



Conceptual Metaphor Theory in World Language Education

Theory, Research, and Pedagogy

Edited by Ida Chavoshan and Loretta Fernández

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY IN WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION

This edited collection explores the scholarly and pedagogical implementations of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in world language education. The chapters offer a diverse range of theoretical and pedagogical perspectives as well as methodologies aiming to achieve the following objectives:

- Introduce novice linguists, novice researchers, and pre-service language teachers to CMT, its extensions, and its applications, while providing an overview of the current state of the discipline;
- Shed light on new research and pedagogical practices for linguists, researchers, and language educators at all levels;
- Present theoretically founded and research-based examples of the pedagogical application of CMT across multiple world languages, including English, French, Mandarin, and Spanish;
- Highlight the experiences and perspectives of practitioner educators who have implemented CMT in world language education.

By addressing these objectives, the book aims to provide a comprehensive and insightful exploration of CMT's role in world language education, offering guidance and inspiration for both researchers and practitioners in the field.

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MULTIMODAL METAPHORS OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Language Teachers' Examination of Language Use and Identity

*Loretta Fernández, Francis John Troyan, Daniel Scott Ferguson,
and Yuseva Ariyani Iswandari*

Introduction

Framed within humanizing approaches to language teacher education (e.g., [Kinloch & Dixon, 2018](#); [Peercy et al., 2025](#); [del Carmen Salazar, 2013](#)), this chapter explores how teacher candidates examined their multilingual identities as they learned to teach. This exploration was conducted through the analysis of conceptual multimodal metaphors that mirror their language use.

Teacher candidates completed a task called the “Language Use Profile” (LUP), developed by [Troyan and Sembiente \(2021\)](#), to help them reflect on their language use and understand their multilingual identities. Within this task, candidates generated a multimodal language use map, detailing and analyzing their personal language use and linguistic repertoires. The map was complemented by additional tasks, including written reflections and classroom discussions, which provided support to the candidates as they developed an understanding of their cultural and linguistic identities. The reflective dimension of this task engaged language teacher candidates in envisioning their future classrooms as humanizing spaces. Hence, language learning becomes an engaged dialogue where students and the teacher learn to better themselves while developing a new language and culture. This understanding is only achievable when language teachers have a profound knowledge of themselves ([Troyan et al., 2023](#)).

To aid this reflective process, teacher candidates were encouraged to analyze their language use maps through the lenses of multimodal conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) ([Gibbs, 2017](#)) and extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (ECMT) ([Kövecses, 2020, 2022, 2024](#)) facilitating the identification and interpretation of metaphorical meanings embedded in the maps. This chapter extends previous research on multimodal metaphors by analyzing teacher candidates' representations depicting their multilingual identity journeys. Language teacher educators play a crucial role in guiding language teachers and candidates toward enacting pedagogies that are responsive, antiracist, and culturally sustaining. We argue that creating opportunities, such as utilizing multimodal ECMT to understand teaching candidates' multilingualism, allows candidates to reflect on their

individual identities and enhance their classroom practices. Furthermore, we argue that relying on humanizing pedagogical practices enables future teachers to engage in transformative praxis, contributing to the creation of a more equitable classroom (San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017).

Review of Literature

Humanizing Approaches to Language Teacher Education

The development of critical consciousness, whether individual or collective, is one of the main tenets of humanizing pedagogies (del Carmen Salazar, 2013). Based on the ideas of Paulo Freire (1993), a humanizing pedagogy is designed to create a critical consciousness (*conscientização*) regarding the ideological, political, and economical contradictions where students and teachers are immersed, rather than manipulate their ideas (Freire, p. 17). For teacher educators, it is particularly apparent the difficulties that future K–12 world and second language teachers will face while entering a school system such as the US one, in which monolingual and monocultural ideologies are prevailing (Wiley & Lukes, 1996). Farr and Song (2011) citing Wiley explain how in the United States, the ideology of English monolingualism was enacted in two distinct types of assimilation policies. The first was a deculturation policy intended for Native Americans where their languages and cultures were removed as a means of subjugation. The second was an acculturation policy for European immigrants where their languages and cultures gradually disappeared by the structural incorporation into the English-only dominant society. These language ideologies have caused struggles particularly to students of color who tried to resist the various assimilation policies enacted in the US school system (del Carmen Salazar, 2013).

Through a humanizing approach to teacher education, teacher educators seek to involve teacher candidates in reflecting, recognizing, and valuing the personal, political, and emotional aspects of teaching (Peercy et al., 2025). In doing so, teachers educators engage teacher candidates in dialogic activities that help them deconstruct biases and engage in inquiry that creates local knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Thus, humanizing approaches to teaching adhere to a call for justice and freedom (Kinloch & Dixon, 2018) where future language teachers can reflect and critically analyze their language use, and knowledge, to resist monolingual and monocultural ideologies. Understanding linguistic repertoires go beyond mere bilingualism, showing that individuals, even seemingly monolingual, use various linguistic resources in different contexts (Troyan et al., 2023). Hence, teacher educators need to offer tools, such as the knowledge of ECMT, that allow teacher candidates to reflect on their linguistic repertoires and how these influence their identities as teachers.

Conceptual Representations of Identity

In contemporary educational research (e.g., Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Varghese et al., 2016), there is a prominent emphasis on exploring teacher identities and ideologies within teacher education programs. Waller et al. (2017) suggested that teachers' identity is at the core of critical praxis. Researchers have employed various approaches to research identity, such as literacy autobiographies (Canagarajah, 2020), critical-autoethnographic

narratives (Yazan, 2019), critical multilingual language awareness (Fu et al., 2023), and language ideology trees and language portraits (Lindahl et al., 2021), to enable teacher candidates to articulate their identities and language ideologies. For instance, Martel and Yazan (2021) introduced a practicum course centered on understanding language teacher identity. The exploration of teacher candidates' identities and linguistic repertoire allows them to critically engage with language learning and development.

Dell Hymes (1962) stressed the importance of investigating language in context and explained it as a situated practice by highlighting the ways in which social behavior and speech are connected through exploring linguistic repertoires. Lave and Wenger (e.g., Lave, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) emphasize how within communities of practice the process of language learning and development happens contemporarily to the identity development in a fluid and complex way through building a linguistic repertoire. ECMT, stemmed from CMT, as an analytic tool, allows individuals to understand the underlying organization of their thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the creation and understanding of various life events, including categorization, memory, emotion, social judgments, and experiences related to static images, film, gestures, music, dance, and other forms of material culture (Gibbs, 2014). Because of its wide applicability, CMT can be used in combination with cognitive linguistics (CL) as a powerful tool for teacher candidates to reflect on their linguistic identities and language teaching.

Cognitive Linguistics and Conceptual Metaphor Theory

CL adopts a usage-based approach to language, emphasizing the exploration and discussion of real instances of verbal interaction, i.e., performance, rather than focusing solely on syntactic abilities (Gibbs, 2014). CL serves as an umbrella term encompassing various methods of examining grammatical structures through semantic explanations (Littlemore, 2023). Cognitive linguists propose that understanding language involves considering five essential aspects (Tyler et al., 2018), including construal, which entails the fact that diverse users of the language portray experiences uniquely; categorization, the act of assigning items to specific classes or groups; embodiment, where sensory perceptions and experiences influence linguistic expression; the usage-based characteristic of language, which highlights language users' reliance on usage patterns; and conceptual metaphor (CM). Within CL, CM is defined as a mapping between two domains—the source and the target, where the source is the conceptual domain from which metaphorical expressions are drawn from (e.g., journey) and the target is the conceptual domain that we try to understand (e.g., life is a journey). In this mapping, properties from the source domain are transferred onto the target domain to track onto and describe it.

CM is defined as an essential way of thinking, “a process by which we understand and structure one domain of experience in terms of another domain of a different kind” (Johnson, 1987, p. 15). When humans speak, we use metaphors not only because we want to make our utterances more descriptive or accessible but also because our “concept is metaphorically structured, our activity is metaphorically structured, and, consequently, our language is metaphorically structured” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). Conventionally, mapping is conceived as universally unidirectional, with the abstract target domain mapped from the more concrete source domain and mainly one universal way of making sense or meaning from them (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). However, recently, scholars (i.e.,

Gibbs, 2017; Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 2017; Kövecses 2020; MacArthur, 2016) have challenged these assumptions acknowledging the importance of the context of culture and the context of situation in the CM use.

Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Kövecses (2020, 2022, 2024) proposes an “extended conceptual metaphor theory” (ECMT) that addresses the issue of context through two tenets: a multilevel view of CM and the incorporation of contextual factors in the use of metaphor in discourse. Kövecses (2022) identifies four main categories of context that influence metaphor use: context of situation, context of discourse, cognitive context, and bodily context. Using concepts from other CL areas of research such as frames of mind and blending theory (e.g., Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) and Langacker’s (1987) cognitive grammar organization, Kövecses proposes that image schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces are utilized by thinkers/speakers to bring order and coherence to our understanding. Image schema is the most generic level (most schematic) while mental spaces, the most specific (least schematic) cognitive structures serving to organize purpose. All these elements contribute to metaphorical thinking. Image schemas are fundamental conceptual frameworks that give significance to our experiences. Consequently, the conceptual system, even with abstract concepts, becomes embodied, grounded in perception. This inherent property renders concepts, including metaphorical ones, meaningful (Kövecses, 2022).

Domain is a cohesive conceptual source of meaning that composes semantic units (Langacker, 1987). Unlike image schemas, domains are not analog, visual, or kinesthetic patterns of experience; instead, they comprise a greater number of components compared to image schemas, thus offering richer informational content. The domain matrix for a concept like “building” encompasses our knowledge of the elements that conceptualize the schema of a building in our minds. However, only specific characteristics of this domain participate in the mappings between source and target concepts in CMs that is called partial mapping. This selective involvement is what eventually brings us to the concept of frames. Frames expound upon specific facets of a domain matrix, focusing on particular lower-level concepts within a domain.

It could be argued that frames contain more conceptually precise information compared to domains. Frames elaborate specific aspects of the domains that allow for specific mappings. This is a level that is particularly linked to the cultural context of use. Kövecses (2022) explains, for example, the concept of LIFE IS A BUILDING can have a frame of FOUNDATION, in cultures where constructions have a foundation, which would not be translatable to cultures in which constructions or buildings do not have a foundation.

Among the four conceptual structures discussed—image schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces—mental spaces are the least schematic. They are notably specific structures that emerge during actual language use within specific communicative contexts. Mental spaces hold the most detailed information, which stems from assigning specific values to generic roles (Fauconnier, 1994). Thus, the generic structures derived from frames are elaborated by specific information derived from the context of communication. Beyond these, there is also the level of communication where speakers and listeners employ symbols (linguistic or otherwise) to express or expand upon the contents of specific mental spaces. These symbols might be linguistic but also multimodal.

In our work, ECMT allows both instructors and world languages teacher candidates to understand cultural and linguistic diversity through the lens of their linguistic repertoires. Understanding the multimodal CMs utilized by Daniel and Yuseva, our research participants (third and fourth authors of the chapter), allowed them to be cognizant of their linguistic repertoire and how it influences their identity as multilingual teacher candidates. For Loretta and Francis (first and second authors of the chapter), understanding the complexity of teacher candidates' work allows them to improve their curriculum planning as well as the classroom interactions. This work is central to the language teacher's identity development and professional development. To this end, we explore the following:

- 1 How do the teacher candidates in this study analyze the LUP as a multimodal metaphor to explore the linguistic repertoires in their language practices?
- 2 How do multimodal metaphors represent the ways in which language teachers think about their multilingual identities?

Methodology

Developing a Knowledge Base

Drawing inspiration from the scholarly work above, the second author of this chapter centered the cultural and linguistic identities of language teachers in a language teaching foundations course. This course allowed teacher candidates to explore their identities as speakers, learners, and teachers of other languages while at the same time learning how to be a world language teacher. During the course, after outlining key concepts of linguistics and language pedagogy and the role of the LUP and the other reflective assignments in the program, teacher candidates examined their own linguistic practice in their multimodal representation of their language use and their reflections on them. The Foundations for World Language Education course (Troyan & Sembiante, 2021) comprised four course tasks assignments. The first assignment was the LUP, which was a multimodal metaphorical representation of the participant language use in context. The second assignment was the analysis of personal language use, which analyzes teacher candidates' use of text messages. The third assignment was the analysis of authentic text which regards the analysis of an email communication. Finally, the students had to create an instructional plan following a genre-based approach in the world language that they were training to teach (see Troyan, 2021).

Data Sources

For this study, we collected the LUP maps (Coursework, June–July 2020) of two students Daniel and Yuseva. These representations were a combination of pictorial and text representation of their language use. They created them at the beginning of the course and later modified them at the end of the course, based on the concepts that they studied throughout the course. After the course ended, Daniel and Yuseva were asked to analyze their language use as represented in their LUPs and the written reflections that accompanied them. In addition, Daniel and Yuseva completed an elicited reflection following O'Reilly and Marsden (2021) in which they analyzed their representations

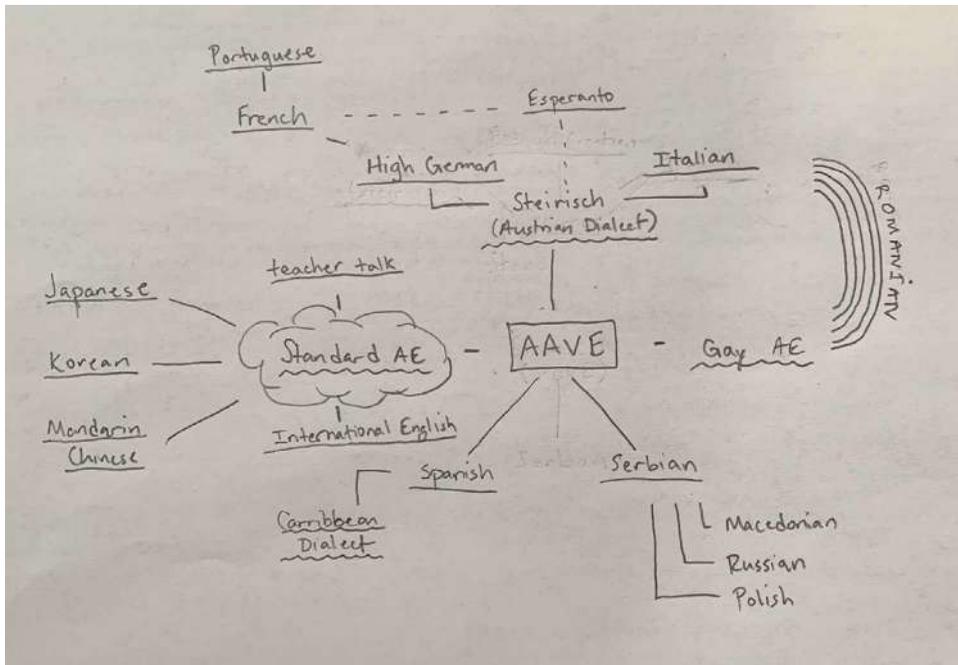


FIGURE 12.1 Daniel's LUP

varieties. Conceptually, in his reflection, Daniel interpreted it as a snapshot of the diverse spaces and places he had inhabited up until the moment of this profile's conceptualization as well as an orientational metaphoric roadmap of his language teaching and learning endeavors as can be observed in Figure 12.1.

Daniel utilized the CM LANGUAGE USE IS A JOURNEY THROUGH A MENTAL LANDSCAPE (Sweetser, 1987) to frame his LUP. Utilizing Kövecses (2020, 2022, 2024) extended CMT, we can analyze at the level of the image schema level, purposeful activities of journeys (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). At the domain level, this is the CM of LANGUAGE USE IS A JOURNEY THROUGH A MENTAL LANDSCAPE. At the frame level, Daniel's non-metaphorical journeys are connected to his language use in metaphorical landscapes which establishes a parallel between language and thought (Sweetser, 1994). At the mental space level, the construal of time in terms of space links the human perception of spatial paths and temporal unidirectionality (Sweetser, 1994). At the utterance level, in the excerpt below, Daniel explains "...the spaces I felt most comfortable navigating and connected with were within Spanish, Styrian German and Serbian speaking contexts" (lines 1–3). At the multimodal level, Daniel represents his LUP as shapes connected through arrows.

In his reflection, Daniel explains that African American Vernacular English (AAVE) represents his foundation "my home." Moreover, he talks about the other languages he knows as his homes away from home as evidenced by the excerpt below:

In leaving my home, the spaces in which I felt most comfortable navigating and connected with were within Spanish, Styrian German, and Serbian-speaking contexts. These circumscribing contexts constitute the spaces in which I do not feel as if I am a

tourist/outsider/foreigner—my homes away from home. Their contours serve as the underlying infrastructure of my language use profile, which has facilitated access across the diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes I navigate.

(Daniel's metaphor reflection on LUP)

Thus, Daniel uses the foundational METAPHOR LANGUAGE IS A BUILDING or as Kövecses (2022) would explain at the level of the image schema: complex abstract systems are complex physical objects. At the domain level, this is the CM of LIFE IS A BUILDING. At the frame level, social/psychological stability is physical support: AAVE is the language that provides Daniel the support for all his other languages. As he explains in his third reflection is the language, he considers his own. At the mental space level, AAVE is the foundation of Daniel's linguistic house. At the utterance level, "AAVE is my foundation, it is my home." Finally, at the multimodal level, Daniel represented AAVE inscribed within a box [home] from where all the other languages derive. The contours serve as the underlying infrastructure of his LUP, which facilitated access across the diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes he inhabited. In his LUP representation, Daniel directly connected through straight lines Spanish, Styrian German, and Serbian languages. According to his metaphor reflection, those languages constitute "spaces in which I do not feel as if I am a tourist/outsider/foreigner—my homes away from home." In this utterance, Daniel linguistically utilizes two CMs. LANGUAGE USE IS A JOURNEY THROUGH A MENTAL LANDSCAPE and LANGUAGE IS A BUILDING to explain the languages that he feels more comfortable with. In contrast, the lines extending Standard and Gay AE to the left and right of his foundation (AAVE) are languages that he used as a vehicle to enter other linguistic spaces. In his linguistic map, Daniel's journey is taking different linguistic paths learning and using Standard American English (SAE) and Gay American English (GAE) that cause him to professionally and personally be part of different communities. While learning and utilizing GAE speech led to some (tokenized) romantic getaways which lead to learning Italian and Romanian, his foray into learning SAE led to first schooling and then teaching into the K-12+ educational system. His SAE led him to develop his teacher talk and also his International English which is a standard simplified English that he utilizes abroad. His professional path led him also to learning Korean, Mandarin Chinese, and Japanese. As Lakoff and Johnson (1999) explain regarding causal path metaphors:

When people travel, whether they are taking a medium length walk or driving somewhere, they tend to continue along the paths and roads they have started out on. As a result, people tend to wind up at places that the paths and roads they are already on lead to.

(p. 210)

Thus, Daniel's professional and personal life journey lead him through a path to be part of different linguistic communities at the same time cognitively utilizing different languages became a metaphorical journey. At the domain level, this is the CM of the causal path (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). At the frame level, path situations lead to a course of action: using Gay AE, Italian, and Romanian, Daniel is able to follow the course of his sentimental life while through Standard AE he is able to follow his

schooling in the United States and his work in the K–12 public system and in academia. At the mental space level, those languages are vehicles to a goal. At the utterance level, Daniel explains,

In contrast, the lines extending Standard and Gay AE to the left and right of my foundation signify the vehicles through which I gained access into lofty, bougie spaces and places that I did not naturally feel comfortable or wanted. Professionally, I would come to inhabit spaces in the world of education, and later on, academia using Standard AE; and personally, I would slowly find my place within the LGBTQIA+ community using Gay AE.

(D's Metaphor reflection on Language use map)

Finally, at the multimodal level, he used wiggly underlining clouds and rainbows to indicate those “lofty bougie spaces and places” his linguistic, personal, and professional paths had brought him to.

Notably, Daniel's adoption of SAE was clouded, gradual, and posed ethical challenges. As he explained in his language use reflection, full participation in the American educational system required the assimilation of SAE at the expense of the linguistic and cultural erasure of his native AAVE. This phenomenon was something he would come to understand and name throughout his undergraduate and graduate linguistic studies. Accordingly, it is around this time in his journey that Daniel started focusing on how he could modify the language classroom into more of a humane space. He did so first by learning teacher talk and applying conventions of International English acquired via his stents abroad, then by explicitly choosing to learn the languages and cultures of the multilingual students who came into his classroom. Through his reflection, he was able to understand that, for example, learning other languages empowered him to integrate in France for an Erasmus study, or to mix and mingle with Brazilian Erasmus students, and was that what incentivized him to learn Esperanto to connect with people whose native languages are still on his “bucket list” to learn.

One concept that impacted Daniel's reflection on language use was translanguaging. In Daniel's reflections and LUP, the metaphor LANGUAGE IS A BUILDING is very present. He utilizes the building metaphor as structures in metaphorical and real landscapes. In this way, this metaphor stays in his reflection in a dialectic relationship in which architectural structure gives support and foundation, and the LANGUAGE IS A JOURNEY THROUGH MENTAL LANDSCAPES metaphor that allows for movement, mixing, and exploration. In fact, he explains,

For instance, with regards to Macedonian, Russian, and Polish, my plurilingual and pluricultural architecture has enabled me to communicate via translanguaging with students, family, and friends of mine even when I have not learned their languages to prescriptivist levels of language proficiency.

(Daniel's Metaphor reflection on LUP map)

For Daniel, language learning was a gateway to truly communicating and connecting with people. Languages provided Daniel with a foundation to learn and communicate

with people in other languages. Language learning and use provided Daniel a space and place to be himself and to develop his different identities.

Yuseva

Yuseva's LUP evolved significantly throughout the semester. Her initial representation, created digitally, is schematic and professional, while her final representation, done by hand, is more complex. Reflecting on the construction of her LUP, class writings, and interview data, her first representation of language use can be analyzed through the metaphorical concept of LANGUAGES ARE CONTAINERS FOR MEANING (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). However, Yuseva does not use this concept in the sense of Reddy's conduit metaphor, where ideas and meanings are treated as objects that can be exchanged between a speaker/writer and a listener/reader (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Instead, the partial mapping Yuseva employed emphasizes the concept of CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS (Gibbs, 2017), suggesting that languages contain various categories or levels of meaning. However, to better understand Yuseva's metaphorical thinking, it is also necessary to consider metonymic thinking. If language is a container for meaning, then meaning itself is a container of distinct aspects. Yuseva identifies these aspects as Field, Tenor, and Mode, concepts she learned during the course, which together form the meaning (Figures 12.2–12.4).

Utilizing Kövecses's ECMT (2020, 2022, 2024), we can analyze Yuseva's LUP at multiple levels. At the image schema level, ideas or meanings are objects (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). At the domain level, the CM is LANGUAGE IS A CONTAINER FOR MEANING. At the frame level, languages contain various categories of meaning. At the mental space level, Yuseva explains that within the meaning container, she can identify specific aspects that influence her meaning-making in diverse cultural and situational contexts. At the utterance level, Yuseva explains,

Being a multilingual person, I at least speak 3 languages (Javanese, Indonesian, English). There are four main containers that reflect my language use: whom I talk to (interlocutor), when I use the languages (the (life) events), the communication purposes, and where I use the languages (context)".

(From Yuseva's Metaphor reflection on Language use map, emphasis in the original)

At the multimodal level, Yuseva uses images to explain the cultural contexts of communication while she writes in words the interlocutors and language use purposes in the different contexts. She uses distinct size boxes to convey these contexts, and three boxed images are a metonymy of these contexts. She chose a computer that stands for the work context, a living room that stands for the family, and two cappuccinos that stand for social gatherings. All three of these illustrations are metonymic representations of the different contexts (Kashanizadeh & Forceville, 2022). There is an intermodal relationship between the different modes of communication where images and the text complement each other (Feng & O'Halloran, 2013).

In the final review of the LUP, Yuseva not only draws by hand but also utilizes two sheets of paper to illustrate her language use in Indonesia and her language use in the



FIGURE 12.2 Yuseva’s initial LUP

United States. She applies the systemic functional linguistic concepts that explored during the course to problematize her language use, thinking about language as the relationship between meaning containers, and enriching her concept map with examples of language use. Yuseva explains,

My reflection has further helped me to view that the metaphorical concepts have increased my awareness on how I use and organize my language containers, which become the reason why I revise my visual representation of my language use. Furthermore,



FIGURE 12.3 Yuseva's final LUP, language use in Indonesia



FIGURE 12.4 Yuseva's final LUP, language use in the United States

I also reflect that my language containers are not metaphorically conceptualized and structured in separation since they are tied to culture (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

(From Yuseva's Metaphor reflection on LUP map)

As Yuseva explains in the excerpt above, thinking metaphorically about language helped her understand her language use and its impact on her identity. Her childhood language, Javanese, is structured with distinct words, expressions, and pragmatic markers tailored to the speaker's status and context. This linguistic foundation profoundly shapes how she navigates and utilizes all her other languages. This insight led her to radically transform her LUP representation, resulting in a final draft that is highly complex, vibrant, and filled with language examples.

Additionally, Yuseva feels compelled to separate her life in Indonesia from her life in the United States, reflecting how both situational and cultural contexts influence her language use. However, as she explains in the quote below, this separation goes beyond merely switching languages. It embodies a deeper negotiation of identity and context.

The simultaneous use of language containers has created a space for negotiation and tension between the home norms tied to my Javanese and Indonesian language containers I have held and language use expectations when I am in the U.S. context.

(From Yuseva's Metaphor reflection on LUP map)

Yuseva language use is not always a straightforward process; the various ways she navigates her languages create a space for *negotiations* and *tensions*. This dynamic reflects what Lakoff and Johnson (1999) describe as *special-case hierarchies* (p. 202), where two metaphors merge—in this case, DIFFICULTIES ARE COUNTERFORCES.

For Yuseva, her language use was deeply influenced by both the cultural and situational contexts in which she lived. Languages provided her with both a SPACE and a CONTAINER to construct meaning, navigate social relationships, and shape her identities. The LUP served as a tool for Yuseva to make sense of her multifaceted identities and the ways language use influenced them. It also helped her grapple with the DIFFICULTIES, or COUNTERFORCES, inherent in deciding how to use language across diverse cultural and situational contexts.

Discussion

In our exploration of CMs as tools to reflect on students' diversity in language use within language teacher education, we have illustrated their potential to enact a humanizing pedagogy, as evidenced through the reflections of Daniel and Yuseva on their LUPs. Their experiences, examined through the LUP task and their metaphoric reflection, underscore the efficacy of CMs in engaging language teacher candidates in critical praxis, a notion supported by Troyan et al. (2023). By employing CMs, these reflections provide deeper insights into the cognitive mechanisms underpinning language use, revealing how their understanding of linguistic diversity was highly metaphoric in structure.

CMs such as LANGUAGE USE IS A JOURNEY THROUGH A MENTAL LANDSCAPE, LANGUAGE IS A BUILDING, and LANGUAGE IS A CONTAINER FOR MEANING emerged as pivotal frameworks

in Daniel and Yuseva's reflections. These metaphors enabled the teacher candidates to conceptualize their language use experiences and understand their linguistic repertoires in nuanced ways. For Daniel, these metaphors framed the comprehension of his linguistic journey and life navigation, illustrating how personal and linguistic experiences intertwine. Similarly, Yuseva's reflection on her "language containers" highlighted how she moved and used her linguistic repertoire across different contexts, such as Indonesia and the United States. The evolution of her graphic representation in her LUP vividly depicted this movement, making apparent how CMs can illuminate the dynamics of language use and identity formation.

Furthermore, the use of ECMTs in analyzing LUPs aligns with the notion that discourse interaction impacts the entrenchment and elaboration of metaphorical scenarios, as discussed by [Caballero and Ibarretxe-Antuñano \(2014\)](#). This perspective reinforces the idea that understanding and teaching languages involves recognizing the underlying cognitive mechanisms that shape how individuals perceive and engage with linguistic diversity. By placing identity at the center of language teacher education, as advocated by [Kanno and Stuart \(2011\)](#) and [Varghese et al. \(2016\)](#), instructors can assist teacher candidates in appreciating the complexity of language learning and develop pedagogical approaches that they can transfer to their classrooms.

In this study, utilizing [Kövecses's \(2020, 2022, 2024\)](#) ECMT as a key to analyze the data, allowed for a comprehensive analysis at multiple levels: the image schema level, the domain level, the frame level, the mental space level, and the multimodal level. Considering the intermodal relationship between different communication modes, where images and text complement each other ([Feng & O'Halloran, 2013](#)), further enhances this analysis. This multimodal approach provides a richer understanding of how metaphors operate across various modes of communication, reinforcing their role in shaping linguistic and cultural perceptions.

Pedagogical Implications

The implications of this study for language teacher education programs are of relevance. [Wassell and Glynn \(2022\)](#) argue for a rethinking of the readings, lessons, and activities used in teacher education programs to foster the development of critically oriented language teachers. This implies the need to reconsider how we engage language teachers in their identity journeys, informing their pedagogies in more meaningful ways. By incorporating reflective activities centered on CMs into our programs, we can provide language teacher candidates with the tools to critically reflect on their experiences and develop a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of language teaching and learning.

Conclusion

The use of multimodal metaphors in understanding linguistic diversity offers significant insights into the cognitive mechanisms that underlie language use perception by multilingual speakers. By integrating CMs into language teacher education, teacher candidates can understand better how language works and how they use it thus fostering humanizing practices that empower teacher candidates to critically engage with their linguistic identities and develop effective and inclusive teaching practices. The reflections of Daniel and Yuseva highlight the transformative potential of this approach, emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive and multimodal analysis of language learning experiences.

Additionally, these findings point to the potential of these multimodal metaphors as dynamic, humanizing spaces for the examination of language teachers' linguistic repertoires in language teacher education and professional development.

ECMT extends CMT integrating more detailed and nuanced levels of analysis. It allows for a multifaceted understanding of how metaphors operate within language. The use of ECMT to analyze LUP tasks shows the different conceptual layers of the metaphors making apparent the cultural context in which these metaphors are used. Furthermore, this analysis allows us to reveal the intersection between language use and identity and raise awareness of the connection between language cultural and situational context, and how these contexts influence linguistic diversity.

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