



## Identity Construction through Metaphoric Manifestations in Omar Shahid Hamid's Crime Thriller, 'The Prisoner'

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### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords:

Conceptual mapping,  
Critical Metaphor Analysis,  
Metaphor,  
Identity conceptualization.

*Metaphors have traditionally been employed in literature as a stylistic feature to enhance the literariness of the genre. The evolution of metaphors through the literature foregrounds their multifaceted role in highlighting the overt and covert meaning construction. The current study investigates the construction of identity of the main characters, through the specific employment of metaphors in the crime thriller, The Prisoner by Omar Shahid Hamid. The theoretical perspective of metaphor analysis is informed by Charteris Black's frame work of Critical Metaphor Analysis. The metaphors are analyzed through the cognitive conceptualization and trans-domain mapping which delineates the role of metaphors in identity construction. The results of the investigation substantiated that the metaphors are employed in the text to construct the identity of the characters present in the novel, and readers can relate them to real life characters found in our society as well. The paper has implications of psycho-social and political settings and practices in the Pakistani society.*

### INTRODUCTION

The current study investigates the role of metaphors as used in Omar Shahid Hamid's crime thriller, *The Prisoner* (2013). The crime thriller contains numerous researchable aspects, however, the investigation at hand focuses on the inquiry into the use of metaphoric manifestations for identity construction and image stamping in the text to emphasize the cognitive semantic role of metaphors for constructing and marking the identities of the main characters in the novel. Metaphor, with its conventional perception as a stylistic feature having only literary use, has evolved into a cognitive device with a subtle underpinning of pragmatic knowledge conjoined with its semantic conceptualization.

The conventional function of metaphors is to create representations and develop an impact on the readers by comparing one entity with another. Although the two entities are entirely distinct in

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their qualities yet the underlying meaning is mapped with each other to give the readers conceptual clarity. The metaphor transfers a significant quality of one entity to the other. This exchange of quality from one to the other entity constructs a new meaning of the existing concept or the situation. While highlighting the importance of metaphors in meaning construction, Eldin (2014) points at the etymology of the word and observes that metaphor is a compound of two Greek words, i.e. Meta meaning with or beyond and phor or phere, meaning carrying. Hence, the word metaphor suggests the imprints of one thought or an identity carrying forward to another level or thought process. The metaphors actually replace and substantiate the use of the longer explanations while comparing two dissimilar objects, events or people. The conceptualization of metaphors allows the readers to imagine and sometimes even feel the undercurrent meaning or referred phenomenon and transcend the general and common literal meaning. Metaphors invigorate the imagination of the readers and hence enable them to gauge the in-depth meaning of the text.

Black (2004) while considering metaphor as, “a figure of speech that is typically used in persuasion ...because it represents a novel way of viewing the world that offers some fresh insight.” further explains the conventional metaphor and highlights its importance in meaning making through comparison of two diverse elements. The specific components of the conventional metaphor include ‘the original context (or tenor), that with which it is compared (the vehicle) and the basis for such a comparison (the grounds). He also mentions the vagueness that is sometimes associated with the term metaphor. He opines that at times it is difficult to understand the meaning when the metaphor is used for some linguistic element. It creates confusion, whether it refers to the ‘tenor’ and ‘vehicle’ or to the ‘ground’ itself. This signifies that, ‘the linguistic outcome’ can be misrepresented and understood with the process of conceptual comprehension (Black, 2004, p.7).

According to Lakoff (1993), metaphors are “categorized by a huge system of cross-domain mappings, and this system is made use of in novel metaphors” (Lakoff, 1993, p.203). The source domain being the referred matter and the target domain is the referral presence. He further observes that the metaphor inquiry seeks to investigate the predominant system that governs our comprehension of the cognitively “abstract” ideas, proceeded by “abstract reasoning”. The concepts related to, “.... time, quantity, state, change, action, cause, purpose, means, modality, and even concept of a category.” (Lakoff, 1993, p.212). He impresses upon the nature of metaphor as being ‘conceptual’ rather than to be thought of as merely an element of the discourse.

## **Aims and Objectives**

This study aims to:

- Explore metaphoric manifestations in the selected text ‘The Prisoner’ by Omar Shahid Hamid
- Highlight identity construction through metaphoric manifestations in the selected text

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The use of metaphor has been extensively explored by several researchers from multi-dimensional angles. Ortony (1993) quotes Aristotle and observes that he was interested in the study of the relationship between metaphor and language and the role of metaphor in communication. He believes that understanding of metaphor leads to the creation of a novel concept and thought process. Metaphor creation involves intersecting the two apparently diverse concepts and trying to establish commonality which is conceptualization of the idea that is referred to. Each mapping is a fixed set of ontological correspondence, between entities in a source domain and entities in a target domain.

Black (2004) discusses the nature of metaphor as a rhetoric tool rather than just a linguistic feature that aims to convey a specific meaning and explains the cognizance of metaphor inquiry from a novel perspective which answers the understanding of abstract qualities of thought processes. He identifies the metaphor as a strong ontological device which does not merely serve the purpose of explanation of things or concepts rather it also communicates a moral and even emotional view. He stresses that the understanding of the metaphors is not only on the ontological level rather it is connected with the situational knowledge that surrounds the occurrence of the events. Black's (2004) framework involves, using "the presence of incongruity or semantic tension – either at linguistic, pragmatic or cognitive levels – resulting from a shift in domain use" as a guiding criterion for the identification of a metaphor. The identification, then, follows a process of studying the frequency of use which leads the cognition through the metaphoric expressions (Black, 2004, p.35). Goatly (1997) explains that, "Metaphor occurs when a unit of discourse is used to refer unconventionally to an object, process or concept, or colligates in an unconventional way." (Goatly, 1997, p.8). Steen (2007) argues that indirect comparison is just the only singular aspect of comparison through metaphors. In a less traditional explanation of metaphor, the 'cross-domain' mapping can be achieved through direct comparison in cognitive linguistics. The conceptual level of analysis involves indirect comparison to achieve cognitive comprehension of the concept. Izwaini (2003) through a corpus-based study of metaphor in information technology, asserts that the semantic quality of the metaphor provides a very structured device for the explanation of numerous scientific realms. In logical and specialized jargon, lexical items of general language are metaphorically used to frame an uncommon language jargon. Metaphor plays a significant role in scientific discourse while transforming it into scientific conceptions. The figurative aspect of metaphor is utilized to forward a model to understand scientific facts, theories and concepts. At this point, metaphor in science and technology moves rather into terminology and specialized language.

Mohammad (2012) uses the frame work of Black's (2014) theory of Critical Metaphor Analysis to investigate and categorize the metaphors pertaining to nature. The research interprets, explains and highlights the specific nature and usage of the metaphors, and observes that various metaphors are used in the Quran as credible sources to convince the masses to have faith in God Almighty. Arhens (2012) investigates the specific use of metaphors in linguistics, Social Sciences and Humanities and highlights the importance of metaphors in understanding and internalizing the emotions, feelings and attitudes of the people through a very deep and effective lens. Eldin (2014) using Black's (2014) frame work of metaphor analysis, studies the metaphors used in the Holy Quran. Through a thorough and detailed categorization and analysis of the metaphors from nature in the Holy Quran, the researcher highlights the unique employment of metaphors as a means of maximizing readers' understanding. The hypothesis underlying this

new approach is that the conceptual metaphors penetrate our understanding of the world around us and they shape our attitude towards it.

Moser (2000) studies the link between the use of metaphors in everyday life experiences and organizational psychology and identifies the important role of metaphors in not only intersecting between the different categories of research as well as their unique role in presenting reality in terms of a translucent reference. Smith & Eisenberg (1987) investigate the nature of metaphors and highlight their specific role in articulating and understanding the thought processes and behavior of human beings. N'dung'u (2015) examines the role of metaphors in meaning construction and argues that frequently used metaphors in communicating messages generally curtail the cognition of certain concepts in linguistic use. The researcher explores the metaphors used in Nagugi wa' Thiango's novel, *Matigari ma Njiruungi* (1987) to foreground their importance in the conceptualization of the ideals of "governance, power and culture" (p.123). Peirce (2000) studies the construction of social identity, especially in the case of language acquisition and observes that it is a complex phenomenon and can be understood by keeping the power structures under consideration which influence the shaping of thought processes as well as their manifestations into behavioral patterns. He further, observes the attributes of identity construction as a multifarious, inconsistent, and dynamic process which is energetic, and can transcend the physical reality. In addition, identity is shaped through language and should be understood with respect to larger social processes.

The foregoing literature review suggests that though the metaphor has been studied with diverse lens but it has not been explored in the backdrop of identity construction. This gap thus forms the premise for the present study as it investigates the metaphoric manifestations in identity construction in the crime thriller, *The Prisoner* written by Omar Shahid Hamid. The study will further explore the conceptual mapping of the overt concepts to the covert meaning through the medium of metaphors.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The current study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative method which construes data location, tabulation and category formation. This process is followed by an in-depth analysis of the categorized data. The study is informed by Charteris Black's (2004) framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis, which is an approach of inquiry of, "metaphor analysis that... aims to reveal the covert ...intentions of language users." and which, "enables us to challenge existing ways of thinking and feeling about human behaviour and its relation to language." (Black, 2000, p.34). Metaphor is active in both the development of a conceptual framework for presenting new ideas and in providing new words to fill lexical gaps. Black (2004) considers conceptual analysis of the metaphors as a thought provoking and an innovative approach that provides intrinsic perception and conceptualization of the comparison by referring to the already established position of the objects, situations or processes. The current investigation uses descriptive closed study to collect data from the crime thriller, *The Prisoner* written by Omer Shahid Hamid. The focus of the study is the investigation of the types of metaphors employed by the author. The analysis uses Charteris Black's (2004) Conceptual Metaphor Analysis frame work, which involves the multi stage exploration process that construes the strategic outline including: "Metaphor Identification", "Interpretation" and "explanation" (p.37-38 ). The procedure used in

the study is given in the following steps:

### **Metaphor Identification**

The first step of the analysis is based on the location of the metaphors in sample text as the delineation of the words that are metaphors need a very critical view as they are embedded in the texts. It is important to establish the presence of semantic “tension” between “the source domain” and “the target domain” which suggest meaning construction (Black, 2004, p. 37).

### **Metaphor Interpretation**

The second stage, “involves establishing a relationship between metaphor and the cognitive and pragmatic factors that determine them.” (Black, 2004, p. 37) At this stage metaphor mapping is understood with regards to the metaphors and the conceptual reference - the target. The individual mappings establish links between the linguistic elements and the conceptual referrals, resulting in cognition of the intrinsic meaning.

### **Metaphor Explanation**

The third stage construes finding out the referred meaning that the target domain is mapping. Cognitive clarity is understood through the identification of the elements or characteristics that are mutually compared for the identity construction. The lexical representation of the intricate cognitive interface signifies the covert meaning that help in cross domain mapping. The arrangement of conceptual representations and conceptual keys and outline of the assessment of representation will support the ideology and functions through the interpretation of metaphors. There are many subtle and important implications for the metaphors. The study of metaphor conceptually enables the readers to comprehend the text intrinsically. Thus, metaphors allow us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently amorphous theme with reference to a more focused subject matter.

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

A careful analysis of the text revealed the following categories of manifested metaphors:

**Table: 1 Categories of Metaphors found in the Text**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Nature	48	Dirt, earth, wind
Animals	10	Dogs, crocodile, predator
Clothing	3	Pockets, dress
Prison	9	VIP, Prison

Power	1	Law
Dust	12	Dirt
Religion	4	<i>Jihadis</i> , Christians
Abusive	9	Green bastard
Contextual	4	Orangi as maze
Money	4	Stacks, Quaid e Azam
Human Attributes	6	Screaming nerve
Game	3	Cards, cricket
Time	4	5 o' clock shadow
Extended Caricature	5	<i>Pakora</i> , Hanuman, Dr Death
Names	24	Ateeq Tension, Adnan Doodhwala

The interactional mapping of the target domain with the source domain foregrounds the use of metaphors in the novel to highlight the inner personalities of the characters having, covert schemas that stamp certain specific identity traits. The discussion focusing on explanation and analysis of the metaphors and their role in adding tangible details in enhancing the sensory perceptions is subsequently stated:

### **Metaphors from Nature**

It is generally observed that in literature, nature is assumed to have an inter-connected bond with mankind. Nature's role in literature is celebrated as a powerful source of happiness, rejuvenation and rebirth. The famous Romantic poet, William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in his poems, depicts nature as reverberating with positivity of life and therefore, the communion with nature is identified with emanating positive forces that play a central role in affecting human beings. In the crime thriller, *The Prisoner*, metaphors pertaining to nature are used in a subtle mode that unearths the deep and dense covert meanings and support the identity construction of the prominent characters in the novel. Out of the 150 metaphors identified in the current study, the maximum number of metaphors pertain to nature. There are over 65 metaphors from nature. The power of natural elements and their impact serves as a technique in bringing out the covert and hidden meaning by sharpening their understanding and influence, hence adding a highly

powerful meaning to the text. The subsequent following examples will illustrate this technique.

### ***Bird***

The metaphor of “song bird” has been used twice in the beginning of the novel. Just as the birds sing, journalists also air their voices, i.e. ideas, thoughts, propaganda and information. The writer uses this metaphor to signify the character of the American journalist, whose role is news reporting and before his kidnapping, he was covering sensitive subject related to Jihadis. So, the writer appropriately uses the metaphor of “song bird”. Akbar, asks, “Kyun, (why) Major sahib, looks like you've lost your American songbird?” (p.19). The same metaphor is repeated when Akbar confirms that the journalist has not been killed, rather his presence is secretly confirmed to be in Karachi, hence, Akbar says, “Your songbird is still in Karachi and he is still alive.” (p.22). There is another covert, contextual information attached to it which is linked with the basic theme of the novel, i.e. the kidnapping and confinement of the American journalist. The songbirds are sometimes caged by people and await their freedom, similarly the American journalist was also confined and was awaiting his fate.

### ***Animals***

In this category, primarily the animals which are metaphorically alluded to, are predominantly ferocious or wild. The examples include, wolves, predators, dogs, sharks, stallions, etc., and second category includes smaller creatures like cockroaches, spiders and crawling insects. This prominent demarcation points at the two extremes of human inherent nature and the projected behavior; on the one hand his personality resounds with power, authority, strength, youth and control and on the other hand, weakness encompasses him when he is hunted, pushed to a nerve shattering experience or brought down, broken, trodden upon or deceived and trapped. For example, Akbar, the leading character, a police officer, hunts down a wanted hardcore political extremist, “Adnan Doodhwala”. However, Akbar, is not given cover by his superiors, already caught in the quagmire of political corruption. Akbar feels that he was about to be thrown in front of the nefarious party workers who would devour him for capturing and killing their front man. Hence, he says, “Hanuman was willing to throw me to wolves over the killing of ‘Adnan Doodhwala.’” (p. 239). Here the metaphoric manifestation of political party activists is extremely well mapped as the “wolves” synonymously portray the vicious, wild and uncouth behavior and stamp image of the political miscreants, who exhibit this vengeance and revenge drenched behavior to anyone who stands in their way of achieving their peculiar political agendas. The conceptual mapping of ferocious bestial nature of party mob with that of wolves is aptly achieved as both hunt and kill their prey.

### ***Stallions***

Added to this category pertaining to the wild animals is, a thorough breed, “Stallion” which is more muscular, powerful and strong than the ordinary horses. In the novel, Akbar, is portrayed to have wild strength, power and persistence that makes him fearless and uncontrollable in crime fighting and dealing with criminal masterminds and their political allies and agents. He is ruthless and almost merciless in handling the criminal political extremists and has more enemies than friends. He metaphorically refers himself to a stallion, showing his untamed strength and

courage as compared to another character, Maqsood Mahr, a DSP, who lacks both of these attributes. Akbar says, “If I come back, there can't be two stallions in the same field.” But sarcastically remembers that “Maqsood was never much of a stallion. More of a donkey, really.” (p. 229). Maqsood is alluded to a “donkey” which is traditionally considered to have little brain and is always used to carry loads. Maqsood is characterized as drenched in personal and professional insecurities, which he tries to substitute by offering his favors to the powerful people in power seats. His favors extended “from providing prostitutes and pimping to money extortions.” (p. 229). The metaphor “donkey” is appropriately used to paint the personality of Maqsood Mahr who is always ready to pick and carry the load of the superiors to safeguard his post.

### ***Scavenger***

Aligning the bestial nature of the characters included in the novel, is a comment on the real nature of Maqsood Mahr, who would go to any extreme to save his position, his post and his worth in the eyes of his superiors. The writer says, “That was the nature of the beast. Maqsood was a scavenger and, sighting a weakened prey, he would always swoop in to feast on the carrion.” (p. 258). The statement contains multiple connected metaphors, including, “beast”, “scavenger”, “weakened prey” and “swoop”. Maqsood is metaphorically compared to a beast. The nature of Maqsood is compared to the nature of the beast, who would, hunt and devour its prey. Similar to this concept, Maqsood is portrayed to have the nature of the predator who would kill to satiate its lust for food. He is also called, “scavenger” to exhibit the carnivorous streak of his real inherent persona that would wait to attack the “weakened prey”. Maqsood would, wait for his opponents to become weak, and then he would plan his kill. The verb “swoop” is also related to the scavenger’s diving while flying to attack its prey. Maqsood also awaits his opponent’s weak moment, when he could take advantage and de-stable them as he did in case of Akbar who is framed and jailed for a murder he did not commit.

### ***Sharks***

The writer in the novel, *The Prisoner* uses the metaphor of shark, though for only once, yet the meaning it conveys is highly critical. The writer says that “Sharks were circling” (p. 256). The metaphor of sharks is used in the text to represent cruel, taxing and vicious nature of journalism also known as paparazzi. The paparazzi is a globally known term to identify the vicious side of journalism that actually hunts the celebrities in order to seek their personal information for the sake of increasing their newspapers’ or channels’ ratings. Even the royal families, celebrities and prominent political figures are not spared from the spying and chasing. The fatal car accident of Princess Diana is a phenomenal example related to the paparazzi and yellow journalism. Curry (2000) quotes Princess Diana’s brother, who talks about the paparazzi and says that Princess Diana, “... talked endlessly of getting away from England mainly because of the treatment she received at the hands of the newspapers.” (p.945). In the novel included in the current study, after the death of a political leader, the SP Constantine observes that there was an uproar in media which was pressurizing the government to take extreme measures against the police officials involved in the incident. This shows the callous and highly critical role of media in disheveling the lives of people. Media was cruelly over excited over the death of Chandio and hence, wanted to blame police personnel for the murder. The journalists are compared with



sharks as sharks encircle their prey and wait for one limp or slack movement, before the final fatal attack, similarly the journalists were encircling the police headquarters, with a desire to make the final blow in terms of blaming Akbar for the murder he never committed. This role of journalism is often repeated in social media, through the term, 'lifafa journalist' (yellow journalist) which characterizes the negative role that the journalists play for personal gain.

### ***Predator***

The metaphor of "predator" is used in the novel to show the heinous personality of Ateeq Tension who is a political miscreant and corrupt party leader, involved in extortion, arms and drug deals and thrives on violence and killings. When he is caught and dealt with by the police, he wanted revenge. But he could not take personal revenge against the police officer who arrested him. Hence, "Tension has a look of a predator whose prey had managed to run away at the last instant." (p. 196). The use of this metaphor is synonymous with the overall portrayal of the wild and unleashed aggression and violence, that is how the political party is shown to have ruled the city. The characters involved with the political activities are merciless and attack the weaker ones. Again the power shift is conceptualized as previously discussed Akbar's role has been of a strong "Stallion" but since he is caught in a situation where he could be used as a scape goat to hush the uproar from media and political circles, hence he becomes the "prey" and Ateeq Tension becomes the "predator".

### ***Animal Fury***

Related to the violence and animal nature, another metaphor that is used in *The Prisoner* is "animal fury". In the novel, Yusuf Chandio, is presented as a reputable party leader, who laments his brother's murder but then in a fit of anger he, ".....rose with an animal fury and stabbed a finger at a startled Dr Death," (p.255). In this metaphoric expression the same concept of wild, unleashed bestial nature of Yusuf is hinted at. The character is shown to exhibit such behavior that is rampant with violence and corruption which is limitless. The high-sounding word, "rose" is used in the sentence to show the symbolic transformation of a desperately lamenting man to a ferocious beast, full of vengeance and rage.

### ***Crocodile***

Crocodiles are ferocious predators and beasts of prey. The apparently slow looking humongous animals are fast attackers and can easily kill the other predators as well. In the novel, Akbar compares himself with crocodiles, who, "... were all lying on the sandy bank, waiting for stray morsels to be thrown at them. The animals were endlessly patient. They reminded Akbar of himself." (p.318-319). He thinks that as these beasts were waiting for food to be thrown to them, he has also been waiting for the chance to be given to him to salvage himself and fight the crime and bring the lawless people to justice. He was arrested and jailed for the murder he did not commit. However, his being in prison, served the purpose of some people both in the police department and in the political party, who cashed his absence from duty for some time. But he was dormant and was made to wait for the chance which he got in terms of locating the kidnapped American journalist as a bargain for his freedom from prison and reinstatement to his post. His move was slow yet strategically fatal similar to the lethal and deceptive posture of the

crocodiles, who would pretend to be asleep yet are actually waiting for their prey.

### **Metaphor of Money**

Money in the hands of poor is need and in the hands of rich is power. The metaphor of money is used in a very subtle manner in the novel. Money is portrayed to be the example of utmost power which has a unique and compact power of marketing anything and everyone. It is this concept with which Home Minister says, "Persuading is much easier with the help of Quaid e Azam." (p.216). The metaphor of Quaid e Azam is a multi-faceted metaphor that is steeped in socio-political censure with its apparent meaning of terming currency notes as Quaid e Azam and undercurrent cognitive structure that hides a very deep and dense meaning. The currency notes of Pakistan have a very special print of the picture of Quaid e Azam. The character's use of the persuading power of the currency notes, outlines the salability of all norms, favours, allegiance, decisions and political and national agendas. With the rampant corruption, people involved in the game of money making, have put a price tag on everything and everyone. But the underlying meaning of the metaphor of "Quaid e Azam" is very pinching with its extremely satirical connotations. Quaid e Azam, the great leader of Pakistan, whose vision concretized the dream of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent, had the power and personal enigma to impact people, impress upon them, guide them and lead them on. The particular metaphoric employment of his title for the fraudulent use of money, conjoins the power of persuading and leading of money with the Quaid's name on the one hand and on the other, it reflects the baseness of the system and rampant corruption that would positively make people sell their souls to the devil, for the vicarious satiation of their lust for power and personal gains. Corruption is shown in the novel to be so cancerous that the corrupt are ready to sell their ideals, national interests and vision as a nation for the sake of monetary and political power. Hence, the metaphor of money is used to signify the power of money as, in the novel, *The Prisoner*, the writer comments, "Old enmities could be buried, for the right price." (p.215).

### **Metaphor of Prison**

The metaphor that resounds throughout the novel included in the research study is of "prison" and "prisoner". The metaphor of prison holds a very significant position as it has socio-politically rich undertones. The title of the novel is, *The Prisoner* which is an overarching metaphor and is reflected varied situations. From the word, "prison" that "... was stenciled on the side door." (p. 61) of the police vehicle to the comparison of jail to the Ivy League, the metaphor of prison is repeated many times. In a highly critical way, the writer exposes the criminality of the political system. The writer comments, "Jail was for sub continental leaders what Oxbridge or the Ivy League were to their western counterparts- a finishing school where the true Pedigree of a leader could be given its final touches." (p. 243). The metaphor of jail is pertinently contextual, keeping the political anarchy presented in the novel in particular and in the sub-continent in general. Being jailed, for the political activists and extremists, is something to be proud of. The political discourses that are generated during the political power show categories of the prison as something that qualifies a leader. Hence, the writer critically compares the concept of being jailed to acquiring a degree from famous high ranked universities of the world.

### ***VIP Prisoner***

The writer employs another metaphor related to the prison in a very cryptic comment as, “Rommel was living alone in a guest room on the Bleak House premises. The room he was staying in had been built to house VIP prisoners.” (p. 124). The metaphor of VIP prisoner is very ironic as it sheds light on the corrupt judicial and political system prevailing in Pakistan where the prisoners get privileges due to their positions and financial and political standings. This is a very severe social critique where by the writer hints at the tipped balance of justice system which has double standards for the rich and the poor.

In the text under research, a significant and fore boarding conceptual metaphor of “prisoners of our own destiny” is repeated twice at the climax of the story. The use of this metaphor at the concluding section of novel is very important as it outlines the undercurrent power play of destiny with which one cannot fight. The characters, especially the lead characters, Akbar and Constantine in particular and the rest of the characters in general are the prisoners in their own lives. The concept is very philosophic as it refers to the helplessness of man to ride against the tide- his fate. At one occasion, Akbar talking about the, events of his recent past that upturned his life twice, says, “In the end, I am what I am, I cannot break out of this cycle and my friend we are all prisoners of our own destiny.” (p. 314) and at the climax of the novel, Constantine reiterates the words of Akbar as, “What was it Akbar had said? In the end, we are all prisoners of our own destiny? And so was it.” (p.342). The entire story is set in such a manner that the characters, whether good or bad are caught up in their own problems, may it be their personal trauma or professional ordeal, are imprisoned by their fate and cannot escape it. That is the major reason the metaphor of prisoner is reverberating throughout the novel.

### **Lexicalized Metaphors**

There are numerous lexical items that are employed for the metaphors. The use of specific words reflects the hidden and the apparent meanings that characterize the personality of the characters in diverse situations. In one of the examples quoted from the text, Major Rommel shares the dire need to see Akbar, and tells him it was a “... matter of great urgency.” (p.10). The word, “great” is used to qualify the “urgency”. But, “great” is indicative of having a grandeur, a supreme stature. However, the usage of the word “great” signifies the writer’s emphasis on the importance of the meeting between Major Rommel and Akbar.

### ***Power Words***

The writer uses certain metaphors signifying power and supremacy, as well as exposing the class differences. Such metaphors are carefully embedded in the text. For example, the writer comments that “Zamzama was a haunt of the wealthy and well heeled.” (p. 106). Zamzama is a commercial area that is located in a very posh area of Karachi. Hence the term, “well heeled” is appropriately used as it signifies the well settled and comfortably residing elite. The kidnapping of the American journalist takes place in Zamazama. The writer further says that the residents of that area never faced such events rather such incidents took place in the areas like Lyari, Kati Pahari, Nazimabad inhabited by poor communities. In another example, Akbar says, “We are law!” (p. 86). The utterance bears a deep socio-political underpinning that points at the power

positions of the personnel associated with the police, political parties and agencies which in retrospect shape and create the personalities of characters.

### ***Abusive words***

The novel includes certain metaphors to foreground the contextual biasness between the civilian and army or police and hence, the writer portrays the lead character's anger at the involvement of the inexperienced army officer in the investigation. Hence, "Constantine was in a shitty mood." (p. 26) because he thinks that, "...bloody two-bit major." would not be able to solve the case and it was, "Just like Tarkeen to send poor green bastard." (p.22). The purpose of the use of the abusive lexical items as metaphor is to stamp the image of other's persona. In the novel while reflecting upon the moral corruption of the police department, a very satirical metaphor of, "Bureaucratic whore" (p. 191) is used to exhibit the baseness of the character of the IG Prison, who was willing to please any one at any cost just to save his job. Hence, the writer mentions him in the novel as, "He was a man willing to do anything to cling to his job." (p.191). The specific use of this metaphor identifies the presence of such characters in our societal set ups where for the personal gain, people would go to any length and fall to the abysmal depth of degradation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study attempted to investigate the specific use of metaphors in the crime thriller, *The Prisoner* as the mode of image stamping and identity construction, from the cognitive perspective. Working within the framework of Black (2004), the analysis of the metaphors foregrounds the identity construction through a very intelligent use of metaphors. The readers are introduced to the diverse set of characters, interspersed throughout the novel and are provided with a cross sectional view of their covert personalities. Hence, the cognitive fabrication of the identities of the characters is achieved through the strategically structured metaphor manifestations. By referring to the diverse characteristics of apparently dissimilar objects, natural elements, and concepts, Omar Shahid Hamid has been able to create identities and bring out their intrinsically concealed characteristics that are mirrored through the metaphoric expressions. The study concludes that cognitive metaphor analysis resonates strongly with psycho social multi-dimensional characterization by the writer, Omar Shahid Hamid.

## **FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present research suggests that in order to have a deeper understanding of the impact of metaphors on the meaning making process, further studies with other perspectives including philosophic values, belief systems and socio-political situations could be carried out.

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