



# Bidirectionality of Metaphor in Fiction: A Study of English Novels

 **Mohammad Zohrabi,<sup>1</sup>**

 **Nasim Layegh,<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>LDepartment of English Language and Literature, Tabriz University, Tabriz, Iran

**Corresponding Author:** Nasim Layegh

**Phone:** +98-9309924438

**e-mail:** nasimlayegh@yahoo.com

**Article citation:** Zohrabi, M. & Layegh, N. (2020). Bidirectionality of metaphor in fiction: A study of English novels, *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 4(4): 88–99.

**Received Date:** October 22, 2019

**Accepted Date:** January 20, 2020

**Online Date:** July 5, 2020

**Publisher:** Kare Publishing

© 2020 Applied Linguistics Research Journal

E-ISSN: 2651-2629



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons, Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International

## ABSTRACT

One of the fundamental pillars of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is that in any metaphorical mapping, the target domain constitutes a rather abstract concept while the source domain is more concrete. This argument entails that metaphors are unidirectional. In line with Kövecses (2010), the principle of unidirectionality of metaphor simply defines the idea that in most everyday metaphors the source and target domains cannot be reversed. Accordingly, the present study investigated aforementioned arguments in two important works of fiction. The materials for the study consisted of Jane Austen's *Persuasion* and John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*, and the identification of the metaphorical source and target domains was conducted following the principles of MIPVU. The findings showed a few cases of bidirectional metaphors in the samples. Moreover, some concepts were also identified which had been employed as both target and source domain by the authors. This study might provide some insights into the understanding and analysis of metaphorical language. It can also offer some implications for teaching literature as well as advanced reading and writing to students.

**Keywords:** Metaphor; Target domain; Source domain; Directionality; Literature.

## 1. Introduction

Metaphor is considered to be an inseparable component of human life and language. Within literary studies, metaphor is a figure of speech which is found mostly in artistic and literary works. However, “[m]etaphor is not simply an ornamental aspect of language, but a fundamental scheme by which people conceptualize the world and their own activities” (Gibbs, 2008, p. 3). Metaphor study contributes a great deal to the understanding of language phenomenon. The literature on metaphor represents beneficial gains of metaphor-related studies. According to Cameron (2003, p. 2), “understanding how metaphor is used may help us understand better how people think, how they make sense of the world and each other, and how they communicate”.

As it has been repeatedly recognized and emphasized, metaphor is ubiquitous in human language and thought. This entails that language learners will be confronted with instances of metaphorical expressions throughout their learning career.

“It is this claim for the ‘ubiquity of metaphor’ that brings metaphor within the scope of applied linguistics” (Cameron, 2003, p. 2). It goes without saying that although the literature on metaphor abounds, there is much to be done to puzzle out the complexities of this omnipresent phenomenon. The present study can be regarded as an instance of many studies emphasizing the relationship between metaphor analysis and the useful, pedagogical as well as non-pedagogical implications that can be drawn from it. The immediate goal of the present analysis is to gain an understanding of the bidirectional use of metaphor. The implications gained from this analysis can be employed in illuminating the teachers’ and the learners’ minds about the significance of metaphor in language. According to Lazar (1996), the ability to understand and generate metaphoric language is an important vocabulary-building skill for language learners, a skill which can be developed by devising appropriate teaching activities to sensitize students to the metaphorical roots of linguistic expressions, and to help them to develop strategies for comprehending and generating metaphor. In this way, the field of language teaching can benefit from this and other metaphor-related studies.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

The contemporary theory of metaphor under the name of Conceptual Metaphor Theory was first introduced in Lakoff and Johnson’s seminal work titled *Metaphors We Live By*, first published in 1980 and later in 2003. The most foundational argument of CMT is that metaphor is not just a linguistic phenomenon, but a reflection of how concepts are organized in our minds. In a sense, CMT argues for the relationship between linguistic metaphors and human cognition (Tay, 2014).

Metaphor is mainly a figure of speech which abounds both in literature and everyday language. It defines or describes one concept by means of another concept. These two concepts are referred to as source and target domains. The target domain is the usually abstract concept which is better captured with the help of the usually concrete source domain. In the conceptual metaphor HAPPY IS UP, the concept of “direction” serves as the source domain to conceptualize the target concept of “happiness”.

### 2.2 Direction of Mappings: From Concrete to Abstract

As stated by Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p. 105), “the metaphors come out of our clearly delineated and concrete experiences and allow us to construct highly abstract and elaborate concepts”. This simply means that metaphor use involves employing more concrete and physical concepts as source domains for more abstract targets (Kövecses, 2017). This concrete-to-abstract direction is not usually reversible since it doesn’t make sense to use a less tangible concept for the purpose of understanding a more easily accessible one. For example, it would seem very puzzling and unintuitive to try to conceptualize *buildings* as *theories* for the simple reason that we know less about theories than about buildings. This is directly in relationship with the principle of unidirectionality, meaning that in most instances of metaphor the source and target domains are not reversible.

To illustrate this idea, it could be said that while we can talk of the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, the reversed metaphor A JOURNEY IS LOVE does not exist. According to this principle, “the metaphorical process typically goes from the more concrete to the more abstract but not the other way around” (Kövecses, 2010). However, Kövecses also talks of the reversibility of the source and target domains. Taking the ANGER IS A STORM metaphor as an example, the reversed metaphor A STORM IS ANGER (or AN ANGRY PERSON) is also possible (Kövecses, 2010). He mentions an interesting phenomenon following the reversibility of certain metaphors. “When source and target domains of conceptual metaphors are reversed, there typically occur certain stylistic shifts in the value of the linguistic metaphors” (Kövecses, 2010, p. 28). The result can be some innovative, literary expressions not typical of everyday language (Kövecses, 2010).

Grady (1999) defines two distinct classes of metaphor, including metaphors based on resemblance and those based on correlation. According to him, some resemblance-based metaphors violate the unidirectionality principle, meaning that they exist and make sense even

in reverse. For instance, a woman's waist can be likened to an "hourglass", or we can talk of the hourglass as having a "waist", which is a characteristic of a woman. On the other hand, metaphors based on correlation do not work bidirectionally. That is, while we can talk of DIFFICULTY IS WEIGHT, we do not normally conceptualize physical weight as difficulty (Grady, 1999).

In their article, Porat and Shen (2017) discuss the fact that while most of the verbal metaphors seem to be unidirectional, their experiential counterparts are bidirectional. They support their argument through reference to some psychological studies. They also believe that linguistic form plays an important role in rendering the bidirectional relationship into a unidirectional one. In their own words, "the very use of certain linguistic forms requires the speaker to apply a certain mode of thinking" (Shen and Porat, 2017, p. 72).

### 2.3 Putting the Unidirectionality Hypothesis to Test

Apart from being usually creative and novel, it is commonly believed that the reversed version of a conventional metaphor proves to be harder to process than its conventional partner. Jäkel (1993) puts the idea of unidirectionality of metaphor to test through testing the hypothesis that "metaphors deviating from the generally preferred direction of transfer should prove harder to understand" (Jäkel, 1993, p. 369). His study yields the interesting result that metaphors with a direction of transfer from concrete to abstract are found to be easier, clearer and better understood. This confirms the unidirectionality hypothesis. On the other hand, he argues that existence of metaphors with a direction of transfer from abstract to concrete is definitely a fact and they are understood as well. This leads to the conclusion that bidirectionality in metaphor use is a preference or tendency normally in favor of providing aesthetic effects.

Based on the above review of literature, it seemed valuable to examine the directionality of conceptual metaphors in fiction, with the aim of shedding some light on the mechanism of metaphors used by prominent figures of literature. This research primarily seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent is the bidirectionality of metaphor present in the analyzed samples?
2. To what extent does a single concept act as both a target domain and a source domain in the analyzed samples?

### 3. Method

The present study followed the line of qualitative research and was conducted within the framework of text analysis. The sample of the study consisted of two popular novels, belonging to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. They include *Persuasion* by Jane Austen and *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green. Each of these novels consists of about 200 pages. To meet the criteria of practicality, the researchers needed to limit the size of the corpus to 20 pages of each novel, in a way of doing the analysis on every tenth page of each.

As claimed by Heywood, Semino, and Short (2002, p. 35), metaphor identification is "a fundamental part of the more complex issue of how to relate linguistic metaphors in text to the conceptual metaphors of cognitive metaphor theory". The challenge faced in any attempt to metaphor identification is twofold: First, the potentially metaphorical linguistic expressions have to be marked or labeled as *metaphorical*. Second, the two domains involved in analogy need to be established in the form of A IS B, following Lakoffian theory.

In the process of analysis, the researchers looked for the potentiality of a linguistic expression in triggering a conceptual mapping. No claim was made that a particular linguistic metaphor had or had not been definitely processed by its producer or receiver(s) as a metaphor (Crisp, 2002). The metaphor producers or receivers may access a particular metaphorical expression literally and without any kind of metaphorical processing. However, the present study marked all potential cases of metaphors, even the conventional ones. Moreover, the present analysis followed an inductive or bottom-up approach, in that all of the cases were analyzed on a one by one basis. No pre-existing conceptual metaphors were assumed.

In this analysis, MIP or MIPVU procedures were adopted in order to spot the linguistic metaphors of the text. These procedures are used to identify “the linguistic forms of metaphor, not its conceptual structures” (Steen et al., 2010, p. 8). The next step was to decide upon the existence of conceptual domains which could be linked by a set of mappings. This step was performed based on the researchers’ intuitions. These identifications were followed by extracting conceptual metaphors in the form of A IS B.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Research question 1

The majority of the conceptual metaphors identified in the samples were unidirectional. A few examples follow:

Table 1. *Unidirectional metaphors identified in the samples*

TIME IS MONEY	TIME IS A CONTAINER	TIME IS A MACHINE
TIME IS A PATH	EVENT (STATE) IS A CONTAINER	EMOTION IS SUBSTANCE
EMOTION IS FORCE	EMOTION IS FOOD	EMOTION IS A PLANT
EMOTION IS AN OBJECT	ECONOMY IS A PLANT	AMOUNT IS SIZE
A STATE IS A CONTAINER	MIND IS A CONTAINER	IDEAS ARE OBJECTS
RELATIONSHIPS ARE ORGANIZATIONS	EVENT IS MOVEMENT	ACTION IS MOVEMENT
MORALITY IS HEAT	MORALITY IS DIRECTION	THOUGHT IS PERCEPTION

These metaphors together with many others were all identified as being used unidirectionally in the samples, meaning that their reversed version, for example, MONEY IS TIME, was not observed in the analyzed discourse.

However, two cases of bidirectionality were noticed in the sample of *Persuasion*. Table 2 presents these bidirectional conceptual metaphors.

Table 2. *Bidirectional conceptual metaphors identified in the sample of Persuasion*

A PERSON IS A ROOM	A ROOM IS A PERSON
A PERSON IS AN OBJECT	AN OBJECT IS A PERSON

The use of these bidirectional conceptual metaphors is represented in the context of *Persuasion*.

#### •A PERSON IS A ROOM

“...but a mind of usefulness and ingenuity seemed to *furnish* him with constant employment within.” (Austen, 1818, p. 119)

In this context, the narrator is characterizing one of the characters of the story, and describes him in terms of a room that can be furnished.

#### •A ROOM IS A PERSON

“These rooms ought to belong only to us. Oh, how *fallen in their destination!* How unworthily occupied!” (Austen, 1818, p. 149)

In the phrase “fallen in their destination”, the term “destination” refers to a determined end, which can be regarded as synonymous with “fate” in this context. It goes without saying that having a fate is primarily attributed to human beings. Therefore, it could be argued that here the rooms have been personified as human beings who have a fate.

A further point can be made by considering the word “fallen”. According to dictionary, this word means “having sinned”, and it is clear that sinning is a major characteristic of human nature. Thus, “fallen rooms” have been conceptualized in terms of a person who has sinned. The metaphor at work here is A ROOM IS A PERSON.

#### •A PERSON IS AN OBJECT

“Mr. Elliot was rational, discreet, *polished*, but he was not open.” (Austen, 1818, p. 192)

*Polished* is an adjective used for describing shiny objects. However, it has been employed here to describe a person of elegance. Certainly, this word has been used metaphorically in this context.

- AN OBJECT IS A PERSON

"...very *pretty* shelves..." (Austen, 1818, p. 119)

"...two *handsome* duodecimo pages..." (Austen, 1818, p. 4)

The adjectives *pretty* and *handsome* are primarily used to describe human beings, but they have been used in the cases of objects in these two expressions.

The sample of *The Fault in Our Stars* was also analyzed in terms of bidirectional conceptual metaphors, but no cases were identified. On the other hand, only two cases of bidirectional conceptual metaphors were identified throughout the whole sample of *Persuasion*, seeming that bidirectional metaphors are rare.

#### 4.2. Research Question 2

A number of concepts were identified that acted as both source and target domains in the samples. The following is a list of these concepts (see Table 3 and Table 4).

Table 3. Concepts acting as both target and source in the sample of *Persuasion*

Actions	Person	Objects	Buildings	Food	Life
---------	--------	---------	-----------	------	------

Table 4. Concepts acting as both target and source in the sample of *The Fault in Our Stars*

Actions	Person	Objects
Buildings	Food	The Human Body
Illness	Medicine	Business

The following are some of the examples.

- Person as a source domain:

"... if it had *pleased* Heaven to spare my poor son..." (Austen, 1818, p. 76)

Here, God has been conceptualized as a person, representing the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A PERSON.

- Person as a target domain:

"...infuse as much of your own spirit *into* her as you can." (Austen, 1818, p. 105)

Here, a person has been conceptualized as a container. The conceptual metaphor showing itself through this expression is A PERSON IS A CONTAINER. Note that the domain of Person is totally different from the domain of The Human Body. The domain of Person includes physical as well as spiritual aspects of a human being, whereas the domain of The Human Body refers only to the physical aspect of a human being.

- The Human Body as a source domain:

"...that such a friendship as has subsisted between him and Captain Benwick should be destroyed, or even *wounded*, by a circumstance of this sort" (Austen, 1818, p. 207).

In this context, friendship has been described in terms of the human body which can be physically wounded. The conceptual metaphor identified is HUMAN RELATIONSHIP IS THE HUMAN BODY.

- The Human Body as a target domain:

"...his *drunken* mouth." (Green, 2012, p. 79)

A part of the human body, the mouth, has been personified here based on the conceptual metaphor THE HUMAN BODY IS A PERSON.

- Illness as a source domain:

"...it felt *invasive* of me to look at him." (Green, 2012, p. 72)

The act of looking has been conceptualized here in terms of an illness, representing the conceptual metaphor ACTION IS AN ILLNESS.

“There must be the same immediate association of thought, though she was very far from conceiving it to be of equal *pain*.” (Austen, 1818, p. 75)

Thinking about something in this context has been metaphorically conceptualized as an illness which causes pain. The conceptual metaphor employed here is THOUGHT IS AN ILLNESS.

“...it could scarcely be said which of the three, who were completely rational, was *suffering* most...” (Austen, 1818, p. 133)

It should be noted that, based on the story, *suffering* is not the result of an illness in this context, but the consequence of an event. Therefore, the conceptual metaphor EVENT IS AN ILLNESS is evident here.

- Illness as a target domain:

“...in the ancient and inglorious *war* against disease.” (Green, 2012, p. 125)

“...young cancer *survivors*...” (Green, 2012, p. 4)

“...to *fight* cancer...” (Green, 2012, p. 22)

In all of these expressions, the author perceives an illness as war, based on the conceptual metaphor ILLNESS IS WAR.

- Food as a source domain:

“...nor did she ever enjoy a *sweeter* feeling than the hope of seeing him...” (Austen, 1818, p. 193)

Pleasantness of an emotion has been described in terms of sweetness of food, yielding the conceptual metaphor EMOTION IS FOOD.

- Food as a target domain:

“Maybe scrambled eggs are *ghettoized*, but they’re also special.” (Green, 2012, p. 60)

According to the dictionary, “to ghettoize” means to force people to live in a ghetto. It is clear that in this context *scrambled eggs* have been personified in terms of the conceptual metaphor FOOD IS A PERSON.

As the results show, some concepts can function as both a target domain and a source domain in a particular context. It might seem that metaphorical conceptualization always employs a concrete concept as a source domain and an abstract concept as a target domain. However, these findings prove that it is highly possible for abstract concepts to function as a source domain and conversely, for concrete concepts to act as a target domain.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Research Question 1

To what extent is the bidirectionality of metaphor present in the analyzed samples?

Metaphor directionality can be understood in two senses. On the one hand, the question is whether the mappings from a particular domain to another are unidirectional or bidirectional. This sense of directionality is discussed under the research question one. The principle of unidirectionality of metaphor was introduced in previous sections. It has been repeatedly argued that metaphor is typically unidirectional. The claim is that “the metaphorical process typically goes from the more concrete to the more abstract but not the other way around” (Kövecses, 2010, p. 7). This claim is supported by the findings obtained in this study. It is supported on the grounds that a considerable portion of the conceptual metaphors identified in both samples were unidirectional. That is, while a large number of instances of a particular conceptual metaphor such as WORDS ARE CONTAINERS were observed, no instances of the reversed version of this metaphor, that is, CONTAINERS ARE WORDS were discerned. Similarly, a conceptual metaphor such as MORALITY IS SUBSTANCE occurred with a considerable frequency, however, its reversed form, a non-metaphor like SUBSTANCE IS MORALITY did not occur in any of the samples.

The findings obtained in this study emphasize the need to highlight the word “mostly” when

claiming that “conceptual metaphors are mostly unidirectional” (Kövecses, 2010, p. 27). In other words, it is not always the fact that the direction is a one-way type. It is possible to encounter cases in which the principle of unidirectionality is invalidated. The present study manifested some examples which provide evidence for the possibility and existence of bidirectional conceptual metaphors. As said before, a conceptual metaphor in terms of A IS B is called bidirectional when its reversed version, that is, B IS A is possible to occur in metaphorical conceptualization. In bidirectional metaphors, the mappings from source to target domains are not necessarily unidirectional.

In the sample of *Persuasion*, two instances of bidirectionality were observed. They include A PERSON IS A ROOM and its reversed version A ROOM IS A PERSON, and also A PERSON IS AN OBJECT alongside with AN OBJECT IS A PERSON. An argument that can be made here is that both above bidirectional metaphors are specific versions of a more general metaphor pair, namely A PERSON IS A PHYSICAL ENTITY and A PHYSICAL ENTITY IS A PERSON. Thus, we can bring the two metaphors (A PERSON IS A ROOM and A PERSON IS AN OBJECT and their reversed versions) together and consider them under a single metaphor pair A PERSON IS A PHYSICAL ENTITY and A PHYSICAL ENTITY IS A PERSON.

Finding bidirectional conceptual metaphors in the present study can be related to the bidirectional nature of The Great Chain of Being metaphor. The version offered by Lakoff and Turner (1989, as cited in Kövecses, 2010, p. 154) is illustrated below:

THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING

humans: higher-order attributes and behavior (e.g., thought, character)

animals: instinctual attributes and behavior

plants: biological attributes and behavior

complex objects: structural attributes and functional behavior

natural physical things: natural physical attributes and natural physical behavior

The Great Chain system becomes a metaphorical system when a particular level of the chain is used to understand another level (Kövecses, 2010). This metaphor system acts bidirectionally. That is, metaphorical conceptualization can go from a lower source to a higher target or from a higher source to a lower target (Kövecses, 2010). For instance, Objects can be conceptualized in terms of Humans and reversely, Humans can be conceptualized in terms of Objects. This is exactly what was obtained through the present analysis. That is, the researchers observed the conceptual metaphors A PERSON IS A PHYSICAL ENTITY and A PHYSICAL ENTITY IS A PERSON. In short, finding bidirectional metaphors in the sample is supported by the bidirectional nature of the Great Chain of Being metaphor.

As can be seen, in both bidirectional metaphors identified in the sample, one of the metaphors in a pair functions as a personification. The occurrence of these reversible conceptual metaphors can be related to the dominance of personification, a conventional type of metaphorical conceptualization and a greatly common tendency in language. Generally, personification plays an important role in human understanding. From the early days of life, children are encountered with cases of personification in stories and cartoons. This suggests that their minds show a tendency for personifying various phenomena in order to comprehend them best. As claimed by Deane (1993), personification metaphors are more original and tend to be acquired earlier than the reversed metaphor in a pair.

The two directions of a bidirectional metaphor are qualitatively and functionally different. When the direction of a conventional metaphor is reversed, the metaphor acquires a special non-everyday function (Kövecses, 2010). It is usually the case that the second metaphor in a bidirectional metaphorical pair, that is, the inverted metaphor, is more novel and creative, and accepting it as a metaphor entails shifts in our understanding of the target concept. The reverse metaphors are usually employed by creative language users, and generally for producing aesthetic effects. Kövecses (2010) believes that the reversal of the usual direction results in formal or literary metaphorical expressions. Moreover, the reversal is a manifestation of the author’s creative engagement with language. For example, conceptualizing a person as a room, as identified in the

sample of *Persuasion* in the form of the metaphorical expression “to furnish him”, yields a novel metaphorical conceptualization, and adds a new dimension to human understanding.

Experiments have suggested that metaphors which follow the preferred direction of transfer from concrete source domain to abstract target domain are understood better and easier than those involving the reverse direction of transfer (Jäkel, 1999). Moreover, the latter types of metaphors are assessed as “profound” and “poetic” (Jäkel, 1999).

A further point is that, as indicated by the results of the study, bidirectional metaphors are less common, and only two reversible conceptual metaphors were identified in the sample. Both were observed in the sample of *Persuasion*, and no cases were discerned in the sample of *The Fault in Our Stars*.

Based on the obtained results, the concluding remark about the direction of metaphor is that bidirectionality does not abound in metaphorical conceptualization. Moreover, bidirectional conceptual metaphors do exist. They are a possibility, but they are mostly the production of the language users’ exercise of creativity. Finally, finding the cases of bidirectional metaphors in the present samples proves the existence of reversed metaphors. These findings are in line with the results of the study by Deane (1993) who examined some examples of metaphoric inversion. The results are also in line with the discussion of the metaphor pair A COMPUTER IS A HUMAN BEING and A HUMAN BEING IS A COMPUTER by Karaliutė (2009). Furthermore, the findings conform to the results of the study by Kiełtyka and Kleparski (2005) who examined cases of animal metaphors, namely A HUMAN BEING IS AN ANIMAL and AN ANIMAL IS A HUMAN BEING.

## 5.2. Research Question 2

To what extent does a single concept act as both a target domain and a source domain in the analyzed samples?

The second sense of metaphor directionality refers to the direction of metaphorical transfer, which is generally accepted to be from a more concrete domain to a more abstract domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2010). Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p. 110) claim that “the less clearly delineated (and usually less concrete) concepts are partially understood in terms of the more clearly delineated (and usually more concrete) concepts, which are directly grounded in our experience”. Kövecses (2010, p. 29) states that “metaphors typically employ a more abstract concept as target and a more concrete or physical concept as their source”. Therefore, the concrete-to-abstract direction is the general tendency.

As presented in the results, a number of concepts were identified in the two samples that had been used both as a source domain and a target domain throughout the sample. This result indicates that it is not the case that source domains are necessarily concrete and target domains are necessarily abstract. Cases exist in which a concrete concept is understood in terms of a more concrete source domain. Some examples include conceptual metaphors such as ACTION IS MOVEMENT AND DIRECTION and EVENT IS ACTION. Also, there were frequent numbers of the domain of Person as a target domain in metaphors such as A PERSON IS AN ANIMAL/ AN OBJECT/ A CONTAINER and as a source domain in metaphors like AN OBJECT IS A PERSON, A BUILDING IS A PERSON, and FOOD IS A PERSON.

To provide an example, the domain of Person can act as a source domain for highly abstract concepts like God. Moreover, it is employed as a source domain for personifying a wide range of entities and concepts. However, some aspects of this concept may not be concrete enough for us. Therefore, it can also appear as a target domain, meaning that it is sometimes conceptualized metaphorically to better grasp the abstract aspects of it. Examples include A PERSON IS A BUILDING, A PERSON IS AN ANIMAL, A PERSON IS AN OBJECT, and A PERSON IS A CONTAINER.

Another example is the domain of The Human Body. This domain is a common source domain, as claimed by Kövecses (2010), and it acted as a source domain in conceptual metaphors such as A BUILDING IS THE HUMAN BODY, HUMAN RELATIONSHIP IS THE HUMAN BODY, and FOOD IS THE HUMAN BODY. It also acted as a target domain in the conceptual metaphors THE HUMAN BODY IS A PERSON and THE HUMAN BODY IS A CONTAINER. This suggests that even the concrete concepts

like The Human Body sometimes requires a metaphorical conceptualization in order to provide adequate delineation and understanding on the part of the language receivers.

A further example is the concept of Illness, the metaphorical conceptualization of which was significantly common in the sample of *The Fault in Our Stars*. While the concept of Illness, which is a rather concrete concept, is usually considered as a common source domain, the results showed a considerable deal of employing this concept as a target domain in the sample. Similarly, the domain of Objects have been used vastly as a source domain for conceptualizing a number of abstract concepts such as Thought, Morality, Emotion, Desire, etc. At another stage, this domain has been used as a target domain and conceptualized as a Person.

Based on these results, it is not suggested to assume that only abstract domains have the capacity to be metaphorically conceptualized. The results pointed out that some words only have abstract meanings, and this does not exclude them from the realm of functioning as a source domain. This can be illustrated by metaphorical possibilities like "LOVE IS ART, LOVE IS SCIENCE, and LOVE IS POLITICS", in which both the source and target domains are abstract concepts (Steen, 2002, p. 25).

These results are in accordance with the claim made by Knowles and Moon (2006), who argued that there are cases of domains being both sources and targets. For example, ILLNESS IS WAR and PROBLEMS ARE ILLNESSES. Moreover, the results are consistent with the claim made by Kövecses (2010, p. 21) that "a typical source domain can also be further conceptualized by another source; that is, source domains can become target domains". This process is referred to as the production of "metaphor chains" (Kövecses, 2010), an area which might require further research.

## 6. Conclusion

It goes without saying that no research study is flawless and the present study is not an exception. First, this work was dedicated to the analysis of metaphor bidirectionality within two samples taken from two novels, namely Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1818) and John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* (2012). The sample might be considered limited, and it was restricted to the genre of novels. Therefore, one needs to be cautious in generalizing the results obtained. Second, metaphor identification is generally a subjective process. However, the subjectivity was reduced using the reliable method of MIPVU for metaphor identification. Moreover, categorizing metaphorical expressions under particular source or target domains is never a matter of clear-cut choices. Sometimes different metaphoric domains intersect, "so that different ones may be at play simultaneously" (Boers, 2000, p. 566). During this second phase of analysis, the researchers mostly resorted to intuitions. However, this limitation is partly justified since there exists no procedure for determining which conceptual domains metaphorical words belong to. Moreover, since the categories of source and target domains were rather general, the identification of the domains was not much problematic for the researchers.

Cameron (2003, p. 40) believes that "metaphor can help recall of information and can help apply what is known to new contexts". The study of metaphor, and as a result, familiarity with metaphor can contribute to the development of writing and reading skills in learners, in general, and in foreign language learners, in particular. First and for most, language learners' writing ability, especially in the sense of creative writing, can highly benefit from the present study. The ability to use figurative language in one's language production is one of the features that marks proficient use of language, and this ability is essential to be developed if one aims to use language for academic or professional purposes. Observing the cases of bidirectional metaphor in the works of masters of literature like Jane Austen can encourage the learners to decorate their writings with metaphorical language and promote the exercise of creativity in their productions. Second, awareness of metaphorical use of language can contribute to the development of reading skills (Boers, 2000). The present study can provide some enlightenment on the ubiquity and bidirectionality of metaphor, and it might prove to be encouraging for teachers, syllabus designers as well as textbook designers to incorporate metaphorical language into the teaching environment and syllabus.

Metaphor is an interesting phenomenon which can be looked at from different angles. There

seems to be a lot of gaps in this area of research ready to be filled with metaphor enthusiast. To extend the present study, future research can focus on identification and analysis of bidirectional metaphors in various text types. In addition, the idea of “metaphor chains” which was briefly referred to in the discussion part of the research question two can be put under more investigation, from which interesting results might be obtained.

## References

- Austen, J. (1818). *Persuasion* [pdf]. Retrieved from <https://www.planetebook.com/ebooks/Persuasion.pdf>  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oseo/instance.00080855>
- Boers, F. (2000). Enhancing metaphoric awareness in specialized reading. *English for Specific Purposes*, 19(2), 137-147.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(98\)00017-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(98)00017-9)
- Cameron, L. (2003). *Metaphor in educational discourse*. London: Continuum.
- Crisp, P. (2002). Metaphorical propositions: A rationale. *Language and Literature*, 11(1), 7-16.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/096394700201100102>
- Deane, P. D. (1993). On metaphoric inversion. *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 8(2), 111-126.  
[https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327868ms0802\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327868ms0802_3)
- Gibbs, R. W., Jr. (2008). Metaphor and thought: The state of the art. In R. W. Gibbs Jr. (Ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of metaphor and thought* (pp. 3-13). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511816802>
- Grady, J. (1999). A typology of motivation for conceptual metaphor: Correlation vs. resemblance. In R. W. Gibbs & G. J. Steen (Eds.), *Metaphor in cognitive linguistics* (pp. 79-100). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.  
<https://doi.org/10.1075/cilt.175.06gra>
- Green, J. (2012). *The fault in our stars* [pdf]. New York: Penguin Group. Retrieved from <https://www.twirpx.com/file/1637474/>
- Heywood, J., Semino, E., & Short, M. (2002). Linguistic metaphor identification in two extracts from novels. *Language and Literature*, 11(1), 35-54.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/096394700201100104>
- Jäkel, O. (1993). Is metaphor really a one-way street?: One of the basic tenets of the cognitive theory of metaphor put to the test. Seminar für Englische Sprache und Kultur.
- Jäkel, O. (1999). Is metaphor really a one-way street? One of the basic tenets of the cognitive theory of metaphor put to the test. In L. de Stadler, & C. Eyrich (Eds.), *Issues in cognitive linguistics: 1993 proceedings of the international cognitive linguistics conference* (pp. 367-388). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Karaliūtė, E. (2009). A case of bidirectional metaphor: A computer as a human being and the reverse. *Jaunųjų mokslininkų darbai*, 2, 44-49. Retrieved from [http://www.su.lt/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&layout=edit&Itemid=605&id=1225&lang=lt](http://www.su.lt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&layout=edit&Itemid=605&id=1225&lang=lt)
- Kiełtyka, R., & Kleparski, G. A. (2005). The ups and downs of the Great Chain of Being: the case of canine zoosemy in the history of English. *SKASE Journal of Theoretical Linguistics*, 2, 22-41.
- Knowles, M., & Moon, R. (2006). *Introducing metaphor*. New York: Routledge.
- Kövecses, Z. (2010). *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2017). Conceptual metaphor theory. In E. Semino & Z. Demjén (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of metaphor and language* (pp. 13-42). London: Routledge.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226470993.001.0001>
- Lakoff, G., & Turner, M. (1989). *More than cool reason: A field guide to poetic metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226470986.001.0001>
- Lazar, G. (1996). Using figurative language to expand students' vocabulary. *ELT Journal*, 50(1), 43-51.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/50.1.43>
- Porat, R., & Shen, Y. (2017). Metaphor: The journey from bidirectionality to nidirectionality. *Poetics Today*, 38(1), 123-140.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-3716252>
- Shen, Y., & Porat, R. (2017). Metaphorical Directionality: The Role of Language. In B. Hampe (Ed.), *Metaphor: Embodied Cognition and Discourse* (pp. 62-81). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108182324.005>

Steen, G. J. (2002). Towards a procedure for metaphor identification. *Language and Literature*, 11(1), 17-33.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/096394700201100103>

Steen, G. J., Dorst, A. G., Herrmann, J. B., Kaal, A. A., Krennmayr, T., & Pasma, T. (2010). *A method for linguistic metaphor identification: From MIP to MIPVU*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

<https://doi.org/10.1075/celcr.14>

Tay, D. (2014). Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphor. In J. Littlemore, & J. R. Taylor (Eds.), *The Bloomsbury companion to cognitive linguistics* (pp. 49-60). London: Bloomsbury.