



La Fleur as Feminine Archetype in Le Petit Prince

Linda Cahya Purnama^{1*}, I Made Rajeg², I Gede Oeinada³

¹²³Master of Linguistics, Universitas Udayana, Indonesia

e-mail: lindacahyapurnama19629@gmail.com¹, made.rajeg@unud.ac.id²,
gede.oeinada@unud.ac.id³

Abstract

This research examines the representation of women through anthropomorphism in *Le Petit Prince* by Saint - Exupéry (1943). It focuses on the figurative character of a feminine archetype. Previous studies on anthropomorphism focused on unseen meanings, metaphor categorisation, and the application of animals and natural entities to portray human behaviour, specifically women. Recent research aims to seek how *la fleur* depicts women, feminine characteristics, and patriarchal values in the French culture. The data are taken from *Le Petit Prince* in its original French version. This research is under the cognitive semantics field and uses the conceptual metaphor theory. This article solely focuses on ontological metaphor since it primarily observes how human characteristics are transferred to a non – human entity. Qualitative descriptive methods are applied to analyse the data by identifying anthropomorphic symbolic expressions and ontological metaphors related to the character of *La fleur*. Furthermore, the analysis continued by mapping the source domain and target domain to discover the structure of femininity in the story. *La fleur* works as an anthropomorphic metaphor imaging women's feelings, attitudes, behaviour, thoughts, and fragility. The representations reveal cultural principles and a patriarchal point of view where women are subtle and dependent in society's perspective, and all their actions are motivated by emotions. This research commits to cognitive metaphor by presenting how anthropomorphism in *Le Petit Prince* emphasises culturally impacted structures of femininity within French Society.

Keywords: *Anthropomorphism, French Culture, Ontological Metaphor*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas representasi perempuan melalui antropomorfisme dalam *Le Petit Prince* karya Saint - Exupéry (1943). Fokusnya adalah pada karakter figuratif *la fleur* sebagai arketipe feminin. Studi sebelumnya tentang antropomorfisme berfokus pada makna tersembunyi, kategorisasi metafora, serta penggunaan hewan dan entitas alam untuk menggambarkan perilaku manusia, khususnya perempuan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana *la fleur* menggambarkan representasi perempuan, karakteristik feminin, dan nilai patriarkal dalam budaya Prancis. Data diambil dari *Le Petit Prince* dalam versi asli bahasa Prancis. Penelitian ini berada dalam bidang semantik kognitif dan menggunakan teori metafora konseptual. Artikel ini secara khusus berfokus pada metafora ontologis terutama mengamati bagaimana karakteristik manusia ditransfer ke entitas nonmanusia. Metode deskriptif kualitatif diterapkan untuk menganalisis data yang dianalisis dengan mengidentifikasi ekspresi simbolis antropomorfik dan metafora ontologis terkait karakter *La fleur*. Selanjutnya, analisis dilanjutkan dengan memetakan domain sumber dan domain target untuk menemukan struktur feminitas dari cerita. *La Fleur* berperan sebagai metafora antropomorfik yang menggambarkan perasaan, sikap, perilaku, pikiran, dan kerentanan perempuan. Representasi ini mengungkapkan prinsip-prinsip budaya dan sudut pandang patriarkal di mana perempuan dianggap halus dan bergantung dalam perspektif masyarakat, dan semua tindakan mereka didorong oleh emosi. Penelitian ini berkomitmen pada metafora kognitif dengan menunjukkan bagaimana antropomorfisme dalam *Le Petit Prince* menonjolkan struktur kefemininan yang dipengaruhi budaya dalam masyarakat Prancis.

Kata Kunci : *Antropomorfisme, Budaya Prancis, Metafora Ontologis*

1. Introduction

Le Petit Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry became one of the most phenomenal books since its very first launch in New York in 1943. This French author and pilot did not only write a story, but it is a children's story for adults. The language is simple, but the philosophical value brings unmatched value to life. It dives into multiple subjects such as love, loss, loneliness, friendship, and life. These lessons are taught through the character *Le Petit Prince*, who travels the universe. Another thing that makes this book interesting to analyse is the usage of anthropomorphic elements within the story of the non – human characters. Hence, the author has succeeded in bringing the imaginary figures into the whole story. Anthropomorphism is able to be comprehended as an acknowledgement inclination to acknowledge how humans understand non – human creatures by infusing human characteristics Dolins (2021). Anthropomorphism does not work on a surface as an ornamental tool of a language. It resonates how humans think about immaterial ideas, complex feelings, and experience by proposing general human behaviours and attitudes to animals, plants, objects, and other entities in nature. Moreover, Persson et al. (2000) state that this action guides humans in developing definitions by the time they agree with an uncommon experience in life. The anthropomorphic value within a story not only improves the story itself but also represents the human impulse to develop meaning and identity through the symbolic images. Aside from the main character, *Le Petit Prince*, there is one character who also serves as an attractive value to learn. It is *la fleure* who is illustrated as a rose that embodies multi-layered femininity traits.

This point is essential to observe how a literary text conceals a gendered archetype in a non – human character. Based on the background, this research aims to find out what ontological aspects are involved in character through anthropomorphism and how these traits convey cognitive value through anthropomorphism using the conceptual metaphor approach. Previous research has studied cognitive semantics related to gender metaphors in *Umpasa* by Siagian and Sitorus (2023). This research shows how metaphorical expressions present viewpoints regarding femininity and masculinity that are carried culturally. Nevertheless, such research focuses on oral culture and local languages; the current analysis is on anthropomorphic metaphors revealing femininity in a story through French culture and literature perspectives.

Other researchers have broadly studied anthropomorphism and metaphor as cognitive and cultural functions for revealing human attitudes and behaviour, mainly femininity. For example, Liudmyla (2024) studied the conceptual correlation between animals as the source domain and women as the target domain by applying conceptual metaphor theory. This analysis observed an extensive corpus of nineteenth – century literatures. The research shows that animal metaphors are often applied to build destructive or negative images of female characters, disregarding the writer's gender. Those metaphors most likely portray women more frequently as wild animals than as domestic ones. This condition presents a hypothetical bias to relate femininity with impulsiveness. Correspondingly, the anthropomorphic metaphors are not merely restricted to literary poets or prose, but also emerge in other artistic literary works Gusriani (2022). Her research shows that six out of twelve song lyrics comprise anthropomorphic metaphors. Those lyrics carry jokes, heartbeat, fury, profuse blood, sight, and lament. The research employs descriptive qualitative methods where the qualitative data are described descriptively. Yuswara (2021) has found in her research that the portrayals of women in the short stories in *Bobo Children's Magazine* are categorised into two: toxic masculinity and women's subordination. This research analyses the personification of women in the *Bobo Children's Magazine*, which was printed in 2016 by PT Gramedia. From a cultural point of view, Vujković and Vuković-Stamatović (2021) observed how the women's figure is illustrated by the agency of animal metaphor in Montenegrin webpages. As a result of the research, it is found that women's appearance tends to resemble a cat, such as a kitten or kitty, fish, mare, snake, tigress, or duck. The reason why women are symbolised and compared to such animals is that it reflects how the cultural perspective is where women's figures are prioritised. This research is specifically conducted on Montenegro's culture. Moreover, the anthropomorphism can also be used as a narrative blueprint in the interpretation of non-human characters. Shirley and Nair (2021) conducted research representing how human traits such as emotions and thoughts are

attributed to animal character in John Grogan's story, *Marley and Me*. This research pays attention to animals in a modern English literary work, but it does not focus on anthropomorphic metaphors, including another natural entity such as a flower they way this present study does in *Le Petit Prince*. Another previous study conducted research about how women are narrated in fairy tales and children's literary works. Through this research, Qur'ani et al. (2025) uncover how femininity is shaped by using symbolic and cultural aspects in the story. On the other hand, such research is limited to women characters while the current study is focusing on a non – human entity. Another former study has proved that conceptual metaphors work as an essential aspect in forming gendered concepts in a language. López Maestre (2020) found that women are metaphorically depicted by using particular source domains. Additionally, metaphors have an important work to form female representations through different cultural narratives. Halyna (2016) conducted an observation on American song folklore to uncover how metaphorical expressions are used to shape hypothetical and philosophical portrayals of women. Another proof that metaphors can be used to form the representation of women across various cultures is found by Gurbanboevna (2024). It is revealed that German and Uzbek proverbs show that metaphorical expressions with gender contents are essential in forming the cultural viewpoint of femininity. On the other hand, such research pays attention to proverbial and folkloric language.

The former studies above do discuss metaphor and symbolised characters to represent humans or specifically women. Yet, they focus on the cultural perspective, protagonist and antagonist characters of women, the genre and meaning of lyrics from the anthropomorphic metaphors, and the portrayals of women. Meanwhile, the recent studies engage in how the character *la fleur*, which is a rose, delivers the feminine archetype through its visual and language use to another character in *Le Petit Prince*. Moreover, the data used within this research is in French, with English glossing are taken from *The Little Prince*. The conceptual metaphor theory, or is also known as CMT by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), is chosen for a reason that this theory contributes to comprehending metaphor as a primordial system of human knowledge instead of a natural discourse decoration. Metaphors allow immaterial and hypothetical ideas to be understood through material and real domains within this theory. Specifically, this analysis highlights the ontological metaphor since it enables non – human creatures to be acknowledged as owning human – like traits, and that is the principle points of *la fleur* research in *Le Petit Prince*.

Research questions have been designed to trigger the analysis. The first question is how the anthropomorphic aspects on *la fleur* express femininity, and the second question is what languages are used by *la fleur* to represent the feminine archetype. Two theories have been used as guidelines to answer the questions through the analysis. Linguistically, a signification is built by signs that associate mental knowledge with linguistic forms. De Saussure (1959) describes this connection by the association between the signifier and the signified. That is a relevant idea to understand symbolic interpretation in literary works. Moreover, Lakoff (1973) emphasises how the application of language represents social qualities with good manners, emotional articulateness, and roundaboutness. Therefore, these hypothetical viewpoints reinforce the current research of how femininity is both linguistically and emblematically concealed by the character *la fleur*. Similarly, such procedures have been applied by Akbar (2024) in analysing ontological metaphor in song lyrics on Pink Floyd's assorted songs. In this case, the linguistic expressions used to describe *la fleur*'s traits are symbolically representing the human, specifically women's femininity traits, such as how she prepares herself and how does she feel to a certain situation. Therefore, this article examines how the anthropomorphic aspects are carried within *la fleur*'s traits through language, as well as uncovers how feminine characteristics are metaphorically developed in the story.

2. Research Methods

This research method includes the data source, method, and technique of collecting data, method and technique of analysing data, and lastly, method and technique of presenting data. Generally, a qualitative descriptive method is applied in this research since it is best suited to explain the linguistic aspect and mental process to understand the character is as a perfect example

of femininity in Saint-Exupéry's *Le Petit Prince*. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), there are three types of conceptual metaphor: structural metaphor, orientational metaphor, and ontological metaphor. In this instance, the character *la fleur* is a non-human entity that is examined as an entity possessing human qualities. Therefore, the ontological metaphor is the only conceptual metaphor type taken for this research since it enables the research to prove that human qualities such as emotions, thoughts, intentions, and behaviour are possible to be projected onto such a non-human entity. Most importantly, it aligns with the anthropomorphism. The structural and orientational metaphors do not support these values since the structural metaphor focuses on mapping abstract ideas to other ideas, and the orientational metaphor pays attention to space orientation. Consequently, they are not the main focus of this research.

The original French version of *Le Petit Prince* by Saint-Exupéry (1943) is the prime data source, and the English version – *The Little Prince* is included to support by providing the English translations for each data. The note-taking technique is employed to collect the data from the books. Additionally, the AntConc software was also used to enable the researcher to efficiently filtering the character *la fleur* as well as its anthropomorphic aspects. Then, the filtered data were confirmed by double-checking the printed books through reading the whole context. Those data include conversations amongst characters, which include *la fleur*, narrative expressions showing thoughts, feelings, and actions. Microsoft Excel is used to record the collected data. The qualitative analysis technique was applied to analyse the data. First, anthropomorphic and metaphorical expressions belonging to *la fleur* were identified. Second, only the data that contain ontological metaphors are taken to be categorised linguistically. Third, the cognitive mapping amongst entities, mainly involving *la fleur*, was defined conceptually. Fourth, the feminine archetype images found in ontological dimensions are described in detail. Only one out of three types of metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is used since it behaves towards unreal ideas as a real entity. It also enables people to discuss it as if it were a concrete item.

3. Results and Discussions

This part discusses and describes the findings of the research according to the qualitative analysis of anthropomorphic and metaphorical expressions of the character *la fleur* in the story book *Le Petit Prince*. Through the AntConc application and close reading techniques, the data were systematically observed to examine the ontological metaphors that gestate philosophical concepts by material creatures. The discussions pay attention to how linguistic interpretations, including the character of *fleur* that works metaphorically to speak for women, especially by persisting aspect as fragility, vulnerability, and emotional reliance. These compositions are presented in the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) as well as cognitive semantics through asserting the conceptual mappings between source and target domains. This section has goals to uncover how metaphorical language presents a gendered portrayal of women in the story and social acknowledgement by accommodating linguistic evidence with contextual comprehension.

3.1 Results

The results of the research show that anthropomorphic and ontological metaphors related to the symbolical character *la fleur* are methodically applied to speak for women in *Le Petit Prince*. Some metaphorical expressions were studied from the collected data. It was *la fleur*'s linguistic expressions indicating human qualities mainly associated with physical vulnerability, emotional weakness, and fragility.

(3-1) Ontological Metaphor

<i>Les</i>	<i>fleurs</i>	<i>Sont</i>	<i>Faibles</i> (Saint - Exupéry, 1943 :20)
the;ART	flowers;FNOM;PL	are;AUX	weak;ADJ;PL
Flowers are weak creatures			
FRAGILITY IS WOMEN			

FRAGILITY IS WOMEN is the conceptual metaphor of 4 frequencies. (3-1) is an expression uttered by *Le Petit* when he is talking about the function of the flowers’ thorns. Yet, he does not believe what *le pilot* ‘the pilot’s aid about the thorns and denies it by saying that the flowers are weak creatures. According to Mével (1993), *fleur* ‘flower’ means *partie des végétaux qui porte les organes de la reproduction*. In English, a flower is the coloured part of a plant from which the seed or fruit develops Hornby (2015). Additionally, the word *faibles* (weak) in French means *qui manque de force, de vigueur, de résistance, de solidité* (Mével, 1993). Meanwhile, in English, weak means not physically strong Hornby (2015). Semantically, the French meaning gives signs that the meaning of *faible* does not solely talk about the physical incapability of doing hard things. It signifies very careful behaviour and emotional fragility. The literal meaning of both words is in contrast with the contextual meaning. This metaphor has entered the psychological and social point of view where one type of plant, which is a red rose, has been symbolically used to describe women on both surface and context levels. Naturally and biologically, flowers, in this case the red rose, are easily damaged, but the story in *Le Petit Prince* has successfully changed the physical weakness into a philosophical common sense. Additionally, the existence of thorns on the roses adds a contradictory idea related to their weak concept. *Les fleurs* in the story refers to women, and *faibles* is a character or a representation that a man has made for women. Therefore, in correlation with the context of the story (3-1), it is a result of how a man sees women. The Pilot does not accept *Le Petit Prince*’s conviction that *les fleurs* need to be protected by explaining that they are weak. This argument has proved the gendered point of view. The masculinity sees not only women as weak, but also that their weakness is similar to a lack of importance. *La fleur* has been frequently serving as a feminine character philosophically and grammatically to support the correlation between flowers and women.

This anthropomorphic representation indicates *fleurs* (flowers) as the source domain is a living creature having human and animal traits, that is, *faibles* (weak) as the target domain. This anthropomorphism is related to a mental condition, where a human or an animal is unable to give some force or energy to do something in a certain condition. As a result, it can be concluded that the conceptual metaphor within this anthropomorphic concept is FRAGILITY IS WOMEN. This idea shows up since beautiful flowers are seen as women, and their flowerless parts of her organs (stem, leaves, and petals) are considered weak. On the other hand, her thorns and the natural colour of her petals are seen as useless and only to cover her weakness. Men, they are weak creatures. Additionally, the ontological metaphors allow people to possess the thought of immaterial ideas as creatures (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Data (3-1) women as the immaterial social classification are gestating through *les fleurs* the flowers, which are the material botanical creature. This mapping helps readers and speakers to discuss women in such a way that they are physically vulnerable creatures. Conceptually, it can be structured that FLOWER is the source domain while WOMAN is the target domain. FLOWER represent vulnerability, aesthetic botanical, pretty, and do not last. WOMAN depicts emotionally delicate, dependent, and is not harmful, only valued by their beautiful appearance. Therefore, this mapping forms the conceptual metaphor FRAGILITY IS WOMEN.

«*Les fleurs sont faibles*» (Saint - Exupéry, 1943 : 20) fairly stated the ontological metaphor, for it contains the idea that abstract human qualities are acknowledged by material creatures, which are *les fleurs*, the flowers. Linguistically, the character *les fleurs* ‘the flowers’ are strongly attached to human, specifically women's, attitude and behaviour. They are applied to give the idea of

feminine yet vulnerable women are. The superficial explanation is about the appearance of the flowers or the women themselves, yet contextually, it is all about how they work metaphorically to tell about women.

(3-2)

<i>Des</i>	<i>fleurs</i>	<i>très</i>	<i>simples</i> (<i>Saint - Exupéry, 1943:22</i>)
PL;ART;INDF	flowers;F;NOM;PL	very;ADV	simple;ADJ;PL
The flowers had always been very simple			
MODESTY IS WOMEN			

(3-2) are one out of four frequencies that appear in the story that represent the conceptual metaphor MODESTY IS WOMEN through the traits and behaviour of character *la fleur* ‘the flower’. In (3-2) is an opinion given by the author to another flower on *Le Petit Prince*’s planet. The word ‘simple’ in French means *don’t les manières, les goûts ne dénotent aucune prétention* (Morvan et al.1995). Meanwhile, in English, it means not complicated or easy to understand or do (Hornby, 2015). Both meaning in French and English have close meaning. However, the context of the story delivers a different implication. When it comes to metaphor, the contextual and conceptual meaning of the word *simple* would not be the same, specifically when it is referred to women. It uncovers the normative assumption instead of a general explanation. As the word *simple* is used to describe the flower that evokes a concept of less or even no decoration or capability. The meaning of *simple* is mapped onto women as a form of support to the concept that women should obey, be calm, and be kind in a social environment. Contextually, it is shown in the story that the author is talking about the flowers on the *Le Petit Prince*’s planet that had one ring of petals, they did no harm to anybody, they appeared in the morning, and disappeared every night silently. The way the flowers only had one ring of petals implies that women are self – effacing and growing beautiful naturally, effortlessly. Women are bringing peace around her where ever they are, and they are merely existing beautifully peacefully.

Following the conceptual metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), these linguistic expressions build up the metaphor MODESTY IS WOMEN. The source domain supplies material experiential thoughts. *Fleurs* are visibly delightful, effortlessly. This idea has developed femininity in women that they should remain silent, not want to get attention to themselves, and be attractive. In terms of the cognitive grammar core, meaning is defined from collected information, and the essential foundation is the ideas of the concept (Langacker, 2008). *Simples* or the simplicity of the flower is highlighted within this metaphor; meanwhile, its natural capacity, such as its ability to recover quickly, is less emphasised. On the other hand, Evans and Green (2015) stated that the metaphorical signification constructs the category of knowledge. In this case, the word *simples* has printed a stereotype of women in which women will only be accepted in society as long as they have those *simples* requirements.

(3-3)

<i>Elle</i>	<i>s’habillait</i>	<i>lentement</i> (<i>Saint - Exupéry, 1943:25</i>)
she;3;S	dressing up;IMP	slowly;ADV
She dressed herself slowly		
CAREFUL IS WOMEN		

The statement «*Elle s’habillait lentement*» reveals the anthropomorphism and physical or worldly interpretation of action. The adverb *lentement* strongly suggests how the action is done. The

action is done with intention, attention, and feeling. Adverbs of manner function essentially in forming event construal (Langacker, 2008). Through the adverb of action *lentement* ‘slowly’, the story is transferring slow but intentional traits to the character *la fleur*. This reinforces the ontological metaphor where *la fleur* ‘the flower’ is thought of as a woman, and her attentiveness is structured as a signification of feminine behaviour.

According to the conceptual metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), the source domain is CAREFUL, which is the human action itself, and the target domain is WOMEN, as well as their feminine traits. As a result, the conceptual metaphor is CAREFUL IS WOMEN. Being careful is regulated as moral responsibility put upon women. The gradual gesture of *la fleur* by the time she is getting herself ready conveys the advice that women are imagined to be attentive and aware of themselves. (3-3) is one out of seven statements that show up in the narrative presenting the conceptual metaphor CAREFUL IS WOMEN by using the character *la fleur* as a representative of the women archetype. It is told in the story that *la fleur* is preparing herself before seeing *Le Petit Prince*, who has been waiting for her to get ready outside of her chamber glass. She is carefully and attentively preparing herself by arranging her beautiful red petals. Through this description, human, specifically women’s, traits have been attributed to a flower, which is a non – human entity. The verb *s’habillait* which means ‘was dressing herself’, indicates human action to a non – human creature. This supports the ontological metaphor where the character *la fleur* ‘the flower’ is mapped as a woman. Moreover, the adverb *lentement* that means ‘slowly’, specifically explains how *la fleur* does her action. That also identifies slowness and deliberateness.

According to the context of the story, what *la fleur* does is not solely about physical activity. It also brings a cognitive representation of feminine traits. The slow and careful action refers to attentiveness and self – awareness. As a result, this narrative underlines the conceptual metaphor CAREFUL IS WOMEN, in which carefulness or attentiveness is tightly related to feminine conduct. Based on the cognitive point of view, the anthropomorphic representation reveals the cultural viewpoint of femininity, where women are expected to act mindfully and cautiously. This anthropomorphic metaphor implicitly contradicts carefulness with carelessness. That emphasises the concept that femininity is associated with calmness. Therefore, the description *elle s’habillait lentement* distributes the idea to the wider depiction of women in *Le Petit Prince* as soft, careful, and emotionally attentive.

(3-4)

<i>Elles</i>	<i>sont</i>	<i>naïves</i> (Saint - Exupéry, 1943 : 20)
they;3;F;PL	AUX;PRS	ADJ;F;PL
They are naïve		
INNOCENCE IS WOMEN		

The word *naïves* or *naïve* or *naïf* in French is originally derived from Latin *nativus*. That means natural. From a semantics perspective, *naïve* refers to a sincere and / or inexperienced person. Above all, the meaning of *naïve* in French does not consistently bring a negative significance. It also indicates authenticity and moral transparency. According to the meaning of the word *naïf*, it is explained that *qui est plein de confiance et de simplicité par ignorance, par inexpérience* (Morvan et al. 1995). Meanwhile, in English, naive relates to a person or an action which is not show enough knowledge or experience of life. They are too willing to trust people (Hornby, 2015). Nevertheless, English usage tends to be more vulnerable or virtuous instead of a lack of experience.

It is narrated in the story that *Le Petit Prince* was asking several questions about life, one of which is «*Les épines, à quoi servent – elles?*» That means “Then the thorns – what use are they?” The Pilot did not know why the flower had thorns because he was occupied fixing his broken aircraft. Long story short, *Le Petit Prince* denied the answer of the Pilot, saying that the flowers have thorns just for spite. Therefore, *Le Petit Prince* answered, «*Elles sont naïves*. The story

illustrates the character *la fleur* as *naïve* in terms of her emotional condition, conduct, and how the world sees her. The indication happens in a state where she is at risk and a moral complication. This situation is being opposed with male character in the story, who is the character *Le Petit Prince* himself. This narrative encloses women as passive regarding knowledge. They understand how the world works from the perspective of emotional purity instead of rational consideration. This also underlines a conventional literary work of femininity.

Based on the context of the story, the word *naïve* is metaphorically used. The detail is not limited to the cognitive restriction. It figuratively presupposes the depiction of femininity. This situation indicates that women are shaped to actualize the virtue of themselves. They are changing a personal behaviour into a conceptual feature of gender. In the concept INNOCENCE IS WOMEN, INNOCENCE is related to immaculateness, kindness, and emotional purity. The metaphor is delivered through the word *naïve* behind the concept INNOCENCE. In terms of cognitive semantics, Langacker (2008) defined meaning is an idea instead of an objective remark. Therefore, the word *naïve* is an adjective triggering the cognitive enclosure where women are related to children's flaws and emotions, and honesty. This concept is mapped into WOMEN ARE INNOCENCE since it has a tight correlation with feminism and patriarchal discussion. Ideologically, it also inherently mentions the naturalised gender aspect, performing honest feelings implicitly. Moreover, it actually puts women in superior positions morally, but they seem passive from a social viewpoint. This story has mentioned women are naïve, but the idea is telling that women are emotionally vulnerable. This represents how women are generally portrayed in patriarchal discussions, which is related to their biological, emotional, and intellectual power being concealed. On the other hand, their weakness and dependency are pointed out.

3.2. Discussions

The research shows that flowers are metaphorically built as the symbol of weakness and beauty. They demonstrate a feminised representation within *Le Petit Prince*. This correlation is linguistically evidenced in data (3-1) *Les fleurs sont faibles*. The adjective *faibles* 'weak' clearly projects weakness or fragility to flowers. This trait may reflect the cultural stereotype of femininity as soft and vulnerable. Flowers have long been used in France as a symbol of feminine natural beauty and innocence.

According to a philosophical point of view, Saint-Exupéry takes flowers as a medium to interpret how uncertain and fragile love is. He is also delivering a lesson that love is beautiful, but easy to get hurt. From the metaphorical point of view, it reveals the emotion and moral value of femininity.

From a feminist point of view, data (3-1) using *faibles* (weak) as a characteristic of *les fleurs* (flowers) is a sign of feminine frailty. Even though (3-1) appears neutral, it delicately normalises a gendered belief that women and femininity are beautiful yet delicate. (Simone, 1949) has mentioned in her book that «*On ne naît pas femme: on le devient*». That means one is not born, but rather becomes a woman (Simone, 1949). Beauvoir herself criticises this unfair perspective between men and women in society. For her, that belief is saying that women are created to be fragile human beings by cultural beliefs in society. Similar to the way *Le Petit Prince* sees *les fleurs*. From the patriarchal viewpoint, this represents a legitimate womanhood that is brittle, dependent, and emotional. Along with Beauvoir's critics and argument about how unfair society is to women is, Chouhan (2025) uncovers a finding from the research conducted presenting that feminist narratives frequently highlight women's liberation and agency.

Based on the data (3-2) *Des fleurs très simples* reflects the definition of feminine simplicity. The adjective *simples* 'simple' or 'modest' delivers a representation of sincerity and self – control, supporting the correlation between femininity and moral modesty. In line with this case, Rousseau, (1762) explains femininity as flawlessly modest, elegant, and ethical indicating that a woman's integrity belongs to purity and self – control. Hence, Rousseau's naturalist belief indicates that women's modesty is similar to pureness and moral delicacy. In this part, Saint – Exupéry was inspired by Rousseau's ideas that pure femininity is a moral integrity, using the irony where *Le*

Petit Prince's connection to *la fleur* presents modesty that does not have to involve emotional complication. Baudelaire (1857) portrays women as possessing a contradictory state of life. It is presented that women have great beauty and dishonesty at the same time. Additionally, the metaphor of simplicity and weakness conveys a contradiction of *La Fleur's* characteristics. This duality is mentioned in the traits of *La Fleur*, who is adored for her flawless beauty; on the other hand, she herself is poisoned by being emotionally dependent and passive. Women are also considered to be holy, but sexually exciting. Unlike the previous point of view, Baudelaire (1857) sees flowers as women who are not only naïve but also worthless. The metaphor of *la fleur* or *les fleurs* within the story aligns with the feminine archetype. The idea is that women are related to nature, emotional dependency, and apathy.

Data (3-3) *Elle s'habillait lentement*, points out *la fleur's* attentiveness and delicacy. This shows that she is an entity to be examined rather than an agent who takes an action. This case is also similar to the projection of naivety in data (3-4) *Elles sont naïves*, where this metaphoric anthropomorphism supports the evidence of femininity as innocent but a lack of autonomy. These findings align with a former study on gender metaphors by (Shokym et al. 2022), emphasising how metaphorical portrayals come up with cultural representations of femininity.

Biologically, flowers are literally botanical entities that grow naturally and exist mainly to be cherished. Hence, this supports the idea that women's worth relies on being alive and accepted instead of being proactive. This idea recalls the argument of Simone (1949) about "the Other", in which women's position in society is as "the Other". Women are signified by what they are seen, not what they do. The metaphor of flowers in the story has implicitly emphasised their function as an entity of examination instead of an object of an action. The metaphors above seem culturally positive, but inside, they unconsciously infuse thought of inhibiting women's spirit, courage, and ambition. This phenomenon is in line with the idea of Simone (1949) that women are valued for behaviour that restricts the ability to go beyond and strengthen the state of being present as a natural and permanent part of one thing.

4. Conclusion

The metaphors above are ontological since it looks upon women as creatures possessing beautiful yet vulnerable characters. The ontological metaphor is not solely a linguistic aesthetic decoration but a primordial structure constructing mind and social interpretation.

Flowers have long been used in France as a symbol of feminine natural beauty and innocence. Speaking of philosophical viewpoint, Saint-Exupéry takes flowers as a medium to interpret how uncertain and fragile love is. He is also delivering a lesson that love is beautiful, but easy to get hurt. From the metaphorical point of view, it reveals the emotion and moral value of femininity. Flowers are adored because of their natural beauty, fragrance, and specifically, their gentleness. This situation and condition are similar to those of women who are perceived as passive and obedient from society's perspective. From a feminist point of view, using *faibles* (weak) as a characteristic of *les fleurs* (flowers) is a sign of feminine frailty. (3-1) sounds not guilty, but deep down it normalises a gendered belief that women and femininity are beautiful yet delicate. Simone (1949) has mentioned in her book that «*On ne naît pas femme: on le devient*». That means one is not born, but rather becomes a woman (Simone, 1949). Beauvoir herself criticises this unfair perspective between men and women in society. For her, that belief is saying that women are created to be flimsy human beings by cultural beliefs in society. Similar to the way *Le Petit Prince* sees *les fleurs*. From the patriarchal viewpoint, this represents a legitimate womanhood that is brittle, dependent, and emotional.

Rousseau (1762) explains femininity as flawlessly modest, elegant, and ethical indicate that a woman's integrity belongs to purity and self – control. Hence, Rousseau's naturalist belief indicates that women's modesty is similar to pureness and moral delicacy. In this part, Saint – Exupéry was inspired by Rousseau's ideas that pure femininity is a moral integrity, using the irony where *Le Petit Prince's* connection to *la fleur* presents modesty that does not have to involve emotional complication. Moreover, Baudelaire (1857) portrays women as possessing a contradictory state of

life. It is presented that women have great beauty and dishonesty at the same time. Women are also considered to be holy, but sexually exciting. Unlike the previous point of view, (Baudelaire, 1857) sees flowers as women who are not only naïve but also worthless.

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