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***Sensory Linguistics: expression and
conceptualisation of experience through the verbs
of taste and smell***

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Abstract (italiano)

Questo elaborato si concentra sul linguaggio che riguarda i verbi di gusto e di olfatto in lingua inglese, esaminando come questi vengano utilizzati sia per discutere esperienze sensoriali sia in quanto fonte di espressioni metaforiche. Queste ultime vengono intese secondo la definizione proposta per la prima volta da George Lakoff e Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By*, cioè come manifestazione linguistica di processi di concettualizzazione di nozioni astratte in termini di esperienze corporee, secondo la teoria dell'“Embodied Cognition”. Due liste di verbi, una per ogni modalità sensoriale, sono state stabilite con il supporto del sito *WordNet*; successivamente, questi sono stati ricercati all'interno del corpus online *enTenTen15*, composto da testi presi dal Web fino al 2015 e consultato tramite il software *Sketch Engine*. Nella maggior parte dei casi, sono state prese in considerazione le costruzioni “verbo + complemento oggetto”; nell'ambito dell'olfatto, alcune espressioni “verbo + preposizione + oggetto” sono state selezionate in quanto particolarmente rilevanti. Tramite il software, sono state trovate le collocazioni più frequenti per ciascuno dei verbi, che sono state poi classificate come o letterali, o metaforiche, o caratterizzate da un grado di ambiguità che impediva di assegnarle a una delle altre due categorie. Per quanto riguarda le espressioni metaforiche, dei possibili “mapping” che giustifichino l'applicazione di linguaggio letterale a esperienze astratte sono stati proposti. Inoltre, nel caso di uno dei verbi considerati nell'ambito del gusto, “to savo(u)r”, è stata introdotta una ulteriore categoria di espressioni “intrafield”, per discutere l'apparente accostamento di diverse esperienze sensoriali. Questo processo di categorizzazione è stato applicato alle collocazioni di tutti i verbi; tuttavia, a seconda del numero totale di “token” e alla relativa distribuzione fra ambito letterale e ambito metaforico, verbi diversi sono stati trattati con diversi gradi di approfondimento. Dall'analisi è emerso uno squilibrio nel lessico assegnato alle diverse aree sensoriali, dal momento che i “token” dei verbi di gusto sono risultati più numerosi di quelli dei verbi di olfatto; tale differenza sembra confermare la posizione dell'olfatto come il più ineffabile fra i sensi, cioè quello con meno mezzi lessicali dedicati all'espressione di aspetti e sfumature dell'esperienza sensoriale. In aggiunta, le metafore riscontrate nelle due aree sensoriali sembrano confermare la già proposta tendenza ad associare diversi sensi a diversi tipi di conoscenza. Da un lato, il gusto viene correlato a un tipo di conoscenza esperienziale, spesso legata a un giudizio di valore; dall'altro, l'olfatto è invece collegato a un tipo di conoscenza più intuitiva, che a sua volta può essere associata a una valutazione sull'oggetto della percezione.

Abstract (english)

This thesis focusses on the language concerning the verbs of taste and smell in English, examining how they are used to discuss sensory experiences but also as sources of metaphorical expressions. These are meant in the acceptance first proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By*, as the linguistic expression of processes of conceptualisation of abstract notions in terms of bodily experiences, according to the theory of Embodied Cognition. Two lists of verbs, one for each sensory modality, have been established with the help of the site *WordNet*; these verbs have been subsequently searched through the software *Sketch Engine* in the *enTenTen15* online corpus, consisting of texts taken from the Web until 2015. For the majority of the verbs, the “verb + direct object” constructions have been examined; in the field of olfaction, a few “verb + preposition + object of the preposition” constructions have been selected as especially relevant. Through the software, the most frequent collocations for each verb have been retrieved and then classified as either literal, metaphorical, or characterised by a degree of ambiguity making it impossible to definitively assign them to one of the previous categories. For the metaphors, possible mappings justifying the use of literal language in the context of abstract experiences have been proposed. Additionally, in the case of one verb of taste, “to savo(u)r”, an ulterior category called “intrafield expressions” has been introduced to discuss the apparent pairing of different sensory experiences. This process of categorisation has been applied to all verbs; however, on the basis of the total number of tokens and their relative distribution in the literal and in the metaphorical domain, different verbs have been examined more or less extensively. An imbalance in terms of the lexicon assigned to different senses emerged, since the tokens for the verbs of taste are on the whole more numerous than the token for the verbs of smell; this difference appears to confirm the status of smell as the most ineffable of the senses, i.e., the one with less lexical means to convey aspects and nuances of that specific perceptual experience. Additionally, the metaphors identified seem to confirm the already proposed association of different senses with different types of knowledge. On the one hand, gustation is linked to experiential knowledge, and it frequently carries an evaluative component; on the other hand, olfaction is connected to intuitive knowledge, but it can once again convey an evaluation of the object of perception.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Sensory Linguistics and Cognitive Linguistics: a theoretical framework

The only manner in which human beings are able to relate to the environment surrounding them is through the senses; perception plays a fundamental role in everyday life, mediating between external reality and internal cognitive processing. The information that we acquire through seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling is what constitutes our knowledge of the world. Given the primary function of the senses, it is not surprising that languages usually possess resources that allow their speakers to encode perceptual experiences into linguistic expression, even though there is remarkable diversity¹ among the languages of the world with regard to the range of experiences that can be discussed and the degree of accuracy that is allowed in the discussion. The field of study that focusses on this area of linguistic expression is Sensory Linguistics (Winter 2019). Its objective is to study the codification of sensory perception in language, the relative ease or difficulty with which different perceptual qualities can be articulated, and the differences that these processes present in different languages. Moreover, Sensory Linguistics endeavours to investigate how linguistic encoding relates to the activity of perception and to the underlying methods of conceptualization in the brain. This last area of investigation is based on the idea that the way in which we speak about perception mirrors the manner in which we think about perception, thus allowing us to study the inner workings of the mind through the external manifestation of language. The notion of language

¹ a diversity that is often discussed in terms of codability, conveyability and ineffability, three concepts that will be explored more exhaustively in Chapter 2.

as both a window into cognitive phenomena and a guide for mental activity is one of the tenets of Cognitive Linguistics, a linguistic discipline that has its roots in the 1970s.

In stark contrast to formal approaches to cognition, which postulate that reality is an entity independent from the subject relating to it and that language is clearly separated from other cognitive abilities, consisting of modules in the mind dedicated to different areas of language, such as a phonology module or a syntax module (Evans and Green 2006: 28), Cognitive Linguistics proposes a radically different view. In this approach, reality is not predetermined, but 'created' in the act of perception, when the perceiver applies schemas, categories and models deriving from previous experiences to external input in order to organise it rationally; these are perceptual mechanisms that "provide structure that is not necessarily apparent in the raw perceptual input" (Evans and Green 2006: 65). Such schemas, categories and models constitute what in Gestalt psychology is defined as patterns: humans don't perceive merely individual components but rather patterns, wholes that are more significant and more meaningful than the sum of their parts. For example, when exposed to the image of four equidistant isolated dots positioned as the four corners of a square, we would probably interpret them as in fact representing a square, instead of four singular entities. It might be maintained that these patterns, giving structure to perceptual input, are simultaneously expressed through and modelled by language, which can consequently be considered as one of the cognitive abilities of the human mind, employing underlying cognitive structures that are not exclusive to the activity of speech production but rather constant tenets of human cognition, in open contradiction with the principle of the modularity of mind adopted by formal approaches. According to the theory of Embodied Cognition, these patterns that organise external stimuli inside the mind are not abstract constructions, but rather they are derived from bodily experience and cannot be separated from it. To sum up, research in Cognitive Linguistics is predominantly guided by two commitments: the Generalisation Commitment, which maintains that there are principles of language structure that hold across all aspects of language, contradicting the concept of the modularity of language, and the Cognitive Commitment, which states that these principles should reflect more general notions and mechanisms of human cognition, which are in turn motivated by embodied experience (Evans and Green 2006).

The Embodied Cognition thesis was presented and developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in various publications. In 1987, Lakoff proposed the notion of Idealized Cognitive Models (ICM), which comprise different types of mechanisms of conceptualization already

introduced in the field of Cognitive Linguistics: they are structures apt at offering a representation of reality, with the aim of understanding specific situations in terms of generalised assumptions. ICMs are used to organise mental spaces, i.e., “containers” of knowledge that become filled as we assign meaning to different experiences. They are generally divided into four categories: frames (or propositionals), image schemas, metonymy, and metaphor. The first two categories are non-operational ICMs, that is, consisting of stored information: while frames provide context for specific terms, creating a system of meaningful connections among elements with specific properties that are often linked together in reality, image schemas offer schematization of basic spatial and kinaesthetic experiences, such as the opposition between “up” and “down”, that are useful to visualize a wide variety of abstract concepts. For example, the mention of the word “widow” immediately evokes a frame containing the concept of marriage, family, death of a partner, probably advanced age, and other notions, attained through both personal experience and general knowledge of the world, and reorganised rationally. On the other hand, the expression “prices are going up” immediately communicates the meaning that prices are increasing, even though there is no direct relation to the physical movement of going upwards; to interpret this orientational schema, we merely and unthinkingly rely on our experience of the fact that generally if a substance goes upwards, this means that the quantity of said substance is increasing. While frames and image schemas are entrenched cognitive models, and therefore static, the other two categories of ICMs, metonymy and metaphor, require a cognitive operation that exploits the knowledge and the assumptions encapsulated in frames and image schemas in order to create meaningful and novel associations. Whereas metonymy draws a connection between two elements within the same domain, the link suggested by metaphor crosses from one domain to another. Lakoff and Johnson explain the difference in *Metaphors We Live By*: “Metaphor is principally a way of conceiving of one thing in terms of another, and its primary function is understanding. Metonymy, on the other hand, has primarily a referential function, that is, it allows us to use one entity to stand for another” (1980: 36). When a waiter tells their colleague “The ham sandwich is waiting for his check” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 35), the intention is to refer to the person who ordered the sandwich by referring to another entity that is directly related to them, and also more relevant to the present situation of having to present them with a check.

As the title of Lakoff and Johnson’s book itself suggest, the most essential of these four categories is metaphor. Although generally the notion of metaphor seems to be relegated to the

domain of poetry and literary expression, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) maintains that in actuality it is a pervasive process, utilised countless times throughout the day by whomever uses language itself; “Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3). Once made aware of the nature of the metaphorical expressions we rely on to communicate and express ourselves meaningfully on a daily basis, we would find it remarkably difficult to avoid them and still be able to articulate what we wish to convey. Metaphors, as has already been established, are fundamentally “a mechanism that allows us to think and talk about one thing in terms of another” (Majid et al 2019: 1); they are a tool used to create mappings between different domains, the source domain and the target domain. While the latter is the one directly regarding the subject that is being discussed, the former is the one that is being used as the basis to create new meaning. The metaphorical use of language draws correspondences between elements and relations in the source domain and elements and relations in the target domain, conferring the properties and connotation of the former onto the latter. For example, one of the conceptual metaphors proposed by Lakoff and Johnson is THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS² (1980: 46). Thanks to the underlying assumption of this connection between a source domain composed of concrete objects that are part of our bodily experience and a target domain composed of abstract notions, we can discuss theories in terms that are familiar to us, uttering sentences such as “Is that the foundation for your theory?” or “The argument collapsed” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 46). These types of expressions are so deeply entrenched in our cognitive processes that they are never questioned, and they facilitate the process of communicating about notional topics in terms of experiences that are familiar to most if not all human beings. Of course, the relative degree of familiarity that the experiences on which metaphors are based hold for speakers of different languages is a debated issue. When Johnson (1987 in Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2019: 46) originally discussed the theory of embodiment, he was clearly referring to both sensorimotor experience and sociocultural experience, which entails an inclusion of experiences that we expect to actually be universal, in the case of the former biological element, and experiences that may instead be more culture-specific, in the case of the latter element. Thus, while some researchers in CMT argue for a universalist account of conceptual metaphors, considering solely the communal physical element, others support a perspective that allows for differences in the manner in which experience is culturally interpreted. For instance, Kövecses (2005 in

² conventionally written in capital letters.

Fenko et al 2010: 3325) differentiates between universal metaphors, rooted in the universal bodily experience, and conventional metaphors, presenting variations according to specific patterns that distinguish the language and culture of one group from those of another.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the discussion on their degree of universality, it is undebatable that metaphors have a pervasive role in shaping our knowledge of the world and at the same time in providing information about the mechanisms of conceptualisation. Numerous concepts that we are able to access and express are a direct function of our embodiment, and it is this direct connection with physical experience that renders them meaningful. Therefore, it might be maintained that we can only talk about what we are able to perceive and to conceive, and what we are able to perceive and conceive is determined and restrained by embodied experience. Cognitive Linguistics states that this reciprocal relation between what can be discerned and what can be expressed is reflected in language; consequently, it might be expected that the area of language that is primarily associated with the act of perception itself and the five senses will be readily transferred to fields that are not directly grounded in spatio-physical experience, through the use of metaphorical expressions. In other words, it is likely that languages will make use of conceptual metaphors that are perceptual in nature. Nonetheless, in order to discuss the correlation between perception and language, it should be recognised that there are some fundamental debates regarding the very nature of perception that are yet to be resolved, and that some notions that have been taken for granted so far should be problematised.

1.2. Perception: the five senses and the distinction between taste and smell

Traditionally, when discussing perception, a distinction between five different modalities is implicitly assumed: that is, sight (or vision), hearing, touch, taste and smell. These are sometimes called the “Aristotelian senses” (Sorabji 1971 in Winter 2019: 11) and they constitute what is known as the five senses folk model. Additionally, the senses can be organised into an order that has become another tenet in the field of perception: Viberg’s hierarchy of the sense, based on his survey of perception verbs, conducted in 1983. While examining the mechanisms at play in the act of perception, Viberg establishes as its field-specific components the five sense modalities listed above; additionally, he considers three general components (i.e., applicable to other verbal semantic fields): activity, experience, and copulative or phenomenon-based. The first component, activity, “refers to an unbounded

process that is consciously controlled by a human agent” (Viberg 1983: 123), as in “She looked at the painting”, while the second, experience, describes “a state (or inchoative achievement) that is not controlled” (123), as in “She saw the painting”, and the third, copulative, qualifies a verb that “takes the experienced entity as a subject” (124), as in “That painting looks beautiful”. The first two types comprise experiencer-based verb, taking the animate being that experiences something as the grammatical subject, while the latter is phenomenon-based, taking the entity that is being experienced as the grammatical subject. Following these categories, a division of the sense modalities can be drawn in the English language: sight and hearing on one side, and touch, taste and smell on the other. The former two lexically differentiate the three possible situations: sight has the three forms “to look at”, “to see” and “to look”, and hearing “to listen to”, “to hear” and “to sound”. Conversely, the other three sense modalities utilise the same form in all cases, with “to feel” “to taste” and “to smell” respectively covering all situations (Viberg 1983). In the case of taste and smell, the difference between activity and experience can be drawn from context. Generally, it could be argued that tasting is more naturally identified as an activity and smell as an experience, inasmuch as it often does not occur as a consequence of a conscious initiative on the part of the experiencer. However, in the case of the former rarer and less immediate examples of experience can be imagined, such as tasting blood as a result of being struck, while the latter can more readily be envisaged also as a voluntary activity. On the other hand, when the verb is copulative, this becomes clear thanks to the semantic role taken by the experienced entity, which becomes the subject, instead of being the object; saying “Sally tasted the cake” and saying “The cake tasted good” evidently assigns very different roles to the components of the sentences. Hence, by combining the field-specific components with the general components, Viberg established fifteen perceptual situations that language could lexicalise with different expressions. Subsequently, he analysed fifteen sentences depicting the scenarios he had identified, taken from fifty different languages, and on the basis of the results of this cross-linguistic comparison he formulated the universalist conclusion known as the hierarchy of sense modalities:

sight > hearing > touch > taste, smell (Viberg 1983: 136)

This implicational hierarchy can be explained in terms of intrafield meaning extensions: a term that has an original “sight” meaning can be extended to a “hearing” meaning, but the same process does not happen in reverse: a term that has a basic “hearing” meaning cannot be extended to a “sight” meaning (San Roque et al 2015: 3). The same reasoning can be applied

to the lower levels. Hence, the hierarchy suggests that the most salient sense modality is vision, since it is the one that could theoretically be extended to all other modalities. A consequent claim made by Sweetser (1990 in Evans and Wilkins 2000: 546), based mostly on Indo-European data, maintains that the primacy of vision can be extended across semantic fields, with verbs of sight most frequently recruited in transfield meaning extension as verbs of higher intellectual function, such as “to know”.

All of these claims (Sweetser’s primacy of vision, Viberg’s hierarchy of the senses, and the five senses folk model itself) have come under scrutiny in following studies, with varying outcomes. A study conducted by Evans and Wilkins (2000) examining Australian languages yielded results that appear to confirm Viberg’s universal, showing a pattern of intrafield semantic extension within the domain of perception that follows the hierarchy. At the same time, Sweetser’s universal was confuted by their findings: hearing, and not vision, is the preferred sensory modality as a source for verbs describing cognitive functions. Evans and Wilkins discuss some possible reasons for this, considering the greater importance of oral communication in Australian communities; thus, they conclude that intrafield extension follows universal rules, while transfield extension seems to be more culture-bound, seemingly buttressing Kövecses’s proposal of conventional metaphors. A more recent study by San Roque et al (2015) analysed the frequency of perception words in a sample of thirteen diverse languages with the aim of testing both the notion of sight as the dominant sense and the relative ranking of all senses. They established that sight-related verbs were the most frequent forms in twelve out of thirteen languages and, when the scope of their search was expanded to consider all references to perceptual modalities (and not exclusively the verbs), those used for vision were more frequent than references to the other senses in all thirteen languages. In conclusion, their findings strongly support the vision dominance hypothesis, suggesting a predominance of visual experience that is shared across cultures and thus universal (San Roque et al 2015: 19). However, the influence of culture-specific elements was found when observing the behavioural patterns of the other senses; the universal hierarchy doesn’t seem to correctly predict the frequency of forms and of general reference of the remaining senses in all thirteen languages. Hearing was second in many languages, but not all of them; for instance, in Semai, an Aslian language spoken in Malaysia, olfaction is discussed more frequently than hearing (San Roque et al 2015: 19). Even in the languages where hearing was second, the remaining three senses occupied different positions in different languages in terms of frequency. Hence, it can be

maintained that, while the two other proposals have been discarded or at least reevaluated, the conclusion that all of these studies seem to reach is the exactness of the primacy of vision hypothesis, within the field of perception. In order to account for it, a few explanations have been formulated, citing the centrality of vision in our physical experience or the simple fact that generally speakers probably have on the whole more occasions to talk about things they see than about things they apprehend with the other senses. Other contributing factors may be the relative ease with which visual experience is shared by the participants in the act of communication, as opposed to other perceptual experiences that tend to be more individualistic, making vision preferable from a socio-interactional point of view (San Roque et al 2015).

The studies discussed in the previous paragraphs used examples from a varied sample of languages, since one of the criticisms of the universals that emerges more frequently is the fact that they are too Eurocentric, being based mostly on Indo-European languages. Nevertheless, the same criticism can be applied to the underlying principle of all of these studies, the five senses folk model. While for many years this model has not been questioned, at least throughout the Western world, more recently it has been criticised for its inaccuracy with respect to the actual complexity that characterises the act of perception. Rather than a scientific classification, the five senses folk model appears to be an arbitrary division, a “cultural construct” (Winter 2019: 117). Winter (2019) states that accepting the folk model implies a categorical approach that ignores the continuity which characterises the activity of perception and the degree to which what it defines as the five senses cooperate in detecting relevant data and combining them in order to provide valuable information; this level of cooperation has led researcher to consider perception as a multisensory activity, rather than as composed by independent modalities. On one hand, this model fails to recognise areas such as nociception, i.e., the perception of pain, which is separate from other dimensions of touch (Winter 2019: 12); on the other hand, it divides areas that may be characterized by intense interaction, such as taste and smell, which will be discussed further in the next paragraph. Generally speaking, on one hand this model appears adequate with regard to Indo-European languages, which seem to usually have lexicon dedicated to each of the five senses, even though with a certain degree of differences with regards to the range of notions that can be encoded and the overlap of some of the terminology. This is logical, if we recall the fact that this model is based on Aristotle’s ideas and on Greek philosophy in general, which has shaped Western thought and languages to a considerable extent. Nevertheless, on the other hand, once researchers became aware of the bias toward Indo-

European languages and shifted the focus toward languages of other families, not influenced in their development by the ideas of Greek philosophy, the results of the new studies have been different. One example is that of Avatime, a language of the Niger-Congo family. Van Putten (2020) states that it presents only two verbs to refer to perceptual experience, one for vision (*mò* ‘see’) and one for all of the non-visual sensory modalities (*nu* ‘hear/feel/taste/smell’), which can be considered as having a central ‘hear/listen’ interpretation. While in the cases where *nu* is used for either tasting or smelling, the specific meaning intended is clarified as a result of the chosen grammatical construction, there does not appear to be any conventionalized means to talk specifically about touch. Consequently, van Putten concludes that “The findings related to the linguistic encoding of the sensory modalities show that the Aristotelian five senses do not necessarily correspond to the underlying concepts on which the encoding of perceptual experience in a language is based” (2020: 458); the five senses folk model is not the only categorisation available when it comes to perception. Furthermore, the possibility of talking specifically about taste or smell, and not about touch, seems to contradict Viberg’s hierarchy, which positions touch above the other two senses, echoing the results yielded by the study by San Roque et al (2015) already discussed.

As has already been mentioned, the separation of the sense of taste and the sense of smell is one of the most disputed points of the folk model. In his study of English perceptual adjectives, Winter notes that the actual correlations among the lexicon customarily assigned to the five senses show a close association between taste and smell, suggesting that “the chemical senses of taste and smell are strongly associated with each other in the sensory vocabulary” (2019: 164). Considering the similarities in usage patterns, word frequencies and evaluative qualities, he proposes a “taste–smell continuum” (2019: 236) where words may veer either toward the taste pole or toward the smell pole, lacking a clear separation in two distinct areas. This notion of a taste-smell continuum may be compared to Auvray et al.’s (2015) explanation of the term “flavour”. In their paper *Confusing tastes with flavours* they discuss the misconceptions surrounding the distinction between “flavour” and “taste” and the basis they might have in the physical act of tasting. Although taste is considered as a more specific term, indicating the result of the stimulation of the gustatory receptors localized in the mouth, while flavour may be defined as the result of the combination of these gustatory sensations together

with both olfactory sensations and trigeminal sensations³, Auvray et al. conclude that taste is never actually experienced in isolation. The activity of tasting food necessarily comprises also olfactory sensations, which come from both orthonasal olfaction, via the nose, and retronasal olfaction, via the mouth. We generally define the results of this activity in terms of “tastes”, but they should actually be characterised more correctly as “flavours”. Customarily, the temporary loss of the sense of smell, due for example to a blocked nose, seems to prevent us from perceiving what we define as the taste of food. Hence, the confusion in the terminology regarding this area may be resolved by qualifying the use of the term “taste” to define the result of the consumption of food as improper, inasmuch as what we actually mean is “flavour”. Consequently, this revaluation of the relevant terminology, rooted in the scientific observation of the act of perception, may provide a valuable explanation for the phenomenon observed by Winter in his analysis of the usage of perception adjectives in the area of taste and smell and of their partial overlap. It has been established that the experience of tasting food itself is never actually separated from that of smelling it, thanks to retronasal olfaction; hence, the interchangeability of a section of the lexicon, which can be readily applied to either the domain of taste or that of smell, could be linked to the role that the olfactory component, in the form of retronasal olfaction, plays in the identification of flavour.

Nonetheless, it might still be argued that, notwithstanding its defects and imprecisions, the folk model retains some degree of merit as a starting point, a “useful fiction” (Winter 2019: 13). Firstly, when it comes to differentiating among the senses “there is no universally agreed set of criteria” (Winter 2019: 12) that might offer a valid alternative framework; secondly, although the model does not reflect the actual mechanism of perception, it is commonly accepted as accurate by speakers and utilised when talking about perceptual language and acts of perception. Thus, it might be useful in such a discussion to adopt, at least partially, its terminology, even though we understand that the conscious assumptions do not coincide with the unconscious mechanisms. For this reason, the data that will be analysed in this thesis is presented within a framework in accordance with the traditional division of taste and smell, since language users knowingly draw such a distinction; instances of similar usages in both realms will be commented on and discussed. In the following chapters, firstly an explanation of the objective and methods of this analysis is presented; subsequently, the data for the sense

³ The trigeminal nerve is responsible for the perception of sensations in the face and mouth, including pain, temperature and touch, but not taste itself.

of taste and the data for the sense of smell are examined in separate chapters, and lastly, a brief discussion on the data is offered in the final chapter.

Chapter 2

Purpose and Methodology

2.1. Purpose of the study

Following the introduction of the theoretical concepts established as the basis for the present research, we now turn to the nature and structure of the study itself. Within the field of Sensory Linguistics, the encoding of sense perception in language usage has been examined in various studies, some of which have been mentioned in Chapter 1. In particular, in his book Winter (2019) discussed extensively taste and smell, the most neglected among the senses; however, he focused primarily on the usage of nouns and adjectives. In this study, the focus is instead placed on the verbs within the spheres of taste and smell, and each verb is separately observed and evaluated in actual usage, by means of the data obtained through a corpus. Since the approach connects Sensory Linguistics and Cognitive Linguistics, the main purpose of this study can be defined as the observation and subsequent appraisal of verb usage in context, in order to assess to what extent the language of taste and smell perception is actually employed to convey those physical experiences and to what extent it is devoted to the creation of metaphors that exploit their original sense to generate new meaning. It has already been established that, considering the importance of physical experience to the manner in which we understand reality, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that language directly referring to these kinds of experiences will generate metaphorical expressions. Therefore, I expect to find a general tendency for literal language to be applied throughout various areas of non-physical experiences, in order to facilitate their processing in the mind and the acts of communication among different speakers.

Obviously, different verbs present both different amounts of data and different patterns of usage, with some being more generic in their meaning and some capturing more specific features, which are comparatively less likely to emerge in an average conversation, and with some being more salient than others for the discussion of perceptual elements. Together with an element of disparity among all verbs, there is an imbalance between the two areas considered: the verbs connected to taste are more numerous than the verbs connected to smell, and the tokens for the former category are noticeably more numerous than those for the latter. This is a concrete example of the diversity that languages show in terms of the accuracy they allow their speakers when discussing different kinds of experiences, buttressing the status of smell as the most ineffable of the senses in English, which has been widely accepted. The concept of ineffability describes “the degree to which percepts or concepts resist linguistic coding” (Levinson and Majid 2014: 407), that is, the level of difficulty that the speaker of a specific language encounters when attempting to put into words a specific perceptual experience. The degree of ineffability is inversely proportional to the degree of codability, which is defined as “a measure of the efficiency with which either a color or another sensory experience may be transmitted in a given language code” (Lenneberg and Roberts 1956 in Levinson and Majid 2014: 411), quantified in terms of parameters such as the conciseness in descriptions of the percepts in question and the amount of dedicated vocabulary available. Therefore, codability is about the ease with which a specific topic can be directly discussed in a language when the speaker has dedicated language at their disposal, and it is different from conveyability, which measures the possibility of communicating meaningfully about a topic, even when the speaker does not have dedicated language at their disposal. In this case, other strategies of communication are employed; one of them is source-based language, of which examples were found among the data. Hence, it might be said that the results of this analysis reinforce the idea that smell is the most difficult sense to directly talk about in the English language, having less dedicated linguistic material; as a direct consequence, it might be maintained that transfers of smell-related experiences to the metaphorical domain are on the whole less frequent than transfers of taste-related ones. Nonetheless, there is still a considerable number of such transfers, showing specific tendencies and patterns that differentiate them from taste-related ones.

In order to assess the nature of the expression involving the verb, the majority of the data discussed involves a “verb + direct object” construction and can be thus categorised according

to Viberg's classification as either activity (a voluntary act) or experience (an involuntary one). The fewer instances which can be classified as copulative or phenomenon-based are those involving the two "verb + preposition + object of the preposition" structures considered, which are "to reek of" and "to stink of"; these can be found in the chapter devoted to the verbs of smell and will be discussed there. In any case, the criteria and the methods established to determine which verbs to consider and how to approach and gather the data are explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

2.2. Methodology

Prior to a discussion of the data, it is necessary to discuss the scope of the following study and the methodology employed in gathering and assessing them. Corpora are large collections of texts produced by actual speakers of the language and, in the field of linguistics, they are the most suitable means to examine general tendencies in one or more languages, given the vast amount of data that they offer and the fact that they are annotated, which means that words are labelled with information regarding the part of speech and the grammatical category. Using a corpus means adopting a usage-based approach to research, i.e., collecting and analysing data that were produced by native speakers without being elicited by researchers; this is ideally suited to the present research, whose object is the study of language in actual and spontaneous usage. Consequently, the tool employed in the current research is *Sketch Engine*, a corpus manager and text analysis software developed by Lexical Computing Limited, and the monolingual corpus chosen is the *English Web Corpus 2015 (enTenTen15)*, of the *TenTen Corpus Family*. It is a Web corpus, which means that it contains exclusively data that have been "crawled", that is, extracted, from the Internet, and then analysed with the following procedure (Jakubíček et al. 2003). Once the data have been extracted, firstly all irrelevant elements usually found on the web, such as navigation links, advertisements or headers, are removed. Then the texts undergo a tokenization process, during which they are divided into the smallest meaningful units, the tokens, which in a corpus are mostly word forms, but also other elements found in texts, such as punctuation or digits (Sketch Engine 2016). Subsequently, the process of deduplication is performed on paragraph level, in order to remove the texts that have been duplicated (which is a phenomenon typical of the Web) thus appearing twice in the corpus. Lastly, the texts are lemmatised, and part-of-speech tagged: each word form is linked to a specific lemma and to all of its derived forms, and it is marked as belonging to a specific part of speech, such as noun, verb or preposition.

The *enTenTen15* corpus contains texts in English taken from the Internet up to the year 2015, and it is made up of 13 billion words: its size, together with the nature of the texts in question, was the reason why it was chosen among the various corpora of the English language that *Sketch Engine* offers. The objective of this research is to analyse general tendencies in current language usage; hence, it is appropriate to consider a corpus that offers a quantity of data substantial enough to try and formulate general observations. Additionally, it is written in a contemporary speech and taken from contexts where it may be expected that the use of language will be more informal and spontaneous, thus producing interesting expressions. Therefore, considering the size of the corpus, the feature of *Sketch Engine* that has been most useful is *Word Sketch*, which allows the user to search for one specific word and obtain a one-page summary of the most prominent characteristics of that word, with relevant information as to its grammatical and collocational behaviour. The latter element refers to the collocational range of the verb, i.e., the set of other lexical items with which it frequently appears; thus, the notion of collocation can be defined as “the statistical tendency of words to co-occur” (Hunston 2002: 12). *Word Sketch* organises the results into columns corresponding to the grammatical relations of the word: in the case of verbs, these include categories such as objects, subjects or modifiers. In each column, the most relevant collocates are indicated; the collocate is the lexeme forming a meaningful collocation together with the node, which in this case is the verb. In the context of this research, the examination of the results has been limited to the column displaying the objects of the verbs taken into consideration⁴, since by analysing the direct objects with which they are most frequently associated, it might be determined whether they are predominantly used in a metaphorical setting or a literal one, and which specific contexts might elicit metaphorical expressions. It should be noted that the reasons that make the *enTenTen15* corpus fitting, namely the amount of data, and the often-unconventional use of language, can also lead to inaccuracies in the annotation of the texts. Inasmuch as it was possible, the inaccuracies have been corrected, as will be explained more extensively in the case of each verb; although the likelihood that some imprecision may remain in the data is recognised, their relevance in the context of a corpus of these dimensions is deemed to be negligible.

In the following chapters, I turn to the analysis and discussion of the situation of each verb, starting with those ordinarily encompassed in the field of the perception of taste, and continuing with those contained within the field of the perception of smell. In order to select

⁴ with the already mentioned exception of “to reek of” and “to stink of”.

the verbs that would be considered, firstly a list of verbs deemed relevant was established with the help of the site *WordNet*, a lexical database of the English language which groups nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs into sets of cognitive synonyms (synsets), linked on the basis of conceptual-semantic and lexical relations. Afterwards, a preliminary search on Sketch Engine determined which of those verbs presented enough data and also lent themselves to trans-domain usage, being thus relevant for the present research. The definitive list for the verbs associated with the sense of taste comprised the following verbs: “to taste”, “to savor/savour”, “to spice up”, “to sweeten”, “to pepper”, “to sour”, “to flavor/flavour”, and “to season”. The definitive list for the verbs associated with the sense of smell comprised the following verbs instead: “to smell”, “to reek of”, “to scent”, “to stink of”, “to sniff (at)”. The verbs of taste are discussed in Chapter 3, while the verbs of smell are discussed in Chapter 4. The data for the verbs has been divided with parameters that attempt to deal with the difficulties of separating in a categorical manner instances of language in actual usage, especially in an informal environment such as the Internet; these parameters will be explained as they are applied, and were adapted to the specific characteristics and usage of each verb. Parallels and differences among the verbs will be commented on, and when appropriate, possible explanations will be proposed. Below, the data gathered for the verbs correlated to the sense of taste and the data gathered for the verbs correlated to the sense of smell are summarised in two separate tables.

'TASTE' VERBS	№ OF COLLOCATIONS
To taste	37.491
To savo(u)r	12.976
To spice up	2.976
To sweeten	6.278
To pepper	1.749
To sour	1.376
To flavo(u)r	13.628
To season	1.778

Table 2.1 'Taste' verb

'SMELL' VERBS	Nº OF COLLOCATIONS
To smell	21.404
To reek of	2.235
To scent	9.489
To stink of	635
To sniff (at)	4.795

Table 2.2 'Smell' verbs

Chapter 3

The Sense of Taste

3.1. Taste

The first verb that has been examined in this analysis of the realm of gustatory perception is the most basic one, namely the verb “to taste”. As stated before, the focus of the analysis is the “objects of the verb” column, showing collocates that have appeared in the corpus with the verb at least a certain number of times, deemed sufficient to qualify the collocation as relevant considering the total number of mentions of the verbs that have been found; the number is not fixed, but it changes for each verb depending on the total number of tokens of that verb, which, in the case of “to taste”, was considerably higher than in other cases. While examining the data, some of the expressions have been removed since they did not fit the “verb + specific object” structure required; for example, all expressions such as “tasting rooms”, “tasting event” and “tasting notes”, where “tasting” carries out the function of an adjective, were excluded from the count. Other expressions such as “taste things”, “taste everything”, “taste nothing”, “taste a bit” or “taste a lot” have been similarly removed since they either do not correspond to the “verb + object” form or they are too generic to allow a judgement on the nature of the expression. Eventually, a total of 37.491 tokens of the verb “to taste” has been retrieved, and most collocations considered have been categorised as either literal or metaphorical, even though a small percentage presented a level of ambiguity and has thus been assigned to a third category, which will be discussed further separately.

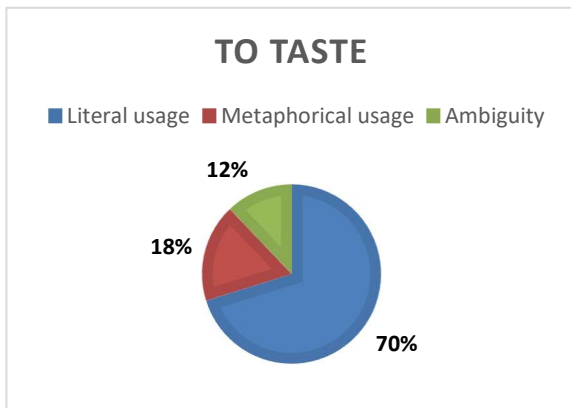


Figure 3.1 Usage of “to taste”

This diagram has the objective of giving a clear visual representation of the conclusions that can be drawn from the data analysed with regard to the usage of “to taste”. There is a clear predominance of the literal domain of expression, which is somewhat unsurprising when considering the centrality of the verb in its field of perception. Nonetheless, even the primary verb used to qualify the concrete act of

gustation is transferred unto more conceptual fields. In addition to the overview of the general distribution of “to taste”, the three areas outlined in the diagram are analysed and discussed separately below, establishing the most frequent collocates for each of them.

3.1.1. Literal Usage

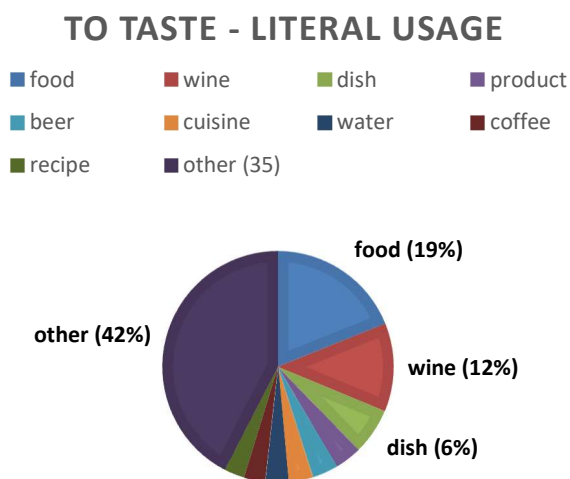


Figure 3.2 Literal usage of “to taste”

The collocate with which “to taste” is used most frequently is, perhaps unsurprisingly, “food”, and the second most frequent is “wine”, which is also coincidentally the object of “to taste” with the highest typicality score. Some of the most frequent collocates, such as cuisine, though not referring directly to either food nor beverages, have been included and will be commented on later. Under the label “other” the other thirty-five

collocations with lower frequencies were combined. Now, the various collocations represented in *Figure 3.2* will be examined in more detail.

In the table below there is a list of all of the collocations, with their respective frequency and typicality score. The frequency is an absolute figure which refers to the total number of occurrences that have been found in the corpus. The typicality score is an index of how typical a given collocation is; it is calculated by comparing how many times the collocate appears with the node and how many times it appears with other lexemes, thus highlighting more specialised

words. In other words, to better understand the complex algorithm behind these calculations in simple terms, we can consider the collocation “*taste food*”: at first all instances of “*taste + noun*” and “*verb + food*” are collected. Then, the data is analysed and essentially every time *food* is found together with *taste*, the collocation gets a plus point and every time each of them is found in combination with another noun it gets a minus point. When the result is a high score, this means that the collocate is often found together with the node and not as often with other nodes, hence the collocation can be characterised as stronger than others. When the result is a low score, this outcome means that the collocate may be found with a certain frequency with other nodes, and thus the collocation is weaker. This parameter is useful inasmuch as it pinpoints collocations which are not frequent on the whole but are typical of that node and not of many others (*Sketch Engine* 2016). Therefore, these results are always obtained in a context of comparison with other elements, rather than being definitive statements supported by an absolute number; the typicality score of one collocation is always dependent on the general behaviour of both node and collocate with regard to all other words they appear in combination with. For this reason, in this case the priority in the ordering of the collocates has been given to the frequency, as it establishes in categorical terms which collocations are dominant in natural expressions. However, the typicality score is still specified, since it indicates the perceived level of compatibility between two lexemes, underlining how specific to that particular sphere of expression a certain word is. It should be understood that henceforth the cases where it is absent are the ones where some of the tokens for one collocate were analysed incorrectly and have been thus removed from the count, rendering the typicality score value null. Below, the data for the literal usage of “to taste” is presented, together with both parameters.

<i>To Taste: Literal Usage</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. food	4.976,00	7.19	23. bread	330,00	5.87
2. wine	3.245,00	9.01	24. oil	318,00	4.66
3. dish	1.701,00	7.88	25. cake	310,00	5.78
4. product	993,00	4.3	26. honey	305,00	6.38
5. beer	951,00	7.34	27. soup	305,00	6.2
6. cuisine	912,00	7.85	28. fish	262,00	4.72
7. water	843,00	4.61	29. sauce	251,00	5.94
8. coffee	777,00	6.88	30. type	239,00	2.86

9. recipe	758,00	6.38	31. specialty	226,00	5.89
10. variety	706,00	4.9	32. cream	216,00	5.3
11. juice	665,00	7.1	33. vegetables	214,00	5.22
12. sample	586,00	5.33	34. treat	211,00	5.41
13. tea	570,00	6.49	35. milk	211,00	5.12
14. meal	461,00	5.23	36. apple	209,00	5.55
15. chocolate	407,00	6.6	37. produce	208,00	5.45
16. cheese	398,00	6.46	38. range	205,00	2.63
17. drink	393,00	5.81	39. tomato	203,00	5.6
18. glass	393,00	5.53	40. plate	183,00	4.77
19. cup	382,00	5.83	41. pizza	182,00	5.47
20. salt	373,00	6.35	42. selection	178,00	3.89
21. meat	356,00	5.68	43. flesh	173,00	5.32
22. delicacy	354,00	6.74	44. snack	173,00	5.22
TOTAL					
26.312,00					

Table 3.1 Literal usage of “to taste”

Various instances of these collocates refer directly to foods or beverages, such as “coffee” “cheese” or “apple”, or to specific ingredients, such as “salt”, “oil” or “honey”, which can all be tasted and consumed, leaving no doubt as to their inclusion in this category; others, however, necessitate some clarification. It has been claimed in the previous chapter that the difference between metaphor and metonymy is a matter of domain: “whilst metaphor is a process by which one domain of experience is used to refer to another unrelated domain of experience, metonymy is a process by which one aspect of a domain of experience is used to refer to another aspect of the same domain of experience” (Gibbs 1994: 13 in Winter 2019: 83). Clearly, in order for metonymical mappings to work, speaker and hearer need to share cultural knowledge allowing them to construct and shape the same domains of experience, within which the same links can be drawn. According to Fauconnier’s classification (1997 in Evans and Green 2006: 167), metonymies are pragmatic function mappings, which can be established between two entities by virtue of a shared frame of experience; this allows one entity to stand for the other. The table above contains some examples of metonymy: “cuisine”, “recipe”, “glass”, “cup”, “plate”, and “selection” necessitate a cognitive operation of association between elements that the perceiver customarily experiences in connection to one another, in order to be interpreted correctly. The

decision to list them among the examples that refer directly to types of food is motivated by the fact that, while it is not literally possible to taste neither the physical object that is a glass, nor the set of instructions that constitute a recipe, all of these elements are still firmly rooted in the domain of the physical experience of gustation, fulfilling the function of replacing a specific referent with a more generic one, presumably more salient in the specific situation or more immediate in signifying the appropriate denotation and connotations. The substitution of one entity for another is based on a direct relationship of contiguity between them that has been established previously. Upon hearing one of these terms in association with the action of tasting, the mechanism of identification of a container with what it contains, of a hypernym such as “cuisine” with the hyponyms it contains, of a set of instructions with their end result, and of a collective noun with the items it comprises, is automatically triggered.

One collocation that exploits the relation of contiguity between terms that carry distinctly different connotation is “taste flesh”, which we can see in (1):

- (1) These poor animals are bred to artificially huge numbers (we are talking billions!), kept in horrible conditions on factory farms, [...] and then inhumanely slaughtered, just to satisfy our desire to *taste animal flesh* (enTenTen15: 2015)

Clearly, “flesh” is not the lexeme we would expect here, based on the usual collocational range of “to taste”. Combining the verb, which is firmly connected to the idea of eating and drinking and is in general primarily associated with enjoyable experiences, and the noun, primarily associated with very different situations, evokes a distinctly unpleasant sensation. This happens because of the direct link that is created between the idea of consuming food and the idea of “flesh”, a word which refers to the living counterpart of processed and cooked “meat”, a term that would arguably function better in such a context. While the former belongs in a “living creature” frame, the latter exists in a “dead animal/food” frame, and the dissonance that we experience in hearing this collocation is due to the juxtaposition of the “living creature” frame with the “eating and drinking” frame that “to taste” evokes. Therefore, it might be said that “flesh” metonymically stands for “meat”; since metonymy “serves as point of access to a particular aspect of a domain” (Evans and Green 2006: 315), here it might be motivated by the intention of accessing the idea of meat through a route that forces the hearer to draw some uncomfortable connections between the food they are consuming and its origin. Clearly, this is a deliberate choice that shows some level of awareness, either conscious or unconscious, of the associations our minds automatically perform when confronted with terminology that refers to

closely related entities but presents very different connotations. Here, these associations are elicited and intentionally exploited in order to conjure negativity on the topic of breeding animals to produce meat.

3.1.2. Metaphorical Usage

TO TASTE - METAPHORICAL USAGE

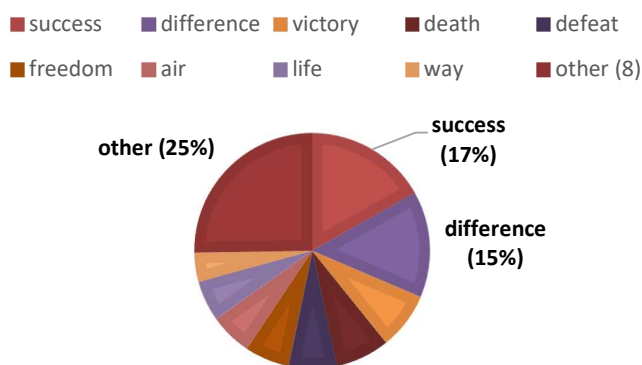


Figure 3.3 Metaphorical usage of “to taste”

In this category, the most frequent collocate for “to taste” is “success”, followed by “difference”. It is immediately clear that this category comprises both collocates such as the former, that refer to abstract concepts that have no direct link to the activities of eating or drinking, and also collocates such as the latter, that can be traced back to such

activities (the idea of tasting two products and determining that one is different and thus better than the other), and yet refer by their nature to an abstract concept that can (at least theoretically) be applied across various domains. Under the label “other”, the other eight collocations with lower frequencies were combined. Now, the various collocations represented in Figure 3.3 will be looked at in more detail.

<i>To Taste: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. success	1.116,00	5.59	10. pleasure	234,00	4.69
2. difference	971,00	4.7	11. delight	233,00	5.75
3. victory	517,00	5.92	12. joy	226,00	4.88
4. death	491,00	5.15	13. result	220,00	1.99
5. defeat	440,00	6.64	14. power	206,00	2.22
6. freedom	405,00	5.02	15. love	196,00	3.61
7. air	386,00	5.26	16. goodness	186,00	5.58
8. life	371,00	2.24	17. world	175,00	2
9. way	266,00	-			

TOTAL	6.639,00
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Table 3.2 Metaphorical usage of “to taste”

In all of these examples we can see that, in accordance with the theory of Embodied Cognition (see 1.1), concepts and vocabulary from the physical world, instinctively more accessible to speakers, are borrowed to describe and characterise the less accessible worlds of reasoning, emotion and experience, according to an ICM that can be called the MIND-AS-BODY metaphor (Sweetser 1990 in Ibarretxe-Antuñano 1999: 108). Essentially, the MIND-AS-BODY metaphor postulates that mental activities are conceptualised in terms of bodily experiences, with the former being the target domain and the latter the source domain. In this specific situation, this means that the bodily experience of physically tasting something and thus appraising its quality is transferred unto the abstract domain where there is no physical act of tasting, but there is a metaphorical contact with an idea which is subsequently appraised. This type of process of transfer is classifiable, according to the division introduced by Fauconnier (1997 in Evans and Green 2006: 167) as a projection mapping, since it projects structure from the source domain onto the target domain; here, the mapping can be expressed as EXPERIENCING IS TASTING or ENJOYING IS TASTING. In this instance, the consistent link between the domain of subjectivity and emotion and the domain of the sense of taste can be attributed to its status as a “contact sense” (together with touch), in opposition to the “distant senses”, vision and hearing, where the apparent distance that can be maintained between perceiver and perceived appears to assure a higher level of objectivity (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 1999: 112). Therefore, while the senses of sight and hearing can frequently be utilised as source domains to create metaphorical language connected to the intellect, implying knowledge and understanding in common expressions such as “I see your point” and “I hear what you’re saying”, the sense of taste seems to be more naturally associated with personal experience, evaluations and attitudes based on personal likes and dislikes.

Hence the presence among the collocates of a vast majority of favourable ones, designating positive feelings such as “joy” and “love” and positive events such as “success” or “victory” (where it could be argued that the implicit assumption is that what is being tasted is the feeling the experiencer derives from the experience); where the collocate in itself does not possess inherently positive or negative connotations, e.g. in the case of “result” or “world”, the association with the action of tasting strongly suggests the positive connotation of its object.

Nevertheless, though there is an undisputed predominance of positive concepts, the collocates are not exclusively so; this can be explained in light of the ‘Invariance Principle’, asserting that “metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology of the source domain in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain” (Lakoff 1993 in Ibarretxe-Antuñano 1999: 116). We might understand cognitive topology as the collection of concepts that are logically connected due to the interaction between them experienced by the perceiver, and that are thus rightfully positioned within the same domain. If the source domain in question is the sense of taste, it might be said that, inasmuch as the physical experience of tasting can lead to both pleasant and unpleasant experiences, so can the metaphorical experience of tasting. Therefore, the negative connotation which “to taste” can assume is part of some of the metaphorical mappings realised here: “death” and “defeat” can be tasted too. In those instances, there is still an external event that is internalised and causes certain sensation or emotions to arise and be experienced in terms that are conceptualised as parallel to how a disagreeable food is experienced.

As stated before, a contrast can be established between the lexemes discussed so far, which refer to purely abstract concepts, and terms such as “difference” or “delights” that are abstract *per se*, but can in some cases refer indirectly to corporeal experiences, as in (2) and (3):

- (2) Can you *taste the difference* within the vast line of craft beers flooding the market? (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (3) They will leave having created and *tasted a culinary delight* designed and executed by them. (enTenTen15: 2015)

These expressions involve a physical experience of tasting; however, the unavoidable additional step that is required takes this specific action out the literal domain of tasting, necessitating in the first case the cognitive act of comparison and in the second the appraisal of an entity that is inherently identified with the sensation of pleasure it produces, by being its source. At the same time, these terms can be directly applied to entirely different domains; this can be seen for instance in (4), where the act of comparison is between the states of mind provoked by two opposite emotions, or in (5), where the source of the sensation of pleasure is located within a financial context:

- (4) I have *tasted the difference* between tears of joy and tears of grief. (enTenTen15: 2015)

- (5) Two Newcastle businesswomen are *tasting the delights* of a £14,000 boost to grow their bespoke catering business in 2014. (enTenTen15: 2015)

One collocate indicating a kind of mapping that is somewhat different from the others observed so far is “way”. All of the instances where the expressions listed in *Word Sketch* presented some form of the structure “it tastes a certain way”, as in “It tastes just the way it looks [..]” (enTenTen15: 2015) have been excluded, inasmuch as they do not correspond the “verb + object” structure considered here. This operation left exclusively the expressions using syntactic constructions similar to those shown in (6) and (7):

- (6) Fill your days adventuring through Napa Valley, hiking the state parks, cycling among the vineyards, soaring in a glider or hot air balloon, relaxing in hot mineral springs, or *tasting your way* through the California Wine Country. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (7) Black Star offers a selection of four pours to let you *taste your way* through the menu. (enTenTen15: 2015)

Here, the *way*-construction (Evans and Green 2006: 705) is exploited, suggesting at the same time a movement and the manner in which that movement is realised through a TASTING IS MOVING mapping that exploits the frame of travelling as a source domain and transfers it unto the activity of tasting different kinds of food or beverages, which functions as the target domain. This differentiates the collocation from the others, inasmuch as they all assigned the role of source domain to the experience of tasting. In these instances, the physical experience of movement during travel and the physical experience of tasting different types of nourishments are juxtaposed in order to evoke a third distinct experience that is not literally feasible but proves evocative enough to function as a marketing strategy. Once this idea has been evoked, it can be applied to linguistic expressions in diverse circumstances: in (6), there is still a discernible actual physical movement in the idea of moving through the tangible space that is the California Wine Country, though the manner in which this movement is to be carried out requires the idea of an imaginary “path” one can taste their way through. On the other hand, in (7), there is no actual concrete space this imaginary movement can be projected upon; what remains of the “travel” frame is merely the imaginary space created within the menu, through which the visitor is offered the possibility to forge their own culinary path.

3.1.3. Ambiguity

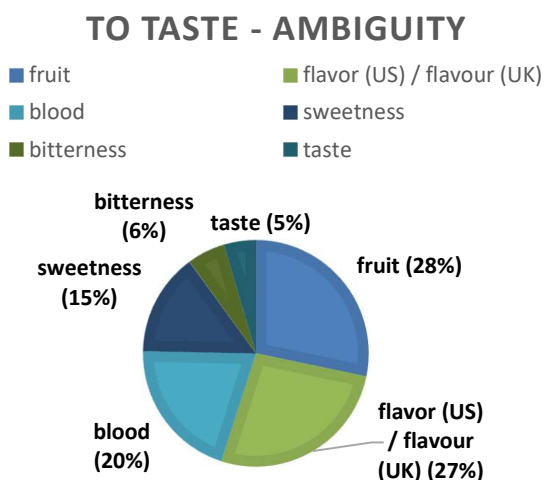


Figure 3.4 Ambiguity in the usage of "to taste"

This additional category was introduced to incorporate all of the terms that could not be assigned to either one of the previous categories definitively, inasmuch as, contrary to some of the terms included in the preceding sections, these are not words referring to physical objects metonymically utilised to talk about foods or drink, nor are they abstract concepts that frequently exhibit a direct connection to the act of eating or drinking. These

lexemes can naturally be directly connected to corporeal experiences, and just as naturally be altogether detached from it, according to the context in which they are encountered. Of these six collocates, two indicate physical entities, two indicate opposite characteristics intrinsic in the food that provoke opposite gustatory sensations, and the two last ones, flavo(u)r and taste, concern our general experience of food and drinks (both fundamentally referring to the result of the interaction between taste and smell, as I discussed in 1.2). At the same time, all of these six terms are often transferred unto abstract domains, some even forming idiomatic expressions.

<u>To Taste: Ambiguity</u>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. fruit	1.284,00	7.05	4. sweetness	665,00	7.69
2. flavo(u)r (US: 854) (UK: 357)	1.211,00	-	5. bitterness	248,00	6.29
3. blood	925,00	6.73	6. taste	207,00	4.82
TOTAL	4.540,00				

Table 3.3 Ambiguity in the usage of "to taste"

Since the literal contexts where they can be found are more predictable and instinctively comprehensible, here we present instances of the manner in which they are utilised metaphorically:

- (8) And if the early signs of success that we have seen at the theatre are any indication of what is to come, then it's only a matter of time before Alice Juban and Steamgirls *taste the fruits* of determination and take their place alongside other famous national Idols. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (9) But the corporate lobby had *tasted blood*, and then went searching for more of it in regional and bilateral trade agreements. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (10) Praise is the characteristic mark of one who has *tasted the sweetness* of the Lord and known his excessive mercy. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (11) I *tasted the bitterness* of obvious failure. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In all of these examples the collocates are chosen in order to describe situations which are very distant from the literal sphere and simultaneously confer on them specific nuances of meaning. The term “fruits” has come to indicate something immaterial that results from an action or effort, often implying its status as a just reward that has been deserved. Hence, the collocate itself can already imply a RESULTS ARE FRUITS metaphor, based on a mapping from a literal domain to a metaphorical domain which is activated on the basis of the context where it is found; when it is associated with “to taste” in the right contexts, both the verb and the noun are mapped onto an abstract meaning and then interpreted according to that mapping. In (8), as soon as “of determination” is added, it is clear that “taste the fruits” should not be interpreted literally, but rather as suggesting a positive outcome as a consequence of the attitude described. The expression “tasted blood” in (9) posits a hunting metaphor, where the logical passages are the metaphorical mappings CONFLICT IS WAR, ENEMIES ARE PREYS, DEFEAT IS WOUND, and the metonymy BLOOD STANDS FOR WOUND, which lead to the metaphor VICTORY IS TASTING BLOOD. The original violent connotations of the literal act are transferred to other areas already characterised by hostility and rivalry, reinforcing those elements, and they are combined with the sensations of pleasantness generally expected when tasting. Therefore, since what for the opponent is a defeat is obviously a victory for the experiencer, “tasting blood” signifies gaining an advantage that acts as an encouragement to continue, which is rendered explicit in the sentence with “went searching for more of it”. In (10), “sweetness”, which is the fifth strongest collocate in general in terms of typicality score, is used within the conceptual metaphor PLEASANTNESS IS SWEETNESS, which is complemented by the metaphor in (11), UNPLEASANTNESS IS BITTERNESS, where both are understood as attributes of an experience. While on one hand the experience of sweetness during gustation is viewed as positive and can

readily transfer such positive connotations when applied to another domain, on the other hand the experience of bitterness is viewed as negative and can just as readily be utilised in other domains to elicit negative connotations linked to its role in gustation. In (10), the experience is a religious one, which is a fairly frequent usage for this specific collocation; in (11) instead, the already negative term “failure” is reinforced by the association with “bitterness”, suggesting that the disappointment is such that it can almost be perceived physically. The last collocate is the only one that directly implies adversity for the agent, thus confirming the tendency already encountered in the metaphorical usage of “to taste” to be more readily associated with feelings of satisfaction and enjoyment.

Flavo(u)r and taste have proven to be particularly interesting with regard to the areas to which they can be extended metaphorically. Unsurprisingly, their respective behaviours show similarities; that is probably due to the fact that these two concepts are closely linked, both characterising the result of the consumption of food and ultimately both referring to the same combination of sensations, as we observed in 1.2 when discussing Auvray et al.’s (2015) paper *Confusing tastes with flavours*. The former is noticeably more frequent than the latter, indicating perhaps merely a resistance to the idea of reutilizing the same terminology as verb and then as noun within the same phrase. Thus, it is “flavour” that exhibits more variety in usage; for instance, it can be frequently found in the field of the promotion of tourism:

(12) Apart from the ultimate list of travel destinations, international tourists can also *taste the flavor* of India's historical wonders. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In this specific case, the metaphor COUNTRY IS FOOD, which is a specific manifestation of the generic conceptual metaphor EXPERIENCE IS FOOD, allows the hearer to anchor the abstract concept of a country and its atmosphere and attractions to something more concrete. It might be hypothesised that the starting point for this kind of expression is the idea of inviting tourist to “taste the flavour” of a country with regard to its culinary tradition, which can easily be transferred to the concept of “tasting” its tradition in a more general sense, regardless of whether that experience includes the consumption of food. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this idea of an experience having a “flavour” (or a “taste”) has been extended to areas where no link to experiencing food can be found:

(13) *Taste the flavors* of 50's B films, German Expressionism and stop motion effects. (enTenTen15: 2015)

- (14) It is definitely worth reading and, as it is an intense 188-page book, it might be necessary to read it twice, perhaps more slowly, to better *taste the different flavors* and perspectives suggested to the reader. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (15) But too many people *tasted the flavor* of free speech to forget their appetite for a more open society. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (16) The variations and variety of possible poses and themes means you can *taste a new flavour* of yoga each time you come to your mat. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (17) When you've *tasted the sweet taste* of success, you'll want more and more and nothing will stand in your way. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (18) What are the attachments, distractions, and habits that block us from *tasting the taste* of pure life itself? (enTenTen15: 2015)

In the sentences from (13) to (18), there is nothing in the situations described that requires a physical act of gustation; what remains here is the idea of “flavour” and “taste” as something that an individual comes into contact with as a consequence of engaging in some kind of activity, in accordance with the ESSENCE IS TASTE metaphor (Bagli 2021: 101). Hence, these expressions suggest the generic metaphor IDEAS ARE FOOD, which is declined to suit the specific context of each sentence, equating, respectively, films, a book, free speech, yoga, success, and life to food. In accordance with the Invariance Principle enounced above, the cognitive topology is preserved in the process of mapping: the elements of the source domain (a food that has a flavour or a taste, the agent that tastes said food, the act of tasting itself) are traced to corresponding elements in the target domain (an experience or an object that has a certain essence, someone experiencing it, the act of engaging in the experience). In the first two examples, there is a specific object that possesses a specific flavour, influencing the experience we can have of it; this object, which is either a movie or a book, and its flavour, are discovered in either watching or reading it, which is the equivalent of consuming a dish and discovering its flavour. In the other four, both collocates lack any connection to a physical entity to which they can be traced back; free speech and yoga are types of actions, though remarkably different ones, and success and life are even more abstract inasmuch as they are concepts. All are characterised by the fact that, in some ways or another, they offer a flavour or a taste that can be experienced in performing or achieving them. Thus, while in (12) the concept of “flavour” can in part be connected to an actual culinary experience, these examples are completely disjointed from the original meaning, maintaining the core idea of an intrinsic characteristic of

something that a human being can detect through the experience the aforementioned object or activity requires.

3.2. Savo(u)r

“To savour” and “to savor”⁵ are indicated by *WordNet* as the verbs closest to “to taste” in terms of lexical relations. Hence, they qualify as synsets, and not as synonyms: it may be maintained that, while “to taste” can have a comparatively more neutral connotation, merely identifying the act, “to savo(u)r” inevitably implies a certain enjoyment that is being experienced. Naturally, considering the central position of “to taste”, the amount of data it provided was considerably higher than the data for “to savo(u)r”; nonetheless, the same approach was maintained in this case inasmuch as there is still a comparatively substantial quantity of data, distributed throughout different patterns of usage, which were categorised here. In the analysis of “to taste”, since all collocations were taken from the Internet, it was clear that they were produced by speakers of both British English and American English, with no way to distinguish between the two groups. Therefore, in this instance, where the difference is signalled through two different spellings, both have been searched through *Sketch Engine*, and then the data obtained have been combined, in order to maintain the same parameter of no differentiation between the speakers of the two most widespread varieties of the English languages. Nevertheless, it is not surprising, considering the numbers in terms of population, that of the total 12.976 tokens retrieved, 3.742 are collocates of “to savour”, the British English variant, and 9.234 are collocates of “to savor”, the American English variant. It should be mentioned that, when combining the data collected for each of the two verbs, the frequency of each collocation in the first verb and in the second has simply been added to reach the total; in other words, the frequency of “savor food” and the frequency of “savour food” have been added to determine the total frequency of “savo(u)r” food. At the same time, the typicality scores have been kept distinct and will be reported separately. This decision was based on the nature of the figures and the manner in which they are calculated, explained in more detail above; while the frequency is merely the absolute number of instances found in the corpus and is not falsified by a sum, the typicality score is calculated through an algorithm that considers all tokens of both collocates in the whole of the corpus. Hence, it could not have been recalculated after uniting the result for the two verbs without devising a new algorithmic formula considering the entirety

⁵ These two forms represent, respectively, the British English spelling and the American English spelling of the word; from this point forwards they are indicated as savo(u)r when referred to collectively.

of the relevant corpus data, which was not a feasible endeavour in the present study; these considerations thus led to the decision of maintaining the two figures separate where necessary. In any case, it should be remembered that it is the frequency that determines the format of all figures and the order of the collocates in all tables, and that constitutes the focus of the research. Following this necessary premise, *Figure 3.5* displays a general representation of the findings for to “to savo(u)r”.

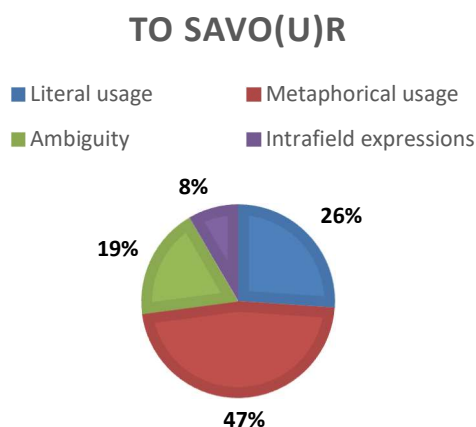


Figure 3.5 Usage of “to savo(u)r”

From the diagram it is at once evident that there is already a significant difference from the diagram of “to taste”: metaphorical usage is more widespread than literal usage. Taking into account how central “to taste” is to this field of perception, it follows that “to savo(u)r”, which is more peripheral and thus less salient in said field, can be more readily applied to other kinds of expressions and is associated with the idea of enjoyment in a general sense more naturally.

Even in this case, there is a portion of the data that is considered to be ambiguous and thus will be examined independently. Additionally, the other feature that is immediately obvious is the addition of a fourth category, “Intrafield expressions”, whose introduction has been deemed necessary after analysing the data and will be discussed further in the dedicated section. All four categories are analysed and discussed separately below, establishing the most frequent collocates for each of them. Lastly, it should be noted that the expressions “savour a bit” and “savour everything” were excluded, since they do not correspond to the parameters of syntactic structure and of semantic clarity that have been set.

3.2.1. Literal Usage

TO SAVO(U)R - LITERAL USAGE

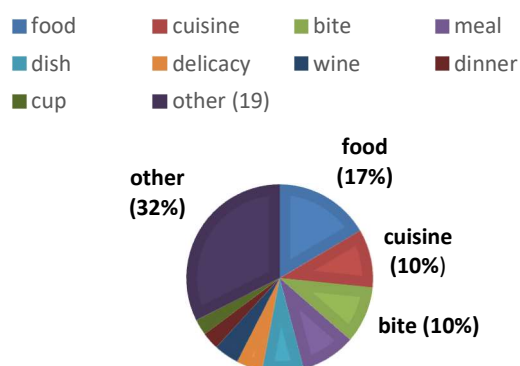


Figure 3.6 Literal usage of "to savo(u)r"

The most frequent collocate is the same one that was found in the "to taste" data: "food", the most generic term possible in the realm of literal expressions. The second one, "cuisine", which also displays higher typicality scores than "food" for both spellings, already signals a different nuance of meaning: it qualifies a certain style of cooking, with an intrinsic implication of a higher level of quality, which is to be properly appreciated, to be, in fact, "savoured". In

general, it can be observed that, while of the nine most frequent collocations for "to taste" many referred to "food" or specific kinds of food or beverages, here the focus is shifted on the experience of eating and drinking, rather than what is eaten or drunk. The remaining nineteen collocations, with lower frequencies, are listed along with the others in the table below.

<i>To Savo(u)r: Literal Usage</i>					
OBJECTS⁶	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE⁷	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. food (US: 379) (UK: 181)	560,00	3.59/2.53	15. coffee (US: 45) (UK: 31)	76,00	3.48/3.03
2. cuisine (US: 221) (UK: 118)	339,00	7.31/6.71	16. variety (US: 47) (UK: 27)	74,00	1.15/0.37
3. bite (US: 287) (UK: 45)	332,00	7.42/4.99	17. tea (US: 40) (UK: 24)	64,00	3.41/2.77
4. meal (US: 230) (UK: 89)	319,00	4.56/3.23	18. glass (US: 38) (UK: 20)	58,00	2.67/1.81
5. dish (US: 113) (UK: 130)	243,00	4.6/4.89	19. sip (US: 43) (UK: 11)	54,00	5.67/4.23

⁶ The distinct frequency values of both spellings, when present, are reported here, while the "frequency" column displays the sum of the two.

⁷ As explained above, the two values reported in this column represent the different typicality scores for each collocation, which have not been combined. Where the collocation was found in only one of the varieties, the slot for the other was left empty.

6. delicacy (US: 73) (UK: 79)	152,00	6.63/7.37	20. chocolate (US: 37) (UK: 12)	49,00	4.49/3.12
7. wine (US: 104) (UK: 43)	147,00	4.8/3.63	21. mouthful (US: 22) (UK: 26)	48,00	5.29/6.44
8. dinner (US: 77) (UK: 23)	100,00	3.72/2.04	22. beer (US: 31) (UK: 17)	48,00	3.22/2.47
9. cup (US: 69) (UK: 25)	94,00	4.06/2.69	23. menu (US: 22) (UK: 21)	43,00	2.27/2.28
10. drink (US: 50) (UK: 44)	94,00	3.5/3.4	24. cocktail (US: 30) (UK: 12)	42,00	4.6/3.62
11. lunch (US: 60) (UK: 21)	81,00	3.26/1.81	25. seafood (US: 27) (UK: 10)	37,00	4.86/3.9
12. selection (US: 45) (UK: 34)	79,00	2.26/1.89	26. recipe	36,00	2.46/ -
13. specialty (US: 40) (UK: 15) speciality (UK: 23)	78,00	5.02/1.2 6.04	27. juice	30,00	3.73/ -
14. breakfast (US: 39) (UK: 37)	76,00	3.23/3.25	28. dessert (US: 21) (UK: 8)	29,00	4.26/3.26
TOTAL	3.382,00				

Table 3.4 Literal usage of “to savo(u)r”

There are obvious symmetries with the “to taste” data; on one hand, there are various examples of terms like “wine”, “chocolate” or “seafood” that refer directly to foods or beverages and are therefore very clearly literal. On the other hand, some other collocates which do not satisfy the same parameters are included, being classified as pragmatic function mappings or metonymies, since they connect entities that share the same frame of experience. The items “cup”, “variety”, “glass”, “menu” and “recipe” have a primarily referential function, inasmuch as they stand in for something else by virtue of association with the entity they substitute, since they belong to the same mental space. They replace more specific terminology, acting as a vehicle concept providing mental access to a target concept, situated within the same domain (Kövecses and Radden 1998 in Evans and Green 2006: 312).

In terms of literal expressions, there are no mentions of specific ingredients, which were found in “to taste” instead; though it is only a hypothesis, we might speculate that while tasting an ingredient, in the sense of merely becoming aware of its presence in a dish, is a common experience, savouring is generally reserved for more elaborated products, rather than for singular ingredients. Another element that buttresses this hypothesis is the importance of the terms “cuisine”, “delicacy”, “special(i)ty”, with comparatively higher frequencies than their counterparts in the “to taste” category.

(19) Choose from 11 nicely furnished rooms with balcony and *savour delicious Romanian specialities and international cuisine*, prepared from farm-fresh locally sourced ingredients. (enTenTen15: 2015)

For instance, in (19) both “specialities” and “cuisine” are direct objects of the verb. The evaluative quality they imply is logically associated with the evaluative quality “to savo(u)r” itself possesses; savouring something implies that the thing savoured, for instance “international cuisine”, deserves to be enjoyed at a higher degree than the idea of the mere consumption of food would suggest. Such enjoyment, as the kind that is suggested by those expressions, is directly linked to the idea of a focus on the specific process of eating or drinking, where every step is made to be relevant; hence, collocates such as “sip”, “bite”, and “mouthful”, all of which were not found in “to taste”. Again, there seems to be an implicit assurance of a higher status, of an experience whose every aspect deserves attention. On the opposite end of the spectrum in terms of approaching the enjoyment of an experience, we can find the four collocates “meal”, “dinner”, “lunch” and “breakfast”, designating not one particular feature of the process but the process itself in its entirety.

(20) *Savour your breakfast*, enjoy the peace, taste properly. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In (20), the nuances of “to savo(u)r” are made explicit in the two imperatives that follow the first one: in order to savour your breakfast, you don’t have to just “enjoy the peace”, or just “taste properly” the food; you need a combination of both. We are reminded, this time explicitly, that savouring is as much about the quality of the activity as it is about the activity itself.

3.2.2. Metaphorical usage

TO SAVO(U)R - METAPHORICAL USAGE

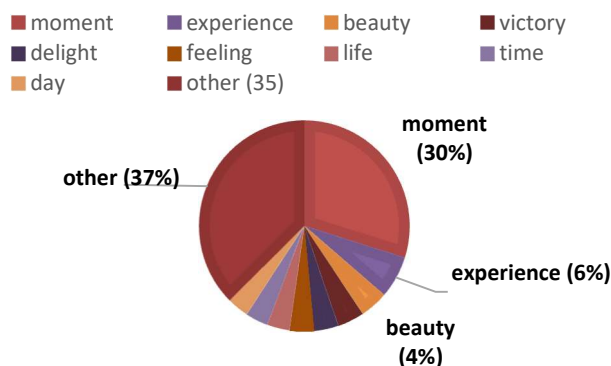


Figure 3.7 Metaphorical usage of "to savo(u)r"

As we already established in Figure 3.5, metaphor is the primary domain where "to savo(u)r" is utilised, occupying almost half of the diagram. Among its nine most frequent collocates, only two, "victory" and "life", also appear among the nine most frequent collocates for "to taste". Of the other seven, only "delight" appears in the data gathered for "to taste" at all. Additionally, "delight" is the only

collocate among these that can occasionally be traced back to activities of eating and drinking, while the others all refer to abstract concepts with no direct link to the activities of eating or drinking. Still, even "delight" is in itself an abstract term; whether the delight described derives from eating or drinking or whether it comes from any other possible source, it is a notion that cannot be attributed to a literal domain.

There is a theme that is clearly predominant in this area, that of time. The noun "time" itself is obviously present, but the concept is also represented by the use of "day" and, most importantly, "moment", which is overwhelmingly the most frequent collocate, almost equalling on its own the sum of the thirty-five collocates in the "other" slot, and more than quadruplicating the number of the second most frequent collocate, "experience". The thirty-five collocations combined under the label "other" are listed along with the more frequent ones in the table below.

<i>To Savo(u)r: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS⁸	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE⁹	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. moment (US: 1.285) (UK: 530)	1.815,00	6.48/5.23	23. freedom (US: 41) (UK: 19)	60,00	2.05/0.98

⁸ see footnote 6.

⁹ See footnote 7.

2. experience (US: 265) (UK: 128)	393,00	1.98/0.94	24. culture (US: 34) (UK: 19)	53,00	1.13/0.31
3. beauty (US: 196) (UK: 68)	264,00	5.14/3.68	25. win (US: 30) (UK: 22)	52,00	2.71/2.35
4. victory (US: 179) (UK: 68)	247,00	4.9/3.56	26. journey (US: 37) (UK: 11)	48,00	2.1/0.39
5. delight (US: 88) (UK: 143)	231,00	5.65/6.58	27. peace (US: 27) (UK: 20)	47,00	1.54/1.14
6. feeling (US: 162) (UK: 64)	226,00	3.73/2.42	28. irony	46,00	5.61/ -
7. life	212,00	1.48/ -	29. detail	46,00	1.2/ -
8. time	212,00	0.36/ -	30. gift	43,00	1.71/ -
9. word (US: 151) (UK: 46)	197,00	2.04/0.33	31. thought (US: 28) (UK: 15)	43,00	1.23/0.36
10. day	190,00	-	32. richness (US: 31) (UK: 11)	42,00	5.01/3.98
11. memory (US: 147) (UK: 42)	189,00	3.75/1.98	33. goodness	36,00	4.77/ -
12. atmosphere (US: 42) (UK: 93)	135,00	2.93/4.14	34. Christ	35,00	2.93/ -
13. pleasures (US: 92) (UK: 40)	132,00	3.81/2.67	35. chance	31,00	0.08/ -
14. joy (US: 79) (UK: 39)	118,00	3.94/2.99	36. essence (US: 21) (UK: 10)	31,00	3.08/2.17
15. sensation (US: 92) (UK: 25)	117,00	5.49/3.81	37. summer	30,00	2.37/ -
16. minute (US: 87) (UK: 29)	116,00	2.55/0.99	38. night	26,00	0.68/ -
17. success (US: 64) (UK: 36)	100,00	1.64/0.83	39. God	26,00	0.32/ -
18. feel (US: 66) (UK: 24)	90,00	4.41/3.07	40. accomplish ment	24,00	3.59/ -

19. second (US: 59) (UK: 17)	76,00	3.61/1.89	41. blessing	24,00	2.6/ -
20. season	70,00	2.44/ -	42. fact	23,00	0.05/ -
21. air (US: 44) (UK: 20)	64,00	2.55/1.46	43. adventure	22,00	2.43/ -
22. warmth (US: 45) (UK: 18)	63,00	5/3.98	44. charm	21,00	4.27/ -
TOTAL					
6.079,00					

Table 3.5 Metaphorical usage of “to savo(u)r”

It was already evident in the previous category that associating something with the action of savouring implies a positive evaluation of the object that is being savoured; since the embodied experience of savouring is generally associated in our minds with a feeling of satisfaction, the non-embodied, abstract experience of savouring something is linked to satisfaction as well, through the ENJOYING IS SAVOURING metaphorical mapping. While with the action of tasting, though the predominant association is with an idea of gratification, the mental connection with displeasure is validated by our physical experience, savouring appears to be necessarily bound to an idea of something enjoyable. Hence, when the action of savouring is conceptually mapped onto other domains of experience, its inherently positive connotations are mapped onto them as well. Thus, with one possible exception discussed below, in this table we only see elements that, though pertaining to a variety of fields, are all regarded either in a positive light, or can easily assume positive connotations. Some of them are closely related, suggesting a mapping from a domain of literal experience composed of various elements to a domain of non-literal experience composed of as many elements.

One example of this is the concept of time, whose relevance in this category was already detected: since you can literally savour “cuisine” or a whole “meal”, but also a particular food such as “chocolate”, or a specific detail such as a “mouthful”, you can also savour “time” itself or the whole of a generic “season” and of “summer”, particular stretches of time such as “day” or “night”, or specific details such as “minute” or “second”. Therefore, the structure of the source domain, where “to savo(u)r” is regularly associated with elements which can be described as having different ‘sizes’ within that domain, is transferred onto the target domain that is the “time” frame, where it is similarly associated with elements of different ‘sizes’ contained within our system of knowledge of time, and of how it can be divided in discrete

areas of a pre-established length. Since the passing of time is quantified with different units of measurement, when the action of “savouring” is introduced in its frame, it can be readily applied to all possible measurements. On one hand, in these instances the collocates in themselves have more neutral connotations, and it is the combination of noun and verb that suggests an element of positivity. On the other hand, many other collocates are already identifiable as referring to something enjoyable: experiences such as “victory”, “success” or “accomplishment” undoubtedly carry positive connotations on their own, and the pairing with “to savour” serves to highlight those connotations. Once again, there are parallels between “to taste” and “to savour”, and there are differences: in the mapping from the domain of gustation to the domain of experience, both verbs are paired with “victory” and “success”, but it is only “to taste” that can also be associated with the negative idea of failure, as we saw in the expression “taste the bitterness of failure”. Two other general areas that include some of these collocates are the domain of experience of feelings and sensations and the domain of religious experience, e.g., “Christ”, “God”, and “blessing”. In the case of the former, some are already referring to positive sensations such as “joy” or “goodness”, and some, “feeling”, “sensations” and “feel”, are more neutral, and it is once again the pairing with “to savour” that introduces positivity in the frame in question.

The possible exception mentioned above is one collocate that is, at least to a certain extent, somewhat more negative as a concept in itself: “irony”. As a noun, it can be associated with adjectives such as “bitter” or “cruel”, and it is described as “an outcome cruelly, humorously, or strangely at odds with assumptions or expectations” (OED 2020), which is a definition that fits accurately into the situation of the following example:

(21) I've saved the rejection letter, *savoring the irony*, or non-irony rather, of the rejection
(enTenTen15: 2015)

Since we can safely assume that, regardless of the speaker’s application or request, the expectation was not to be rejected, the irony stems from the unforeseen rejection which, being a negative experience, is not in itself to be savoured. Nevertheless, this example does not contradict what was previously stated, inasmuch as the juxtaposition of “to savour” and “irony”, coupled with the fact that this clearly happened in the past, suggests a change of attitude toward the rejection. With time, the negativity associated with the experience has been somehow tempered by subsequent events, allowing the speaker to appreciate the irony in a now more positive light, and thus to savour it.

A final consideration concerns the term “word”, which has been placed into this category, even though it might be said that it differs from the other collocates because it is easy to imagine its physical manifestation. Moreover, it can be thought of as part of a frame of experience that also contains the term “page”, which is instead listed among the intrafield expressions below (a choice that will be explained in 3.2.3). Nonetheless, the reason for this classification of “word” is that it is deemed to be part of a larger ‘packet’ of knowledge than the one of reading that contains the “page” term. While a word can be apprehended through the senses by being read or heard, it can also be thought, as a “memory” or, evidently, a “thought”, and it can be spoken. The abstract nature of “word” means that it is not necessarily experienced through the senses; when we are savouring a word, the source of our enjoyment is the meaning that said word conveys, which can be accessed in a manner that is entirely independent from the perceptual experience of a possible physical manifestation of said word.

It is important to reiterate that metaphors are mechanisms that allow speakers to think about one thing in terms of another, through mappings that associate elements from a source domain of bodily experience, which in this case is the act of eating or drinking, to different target domains, which in this case are as varied as the areas where human beings believe they can find enjoyment. This concept of a necessary transfer from one domain to another is fundamental to understand the next category that has been introduced for this verb.

3.2.3. Intrafield expressions

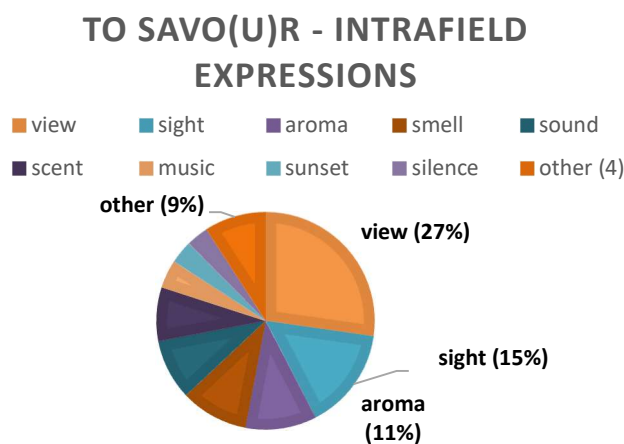


Figure 3.8 Intrafield expressions in “to savo(u)r”

All of the expressions included in this section could customarily be defined by using the denomination of ‘synaesthetic metaphors’ which is widespread in the field of studies of perceptual language. A synaesthetic metaphor is defined as “the syntactic relation between elements semantically incompatible, denoting sensations from different sensorial spheres.” (Erzsébet

1974 in Winter 2019: 107), where “a perceptual experience related to one sense is described through lexical means typically associated with a different sense” (Strik Lievers 2015 in Winter 2019: 108). Hence, borrowing its terminology from the phenomenon of synaesthesia observed

in the neurosciences and in psychology, the notion of synaesthetic metaphors posits a metaphorical mapping between distinct sensory modalities which creates novel associations. In his paper “Synaesthetic metaphors are neither synaesthetic nor metaphorical”, Winter (2019) assesses the appropriateness of this expression and concludes, as the title plainly suggests, that it is in fact inadequate. Firstly, he remarks that the linguistic phenomenon classified as synaesthesia, which is quite common, has very little to do with the perceptual phenomenon of synaesthesia, which, according to various studies, is quite rare and experienced by a small part of the population. Most importantly, the most common mappings in the case of the former phenomenon do not correspond to the most common mappings for the latter. Hence, the first component of this definition, ‘synaesthetic’, is used improperly. Moreover, even the second one is not adequate in order to describe these linguistic phenomena. Considering this kind of expression as metaphorical necessarily implies that there has been a transfer from one domain to another, which in turn implies the existence of separate categorical domains, the five senses. In 1.2, it was explained that Winter criticises this idea of the five senses model, maintaining that the level of integration and collaboration among the senses in the act of perception does not justify this kind of separation. Calling the expression “sweet fragrance” a synaesthetic metaphor with a taste to smell mapping implicitly assumes the existence of two distinct senses and the exclusive association of “sweet” to the sense of taste, whereas Winter offers an alternative interpretation of this adjective as a word that “denotes a whole range of perceptual experiences, including both taste and smell, which are neurologically and behaviourally integrated” (Winter 2019: 116). “Sweet” is seen as a supramodal adjective, whose association with gustatory sensation may be more salient and thus intuitively more accessible to speakers; at the same time, there is an olfactory association that, though less prototypically activated within our minds, still remains a part of its lexical representation. Hence, this expression cannot be analysed as metaphorical, inasmuch as there are no separate domains involved, between which the necessary conceptual mapping would have the possibility of taking place.

Furthermore, the idea of synaesthetic metaphors highlights the relevance of the perceptual nature of the words forming the expression, while there actually might be a different nuance of meaning at play in these associations. Using examples such as “loud colour”, Winter suggests that the relevant dimension of “loud” here is its association with displeasure; the instinctive correlation between a loud noise and the feeling of annoyance is unthinkingly applied to this expression, which immediately conveys the idea of a colour that is not pleasant to look at. Thus,

it is the evaluative dimension of the adjective’s connotation that explains why it is used here; it evokes a certain sentiment, rather than a different perceptual modality. In conclusion, the notion of synaesthetic metaphor can be discarded entirely, replacing it with a re-evaluation of the lexical representation of the words involved that places more significance on the one hand on their supramodality and on the level of integration among some of the traditionally categorised five senses, and on the other hand on their evaluative meaning. To substitute the label “synaesthetic metaphor”, the term “intrafield metaphor” (Majid et al 2019: 2) has been suggested; however, since we demonstrated that their classification as metaphorical expression has been refused together with the classification as synaesthesias, the less controversial definition of “intrafield expressions” is proposed here.

It should be noted that Winter (2019) analysed “adjective + noun” pairings and based his conclusions on their behaviour and the manner in which they associate and interact. However, the general concepts that have been delineated in the previous paragraph are deemed to be relevant even in the context of the “verb + noun” constructions analysed here and will thus be utilised to argue in favour of the decision to place the following collocates in this alternative category.

<i>To Savo(u)r: Intrafield expressions</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>¹⁰	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>¹¹	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. view (US: 167) (UK: 130)	297,00	2.61/2.26	8. sunset (US: 29) (UK: 8)	37,00	4.96/3.59
2. sight (US: 99) (UK: 66)	165,00	4.27/3.76	9. silence (US: 23) (UK: 13)	36,00	3.29/2.63
3. aroma (US: 87) (UK: 28)	115,00	6.81/5.76	10. page	29,00	0.22/ -
4. smell (US: 80) (UK: 29)	109,00	5.52/4.29	11. breeze	26,00	4.42/ -
5. sound (US: 64) (UK: 34)	98,00	2.41/1.53	12. scenery	22,00	4.6/ -
6. scent (US: 66) (UK: 21)	87,00	5.67/4.35	13. color	22,00	1.13/ -

¹⁰ see footnote 6.

¹¹ see footnote 7.

7. music	46,00	1.2/ -			
TOTAL					
	1.089,00				

Table 3.6 Intrafield expressions in “to savo(u)r”

All of these expressions have one characteristic in common: on the surface, they draw a connection between different perceptual areas, between the sense of taste and one of the other four senses. Thus, they can be divided on the basis of the sense that constitutes what we will refer to for the moment as the target domain (which, in the conventional formulation of the mappings, is the second element) in order to make the following division clearer:

- “savo(u)r the view”, “savo(u)r the sight”, “savo(u)r the sunset”, “savor the page” “savor the scenery” and “savor the color” all appear to exploit a taste-to-sight mapping.
- “savo(u)r the aroma”, “savo(u)r the smell” and “savo(u)r the scent” appear to exploit a taste-to-smell mapping.
- “savo(u)r the sound”, “savor the music” and “savo(u)r the silence” appear to exploit a taste-to-hearing mapping.
- “savor the breeze” appears to exploit a taste-to-touch mapping.

Consequently, within the more traditional theory presented above with regard to “adjective + noun” pairings, these “verb + noun” pairing would be considered as synaesthetic metaphors too, since in all of them the first element is a verb which can be primarily associated with the sense of taste, and the second element refers to an object or an entity customarily conceptualised as being perceived primarily with, respectively, the sense of either sight, smell, hearing, or touch. Nevertheless, the alternative explanation Winter introduced allows for the grouping of all of these expression within a different class. Previously, in the discussion of the verb “to savo(u)r”, the dimension of a positive evaluation of its object in its lexical representation has been highlighted both for literal expressions and for metaphorical ones. In this instance, we propose that it is in fact this evaluative dimension that becomes the central meaning, causing the speaker to select this expression inasmuch as it involves “the mapping of evaluative attributes rather than mappings of perceptual content” (Winter 2019: 107). Provided that, in the specific case of the expressions that associate taste and smell, such as “savour the aroma”, there is also an element of partial overlap of the perceptual dimension itself, we argue that all of these collocations are uttered with the primary intention of suggesting a sensation of pleasure or satisfaction as the most salient aspect of the experience that is being recounted. Hence, there is

no conceptual mapping between clearly delineated areas of perceptual experience, but rather the suggestion of an implicitly meant (and generally implicitly understood) judgement on the quality of the experience itself; thus, the experience remains primarily anchored within the experiential possibilities of one domain, designated by the object of the collocation. All of these examples depict experiences that are still exclusively rooted within the domain of perception, rendering the identification of a source domain and a target domain impossible:

(22) You can also go on a cruise and *savor the magnificent views*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(23) They also *savor music* that isn't mainstream USA -- which opens the doors to even broader musical experiences. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(24) Unravel the mysteries of nature by wandering through plantations, *savouring the aroma* of wild ambience, and listening to the melodious chirping of birds. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(25) *Savor the panoramic views and award-winning wines* from Ponzi's stunning contemporary new winery and tasting room following a tour of their state-of-the-art production facility. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(26) But rather we *savour the sound* of the wind through the alpine tussock, *the mood* of the mystical mossy forest *and the taste* of that last m&m in our trailmix bag! (enTenTen15: 2015)

From (22) to (24), “to savo(u)r” is used in the manner we suggested above, with “views”, “music” and “aroma”, all clearly elements you cannot experience by directly tasting them. Interestingly, both (22) and (24) appear to be linked to the topic of tourism; they are utilised to suggest the quality of the experience that is being promoted without directly stating it, but rather including it in the sentence as a matter of fact. In (25) and (26), on the other hand, there is more than one object of “to savo(u)r”, with a combination that creates a “zeugma”, the figure of speech where a word (usually a verb or an adjective) applies to nouns that refer to concepts belonging to different semantic areas, which are combined in that specific sentence through the use of said word. Therefore, tourists can savour the view, in the sense of enjoying it by looking at it, but at the same time they can literally savour the wine, in the sense of enjoying it by consuming it; they can savour the sound, in the sense of enjoying it by listening to it, but they can also metaphorically savour the mood, in the sense of enjoying it by experiencing it, and literally savour their last m&m, in the sense of enjoying it by consuming it. In these two last sentences, once again taken from the context of the promotion of tourism, all three of the categories mentioned so far (literal, metaphorical, intrafield expression) are interwoven in the

same “verb + objects” construction, suggesting an experience that will be satisfactory on different levels, both within the perceptual realm, and outside of the perceptual realm.

One paragraph should be dedicated to explaining the line of reasoning that led to the inclusion of “page” in this category, related to the discussion of “word” in the metaphorical section. The term “page” could be situated in a frame that also comprises “word” and considered as a vehicle for the thought and reflections standing behind it; in that sense it should be more properly classified as a metaphor, inasmuch as “page” would be a metonymical vehicle used to point to the metaphorical concept of thought. Obviously, it has already been made abundantly clear that this field of study is generally characterised by discussions and debates about a variety of aspects, of which this is only one small example. Nevertheless, in this dissertation a choice has been made with regard to this example to focus on the role that two different aspects of perception play in the expression, and thus an interpretation coherent with this approach has been offered, categorizing the expression among others where there is a similar interplay of perceptual domains. While we have previously established that a word can be conceived of without having to necessarily be apprehended through one of the senses, a page is a physical object that can only be absorbed through the mediating role of one of the senses – most commonly sight, though in this hypothesis a possible interpretation where a page can be savoured even when it is being read to you, which would make the intervening sense hearing, is allowed. The collocation “to savor a page” necessarily implies the presence of a physical object, with whom the experiencer can only interact thanks to faculties linked to other perceptual areas, and thus it is here considered to be an intrafield expression.

3.2.4. Ambiguity

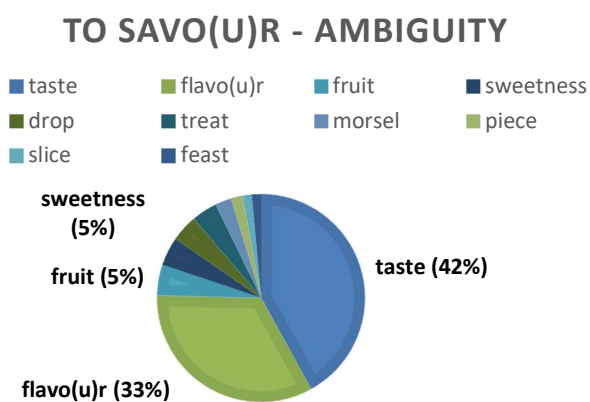


Figure 3.9 Ambiguity in the usage of “to savo(u)r”

As previously maintained, the division of all collocates in one of the categories above is not always a straightforward process; therefore, in this section I list all of the terms that exhibit an ambiguity that is considered as inherent to the lexical representation of the word itself. These ten terms can literally belong to the category of either

food or drink, but they can also be intended in a purely metaphorical acceptance, independent from the literal one. The collocates “taste”, “flavo(u)r” and “sweetness” are all characteristics of our experience of food, but they can also be applied to radically different experiences; “fruit”, as we already established, is either the product we consume, or the result of dedication. The items “drop”, “piece” and “slice” are ways to quantify food, but they can also be transferred to other domains in order to metaphorically quantify other entities; similarly, “treat” and “feast” are primarily associated with food, but they can be readily applied to other domains of experience.

<i>To Savo(u)r: Ambiguity</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u> ¹²	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u> ¹³	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. taste (US: 704) (UK: 314)	1.018,00	7.2/6.12	6. treat (US: 70) (UK: 26)	96,00	4.87/3.61
2. flavor (US: 594) (UK: 9) flavour (UK: 208)	811,00	8/2.14 7.68	7. morsel (US: 41) (UK: 21)	62,00	6.35/6.44
3. fruit (US: 78) (UK: 39)	117,00	3.45/2.51	8. piece	44,00	0.97/ -
4. sweetness (US: 88) (UK: 19)	107,00	7.07/5.59	9. slice (US: 22) (UK: 13)	35,00	3.83/3.34
5. drop (US: 73) (UK: 29)	102,00	4.08/2.85	10. feast (US: 25) (UK: 9)	34,00	3.92/2.69
TOTAL	2.426,00				

Table 3.7 Ambiguity in the usage “to savo(u)r”

Considering that the literal usage has already been explained in the paragraph above, and it is generally more easily predictable, below the focus is on examples for each of the collocates, where they are used in a metaphorical acceptance:

(27) A family-owned Los Gigantes estate agents are really *savouring the sweet taste* of success after being praised at an international travel show (enTenTen15: 2015)

¹² see footnote 6.

¹³ see footnote 7.

- (28) I've been *savoring the last few drops* of summer and our time has been filled with [...] stuff of real life. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (29) The art enthusiasts can stroll along the stalls and *savour the greatest visual treat*. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (30) In the seven years since I stumbled across No Country For Old Men in an airport bookstore, I've *savored every morsel* of his writing, including his ten novels, two plays, and one screenplay (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (31) [...] "Visiting Maracanã is a must not only for fans of football, but for general tourists too who want to *savour a slice* of the Brazilian life." (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (32) Admire colonial architecture in Dalian; *savor a cultural feast* of museums and art galleries in Seoul, South Korea's vivacious capital city [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

From (27) to (32), the terms in italics are used metaphorically. In (27) there is a metaphorical mapping of various characteristics of food: it can be savoured, it has a taste, and its taste can be sweet (and thus enjoyable). Hence, if we posit the metaphor SUCCESS IS SWEET (Bagli 2021: 118), with success conceptualised as a kind of food, it earns these characteristics too: it can be savoured, it has a taste, and its taste can be sweet (and thus enjoyable). The evaluative aspect of both the verb “to savour” and the adjective “sweet” strengthens the already positive concept of success. In (28), the entity that is being experienced is the summer, which was already listed among the metaphorical terms; here however, the direct object of the expression is “the last few drops”, introducing a unit of measurement that is not conventionally associated with time. Once again, different aspects are mapped onto a metaphorical domain, with the metaphor SUMMER IS BEVERAGE; just like an expert would savour each drop of wine in order to fully appreciate it, so does the speaker savour each drop of summer, immediately transferring the idea of the attention required for something like wine-tasting to another realm of experience that thus becomes in some way “summer-tasting”. In (29), there is a ART IS GOOD FOOD metaphor; the idea of a treat, something delightful that is generally food- or drink-related, is coupled with the adjective “visual”, forming in this instance an “adjective + noun” intrafield expression that suggests a similar level of enjoyment that can be attained through your eyes. While for intrafield expressions it has generally been found that it is an adjective that is related to the perception of taste that is transferred along with its evaluative connotations to another perceptual experience, as in “sweet fragrance”, here the reverse happens: it is the adjective that identifies the

experience as a sight-related one, while it is the noun that is mapped unto this experience, conferring on it its positive connotations.

In (30), the topic of the sentence is the activity of reading, but here, instead of the words or the page, the object is “every morsel of his writing”, introducing the BOOK IS FOOD metaphor. Once again, as in “drops of summer”, the usage of a term that evokes a specific moment rather than the whole process is effective in conveying an even stronger idea of the care that this activity deserves and the pleasure that is to be gained from executing it with such care. Here the metaphor clearly involves the mappings of multiple distinct elements, with the frame of an individual eating and paying attention to every morsel of a meal being mapped unto the frame of an individual reading and enjoying every word of the whole author’s output, as the book becomes a meal, the words become morsels and the reader becomes a consumer of food (or even a gourmet, if we want to underline the idea that this is an experience of a certain level of quality). In (31), the usage of “slice” creates the LIFE IS CAKE metaphor and draws a conceptual mapping, which allows the speaker to convey succinctly a specific concept that would not be easily expressed in any other way. Just as a slice of cake represent only a part of the whole, that is nonetheless representative of the whole, so does “a slice of the Brazilian life” represents just a limited part of the experience of living in Brazil, and yet it exemplifies its totality. Using “slice” implicitly assures the reader of the fact that since a slice of a cake is enough to relish the whole of the cake, then a slice of “Brazilian life” is enough to relish the whole experience of living in the country. In (32), the noun “feast” is characterised as cultural, presupposing a CULTURE IS FEAST metaphor. There is a parallel with the use of “visual treat” in (29), inasmuch as in both cases, it is the noun that is generally related to the activity of eating or drinking, with positive connotations, and it is the adjective that is used to decontextualize the noun from the activity of eating and drinking and place it within an area where these positive connotations are transferred. Here in the field of the promotion of tourism, the mapping involves, as usual, a tourist that becomes a consumer of food, and by visiting them consumes the museums and art galleries, which are supposed to produce on a tourist the effect that a literal feast would produce on someone participating in it.

In conclusion, it might be maintained that even among these examples the predominant feature of “to savo(u)r” is the idea of enjoyment that can be derived from an extremely varied range of experiences, be it financial success, being on vacation, reading or tourism. The terms here combined with “to savo(u)r” have, as we noticed, the advantage of conveying effectively

and briefly nuances of the experience discussed that mirror nuances of the literal experience they evoke, showing once again how metaphors systematically exploit familiar and communal experiences to facilitate and enrich communication among speakers which can draw on a communal set of references.

3.3. Other verbs

In this section, the focus in the approach to the analysis of the verbs is slightly shifted. I decided that, in the case of the two previous verbs, both the quantity and the variety of the data warranted a more comprehensive discussion. The following verbs should instead be analysed in a less extensive manner, with an emphasis on the metaphorical data. In other words, while both “to taste” and “to savour” had both a high number of instances and a significant degree of variation in usage, the following verbs lack one if not both of these characteristics. It should also be noted that four verbs originally considered have been discarded after an evaluation of the data obtained: “to edulcorate”, “to exacerbate”, “to embitter” and “to salt”. The first verb has now mostly fallen into disuse, and no instances of it were found in the corpus; the second and the third one are still in use, but they appear to lack direct references to physical experiences, being exclusively utilised in metaphorical settings to convey the idea of something whose figurative bitterness is strengthened with negative effects. Thus, though their etymology can be traced back to words that are directly related to gustation (the Latin adjective “acerbus” and the English adjective “bitter”, respectively, OED 2020), the meaning of the verbs themselves remains rooted in metaphorical settings and is not transferred from one domain to another. This phenomenon is sometimes defined as conventional or dead metaphors; their original embodied significance has become too opaque to be recognised by a majority of native speakers, and they are now exclusively used in their metaphorical acceptance (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Considering this characteristic, which fundamentally distinguishes them from the other verbs discussed here and the heterogeneity they show in usage, these verbs have been excluded from the present analysis. Finally, the fourth verb, “to salt”, is primarily used in a literal sense, with only four collocates being metaphorical: “wound”, “earth”, “ground”, and “soil”. In the first case, the experience evoked is one of physical contact between salt and a wound, which immediately evokes the idea of pain; in the other three cases, the literal practice that serves as the basis for the mapping is the ritual of spreading salt on either the earth, the ground or the soil as a means to prevent the growth of anything. Therefore, the physical experiences that fulfil the role of source domain in these mappings are not linked to the role of

salt as a relevant ingredient in the process of gustation, where it possesses mostly positive connotations as an enhancer of flavour (Bagli 2021: 82), but to its use in other contexts, where it is instead definitely negative. Hence, since the experience of the ingredient of salt and its effect in the context of taste perception are not significant elements in these metaphorical mappings, these have been excluded from the present analysis of the language of perception and its metaphorical application in different domains. In conclusion, the verbs that will be considered are the following: “to spice up”, “to sweeten”, “to pepper”, “to sour”, “to flavo(u)r” and “to season”.

3.3.1. Spice up

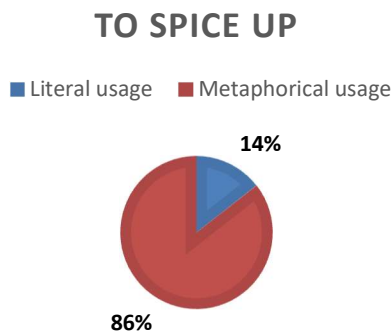


Figure 3.10 Usage of “to spice up”

The verb ‘spice up’ is the first example of source-based language, which is used to “identify a perceptual quality indirectly via referring to its source” (Winter 2019: 23). In the case of adjectives, this refers to the existence of terms such as “spicy”, which identifies the experience of a pungent taste in a dish by deriving new terminology from the noun “spice”. This process relies on a shared common ground of experience, which allows speakers to access the sensation associated with it. This linguistic phenomenon relates to the degree of ineffability a certain area of experience has in a language; when the linguistic material is not sufficient to discuss details of said experience, the creation of source-based language contributes to their conveyability (see 2.1), compensating for the dearth of dedicated lexicon. Adjectives such as “spicy” can be contrasted with adjectives such as “sweet” or “sour”, which do not refer directly to the source of the sensation, but to the quality of the sensation itself. The same argument can be applied to the verbs discussed here: while “to spice up” refers directly to a concrete entity, “to sweeten” and “to sour” draw on a lexically-coded sensation. Interestingly, it has been proposed that source-based language could be considered as metonymical, defined by a SOURCE FOR EFFECT relation, inasmuch as the perceptual quality is defined by referring to its source, which would be, in this view, the vehicle that has a relation of contiguity with the target concept and provides access to it (Winter 2019).

In this particular instance, the subject of the analysis is the phrasal verb “to spice up”, rather than the verb “to spice”; the latter is exclusively found in literal acceptations, often as the

participle functioning as an adjective for a noun, e.g., in “spiced wine” or “spiced chicken”. The former, instead, displays different nuances of meaning, shown in *Figure 3.10*, distributed throughout a total of 2.976 collocations, among which 430 are classified as literal. The phrasal verb partially maintains the initial literal meaning of the verb, although it is clearly in the minority. When the verb is meant literally, in the sense of adding some kind of spices to an aliment to render its flavour less insipid, it is most often paired with collocates such as “meal”, “food”, or “salad”. There are some examples of metonymy too: “recipe” was already present in the dataset for “to taste”, but there are also “cooking”, “kitchen”, and “table”, all referring to a vehicle concept that allows the hearer to access the target concept, with whom the first one is in a relationship of contiguity. While “cooking” describes the process of preparing food, and thus “to spice up your cooking” means to add some ingredients to make the result of this activity more appetizing, “kitchen” and “table” refer to two physical spaces, where the processes of cooking and eating, respectively, take place, and exploit a PLACE FOR EVENT metonymy (Evans and Green 2006: 313).

When it is instead used metaphorically, “to spice up” fundamentally means to increase the interest or excitement of something, by figuratively adding a new element to it. The ideas from the source domain are of a food that is being consumed, a spice that is introduced to make said food more appealing, someone that adds the spice, and someone who enjoys the results in the addition (though the two are often in reality the same subject). These are mapped unto a target domain where they correspond, respectively, to an entity that is being experienced or devised, an ulterior element that is meant to modify the experience or the process of creation through its inclusion, someone that is responsible for this action, and someone appreciating its results. All of these mappings create a generic ADDING EXCITEMENT IS SPICING UP metaphor, expanded upon in the following collocates in *Table 3.8* to fit each situation.

<i>To Spice up: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. life	679,00	10.27	22. season	32,00	6.88
2. relationship	107,00	8.46	23. action	32,00	6.85
3. game	102,00	7.57	24. workout	31,00	7.55
4. day	96,00	6.91	25. mix	31,00	7.5
5. event	95,00	8.17	26. scene	31,00	7.15
6. night	92,00	7.76	27. lesson	30,00	7.27

7. look	88,00	8.78	28. time	27,00	4.6
8. experience	80,00	7.99	29. decor	26,00	7.38
9. marriage	79,00	8.82	30. video	26,00	6.87
10. routine	68,00	8.41	31. home	25,00	5.94
11. outfit	67,00	8.63	32. class	24,00	6.52
12. party	63,00	8.13	33. design	23,00	6.75
13. wardrobe	61,00	8.53	34. website	23,00	5.98
14. presentation	51,00	8.09	35. image	23,00	5.65
15. room	49,00	6.69	36. mood	22,00	6.92
16. story	49,00	6.55	37. weekend	22,00	6.55
17. evening	47,00	7.84	38. site	22,00	5.61
18. show	37,00	7.18	39. gameplay	21,00	7.09
19. page	36,00	6.35	40. bedroom	21,00	7.01
20. space	34,00	5.07	41. area	21,00	5.14
21. holiday	32,00	7.58	42. track	21,00	6.57
TOTAL					
	2.546,00				

Table 3.8 Metaphorical usage of “to spice up”

As I mentioned before, just as “bland food” can be enlivened by including a spice, so can “bland experience” be enlivened by including something novel. In broad terms, these collocates can be divided into a first group that focuses on a process, which can be an experience or an activity, and a second group that qualifies the results or consequences of a process, which are to some extent tangible. Unsurprisingly, the most frequent and also most typical collocate, substantially more present than the second one, corresponds to the most generic experience one could think of: “life” itself. Some of the other, less frequent collocates, on the other hand, are less generic, defining more specific events or processes that need the introduction of something foreign.

(33) Here are a few activities that you could try to *spice up your life* and get out of your comfort zone. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(34) Whatever the case, *spice up your old routine* by instituting a new kind of family game night, one that [...] does anything but put a damper on your evening. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(35) Use humour and mystery to *spice up the stories*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(36) *Spicing up traditional workouts* may be just what your training needs to take your racing to the next level. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(37) This could be beneficial particularly for new teachers or even veterans interested in *spicing up their lessons*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(38) In order to *spice up the time* even more before the wedding, attempts are made to bring a second couple together: Benedick and Beatrice [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

These collocates belong to the first group established above. In (33), life is the entity that needs to be modified in some way to improve it, and the new elements corresponding to the role of spice are the “few activities” mentioned. As we stated before, the fundamental idea behind “spicing up” something is that there is a conventional or habitual element within them that is altered. Clearly, the suggestion of the necessity of initiating this action implies a judgement of such an experience as too ‘bland’ (which as an adjective can mean both, literally, “insipid”, and, figuratively, “boring”). This implication of a habitual element that is somehow perceived negatively is made explicit through the term “routine” used in (34), coupled with the “old” – “new” opposition. In (35), “humour and mystery” constitute the spice that is added, with the role of cook being mapped onto the figure of the writer, while the reader is the consumer. The specific element that acts as a spice does not need to be always made explicit: in (36), the idea of “spicing up” and the context of “workouts” are enough to deduce that this is an invitation to reshape them by adding new exercises. The same mechanism of association works in (37). If the verb “to spice up” is used and a specific context is established, there is no need to identify all elements of the target domain that had a role in the mappings of the metaphor. Indeed, the focus is not on the element that will be introduced but rather on the effect that said element will have on the whole experience. In (38), time is to be interpreted metonymically, as the experience the characters of Shakespeare’s play *Much Ado About Nothing* (whose plot is the topic of this sentence) will have in the period of time preceding the wedding, with the “attempts” being the spice meant to deliver the required excitement. In the previous paragraph I maintained that the person literally adding the spice and the person enjoying such addition can often correspond. That also applies to metaphorical situations like the ones described as “your life”, “your routine”, “workout”, and “time”, where the person introducing the new element and the person benefitting from the introduction are one and the same (or the same group, in (38)). At the same time, with “stories” or “lessons” the frame that these two terms evoke requires the

presence of someone on the receiving end of the activity; hence, here two distinct entities, one introducing the spice and one enjoying the effects of the introduction, can be individuated.

The second group is the one where the collocates refer to more concrete entities, definable as the results of some effort or activity:

- (39) *Spice up your home* with 12 stunning design tips. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (40) There is a variety of furniture items that can *spice up your outdoor area* including tables, chairs, benches and garden umbrellas etc. [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (41) She *spiced up our lives* all those years ago and now you can *spice up your wardrobe* with some bargains from the Victoria Beckham sample sale. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (42) An easy way to *spice up an image* without making it distracting again is to use Photoshop's "Render Clouds" feature. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (43) Add a PowerPoint into your project, and *spice up your presentation* with panoramas, charts, and videos. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In the first two examples, “home” and “area” are the physical spaces that will be “spiced up”, the concrete manifestations of the object that needs to be changed. It might be maintained that, in both source domain and target domain, there is to some extent an element that is tangible. Nonetheless, as a result of this metaphorical mapping the less immediate and less experiential frame of interior design is accessed through the more immediate frame of spicing a dish. In (41) there is still a target source that is tangible, “wardrobe”, which, together with “outfit”, signals a distinct preoccupation with the idea of visual representation. In this sentence, “spice up” is applied to both “our lives” and “wardrobe”, and its use is motivated by the designer’s past as a member of the musical group *Spice Girls*. Consequently, knowledge of the cultural background provides an ulterior layer of meaning, which is nevertheless not necessary inasmuch as the linguistic expressions in themselves are easily accessible to all native speakers. The last two examples, “image” and “presentation”, together with the other collocates “page”, “design” and “website”, are linked to concepts that are not strictly tangible, but are still manifest and can be apprehended through the senses, since they exist on the Web.

Evidently, all of the elements in this second group contain a visual element; additionally, two other collocates, “track” and “mix” (when intended as musical mix) imply an auditory element. Nonetheless, unlike the expressions found in “to savour”, they were not categorised as intrafield expressions, where a perceptual experience that is customarily apprehended

through and associated with one of the senses is lexicalized through linguistic means that are primarily associated with another sense. Two different image schemas are utilized: in the case of “to savour” there is a direct juxtaposition of two perceptual spheres, where the act of, for example, “savouring music” evokes a gustatory experience conceived as a way to appreciate music. Here there is a metaphorical representation, devised thanks to the entrenched experience and effect of the act of spicing food, of a process that will lead to a particular result, which will then be apprehended through a sense that is not that of taste. The external object in question has been figuratively endowed with a taste, through the ESSENCE IS TASTE metaphor, and thus its taste can be modified. Therefore, there is no direct interaction of perceptual modalities that would justify the categorization of these phrases as intrafield expressions. However, behind the metaphor that motivates them there is an idea of the object of the verb as something that can be experienced through the sense of taste. Thus, it might be maintained that once these objects have been “spiced up”, they will be savoured by someone. In conclusion, these metaphors suggest an ulterior step that could be classified as intrafield, but they do not classify as intrafield.

3.3.2. Sweeten

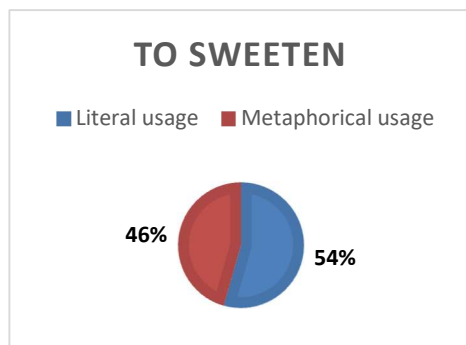


Figure 3.11 Usage of “to sweeten”

As already observed, “to sweeten” is not source-base language inasmuch as it does not derive from a specific entity that causes the effect the verb is depicting. It is instead linked to one of the few English adjectives that describe one of the basic gustatory sensations, alongside “sour”, “bitter”, “salty”, and “umami”. In total, 6.278 tokens of the verb have been retrieved, among which 3.417 are literal. Its usage is almost evenly

distributed between metaphorical and literal; in the case of the latter, the most frequent collocates are “beverage”, “drink”, “milk” and “tea”, showing that the verb is linked more frequently to beverages than to foods. There are also examples of metonymy, with “cup” and “recipe” used to refer to their content and their result, respectively. Undoubtedly, in the connotation of “to sweeten” there is an emotional response that is fully embodied and that is based on the empirical reality of the fact that sweetening something is generally an action aimed at changing its flavour to make it more pleasing. When used in a metaphorical sense, “to sweeten” maintains the embodied idea of improving the quality and thus the experience of something by means of adding another element; while in “to spice up” this image schema led

to the idea of excitement, here there is an idea of ‘palatableness’, of increased pleasantness, conveyed through a MAKING MORE PLEASANT IS SWEETENING conceptual metaphor. This idea of prompting an improvement does not necessarily imply that there is something inherently negative in the object of the verb. On the contrary, sweetening means causing a change of state that may well be from already positive to more positive. The characteristics of the collocates shown here, which are mostly positive or neutral, support this claim.

<i>To Sweeten: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. deal	1.443,00	6.23	17. mix	14,00	-
2. pot	617,00	8.01	18. smell	12,00	2.94
3. offer	138,00	4.17	19. holiday	12,00	1.42
4. pill	127,00	6.31	20. pain	12,00	0.14
5. life	105,00	0.47	21. evening	11,00	0.89
6. air	57,00	3.07	22. temper	10,00	4
7. breath	40,00	3.26	23. occasion	10,00	1.48
8. bid	29,00	3.24	24. offering	10,00	1.33
9. term	28,00	0.49	25. celebration	10,00	1.18
10. incentive	23,00	2.08	26. trade	10,00	0.61
11. sound	20,00	0.75	27. spirit	9,00	0
12. soul	18,00	1.63	28. mood	8,00	1.86
13. package	18,00	0.73	29. audio	8,00	2.11
14. pie	16,00	-	30. blow	8,00	1.7
15. bitterness	15,00	5.15	31. prospect	8,00	1.09
16. taste	15,00	-			
TOTAL	2.861,00				

Table 3.9 Metaphorical usage of “to sweeten”

Once again, at the roots of these metaphorical expressions there is an ESSENCE IS TASTE metaphor, which allows us to perceive as appropriate the idea of adjusting the possessor of the aforementioned essence through the action of sweetening it. The main collocate is “deal”, more than doubling the second one. The general idea behind this collocation, and behind many of the others, is to make something more attractive to others, generally by offering some advantage,

which becomes the metaphorical substance added to the object of the verb to make it sweeter. Nonetheless, as with “to spice up”, there is not always a transaction involved; various others do not necessitate the presence of someone on the receiving end of the action of sweetening, only requiring one subject that both carries out the action and then benefits from it. As we already observed, the inherently negative terms are few: “bitterness”, “pain”, and “blow”.

(44) BlackBerry then *sweetens the deal* by kicking in an additional \$150 as a topper for each iPhone. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(45) To *sweeten the pot* and enhance the experience, they also offer free dinner and dessert packages to participants. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(46) It is obvious that, at a time when people are being restricted in their ability to go out and socialise, they are instead spending on TV access at home to *sweeten the pill*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

From (44) to (46), “deal”, “pot” and “pill” are used in expressions that have become entrenched, assuming a meaning that is not discernible from the individual components, though some elements have maintained their original one. On the one hand, “to sweeten the deal” can be used in a context where there is actually a commercial transaction, as in (44), where it is a telephone that is being sold, but also in contexts where there is no actual deal, and it presents the MAKING SOMETHING MORE VALUABLE IS SWEETENING metaphor (Bagli 2021: 108). On the other hand, when a speaker uses the expressions “to sweeten the pot” or “to sweeten the pill”, nobody expects an actual pot or an actual pill to be involved in the situation that is being discussed. In the case of the former, it usually indicates something that makes an offer more appealing, often in financial terms, while in the case of the latter, it means finding a way of bettering something and making it seem less unpleasant in a more generic sense. Thus, in (45) there is some kind of an experience, for which the participants have to pay, and offering a free dinner is a way for the offer to become financially more attractive. In (46) instead, the conceptual metaphor MITIGATING IS SWEETENING (Bagli 2021: 109) accounts for the mapping; the unpleasant situation is the obligation to stay at home and not be in contact with other people, and it is the TV access that acts as the metaphorical “sweetener” which can, to some extent, improve the situation and mitigate the discomfort. Interestingly, an analogous expression is “to sugar the pill”, which retains the same metaphorical meaning; it is the only metaphorical collocation that could be found for this verb, which is altogether considerably less frequent than the others considered here, and consequently it did not warrant a specific analysis.

(47) Adversities and misfortunes are meant to *sweeten our spirits*, not to make them sour and bitter. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(48) Now, the only purpose of having animals is to *sweeten the bitterness* of human loneliness and alienation. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(49) A greater awareness might *sweeten the otherwise bitter taste* of some climate change policies. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In (47), with “spirits”, which can be grouped together with “mood” and “temper”, the focus is shifted to internalised circumstances, and the idea of sweetening the spirits stands in opposition with the idea of making them sour or bitter. The opposing ideas of either becoming better or becoming worse are mapped onto the gustatory sensation, with sweet being connected to the former, thanks to the generally positive embodied experience of sweetness, and sour and bitter being connected to the latter, owing to the generally negative embodied experience of sourness or bitterness. The next two examples are constructed on the basis of this last element: the experience of “loneliness and alienation” in (48) is characterized by bitterness because these are emotions that human beings tend to avoid, just as excessively bitter tastes, and the presence of an animal is meant to ease them, at least in the context of this sentence. Again, a MITIGATING IS SWEETENING metaphor is evoked. In (49), it is the taste that is represented as bitter; even merely saying “to sweeten the taste” would imply that said taste necessitates some modifications to be agreeable, but here this is explicitly stated, attributing to the abstract element of “climate change policies” a negative connotation, which could only be sweetened by an appreciation of their purpose.

(50) Ryan added extra fun keyboard fills that *sweetened the sound* more than on previous performances [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

(51) It was used to *sweeten the smell* and taste of various foods. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In these two last examples, the context belongs to a different domain: the two collocates used, together with others such as “breath”, “mix” (when meant in the acceptance of “musical mix”), and “audio”, imply the role of an ulterior element, which is olfactory or auditory. However, as in “to spice up”, these are not considered as intrafield expressions, which would entail the juxtaposition of different perceptual processes. The reason is that, once again, the image schema that is evoked here is not one of experience, but of creation of something that metaphorically possesses a taste. In (50), it is the musician that sweetens the sound by introducing “keyboard fills”, and in (51) it is the cook that uses something to sweeten the smell (together with the taste,

which as we ascertained before, is strictly connected to it) of the food. It is the connotation of “to sweeten” as “to improve” that motivates this mapping, becoming central in the actions depicted: the intervention of this new element at the hand of the individual, that is in some way crafting the object of the verb, contributes to the positive outcome of this act of creation. Nonetheless, the considerations with regard to the motivating idea behind this metaphor are still valid: once the act of sweetening is over, the individual on the receiving end could “savour” the sound or the smell. Hence, even in this case these expressions, though not intrafield in themselves, evoke the idea of an ulterior passage where an intrafield expression could apply.

3.3.3. Pepper

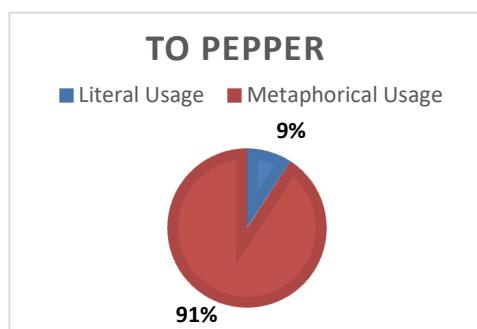


Figure 3.12 Usage of “to pepper”

The verb “to pepper” is another example of source-based language, where the act and its consequences, i.e., the perceptual sensation, are identified through their source, owing to a SOURCE FOR EFFECT metonymy. Pepper is the specific spice that can be added to food, and it becomes the basis for the verb describing the action of adding it. This renders explicit the idea that the effect of such an action will cause a

transformation to the taste of the food that will make it “peppery”. There is no adjective to describe this specific gustatory sensation, and thus one is created from its source in order to convey it. While, to compare this to the previous verb, adding a specific ingredient that might be sugar would allow for a food to be described as “sweet”, adding the specific ingredient that is pepper allows for a food to be described as “peppery”, or at most “spicy” (which is again derived from another source, as we discussed in the “to spice up” section).

A total of 1.749 tokens of “to pepper” have been retrieved, among which 161 are considered literal. Hence, in the minority of the cases, when the action is meant literally, the collocates are for example “steak” or “bacon”. In the majority of the cases, when the action is metaphorical, its meaning is similar to that of “to spice up”: this is not surprising since pepper is a spice, and the conceptualisation of this network of entities and actions adheres to the connections they exhibit in the perceptual domain and to the embodied reactions that are associated with them. Therefore, peppering something is a way of causing a change within the object of the verb that makes it more appetizing or more attractive, according to a generic ADDING EXCITEMENT IS PEPPERING metaphor that mirrors the one proposed for “to spice up”.

Nonetheless, there are differences in the nuances of meaning. While “to spice up” refers to the general effect of the addition, in the case of “to pepper” the manner in which the addition is carried out, by sprinkling the spice, appears to be more salient and contributes to expanding the array of situations where the verb can be applied. Because of this specific aspect of its meaning, “to pepper” can be mapped unto different types of experience by exploiting its different acceptations: when the method with which the action is performed becomes the central feature, the uses of the verb are classifiable as “relating to the fine particles characteristic of ground pepper” (OED 2020). They have been excluded from this examination, since the element of tasting becomes irrelevant. In expressions such as “to pepper the landscape” or “to pepper the body” there is no implication of changes to an experience or a process, just the idea of scattering something throughout an area specified in the object of the verb. The metaphorical mapping relies on the image schema of how pepper is distributed on a dish to conjure the idea of the movement, and the modifications that pepper would cause as an ingredient are not necessary to understand the expression. On the other hand, the “uses alluding to the pungent, spicy, biting, or stimulating qualities of pepper” (OED 2020), where the gustatory sensations it provokes are central to the mapping to another domain and essential for the expression to be meaningful, have been analysed.

<i>To Pepper: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. speech	218,00	4.74	16. writing	30,00	3.16
2. book	165,00	1.88	17. remark	29,00	3.21
3. conversation	163,00	3.97	18. scene	28,00	1.56
4. story	106,00	0.99	19. discussion	26,00	0.44
5. talk	87,00	2.87	20. set	26,00	0.28
6. text	81,00	2.43	21. sentence	25,00	2.09
7. film	72,00	1.81	22. post	25,00	2.09
8. history	68,00	1.52	23. novel	23,00	2.48
9. page	53,00	1.1	24. chapter	22,00	1.67
10. presentation	44,00	1.55	25. air	22,00	1.59
11. narrative	37,00	3.23	26. track	22,00	0.95
12. language	35,00	0.69	27. night	22,00	0.46
13. dialogue	34,00	2.55	28. lecture	21,00	1.67

14. show	33,00	0.97	29. comment	20,00	0.38
15. article	31,00	0.1	30. song	20,00	-
TOTAL					
	1.588,00				

Table 3.10 Metaphorical usage of “to pepper”

The collocates that “to pepper” and “to spice up” share are seven: “story”, “page”, “presentation”, “show”, “scene”, “track”, and “night”. But while the range of context where the latter appears are more diverse, what emerges from this list of collocates is a prevailing preoccupation with acts of communication and with narrative forms. These two appear to be the areas where “to pepper” is perceived as metaphorically relevant. The collocates refer to entities that can be conceptualised as having some length or duration, a cohesive structure that nevertheless allows for insertion, and elements that can be logically accepted as incorporable in that structure; all are features that correspond to the characteristics a dish may have. Therefore, “to pepper” is appropriate in sentences like this:

(52) I am able to *pepper my speech* with slang and idioms and I can express subtle differences in meaning with ease. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(53) *The book is peppered* with inspiring quotes, humor, and personal stories. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(54) *So much of our culture* from great literature to daily conversation *is peppered* with metaphors, similies and analogies from the bible. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(55) *The night was peppered* with references to McVie's return, from Buckingham's awkward reference to the return of a "presence"; to Fleetwood's happy declaration that "we have our songbird back" [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

(56) *The singer peppers* the track with a little of RnB. (enTenTen15: 2015)

As explained previously, all of these terms define entities with specific characteristics: “speech”, “book” and “track” are instinctually understandable as cohesive products where a new element can be inserted intermittently. The term “culture” in (54), which can generally refer to a less definite entity, is explained here through “literature” and “conversation”, both ideas that echo the objects of the verb of (53) and (52) respectively. The same observation can be applied to “night” in (55), where the mention of various members of the *Fleetwood Mac* music band points to the collocate being intended as “concert”, i.e., a collection of songs and of spoken interludes, which connects it to “track” in (56). The feature that all of these examples

(and all expressions with “to pepper” in general) share is the need for an immediate clarification of the nature of the novel element, of the “pepper” modifying the “dish” identified by the object of the verb, through a “with + object of the preposition” structure that is consistently present. Clearly, all of these elements, from “slang and idioms” to “a little of RnB”, are seen in a positive light, inasmuch as the addition of pepper is positively regarded as a way to change the flavour of a dish for the better. Using “to pepper” instead of “to spice up” allows the specific image schema of adding pepper to be conjured together with the sensations that constitute the consequence of that movement. Not only is the idea of this metaphorical pepper improving a speech or a book conveyed, but also the manner in which its inclusion is carried out is immediately apparent upon hearing the expression. Although the collocates of the last examples, “track”, together with “set” and “song”, belongs to a frame where the role of the sense of hearing is central, once again these have not been classified as intrafield expressions. Similarly to the other verbs, the emphasis is not on the subsequent process of consumption of these collocates (which could then be ‘savoured’ on the receiving end), but on the preceding level of production, which in these cases includes mostly either writing or performing. Inasmuch as the auditory sense is not directly involved in the metaphorical mapping which justifies these expressions, there is no need to posit an interaction between two fields of perception.

3.3.4.Sour

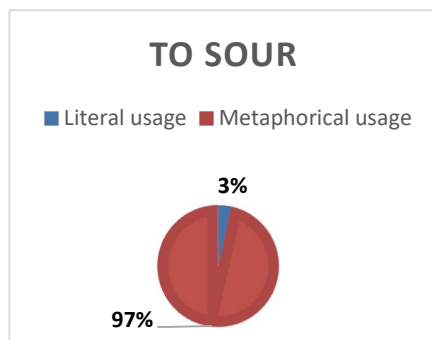


Figure 3.13 Usage of “to sour”

As an adjective, “sour” describes one of the basic taste sensations, specifically one that is generally associated with a negative experience. The condition of “sourness” is something that a food or a beverage acquires as a result of a process of deterioration that takes place over an extended period of time. Therefore, though once the aforementioned food or beverage could have been consumed and thus linked to sensations of pleasure in the

consumer’s mind, that opportunity has been ruled out permanently. In total, 1.376 occurrences have been retrieved, with only 48 being literal. In the minority of the cases describing this literal situation, the most frequent collocates are “milk” and “wine”. When this embodied experience is relocated from the source domain to the target domain, the idea of something that was once positive now changed for the worse definitively, as a consequence of a process of transformation exemplified in the conceptual metaphor SPOILING IS SOURING, is transposed. The

conceptual mapping ESSENCE IS TASTE suggests that, once the essence of something has been spoiled, this is irreversible, just as the taste of something having become sour is a permanent state. There is an obviously consistent evaluative component, a negative response to the gustation of sourness that is diametrically opposed to the ones explored in the previous verbs, which all epitomised positive outcomes, though with nuances of meaning that mirror the nuances of flavour of the physical experiences they are based on. Since the metaphorical expression still mirrors the physical experience depicted in the verb, the sense of an irreparable damage caused to something that once was pleasing or agreeable is applied throughout the various target domains displayed in the list below.

<i>To Sour: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. relation	448,00	5.64	13. attitude	17,00	1.44
2. relationship	275,00	3.01	14. disposition	14,00	4.61
3. mood	121,00	5.91	15. voter	14,00	1.97
4. experience	67,00	0.01	16. climate	14,00	1.8
5. tie	42,00	3.16	17. marriage	14,00	1.21
6. public	41,00	2.14	18. feeling	14,00	0.24
7. atmosphere	40,00	2.96	19. outlook	13,00	2.75
8. opinion	40,00	1.82	20. taste	13,00	-
9. deal	29,00	0.61	21. friendship	13,00	2.06
10. sentiment	28,00	3.82	22. reputation	12,00	1.06
11. temper	21,00	5.58	23. investor	11,00	1.37
12. economy	18,00	0.24	24. stomach	9,00	-
TOTAL					
	1.328,00				

Table 3.11 Metaphorical usage of “to sour”

Considering the metonymical mapping SOUR STANDS FOR UNPLEASANT, the attribution of sourness to something elicits the conceptualisation of a general feeling of unpleasantness, which, when applied to metaphorical settings with a human component that becomes central in the scenario, implies a sense of dissatisfaction, distrust or even hostility directed toward a clear target. This is most conspicuous with the collocates that refer directly to the relation among different people, where the souring of said relationship led to the formation of negative feelings

among the subjects involved: “relation” and “relationship” (the two most frequent collocates), “tie”, “marriage”, and “friendship”. On the other hand, even when the focal point is the feeling or disposition of one subject in particular, there is still a target, though in this instance it is not necessarily another human being; this is the case of terms like “mood”, “disposition”, “sentiment”, or “stomach”. In a few collocates, through the metonymical mapping EXPERIENCER FOR EXPERIENCE, “public”, “voter” and “investor” are utilised to signify that it is not the person that has somehow become sour, but instead their attitude toward something. In the case of “economy”, two metonymies become operational in creating its meaning. The first one is the metonymy SETTING FOR SUBJECTS, where the entity “economy” comprises everybody who is in any way connected to it, and the second one is the previously mentioned metonymy EXPERIENCER FOR EXPERIENCE, where the people connected to the economy stand for their condition of suffering from the economy, as the voters stood for their attitude (probably toward one or more candidates). On a more general note, on the basis of the nature of most collocates listed here, it could be maintained that “to sour” tends to be frequently used in target domains about the public sphere, with topics such as politics or the economy, as the examples below demonstrate.

(57) The two countries hardly became good neighbours, with the issues of Ethiopian access to the Eritrean ports of Massawa and Assab and unequal trade terms *souring relations*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(58) But his poor handling of other promises, such as a 75 percent tax on the rich that was ruled unconstitutional or his faltering struggle against rising unemployment, has *soured the public mood*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(59) In their judgment, the intended material "sweetener" *soured the deal*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(60) Negative campaign ads attacking each other by the two front runners *soured the voters* on the leaders, however. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(61) Rage burned deep in his gut, *souring his stomach*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In (57) there is one example of a relation being conceptualised as a dish; when it becomes sour, both sides involved in it become participants in the figurative meal evoked here, experiencing a distasteful dish that leaves them with reciprocal negative feelings, precluding the possibility of the two becoming “good neighbours”. Though the addition of “hardly” suggests that the period during which the countries had a good relation was very brief, using “to sour” still

implies a starting point where the conditions were better, and a process of worsening over time. Furthermore, the meaning of the sentence is accessible if, together with the metaphor RELATION IS FOOD, also the metonymy COUNTRY FOR GOVERNMENT is accepted, attributing the negative feelings that resulted from the souring of the relation to the persons responsible for running the country rather than to the country itself. In (58), the context is still the public sphere: the “public mood”, which we can imagine as having been in the past favourably disposed toward the subject of the sentence, has been spoiled over time by their “poor handling” of various issues. There are still two sides considered here, inasmuch as there is a relation between the public and the subject. In (59), two opposite perceptual experience are juxtaposed to highlight the feeling evoked by contrast: the element that was meant to render “the deal”, which has to be understood as metonymically standing as “disposition toward the deal”, more alluring, i.e., “sweeter”, is instead producing the opposite effect, making it more objectionable, i.e., “sourer”. The mapping of the various perceptual sensations unto various but corresponding mental states is consciously acknowledged by drawing a direct comparison between the intended positive effect and the negative actual effect. In (60), the topic is once again politics, and once again the object of the verb is the result of a metonymy, which in this case is EXPERIENCER FOR EXPERIENCE, since it is not the voters themselves that are conceptualised as food, but it is their attitude toward the front runners, which has been irreparably damaged. The last example employs the metonymies PART FOR WHOLE and EXPERIENCER FOR EXPERIENCE: the first one allows the speaker to use the part that is the stomach for the whole that is the person whose stomach that is, and the second one to use the subject instead of the element that is actually being soured, their disposition. The physical experience of the negative feelings of sourness that is sometimes felt in the stomach is used as the point of access for the metaphorical feeling of sourness, which is conceptualised as being located in the stomach. Associating different emotions with different parts of the body is a common metaphorical transfer, based on the physical sensation that are often associated with experiencing those emotions; in (61), together with the sourness placed in the stomach, the speaker discusses another emotion, rage, which is instead placed in the “gut”.

This verb was the last, among the ones linked to the sphere of taste, whose analysis yielded enough data to justify a separate discussion. Below, the last two verbs considered are grouped together because they offered very few data. Nonetheless, I still deemed the metaphorical usages they exhibit worth mentioning, for they still represent mechanisms of conceptualisation of abstract experiences in terms of concrete perceptual ones.

3.3.5.Flavo(u)r, Season

The two verbs discussed here have one characteristic in common: their metaphorical uses are extremely limited, in comparison to the literal usages. Therefore, for each of these verbs the few metaphorical collocates are listed in separate tables, and for each of them a few examples are offered and discussed.

<u>To Flavo(u)r: Metaphorical Usage</u>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. music (US: 38) (UK: 33)	71,00	-	3. pop (US: 4) (UK: 8)	12,00	-
2. tune	15,00	- / 2.85	4. mix (US: 6) (UK: 3)	9,00	-
TOTAL					
	107,00				

Table 3.12 Metaphorical usage of “to flavo(u)r”

The tokens of the verb “to flavo(u)r” found in the corpus amount to 13.628, and the metaphorical expressions identified among them are 107. The verb means giving flavour or taste to something (mostly beverages but, to a lesser extent, also food) and it therefore implies the addition of a new element, which improves the taste and thus the experience of the consumer. In the rare cases where it is transferred to a different target domain, it is utilised according to the metaphor MAKING MORE INTERESTING IS FLAVOURING, to conceptualise the addition of a new element that intervenes to modify in some way a specific entity in order to improve its quality, thanks to the ESSENCE IS TASTE metaphor which allows said entity to possess a specific taste.

(62) Here, again, jazz elements appeared to *flavor the music*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(63) "Fleetwood Mac Live" is that rare live double-record that works, expanding & enhancing the well-known songs & *flavoring the mix* with new material. (enTenTen15: 2015)

The new element, which is here either “jazz elements” or “new material”, is the sweet ingredient which is added to the beverage or food that is the music or the mix of songs on a record; the action is initiated by the musicians that are performing the music, embodying the role of cooks, and will be then appreciated by the consumer, which is equated to the person drinking the beverage or eating the food. As already observed, the usage of “to flavour” implies a favourable

judgement with regard to the element that has been added and to the overall ‘taste’ of the entity, which benefits from the variety and originality introduced. All four collocates belong to the “music” frame. However, they are not classified as intrafield expressions for the same reasons explained above for “to spice up”, “to sweeten”, and “to pepper”. The act of flavouring is fulfilled by the subject that is involved in the process of production of the object of the verb, according to an image schema of modifying an external object with the objective of adjusting its taste to make it more noteworthy. Needless to say, at the other end of the process there is the consumer, which will appreciate the ‘flavour’ perceived in the music and may ‘savour’ it. That process would imply the juxtaposition of different perceptual spheres, but that remains solely a hypothesised outcome of the actions that are actually described in the expressions analysed here, which do not entail the interaction of different senses.

<i>To Season: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. speech	21,00	1.38	3. professional	14,00	0.78
2. conversation	18,00	0.8	4. veteran	13,00	1.81
TOTAL	66,00				

Table 3.13 Metaphorical usage of “to season”

The tokens of “to season” found in the corpus are on the whole 1.778, and the metaphorical ones among them are only 66. The verb is generally defined as “to render (a dish) more palatable by the addition of some savoury ingredient” or “to bring to maturity, ripen” (OED 2020), with two nuances of meaning in the literal realm that are both applied metaphorically in the examples below, according to the conceptual metaphors IMPROVING IS SEASONING and HAVING EXPERIENCE IS BEING SEASONED.

(64) Mercy and undeserved loving kindness *seasons our speech*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(65) They have *seasoned veterans* who are among the best in the league at their respective positions. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In (64), the new ingredients “mercy and undeserved loving kindness” are introduced to improve the dish that is “our speech”, whose essence is mapped unto the taste an actual dish would have. This expression exploits the first meaning presented above, where the introduction of a novel element immediately brings about a change. In (65), the veterans have been “seasoned”, which

means they have gone through a process akin to the one that food undergoes to ripen, ensuring that they are now in their best possible state. This expression exploits the second meaning, where a change is achieved throughout an extended period of time, and there is no need to identify new elements, for the agent causing the transformation is in the metaphorical sense experience in a specific field, and in the literal sense merely the passing of time. Hence, since the original verb possesses two acceptations that are different, but both connected to the experience of taste, the metaphorical mappings constructed here exploit them both in order to form a mental representation of different abstract experiences.

This concludes the analysis of the verbs connected to the sense of taste and their utilization throughout different realms of human experience, where they fulfil the function of contributing to the conceptualisation of notional and diverse concepts in terms of experiences that are instead concrete and accessible by a large number of speakers. The discussion in the next chapter will focus instead on the analysis of the verbs connected to the sense of smell and their utilization throughout different domains of experience.

Chapter 4

The Sense of Smell

4.1. Smell

As previously stated, the sense of smell has been described as the most ineffable among the senses in the English language, i.e., the one that presents the most difficulties in terms of linguistic encoding. If a speaker of English wishes to talk about information apprehended through the sense of vision, the lexicon at their disposal allows for the articulation of nuances and subtleties, that are instead not accessible when communicating about the perceptual qualities related to the experience of smell. While recognising smells seems to be comparatively easy, labelling them frequently presents difficulties that are insurmountable without strategies such as source-descriptions or metaphors; furthermore, such strategies do not allow for a high level of consistency and agreement among different speakers (Croijmans and Majid 2016: 2). This may be due to the fact that the judgement of odour quality is highly context-dependent, influenced by external factors (Agapakis and Tolaas 2012: 569 in Winter 2019: 42), in addition to being perceived as fairly subjective and closely connected to one's body rather than to external objects (Winter 2019: 107), and thus it does not offer stable referential points on which repeated characterisations could be based. As I established in Chapter 1, smell is positioned at the bottom of Viberg's hierarchy of the senses; though customarily this is a position it shares with the sense of taste, the sense of smell in particular has been argued to be relatively ineffable when compared to vision (Winter 2019: 34), which is instead positioned at the opposite end of the hierarchy. This claim appears to be supported by the amount of data gathered here; at any rate, it appears that the verbs that are usually associated with smell in dictionaries are less numerous than the verbs that are associated with taste, notwithstanding the cooperation between

the two senses that occurs unbeknownst to most speakers. The verbs considered in this chapter (“to smell”, “to reek of”, “to stink of”, “to scent”, “to sniff (at)”) are indeed less numerous than the verbs considered in the previous one, and the total number of collocations is noticeably smaller.

Adopting the same approach utilised in the previous chapter, the first verb that has been examined in this analysis of the realm of olfactory perception is the most basic one, namely the verb “to smell”. The “objects of the verb” column was the basis for the obtainment of the data, after the collocations not conforming to the “verb + specific object” structure had been removed. For example, “smell something”, “smell things”, “smell nothing”, though presenting a “verb + object” format, were too generic to warrant an evaluation on the nature of the expression; on the other hand, “smell a bit” and “smelling salt” did not present the suitable form, with the former being adverbial and the latter containing an adjective. After this process of exclusion, a total of 21.404 collocations have been retrieved (for the sake of comparison, its counterpart “to taste” had 37.491).

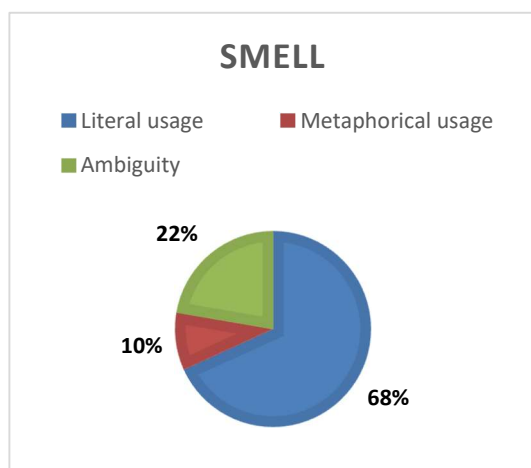


Figure 4.1 Usage of “to smell”

Figure 4.1 is meant to provide a visual representation of the distribution of the data. Interestingly, the percentage of expressions that have been classified as literal, at 68%, is almost the same as the one for “to taste”, which was 70% - though evidently in numerical terms the latter has more collocations. The same observation formulated for “to taste” can be applied here: this is not entirely unexpected, considering the centrality of the verb in its field of perception, and the range

of experiences within said field it can cover. Though the metaphorical expressions appear to be the minority, it should be noted that this is partly due to the existence of the ‘Ambiguity’ category, which is so extended mostly due to idiomatic expressions that are fairly widespread but also still used in a literal acceptance. All three areas are analysed separately in more detail below.

4.1.1. Literal Usage

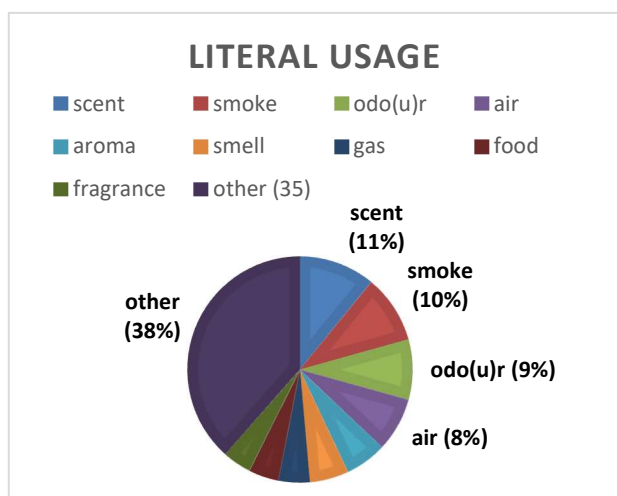


Figure 4.2 Literal usage of “to smell”

From the graphic in *Figure 4.2*, it is immediately clear that there is not one distinctly predominant collocate, with “scent”, “smoke”, “odo(u)r” (with the frequencies of both spellings integrated) and “air” being very close in terms of numerical values. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the collocate “smell” appears as one of the most frequent ones, showing that in this case there doesn’t seem to be the same reticence encountered for “to taste the taste” to repeat

the same linguistic form acting first as verb and then as noun, which may be due at least partly to the dearth of ‘smell’ lexicon, offering little alternative. All of the other thirty-five collocates, assembled under the label “other”, are shown in the table below together with their respective frequencies and typicality scores, along with the other more frequent ones.

<u>To Smell: Literal Usage</u>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. scent	1.594,00	9.44	23. chemical	138,00	-
2. smoke	1.428,00	9.09	24. rain	137,00	5.1
3. odo(u)r (US: 1.087) (UK: 167)	1.254,00	9.1 6.75	25. spice	137,00	-
4. air	1.126,00	7.04	26. fish	133,00	3.99
5. aroma	872,00	8.93	27. tree	133,00	3.12
6. smell	823,00	8.22	28. fire	132,00	3.56
7. gas	654,00	6.3	29. foot	116,00	-
8. food	628,00	4.27	30. cologne	116,00	-
9. fragrance	605,00	8.33	31. earth	107,00	4.18
10. perfume	492,00	8.16	32. stink	103,00	6.11
11. stench	386,00	7.99	33. wood	99,00	4.35
12. alcohol	372,00	6.56	34. fruit	97,00	3.58

13.	breath	272,00	-	35.	product	95,00	-
14.	oil	269,00	-	36.	breeze	95,00	5.42
15.	hair	249,00	4.62	37.	flesh	95,00	5.1
16.	sweat	217,00	6.88	38.	hand	93,00	-
17.	cooking	194,00	6.32	39.	ocean	90,00	4.93
18.	water	193,00	-	40.	bread	90,00	4.47
19.	grass	167,00	-	41.	plant	87,00	-
20.	fume	167,00	6.7	42.	leaf	86,00	4.13
21.	sea	148,00	5.38	43.	musk	85,00	5.86
22.	incense	143,00	6.47	44.	meat	85,00	3.98
TOTAL		14.602,00					

Table 4.1 Literal usage of “to smell”

One of the features of this list that emerges more clearly is that, in addition to the collocate “smell” itself, already mentioned, there are three more collocates that *Wordnet* recognises as synsets (namely cognitive synonyms, linked by means of conceptual-semantic and lexical relations) of “smell”: “scent”, “odo(u)r” and “aroma”. Consequently, there is a distinct preoccupation with the idea of qualifying in a generic sense the perceptual quality that is central to this field of perception. Its genericness can then be specified with the addition of a prepositional phrase “preposition + prepositional object”, identifying the source of the aforementioned smell, scent, odour or aroma. It could be argued that such a structure is concealed behind all of collocates that identify a specific entity, drawing a SOURCE FOR EFFECT metonymy, on the basis of sentences such as these examples:

- (66) Never leave food in your car or garage: Bears have a tremendous sense of smell and can easily *smell food* in a closed vehicle or garage. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (67) I could *smell the fish* and the lovely flowers. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (68) I can *smell the bacon cooking* in the kitchen as Grandma gets breakfast ready and packs lunch for Grandpa and me, and I know it is time to get up. (enTenTen15: 2015)
- (69) We would *smell the cooking* all day and could hardly wait to have the first taste. (enTenTen15: 2015)

When, “to smell” is paired with terms such as “food” or “fish”, as in (66) and (67), it could be argued that a pragmatic function mapping is established between the source of the smell and

the smell itself by virtue of the shared frame of experience, allowing the food to act as a vehicle for the target concept of the smell it experientially corresponds to. In these situations, it is not the food or the fish that is being directly experienced, but rather their smell that is apprehended. Thus, it might be maintained that behind “to smell the food” there is a hypothetical hidden phrase which actually is “to smell the smell of the food”, clarifying the underlying mechanism. Similarly, in (68), there is a specific object that is identified, “the bacon”, and, since it is going through the process of preparation, it has a specific smell. Thus, it could be suggested that “the bacon cooking” metonymically stands for “the smell of the bacon cooking”, similarly to the expressions examined above. On the other hand, in (69) there is no entity explicitly referred to, but only the process. Hence, according to the hypothesis just presented, in order to decode the expression two metonymical mappings would have to become operative, one allowing the method of preparation to stand for what is being prepared, and one allowing what is being prepared to stand for its smell, similarly to the other expressions.

Until now, the focus has been on expressions that are still within the frame of the experience of food and beverages. In this section, other areas of experience are represented. Obviously, while in the case of the field of taste perception the nature of the action characterised necessarily confines the literal usages to gustation, in the case of olfaction the range of experiential occurrences that become pertinent is more extensive. Collocates such as “gas”, “perfume”, “sea” and “tree” all belong to distinct frames, demonstrating how the sense of smell plays an active role across numerous domains. From the point of view of connotation, only a few collocates definitely encode a positive evaluation of the object (“aroma”, “fragrance”, “perfume”) and only two imply a distinctly negative judgement, “stench” and “stink”. Most elements could be defined as neutral, and their association with the action of smelling does not necessarily influence the manner in which they are perceived, merely depicting the act.

4.1.2. Metaphorical Usage

As previously mentioned, the expressions that could be definitively classified as metaphorical in nature are not very numerous; there are only nine of them. The collocate “rat” almost singlehandedly occupies half of the diagram, with the remaining space distributed more evenly among the other eight. As with “to taste”, in the case of “to smell” there are two types of metaphorical collocates. On one hand, most of them clearly refer to abstract concepts that do not belong in any frame directly connected to physical experience. On the other hand, the collocate “difference”, can both be rationally connected to activities that have a spatio-physical

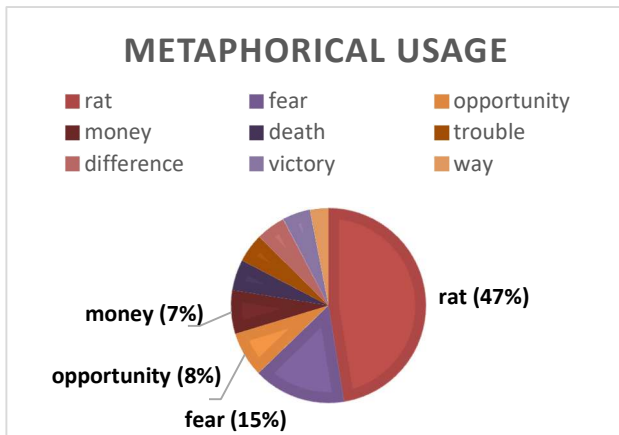


Figure 4.3 Metaphorical usage of “to smell”

component and at the same be completely detached from concrete phenomena. Just as “to taste the difference” could express the idea of tasting two products in order to determine the presence of a (possibly qualitative) difference between them, “to smell the difference” can embody a parallel concept in terms of smelling two products. At the same time, “to smell the difference” can be utilised in context where there are no

physical smells that can be detected, just as “to taste the difference” can be utilised in context where there are no physical tastes. In both verbs, the determining factor in the classification of “difference” as metaphorical is the inherently abstract nature of the intellectual operation required for the comparison, regardless of the physical or non-physical nature of the two entities compared.

<i>To Smell: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. rat	962,00	8.48	6. trouble	98,00	3.71
2. fear	311,00	5.18	7. difference	98,00	1.46
3. opportunity	153,00	0.8	8. victory	94,00	3.74
4. money	146,00	1.6	9. way	62,00	-
5. death	104,00	3.08			
TOTAL	2.028,00				

Table 4.2 Metaphorical usage of “to smell”

The already mentioned ‘Invariance Principle’ asserts that metaphorical mappings maintain the internal structure of the source domain and the relations among its components, applying them to the target domain. In the previous paragraph, it has been established that the action of smelling can be associated with elements that have positive, negative or neutral connotation, inasmuch as actual experience suggests that all three outcomes are possibilities in reality. Therefore, it follows that, if the Invariance Principle holds true, the same structure and the same components should appear even in metaphorical usage. Consequently, the collocates

“rat”, “fear”, “death” or “trouble” suggest an unpleasant experience; while “opportunity”, “money” and “victory” a pleasant one, and “way” and “difference” do not inherently encode an implicit judgement.

(70) You know the stuff you're hearing is bad when ordinary folks like me (who aren't economists) can read things like the 2004 Economic Report of the President, and daily Administration press briefings, and *smell a rat*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(71) Mysteriously, suddenly all the executives *smell money* in the air and they want it ! (enTenTen15: 2015)

(72) At one stage, we forgot which bowl had the beef and which the lamb, and I think because it was quite cold from the fridge, it was difficult to *smell the difference*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(73) After being at Art Basel, art forum berlin and Frieze London this year, it seems that you can *smell the difference* between an important, an up and coming and a hard trying art fair in the first two minutes you enter the fair on its preview day. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In (70), the fixed expression is made up of “to smell” and the collocate, “rat”, which is the most numerous one, more than tripling the instances of the second collocate; “to smell a rat”, means “to suspect deception, foul play, or that something is not what it at first appears to be” (OED 2020). Ordinarily, “rat” would refer to an entity that is undoubtedly physical, and yet, unlike “difference”, it was not cited as an example of expression which has an experiential basis, nor placed in the ‘Ambiguity’ section. This is due to the fact that, in this expression, “rat” has become entirely detached from the original entity it stood for, acquiring instead the meaning of something whose appearance may be deceiving. Thus, the metaphorical mechanism at play here can be formulated as SUSPECTING IS SMELLING, where both the verb and the noun in the expression are mapped from a literal source domain to a target domain of suspicion, which, in this sentence, is directed toward the economy. Consequently, it is the economy that becomes the object emanating the “rat-like smell” raising the suspicion of the speaker, who is the one “doing the smelling” in this scenario. Similarly, in (71), there is a collocate that, though ordinarily used to identify a concrete entity, is intended here to represent a more abstract concept. Unlike “rat” though, “money” is not completely detached from the underlying meaning of “profit”; rather, it serves as a vehicle concept, allowing the target concept to be accessed metonymically, inasmuch as “money” and “profit” can be conceptualised as different aspects of the same domain of experience. Thus, “to smell money” can be understood as “to realise that there is the opportunity to make a profit”, where the metaphor is REALISING IS SMELLING,

substituting the suspicion of the previous example for intuition, a similarly instinctive state of mind. The next pair of sentences, (72) and (73), exhibit the different interpretations of “difference” explained above, depending on the context; in (72), the difference is between two types of meat, “beef” and “lamb”. The context of the sentence is rooted in the domain of physical experience, and yet it requires an ulterior stage of comprehension, where the action of smelling is not only realised in relation to kinds of food that actually possess a smell, but also to the notional idea of making a comparison between the data apprehended. The metaphorical expression implies the process of extracting information from the external world and re-elaborating it in order to draw links and establish relations among the external elements with the aim of schematising the experience. In (73), the same mechanism of re-elaboration is required when the notion of “difference” is summoned; additionally, in this instance the comparison is not between kinds of meat but kinds of art fair, once again evoking the conceptualisation of the ability to smell as a sort of intuition allowing visitors to immediately understand the nature of the art fair they are attending.

This last example is presented separately in view of the fact that the mapping utilised is different to the others observed so far, involving the collocate “way”. In a manner similar to the procedure adopted for the same collocate in “to taste”, the cases where the sentence presented some form of the structure “it smells a certain way”, as in “We make our homes smell a certain way [...]” (enTenTen15: 2015) were removed since they do not fit in an analysis of the “verb + object” constructions. The result of this process was a list comprising exclusively the expressions with syntactic constructions using “way” as a direct object of the verb, as in (74) and (75):

(74) There are some species of seabirds that will *smell their way* back to their nest burrows among millions of other nest burrows [...] by how that burrow smells. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(75) Yes, that's right – you'll be able to see, hear, touch, taste and even *smell your way* through this year's event! (enTenTen15: 2015)

The way-construction implies motion, either concrete or metaphorical; it identifies a subject executing a specific movement, within an established spatial dimension. Thus, the image schema of motion is encoded within the construction, and the manner in which that movement is executed is encoded within the verb. The result of this juxtaposition of different activities is a SMELLING IS MOVING mapping, where smell uncharacteristically (unlike the other metaphorical usages considered) assumes the role of the target domain to which the source

domain of motion is applied, transferring its image schema of movement with a destination to the more static activity of smelling. In (74), the idea that these “seabirds” are able to find their way back to their “nest burrows” by recognising familiar smells is successfully encoded in a construction which is at the same time less verbose and communicatively more efficient. In (75), the *way*-construction is associated with all of the senses, in an effort to promote this event as an all-encompassing experience, designed to offer stimuli for all areas of perception. The physical space of the event is conceptualised as a path throughout which every station engages with the visitor in a manner that allows them to realise a trajectory of continuous motion and continuous reception of information apprehended through the senses. In the image that is evoked, smell is conspicuously the last sense that is mentioned, with the order following Viberg’s hierarchy and the adverb “even” highlighting the exceptional nature of the opportunity of including the sense of smell as one of the aspects of the experience that is being marketed.

4.1.3. Ambiguity

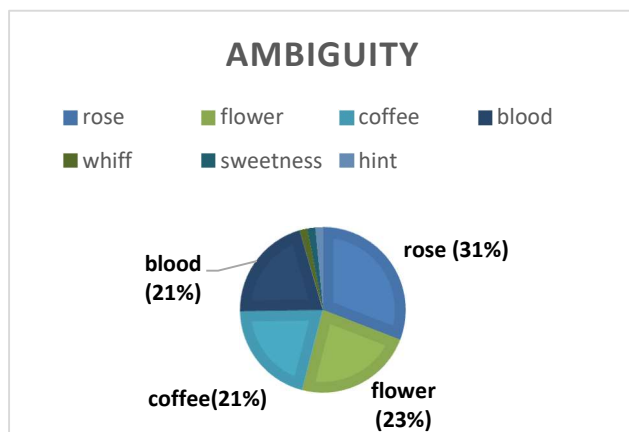


Figure 4.4 Ambiguity in the usage of “to smell”

It has been established that this category is meant for nouns that cannot be definitively classified as either literal or metaphorical, inasmuch as they can alternatively refer to physical object or perceptual qualities, or to notional concepts that derive from the original literal acceptance, with which they may maintain a relationship of some degree of continuity

in meaning. Hence, the relation between the different meanings the collocates take on is not invariable; on one hand, some have specific tangible objects as referent, and they acquire additional meaning when combined with the verb. On the other hand, others refer to perceptual qualities that can be attributed to tangible objects and apprehended through smell, and at the same time can also be completely recontextualised to indicate qualities that are not perceptual, but rather notional in nature.

<i>To Smell: Ambiguity</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. rose	1.474,00	9.58	5. whiff	72,00	5.53

2. flower	1.106,00	7.9	6. sweetness	72,00	5.44
3. coffee	989,00	7.61	7. hint	72,00	4.49
4. blood	989,00	7.11			
TOTAL					
	4.774,00				

Table 4.3 Ambiguity in the usage of “to smell”

There is a well-defined separation between the two categories pinpointed above, with the four more frequent collocates referring to tangible objects, and the three less frequent ones referring to qualities. Inasmuch as their literal meaning can be easily conceived of, examples of the usages of the components of the former category in a metaphorical sense instead are presented below:

(76) Ride to ride, enjoy the moment, just breathe the air, feel the sun, and take time to *smell the roses*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(77) Every dreamer has a point where they wake up, *smell the coffee* and get back to reality (job, or other daily activities). (enTenTen15: 2015)

(78) The danger is that the Republicans, *smelling Dem blood* as a result of recent polls, will harden their opposition. (enTenTen15: 2015)

The expression “to smell the roses” (or, alternatively “the flowers”) means “to appreciate or fully enjoy life's pleasures, esp. those things which are transitory or regarded as inessential” (OED 2020), positing an ENJOYING IS SMELLING metaphorical mapping; consequently, in (76) it is befitting to an exhortation to “enjoy the moment”, and value the things that are taken for granted. Obviously, it is possible to literally experience the smell of a flower, but here the noun seems to metaphorically embody all of the aspect of life that people do not usually pay attention to, and that are easily accessible to everyone, with both the verb and the noun assuming a meaning that is not discernible from the words in isolation, as a result of their pairing. Similarly, the urging to “smell the coffee”, frequently paired with “wake up” as in (77), is once again utilising an action that could very well be literal to communicate an entirely different meaning, which originates from the union of the node and the collocate and draws a REALISING IS SMELLING mapping. Said meaning could be paraphrased as “to be realistic or aware; to abandon a naive or foolish notion” (OED 2020), which is the course of action dreamers are advised to adopt according to the speaker. The last one of this kind of expression is “to smell blood”, which mirrors the expression “to taste blood” encountered in the ‘Ambiguity’ category for “to

taste”. While the former has 989 collocations, the latter had 925; therefore, it might be observed that not only is the former more frequent, but it also occupies a larger slice of the usage of the verb comparatively speaking, since “to taste” is considerably more frequent in total. Although this is merely a speculation, we may understand the higher frequency of the version of the expression with “to smell” as a preference for the less ‘graphic’ expression, where the frame of violence and conflict is still successfully evoked, but with slightly less unpleasant implications. From (78), it is clear that smelling is conceptualised as perceiving and blood is conceptualised as signs of weakness in the opponent; the idea being communicated is that Republicans will be more likely to “harden their opposition” if they notice that their opponents are showing vulnerability and they start to believe in the possibility of obtaining a political victory. Evidently, the larger context where this conflict takes place is within the political realm, but the speaker is borrowing structure and concepts from the context of war and hunting to characterise its nuances.

(79) I have an unpleasant feeling that at this point you are beginning to *smell a whiff* of sanctimoniousness. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(80) You too could *smell the sweetness* of success along with lots of other successful Scentsy consultants[..]! (enTenTen15: 2015)

(81) I *smell a hint* of sarcasm in this message. (enTenTen15: 2015)

These three sentences are examples of collocates of the second category that are capable of referring both to percepts, and to the expressions of concepts (or specific qualities), instance where the PERCEIVING IS SMELLING metaphor justifies the metaphorical usage, as in the examples above from (79) to (81). Considering the ambivalence of the collocate itself, a “of + object of the preposition” structure is always required in order to specify the context. In (79), a whiff is essentially a gust of air, which in this sentence is conceptualised as carrying an inkling of “sanctimoniousness”, namely the quality of being hypocritically devout. In this scenario, the listener perceives the sanctimoniousness through a channel that suggests the mode of perception. It is not the level of awareness which would be associated with one of the more “reliable” senses, namely vision and hearing, but merely the consciousness of the faint presence of such a quality that comes from the sense which, though deemed as less dependable, still acts as a source of information. In (80), it is instead a characteristic of the notion considered that “sweetness” embodies; “success” emanates it, representing the inherently positive features of the experience. The step that is suggested here could be considered as part of a larger mapping

where the food that is success is conceptualised as having multiple characteristics belonging to its material counterpart, in accordance with the Invariance Principle. The experience of its attractive smell is intended to captivate people; it functions as the motivation to pursue a specific line of action to reach the source of the smell. It contains an implicit promise, namely ‘if it can be smelt it can also be tasted’, that is, directly experienced. Significantly, “success” is the most frequent metaphorical collocate of “to taste”. The last one, “hint”, meaning “a trace of something”, is quite similar to “whiff” in the frame it evokes. The type of knowledge portrayed is not undeniable, but rather a suspicion that the author of the message was trying to convey a certain amount of “sarcasm”. If sarcasm is imagined as the ingredient whose presence is barely perceivable in the eventual result of the recipe that is the message, then the actors involved in this scenario acquire metaphorical counterparts too, with the author becoming the manufacturer who embedded sarcasm in the final product and the reader the taster who recognised its presence upon consuming it. Thus, while “sweetness” necessarily entails positivity, the other two notions discussed are generally regarded as more negative. This is conceivable thanks to the nature of “to smell”, which doesn’t include an idea of enjoying, merely provoking the mapping that allows for the conceptualisation of some kind of detection, implying varying degrees of conscious realisation.

4.2. Other verbs

The verb “to smell” presented the highest quantity of instances and the most significant degree of variation in usage, and thus it was discussed more extensively, with all three categories displayed and examined. The remaining verbs, on the other hand, offered a lesser amount of relevant data, and are thus appointed less space, with an analysis focussing on the metaphorical portion of their usage. Two verbs that were initially considered and then eliminated are “to inhale” and “to emanate”; the former was deemed unsuitable to the current analysis, inasmuch as it describes the mechanical act of breathing, and doesn’t directly correlate to olfaction. The latter was similarly excluded because of its meaning, which is to describe a material substance or immaterial quality issuing from a specific source; this concept can be paired with smell, and it sometimes is, with collocates such as “smell”, “odor” or “fragrance”. Nonetheless, it was ruled out inasmuch as it has a more generic central meaning, which can be applied across various domains of experience, rather than having a primary meaning associated with the domain of olfaction, that is then transferred to different domains. Therefore, once this

process of elimination was completed, the remaining verbs were “to reek of”, “to stink of”, “to scent”, and “to sniff (at)”.

4.2.1. Reek of

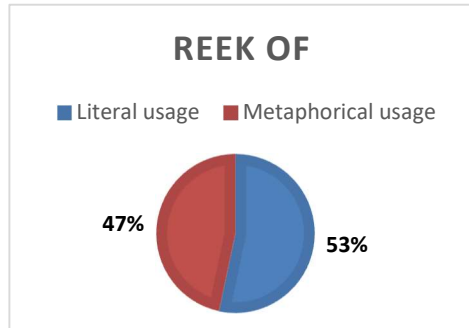


Figure 4.5 Metaphorical usage of “to reek of”

The verb “to reek of” is one of the two examples of “verb + preposition + object of the preposition” structures which have been considered. This decision was due to the fact that “to reek” is markedly rarer and not used metaphorically; “to reek of”, on the other hand, is used with a certain frequency, and often in metaphorical terms. In Viberg’s classification, it corresponds to a copulative expression, i.e., a

phenomenon-based verb whose subject is the entity that is experienced. Thus, the focus is on the perceptual quality attributed to said entity. Conversely, the meaning of “to smell” places the focus on the action itself, whose result can be either enjoyable or unenjoyable. The verb “to reek of” is unequivocally negative: when something reeks, it emits a smell that is both powerful and decidedly disagreeable, unpleasantly imposing itself on the senses of the experiencer.

Within a total of 2.235 instances, 1.192 are literal, and the most frequent are “alcohol”, “smoke” and “urine”, reinforcing the idea that “to reek of” is associated with things possessing an unpleasant smell. Therefore, even when the trait of the entity that is highlighted is immaterial, the metaphorical transfer generally implies a strongly negative evaluation of this trait.

<i>To Reek of: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. desperation	112,00	8.46	23. authenticity	13,00	4.93
2. hypocrisy	102,00	8.61	24. lack	13,00	3.74
3. death	100,00	3.45	25. desire	13,00	3.52
4. corruption	73,00	5.14	26. class	13,00	0.5
5. arrogance	40,00	7.5	27. insincerity	12,00	6.85
6. politics	36,00	3.37	28. contempt	12,00	5.55
7. history	32,00	1.1	29. nostalgia	12,00	5.14
8. racism	30,00	4.82	30. greed	12,00	5.07

9. opportunism	28,00	7.78	31. anti-Semitism	12,00	5.02
10. fear	25,00	3.56	32. manipulation	12,00	4.49
11. money	25,00	1.19	33. ignorance	12,00	4.4
12. bias	24,00	4.82	34. propaganda	12,00	4.26
13. quality	20,00	1.44	35. attempt	12,00	3.4
14. failure	19,00	2.5	36. faith (bad faith)	12,00	0.71
15. conspiracy	17,00	4.88	37. violence	12,00	0.31
16. evil	16,00	3.38	38. awesomeness	11,00	6.38
17. cronyism	15,00	6.97	39. hubris	11,00	6.18
18. entitlement	15,00	5.06	40. cover-up	11,00	6.16
19. elitism	14,00	6.84	41. incompetence	11,00	5.76
20. double standards	14,00	1.46	42. tactic	11,00	4.12
21. laziness	13,00	6.65	43. conflict	11,00	0.86
22. cowardice	13,00	6.5	44. interference	10,00	4.22
TOTAL					
1.043,00					

Table 4.4 Metaphorical usage of “to reek of”

The cognitive topology of the source domain is maintained, respecting the Invariance Principle: the object emitting a smell, the (generally unpleasant) smell itself, and the person who perceives that smell become, respectively, an entity possessing a distinguishing characteristic, the (generally unpleasant) characteristic itself, and the person who detects the characteristic. As I already mentioned, reeking of something has a negative connotation. The collocates of the verb are either undesirable (e.g., “desperation”, “corruption” or “racism”), or their negative meaning is imposed by the association with the verb (e.g., “nostalgia”, “desire” or “attempt”). There is also a third option, where the negative evaluation is discarded, which is discussed below.

(82) It was a PR disaster; claiming they liked losing because it made the brand seem human *reeked of desperation*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(83) In 2012, the Democrats benefited by facing a Republican who *reeked of money* and privilege and displayed indifference toward the 47 percent. (enTenTen15: 2015)

The sentences in (82) and (83) demonstrate the contexts in which the HAVING A NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTIC IS REEKING OF SOMETHING metaphor is utilised. In (82) “desperation”, the most frequent collocate, is the smell metaphorically originating from the “object” that is the claim detected by the speaker. Undoubtedly, desperation is already an unwelcome sentiment when considered on its own, and this expression evokes the idea that it is permeating the claim in an all-encompassing manner, so evidently that it is virtually impossible to overlook, as it would be impossible to physically ignore the reek of something. On the other hand, in (83) “money” is not necessarily negative; in the previously discussed “to smell money” expression, it evoked the idea of a possibility for profit. The association with a different verb, however, changes its connotational nature, and the target concept it metonymically stands for is not “profit” anymore, but another element of the frame it belongs to: “richness”. This term would still not be negative when considered on its own; nonetheless, since here richness is an element a “Republican” can “reek of”, it is evaluated negatively, becoming an unappealing quantity in a political candidate that appears detached from the population.

The third option comprises five collocates among the forty-four listed, consisting of 89 instances in total, who appear to contradict the general tendency of the verb “to reek of” to qualify characteristics that are judged as unpleasant. These collocates are: “history”, “quality”, “authenticity”, “class”, and “awesomeness”.

(84) The photography is excellent, the huge cast of characters is handled admirably, the sets and clothes all *reek of authenticity*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(85) It was a rather steep climb from the carpark up into the village, but this place literally *reeked of history* and charm. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(86) Whether by conscious deception or mere ignorance, Gregg's piece also *reeks of bad history*....[...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

(87) I did in fact find one group in a neighboring suburb that *reeked of this non-desirable quality*, and I passed it up and kept looking. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(88) This is one adaptation that *reeks of quality*, as in Lord of the Rings-type detail (having Sean Bean doesn't hurt either). (enTenTen15: 2015)

(89) Leanne *reeked of class, eloquence, sophistication*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(90) Christian said the show must go on and they have a great show planned, which the 40 year + Edge said totally *reeked of awesomeness*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In the first place, it should be noted that “history” and “quality” can retain the negativity usually embedded in “to reek of”, as in (86) and (87), where the former is “bad” and the latter is “non-desirable”, and they act as unattractive features of, respectively, the “piece” and the “suburb”. Nonetheless, this is the exception, rather than the rule, since they are more naturally utilised in the manner shown in (85) and (88). In (85), “history” is paired with “charm”, which leaves no doubt as to the attractiveness of the village possessing these two qualities; it is intended as a compliment, and not as a critical assessment. The conceptual metaphor that can be identified as the motivating factor for these expressions is HAVING A STRONG CHARACTERISTIC IS REEKING OF SOMETHING, with the conceptual mapping selecting only some aspects of the source domain to transfer to the target domain, maintaining the idea of the strength of the smell, but not its negative quality. Hence, the presence of the verb is exploited to delineate the intensity of the feature highlighted, but the nature of the exact feature, together with the context where it is detected, lead to the exclusion of the negativity, which would ordinarily be central to the meaning of “to reek of”. In (88), reeking of “quality” is clearly meant as a compliment; the fact that it reeks indicates that the level of quality in the adaptation is significant. Similarly, the reek of authenticity in (84), cannot be ignored but, since it is an attractive feature, this is perceived as an advantage: if “the sets and the clothes” reek of authenticity, this means that the viewer cannot avoid “smelling”, noticing it, and thus appreciating the show for its accuracy. In (89), once again the fact that the traits listed are “class, eloquence, sophistication” assures the hearer that “reeking of” them is a merit, rather than a fault. In the final sentence, the term “awesomeness” is the one that is most positively connoted, creating a jarring contrast between the verb and the noun; it is not surprising, then, that it is the less frequent among these five collocates. It should be remembered, nonetheless, that this conceptual mapping, selecting one feature of the verb and discarding another, remains a secondary trend within the data, where 954 collocations on 1.043 instead rely on the strongly negative conceptualisation linked to the verb “to reek of” in order to communicate the salient aspects of the experience discussed.

4.2.2. Stink of, Scent, Sniff (at)

The last three verbs listed here, “to stink of”, “to scent” and “to sniff (at)”, have the unifying feature of possessing few metaphorical collocates, amounting to a scarce number of metaphorical collocations in total, especially when considering their general usage. Therefore, they are all discussed in this paragraph, with a list of collocates and some examples of usage in context for each of them.

<i>To Stink of: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. death	42,00	2.21	5. desperation	8,00	5.07
2. corruption	23,00	3.54	6. racism	6,00	2.6
3. hypocrisy	14,00	6.27	7. cronyism	5,00	7
4. fear	14,00	2.78	8. politics	5,00	0.55
TOTAL	117,00				

Table 4.5 Metaphorical usage of “to stink of”

The verb “to stink of” is the second example of “verb + preposition + object of the preposition” structure which has been considered. This decision is once again due to the fact that “to stink” is conspicuously rarer and not used metaphorically; “to stink of”, on the other hand, is used with a higher frequency, and with some metaphorical collocations. Once again, it is a kind of expression that in Viberg’s classification would be categorised as copulative, with a phenomenon-based verb selecting the entity that is experienced as its subject. As the verb “to reek of”, “to stink of” is evidently negative, and the perceptual quality it designates is undoubtedly unpleasant, and its unpleasantness is enhanced by the fact that it is difficult to ignore. Among the total of 635 tokens, 518 are literal, and the most frequent collocates are “sweat”, “urine” or “fish”, all three referring to types of smell that are generally deemed as at least bothersome, if not downright disturbing. Consequently, when the collocates are metaphorical, the idea that these traits are undesirable, and that perceiving them is distinctly unpleasant for the experiencer, remains central to the mapping. In terms of cognitive topology, the roles and relations in the source domain are maintained in the mapping: the entity possessing an undesirable characteristic corresponds to the object emitting the distasteful smell, the characteristic itself corresponds to the smell, and the human being that notices the characteristic corresponds to the individual detecting the smell. All of the collocates appearing in the list for “to stink of” were also part of the collocates for “to reek of”, suggesting that the two verbs could be used almost interchangeably. Nonetheless, the latter appears to be more frequent, and thus it presented the additional mappings where the only feature that is relevant is the strength of the smell and not its unpleasantness, mapping which is completely absent here, with all collocates referring to unmistakably negative notions.

(91) Milanović said in an interview that in Zagreb things "*stink of corruption*". (enTenTen15: 2015)

(92) Finally, it *stinks of hypocrisy* when the upper class politicians, academics and policy makers, who received free education, start wanting to introduce tuition fees on the young [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

In both sentences, the meaning of the expression selected is clear: if an entity possesses a feature that can be conceptualised as something that it “stinks of”, that means that it is inherently negative and undesirable, and that it is conspicuous to an extent that renders it impossible to discount it. This is exemplified by the conceptual metaphor HAVING A NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTIC IS STINKING OF SOMETHING. In (91), it is the general situation in the city that becomes an object whose most prominent characteristic is “corruption”, with the individual Milanović fulfilling the active role of the one detecting it. In (92), the underlying conceptual structure that the metaphorical expression establishes is similar: the intentions of the politicians are the entity in question, the smell that they emit is one of “hypocrisy”, and the speaker is the one perceiving it and formulating a judgement on the situation. In both cases, the collocates are already heavily characterised as negative features; the combination with the verb enhances this negativity by correlating it to the material experience of an obnoxious smell that imposes itself on the senses of the experiencer.

<i>To Scent: Metaphorical Usage</i>					
<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>	<u>OBJECTS</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>T-SCORE</u>
1. blood	39,00	-	3. victory	22,00	1.88
2. danger	35,00	2.74			
TOTAL					
	96,00				

Table 4.6 Metaphorical usage of “to scent”

Within a total of 9.489 tokens, 96 instances of metaphorical usage have been identified for “to scent”. The verb has three main related meanings: the first one, intransitive, is “to exude a certain odour or perfume”, the second one, transitive, is “to imbue something with an odour” (generally a pleasant one), while the third one, transitive, is “to apprehend something by means of smelling it”. In the literal acceptance, the verb assumes primarily the first two meanings, with “candle” being the most frequent collocate by a great deal, followed by “oil” and

“product”. On the other hand, in its metaphorical acceptance it acquires the third meaning, with the mapping selecting the conceptual elements of an entity actively perceiving an object by means of metaphorically smelling it, without a positive evaluation of the smell necessarily implied. Generally speaking, the conceptual metaphor posited in this mapping is PERCEIVING IS SCENTING, SENSING IS SCENTING, with the elements of instinct and intuition, already encountered among the metaphors produced with “to smell”, playing an indispensable role in this mechanism of perception. The implications are that the object in question exudes a certain smell that allows the perceiver to identify it, and that the perceiver has the necessary ability required to sense and recognise it.

(93) Williams *scented blood* and Muguruza crumbled, a double-fault on set point gift-wrapping the lead to Serena [...] (enTenTen15: 2015)

(94) The "capitalists and their tools [...] already begin to *scent the impending dangers* of trades-union socialism and initiatory steps are on foot [...] to construe labour combinations as conspiracies against commerce and industry[...]" (enTenTen15: 2015)

(95) With the French backs against the wall and the Germans *scenting final victory* the fighting became increasingly frenzied. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In (93), the metaphor SENSING WEAKNESS IS SCENTING BLOOD evokes a hunting frame, mapping the tennis player Serena Williams unto the figure of a hound and her opponent Muguruza unto an animal that is being hunted. Hence, the mapping allows for the conceptualisation of the intellectual activity of recognising signs of weakness in the manner an opponent is playing as the physical activity of scenting the blood of the prey, suggesting that the prey is hurt and thus less likely to escape its hunter. Therefore, the competitiveness which characterises the target domain of sports played at a professional level is interpreted in terms of the hostility and violence ordinarily linked to the activity of hunting. On the other hand, in (94) the context is that of class conflicts, with “the capitalists and their tools” taking on the role of hunters and “trade-union socialism” the role of hunted. “Socialism” acquires the feature of producing the smell of danger, which allows the capitalists to accurately identify the source of the impending danger they are perceiving and act accordingly, adopting measures to contrast it. While previously “blood” maintained a metonymical relationship with the source domain of hunting, here “danger” is already notional, and the source domain offers solely the roles and the connections that can be drawn among them, with one faction clearly exerting more power over

the situation depicted than the other one. In the last example, the situation is once again one of conflict, even though this is interpreted through wildly different contexts in the three sentences; in (95), it is the context of war, and the metaphorical smell is not a feature directly attributable to the “losing side”, as in (93) and (94), but a feature of the external situation. Nonetheless, the fundamental notion that is being communicated is that there are two sides exhibiting an imbalance of power, with the one that is able to “scent” being the one that can recognise the opportunity for victory, and the other one finding itself at a disadvantage, with the “backs against the wall”.

<i>To Sniff (at): Metaphorical Usage</i>					
OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE	OBJECTS	FREQUENCY	T-SCORE
1. playoff (2,00 ‘at’)	39,00	-	3. idea (‘at’)	10,00	4.84
2. blood	13,00	-	4. people (‘at’)	1,00	-
TOTAL					
	63,00				

Table 4.7 Metaphorical usage of “to sniff (at)”

In this instance, the analysis considered both “to sniff” and “to sniff at”, inasmuch as a few instances of metaphorical usage were found in both forms; hence, within a total of 4.795 (sum of the tokens of both verbs), 63 metaphorical collocations were found¹⁴. In its literal meaning, it refers to the action of smelling something by sniffing it, and when the preposition “at” is added, a specific target of the action is specified; the most frequent collocates are “air”, “glue”, or “ground”. When it is used metaphorically, it can mean merely “to perceive something”, through the mapping PERCEIVING IS SNIFFING, or, in some instances of “to sniff at”, it qualifies a specific attitude toward the object experienced, one of contempt and disdain, owing to the mapping SHOWING CONTEMPT IS SNIFFING AT.

(96) They are a basketball team that will be lucky to even *sniff the playoffs*. (enTenTen15: 2015)

(97) So much so, that gaping holes began to appear in the home side's defence and the visitors, suddenly *sniffing blood* in the water, broke free from their 'Warrenball' shackles to run riot. (enTenTen15: 2015)

¹⁴ the table signals the specific form to which they belong.

(98) Besides viewing it as unhealthy, proud home cooks often *sniff at the idea* of rummaging in the freezer for a quick-fix family meal. (enTenTen15: 2015)

In the first two examples, the conceptual metaphor employed is the former, PERCEIVING IS SNIFFING: in (96), the basketball team in question becomes the individual with the ability to perceive the smell, and the playoffs are the entity that can be apprehended through the sense of smell. Thanks to the frame evoked through the metaphor, the concept that this team will be lucky to even entertain, however briefly, the possibility of accessing the playoffs, is succinctly and efficiently encoded within the linguistic material. In (97), though the same metaphorical mechanism motivates the mapping, there is an ulterior metonymical passage, with the metonymy BLOOD FOR WEAKNESS exploited within a context of sports, where the element of competition is central. Once again, of the two opposing sides facing each other one becomes the hunter and one becomes the hunted, and when the latter shows signs of weakness, the former is capable of detecting it and using it to its advantage. Unlike the other two, the last sentence illustrates the SHOWING CONTEMPT IS SNIFFING AT metaphor, where the physical act of sniffing becomes the conduit for the expression of a mental state, with the “proud home cooks” in the active role of experiencers and the “quick-fix family meal” in the passive role of the (undesirable) experienced.

This concludes the analysis of the verbs connected to the sense of smell and their applications throughout various domain of human experience, where they are exploited to encode and communicate nuances of meaning by employing communal and widespread bodily experiences, and the frame of references and assumptions connected to them, to conceptualise a wide array of more abstract concepts and situations. The next and final chapter will be devoted to a general discussion of all the data.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1. The role of perception

The wealth of information we regularly rely on to formulate judgments on the external world and make decisions is filtered through our senses. The significance of their role in the mechanisms we utilise to elaborate information originating from our surroundings is undisputed, and increasingly more attention is being devoted to the significance of their role in the meaning-creating processes which take place inside our minds, organising and lending structure to that which is not originally apprehended through physical means. Among the most common source domains in metaphorical mappings, together with ‘animals’, ‘plants’, or ‘forces’, we find ‘human body’ and ‘food’ (Kövecses 2002 in Evans and Green 2006: 297), which are two essential elements of the corporeal experiences considered here. The bodily interactions with our environment yield a considerable amount of knowledge, associations and logical connections that become engraved in our memory through repetition and are common enough to allow us to assume they are shared by at least the members of our immediate community, if not members of larger segments of humanity. Metaphorical language does not erect fences confining our understanding of the environment, but rather it provides bricks, aiding us in the practice of building internal representations of the external world. Therefore, once these bricks or packets of information are at our disposal, they readily adapt to other contexts and inform our approach to them, through hiding and highlighting (Evans and Green 2006: 303). These two complementary concepts refer to the consequences of looking at a target domain through the lens of a source domain, which necessarily entails that certain aspects of the target domain are selected as more salient, while others are instead overlooked. Inasmuch

as the metaphors considered here pertain to the area of perception, they don't differ fundamentally in their manner of representing the target domain; nevertheless, a discrepancy can be detected between them in terms of the level of attainability they convey. For example, when a collocate such as "victory" is framed within a context of tasting, it acquires a certain consistency that allows speakers to conceptualise it as somewhat solid and apprehensible, attainable in the foreseeable future; on the other hand, when it is placed within the context of smelling, it retains an immaterial quality that renders it less tangible, detectable and yet not necessarily obtainable.

Considering the notion of corporeal experience as the source of widespread and accessible blueprints offering a window into less accessible concepts, it appears coherent that such an experience should be expected to fulfil the role of source domain in the metaphorical mappings. This expectation is satisfied in the vast majority of mappings encountered here, with one significant exception: the constructions "to taste + possessive pronoun + way" or "to smell + poss. pron. + way", which assign to, respectively, the area of taste perception and the area of smell perception, the role of target domain, in TASTING IS MOVING and SMELLING IS MOVING. This is possible inasmuch as the source domain in this mapping is still rooted in the realm of physical experience, depicting a bodily function which can be thought of as even more basic than the activities of tasting and smelling. Thus, the idea of moving through a space provides the fundamental image schema depicting the action evoked, and the idea of tasting or smelling provides the modality through which the action is carried out. The blending of both corporeal experiences creates a new image that is more than the sum of its parts, depicting a kind of action that is not merely a movement nor merely a gustatory or olfactory experience.

It should be noted that, as I established in Chapter 1, throughout this thesis the "useful fiction" of the five senses folk model has been retained, drawing a line between the verbs related to taste and the verbs related to smell. This has proven to be especially useful in the present analysis of verbs, since, while with lexical categories such as adjectives an overlap in the description of perceptual qualities is more likely, different verbs are clearly associated with different actions, rooted either in the field of gustation or in the field of olfaction. Clearly, as Auvray et al.'s study (2015) established, the concept of tasting behind all of the verbs related to this area of perception comprises an element of smelling in the form of retronasal olfaction in the mouth, which contributes to the creation of the flavour we actually experience. Nevertheless, this information is not available to most speakers, who recognise solely the role

of orthonasal olfaction through the nose as pertaining to the sense of smell. Therefore, the conscious and clear division of actions associated with one organ and actions associated with the other legitimises the decision of keeping the verbs for the former separated from the verbs for the latter.

5.2. Perception and knowledge

In addition to being clearly distinguished in terms of actions attributed to them, the two types of perceptual acts appear to be correlated to different methods of apprehending and elaborating information. More broadly, it has been proposed that there is a culture-specific tendency to associate the five senses with different types of knowledge: vision corresponds to reliable knowledge, hearing to indirect knowledge, touch and taste to experiential knowledge, and smell to intuitive knowledge (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2019). The ‘distant senses’, vision and hearing, are seen as more objective, hence they embody a kind of knowledge that is trustworthy and verifiable, though hearing implies an intermediate step lessening its effectiveness with respect to the immediacy of vision. The ‘contact sense’, touch and taste, which require closeness to the object of perception, are perceived as less reliable and more depending on personal experience, though touch is regarded as more superficial than taste, owing to the internal kind of contact required for the latter, and thus less likely to yield accurate experiential information (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2019: 55). The last sense, smell, though technically classifiable as ‘distant’ in such a division, is concerned with the most ephemeral data offered by our environment, and thus relegated to the less dependable kind of knowledge, which requires ulterior verification to be validated. The data displayed in this dissertation seem to buttress this association of senses and categories of knowledge, showing how the verbs of taste tend to describe personal experience, and in many cases evaluations and judgments derived from it, and the verbs of smell mostly convey notions of suspicion and intuition, once again often accompanied by evaluation and judgments. Nonetheless, since a wider variety of verbs related to these senses has been selected, the scope of the metaphor, i.e., the range of target domains to which a source concept can be applied (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2019), has been widened.

The evaluative aspect undoubtedly assumes an important role in the two ‘chemical senses’, while sight, hearing and touch offer relatively more neutral representations of the target domain within which they are introduced (Winter 2019). The general mappings guiding the metaphorical collocations for the two main verbs of taste perception, “to taste” and “to

savo(u)r”, are EXPERIENCING IS TASTING and ENJOYING IS SAVOURING, with the latter encoding a decidedly positive experience. The knowledge acquired in tasting and in savouring is experiential, deriving from the direct and extensive contact with the object of perception. In the case of the other verbs, the relation to experience is different; while in the previous instances the focus was on the role of the experiencer and the experiential knowledge they acquired, here it is shifted toward the creator of the experience, and thus the experiential knowledge is not acquired but rather shaped and defined, to be experientially acquired only afterwards. The metaphors realised through these verbs, from ADDING EXCITEMENT IS SPICING UP to MAKING MORE PLEASANT IS SWEETENING and SPOILING IS SOURING, characterise qualities that are instilled within the experience, once again implying a process of either improvement or worsening that is to be evaluated. Throughout all of its variations, the field of taste perception, being defined by direct contact with the object of perception and by a perceptual act that is deeply subjective, concerns the kind of knowledge that derives from close and individual experience.

This feature of subjectivity is shared by the field of smell, which, on the other hand, is associated with intuitive knowledge. The knowledge that is encoded through the metaphors related to smell is not acquired by means of direct experience; as the metaphors SUSPECTING IS SMELLING and PERCEIVING IS SMELLING suggest, it is linked to instinct, to the idea of suspecting or intuiting something. Similarly, “to sniff” and “to scent”, verbs that signify the basic act of apprehending a smell as the verb “to smell” itself, are utilised in similar metaphors such as PERCEIVING IS SNIFFING and SENSING IS SCENTING. Interestingly, in some of the fixed expressions analysed the meaning of “to smell” is slightly shifted as a result of the pairing with a specific collocate; for example, in “to smell the coffee” I proposed a REALISING IS SMELLING metaphor, where there is a higher level of awareness, though it is still distinct from the certainty of a metaphor like KNOWING IS SEEING (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2019: 47). Conversely, “to smell the roses” suggests an ENJOYING IS SMELLING metaphor, which once again is motivated by the association with the collocate and functions in this very specific context. Besides these instances of fixed expressions, the act of smelling appears to indicate an intuitive knowledge deriving from a subjective point of view. The other verbs add an evaluative component to the subjectivity of the intuitive act; in “to reek of” and “to stink of”, the object of perception becomes the subject, but there is still an entity that is perceiving the smell, and judging it in a negative light, according to the HAVING A NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTIC IS REEKING OF SOMETHING and HAVING A NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTIC IS STINKING OF SOMETHING metaphors. The only exception to this

rule is the small group of collocations motivated by the HAVING A STRONG CHARACTERISTIC IS REEKING OF SOMETHING metaphor, where the negative appraisal is hidden, while the idea of detection is highlighted.

In conclusion, it can be maintained that the data analysed has shown how the nuances of corporeal experience lend themselves to portray the nuances of incorporeal experience, and how the process of using schemas and models from embodied experience to conceptualise external input emerges through the kind of language we chose to communicate and exchange information about it. Since this monolingual study focuses on the English language, it is impossible to make definitive statements on the universality of these mappings. Nonetheless, it might be maintained that the degree of variation in the relative relevance of the senses, once we distance ourselves from Western culture, could cause some shifts in the assignment of different perceptual experiences to different types of acquisition of knowledge. However, in a more general sense it seems reasonable to expect the role of the field of perception as a source domain in metaphorical mappings to be central even across different languages, since the senses offer, at least to some extent, a universally shared experiential basis upon which communication may be founded.

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