



Faculty of Education, Language and Communication

A Stylistic Analysis of Rape Metaphors in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*

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A Stylistic Analysis of Rape Metaphors in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.



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ABSTRACT

Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones* (*TLB*) portrays a young rape victim of fourteen, Susie Salmon, who was brutally beaten, raped, and murdered in a hole in the ground by an elderly man of thirty-six, Mr. Harvey. The representation of rape in Sebold's *TLB* has been examined through a variety of perspectives by employing linguistic approaches to the meanings of rape metaphors. The studies on rape metaphors in *TLB* have indicated the details of rape events and rape victims' experiences. Nevertheless, since rape metaphors are a part of rape victims' cognition and thought systems, the findings of the existing studies on rape metaphors in *TLB* remain inadequate to understand the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors (i.e., combining both linguistic and conceptual knowledge approaches) in literary language. It is due to the contemporary theory of metaphor, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Kovecses, 2002, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003), in which metaphors are not only language-based, intended to achieve rhetorical effects on the audience, but also an essential constituent of human thought and cognition. Accordingly, metaphors significantly influence our understanding of a concept in terms of another. In the existing literature on rape representation, very few studies have been conducted on conceptual metaphors of rape. Besides, the findings of the studies remain inconclusive as they are based on the phenomenon of cognition, ignoring the role of language and linguistic knowledge in constructing rape metaphors. Importantly, the theory of Lexical Concepts and Cognitive Models (LCCM) (Evans, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) claims that the integration of linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge is essential to have a comprehensive meaning and understanding of a metaphor. Therefore, in the current study, rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB* are investigated by incorporating both linguistic knowledge and

conceptual knowledge. For this, theoretical approaches of literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007), CMT, and LCCM Theory have been applied to dissect rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB*. Three research questions were derived to guide the study: (1) What are the types of conceptual metaphors used to describe rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB*? (2) How are the conceptual metaphors of rape constructed in Alice Sebold's *TLB*? (3) What are the differences between the metaphorical constructions of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB* and the existing rape discourses? The findings of the study reveal a variety of categories of conceptual metaphors like animal metaphors, plants metaphors, objects and things metaphors, metaphors of human state and human experiences, metaphors of human activities, and personifications constructing the conceptual metaphors, such as RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS, RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY, RAPE IS SILENCING, RAPE IS HUNTING, RAPE IS PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING, RAPE IS HUMILIATION, and RAPE IS MUTILATION. Furthermore, the findings show that the metaphorical constructions of rape in *TLB* indicate how rape is constructed through the source domains related to the human experiences of animals, birds, plants, hunting, silencing, humiliating, killing, and torturing, exhibiting the reality of rape, the embedded horrors, and underpinning the gravity of pain and suffering of rape victims. Additionally, the findings show the significant differences in rape events and rape victims' conceptualizations in Sebold's *TLB* and other existing rape discourses, such as media discourses of rape, legal and rape trial discourses, political and war rape discourses, and religious discourses of rape. Moreover, the study provides the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors in contrast to the perspective in which metaphors have traditionally been seen as merely linguistic and rhetorical devices. Overall, this study is a significant contribution to understanding rape and rape victims' life experiences in *TLB*. Also, it will help us interpret the existing literature on

rape, exposing the horrific reality of rape events and the traumatic experiences of rape victims that are metaphorically constructed and represented through literary language.

Keywords: Rape, rape metaphors, stylistics, conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), lexical concepts and cognitive models (LCCM) theory.

Analisis Gaya Metafora Rogol dalam The Lovely Bones karya Alice Sebold

ABSTRAK

The Lovely Bones (TLB) karya Alice Sebold menggambarkan mangsa rogol muda berusia empat belas tahun, Susie Salmon, yang dipukul, dirogol dan dibunuh dengan kejam dalam lubang oleh seorang lelaki tua berusia tiga puluh enam tahun iaitu Encik Harvey. Representasi rogol dalam TLB Sebold telah analisis melalui pelbagai perspektif dengan menggunakan pendekatan linguistik terhadap makna metafora rogol. Kajian tentang metafora rogol dalam TLB telah menunjukkan butiran peristiwa rogol dan pengalaman mangsa rogol. Namun begitu, memandangkan metafora rogol adalah sebahagian daripada sistem kognisi dan pemikiran mangsa rogol, penemuan kajian sedia ada mengenai metafora rogol dalam TLB masih tidak mencukupi untuk memahami makna komprehensif metafora rogol (iaitu, menggabungkan kedua-dua pendekatan pengetahuan linguistik dan konseptual) dalam bahasa sastera. Ia disebabkan oleh teori metafora kontemporari, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Kovecses, 2002, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003), di mana metafora bukan sahaja berasaskan bahasa, bertujuan untuk mencapai kesan retorik kepada penonton, tetapi juga merupakan konstituen penting pemikiran dan kognisi manusia. Sehubungan itu, metafora secara signifikan mempengaruhi pemahaman kita tentang sesuatu konsep dari segi yang lain. Dalam literatur sedia ada mengenai representasi rogol, sangat sedikit kajian telah dijalankan mengenai metafora konseptual rogol. Selain itu, hasil kajian ini masih tidak dapat disimpulkan kerana ia berdasarkan fenomena kognisi, mengabaikan peranan bahasa dan pengetahuan linguistik dalam membina metafora rogol. Apa yang penting, teori Lexical Concepts and Cognitive Models (LCCM) (Evans, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) mendakwa bahawa integrasi pengetahuan

linguistik dan pengetahuan konseptual adalah penting untuk mempunyai makna yang menyeluruh dan pemahaman metafora. Oleh itu, dalam kajian semasa, metafora rogol dalam TLB Sebold diasas dengan menggabungkan kedua-dua pengetahuan linguistik dan pengetahuan konseptual. Untuk ini, pendekatan teori stilistik sastera (Leech & Short, 2007), CMT, dan Teori LCCM telah digunakan untuk membedah metafora rogol dalam TLB Sebold. Tiga soalan kajian dibentuk untuk menjawab persoalan kajian: (1) Apakah jenis metafora konseptual yang digunakan untuk menggambarkan metafora rogol dalam TLB Alice Sebold? (2) Bagaimanakah metafora konseptual rogol dibina dalam TLB Alice Sebold? (3) Apakah perbezaan antara binaan metafora rogol dalam TLB Alice Sebold dan wacana-wacana yang membincangkan tentang rogol sedia ada? Hasil kajian mendedahkan pelbagai kategori metafora konseptual seperti metafora haiwan, metafora tumbuhan, metafora objek dan benda, metafora keadaan manusia dan pengalaman manusia, metafora aktiviti manusia, dan personifikasi yang membina metafora konsep, seperti MANGSA ROGOL ADALAH HAIWAN, MANGSA ROGOL ADALAH DIMANGSA, ROGOL ADALAH MENDIAM, ROGOL ADALAH MEMBURU, ROGOL ADALAH PENDERITAAN PSIKOLOGI, ROGOL ADALAH PENGHINAAN DAN ROGOL ADALAH MUTASI. Tambahan pula, penemuan menunjukkan bahawa pembinaan metafora rogol dalam TLB menunjukkan bagaimana rogol dibina melalui domain sumber yang berkaitan dengan pengalaman manusia mengenai haiwan, burung, tumbuhan, memburu, membungkam, memalukan, membunuh, dan menyeksa, mempamerkan realiti rogol, kengerian yang tertanam, dan menyokong keperitan kesakitan dan penderitaan mangsa rogol. Selain itu, penemuan menunjukkan perbezaan ketara dalam peristiwa rogol dan konsep mangsa rogol dalam TLB Sebold dan metafora rogol wujud dalam pelbagai jenis wacana termasuk wacana media, wacana perbicaraan undang-undang, wacana politik dan

perang, dan wacana agama. Selain itu, kajian ini memberikan makna komprehensif metafora rogol berbeza dengan perspektif di mana metafora secara tradisinya dilihat hanya sebagai alat linguistik dan retorik. Secara keseluruhannya, kajian ini merupakan sumbangan yang signifikan untuk memahami pengalaman hidup mangsa rogol dan rogol di TLB. Selain itu, ia akan membantu kami mentafsir kesusasteraan sedia ada mengenai rogol, mendedahkan realiti ngeri kejadian rogol dan pengalaman traumatik mangsa rogol yang dibina secara metafora dan mewakili melalui bahasa sastera.

Kata kunci: *Rogol, metafora rogol, stilistik, teori metafora konsep (CMT), konsep leksikal dan teori model kognitif (LCCM).*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
LCCM	Lexical Concepts and Cognitive Models
MIP	Metaphor Identification Procedure
RO	Research Objective
RQ	Research Question
TLB	The Lovely Bones

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

The chapter begins with the background of the current research study, establishing the context and introducing the study's research gap and theoretical approaches. It is followed by the statement of the problem, research aim and objectives, significance of the study, and the definition of terms. The chapter ends with an outline of the chapters.

1.2 Introduction

Rape is the most severe crime that involves a rape victim's physical and mental health degradation (Campbell, 2008; Finkelhor, 2018). During a rape incident, rape victims are abused, tortured, and humiliated (Koss & Harvey, 1991; Trigueiro et al., 2017). In some cases, the victims are critically injured, dismembered, or even killed (Koss, 1993; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Rape survivors, on the other hand, are at a significantly higher risk of mental disorders such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, betrayal, and rejection (Chivers-Wilson, 2006; Felitti & Anda, 2010; Littleton et al., 2013). Therefore, rape is a form of multiple humiliation that includes rape victims' intense pain, suffering, and helplessness (Taylor, 2020).

Rape affects everyone, irrespective of age and sex, with women and children as the most common victims (World Health Organization, 2021). Nearly one billion women were raped globally between 2000 and 2018 (WHO, 2021), a child is raped every nine minutes (Children's Bureau, 2018), and, alarmingly, 120 million girls were raped in a year in 2020 (WHO, 2020). The large numbers of rape are based on the cases that were reported, but the situation is more

critical since rape is the most underreported crime (Morgan & Kena, 2018). It is estimated that only one out of three rape incidents is reported (Morgan & Thompson, 2022).

Rape is critical and challenging to deal with since it includes various factors (Morgan & Kena, 2018; Taylor, 2020). Nevertheless, multiple studies of rape have been conducted to define and understand rape from different perspectives, including clinical (Subramanian & Green, 2015; Swiss & Giller, 1993), pathological (Dworkin et al., 2017), religious (Barnett et al., 2016; Stack & Kanavy, 1983), socio-cultural (Reshma et al., 2022; Sanday, 1981; White & Sorenson, 1992), and political (Barnett et al., 2017; Kelly, 1997). For instance, in legal and rape trial discourses of rape, the perpetrator of rape and the rape victim are frequently addressed as a “predator” and a vulnerable “prey” (Aldridge & Luchjenbroers, 2007, p. 344). Correspondingly, this practice justifies the animalistic behavior of the predators and the hunting of rape victims. Moreover, in the discourses of psychological trauma, rape is understood in terms of cancer, denoting the similarities between a cancer patient and a rape victim (Stroinska, 2014). Stroinska (2014) adds that cancer gives the victim legitimate and positive attention, empathy, and care, and it also offers a powerful way to present oneself as a legitimate victim of a vicious attack on the body. Subsequently, in socio-cultural discourses of rape, rape victims are mostly women and children. They are called dolls and toys—the playthings to be played with, and foxes—the sly animals—supporting the patriarchal practices that form a pervasive sex-stereotyped conceptual framework used to understand and guide interactions between men and women (Anderson & Doherty, 2008). In contrast, Adams et al. (1995) instantiated that women in socio-cultural discourses of rape are represented as a “package”—the object justifying violence concealing abuse, and supporting entitlement to positions of power (p. 396). Besides, in media discourses,

the rapists are described as “beasts” and “monsters,” on the other hand, the victims are often portrayed as “promiscuous,” which promotes the rape myth of rape victims inviting rape and blaming them for the act (O’Hara, 2012, p. 248). On the whole, rape is metaphorically defined and understood in several discourses of rape, which establishes the fact that rape, rape events, rape victims, and the perpetrators of rape are metaphorically understood in terms of other things (Aldridge & Luchjenbroers, 2007; Laugerud, 2020; Soothill et al., 1990).

1.3 Background to the Study

Literature is one among the discourses of rape. The authors employ their different styles to discuss the intended topics like rape (Anderson, 1999; Brison, 2002; Gay, 2017; Sebold, 1999, 2002b; Sielke, 2002). The discussion on the representation of rape in literature is given in the following paragraphs. On the concept of style, Simpson and Hall (2002) state that style is a consistent occurrence in the text of certain items and structures the language offers. Likewise, style covers all linguistic levels of the language of a piece of work. This concept of style is historically related to rhetoric—the art of effective expression and argumentation—which is rendered by selecting some particular words and figures of speech to influence the audience’s opinion (Brummett, 2008). The concept of style and stylistics will be discussed more in Chapter 2. In contemporary times, Leech and Short (2007) define style as how language is used in any piece of work in a given context, by a given person, and for a given purpose (p. 9). Concurrently, stylistics is the study of various manifestations of style, including linguistic and non-linguistic choices (Leech & Short, 2007). Since the origin of the discipline of stylistics in the early twentieth century with the work of Russian formalists group (e.g., Roman Jakobson, Victor Shklovsky, Vladimir Propp) and British Semanticists (e.g., I. A. Richards and William Empson),

it has evolved in different subdisciplines such as corpus stylistics (Stockwell & Mahlberg, 2015), computational stylistics (Herrmann et al., 2021), cognitive stylistics (Semino & Culpeper, 2002), and feminist stylistics (Mills, 1995). Also, literary stylistics is one such subdiscipline that deals with the aesthetic use of language in literary texts (Cureton, 1992; Simpson, 2004). Mainly, literary stylistics mediates between linguistics and literary criticism, applying linguistics methods and insights to literary analysis and the methods and insights of literary criticism to the study of language (Fabb et al., 1987; Leech, 2008). Significantly, Leech and Short (2007) proposed the categories of stylistic devices in literary texts as lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context (p. 78).

In literary writings, as discussed above, the authors use metaphors to talk about their intended topics, such as rape and the pain and suffering of rape victims (Anderson, 2000; Brison, 2002; Gay, 2017; Sebold, 1999, 2002b; Sielke, 2002). For instance, Anderson (1999), in the rape narrative *Speak*, gives voice to a voiceless rape victim Melinda Sordino who was a thirteen-year-old girl when brutally raped before starting high school. Melinda says, “My head is killing me, my throat is killing me,” while sharing her post-assault life experiences (Anderson, 1999, p. 86). In Melinda’s utterance, the animating head and throat indicate the author’s use of metaphors to construct the painful experiences of the young rape victim. Similarly, Gay (2014), in the book *An Untamed State*, employs metaphors to discuss the rape of Mireille, a young woman and mother who was savagely beaten, burned, sliced, and eventually gang-raped. Gay (2014) depicts the gravity of the pain and suffering of Mireille’s rape as “[t]hin streams of blood trickled along my forearms. My skin began to swell around the shards of glass” (p. 35). The metaphors (i.e., streams of blood and skin began to swell) in Mireille’s utterance exposed how

rape degrades and deteriorates a rape victim mentally and physically (Gay, 2014). Further, in Mireille's story, Roldan-Sevillano (2021) stated that rape is represented as a weapon of terror and crime, which is a common practice conducted by the rapists to control rape victims. Notably, Downham (2012), in the rape narrative *You Against Me*, metaphorically calls rape a "nightmare," which causes psychological stress and pain and kills the rape victim slowly (p. 36). Therefore, it shows that the authors have widely used metaphors in their literary writings to discuss rape and rape victims' painful experiences. Nevertheless, rape is a more complex phenomenon than it is previously thought. Notably, the studies on rape show that when rape is constructed and represented through metaphors in a discourse, the metaphors are linked to rape victims' cognition (Ciamaricone, 2020; Erjavec & Volcic, 2010; Gibbs, 2017; Imre, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1987; Lee, 2010). This is because the nature of metaphor is primarily conceptual, and it forms part of the ordinary system of thought and language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1987). A study shows that rape victims conceptualize and interpret the event of rape as identified by the prevailing rape culture in which the victims are blamed and punished (Arttime, 2013). Recently, Lyons et al. (2022) stated that the conceptualization of rape by an individual is influenced by rape-supportive cognitions (e.g., victim blaming and rape myths). Moreover, rape-supportive cognitions support dispositional factors such as several socially aversive personality traits (Jonason et al., 2017; Kasowski & Anderson, 2019). Therefore, conceptual metaphors in a discourse capture cultural stereotypes and become a powerful tool for investigating the perceptions of rape (Luchjenbroers & Aldridge, 2007). In other words, metaphors structure the human conceptual system, including the most abstract concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Lakoff (1990) adds that conceptual metaphors are the primary mechanism for understanding abstract concepts and developing abstract reasoning. In addition, Gibbs (2006) describes

metaphors as the basis of human thinking and communication. Thus, metaphor is a concept of human consciousness, determining a person's perception of the surrounding world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1987). Correspondingly, studying metaphors provides insights into the overall unity of human conceptual structures, bodily experiences, and the communicative functions of language (Gibbs, 2009, p. 15). It has been demonstrated that metaphor is appropriately recognized as a fundamental scheme of thought (Gibbs, 2008; Kovecses, 2002, 2005), serving many cognitive and social functions (Gibbs, 2008).

Historically, metaphor is seen in terms of describing one thing in terms of another thing that is notably different (Bowdle, 2019; Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004). Metaphors are traditionally used as literary devices to embellish text or speech and attract the audience's attention (Aristotle, 1940; Ortony, 1979). Accordingly, metaphor has been understood as a characteristic of language to form a deviant use of language and have ornamental functions (Richards, 1936). However, the modern perspective of metaphor has changed and seen a cognitive turn in metaphor studies, resulting in a view of metaphor as a figure of thought rather than a figure of language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Steen, 2002). Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in their phenomenal book *Metaphors We Live By*, show that metaphorical expressions are not restricted to poetic language and rhetoric but are pervasive in everyday language use. This cognitive-linguistic approach to metaphor is known as Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Kovecses, 2002; Lakoff 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999; Lakoff & Turner, 1989) that claims that the metaphorical expressions (e.g., "Your claims are *indefensible*," "He *attacked* every weak point in my argument," "I *demolished* his argument") in language use show that we do not talk about arguments in terms of war, but we also think of arguments in terms of war

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4, italics in original). Such systematic groups of expressions reflect conventional patterns of thought that Lakoff and Johnson call conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Thus, the systematicity in language use reflects the underlying systematicity in our conceptual system. The italicized expressions are all linguistic realizations of an underlying conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). A detailed discussion of conceptual metaphors is given in Chapter 2.

The main emphasis of CMT is that figurative language is a consequence of the already universally existing pre-linguistic metaphors and language-specific conceptual metaphors (Grady 1997; Lakoff & Johnson 1999). However, CMT is neither a theory about linguistic organization nor concerned with linguistic meaning construction (Casasanto, 2009; Macha, 2016). CMT is primarily concerned with “backstage cognition”—the role of the non-linguistic processes that facilitate meaning construction behind the scenes (Evans, 2010, p. 603). Evans (2009) states that in addition to the backstage cognition perspective, linguists require a theoretical account modeling how language deploys and interfaces with non-linguistic knowledge structures (i.e., conceptual metaphors), the conceptual mechanism of meaning construction, and the process of conceptual integration during the process of figurative language understanding. Accordingly, a theoretical approach is required that deals with “frontstage cognition”—the role of linguistic prompts and linguistic processes of semantic composition (i.e., the interaction between linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge) in figurative language understanding (Evans, 2009, p. 275). Thus, Lexical Concepts and Cognitive Models (LCCM) Theory relies on semantic compositionality in metaphorical language to provide the theoretical context for figurative language understanding (Evans, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013).

LCCM Theory holds that meaning arises through “integration”—the role of linguistic knowledge in semantic and conceptual composition (Evans, 2010, p. 604). This characteristic of LCCM Theory resides in its title, where a lexical concept means the semantic element paired with a phonological form in a *symbolic unit*—a conventional pairing of a phonological form and a semantic element (p. 613). On the other hand, a cognitive model is a coherent body of multimodal knowledge grounded in the brain’s modal system, and it derives a full range of experience types processed by the brain, including sensory-motor experience, proprioception, and subjective experience. Accordingly, linguistic content includes highly schematic semantic knowledge, while the conceptual concept is concerned with detailed knowledge grounded in the piece of information captured from multimodal brain states. In this way, LCCM Theory provides an executive control mechanism facilitating the deployment of conceptual representations in service of linguistically-mediated meaning construction. A detailed description of LCCM Theory is provided in Chapter 2.

Because rape metaphors need to be seen through both linguistic and cognitive lenses (Ciamaricone, 2020; Lakoff & Johnson, 1987; Laugerud, 2010; Lee, 2010; Lopez-Maestre, 2015; Luchjenbroers & Aldridge, 2007; Stroinska, 2014) since the instances of metaphors in language use are the reflections of the human conceptual system and thought process (Evans, 2009, 2010, 2013; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the current research study stylistically analyses Alice Sebold’s rape narrative *The Lovely Bones* (2002) (*TLB*) to investigate how metaphors help expose the reality of rape. For this, the study follows the theoretical model of literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007) and applies LCCM Theory (Evans, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) to interpret the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold’s (2002) *TLB*.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Alice Sebold writes about the topics of rape, rape victims' experiences, violence against women, and death and afterlife experiences (Olson, 2012; Wehling-Giorgi, 2021). Sebold was brutally beaten, tortured, raped, and humiliated in a tunnel upon her return to college while she was studying in her first year. Instead of staying silent, Sebold publicly expressed her ordeal and showed how rape victims are dehumanized and mutilated during rape events (Sebold, 1999; Viner, 2000). In an interview, Sebold stated that her writing aims to remove the weirdness of rape and rape victims' experiences and to bring it to human discussion (Viner, 2000).

In *TLB*, Sebold writes about a young rape victim Susie Salmon who was fourteen when brutally raped and murdered in a hole in the ground by a man of thirty-six, Mr. Harvey. The impact and popularity of *TLB* are seen in the background of American culture as it has been seen as a comfort novel for the loving and traumatized families attempting to cope with the loss of their loved ones killed on 9/11 (Smith, 2002). Moreover, Charles (2002) discusses that even though *TLB* represented that those who died in the attack were safe in better places, it also revealed newly acute fears about the vulnerability of American children and cultural anxieties about children being abducted, raped, and murdered.

Representation of rape in Sebold's (2002) *TLB* has been studied from a variety of standpoints. For instance, Wehling-Giorgi (2018) conducted a textual analysis of *TLB* that informed how Susie's rape and murder led to the disruption of a family; there were dramatic changes in the behavior of Susie's mother (named Abigail), which eventually contributed to the theme of maternity and femininity. The study further shows that *TLB* provides a first-person perspective of the emergence of female subjectivity in modern city life that is directly filtered

through the maternal body (Wehling-Giorgi, 2018). Bliss (2008), offering a different approach, explores the metaphorical underpinnings of the photographs used in *TLB* and suggests that the individual photographs of the raped and dead girl Susie and the living Abigail refer to the degradation and destruction of each family member. Subsequently, Kilby (2018) applies the theoretical model of intertextuality—used to signify the multiple ways in which any one literary text is made up of other texts through multiple references (Abrams & Harpham, 2015; Allen, 2000)—and compares Sebold’s *TLB* and *Lucky* to see a deeper understanding of rape victims’ experiences. Also, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) stylistically analyzed *TLB* to explore the significance of stylistic devices in depicting rape and rape victims’ experiences. For instance, the study finds that the linguistic metaphor “life is a perpetual yesterday” depicts how rape victims suffer from the consequences of rape even after the assault in their daily life experiences (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018, p. 234). In a different stylistically mediated study, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2020) discuss how rape victims’ thought system is constructed and represented by analyzing the linguistic patterns in the utterances of the young rape victim Susie in Sebold’s (2002) *TLB*. The study concludes that the author’s stylistic construction of the rape victim’s narration indicates a way out to reach the victim’s thought system, mainly affecting the construction and meaning of rape and rape experiences (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2020).

The scholarly discourse shows that Sebold’s *TLB* has attracted scholars from different research interests applying a variety of theoretical approaches and perspectives, including stylistics and metaphors, to examine rape and rape victims’ experiences. However, it has been seen that the relation of metaphors with human cognition and thought system has not been thoroughly investigated to understand rape in *TLB*. Since rape metaphors are associated with

rape victims' cognition and thought systems, they cannot be regarded as merely literary or rhetorical devices. In this regard, Ciamaricone (2020) explores rape discourses in literature and reiterates that rape metaphors reside in rape victims' cognition and are expressed through the language in use. For instance, the linguistic choice "gasoline dangerous"—in a rape victim's discourse—exemplifies the metaphorical conceptualization of the perpetrator of rape as a machine since he has bitten the victim during rape (Ciamaricone, 2020, p. 17). Importantly, Luchjenbroers and Aldridge (2007) study legal and rape trial discourses and describe that conceptual metaphors are fundamental to rape victims and support them in expressing and sharing the experiences of the ordeal. Additionally, metaphors help rape victims to conceptualize the event and experiences (Luchjenbroers & Aldridge, 2007). Moreover, Stroinska (2014) studies the discourses of rape trauma and finds that metaphors help rape victims construct their traumatic rape experiences. For instance, the lexical choices of "lurks," "hides," and "pounces" (Lee, 2010, p. 146) in a discourse of rape construct the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS PREYING while the choices of "specific target" and "fired a canon" construct the metaphor RAPE IS WAR; hence, the use of language helps construct and realize conceptual metaphors in which the brutal terms of PREYING and WAR represent rape (Lee, 2010, p. 151). Significantly, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that metaphors influence a person's conceptual system, as shown through a person's language, actions, and understanding. Even though conceptual metaphors of rape have been studied in different discourses like media discourses of rape, legal and rape trial discourses, political and war rape discourses, and religious discourses of rape, the use of the combination of both linguistic and conceptual knowledge in the interpretation of the meanings of metaphors has been ignored. Therefore, the current research

study fills this potential gap of knowledge by interpreting the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB* using both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge.

1.5 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The current study aims to analyze rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB* from both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge perspectives. Specifically, the research objectives of this study are:

- i. To identify the types of conceptual metaphors used to describe rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB*,
- ii. To examine how conceptual metaphors of rape are constructed in Alice Sebold's *TLB*, and
- iii. To compare and contrast the metaphorical constructions of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB* with the existing rape discourses.

Moreover, three research questions (hereinafter referred to as RQs) were formed to guide the current study.

- i. What are the types of conceptual metaphors used to describe rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB*?
- ii. How are the conceptual metaphors of rape constructed in Alice Sebold's *TLB*?
- iii. What are the differences between the metaphorical constructions of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB* and the existing rape discourses?

For these RQs, the data are collected from the discourses of rape and rape experiences in the text of Sebold's *TLB*. For RQ1, the stylistic choices of metaphorical expressions (i.e., metaphorical words) are extracted to identify the underlying metaphors depicting rape and rape victims' painful experiences. The identification of rape metaphors is performed by following literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007), metaphor identification procedure (MIP) (Steen et al., 2007), and CMT (Kovecses, 2002, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003). For RQ2, literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007) and LCCM Theory (Evans, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) are used to show the role and significance of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge to understand the meanings of rape metaphors. Finally, the RQ3 is answered by comparing and contrasting the metaphorical constructions of rape in Sebold's novel with the other existing rape discourses like media discourses of rape, legal and rape trial discourses, political and war rape discourses, and religious discourses of rape using literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007) and LCCM Theory (Evans, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013), which challenges the ways rape metaphors have long been studied and understood as simply literary or rhetorical devices.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the current study is separated into its specific contributions. Additionally, the study may benefit those who find the findings valuable.

The study addresses rape metaphors and significantly fills the gaps in the existing knowledge related to the understanding of rape metaphors. In the existing literature, several studies have been conducted on rape and traumatic experiences of rape victims in Sebold's *TLB* (e.g., Arrida, 2013; Bennett, 2009; Bennett, 2012; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016; Kiaei & Safdari, 2014; Mirabella, 2016; Wehling-Giorgi, 2021; Whitney, 2010). Among these studies,

there are some studies (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016) that analyze the phenomenon of metaphors concerning rape in *TLB*. However, before this study, the conceptual metaphors of rape in *TLB* had not been examined, which created a potential knowledge gap. This is because most past studies (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2020; Kilby, 2018; Wehling-Giorgi, 2018) focused on different themes and perspectives (e.g., femininity and maternity, family destruction, and rape victims' post-assault lives) in *TLB*.

The findings show current theoretical knowledge for scholars researching conceptual metaphors of rape. The combination of both types of knowledge, linguistic and conceptual, was not used to understand rape in *TLB*. Therefore, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of rape and rape victims' painful experiences by interpreting rape metaphors through the combination of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge.

Besides, the study helps literary scholars and readers interpret and understand the meanings of rape metaphors in literary language, constructing and representing the horrific realities embedded in rape events and the volumes of pain and suffering of rape victims. Additionally, the findings of the study can be applied to other literary works to examine how the author's style affects the construction and representation of rape. Accordingly, the study helps creative and effective rereading and redefining the existing literature on rape to evaluate new meanings and, hence, a new understanding of rape and rape victims' experiences. For example, the current study reveals rape metaphors like RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS, RAPE IS SILENCING, RAPE IS HUNTING, and RAPE IS MUTILATION in Sebald's *TLB*, exposing the horrors of rape and rape victim's pain and suffering. As such, the current study would be beneficial for the literary community to dissect rape in literary language.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Terms

Several terms are used throughout this thesis. These are style, stylistics, linguistic metaphor, conceptual metaphor, source domain, target domain, mappings, lexical concept, cognitive model, semantic potential, semantic affordances, semantic value, and informational characterization. The following sections define these terms.

1.7.1 Style

Style is how language is used in any piece of work in a given context, by a given person, and for a given purpose (Leech & Short, 2007). Besides, style is a selection from a total linguistic repertoire (Leech and Short, 2007). Style in the current study refers to the linguistic and figurative choices used to represent rape in Sebold's *TLB*.

1.7.2 Stylistics

Stylistics is the study of style (Leech & Short, 2007). In the current study, stylistics refers to the study of lexical choices, grammatical categories, and metaphors employed in a literary text.

1.7.3 Linguistic Metaphor

A linguistic metaphor involves talking about one thing in terms of another, where the two things are different, but some similarities or correspondences can be perceived between them (Cameron & Maslen, 2010; Deignan, 2017; Semino, 2020). In the current study, linguistic metaphor is a novel metaphor traditionally used as a stylistic device to have rhetorical effects. Besides, a linguistic metaphor is different from a conceptual metaphor.

1.7.4 Conceptual Metaphor

In a conceptual metaphor, one domain of experience is used to understand another domain of experience (Kovecses, 2010; Potts & Semino, 2019; Steen, 2011). In the current study, a conceptual metaphor stands for understanding one domain of experience (typically abstract) in terms of another (typically concrete).

1.7.5 Source Domain

The source domain is the conceptual domain from which the metaphorical expressions are drawn (Grady, 1997; Kovecses, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003).

1.7.6 Target Domain

The target domain is the conceptual domain to be understood (Grady, 1997; Kovecses, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

1.7.7 Mappings

Mappings involve a set of fixed correspondences between a source and a target domain while understanding one domain in terms of another (Kovecses, 2010; Lederer, 2016). In other words, mappings are the mental organization of information in domains (e.g., source and target domains), the underlying phenomenon that drives metaphorical usage in language.

1.7.8 Lexical Concept

A lexical concept is defined as a unit of semantic structure conventionally associated with a linguistic form central to LCCM Theory—accordingly, lexical concepts are concerned with purely linguistic knowledge (Evans, 2009). In the current study, the lexical concept refers to the distinct senses associated with a given word.

1.7.9 Cognitive Model

A cognitive model is a coherent, in large-part non-linguistic, knowledge structure. In other words, a cognitive model is a representational form that knowledge in the conceptual system takes; it consists of frames that give rise to a potentially unlimited set of simulations (Evans, 2009). Notably, the cognitive models are accessed via a given lexical concept.

1.7.10 Semantic Potential

Semantic potential is the nature of encyclopedic knowledge to which an individual lexical provides potential access. The part of a word's semantic potential that is activated is a consequence of linguistic and extralinguistic context (Evans, 2007). Semantic potential refers to the sentential context that guides and narrows the specific knowledge (Evans, 2009).

1.7.11 Semantic Affordances

Semantic affordance is the non-linguistic knowledge structures activated by linguistic and non-linguistic contexts (Evans, 2010).

1.7.12 Semantic Value

Semantic value is the value associated with a lexical concept once it has undergone lexical concept integration and before interpretation (Evans, 2010).

1.7.13 Informational Characterization

Informational characterization is the simulation associated with a linguistic unit, such as a conceptual lexical unit or an utterance following interpretation. An utterance-level informational characterization is a conception (Evans, 2010).

1.8 Thesis Outline and Chapter Summary

The study has been organized in the manner as is briefly outlined here:

Chapter 1 began with the chapter overview and the study's background. The background of the study initially discussed rape and how rape victims are treated during and after rape events globally. After that, the concept of style and literary stylistics is discussed to show how the authors' style influences the meaning of the phenomenon described, and how rape is defined and understood through metaphors in different discourses is discussed as well. In particular, it stated the metaphorical constructions and representations of rape in the authors' rape narratives. The following section dealt with the statement of the problem in the existing literature on Sebold's rape narrative *TLB* about the meaning construction and conceptualization process of rape metaphors. The objectives, research questions, significance, and operational definitions of terms followed.

Chapter 2 begins with the research background on the constructions and conceptualizations of rape in several discourses. It also reviews the existing literature on the analysis of metaphorical constructions and representations of rape in literary writings. The second part of the chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. The discussion primarily draws on the nature and concept of linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge in metaphor understanding.

Chapter 3 outlines the methods to achieve the objectives of the study. It opens with the research approach used in the study. It follows the data collection procedure consisting of the identification of data, a compilation of the data, data coding, identification of metaphors, and

categorizing and tabulating metaphors. Finally, the method of data analysis and the interpretation of metaphors through LCCM Theory has been stated.

Chapter 4 presents the results and analysis of the data. It begins with identifying major conceptual metaphor types based on the source domains. The primary source domains of conceptual metaphors are ANIMALS, ANIMALISTIC, PREY, AUTHORITIES, CONTROLLING TOOLS, HORROR, TORTURE, PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING, HUNTING, SILENCING, and MUTILATION. It follows the analysis of one linguistic expression from each conceptual metaphor in a situational context through LCCM Theory. The second part of this chapter deals with the discussion of the findings. It consists of aspects of linguistic and conceptual knowledge to understand metaphorical expressions in language use. Finally, the chapter shows the differences between the metaphorical constructions of rape in Sebold's *TLB* and the other existing rape discourses.

Chapter 5 draws on essential conclusions that are drawn from the analysis of the data. It argues for the elaborate model of understanding rape in a rape narrative which combines both linguistic and conceptual knowledge for a comprehensive interpretation of the phenomenon. The chapter ends with the recommendations for future research.

1.9 Caveats

In the current study, the investigation of the topic of rape may be disturbing to some readers since it shows the representation of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB*. Regarding the representation of rape and violence against women in *TLB*, Sebold says that she was motivated to write because she believes it is not unusual. She sees it as just a part of life and thinks, "We get in trouble when we separate people who've experienced it from those who haven't. Though

it's a horrible experience, it's not as if violence hasn't affected many of us" (Darby, 2002). Moreover, about the graphic details of rape, Sebold says in an interview, "It's meant to let people who have no experience of rape see what one of them is like" (Dave, 2006). Wehling-Giorgi (2021) adds that the details of rape in Sebold's writing fill the gaps of overly-sanitized accounts of rape and violence against women without sparing any details of the degrading and demeaning behavior adopted by the rapist. Furthermore, challenging the boundaries imposed on fact-based accounts of traumatic experience to delve into the lapses, gaps, and absences of the traumatized imagination, Sebold's *TLB* gives a new shape to a formerly unimagined and unwritten but real experience (Wehling-Giorgi, 2021).

As such, it is reported that *TLB* is a deeply affecting meditation on how terrible pain and loss can be redeemed—slowly, grudgingly, and in fragments—through love and acceptance (Viner, 2002). Additionally, Sebold adds that in the expression of rape and violence, everything should be mentioned, and it should not be cloaked in shame; *TLB* is a story of survival, which is heroic (Viner, 2002). Therefore, Sebold believes that things are controlled by naming them, which is why she always talks about her "rape" rather than, as one radio host did, "that horrible thing that happened to you from which you have luckily recovered" (Viner, 2002).

Also, the topic of rape in the current study has been interpreted using the most appropriate language maintaining the ethics and integrity of research. In the light of existing literature, the researcher selected the words and expressions that adequately describe the intended phenomenon. On the other hand, the misleading and inappropriate words and expressions were discarded.

The researcher is a male who deals with the interpretation of the topic of rape and violence against women in the current study. The study includes the details of a male perpetrator depicted in Sebold's *TLB*. However, the researcher does not find any pleasure in it. The researcher is sympathetic and empathetic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

The chapter opens with the metaphorical constructions and concepts of rape in several discourses, including literature. It also reviews the existing literature on the representation of rape in Sebold's rape narrative *TLB*. After that, the chapter discusses the concept of style, stylistics, and metaphor in literature and how metaphors are interpreted, meant, and conceptualized through LCCM Theory. Finally, the chapter ends with the chapter summary.

2.2 Concepts and Constructs of Rape

Profound literature on rape instantiates that rape is the most violent crime, having traumatic, severe, devastating, and lasting impacts on a rape victim (Jewkes et al., 2002). Accordingly, Weis and Borges (1973) call rape "a total attack against the whole person, affecting the victim's physical, psychological, and social identity" (p. 72). In other words, rape is a unique crime in which a rape victim is not only physically tortured and destroyed but also mentally traumatized in post-assault life experiences, consisting of stigmatization and silencing of the victim (Campbell & Wasco, 2005; Gavey & Schmidt, 2011). Nevertheless, rape has been mainly understood in terms of why men rape by describing the characteristics of the rapists (Groth & Burgess, 1977). Even though there is a change in rape discourse understanding, the researchers suggest that the old myths continue to influence our understanding of rape in forms that might be more subtle (Anderson & Doherty, 2008; McMahon, 2007). For instance, the rape victims seeking support from their families and community receive negative responses that are

equal to a second rape or revictimization (Ahrens et al., 2007; Campbell et al., 2001). Wood and Rennie (1994) emphasized that the raped women and children are not only victimized but also transformed into the victims in the public domain. This is possible due to the general perception of rape affected by the socio-cultural settings based on the patriarchal patterns that cause an imbalance of power among men and women primarily on gender basis differences (Buchwald et al., 1993). This distribution supports the culture where men are primary, and women are secondary and subordinate to men, resulting in the latter's castration, subjugation, and oppression (Buchwald et al., 1993; Rozee & Koss, 2001).

Consequently, the prevailing patterns of patriarchy constrain the construction and understanding of rape, rape victims, and their life experiences (Rozee & Koss, 2001; Walby et al., 1983). In this line, Henley et al. (1995) discussed that rape victims (especially women and children) are foregrounded and blamed in the discourses of rape; on the other hand, the perpetrators are intentionally kept in the background and spared. On such socio-cultural practices, Muchoki (2011) commented that they eventually create specific images of rape, compromising with the reality of rape and the pain and suffering of rape victims, used to trivialize and neutralize rape within wider societies. In addition, Easton et al. (2014) reported that under the influence of patriarchal patterns, the misleading meaning of rape and rape victims' experiences is served, which eventually restricts the reality of rape and, therefore, hinders the appropriate measures to be taken while dealing with rape and rape victims. Notably, Trinch and Cassidy (2020) remarked that such discriminatory practices of human societies facilitate and foster unsafe environments for women and children in which they are to be raped, blamed, punished, and silenced.

2.3 Metaphorical Understanding of Rape

The construction of rape in different discourses shows how rape is constructed and perceived, representing the current image of rape and how it is dealt with. Weis and Borges (1973) called rape a “total attack,” which refers to the analogy between a rape and an attack (p. 72). This metaphorical understanding of rape exposes the gruesome images of a rape victim’s physical damage, psychological trauma, and social exploitation, as it happens in the case of an attack. Moreover, a rape victim and a perpetrator are understood in terms of the two entities in an attack (i.e., the one being attacked and the other one as an attacker); thus, the attacker plans his attack and carefully executes to destroy the one being attacked. On the other hand, a perpetrator does the same by raping a victim. Most importantly, this metaphorical construction of rape reaffirms that rape is not only related to physical damage; instead, it expands to psychological and social suffering (Weis & Borges, 1973). Moreover, Penelope (1990) states that rape is sometimes not given any names; it is just referred to some misleading references (e.g., I can’t believe that it happened to me, cause it’s so long and I have healed. Herein, the false deixis (i.e., the pronoun *it*) is used to avoid naming and proper referencing to rape (Penelope, 1990, p. 181). Similarly, Wood and Rennie (1994) restate that there is difficulty found in naming the experience of rape and sexual violence either reported by a victim or a perpetrator. Therefore, rape is talked about as a social misunderstanding or an accident (Gravelin et al., 2019). Along with this, rape is constructed and understood using a variety of terms in various forms of discourse.

2.4 Representation of Rape in Discourses

There are various forms of discourse in which rape is constructed using metaphorical constructions. Such discourses are discussed in the following sections.

2.4.1 Media Discourses of Rape

In media discourses, the construction of rape is affected by the socio-cultural practices in which patriarchy restricts the reality of rape and rape victims' pain and suffering (Walby et al., 1983). The perpetrators are categorized as beasts, monsters, and evils; for example, as in the news headings—the three-hour terror of beast with evil eyes (News of the World, 1978) and in 18 Years of Rape Monster Sex Fiend (Daily Mirror, 1978). The metaphorical image of seeing the perpetrators as monsters and beasts implies that the rapists are rare individuals, not like most men. In other words, they are abnormal and thus very unlike the man next door. The logic continues that most men would not rape since the rapists are strange fiends. The image of the rapists as monsters and beasts strengthens the notion that rape is very rare. The other aspect of the image is that the psychological explanation directs human attention away from the social relations between the sexes. The image says that this act is abnormal, a product of a sick mind; therefore, it has nothing to do with the way men view women as sexual objects. The psychological angle shifts our attention to a medical rather than a social problem. Walby et al. (1983) add that the media reports strikingly did not show any image of rape in which rape could be depicted as the oppression of rape victims being women and children. This is despite the evidence about the brutality inflicted on rape victims during rape and the fear that its existence causes for many women and children. This is in line with Tranchese (2019), who asserted that rape is the only gender-based crime in which one of the “weapons” is a sexual act (p. 175). The

sexual act is further elaborated by Kitzinger and Thomas (1995) as “the means to an end, not the end in itself. Power is the desired element” (p. 45). Therefore, according to Tranchese (2019), rape in media is constructed as a weapon which is directly related to power and control. In other words, the metaphorical constructions of rape as a weapon demonstrate how a rape victim is terrorized and traumatized under the threat of a weapon and then eventually subjugated and oppressed.

Moreover, the women and children who experience rape are often represented as innocent and vulnerable, attacked by the men who, on the other hand, are usually portrayed as evil and monsters (Benedict, 1992; Mason & Monckton-Smith, 2008; O’Hara 2012; Walby et al., 1983). The dichotomy of representing the victims and the rapists reconstructs the patriarchal view that rape victims being women and children are weaker and vulnerable. In contrast, the rapists are powerful and authoritative, justifying their acts of rape and violence. Similarly, Brownmiller (1975) posits that rape is not an impulsive sexual urge as it has been practiced but a social practice and an essential function to maintain control over women. Consequently, the metaphorical constructions of rape in media discourse studies show how rape is constructed in terms of fear and control and rape victims as vulnerable and powerless. In contrast, the rapists are monsters and oppressors by undermining the female and male relationship (Schwark, 2017).

2.4.2 Legal and Rape Trial Discourses

In legal and rape trial discourses, rape is constructed through a variety of linguistic choices representing the practices of rape and dealings with rape victims (Ehrlich, 2020). Ehrlich (2020) explains that the linguistic choices (e.g., she wants it, invited it) show that lawyers and judges doubt rape victims that the victims did not do what was necessary to protect them;

therefore, they wanted it. For such practices, first, the linguistic and socio-cultural dominant notions of gender are encoded and potentially contested. Secondly, rape is understood through the predesigned parameters of rape—the victims and the perpetrators—existing in such socio-cultural settings. Consequently, the meanings are already made to even those serving justice (Ehrlich, 2001). Therefore, Figueiredo (1998) illustrated that rape victims are constructed as the causers of rape, provoking the rapists and giving them opportunities and excuses for rape. It fits the description of imprudent female behavior or promiscuous (McCahill et al., 1979). The courts usually see cases of rape against rape victims as non-criminal or at least as understandable, especially when a victim's behavior is considered imprudent or when she is labeled promiscuous (Liebes-Plesner, 1984). In such cases, it can be the rape victim's actions and behavior, rather than the offender's, that is judged.

Metaphorically, the law sees a rape victim's body and its activities as the area of legal jurisdiction, as an object of legal regulation, control, and punishment (Smart, 1989). The construction of the female body as legal jurisdiction redirects to prevailing rape myths in which the body of a rape victim is considered one of the reasons for rape; the appearance and dress of the victim. Such instances in legal rape discourses are used to make rape victims responsible, and accordingly they are punished. Moreover, Smart (1989) exemplifies that a female body is metaphorically constructed as diseased, hysterical, and immoral in legal discourses. Gurnham (2016) found that rape victims' bodies are constructed as "white meat" in rape trials (p. 123). A victim's body is white meat, which evokes the relationship between the two—the victim and the perpetrator—and the natural satisfaction of appetite. Such metaphorical constructions promote rape incidents and normalize the inflicted violence on women and children during rape events.

Moreover, Laugerud (2020) metaphorically defines rape trials as a game that represents the trials as a competitive, hostile, and masculine process that excludes rape victims from participating in the trial. The game metaphor emphasizes what rape victims do in court rather than how the legal system demands affect them. Edwards (1981) argues that the discourses of rape trials are ripe with notions about female passivity, women as victims, and female culpability.

2.4.3 Political and War Rape Discourses

In political and war rape discourses, rape is conceptualized as a strategy used to institutionalize, subjugate, and disempower rape victims, primarily women and children (Chakrabarti, 2014). For instance, during the Bosnian War (1992–95), it is estimated that 20,000 to 50,000 women and children were brutally raped (Jones, 2017; Salzman, 1998). The rapes were carried out to humiliate or destroy the identity of a victim. It was done in a way whereby rape and violence constituted a weapon of war (Allen, 1996; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 1996; Skjelsbaek, 2006; Stiglmeier, 1994). Erjavec's (2010) study on the discourses of rape in the Bosnian war reiterates that rape victims are metaphorically constructed mainly as shooting targets and cancer (e.g., "I am their shooting target," (p. 7) "everyone is allowed to shoot," (p. 7) and "see myself as cancer," (p. 11). The metaphorical representations refer to the commodification of rape victims; they are understood in terms of non-human beings and life-threatening diseases (e.g., cancer) that justify their torture and termination. Ghosal (2013) comments that political systems and patriarchal thought institutionalize and support rape and the dehumanization of rape victims, particularly women and children, in socio-cultural practices. Thus, rape is a primary mechanism through which men perpetuate their dominance over women.

Similarly, Engle (2005) reassures that rape is the systematic extermination of women and girls. Adams (2018) illustrates that rape as a systematic extermination was used in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, resulting in severe physical and mental harm accompanied by torture and trauma. The women and children were savagely raped at home, in public, and in front of family members, causing serious diseases, sexual slavery, trafficking, and forced impregnation or abortion (Hynes, 2004). Therefore, the studies of political rape discourses showed that rape is a strategic weapon of war (Gottschall, 2004; Hynes, 2004; Jennings & Swiss, 2001).

While discussing the representation of rape victims' bodies in war rape discourses, Parashar (2013) described the bodies as a "log book" of war (p. 626). The bodies and body parts of rape victims reflect how armed groups were trained to control and defeat using rape as a weapon. Accordingly, Seifert (2014) remarks that rape is thus not primarily a sexually motivated act but an act of aggression. In other words, in the mind of a perpetrator, rape does not fulfill sexual functions, as it is generally understood, but it is a manifestation of anger, violence, and the domination of rape victims—women and children in particular. Furthermore, Groth et al. (1982) add that rape is exercised to degrade, humiliate, and subjugate a rape victim. Research on rape thus illuminates that the amount of violence exerted in the form of beating, strangling, and other maltreatment often grossly exceeds the violence necessary for carrying out rape (Groth et al., 1982). For instance, in the war in former Yugoslavia, busloads of pregnant women were sent back across enemy lines painted with cynical comments about the babies to be born to humiliate males (Diken & Laustsen, 2005). Therefore, Ghosal (2013) instantiates that the raped women are used as an agency—symbolizing defeat, degradation, and humiliation of the male enemy.

In a study of war rape, Farr (2009) remarkably states that rape victims' bodies are understood as battlefields, and, therefore, women and children are appropriated as objects to inflict sexual violence. Gebremichael et al. (2023) add that the practice of dehumanizing women and children is one of the war strategies. Diken and Laustsen (2005) and Watts and Zimmerman (2002) elaborate that rape as a war strategy was used in the Bosnian War and civil wars in Rwanda, Liberia, and Uganda. Moreover, systematic rape was also reported from a historical perspective, such as in the war for independence in Bangladesh, in anti-Chinese riots in Indonesia, and on a massive scale by Japanese soldiers in China and Korea during Second World War. Doja (2019) mentions that rapes are fueled by specific cultural activism that activates a cultural ideology making mass rapes effective in political war programs. Ghosal (2013) states that within cultural ideologies, the dignity of women is the most vulnerable and soft target. Kesic (2005) adds that raped women and children are stigmatized and called dirty, morally inferior persons. For example, in the case of the Bosnian war, the family members were forced to rape one another or to witness a family member being raped. Moreover, soldiers were forced to rape, and those who refused were humiliated or even killed (Diken & Laustsen, 2005).

2.4.4 Religious Discourses of Rape

In religious discourses, the commonality of rapes is attested (Blyth et al., 2018). These discourses, as endorsed by Blyth et al. (2018), are rooted in the foundations of patriarchal culture, constituting a part of the framework upon which rape-supportive ideologies and belief systems are built. Such ideologies and belief systems, in turn, create and sustain rape cultures—the cultures in which rape and other forms of gender violence are trivialized and normalized, tolerated as acceptable expressions of sexuality (Barnett et al., 2018). According to Tishelman

and Fontes (2017), the perpetrators use religion to intimidate, coerce, or prevent rape victims from disclosing rape. Kimmons (2011) reported that a rape victim of 30, who was raped when she was 12, described, “She thought it was impossible to outcry against a god,” furthermore added, “she was told that it was a test and if failed, she would go to hell.” Accordingly, Blyth et al. (2018) state that rape in religious discourses has metaphorical renditions. For instance, in Kimmons (2011), the perpetrator is constructed as God, and rape is represented as a test that leads to either heaven or hell. Blyth et al. (2018) add that law in religious discourses upholds the structural violence of patriarchal power that grants a divine mandate to the rigidly prescriptive and proscriptive control of rape victims. For example, Tishelman and Fontes (2017) interviewed rape victims—who belong to religious families—and found that the raped children face religious pressure not to share information with outsiders contributed to victims maintaining silence for years. One of the victims had been told: “Do not betray the head of the household because bad things will happen to you because it’s in the ... revenge comes to people who betray” (Tishelman & Fontes, 2017, p. 123). Herein, two types of rape victims are described: those who are good—who stay silent, and the others as bad and treacherous—who disclose rape. Consequently, rape is metaphorically represented as a religious act.

Such perspectives towards rape create an environment in which rape and violence can flourish, and religion—with its myriad traditions about rape and violence and its endorsement of the patriarchal discourses that sanction such violence—plays an undeniable role in this process (Albee & Perry, 1998; Blyth et al., 2018; Starr, 1991). Moreover, religion influences culture and socialization—guiding many political, cultural, and social attitudes (Finlay & Walther, 2003; Sapienza et al., 2006). Therefore, rape is conceptualized as a trivial event (e.g.,

if a woman is willing, then it is no big deal if the man goes a little further and has sex) and a deviant event (e.g., rape mainly occurs on the wrong side of town) (Payne et al., 1999, p. 49). On the other hand, Eylon (2004) analyzed rape discourses in Hebrew Bible and found that rape is represented as revenge, deception, and ethnic cleansing; for example, the rape victims named Dina and Tamar in the discourses stay in mourning and disappear. Graybill (2021) redirects that other than the stories of Dina and Tamar, there are also stories of rape in which rape is conceptualized as a threat and divine.

Nevertheless, Hlavka (2014) finds that in religious discourses, women conceptualize rape as the normative behavior of men. Concerning modesty, women and girls are taught to be mindful of how they dress so as not to cause a male to stumble in lust, placing a burden of responsibility on them and inspiring shame over their bodies (Owens et al., 2020). Women and girls are also taught they must be sexual gatekeepers in charge of denying sex since men have an inherently reduced capacity for sexual self-control (Owens et al., 2020). Consequently, in rape situations, women and girls may blame the assault on the way they dress or a personal failure to be a good enough sexual gatekeeper. Relatedly, popular Christian dating books have been found to normalize sexual violence and entirely attribute sexual assault to the way the woman dressed or behaved (Klement & Sagarin, 2017; Moon, 2014).

Surprisingly, rape victims are considered impure (Owens et al., 2020). Purity culture in religious discourses also teaches that women do not have bodily autonomy, and Christian books have been found to dehumanize women by conceptualizing them as property (Klement & Sagarin, 2017; Moon, 2014). Purity culture purports the idea that a woman's body belongs to her future husband, and her worth lies in her ability to remain a virgin until marriage. It implies

that females who have been raped have become impure and have lost a part of their inherent worth (Owens et al., 2020). Owens et al. (2020) state that purity culture in religion is a unique version of rape culture, as both rests on the idea that a female's body is not her own.

Literature is one among these discourses, and there has been much written on rape in literature. The representation of rape and rape victims in the existing literature is reviewed in the following section.

2.5 Representation of Rape in Literature

Literature mirrors human weaknesses and offers multiple interpretations (Albrecht, 1954; Davis et al., 2022; Ramanathan, 2018; Schrijvers et al., 2019). The authors often discuss rape in their writings (Anderson, 1999; Brison, 2002; Gay, 2017; Sebold, 1999, 2002) and refigure rape as a “systematic violence” (Sielke, 2002, p. 3). On such reconfiguration of rape in literature, Jolly (1996) remarks that these narratives of rape and violence need to be developed that go beyond the safe, exclusive condemnation of certain representations of rape and violence (p. xiii). Also, rape narratives confront the uncomfortable and shocking nature of sexual violence in ways that are themselves shocking and uncomfortable and break the mold of the victim-perpetrator binary that dominates patriarchal discourse and much of the subsequent feminist debates (Brownmiller, 1993; Higgins & Silver, 1991). Higgins and Silver (1991) add that rape is central to the construction of gender identity, and our subjectivity and sense of ourselves as sexual beings are inextricably entangled in representations. Above all, representing rape plays a vital role as a scenario through which questions are posed about masculine and feminine identity, sexuality and sexual differences, and the origins of cultures (Horeck, 2004).

Furthermore, Boehm et al. (2020) examined rape narratives in literature and showed how rape is metaphorically constructed to represent the identities of a rape victim and a perpetrator. Boehm et al. (2020) studied sports discourses and indicated that the athletes in rape narratives are represented as agitators, assaulters, and armor; on the other hand, the victims are described as passive and, hence, punished. The representations contribute to rape myths and support rape culture in which the victim is always blamed for the act, and the perpetrator is supported and protected (Thacker, 2017). For instance, in the rape narrative *Asking For It* (2016), Emma, a young student, is blamed for her rape, and the perpetrator is admired for the ways he navigates the accusations. Consequently, Emma becomes invisible within her school community as a result of emotional and physical abuse after the rape (Boehm et al., 2020). As such, Boehm et al. (2020) conclude that such metaphorical representations of male athletes' identities (e.g., called GOLDEN BOYS) allow them to engage in reprehensible acts that are protected by society.

Besides, the stigmatization of rape victims leads to rape an unspeakable topic (Ahrens, 2006). Detora (2006) describes that speaking about rape is difficult because the mind tries to suppress memories that persist, intrude unpredictably, and alter the victim's experiences of daily life, producing a lack of credibility (p. 25). As discussed in Anderson's (1999) rape narrative *Speak*, the young rape victim, Melinda Sordino struggles with an open secret of rape; she was brutally raped at the age of thirteen while studying in high school. Melinda says, "Did he rape my head, too?" while describing her post-assault traumatic experiences (Anderson, 1999, p. 86). In the given utterance, the metaphorical representation of the victim's head as a part of the human body that can be raped brings mental destruction to the victim, which is equal to her

physical pain and suffering. In addition, in a different instance, Melinda was metaphorically called “freshmeat” (Anderson, 1999, p. 49). Notably, the dehumanization of a young girl functions twofold: first, it represents that young girls are not human beings but rather edible objects, and secondly, since the meat is fresh, it is used to entice consumers to consume it promptly (Beneke, 1982).

Moreover, Beneke (1982) studies that metaphors shape sexuality and outlines that men rationalize the idea that women are commodities. For example, the metaphor WOMEN ARE FOOD TO BE EATEN (e.g., she is a peach, and she is a sweet one) shows that women have become the products that men buy, sell, eat, and discard. Moreover, the stylistic use of the lexical choice freshmeat worked as a metaphor in Anderson’s (1999) *Speak* that represented Melinda as vulnerable to rape. Hence, she was attacked, treated as an object, and eventually savagely raped. However, she wanted to open her “mouth to breathe, to scream” while she was being raped (p. 76). Due to the severe pain, suffering, and oppression inflicted on Melinda, the perpetrator was called an “animal” in the discussion of Melinda’s classmates (Anderson, 1999, p. 86). The stylistic use of a metaphor in which Anderson (1999) depicts the perpetrator as an animal gives way to fact, as stated by Beneke (1982), that such metaphors (i.e., PERPETRATORS ARE ANIMALS) describe that the rapists have appetites that fit neatly with the logic that women and children are food items.

Furthermore, Anderson (1999) employs lexical choices (i.e., horrible and horrible thing) to denote the act of rape in the book *Speak*. The choices metaphorically represent rape as a thing corresponding that rape is a horrible topic of shame and stigma that even cannot be directly stated. Similarly, Gay (2017), in the book *Hunger*, uses the phrase “something terrible” to

address the act of rape when she was gang-raped at the age of twelve (p. 36). Even though Gay was raped a long time ago, she still suffers from its severe consequences. For example, Gay narrates, “[t]he past is still with me. The past is written on my body. I carry it every single day. The past sometimes feels like it might kill me” (Gay, 2017, p. 38). The utterance thus metaphorically depicts the past (consisting of the rape event)—making rape something concrete (written, carrying it)—and assigning rape human-like abilities (such as killing), and shows how severely, uncontrollably, and independently the pain and suffering of rape affect the victim’s physical and psychological health for a long time. Overall, Riger and Gordon (1981) state that such suffering can induce a continuing state of fear and stress and can lead to precautions that severely restrict the rape victims’ freedom.

Likewise, in Brison’s (2002) book *Aftermath*, rape is addressed as a form of torture and humiliation (p. 63). Brison (2002) describes the rape incident as she was “grabbed from behind, pulled into the bushes, beaten, and sexually assaulted” and found “lying face down in a muddy creek bed at the bottom of a dark ravine, struggling to stay alive” (p. 2). Brison’s (2002) selected lexical choices (e.g., grabbed, pulled, beaten) exposed that she was not only sexually assaulted but also brutally beaten and humiliated. On such consequences of rape, Gorman (2016) reported that rape is a crime against humanity and an act of torture due to its severe physical and psychological effects on individuals and communities. Additionally, Bourke (2007) called rape a conquest in the book *Rape: A History from 1860 to the Present Day* which metaphorically denotes that the rapists make their victims vulnerable by torturing them physically and mentally to invade and conquer them. For example, in the case of the rape victim Mireille, a woman and mother in Gay’s (2014) book *An Untamed State*, tried to defend, screamed, and “fought

viciously”— “clawed at him and beat his body with hands,” but eventually oppressed, lost, and humiliated” (p. 119). Gay (2014) described that the perpetrator “pressed the blade into the skin at the base of my throat, and drew his knife to the left” (p. 66). Gay’s (2014) description of rape and violence against women depicts the horror and subjugation of rape victims. About such descriptions, Sielke (2001), in the book *Reading Rape*, discusses that the authors refigure, represent, and thus reinterpret the previous interrogations of rape and violence. More importantly, Gay (2014) represents the terror and mutilation of the rape victim by describing the perpetrator and victim as “[h]e was a sharp blade. I was a tender wound” (p. 70). Correspondingly, the metaphor in which the perpetrator is depicted as a sharp blade represents him as a powerful, ruthless killer. On the other hand, the victim is called a tender wound, which refers to the victim’s weakness, dirt, defeat, and vulnerability. In this way, Gay’s (2014) style demonstrated that a rape incident is more than a sexual act in which the perpetrators exercise their powers on the victims and humiliate them. Significantly, Sielke (2001) states that the narratives of rape critically investigate the socio-cultural practices and represent the critical perception of rape and violence deeply rooted in human societies.

Similarly, Miller (2019), in the rape narrative *Know My Name* gives voice to a silenced rape victim and portrays the harrowing details of rape and the humiliation of the young victim. Miller (2009) describes the rape victim’s physical pain and suffering as “[m]y skin prickled and stung. I imagined bees with little teeth, chewing my raw flesh” (p. 35). In the utterance, the author metaphorically compares the victim’s pain with the bees’ chewing, which depicts how painful rape is. Moreover, Miller (2009) used animal metaphors to describe how rape is configured, and a perpetrator and a victim are represented in a rape narrative as “you are not

supposed to walk into a lion's den because you could be mauled" (p. 52). Using the metaphor, the perpetrator is treated as a lion that represents power and authority, the place of the rape incident is described as the lion's den, which refers to the lion's territory, and the victim is represented as an offender who entered into the lion's territory. Consequently, the offender is held responsible for entering into the territory, and, therefore, the lion's attack and killing of the victim are justified. On such representations of perpetrators and rape victims, Estrich (1987) says in the book *Real Rape* that rape is a force in which the rapists exercise their powers and force while the victims do not have any option. Also, Vernon (1998) emphasizes that such metaphors frame our understanding of the world and suggest alternate frames of awareness.

Moreover, the concept of rape is metaphorically conceptualized, which represents how the event of rape is understood by rape victims and societies (Ciamaricone, 2020). Ciamaricone (2020) studies the literary works of Anderson's (2019) *Shout* and Washuta's (2014) *My Body is a Book of Rules* and discusses that conceptual metaphors (e.g., DESIRE IS HUNTING, and A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ACTIVATED MACHINE) reveal the details of rape constructed in American society. Through the metaphors, rape is seen as an entertaining and adventurous activity, and a perpetrator is seen as a non-human being which corresponds to the apparent results without having emotions and care (Ciamaricone, 2020). On the other hand, the close observation of such metaphors shows that rape victims are in the background, unknown, and merely the receivers of the perpetrators' force. For instance, the DESIRE IS HUNTING metaphor constructs rape victims as objects—dehumanizing, to be spotted, aimed at, and hunted (Ciamaricone, 2020). The metaphor recalls how rape victims are taken as secondary objects to be played with. The effect of the metaphor keeps the victims unnoticed, lost and silenced,

passive, and more importantly, they are the objects rightfully shot by the hunters since the job of a hunter is to hunt—where the object that is to be hunted is inviting. Secondly, the metaphor of things and objects, in which a perpetrator is understood as an activated machine, shows the apparent results of destruction with no emotions. Whatever the machine does, it is understood as natural since it is a machine. Consequently, the victims are just the affected objects attacked by the machine and finished. The metaphor, on the one hand, hides the perpetrator's intentions and responsibility. On the other hand, it makes rape an evident and natural activity in which there is no space for the victim—she just faces it. Such metaphorical constructions of rape represent how rape is overall seen in which the perpetrators are addressed as HUNTERS and MACHINES performing their actions of rape and killing naturally. In contrast, the victims are just like the objects to be targeted and shot dead. For example, in the book *Shout*, Anderson (1999) says, “... boys ... with shark-toothed fingers ... girls tossed like bloody buckets of chum” in a swimming pool, and “[g]irls stay in the shallows after their baptism as bait,” (p. 24) constructing the metaphor LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL that represents the behavior of both a perpetrator and a victim as the behavior of animals.

Accordingly, both the perpetrator and the victim are dehumanized and relegated to predator and prey (Ciamaricone, 2020, p. 21). Furthermore, the metaphor PREDATOR IS A MACHINE is constructed through the linguistic expression, “[h]e grabbed me once. Pushed me against a brick wall, hands greased with experience arms metal cables looping around and encasing me” (Anderson, 2019, pp. 88–89) in which the lexical choices (e.g., grease, metal, looping) portray man as a machine removing the human elements from the attack. Ciamaricone (2020) remarks that an author uses these concepts to provide her readers with a deeper

understanding of the nonconsensual and often predatory nature of crimes like rape and violence against women. Similarly, in Washuta's (2014) book, *My Body Is a Book of Rules*, the author strategically blends metaphorical concepts into a traumatized timeline of events to highlight the sexual assaults she endured and how they shaped her life afterward. For example, in the utterance "... they suck us dry. We're like aliens. Drooling fiends lurking in the bushes" (Washuta, 2014, p. 408), the term "fiend" also dehumanizes the perpetrators that mean they are allowed to commit the crime without any remorse. The term thus triggers the conceptual metaphor of DESIRE IS HUNGER as the behavior of the fiend and its act of lurking in the bushes, coupled with the feelings of hunger (Ciamaricone, 2020). In conclusion, Ciamaricone (2020) states that these metaphorical conceptualizations of rape show the cultural understanding of the severity of the crime and how rape is perceived in American society.

Moreover, rape is a "violent inscription of the female body" (Cutter, 2000, p. 161). Cutter (2000) investigates literary rape narratives to examine the representations of rape victims who were violently raped and silenced. In Morrison's book (1970) *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola, the young rape victim, faced a fragmentation of her psyche when her family and society did not believe her rape. Consequently, the young rape victim faced isolation, and she was depicted as a "winged but ground bird" that flutters along the edges of society (Morrison, 1970, p. 158). The conceptualization of the rape victim as a bird depicts that rape victims are not treated as human beings and, thus, discarded and humiliated, as in the case of Pecola (Morrison, 1970).

Similarly, Walker's (1982) rape narrative *The Color Purple* revisions rape and allows the rape victim Celie to speak, becomes the instrument for a radical metamorphosis of the individual as well as a subversive deconstruction of power structures that undergird both

patriarchal language and the patriarchal world itself. In an instance, while Celie was being beaten and raped, she said, “I say to myself, Celie, you are a tree” (Walker, 1982, p. 30). The comparison of the rape victim with a tree reiterates that the victim avoids the pain and denies her body and presence. In addition, Cutter (2020) remarks that Celie was silenced, and this is how rape and violence oppress women’s bodies and eradicate their subjectivity and voice (p. 162). Besides, Barnett (1997) studied fictional rape narratives and discovered that rape is conceptualized as dirt, and the perpetrators are vampires. Barnett (1997) explained that in Morrison’s (1987) book *Beloved*, the heroine Sethe kills her child so that no man will ever “dirty” her so that no young man with “mossy teeth” will ever hold the child down (p. 70). In addition, Sethe passionately insists that she protected her beloved daughter and also herself from the perpetrators who attack, invade, and then humiliate and dismember women and young girls (Morrison, 1987, p. 251).

From a different perspective, Lakoff (1987) investigated the logic of rape to show how the perpetrators of rape conceptualize rape and rape victims in American society. For instance, the conceptual metaphor SEXUALITY IS A PHYSICAL FORCE is based on the linguistic expressions in which a woman is held responsible for the act, such as “she’s giving off very feminine, sexy vibes,” “she’s radiant ... she’s a bomb-shell” (Lakoff, 1987, p. 2). The metaphor thus reiterates the fact that rape myths of holding a woman responsible for the act affect rape perception. Finally, Lakoff (1987) states that metaphors act on our reasoning and play a critical role in creating reality. More importantly, when that created reality is grim, it becomes all the more important to understand the mode of reasoning that helped make it (Lakoff, 1987, p. 5).

2.6 Alice Sebold and *TLB*

Alice Sebold (born in 1963) is an American author who writes about the topics of rape, violence against women, the pain and suffering of rape victims and their families, and death and afterlife experiences (Olson, 2012; Wehling-Giorgi, 2021). During an interview, Sebold clarified that her writing would help remove the weirdness of such topics and make it easier to bring up in human discussion (Viner, 2002). In the memoir *Lucky* (2002), Sebold writes about her rape and its severe effects on her life—she was attacked, brutally beaten, and raped in a tunnel when she was on her way back to her dorm while studying in her first year at Syracuse University. During the rape act, Sebold tried to run and escape, but the man yanked her by the hair, dragged her along a brick path, pounded her skull into the ground, and threatened to kill her if she screamed (Sebold, 2002). In addition, she was forced to kiss the man, who then urinated on her and eventually left her to crawl away (Sebold, 2002). Even though Sebold “was changed, bloodied, damaged goods, ruined” (Sebold, 2002, p. 54), she continued to speak out about the various challenges during her medical examinations, investigations, and rape trials, and the society’s continuous attempts to silence her (Viner, 2002).

In another book, *The Almost Moon* (2007) (*TAM*), Sebold writes about the realities of social evils such as matricide, dismemberment, seduction, emotional abuse, and domestic ruin (Whitney, 2010). Sebold (2007) opens *TAM* with a terse acknowledgment of a daughter, Helen Knightly, as “when all is said and done, killing my mother came easily” (p. 5). Helen’s post-murder musings involve flashbacks to her failed marriage and her childhood as the daughter of a mentally disturbed, agoraphobic mother and a depressed, suicidal father (Olson, 2012). Comparatively, while the mother remains a marginal figure in Sebold’s (1999) *Lucky*, various

elements in *TAM* foreshadow the author's later reflections on troubled forms of motherhood (Wehling-Giorgi, 2018). According to McCrum (2011), even though Sebold depicts the recurring themes of violence, mother-daughter ambivalence, and bodily disintegration, her work is bound to be read biographically rather than her fiction as a portrait of the artist herself. Overall, Sebold (2007) described a mother-daughter relationship in the contemporary suburban American society where the daughter deals with her mother suffering from dementia. Although Sebold portrayed the intolerable destructive power of the mother-daughter relationship, *TAM* is less critically acclaimed due to its detachment from reality to enact the postfeminist fantasy of gender (Whitney, 2010).

In *TLB*, Sebold (2002) writes about a fourteen-year-old girl Susie Salmon who was savagely raped by her neighbor, a man of thirty-six, Mr. Harvey, in a hole in the ground while Susie was returning home from school. After the abrupt end, Susie opens her eyes in heaven and yells to return to her family. The inability to return compels her to stay in between and watch over the earthly lives (Sebold, 2002). Concurrently, Olson (2005) remarks that *TLB* is about a young rape victim and her family's failed attempts to meet one another in the space that separates them after the victim's death. Furthermore, Mirabella (2016) discusses that Susie's narrative focuses on her growth and emphasizes learning while living in tragic situations. After all, Sebold (2002) enables Susie to see what happens on Earth. Susie observes and describes the ongoing matters, including what happened in the past, and, thus, including her family members, she describes the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey.

Sebold's (2002) *TLB* became an overnight success—selling two and a half million copies in hardcover and setting a record for the first novel (McShane, 2007). As an international

bestseller, the book has sold ten million copies worldwide and has been translated into more than forty languages (McShane, 2007). For *TLB*, Sebold won the American Booksellers Association Book of the Year Award for Adult Fiction in 2003 and the Bram Stoker Award for Best First Novel in 2002 (Mendelsohn, 2003). In 2009, the book was adapted into a film directed by Peter Jackson and critically acclaimed worldwide. Sebold's (2002) *TLB* is thus a well-received novel, and its impact and popularity have been interpreted on the background of American culture as it has been seen as a comfort novel for the loving and traumatized families attempting to cope with the loss of their beloved ones killed on 9/11 (Smith, 2002). On the one hand, *TLB* demonstrated that those who died in the attack are in better places. On the other hand, it is also considered that it is revealing newly acute fears about the vulnerability of American children and cultural anxieties about children being abducted, raped and murdered (Charles, 2002).

Briefly, Sebold's works are mysterious and address serious issues such as rape, rape victims' experiences, particularly women in peril, and the acute threat of violence (Whitney, 2010). Accordingly, Sebold's (2002) *TLB* is a significant novel reflecting on the reality of rape, rape events, and the pain and suffering of rape victims who were traumatized and silenced (Kilby, 2018).

2.7 Studies on Sebold's *TLB*

Since *TLB* is a successful and critically acclaimed novel worldwide, it has attracted scholars from various scholarships. From a philosophical standpoint, Bufacchi and Gilson (2016) explored the nature of violence portrayed in Sebold's (2002) *TLB* and claimed that violence should not be defined as an act of force and intentionality that inexcusably tends to

prioritize the agent performing the act of violence, it should also be described as an experience because an act is temporarily determinate while an experience is temporarily indeterminate. Moreover, Bufacchi and Gilson (2016) argue that rape has long-lasting consequences (i.e., like ripples of violence) affecting a rape victim's daily life; in other words, "violent rape is not over when it is over" (p. 30). Also, violence should be seen from the point of view of a victim rather than a perpetrator, as it is usually taken for criminal law. Nevertheless, the issue of the perpetrator's intentionality becomes less critical, or at least it becomes essential for different reasons (Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016). For instance, in *TLB*, the rape and murder of fourteen-year-old Susie not only took her life but also destroyed her family members who were not the intended victims of the rape event by the rapist. They were the unintended sufferers of many ripples of the same act of violence (Bufacchi & Gilson, p. 34). More importantly, Bufacchi and Gilson (2016) state that rape starts with the act but lives on after the act has ceased, and hence, it is necessary to think about violence beyond the parameters of an action. Similarly, Rajagopalan (2013) reviews *TLB* as a compelling and haunting story of rape in which a young girl suffers from the consequences of rape and violence, and her family is trying to cope with the crime.

Since rape is unanimously detrimental to both physical and mental health, the researchers have explored its severity by employing multiple approaches (Amstadter, 2011; Goodman et al., 1993; Schnittker, 2022; Tenaw et al., 2022). For instance, Arrida (2013) explores the young rape victim Susie's psychological and mental growth in Sebold's (2002) *TLB* by using the narrating techniques. Studies on mental growth and development show that self-actualization is prominent in mental maturity (Ford, 1991; Maslow, 1943). The stages of self-actualization (e.g., the mistake, recognition, and sudden reversal as given in Aristotle's

Poetics) in Susie's narration can be observed through her making a mistake in believing that Mr. Harvey is harmless, seeing her family members united, and leaving her family and moving towards the next level of heaven (Arrida, 2013). In addition, the study discusses that the metaphors in *TLB* show the recognition phase in Susie's maturity (Arrida, 2013). For instance, the connections grown among Susie's family members are described as "bones" to show the bond and interconnectedness within the family (Arrida, 2013, p. 8). Thus, the metaphor of bones helps Susie explain the impact of her death on the world and compare the world with and without her in it (Arrida, 2013). Correspondingly, Susie uses the "horror and blood" metaphor to show the horror, humiliation, and mutilation embedded in the rape event (Arrida, 2013, p. 6). Altogether, Sebold's (2002) stylistic uses of narrative techniques, words, and metaphors in *TLB* help examine the different stages of the rape victim's mental growth and development.

Furthermore, Mirabella (2016) analyses the narration style in Sebold's *TLB* to expose the underpinnings of monstrosity. The study shows that the structure of Susie's posthumous narration works towards empowering rape victims in a society not only hardened to the tragedy of serial rape and murder but also voiced such horrors by humanizing herself as a victim and forcing readers to see the monstrosity of her killer (Mirabella, 2016). Instead of strengthening the murderer's role in the story by obsessing over his motivations like the typical crime genre, Susie's narrative focuses on her growth. It emphasizes learning how to live in a tragic world despite the monsters that inhabit it (Mirabella, 2016). Similarly, Bennett (2012) highlights by stating that in this rewriting of a murder mystery, the murder victim is the one who gets to arrange the telling of the story's events to ensure that the murderer is not the creative force shaping the plot's dynamic (Bennett, 2012, p. 109). Sebold (2002) parallels Susie's

unconventional posthumous storytelling by naming her Salmon—like the fish that swims upstream, Susie swims against the current of silencing death to reach peace in her heaven. Instead of saying directly that a man murdered her, Susie uses a personal possessive pronoun and states, “My murderer was a man from our neighborhood” to take claim of her story (Sebold, 2002, p. 6). The narration thus structurally removes Mr. Harvey from the action and empowers Susie’s posthumous voice through possession. Through Susie’s first-person narrative, *TLB* forces the reader to be close and personal to the horrific reality of being the victim of a serial killer—twisting the norm and questioning society’s fascination and obsession with these monsters (Mirabella, 2016). In conclusion, Sebold promotes an alternative to crime fiction obsessed with serial killers by concentrating on the highly vulnerable and powerfully beautiful voices of the victims systematically silenced by rape and violence.

Having a different perspective, Bennett (2009) studies the concept of death-writing or autothanatography through Sebold’s (2002) narration in *TLB* and examines the dead narrator’s strategies to discover what the autothanatographers try to find. For instance, the narrator, Susie, says, “[d]on’t think every person you’re going to meet here is a suspect,” before going on to identify her murderer (Sebold, 2002, p. 6). Bennett (2009) describes that in the course of the novel, Susie’s killer is never apprehended, and he is effectively erased from the narrative by being buried under a snowdrift. The murderer himself controls the story, and his actions are motivated by his psychological damage and fear, not by a compelling and clever murder plot (p. 467). That is, the narration by the dead narrators not only gives them a voice but gives them a place in the story itself as a character rather than an object whose story exists only in the past,

to be rediscovered and retold by others as part of an explanation for haunting or murder (Bennett, 2009).

Furthermore, Kiaei and Safdari (2014) analyze the representation of heaven in *TLB* and discuss the concept of hyper-reality. According to Baudrillard (1994), hyper-reality is the act of creating something fake that is perceived as being real, and, importantly, in contemporary social settings, political agencies and religious foundations have created a fake environment in which we live in an illusion (p. 94). Considering this fact, Kiaei and Safdari (2014) claim that the representation of heaven in *TLB* has no origin. Instead, it is “simulated as a copy of a religious one” (p. 53), and it is a representation of American culture consisting of suburban high school, soccer goalposts, lumbering women throwing shot put and javelin, and large buildings (Sebold, 2002, p. 16). The study focuses on Susie being drowned in the hyper-reality world of heaven. There is no clear distinction between reality and hyper-reality since everything she sees in her heaven is real in our world. Still, in Heaven, there is no sign of them, so they eliminate the difference between reality and hyper-reality, and these signs can show Heaven as a hyper-real one (Kiaei & Safdari, 2014, p. 55). Terashima and Tiffin (2001) state that hyper-reality is seen as a condition in which real and fiction are mixed, so there is no clear distinction between where one ends and the other begins.

Recently, Wehling-Giorgi (2021) examined the authors Alice Sebold and Elena Ferrante’s rape narratives to expose the traumatic experiences of rape victims. For this, Wehling-Giorgi (2021) adopts a feminist perspective to see how violent rapes are used to control women’s bodies and how rhetoric is enabled that legitimates violence against women. In this line, Pain (2022) says that gendered violence forms an intrinsic part of contemporary world literature with

a growing shift to redefine experience, individual and historical, in terms of trauma. For instance, Alice Sebold and Elena Ferrante's works provide a powerful gateway into the unacknowledged stories of the traumatized female subject and the global hegemonic norms that shape them (Wehling-Giorgi, 2021). In Sebold's (2002) *TLB*, Susie's old school photograph not only comes to stand as a moment and materiality that has forever been lost but also "metaphorically replace[s] [her] unrecovered body" (Bliss, 2008, p. 863). Wehling-Giorgi (2021) explains that this dual temporality of the photos representing Susie's living self sets up a direct link with traumatic memory and loss. From the outset, Susie underlines the importance of elevating her suffering to a socio-political level, including the effects of violent sexual crime against women on her immediate family and the wider community (Wehling-Giorgi, 2021, p. 134). Overall, Sebold's *TLB* reveals the potential of trauma narratives to perform a critical function in showing the pain and suffering of rape victims.

Besides, Whitney (2010) argues that Sebold's *TLB* "revivifies the female Gothic genre in a postfeminist moment that is invested in minimizing claims of gendered inequity and violence" (p. 351). In *TLB*, Susie's posthumous narrative voice challenges the typical victim or agent debate dominating late feminist discourse and creates agency over silenced women. Whitney (2010) adds that as a dead girl, Susie is mainly ineffective in her efforts to influence life on Earth. Nevertheless, Sebold's expanded consciousness granted to Susie allows her certain privileges (e.g., Susie possesses fluid abilities that enable her to gain access to minds and memories at will and to interpret events that pre-exist her birth, and she can investigate the inner life of her murderer, Mr. Harvey as well). Even though Susie suffers the ultimate trauma, she

evades death's finality through expanded consciousness and narrative control, and thus, she serves as an unusual example of the postfeminist survivor mystique (Whitney, 2010).

Similarly, Hoeveler (1998) sees fascination with similar figures in the traditions of the female gothic and comments that "one can tell one's story in such a way that the victim triumphs over the victimizer, the weak overcome the strong" (p. 101). Importantly, postfeminist depicts women as "canny, flexible survivors of the patriarchal system that they dominate and manipulate through a variety of passive-aggressive behavioral strategies that are passed on through cultural systems such as female Gothic novels" (Hoeveler & Schuster, 2007, p. 100–01). Finally, Whitney (2010) remarks that Susie survives in her narrative and passive earthly agency.

In a different study, Wehling-Giorgi (2018) takes a feminist standpoint and explores the contemporary construction of maternity and femininity through Sebold's works and discusses that Sebold not only challenges but also shifts the perspective of the maternal or feminine body and the long history of the objectification of the latter. For example, in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*, the photograph of Susie's mother, Abigail, which was taken shortly before Susie's death, captures a part of Abigail's personality that had been repressed by her motherhood (Bliss, 2008). Moreover, the photograph defies the convention of the family photograph by depicting Abigail. The maternal portrayal thus "represents the fractured and damaged family" as it foreshadows the mother's abandonment of the family in the wake of Susie's death (p. 865). Secondly, Susie's old school photograph, on the one hand, metaphorically functions as a replacement for Susie's unrecovered body. On the other hand, the strategic use of the photograph provides evidence of the photographic moment and, therefore, of Susie's existence. A viewer cannot recuperate from the past moment captured in the photograph (Bliss, 2008). Finally, Bliss (2008) establishes a

metaphorical link between the photographic images of Susie and mourning, explaining that the photograph, like trauma, presents a gap, an absence, for the viewer—the viewer can never experience the moment of the photograph (p. 871). In this regard, Wehling-Giorgi (2018) remarks that in Sebold's works, the metaphorical images of the female or maternal body provide an intimate insight into the mother-daughter relationship. Additionally, by transcending the cultural and social norms often associated with motherhood—and its disruptive couplings with gendered violence, disease, and animosity in particular—Sebold makes powerful statements about the history of colonization of the female body in a society that has long been dominated by men and crucially focalized by the male gaze (Wehling-Giorgi, 2018, p. 11).

In a recent study of Sebold's (2002) *TLB*, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2020) stylistically interpret the consciousness of rape victims and their assailants through lexical selections, semantics, and language patterns. Notably, feminist writers have employed thought presentations in stream-of-consciousness narratives to give voice to the sufferings and yearnings of women and children (Gregoriou, 2002). Similarly, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2020) find that Susie's uses of personal pronouns like "my mother," "my father," and "my murderer" (Sebold, 2002, p. 6) denoting her murderer, Mr. Harvey, and parents redirect to Susie's consciousness thinking that Mr. Harvey is not dangerous since her mother likes his flowers and her father has talked to him. Thus, it shows that the linguistic opportunities function as scattered clues and patterns in such narratives that cohesively contribute to the overall personalities of the characters and their experiences. Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) conclude that it is, however, never easy to talk about rape and death—the careful construction of flashbacks and the interplay of words bring about systemic thinking of characters.

Additionally, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) explore the use and function of stylistic devices (e.g., lexical choices, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and coherence) to describe rape and rape victims' traumatic experiences. For instance, the study shows that the metaphor in "I was an animal already dying" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14) redirects to Susie's treatment as an animal while being raped by Mr. Harvey in a hole in the ground (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018). Regarding the representation of human beings as animals, Kovecses (2000) states that human behavior is frequently understood in terms of animal behavior, and, in general terms, the association of people with animals tends to convey negative evaluations. Lopez-Rodriguez (2009) adds that such metaphors in which women are understood as animals express and perpetuate collective evaluations about their roles in society, reinforcing stereotypes and, ultimately, pigeonholing people into the normative binary set of "the self" and "the other" (p. 80). Accordingly, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) conclude that stylistic devices in Sebold's *TLB* help expose the configuration of rape and the pain and suffering of rape victims.

Overall, the studies on Sebold's *TLB* show that the concept of rape has been analyzed through multiple approaches (Arrida, 2013; Bennett, 2009; Bennett, 2012; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016; Kiaei & Safdari, 2014; Mirabella, 2016; Whitney, 2010; Wehling-Giorgi, 2021). Employing the approach of metaphor to study rape in *TLB* has significantly resulted in multiple ways to explore and understand rape, rape victims, and the experiences of the victims' family members as well (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016; Wehling-Giorgi, 2018). Even though the concept of metaphor has been applied to study rape in *TLB*, it was limited to the use of linguistic metaphor or the use of metaphor as a stylistic device (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson,

2016; Wehling-Giorgi, 2018); further investigation of rape through different approaches of metaphor has been suggested in the studies.

Moreover, as discussed, metaphor in contemporary times is considered a part of thought and cognition, not only a part of language (Kovecses, 2002, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The modern perspective of conceptual metaphor has significantly influenced the understanding of the concept of rape and sexual violence (Ciamaricone, 2020; Lakoff, 1987; Lee, 2010; Luchjenbroers & Aldridge, 2007; Stroinska, 2014). The studies result in a variety of conceptual metaphors, such as RAPE IS PREYING and RAPE IS WAR, in which rape and rape victims are understood in different terms, such as prey and enemy (Ciamaricone, 2020; Lakoff, 1987; Lee, 2010; Luchjenbroers & Aldridge, 2007; Stroinska, 2014). Since rape is constructed as a leisure activity of hunting, a rape victim is an animal that is to be targeted, raped, and killed (Lee, 2010). In this light, the current study, therefore, is initiated to investigate the concept of rape through conceptual metaphors, exposing the horrors of rape and the traumatic experiences of rape victims in *TLB*.

2.8 Theoretical Framework of the Study

2.8.1 Study of Style and Metaphor

Style in language and literature remains fundamental (Herrmann et al., 2015). Style is historically defined as the way of writing/saying something that refers to the features that characterize somebody or something (Herrmann et al., 2015, p. 29; Stamatatos, 2009). The perspective relates to style as the linguistic features of a text. Leech and Short (2007) add that when referring to a stylistic study, the linguistic features (e.g., lexical and grammatical choices) cannot be seen in isolation but rather in the pattern of choices that belong to the text. Moreover,

since a text consists of patterns or unusual preferences (e.g., passives over actives), it becomes apparent to consider this preference a style feature. The occurrence of this preferred choice would be counted for frequency purposes, but the context is much more significant when analyzing the choices, reflecting on tendency and consistency. Therefore, quantification is a less essential part of stylistics. Also, Leech and Short (2007) state that counting the choices in a text or against the corpus of language as a whole is indefinitely large, which would not inform about the linguistic details in the text, affecting the readers' feelings for differences of style.

On the other hand, quantifying the linguistic choices confirms insights about the style of a particular case (Wales, 2011). In this regard, Stamatatos (2009) remarks that quantifying linguistic choices can focus on many style markers. Since the linguistic features (e.g., lexical and grammatical choices) are countable, Herrmann et al. (2015) add that using a computational approach—an approach to the study of literary style that includes both corpus linguistics and computer science—would enable views of norms and style as a result of selection operations. However, the study of style through linguistic features (i.e., lexical and grammatical choices) has also been used abstractly to capture thought, personality, and ideology (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2020; Leech & Short, 2007). Style has also been conceptualized to denote unity or difference as it is a higher-order artistic value, the holistic gestalt of a single or more than one text, and an expression of individuality and subjectivity (Zoltan, 1970). Concurrently, the individuality of an author's style plays a significant role in depicting and expressing the topic being discussed, including a hypothetical and intentional selection from among a set of alternatives, in which deviation has been one of the most vital strands (Herrmann et al., 2015). Overall, the style phenomenon includes prescriptive ideas of how to write and the assumptions

of static language norms to the views of flexibility, changing forms, and contrasts (Leech & Short, 1981; Riffaterre, 1959; Spencer et al., 1964). Traditionally, this approach to style is known as “foregrounding” (Wales, 2011).

The term foregrounding was first used in stylistics by Garvin (1964). Foregrounding refers to cases where the language is sufficiently deviant to draw attention to itself and thereby prompt an interpretation of extra meaning (Havranek, 1983; Mukarovsky, 1964). Foregrounding is recognized as occurring at all linguistic levels, such as unusual word choices, highly creative metaphors, and breaches of the usual discourse nature (Simpson, 2014). Thus, the functions of foregrounding can be various, including highlighting specific vital points, producing thematic meaning, and prompting an emotional response (Emmott & Alexander, 2014; Leech, 2008; Leech & Short, 2007; Van Peer, 2007). Although foregrounding is found in everyday language, it is crucial to prompting literary interpretations (Van Peer et al., 2021). Miall and Kuiken (1994) argue that foregrounding is more structured in literary texts assumed to prompt attention whether an item is to be noticeable or not. The stylisticians of the 1960s and 1970s put this idea further towards a fully synthesized theory that deviation and parallelism foreground certain literary text elements (Van Peer, 1986).

Like foregrounding, the concept of defamiliarization has played a significant role in the literary studies of the twentieth century (Anderson & Iversen, 2018; Gavins, 2014; Miall & Kuiken, 1994; Zhang, 2022). The Russian formalist Viktor Shklovsky coined the term and stated that the function of literary texts is the “making strange” of familiar everyday experiences (Gunn, 1984). Shklovsky (1965) added that art exists to “recover the sensation of life” and to portray the world to be discovered by the reader as if for the first time (p. 20). Later, Jakobson

(1960) and Mukarovsky (1964) described the defamiliarizing effect of literature in the formal structure of the text and its deviation from certain standard norms. In this way, style is considered a property of any text constituted by an ensemble (i.e., ranging from linguistic, grammatical, and figurative to narrative and macro structures) of formal features that can be observed quantitatively and qualitatively (Herrmann et al., 2015).

Historically, the beginning of the studies of style is linked to the ideas of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who established modern linguistics, analyzing the meanings of literary texts focusing on linguistic and non-linguistic features (Neilson, 2019). Based on this fact, Giovanelli and Harrison (2022) thus reiterate that stylistics is the study of language patterns in texts and the meaningful relationship between linguistic choice and literary interpretation. The text patterns range from linguistic to extra-linguistic, such as lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, cohesion, and context (Leech & Short, 2007). Notably, Barry (2017) concludes that stylistics is a critical approach that uses the methods and findings of linguistics in the analysis of texts.

In contemporary times, Leech and Short (2007) state that style refers to how language is used in a given context by a given person for a given purpose. Accordingly, style is a selection from a total linguistic repertoire, which aligns with the Swiss linguist Saussure, who distinguished between *langue* and *parole* (Leech & Short, 2007). Elder-Vass (2012) defines *langue* as the code or system of rules standard to speakers of a language, and *parole* being the particular uses of this system, or selections from this system, that speakers or writers make on different occasions. Therefore, style is the linguistic characteristics of a particular text (Leech & Short, 2007).

Since the factor of style in a text consists of multiple characteristics ranging from lexical choices to grammatical categories (Simpson, 2004), the study of these linguistic characteristics refers to stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007). Moreover, stylistics includes the analysis of linguistic choices in a text, whether literary or non-literary. Due to the advancements in science and technology and knowledge in general, the discipline of stylistics has developed a variety of sub-disciplines, for example, corpus stylistics (Stockwell & Mahlberg, 2015), computational stylistics (Herrmann et al., 2021), cognitive stylistics (Semino & Culpeper, 2002), and feminist stylistics (Mills, 1995) as discussed in chapter one. Contrarily, literary linguistics, often used interchangeably with stylistics, analyzes literary texts and other discourse forms, such as political, advertising, legal, and everyday conversation (Burke, 2015). On the other hand, literary stylistics is one of the sub-disciplines of stylistics specifically incorporated to study the style of a literary text (Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004).

While studying style, metaphor is a central concern in literary stylistics (Peng & Khatin-Zadeh, 2023; Steele et al., 2022; Wales, 2014). The study of metaphors in literature spans a very long time, beginning with the inception of the concept of style in ancient times (Freeman, 1995; Wales, 2014). Accordingly, metaphor has typically been seen as a matter of stylistics because metaphor in literature is a stylistic device (Steen, 2009, 1989).

Since 1980, the study of metaphor has been shifted from traditional stylistics to a modern cognitive science due to several revolutionary works showing that metaphor is not just a matter of literary purposes such as ornamental or rhetorical, but it is a matter of thought (Honeck & Hoffman, 1980; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1979). The strong influence of cognitive approaches initiated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) has led stylisticians to replace the traditional

terms tenor and vehicle (Richards, 1936) with target and source, respectively—particularly in discussions of conventional metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). CMT (Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003) defines metaphors as cross-domain mappings between more concrete source domains (e.g., JOURNEY) and more abstract target domains (e.g., LIFE). Relatively, the specific selection of the source domain choice highlights particular aspects of the target domain, which shows the referents of the target domain. Kovecses (2010) elaborates that the conceptual domain, the metaphorical expressions from which to perceive another conceptual domain are borrowed, is called a source domain, while the conceptual domain that is perceived is called a target domain. More importantly, Evans and Green (2006) posit that there is a set of correspondences between the source domain and the target domain, which is technically called mapping. For instance, the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY refers to journeys that include travelers, a means of transport, a route, and obstacles along the path (Climent & Coll-Florit, 2021).

Similarly, love relations include lovers, events, and difficulties (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Since the elements of the source domain are mapped onto the aspects of the target domain, LOVERS become TRAVELLERS as depicted in “we’re at crossroads who use a particular MEANS OF TRANSPORT” as in “we’re spinning our wheels traveling along particular ROUTE (e.g., Our relationship went off course),” and “faced by obstacles” like “our marriage is on the rocks” (Rumman et al., 2023, pp. 3–4). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) propose that we speak of love as a journey that can get stranded and arguments as if they are wars that can be won or lost. Moreover, we do not talk in these metaphorical ways. Still, we metaphorically conceptualize these abstract, less understood, and complex topics by using our

knowledge of wars and journeys and imposing conceptual structure on our thoughts and texts about arguments, love, and understanding (Steen, 2015).

Based on their cognitive function, Kovecses (2002) claims conceptual metaphors are divided into structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors. Structural metaphors are employed to understand target A using the structure of source B. For example, the notion of time is perceived in terms of motion and space (e.g., the passing of time is motion, time is a thing), manifesting the conceptual metaphor TIME IS MOTION (Kovecses, 2002, p. 37). Secondly, ontological metaphors mean conceiving experiences of objects, substances, and containers without specifying what kind of object, substance, or container is meant (Kovecses, 2010). For instance, fear can be understood in terms of an object, such as possession depicted in “my fear” and “your fear,” and the state of love can be visualized as a container as in being “in love” (Kovecses, 2010, p. 38). Finally, as described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), orientational metaphors are associated with “spatial orientation: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off.” These spatial orientations are derived from human bodies acting in specific ways in this physical world. Thus, a concept acquires a physical orientation through orientational metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14). For instance, the conceptual metaphor HAPPY IS UP indicates that happiness is linked with the state of being up, as depicted through the expression “I am feeling up.” In contrast, the conceptual metaphor, SAD IS DOWN, indicates that sadness is associated with being down. Therefore, the following expression is “I am feeling down” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 15).

Meanwhile, Wales (2014) indicates that metaphor in cognitive linguistics is not only the textual realization of a rhetorical trope but is also treated as a fundamentally important aspect of

human conceptualization. Metaphors are thus neither linguistic forms nor mere ornamental in cognitive linguistics but have been regarded more importantly as textual manifestations of underlying shared, universal properties of human perception (Freeman, 1996). Additionally, Gibbs (2008) and Steen (2011) state that a metaphor is not a stylistic device but a matter of thought in contemporary times. As a result, most metaphors occur as regular ingredients of the conceptual systems in our culture. They are expressed in conventionalized metaphorical language in all sorts of sociocultural domains of discourse, of which literature is only one.

Overall, the metaphors in language can be related to underlying metaphors in thought and are called conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The conceptual metaphors represent familiar linguistic expressions of culturally shared conceptual models (Peng & Khatin-Zadeh, 2023; Zhao et al., 2023). For example, the lexical units having to do with fighting or war, such as defend, attack, defense, and so on, are all systematically polysemous between fighting and war on the one hand and their metaphorical use in the domain of argumentation on the other (Kovecses, 2010). Independently, all metaphors in thought may be expressed in various linguistic forms. Accordingly, since CMT functions to map human cognition and thought systems through conceptual metaphors, it has been used to show the conceptual metaphors of rape in the current study. On the other hand, stylistics is used to understand the linguistic characteristics of the text constructing rape and rape victims' painful experiences.

2.8.2 Metaphor in LCCM Theory

The phenomenon of meaning variability is so pervasive since the semantic value of a word varies according to its context of use (Fairclough, 1985, 1995; Geeraerts, 2004; Taylor, 2014; Van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2007, 2011). Some variation might be accommodated by

supposing a word may be polysemous. However, in principle, it would be impossible to list all possible meanings of a word in all its possible contexts of use (Foraker & Murphy, 2012). Regarding analyzing the meanings of utterances in discourse, Fairclough (1995) remarkably developed a theoretical model comprising three levels: text, discourse, and socio-cultural levels. Furthermore, the three levels correspond to text analysis, including the stage of description; processing analysis, including interpretation; and social analysis, including explanation, in a study of meanings of discourse (Fairclough, 1985, 1995; Van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2007, 2011). Therefore, by putting all three factors together, the meanings of the intended phenomenon can be comprehensively approached (Fairclough, 1985, 1995; Van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2007, 2011).

However, Evans (2006, 2009, 2010, 2015) developed a cognitively realistic theory of lexical representation and a pragmatic theory of lexical concept integration called Lexical Concepts and Cognitive Models (LCCM Theory) to deal with this long-standing issue of meaning construction. LCCM Theory claims that there is a distinction between lexical concepts and meaning (Evans, 2006). While lexical concepts constitute the semantic units conventionally associated with linguistic forms, meaning is a property of situated usage events rather than words. That is, meaning is not a function of language but arises from language use (Evans, 2009, 2015).

Taking these two approaches to meaning construction, Evans (2015) comes up with a clear distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic (i.e., conceptual knowledge). In other words, meaning emerges through integrating these two independent systems. However, it is a fact that meanings associated with words are context-driven and hence change depending on the context in which they are used; words are protean, meaning a word's meaning is flexible

(Kielmann, 2012). Similarly, emphasizing the importance of contextual knowledge in the interpretation of meanings of a text, Fairclough (1995), Van Dijk (2008), and Wodak (2011) add that without referencing the context of the text, it is not possible to reach meanings of the text. In other words, Fairclough (1989) refers to the situational context and the intertextual context as central to the process of interpretation. Therefore, words do not have meanings because they are associated with fixed chunks of conceptual content that contribute to the compositional process; instead, words provide access to conceptual knowledge (Evans, 2009). Furthermore, cognitive models comprise coherent knowledge systems derived from experience; they are multimodal and extensively cross-referenced, ranging over individuals, types, events, and properties. As a result, understanding a linguistic expression involves the selective activation and fusion of facets of cognitive models following the syntactic constituency of the expression, and the result is a coherent conceptualization or conception (Evans, 2015).

According to LCCM Theory, there are three components to a lexical concept (Evans, 2009). First is the grammatical category of a word. For example, the linguistic concept associated with “red” is simply a property of a thing, in keeping with the word’s status as an adjective (p. 108). The conceptual component “redness” resides in the conceptual system and our specific memories of red things, which might be activated by a particular use of the word (i.e., red ink, red squirrels, etc.) (Evans, 2009, pp. 108–109). Second, a lexical concept pertains to selecting preferences, referred to as a “lexical profile” (Evans, 2009, p. 133). Besides, a lexical profile concerns the syntactic environments in which it typically occurs, such as its collocations and colligations. Third, the “pragmatic point” concerns the speaker, register, and discourse-specific values of a word (Evans, 2009, p. 124).

LCCM Theory reiterates that the meaning of each word is different and depends on a particular context (Evans, 2009). The idea aligns with Fairclough (1995), Van Dijk (2008), and Clark (1997), who emphasize that meaning construction constitutes a form of joint action in service of situated communication goals. Therefore, LCCM Theory uses the usage-based perspective (Langacker, 2000) in dealing with the interpretation of the meanings of a text. On the other hand, it is generally believed that the meaning of a word and sentence is context-independent (Cruse, 1986; Evans, 2013). Later, this worldview was challenged by the introduction of pragmatics (Wodak, 2007, 2011), which believes in using context-dependent tradition to make the meaning of the sentence and, hence, the speaker's meaning (Evans, 2013). Research studies have shown that the meaning of a given word, and thus the truth conditions of the sentence to which the word contributes, is typically a function of context/background (Carston, 2002; Fairclough, 1995; Recanati, 2003; Searle, 1983; Van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2007, 2011).

Moreover, understanding what a word means involves encyclopedic knowledge or knowledge of various events, agents, and purposes (Evans, 2006; Searle, 1983). In any given example, along with the main word (e.g., open), other words direct the sort of encyclopedic knowledge to which the word open provides access. That is, while open has a large body of knowledge, in the case of a sophisticated range of scenarios and events that can be applied to what is called herein "semantic potential," which means that the sentential context serves to guide and narrow the specific sorts of knowledge that a given instance of open relates to (Evans, 2009, p. 11). In sum, the meaning of open appears to be a function of (i) (sentential) context, which guides the (ii) encyclopedic knowledge to which open relates in a given instance of use.

On the whole, Evans (2006, 2009) declares that word meaning emerges from a sizeable semantic potential narrowed by the sentential and extra-linguistic context in which it is embedded. As such, word meaning appears to be guided by and a function of context (Fairclough, 1985, 1989, 1995). Extensively, words are never meaningful independent of the utterance in which they are embedded, and the encyclopedic knowledge and extra-linguistic context that guide how words are embedded in an utterance should be interpreted (Allwood, 2009; Croft, 2000; Evans, 2004; Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 1987). Primarily, meaning arises as a function of how words and language are deployed by language users in socioculturally, temporally, and physically contextualized communicative events, which is to say utterances, due to a complex battery of linguistic and non-linguistic processes, in service of the expression of situated communicative intentions (Evans, 2009; Fairclough, 1985, 1989, 1995; Van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2007, 2011).

More importantly, the meaning is associated with words that do not equate with the words' meaning (Evans, 2009). LCCM theory, on the other hand, explains that meaning is achieved through the integration of lexical concepts and cognitive models (Evans, 2013). While a lexical concept is a conceptual representation specialized for being encoded in and externalized by language, cognitive models refer to a conceptual structure of non-linguistic knowledge (this body of knowledge modeled in terms of a set of cognitive models) to which lexical concepts provide access. Moreover, the cognitive models comprise areas (of a particular linguistic concept in the conceptual system) that collectively form the access site for the lexical concept. The purpose of an access site is to facilitate the integration of linguistic and conceptual content to provide an integrated simulation, and this integrated simulation is conception (Evans, 2009).

Since word forms have distinct, albeit related, lexical entries that give rise to polysemous word senses in language use—in LCCM Theory, polysemy has been viewed as a function of underlying entries in semantic memory (Evans, 2015)—Evans (2015) adds that along with linguistic knowledge, polysemy can also arise from the non-linguistic knowledge to which words facilitate access. Based on this fact, polysemy is mainly divided into two categories: lexical polysemy and conceptual polysemy. In conceptual polysemy, a single lexical item obtains different meanings in different contexts. For example, the word “book” in “that’s a boring book” is understood to refer to the activity of reading, and especially the level of interest achieved by the reader, and in “that’s a long book” concerns the length of time taken to read the book (Evans, 2015, p. 1). Collectively, these examples illustrate how an open-class lexical item can take on different interpretations in different linguistic contexts. Thus, conceptual polysemy arises in the following way: linguistic context can highlight various aspects of the non-linguistic or encyclopedic knowledge to which a word form facilitates access (Evans, 2009; Langacker, 1987).

Secondly, lexical polysemy is about a single lexical form with multiple distinct meanings that appear conventionalized but are nevertheless semantically related (Evans, 2015). For example, the preposition “in” in “we are in a room” means a “container” while “we are in love” means a “state” (Evans, 2015, p. 2). The main difference between conceptual polysemy and lexical polysemy is based on the traditional distinction between “ambiguity” and “vagueness” (Evans, 2015, p. 2). Ambiguity has to do with two distinct conventional readings for a given form. In contrast, vagueness concerns the role of context in facilitating the precise semantic details associated with a given lexical form on a particular instance of use (Evans, 2015). Evans

(2009, 2013) provides an elegant account of this fundamental distinction in polysemous phenomena in LCCM Theory. It is facilitated by the two central constructs associated with the theory: the lexical concept—a unit of linguistic knowledge, and the cognitive model—a unit of non-linguistic knowledge that plays a differential role in the two types of polysemy.

In addition, the interaction between linguistic and conceptual structures forms the process of semantic composition (Evans, 2009). Semantic composition involves lexical concept selection and fusion. Firstly, lexical concept selection is the process of identifying the most appropriate lexical concepts associated with the words that populate a given utterance. Of all the lexical concepts related to a given vehicle, what makes one appropriate rather than another can be attributed loosely to context. However, this subsumes several more specific factors that influence lexical concept selection. LCCM Theory primarily deals with this phenomenon of the inherent semantic variation exhibited by words in contexts of use (Evans, 2009, p. 217). The lexical concept selection procedure is the first step in narrowing down the reading associated with a context-bound word. A word form has a range of distinct lexical concepts related to it, as in the *book* and *in*. This range of lexical concepts associated with a word is called the lexical concept potential, which must be narrowed to a single concept. This process of narrowing is a consequence of lexical concept selection.

For example, the prepositional vehicle *in* in “the kitten is in the box” presents the lexical concept of ENCLOSURE, and in “John is in love,” it presents the PSYCHOSOMATIC STATE (Evans, 2009, p. 218). Lexical concept selection relies on many constraining factors to determine the lexical concept that best fits the conception under construction. More importantly, while selection serves to identify distinct lexical concepts associated with *in*, in the given examples,

selection does not apply to “France” as in the following examples: (i) France is a country of outstanding natural beauty, and (ii) France beat New Zealand in the 2007 Rugby World Cup (p. 220). This follows as the vehicle France is sanctioned by the same lexical concept in each of these examples. Hence, while France provides a different semantic contribution in each of the utterances, this is not a consequence of selection but the two constituent compositional processes associated with fusion; in these examples, this is associated with a single lexical concept, with a single access site and a single coherent cognitive model profile.

In contrast, the instances of *in* in the examples are associated with distinct lexical profiles and hence count as instances of distinct lexical concepts (Evans, 2009, p. 220). Moreover, lexical concept selection can be divided into broad and narrow. Broad selection involves the identification of a lexical concept. For instance, in the utterance *the kitten is in the box*, the hearer must select the appropriate lexical concept from the range of available concepts. The language user typically chooses a single lexical concept to build a conception. For example, the hearer selects the ENCLOSURE lexical concept from the lexical concept potential associated with the vehicle *in*. However, more than one lexical concept can be chosen in specific contexts. For example, the vehicle “fast” in “a fast car” involves RAPID LOCOMOTION, while “a fast typist” involves RAPID PERFORMANCE OF ACTIVITY (Evans, 2009, p. 220). In each of these examples, a distinct lexical concept for fast is selected, as indicated by the lexical concept glosses next to each utterance. Significantly, while broad selection concerns selecting a distinct lexical concept from several possible lexical concepts conventionally associated with a particular vehicle, narrow selection involves selection within a single lexical concept. A lexical concept comprises a bundle of different types of knowledge and thus encodes multiple

parameters, such as the lexical concept associated with the prepositional vehicle *in*. The selection of the parameter depends on the context. For instance, contexts involve enclosure in “the toy is in the box” and “the bulb is in the socket” (Evans, 2009, p. 222). However, LCCM theory claims that the various processes of semantic composition occur in tandem and recursively when building a conception. Therefore, a conception is expected to be revised as further information is incorporated.

In the lexical concept selection process, two main contextual factors are involved: linguistic and extra-linguistic context. The linguistic context consists of (i) the utterance, which includes all aspects of linguistic information that appear in a given utterance; (ii) the discourse level, which is known as common ground (Stalnaker, 1978), and includes knowledge above the level of utterance and relates to the accumulated knowledge, both textual and situational, interlocutors share that due to the ongoing discourse, and (iii) the speech event. A speech event can be considered the highest level of linguistic context in which more than one discourse episode is embedded. Each level, the utterance level, the discourse level, and the level of the speech event, provides a context that facilitates lexical concept selection in slightly different ways. Secondly, the extra-linguistic context is a complex construct that plays a significant role in the compositional process of interpretation. Thus, in an utterance, the venue in which the utterance is made, which is the setting, provides the extra-linguistic context, facilitating lexical concept selection.

Secondly, once lexical concept selection has occurred, the lexical concepts must be integrated: the process of fusion. Fusion manifests itself in two distinct forms. First, lexical concept integration involves the integration of linguistic content associated with the selected

lexical concepts. Lexical concept integration is concerned solely with the integration of linguistic content. It is guided by the linguistic context of the utterance rather than any other context, for instance, extra-linguistic context. Integration involves unpacking the linguistic content associated with the integrated lexical concepts for integration. The linguistic content (i.e., grammatical knowledge) that arises from lexical concept integration is essential for providing conceptual content structure. Overall, integration gives rise to the forming of lexical conceptual units, the integrated units of linguistic content. Once linguistic content has been unpacked and integrated, the lexical conceptual unit will achieve a semantic value. Once a lexical concept or lexical conceptual unit has achieved a semantic value, it is subject to interpretation.

Meanwhile, lexical concept integration is governed by three Principles of Lexical Integration: Linguistic Coherence, Schematic Coherence, and the Principle of Ordered Integration. In the Principle of Linguistic Coherence, a linguistic concept integrates with a lexical concept with schematic coherence regarding linguistic content. Thus, this principle relies on the second principle of schematic coherence. In the Principle of Schematic Coherence, the content associated with entities, participants, and their relations must exhibit coherence in fusion operations (e.g., lexical concept integration and interpretation). Finally, the Principle of Linguistic Coherence does not proceed randomly but proceeds in an ordered way; the third principle, the Principle of Ordered Integration, occurs in internally more straightforward lexical concepts before taking place in more internally complex concepts.

Second, once this has occurred, the open-class lexical concepts activate a subset of their semantic potential, guided by the output of lexical concept integration. This process is referred

to as interpretation. Interpretation provides the compositional interface between semantic structure and conceptual structure, facilitating the deployment of conceptual content in service of linguistically mediated meaning construction. The essential insight is that interpretation involves a process of matching. Matching occurs between the cognitive model profiles of open-class lexical concepts that have undergone integration, resulting in a lexical conceptual unit. For example, in the expression “France, the landmass” and “France, the nation,” France receives distinct informational characterization (e.g., REGION and NATION, respectively) (Evans, 2009, p. 253). In the first expression, France relates to a geographical area. In the latter, it relates to a political entity. It is because the lexical concept of FRANCE affords access to conceptual content relating to France as a geographical region, a political entity including knowledge about the French political system, the French people and their social customs and practices, their history and language, and national sports engaged, etc. Figure 2.1 shows a partial primary cognitive model profile for FRANCE.

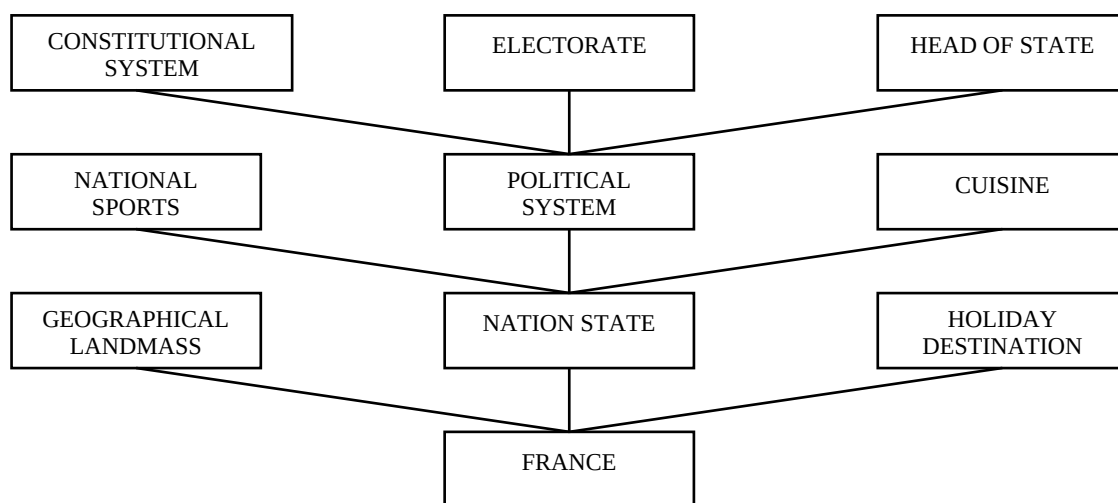


Figure 2.1: Partial cognitive model profile for FRANCE (Evans, 2009)

The lexical concept LANDMASS (see Figure 2.2) facilitates access to primary cognitive models relating to a physical terrain—a landmass can be hilly, mountainous, woodland, etc.—or a geographical area.

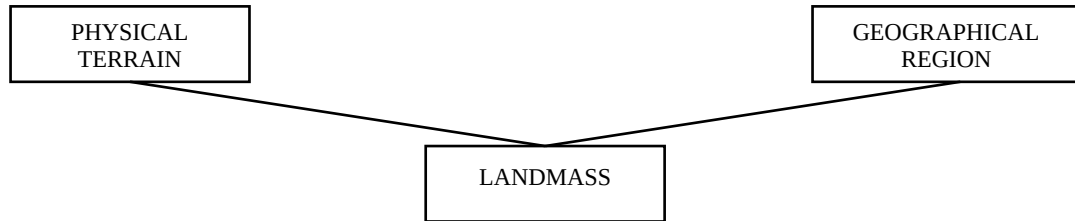


Figure 2.2: Partial primary cognitive model profile for LANDMASS (Evans, 2009)

Next, the lexical concept of NATION facilitates access to cognitive model profiles concerning the political entity and nation-state, and hence a particular political system, a people (with shared traditions, cuisine, and so on), language, and a shared history. Figure 2.3 shows the partial primary cognitive model profile for NATION:

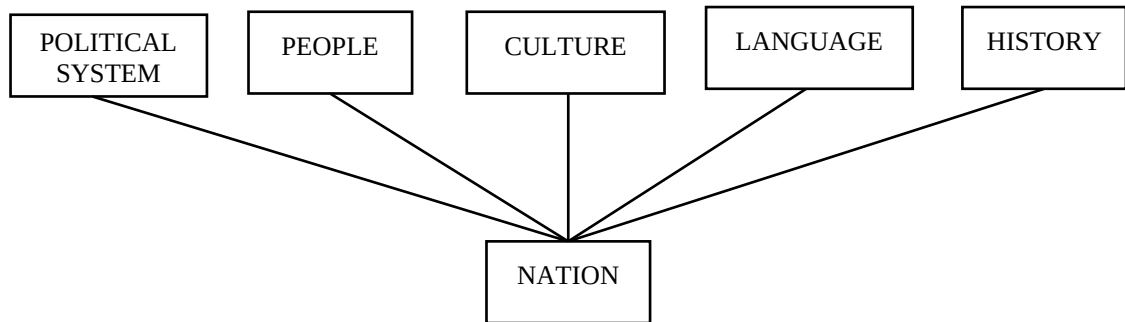


Figure 2.3: Partial primary cognitive model profile for NATION (Evans, 2009)

The relevant lexical concepts for these examples are FRANCE, LANDMASS, and NATION. Interpretation involves establishing a match between one or more cognitive model profiles in the cognitive model profiles associated with the relevant lexical concepts. This process serves to activate the matched cognitive models. For example, in the first expression, a

match is established between the primary cognitive model profile associated with LANDMASS and one of the cognitive models to which FRANCE affords access. It is the cognitive model GEOGRAPHICAL REGION that becomes activated. In the second expression, the match occurs between the primary cognitive model profile to which NATION affords access and the NATION STATE cognitive model to which FRANCE affords access. Hence, the reason for different readings of FRANCE is that the lexical concept in each utterance receives a distinct informational characterization.

Since interpretation involves lexical concepts within the same lexical conceptual unit, it is guided by linguistic context, the outcome of lexical concept integration. In addition, interpretation is guided by inferential processes relating to extra-linguistic context. The result is that each lexical conceptual unit receives an informational characterization. Finally, this results in interaction between these lexical concepts and conceptual structures via access site to derive an informational characterization of each relevant lexical concept. Crucially, the nature of the interpretations achieved, and hence which aspects of an open-class lexical concept's cognitive model profile become activated, is a consequence of the output of lexical concept integration. The result is a conception: a simulation achieved by selection and the subsequent compositional processes.

Additionally, in LCCM Theory, this application of matching in interpretation is guided by principles. The first principle is the Principle of Guided Matching, which is about the compatibility of matching cognitive models with the output of lexical concept integration. This principle ensures that the matching process central to interpretation proceeds by interpreting relevant lexical concepts in the order in which they undergo lexical concept integration. Second,

the Principle of Primary Activation states that the matched cognitive model(s) are subject to primary activation. This principle guarantees that cognitive models subject to matching achieve a high degree of resonance, for example, in the case of FRANCE, LANDMASS, and NATION, where a match is found in the primary cognitive profiles. However, sometimes, there is a clash, such as in the expression “John, the landmass” (Evans, 2009). This utterance is not straightforwardly interpretable precisely because an informational characterization is impossible for LANDMASS when matched with the primary cognitive model profile associated with the lexical concept of INDIVIDUAL NAMED JOHN. It is due to a clash in the primary cognitive model profiles related to the INDIVIDUAL NAMED JOHN lexical concept on the one hand and LANDMASS on the other. In this case, the matching becomes impossible, thereby avoiding a clash. This clash resolution requires access to the secondary cognitive models, and activation at this level is the hallmark of figurative language.

Since there is no schematic coherence readily available apparent in the primary cognitive model profiles associated via the LANDMASS and INDIVIDUAL NAMED JOHN lexical concepts, a search region must be established in the secondary cognitive model profile of one or more of the relevant lexical concepts; the Principle of Ordered Search ensures this. Thus, the principle facilitates clash resolution by facilitating a search region beyond the default search region. Therefore, the secondary model that achieves primary activation in the cognitive model of LANDMASS is significantly more extensive than other geographical features, which is glossed as OVERSIZE. It matches the primary cognitive model of BODY associated with INDIVIDUAL NAMED JOHN, providing an informational characterization of an “excessively

large individual named John” (Evans, 2009, p. 266). Figure 2.4 shows this whole process of semantic composition in LCCM Theory:

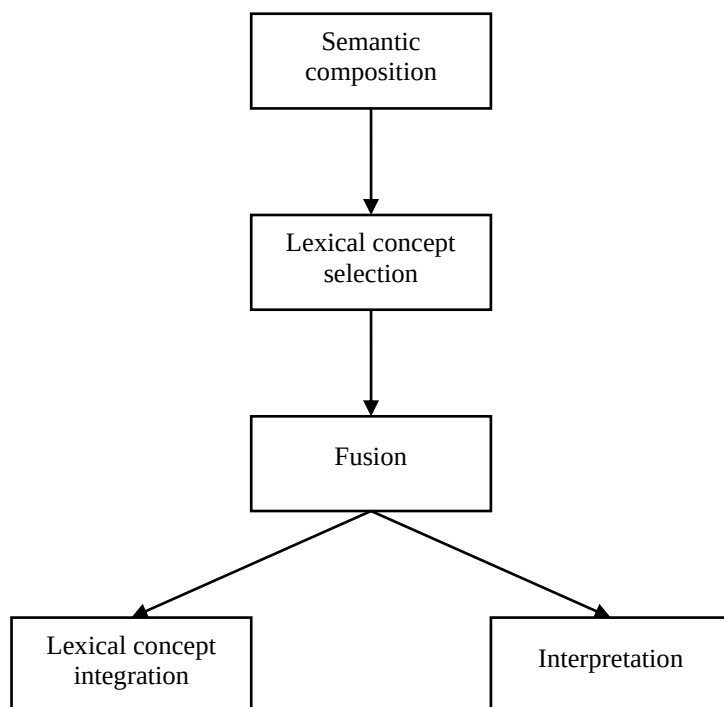


Figure 2.4: The relationship between selection and the other processes of meaning construction in LCCM Theory (Evans, 2009)

The cognitive linguistics enterprise has also provided an approach to studying human imagination and has been influential in arguing that language reveals systematic processes at work. Cognitive linguists have argued that such processes are central to our thinking. Within this, stable knowledge structures held to inhere long-term memory are termed conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and are claimed to have psychological reality. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and Grady (1997) argue that figurative language results from a universal set of pre-linguistic primary metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Evans (2013) add that

linguistic metaphors are surface manifestations of underlying cognitive associations, presumably inhere in long-term memory, often relating diverse bodies or domains of conceptual knowledge. As such, metaphoric linguistic behavior results from stable cross-domain conceptual mappings and conceptual metaphors, which license the patterns evident in language use. In this line, LCCM Theory claims that literal and figurative language are seen as arising from the same processes of meaning construction (Evans, 2009). In other words, they can be seen as points along a continuum of meaning construction rather than due to wholly different mechanisms. Moreover, the meanings associated with figurative utterances are guided by linguistic and extra-linguistic contexts in the same way as literal utterances. In conclusion, figurative language understanding results from the nature of semantic representation and semantic composition.

According to LCCM Theory, a literal conception—the meaning associated with a literal utterance—results in an interpretation that activates a cognitive model, or cognitive models, within the default, which is to say primary cognitive model profile, while a figurative conception—the meaning associated with a figurative utterance—arises when cognitive models are activated in the secondary cognitive model profile. The fundamental distinction between literal versus figurative conceptions relates to a clash in one of the primary cognitive model profiles of the lexical concept in the same lexical conceptual unit undergoing matching in interpretation. In LCCM Theory, the lexical concept selected for clash resolution, and hence, for primary activation in the secondary cognitive model profiles, is contextually determined. It is formalized as the Principle of Context-induced Clash Resolution (Evans, 2009).

At the interpretation level, the primary cognitive model profiles for lexical concepts that afford access to conceptual content and are in the same lexical conceptual unit undergo

matching. The Principle of Conceptual Coherence requires avoiding a clash in the cognitive model profiles of the two or more lexical concepts undergoing interpretation. The Principle of Ordered Search ensures that primary cognitive models undergo matching first. If there is a match, the primary activation of one or more primary cognitive models occurs. If there is no match, then there is a clash in the primary cognitive model profiles of the relevant lexical concepts. A search is initiated in the secondary cognitive model profile to avoid the clash. The secondary cognitive model profile relates to knowledge that is not directly associated with a given lexical concept as it does not form part of a lexical concept's access site. The secondary cognitive model profile constitutes a huge semantic potential that is available for search. The Principle of Ordered Search ensures that the search in the secondary cognitive model profile proceeds coherently. Secondary cognitive models are searched to facilitate a match based on their conceptual coherence with the primary cognitive models, which form part of the lexical concept's access site.

Accordingly, LCCM Theory combines frontstage and backstage cognition since it deals with lexical concepts and cognitive models to understand language use comprehensively. LCCM Theory emphasizes the role of words in the meaning-construction process, which in cognitive linguistics has been underplayed. For instance, Turner (1991) claimed that words are nothing and do not mean anything; instead, they instigate the conceptual system to make meanings. Additionally, Fauconnier (1997) states that some of the most important aspects of meaning construction lie behind the scenes, not in language but at the conceptual level. While putting it differently, LCCM Theory represents an attempt to study the complexity of lexical concepts associated with linguistic units such as words and their central role in language

understanding. Overall, LCCM Theory accounts for how the symbolic resources in a specific language interface with the conceptual structures.

On the whole, since the human brain has evolved into a unique capability of highly abstract thinking, the crime of rape and violence is one of those abstract ideas to be given special attention and understanding due to their abstract nature and stigmatization of the victims and existing socio-cultural patriarchal beliefs the meaning and interpretation of rape and violence had gone to a shift hiding the horrors and thus the reality of the crimes (Husain, 2014). There is no disagreement that abstract concepts constitute a fundamental part of human cognition. Therefore, defining and describing the role of linguistic content and structures in the referential and conceptual transparency of the meaning of abstract concepts is essential. In the current study, the meanings of the metaphors of rape in Sebald's novel *TLB* are investigated to show the horrors and the pain and suffering of rape victims.

2.9 Theoretical Background for Data Analysis

The following sections provide the theoretical background for the data analysis purposes in the current research study:

2.9.1 Literary Stylistics

As discussed in section 2.8, style is the linguistic characteristics of a particular text, and it broadly refers to how language is used in a given context, by a given person, and for a given purpose (Leech & Short, 2007). Accordingly, stylistics refers to the linguistic study of style (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 28), which focuses on the various forms, patterns, and levels that constitute the linguistic structure of the text (Simpson, 2004, p. 2). While stylistics refers to the

study of the style of any text, either literary or non-literary, literary stylistics, on the other hand, is specifically concerned with the study of style in a literary text, and the latter is intended to explain the relation between language and its artistic function (Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004). It is insisted that literary stylistics helps us unlock the most minor details of the language of a literary work (Hough, 1969). In this line, literary stylistics analyses literary language using linguistic concepts and categories to explain how literary meanings are created by specific language choices and patterns in the text (Toolan, 1990, 1998, 2019). As such, literary stylistics draws on the linguistic phenomenon of creative language use in literary texts (Guy et al., 2018; Mahlberg & Wiegand, 2020). Furthermore, including the adventures of computational approaches and cognitive perspectives, Toolan (1990, 1998, 2019) discusses that stylistics remains an influential way to explore the passages of language that can be seen to perform the effects of meanings. Regarding these stylistic characteristics of the language in the text, Leech and Short (2007) categorized them as lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context (p. 61).

As such, in the current study, Leech and Short's (2007) concept of literary stylistics is applied to analyze Sebold's novel *TLB* and determine rape metaphors, constructing the horrors and reality of rape in literary language.

2.9.2 LCCM Theory

Traditionally, two approaches (i.e., linguistic and conceptual) to understand metaphors function independently; however, recently, LCCM Theory combined these two approaches to develop a comprehensive procedure dealing with the meaning of metaphors in language use. The current research study uses Evans' (2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) LCCM Theory to interpret

rape metaphors in Sebold's rape narrative *TLB*. LCCM Theory extends the concept of metaphor understanding by stating that even the modern advancements in metaphor theory, such as CMT, deal with the non-linguistic nature of knowledge or cognition; however, the role of linguistic knowledge in comprehending metaphors is also essential (Evans, 2009). Evans (2010) adds that the linguistic system serves as the end of the conceptual system as the linguistic system is concerned with communication while the conceptual system is concerned with perception, categorization, inference, choice, and action. In the linguistic system, the linguistic contents are encoded by lexical concepts; in the conceptual system, the conceptual contents are encoded by cognitive models, as discussed in section 2.8.2. Thus, the association of the two systems helps understand figurative language.

2.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter initially reviewed how rape has been represented in literature and, more specifically, how the authors represented rape through metaphors in their literary works. The discussion showed the significance of the metaphorical representation of rape in terms of indicating different experiences of rape and rape victims' treatment during and after the assault. Sebold's rape narrative *TLB* is a worldwide acclaimed piece of literature and has been studied through a variety of perspectives, including the perspective of metaphors and style. However, *TLB* has not been analyzed using the standpoint of metaphors relating to rape victims' cognition. In this regard, the chapter describes how metaphor and cognition are interconnected and presents the recent theoretical assumptions dealing with metaphors concerning language and cognition. One such initiative is LCCM Theory. Therefore, the current research work investigates the meanings of rape metaphors incorporating the theoretical model of figurative language

understanding in LCCM Theory. For this, the next chapter provides the methodology of the current research study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides the methodology for the interpretation of meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB*. First, the chapter presents the research approach and the conceptual framework. Then, the data collection procedure, which consists of data identification and categorization steps, is discussed. Next, the chapter deals with the theoretical models of literary stylistics and LCCM Theory adopted for data analysis. Then, the process of metaphor analysis is demonstrated. After that, the limitations of the study have been provided. Finally, a summary of the chapter is presented.

3.2 Research Approach

The current research study aims to interpret the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) *TLB* from a stylistic and cognitive-linguistic perspective. Hence, it is based on the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research entails the phenomenon of meaning interpretation and attribution. The qualitative research approach is a situation-based activity in which the observer locates themselves in the world. Petty et al. (2012) add that by applying a qualitative research approach, the researcher studies the phenomenon in its settings to comprehensively understand the meanings attributed to the experiences. In other words, qualitative research concerns meanings, situational and social contexts, and personal experiences (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Also, qualitative research is typically inductive, which derives from the data rather than being predetermined and verified by the researcher. More

importantly, while it is possible to analyze qualitative information quantitatively, qualitative researchers suggest that this cannot be done without a significant loss of meaning and depth in the data (van Griensven et al., 2014). Accordingly, qualitative research is incorporated to describe and clarify human experiences, and data are used as evidence for an adequate description. Additionally, the data are in textual form, either already written or oral, which is duly documented (Polkinghorne, 2005).

The current study follows the qualitative research approach to investigate the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB* taking a stylistic and cognitive-linguistic standpoint. Studies on rape show that rape is a part of the victim's thought and cognition and, hence, constructed and expressed through metaphors in the language (Emanatian, 1995; Lakoff, 1987; Lee, 2010; Skjelsbaek, 2001). The representation and perception of rape need a critical examination because the understanding of rape metaphors requires both linguistic and cognitive knowledge perspectives (Ciamaricone, 2020; Ehrlich, 2020; O'Hara, 2012; Penelope, 1990; Weatherall & Walton, 1999). Therefore, in the current study, rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) *TLB* are investigated by employing the perspectives of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

In her literary language, Sebold (2002) employs metaphors to depict the most severe human crime of rape, generally shunned in human discourses in the real world. Whitney (2010) describes that the language used in Sebold's *TLB* establishes literary survivorship through Susie's posthumous narration that restores some dignity and agency to those raped and silenced by violence. Bufacchi and Gilson (2016) state that beyond the description of the act of rape,

Sebold's *TLB* is about the experience of rape that lasts longer and affects the young victim's daily life experiences.

Besides, the studies on rape discourses in the existing literature show the association between rape victims' thought systems and cognition and metaphors in their language of use. This is because metaphor in contemporary times is considered an integral part of human thought and cognition. Meanwhile, *TLB* has been studied through a variety of approaches dealing with rape and violence against women, including the use of metaphors in the discourse of *TLB*. However, the studies on *TLB* focused on the use of linguistic metaphors to analyze rape. Since the studies indicate further exploration of the phenomenon of metaphorical construction and representation of rape, the current study extends the approach. The study includes the combination of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge to investigate the meanings of conceptual metaphors of rape in *TLB*.

To demonstrate how the study initiated and reached the stage of outcomes, Figure 3.1 represents the study's conceptual framework.

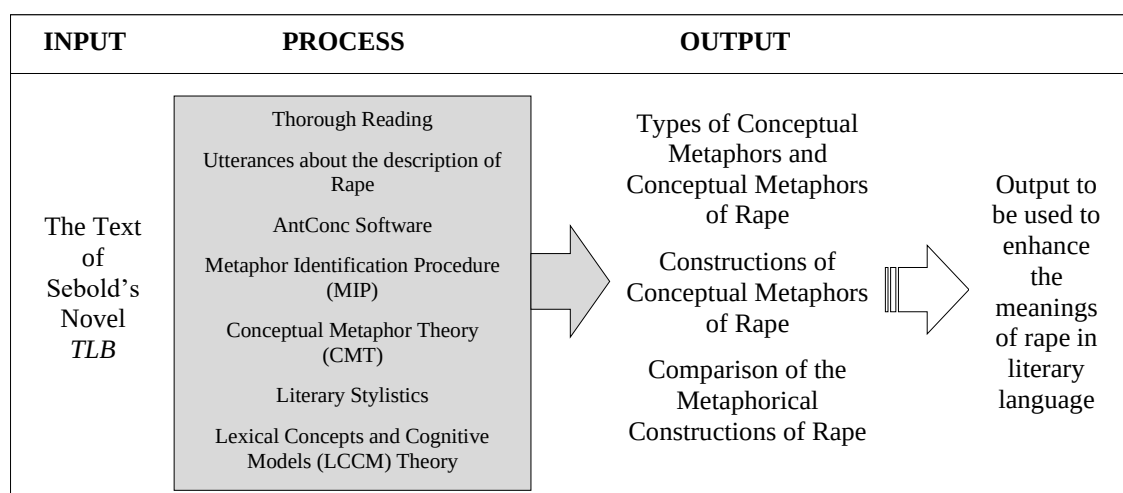


Figure 3.1: The study's conceptual framework

3.4 Corpus/Text

In the current study, the text of Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB* is stylistically analyzed to investigate the meanings of rape metaphors. The following sections provide information about the corpus/text.

3.4.1 About the Author Alice Sebold

Alice Sebold (born in 1963) is an American author from Madison, Wisconsin. Sebold's writings mainly deal with the topics of rape, violence against women, murder, and the consequences of rape on rape victims and their family members. While Sebold was studying at a university in New York, she was brutally beaten, raped, and dismembered. After the incident—instead of staying silent—Sebold continued to speak and share her ordeal publicly to express how rape victims are treated in rape events and post-assault life experiences, such as medical examinations, legal investigations, and socio-cultural practices (Viner, 2002). Sebold wrote about her rape experience and its consequences in her memoir titled *Lucky* (1999)—she became isolated and rejected by both family and friends. Sebold clarifies that she writes about such topics (e.g., rape, death, murder, violence against women) to help remove the weirdness of the topics and make them easier to bring up in human discussion (Viner, 2002). In her novel *The Almost Moon* (2007), Sebold described a fictional character of Helen Knightly, who murdered her mother. It includes several psychological reasons, such as Helen's failed marriage, her daughter's mental disability, her mother's dementia, and her suicidal father. Her critically acclaimed novel, *TLB*, is described in section 3.4.2. Sebold has been awarded many times for her literary achievements. Now, Sebold is married and lives in California with her husband.

3.4.2 *TLB*

TLB is a first-person narrative account of a young rape victim Susie Salmon who was fourteen when savagely raped and butchered in the hole in the ground by Mr. Harvey, a man of thirty-six who lives in the same neighborhood. Since Susie is an omniscient narrator in *TLB*, she narrates her ordeal from beyond the grave and has access to the consciousness of her family members, friends, and the perpetrator. Even though Susie lives in heaven, she frequently visits the earth to see her family. Olson (2005) remarks that *TLB* depicts how a young rape victim and her family members cope with the crime after the victim's abrupt death.

In a report on *TLB*'s success and critical appreciation, McShane (2007) shares that *TLB* is an overnight success that sets a record of selling more than ten million copies worldwide and gets translated into more than forty languages. Moreover, Sebold has won several remarkable awards for *TLB*, such as the American Booksellers Association Book of the Year Award for Adult Fiction in 2003 and the Bram Stoker Award for Best First Novel in 2002 (Mendelsohn, 2003). Also, the book has been adapted into a film by Peter Jackson.

Sebold's (2002) *TLB* is a critically acclaimed novel worldwide. Smith (2002) discusses that in the background of American culture, *TLB* is seen as a comfort novel for those who lost their children on 9/11 as the novel depicts a family coping with the loss of its beloved one. On the one hand, *TLB* demonstrates that the children who died in the attack are safe in new places. On the other hand, it is also considered that it is revealing newly acute fears about the vulnerability of American children and cultural anxieties about children being abducted, raped and murdered (Charles, 2002).

3.4.3 Plot of *TLB*

In the opening of the story of *TLB*, the main character of the story, Susie, is raped and murdered in the cornfield in the neighborhood upon her returning home from school. Mr. Harvey, a rapist and serial killer who lives in Susie's neighborhood, killed her. After her abrupt end, Susie opens her eyes in heaven and yells to return to earth to join her family and to start her life from where she had ended. Susie's abrupt end disturbs her family—all members suffer from different psychological effects. Amid such a situation, Susie, instead of chasing and killing her murderer in revenge, desires for her family to heal. Finally, the perpetrator accidentally dies by falling from a hill, and, in the end, Susie's family becomes united again. In her heaven, Susie moves to the next level of heaven.

3.4.4 Characters in *TLB*

The main characters in *TLB* are presented below.

3.4.4.1 Susie Salmon

Susie Salmon is the rape victim and an omniscient narrator of the novel who was raped and killed at the beginning of the story. Susie was fourteen and a school-going girl when she was trapped in a hole in the cornfield, raped, and murdered one evening.

3.4.4.2 Mr. Harvey

Mr. Harvey is the perpetrator who rapes and murders Susie in a hole in the ground. He is a rapist and a serial killer, as he has raped and killed many women and kids. Susie addresses him as Mr. Harvey throughout the novel.

3.4.4.3 Abigail Salmon

Abigail Salmon is Susie's mother, who severely suffers from the consequences of Susie's death. Abigail had extra-marital affairs with the policeman who was handling Susie's case. Besides, she left the family and city for a long time but returned when her husband was hospitalized.

3.4.4.4 Jack Salmon

Jack Salmon is Susie's father. He also suffers from the consequences of Susie's death. He became mentally upset—he blamed himself for Susie's death, so he started staying awake the whole night and searching for the murderer.

3.4.4.5 Lindsey Salmon

Lindsey Salmon is Susie's younger sister, who is thirteen and also school-going. After Susie's death, she succeeds in stealing evidence from Mr. Harvey's house. Susie loves her sister and frequently thinks about her in heaven.

3.4.4.6 Buckley Salmon

Buckley Salmon is Susie's younger brother—the youngest in the family. Since he is very young, he does not know much about Susie's rape and murder. Susie narrates several childhood memories of her time with him.

3.4.4.7 Ruth Connors

Ruth Connors is Susie's schoolmate and friend. While Susie was leaving Earth, she made her last contact with Ruth. Ruth plays a significant role in the novel as Susie comes into her (Ruth's) body on earth and stays with her (Susie's) boyfriend, Ray Singh.

3.4.4.8 Ray Singh

Ray Singh is Susie's classmate and friend. Susie loves him.

3.4.4.9 Len Fenerman

Len Fenerman is the policeman who was dealing with Susie's case. During the case investigation, he had relations with Susie's mother, Abigail.

3.4.5 Setting of *TLB*

TLB is set in suburban Pennsylvania, the United States. The story of the novel begins in this area in 1976. However, after Susie's death, she resides in heaven. Hence, the book is complete in these two different settings: the world and heaven.

3.4.6 Themes in *TLB*

There are several themes in *TLB*, such as rape, death, loss, grief, guilt and responsibility, love, suffering, family, mortality, memory, and justice.

3.4.7 Conflict in *TLB*

TLB consists of multiple conflicts. The central conflict was the reunion of Susie's family after her abrupt end. Besides, there were conflicts within the characters. For instance, Susie wants to join her family and continue her life on earth; she wants to see the perpetrator dead; her mother seeks peace; her father looks for the perpetrator, and so on.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is essential to maintaining the integrity of research (Busetto et al., 2020; Cleary et al., 2014; Gibbs et al., 2007). Selecting appropriate data collection instruments and delineating instructions for their use reduces the likelihood of errors. Therefore, the current study

has systematically collected data from Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB*. The approach contains the following steps:

3.5.1 Reading and Familiarization

Qualitative research is about words and their meaning in which context is treated as an essential phenomenon (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Therefore, the researcher initially reads the text of Sebold's (2002) *TLB* multiple times to comprehend the whole text thoroughly and to become familiar with the author's stylistic choices (e.g., lexical, grammatical, and figurative language) incorporated to depict rape in different contexts.

3.5.2 Coding the Data

The data coding has been done using AntConc software version 4.2.4 (Anthony, 2023) to employ maximum scientific standards in data delineation. For this, the text file of Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB* was first inserted into the software. Then, the file was processed, resulting in the text's details (e.g., the number of total words in the novel, the frequency of each word, and the tokens). Figure 3.2 shows the file processing process in AntConc software.

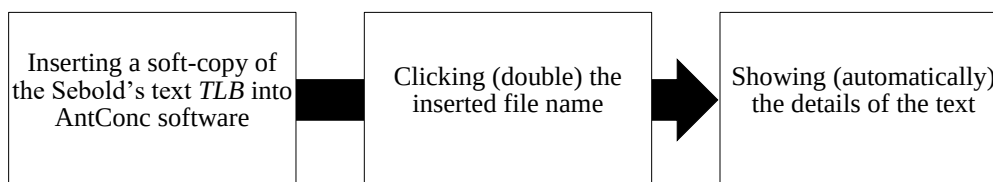


Figure 3.2: File processing in AntConc software

Moreover, Figure 3.3 is the screenshot of the computer software that displayed the initial linguistic details in the text of *TLB*:

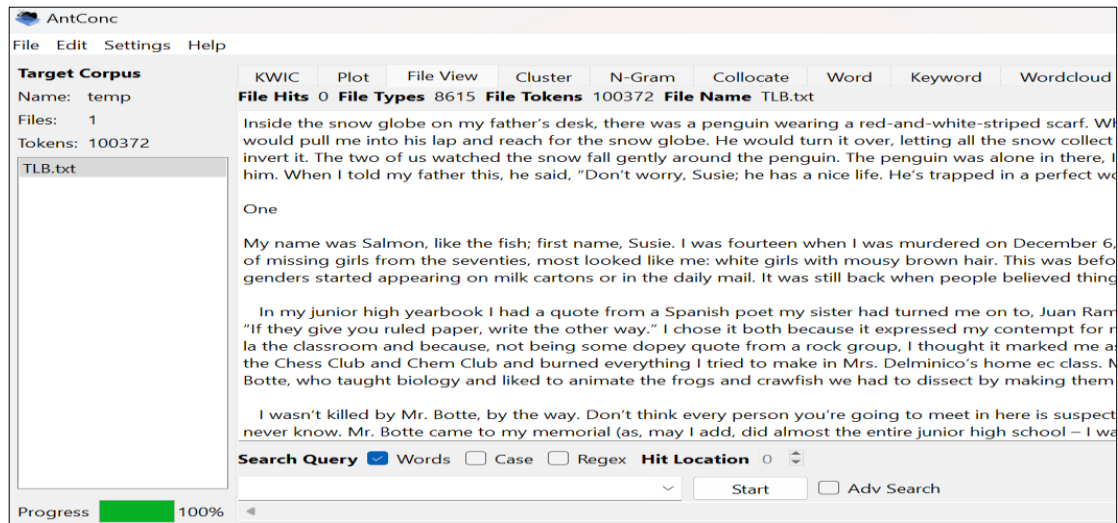


Figure 3.3: The AntConc software-generated linguistic details of Sebold’s (2002) *TLB*

After that, the words were seen in the context in which they were used in the text. The words which occurred in the utterances about rape description were selected. After that, the chosen words were further seen in their immediate linguistic context through the Concordance Tool to identify their relation with the description of rape. Once it is determined that the words are related to rape, the next step of activating the metaphor identification procedure (Steen et al., 2007) (called MIP, metaphor identification procedure) was taken, which is described in section 3.5.3.

3.5.3 Metaphor Identification Procedure

Metaphors are an integral part of human communication, significantly impacting how we think and understand the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This advancement of cognitive turn in metaphor studies (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) leads to the researchers’ interest in the expression of conceptual metaphors in language use and utterances (Evans, 2009, 2013; Steen, 2007, 2010). Since metaphors are used in language and expressed through words, metaphors are

an area of interest in linguistic research (Evans, 2010, 2013). However, identifying metaphors in language and utterances remained a challenge for a long time until the Pragglejaz Group introduced the metaphor identification procedure in 2007 and 2010—the name of the group is a series of initial letters of the names of the researchers who participated in the research and development of the procedure. The MIP (Steen et al., 2007) method is the predecessor of the MIPVU (Steen et al., 2010), which is its upgraded version. The Pragglejaz Group states that the procedure aims to determine for each lexical unit in the discourse whether its use in a specific context can be described as metaphorical (Steen et al., 2007). While the MIP method primarily identifies the indirect use of words and only decides whether a word is a metaphor—the MIPVU adds steps to capture direct and implicit metaphors (Steen et al., 2010). In conclusion, the authors in the Group add that the initial steps of finding a metaphor in both MIP and MIPVU procedures are the same as once a metaphor is detected in MIP, MIPVU guides us in determining the metaphor type (Steen et al. 2007, 2010). Both procedures state that it is necessary to consult dictionaries to identify a metaphor or determine the basic meaning of lexical units. Therefore, the current research study uses dictionaries, such as *Oxford Languages Dictionary*, *Collins Online Dictionary*, and *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, to limit errors.

The study follows the MIP procedure (Steen et al. 2007) for identifying metaphors in the text of Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB*. The MIP procedure is a more systematic approach to sorting out metaphors in a text (Steen et al., 2007). The metaphor identification procedure contains the following steps.

- i. Identify the implied meaning of the utterance.
- ii. Determine the contextual meaning and the basic meaning of the word involved.

- iii. Compare the contextual and basic meanings of the word and decide whether the word is used metaphorically in the context of the novel.

The procedure can be illustrated by its application to one of the utterances in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*, such as, "On a slipcovered couch under ... he killed her. ... He fell *asleep* [emphasis added] on top of *her*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 181). First, the implied meaning of the utterance suggests that the rapist Mr. Harvey not only raped and killed a twelve-year-old child but he also humiliated the victim by sleeping on her body. Contextually, the adjective *asleep* is associated with the noun Mr. Harvey who is a serial rapist and killer. Moreover, the rapist's location of falling asleep is on top of the body of a twelve-year-old child who was recently raped and killed under a highway on-ramp. In the given utterance, the victim is referred to by using the personal pronoun *her*. The rapist's sleeping on the victim's body is the latter's humiliation. Hence, the contextual meaning of the adjective *asleep* denotes the victim's humiliation.

While on the other hand, the basic meaning of the adjective *asleep* refers to the normal human state of sleeping. Since there is a difference between the contextual and basic meaning of the word *asleep*, the word is marked as a metaphor in the given utterance.

3.5.4 Data Categorization and Sample Size

Setting a sample size in qualitative research remains challenging (Vasileiou et al., 2018). However, taking a sample is an essential consideration in evaluating the quality and trustworthiness of qualitative research (Spencer et al., 2003). In the current study, since the meanings of metaphors are interpreted, the categories of data are based on the source domains. Therefore, data are coded and organized into categories depending on their semantic fields

(Kovecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). As such, each semantic field is assigned a label and respectively added to the category it belongs to. The categories are based on the similarities and differences found in the data (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). After creating categories of the data, the next step is to interpret the data.

Data and sampling do not have the same connotation in qualitative research as in quantitative research (Gill, 2020). In qualitative research, the findings do not show the probability as quantitative research; however, it helps discover meaning grounded in the human experience it describes (Sandelowski, 2004). Additionally, qualitative research has smaller samples to examine a phenomenon in depth (Gill, 2020). Thus, sampling in qualitative research means selecting data representative of the population (Polkinghorne, 2005). Marshall et al. (2013) add that the required sample should be rich in information and efficiently realize the research objectives. Overall, getting the right kind of sampling requires a systematic methodology for organizing sample size, which should neither be too large to hamper analysis nor too small to lose the meaning (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

Once the metaphors are categorized, each category of conceptual metaphors is analyzed using one example of a conceptual metaphor used in the discourse. For instance, the conceptual metaphor theme of ANIMAL METAPHORS consists of several metaphors like RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC, RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS, RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY. One example is taken from such a metaphor theme for interpretation purposes. Consequently, the whole data is a reasonable size, representing the total population and following the research objectives.

3.6 Data Validation

Data validity is a critical and challenging task in a qualitative research study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Data validation in qualitative research has been differently approached in the existing theoretical literature (see Maxwell, 1996; Schwandt, 1997). According to Creswell and Miller (2000), in qualitative research, a researcher should adopt a particular lens that helps them establish themes, categories, and a persuasive narrative. As such, Patton (1980) exemplifies that with the perspective of adopting a lens, the researcher returns to the data repeatedly to see if the themes, constructs, categories, explanations, and interpretations make sense. Therefore, the researcher's critical perspective is significant in the validity and trustworthiness of the qualitative research study. Moreover, the perspective helps the researcher uncover hidden assumptions regarding how narrative accounts are constructed, read, and interpreted (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

3.6.1 Trustworthiness of the Data

Sandelowski (2004) states that qualitative research is conducted to generate knowledge in human experiences. Qualitative research has attracted the attention of research scholars and is increasingly recognized and valued. Therefore, Attride-Strling (2001) adds that rigorous and methodical manners must be incorporated to yield meaningful and valuable results. Moreover, more sophisticated tools are required to facilitate researchers in conducting trustworthy qualitative research. In this regard, Nowell et al. (2017) emphasize that qualitative researchers must demonstrate that data analysis has been conducted in a precise, consistent, and exhaustive manner through recording, systematizing, and disclosing the methods of analysis with enough details to enable the reader to determine whether the process is credible. For this reason,

trustworthiness is a way for researchers to persuade themselves and readers that their research findings are worthy of attention (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The perspective of trustworthiness evaluation criteria has been developed by employing different approaches (see Emden & Sandelowski, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Polit & Beck, 2014; Schreier, 2012; Stahl & King, 2020). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness in qualitative research aims to support the argument that the analysis findings support the argument that the study's findings are worthy of attention. Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed the concept of trustworthiness by introducing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to enhance the validity and reliability of qualitative research data. The current study strives to achieve the four main criteria explained in the following subsections:

3.6.1.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the correct and accurate findings of the study. Stahl and King (2020) add that it relies on the researchers' credibility and research methods. For example, triangulation, prolonged engagement with data, persistent observation, examination of the previous research findings, thick description of the phenomenon, and referential adequacy are procedures that can be used to increase the credibility of qualitative research studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Silverman, 2022; Shenton, 2004). In the current study, the researcher employs the triangulation method, using multiple data sources, methods and approaches of data analysis, and theories to ensure that the data, data analysis procedure, findings, and conclusions of the study are comprehensive and accurate.

Moreover, the researcher thoroughly analyzed the previous research findings based on the phenomenon of rape and rape metaphors in different discourses like media discourses of

rape, legal and rape trial discourses, political and war rape discourses, and rape in literary discourses. The detailed analysis of the existing literature on rape and rape metaphors provided the context and references for the study, enhancing the validity and reliability of the data. In addition, the researcher provides a detailed description of the data and data analysis procedures, incorporating diagrams and figures showing the procedure followed, which enhances the study's credibility.

3.6.1.2 Transferability

Transferability is about the potential of extrapolation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Merriam (2009) describes that transferability relies on the reasoning that findings can be generalized or transferred to other contexts, circumstances, and settings. Conversely, Stake (1994) suggests that although each case may be unique, it is also an example within a broader group, and, as a result, the prospect of transferability should not be immediately rejected.

In the current study, a thick description of the phenomenon and contexts has been provided. The description includes the topic of rape and rape victims, literary language, Sebold's writing style, *TLB*, and characters, settings, and conflicts in the novel. Furthermore, the study described the tools and instruments used to collect and handle data.

3.6.1.3 Dependability

Dependability includes an in-depth description of the study procedures and analysis to allow a study to be replicated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such, the process within the study should be reported in detail, enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004). The current study provides a detailed description of

the theoretical and conceptual framework and its implementation. Also, the data collection and data analysis procedures are illustrated step-by-step.

3.6.1.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is established when credibility, transferability, and dependability are achieved (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Koch (1994) recommended that researchers include markers such as the reasons for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the study so that others can understand how and why decisions were made. Confirmability ensures that the data and findings are not due to the researcher's bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, confirmability is objectivity in qualitative studies. Moreover, Shenton (2004) states that confirmability can be documented by an explicit coding schema that identifies the codes and patterns identified in the analysis. In the current study, the coding of data, achievement of research objectives, and data analysis procedures are explained in steps and diagrammatically represented. Hence, the study's findings are neutral and not influenced by the researcher's assumptions or biases. Figure 3.4 shows the validity and reliability of the data in the current study:

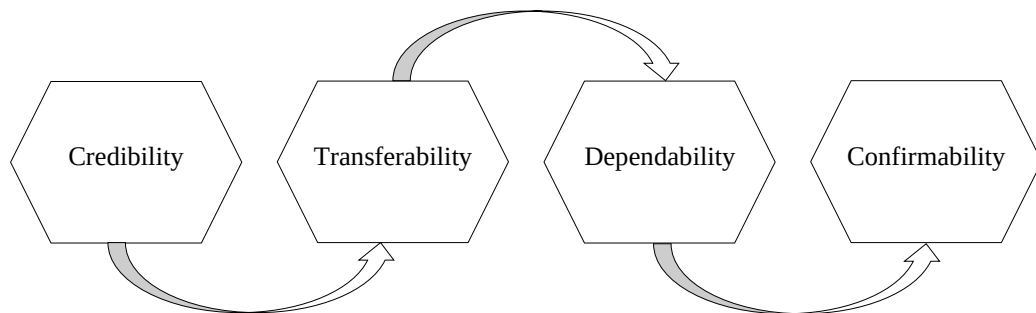


Figure 3.4: Validity and reliability of qualitative data in the study

3.6.2 Cohen's Kappa Interrater Reliability

Cohen's Kappa (k) is a statistical measure used to test interrater reliability (Li et al., 2023; McHugh, 2012). Cohen's Kappa test involves two raters and accounts for chance agreement when establishing interrater reliability of qualitative data (Cohen, 1968). In the test, the range of scores is 0 to 1, higher scores indicating higher agreement (Halpin, 2024; Landis & Koch, 1977). Figure 3.5 shows the level of agreement in Cohen's Kappa.

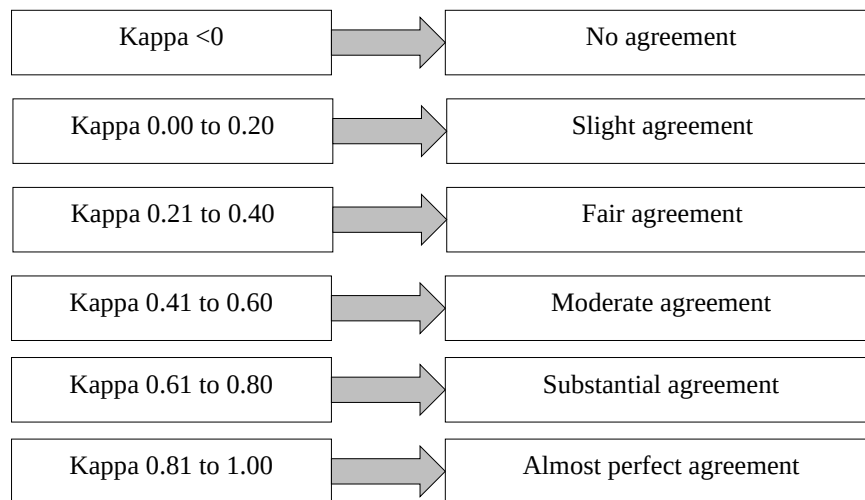


Figure 3.5: Level of agreement in Cohen's Kappa

Moreover, Halpin (2024) adds that Kappa (k) is calculated by subtracting the expected agreement from the observed agreement and dividing the number by one minus the expected agreement. Cole (2024) reiterates that testing interrater reliability improves the transparency and consistency of qualitative data. Similarly, Stahl and King (2020) state that to pursue reliability in qualitative research, the involvement of informants, such as faculty members, co-researchers, and colleagues, effectively helps verify the researchers' interpretations after the fact.

Accordingly, in the current study, Cohen's Kappa is used to test the reliability of the data (i.e., data collection procedures, data validation, analytical framework of the study, data analysis procedures, and findings of the study). For this, the researcher consulted an assistant professor, Dr. Mohmad Ashraf Bhat, from the Department of Foreign Languages, Jazan University, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Dr. Bhat is an expert in the field and has vast experience as a researcher and educator at national and international levels. The researcher of the current study (i.e., Rater 1) discussed the aim and objectives, the context, the research approach, and the methodology of the current study with the professor (Rater 2). Additionally, a copy of the thesis was shared with him so he could have a thorough knowledge of the items, including the study's findings. Figure 3.6 shows the responses of both raters (i.e., Rater 1 and Rater 2).

Points		Rater 1	Rater 2
		Agree (Yes/No)	
1. Data collection procedures		Yes	Yes
2. Data validation		Yes	Yes
3. Analytical framework of the study		Yes	Yes
4. Data analysis procedures		Yes	Yes
5. Findings of the study		Yes	Yes

Figure 3.6: Responses of the Rater 1 and Rater 2

According to the raters' responses, both agreed on all 5 points indicated in Figure 3.6. Therefore, after calculating the responses using Cohen's Kappa statistics, the score is 1.00, which shows almost perfect agreement, as indicated in Figure 3.5. The calculation of Cohen's Kappa and the interpretation of the results is based on an online statistics calculator (see DATAtab, 2024).

3.7 Analytical Framework of the Study

The study aims to investigate rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*. Specifically, the study has three objectives. The processes of data collection and the approaches and methods used to achieve these objectives are presented in the following sections.

3.7.1 RO1: Identifying the conceptual metaphors of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB*

The steps that are taken to achieve RO1 are given below.

Step 1: Reading the Novel

The researcher read Sebold's novel *TLB* multiple times to better understand Sebold's literary style through linguistic choices such as lexical categories, grammatical categories, figurative language, and cohesion and context in the text.

Step 2: Using AntConc (Anthony, 2023)

Initially, a soft copy (i.e., a file) of the text of *TLB* was inserted into AntConc software. Then, the file name was clicked to process the linguistic details of the text automatically. For example, the software showed the number of total words in the novel, the frequency of each word, and the tokens. After that, the words were further seen in their respective contexts in the text. For instance, Figure 3.7 contains the occurrences of the word *bones* in the text of Sebold's *TLB*.

AntConc

File Edit Settings Help

Target Corpus

Name: temp

Files: 1

Tokens: 100372

TLB.txt

KWIC

Plot

File View

Cluster

N-Gram

Collocate

Word

Keyword

Wordcloud

Total Hits: 17

Page Size 100 hits

1 to 17 of 17 hits

	File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1	TLB.txt	it. The events that my death wrought were merely the	bones	of a body that would become whole at some
2	TLB.txt	by a bear. Exposed by the bear were the unmistakable	bones	of a child's foot. My mother made it
3	TLB.txt	her eyes to the crawspace, where she would find the	bones	of the animals, but I knew, too, that regardless
4	TLB.txt	visited the large safety box in the evidence room. The	bones	of the neighborhood animals he had found in Mr.
5	TLB.txt	knee. His thinness was a boon to him then, the	bones	and muscles clearly distinguished beneath the skin. By the
6	TLB.txt	to have nothing left but their bones. By counting the	bones	and staying away from the sealed letter, the wedding
7	TLB.txt	the two of us before Buckley was born: Stones and	bones; snow and frost;	seeds and beans and polliwogs. Paths
8	TLB.txt	both slept silently together, I whispered to them: Stones and	bones; snow and frost;	seeds and beans and polliwogs. Paths
9	TLB.txt	warm. Neither of them knew who fell asleep first; their	bones	aching with exhaustion, they drifted off and woke guiltily
10	TLB.txt	the sooner for him to have nothing left but their	bones.	By counting the bones and staying away from the
11	TLB.txt	rushed her young children with unexplained fevers or possible broken	bones	from falls. At the same hospital where I had
12	TLB.txt	is air and at their base: blood. I hold up	bones	I wish like broken glass they could court light ...

Figure 3.7: The occurrences of the word *bones* in the context of Sebold's *TLB*

Step 3: Running MIP Tool (Steen et al., 2007)

After that, the MIP protocol was used to see the difference between the basic and contextual meaning of the lexical choices in the text. Then, if a lexical choice is found metaphorical, it is marked as a use of metaphor. For example, Figure 3.8 shows the basic and contextual meanings of the word *bones*.

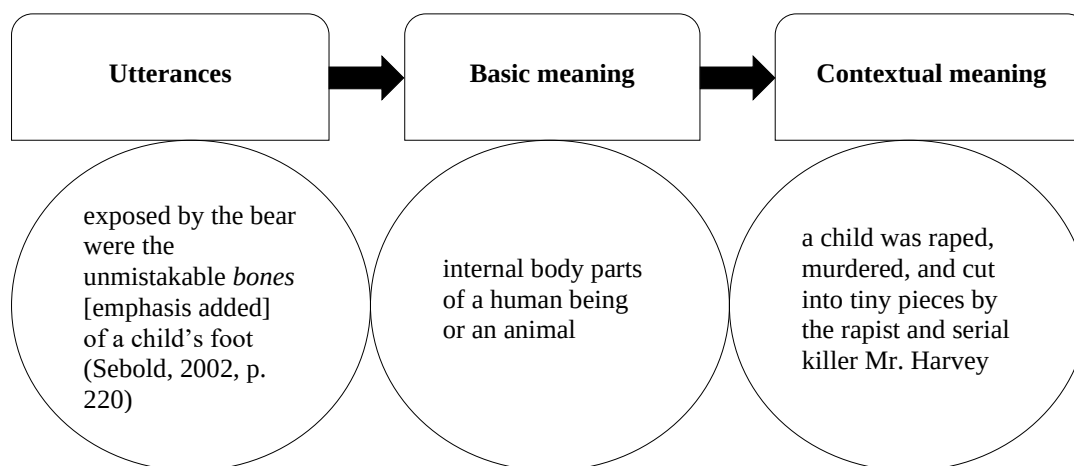


Figure 3.8: The basic meaning and contextual meaning of the word *bones*

In the given utterance shown in Figure 3.8, since there is a difference between the basic meaning and contextual meaning of the word *bones*, the word—bones—is marked as a metaphorical word in the utterance.

Step 3.1: Using Discourse Analysis Tool (Fairclough, 1995, 2003)

During the interpretation of differences between basic and contextual meanings of the lexical choices, Fairclough's (1995) discourse analysis tool was used to dissect the contextual meanings of the utterances in the discourse of rape in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*. For example, in the utterance "exposed by the bear were the unmistakable *bones* [emphasis added] of a child's foot" (Sebold, 2002, p. 220), the word—*bones*—is used as a concrete noun that refers to a child's body part which is the foot. The narrator's use of the adjective *unmistakable* emphasizes the connection between the bones and the child. The narrator is Susie Salmon, who was raped and killed by Mr. Harvey. Moreover, in the given utterance, the action verb *exposed* denotes the past action of the animal *bear* that exposed the child's bones. In the given context, the exposing of the child's bones means that the child was raped, murdered, and cut into tiny pieces by the rapist and serial killer, Mr. Harvey. In addition, Mr. Harvey hid the corpse in the ground so he could not be traced. Overall, the utterance adds to the fact that irrespective of age, the rape victims are dehumanized, tortured, and sometimes even killed.

Step 4: Applying CMT (Kovecses, 2002, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003)

Next, the metaphorical expressions found in the text were categorized according to the source domains. For example, Figure 3.9 contains the metaphorical expressions under the source domain of ANIMALS that are used to construct and understand the experiences of the target domain of RAPE VICTIMS.

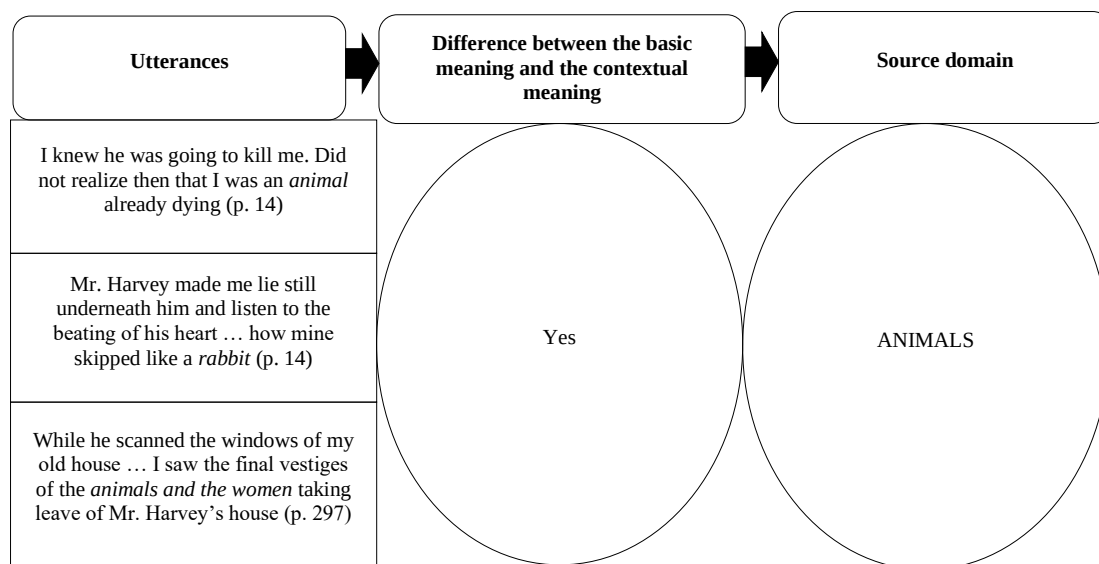


Figure 3.9: Metaphorical expressions under the source domain of ANIMALS

Following the source domain of ANIMALS and the target domain of RAPE VICTIMS, the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS is constructed. Similarly, the other conceptual metaphors of rape were identified and categorized in Sebold's *TLB*. Figure 3.10 shows the steps in achieving RO1.

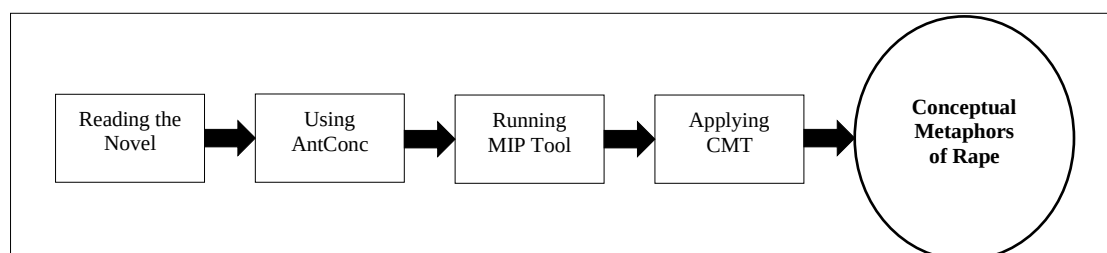


Figure 3.10: Representation of the process of RO1

3.7.2 RO2: Examining the constructions of conceptual metaphors of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB*

RO2 is achieved by applying the theoretical approaches of literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007) and LCCM Theory (Evans, 2009, 2010, 2013). The steps are as follows:

Step 1: Decoding the Linguistic Knowledge

First, the words in an utterance are linguistically analyzed. For this, the linguistic construction of each lexical concept is seen in its linguistic context. The linguistic context comprises the linguistic knowledge of all lexical concepts incorporated in an utterance. At the integration stage, if a clash is found in the lexical concepts, the clash is resolved through investigating the extra-linguistic knowledge. For example, in the utterance, “I was cold, but the natural authority of his age, and the added fact that he was a neighbor and had talked to my father about fertilizer, *rooted* [emphasis added] me to the spot” (Sebold, 2002, p. 7), the word *rooted* is used as a metaphor in this utterance, and CMT identifies it as a conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS. The lexical concept of ROOT is derived from the word root, which is the name of a plant’s part that helps the plant hold and grow. Also, the roots anchor the plants to the ground so winds and rain cannot move them. Therefore, literally, the word root is associated with plants. Hence, a clash arises at the lexical concept integration stage of the utterance. The clash will be resolved by employing extra-linguistic knowledge.

Step 2: Examining the Extra-linguistic Knowledge

After decoding the linguistic knowledge of the lexical concepts in an utterance, the next stage is investigating the extra-linguistic knowledge that can resolve the clash in the primary cognitive model profiles. The clash is resolved by exploring the secondary cognitive model profiles. For example, in the utterance, “I was cold, but the natural authority of his age, and the added fact that he was a neighbor and had talked to my father about fertilizer, *rooted* [emphasis added] me to the spot” (Sebold, 2002, p. 7), the lexical concept of root literally refers to a plant. However, the utterance describes Susie’s inability to move or escape seeing Mr. Harvey in the

cornfield when she returns home from school. As plants are made more robust in different ways (i.e., watering), Susie's trust in Mr. Harvey—that he is not dangerous—was developed by her family and society since her parents visited and talked to him. He lived in the neighborhood as well. In the present context, the lexical concept of ROOT achieves informational characterization of firmness and inability to move and escape.

Step 3: Interpreting the Metaphorical Expressions

Finally, the conceptual metaphors of rape in the discourse of *TLB* are interpreted by applying both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge of the lexical concepts. For example, the interpretation of the metaphorical expressions (e.g., rooted) constructing the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS incorporating both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge. The interpretation helps expose how the rape victim Susie was dehumanized and metaphorically conceptualized as a plant. Additionally, the existing socio-cultural patterns made Susie unable to escape. Consequently, Susie was raped and cut down into pieces in a hole in the ground by Mr. Harvey as a plant gets chopped down. During the chopping of a plant or tree, there are no emotions or sympathy shown by the one who chops it down; similarly, Susie is traumatized, mutilated, and eventually butchered by Mr. Harvey. Figure 3.11 shows the steps in achieving RO2.

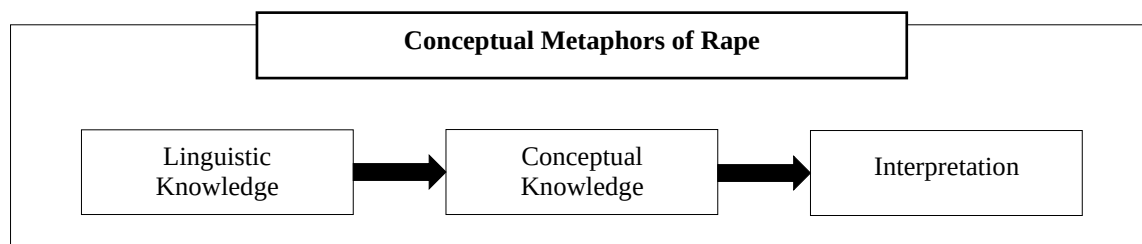


Figure 3.11: Representation of the process of RO2

3.7.3 RO3: Comparing and contrasting the metaphorical constructions of rape in Alice Sebold's *TLB* with the existing rape discourses

RO3 is achieved by applying the theoretical approaches of literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007) and LCCM Theory (Evans, 2009, 2010, 2013). The steps are as follows:

Step 1: Linguistic Knowledge

Initially, the role of linguistic knowledge in terms of the uses and functions of lexical and grammatical choices is figured out. Then, the linguistic choices used to construct the conceptual metaphors in the discourse of Sebold's *TLB* were seen in the existing literature on rape. As discussed in section 3.7.2, the current study incorporates linguistic knowledge of the utterances in which the metaphorical expressions exist. It shows its significance in interpreting the comprehensive meanings of the metaphors of rape in Sebold's *TLB*. Moreover, the perspective of using linguistic knowledge in the interpretation of metaphors of rape was compared with the existing literature on rape metaphors.

Step 2: Conceptual Knowledge

At this stage, conceptual knowledge in terms of the situational context that is non-linguistic is analyzed to dissect its role in constructing and representing the conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's *TLB*. Section 3.7.2 discusses the incorporation of conceptual knowledge in interpreting the meanings of rape metaphors in the current study. Moreover, the perspective of employing conceptual knowledge in the interpretation of metaphors of rape was compared with the existing literature on rape metaphors.

Step 3: Conceptual Metaphors

Finally, the conceptual metaphors of rape were investigated through the interpretation of linguistic and conceptual knowledge in the discourse of Sebold's *TLB*. Furthermore, the constructions of metaphors interpreted in the current study were compared with those in the existing literature on the representation of rape. For instance, the current study shows the conceptual metaphors of rape, like RAPE IS SILENCING and reveals the comprehensive meanings of the metaphors by employing both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge. On the other hand, while the constructions of rape metaphors in the current study were compared with the existing literature, it has been seen that the conceptual metaphors of rape, like PREDATOR IS A MACHINE (Ciamaricone, 2020), exist in the literature, but the metaphor interpretations lack in comprehensive meanings since they include only the perspective of conceptual knowledge, and, hence, ignore linguistic knowledge. Figure 3.12 shows the steps in achieving RO3.

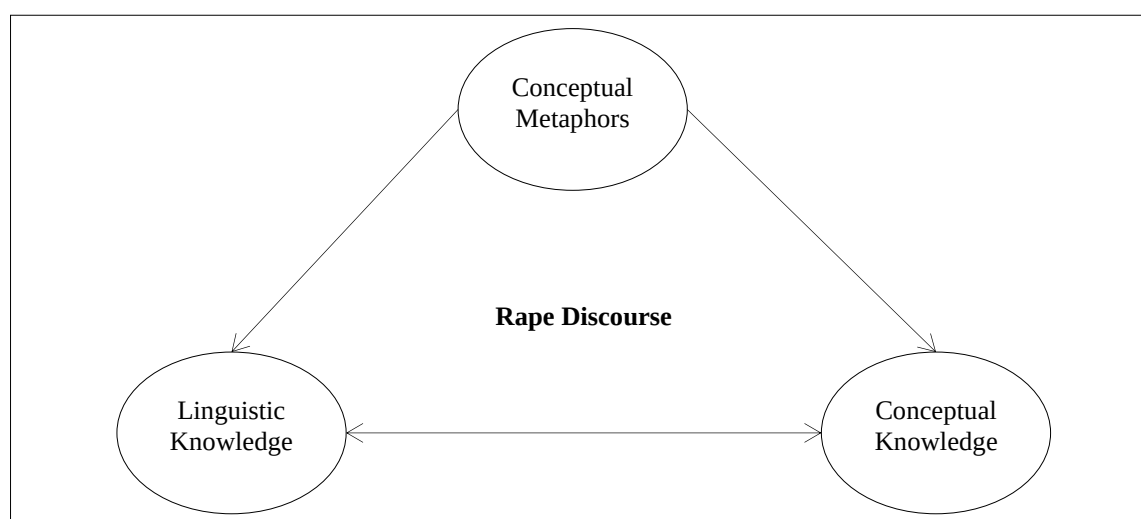


Figure 3.12: Representation of the process of RO3

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

LCCM Theory mainly shows that meaning is the property of an utterance, which is possible due to the co-existence of cognitive operations and lexical representations restored in instances of language use (Evans, 2013). More importantly, a lexical concept has a semantic value that carries linguistic knowledge. For instance, as discussed in section 2.8.2, the linguistic knowledge of a particular word (e.g., the word *in*) that is used in a specific context has a semantic value that depends on its linguistic context in which the word occurs (e.g., “we are in a room” and “we are in love”) (Evans, 2015, p. 2). On the other hand, a cognitive model is a large-scale, coherent body of non-linguistic knowledge to which access is provided by the lexical concept either directly or indirectly. For example, the lexical concept of the word *red* might activate the conceptual component of *redness* that resides in the conceptual system of red things (e.g., red ink, red squirrels) (Evans, 2009), as discussed in section 2.8.2. In this course, the range of cognitive models accessed by lexical concepts is termed the cognitive model profile (Evans, 2010). Applying both of these facts (i.e., lexical concepts and cognitive models) as suggested by the LCCM Theory, the current study aims to interpret the meaning of rape metaphors in Sebold’s novel *TLB*. The mechanism of LCCM Theory is explained in section 3.8.1.

3.8.1 Meaning Construction in LCCM Theory

The meaning construction in LCCM Theory, as discussed in section 2.8, involves lexical concept selection and fusion. Lexical concept selection involves selecting the most appropriate lexical concept for an utterance within the extra-linguistic context. Besides, fusion is divided into two major processes: integration and interpretation. Integration combines other lexical concepts to form a conceptual unit or an utterance. In addition, integration provides the access

route each lexical concept can have to its cognitive model. It establishes the unique significance of each word in terms of semantic potential in different contexts. For example, in a consequence of linguistic and extralinguistic context, the part of the word France's semantic potential (e.g., "France is a region of outstanding beauty" and "France rejected the EU constitution") that gets activated is: (i) *France* is a geographical landmass of a certain kind, and (ii) *France* relates to that portion of the French electorate who voted against the EU constitution (Evans, 2007, pp. 194–195). Then, interpretation is the activation of semantic potential to which the lexical concept gives access. Interpretation is the last step of the meaning construction process in LCCM Theory, in which a lexical concept achieves informational characterization. This whole process of meaning construction is illustrated in Figure 3.13.

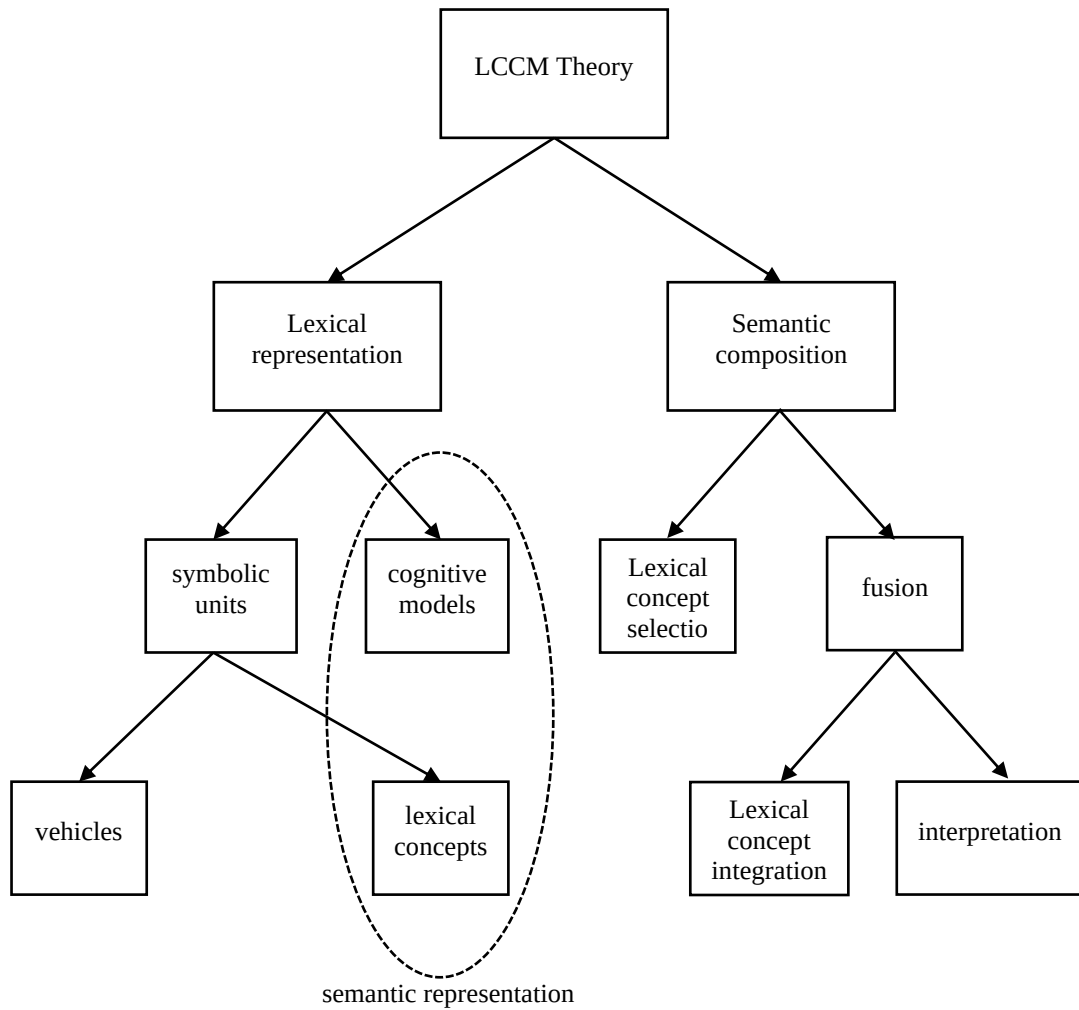


Figure 3.13: An overview of the architecture of LCCM Theory (Evans, 2009)

In addition, if a lexical concept during interpretation has direct access to the cognitive model, it ends in literal conception, as in the case of the lexical concept of FRANCE in section 2.8.2. On the other hand, if the lexical concept does not find a match in the primary cognitive model profile or does not have direct access to the cognitive model profile, there occurs a clash which can be resolved by searching the secondary cognitive models unless a suitable match is found for the given lexical concept. For example, a clash arises during the interpretation stage of the utterance “John, the landmass” (Evans, 2009). The clash is resolved by finding a match

in secondary cognitive models where landmass refers to oversize. Thus, the utterance means an “excessively large individual named John,” as discussed in section 2.8.2. This conception retrieved through the clash resolution process is called figurative. This process can be understood through Figure 3.14.

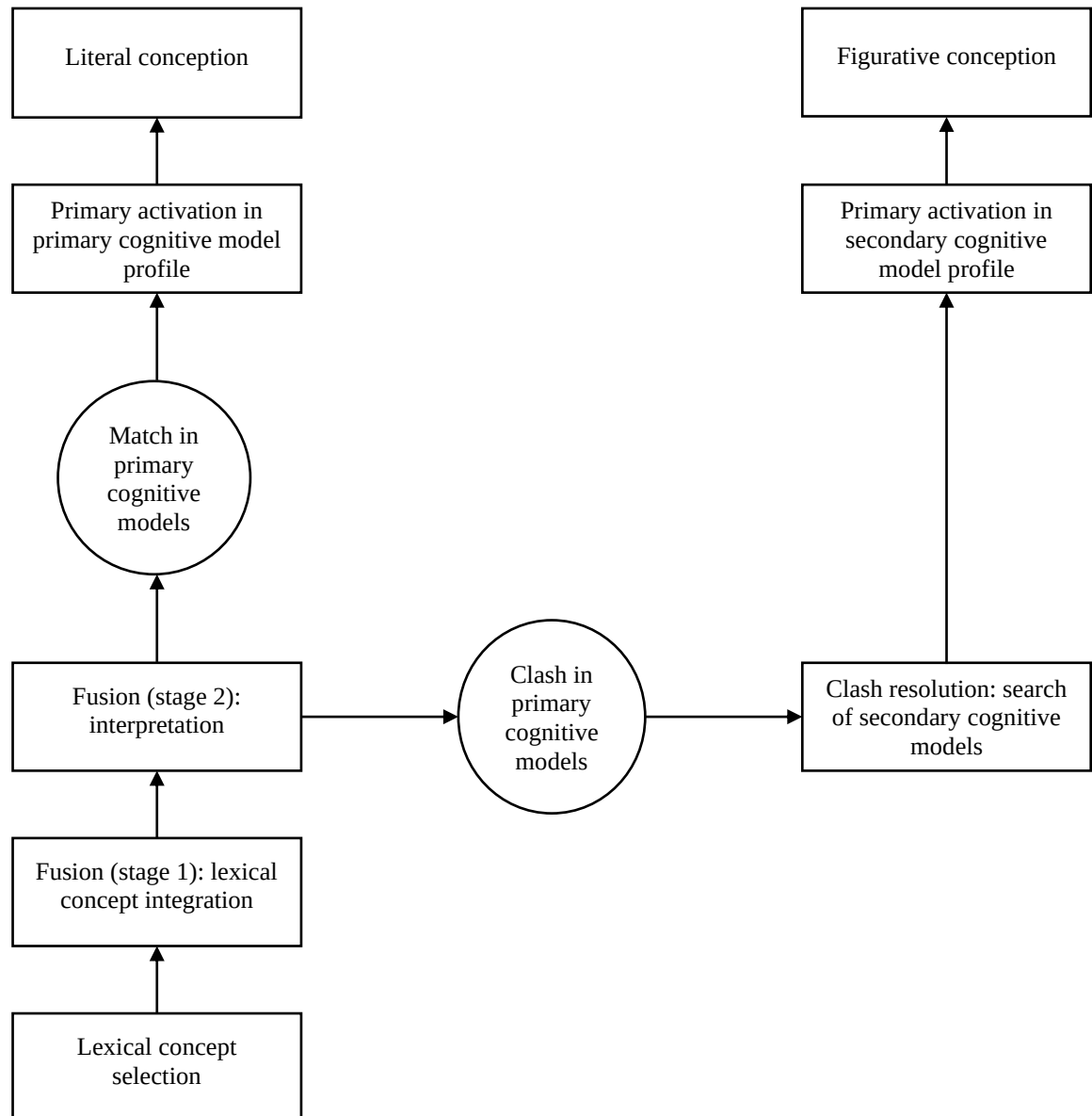


Figure 3.14: Literal and figurative meaning construction process in LCCM Theory

(Evans, 2009)

The following example from Sebold's (2002) *TLB* shows how LCCM Theory deals with the investigation of meanings of rape metaphors:

"I was cold, but the natural authority of his age, and the added fact that he was a neighbor and had talked to my father about fertilizer, *rooted* [emphasis added] me to the spot" (Sebold, 2002, p. 7).

The word *rooted* is used as a metaphor in this utterance, and CMT categorizes it as a conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS. Next, the study incorporates LCCM Theory to interpret the meaning of the metaphor (e.g., RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS). Initially, the lexical concepts of each word in the utterance are seen. For example, the lexical concepts of the word *root* are the part of a plant that grows under the ground, the part of a hair, tooth, nail, or tongue that attaches it to the rest of the body, the leading cause of something, and growing roots. Accordingly, the lexical concept of ROOT is derived from the word *root*, which is the name of a plant's part that helps the plant hold and grow. Also, the roots anchor the plants to the ground so winds and rain cannot move them. Literally, the word *root* is associated with plants.

Secondly, the lexical concepts associated with each word in the utterance are integrated. After that, the integrated lexical concepts in the utterance are interpreted. During the interpretation, a clash arises since the context of the utterance describes Susie's inability to move or escape seeing Mr. Harvey in the cornfield when she returns home from school. Then, to resolve the clash, the secondary cognitive models are searched. The search reveals that as plants are made more robust in different ways (i.e., watering), Susie's trust in Mr. Harvey—that he is not dangerous—was developed by her family and society since her parents visited and talked to

him. He lived in the neighborhood as well. Therefore, in the present context, the lexical concept of ROOT achieves informational characterization of firmness and inability to move and escape. Thus, Susie's inability to move is her fear since she is alone with a man in the dark. Overall, the metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS represents rape victims as plants exposing how the social settings and family treatment of children make them vulnerable to rape.

On the whole, it has been seen in LCCM Theory that the meaning construction at both levels, literal and figurative, involves the interaction of linguistic and non-linguistic systems (Evans, 2009).

3.9 Limitations of the Study

The study significantly contributes to the scope of stylistic and cognitive-linguistic approaches to interpreting metaphorical meanings. It is based on the interpretation and attribution of the meanings of rape metaphors, and it follows a qualitative research approach. While meaning interpretation can be done by employing a quantitative research approach, there would be a loss of meaning and depth in the data (van Griensven et al., 2014). The current study reveals the meanings of rape metaphors in the situational context by including linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge of lexical choices in an utterance.

Since the current study follows qualitative research and reveals the meanings of metaphors that require both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge of the lexical concepts and the situational context of the utterances, the data from Sebold's single text *TLB* are used as evidence for an adequate description. The findings of the study, as discussed in Chapter 4, profoundly enrich the existing literature on rape. However, the study has some limitations that are outlined below:

3.9.1 Corpus/Text

Since the study is about the interpretation of conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's *TLB*, it does not cover the novel metaphors. Moreover, it does not include metaphors other than rape, like the metaphors of maternity, family, love, and healing. Therefore, the study does not claim that it has investigated all of the metaphors in *TLB*.

3.9.2 Tools

The current study employs Anthony's (2023) computer software AntConc (Version 4.2.4) to see the stylistic choices (i.e., lexical and grammatical categories) in their immediate linguistic contexts as per the intended objectives of the study. However, the same software or other computer applications can be used to see the distribution and frequency of lexical choices to obtain quantitative data exploring the concept of rape in Sebold's *TLB*. Accordingly, the distribution of lexical choices and their effects on the representation of rape in Sebold's *TLB* can be compared with other similar discourses.

Furthermore, MIP (Steen et al., 2007) is employed in the current study to identify the metaphorical expressions in the discourse of *TLB*. Even though the MIP procedure effectively presents the results, it requires considerable time as each metaphorical expression needs to be seen in its basic and contextual meaning.

Additionally, despite the instruments of MIP and stylistic analysis being significant in conducting qualitative research studies and being consistently used in qualitative research, they have no clear indication of qualitative data validity and reliability strategies.

3.9.3 Data Collection

The study follows both procedures (i.e., manual and computer applications) to collect data since the study's objectives require the interpretation of metaphorical expressions through linguistic and conceptual knowledge. However, in the case of pre-defined conceptual metaphors, data collection would have been entirely done by employing different computer applications to automatically extract the metaphorical words in the text.

On the whole, the study has contributed to the metaphorical language understanding of rape in literature.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter has provided the methodology for the current research. Initially, the study's research approach and conceptual framework were described, which showed how the objectives of the current research work would be achieved. After that, the data collection procedure included systematic steps from manual efforts to computational strategies to provide quality standards. Once the data were collected, the chapter described the subsequent phases of the metaphor identification procedure (MIP) and the categorization and sample size retrieved from the data to be analyzed. Next, the theoretical models of literary stylistics and LCCM Theory were discussed, and then, a detailed description of data analysis and metaphor interpretation was provided. After that, the limitations of the study were discussed. Chapter four deals with the findings and discusses the results.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Chapter Overview

The chapter initially presents the main categories of metaphors and rape metaphors that emerged from the data in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*. The categories facilitate the interpretation of meanings of rape metaphors. After that, the metaphors are interpreted, applying both linguistic and conceptual knowledge perspectives to dissect the meanings of the metaphors exhibiting the reality of rape, the horrors of rape events, and rape victims' painful experiences. Finally, the chapter ends with a chapter summary.

4.2 Rape Metaphors in Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB*

The current study follows the theoretical approach of literary stylistics (Leech & Short, 2007) and CMT (Kovecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003) and applies the MIP protocol (Steen et al., 2007) to identify rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*. The main categories of the metaphors and underlying conceptual metaphors of rape are represented in Figure 4.1 below.

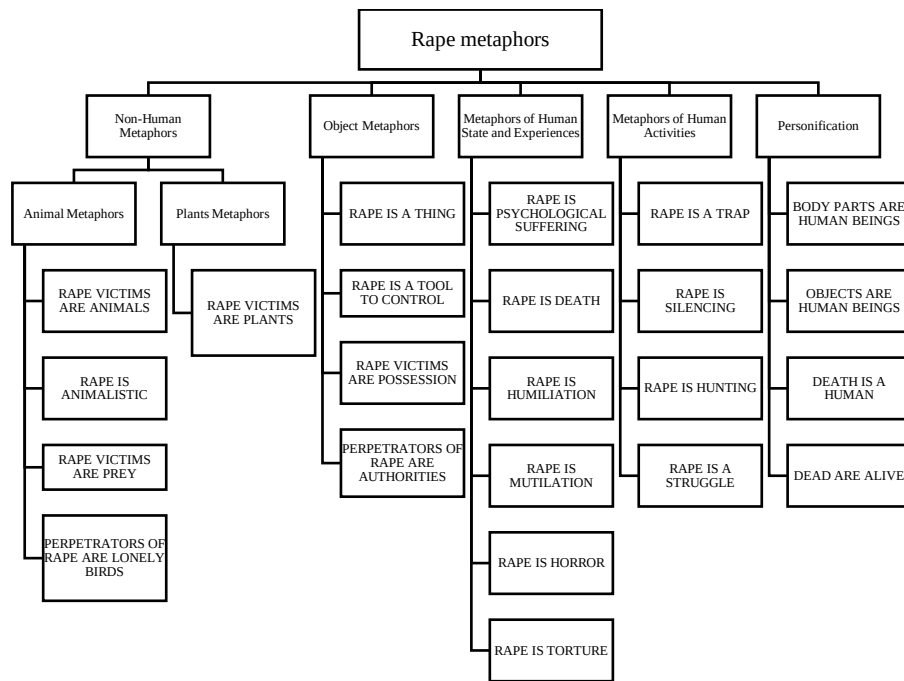


Figure 4.1: Representation of metaphor categories and underlying conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*

4.3 Non-Human Metaphors

Animals occur repeatedly in human speech, conveying multiple feelings and thoughts (Kellert & Kellert, 1997). The human need for metaphoric expression finds its greatest fulfillment through reference to the animal kingdom (Lawrence, 1993). Thus, symbolic images of animals enable humans to objectify qualities and traits (Shepard, 1978). Kovecses (2010) reiterates that relationships through attributes and behavior are the case for humans and animals or vice versa. The current study finds the patterns of metaphorical expressions consisting of non-human attributions to rape victims and the perpetrators of rape, as detailed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Animal Metaphors

Since human thoughts and behavior are expressed through the use of a variety of animals and the latter's behavior (Kovecses, 2010; Shepard, 1978), the current study indicates that rape victims and the perpetrators of rape are metaphorically represented as animals, having specific animalistic behavior, prey, birds, and plants. It has been described through the following conceptual metaphors.

(1) RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS

The conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS has been used frequently in *TLB* to depict rape victims. The characteristics, behavior, and the human usage of animals are used to portray rape and rape victims' experiences. For instance, in the utterance, "The dark earth surrounding ... moist dirt where worms and animals lived their daily lives. I could have yelled for hours. I knew he was going to kill me. I did not realize then that I was an *animal* [emphasis added] already dying" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14); the use of the noun *animal* is metaphoric. Herein, the personal pronoun *I* refers to Susie, the rape victim, and the noun *animal* characterizes Susie as an animal. Similarly, in the utterance, "In newspaper photos of missing girls from the seventies, most looked like me: white girls with *mousy* [emphasis added] brown hair" (Sebold, 2002, p. 5), the hair of the girls who were abducted and raped is described through the use of the descriptive adjective *mousy*, which refers to the characteristics of a mouse.

Moreover, the beating of a rape victim's heart is compared with a rabbit, as in the utterance, "Mr. Harvey made me lie still underneath him and listen to the beating of his heart and the beating of mine. How mine skipped like a *rabbit* [emphasis added], and how his thudded, a hammer against cloth" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14). The concrete noun *rabbit* depicts the speed of

the victim's heartbeat since a rabbit is identified for its fast speed. Overall, the metaphorical expressions in the given utterances show that rape victims are represented as animals.

(2) RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC

Extending the concept that rape victims are metaphorically constructed as animals, the metaphor RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC describes the details of the animalistic behavior of a perpetrator in a rape event. For example, in the utterance, "Susie! Susie! I heard my mother calling. Dinner is ready. He was inside me. He was *grunting* [emphasis added]. We're having string beans and lamb. I was the mortar, he was the pestle" (Sebold, 2002 p. 14), the progressive verb *grunting* is metaphorically used. In the literal sense, *grunting* is associated with the sounds of animals, especially of a pig, showing their effort or indicating assent. In the given utterance, the word *grunting* is used to denote the sound of Mr. Harvey, the rapist, while he was raping Susie. In another instance, the noun phrase *worms and animals* as in "the dark earth surrounding us smelled like what it was, moist dirt where *worms and animals* [emphasis added] lived their daily lives. I could have yelled for hours" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14), depicts the rape event as an animalistic activity and the rape victim and the perpetrator as animals. In literal terms, worms and animals are natural inhabitants of the earth. The finding of the rape victim and the perpetrator among them while the perpetrator was raping the young victim in a hole in the ground marks the metaphorical use of the phrase. In addition, the finding of Susie's elbow by a dog depicts the similarities and joint actions between animals and rape victims, as well as the animalistic details of a rape event. For example, the finding of Susie's bone by a dog, as in the utterance, "Dad, I want you to tell me what it was. Which body part, and then I'm going to need

to throw up ... It was an elbow. Gilbert's *dog* [emphasis added] found it" (Sebold, 2002, pp. 22–23), reveals the association between rape victims and animals.

(3) RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY

Rape victims are metaphorically constructed as prey as represented through the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY. The metaphorical understanding of rape victims brings how the perpetrators treat rape victims. In *TLB*, the metaphorical patterns of constructing rape victims as prey occur repeatedly. For example, the utterance "[i]n the hours after I was murdered, as my mother made phone calls ... door to door in the neighborhood ... Mr. Harvey had collapsed the hole in the cornfield and carried away a sack filled with my *body parts* [emphasis added]" (Sebold, 2002, p. 49) describes what happened to Susie after her rape and murder. The noun phrase—body parts—literally refers to the parts of a body. However, in the given utterance, the phrase is used as a metaphor denoting the cutting of the young rape victim Susie into pieces as a prey is cut before consumption.

Moreover, in the utterance, "[a]s she brought prospective buyers through, the realtor said it was an oil stain, but it was me, seeping out of the *bag* [emphasis added] Mr. Harvey carried and spilling onto the concrete" (Sebold, 2002, pp. 49–50), the concrete noun bag depicts an entity that is used to hold and store some household items (e.g., grocery, books, etc.). On the other hand, in the given utterance, the bag is used to carry the pieces of Susie's body that the perpetrator had cut. Thus, the metaphorical use of the noun bag describes the similarities drawn between a rape victim and prey as both of them are cut into pieces and packed in.

(4) PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE LONELY BIRDS

The perpetrators of rape are dangerous, lonely birds, as the metaphor PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE LONELY BIRDS reflects in *TLB*. The sea-bird penguin is depicted as Mr. Harvey, the rapist and murderer. For example, in the utterance, “Inside the globe on my father’s desk, there was a penguin ... When I was little my father would pull me into his lap and reach for the snow globe ... the *penguin* [emphasis added] was alone in there” (Sebold, 2002, p. 6), the noun penguin refers to Mr. Harvey as alone, sinister, and destructive, while, on the other hand, a penguin is a sea bird that swims but cannot fly, refers to loyalty, love, and affection. Hence, the word penguin is a metaphorical expression in the utterance. Similarly, the word penguin is used in the utterance, “I thought, and I worried for him. When I told my father this, he said, [d]on’t worry, Susie; *he* [emphasis added] has a nice life” (Sebold, 2002, p. 6) to denote Mr. Harvey’s qualities of comfortable living which implies bringing the rape victim Susie closer to the rapist.

4.3.2 Plants Metaphors

The following metaphors are about the representation of rape, rape victims, and the perpetrators of rape in terms of plants in Sebold’s *TLB*.

(1) RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS

As rape is constructed through animals and animalistic behavior patterns, it is also constructed through the similarities between rape victims and the parts of plants and plants. For example, the use of the verb rooted in “I was cold, but the natural authority of his age, and the added fact that he was a neighbor and had talked to my father about fertilizer, *rooted* [emphasis added] me to the spot” (Sebold, 2002, p. 7) is metaphoric since it depicts the rape victim Susie’s

firmness, inability to move and escape from the rape event which caused her abrupt end. In the literal sense, the verb rooted is associated with plants as it is a part of a plant that helps it grow and stay stronger.

4.4 Object Metaphors

Object and substance metaphors are essential in language, thought, and cognition (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Through the metaphors of objects, Kovecses (2010) describes that abstract ideas are constructed, such as the ideas and notions we conceive, the actions we do, the emotions we feel, and the perceptions we detect. More importantly, there is no other way to conceive and express our experiences of the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In the current study, the following object metaphors of rape have been identified in *TLB*.

(1) RAPE IS A THING

The metaphor RAPE IS A THING conceptualizes rape as a thing, a concrete object. In the text of *TLB*, the metaphor is constantly used. For instance, in the utterance "... missing girls ... This was before kids of all races and genders ... It was still back when people believed *things* [emphasis added] like that didn't happen" (Sebold, 2002, p. 5), the noun things refers to the events of abduction, rape, and murder of young girls and kids in the context of the novel. However, in general terms, the word thing is abstract and hiding since it denotes a product or part of nature that is not named. On the other hand, the lexical choice of things in the utterance is used as a metaphor for depicting rape events. Besides, in a different utterance, "I fought hard ... as hard as I could ... I was soon lying down on the ground ... I thought it was the worst *thing* [emphasis added] in the world to be lying flat on my back with a sweating man on top of me" (Sebold, 2002, p. 12) is used to depict Susie's experiences of physical and mental torture when

Mr. Harvey savagely raped her in a hole in the ground. Therefore, the noun thing is again metaphorically used to construct rape and rape victims' experiences.

(2) RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL

Rape is also metaphorically constructed in terms of the tools, instruments, and agencies that are used to exert power and control rape victims. The metaphor RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL can be mapped through the use of the lexical choice of inside in Susie's utterance, "He was *inside* [emphasis added] me. He was grunting ... I was the mortar, he was the pestle" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14) that refers to the inhabitation, overcome and complete control of the rape victim's body. On the other hand, in general terms, the word inside means within something. In a different example, the adjective still comprises the use of a metaphor, as in, "Mr. Harvey made me lie *still underneath* [emphasis added] him and listen to the beating of his heart and the beating of mine" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14), which denotes the perpetrator's control over the victim. Herein, the adjective still portrays something that is not moving. Moreover, in the same utterance, the adverb underneath is also metaphorically used to show the dominance and control of the victim as she is lying flat on her back. The perpetrator is on top of her and raping her inside a hole in the ground. Conversely, in general terms, the adverb underneath states something directly situated below something, irrespective of referring to someone's dominance, power, and control.

(3) RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION

The conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION is evident in the text of *TLB*. For instance, in the utterance, "I want to check that you're still a virgin ... I want to make sure. Your parents will thank me ... they only want good girls ... please let me leave ... you aren't leaving Susie. You're *mine* [emphasis added] now" (Sebold, 2002, p. 12); the use of the

pronoun mine points to what the perpetrator possesses. The possessive pronoun denotes Susie's possession. Mr. Harvey declares it when he rapes Susie in a hole in the cornfield. Since Mr. Harvey declares Susie as his possession, he starts executing his power and authority over her as he orders Susie, "you aren't leaving." Moreover, Mr. Harvey's order thus reiterates Susie's possession and indicates that Susie is not free now; she will follow what is ordered. In other words, Susie is metaphorically constructed as an entity that belongs to Mr. Harvey. He has rights over Susie. Conversely, in literal terms, the pronoun mine indicates when something belongs to the speaker, irrespective of someone's oppression and subjugation.

Similarly, the lexical choice of the verb—want—in "[d]on't, Mr. Harvey, I managed, and I kept saying that one word a lot. *Don't*. And I said *Please* a lot too. I *want* [emphasis added] you Susie, he said" (Sebold, 2002, p. 13) metaphorically constructs Susie as Mr. Harvey's possession. In general terms, the verb (i.e., want) refers to wishing, desiring, and polite requests. However, in the given context, the verb indicates an exercise of power, force, fear, and control. Therefore, possessing a human being, a rape victim in the current context, marks the metaphorical use of the verb—want—that comprises the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION.

(4) PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE AUTHORITIES

The current study indicated that the perpetrators of rape are constructed as supreme authorities in the discourse of *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, "The only sound I made after that was the weak tinkling of the bells. As he *kissed* [emphasis added] his wet lips down on my face and neck and then began to *shove* [emphasis added] his hands up *under my shirt* [emphasis added], I wept" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14); the word kissed functioned as a verb denoting the action

of kissing, which literally means love and greetings. However, in the given utterance, the perpetrator's action of kissing refers to the execution of his power and authority over the rape victim. Therefore, the word kissed is a metaphor in the situational context. Also, the verb shove and the noun phrase under my shirt denote the perpetrator's control and authority over the victims; he follows his whims of doing whatever he wants to do with the victim. Thus, these linguistic instances show that the perpetrator of rape has been metaphorically constructed in terms of power and authority.

4.5 Metaphors of Human State and Experiences

Metaphors frame how we see and interpret the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Every metaphor thus has the potential to highlight some aspects of our experiences (Lawlor, 1984). Rape victims experience several states, including mental and physical trauma, pain, death, social isolation, stress, and suffering (Campbell & Wasco, 2005; Chivers-Wilson, 2006; Sigurdardottir & Halldosdottir, 2021; Tenaw et al., 2022). In the discourse of *TLB*, the human states and experiences of rape victims are psychological suffering, death, humiliation, mutilation, horror, and torture. Therefore, the following conceptual metaphors of rape victims' states and experiences are found in the text.

(1) RAPE IS PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING

As discussed, rape has both physical and mental effects on rape victims that result in the constant pain and suffering of the victims even in their post-assault life experiences. In *TLB*, the construction of rape as psychological suffering can be mapped. For instance, in the utterance, "My name was Salmon, like the fish; first name, Susie. I was *fourteen* [emphasis added] when I was murdered on December 6, 1973" (Sebold, 2002, p. 5), the lexical choice of fourteen

describes Susie's age when she was raped and killed. In the given utterance, the use of the lexical choice fourteen is metaphorical in the situational context because it stands for Susie's dreams, wishes, and new experiences in her daily life, like joining a high school, being called Suzanne, wearing hair feathered or up in the bun, reaching a queenly status (Sebold, 2002, pp. 16–17). Therefore, the mention of the age—fourteen—refers to Susie's abrupt end at an early age—at the point of age when she had a lot of things to do and several wishes to be completed. Hence, in the given context, Susie's age reveals her inabilities that cause her pain and psychological suffering. Otherwise, in literal terms, the word fourteen is merely a number, and it is used for quantification purposes.

Furthermore, the lexical choice of wish and its other forms, such as wishing and wished, have repeatedly been used in *TLB*, which adds to the psychological suffering of the rape victim. For example, in the utterance, "Lindsey walked through the hallways and in and out of the rows of lockers ... I *wished* [emphasis added] I could walk with her, mimic the principal and the ways he always started out a meeting in the auditorium" (Sebold, 2002, p. 30), the verb wished describes what Susie thinks about her younger sister Lindsey in her (Susie's) heaven. Herein, the lexical choice of wished refers to Susie's wants and wishes and, thus, shows her inability to do the desired things, resulting in Susie's psychological suffering. On the other hand, in literal terms, the word wish is associated with unattainable solid desires but not necessarily pain and psychological suffering. Therefore, the linguistic choices (e.g., fourteen, wished) are used metaphorically to construct the metaphor RAPE IS PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING in *TLB*.

(2) RAPE IS DEATH

Studies show that rape victims are not only brutally raped but killed as one of the consequences of rape (Smith, 2010; Zara et al., 2022). The construction of rape in terms of death can be mapped in *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “It felt harder even than frozen earth, which was pretty hard. It’s *wood* [emphasis added], Mr. Harvey said. It keeps the entrance from *collapsing* [emphasis added]. Other than that, it’s all *made out of earth* [emphasis added] ... both inside the hole” (Sebold, 2002, p. 9); the *hole* in which Susie was raped and murdered has been described through the lexical choices of wood, collapsing, and earth. Literally, the noun hole means an opening through something, a pit, or a well in the ground, but in the given utterance, the word hole is metaphorically used to depict a grave. For this, the noun phrase wood reinforcement as in the utterance, “I was in transit during this. I didn’t get to see him sweat it out, remove the *wood reinforcement* [emphasis added], bag any evidence along with my body parts, except that elbow” (Sebold, 2002, p. 10) is used for the piece of wood used to cover a grave, and made out of the earth refers to the lower parts of the grave made of earth. Thus, the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS DEATH emerges.

Also, in a different utterance, rape is metaphorically constructed as death. For example, the utterance, “Why don’t you get up? Mr. Harvey said as he rolled to the side and then crouched over me ... I *could not move* [emphasis added], I *could not get up* [emphasis added]. When I would not ... he leaned to the side ... brought back his knife” (Sebold, 2002, p. 15) metaphorically indicates the state of Susie’s death. In the present context, the two phrases—could not move and could not get up—show that after the rape, Susie could not move and get up. However, in the literal sense, the inability to move and get up is a general human state and

experience in their daily lives. Therefore, these lexical choices metaphorically construct rape as a death in the discourse of *TLB*.

(3) RAPE IS HUMILIATION

As discussed, rape is not limited to only the physical degradation and destruction of a rape victim, but it severely impacts the victim's life in many other ways—one of them is humiliating a rape victim (Darke, 1990; Weiss, 2010). The metaphorical construction of rape as humiliation can be seen in several instances in the text of *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “I fought as hard as I could not let Mr. Harvey hurt me ... I was soon lying down on the ground ... with him on top of me *panting* [emphasis added] and *sweating* [emphasis added] having lost his glasses in the struggle” (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), the lexical choices of panting, and sweating are used as metaphors to denote Susie's state of humiliation while Mr. Harvey was raping her in a hole in the ground. The words—panting and sweating—describe Mr. Harvey's physical condition when he was on top of Susie during the rape event. Even though they are used to denote human conditions in everyday life experiences, in the present context, they are metaphorically used to exhibit Susie's humiliation as a man is sitting on top of her, raping her, and panting and sweating.

Further, in the utterance, “As he kissed his wet lips down my face and neck ... shove his hands up under my shirt ... I wept ... He *ripped open* [emphasis added] my pants, not having found the invisible zipper my mother had artfully sewn into their side” (Sebold, 2002, p. 14), the phrase ripped open describes the opening of Susie's pants exposing how badly she was attacked and tortured, and her pants were torn while the pants were opened by the perpetrator Mr. Harvey. The opening of the pants and exposing someone's private body parts is an act that

leads to the affected one's shame and humiliation. In the present context, the opening of Susie's pants is associated with her shame, degradation, and humiliation. Moreover, in the utterance, "*Big white panties* [emphasis added], he said. I felt huge and bloated" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14), the lexical choice—big white panties—is not merely used to describe the inner clothing Susie was wearing at that time, but they metaphorically depict Susie's shame and humiliation since her private clothes and parts are exposed to someone, Mr. Harvey, the rapist, and serial killer. Therefore, the words and phrases (e.g., panting, sweating, ripped open, and panties) show the metaphorical construction of rape as rape victims' humiliation.

(4) RAPE IS MUTILATION

In the text of *TLB*, rape is constantly constructed in terms of mutilation. For instance, in the utterance, "Jackie Meyer ... Thirteen ... A chair knocked over ... lying curled toward it, she wore a striped T-shirt and nothing else. Near her head, a small *pool of blood* [emphasis added]" (Sebold, 2002, p. 181), the phrase—pool of blood—is metaphorically used to denote how rape victims are physically tortured. Even though, in literal terms, the word pool is associated with water, in the situational context of the utterance, it is associated with blood, more specifically, the blood of a rape victim who was raped and murdered by Mr. Harvey. Literally, a pool contains a lot of water which metaphorically implies that a lot of blood was there where the rape event happened. Thus, the phrase pool of the blood metaphorically portrays the rape victim's volumes of pain and suffering, and mutilation.

In another instance, a rape victim was cut into pieces, as the utterance, "Flora Hernandez ... Eight ... He'd only wanted to touch her, but she screamed. A small girl for her age. Her left sock and shoe were found later. The body, unrecovered. The *bones* [emphasis added] lay in the

earthen basement of an old apartment house” (Sebold, 2002, p. 181) describes. Herein, the concrete noun—bones—refers to the dismemberment of the victim’s body. On the other hand, in its literal use, the bones are the parts of a human body. Moreover, in the utterance, “Wendy Richter ... Thirteen. She was waiting for her father outside the bar. He raped her in the *bushes* [emphasis added] and then strangled her” (Sebold, 2002, p. 182), the lexical choice of bushes is metaphorical as it refers to the mutilation of the rape victim. Literally, the word bush means a shrub that has stems of moderate length, but in the context of *TLB*, it is used as a site of rape where the rape victim was savagely raped and then brutally killed. Overall, the lexical choices (e.g., pool of blood, bones, bush) help construct the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS MUTILATION.

(5) RAPE IS HORROR

Rape is also conceptualized in terms of horror in *TLB*. For example, in the utterance “Flora Hernandez ... Eight ... He’d only wanted to touch her, but she screamed. A small girl for her age. Her left *sock* [emphasis added] and *shoe* [emphasis added] were found later. The body, unrecovered. The bones lay in the earthen basement of an old apartment house” (Sebold, 2002, p. 181); the concrete nouns sock and shoe are used as metaphorical expressions. Herein, the sock and shoe are the personal belonging of the rape victim of eight years old who was raped and killed by Mr. Harvey. In the situational context of the utterance, the words (sock, shoe) create fear and horror, leading to what happened with the girl since only the two things from her had been retrieved. Besides, in another utterance, “Leah Fox ... Twelve. On a slipcovered couch under a highway on-ramp, he killed her very quietly. He fell asleep on top of her ... Mr. Harvey ... did he begin to *pack* [emphasis added] himself and Leah Fox’s body up” (Sebold, 2002, p.

181); the action verb pack has been used for the packaging of a human body, specifically, the body of a rape victim. However, in the literal sense, the verb pack refers to packing household items for several purposes (e.g., leaving home). Nevertheless, in the present context, it relates to packing a human body—that was cut into pieces during a brutal rape event. Overall, the metaphorical expressions (i.e., sock, shoe, and pack) in the given utterances construct the conceptual metaphor of RAPE IS HORROR.

(6) RAPE IS TORTURE

Rape is a form of torture as it is metaphorically conceptualized in the discourse of *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “He made me feel skeevy and icky now that he was blocking the door. Mr. Harvey, I really have to get home. *Take off your clothes* [emphasis added] ... Mr. Harvey said. I want to check that you’re still a virgin” (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), the act of taking clothes off is metaphorically represented, and it conceptualizes a rape victim’s torture. In the situational context of the utterance, the rape victim Susie was ordered to take her clothes off before she was raped and killed by Mr. Harvey. In a literal sense, taking clothes off is a part of humans’ daily lives. However, in the present context, the activity depicts the young rape victim’s torture and humiliation, too, as she was forced to take her clothes off in the presence of the perpetrator. Hence the act of rape is metaphorically constructed as a form of torture that the perpetrators use while raping the victims.

Also, in the utterance, “Mr. Harvey started to *press* [emphasis added] his lips against mine. They were blubbery and wet and I wanted to scream but I was too afraid and too exhausted from the fight” (Sebold, 2002, p. 13), the lexical choice—press—is used as a metaphorical expression depicting the rape victim’s torture and degradation. The situational context of the

utterance facilitates that the word press includes the perpetrator's force while, on the other hand, the victim's resistance. Nevertheless, in literal terms, pressing lips means kissing, which stands for love and affection. Thus, rape is metaphorically conceptualized as a rape victim's torture.

4.6 Metaphors of Human Activities

Conceptual metaphors have source domains rooted in the patterns of human actions that underlie people's use and understanding of conventional expressions (Wilson & Gibbs, 2007). The current study shows the metaphorical expressions in the discourse of *TLB* that represent rape in terms of human actions and activities such as trapping, silencing, hunting, fighting, and attacking. Based on the activities, the following conceptual metaphors have emerged.

(1) RAPE IS A TRAP

Rape can also be conceptualized as a human action and the activity of trapping someone/something. In the text of *TLB*, the metaphor RAPE IS A TRAP is evident. For instance, in the utterance "What is it? I asked. I was no longer cold or weirded out by the look he had given me. I was like I was in science class: I was *curious* [emphasis added]. Come and see" (Sebold, 2002, p. 9), the lexical choice of the adjective *curious* describes Susie's state of emotions and feelings. In a literal sense, the word *curious* stands for excitement. However, in the given utterance, it is metaphorically used as one of the strategies to trap the rape victim, Susie. The immediate context of the utterance informs that Mr. Harvey built a hole by employing several exciting architectural ideas. By looking at the architectural details of the hole, Susie became excited and curious to know about the engineering used. Susie's curiosity about knowing the details, thus, made her forget escaping from the hole that was purposefully built by the perpetrator Mr. Harvey to trap, rape, and kill the kids in the neighborhood. Therefore, the

metaphorical expression curious helps emerge the metaphor RAPE IS A TRAP. Moreover, the expressions—I was so amazed, getting out of the hole wasn't even on my mind—in the utterances, “it was awkward to get into ... the hole. But *I was so amazed* [emphasis added] by how he had made a chimney that would draw smoke out ... the awkwardness of *getting in and out of the hole wasn't even on my mind*” [emphasis added], and I was my brother Buckley in “I completely reverted. *I was my brother Buckley* [emphasis added] on our day-trip to the Museum of Natural History in New York, where he'd fallen in love with the huge skeletons on display” (Sebold, 2002, p. 9) also contribute to the metaphorical construction of rape as an activity of trapping rape victims.

(2) RAPE IS SILENCING

In the text of *TLB*, rape is also metaphorically constructed as the act of silencing rape victims. For example, in the utterance, “But he grew tired of hearing me *plead* [emphasis added]. He reached into the pocket of my parka and balled up the hat ... smashing it into my *mouth* [emphasis added]. The only sound I made after that was the weak tinkling of bells” (Sebold, 2002, p. 13); the noun mouth is used as a metaphorical expression constructing rape in terms of an act of silencing rape victims. Literally, the noun mouth means a body part through which food is taken. Conversely, in the situational context of the utterance, the word mouth refers explicitly to the rape victim Susie's mouth in which the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey, forcibly inserted a piece of cloth so she could not utter any sound by crying, speaking, and requesting. Similarly, the word plead (Sebold, 2002, p. 13) is metaphorically used. Since Susie was pleading to Mr. Harvey to leave and let her go; however, for Mr. Harvey, her pleading is nothing more than a disturbing sound. Consequently, he puts a piece of cloth in the victim's mouth to stop the

sound and to silence Susie. On the other hand, literally, the word plead refers to an appeal that helps convince people. Thus, the use of lexical choices (e.g., mouth, plead) construct the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS SILENCING.

(3) RAPE IS HUNTING

The human activity of hunting helps us understand the conceptualization of rape in *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “Be polite and have a Coke, he said. I’m sure the other kids would. What other kids? I built this for the kids in the neighborhood. I thought it could be some sort of *clubhouse*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 11); the concrete noun clubhouse indicates the use of a metaphorical expression. In literal terms, a clubhouse is a club where club members meet and have social events. However, in the present context, the word clubhouse is used as a site for hunting children to rape and kill. Besides, in a different utterance, “I talked ... He made me feel skeezy and icky now that he was *blocking* [emphasis added] the door. Mr. Harvey, I really have to get home” (Sebold, 2002, p. 11) the progressive verb blocking is used as a metaphor. The verb blocking in the situational context of the utterance means stopping and eliminating the possibility of the escape of the hunted child so the perpetrator could rape and kill her without any failure. However, in literal terms, the verb blocking refers to the actions of closing (e.g., a door).

Moreover, in the utterance, “Jackie Meyer. Delaware, 1967. Thirteen ... Flora Hernandez. Delaware, 1963. Eight ... Leah Fox. Delaware, 1969. Twelve ... Sophie Cichetti, Pennsylvania, 1960. Forty-nine ... Leidia Johnson. 1960. Six ... Wendy Richter. Connecticut, 1971. Thirteen” (Sebold, 2002, pp. 181–182), the names of the hunted, raped, and killed women and children are metaphorically listed. In general terms, listing refers to maintaining information

on people, items, and activities (e.g., shopping) to be retrieved easily. However, in the context of the novel, the perpetrator plans the initiative of hunting, raping, and killing women and children by listing their names, age, and address. Thus, rape in the text of *TLB* has been metaphorically constructed through the human activity of hunting.

(4) RAPE IS A STRUGGLE

Rape is metaphorically represented as a struggle in the text of *TLB*. For instance, in the utterances, “I *fought* [emphasis added] as hard as I could not to let Mr. Harvey hurt me ... I was soon *lying down* [emphasis added] on the ground ... with him on top of me panting and sweating, having lost his glasses in the *struggle*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), and “Mr. Harvey started to press his lips against mine. They were blubbery and wet and I wanted to scream but I was too afraid and too *exhausted* [emphasis added] from the *fight*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 13), the lexical choices (e.g., struggle, lying down, fought, and exhausted) are the metaphorical expressions used to construct rape in terms of a struggle. However, a phrase like lying down literally depicts a human activity of lying. Nevertheless, in the situational context of the utterance, the lexical choice lying down refers to the rape victim’s loss and defeat. Accordingly, the linguistic choices (e.g., struggle, lying down, fought, exhausted, and fight) help construct the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS A STRUGGLE.

4.7 Personification

Personification involves a cross-domain mapping where an object or entity “is further specified as being a person” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 33). In other words, personification occurs when animals, objects, social organizations, and abstract notions are given qualities of people (Graesser et al., 1989). The current study identifies personification metaphors, animating

body parts, objects, and death and exhibiting rape, rape events, and rape victims' experiences in *TLB*. Based on the metaphorical expressions in the text of *TLB*, the following conceptual metaphors are categorized.

(1) BODY PARTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS

Rape victims' body parts are constructed as human agents performing specific actions in the text of *TLB*. For instance, in the utterance, "I was aware that Mr. Harvey was looking at me strangely ... His glasses were small and round with gold frames, and his *eyes looked out over them and at me*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 8); the noun eyes acted as looking. Literally, the eyes cannot act for looking—a human being acts by looking through the eyes. However, in the situational context of the given utterance, Mr. Harvey's eyes independently perform the action of looking like a human being when he rapes Susie in a hole in the ground. Moreover, in another utterance, "All evidence points to your daughter's death. I'm very sorry. The uniformed officer had been staring to the right of *my father's pleading eyes*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 29); the phrase pleading eyes is used as a personification metaphor since Susie's father's eyes have been assigned human qualities to act—the act of pleading. However, the act of pleading is associated with human beings. Moreover, "It was the picture. A deep breath rushed out of her ... her mouth still open and her *hand still holding the picture* [emphasis added]. The tethers were rushing and whipping around her, like a canvas tent come loose from its stakes" (Sebold, 2002, p. 44); the concrete noun hand is used as a personification metaphor as it is acting (i.e., holding a picture). However, acting is a human attribute. Based on the metaphorical uses of the lexical choices (e.g., eyes, hand), the personification BODY PARTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS emerges in *TLB*.

(2) OBJECTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS

The objects are also attributed to human qualities. They are accordingly used as personifications to expose the metaphorical constructions of rape, rape events, and rape victims' painful experiences in the text of *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “[h]e had placed matches, a row of batteries, and a battery-powered fluorescent lamp that cast the only light in the room—an *eerie light that would make his features hard to see when he was on top of me*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 10), the phrase *eerie light* is used as a personification metaphor since the light is described as *eerie*—referring to strange and frightening. Being strange and frightening, the only light in the hole intensified Susie’s fear. Additionally, the light was performing the human action of hiding—by making the perpetrator’s physical details unrecognizable—corresponding to assisting the assailant. In a different instance, the word *knife* is used as a personification, in which it is given the human qualities of smiling. In the utterance, “... he leaned to the side and felt ... He brought back a knife. Unsheathed, *it smiled at me* [emphasis added], curving up in a grin. He took the hat from my mouth. Tell me you love me, he said. ... The end came anyway” (Sebold, 2002, p. 15); the pronoun—it—refers to the knife that smiles when Mr. Harvey uses it to murder Susie after raping her. Overall, the objects (e.g., light, knife) are used as personification metaphors to depict rape and the rape events underpinning the traumatic experiences of rape victims in *TLB*.

(3) DEATH IS A HUMAN

Death of rape victims, as one of the consequences of rape, is conceptualized as a human being in the text of *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “He took the hat from my mouth. Tell me you love me, he said. Gently, I did. *The end came anyway*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002,

p. 15); the lexical choices of the abstract noun (i.e., end) and the action verb (i.e., came) are contrary to each other since the end is an inanimate entity, and, thus, it cannot act as coming. In the literal sense, the word end signifies the final part of something, especially an activity or a story. However, in the situational context of the utterance, it is used to demonstrate Susie's death and metaphorically functions as coming marks as a use of personification. Besides, in the utterance, "He felt a calm flood him ... he felt thoughts of me then ... *My delicious death moan* [emphasis added]. The glorious white flesh that had never seen the sun, like an infant's, and then split, so perfectly, with the blade of his knife" (Sebold, 2002, p. 50), the abstract noun death has been assigned human traits of moaning that indicates a metaphorical expression. On the other hand, in the literal sense, the word death refers to the state of being dead. As such, the personification DEATH IS A HUMAN occurs in the discourse of *TLB*, which demonstrates that the death of rape victims is represented as human beings.

(4) DEAD ARE ALIVE

The dead rape victims are metaphorically represented as alive in *TLB*. The current study reveals the lexical choices used to represent the dead ones functioning as alive, which eventually helps construct the conceptual metaphor DEAD ARE ALIVE. For example, in the utterance, "When *I first entered heaven I thought* [emphasis added] everyone saw what I saw. That in everyone's heaven there were soccer goalposts in the distance and lumbering women throwing shot put and javelin" (Sebold, 2002, p. 16), the two lexical choices—heaven, and thought—are used to depict the dead rape victim as alive. Heaven religiously means a place above the sky, and only the dead people go there. On the other hand, in the given utterance, the word thought is associated with the actions of the dead rape victim, representing the act of thinking and, thus,

portraying the dead rape victim as alive. However, in literal terms, only living people can do the act of thinking. Additionally, the utterance “after I was dead, I thought” (Sebold, 2002, p. 6) metaphorically depicts the dead rape victim as alive. Consequently, the personification metaphor DEAD ARE ALIVE represents how a dead rape victim is reconstructed as alive to represent the details of rape, rape event, and rape victims’ experiences in *TLB*.

4.8 Analysis of Metaphors

The interpretation of meaning requires a set of other knowledge structures. It cannot be done by having only the linguistic meaning of the phenomenon; hence, meaning construction is a constructive process (Evans, 2010; Kreidler, 2013; Leech & Short, 2007). Therefore, the comprehensive meaning of metaphor requires both linguistic and conceptual knowledge (Bowdle, 2005; Coulson & Van Patten, 2007; Evans, 2013; Gentner & Bowdle, 2008). Moreover, the meaning of a metaphor is not merely a mapping between two concepts; it depends on various knowledge structures (Evans, 2009, 2010). In the current study, LCCM Theory (Evans, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) has been employed to interpret the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold’s (2002) *TLB*.

The study finds a variety of concepts in the form of source domains conceptualizing the phenomenon of rape in *TLB*. The key metaphoric concepts are animals, birds, plants, prey, objects, tools to control, possession, humiliation, mutilation, horror, trap, silencing, hunting, and struggle, as discussed in sections 4.2–4.7. The analysis of the conceptual metaphors based on these concepts is given below.

4.8.1 Non-Human Metaphors

Animal metaphors are potent tools to cognitively model and represent other agents (Hart & Long, 2011). More importantly, animal metaphors are used to construct social identities and are one of the primary mechanisms contributing to the diffusion and ingraining of folk beliefs (Lopez-Rodriguez, 2009). The current study finds the following conceptual metaphors of rape based on the theme of non-human entities and animals. The analysis of the metaphors is as follows.

4.8.1.1 Animal Metaphors

In the text of *TLB*, animal metaphors are used to depict rape and rape victims' experiences. The conceptual metaphors of rape constructing animal metaphors are discussed below.

(1) RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS

Rape victims are conceptualized in the terms of animals in *TLB*. For instance, in the utterance “I knew he was going to kill me. I did not realize then that I was an *animal* [emphasis added] already dying” (Sebold, 2002, p. 14), the rape victim Susie is directly depicted as an animal. Herein, the use of the words—the pronoun *I* and the concrete noun *animal*—is metaphorical since the personal pronoun *I*, in the given utterance, stands for the rape victim, Susie—a human being who cannot be literally an animal at the same time. Therefore, a clash arises in the primary cognitive models of the lexical choices *I* and *animal*. The lexical concepts of *I* and *animal* were further searched in their secondary models to resolve the clash. The lexical concept of *animal* gives access to the semantic potentials such as inhumanity, cruelty, treatment, animalistic behavior, and torturing, depending upon the context of the utterance. The situational

context of the utterance informs that Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, raped Susie in a hole in the cornfield. Thus, by accessing the secondary cognitive model profiles, the metaphorical expression (i.e., animal) means that Susie was dehumanized and treated as an animal by degrading, destructing, and inflicting physical and mental torture on her during her rape in the hole in the ground. A recent study on animal cruelty shows that animals are treated with cruelty and hatred, showing no emotions or affection (Akkaya & Gungor, 2022).

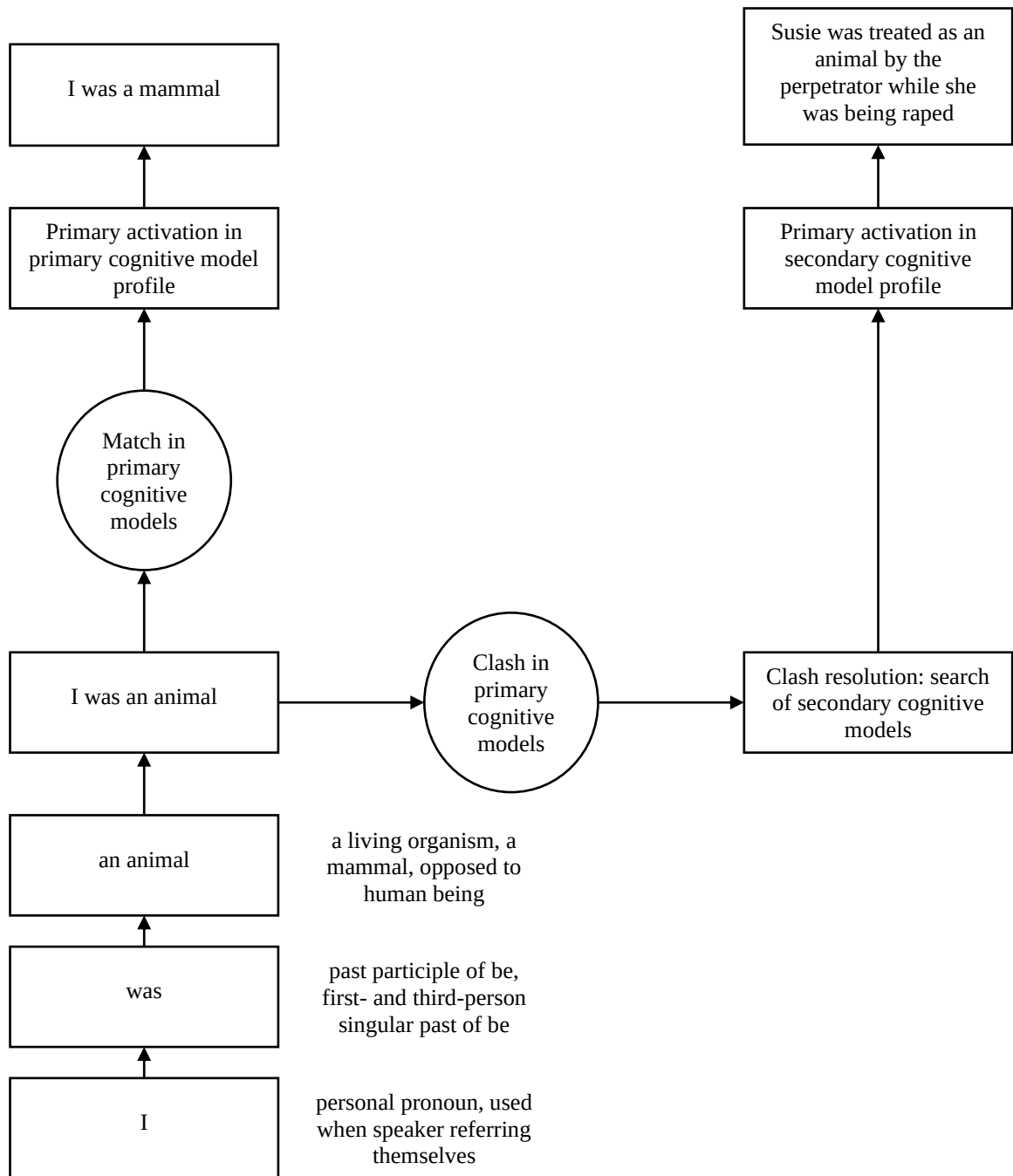


Figure 4.2: Meaning-construction in [I was an animal]

Consequently, since Susie is constructed in terms of an animal, she is not only brutally beaten but also savagely raped and cut into pieces as the animals are cut and consumed. On the whole, the metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS demonstrates the vulnerability of rape

victims and their treatment as animals that not only discards them as human beings but also makes them to be inhumanly treated, raped, and cut into tiny pieces. Jolly (1996), on this representation of rape and sexual violence, emphasizes that such narratives go beyond the safe representations of rape and violence against women and thus expose the reality of rape and the horrors embedded in rape victims' experiences. In addition, although both men and women are prone to animalization, the former is compared with fierce, giant, predatory beasts, whereas the latter is compared to docile, small, domestic creatures (Lopez-Rodriguez, 2009). Moreover, such social practices of conceptualizations envision men and women as animals and expose the horrors of rape and the pain and suffering of rape victims (Bock & Burkley, 2019; Gutmann, 2021; Rudman & Mescher, 2012).

(2) RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC

The details of rape events are mapped with animalistic activities in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*, and hence, the metaphor RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC emerges, showing the embedded horrific realities in a rape event. In the utterance "Susie! Susie! I heard my mother calling. Dinner is ready. He was inside me. He was *grunting* [emphasis added]. We're having string beans and lamb" (Sebold, 2002, p. 14), the lexical choice of the progressive verb *grunting* has been used as a metaphor constructing the perpetrator Mr. Harvey as an animal—and his animalistic behavior accordingly. Literally, the sound of *grunting* is associated with animals, especially with a pig—when the pig makes efforts or indicates assent, as discussed in section 4.3.1. Consequently, there is a clash in the primary cognitive profiles of the lexical concepts of *he*—Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, is a human being, and *grunting* is associated with animals and characterizes the animals' sounds. The secondary cognitive models are searched to resolve the

clash, and a match is found in sounds. The match shows that Mr. Harvey behaves animalistically; that is, he has no emotions or feelings toward Susie, resulting in the infliction of brutality and cruelty on her. Herein, the destruction of the rape victim includes not only her physical health but also her mental health as well. The lexical choices of concrete nouns *mother*, *dinner*, *string beans*, and *lamb* demonstrate that the utterance comprises two different events happening simultaneously—cooking and raping.

Moreover, thinking about her family members and their activities, Susie faces psychological trauma as she was brutally raped while, on the other hand, she should have been with her family. On the whole, referring to rape as an animalistic activity is also conceptualized by projecting the actions of cooking and raping together as the linguistic context of the utterance indicates that Susie's emotions are as crushed as the ingredients in cooking string beans and lamb.

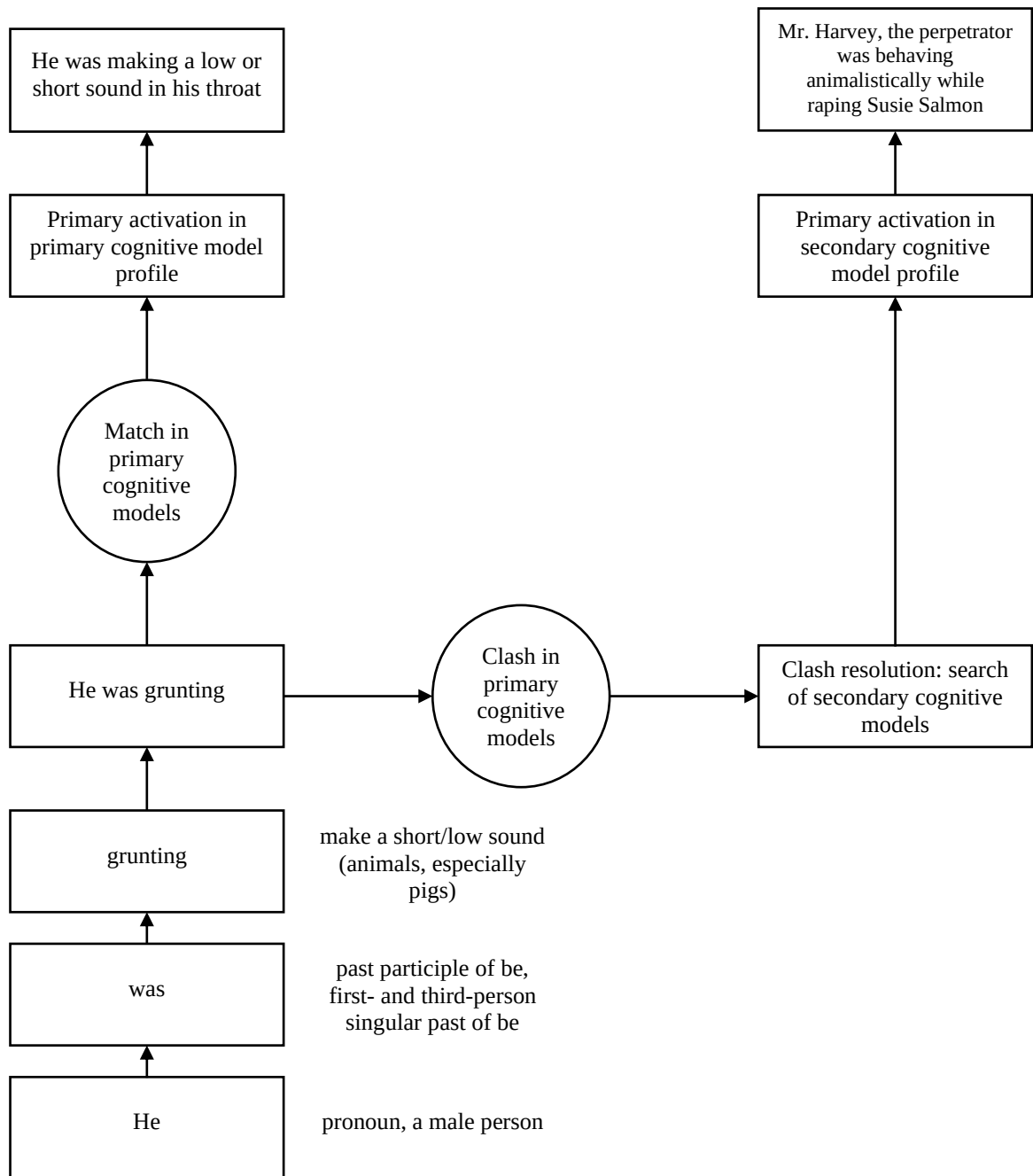


Figure 4.3: Meaning construction of [he was grunting]

The metaphor RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC shows how Susie was torn both mentally and physically, eventually leading to her savage rape and cutting into pieces (Sebold, 2002). The representation of rape as an animalistic behavior instantiates that rape and sexual violence once

break the traditional mold of the victim-perpetrator binary; it exposes the uncomfortable and shocking nature of sexual violence (Brownmiller, 1993; Higgins & Silver, 1991). Similarly, Lakoff and Turner (1989) add that animal metaphors are based on cultural models that locate the different forms of being human, animals, plants, and complex objects in a hierarchy built upon the attributes and behaviors of each form. In other words, Lopez-Rodriguez (2009) concludes that animal metaphors have a cognitive basis and are culturally motivated. Accordingly, they reflect a particular community's attitudes and beliefs toward certain animal species and may vary from culture to culture in time and space.

(3) RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY

The conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY has been seen repeatedly in the text of *TLB*. In the utterance “Mr. Harvey had collapsed the hole in the cornfield and carried away *a sack filled with my body parts*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 49), the phrase (i.e., a sack filled with my body parts) constructs the metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY. The mappings of the lexical concepts of a sack and my body parts in the primary cognitive models are mismatched; hence, a clash arises. Based on the linguistic context, the semantic potentials of the linguistic concept of a rape victim's body parts—as the personal pronoun *my* denotes Susie—emerge as killing, preying, torturing, and cutting into pieces. Therefore, in the secondary cognitive models of a rape victim's body parts, a match is found with preying and cutting into pieces, as prey—after being shot or killed—are cut into pieces and packed in. Thus, the utterance constructs rape victims as prey.

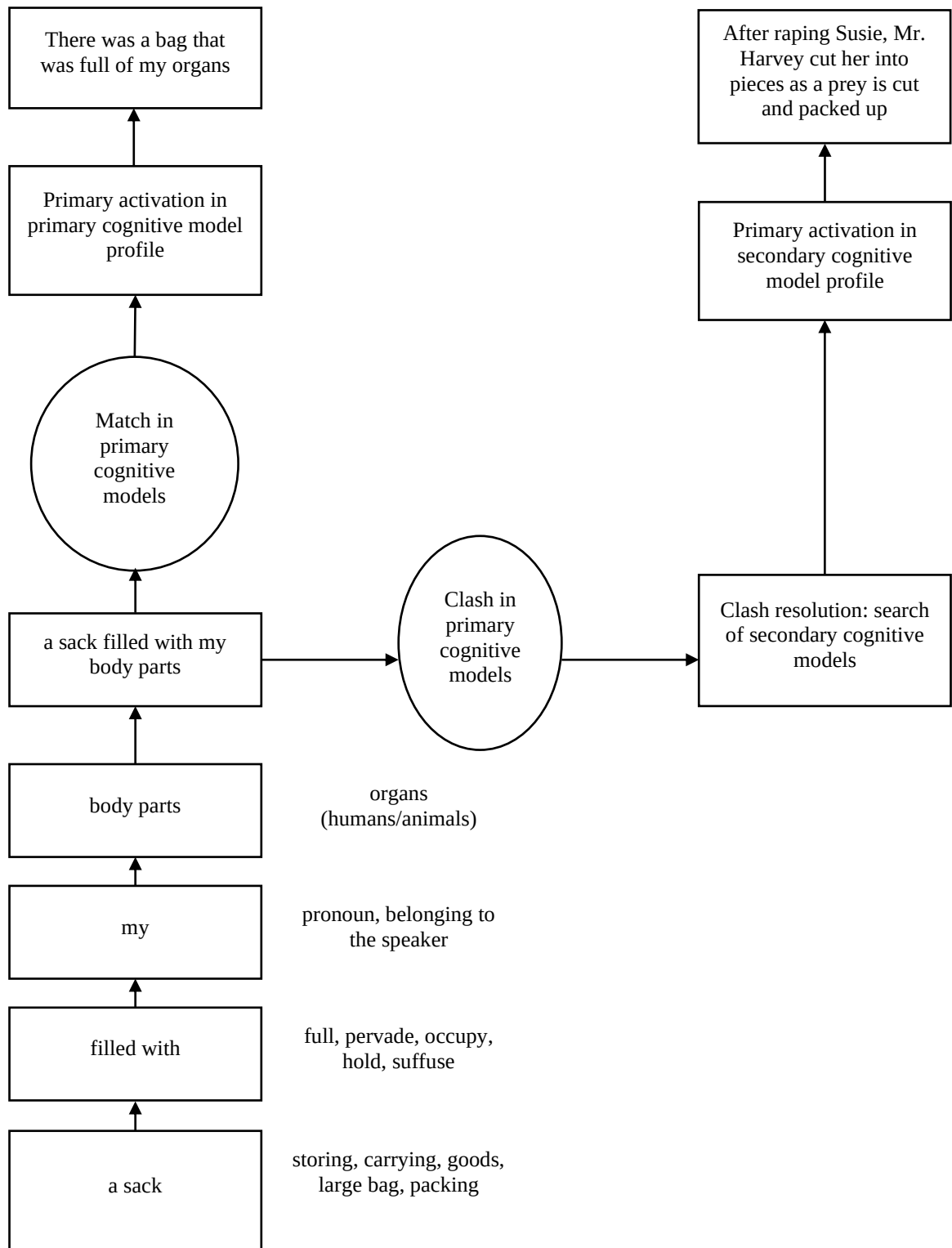


Figure 4.4: Meaning construction in [a sack filled with my body parts]

On the whole, the metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY reflects that rape victims are seen as inhuman and accordingly hunted as prey, tortured, raped, and eventually killed. The context of *TLB* reiterates the exercise of the metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY that Susie was first trapped in the hole in the cornfield while returning home from school, then brutally tortured, savagely raped, and then cut into tiny pieces (Sebold, 2002). Besides, on the revealing nature of animal metaphors, Nesi (1995) remarks that exploration of animal metaphors is necessary for a particular culture and language because the metaphors produce essential insights into the prevailing cultural model in that society. Such representations of rape play a significant role as a scenario in which the questions are posed about the figuration of the victim, the perpetrator, and, more importantly, the culture in which these representations emerge (Horeck, 2003).

(4) PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE LONELY BIRDS

Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, is metaphorically represented as a lonely sea bird (i.e., a penguin) in the discourse of *TLB*. For instance, based on the utterance “there was a penguin wearing red-and-white-striped scarf ... snow fall gently around the penguin ... *penguin was alone* [emphasis added] ... he has a nice life” (Sebold, 2002, p.3), the mappings between the penguin and Mr. Harvey are matched in the secondary cognitive models as the context of the utterance depicts the penguin as Mr. Harvey in terms of living alone, sinister, and destructive while a penguin is a sea-bird that represents loyalty and affection, as discussed in section 4.3.1. Since it is a penguin, Susie’s father brings Susie closer to it, which means closer to Mr. Harvey according to the linguistic context of the utterance: “Don’t worry Susie, he has a nice life.” Tragically, Susie was raped and killed by Mr. Harvey (Sebold, 2002).

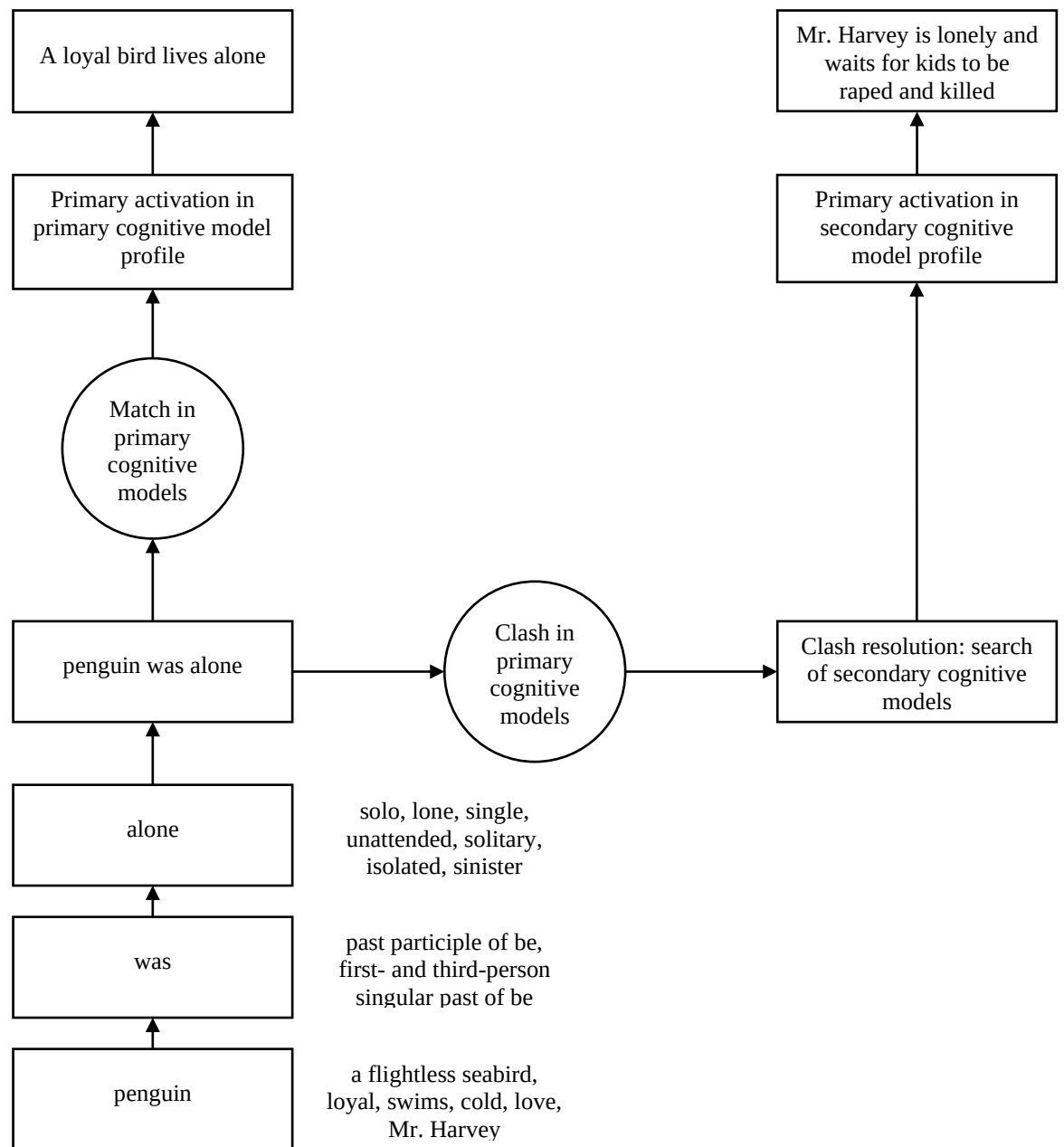


Figure 4.5: Meaning construction in [penguin was alone]

Overall, the metaphor PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE LONELY BIRDS suggests that the perpetrators of rape are disguised and cannot be identified easily. Moreover, Kovecses (2002) states that much of human behavior seems metaphorically understood in terms of animal

behavior. Thus, metaphors that construct humans as animals structure our thoughts about human behavior and its relevant aspects (Talebinejad & Dastjerdi, 2005).

4.8.1.2 Plants Metaphors

In the text of *TLB*, rape victims and the perpetrators are also metaphorically constructed as plants. The following conceptual metaphors of rape show the constructions.

(1) RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS

The metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS represents rape victims as plants and trees in the text of *TLB*. For example, in the utterance, “I was cold, but the natural authority of his age, and the added fact that he was a neighbor and had talked to my father about fertilizer, *rooted me to the spot*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 7), the linguistic choice of the phrase *rooted me to the spot* constructed the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS. The emergence of the metaphor is due to the mappings being matched in the secondary cognitive models of linguistic concepts of rape victims and plants. In the given example, the semantic potential of the word root means firmness, inability to move, and inability to escape or leave the place. Thus, Susie, the rape victim, is represented as a plant or a tree since the roots of the plant help the plant to stay firm and robust. Moreover, the linguistic context of the utterance corresponds with the activities that help the plants grow (e.g., preparing the ground and watering), such as the cold, natural authority of his age, neighbor, and talked to my father. Therefore, Susie cannot run or escape because the roots of a plant conceptually represent her.

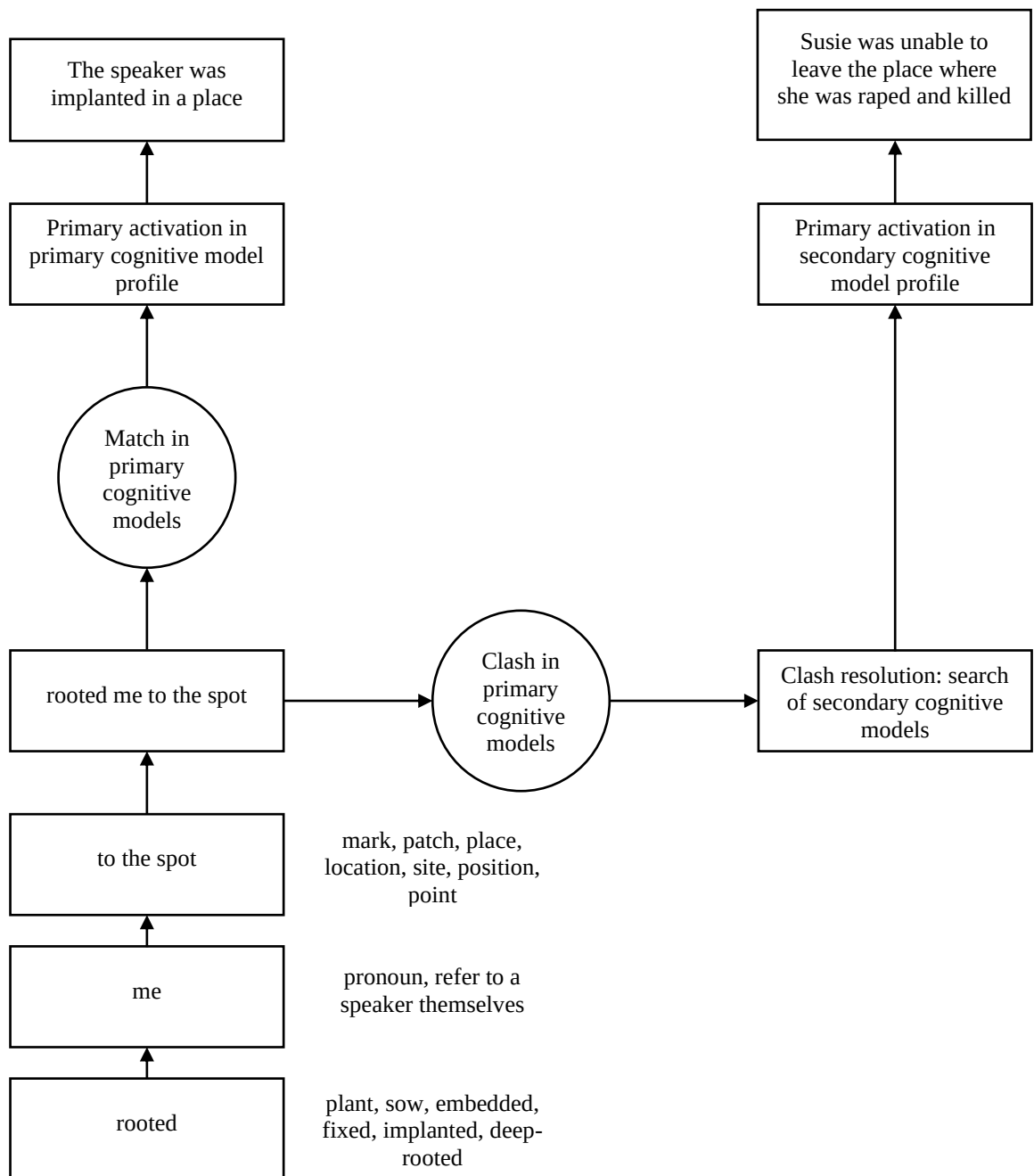


Figure 4.6: Meaning construction in [rooted me to the spot]

As Susie is constructed as a plant, she is raped and destroyed by Mr. Harvey and eventually cut into parts as the plants are chopped down (Sebold, 2002). Kovecses (2002)

emphasizes that due to the interactions between humans and nature, human beings gradually associate their characteristics with plant characteristics, projecting various characteristics of the plants to people or things, and, thus, it creates many metaphorical expressions of plants in language. Similarly, Anderson (1999) configures a rape victim as freshmeat that represents the victim as an edible item. Since plants are also commodities, Beneke (1982) reiterates that the metaphors of sexuality representing rape victims through commodities serve that rape victims, primarily women and children, are products that men buy and sell. Moreover, Walker (1982) compares the rape victim with a tree that demonstrates the victim's avoidance of the pain and denying her body and presence.

4.8.2 Object Metaphors

Object metaphors are essential for conceptualizing abstract ideas in language and thought (Kovecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Lapaire (2018) adds that conceptualizing abstract in terms of concrete, turning actions, states, events, notions, properties, and feelings into objects allows us to deconstruct experiences and identify their components. The current study presents the following conceptual metaphors of objects to construct rape and rape victims' painful experiences in *TLB*.

(1) RAPE IS A THING

The metaphor of thing constructing rape and rape experiences has repeatedly been used in the text of *TLB*. For instance, in the utterance, "I was so alive then, I thought it was *the worst thing in the world* to be lying flat on my back with a sweating man on top of me" (Sebold, 2002, p. 12, italics original), the word thing is metaphorically used. In the primary cognitive models of thing, there is no match found for rape and thing. Therefore, the secondary cognitive models

are searched to establish a match. The situational context of the utterance informs that Mr. Harvey raped Susie in a hole in the ground. Moreover, the linguistic context of the utterance shows the use of lexical choices such as—lying flat on my back, sweating man on top, and worst—that add to the semantic potential of the lexical concept of the thing as something shameful, degradation, and unspeakable. Therefore, a match is found in the secondary cognitive models, which establishes the conceptual metaphor of RAPE IS A THING since rape is also understood in terms of shame, stigma, and unspeakable.

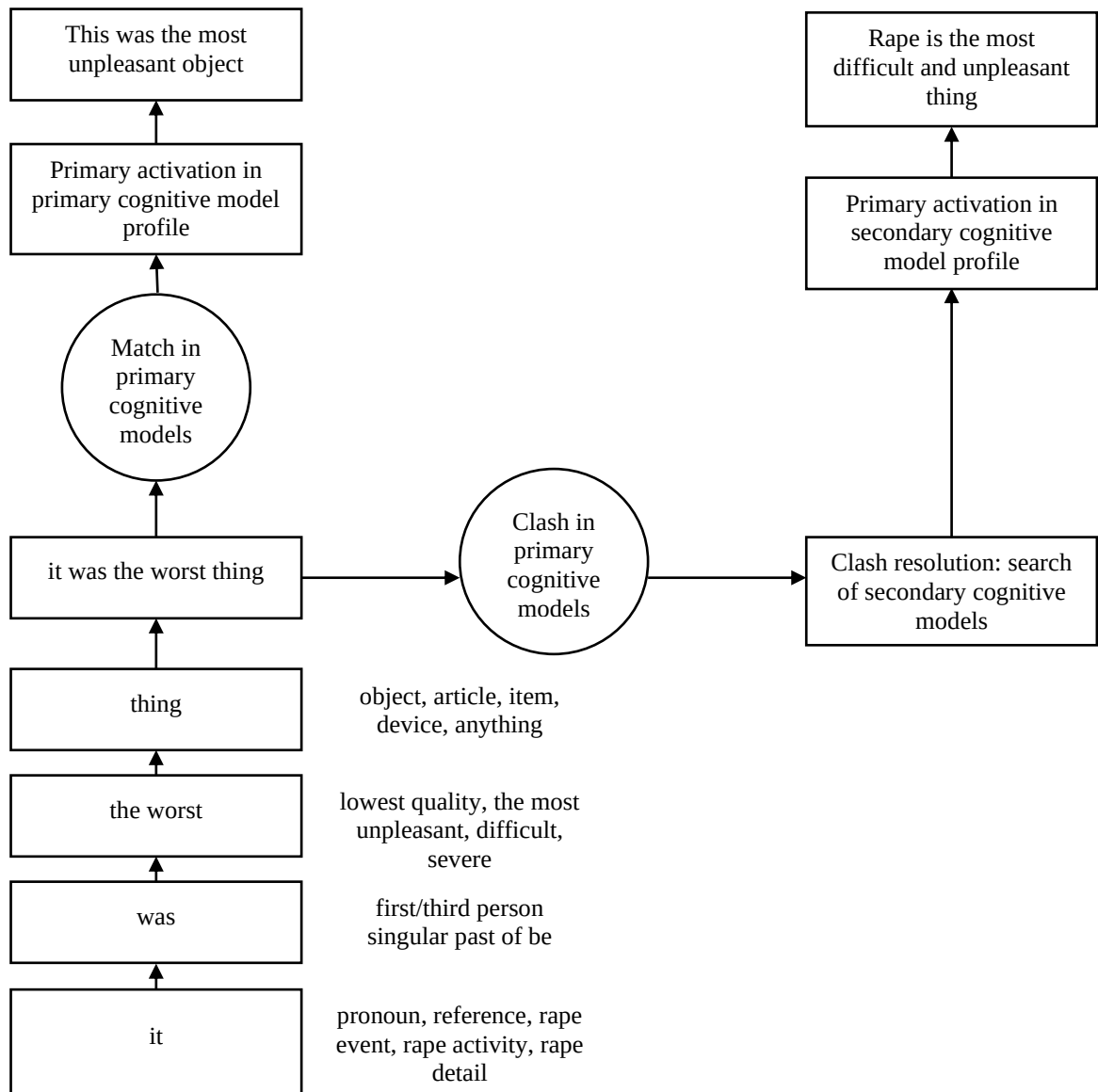


Figure 4.7: Meaning construction in [it was the worst thing]

Hence, the thing metaphor reiterates that rape is a thing that cannot be appropriately named since it is shameful, stigmatizing, and unspeakable for Susie (Sebold, 2002). Also, Gay (2017) called rape “something terrible,” which metaphorically depicts how rape events constantly humiliate a rape victim uncontrollably (p. 36). Riger and Gordon (1981) reiterate that

such pain and suffering of rape victims induce a continuing state of fear and stress. Significantly, Kennedy and Prock (2018) stated that stigma is a significant problem faced by rape victims.

(2) RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL

The conceptual metaphor RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL has contextually been analyzed using the given utterance: “Mr. Harvey made me *lie still underneath* [emphasis added] him and listen to the beating of his heart and the beating of mine” (Sebold, 2002, p. 14). Literally, the verb *lie* means to be in or assume a horizontal position. The adjective *still* means not moving or making a sound, and the preposition *underneath* means situated directly below (something else). The verb, adjective, and preposition in the utterance are used to state the position of the rape victim Susie and the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey. However, in the given context, these words are not literally used since Mr. Harvey rapes Susie in a hole in the ground, so the words *lie*, *still*, and *underneath* are used metaphorically to denote the perpetrator’s control over the victim. Significantly, the preposition *underneath* shows Susie’s position under Mr. Harvey, representing how he overcomes to control her. But the clash of lexical concepts arises in the literal interpretation of *lie*, *still*, *underneath*, and the control.

In the linguistic context of the utterance, the lexical choices—made, listen to the beating of his heart, and the beating of mine—are used to show the element of force as the subject of the verbs (i.e., made, and listen) is Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator. Hence, the semantic potentials of *underneath* are covering, controlling, and possession. Thus, the mappings of rape and control are matched in the secondary cognitive model profile. In the situational context of the given utterance, the word *underneath* refers to the control of the rape victim. Hence, the interpretation

of the utterance would be that during the rape event, rape is used by the perpetrator as a tool to control the rape victim—exposing the latter’s domination and oppression.

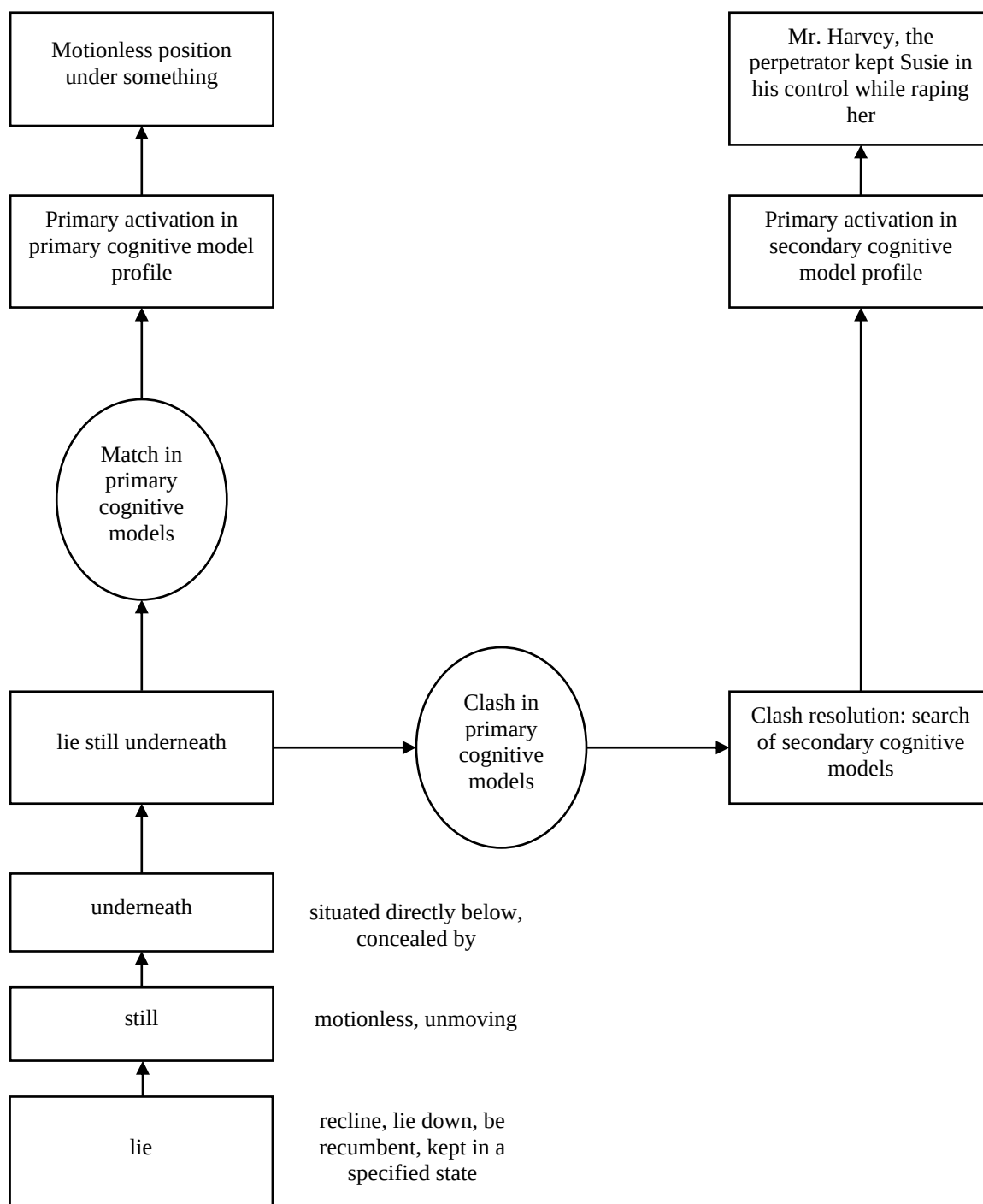


Figure 4.8: Meaning construction in [lie still underneath]

As such, the conceptual metaphor of rape as a tool to control rape victims exists. In this way, rape, as a tool to control rape victims, affected Susie in many ways. Since the perpetrator had control over Susie, she was humiliated, raped, and tortured in a hole in the ground. Susie's clothes were torn apart, her private parts were touched and pressed, and eventually she was raped and killed (Sebold, 2002). On the whole, the metaphor RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL suggests how rape victims are inhumanly treated and controlled by the perpetrators of rape in rape events.

Similarly, Brison (2002) demonstrates that rape victims are grabbed from behind and controlled in a rape event that leads to the victim's oppression and destruction both physically and mentally. Gorman (2016), in this regard, states that such controlling nature of a rape victim is against humanity. Significantly, a study shows that rape is a form to violate a person's sense of autonomy, control, and mastery over their body (Rose, 1986). Moreover, even after the assault, rape victims face severe challenges related to their physical, mental, and social life (Chivers-Wilson, 2006).

(3) RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION

The metaphor, RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION, is contextualized through the analyses of the utterance "you aren't leaving Susie. *You're mine* [emphasis added] now" (Sebold, 2002, p. 12). Literally, the pronoun mine means to state things that belong to a speaker. In the given utterance, the word mine is associated with you—that stands for Susie, the rape victim. Hence, a clash occurs. The semantic potentials of the pronoun mine means possession, control, rights, treatment, etc., as the first part of the utterance, in which the linguistic context helps describe the situation in which Susie has to follow the perpetrator's commands. Since the

situational context of the utterance declares that the perpetrator rapes Susie in a hole in the ground, the interpretation of the utterance is that Susie is in the perpetrator's possession.

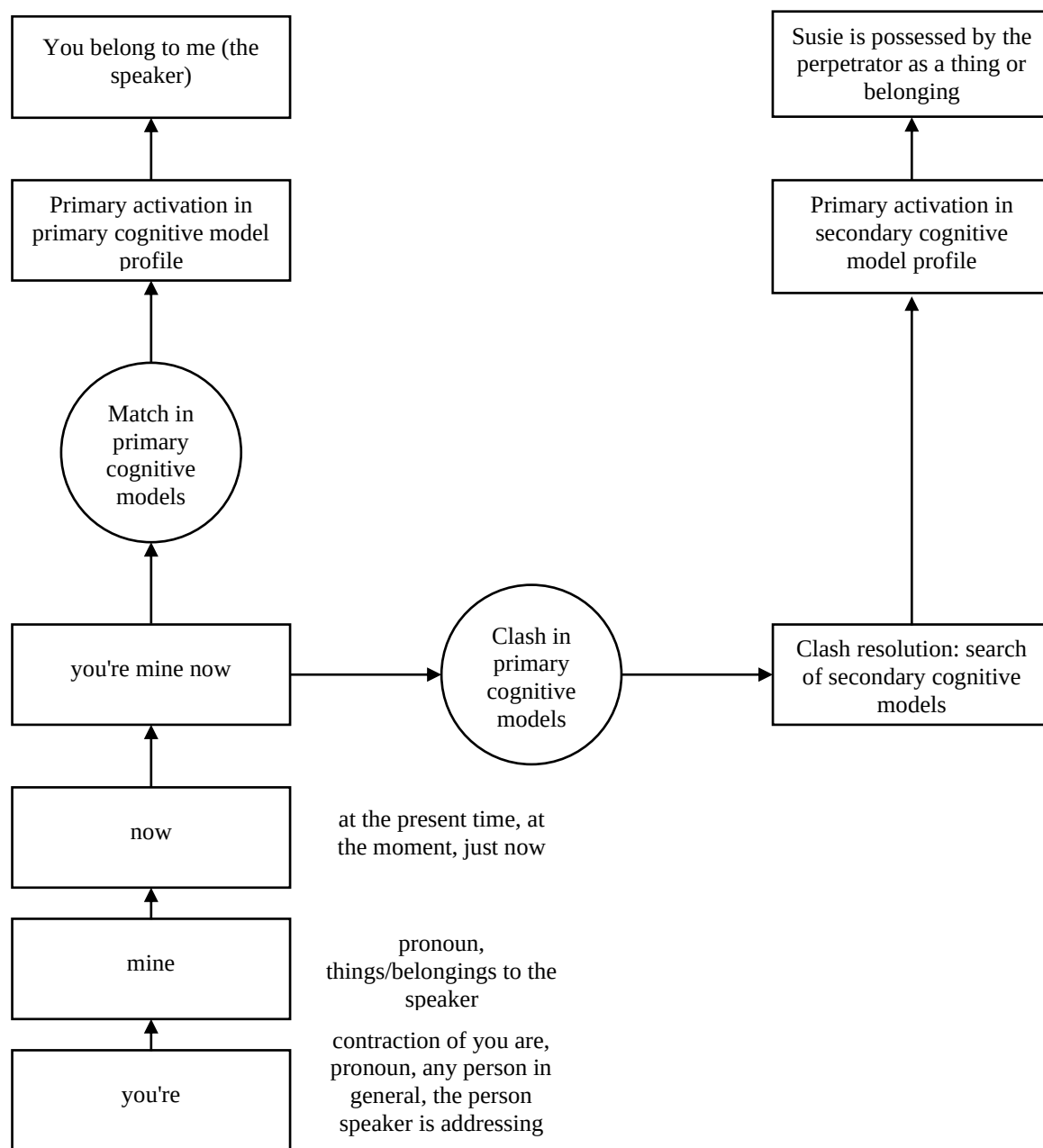


Figure 4.9: Meaning construction in [you're mine now]

The situation leads to the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION that describes how rape victims are taken as things and belonging by the perpetrators so that the victims can be used as per the perpetrators' needs and demands. In the case of Susie, she was inhabited by Mr. Harvey, which was followed by Susie's brutal rape and dismemberment (Sebold, 2002). Kellie et al. (2019) conclude that rape victims are objectified and understood as lacking in certain human qualities. Moreover, rape victims—once they are objectified—are understood in terms of entities or inanimate objects (Loughnan et al., 2013). According to Bourke (2007), the possession of rape victims by the perpetrators of rape is not only related to torturing but invading and conquering the victims' world both mentally and physically.

(4) PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE AUTHORITIES

The perpetrators of rape are metaphorically constructed as supreme authorities in the text of *TLB*. For instance, in the utterance “and then [he] began to *shove* [emphasis added] his hands up under my shirt” (Sebold, 2002, p. 14). Literally, the verb *shove* refers to roughly pushing someone or something. In the given utterance, the word *shove* is connected with the possessive noun phrase—his hands—that refers to the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey. On the other hand, the prepositional phrase—under my shirt—belongs to the rape victim, Susie. The semantic potentials of the word *shove* in the given utterance state the exercise, act upon, controlling, rightful authority. Thus, according to the situational context of the utterance, it is constructed that the rape perpetrators are the sole authorities who exercise their powers over rape victims. Therefore, the perpetrators are metaphorically constructed as authorities in the discourse of *TLB*, which highlights how Mr. Harvey commanded Susie to do certain inhuman acts.

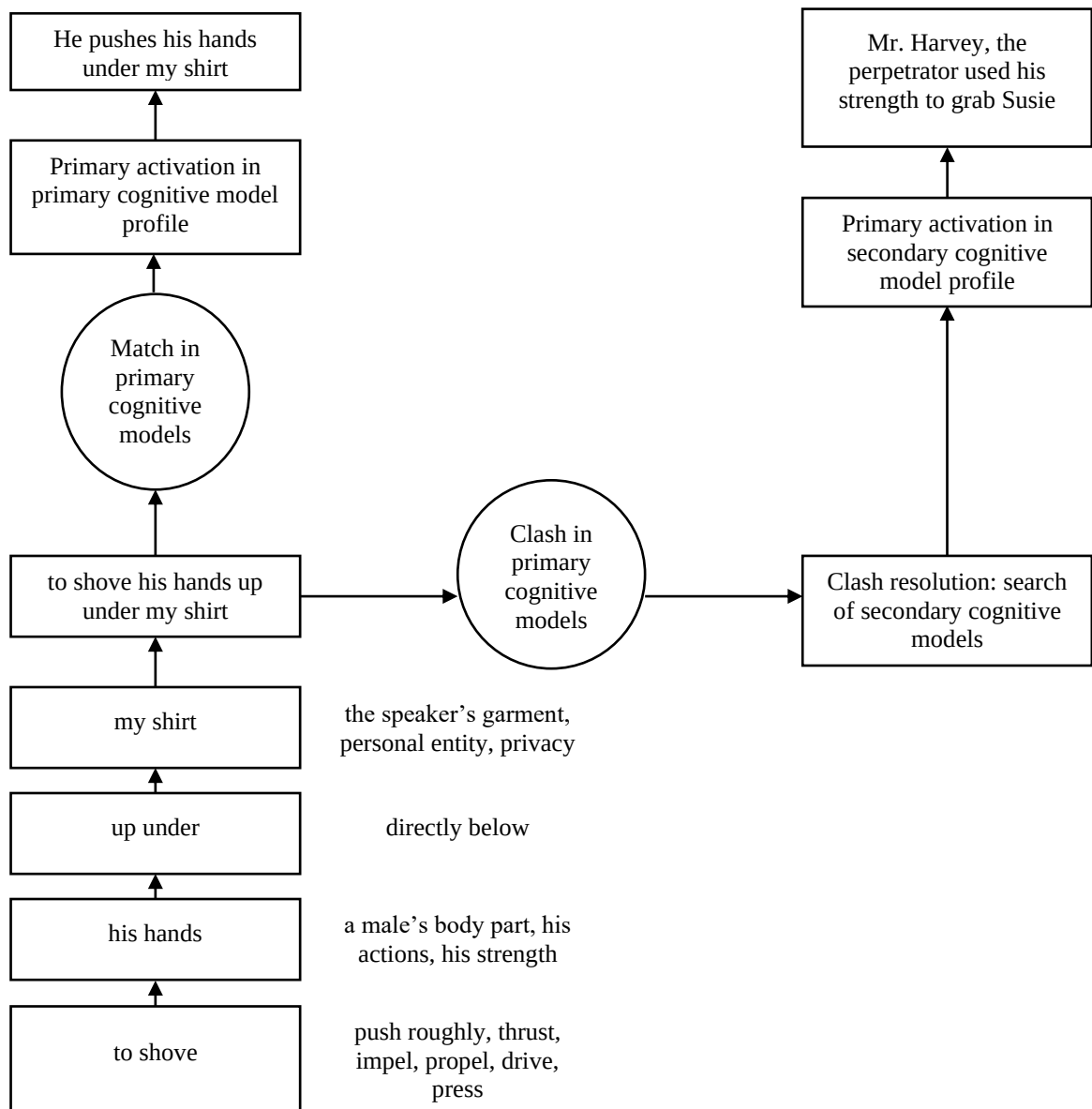


Figure 4.10: Meaning construction of [to shove his hands up under my shirt]

Eventually, Susie was oppressed and strangled (Sebold, 2002). Essentially, the conceptual metaphor PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE AUTHORITIES shows the roles of the perpetrators in a rape event—the perpetrators are active, the agents and the victims are passive, or the recipients of the perpetrators' force. On the exercise of authority by the perpetrators of rape, a study shows that the perpetrators rape to show their power and influence

(Groth & Birnbaum, 1978). Comprehensively, Felson et al. (1990) state that since there are three significant rape outcomes: sexual intercourse, domination of the victim, and harm to the victim, the perpetrator could go for any one of them. Moreover, as seen in Gay's (2014) rape narrative, the perpetrator pressed the blade into the victim's skin which demonstrates the rape victim's domination and subjugation by the perpetrator.

4.8.3 Metaphors of Human State and Experiences

The metaphors of the human state and experiences, as discussed in section 4.5, help construct and exhibit the details of rape and rape experiences in Sebold's *TLB*. Such metaphors can be contextually analyzed as given below.

(1) RAPE IS PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING

Rape is metaphorically constructed as a rape victim's psychological suffering in *TLB*. In the utterance "I was *fourteen* [emphasis added] when I was murdered on December 6, 1973" (Sebold, 2002, p. 5), the lexical choice of the adjective fourteen in the literal terms stands for merely a number. However, in the given utterance, the adjective is metaphorically used to characterize Susie, the rape victim. The semantic potentials of the word fourteen in the situational context of the utterance are an entity, a memory, an event, dreams, wishes, changes, and a milestone. Therefore, the interpretation of the utterance would be that by expressing a milestone, the rape victim Susie remembers her abrupt ending. In other words, the victim resists her early ending and repeatedly shares her wishes and dreams on earth as informed by the utterance's linguistic context (e.g., I wish, I think). The act of remembering the past exposes that Susie is constantly suffering because the rape event stays in her memory, even in her post-assault life experiences. In the context of the novel, Susie suffers from the severe consequences of rape

as she always wants to join her family on earth and continue her life from an early age, right from the point of age (i.e., fourteen) when she was brutally raped and murdered (Sebold, 2002).

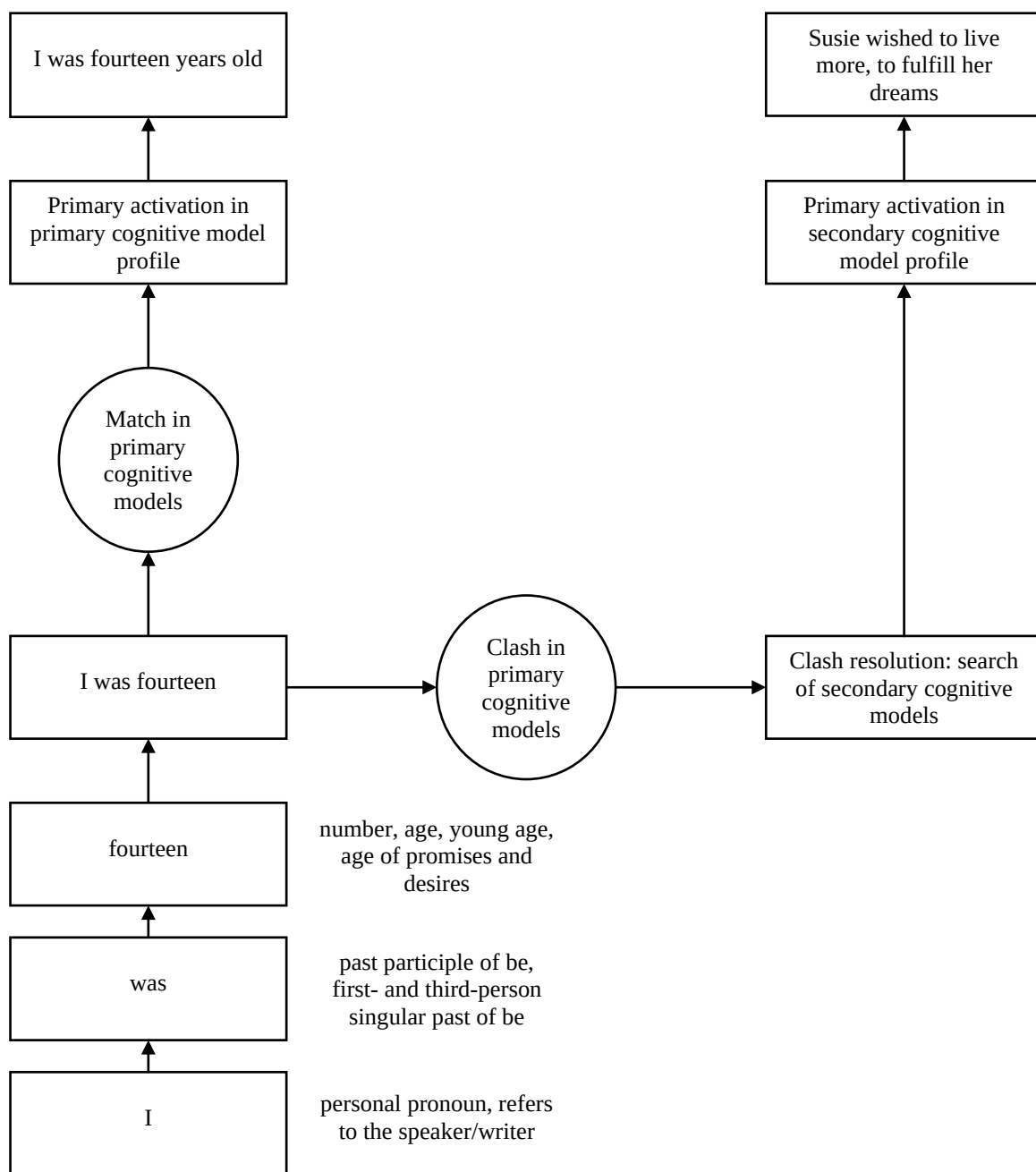


Figure 4.11: Meaning construction in [I was fourteen]

Similarly, in Anderson's (1999) rape narrative, a rape victim is thirteen-years-old and suffers from post-assault traumatic experiences. The victim is unable to stop thinking about the past and recalls, "Did he rape my head, too" (p. 86). In a study of the psychological suffering of rape victims, Bragesjo et al. (2020) claim that rape is the most common trauma leading to post-traumatic disorder, lifetime diagnosis of anxiety disorders, and depression.

(2) RAPE IS DEATH

Rape is also metaphorically constructed in terms of death in *TLB*. The metaphor RAPE IS DEATH is mapped through the utterance: "[h]is voice was gentle, encouraging, a lover's voice on a late morning. A suggestion, not a command. I could *not move* [emphasis added]. I could *not get up*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 15). The phrases—not move and not get up—literally represent the ordinary human states and experiences describing the inability to move and get up. However, in the present context of the utterance, since they are associated with the pronoun *I*—that stands for the rape victim Susie—they are constructed as the victim's death. The semantic potential of the given phrases in the situational context of the utterance refers to Susie's death after her rape and her inability to move and get up. Accordingly, the linguistic context of the utterance also provides the details (e.g., brought back a knife, the end came anyway).

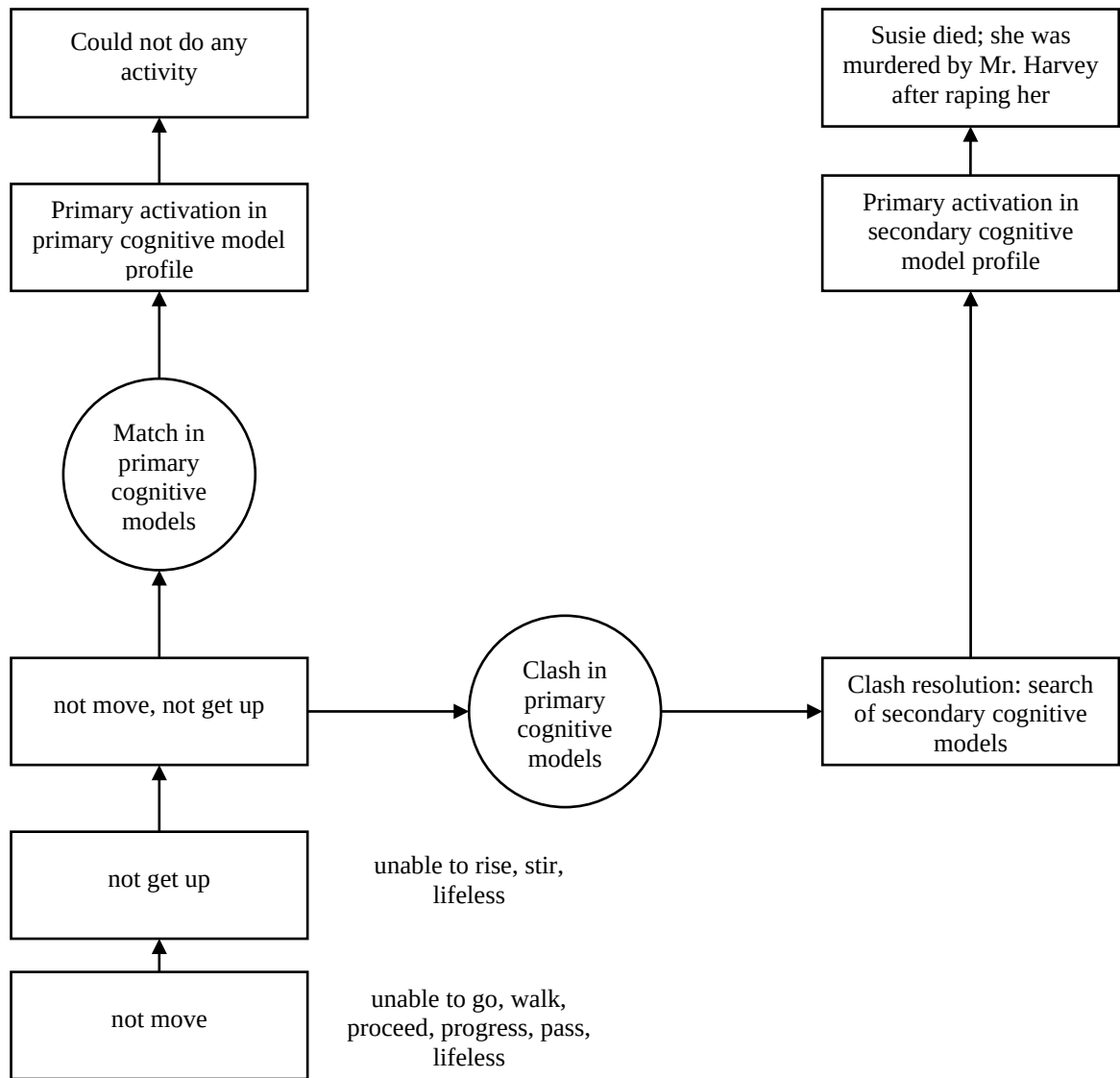


Figure 4.12: Meaning construction in [could not move, could not get up]

Thus, the construction of rape as death exposes that rape is not a physical and mental abuse, but it terminates lives as well. In *TLB*, Susie was raped and then brutally cut into tiny pieces (Sebold, 2022). In this regard, studies have shown that the perpetrators murdered the victims due to excessive rage (Chan & Heide, 2016; Stefanska et al., 2017). Moreover, death is

also conceptualized as an escape and protection from rape and sexual violence in Morrison's (1987) book *Beloved*.

(3) RAPE IS HUMILIATION

In the discourse of *TLB*, rape has constantly been constructed as humiliation. The analysis of the metaphor RAPE IS HUMILIATION in *TLB* is as follows.

In the utterance “I was soon lying down on the ground, in the ground, with him on top of me *panting* [emphasis added] and *sweating*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), the words—panting and sweating—describe the human states and experiences of short, quick breathing, and excreting a salty, colorless liquid through the skin. However, in the given context of the utterance, it is informed by the relationship of words with the possessive adjective him, which stands for Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, and represents the words metaphorically leading to the victim's humiliation. Susie, the rape victim is underneath the perpetrator as the phrase—on top of me—describes the physical location of the perpetrator and the victim. Thus, the interpretation of the utterance is that a man who is raping, panting, and sweating is humiliating the victim as the victim experiences severe physical and mental trauma. On the whole, the metaphor reiterated that rape is not only a physical form of abuse but the humiliation as well. Mr. Harvey, in *TLB*, not only raped and killed the victim Susie but also humiliated her by touching each single body part, throwing off all pieces of clothes, and kissing her from head to neck (Sebold, 2002).

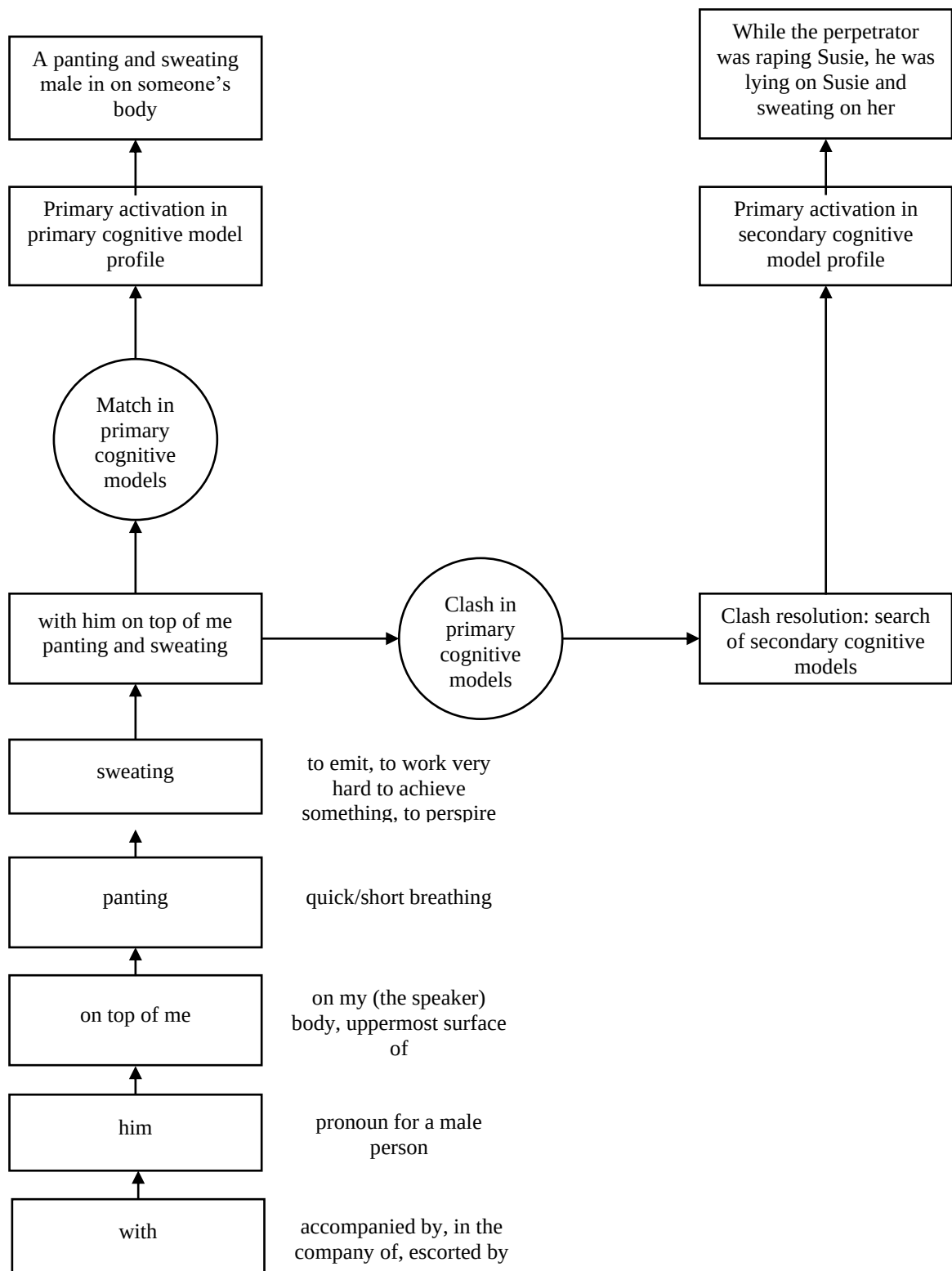


Figure 4.13: Meaning construction in [with him on top of me panting and sweating]

In this regard, Darke (1990) states that rape victims experience the extreme stages of embarrassment, fear and humiliation. Besides, the humiliation of a rape victim includes the intensive aversive emotion where the whole self is seen as flawed and debased and, therefore, unworthy of acceptance of belonging (Willan et al., 2024).

(4) RAPE IS MUTILATION

Along with humiliation, rape is metaphorically constructed as a mutilation process in the discourse of *TLB*. In the utterance “[n]ear her head, a small *pool of blood*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 181), the phrase pool of blood is used as a metaphor. The word pool literally means a small area of still water, but in the present utterance, it is not used for water but blood. Hence, a clash arises. For the clash resolution, the secondary cognitive model profile of the lexical concept of pool is searched to find a match that ends with a container and a large quantity of something. The semantic potential of pool in the situational context of the utterance means container and volume.

Furthermore, the linguistic context of the utterance informs that the phrase pool of blood describes the pronoun her which stands for the rape victim who was recently raped and killed by Mr. Harvey by hitting a chair on her head. Damaging the victim is an act of mutilation. As such, the metaphor RAPE IS MUTILATION constructs severe details of rape that present the reality of the crime.

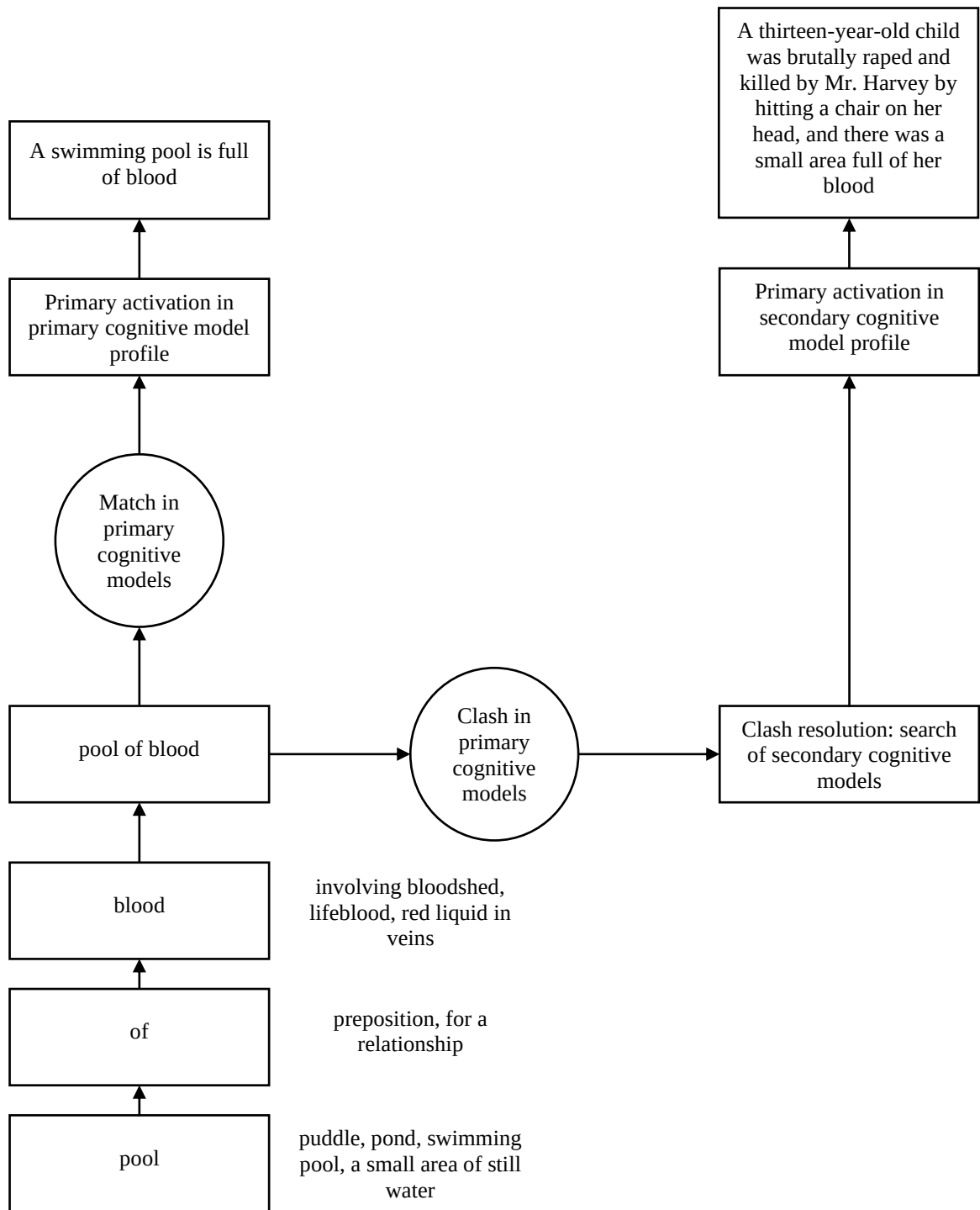


Figure 4.14: Meaning construction in [pool of blood]

In *TLB*, other than Susie, the rape victim named Jackie Meyer, thirteen, was first brutally tortured, raped, and eventually killed by hitting on her head (Sebold, 2002). Thus, the construction of rape as a mutilation process of the rape victim showed how rape victims are not only sexually violated but dehumanized and mutilated. Similarly, Miller (2019) metaphorically describes the mutilation of a rape victim as her “skin prickled and stung. I imagined bees with little teeth, chewing my raw flesh” (p. 35). Moreover, Chan and Li (2019) and Karakasi et al. (2017) add that during the act of rape, rape victims are deprived of their limbs and other essential parts of the body or severe disfigurement. Among such other acts, slashing and cutting the victim’s dead body are also regarded as acts of mutilation (Beauregard et al., 2008).

(5) RAPE IS HORROR

In terms of horror, rape has been metaphorically conceptualized in the text of *TLB*. The metaphor RAPE IS HORROR is analyzed as given below.

In the utterance, “[h]e’d only wanted to touch her, but she screamed. A small girl of her age. Her left *sock* [emphasis added] and *shoe* [emphasis added] were found later. The body unrecovered,” (Sebold, 2002, p. 181) the use of the concrete nouns—sock and shoe—are metaphorical expressions that construct the act of rape as horror. Literally, the nouns sock and shoe refer to the items used for the human foot. However, the semantic potentials of the words in the present context of the utterance are the things, items, and identities belonging to a rape victim. Thus, finding a match in the secondary cognitive models, the utterance implies the horror involved in the rape event. Moreover, the utterance’s linguistic context (e.g., small girl, touch, scream) also helps exhibit the underlying horror. On the whole, the context of the novel facilitates that Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator who was thirty-six, raped a girl of eight, killed her,

and cut her into pieces. Therefore, the nouns sock and shoe denote that these are the only things that have been retrieved—what happened to the victim creates fear and horror.

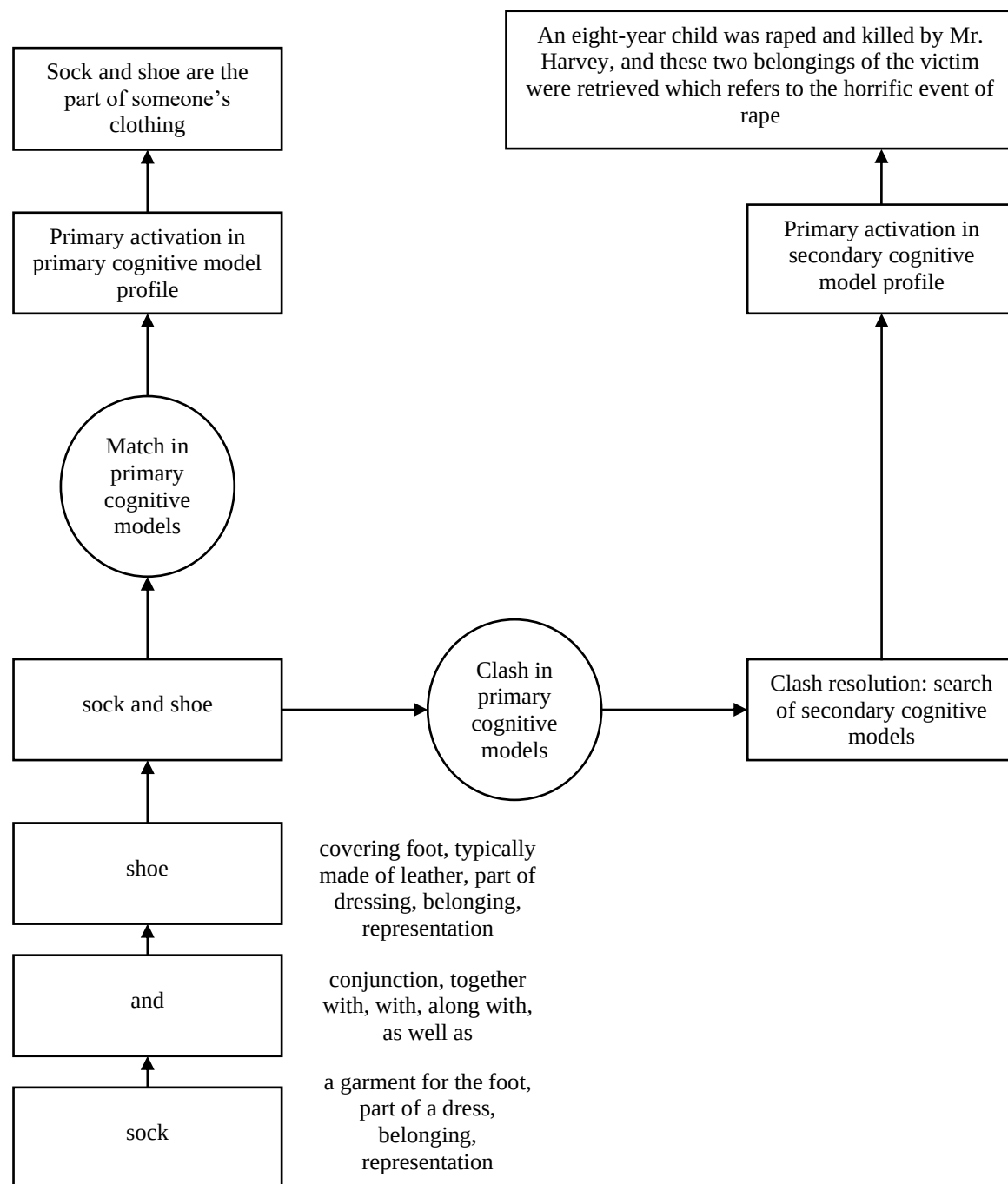


Figure 4.15: Meaning construction in [sock and shoe]

The construction of rape in terms of horror reveals the reality of rape. In a study, Goldner (1973) discusses rape as a heinous crime. For instance, in Gay's (2014) narrative, the rape victim was brutally beaten, attacked with a knife, and gang-raped.

(6) RAPE IS TORTURE

In the text of *TLB*, rape has also been constructed as a form of torture. The metaphor RAPE IS TORTURE is analyzed as given below.

In the utterance "Mr. Harvey, I really have to get home. *Take off your clothes*. [emphasis added] What?" (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), the imperative sentence—take off your clothes—has been metaphorically used to encompass the fact of torture in rape events. Literally, the sentence implies removing clothes is one of the daily human life activities. However, in the context of the utterance, the sentence represents Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, ordering Susie to remove her clothes. The linguistic context of the utterance (i.e., really have to get home) helps show how Susie—depicted through the personal pronoun *I*—impatiently wants to go home, corresponding to her escape from the scene. Moreover, the situational context of the utterance adds that both Susie and Mr. Harvey are in a hole in the ground, which indirectly adds to Susie's fear. Accordingly, the meaning of the imperative sentence—take off your clothes—functions as a form of torture, as an initiative to rape.

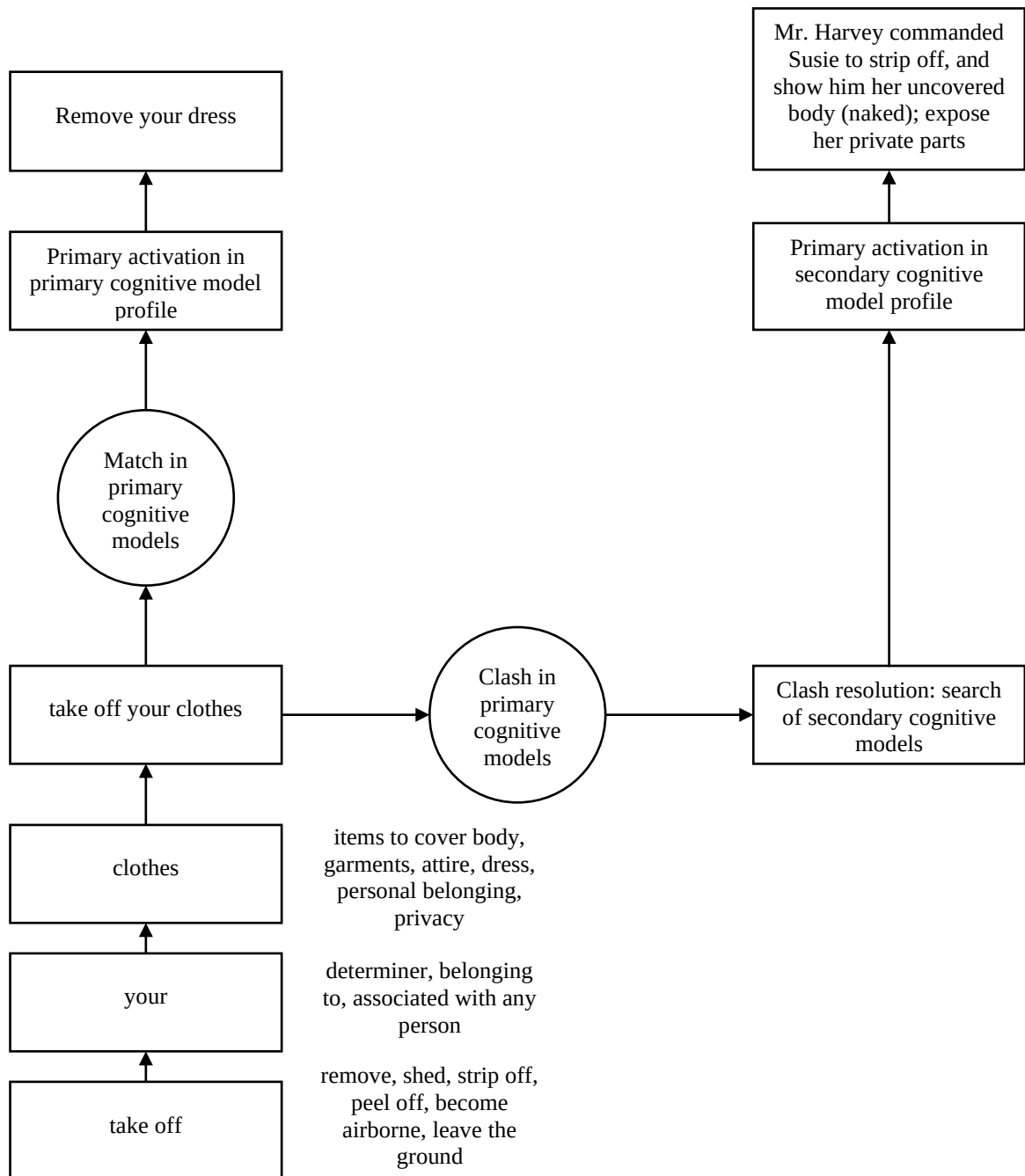


Figure 4.16: Meaning construction in [take off your clothes]

Thus, rape has been metaphorically conceptualized as a form of torture. In the case of Susie, during the rape event, she was not only raped and violated but also tortured in various

forms, such as she was beaten, emotionally abused, her private parts were touched, the perpetrator slept on top of her, and eventually her body was cut into tiny pieces (Sebold, 2002). Moreover, Gay (2014) metaphorically represents the torture of rape by configuring a perpetrator as a sharp blade and a victim as a tender wound (p. 70). In a study, Bernstein (2015) discusses that rape and torture have the same fundamental structure, as in both cases, the devaluation occurs through dispossessing the victim of her bodily anatomy and integrity and being so dispossessed that it causes devastation.

4.8.4 Metaphors of Human Activities

The conceptual metaphors of rape in the text of *TLB* have also been constructed through human activities that are discussed as follows.

(1) RAPE IS A TRAP

Rape is conceptualized as the act of trapping in *TLB*. The analysis of the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS A TRAP is given below.

In the utterance “I was like I was in science class: I was *curious*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 9), the lexical choice *curious* constructs a rape metaphor of trap. In its literal sense, the adjective *curious* means eagerness to know or learn something. Furthermore, the linguistic context further explains the element of curiosity, which adds a concrete noun phrase: science class. The phrase refers to the practical experiments in a science subject class. However, there is a clash in the uses of the adjective *curious* and the phrase science class in the particular instance of the utterance. The semantic potential of the word *curious* refers to Susie’s state of forgetting the danger around when she was with Mr. Harvey in a hole in the ground. The

practical experiments of the science class are mapped with how Mr. Harvey built the hole.

Therefore, it concludes that the perpetrator used the hole to trap rape victims.

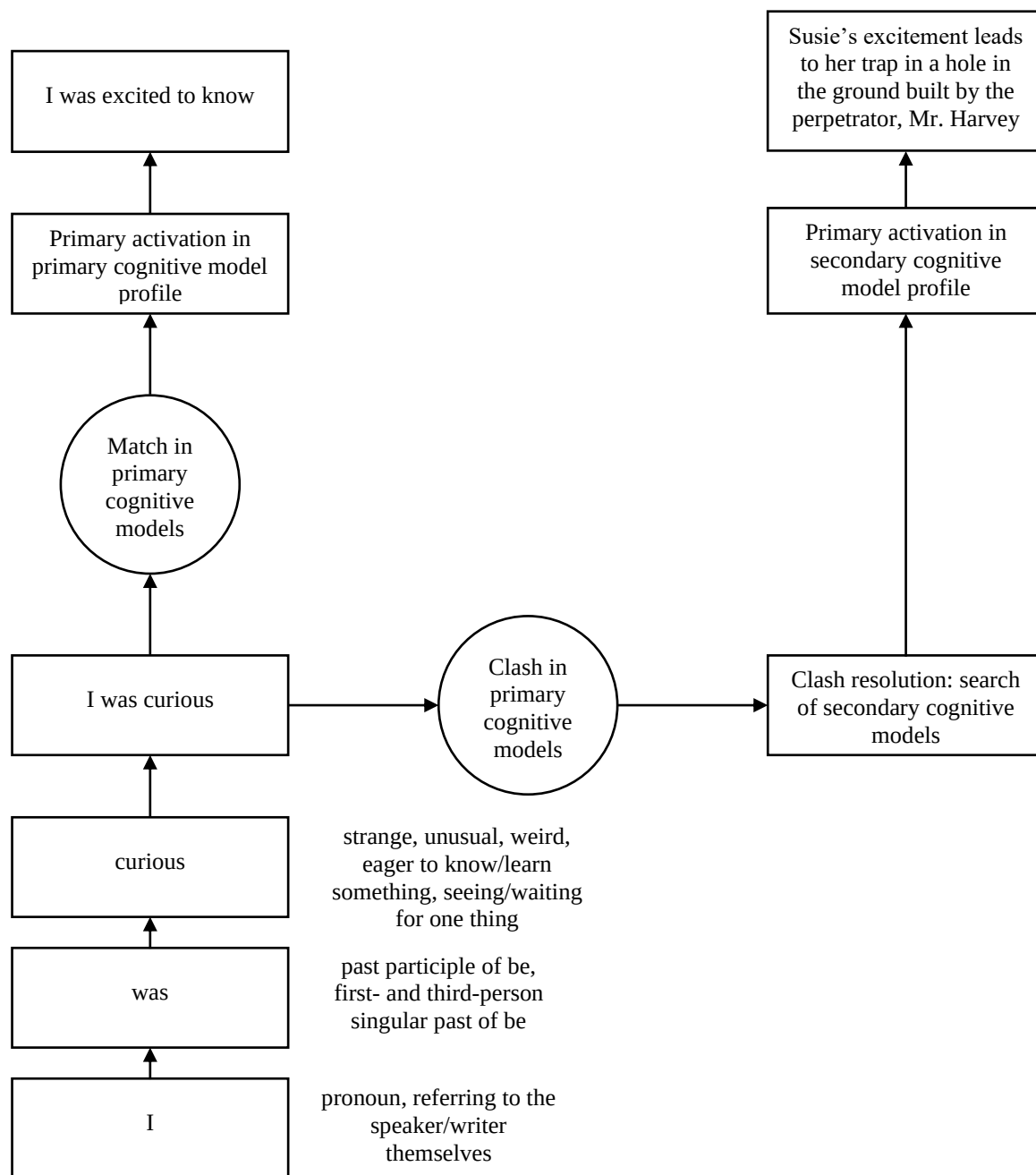


Figure 4.17: Meaning construction in [I was curious]

Accordingly, the metaphorical construction of rape as a trap indicates that rape victims are made curious, which makes them feel safe. Similarly, Susie was trapped by Mr. Harvey in *TLB*, which led to her brutal rape and dismemberment (Sebold, 2002). Sielke (2002) instantiates that by such metaphorical representations of rape, rape is refigured as “systematic violence” (p. 3). Besides, based on the reconfiguration of rape, the identities of the perpetrators of rape and rape victims are constructed (Boehm et al., 2020).

(2) RAPE IS SILENCING

Rape is also metaphorically constructed as a way of silencing rape victims in the text of *TLB*. The conceptual metaphor RAPE IS SILENCING is analyzed as given below.

In the utterance “[h]e reached into the pocket of my parka and balled up that hat my mother had made me, *smashing it into my mouth*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 13), the phrase (smashing it into my mouth) is metaphorically used. The pronoun (i.e., it) refers to the hat Susie kept in her parka’s pocket, and the word mouth is a part of the human body used for eating food. A clash arises when using two dissimilar objects—hat and mouth. Secondary cognitive models were searched for clash resolution. The situational context of the given utterance informs that Mr. Harvey rapes Susie in a hole in the ground. The linguistic context also helps reveal that the perpetrator reached Susie’s pocket to draw the hat out. The situational context adds that the perpetrator was tired of Susie’s sounds as she pleaded, cried, and screamed. The semantic potential of the word—hat—refers to a tool, a way, or a strategy of the perpetrator to be used in his act of rape. Thus, the interpretation of the utterance exposes that the word (hat) is metaphorically used as a tool by the perpetrator to silence the rape victim.

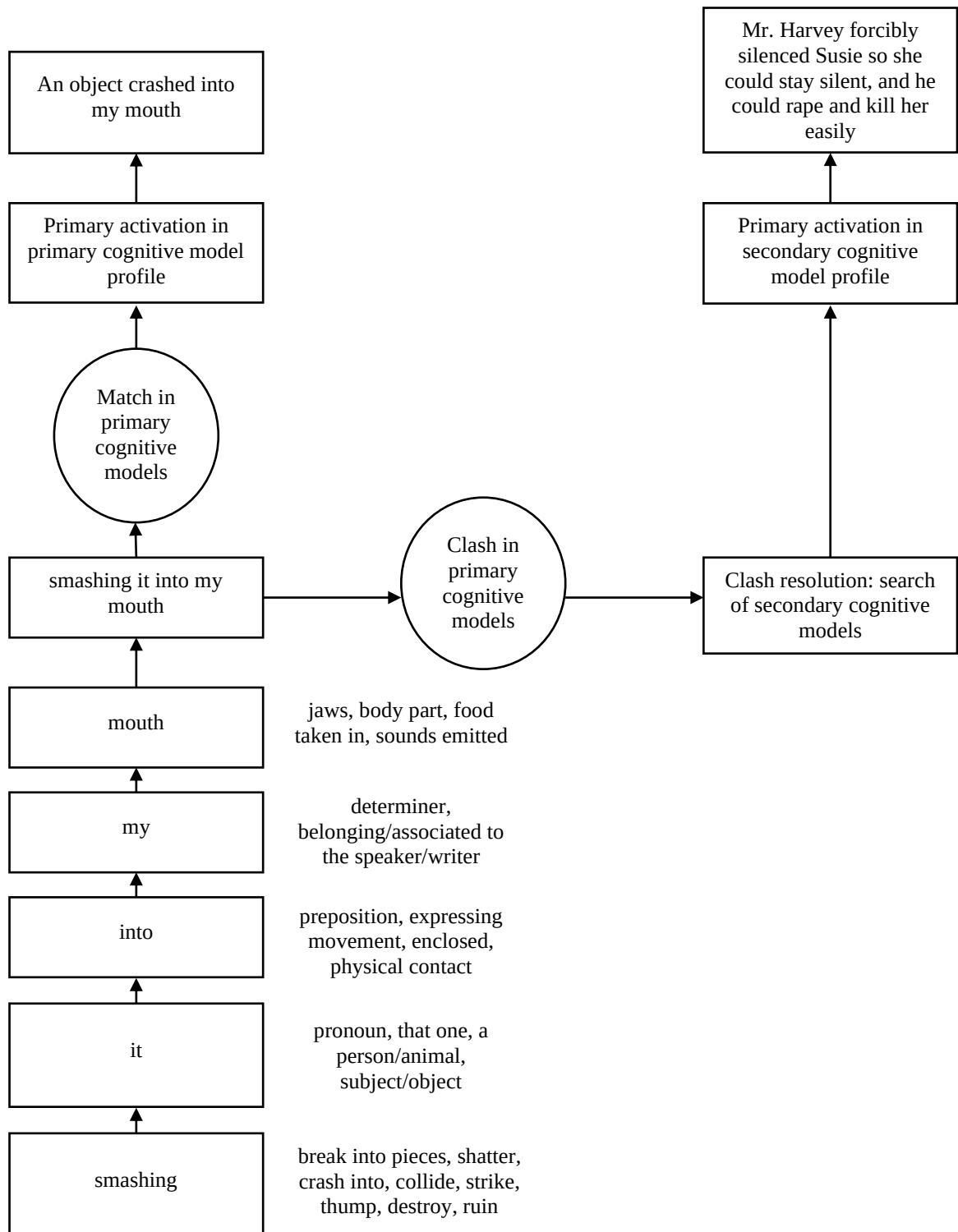


Figure 4.18: Meaning construction in [smashing it into my mouth]

Consequently, the hat was smashed and forced into Susie's mouth to stop her pleading and screaming, which annoyed and disturbed him while he was raping Susie in a hole in the ground. The metaphor RAPE IS SILENCING demonstrates the gruesome details of a rape event in which rape victims are inhumanly treated and silenced forever. Due to such practices of rape as a silencing tool, Susie faced difficulties in breathing, wept, and felt huge and bloated, which led to her abrupt death (Sebold, 2002). Also, a rape victim in Anderson's (1999) *Speak* wanted to "breathe" and "scream," but the perpetrator silenced her (p. 76). On such practices of silencing rape victims, Ahrens (2006) reiterates that rape victims who want to speak and share their ordeal are often punished for doing so. Then, they are subjected to adverse reactions that eventually thereby serve a silencing function, leading the victims to stop speaking and sharing their experiences.

(3) RAPE IS HUNTING

Rape has metaphorically been constructed in terms of hunting in the text of *TLB*. The utterance: "I built this for the kids in the neighborhood. I thought it could be some sort of *clubhouse*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 11) is presented to analyze the metaphor RAPE IS HUNTING in the discourse of *TLB*. The metaphor of rape as hunting emerges from the use of the word clubhouse. The lexical choice clubhouse literally means a building with a bar and other facilities for the club members. However, in the situational context of the given utterance, the clubhouse is associated with the pronoun *it*, which replaces a hole that is a site used by Mr. Harvey to trap, rape, and kill the kids from the neighborhood. Accordingly, the semantic potentials of the word clubhouse are a unique site to trap kids, trap victims, and a hunting place.

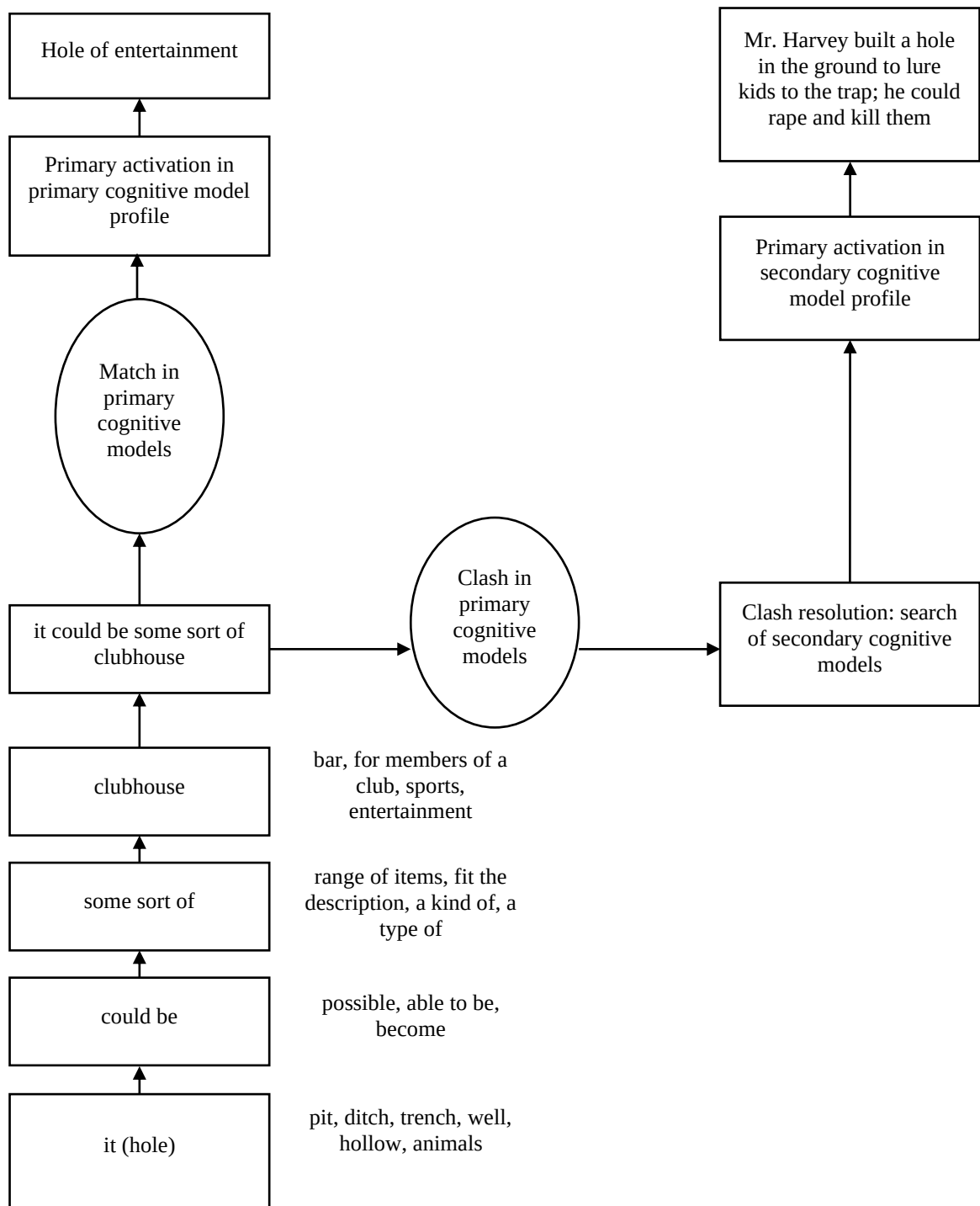


Figure 4.19: Meaning construction in [it could be a sort of clubhouse]

Based on the semantic potential of a hunting place, the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS HUNTING exists in which rape victims are understood as the animals or objects to be hunted by the hunters—the perpetrators of rape. Consequently, Susie was hunted in the clubhouse by Mr. Harvey—she was targeted, trapped, raped, and murdered (Sebold, 2002). Moreover, the understanding of rape in terms of hunting naturalizes and normalizes crime and violence against women since hunting is considered the apparent activity of hunters. Ciamaricone (2020) discusses that rape is metaphorically seen as an entertaining activity in which the perpetrator is a hunter who spots the victim, aims, and hunts. In this regard, Rebocho and Goncalves (2012) add that there are similarities between the behavior of a hunter and a perpetrator of rape. Also, some studies show that the perpetrators of rape are planners—they act rationally and select the victims carefully (Beauregard & Leclerc, 2007; Beauregard et al., 2007). Like animal predators, they search for targets to victimize and gain profit from sexual gratification and attack them in the most effective way possible. Similarly, the perpetrators of rape actively hunt for victims and act as human predators (Rossmo, 2000).

(4) RAPE IS A STRUGGLE

The conceptual metaphor RAPE IS A STRUGGLE is analyzed in the text of *TLB* as given below.

In the utterance, “I was soon lying down on the ground, in the ground, with him on top of me panting and sweating, having lost his glasses in the *struggle*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), the abstract noun struggle is metaphorically used to demonstrate that rape is a struggle. The word struggle literally means a forceful or violent effort to get free. According to the situational context of the utterance, Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, and Susie, the rape victim,

have been fighting since the former initiated a rape event to rape and overcame the latter. The linguistic context of the utterance also adds—lying down, ground, and on top of me—to demonstrate the ongoing struggle in which each party wants to win. Hence, the interpretation of the utterance describes that rape is constructed as a struggle in which both a perpetrator and a rape victim want to win.

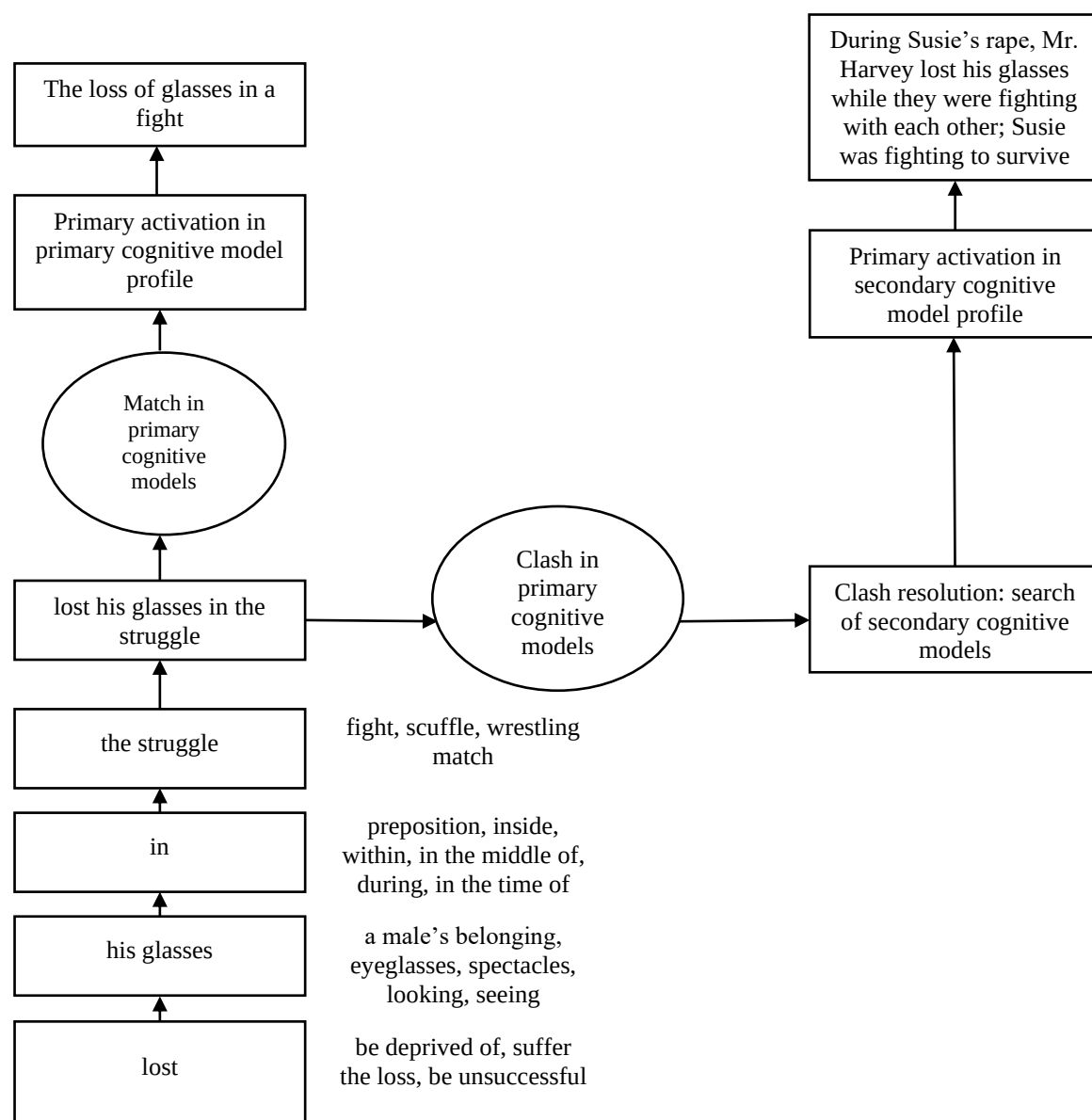


Figure 4.20: Meaning construction in [lost his glasses in the struggle]

However, as in the case of a struggle, only one party wins while the other loses; in the case of *TLB*, Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, wins, and Susie, the rape victim, loses. Consequently, Mr. Harvey rapes Susie and eventually murders her (Sebold, 2002). On the whole, the metaphor RAPE IS A STRUGGLE suggests that rape is a fight and struggle for survival in which the rape victims, after rape, are brutally beaten, punished, and even murdered. Meanwhile, Ullman (1998) discusses that rape victims employ forceful resistance strategies such as fighting, fleeing, and screaming to avoid rape. On the other hand, a study shows that retaliation of the victims by fighting with the perpetrator or giving him warnings may escalate his violence towards the victims (Lefley et al., 1993). This has been seen in the cases of war and fighting in which women and children are savagely raped as a strategy of war (Gottschall, 2004; Hynes, 2004), resulting in severe physical and mental harm and death accompanied by torture and trauma (Alexandra, 2010).

4.8.5 Personification

In CMT, personification, as discussed in section 4.7, involves cross-domain mapping in which an object is attributed to some human qualities (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In the representation of rape and sexual violence, this domain is constantly mapped with the other domain of human beings and human characteristics to understand the targeted phenomenon (Ciamaricone, 2020). The current study analyses the following personification metaphors in the text of *TLB*.

(1) BODY PARTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS

In the utterance “[h]is glasses were small and round with gold frames, and his eyes looked [emphasis added] out over them and at me” (Sebold, 2002, p. 8), the phenomenon of

eyes has been metaphorically used as a personification. The plural noun—eyes—is used with its predicate looked to demonstrate that the subject (eyes) is acting. Literally, the eyes are inanimate objects and cannot perform any action. On the other hand, the performance of actions is associated with human beings, so human beings do the act of looking through eyes. In the present context of the utterance, Mr. Harvey is preparing to rape Susie. Since the eyes are attributed to human qualities of looking, it is demonstrated that instead of the perpetrator, the eyes are held responsible for rape. Thus, the interpretation of the utterance reveals that the personification metaphor of eyes shows the force and power of raping that the perpetrator has by which his body parts are functioning independently. Moreover, the responsibility of the act is thus transferred to someone else.

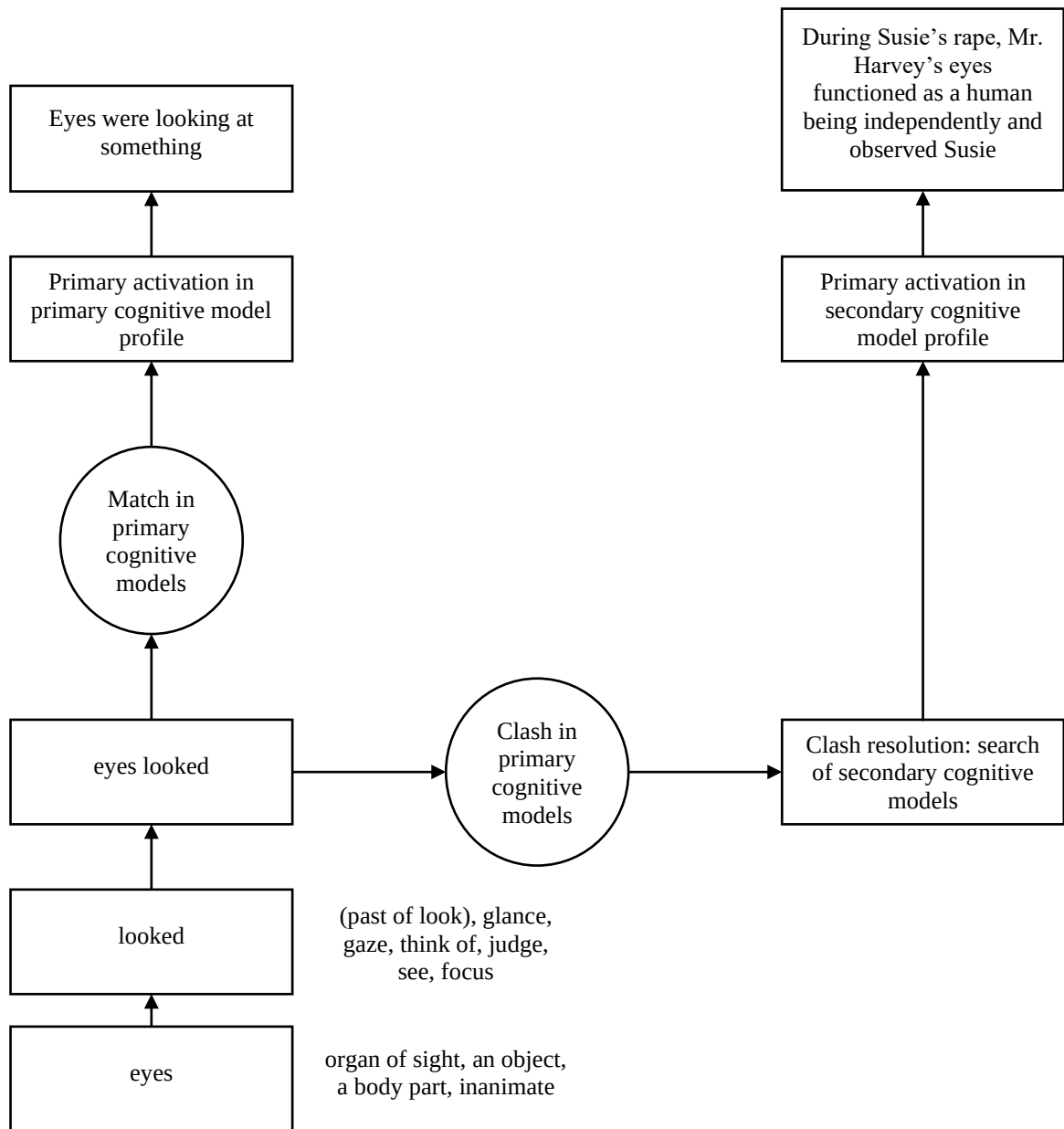


Figure 4.21: Meaning construction in [eyes looked]

Accordingly, the result of the perpetrator's force and power can be seen in Susie's physical torture, mental suffering, and murder (Sebold, 2002). On the whole, the personification of body parts reveals the understanding of the perpetrators of rape and the consequences on rape victims in the rape discourses. Similarly, Ciamaricone (2020) observes that metaphors are also

constructed in which human beings are represented as animals and objects and vice versa. A recent study on rape metaphors shows that the metaphor PREDATOR IS A MACHINE portrays the perpetrator of rape as a machine that eventually removes the human elements from the attack and makes the rape event even more humiliating (Ciamaricone, 2020).

(2) OBJECTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS

The objects and entities are also used as metaphors in *TLB*. The personification metaphor of OBJECTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS is analyzed as given below.

In the utterance, “he leaned to the side and felt, over his head, across the ledge where razor and shaving cream sat. He brought back a *knife* [emphasis added]. Unsheathed, *it smiled* [emphasis added] at me, curving up in a grin” (Sebold, 2002, p. 15); the object knife is associated with the action of smiling, literally informing that the knife smiled. However, since a knife is an object or non-living thing, it cannot smile. In the immediate context of the words (i.e., knife and it), the pronoun (i.e., he) refers to the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey. According to the situational context of the utterance, Mr. Harvey brutally raped Susie. The semantic potential of the word knife adds that the knife is one of the instruments or supporting agents that Mr. Harvey used to rape Susie. Since the knife belongs to Mr. Harvey and is against Susie, the happiness of Mr. Harvey has been transferred to the knife, making it an animate object. Therefore, the interpretation of the utterance suggests that Mr. Harvey was smiling while he killed Susie after the rape.

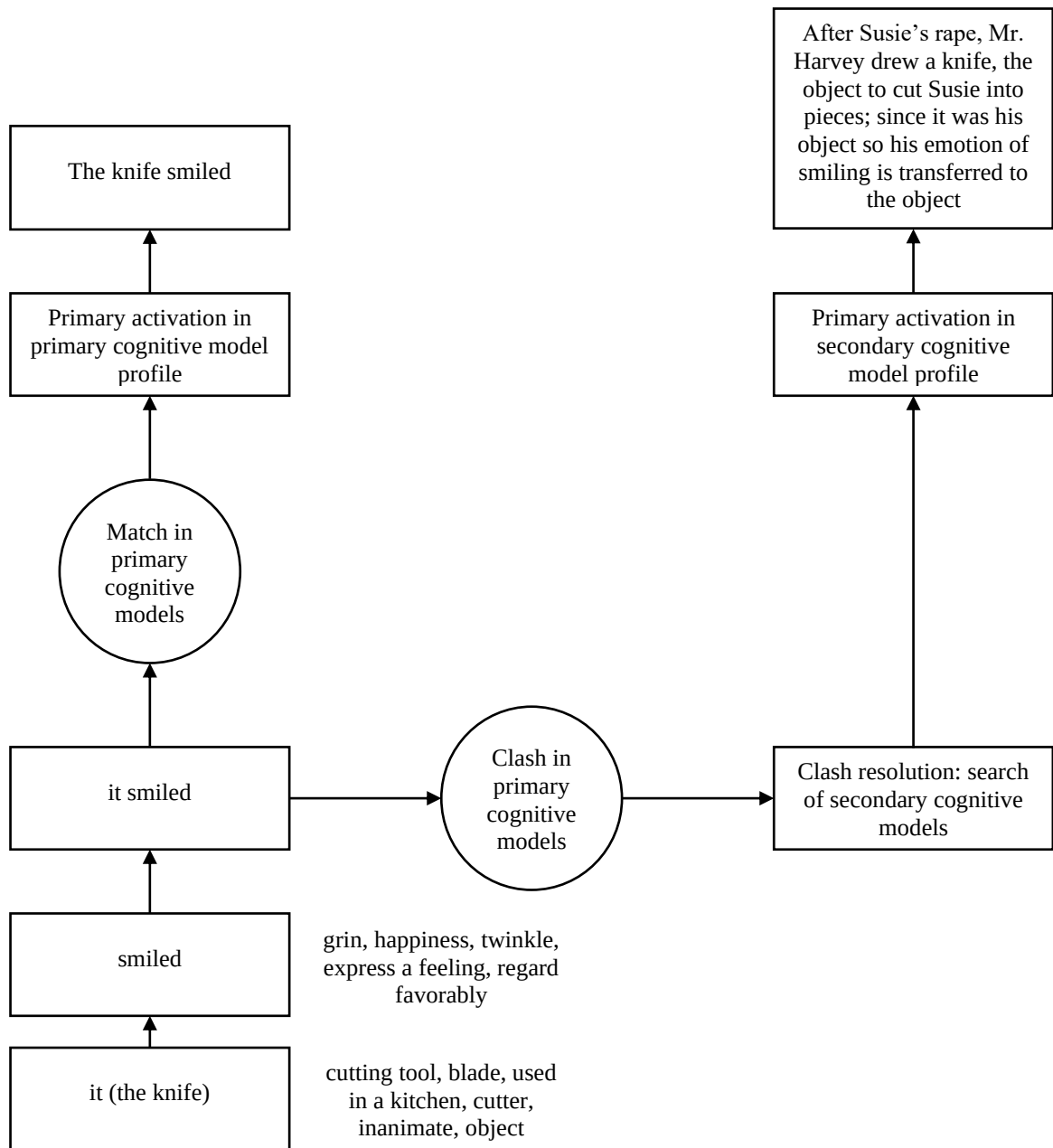


Figure 4.22: Meaning construction in [it smiled]

On the whole, the personification metaphor of objects as human beings shows more details and perceptions of the perpetrators of rape about rape and the embedded violence. In the case of *TLB*, the smiling of the knife resulted in Susie's body being cut into tiny pieces (Sebold,

2002). Besides, Cutter (2020) demonstrates that rape and violence against women oppress women's bodies and eradicate their subjectivities and voice.

(3) DEATH IS A HUMAN

In the utterance “[m]y delicious *death moan*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 50), the lexical choices of death and moan create a personification metaphor. Literally, death does not moan. However, in the situational context of the given utterance, death has been assigned human attributes of moaning. Therefore, death functions as a human being. In the situational context of the utterance, Mr. Harvey has cut Susie into pieces and packed the pieces of her body into a sack. The noun death signifies the death of Susie. Hence, it refers to what Susie thinks about the brutality that Mr. Harvey has done to her. The act of moaning depicts the pain and psychological suffering even in her post-assault life experiences. Moreover, the word death suggests that Susie has departed into a new world, but still, she suffers from the severe consequences of rape.

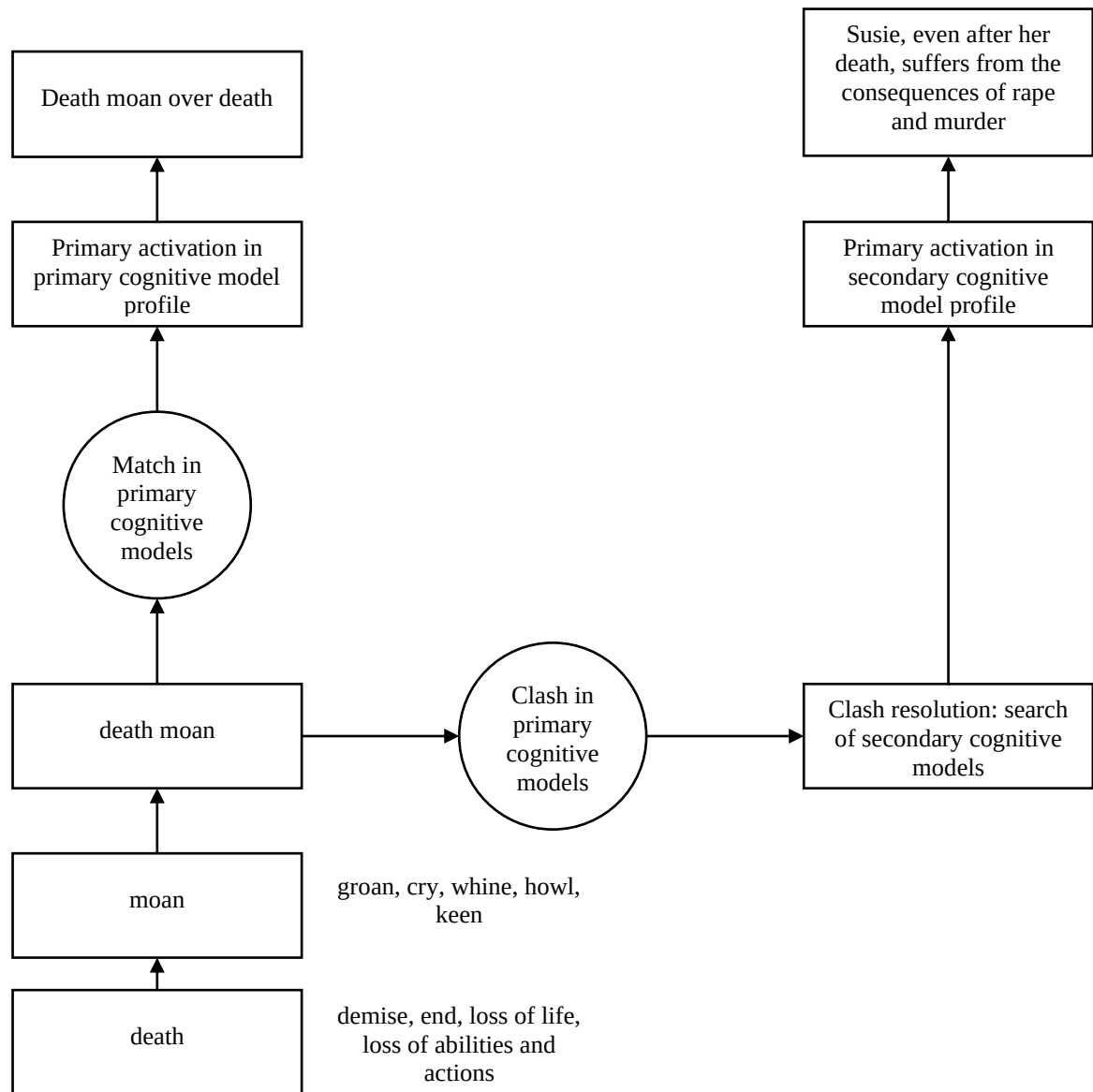


Figure 4.23: Meaning construction in [death moan]

In conclusion, the personification metaphor of DEATH IS A HUMAN depicts that rape victims experience volumes of constant pain and suffering. As in the case of Susie in *TLB*, even though she moves to other levels of heaven, she never stops thinking about her family on earth, which signifies her constant suffering caused by rape and murder (Sebold, 2002). Shipley and Arrigo (2008) add that a perpetrator of rape makes rape an integral part of murdering a victim.

Also, the perpetrators commit rape and sexual violence to degrade, dominate, and subsequently annihilate the victim (Petrella & Harkins, 2021).

(4) DEAD ARE ALIVE

A dead rape victim has also been constructed in terms of alive and living in the text of *TLB*. The conceptual metaphor DEAD ARE ALIVE is analyzed in the instance given below.

In the utterance “[w]hen I first *entered heaven I thought* [emphasis added] everyone saw what I saw” (Sebold, 2002, p. 16), the lexical choices—entered heaven, and I thought—depict the dead as alive since the words (i.e., entered and thought) refer to the human activities of entering and thinking associated to those who are alive. Literally, a dead person can neither move nor think. Thus, a clash arises. The situational context of the novel adds that Susie, after she is raped and killed, opens her eyes in heaven, which stretches her life even after her death. Even though these beliefs about the afterlife are followed worldwide, scientific inquiry remains incomplete here (Kiaei & Safdari, 2014). However, in the present context, since Susie has been moved from earth to heaven, it adds to the fact that the consequences of rape are forever. Thus, the linguistic choices of heaven, thought, and saw indicate that Susie is still observing, thinking, and seeing, even in heaven.

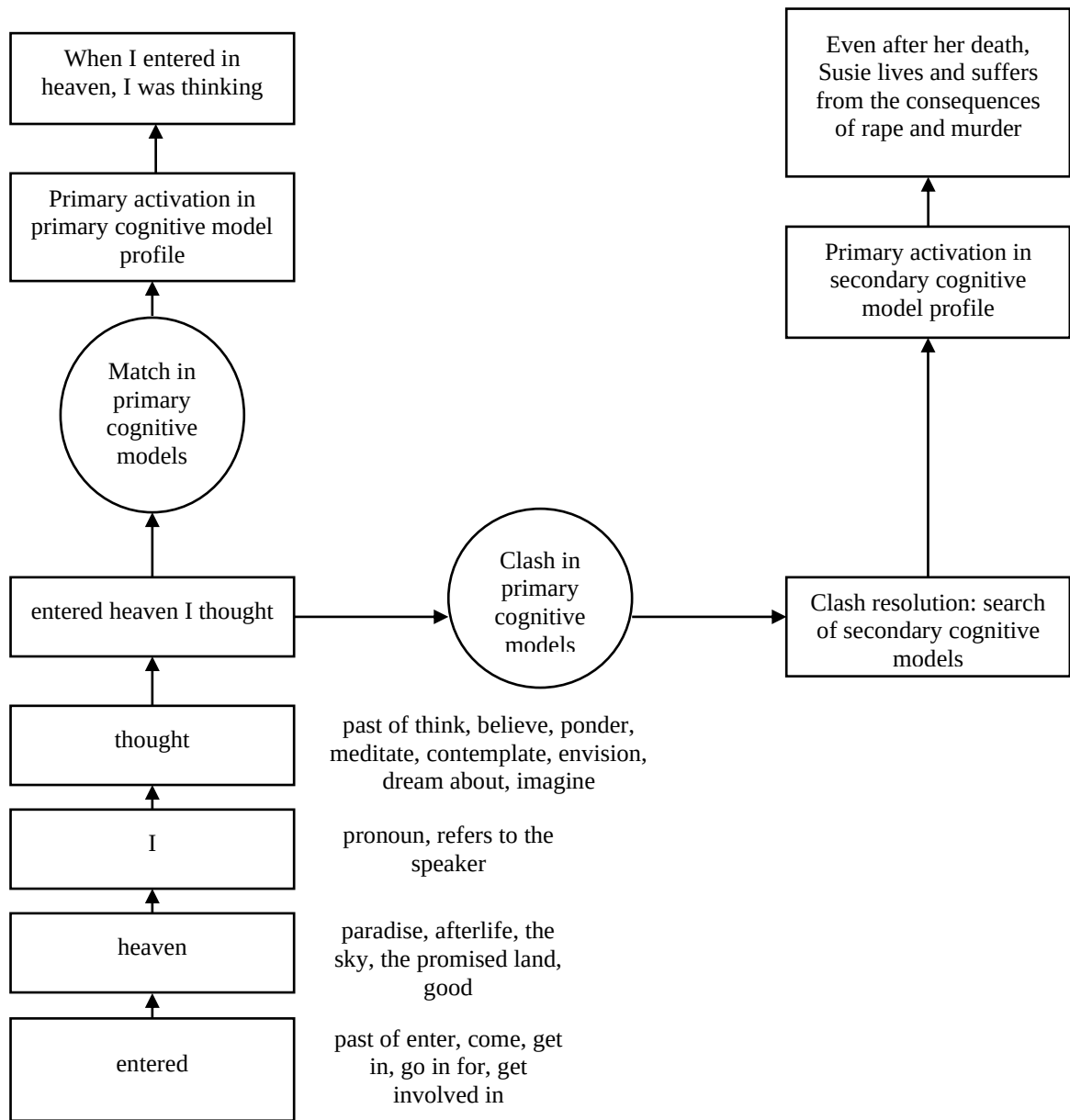


Figure 4.24: Meaning construction in [entered heaven I thought]

On the whole, the personification of the dead as alive reiterates that rape victims cannot be healed completely; there always remains something missing since the past occurs in memory intermittingly. As in the case of Susie in *TLB*, even though Susie gets her wishes completed, her family gets united, and she moves to the other levels of heaven, she still thinks about her life

experiences on earth and, hence, suffers psychologically (Sebold, 2002). Similarly, in Gay's (2017) narrative, a rape victim suffers from the psychological effects of rape and violence even after a considerable amount of time. The rape victim declared that the rape had become a part of her memory, and it always stays with her (p. 38). In a study on the impacts of rape on rape victims' psychological health, Oshodi et al. (2020) describe that young rape victims exclusively experience a wide range of immediate and long-term emotional and mental health consequences following the assault. The consequences include depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and feelings of guilt and shame (Ackard et al., 2001; Kendall-Tackett et al., 1993).

Overall, the findings of conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's (2002) *TLB* indicate that different categories of rape metaphors emerge in the discourse. The categories are based on the non-human nature of metaphors, object metaphors, metaphors of human state and experiences, metaphors of human activities, and personification metaphors. Further, these main categories construct different conceptual metaphors representing rape in *TLB*. The conceptual metaphors construct rape through a variety of source domains, including animals, birds, plants, prey, things, tools, and instruments to control, possession, horror, hunting, and silencing. The conceptual metaphors of rape are based on the linguistic and conceptual knowledge interpretation of the utterances in *TLB*, and the interpretation protocols are suggested by Evans (2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) in LCCM Theory.

Furthermore, the findings of the study show that the incorporation of both linguistic and conceptual knowledge in the interpretation of the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB* effectively represents the constructions of rape that eventually expose the embedded horrors in a rape event and the gravity of pain and suffering in a rape victim's life experiences. As such,

the non-human metaphors in *TLB* exhibited that a rape event is understood as an animalistic activity in which Susie, the rape victim, and Mr. Harvey, the perpetrator, are animals. Since animal behavior and animals are deprived of human behavior and characteristics of emotions and affection, Susie was brutally beaten, savagely raped, and then cut into tiny pieces. In metaphors of objects, while Susie was constructed as an object, the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey, was constructed as the object's owner who has the object's rights and authority. As the owner and authoritative person, Mr. Harvey controlled and dominated Susie and used her as his possession—he followed his whims. He did with Susie what he wanted, from taking her clothes off to sleeping on her body after raping her. In the following category of conceptual metaphors, the metaphors of human state and experiences, rape events, and the participants (Susie and Mr. Harvey) were constructed as psychological suffering, death, humiliation, and horror. The constructions exposed the channels and objects Mr. Harvey used to operate his plan of raping and killing Susie, referring to the latter's humiliation and mutilation. After that, the metaphors of human activities provided how rape was constructed as a strategy to trap, hunt, and silence Susie. Primarily, the metaphorical constructions shed light on the planning and execution of Mr. Harvey's strategies to trap, rape, and kill Susie. Finally, in personification metaphors, the personification of Mr. Harvey's tools and instruments depicts the level of cruelty embedded in rape and Susie's volumes of pain and suffering.

4.9 Discussion

In the subsequent sections, the findings based on the intended objectives of the study will be discussed.

4.9.1 Interpretation of Metaphoric Language

The current study indicates that the interpretation of metaphoric language essentially depends on the situational context of the lexical concepts in an utterance. The situational context functions as a facilitating phenomenon to a lexical concept accessing the hierarchies of conceptual knowledge. Extensively, the situational context of an utterance is composed of the immediate linguistic context and the extra-linguistic context. Furthermore, the immediate linguistic context comprises the linguistic choices in an utterance, including lexical categories, grammatical structures, cohesion, and coherence. Furthermore, the lexical concepts in an utterance are fundamental to referencing and connecting with other lexical concepts. The interaction and connection of lexical concepts with other lexical concepts leads to the access sites of the semantic potentials. The semantic potentials further provide access to the conceptual knowledge of the lexical concepts. Overall, the lexical concepts are about the linguistic knowledge of an utterance. Accordingly, the study shows that a lexical concept may give access to multiple semantic potentials. The semantic potentials of a lexical concept are structured schematically in cognitive model profiles.

A lexical concept with other lexical concepts in a situational context may give access to its literal or figurative conception, as shown through the diagrams in section 4.8. Even though a lexical concept may have different semantic potentials, it only gives access to a particular cognitive model. Therefore, it is suggested that a lexical concept may have different informational characterization in various contexts, as exemplified in all the metaphoric instances mentioned in section 4.8. In these instances, a lexical concept provides access to different semantic potentials depending on the situational context. However, the informational

characterization relies on the form of a lexical concept and its relation with the other lexical concepts.

In the existing literature on the interpretation of rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB*, the studies adopted the traditional approaches (e.g., textual analysis, linguistic approach) to analyzing the meanings of metaphors (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016). For example, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) interpreted the dark images of rape and violence against women in *TLB* through a stylistic approach. In the study, the researchers (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018) analyzed a personification metaphor—“*His glasses were small and round with gold frames, and his eyes looked over them at me*” [emphasis added] (p. 234)—to discuss Mr. Harvey's intentions during the rape event without including the linguistic and extra-linguistic context in which the personification metaphor existed. Similarly, the interpretation of the metaphor—“*Life is a perpetual yesterday for us*” [emphasis added]—also ignored the inclusion of the situational context of the utterance (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018). Consequently, since the interpretation of the meanings of rape metaphors is without the inclusion of the knowledge of the situational context, the meanings of the metaphors remain inconclusive. Therefore, the analysis of rape metaphors constrains the gruesome details of rape and the horrific reality embedded in rape events that reflect the pain and suffering of rape victims. Similarly, in the study (Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016), the consequences of rape (e.g., Susie's family members are the sufferers of the many ripples of the rape act) are metaphorically represented and analyzed. However, the situational context—consisting of the linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge—of the utterances in which the metaphorical expressions exist has not been interpreted. Moreover, Arrida (2013) interpreted rape metaphors (e.g., bones, weeds, horror and

blood) in *TLB* to show the critical stages in Susie's progress and development. Even though the findings of Arrida's (2013) study discuss the significance of metaphors in understanding Susie's realization and maturation process, the researcher ignored the inclusion of the situational context of the metaphorical expressions. Consequently, the interpretation of rape metaphors lacks the comprehensive meanings of rape.

Most importantly, the past studies on Sebold's *TLB* are not particularly related to the phenomenon of metaphor understanding; however, they explain the instances of rape metaphors while analyzing their intended objectives (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016). For instance, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) identify the linguistic metaphors of rape (i.e., I was the mortar, He was the pestle) in Sebold's *TLB* and analyze the rhetorical effects of the metaphors. The analysis provides how Sebold uses metaphor as a stylistic device to represent rape and rape victims' experiences. However, the researchers Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) ignore the use of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge embedded in the situational context of the utterances in which the metaphors appear. Consequently, the meanings of the metaphors remain inconclusive. On the other hand, in the current study, such metaphorical expressions of rape are interpreted by employing the perspective of linguistic and conceptual knowledge and, therefore, show the conceptual metaphors of rape, such as RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION. More than a linguistic representation of a rape victim as an object (such as a mortar), and the expressions like "*I want to check*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 12) and "*I want to make sure*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 12), the metaphors RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION and RAPE PERPETRATORS ARE AUTHORITIES expose the underlying reality of a rape event in which

a rape victim is dehumanized, controlled, and possessed as an entity by the perpetrator. In Arrida's (2013) study of Sebold's *TLB*, the linguistic metaphor "horror and blood" was examined to show a change in the rape victim Susie's maturation process (p. 6). However, linguistic choices such as "*too much blood in the earth*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 27), "*the blood on the Earth*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 261), "*my blood on the blade had turned black*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 56), "*much blood there was in the cornfield*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 193) and "*small pool of blood*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 181) in the current study are seen in their linguistic and extra-linguistic contexts, revealed a variety of semantic potentials and, thus, constructing the conceptual metaphors such as RAPE IS HUMILIATION and RAPE IS MUTILATION.

Moreover, past studies on the representation of rape in Sebold's *TLB* indicate that if words are used with other than their basic meanings—based on resemblance and analogy—they are marked as metaphorical expressions (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016). For instance, based on the analogies between the effects of a ripple and the consequences of a rape act, the consequences of Susie's rape act (e.g., the suffering of family members and the disintegration of the family) were metaphorically interpreted as the ripples of violence (Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016). Similarly, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) discuss rape metaphors based on resemblance. For example, the metaphor "I was the mortar, he was the pestle" is based on the resemblance of Susie as a mortar and Mr. Harvey as a pestle (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018, p. 234). However, the current study's findings showed that the words are not associated with particular meanings. Instead, the situational context constructs the meanings of the words through a constructive process. The constructive process is described below.

4.9.2 Linguistic Knowledge

The current study has shown that the linguistic knowledge of an utterance in interpreting metaphoric language plays a significant role. As discussed, the linguistic knowledge of the utterance, including the metaphorical expressions, consists of the stylistic uses of the lexical categories, grammatical structures, and the function of cohesion and coherence in the given utterance. The study reveals that the linguistic knowledge of the stylistic choices is essential to interpret rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB*. For instance, regarding lexical choices, the study shows the frequent uses of personal pronouns (i.e., I), as seen in section 4.8. The personal pronoun *I* stands for Susie, the rape victim. Thus, the frequent use of the pronoun brings the rape victim back in focus, and the associated lexical choices with the pronoun indicate the details of Susie's experience of rape. For example, in the utterances "*I was cold*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 7), "*I was fourteen*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 5), "*I was in the gazebo thinking*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 43), "*I was a soul back on Earth*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 302) "*I was still alive*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 126) "*I was still breathing*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 14) and "*I was too afraid*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 303), the pronoun (i.e., I) brings the focus on Susie to express her ordeal. Besides, the multiple uses of the past participle form of was in the instances describe that the event has already taken place, which is further intensified by the situational context about Susie's brutal rape and murder. Such interpretations of the linguistic choices in the current study helped construct the conceptual metaphors of rape in *TLB*, such as RAPE IS PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING and RAPE IS TORTURE.

Moreover, the adjectives—cold and fourteen—help describe two different experiences: the first describes Susie’s feelings, the weather conditions, and the difficulties of that particular moment, and the latter is about her age, the specific time, and a milestone in her life—when she started her life at fourteen, she was raped and killed. Furthermore, in the case of the use of the phrase—Mr. Harvey—combines two nouns, Mr. and Harvey. The lexical choice of Mr. is a title used for a respectful address, and Harvey is a proper name. In the discourse of *TLB*, Harvey is the rapist and serial killer, even though Susie always addressed him as Mr. Harvey, as in “*Mr. Harvey’s house and started howling*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 131), “*The bones of the neighborhood animals ... Mr. Harvey’s crawlspace were there*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 218) “*Mr. Harvey’s spidery hand*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 185) and “*Mr. Harvey had killed*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 185). The antithesis depicts the central idea—that for Susie—it is formal to address an older man, which shows the distance between Susie and Mr. Harvey, unlike the other informal relations among family members. Thus, the linguistic knowledge of the lexical choices enhances the interpretation of metaphorical uses in the given utterances. Also, it helps construct the conceptual metaphors of rape, such as PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE LONELY BIRDS, RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC, RAPE IS DEATH, and RAPE IS TORTURE in the current study.

Furthermore, the study shows that the linguistic knowledge of grammatical structures in *TLB* facilitates the understanding of rape metaphors’ meanings. The frequent uses of parallel structures in the discourse of *TLB* provide rich details of rape and rape victims’ experiences. For instance, in the construction of “*My murderer ... my father ... my mother*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 6), the use of a parallel structure of a personal pronoun (e.g., my) and noun

(e.g., murderer, father) helps describe the closeness of the perpetrator to the victim that is elaborated in section 4.8. Herein, the personal pronoun *my* in all three instances of noun phrases refers to the rape victim Susie Salmon. In the last two phrases, the nouns *father* and *mother* denote the biographical entities and the social relationships among family members, eventually conceptualizing the bond, togetherness, and closeness among family members. However, the first phrase includes the word *murderer*, which linguistically stands for a person against all the attributes described in the last two words (i.e., *father* and *mother*). Thus, the parallel structure informs the closeness of the murderer with the victim and her family that further exposes the fact of how the closeness of the victim and the perpetrator causes the victim's rape and abrupt end, as discussed in section 4.8.

Also, with the use of the grammatical choices and their linguistic knowledge in *TLB*, the prepositions such as *on* and *under* play a significant role in understanding the metaphorical expressions in an utterance and constructing conceptual metaphors like RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL and RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION. For instance, as discussed in section 4.8, the use of *on* in *on top of me* depicts the physical position of the rape victim and the perpetrator. Since the preposition *on* is used to show the position of an entity about the other, it shows that the perpetrator was always on Susie. Moreover, the preposition *on* is followed by the noun *top* which refers to the front of the rape victim (in this particular context), which was further elaborated by the use of another preposition—*of*—connecting it with the rape victim Susie Salmon through the use of the object pronoun—*me*.

Besides, the linguistic knowledge about the discourse of rape in *TLB* is also comprised of adverbs. The selection of adverbs as the author's style of writing about rape exhibited the

significance of the specific selection in representing the rape victim's ordeal. The use of the adverb *now* in *TLB* elucidates the horrific details of rape crime and, thus, adds to the whole of rape. The word *now* denotes the ongoing time or moment concerning the action that is taking place. For example, as discussed in section 4.8, the adverb *now* shows Susie's present state—she belongs to Mr. Harvey *now*. The adverb *now* reiterates the experiences before what happened and adds to the details of the crime.

Additionally, the linguistic knowledge of different referencing lexical choices—either anaphoric or cataphoric—helps contribute to the stylistic uses of cohesion and coherence. Consequently, the referencing choices add value to the overall understanding of the metaphorical expressions representing rape and rape victims' experiences in *TLB*. As discussed in section 4.8, substituting the pronoun *it* replaces the noun and functions as a stylistic device to establish cohesion. The substitution of noun through the pronoun *it* refers to its relationship with the entity that already has existed, and thus, its reiteration helps bring the whole idea back. For instance, in “*it was the size of a small room*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 10), the word *it* substitutes the word *hole* in which Susie was trapped, brutally tortured, raped, and then butchered by Mr. Harvey. Furthermore, the idea of the hole is extended through the collocation of a *small room*. The hole is substituted by the pronoun (i.e., *it*) and further elaborated in terms of its size, compared with the size of a small room. In this way, the linguistic knowledge of the stylistic choices that the author has employed in the discourse of *TLB* plays a significant role in constructing metaphors and representing rape.

However, in previous studies of Sebold's *TLB*, the metaphorical construction of rape has not been seen through the perspective of interpreting linguistic knowledge (see Ahmad &

Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bennett, 2009; Bennett, 2012; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016; Kiaei & Safdari, 2014; Mirabella, 2016; Wehling-Giorgi, 2021; Whitney, 2010). For example, Bliss (2008) studied the metaphorical significance of the photographs, exposing the traumatic effects on the rape victim's family in *TLB*. Even though the researcher Bliss (2008) discussed the instances in which the photographs were used as metaphors, like "photographs stand in for the dead and become a metaphor for the living traumatized family" (p. 862), the "photograph also comes to metaphorically replace Susie's unrecovered body" (p. 863), the linguistic knowledge of the utterances and metaphorical expressions has not been included in the interpretation of the meanings of the metaphors. Thus, the meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB* remained limited. Similarly, Arrida (2013) analyzed the metaphorical significance of the word "weeds" while interpreting the consequences of rape in Susie's post-assault life experiences (p. 6). However, in Arrida's (2013) study, the perspective of investigating rape metaphors through linguistic knowledge remains to be addressed.

Furthermore, the studies conducted on the metaphorical representation of rape in language in the existing literature also ignored the phenomenon of linguistic knowledge of the lexical concepts in the interpretation of the meaning of rape metaphors (see Allen, 1996; Boehm et al., 2020; Ehrlich, 2020; Ghosal, 2013; Gurnham, 2016; Kimmons, 2011; Laugerud, 2020; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 1999; Skjelsbaek, 2001). For instance, while interpreting the political and war rape discourses, Skjelsbaek (2001) examined rape as a weapon of war because rape in war situations has been used as a calculated strategy—rape camps are constructed in which women are held captive and raped. The study describes the ways (i.e., essentialism, structuralism, social constructionism) that help conceptualize rape as a weapon of war; however, it cannot be

considered conclusive regarding the meanings of the metaphors since it never addresses the interpretation of rape metaphors using the perspective of linguistic knowledge of the utterances in which the metaphorical expressions exist. Similarly, in legal and rape trial discourses, Laugerud (2020) studied how game metaphors are used to construct the perspectives of judges, lawyers, and rape victims. Laugerud (2020) analyzed rape victims' discourses and discussed the lexical choices (e.g., showman, right things) referring to game metaphors (e.g., lawyers are showman, rape victims are players). Even though the study incorporated the analysis of the linguistic choices in constructing metaphors, the explanation of the metaphors appeared inconsistent since it had not examined the linguistic knowledge of the situational context in which the metaphorical expressions were used.

Even though past studies focused on rape metaphors understanding, only the metaphorically used words were interpreted in terms of the traditional methods of understanding metaphors like similarities and analogies (see Beneke, 1982; Boehm et al., 2020; Ciamaricone, 2020; Sielke, 2001). For example, Ciamaricone (2020) examined the conceptual metaphors (e.g., A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ACTIVATED MACHINE, CONTROL IS UP)—constructing rape and the trauma of rape victims in literary discourses—by mentioning the lexical choices (e.g., chum/bait, sharks, circling prey) that drew mapping between the source domain (e.g., HUNTING) and the target domain (e.g., DESIRE). Moreover, past studies on rape metaphors only focused on the open-class words constructing metaphors and ignored the other words—the words existing in the situational context of the utterance as discussed in section 4.8 (see Beneke, 1982; Boehm et al., 2020; Ciamaricone, 2020; Sielke, 2001). For instance, Boehm et al. (2020) mentioned the words (e.g., flirtatious, attractive, fun to party with) that are used to

construct the identities of rape victims in literary language (p. 43). However, the interpretation of the other words in the utterance has been excluded, that constrained the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors.

On the other hand, the current study shows that words other than open-class significantly facilitate the interpretation of metaphorical meanings, as shown in section 4.8. Since the integral part of linguistic knowledge of the lexical concepts in the metaphorical constructions of rape has not been adequately incorporated in past studies on rape metaphors, a comprehensive meaning of the phenomenon cannot be observed. Therefore, the current study fills this potential gap of knowledge and provides an extensive interpretation of the meanings of rape metaphors in literary language.

4.9.3 Conceptual Knowledge

The current study reveals that interpreting metaphorical meanings of rape in literary language essentially involves two perspectives, the one discussed in section 4.9.2, which is linguistic knowledge, and the other one is conceptual knowledge which is discussed in this section. Conceptual knowledge refers to non-linguistic knowledge comprising cognitive models and conceptual metaphors based on linguistic and non-linguistic experiences. Moreover, cognitive models are the cognitive processes that are coherent bodies of knowledge for comprehension and prediction purposes. In other words, a cognitive model is a body of knowledge that attains representational form in language. This body of knowledge is stored in the human conceptual system, and new pieces of information are added to it analogously. Thus, it creates a schema that describes a pattern of thought or behavior that organizes categories of information and the relationships among them. The pieces of information are stored in it through

human perceptual experiences, and these experiences provide the building blocks of the concepts. The concepts are formed and enriched through the same perceptual experiences. Accordingly, a lexical item gives a representation character to a large body of coherent knowledge or a semantic potential to which a lexical concept may have access, which is termed a cognitive model profile for that lexical concept.

The current study's findings show that a single lexical concept can access a large coherent body of knowledge stored hierarchically. It has already been illustrated in section 4.8. Thus, the results reveal that a lexical concept has direct or indirect access to conceptual knowledge. The concepts directly accessed by the lexical concepts encoded in the primary cognitive model profile are called literal conceptions. For example, the utterance "*it was snowing*" [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 6) ends up with a literal conception since there is no clash found in the primary cognitive model profiles of the lexical concepts in the utterance.

On the other hand, lexical concepts may access many semantic potentials, meaning the concepts are accessed indirectly in the secondary cognitive profile and are called figurative conceptions. It shows that the more distant a concept is from the lexical concept, the more it is figurative in its ideal state. The examples of figurative conception are discussed through diagrams in section 4.8.

In this way, the findings of the current study show that the part of conceptual knowledge in the interpretation of metaphorical meanings of rape in Sebold's *TLB* is significant. On the other hand, past studies conducted on the representation of rape in Sebold's *TLB* have not analyzed the discourse by employing the perspective of conceptual knowledge in the interpretation of metaphorical expressions (see Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013;

Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016). For example, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) investigated the meaning of the metaphor—*I was an animal already dying*—and showed how the metaphor helped construct the dark images of rape and rape victims in Sebold’s *TLB*. However, the investigation of the meanings of the metaphor reveals shortcomings since the study has exclusively focused on the linguistic perspective of knowledge. Moreover, conceptual knowledge’s perspective in interpreting the meaning of metaphors in *TLB* is not discussed. Similarly, Arrida (2013) linguistically discussed the metaphor—*horror and blood*—and showed Susie’s progress and development in the afterlife. The study remains limited to the comprehensive meanings of rape since it includes only one aspect of knowledge (i.e., linguistic knowledge). In conclusion, past studies on the representation of rape in Sebold’s *TLB* employed the approaches of the symbolic nature of lexical choices and stylistic devices to understand the meanings of rape metaphors and the rape victims’ experiences.

Furthermore, in past studies conducted on the discourse of rape, either literary or non-literary in the existing literature, the perspective of conceptual knowledge to analyze rape metaphors has also been ignored (see Adams et al., 1995; Anderson & Doherty, 2008; Laugerud, 2020; Luchjenbroers & Aldridge, 2007; O’Hara, 2012; Roldan-Sevillano, 2021; Stroinska, 2014). For instance, O’Hara (2012) analyzed media discourses of rape to demonstrate how the perpetrators are conceptualized as predators, and rape is represented as preying and hunting (p. 251). The conceptualizations of rape and the perpetrators of rape in the study have been analyzed through the approach of textual analysis focusing on the frequencies of the lexical choices (e.g., *beast, pounce, stalk, wolf in sheep’s clothing*) that occurred in news reports (p. 251). Even though the study showed how rape myths exist in media discourses, the interpretation of rape

metaphors remained limited since it ignored the inclusion of conceptual knowledge while interpreting the metaphorical constructions of rape myths in the discourses. Similarly, the researcher Roldan-Sevillano (2021) discussed the metaphorical conceptualizations of rape as a form of violence and a national symbol by referring to a myth in the history of Haitian people. However, the analysis lacked the linguistic and conceptual interpretation of the utterances (p. 33). Consequently, rape is seen using linguistic approaches to metaphors, such as revenge, deception, weapon, attack, and game, and rape victims as white meat and cancer. On the other hand, in the current study, by conjoining both linguistic and conceptual knowledge, conceptual metaphors such as RAPE IS HORROR, RAPE IS DEATH, RAPE IS SILENCING, and RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS emerge to expose the horrors of rape and the painful experiences of rape victims. Therefore, the current study fills this potential gap of knowledge and explores rape metaphors, employing the perspective of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge to understand the meanings and constructions of rape in literary language comprehensively.

4.9.4 Conceptual Metaphor

The findings of the current study exhibited the varieties of conceptual metaphors of rape in the discourse of Sebold's novel *TLB*. The main categories of conceptual metaphors include non-human metaphors (e.g., animals and plants), the metaphors of objects and things, the metaphors of human state and experiences, the metaphors of human actions and activities, and personification, as discussed in section 4.2. The main categories of conceptual metaphors comprise several metaphors based on different source domains related to ordinary human life experiences. The conceptual metaphors include the source domains of animals, animalistic behavior, lonely seabirds, plants, objects, things, tools, possessions, authorities, psychological

suffering, death, humiliation, mutilation, horror, trap, silencing, hunting, and struggle. The source domains are used to capture rape, rape events, and rape victims' painful experiences. The study shows that the source domains used to capture rape are grounded in different entities that are in use and a range of other human experiences. Moreover, the study points out that human experiences in the physical and social world provide a vast repository of domains to construct the abstract concepts of rape.

Concerning the existing literature on rape, multiple studies have examined the conceptual metaphors constructing and representing rape in a variety of discourses (see Benedict, 1992; Bock & Burkley, 2019; Chasteen, 2001; Emanatian, 1995; Lee, 2010; Mason & Monckton-Smith 2008; O'Hara 2012; Skjelsbaek, 2001; Tranchese, 2019; Weatherall & Walton, 1999). For example, Chasteen (2001) revealed that conceptual metaphors like rape is personal destruction (e.g., *destruction of the physical and emotional self*), rape is theft (e.g., *robbery, the criminal act*), and rape is betrayal (e.g., *to enter into a relationship with someone*) by following the approach of critical discourse analysis. On the other hand, a few studies have employed the theoretical approach of CMT to discuss rape metaphors (see Bock & Burkley, 2019; Lee, 2010; Skjelsbaek, 2001; Weatherall & Walton, 1999). For instance, Bock and Burkley (2019) demonstrated that in animal metaphors (e.g., MEN IS A PREDATOR, WOMAN IS A PREY), a woman is represented as a prey (e.g., *chick*). In contrast, a man is represented as a predator (e.g., *a wolf*). Similarly, Lee (2010) revealed rape metaphors like FEMALE RAPE IS SCIENCE (e.g., *can't prevent it, not performing a radical cure*), THE RAPIST IS A PREDATOR (e.g., *take this chance to think of how to avoid wolf, teach them some strategies to avoid wolf*), RAPE IS PREYING (e.g., *he actually pounces on her, he lurks*

in the shadow, he purposely and thoughtfully hides in a place), THE VICTIM IS PREY (e.g., *maybe he will randomly find a prey in different situations, if I choose a prey*), showing how rape victims, the perpetrators of rape, and rape events are metaphorically conceptualized. Moreover, a large number of studies used linguistic approaches to identify and interpret rape metaphors based on similarities and analogies of the metaphorical words (see Benedict, 1992; Chasteen, 2001; Emanatian, 1995; Mason & Monckton-Smith 2008; O'Hara 2012; Tranchese, 2019). For example, Benedict (1992) discusses that rape is represented as a punishment for rape victims for their past deeds in media discourses of rape. The victims are judged by their behavior, whether good or bad. However, since this is not rational thinking, it has been rejected by the therapist and counselors who work to resurface rape victims (Benedict, 1992, p. 17). Similarly, O'Hara (2012) finds that rape victims are represented as promiscuous women who invited rape while, on the other hand, the perpetrators are constructed as monsters and perverts in media discourses of rape. However, the studies ignored the collaboration of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge to interpret rape metaphors. Therefore, this potential gap of knowledge of combining the two different perspectives of knowledge—linguistic and conceptual—in the interpretation of the meanings of rape metaphors is filled by the current study.

Accordingly, there are significant differences between the findings of the current study and past studies on understanding rape metaphors in language. For instance, the current study identifies the conceptual metaphor RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY in Sebold's *TLB*. On the other hand, Lee (2010) examines the conceptual metaphor RAPE IS PREYING and VICTIM IS PREY in the discourses of rape. On the surface level, the conceptual metaphors in both studies seem to have similar meanings but differ in interpretations. Lee (2010) used the CMT to find

conceptual metaphors based on the mappings between the source domain and target domain, and there are no further details of the linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge used in the construction of metaphors. However, the current study includes both perspectives in detail and then provides the interpretation of the metaphors. For example, as discussed in section 4.8, the linguistic context, including the lexical concepts of Mr. Harvey, collapsed, hole, and cornfield, facilitated the semantic potentials of the metaphorical expression “*a sack filled with my body parts*” [emphasis added] (Sebold, 2002, p. 49). The semantic potential gave access to the secondary cognitive profiles as a clash occurred in the primary cognitive profiles, marking the expression as a figurative conception. Thus, the lexical concepts—such as hole and cornfield—supported the planning and hunting strategies of the perpetrator—Mr. Harvey. In Lee’s (2010) study, such details have been ignored.

Similarly, in Bock and Burkley’s (2018) study, the metaphorical conceptualization of the perpetrators of rape and rape victims occurs as PREDATOR and PREY. However, the study lacks the use of both linguistic and conceptual knowledge incorporation in the constructions of rape metaphors. Moreover, even though Weatherall and Walton (1999) adopted the theoretical model of CMT and indicated the categories of conceptual metaphors, such as animals, war, and violence, the study employed the process of mappings between the two domains based on similarity and analogy and; and, therefore, lacked in providing comprehensive findings of the intended phenomenon by analyzing through the perspective of linguistic and conceptual knowledge. While on the other hand, the current study follows the linguistic and conceptual knowledge perspective and exposes horrific details of rape constructed through the same

conceptual metaphor of rape, such as RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS and RAPE IS A STRUGGLE in Sebold's *TLB*.

Additionally, past studies on the nature of metaphor understanding concerning the representation of rape in Sebold's *TLB* differ from the findings of the current study. Past studies explored the phenomenon of metaphor in Sebold's *TLB* specifically on a linguistic basis in which metaphors are either linguistic or based on analogies and similarities (see Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Arrida, 2013; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016; Wehling-Giorgi, 2018). For example, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) explored the significance of metaphors as a stylistic device that helps deepen the meaning of the represented theme of rape in Sebold's *TLB*. Also, Wehling-Giorgi (2018) linguistically explains the metaphors of photographs used in the *TLB* and describes the psychological suffering of rape victims and their family members. Contrarily, in the current study, rape metaphors are dissected, incorporating both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge. Therefore, the study presents the findings of rape metaphors, revealing the reality of rape, embedded violence, and the gravity of the pain and suffering of rape victims in *TLB*.

Overall, the current study provided interpretations of the meanings of rape metaphors that have been ignored in the existing literature on Sebold's *TLB*. As discussed, past studies included a variety of approaches to explore the phenomenon of rape metaphors. However, the interpretation of conceptual metaphors—using both linguistic and conceptual knowledge approaches—has remained unexplored. Thus, the current study filled in the potential gap and addressed the unexplored area by employing the comprehensive approach of unifying linguistic and conceptual knowledge to interpret the conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's *TLB*. The

findings of the study show that rape is metaphorically constructed through ordinary human life experiences and activities that help construct and understand rape.

4.9.5 Interplay of Linguistic Knowledge and Conceptual Knowledge

The interpretation of metaphorical language depends on the combination of linguistic and conceptual knowledge in the situational context of an utterance. Further, the combination of linguistic and conceptual knowledge is guided by the utterance's immediate linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. The linguistic context comprises lexical concepts and their association with other lexical concepts.

The current study's findings reveal that each lexical concept's form carries a semantic value. The lexical concept holds the perceptual concept, which is often literal, but its association with other lexical concepts frames its semantic argument in the immediate linguistic context, as illustrated in section 4.8. The interpretation may produce erroneous results if the form of lexical concepts and associations is not considered. The importance of the form of lexical concepts and their relation with other lexical concepts in meaning construction has already been illustrated throughout the analysis (see section 4.8). On the other hand, past studies in the existing literature on metaphorical constructions and representations of rape and violence against women have ignored the phenomenon of lexical forms and lexical concepts in the interpretations of rape metaphors (see Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2020; Arrida, 2013; Bock & Burkley, 2018; Ciamaricone, 2020; Emanatian, 1995; Lee, 2010; Skjelsbaek, 2001; Weatherall & Walton, 1999). For example, Ahmad and Nadarajan (2018) analyzed rape metaphors, such as *his eyes looked out over them at me* in Sebold's *TLB*; however, the interpretation of the metaphors remained limited since it ignored the analysis of the lexical concepts of the lexical

choices (e.g., his, eyes, looked) embedded in the utterances (p. 234). Consequently, the meanings of the metaphors constrain the horrific realities of rape and the painful experiences of rape victims in Sebold's *TLB*. However, the study showed the significance of metaphors as a stylistic device used to conceptualize the dark images of rape. Similarly, Lee (2010) interpreted the conceptual metaphors of rape (e.g., RAPE IS WAR) by drawing the similarities between the source domain (e.g., WAR) and the target domain (e.g., RAPE) and highlighting the lexical choices (e.g., wild war, specific target) used in the utterances (p. 151). Even though the study discussed how conceptual metaphors of rape are significant ways to understand the construction of rape and rape experiences in rape victims' discourses, the inclusion of linguistic knowledge of metaphorical words has been ignored, which constrains the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors. Therefore, the inadequate linguistic knowledge in the interpretation of metaphors may mislead the results and, hence, the construction and representation of rape in language. Thus, the current study's findings contrast with past studies in which linguistic knowledge remains to be addressed in interpreting metaphorical language. However, it has been seen that linguistic knowledge in metaphor interpretation plays a critical role since linguistic knowledge constructs the experiences of rape and describes the language, thought, and cognition of a rape victim in the discourse, as in Susie's case in Sebold's *TLB*.

The current study's findings reveal that the situational context of an utterance is essential in the meaning-construction process of metaphors. Therefore, it is intended that the situational context guides the lexical concepts, implying that if the situational context of a lexical context is different, the result is different. Importantly, if the lexical concept is interpreted without its situational context, the results of that particular lexical concept interpretation would be incorrect.

As discussed in the current study (see section 4.8), the lexical concepts of the lexical choices—hat and hole—show different results in their situational contexts. Without the situational context of the lexical choices, the lexical concepts of hat and hole stand for the part of a dress and a hollow space. While in the situational context of the utterance, the lexical concepts of the words (i.e., hat and hole) are interpreted as a tool to silence rape victims and a site to torture, rape, and kill rape victims (see section 4.8). Therefore, the meaning of lexical choices must be sought in the situational context of the utterance. The whole utterance provides the actual situational context. Hence, the process of meaning construction of metaphors depends on the situational context, which implies interpreting the co-existing linguistic choices in the utterance. In this way, the current study contrasts with past studies on metaphorical understanding of rape because past studies focused on conceptual metaphors and ignored the interpretation of the situational context in which the lexical concepts exist and the meaning of the metaphors are created. Additionally, past studies incorporated only one aspect of the interpretation of metaphorical language (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018; Beneke, 1982; Boehm et al., 2020; Ciamaricone, 2020; Farr, 2009; Ghosal, 2013; Gurnham, 2016; Parashar, 2013; Smart, 1989; Walby et al., 1983). For instance, Farr (2009) studied war rape discourses exposing the gruesome details of war rapes in which women and children were tortured, oppressed, humiliated, and raped. Furthermore, the researcher Farr (2009) discusses how rape is metaphorically constructed as a strategy to defeat an enemy. However, the interpretation of the situational context in which the metaphorical words are embedded has been ignored, which constrains the comprehensive meanings of the details of constructing rape metaphors. Moreover, Walby et al. (1983) analyze media discourses on rape and reveal that rape metaphors (e.g., rapists are beasts, rapists are evil) are used to construct the rapists as permanently psychologically unbalanced men. The researchers Walby et

al. (1983) show the utterances in which the metaphorical words are used. Nevertheless, it ignores the discussion of the situational context in which the utterances appear. On the other hand, the current study combined the two approaches (i.e., linguistic knowledge and non-linguistic knowledge) to investigate the constructions and representations of rape metaphors in literary language.

Moreover, the interpretations of conceptual metaphors of rape in the current study are not based on the mappings of the source domain and the target domain as described in CMT. CMT follows the perspective of conceptual knowledge only. Similarly, past studies on rape metaphors followed the perspective of CMT by using the perspective of conceptual knowledge (see Beneke, 1982; Bock & Burkley, 2018; Ciamaricone, 2020; Emanatian, 1995; Lakoff, 1987; Lee, 2010; Skjelsbaek, 2001; Weatherall & Walton, 1999). For instance, in Ciamaricone's (2020) study of rape metaphors, the conceptual metaphors of rape (e.g., DESIRE IS HUNTING, A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ACTIVATED MACHINE, CONTROL IS UP) are based on the mappings between the source domains (e.g., HUNTING, AN ANIMAL, UP) and the target domains (e.g., DESIRE, A LUSTFUL PERSON, CONTROL). Similarly, in Lee's (2010), the conceptual metaphors of rape (e.g., THE VICTIM IS PREY, THE RAPIST IS A PREDATOR, THE ACT OF RAPE IS HOLDING IN THE HAND) are based on the similarities and analogies between the source domains (e.g., PREY, PREDATOR, HAND) and the target domains (e.g., VICTIM, RAPIST, RAPE ACT). The studies showed how metaphors of rape are conceptually constructed, but the findings of the studies lack the inclusion of the linguistic knowledge of the lexical concepts that co-existed in an utterance that plays a significant role in constructing and understanding metaphors, as shown in the analysis of the current study in section 4.8. Thus, the

meaning of a metaphor depends on the salient situational context—having more semantic distance and being less contextually used. In this way, the metaphorical expressions in language are neither the products of the words as referred to by the traditional metaphor nor the structures of the human conceptual system as claimed by CMT, but rather, the construction of metaphors depends on the combination of both the linguistic context and the situational context. Therefore, interpreting metaphors requires a combination of linguistic and conceptual knowledge, as LCCM Theory claims. Thus, conceptual metaphors help integrate the primary cognitive models that are part of conceptual knowledge and influence linguistic knowledge.

Concurrently, the current study's findings are based on the phenomenon of metaphor meaning construction in which both linguistic and conceptual knowledge are combined. Therefore, the findings of the study indicate contrasts when compared with past studies on rape metaphors in the existing literature because past studies used either linguistic knowledge or conceptual knowledge and, thus, ignored the integration of linguistic and conceptual knowledge. In other words, the perspective of combining the two sets of knowledge (linguistic and conceptual) has not been applied in past studies. In Sebold's *TLB*, the linguistic approach to metaphor has been used in past studies that functioned in analyzing the linguistic choices, similarities, and analogy concerning investigating the metaphors. Thus, the findings of past studies on Sebold's *TLB* are not in the light of the contemporary understanding of metaphors, so they lack many ways to interpret metaphors. Accordingly, since past studies were limited to one of the perspectives of metaphor understanding, the findings of the studies remain limited and provide inconclusive meanings of rape metaphors. On the other hand, the current study has followed the approach of integrating both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge in

metaphor understanding and provided a comprehensive understanding of the metaphorical constructions and representation of rape in Sebold's *TLB*.

Overall, the study shows that the construction and comprehension of rape metaphors depend on the use of language in a situational context of the utterances in Sebold's *TLB*. Therefore, the findings of the study strongly affirm that the framework of the integration of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge provides a more comprehensive knowledge to understanding rape metaphors in Sebold's *TLB*.

4.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter initially presented the findings of rape metaphors in Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB*. The conceptual metaphors were categorized and investigated based on the source domains. The following section deals with the analysis of the metaphors focusing on the role of linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge in understanding the meanings of metaphors constructing rape. The analysis was followed by a discussion of the conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's *TLB* that exposed the differences between the findings of the current study and the existing studies on rape representation in literature. The next chapter deals with the conclusion and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Chapter Overview

The chapter begins with a comprehensive summary of the current research study's results. Then, it discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the study. After that, it presents the study's recommendations for future studies. Then, it provides the conclusion of the study. Finally, the chapter ends with a chapter summary.

5.2 Summary of Results

Sebold's (2002) novel *TLB* has attracted the attention of researchers from a variety of scholarships (i.e., hyper-reality, photographs, elements of monstrosity, female gothic, and feminine agency) to examine the representation of rape and rape victims including the perspective of style and metaphor (see Arrida, 2013; Bennett, 2009; Bennett, 2012; Bliss, 2008; Bufacchi & Gilson, 2016; Kiaei & Safdari, 2014; Mirabella, 2016; Wehling-Giorgi, 2021; Whitney, 2010). However, the modern approach (i.e., CMT) of thought and cognition to understanding rape metaphors has not been adequately implemented to examine the metaphorical constructions and representations of rape in language. Therefore, the current study has investigated the conceptual metaphors of rape by employing the perspectives of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge to have the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors exposing the reality of rape events—underpinning violence and horror—and the pain and suffering of rape victims. As such, the study has attained all the intended objectives, which are—identifying the conceptual metaphors used to describe rape in *TLB*, examining the

construction of metaphors through both linguistic and conceptual knowledge in *TLB*, and comparing and contrasting the metaphorical constructions of rape in Sebold's *TLB* and the existing rape discourses.

The results revealed a variety of conceptual metaphors constructing rape and rape victims' painful experiences in *TLB*. The metaphors include the metaphors of non-human entities (e.g., animals, birds, prey, and plants), the metaphors of objects or things (e.g., a tool to control, possession, and supreme authorities), the metaphors of human states and human experiences (e.g., psychological suffering, death, humiliation, mutilation, horror, and torture), the metaphors of human activities (e.g., trap, silencing, hunting, and struggle) and personification metaphors (e.g., body parts as human beings, death is human, and dead are alive). Thus, the study reveals that the use of metaphorical language is pervasive to represent rape, rape events, and rape victims in *TLB*. The abstract concepts of rape, violence, pain, and suffering are expressed through the tangible concepts and experiential concepts to make them intelligible. Furthermore, the findings of the study emphasize that the literary style of incorporating metaphorical language in the narratives of rape is not only to render the rhetorical purposes but also to exhibit the cognition and thought systems of rape victims. Accordingly, the abstract concepts of rape are mapped with tangible and experiential concepts and categorized systematically under the phenomenon of conceptual metaphors. Also, the current study indicates that the source domains of conceptual metaphors have been taken from daily human life experiences and that, accordingly, enhance the understanding of the constructions and representations of rape.

Moreover, in the current study, the constructions of rape metaphors in *TLB* are interpreted to comprehensively understand the meanings of the metaphors representing the horrific realities of rape. For this, literary stylistics, CMT, and LCCM Theory provide an interpretative model for metaphor understanding that combines linguistic and conceptual knowledge approaches in a situational context. Linguistic knowledge involves the lexical concepts and their combination in an utterance. Conceptual knowledge involves non-linguistic knowledge, including conceptual metaphors, cognitive models, and semantic affordances. Accordingly, the current study reveals the following conceptual metaphors of rape. Figure 5.1 shows the conceptual metaphors in *TLB*.

RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS	RAPE IS ANIMALISTIC	RAPE VICTIMS ARE PREY	PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE LONELY BIRDS	RAPE IS A THING	RAPE VICTIMS ARE PLANTS
RAPE IS A TOOL TO CONTROL	RAPE VICTIMS ARE POSSESSION	PERPETRATORS OF RAPE ARE AUTHORITIES	RAPE IS A PSYCHOLOGIC AL SUFFERING	RAPE IS DEATH	RAPE IS HUMILIATION
RAPE IS MUTILATION	RAPE IS HORROR	RAPE IS TORTURE	RAPE IS TRAP	RAPE IS SILENCING	RAPE IS HUNTING
RAPE IS A STRUGGLE	OBJECTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS	BODY PARTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS	DEATH IS A HUMAN	DEAD ARE ALIVE	

Figure 5.1: Conceptual metaphors of rape in *TLB*

The conceptual metaphors help construct rape, rape events, the underlying violence, and the pain and suffering of rape victims through several tangible and experiential concepts related to animals, birds, objects, human states, and human activities.

Moreover, since rape events, rape victims, and the perpetrators of rape are constructed through these concepts, the representation of rape is affected in *TLB*. Consequently, the rape

victim Susie Salmon was brutally beaten, savagely raped, and then eventually cut into pieces by the perpetrator, Mr. Harvey. The incident of rape and murder leads Susie's life and her family members to their constant suffering in both physical and mental health (Sebold, 2002).

Previously, the phenomenon of metaphorical language understanding has not been applied to the discourse of rape in *TLB*. Instead, past studies focused on other aspects of style such as lexical choices, grammatical patterns, linguistic or rhetorical metaphors (Ahmad & Nadarajan, 2018), and more than that, for example, the meanings of photographs (Bliss, 2008), the concept of hyper-reality (Arrida, 2013), the themes of motherhood and femininity representation (Wehling-Giorgi, 2018), the themes of female gothic (Whitney, 2010), and monstrosity (Mirabella, 2016). Consequently, the interpretation of rape metaphors and their comprehensive meanings remain inconclusive. Therefore, the current study fills the potential gap of knowledge in the existing literature by interpreting rape metaphors in *TLB*, incorporating the combination of both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge. In other words, the interpretation of rape metaphors includes not only the linguistic knowledge of rape victims' discourses but also the non-linguistic knowledge that helps reveal the hidden meanings of the metaphors. Therefore, the present study will be a significant contribution to understanding the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors—including both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge of the utterances—in *TLB*.

5.3 The Implications of the Analysis of Rape Metaphors in Sebold's (2002) *TLB*

The current study has several implications for potential researchers in literary stylistics and cognitive-linguistic approaches to the meanings and constructions of metaphors. Besides, the implications of the study cover the exploration of literary language, meaning constructions

of conceptual metaphors, and integration of both linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge in the interpretation of rape metaphors in literary language.

5.3.1 Theoretical Implications

The findings of the study revealed that the phenomenon of the style of a literary text is significant in representing rape and rape victims' experiences. More importantly, since style is a way in which language is used in a piece of work, in a given context, by a given person, and for a given purpose (Leech & Short, 2007), it can be approached through the lexical choices, grammatical categories, and figurative choices of the text. Furthermore, the study shows that the stylistic devices (i.e., lexical, grammatical, figurative choices) are significantly used to depict the gruesome details of rape events and rape victims' painful experiences. Significantly, a stylistic study of rape in literary language reveals the constructions and representations of rape and violence against women and children.

Moreover, the identification of both linguistic metaphors and conceptual metaphors is a critical task that cannot be adequately accomplished without including the phenomenon of the situational context in which the metaphorical expressions appear. The linguistic knowledge of different lexical choices prepares linguistic context that helps lexical concepts contribute to the meaning and conception of the phenomenon in a situational context. Also, a lexical concept can access multiple semantic potentials that are hierarchically organized in the cognitive models. A lexical concept attains a semantic argument based on its linguistic and situational context and other lexical concepts. The semantic argument, termed semantic affordance, eventually constructs utterance's meaning in LCCM Theory. Therefore, linguistic knowledge eventually helps determine whether the utterance would be understood in literal or figurative terms.

Therefore, the study's findings reveal that linguistic and non-linguistic perspectives of the meanings of the metaphorical expressions in an utterance facilitate the identification of metaphors.

Besides, the study indicates that since style differs from person to person and context to context, linguistic metaphors may have various lexical choices and grammatical categories that eventually affect conceptual metaphors' existence (i.e., types). Thus, the aspect of literary style, and especially the use of metaphorical expressions (i.e., linguistic metaphors), makes every single piece of literature a unique text that can be explored for various constructions of conceptual metaphors of rape in literary language.

Moreover, the findings of the study show that metaphors are phenomenal to represent rape and rape victims' experiences. In the interpretation of rape metaphors, the inclusion of only one perspective of knowledge (i.e., linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge) provides inadequate meanings of the metaphors. However, the combination of linguistic and conceptual knowledge exposes the hidden meanings of the metaphors. In addition, the interpretation of linguistic knowledge consists of metaphorical words and the other words embedded in the utterance. Notably, the situational context of the utterance guides the non-linguistic knowledge and significantly facilitates the interpretation of metaphors.

The findings of the study also reveal that the use of CMT is limited in analyzing the meanings of the conceptual metaphors of rape, as past studies have done. On the other hand, as the current study shows, the interpretation of metaphors requires a linguistic perspective of the utterances, including knowledge of lexical concepts, their referential nature, and their combination.

Overall, the theoretical implications of the study emphasize that the phenomenon of rape metaphors in literary language encompasses details of rape events and rape victims' experiences. A stylistic interpretation of rape metaphors thus helps examine and see how rape is constructed and represented in literary language.

5.3.2 Practical Implications

The findings of the study provide a variety of conceptual metaphors of rape (e.g., RAPE VICTIMS ARE ANIMALS, RAPE IS HORROR, RAPE IS HUNTING, RAPE IS SILENCING) reflecting on the horrific realities of rape events, the pain and suffering of rape victims that can be used to examine and understand how rape and rape victims' experiences are metaphorically constructed in literary language.

Importantly, the findings of the study can be used in pedagogical situations. During classroom teaching, the teachers can also implement the study's findings to show how metaphors' comprehensive meanings are interpreted by exploring the linguistic knowledge of the lexical concepts in the utterances and the conceptual knowledge of the metaphorical expressions. Additionally, the learners can enhance their skills to examine metaphors and understand metaphorical expressions in communicative settings.

Moreover, the current study helps facilitate the writers of novels since the findings of the study have revealed how literary style (e.g., selecting a word, a grammatical structure, and a figure of speech) is used to depict the intended messages (e.g., rape, rape victims' pain and suffering) in a literary work.

Furthermore, the study can facilitate the writers' writing of news reports and articles in the media. The writers, while writing about such severe crimes of rape and violence against

women and children, can employ metaphors depicting the reality of the crimes instead of supporting and promoting rape myths and rape culture.

On the other hand, the study's findings can also help a reader. The reader can understand how rape metaphors are used to construct and represent rape in media and literature. Accordingly, understanding this would help bring awareness about the crimes.

Overall, the practical implications of the study affirm that an approach comprising both linguistic knowledge and conceptual knowledge to interpret the meanings of metaphors helps us reread the existing literature on rape and, thus, expose the horrors of rape and the gravity of the pain and suffering of rape victims constructed and represented through literary language.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

By following the given recommendations, the understating of the phenomenon of rape in *TLB* can be enhanced:

5.4.1 Scholarship on Sebold's Works

The following scholarships on Sebold's works are recommended:

Other than the conceptual metaphors of rape in Sebold's *TLB*, the conceptual metaphors of healing and resurfacing of rape victims can be explored. Moreover, the conceptual metaphors (i.e., rape, healing, and resurfacing) can be investigated and compared within Sebold's other literary works. Additionally, the role of novel metaphors in portraying rape can also be extensively studied in Sebold's *TLB* and other works.

Using computer applications other than AntConc, and the MIP approach, linguistic metaphors constructing rape and other themes can be extracted from the corpus of Sebold's

literary works representing rape and violence against women. Similarly, Sebold (1999) has written a memoir *Lucky* on her rape incident. Even though the interrelationship between the two texts, *Lucky* and *TLB*, has been explored in very few studies (see Kilby, 2008), more works on rape metaphors are required to map the experiences of rape and the gravity of the pain and suffering of rape victims in real and fictional worlds.

Similarly, there are few studies on the metaphorical constructions of the perpetrators' thought systems in Sebold's works. Therefore, exploring the perpetrators' discourses would help understand the mechanism of criminal minds through their use of language.

5.4.2 Scholarship on Rape Discourses

The following scholarships on rape discourses are recommended:

Other than Sebold's literary works, literary rape narratives can also be interpreted to investigate the meanings of conceptual metaphors constructing the event of rape and rape victims' experiences by employing the theoretical standpoints of literary stylistics, CMT, and LCCM Theory. In this way, the findings of the current study can be compared with others and also provide context to interpret new conceptual metaphors of rape.

Additionally, the modern perspective of metaphor (i.e., CMT) claims that metaphor is ubiquitous and a matter of cognition and thought systems. Accordingly, the findings of the current study can be compared with the conceptual metaphors constructed in real-life rape stories. The comparison would exhibit how the constructions of conceptual metaphors affect the representation of rape in both real-life and fictional rape stories. Significantly, the findings of such works would help rape victims reshape their lives, society support rape victims, and

policymakers reconsider and readjust their policies to curb the crime and help rape victims resurface and live everyday lives.

5.5 Conclusion

In the current study, the comprehensive meanings of rape metaphors in Sebold's novel *TLB* have been interpreted. It exposes the horrors of rape events and the painful experiences of rape victims even in their post-assault lives. Moreover, the study reveals conceptual metaphors of rape, constructing rape as hunting, silencing, torture, and humiliating, whereas rape victims as animals, plants, and objects. Accordingly, rape victims are treated as non-humans who are eventually controlled, oppressed, and subjugated. Exposing the horrific details of rape events and the animalistic treatment of rape victims, the study indicates that the reality of rape should not be hidden but instead studied and expressed with circumstantial descriptions. Consequently, a comprehensive understanding of rape helps deal effectively with the constructions and representations of rape and rape victims. Moreover, the study indicates that while interpreting rape metaphors in language, the stylistic devices of the text should be examined both at linguistic and conceptual levels in the situational context. The interpretation of rape metaphors in *TLB* thus provides the comprehensive meanings of the metaphors since it includes the combination of both language and cognition. Similarly, the metaphorical representations of rape in literature can be investigated that may reflect on several conceptual metaphors of rape offering new horrors of rape and new traumatic ways in which rape victims suffer. Overall, the current study is a significant contribution to the existing literature on rape by providing a comprehensive approach dealing with the interpretation of meanings of the metaphors and exposing the horrors embedded in rape events and the gravity of the pain and suffering of rape victims.

5.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter concludes the current study by providing a comprehensive summary of the results. It also illustrated the theoretical and practical implications of the study that enhance the significance of the study in the existing literature on understanding rape through metaphorical language. After that, recommendations for future studies were provided based on the current study's limitations. Finally, the chapter concludes the study and ends with a summary of the chapter.

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