UPtown and DOWNtown: the INs and OUTs of how Navan residents conceptualise the town where they live

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Abstract

As metaphor research has developed since Lakoff & Johnson (1980), the focus has shifted from describing metaphors to applying Conceptual Metaphor Theory to other areas of linguistic research. In particular, recent research into variation in how cultures use these metaphors has flourished. The present study examines how 20 participants who live in the same town in Ireland conceptualise that town. Participants who were born in the town use different strategies for conceptualising their town and how they travel towards and within it than participants who are not originally from the town. The type of metaphor used in conceptualisations of this town is also affected by age and place of birth.

1   Introduction

Recent cross-linguistic studies have shown little universality of concepts in Spatial Cognition (see Levinson & Wilkins (eds) 2006). The variation in spatial conceptualisation in languages across the world has led to the formation of the Language and Cognition Group at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, whose work has recently finished. Where this work is limited is in how varieties of a language handle spatial concepts.

Another area of cognitive linguistic research that focuses on spatial concepts is Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which has demonstrated the link between the physical world and the conceptual world. Notably, a great deal of physical spatial concepts form the basis of conceptual space, using conceptual metaphors. This can be seen in the following examples:

(1)

    a.   "You go *up* Flower Hill, and just on the outskirts of the town, it's there." (P020, p. 1)

    b.   "And this woman came on a Sunday evening and offered to drive me *up* to Dublin."

        (P008, p. 15)

    c.   "*Out* the back, they got married in the house, like." (P017, p. 4)

    d.   "And Blackcastle is *out* the Slane Road." (P014, p. 6)

The physical experiences of (1a.) and (1c.) inform the conceptual experiences of (1b.) and (1d.). How is it that the *up* in (1a.) is related to the *up* in (1b.)? Navan is not downhill from Dublin, so why is motion towards Dublin from Navan **up** motion? Likewise, how does the *out* in (1c.) relate to the *out* in (1d.)? The back of the house in (1c.) must somehow be related to Blackcastle in (1d.) The hypothesis of this article is that these are all examples of physical space and conceptual space intersecting: two parallel types of vertical axis concepts and two parallel types of containers. The following article looks to explain the relationship between physical space and conceptual space by discussing how 20 residents of an Irish town talk about the town that they live in and the conceptual domains that they use to describe motion towards this town.[1]

The data presented in this study were gathered for the current author's Ph D thesis which involved fieldwork in Navan, a medium-sized Irish town 45 miles to the northwest of Dublin in Ireland. Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the results of the study will be categorised by which metaphor each participant uses to conceptualise Navan, while using their socioeconomic data to understand the reasons for variation between these two metaphorical domains. Before the data can be discussed, an understanding of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is necessary.

2 Metaphor and Metaphor Variation

Lakoff & Johnson set out in 1980 to explain that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action" and that "[o]ur ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (2003, p. 3). The ubiquity of experience and its interpretations extends beyond the physical world, necessitating metaphor. Two types of metaphors that will be applicable to the current study are orientational metaphors and container metaphors.

2.1 Orientational Metaphors

Lakoff and Johnson (2003, pp. 14–21) note that orientational metaphors are used without speakers realising that they are using them. **Up** and **good** are collocated in a great number of ways from a company's increase in profits (2a.) to an improvement in a person's state of mind (2b.), as seen in the following examples:

(2)

    a. Profits are rising.

    b. Thanks for cheering me up.

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[1] In this article, specific examples or a specific word, will be marked in *italics*; glosses of words or phrases are marked with 'single quotation marks'; concepts and conceptualisations, such as **fly on the wall** and **downtown** are marked with **bold face**; groups of conceptualisations, such as **UP** and **DOWN**, are marked with CAPITAL LETTERS and **bold face**; and metaphors, such as UP IS GOOD, are written in small capital letters.

These metaphors are rooted in a physical experience: the accumulation of objects into a pile or a container sees the level rise (2a.); and natural human posture dictates that happiness can be indicated by an erect posture (2b.). Sleeping posture also contributes to metaphors of health and consciousness as in the metaphors of coming down with an illness and falling asleep. These metaphors can extend far beyond immediately experiential metaphors to more complex and telling ones. That human eyes are located on the **front** of the human body gives rise to temporal notions like future events lying ahead of us, while the correlation between physical strength and physical size leads to power and control being **up**, as seen in the following examples:

(3)

    a.   He has a bright future ahead of him.

    b.   John is at the peak of his abilities.

Some metaphors are interwoven when social and cultural factors are introduced. Social power is equated to physical power in setting high status **up**, while physical health is applied to social and cultural goodness and virtue. Finally, rationality is equated with the brain and emotionality the heart, combining both physical heights with control to understand why rationality is revered in decision-making (see Lakoff & Johnson 2003, pp. 15–17), as seen in the following examples:

(4)

    a.   Seán is not concerned with high society.

    b.   They fell in love at first sight.

Each of these orientational metaphors is experiential rather than universal. They speak more to cultural coherence and social mores than a universal experience of altitude. Lakoff and Johnson describe this cultural coherence as "partly a matter of the subculture one lives in and partly a matter of personal values" (p. 23). So while metaphors are normally universal, the experiential truth that language users bring to a metaphor are variable. This is a point that will be expanded upon in the following sections. Metaphors are linguistic expressions of social thought, allowing linguists to understand the cognitive processes of how they are conceived and, perhaps more importantly, how they are tacitly understood. Lakoff & Johnson go so far as to state that they "feel that no metaphor can ever be comprehended or even adequately represented independently of its experiential basis" (p. 19). Not all **up**s are created equally, and not all **up** conceptualisations are going to be universally accepted. There is far more interesting work, then, in the places where these conceptualisations are not universally held. Spatial conceptualisations, therefore, emerge "from our constant spatial experience, that is, our interaction with the physical environment" (p. 56) and are malleable to individual conceptualisations of the space at hand.

2.2 Container Metaphors

Lakoff and Johnson (2003, pp. 29–32) take as the basis for container metaphors the bounded surfaces of containers, for example a jam jar that is upturned on a counter. The space that is bounded by the jar and the counter are considered to be **in** while the entirety of existence that is not contained within the jar and counter are **out**. When this prototypical container metaphor is extended to situations "where there is no natural physical boundary that can be viewed as defining a container, we impose boundaries—marking off territory so that it has an inside and a bounding surface—whether a wall, a fence, or an abstract line or plane" (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, p. 29). There are different types of container metaphors that are available to language users: spatial, social, and emotional. Lakoff & Johnson note that "none of these has experiential priority over the others; they are all equally basic kinds of experience" (2003, p. 59). So while a physical container is an easily conceptualised object, it is no more basic than the involvement in a group activity or being subjected to an emotional state.

2.3 Variation in Metaphor

A core component of the current study is how metaphors vary and what are the core elements of these variations. Kövecses (2005) approaches these questions of variation in such a manner that Conceptual Metaphor Theory is "modified, revised, and supplemented in several ways" (p. xii). This is an expansion of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, a development that was anticipated in the consideration of cultural coherence (see Lakoff and Johnson 2003, pp. 22–24). At issue here is a theory of metaphor that accommodates both universality and variation. As Kövecses (2005, pp. 10–11) sets out, any theory of variation in conceptual metaphor must involve asking which metaphors are universal, the causes and scope of variation, and which aspects of metaphor are more likely to allow variation. Then a coherent theory can follow, which accounts for "the conflicts among these various systems that interact with metaphor" (ibid., p. 11). Metaphors that are universal tend to be of the type that are "'simple' or 'primary' metaphors and/or complex metaphors that are based on universal human experiences" (p. 64).

Cross-cultural and within-culture variation is most likely to occur in aspects of metaphor that are cultural in nature. There has been extensive work recently on the variation of cross-cultural comparisons of spatial language in Levinson & Wilkins (2006). Within-culture variation is a more complex notion, based on different experiential realities that are still congruent. Here, social, ethnic, regional, stylistic, subcultural, diachronic, developmental, and individual dimensions are considered as aspects of universality within a culture. It is not enough to think of these as discrete variables as "the dimensions along which metaphors vary merge in most cases, exemplifying variation along several dimensions all at the same time" (Kövecses 2005, p. 111). Variation in metaphor should be considered complex and multifaceted.

There are many causes for cross-cultural and within-culture variation. Primary amongst these causes

is the difference in individuals' experiences of the world. As seen above, Lakoff & Johnson (2003) explain that through these experiences of the world, individuals construct their own perceptions that are then expressed through the conceptual metaphors they use. Kövecses (2005) states that there are choices that individuals make in how they conceptualise their worlds. Creativity can also cause variation in metaphor. Poets need to have the freedom to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct experiential reality in order to fulfil their roles in society. But it is not just poets who have the license to create new realities, as individual speakers all have the ability to vary language and exhibit creativity in metaphor.

Because conceptual metaphor is, by definition, a conceptual link between a source and a target, and cultural differences are reflected in the variation of metaphor cross-culturally and within-cultures, a spatial reference system can be thought of as a flexible set of metaphors available to speakers of Irish English. The embodiment basis for cognition must have a cultural element in addition to a culturally universal element. What Kövecses has argued is that "[t]his is possible because cultures can be viewed, in part, as shared metaphorical understandings of the world and because conventional metaphorical language and metaphorically constituted physical reality have relative time stability" (2005, p. 284). And while bodily experience is the basis for conceptual metaphors, "the environment, the social-cultural context, and the communicative situation of groups of people or individuals provide these groups and individuals with experiences that are specific to them" (ibid., p. 286). Cultures are also capable of taking universal cognitive processes and applying them culture-specifically. However, as there is conflict in Conceptual Metaphor Theory, there must be some occurrences of conflict between the presumed universality of cognition and the specificity of embodiment. These conflicts arise from situations where an override exists between source and target domains, mappings, or entailments. This can be seen in situations where "a well-embodied metaphor may make use of differential mappings (even within the same culture) because of the influence of the broader cultural context" (ibid., p. 292), for example in SOCIETY IS A FAMILY, submetaphors where cultural-specific values are in conflict with one another, result in conflicting cultural variation of conceptual metaphors where **infidelity** (Kövecses' example) is viewed as more or less morally important.

3   Methodology

The primary method to be used in this study is the sociolinguistic interview. The goal of this method is to "record one to two hours of speech and a full range of demographic data for each speaker within one's sample design" (Tagliamonte 2006, p. 37). Once collected, these data were interpreted as apparent time variation. The interview was structured, asking participants about how the town of Navan grew, where specific objects are located, and how one would travel from one point to another. Two instruments were used in these interviews: a printed Google Map of Navan with several landmarks around the town labelled with letters; and a wider map of the eastern half of Ireland, with various towns similarly labelled with letters. Participants were asked to identify when different parts of Navan were built or incorporated into the town and how one would travel between the various points. Travel between towns was the focus of the second map task.

The methodology is also informed by the work of the Max Planck Institute, Nijmegen researchers

into cross-linguistic spatial language variation. As this sort of data tends to be quite difficult to elicit, their work involves several different techniques to gather the necessary data. Drawn images of spatial relations are shown to the participants to elicit spatial data. Locative and positional verbs account for some spatial relations, while other spatial relations are accomplished by means of topological relation markers. The elicitation techniques required for their research can only be accomplished by face-to-face interviews, using a set of stimuli that are common across all of the languages investigated. This allows for cross-linguistic study using the same stimuli.

The interview participants of the current study were not explicitly told that this was a linguistic study. Rather, they were invited to participate in a local history project. As this removed any self-consciousness about the way in which they speak, a more natural speech should emerge (see Labov 1972). All materials used to recruit, and subsequently carry out, the study were labelled with the Centre for Language & Communication Studies (CLCS), though participants rarely asked how the data would be used or what the researcher's plans were for these data.

Twenty participants were recruited who were either (A) born in the Navan area and currently live there; (B) born elsewhere in Ireland and have moved to the Navan area and currently live there; or (C) born elsewhere in Ireland. A summary of the participants can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Participants in the Study

ID	AGE	SEX	BORN	LIVES	WORK	EDUCATION	JOB
P001	64	M	Navan	Navan	Navan	Some Secondary	Miner
P002	58	F	Tiperary	Navan	Navan	Bachelor's	Teacher
P003	69	M	Bohermeen	Bohermeen	Navan	Secondary	Factory Worker
P004	62	F	Dublin	Navan	Navan	Bachelor's	Teacher
P005	80	M	Roscommon	Ardsallagh	Ardsallagh	Secondary	Farmer
P006	70	M	Navan	Navan	Navan	Secondary	Town Clerk
P007	41	F	Galway	Trim	Navan	Bachelor's	Teacher
P008	71	M	Johnstown	Johnstown	Kells	Bachelor's	Teacher
P009	59	F	Clare	Johnstown	Dublin	Bachelor's	Admin Assistant
P010	33	F	Dublin	Johnstown	Dublin	Doctorate	Business Consultant
P011	34	F	Dublin	Johnstown	Dublin	Master's	Business Consultant
P012	44	M	Dublin	Johnstown	Dublin	Secondary	Bus Driver
P013	40	F	Kildalkey	Johnstown	Unemployed	Doctorate	Civil Engineer
P014	67	M	Horseleap	Walterstown	Navan	Bachelor's	Teacher
P015	40	M	Dublin	Carnaross	Navan	Bachelor's	County Clerk
P016	75	M	Navan	Navan	Navan	Secondary	Undertaker
P017	38	M	Dublin	Johnstown	Unemployed	Secondary	Waiter
P018	75	M	Navan	Navan	Various	Secondary	Engineer
P019	50	M	Leitrim	Johnstown	Dublin	Bachelor's	Software Engineer
P020	36	F	Dunmoe	Dunmoe	Navan	Bachelor's	Community Worker

3.1   Sociolinguistic Variables

In analysing these data, several sociolinguistic variables will be considered. The age groupings are balanced as closely as possible, in decades. There are four participants in their 30s, four participants in their 40s, three participants in their 50s, four participants in their 60s, four participants in their 70s, and one participant in his 80s. Gender groupings are slightly less balanced with 12 male participants and eight female participants. In gathering the participant pool, there was a conscious effort made to reflect the changing demographics of Navan. While it was important to interview participants who were born in the Navan area and still live there, participants who moved to Navan from Dublin, and participants who moved to Navan from areas of Ireland other than Dublin are represented. The participants' level of education is also varied, with eight participants completing at least some secondary school, nine participants completing university level education, and three participants holding postgraduate qualifications. These variables will be used as potential factors to the variations found in conceptualisations in these data as they apply to specific conceptualisations.

4   Results & Analysis

Lakoff & Johnson propose that "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (2003, p. 5). Physical space is the foundation upon which conceptual space might be understood in these data. I will begin the analysis by considering physical space before exploring the conceptual implications of these physical descriptions. Where a physical mapping of spatial language is not enough to understand conceptual space, I will rely on contextual reading to make judgements based on the participant's data on the whole. To illustrate this process, the following examples are from P008:

(5)

    a.   "And I often went home at 3 o'clock and we would be back in to play football *up* in the

          jumping enclosure which is now where... I'm not sure if it's Lidl or Aldi on Brew's Hill *up*

          beside Pairc Tailteann." (P008, p. 4)

    b.   "You have Simonstown *up* in the North End of the town and you have O'Mahoney's and

          out in Bective, then, you would have a smaller club; a junior football club." (P008, p. 4)

    c.   "There was a tragic murder *up* there." (P008, p. 13)

    d.   "We played a football game one day *out* in Ballinacree which is way *up* here in Cavan."

          (P008, p. 18)

In these examples, P008 uses **up** in (5a.) to refer to the jumping enclosure that was located on Brew's Hill. This **up** can be read as 'at a height' and is a physical conceptualisation. In (5b.), **up** is now used to conceptualise the North End of Navan. Participant 008 also uses **out** in this example to conceptualise Bective as being away from town. There is also an **up** conceptualisation in (5c.), where P008 is talking about the Beechmount area of Navan, which is to the South of the town centre. If read on their own, (5b.) and (5c.) could lead a researcher to conclude that P008 uses **up** to mean 'away from the town centre' in conceptual space. However, this would not address the *out* conceptualisation of Bective in (5b.). Finally, in (5d.), P008 uses **out** to conceptualise Ballinacree on its own and **up** to conceptualise the context of where Ballinacree is, in county Cavan. Thus, for P008, **up** space includes the physical height of a hill (5a.), the concept of being to the North of Navan town centre (5b.), the concept of being away from the town centre (5c.), and to the North and away from Navan (5d.). I also can conclude that **out** most likely means 'away from town' in these contexts.

These conceptualisations are only one part of how P008's understands space. The following examples show how P008 uses **down** conceptualisations:

(6)

    a.   "*Down* this end, you still have the Brothers school's there that's not run by the Brothers any more, run by lay people and the two convents are still there, but they're taking in boys now, you know?" (P008, p. 8)

    b.   "You go heading through the lights, *down* heading towards Kells." (P008, p. 9)

    c.   "To me, Navan ends at the Railway Bridge going to Dublin. And it ends going *down* Timmons's Hill. And it ends at Canon Row." (P008, p. 13)

    d.   "She's still alive living *down* in a place called Grangecon, I'm not sure if it's in Wicklow or Kildare." (P008, p. 17)

In these examples, P008 uses **down** to conceptualise where the Christian Brothers' School was formerly located, along the Blackwater River (6a.), motion in the direction of Kells (6b.), the descent of a hill (6c.), and the village of Grangecon in Wicklow (6d.). These can be read as **down** space encompassing locations near a river (6a.), motion away from town (6b.), motion that descends a hill (6c.), and a location to the South of Navan (6d.). Compare (5d.) which conceptualises Ballinacree (**out**) and Cavan (**up**) with (6b.) which conceptualises Kells (**down**). Participant 008 can't use **out**, **up**, and **down** to refer to the same notion of 'away from Navan' as this would remove any differentiation

in conceptual space. This is the model that will be followed in the discussion to follow.

4.1   Vertical Axis Metaphors

While a great deal of the vertical axis data concern altitude, there are parts of the town that are not at an incline but are conceptualised as **up** in a geographical metaphor, as seen below:

(7)

    a.   "I started work for Danny Fitzpatrick, he was a furniture manufacturer *up* the North end of the town." (P001, p. 3)

    b.   "You have Simonstown *up* in the North End of the town and you have O'Mahoney's and out in Bective, then, you would have a smaller club; a junior football club." (P008, p. 4)

    c.   "And then I don't know *up* the other side of town, *up* sort of in Windtown *up* where the swimming pool is there." (P013, p. 8)

    d.   "That's right, *up* in the North of the town." (P014, p. 6)

    e.   "They have their own school *up* there." (P020, p. 4)

For these conceptualisations, a logical physical/conceptual metaphor would be NORTH IS UP, SOUTH IS DOWN. What is significant about these examples is that they are all locations that are away from Navan itself, or at the very least away from the town centre. These **up** conceptualisations pair with the following **down** conceptualisations of the town:

(8)

    a.   "And I remember one day I was minding him whilst me mother was *down* the town. Ah sorry, it was me sister who was down the town." (P001, p. 10)

    b.   "I would take a right down Trimgate... *down* Railway Street. And when I come to the traffic lights, I would take a left, go up Brew's Hill, and keep on going until I get to the hospital." (P002, p. 19)

c.   "Is the one as you go *down* to the square." (P005, p. 9)

d.   "I used to plead with them, 'Ah, please let me go *down* the town.'" (P006, p. 8)

e.   "I lived in the Central Hotel which is *down* in the centre, owned by Matty Crinion."

(P014, p. 2)

f.   "*Down* on Market Square." (P016, p. 5)

g.   "Because the Barracks is *down* the town hall." (P020, p. 4)

Read together, a conceptual metaphor UP IS ON THE PERIPHERY OF A PLACE, DOWN IS IN THE CENTRE OF A PLACE can be proposed. Put another way, UP IS OUTSIDE THE CENTRE, DOWN IS IN THE CENTRE.

As a place of importance, Dublin is conceptualised as **up** from Navan, as seen in the following examples:

(9)

a.   "But I never had any... I do always say, you know people saying 'the Dubs this' and 'the

Dubs that', and I say, listen, all the culchies have been going *up* to Dublin for years,

they're only getting their own back, I used to say to them." (P006, p. 14)

b.   "And this woman came on a Sunday evening and offered to drive me *up* to Dublin."

(P008, p. 15)

c.   "That's where we stay sometimes when we go *up* to Dublin." (P015, p. 5)

This leads to a conceptual metaphor DUBLIN IS UP, NAVAN IS DOWN. However, this metaphor is not universal in these data. We have conflicting examples, below:

(10)

a.   "So like, you'd be *up* in Meath... you'd be *up* in Meath a lot, actually." (P015, p. 3)

b.   "And then we moved *up* here, then." (P015, p. 3)

c.   "We moved *up* to Navan in 2001." (P017, p. 1)

d.   "And I prefer it *up* here than Dublin." (P017, p. 1)

For two of the participants, both of whom are originally from Dublin, *Navan* and *Meath* are, in fact, **up** relative to *Dublin*. For them, Navan is up, Dublin is down. But this is, perhaps, not the metaphor they are employing. Participant 015, in particular, expands on these conceptualisations, as seen in the examples, below:

(11)

    a. "Then we moved *up* to Blessington then, after that when school finished up that year in the summertime." (P015, p. 2)

    b. "And if you go *up* to Blessington now, there's Dunnes, and there's any amount of houses and apartments in there now." (P015, p. 8)

Using truth statements (see Lakoff & Johnson 2003, pp. 159–184), we can understand more clearly what is happening. Participant 015 was born in *Swords*, in North County Dublin before moving **up** to *Blessington*. He frequently travelled **up** to *Meath* before moving **up** to *Carnaross*, which is Northwest of *Navan*. He presently travels **up** to *Blessington* to visit his family. These examples suggest a conceptual metaphor along the lines of the FUTURE IS UP, which can be applied to the passage of time from *Swords* **up** to *Blessington* and then **up** to *Carnaross*. He also uses **up** to conceptualise happy times: childhood trips to *Meath*, visiting family in *Blessington*. These suggest GOOD IS UP. That he uses at least two UP metaphors speaks to the complexity of conceptual metaphors as well as the fine-grained approach that must be taken to understanding the breadth of applications of Conceptual Metaphor Theory in these data.

While these conceptualisations are rare, *Navan* plays a part in different metaphors, as well. *Navan*, for example, can be conceptualised as **up**, relative to other places in Ireland, as seen below:

(12)

    a. "We went into this big, cavernous pub, my father and mother came *up* with me." (P002, p. 3)

    b. "And eh... then I... when I was just about 11, I was sent *up* here." (P005, p. 1)

    c. "With the property boom coming and going and everybody kinda settled in to their own environment now, I don't really see there being any influx of any more people form any type of country or down the country moving *up* to Navan and settling down." (P017, p. 7)

d. "There was one who had heart problems and the other brother died suddenly, so he left the other fella who had the heart problems, so we were *up* and down from Mullingar to look after the place and trying to keep things going, you know?" (P018, p. 4)

In these examples, *Navan* is **up** as relative to places of less importance: *Limerick* (12a.), *Tuam* (12b.), and *Mullingar* (12d.). (It should be noted that in (12d.), it should be understood that "up and down" means **up** to *Navan* and **down** to *Mullingar*, as an application of Cooper and Ross 1975, as suggested by Lakoff & Johnson 2003, pp. 132–133.) Other places are also conceptualised as **up** or **down**, though there is no physical reasoning for this differentiation:

(13)

a. "We'd be counting how many cars went *up* to Trim." (P001, p. 6)

b. "Now, Dunshaughlin had... the place I used to go to play Whist on a Wednesday night, they had 2 Gards *up* there." (P005, p. 18)

c. "Well, you know, it's Dunshaughlin on *down* towards Cavan." (P005, p. 16)

d. "I go *down* to Castlerea to see them and they come up to see me." (P005, p. 4)

e. "And Kells is the same way with the... the high crosses and that *down* there." (P006, p. 13)

f. "And we had a lad playing in it from Ballinabrackey which is *down* here somewhere on the borders of Meath and Offaly. (P008, p. 18)

g. "You go heading through the lights, *down* heading towards Kells." (P008, p. 9)

h. "So I would go *down* the N3 and turn off for Dunboyne and cross into Maynooth." (P011, p. 7)

i. "Some of the landowners would have men that went *down* to the west to buy stock." (P016, p. 16)

Thus, the DUBLIN IS UP, NAVAN IS DOWN metaphor can be linked with the NAVAN IS UP, OTHER PLACES ARE DOWN metaphor to an overarching PLACES OF IMPORTANCE ARE UP, PLACES OF LESSER IMPORTANCE ARE DOWN

metaphor that can be extended throughout Ireland. Where this becomes problematic is in relative conceptualisations, as seen in the examples below:

(14)

    a.   "So I would probably go Trim, between Kinnegad and Enfield and then *up* the motorway *up* there just for ease to avoid the little windy roads." (P010, p. 6)

    b.   "Alternatively at Slane I would go left [Right] and go *up* and turn off at Cullen there for Dunlear." (P011, p. 7)

    c.   "And then I would head *up* by Trim and Summerhill and across that way then." (P012, p.7)

    d.   "And that would bring you *down* to Duleek." (P017, p. 9)

    e.   "Of course if you were in Drogheda, you could nip *down* the M1 and slip *down* to Dundalk in 10-15 minutes." (P018, p. 7)

    f.   "She would come *down* and then the brothers and the sisters would follow soon after." (P020, p. 2)

If these conceptualisations are metaphors for **up**ness and, then a hierarchy of **up**ness and **down**ness can be constructed that reflects the "different priorities given to these values and metaphors by the subculture that uses them" (Lakoff and Johnson 2003, p. 23). So in (14a.), there is an UP metaphor that governs the relationship between *Enfield* and the *motorway that leads to Mullingar*. The PLACES OF IMPORTANCE ARE UP, PLACES OF LESSER IMPORTANCE ARE DOWN metaphor can be applied here, as *Mullingar* is considerably larger than *Enfield* and is regarded as more developed. In (14b.), there is a different **up**ness relationship between *Slane* and *Cullen*. Slane is a medium-sized town whereas Cullen is more of a townland, a collection of farms, thus making Slane a more developed and important place, negating the PLACES OF IMPORTANCE ARE UP, PLACES OF LESSER IMPORTANCE ARE DOWN metaphor. *Cullen* is South of *Slane*, negating any geographic metaphors. Slane is also located on a hill, negating the physical metaphors. Perhaps there is something to be said about the short stretch of road between Slane and Cullen, just 3 kilometres on the N2, a road that terminates in Dublin. Perhaps the importance of Dublin is so strong that it dominates even this small motion, Southwards, away from a town, downhill, but also closer to Dublin. Thus, **up** motion is always towards Dublin, no matter where else that road takes you.

4.2   Container Metaphors

The most obvious spatial use of **out** comes in the form meaning 'away from the town' as in the examples, below:

(15)

a. "And she arrived *out* in Johnstown." (P001, p. 7)

b. "[T]he town ended *out* at Saint Mary's Park, which is just behind the Round O pub."

(P003, p. 6)

c. "And some of the roundabouts now, I... I've already reported to the Council that *out* at

Kilcarn, where I live." (P005, p. 17)

d. "And, eh... of course, what do you call Irish settlements... there were Gaeltacht *out* in

Gibbstown." (P006, p. 6)

Here, the container metaphor can be applied to the town borders of Navan, but not everything that is **outside** the Navan town borders is **out** from **Navan**. **Dublin**'s high status is consistently applied to container metaphors, just as it was to vertical axis metaphors. Participants who have moved to Navan from Dublin conceptualise **Navan** as **out** from **Dublin**, while Navan natives conceptualise that motion **away from Dublin** as **out**ward, as seen in the examples below:

(16)

a. "We looked at this and said what the hell would you be doing put *out* here?" (P012, p.

2)

b. "You might get the Luas *out* here before we get the train." (P012, p. 3)

c. "So obviously, when I was buying I knew there could be something *out* there." (P013, p.

4)

As a spatial conceptualisation, **in** does not have the same flexibility as **out**. It does, however, complete the container metaphor as **towns** are a marker of **in**-ness, as seen in the following examples:

(17)

    a.   "There were two cinemas *in* the town." (P001, p. 1)

    b.   "The original school was *in* town. It was in what was called Academy Street." (P002, p. 5)

    c.   "OK, so you had the old bridge *in*, that was the main bridge on the Dublin to Cavan road." (P011, p. 2)

This leads to a container hierarchy where all the **OUT** conceptualisations (and, reflexively, **IN** conceptualisations) are governed by the status of the places involved. The country is out from the suburbs of Navan, which are out from Navan which is out from Dublin. As this is a consistently applied hierarchy, the conceptual metaphor HIGHER STATUS IS IN, LOWER STATUS IS OUT can be put forward.

4.3   Variation in these data

We do not see uniformity in all of these data. All but one of the participants have some conceptualisations of **Navan**. When these conceptualisations are viewed within the frames of reference framework, the variety of conceptualisations that the participants use to construct the **Navan** of their own (and possibly others') experiences can be seen. Setting aside conceptualisations within Navan, the **Navan** conceptualisations can be summarised in Table 2, below:

Table 2: Navan conceptualisations in these data

ID	EGOCENTRIC	ALLOCENTRIC	UNIVERSAL
P001		Navan is up from the country	
P002	Navan is in	Navan is up from Tipperary; Navan is down from Blanchardstown	
P003			Navan is in
P004	Navan is down from Dublin	Navan is up from Dublin; Navan is in from Dublin	
P005		Navan is up from Kilcarn; Navan is up from Roscrea; Navan is up from Roscommon; Navan is up from Tuam; Navan is down from Finglas; Navan is down from Blanchardstown; Navan is down from Dunshaughlin	
P006		Navan is down from Dublin	
P007	Navan is in	Navan is out from Johnstown	
P008		Navan is down from Dublin	Navan is in
P009	Navan is up on a hill		
P010		Navan is down from Dublin; Navan is out from Dublin; Navan is in from Johnstown	
P011		Navan is down from Dublin	
P012		Navan is in from Dundalk	
P013			Navan is in
P014		Navan is down from Dublin	Navan is in
P015			
P016			Navan is in
P017		Navan is up from Dublin; Navan is up from the country; Navan is out from Dublin	
P018		Navan is up from the West	
P019	Navan is in		
P020		Navan is down from Dublin; Navan is down from Westmeath	

4.3.1 *In/Out*

From a strictly experiential point of view, **Navan** is conceptualised as a container by three of the participants, none of them are originally from the Navan area, between 40 and 58 years of age, and with a university level education. Two of these three are or were teachers, both of whom are female. If the net is widened to those who conceptualise **Navan** as a universal concept, six more participants conceptualise **Navan** as **in**. Their ages are more diverse (40–75) but skew closer to the older end of the spectrum (mean age 64, median age 68), while there is an even mix of participants from the Navan area and those outside the Navan area. If these nine participants are taken together, a clearer picture starts to emerge. Now, all of the teachers (P002, P004, P007, P008, P014) conceptualise **Navan** as **in**. The ages of the **Navan** is **in** participants drops if the egocentric frame of reference **Navan** is **in** participants are added to the universal frame of reference **Navan** is **in** participants (mean age 59.1, median age 62), though only three of the nine are originally from the Navan area (P003, P008, P016), and seven of the nine have at least a university level education.

Where the greatest variation can be seen is within the allocentric frame of reference. **Navan** is **in** from **Johnstown** and from **Dundalk**, according to P010 and P012, both of whom are originally from Dublin. However, **Navan** is also **out** from **Dublin**, according to P010 and P017.

There are now 11 participants who conceptualise **Navan** as **in** from somewhere else, exhibiting the PLACES OF IMPORTANCE ARE IN metaphor as explained above. There is also the **Navan** is **out** from **Dublin** conceptualisation which also fits with the PLACES OF IMPORTANCE ARE IN, PLACES OF LESS IMPORTANCE ARE OUT metaphor. A hierarchy of **in**-ness can also be seen in these data, as shown below.

OUT   Dundalk/Johnstown → Navan   →   Dublin   **IN**

Experiential truths in these data must also be considered. Participant 007 conceptualises one of her co-workers motion from **Johnstown towards Navan** as **out**ward motion, while P004 conceptualises people from Dublin moving **in**to **Navan** from **Dublin**, contradicting the **OUT/IN** place of importance hierarchy. Participant 007's allocentric conceptualisation of **Navan**, through the imagined perspective of her co-worker to be one of inconvenience, describes a difficult commute to work, while her own commute from **Trim** to **Navan** is one of convenience. The conceptual metaphor CONVENIENCE IS IN, INCONVENIENCE IS OUT can thus be put forward.

Participants 010, 012, 013 and 019 specifically mention that they go **in** to **Navan** for shopping. The conceptual metaphor SHOPPING IS IN can thus be put forward. Each of these participants moved to the Navan area within the past 15 years, having been born outside of the Navan area. Three have been educated at least to the university level, with the outlier also working outside the professional ranks. They are between the ages of 33–50, suggesting an age-based grouping in addition their place of origin grouping.

Participants 002 and 003 travelled **in** to **Navan** for work at Navan Carpets and St Patrick's Secondary School, respectively. The conceptual metaphor WORK IS IN can thus be put forward. These participants

are 58 and 69 years of age, respectively, suggesting an age-based grouping. One is male, the other female, while one is from the Navan area and the other is not.

The remaining participants (008, 014, 016) all conceptualise **Navan** as **in** but without pretense, which confirms their conceptualisation of **Navan** as a place of importance. That these three participants are all between 67–75 years of age seems to point to an age-based grouping. Two of these participants are teachers, and one comes from outside of the Navan area. All three are male.

4.3.2   *Up/Down*

The **up**-ness of **Navan** is not an egocentric, nor universal experience, but is, rather, a relative one. **Navan** is dependent upon other landmarks in order to understand its **up**-ness or **down**-ness, therefore, all of the **up/down** conceptualisations are from the allocentric frame of reference. There is more regularity in these data than with the Container conceptualisations, above. Two participants (P001, P017) conceptualise **Navan** as **up** from the **country**, though they have very little else in common. Though both male, P001 is 70, a former miner, and originally from Navan while P017 is 38, a former waiter, and originally from Dublin. Neither has a university level education and neither currently works. Participant 017 also conceptualises **Navan** as **up** from **Dublin**, as does P004. While both are originally from Dublin, P004 is 62, educated to the university level, and a retired teacher.

Other participants conceptualise Navan as **up** from their home places, **Tipperary** (P002) and **Roscommon** (P005). This can be read alongside P018 who is originally from the Navan area, and conceptualises the **up** motion of people from the **West of Ireland** towards **Navan**. For P005, **Navan** is also **up** from **Tuam**, **Roscrea**, and his own home in **Kilcarn**. For all of these conceptualisations, Navan is a place of importance, therefore the conceptual metaphor PLACES OF IMPORTANCE ARE UP is confirmed. There is very little that binds these participants: two are male, one is female; two are not originally from the Navan area; only one progressed beyond 2nd level education; and they worked in different industries. However, these three participants are between 58–80, suggesting an age-based grouping for the notion of Navan being **up** from other places.

The place of importance metaphor, described above, is just as strong, if not stronger when it comes to **down** conceptualisations of **Navan**. Specifically, **Navan**'s place relative to **Dublin** is **down** for P006, P008, P010, P011, P014, and P020. Participant 005 is more specific in conceptualising **Navan** as **down** from **various parts of Dublin** without specifying that **Navan** is **down** from **Dublin**, though that seems to be implied. This is another demographically diverse group: their ages range from 36–80 (mean age: 55.8, median age: 67); four are male, three are female; two are originally from Dublin, two from elsewhere in Ireland, and three are originally from the Navan area; two are former teachers, two are business consultants, one is a community worker, one is a town clerk, and one is a farmer. It would appear that there are no sociolinguistic reasons for these seven participants to choose to conceptualise **Navan** as **down** from **Dublin**. However, Dublin is viewed as a place of importance elsewhere in these data, and that is confirmed here.

One final **Navan** conceptualisation comes from P020 who conceptualises a bride's family moving **down** to **Navan** from **Westmeath**. The hypothetical family that she is describing are members of the

Travelling Community, a sometimes ostracised and marginalised segment of the Irish population. To P020, **Navan** is a safer place for members of the Travelling Community than **Westmeath**, so her **down** conceptualisation here suggests the conceptual metaphor SAFETY IS DOWN.

4.3.3   *Navan Summary*

Navan is a remarkably diverse object of conceptualisation in these data. Seven of the participants (001, 005, 006, 009, 011, 018, 020) use **up/down** conceptualisations only, six participants (003, 007, 012, 013, 016, 019) use **in/out** conceptualisations only, and six participants (002, 004, 008, 010, 014, 017) use both **up/down** and **in/out** conceptualisations, while one Participant (015) does not conceptualise **Navan** at all. The participants who use **up/down** conceptualisations only are far more likely to be originally from the Navan area, while those who use **in/out** conceptualisations only are far more likely to not be originally from the Navan area.

While it is not overwhelming, **in/out** conceptualisations are more likely to be used than **up/down** conceptualisations if the Participant is not originally from an area. While **uphill/downhill** conceptualisations were easy enough to learn for non-natives, **in/out** is a safer conceptualisation.

5   Conclusion

The data described here have shown how 20 participants talk about the place where they live. It is possible to derive from these conceptualisations how they view this place, as well as how quickly different conceptualisations are acquired. By using a sociolinguistic approach to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, these data have shown that there is variation in how people living in a community conceptualise the town in which they live. Each of the participants brings their own truth statements to their conceptualisations of Navan.

It can also be seen that **in/out** conceptualisations are more likely to be used than **up/down** conceptualisations if the participant is not originally from an area. While **uphill/downhill** conceptualisations were easy enough to learn for non-natives, **in/out of town** is a safer conceptualisation. Natives to an area have a more complex Vertical Axis system than those who have moved to an area from elsewhere. This leads to the conclusion that Container metaphors are more easily acquired than Vertical Axis metaphors while noting that the Vertical Axis is more complex.

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