Article

Hello spring! Exploring cherry blossoms in English and French

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Abstract

This study investigates the current significance of cherry blossoms, focusing on their aesthetic, cultural, and emotional importance, while also exploring how this seasonal phenomenon is articulated in both English and French. Despite their worldwide soft power and historical allure, research on cherry blossoms is underrepresented in online discourse, especially in non-English contexts. Through an analysis of web articles, the study examines the positive descriptions related to cherry blossoms, the emotions they evoke, and the conceptual metaphors they convey. By using the main tenets from ecolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, the study shows how language can influence our perceptions of cherry blossoms and deepen our understanding of the natural world. By comparing descriptions in English and French, this study broadens our comprehension of cherry blossoms as a global phenomenon, ultimately promoting a positive narrative that honours their lasting beauty and significance.

Keywords: cherry blossoms; ecolinguistics; cognitive linguistics; qualitative data analysis

1. Introduction

For centuries, cherry trees in bloom have allured millions of people with their fleeting beauty. This allure continues today, enhanced by advanced technological experiences related to cherry blossoms and an abundance of content to explore, including online resources. Imagine a typical Internet user, a potential tourist, searching for information about cherry blossoms. What can be found with a simple online keyword search? The language used to describe cherry blossoms shapes a certain perception of these flowers, emotions, and stories associated with them. It can also influence how we conceptualise our

experience of these blooms and their place in our reality and worldview. This exploration not only enriches our appreciation of cherry blossoms in diverse interpretations but also highlights the intricate relationships between language, cognition, and emotions, ultimately enhancing our understanding of the human–nature relationships.

Research on cherry blossoms is both diverse and under-represented. While cherry blossoms have been studied from various perspectives — e.g., cultural-historical (Kuitert, 1999; Salazar, 2022), media (Moeran & Skov, 1997), literary studies (Ramlan, 2021), biological (Primack et al., 2009), and business (Sakurai et al., 2011) — they remain somewhat overlooked in online written content, especially in languages other than English. Commonly, cherry blossom viewing is associated with Japan and the information about the bloom is widely available in English due to increased seasonal tourist interest. In this study, the perspective from the French language is offered alongside English to address the following: (i) underwhelming research on cherry blossoms, particularly in the French language; and (ii) expanding the study of cherry blossoms as a global experience with high authentic value.

Studies devoted to human–nature relationships have focused both on their negative and positive aspects. Recently, the prevalent negative discourses on nature-related topics have seen a shift. Ecolinguistics research has advanced exploration of constructive and favourable discourse practices, including harmonious (Huang & Zhao, 2021) and positive discourse analysis frameworks (Stibbe, 2018; Ponton, 2022) to diversify the challenging ones. The present study adopts the positive approach to the analysis of cherry blossoms as expressed in languages. Motivated by the continuous cultural value of cherry blossoms, their emotional impact and the distinguished visual aesthetics, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1) What significance is attributed to cherry blossoms?
2) How are cherry blossoms expressed and conceptualised in English and French?
3) What kinds of affective states are associated with cherry blossoms in English and French?

First, the study offers an overview of the continuous importance of cherry blossoms and their cultural significance. Second, linguistic exploration of cherry blossoms as expressed in English and French provides insight into how this seasonal phenomenon can be perceived and described in these languages, including the emotions associated with it. The corpus of the study comprises a collection of web articles about cherry blossoms, which has been obtained by online keyword search in spring 2024. To account for global tourist insights, the English language has been used to examine cherry blossoms in Japan. This is further compared to the written content in the French language, which accounts for cherry blossoms description in France.

The tenets from ecolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, and psychological approach to emotions have been employed to tackle this topic. Considering the research objectives,

which focus on non-numerical data and the goal of examining the descriptions of cherry blossoms, a qualitative data analysis framework has been employed in the study.

The paper is presented in four parts. The first part provides a reflection on the meaning of cherry blossoms in relation to tourism, art, and aesthetics. The second part offers an outlook on the interconnection between language, cognition, and emotions in research on human–nature relationships. It highlights the importance of approaching language as a powerful tool for conveying thoughts that can shape our reality. In this light, the third part introduces the corpus and method for the study. Followed by the qualitative data analysis, the fourth part provides a comparative examination of cherry blossoms as expressed and conceptualised in English and French, as well as the dynamics of emotions associated with the cherry in bloom.

2. The layered meaning of cherry blossoms

2.1. Celebrating and forecasting: Where tourists flock

> For your trip to Japan in Spring! Cherry blossom forecast.
> — *Sakura Navi–Forecast in 2024, JMC*

Above is the slogan of an app for those interested in cherry blossoms. Developed by the Japan Meteorological Corporation (JMC), *Sakura Navi–Forecast in 2024* provides detailed "[…] information on the forecast of the flowering and full bloom dates of the cherry blossoms and their current status all over Japan" (JMC, 2024). The flowering forecast covers selected spots to visit in the cities and beyond, with the time schedule for cherry blossom viewing cascading from the Okinawa Island in the south to Hokkaido Island in the north of Japan (JMC, 2024).

Japan has a long-standing tradition of blossom viewing that dates back to the Nara period (710–794 AD), initially focusing on plum blossoms before evolving to include cherry blossoms, which over the centuries helped shape its culture (Salazar, 2022), "sense of the seasons" (Nagai et al., 2024), and identity (Kuitert, 2022a, 2022b). For over a millennium, Japan has preserved historical accounts that capture the timeless allure and practical records of cherry blossoms, referred to as *sakura*.[1] Such long-term timing is valuable for understanding the country's ecological and cultural interests. These include climate change patterns through the time span of blossoms (Doi & Katano, 2008; Primack et al., 2009) or socio-economic dynamics impacted by this small spring window of "the big business" of cherry blossoms (Whiteaker et al., 2019).

Hanami, or "viewing the flowers" in Japanese, is a traditional festival where people gather for "spring picnics under cherry trees" (Kuitert, 1999, p. 370) and has been studied for its relationship with climate change effects on cherry blossom timing and festival-

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[1] In Japanese, *sakura* refers to the cherry blossom tree and its flowers.

dependent businesses. The studies show that while some organisers and tourists are concerned about climate change, others report greater concern about income from cherry blossoms and less about climate influencing the timing of sakura (Sakurai et al., 2011). Research has also indicated changes in hanami celebrations and the marketing exploitation of the event (Moeran & Skov, 1997): commercialising foods and goods during the hanami season has become part of the experience, where sakura-themed everything can be found all over Japan. In addition, increased social gathering, along with the continuous cultural significance of the festival, has led to celebrations occurring overseas (Basil, 2017; Moriuchi & Basil, 2019).

In China, where plum and cherry blossoms originated and have been honoured for several thousand years (Moriuchi & Basil, 2019), recent studies have examined the impact of climate change on tourist volume during cherry blossom viewing by exploring the Chinese microblogging platform Weibo. Its user-generated data related to the event indicated the dependency between cherry blossom viewing tourism and climate change (Peng et al., 2024). This, in turn, can practically contribute to tourism management by enabling more "regional tourism arrangements" regarding the timely organisation of "scenic spots with ornamental plants" and providing reliable information for tourists (Peng et al., 2024). In addition to climate and tourism matters that increasingly go hand in hand, the researchers have also focused on the quality of cherry blossom landscapes and "the scenic beauty model" (Wang et al., 2023). The latter revealed major factors that aid in the successful management of such landscapes, including plant colour composition and plant type (Wang et al., 2023).

2.2. A fab impact

France cultivated cherries commercially since the High Medieval Period (AD 1000 to 1300). Cherry trees could be found in the gardens of aristocrats and were beloved for their aesthetic beauty and the colour of their wood. Louis XV of France (reigned 1715–1774) was known for his love of cherries and for promoting the cultivation of cherry trees in France (Larousse, n.d.).

Cherry blossoms from Japan and China have been part of French culture for centuries. As an example, a majestic Sato-zakura cherry tree in one of the oldest gardens in Paris — *Jardin des Plantes* — is a 'Village cherry tree' and 'Shirotae', which is a horticultural variety obtained in Japan around the 16th century. It was introduced to France at the beginning of the 20th century (Jardin des Plantes, 2024). In addition to Japan, China introduced cherry trees to France through "a network of ancient trade routes", The Silk Road (Mark, 2018), which facilitated the movement of plants. A noble French botanist and naturalist, Philibert Commerson (1727–1773) had a significant voyage of circumnavigation led by Louis Antoine de Bougainville from 1766 to 1769 (Larousse, n.d.). This voyage resulted in the introduction of many types of plant species and contributed to the diversification of flora in French parks and gardens that can be observed today.

One of the symbolic dates for the East-West trade expansion is the year 1867 — the *Exposition Universelle de Paris*. The World's Fair allowed fruitful international exchanges between France, Japan, and China, including cherry trees, tea, art, and design. Around that period, Japanese culture received tremendous attention in France, especially in Paris, which is known as Japonisme. This term was coined by the art critic Philippe Burty, and the appreciation of Japanese culture by the French painters, artists, and writers were highly significant between 1860 and 1890 (Grand Palais Rmn, 2024), including the iconic symbol of cherry blossoms (Irvine, 2013).

In the past few years, there has been a spike in interest in the French capital as a location for cherry blossom viewing. Every spring, France honours hanami and leverages cherry blossoms boom across different business sectors. France is the most visited country in the world (WPR, 2024) and has a centuries-long carefully crafted image appreciated worldwide. Paris remains the world's "top city destination" (Euromonitor International, 2024).

One of the most influential factors in the increased popularity of cherry blossoms in Paris can be attributed to modern channels of communication. With the digitally savvy Gen Z, a demographic group that will relatively soon become "the mainstream of society" (Peredy et al., 2024), "snack media" (Deskbird, 2024) has emerged as a significant influence. Its entertaining and informative micro-textual and video content is available worldwide and has contributed to new ways of information dissemination. Not underestimating "the ultimate Parisienne photo op" (National Geographic, 2024), cherry blossom viewing in a major tourist destination like Paris is now more accessible virtually and on-site, with extensive data (visual, video, audio) available before a trip. Often, this pre-shapes perception; intentionally or not, people can learn about where exactly to go, what to see, and receive advice on what to buy and even how to feel. The already iconic parks, gardens, historic streets with cathedrals, bookstores, and cafés embellished with blooming cherry trees, create a unique sight for tourists and locals.

2.3. Sustaining aesthetics and beauty

> After all, the cherry blossom blooms every year, but does anyone find it less lovely for that?
>
> — Sei Shōnagon, *The Pillow Book* (1002)[2]

From phenologists to poets, architects, or anime creators, season of spring is intricately intertwined with sakura and is lavishly depicted in many artistic forms. Japanese literary tradition is rich with works devoted to cherry blossoms. Sosnoski emphasises the value of sakura[3] in Japanese culture and identity (1996, p. 12):

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[2] Translated by Ivan Morris (1991).

[3] Symbolism of cherry blossoms in Japan is a vast topic. The scope of this study does not include the historical-political aspect of cherry blossoms.

> […] few Japanese would miss cherry blossom viewing because no other event can take them back so completely to their historical, cultural, social, and psychological roots.

Flowering cherry trees, renowned for their immense popularity in Japanese literature and art, frequently appear in various contexts. Sometimes a leitmotif, sometimes scattered description, cherry blossoms are part of novels, folklore, poems, and contemporary literature. To provide an example, *The Pillow Book* (1002) by Sei Shōnagon, a culturally significant literary work from 11th-century Japan, is highly regarded for its historical value and includes descriptions of cherry blossoms as a motif of beauty and transience. This collection of observations and stories about court life of the Heian-period Japan (794–1185) depicts "slender branches" of cherry blossoms "lovely" and "beautifully flowering" (Shōnagon, 1002/1991). In modern days, renowned in the Japanese and international literary scenes, Haruki Murakami's universe frequently, but not overly explicitly, incorporates the most famous sakura spots. In his fictional worlds, readers can visit the Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden in Tokyo (*The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, 1994) or Ueno Park in the same novel, as well as Ueno Station, which appears in Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (1987).

To fully grasp the essence of cherry blossoms, haiku poetry is indispensable.[4] Haiku writers sustain the significance of cherry blossoms and create an omnipresent link with Japan (Ramlan, 2021). They maintain sakura's symbolism, appreciation of nature, and awareness of the seasons, while also portraying emotional depth and simplicity in their works — qualities that hold a universal appeal wrapped in 17-syllable poems. The notable masters include one of the greatest Matsuo Bashō,[5] who "elevated the haiku […] into a higher art form" (Persinger, 2013), and Kobayashi Issa with his perspective on "[…] all living things, including plants" as a "cosmic pilgrimage towards enlightenment" (Lanoue, 2008). Works of a sakura poet Yosa Buson attributed with a dreamlike feeling of cherry petals, as well as the author's usage of other flowers (plum, peach) to compare with cherry.

In relation to France, a different context than literature should be emphasised — aesthetic branding. Cherry trees in France are appreciated not only for their beauty but also for their significance in aesthetic branding, influencing collaborations with various French products. Such appreciation within French culture concerns fashion industry, beauty and fragrance, and culinary arts, which are the country's top luxury sectors due to France's romantic image, art de vivre[6], and authoritative expertise. As an example, for the past few

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[4] Haiku is a short-form poetry originated in Japan. It consists of three lines and follows a specific syllable pattern 5-7-5 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.).

[5] Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), Yosa Buson (1716–1784), Kobayashi Issa (1763–1826), and Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902) are considered to be the most influential poets of haiku. They are also known as the "The Great Four" or "Four Masters" of haiku.

[6] "The French art of living (art de vivre) is a combination of several elements that take root in the history and culture of France, and that signify taste, aesthetics, a sense of detail, and the requirement in all its forms (cultural, social, intellectual, courtesy, artisanal work, etc.)" (Batat & Kerviler, 2020).

years, one of the oldest and most prestigious French luxury brands — Guerlain — has created a "tribute to the Hanami ritual in Japan" each spring with the limited-edition Cherry Blossom fragrance. In 2023, it collaborated with the exceptional Parisian embroidery house Ateliers Vermont to create "the magical adornment" in pink for its symbolic Bee Bottle (Guerlain, 2024).

2.3.1. Immersing in pink through art

The representation of cherry blossoms in art not only cherishes tradition that spans centuries but also dynamically evolves with technological advances. One of the most celebrated Japanese paintings featuring cherry blossoms dates to the Edo[7] period in Japan. People observed and admired the beauty on paper, silk, or through the *ukiyo-e* woodblocks print technique. The notable works include the oldest known painting titled *Cherry Blossoms* by Matsumura Goshun (The Met, 2024a) from the 18th century or the masterpiece *Cherry Blossoms at Yoshino* by Katsushika Hokusai (The Met, 2024b) from around 1833.

In 2024, the mediums used to represent cherry blossoms in art expanded to sophisticated canvases, immersive and interactive physical and digital environments. The latter became popular to include active multi-sensory (e.g., visual, auditory) engagement, where participants not only traditionally observe but interact with the art through senses. One of the examples from France is *Atelier des Lumières*, a digital art centre with a production called *Dreamed Japan, Images of the Floating World*. Launched in 2020, it offers an immersive "contemplative and audio journey" that connects many Japanese concepts, including Hokusai's iconic *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* (The Met, 2024c) and cherry blossoms (ADL, 2024).

Japanese contemporary artist Reiji Hiramatsu, famous for his depictions of cherry trees in various forms of art, such as the painting *Prayer of Japan (Cherry Blossoms)* (Reiji, 2024), paid homage to Monet in 2024 with a special exhibition in Giverny[8] (MDIG, 2024). The 2024 Impressionism celebration marks a significant year for honouring the legacy of the Impressionist movement, which originated in France and revolutionised the art world in the late 19th century. Many impressionist painters, including a monumental figure in the world of art — Claude Monet —, were fascinated by Japanese art and aesthetics and were profoundly inspired by Japonisme. For example, this influence is evident in Monet's series *Les Nymphéas* (Water Lilies) (Maison et Jardins de Claude Monet, 2024). Such reciprocal cultural exchanges between the two countries are ongoing.

The theme of connection and interaction through art, whether with oneself or with others, has also been emphasised through numerical representation of cherry blossoms.

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[7] The Edo period was a significant era in the history of Japan. Lasted from 1603 to 1868, this period was characterised by internal social, political, and cultural growth.

[8] Giverny is a village in Normandy, France. It is known as the home of Claude Monet — the legendary impressionist painter. His home has beautiful gardens and an iconic water lily pond that inspired many of his works.

One example from Japan is the digital project *Flowers Bombing Home* by an international art collective called *teamLab* (2024b). In 2020, people from around the world participated in this project by drawing flowers and uploading them to be displayed live on TV in their homes alongside the drawings of others. In this way, a single global artwork was created that connected people digitally (teamLab, 2024a).

A museum's architecture can serve as an immersive experience, as exemplified by the Miho Museum in Japan. Described as "a real-world Shangri-La", the path to this museum was designed by architect I. M. Pei, renowned for the glass pyramid at the Louvre in Paris. At the Miho Museum, "visitors travel down a walkway enveloped by cherry trees and pass through a tunnel and over a bridge before arriving at the museum" (Miho Museum, 2024).

These are only a few examples that showcase cherry blossoms in the modern art scene. It is also important to mention certain Japanese philosophical concepts that are essential in relation to cherry blossoms, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.4. Impermanence and ephemerality

> Cherry blossoms
> residents of this world, too
> a short time.[9]
>
>   — Kobayashi Issa

Cherry blossoms are strongly associated with the fundamental Japanese aesthetic concepts of *mono no aware*, *wabi*, and *sabi*. The first concept is linked to an awareness of an impermanence of life, beauty, and the bittersweet feelings associated with it. The impermanence and transience of blossoms also resonate with *wabi* and *sabi*.[10]

2.4.1. Mono no aware

Cherry blossoms are associated with a metaphor for the ephemeral nature of life and are strongly linked to one of the most critical Japanese aesthetic ideas — *mono no aware,* which literally means "the emotion felt out of it/out of (the) things" (Rumánek, 2003). The phrase refers to the "'pathos' (*aware*) of 'things' (*mono*), deriving from their transience" (SEP, n.d.), and signifies the acceptance of life, as well as a deep emotional awareness and appreciation of its transient nature. Sorrow, misery (Meli, 2002), along with regret for and sympathy toward things (Rumánek, 2003), are often attributed to this expression.

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[9] Translated by David G. Lanoue. Ma and Stibbe talk about this haiku: "As can be seen in the haiku […], a strong sense of identity hinges around the word も (mo, 'too'), as it conveys the idea that humans and cherry blossoms are identical in having a short but precious life" (2022, p. 181).

[10] *Wabi* and *sabi* almost always go together; however, this raises a question about the deeper insights into cultural borrowings and whether applying both concepts can work accurately in certain contexts. Learn more about the topic from Avdulov (2022).

The 11th-century *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu holds an important place in the Japanese culture of aesthetic ideas, especially *mono no aware*. This book immortalised cherry blossoms. They were depicted as a recurrent and symbolic motif of a bittersweet beauty and transience. Motoori Norinaga (1763, cited in Lin, 2023), the Japanese literary scholar of the Edo period, stated about the essence of *mono no aware*:

> Everything in the world, what you see, what you hear, and what you touch, all of them are hidden in your heart, and then you ponder them in your heart and taste them and perceive the emotions.

Lin suggests understanding *mono no aware* as "perceiving the emotion of things" by dividing it into "perceiving", "things", and "emotions", with the latter at its core (Lin, 2023). These three words should be interpreted in a more profound way than their common definitions. Hence, "perceiving" can be understood as a complex cognitive process about things (objects, everything in the world that people can see, touch, etc.) with often subjective emotions attached to these things. Emotions in *mono no aware* can be experiences of mourning and sadness (Lin, 2023). In this sense, cherry blossoms can appear as a manifestation of *mono no aware*: happiness associated with the blooming flowers is linked to sadness, as we know that such a beautiful view will be fleeting.

2.4.2. Wabi and sabi

An ancient Japanese philosophy, *wabi-sabi* centres around the beauty of imperfection, impermanence, and simplicity (OED, n.d.), as well as the appreciation of the transient or flawed beauty and nature. In this regard, cherry blossoms are connected to *wabi* and *sabi* through the shared themes of blooming transience, and the beauty of imperfection, when cherry flowers finish their blooming. Sometimes *wabi-sabi* is called an aesthetic, sometimes a worldview. *Wabi*[11] can refer to "finding beauty or serenity in simplicity, lack of sophistication, or quietness" (OED, n.d.). Kempton says that "ultimately, *wabi* is a mindset that appreciates humility, simplicity and frugality as routes to tranquillity and contentment" (Kempton, 2018). *Sabi* can be seen in "finding beauty or serenity in imperfection and impermanence" (OED, n.d.); that is why it can be linked to weathering or tarnishing and perceived as "a condition created by time, not the human hand, although it often emerges on quality objects that were originally crafted with care" (Kempton, 2018).

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[11] The concept of *wabi* is strongly linked to the Japanese tea ceremony, the Way of Tea, and the tea master Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591), who is renowned for transforming the tea ceremony into an art form (SEP, 2024).

3. Nature conveyed through language, thought, and emotions

3.1. How we talk

Language and cognition contribute to the construction of reality, including people's harmonious and damaging discourses about nature and humans. While more attention is given to the problems of environmental reality, positive advancements, appreciative and encouraging stories (Stibbe, 2015) are somewhat understudied, despite being equally important. In recent years, however, not only have destructive stories been under scrutiny, but also positive narratives (Stibbe, 2018; Ponton, 2022) boosted their way towards diversification of ecological mindsets (Zhou, 2017; Huang & Zhao, 2021; Zou, 2021). For example, Ponton suggests focusing on positive and "environmentally sound" discourses, which provide "alternative models of thought and sociolinguistic practice" (Ponton, 2022). Stibbe emphasises the "ways of speaking and writing which encourage people to protect the ecosystems that life depends on" (Stibbe, 2018).

Very recently, the harmonious discourses surrounding human-nature relationships have been examined with the wider framework within the Harmonious Discourse Analysis (HDA). This new approach is based on "the Chinese worldview of harmony" (Zhou, 2017) and aims to "diversify the landscape of ecolinguistics" by localising it in a Chinese context (Huang & Zhao, 2021). In HDA, harmony is approached as "a *perspective*, a way of seeing and dealing with relations in the world" (Huang & Zhao, 2021). In this sense, language can be seen as generating appreciation and care for the world and nature, while also sustaining this appreciation. As discussed earlier, the Japanese language has a plethora of words and expressions related to cherry blossoms, such as hanami. These linguistic representations not only highlight the significance of cherry blossoms in Japanese culture but also foster a deep appreciation for nature and its transient beauty worldwide.

In the examination of human–nature relationships, the significance of salience emerges as one of the key factors. Stibbe states: "[…] one important step towards guiding people to care and to protect nature will be creating more salient linguistic patterns for the more-than-human world" (Ma & Stibbe, 2022, p. 172). In his ecolinguistics lectures, Stibbe illustrates how salience can be used in a "creative" way to help readers develop an appreciation for nature. He also includes an example from the book by Macfarlane and Morris (2017) to further demonstrate this point. It showcases a positive and picturesque description of a unique and "lovely creature" — a bird kingfisher —, which gives a reader an opportunity to "cherish its beauty" (Macfarlane & Morris, 2017). Similar to the kingfisher, the cherry blossoms are often described to highlight their stunning beauty, fleeting nature, and profound meaning. Such descriptions can help to preserve its image in the world and keep alive its aesthetic and cultural significance, among other aspects. It is important to note that cultivating beauty, empathy, and care through language does not imply denying reality, which can often bear negative or challenging connotations even to the most beautiful things.

3.2. How we think

> Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.
> — George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980)

As "a living organism", language is pivotal in identifying the mainstream social, cultural, and other dynamics. For example, *water* can be thought of as an abstract "container" for storing harmful waste or as "a home" for various creatures; *forests* can be conceptualised as "sources of economic benefits" or "connecting spaces" for animals and humans. Stibbe emphasises: "How we think has an influence on how we act, so language can inspire us to destroy or protect the ecosystems that life depends on" (Stibbe, 2015, p. 2). One of the ways to understand how cognition and language work together is to explore it through the lenses of cognitive linguistics. Such an approach has been applied to study, for example, cognitive frames of nature connectedness (Andrews, 2018), sustainability of animal metaphors (Goatly, 2006; Bhattacherjee & Sinha, 2024), or Chinese *shui* (水 'water') and its conceptual metaphors in traditional Chinese thought (Lan & Jia, 2020).

Metaphor is not only a device to trigger "poetic imagination and the rhetoric flourish" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980b, p. 453). Nor is it simply a matter of words; it is very much a matter of thought. The concepts that govern our thoughts are not just matters of the intellect. They also govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details. Our conceptual system structures what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980b, p. 454). As a cognitive tool, conceptual metaphor allows us to broaden our understanding of the world in a novel way by identifying subtle differences in meaning. This includes approaching conceptual metaphor as "a dynamic process" in discourse (Cameron, 2010) and employing metaphorical creativity (Kövecses, 2020) to enhance our nuanced contextual understanding of conceptual metaphors.

Similar to the conceptualisation of language as "a living organism" that evolves and grows over time, cherry blossoms also can provide intriguing metaphors. This seemingly abstract dimension of metaphorical thinking can be highly informative and help to shed the light on how humans construct the reality around the experience of cherry blossoms, how habitual (automated) it is and how this reality radiates through our everyday language use.

3.3. How we feel

Environmental psychologists suggest that extraordinary and "awe-evoking kinds of nature" with, for example, "spectacular mountains" or "impressive waterfalls" can result in "unique and pronounced emotional effects" (e.g., feeling small and humble) and mood

improvement (Joye & Bolderdijk, 2015). Similarly, viewing cherry blossoms can be considered as an impressive, visually stunning, and meaningful experience that evokes positive emotions. Nature shows a remarkable ability to evoke, stimulate, and maintain a wide range of emotions and sensations within humans (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995; Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998; Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999; Ryan et al., 2010).

Culturally significant and highly symbolic, flowers play an important semiotic role in our lives (Brooks, 2008; Huss et al., 2017). For centuries they have been associated with a non-verbal form of communicating a range of emotions, from love and joy to grief and empathy. Often, trees hold a specific meaning for positively influencing physiological and psychological wellbeing of people (Atchison et al., 2024; Konijnendijk et al. 2023). They are considered as sources of reducing anxiety and stress, for example, through "forest bathing" (in Japanese, *Shinrin-yoku*, 森林浴),[12] or enhancing social connection and public health (Doimo et al., 2020).

Emotions, feelings, moods, and other states can be placed under an umbrella term of *affective states* (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.). Thus, psychologists classify happiness as a basic or universal emotion that is accessible to nearly everyone (Tomkins, 1962; Ekman, 1999); whereas admiration belongs more to the realm of feelings. Emotions are ubiquitous notions with "no consensus" about their exact definition (Frijda, 1988, p. 350) and sometimes the "lack of definition" can be a source of misunderstanding (Mulligan & Scherer, 2012). In the present study, emotions are approached in a general way to better understand the study's findings with affective content.

Dictionaries define emotion as "a strong feeling" (CED, n.d.) or "an excited mental state" (OED, n.d.). As a rule, emotions tend to have a shorter duration than feelings, with more bodily changes. For example, we can be surprised for minutes, with our eyebrows raised, our heartbeat quickening, and our bodies jumping or moving, or we can be guilty for months, ruminating and feeling down. Interestingly, the definition of emotion often includes the word "feeling" and vice versa. A feeling can be understood as "a way of thinking and reacting to things which is emotional and not planned rather than logical and practical" (Collins English Dictionary, n.d.).

Emotions and feelings have different types of intensity and complexity. For example, depending on the context and subjective feelings, viewing cherry blossoms can be both a sad and extremely happy experience. For some people, hanami evokes a basic emotion of joy, while for others, it can evoke a profound emotion of awe. To navigate the intricate realm of emotions, this study utilises Plutchik's (1980) psychological classification of emotions called the *Wheel of Emotions* that offers an insight about the most prevalent human emotions and their types (primary, combined), intensity (low, medium, high) and provides a system for understanding combinations of emotions. For instance, the interplay between

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[12] Advocated by the Japanese Forestry Agency in 1982, forest bathing was identified as "a form of recreation involving walking and inhaling the fragment substances released by trees" (Furuyashiki et al., 2019).

universal emotions can create more complex emotions, such as when the universal emotions of *fear* and *surprise* are combined to evoke a very complex emotion of *awe.*

4. Research design

4.1. Corpus

To examine cherry blossoms as expressed in English and French, two separate sets of web articles have been compiled — in English to represent texts about Japan and in French for France. The term *corpus* is used loosely in this study, with no reference to the size of a common corpus in the sense of corpus linguistics, but rather to indicate a representative text sample. Each text sample comprises articles collected online via keyword search: "cherry blossoms" and "cerisier en fleurs" for the respective languages, within the time span from February until May 2024. The aim was to collect written content that could commonly be obtained through online keyword search by a typical Internet user for informative purposes. The total number of words in the text sample is 17,209: 8,492 words in English and 8,717 words in French.

The testing keyword search was performed without geographical restrictions. When using English keywords, the results primarily featured articles about Japan as a tourist destination for viewing cherry blossoms. There were some suggestions regarding Canada (e.g., Vancouver) and the USA (e.g., Washington, D.C.), although these were insignificant. When searching with French keywords, the results highlighted France, particularly Paris and the Greater Paris area. Suggestions about Japan also appeared in the search but were less numerous. As a result, the final corpus was compiled based on keyword searches for two locations: Japan and France. Both countries are popular tourist destinations, especially Paris and Tokyo. In Japan, cherry blossoms are mentioned throughout the country, not only in Tokyo. However, in France, the search results predominantly feature Paris.

4.2. A qualitative approach to data treatment

Approaching the data in a qualitative manner means gathering, organising, and analysing information in a "non-numeric and often textual form about meanings, intentions, actions, behaviours, and events" (Gibbs, 2007). Such treatment allows for the identification and categorisation of information grounded in the data (Friese et al., 2018), as well as comparative analysis within the relevant context. The coding procedure was performed separately for English and French and was supported by ATLAS.ti (version 24.0.1) for Mac, a software designed for the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS).

The first step is to identify, extract, and categorise the segments from the text samples that describe cherry blossoms. This is performed semi-manually by assigning the qualitative codes. As shown in Table 1 and the examples, the focus is specifically on the description of (i) cherry blossoms, (ii) the affective states associated with them, and (iii) the

metaphorical language related to cherry blossoms. This step is rooted in the qualitative approach to data analysis.

Table 1. The list of codes and subcodes for the analysis

code: cherry blossoms	
code: affective state	subcode: emotion
code: affective state	subcode: feeling
code: affective state	subcode: other state
code: (conceptual) metaphor	

Example 1: *This <u>beloved</u> **flower** evokes feelings of <u>happiness</u> and <u>nostalgia</u> among Japanese people.*

code: cherry blossoms: *flower*
code: affective state: emotion: *beloved*
code: affective state: emotion: *happiness*
code: affective state: feeling: *nostalgia*

Example 2: <u>*explosions*</u> *rose de* **cerisiers** (pink cherry blossom explosions)

code: cherry blossoms: *cerisiers*
code: (conceptual) metaphor: *explosions rose*

The second step is two-fold. First, nuances in the description of cherry blossoms are discussed and compared in both languages. Second, affective content associated with cherry blossoms is identified and compared. The third step focuses on examining figurative language and conceptualisations of cherry blossoms. The theoretical basis for this step is provided by Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

4.3. Limitations

The analysis uses a limited number of web articles from both languages, which may constrain observations. However, one of the objectives was to analyse the amount of information available through online searches regarding cherry blossoms. The analysis prioritises comparative-descriptive observations over quantitative evaluation. A qualitative approach allows for deeper insights into the representation of cherry blossoms through language use, though it involves some subjectivity, as the data have been treated semi-manually.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Corpus overview

The descriptions in the corpus include popular spots and hidden gems to visit during hanami or when planning a trip to Japan or France in spring. In English, famous ancient trees, tourist spots, and routes are mentioned in relation to viewing cherry blossoms. The descriptions in English during this time of year are also linked to the cultural significance of sakura, a variety of sakura-themed foods to enjoy, the blooming forecast, and celebrations across the country. In addition to mentioning hanami, the French text sample highlights specific gardens or streets with cherry trees ideal for a photoshoot, spring lunch, or a pleasant stroll. In both text samples, the month of April is the most frequently mentioned period for cherry blossom viewing, with 25 mentions in English and 38 in French.

Some prominent spots for cherry blossoms have formed collocates in French — *le parc de Sceaux, le parc de Bagatelle* and *le parc Clichy-Batignolles–Martin-Luther-King.* In English, collocates included not parks but the types of cherry trees; the word "somei" refers to arguably the most favourite type of sakura in Japan — Somei-Yoshino — cultivated during the Edo Period. "Yoshino" refers to the type of cherry tree and to Mount Yoshino in Nara Prefecture of Japan.

Table 2. The most frequent words in each text sample

EN	cherry (266)	blossoms (131)	trees (94)	blossom (84)	tokyo (75)
FR	cerisiers[13] (113)	fleurs[14] (112)	parc (87)	paris (79)	jardin[15] (74)

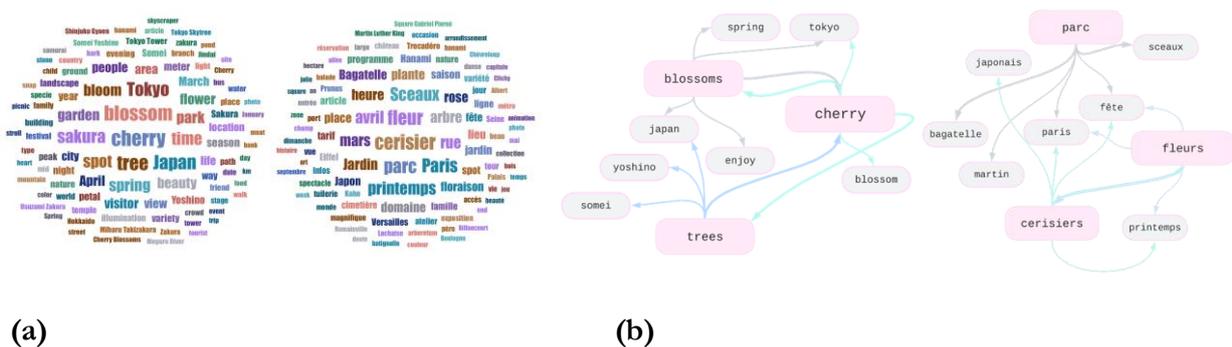**(a)**   **(b)**

Diagram 1. (a) Word clusters for English and French with the most frequent terms in the text samples. (b) Collocates'[16] for English and French with the keywords in proximity

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[13] 'cherry trees'

[14] 'flowers'

[15] 'garden'

[16] Collocates are "arbitrary and recurrent word combinations" (Benson, 1990).

The analysis has revealed a total of 262 examples with 145 for English and 117 for French, comprising the cases with descriptions of cherry blossoms (50 in English, 43 in French), affective states (51 in English, 38 in French), and figurative expressions (44 in English, 36 in French). In English, the third most frequent word is "trees", whereas in French, it is "parc". Japan has one of the most famous and ancient cherry trees, which may potentially influence the frequency of the term "trees" to be higher than that of "park" and "garden". Green areas, such as "parc" and "jardin" (garden), have been identified as among the top five most frequent words only in the French text sample.

5.2. Cherry trees in bloom

The cases of attributing characteristics to cherry blossoms have been identified in 50 examples in English and 43 in French. The apparent visual beauty of trees, along with their nuanced aesthetic effects and cultural significance, has been highlighted in the descriptions of cherry trees in bloom.

Diagram 2 illustrates the examples of cherry blossoms descriptions with the main themes.
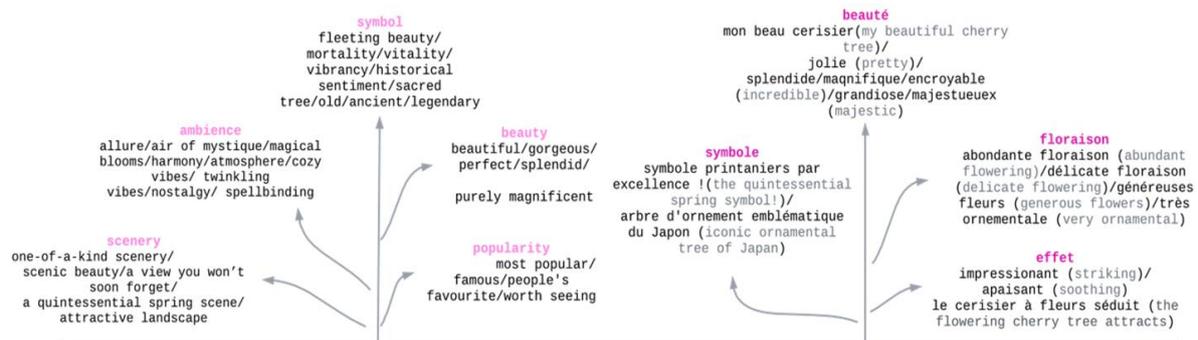

Diagram 2. The main descriptive themes of cherry blossoms in English and French

In English, cherry blossoms are described as symbols of "fleeting beauty", "mortality", and "vitality", as well as "evoking historical sentiment". The expressions that have not been mentioned in the French text sample include "old", "ancient", and "sacred" cherry trees. The nostalgic and historically significant elements of portraying cherry blossoms are more prominent in English. In French, they are briefly mentioned with only two examples when explaining the essence of hanami, such as "Arbre d'ornement emblématique du Japon" (Japan's emblematic ornamental tree). As symbols of spring, rather than culturally attached concepts, cherry blossoms are mentioned in French more, as in "symboles printaniers par excellence" (spring symbols par excellence).

In French, the description of visual beauty shows more variety. In addition to adjectives that capture the beauty of cherry blossoms, such as "beaux" (beautiful), "jolis" (pretty), and "les plus belles" (the most beautiful), there are also descriptions that evoke a sense of excitement. These include "grandiose", "splendide", "magnifiques" (magnificent), or "généreuses" (abundant).

A variety of trees and flowers have been recounted in both languages; however, these descriptions are more pertinent to French, including "magnolia", "pommier" (apple), "arbre de locust" (locust tree), "sequoia", as well as a "glycines" (wisteria), "begonias", "iris", and "roses". Although cherry blossoms are represented slightly less in English through beauty-related phrases, they still encompass characteristics, such as "magical blooms" or "gorgeous trees". It should be noted that the representation leans towards these iconic flowers as a "famous", "most popular", or "worth seeing" sight. In addition, cherry blossoms have been depicted as part of a certain ambient scenery. They provide "cozy and twinkling vibes", a unique "allure" with an "air of mystique", something "magical" or "spellbound". In this regard, the focus in English is on the surrounding areas and the special vibes that cherry blossoms bring:

> *The cherry blossom-lined promenade, softly lit lanterns, and* **the reflection of a cherry blossom** *and light on the river create* **an exceptional Japanese scenic beauty***.*
>
> *[…] (weeping cherry tree).* **The perfect addition** *to Hashin'tei, the temple's zen rock garden.* **Nighttime cherry blossoms** *offer an all-new* **allure** *and* **mystique** *not seen under the sun.*
>
> *[…] le cerisier à fleurs* **séduit** *par sa* **délicate floraison** *printanière rose ou blanche.*[17]

The word "mystical" has not been found in the French text sample, nor has there been a description of cherry blossoms during the night-time, which was present in English. The ambience created by cherry blossoms in English has not been identified in French; instead, the emphasis has been on the bloom and the effect of cherry blossoms on people. The bloom and flowers have been highlighted with phrases like "généreuses fleurs" (abundant flowers) or "délicate floraison" (delicate flowering), which have not been traced in English, along the attractive or soothing effects of cherry blossoms, which have been identified exclusively in French.

5.3. Cherry blossoms and affective states

The analysis of affective content has revealed 13 states in English and 8 in French. The emotional response of enjoyment is predominant in English with 22 examples but is much less frequent in French. The French "admirer" (to admire) has been identified only two times in English. It is interesting to note a significant gap between the most frequent affective state (e.g., *enjoyment*, 22 examples) and the second most frequent (e.g., *appreciation*, 8 examples). As can be seen in Diagram 3, such dynamics is seen in both languages but with different affective states, i.e., the basic emotion of joy in English and the feeling of appreciation in French.

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[17] 'The flowering cherry tree **enchants** with its **delicate** pink or white spring **blossoms**.'
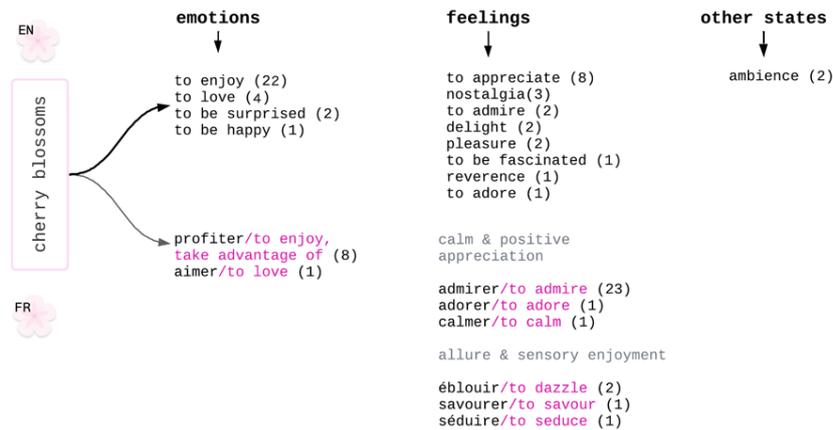
```
           emotions              feelings              other states
              ↓                     ↓                       ↓

EN                         to appreciate (8)         ambience (2)
                           nostalgia(3)
           to enjoy (22)   to admire (2)
           to love (4)     delight (2)
           to be surprised (2)  pleasure (2)
           to be happy (1)  to be fascinated (1)
                           reverence (1)
                           to adore (1)


                           calm & positive
                           appreciation
           profiter/to enjoy,
           take advantage of (8)  admirer/to admire (23)
           aimer/to love (1)  adorer/to adore (1)
                           calmer/to calm (1)

FR                         allure & sensory enjoyment

                           éblouir/to dazzle (2)
                           savourer/to savour (1)
                           séduire/to seduce (1)
```

Diagram 3. Affective and related states associated with cherry blossoms in English and French

Admiration is considered a positive emotion "in response to an outstanding person or object" (Schindler, 2014). Rooted deep in the brain, this complex and intense emotion (Plutchik, 1980) is associated with cognitively appraised and intricate emotions of awe or gratitude. Often called a social emotion, admiration can involve feelings of respect, approval, appreciation, and delight (Meng-Lewis et al., 2021). Admiration can also be a powerful stimulus for motivation, which brings both positive and potential negative influences when inadequately expressed. In the case of admiring cherry blossoms, the analysis naturally showed only its positive expression concerning the beauty, as in "les plus beaux arbres en fleurs" (the most beautiful trees in bloom). One example has been identified in which admiration was expressed as something "évidemment" (obvious) to do, as in "On ne se lasse pas de les admirer" (We never tire of admiring them).

In French, cherry blossoms are expressed through the alluring qualities of "éblouir" (to dazzle), "calmer" (to calm), and "séduire" (to attract/to enchant):

> *Et au printemps, quand les cerisiers fleurissent, le spectacle est tout simplement **éblouissant**.*[18]
> *On profite également de ses bancs pour bouquiner au **calme** à l'ombre des cerisiers.*[19]

The verb "profiter", mentioned in the example above, is the second most frequent. There is no exact equivalent in English, but "profiter" can be translated "to make the most of something", "to enjoy", or "to benefit from":

> *[…] prenez la peine de **lever le nez** et **profitez** de la **nature** foisonnante de ce paisible lieu.*[20]

The predominant emotional response to cherry blossoms identified in English was enjoyment. Compared to the French word "profiter", enjoyment is similar in the sense of

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[18] 'And in spring, when the cherry trees bloom, the spectacle is simply **dazzling**.'

[19] 'We also take advantage of its benches to read **quietly** in the shade of the cherry trees.'

[20] '[…] take the time **to look up** and **enjoy** the abundant **nature** of this peaceful place.'

deriving benefit and taking pleasure from the cherry blossoms experience. Joy is a universal emotion of medium intensity (Plutchik, 1980); it is less intense than ecstasy but more intense than serenity, which are in the same dimension in Plutchik's classification of emotions. While there are differences between "enjoyment" and "joy", the meanings centre around finding pleasure, fulfilment, and contentment. The description of enjoyment in the English text sample is quite diverse. After-dark viewing has been mentioned, highlighting the experience of enjoying a "magical bloom at night" or a "unique night cherry blossom". Exclusive to the English text sample are the themes of "fleeting beauty" and "special moments in life" in the context of enjoyment.

The universal emotions of happiness, surprise, and love have been identified, but with fewer examples. The emotion of love has been found once with the French "aimer" (to love) and four times in English. In both cases, the description concerned liking cherry blossoms. The verb "to love" has had an expansion and is often overused in the sense of strong liking, rather than deep affection typically linked to love:

> *[…] cherry blossom to **love** along the Seibu Shinjuku Line!*

Nevertheless, one example in English has been identified to describe sakura and Japan as "an enduring love story". In addition to loving or liking cherry blossoms, appreciating them is the second most common sentiment, which mainly includes their beauty and the spots where they bloom:

> *In Japan, **the act of appreciating** sakura blossoms is called hanami.*
> *Another **popular location to appreciate** sakura is from the banks of Lake Kawaguchi […]*

Often, appreciation is linked to worth, value and respect, but it can also be conceptualised as an emotion and as a disposition. When appreciating, we recognise the positive effect a person, event or a thing can evoke in us. Appreciation, as a personal trait or tendency, can mean being grateful and experiencing a constant presence of positive emotions, which benefits overall wellbeing.

The basic emotion of happiness, seemingly obvious in the context of the cherry blossoms experience, has been used only once in English and is absent in the French text sample. Not only are basic positive emotions associated with cherry blossoms, but also more complex feelings of (a) being fascinated or delighted by cherry blossoms, as well as (b) being nostalgic about cherry blossoms. The feeling of nostalgia has been found only in English, with the examples of sentimental longing related to the Japanese cultural tradition of sakura:

> *It's a time-honoured tradition illustrating our deep **fascination** and **reverence** for these little pink petals.*

Two interesting cases of describing a Japanese type of ambience have also shown that not only strong emotions can create experiences of cherry blossoms but a culturally related ambience:

> **Authentic Japanese ambience** *awaits at this* **cherry blossom-lined path** *with softlylit lanterns.*
> *The weeping cherry trees bloom […] The true air and* **ambience of a Japanese garden in spring**.

Ambience is not necessarily an affective state but is sometimes defined as "a mood associated with a particular place, person, or thing" (MWD, n.d.), or a closely related state to the creation of mood. The latter is a specific type of state often referred to as a less intense and more prolonged state that a person experiences at a particular time, influenced by external stimuli or a distinctive context (MWD, n.d.), in this case, authentic Japanese.

5.4. Cherry blossoms and metaphorical expressions

Figurative expressions of cherry blossoms offer engaging and imaginative mental pictures, such as "trembling waterfalls", "a cloud of delicate pink and white", or "a sea of soft coral hues".
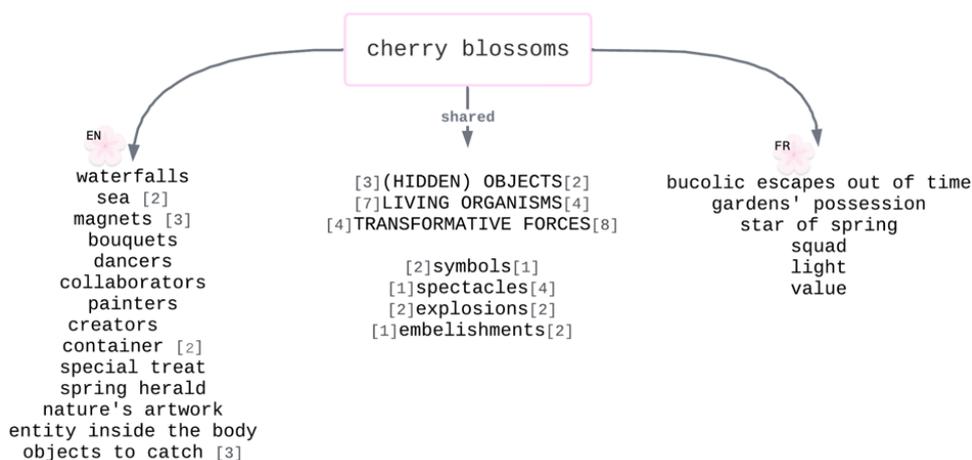

Diagram 4. Figurative expressions, (conceptual) metaphors related to cherry blossoms in English and French

Metaphorical logic suggests similarities in both languages with the recurrent conceptualisations of cherry blossoms as "transformative forces", "hidden objects", or "living organisms" with their "home" in green areas. These abstract residences are more prominent in French in a sense of "abriter" (to provide shelter) and "posséder" (to own) cherry trees:

> *Du 1er au 24 avril, le Domaine départemental de Sceaux célèbre la floraison des centaines de*

cerisiers qu'il abrite dans son bosquet nord *[…]*[21]
CHERRY TREES ARE LIVING ORGANISMS THAT FOUND SHELTER IN GREEN AREAS

Metaphorical "transformation" of cherry blossoms is associated with bringing changes to parks and gardens, as well as revitalising places, especially cemeteries:

Au milieu des tombes de Jim Morrison, de Maria Callas ou d'Honoré de Balzac, les promeneurs peuvent admirer **ces spécimens qui redonnent vie à ce lieu solennel**.[22]
CHERRY TREES ARE FORCES THAT BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO PLACES

It is noteworthy to mention that in French one needs to "chercher" (to search) or "quêter" (to seek) cherry blossoms because they are "cachées" (hidden). In English, the attribute of "catching" cherry blossoms is prevalent rather than searching or seeking:

[…] ce parc de 6,5 hectares dans le quartier des Batignolles a de quoi séduire les personnes **en quête d'arbres et cerisiers en fleurs**.[23]
CHERRY BLOSSOMS ARE HIDDEN OBJECTS

The parks of Tokyo are where to go for hidden pockets of nature, many of them offering a green feast for the eyes and chance **to catch the cherry blossoms**.
CHERRY BLOSSOMS ARE OBJECTS TO CATCH

In addition to the main conceptualisations, the figurative expression of cherry blossoms has shown variety even within the limits of the text samples. In French, cherry blossoms are portrayed as embellishment in gardens, as in "**se pare** de fleurs" (adorned with flowers), "une **escouade** d'une dizaine de cerisiers à fleurs roses" (a squad of around ten cherry trees with pink flowers), or "véritable **star** du printemps" (a true star of spring). Often, cherry blossoms are presented as a "spectacle", including its descriptions, as "éblouissant" (dazzling), "inégalé" (unparalleled), and "saisissant" (stunning/breathtaking):

Lorsque le printemps fait son retour, **le spectacle** *offert par les cerisiers en fleurs est* **saisissant**.[24]

In English, on the other hand, it is curious to point out two groups of figurative

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expressions: (i) cherry blossoms as an imaginative or physical cover made of white and pink petals, and (ii) cherry blossoms as a personified object. As an abstract "cover", cherry blossoms are linked to water, resembling waterfalls or the sea when the petals cover the ground:

> *In the spring, cherry blossoms **cover** the park with a light-pink **blanket**.*
> *Most notably Maruyama Park and Kiyomizu-dera temple, both **blanketed** by a **sea** of soft coral hues during the Spring.*
>
> *The sight of fully bloomed cherry blossoms **in collaboration with** other flowers offers a quintessential spring spectacle.*
> *These are sakura, Japan's famed cherry blossoms, **painting** the world in a cloud of delicate pinks and whites.*
> *As the delicate petals of the cherry blossoms **dance** in the spring breeze […]*

The analysis has not revealed any similar examples in French, nor has it identified another exclusive example of cherry blossoms — "an entity inside the body" and a type of "magnet" that draws people to see the cherry trees in bloom:

> *As you can tell, sakura blossom is a flower that holds a special place **in Japanese people's hearts**.*
>
> *Sakura, the Japanese word for cherry blossoms, are a symbol of Japan, **drawing millions of people** outside each year to witness the blooming of the cherry flowers.*

This indicates a unique cultural significance attributed to sakura blossoms, which hold a special place in the hearts of Japanese people, representing beauty and deep emotional connections. The richness of conceptualisations can be further studied in terms of cultural differences and similarities, highlighting common conceptualisations and potentially rare but salient ones.

6. Concluding remarks

Through the discussion about cherry blossoms and their expression in English and French, this study explored the role of language as a powerful tool for examining human–nature relationships. It was emphasised that addressing not only destructive discourses but also positive ones about nature can serve as a source of motivation and inspiration. A proposed layered framework examined how cherry blossoms are expressed in English and French, incorporating descriptive, affective, and conceptual levels of linguistic content.

Descriptions of cherry blossoms encompass not only their visual beauty and cultural symbolism but also convey the specific ambience and scenery they evoke. This was

particularly evident in English descriptions. In French, the description focused more on the emotional effects cherry blossoms have on people, such as feelings of soothing or being struck by their beauty.

In terms of emotional responses, the analysis identified a range of emotions and feelings expressed in English, with the emotion of enjoyment emerging as the most frequently mentioned. In contrast, French descriptions predominantly expressed admiration, along with intriguing states of being dazzled by the beauty of cherry blossoms, which were unique to the French context.

Metaphorical expressions of cherry blossoms were found to be both similar and curiously expressive in both languages. Cherry trees were conceptualised as "hidden objects" residing in gardens and recognised as "transformative forces" in various places. In French, the pink and white flowers were depicted as embellishments and the true stars of spring, while in English, they were linked to abstract painters and dancers to capture the mood they create.

Hopefully, the discussions and findings of this study will inspire further exploration into the rich tapestry of human–nature relationships and the constructive discourses surrounding these iconic symbols of beauty and transience.

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