Resources not rulebooks: metaphors for grammar in teachers' metalinguistic discourse

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Abstract
This paper explores the way that teachers use metaphors to think and talk about grammar and what this means for classroom practice. It does so by employing conceptual metaphor theory to analyse teachers' metalinguistic discourse, focusing particularly on construals of grammar and grammar teaching. Based on a series of interviews with 24 UK-based secondary school English teachers, the findings suggest that teachers make extensive use of metaphor, often mapping the abstract domain of GRAMMAR with concrete domains such as CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL and RULEBOOK. The discipline of English studies itself was often construed as a series of separate parts, with GRAMMAR occupying a physical space that was often seen as disconnected to other aspects of the curriculum. The findings are discussed in relation to sociocultural contexts, including the current climate of English teaching in the UK, educational policy discourse, public and professional views on language, and the place of grammar on the curriculum.

1. Introduction
On the 2nd of February 2018, in response to a *Times Educational Supplement* article about grammar, a user posted the following on Twitter:

> Conjunctive adverbs, such as 'moreover', 'undoubtedly' and 'nonetheless' are an increasing Public Health problem. Like cockroaches, identification should lead to better methods for elimination. I do hope these beasts are not breeding in our schools?

There are two metaphors at work here: GRAMMAR IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM and GRAMMAR IS A COCKROACH. Although clearly a creative use of metaphor, this kind of deficit discourse about grammar is common in educational contexts in the UK. The reasons for this are discussed in Section 3 of this paper, but I argue are partially a result of educational language policy and issues surrounding teacher education in language.

Given that metaphor can reveal shared ways of framing concepts across groups and individuals (Littlemore 2016: 283), this study explores the way that teachers use metaphors to think and talk about grammar and other aspects of language, and what this means for classroom practice. It does so by presenting a metaphor analysis of interviews with 24 English teachers, in which they were asked about their feelings, perceptions and attitudes towards grammar. My analysis rests on the assumption that different metaphors both reflect and yield different *construals* (Langacker 2008: 43), defined as our ability to portray and perceive the same thing in different ways. This paper is interested in how and why construals for grammar manifest themselves in the teaching community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991).

The discussion of the data is framed around the social and cultural context in which the interviews took place. In the UK, much of the current negative discourse around grammar stem from changes to the 2014 National Curriculum (DfE 2013), which placed an increased emphasis on grammar and grammatical terminology. For many teachers, particular animosity

is directed towards the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) assessments, compulsory tests for 10-11-year olds, taken at the end of primary school. These tests have received a significant amount of hostile attention, around the ethics of high-stakes assessments and the nature of assessing decontextualized, artificial sentences (e.g. Marshall 2017). At secondary school level, GCSE specifications have also seen an increased weighting in the marks available for use of grammatical terminology and literary linguistic analyses. I suggest that deficit discourses to grammar in schools are a result of a complex assemblage of factors, such as: teachers' linguistic knowledge being typically low, due to the majority of English teachers having literature-based degrees (Giovanelli 2015); a lack of access to training in linguistics for teachers (Hudson 2016), and ongoing debates around the place, value and nature of grammar teaching in schools. I explore these factors in my discussion of the data.

The questions that this research attempts to answer are:

- What kind of metaphors do teachers use when thinking and talking about grammar and grammar teaching?
- What kind of information is contained within such metaphors and what does this suggest about teachers' conceptualisations about grammar?
- What might the motivations for these metaphors be, in terms of educational policy, teacher knowledge, and discourse around grammar on the curriculum?

Given the increased emphasis that grammar now plays on the curriculum in Anglophone countries such as the UK, Australia and the USA (see Locke 2010), the research findings have international reach and provide a timely insight into the various metaphors that teachers employ when talking about grammar, and what these metaphors reveal about the way that grammar is positioned within educational discourse more broadly. The findings have implications for teacher education, especially in grammatical subject knowledge and grammar pedagogy, and the role that metaphor might play in this. To the best of my knowledge, it is the first ever study to use metaphor to interpret teacher's conceptualisations of grammar.

2. Metaphor in metalinguistic discourse
Grammar is an abstract and complex system, often conceptualised through the use of metaphor. For example, consider the way it is defined in the following popular works:

> Grammar is concerned with the *structure* of words, and of phrases and clauses (Aarts 2011: 3, my emphasis).

> Grammar [accounts for] *constructions* where the greatest generalisation is possible (Quirk et al., 1985: 15, my emphasis).

Both of these define grammar through a BUILDING metaphor, where it is conceived of as a physical structure made up of a series of separate parts. In addition to this metaphor, grammar (and language more broadly) is often conceptualised in terms of source domains such as plants, machines and human bodies. Other work has used different source domains to interpret the nature and function of language in different ways. For example, both Cushing (2018) and Saraceni (2015) provide a critical analysis of the LANGUAGE IS A PLANT metaphor in discourse about the 'growth' and 'nurturing' of English around the world. Others have demonstrated how source domains mapped with LANGUAGE can serve ideological functions in nation-building, nationalism and language policy discourse (e.g. Bermel 2007; Bogetić

2017), in critical discussions of how language comes to framed as a commodity, a self-regulating organism or a key to provide 'access' to citizenship and economic stability.

However, despite the fact that GRAMMAR and LANGUAGE are often construed metaphorically, there is very little work on how such metaphors get taken up and replicated by practitioners who work closely with grammar in their professional lives. Whilst Watson (2015) does report UK teachers conceptualizing grammar in terms of physical structures, mechanics and a toolkit, she does not frame her discussion using a systematic theory of metaphor. In work by Myhill et al. (e.g. 2012), which investigated the impact of contextualised grammar teaching on writing and metalinguistic understanding, language was framed by the researchers as 'putty', in an attempt to steer away from a RULEBOOK metaphor and foreground a social-semiotic, Hallidayan conceptualisation of grammar. Follow-up analysis of classroom discourse and interviews with teachers suggest that the PUTTY metaphor provides a useful set of cross-domain mappings for teachers and students, in shifting their own conceptualisations of grammar towards 'craft', 'design' and 'choice' and away from 'rules' and 'constraints'.

There is a common notion in metaphor studies that metaphor uncovers the kinds of ideological understandings that practitioners have about their profession and their practice, both as individuals and as a community of practice (Semino 2008). Over time then, metaphors that are common to a particular community of practice become a conventionalized part of their linguistic repertoire, acting as important sociocultural markers in defining different groups. As Cameron argues:

> Conventionalized metaphors in language usage can emerge over long periods of time across speech communities, while individuals engaged in conversation may come to use particular metaphors as shared ways of talking over a few turns of talk. Groups of people who spend time in the same place or talking about the same ideas will also come to share metaphors (Cameron 2008a: 202)

In other words, people who belong to a particular speech community (such as secondary school English teachers) are likely to use the same metaphors to talk about things. Given that metaphor is a reflection of thought structure (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), such deeply embedded metaphors have strong implications for how teachers conceptualise aspects of their professional lives.

3. Conceptualisations of grammar in schools

In educational contexts, debates around the place and value of grammar are often framed through a WAR metaphor (e.g. Locke 2010). Grammar is a much-politicised aspect of the curriculum in many countries, with policy makers, the media and the general public often conflating notions of 'correct' grammar with 'good' social behaviour and the maintenance of moral standards (Cameron 1995). The metaphor of GRAMMAR IS A RULEBOOK lies at the heart of such discourse, where grammar is construed as a set of constraints, rules and regulations, with forms that are considered to be 'correct' or 'incorrect' with little regard to context of use. Explicit use of the RULEBOOK metaphor in UK educational policy can be traced back to the Newbolt Report[1] (Board of Education 1921), and has since been manifested in various ways, notably recently in the form of classroom language policing (Snell 2013), political agendas (Hudson 2016) and high-stakes assessments (Marshall 2017). In the UK, the most notable embodiment of these assessments are the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS

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[1] A report on the teaching of English in England and Wales.

tests, in which 10-11-year old children must identify aspects of grammatical form and function in decontextualized sentences written in Standard English.

A crucial aspect in the debates around grammar teaching lies in the well-established fact that the majority of English teachers have low linguistic subject knowledge (e.g. Blake and Shortis 2010; Cajkler and Hislam 2002). There are multiple reasons for this, such as the lack of government support, limited grammatical training on teacher training programmes and most English teachers having specialist knowledge in literature, as opposed to language (see Giovanelli 2015). Given this, many teachers rely on overly-schematic, reductive definitions of grammar and grammatical concepts, such as VERB as 'doing word' and GRAMMAR as 'rulebook'. Because grammar is often construed through the use of metaphor, I suggest that the metaphors teachers hold for grammar can have implications for a number of aspects of their practice: their attitudes and feelings towards grammar; the way they think and talk about grammar; the way in which they teach grammar in the classroom, and the general discourse of grammar across the professional community of practice.

Given the lack of research in exploring metaphors of grammar, coupled with the emphasis on grammar in a number of curricula across the world, I now present the method and data of the current study, designed to address this gap in knowledge.

4. Interview design
To investigate the use of metaphor in metalinguistic discourse, I designed, administered and transcribed 24 semi-structured interviews with English teachers. Participants were recruited through personal contact lists, social media and online discussion forums, and invited to take part in an interview, which took place in person or on Skype. All participants were working in UK secondary schools, and interviews lasted between 15-45 minutes. Interview questions focused on teacher's perceptions and feelings about grammar and grammar teaching. As an ex-English teacher and now academic linguist who works closely with teachers, I was able to empathise with participants and understand the contextual conditions of their community of practice. This constructed a mutually supportive environment in which the interviews took place.

At no point did I specifically ask a participant to use a metaphor to describe grammar, and initially avoided using metaphors to describe grammar in my own language. However, many participants used metaphor in their discourse about grammar, and if they did so, I then asked them to unpack this metaphor, seeking to understand the kinds of mappings they had in mind, and to understand the motivations for metaphor use. For example, if a participant used the BUILDING metaphor, I would ask them to elaborate on this, thinking about how this construal might manifest itself in the classroom, or whether this was judged to be a useful way of presenting grammar in pedagogical practice.

At times, I intentionally introduced a novel metaphor, such as GRAMMAR IS PLASTICINE, or GRAMMAR IS A TAPESTRY. These metaphors were introduced because they challenged other metaphors, or offered radically different ways of construing different things, such as GRAMMAR and GRAMMAR TEACHING, allowing participants to evaluate the nature of a source domain in relation to its target. I did this because I was interested in how participants would react to new metaphors and was interested in how they evaluated its meanings against alternatives. The purposeful introduction and meta-reflection of metaphors here resonates with what Brinkmann and Kvale (2009: 57-59) call the INTERVIEWER AS TRAVELER metaphor, a construal that leads to an interview as a form as 'knowledge construction'. For the interview participants, the chance to discuss and reflect on their own construals of grammar was an informative experience, allowing them to explore how these construals contributed to their identity as a practitioner. This also allowed me to better understand the role and function that metaphor plays in construals of grammar.

Both meta-reflective discourse on metaphor and the intentional introduction of metaphor yielded instances of deliberate metaphor (e.g. Beger 2011; Steen 2008, 2013, 2015, 2017) and direct metaphor (e.g. Steen 2009). Direct metaphor contains an explicit cross-domain mapping, typically using the copular verb 'to be' (e.g. *language is like a plant*). Contrastingly, indirect metaphors are where the target/source domains are not so explicit (e.g. *language grows*). Direct metaphors are often used deliberately, used to knowingly highlight or reveal something through metaphor. Steen's definition highlights the communicative function that deliberate metaphors hold:

> A metaphor is used deliberately when it is expressly meant to change the addressee's perspective on the referent or topic that is the target of the metaphor, by making the addressee look at it from a different conceptual domain or space, which functions as a conceptual source. (Steen 2008: 222)

Thus, when direct metaphors are used deliberately, they can serve a rhetorical function, allowing a speaker to re/frame a target domain in increasingly exaggerated or extravagant ways, what Barnden (2015) calls a 'likeness-exaggerating' function'. They can also serve a pedagogic function, used to explain or shed new light on particularly difficult topics (e.g. Beger 2011; Cameron 2003:100-102), in which readers/hearers are 'explicitly instructed to view one thing in terms of another' (Bogetić 2017: 207). My purposeful introduction of direct deliberate metaphors was an intentional feature of the research design in assessing how different source domains had the potential to yield different conceptualisations of grammar.

5. Analysis method
The interview data amounted to 79,840 words. 55,996 of these were participant turns. Metaphorical language from the interviews was extracted and tagged using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group 2007). Given the large amount of data in the interviews, it was unfeasible to follow the MIP procedure exactly, and for this study, I was only interested in a finite list of target domains (listed in Table 1). As a compromise, I focused only on the use of metaphor in the teacher's turns, and did not include any instances of metaphorical language in my own turns. I also decided on a deductive approach, with a prescribed set of target domains to look for in the data. These target domains were chosen because of their relevance to the study, found in the data by looking for tokens related to language and language teaching, such as 'language', 'grammar', 'curriculum', and 'English teaching'. This was done manually at first, and then checked with token specific searches to ensure full coverage of lexis associated with each target domain. The total number of metaphors extracted was 1112. To ensure consistency and reliability, I then checked the data by repeating the MIP procedure and resolving any inconsistencies. An additional check of the marked dataset was completed by a colleague, providing an additional layer of validity and reliability.

6. Metaphor in the interview data
Table 1 lists the target domains of interest and any source domains they were mapped with that were used more than once. In the *common source domains* column, the domains are listed in order of number of times they appeared. For example, RULEBOOK was the most widely used source domain mapped onto GRAMMAR, and so appears first in the list of common source domains. In the following sections, I focus on the target domains of GRAMMAR, GRAMMAR TEACHING and ENGLISH STUDIES.

Finite target domains of interest	Common source domains
GRAMMAR	RULEBOOK, CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL, COMPONENT PARTS, THING TO BE FEARED, CONSTRUCTION, CRAFT, LIQUID, PART OF A WIDER MASS, DISCONNECTED FROM A WIDER MASS, TOOL, CONTAINER, PLANT, FOOD, MATERIAL, SKELETON, ASSET, LIFE TAKER, MACHINE, PERSON, STEM SUBJECT, LIFE GIVER, RECREATION, SUBSTANCE
GRAMMAR TEACHING	DISCONNECTED FROM A WIDER MASS, CONNECTED TO A WIDER MASS, PATH, WAR, SEEING, MATERIAL, OBJECT, PHYSICAL COMFORT, STEALTH
ENGLISH STUDIES	SERIES OF SEPARATE PARTS IN A BOUNDED REGION, BALANCING SCALES, POSITION ON A SCALE, CONTAINER, FAMILY, RELIGION, CURRENCY, HIERARCHY, VERTICAL ORGANISATION
CURRICULUM	CONTAINER, CONDUIT, BALANCING SCALES, CONSTRUCTION, JOURNEY, PERSON, SEPARATE PARTS, FOOD, IMMOVABLE OBJECT
KNOWLEDGE, KNOWING	GRASPING, SEEING, CONSTRUCTING, CONTAINER, EXTRACTING, MOVING, POSITION ON A SCALE, JOURNEY, LIQUID
LANGUAGE	COMPONENT PARTS, CONSTRUCTION, LAYERS, FOOD, SUBSTANCE, VERTICAL ORGANISATION, LIQUID, MATERIAL, TOOL, CONTAINER, LIVING THING, PLANT

Table 1: Metaphors of interest in the dataset

6.1 The GRAMMAR target domain
GRAMMAR was the most widely used target domain in the interview data, appearing a total of 230 times. The following sections explore some of the common source domains mapped onto this target.

6.1.2 RULEBOOK
The most widely used source domain mapped onto GRAMMAR was RULEBOOK (used 60 times, appearing in 15 interviews). The way in which 'rules' were talked about varied, with some participants foregrounding the idea of a 'correct' and 'incorrect' way to use language, with a set of rules 'dictating' language use:

> you know the *correct* form that means that other people can understand you and understand what you mean so just following the (.) yeah the *rules* of the language (i09)

> I think grammar is in some ways the terminology in how we use language and how it fits together and I think to me grammar is also the *rules* that *dictates* what we *can* and *can't do* if we're going to communicate accurately and effectively (i02)

Some participants felt that the RULEBOOK metaphor was a useful way of thinking and talking about grammar in their classroom practice, as they felt that students benefitted from having an understanding of such 'rules':

> when it comes to the functional ways that English works like systems of grammar and *rules* and stuff they respond really clearly to clear *rules* like grammar and punctuation (i14)

Another participant suggested that he used the RULEBOOK metaphor as a vehicle for maintaining expected standards and behaviour in the classroom. This followed a discussion about how the notion of *choices* in grammar was a difficult thing to teach, and that if grammar was presented as a series of 'right' or 'wrong' rules, then it made it easier for him to maintain control of students:

> what I find is and what when it becomes a problem is that when you have those kinds of discussions the children sometimes then get confused or if the discussion goes on longer than sort of two or three minutes then they get bored and you lose their focus and sometimes behaviour goes as well (.) and when you have thirty children in a classroom it can be quite difficult to have those conversations or discussions and make sure that everybody is following and is understanding it as well it's very easy to kind of go right you've got subject verb and then you need a full stop (.) that is so much easier and if all the kids get that right we can move on (.) it's that kind of thing that's what I think and I do it I revert to that sort of process I think that's why we have rules as well and how these are kind of developed and exacerbated through society because teachers go for the easy option because you don't like your classroom getting out of control you don't want to lose them on a debate like that (i19)

As discussed previously, grammar is a much-politicised aspect of education, with notions of 'correct' grammar often aligned with the maintenance of moral standards (Cameron 1995). i19's turn above is an example of how such thinking can actualise classroom practice. Current educational policy in the teaching of grammar also plays a role here, such as the Bew Report (DfE 2011), which recommended the implementation of the GPS tests, which are strongly underpinned by the RULEBOOK metaphor and the prescriptive notion that grammar can be 'right' or 'wrong'.

Where and when grammar is framed as a 'rulebook' and used as a vehicle to promote conservative ideologies of standards and correctness, it can quickly expand into a 'societal-level' metaphor of CORRECT GRAMMAR IS GOOD BEHAVIOUR. When this kind of rich, additional knowledge about a source domain is mapped onto a target, it is known as 'metaphorical entailment' (Kövecses 2010: 94; Lakoff 1987: 384). Entailment is a particularly useful way of scaling up metaphor to discourse-level analysis of language, because it allows us to go beyond the immediate contexts of production and reception. So, the rich additional knowledge and elaborations of the RULEBOOK domain *can* include ideas of right-wing conservatism, maintenance of perceived standards, accountability, institutional power and feelings of fear and anxiety. This is not to say that every use of this metaphor involved these kinds of mappings – but the information was available as discourse-world knowledge (Gavins 2007) nonetheless, i.e. participants' individual memories and experiences acquired over time. This kind of information is therefore included in the set of cross-domain mappings I present for GRAMMAR IS A RULEBOOK at the end of this section.

Breaking rules
Whilst some participants acknowledged that knowing grammar 'rules' were important, knowledge of these was only so that they could be broken and manipulated in order to do different things with language:

just sort of said to them think about you know that sometimes when we do *break a rule* (.) if you're going to *break a grammatical rule* you have to know why you're *breaking* it and what the effect is of that (i03)

The above turn features an example of a conditional *if*-clause that triggers an epistemic modal-world (Gavins 2007: 120), a conceptual space that is unrealized at the time of speaking, and conceptually distant. The initial *if*-clause (*if you're going to break a grammatical rule*), becomes further fleshed out by the apodosis that follows it (*you have to know why you're breaking it and what the effect is of that*). The use of the conditional form here implies that one thing rests on another thing: rules can be broken, but they must be broken knowingly and intentionally in order to create meanings or 'effects' in the minds of readers. In a similar way, some participants clearly felt uncomfortable when discussing the suitability of the GRAMMAR IS A RULEBOOK metaphor and how it might underpin elements of their classroom practice, suggesting that the metaphor is not a particularly useful way in which to think with. Some responses did this by negating the notion of rules in various ways:

my own definition is it's the rules of a language but *not* necessarily the prescriptive ones (i03)

I like them to think about grammar as *not* being rules but as about being tools that's my strategy […] I think when you start talking about rules people automatically *switch off* and then it becomes something that you have to learn something that you have to get right every time and whenever you talk about grammar certainly in my experience to children it's just like you know eye rolling and everyone goes floppy and they *don't* want to do it and it becomes something boring and that's *not* what grammar is (i21)

Negation has the effect of foregrounding the contents of a proposition before they are removed (Croft and Cruse 2004: 13). In the examples above, participants' use of negation actively recognizes the potential problems of the RULEBOOK metaphor, sometimes offering a new metaphor to do so, as in i21's suggestion of GRAMMAR IS A TOOL. The TOOL source domain provides a radically different set of mappings and thus projects a different construal, one grammar is as a helpful thing to 'do things with', rather than something to limit and constrain.

In terms of evaluating the appropriateness of the RULEBOOK metaphor, participant i08 provided a particularly interesting narrative. At first, i08 provided the following definition for grammar (which additionally used the KNOWING IS GRASPING and KNOWING IS ARRIVING AT A DESTINATION metaphors, respectively):

I'm still kind of *getting to grips* with (.) like *rules* and things like that

and

um (6) I suppose you just *have to get to* something like *the rules* of English essentially

However, when asked to reflect on the RULEBOOK metaphor, it quickly became clear that he felt uncomfortable with the kinds of connotations this held, admitting to 'feeling very prescriptive' in talking about grammar this way. At this point, I introduced three alternative metaphors into the discourse and asked the participant to consider how they might offer a

shift in his own thinking. As stated previously, the introduction of novel metaphors was a deliberate interviewing tactic in order to try and understand how participants evaluated different metaphors against each other (*I* = interviewer):

> I: it's interesting thinking about the sort of metaphors that people use to talk about grammar because obviously one metaphor is grammar is a rulebook (.) it's something to be prescribed that you must follow
>
> i08: yeah I know I felt very prescriptive giving that kind of response
>
> I: what about the metaphor of grammar is a resource? or grammar is pool of resources (.) or a repertoire of choices?
>
> i08: sounds a lot nicer than rulebook doesn't it
>
> I: well I suppose it's what you want to get out of grammar (.) but why do you think they might sound like a bit nicer than rulebook? what is it about grammar is a resource or grammar is a repertoire of choices that
>
> i08:   because a repertoire of choices sounds like (.) if you pick something and it doesn't work or if it you know if you pick something and you don't use it appropriately then no one's going to bite your head off and call it wrong you know (.) I mean then if you say a rulebook then that is clearly what it is (.) it opens the door to judgements on your constructions and your things like that so (.) which you know (1) I accept that there are kind of rules but that's how grammar is presented it is a rulebook that you follow and if you don't know these rules then you're not going to get your spag[2] marks or whatever where is if you look at it like a resource or something like that oh well I can take this syntax construction and play around with it and things like that and I think that's the way that I look at it now and I love that description of a pool of resources rather than a rulebook

Once again, the use of conditional *if*-clauses in the turn above trigger epistemic modal-worlds, setting up unrealised and remote situations that are based on hypothetical situations (Gavins 2007: 120). The contents of the modal-world triggered by the *if*-clause referencing the RESOURCE metaphor are particularly interesting in the way that this changes i08's thinking: *a repertoire of choices sounds like (.) if you pick something and it doesn't work or if it you know if you pick something and you don't use it appropriately then no one's going to bite your head off and call it wrong*. This provides an example of 'cognitive displacement' – or, how one participant used epistemic modal-worlds to re-evaluate what he knew and thought about an aspect of grammar, by setting-up and evaluating a series of remote conceptual spaces. Importantly, it was the purposeful introduction of novel metaphors which prompted the participant to use language which triggered these spaces, expanding on the RESOURCE metaphor in particular. The novel metaphors allowed i08 to 'think through' aspects of grammar and grammar teaching, providing him with a new set of cross-domain mappings that were radically different from his original thoughts, and potentially have impact on classroom practice itself.

   In dealing with the dynamicity of metaphor in real-world discourse, Cameron (2008b) uses the term 'metaphor shifting' to account for the kinds of changes and adaptations which occur at the conceptual domain level. This occurs as 'speakers move through a social, linguistic and cognitive 'landscape', adjusting and adapting contingently' (2008b: 60). It is a useful term to frame the exchange from i08 above, where new knowledge caused a shift in his use of source domains (from RULEBOOK to RESOURCE) and provided a new set of

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[2] Spelling, punctuation and grammar.

mappings that he was able to then reflect on. In i08's final turn he talks about how the RULEBOOK metaphor serves to authorize punishments and judgements for getting things 'wrong', whereas the RESOURCE metaphor allows creative and expressive uses of language. This is a powerful example of how metaphor shifting can change perceptions of a given topic.

Given the discussion in this section, I would like to suggest the following cross-domain mappings that make up the metaphor of GRAMMAR IS A RULEBOOK. Cross-domain mappings are constituent elements of source/target domains which are in correspondence with one another (Kövecses 2010: 7-8) and arise from priming effects of sociocultural and contextual factors across groups and individuals at both local and global levels (Kövecses 2015: 53). At a local level, these contextual conditions include participants' professional identities and perceptions of grammar, built over time through their own training and practice. At a global level, contextual conditions include wider metalinguistic discourse in the public sphere, the media and educational policy. The mappings are as follows:

RULEBOOK		GRAMMAR
rules	→	regular patterns in grammatical constructions
diversions from rules	→	irregular patterns in grammatical constructions
following the rules	→	perceived correct linguistic/non-linguistic behaviour
intentionally breaking rules	→	creating various effects in language; incorrect behaviour
overseers of rules	→	exam boards; teachers
writers of rules	→	dictionaries; grammars; policy makers
sanctions and punishments	→	feelings of fear; loss of marks

6.1.3 PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

This section looks at the source domains of CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL (used 31 times) and CONSTRUCTION (used 12 times) in the interview data. Generally, these can be treated as one here: given the clear semantic similarities between the two it may be useful to consider them falling under the more schematic domain of PHYSICAL STRUCTURE. Doing so would place the PHYSICAL STRUCTURE domain as the second most commonly used domain mapped onto GRAMMAR. At times, however, it is useful to maintain the distinction, and this is how the domains were identified using MIP. Examples of linguistic expressions included:

> CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL
> the *nuts and bolts* of language (.) everything that *holds* it together (i01)
> I would say it's the *building blocks* of language (i04)
> it's the *foundations* of language (i04)
> it's like the *bricks and the mortar and the cement and building* it all up (i15)

> CONSTRUCTION
> it's like *building a house* (i04)
> it (.) provides (.) *structure* for understanding meaning (i12)
> I would say that grammar is (1) the way words are *formed* (i18)
> I think they find it a bit *unstable* (i20)

As evidenced above, participants tended to be quite specific about the type of construction materials they associated with grammar: nuts and bolts, building blocks, bricks, mortar, stone, cement, framework, foundations, scaffolding, glue, and so on. The physical properties of these specific construction materials used are important, and give us an insight into the

kind of source domain knowledge that is involved in the mapping. All are strong and vital elements used to hold other things together - a physical structure simply cannot function without some form of materials that hold and keep it together. In a reflection of the CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL metaphor that she had used to define grammar, i04 suggested the following:

> I: ok so when you talk about the building blocks do you kind of mean that each grammatical part of speech is a particular block? is that the metaphor you're getting at?
>
> i04: I think I probably would yes (.) breaking it down into its most basics (.) it's the foundations of language (.) if you have a good foundation it's like building a house if you have a good foundation then so much is possible (i04)

As well as their strength, these kinds of construction materials (nuts, bolts, glue, etc.) are typically seen to have functional, as opposed to high-aesthetic qualities. In physical structures, they often remain hidden from view, being masked by other materials that are deemed to be more aesthetically pleasing (such as cladding, paint and other decorative materials). In other words, the CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL metaphor can present grammar as something practical and utilitarian, rather than a thing of beauty or high-aesthetic value. Such a view of grammar ties in with how many English teachers view language work: secondary to literature, or, as i03 put it in her interview, the 'poorer relative'. This hierarchical view of English studies is commonplace, manifested in policy documents, teacher training entry requirements and teacher discourse (see Giovanelli 2016; Hudson and Walmsley 2005, and section 6.2 below). The idea that grammar was somehow 'less than' other work in English was discussed by i15, during which she agreed that this was the kind of information she had in mind after she had used the CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL metaphor.

> I: yeah it's interesting as well that the kind of the nuts and the bolts and the bricks and the mortar they are the things that you never see in a finished building just to stretch the metaphor even further
>
> i15: yeah you're right that's exactly it and that's why that's the metaphor that I would use (.) because you don't see grammar really anyway when you hear language you're not hearing the grammar behind it explicitly it's all very implicit isn't it?
>
> I: and I suppose it also implies that it's sort of you know the bricks and the nuts and bolts are the things that tend to be get covered up by more aesthetic things like paint or you know cladding or something that is to be seen and not heard in a way
>
> i15: yeah that's your vocabulary choices the difference between using a boring choice and an interesting choice
>
> I: sure
>
> i15: and the grammar underpins that without you really knowing that it's doing anything at all (.) it's kind of in the background isn't it?

Here, i15 appears to divorce grammar from meaning, suggesting that 'vocabulary choices' carry the most important weight in language use. This was also apparent in another interview, where 'ideas and meanings' were seen as the things the construction materials hold together:

> I: so just to take up that metaphor then (.) so if grammar is the kind of nuts and bolts of a language then (.) what's being held together by those nuts and bolts if you see what I mean?
>
> i09:   ok (1) well the ideas and the meanings (.) putting it together yeah so it forms and follows an order and a pattern that means that other people can understand what those thoughts and ideas are

Throughout these and other exchanges, participants also drew on the metaphor of GRAMMAR IS A SERIES OF COMPONENT PARTS. This occurred 25 times and was present in all interviews. It can be argued that this metaphor falls under the PHYSICAL STRUCTURE metaphor, given the idea that 'component parts' typically denote a larger whole, formed by the coming together of separate components. Expressions that were tagged as the COMPONENT PARTS metaphor included:

> how we use language and how it *fits together* (i02)
> word *arrangement* (i12)
> they're having to learn all *the different parts* (i13)
> how words have meaning when they are *put together* (i22)

Use of the COMPONENT PARTS metaphor suggests an atomistic view of grammar, the teaching of which involves the physical act of putting together and breaking down different discrete items.

Throughout the discussion so far, I have suggested that the type of metaphor a teacher has for GRAMMAR has implications for classroom practice. In asking participants about this, responses suggested that this was indeed the case. For example, i24 was a teacher who had received no formal training in linguistics, and expressed fears about teaching grammar throughout our interview. She had a strong desire to improve her own grammatical subject knowledge and teaching practice. In a discussion of the usefulness of the PHYSICAL STRUCTURE metaphor, i24 talked about how she aspired to have this metaphor as the basis for her classroom practice:

> designing and building (.) that's my aspiration of how to think about it (.) I think that's a really lovely way about crafting and designing (.) I really love the way that grammar is described there and that's in complete contrast to something like the rulebook one (.) you know grammar allows creativity in a sense and the metaphor that it's a rulebook that suggests it stifles creativity whereas construction suggests it encourages creativity

The above example demonstrates how metaphors have the potential to shape thought and pedagogy – much in the same way for i08, who rejected the RULEBOOK metaphor when the RESOURCE metaphor was offered as an alternative. Importantly for i24, her experience of teaching A-level[3] English Language had helped to shift her conceptualisations of grammar away from RULEBOOK and towards CONSTRUCTION. The transformative potential and power of this A-level for English teachers has been noted in other work (e.g. Giovanelli 2015), where teachers who typically identified as 'literature specialists' had undergone a significant positive shift in professional identity as a result of teaching A-level English Language. Participants in Giovanelli's study, along with i24 in this study clearly demonstrate that if

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[3] Post-16 qualifications in the UK.

English teachers are equipped with knowledge about language, then this can have positive impact on their professional identity and practice, and a greater feeling of agency.

As has been explored in this section, the PHYSICAL STRUCTURE metaphor can be construed in negative and positive ways. In negative terms, mappings can highlight the arrangement of language and hide meaning, which, I argue, is a reductive understanding of what grammar is. In more positive terms, mappings can highlight the creative aspect of 'designing and crafting' language, and hide the stifling nature of the RULEBOOK metaphor. It follows that the mappings involved in this metaphor are:

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE		GRAMMAR
a construction	→	language
made from different parts	→	word classes, phrases, clauses
construction materials	→	words and syntax
design and construction	→	speaking and writing
architects and builders	→	speakers and writers
nuts, bolts, glue, girders, cement	→	function words
paint; decorative materials	→	lexical words
collapse of a structure	→	ungrammaticality

6.2 Grammar and the curriculum

In this section, I turn to how grammar is perceived in terms of the curriculum. I argue that the curriculum itself is often conceptualised as a series of discrete parts that can, but do not always, connect. Following on from this, I discuss the place of grammar and grammar teaching within this system, arguing that it is often conceptualised by teachers as being a particularly 'separate' part.

Data from the interviews confirms that the division of English studies in this way is reflected in metaphorical language use, with the profession of English teaching itself being construed as a bounded region delineated by physical borders. I will use the metaphor of ENGLISH STUDIES IS A SERIES OF SEPARATE PARTS IN A BOUNDED REGION OF SPACE to capture this, of which expressions from the interviews included:

> There is *a link between* language and literature (i05)
> *This* is English language and *this* is English literature (i07)
> There is a bit of *a divide* (i11)
> I enjoy the literature *side of things* (i19)

The SEPARATE PARTS IN A BOUNDED REGION metaphor was used a total of 44 times in the interview data, in 19 interviews. Part of the cross-domain mapping in this metaphor invokes the idea of ENGLISH STUDIES existing as a physical space, with various aspects of English studies (language, literature, etc.) occupying a position within this. Many expressions falling under this metaphor made use of spatial deixis in physically 'mapping out' these aspects, in examples such as '*this* is English language and *this* is English literature'. In uses of deixis such as this, the English teacher themselves sit within the deictic centre, physically moving towards or away from different aspects of the discipline:

> I do think most teachers *gravitate towards* literature teaching and *away from* grammar (i04)

> I'm *drawn* much more *towards* the language (i12)

Entering into the discipline itself was also talked about using a physical JOURNEY/PATH metaphor, where the profession is construed as a BOUNDED REGION/CONTAINER:

> *coming from* a language background (i05)
> you sort of *go through* your English career (i06)
> because of that *route in* […] I've *ended up* as a literature teacher (i15)

The aspects of English studies themselves were generally construed as containers, as in the metaphor of ASPECTS OF ENGLISH STUDIES ARE CONTAINERS:

> they are very much *into* grammar (i07)
> a completely different thing when you do *delve* a lot more *into* English language (i10)
> we do that *in* literature as well as *in* language (i13)
> I kind of *fell into* A-level English Language (i17)
> I haven't specialized particularly *in one area* (i19)

The CONTAINER metaphor used in this sense supports the SEPARATE PARTS metaphor. Both these metaphors suggest that many English teachers see the different aspects of English studies as physical spaces that they can enter into and exit out of, as well as the profession itself. In this sense, 'doing grammar' becomes an aspect of the profession that can be seen as separate from other aspects, with physical connections having to be made if different aspects are to be brought together. The cross-domain mappings for ENGLISH STUDIES IS A SERIES OF SEPARATE PARTS IN A BOUNDED REGION metaphor are as follows:

SEPARATE PARTS IN A BOUNDED REGION		ENGLISH STUDIES
bounded region	→	the profession of English teaching
separate parts	→	different aspects of English teaching
connections	→	combinations of different aspects
entering and leaving the region	→	entering and leaving the profession

7. Reflection and discussion

This paper has presented and explored metaphors for the ways that teachers think and talk about three aspects of their professional lives: grammar, grammar teaching and English studies. I discovered generalisations across a number of different source and target domains, which were presented in the form of cross-domain mappings. The data suggested that GRAMMAR is often construed in negative terms or something to avoid (e.g. as a rulebook; as something that is disconnected from a wider mass), but that many participants have a deep desire to shift their thinking away from this. I showed how the deliberate introduction of novel metaphors into the discourse can provide a springboard for this. These shifts are often realised through the form of conditionals and negation, where participants set-up conceptual spaces in which alternative construals are considered. I also argued that metaphors are motivated by socio-contextual conditions, such as educational policy discourse and changes to the curriculum, especially in the light of the re-emphasis on grammar in UK primary and secondary schools.

The data in this paper suggests that certain metaphors can have radical implications for classroom practice in grammar pedagogy, in highlighting positive aspects of grammar and framing it as a resource for making meaning, as opposed to a set of tightly constrained rules and regulations. It follows that this finding has significant implications for teacher education and developing teachers' linguistic subject knowledge. More work is needed in order to

better understand how teachers' metaphors for grammar affect teaching decisions in the classroom.

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