

**THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF METAPHORS IN THE MALAYSIAN
EDUCATION BLUEPRINT**

LINGGATHARANI A/P KESAVAN

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

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**THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF METAPHORS IN THE
MALAYSIAN EDUCATION BLUEPRINT**

LINGGATHARANI A/P KESAVAN

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Name of Candidate: LINGGATHARANI A/P KESAVAN

Registration/Matric No.: 17035582/1

Name of Degree: Master of Arts 'English as a Second Language'

The Title Dissertation ("this Work"): THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF METAPHORS IN THE MALAYSIAN EDUCATION BLUEPRINT

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The Roles and Functions of Metaphors in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025)

Abstract: The Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013 - 2025) seeks to revamp the entire education system in Malaysia, targeting institutions of learning and the stakeholders via a series of radical changes in policy and governance. Upon scrutiny, it was also found to contain several metaphors that are carefully constructed and layered to deliver the contents to the readers. Metaphors have been identified as an effective linguistic tool that can be used to achieve cognitive, semantic and pragmatic goals effectively. More importantly, they are also found to create or alter realities and evoke powerful emotions. This research applies the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to explore the metaphorical concepts in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013 – 2025). Additionally, Charteris-Black's (2004) framework of analyzing metaphorical data in a corpus was employed to study the functions and the role metaphors play in the document. This research found that the metaphorical concepts in the blueprint were systematically employed to represent complex policies and the changes proposed for the next twelve years in the education system. The document also effectively used metaphors to present the issues and challenges faced by the education system in a more palatable way. Moreover, by using military metaphors, the document was found to conceptualize the seriousness of the government in creating an improved education system for the future by taking on current issues.

Keywords: *Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Critical Metaphor Analysis, Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2015)*

Peranan dan Fungsi Metafora dalam Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia (2013-2025)

Abstrak: Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia (2013 – 2025) merupakan pelan yang melakarkan visi sistem pendidikan Malaysia, aspirasi murid dan anjakan yang perlu dilakukan untuk mencapai visi tersebut. Pelan ini juga merupakan satu transformasi yang sangat besar dalam sistem pendidikan. Selepas penelitian yang menyeluruh, dokumen tersebut juga didapati mengandungi banyak metafora yang digunakan untuk menyampaikan kandungan tersurat dan tersirat kepada pembaca. Metafora merupakan salah satu unsur bahasa yang boleh digunakan untuk mencapai objektif kognitif, semantik dan pragmatik. Sebagai contoh, unsur metafora boleh digunakan untuk menyampaikan maklumat secara mudah kepada para pembaca dan pendengar. Selain itu, metafora juga memainkan fungsi yang penting dalam mempengaruhi masyarakat dan perasaan mereka. Kajian ini telah menggunakan Teori Metafora Konseptual (TMK) yang diperkenalkan oleh Lakoff dan Johnson pada tahun 1980 untuk menyelidik unsur metafora yang digunakan dalam Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia. Selain itu, kajian ini menggunakan kerangka analitik Charteris-Black yang diperkenalkan pada tahun 2004 untuk menganalisis fungsi dan peranan metafora dalam dokumen tersebut. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa unsur metafora perjalanan telah digunakan secara sistematik untuk menyampaikan perancangan pembangunan pendidikan untuk tempoh 12 tahun kepada masyarakat umum. Metafora konflik pula telah digunakan untuk menyampaikan mesej bahawa pihak kerajaan memandang serius tentang isu-isu dalam bidang pendidikan dan berusaha untuk menyelesaikan masalah tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Teori Metafora Kritikal (TMK), Analisis Kritikal Metafora, Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan (2013-2025)

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As you start to walk on the way, the way appears

-Rumi

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Word Abbreviation List

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CMA	Critical Metaphor Analysis
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
DLP	Dual Language Programme
ETP	Economic Transformation Programme
MIP	Metaphor Identification Procedure
MIPVU	Metaphor Identification Procedure VU University of Amsterdam
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation
PATH	Source-Path-Goal Schema
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPSMI	Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik dalam Bahasa Inggeris

Chapter 1 : Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided into two segments. One, it will briefly discuss the issues that prompted this research, the history of the Malaysian education system as well as the economic and political influences over it. It is important to understand the education system from these perspectives to understand the narratives, policies, and planning adopted in the blueprint. The contextual information will allow for a better understanding of the strategic use of metaphors within the document. Next, it will discuss the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT) proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson based on their book, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) and their subsequent works. It will also briefly touch on the Critical Metaphor Analysis that makes up the analytical framework used in this research.

1.2. Problem Statements

In the year 2009 and 2011, Malaysian students participated in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) tests. Both the results later reported that Malaysian students possessed ‘limited mastery’ of basic Mathematical and Science concepts (Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2013). The decline was alarming and raised questions on the quality of the education system among many quarters. The World Bank’s report, *Malaysia Economic Monitor: High performing Education* (2013) states that despite the educational expenditures and income per capita, Malaysia’s educational performance when compared with internationally standard continues to be below average. The report had also warned that if the trend continues, then the nation will face challenges in competing with high-income economies for innovation and knowledge-based investment. Other issues include the decline of English proficiency, high unemployment rates that suggest the failure of

the system to equip graduates with the necessary skills and the increasing social divide within the school system. The following year, World Bank also reported that Malaysia faces high youth unemployment despite skills shortages and 62% of employers have trouble finding fresh graduates with the necessary skills.

Therefore, it was a critical juncture for the government to take control of the alarming issues and provide solutions. The blueprint was drawn after considering these issues and performance of the students when compared to the international standards. It is a policy-report that documented the changes in structure and policies that will be made to the education system over the span of 12 years. Additionally, it also discusses the issues plaguing the system in the opening chapter of the book. Interestingly, the blueprint was found to contain many metaphors that were interlinked and systematically connected to each other. It is important to study the strategic use of metaphors for a few reasons. First, metaphors are proven to help deconstruct the messages intended by the blueprint and deliver it to the public without much complications. Next, several researchers (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Charteris-Black, 2004; Kovecses, 2010) also found that the strategic usage of metaphors functions to influence opinion and change the mindsets of people. It can either create or alter realities according to ideologies and beliefs. For instance, Santa Ana (1997) found that by adopting a metaphoric discourse, newspapers were able to instill anti-immigrant sentiments into the minds of the readers. Often deployed in political speeches, Charteris-Black (2014) summarizes metaphors as being the binding agent to link notions of terrorism to religion, politics, and conflict. Therefore, the research would shed light on how the metaphors are strategically utilized in the blueprint, its role, and critical functions within the document. More importantly, researching the metaphors would help to discover the covert intentions of the functions of metaphors identified in the blueprint, if any, by investigating the contextual information and other circumstantial evidence present.

1.3. Research Purposes and Questions

This research attempts to identify and classify the metaphors used in Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013 – 2025) and examine their roles and functions using the Critical Metaphor Analysis by Charteris-Black in 2004 as an analytical framework. The strategic use of metaphors can be influenced by ideologies and political beliefs. Often, these metaphors act as an effective linguistic tool to realize the speaker's underlying goals as they have the potential to move us (Charteris-Black). The blueprint was drafted and released around the time when the system was failing, and the ministry was under pressure by the demands from stakeholder groups for a change. Therefore, researching the metaphors' roles and functions in the blueprint would help uncover their original purpose(s) and if they offer an altered reality to the public with the goal of influencing their opinion. The research questions are:

1. What are the metaphors used in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025) and how are they mapped to the target domain from the source domain?

This question classifies the metaphors found in the blueprint into specific domains by identifying the metaphor keyword. Possible keywords are categorized into the domains found and the rest are eliminated. The keywords identified are then mapped from the target domain to the source domain. The categories would indicate the different meaning constructs used to convey the policies and ideas presented in the document.

2. What are the roles and functions of the metaphors found in the blueprint?

This next question explores how the metaphors identified in each domain are strategically used to construct meaning and convey it to the readers. Roles refer to the part played by the metaphors in the blueprint. They can vary from being used to persuade, attack or construct thoughts. Functions also refer to roles, but in a more nuanced and detailed manner, highlighting how it carries out the role. It considers the observations generated by previous research and patterns in metaphor constructions. More specifically, it would focus on the relevance of the selected domain and usage to the target audience. Researchers suggest that the conceptual metaphor mapping is relevant and logical to the target audience. For instance, political speeches often carry metaphors that are related to war, journey, and constructions. They are woven in a discourse to function in several different ways. Some of the notable functions include to persuade, to evoke emotions or to alter realities. In other words, metaphors often need to be adapted so that it can be effectively useful to an audience and to achieve a certain goal. Understanding the social, cultural and ideologies of the target audience is central to account for metaphorical choices. This question would help uncover the link between the metaphorical choices and the goal motivation behind their existence.

1.4. The Malaysian Education System – A Brief History

Once a colonized nation, Malaysia's education system has come a long way since the formation of the country. Malaysia, being one of the most multiethnic and multireligious country in Southeast Asia, is naturally bound to create a system that will cater to the needs and demands of the unique demography. This practice is evident even before independence was granted. In the 1950s there four proposals to develop the nation's education system. They were the Barnes Report, Fenn-Wu Report, Ordinance Report (a modification of the Barnes report) and the Razak report. Subsequently, the 1952

Education Ordinance was created based on the Barnes report that evoked dissatisfaction from ethnic minority groups (the Chinese and Tamil) because they felt their mother tongue would soon wane. (Mariasosay, 1996). After the failure of the proposal, eventually the Razak report was adopted in 1955. It allowed for the existence of national and national-type schools that adopted a national curriculum with differing medium of instructions. This school-system catering to ethnic needs exists until today. However, from the inception of the Razak report in 1955 until date, the policy changes in the education system of the country has been radical.

Currently, the education system encompasses preschools, primary schools, secondary schools and public universities. This chapter will not discuss the independent, private and international schools as it is not part of the blueprint. However, understanding the rest of the education system, especially recent policies and challenges in it are crucial to understanding the inception of the blueprint, the changes, and key initiatives. As the research focuses on metaphors used in the blueprint, understanding these elements would aid in understanding how the metaphors capture and conceptualized these changes and presented it to the readers. The executive summary of the blueprint also states that the changes to the education system would consider 'historical starting points' against the international benchmark.

While the pre- and post-independence reports laid groundwork in creating a structure for the education system, the young nation continued to develop rapidly in all areas, including education. In the 1970s, the medium of instruction was changed from Malay to English in all schools in accordance with the national language policy. In August 1988, the Curriculum Development Centre released the National Education Philosophy. It highlights the aim of the education system that was focused mainly on creating a holistic individual, focusing on the development of mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being alongside academics.

1.5. The Education System and the Economy

In the years following independence, Malaysia's economic growth was one of the fastest in the Southeast Asian region. The introduction of economic policies played a major role in the shifts that occurred within the education system. The New Economic Policy was implemented in 1971 during the second Malaysia plan and lasted until the fifth Malaysia plan (1990) and was aimed at uniting the races of Malaysia and re-structuring the socio-economic landscape of the country.

In March 2010, the New Economic Model was published by the government to improve the country's economy. The reports highlight that the education system has not produced 'the skills demanded by firms'. Other issues that were highlighted in the report include 'inadequate creativity and English proficiency'. The education system was implicated in the report for the state of economy and became a lever for the proposed transformation.

The following year, on 25th October 2010, the Prime Minister, Najib Razak launched the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), A Roadmap for Malaysia. It was a proposal to propel Malaysia as a high-income nation by 2020. Under the proposal, the education system was listed under one of the 12 National Key Economic Areas (NKEA). Notably, it mentions that four-fifth of the Malaysian workforce have received only SPM-level education. Moreover, there was an exodus of talents from the country, creating a brain-drain that did not help with the economy. The report also highlighted that despite the government spending relatively high on public education, the quality of the graduates (measured by international test scores in Science and Mathematics) were not satisfactory. Finally, it was also reported that the World Bank assessment suggests that locally based firms are 'becoming increasingly concerned about IT, technical and professional skills of Malaysian workers'. There were also complains about inadequate creativity and English language proficiency.

Furthermore, a major part of Malaysia's traditional economy was dependent on raw materials such as rubber, palm oil, and petroleum. However, the emergence of the k-economy prompted the government to replace physical and natural resources to talent, skills, and knowledge (Mustapha & Abdullah, 2004). The transition demanded that the education system to shift its focus in order to produce holistic graduates that can sustain the trends in the new economy.

From the reports and explanation given in these economic models, it is now evident that the country's education system needs a shift from being a tool of uniting citizens and creating a wholesome individual to a platform where the citizens can be fit for the job market. The world was moving towards a more digital and highly competitive era and the system needed to move along with it. This will be further explored in subchapter 1.4 that discusses the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025).

1.6. The Education System, Politics and Controversies

The blueprint was conceived, drafted and released to the public amidst calls for a reform in the education system and failure of Malaysian students at international levels. There was also a pressing need for the system to catch up with the technological demands of the 21st century. Therefore, it is important to understand the issues and controversies surrounding the education system in their chronological order as it will help conceptualize the inception of the blueprint and the motivation of the decisions and policies in it.

Education is an area where figures of authority engage in 'struggle over power relation' (Giroux, 1983). Many policies in education (including medium of instructions and other language policies) were matters of public discussions and political debate since the colonial era (A.Raji, 2012). Being a heterogeneous nation, Malaysia's politics heavily leans on race-based parties and practices. Race-based political parties continue to exist within both sides of the political divide, and they work to ensure that the interest of their

ethnic group is protected. Considering that the education system was not only functional in the dissemination of knowledge but also served as a political leverage for these parties, guarding the interest of all ethnic groups in all areas is a key objective to ensure success.

The ethnic riots of May 1969 prompted the government to look into the eradication of inter-ethnic disparities between the races of Malaysia. The riot left the nation in tatters, a major turning point in history. Besides several changes in economic policies, it also propelled changes in the education system. One of the most prominent changes to date was the changing of medium of instructions. For instance, English-medium schools were phased out progressively and eventually by 1982, they became national schools. It demonstrated that the government was committed to giving importance to the Malay language as a medium of instruction. On the other hand, the national-type schools were still operating and continued using Mandarin and Tamil as medium of instruction. Language served the bigger purpose of cultural identity and the Malay language was given the importance that the Malay people were seeking whilst the minority could operate the national-type schools using their languages as medium of instructions. It appeared to be a win-win situation for all the parties involved.

The setting worked well and stayed in place until the year 2002 when it was announced that from 2003 onwards, the teaching of Science and Mathematics will be in English (henceforth the PPSMI policy). The PPSMI was the brainchild of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mahathir Mohamad, who stressed that the medium of instruction of Science and Mathematics to be in English because the field is usually rich with publications and research that use the English language (Selamat et al, 2011).

However, the introduction of PPSMI received backlash from the public. The opposition mainly stemmed from Malay and Chinese groups that viewed the policy as a threat to their mother tongue. Parental groups and dissatisfied public took to the streets to hold rallies opposing the introduction of PPSMI. Organizations such as PEMBINA and

GAPENA argued that the introduction of PPSMI could cause erosion to the culture and create learning difficulties because students would have a hard time understanding the medium of instruction. Several politicians criticized the decision, pointing to the gap between rural and urban students. Eventually, the policy was reversed in 2009 and completely scrapped in 2014 after Muhyiddin Yassin took over the Education Portfolio. It was replaced with the *Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia Memperkukuhkan Bahasa Inggeris* (MBMMBI) program aiming to improve both English and Malay language of the students.

Following that, the Dual Language Program (DLP) was announced in 2016 to cater to the needs of parents who still supported the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English. Ashairi, Mohamed Yusoff and Melor (2017) state that the DLP program allows all the stakeholders the flexibility to choose their medium of instructions if they fulfill the criteria set by the Ministry. In 2018, it was reported that there were more than 40, 000 pupils who were enrolled in the DLP program. The move to accommodate the sentiments of people who wants to retain the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English as well as those who champion the causes for their mother tongue is very diplomatic.

1.7. The Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013 – 2025)

The following is the foreword to the executive summary taken from the Education Blueprint (p. 22) that highlights the background to the creation of the blueprint and the overarching plans put forward moving into the future. In October 2011, the Ministry of Education launched a comprehensive review of the education system in Malaysia in order to develop a new National Education Blueprint. The decision was made in the context of raising international education standards, the Government's aspiration of better preparing Malaysia's children for the needs of the 21st century, and increased public and parental expectations of education policy. Over the course of 15 months (October 2011 to

December 2012), the Ministry drew on many sources of input, from education experts at UNESCO, World Bank, OECD, and six local universities, to principals, teachers, parents, students, and other members of the public from every state in Malaysia. The result is a Malaysia Education Blueprint that evaluates the performance of current Malaysia's education system with considerations of historical starting points against international benchmarks. The Blueprint also offers a vision of the education system and student aspirations that Malaysia both needs and deserves and suggests 11 strategic as well as operational shifts that would be required to achieve that vision.

In 2009, when Malaysia took part in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), an assessment done by Malaysian secondary school students. Malaysia performed poorly and was listed in the bottom third of the 74 countries that participated. The Malaysian education blueprint (p. 7) highlighted that the performance of the participants is several years behind their peers in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Shanghai. However, the performance of Malaysian students in the same tests was higher than the international average in 1999. This was indication enough that a serious intervention was needed to revamp the education system.

In October the following year, the Ministry of Education conducted a review of the education system in Malaysia to 'develop a new National Education Blueprint'. The decision was made to better prepare Malaysian students to the raising educational standards around the world, increased demands from parents and employers' groups as well as the challenges of the 21st century.

After extensive research that considered inputs from various local stakeholders, UNESCO and the World Bank, the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025) was drafted over a period of 15 months (from October 2011 to December 2012). Besides that, there were also roundtable discussions, forums, surveys and interviews that engaged members of the public and ministry officials to gather input for the blueprint.

The document that spans over 12 years seeks to revamp the education system starting from pre-school education up to higher education to meet ‘public and parental expectations, raising international education standards and the 21st-century demands’.

The core objectives of the document are:

- Understanding current performance and challenges of the Malaysian education system.
- Establishing a clear vision and aspiration for students and the system as a whole for the next 13 years.
- Outlining a comprehensive transformation program for the system, including key changes to the ministry.

The objectives stated above raises a key point to this research – that the blueprint seeks to overhaul the education system using what it calls 11 ‘strategic and operational’ shifts. It will include stakeholders from all levels in a radical change. More importantly, the blueprint also addresses the issues and problems found in the system and proposes plans to rectify it. Hence, the document that presents these changes must be presented in a clear and easily understandable way to the readers to prevent confusion and misunderstandings. One way to do this is through the usage of metaphors.

After extensive research, the blueprint was said to ‘evaluate the performance of the current system’ and consider historical starting points against the international benchmark. However, it was not elaborated on what the historical starting points were.

There were also discussions in the blueprint on the returns of investment (in education) that was not satisfactory given the performance of the students. The money invested in Malaysia for the education system was compared to the expenditure of other

countries. The results showed that Malaysia lags behind countries with similar spending such as Thailand, Chile, and Armenia. Other issues discussed include mastery of technological skills, knowledge and performance gap due to gender and geographical constraints.

The blueprint also included what it terms to be the ‘eleven shifts to transform the system’. These shifts function to transform and empower the system for an improved result. The shifts are an extension of the aspirations mentioned above. It outlines the general pathway to achieve the aspirations intended.

Some of the changes brought by the blueprint includes Cambridge Placement Test for English teachers, a standardized Bahasa Melayu curriculum in both national and vernacular schools, and upgrading the skills of teacher in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The emphasis placed on the new system proposed for the future of education in the country stems from a solid ground of careful research, debate, and considerations.

The following is a statement from the education blueprint:

“Return on investments is not as high as desired”

(Malaysian Education Blueprint, p.29)

If the statement above was to be read as a standalone, it would occur to most of us that we are reading out of a financial report page. However, it denotes the poor performance of Malaysian students in international assessments despite the amount of money spent on education by the government. This is one of the many examples of metaphorical concepts that are present in the blueprint that would be explored through this research. It is also noteworthy to mention that when the new coalition, Pakatan Harapan took over government after the defeat of the Barisan Nasional coalition in 2018, the new education

minister, Maszlee Malek stated that the ministry will continue to implement the education blueprint in the system with periodic mid-term reviews on all activities and programs (The Star, 2018).

University of Malaya

Chapter 2 : Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter first analyzes the work of Lakoff and Johnson on conceptual metaphors. It is primarily based on their book, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) and other related work that contributed to the theory. The roles and functions of metaphors discovered by other authors are also presented here. The works of literature reviewed generally revolve around other researches on metaphors across discourses such as political speeches, newspaper reports, and financial and educational reports.

2.2. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Historically, metaphors are viewed as ‘a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish – a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language’ (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p.3). They were assigned what Deignan (2005) terms as a ‘peripheral’ function in language and their roles in shaping the thoughts were not counted. Although metaphors were long viewed as an ornamental tool to add aesthetic value to communication; over time they were subject to more critical inquiries. As a result, there are many schools of thought connected to metaphors that rejected the historical viewpoints of metaphors and paid more attention to their functions and roles in our everyday life. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s pioneering work on metaphors – *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) provides insight into how metaphors can be mapped across domains of thought to construct, alter and even create realities (Kovecses, 2010; Charteris-Black, 2004). They are popularly referred to as the ‘Conceptual Metaphor Theory’ (CMT). Summarily, their work explored the process of mapping the non-concrete ideas and concepts to concrete ones.

The standard definition of conceptual metaphor is:

“A conceptual metaphor is understanding one domain of experience (that is typically abstract) in terms of another (that is typically concrete).”

(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980)

The process of mapping is not merely identifying and associating the meaning of one word in terms of another. Although word to word mapping exists in CMT, it extends to reconceptualizing an experience in terms of another. It enables us to see concepts and arguments from different perspectives. For example, the expression ‘gadget time for children is poison’ consists of two different parts. Part A (gadget time) and Part B (poison). Although they refer to different conceptual domains in our cognitive, metaphors link one to the other.

Metaphors often pervade our discussions on ideas that are complex and abstract, focusing on the cognitive process in language representations and the motivation behind it (Ponteretto, 2014; Charteris-Black, 2014). Researchers have found that even the subtlest use of metaphors in discussions can have a powerful influence over decision making and problem-solving skills (Thibodeau and Boroditsky, 2011; Charteris-Black, 2014).

An extensive number of subsequent researches on metaphors were developed based on the ideas of Lakoff and Johnson’s CMT. In addition to confirming their theories, these researches also contributed to it and in some instances, even altered the original idea stemming from the book and other works by Lakoff and Johnson.

They also suggest that our conceptual thinking is based on metaphorical concepts. The authors argued that metaphor is central and plays a significant role in shaping thought-processes and language. The CMT presented in their work summarily proposes

that we often use a concrete experience to understand ideas that are abstract. In other words, we typically conceptualize the non-physical in terms of physical. This cognitive process is referred to in CMT as the mapping of one conceptual domain to another. A characterization of metaphors and how they function is found in Lakoff (1993):

‘Metaphor is the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning...Metaphor is fundamentally conceptual, not linguistic, in nature...Metaphor allows us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete, or at least more highly structured subject matter’

Taking this basic idea of mapping and systematized metaphorical concepts into account, Lakoff & Johnson provided a few typologies of metaphors in their work. All the examples mentioned below are taken from the authors themselves.

a) Orientational Metaphors

Orientational metaphors use spatial references as a source domain because they “have a basis in our cultural and physical experience” (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). Some of the examples mentioned by the authors are:

Happy is up and sad is down.

“My spirits *rose*”

“He is really *low* these days”

The physical references to these examples would be: Drooping and slouching postures are often associated with negative emotions and an erect posture indicates positive emotion.

b) Ontological Metaphors

Ontological metaphors use our experience of physical objects and substance to provide a further basis of understanding – one that goes beyond spatial references as mentioned previously. It allows us to extract internal experiences and manipulate them as if they were physical. Two categories can be derived from ontological metaphors.

Personification:

The abstract concept is treated like a person and brought to life in human terms.

“Life has *cheated* me”

“Inflation is *eating up* our profits”

Metonymy:

Metonymy refers to using the name of something for another of which it is an attribute or associated to.

“The *ham sandwich* is waiting for his check”

“*The Times* hasn’t arrived at the conference yet”

In both these examples, the metonymy highlighted refers to a customer waiting for his bill and a reporter yet to arrive at a conference.

c) Structural Metaphors

Structural metaphors produce new metaphors from one semantic field to create a group of metaphors surrounding the same topic. The primary example mentioned by the authors that ARGUMENT IS WAR makes for a good explanation point for structural metaphors. Departing from the concept of an argument being a war, we are presented with several associated terminologies in the examples provided:

“He *attacked* every weak point in my argument”

“I *demolished* his argument”

“I’ve never *won* an argument with him”

Structural metaphors are very important in this research because many instances of mappings found in the data were mostly structural.

Lakoff & Johnson’s work on metaphors is imperative to and inspires many studies centered around metaphors across disciplines that include but are not limited to – psychology, cognitive linguistics and philosophy (Deignen, 2005). They also propose that the way we perceive the world around us and our relationship with other people is governed by our thought process and the conceptual system we employ in it. Therefore, our everyday reality is influenced by these conceptual systems that we create. When even the most ordinary conceptual system is largely perceived to be metaphorical, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) suggest that the way we think and our experiences in daily life is ‘very much a matter of metaphor’.

In an article published in 1980, the authors also suggested that metaphorical concepts are derived from ‘complex experiential gestalts’. In describing the concept, they illustrated it with an example of conceptual mapping of ‘Argument is War’:

“Understanding a conversation as being an argument involves being able to superimpose the multidimensional structure of part of the concept of WAR upon the corresponding structural dimensions of CONVERSATION. In the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor, the gestalt for CONVERSATION is structured further by means of correspondences with selected elements of the gestalt for WAR. Thus, one activity, talking, is understood in terms of another, physical fighting. This way of conceptualizing arguments in terms of war is reflected in our use of war terminology to speak about corresponding parts of arguments, and it is the superimposition of the gestalts that defines the correspondence. Thus, we speak of winning or losing an argument, gaining or losing ground, being on the defensive, even shooting down our opponent. Structuring our experience in terms of such multidimensional gestalts is what makes our experience coherent”

Based on the arguments above, it can be concluded that for any structure of metaphorical mappings to be understood, it is important the experiences of both senders and receivers are in sync to aid comprehension. The choices of terminologies and even the choices of mappings must be relevant in order to accomplish any motivation behind the use of metaphors.

2.3. Roles and Functions of Metaphors

2.3.1. Metaphors in Political Discourse

Metaphors can assume a variety of roles either cognitively or pragmatically, depending on the context that they appear in; across an array of discourses. Firstly, a metaphor assists in learning because it facilitates message comprehension by changing the abstract ideas into concrete ones. In addition to that, metaphors are also found to conceal meanings and intentions that are ‘not immediately transparent’ (Charteris-Black, 2004). He also states that it is important that receivers are equipped with critical language awareness to be able to understand how choices of words can influence thought processes. He also suggests that the more democratic a society becomes, the more the leaders must work on convincing the followers. Following this, in 2018, Charteris Black analysed the rhetoric speeches made by British and American politicians. His work deconstructs metaphors as linguistic tools that are employed to create political myths of monsters, villains, and heroes. Metaphors were shown to interact with other figures of speech to construct meaning by relating to the unconscious emotional association of words. This subchapter’s focus on the manifestation of metaphors in political discourse is vital to the research as it allows us to judge for ourselves the impact it can have on the message receivers.

A powerful use of metaphors in a political speech would be Barack Obama’s presidential inaugural address where he employs nature and related terminologies to depict the struggles of his citizens: “...in this **winter** of our hardship, [...], let us brave once more the **icy currents**, and endure what **storms** may come.” [...] *The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still **waters** of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering **clouds** and raging **storms**.*”

(Barack Obama’s Presidential Inauguration Speech, January 21, 2009)

Similarly, research carried out by Vestermark (2007) found several instances of personification of America in the inauguration speeches of four presidents from Ronald

Reagan in 1981 to George Bush in 2001. Her research focused on the conceptualization of the nation as a person with human attributes and the rest of the world as a community. Some of the interesting examples include viewing drugs as bacteria that can affect the nation who is a healthy person, a nation as a person who makes promises and acts on causes as well as a nation as a woman with 'high moral principles'.

An example of personification was also found in Mahathir Mohamad's first speech in the United Nation's 73rd General Assembly in 2019 after resuming role as the Prime Minister. He personified Malaysia as a 'friend to all and enemy of none', in an effort to reaffirm Malaysia's stand on the international arena. Here, Malaysia is personified as a friendly person.

According to Lakoff (2003), the most commonly used metaphorical reference in foreign policy is 'nation as a person'. He had elaborated that in the conceptualization 'nation is a person', He further explains that by doing this, the public can relate the content to their own experiences and delivery of the message becomes more coherent. Some examples of the mappings provided include referring to the government as a 'parent' and the citizens as 'children'. This will create a power position in discourse whereby the government will automatically assume roles as the decision-maker and knows what is best for the country. The metaphors serve a greater purpose of coating the patronization and presenting it in a more palatable manner to the general public. A closer look at the reports presented to the public through the media in the subchapter 2.2.3 would provide more examples of how the power position of the governments are established with the strategic use of metaphors. In 1999, Lakoff proposes that the position of the nation as a person has been extended to include the 'world as a community' after the end of the Cold War. For instance, the nations are often depicted as being 'friends', 'enemies' or 'hostile' with each other, it means the nations were personified. In fact, Lakoff (2003) described how George Bush had described the attack on foreign soils in the Gulf War as an act of

self-defense. The conceptualization did not resonate too well, and he had to change his stand to personifying America as a ‘hero’ and the Iraqi citizens as victims that needed ‘rescuing’. Commenting on Lakoff’s work, however, Charteris-Black (2004) suggests that while this is an excellent qualitative analysis, it lacks the corpus data to support the claim. Therefore, he suggests using a wider range of data to make the claims more valid.

In another interesting observation, Bowers and Osborn (as cited in Bosman, 1987) suggest that metaphors do not have the ‘boomerang effect’ (negative effects of a strong, intense language) when used in political discourses. This means the people are allowed the space to process the information and ingest it slowly as opposing to an immediate response to a negative speech. A speech that comes off too negative or selfish quickly may not even bid the time for it to be processed, therefore it will lose its chance to stand ground. This is part of the reason why metaphors work effectively as a persuasive tool. It can hide and mask the actual meaning of the speaker (such as political ideology) and convince people to relate their experiences to the desired meaning.

Writing on the British Party Manifesto Corpus, Charteris-Black (2004) analyzes the conceptualization of social practices by two opposing political parties. The manifestos by both parties had the underlying conceptualization of ‘politics is conflict’. However, the perspectives from which the parties portrayed themselves in the conflict was different. Although both parties commonly valued social groups and goals, the Labour Party ‘attacked’ social ills and the Conservative Party portrayed themselves as the defender of the social groups and goals. This review is important in helping us understand that not all metaphorical representations reflect similar ideologies although they are conceptualized in the same manner.

2.3.2. Metaphors Evoke Emotions, Create and Alter Realities

Besides persuasion, metaphors also play a role in sending out strong, emotional messages to the receiver. They are powerful to alter and influence thoughts. Charteris-Black (2004) quotes Goatly (1997, p.158) who proposes that metaphors are frequently used in poetry and other literature due to its ability to move and evoke strong emotional responses in us. Therefore, if used effectively, he argues that metaphors would evoke strong emotions in the receivers. An interesting example he cited would be the speeches given by Osama bin Laden following the strike on the World Trade Center in September 2001 and George W Bush's State of The Union Address in 2002. Speaking from either side of the ideological divide, the perspectives of these two leaders were obviously different but it was filled with common metaphorical concepts that tied their decisions to religion. The attack on the World Trade Center as deemed by Osama as a 'blessed strike', suggesting to us that conflicts are religious in nature. On the other hand, George Bush related his military actions against enemy territories as retaliation against 'evil' and 'creed'. It suggests that political actions are religious in nature. The use of metaphors to relate and justify actions from a religious standpoint demonstrates that metaphors are powerful tools that help politicians alter realities and present their case to the public in a way that will be more convincing. The reality is that many innocent people have lost their lives in both these wars and metaphors are used to justify military actions as something demanded and approved by religion.

Cammaerts (2012) carried out a research following the Belgian Constitutional Crisis in 2011 on the strategic use of metaphors by political parties and media elite. He concluded that the use of metaphors in the domains of sports and games, war, culinary and transport appeared to demoralize the opponents and urge people to stand as one in pursuing a common goal. The metaphors were found to be instrumental in framing the Flemish side of the argument as 'unquestionable and common sense' while the France-

speaking parties' demands were deemed to be 'unreasonable'. The concept of using metaphors to shame and bring negative connotations to the subjects was also identified by Santa Ana in 1997. She researched the newspaper reports of the 1994 California Proposition 187 as they appeared in the Los Angeles Times. The proposition was a ballot initiative to establish a state-run citizenship screening system and prohibit illegal immigrants from using non-emergency health care, public education, and other services in the State of California. Her research reported that the newspaper was to be held accountable for instilling anti-immigrant sentiments into the minds of the readers by adopting a metaphoric discourse. In her research, she reported that the newspaper termed immigrants as 'animals', 'plants' and 'commodities'. The nation was conceptualized as a house and the immigrants were then referred to as metaphorical disasters such as 'flood'. It was a deliberate attempt to portray the immigrants as a natural threat and a disaster than can be avoided following necessary actions. Supposedly a neutral entity, the newspaper was biased against the plight of the immigrants.

Similar metaphorical motivations were found by Ezeifeke (2013) who analyzed the metaphors representing the strike of Nigerian teachers who demanded a new pay scale in the reporting done by The Guardian – a privately-owned Nigerian newspaper. The results revealed the newspaper's solidarity in standing with the 'power elite' against the teachers' demands. The teachers' roles were related to religion and their services are termed as 'sacrifice' that will have 'reward in heaven'. The teachers were then reduced to the status of being a 'villain' and their strike is categorized as an 'illness'. In both these papers, it was not clear whether there was a deliberate attempt to sway public opinions with the strategic use of metaphors or it was subconsciously used by the authors. However, the fact remains that metaphors were employed as a linguistic tool in engulfing negative and bad perceptions towards issues related to immigrants and pay-rise. Since the print media is proven to influence public opinion, the metaphors can be seen as a

subconscious effort to change the realities of the situations above and present it in an altered way to the public.

Chilton and Ilyin (1993) analyse how metaphors of the 'common European house' transforms as it passes through linguistic and political cultures. They conclude that metaphors assume an important conceptual role in communication across borders and national boundaries. They are not 'transferred with fixed meanings, but are processed in accordance with local languages, local discourse formations and political interest'. Brown-Levinson's (1987) politeness model suggests that metaphors also function to 'lubricate' friction between two communicating entities and reduce the accountability of the individual employing metaphors. The sharing of a common conceptual ground can serve two different purposes. One, it can reduce accountability because it is the responsibility of the receiver or the hearer to infer meaning from his perspectives. According to the authors, using metaphors can also avoid direct reference while facing threatening situations. On the other hand, it can also improve the communication because both parties can relate to the conceptual common ground. However, they suggest that there are risks in assuming common grounds when the conversation is taking place across cultures or borders. On a positive note, it allows rooms for negotiations of specific meanings and references because of the dissimilar conceptual grounds and experience. An important example would be the communication of policies and declarations that are newly formulated to the public. They state that metaphors are likely to play a heuristic (cognitive) and interactional role because the process of mapping ensures cohesion and continuity from previous experiences of the receivers.

Metaphors are also constantly researched in the medical field, with the objective of constructing better patient-communication, especially when it involves serious or terminal illness. Discussing on the duty of healthcare providers to their patients, Kirklin (2007) suggests that they employ appropriate metaphors to reveal the truth about

prognoses. She states while certain metaphors may be ‘obscuring’ the truth, they may also be used to achieve the opposite – helping healthcare professionals communicate honestly with their patients and therefore helping them understand their conditions in a ‘richer’ and ‘more nuanced’ way. Supporting this view, Periyakoil (2008) suggests that metaphors used in clinician-patient communications can create a ‘contextual roadmap’ that can help them understand complex patterns of feelings. Having focused her research on cancer patients, she suggests that metaphors provide a safe avenue for healthcare professionals to discuss the conditions and treatment of patients in a ‘non-threatening’ manner. Some of the metaphorical concepts cited in her work include sports (win/lose), war (battleground) and machine (faulty parts). An interesting conversation between a doctor and a patient is also presented in her work. The conversation took place during attending rounds. Some parts of the conversation were omitted and only the parts with metaphors are highlighted below:

Note: MD denotes the doctor and Mr. T denotes the patient.

MD: “Mr. T, how did it go last night?”

Mr. T: “Not so good doc. Lots of pain. Couldn’t sleep. But you know me. I took some pain medicine and soldiered on.

MD: “Yeah! That’s what I admire about you. You are a real fighter.

...

Mr. T: “Oh. . . . So what comes next? More chemotherapy?”

MD: “Not yet. Your albumin is only 2.2. . . . your marrow is **wiped out**. The cancer has spread to your liver as well.”

...

Mr. T: (doubtfully) “Doc, give it to me straight. How am I doing?”

MD: “Well, you are a **real trooper**, Mr. T and I think that given the circumstances, you are doing great. So . . . what do you think? Should I call the radiation oncology docs?”

Mr. T: (Cheering up) “You go for it doc! There is still some more **fight left** in this old body of mine. Let’s give them a run for their money.”

Although it was not clearly mentioned if the doctor deliberately chose to employ similar domains of metaphor mapping in the conversation, the excerpts demonstrate that metaphors are pervasive in their communication with patients. Periyakoil then states that a clinician-initiated metaphor usually serves to introduce unfamiliar materials and break any pre-existing mindsets the patients may have.

2.3.3. Metaphors and Media Reporting

This subchapter is categorized under the umbrella term ‘media reporting’ as it does not only cover newspaper reports but also includes other forms of publicly available reports such as financial and economic reports on print media. Most of the literature reviewed in this subchapter are corpus-based studies as it will provide an insight into how the metaphors occurred across a variety of discourses. The blueprint analyzed in this research does not only discuss the education system and plans. It also reported on the issues pertaining to the education system from a pragmatic point of view and at several junctures, also discussed financial planning and the state of the economy in their report. Thus, it is important to understand how metaphors are utilized in other domains of reporting to structure the analysis of the metaphors used in the blueprint.

Awab and Norazit (2013) compared the metaphors used in newspapers to conceptualize the economic crisis that plagued two neighbouring countries – Malaysia and Singapore. In addition to analyzing metaphors, the researchers also touched on the

issues and other events happening around the time of the crisis to substantiate the choice of metaphors in the newspaper. The research reports that the Malaysian newspaper used natural disasters, sports and medical metaphors in their reporting. On the other hand, the Singaporean reports related to the economic crisis as a fallout, a slippery slope, and a battlefield. Their findings conclude that metaphors often reflect the cultural setting, political ideologies, and experiences of the nations. The newspapers in which the data was sourced from were generally perceived to be ruling-party friendly. Therefore, it was concluded in the research that their choices of metaphors is motivated by the goals of constructing realities based on the political ideologies at that time.

In 2013, Cheng investigated the language, topics, and issues presented in financial analysts reports meant for specific groups audience. The data obtained from BNP Paribas (one of the world's biggest bank) was collected from February 2011 to January 2012, around the time where Europe was going through a debt crisis. The reports were analyzed in terms of discursive presentation of the economic and investment content to achieve 'personal, organisational, institutional, professional, and socio-cultural goals'. The focus of the research was on how 'emotions' were conceptualized using metaphors in the constituent words of emotions. Her study revealed that the strategic use of metaphors to portray emotions in the financial reports are useful to build trust between bank and customers and encourage them in market activities. For instance, the concept of confidence in the financial reports was associated with metaphors of plants (growing), humans (confidence is on hurt/on the mend) and water (confidence evaporates/spills over). The reports resorted to metaphors to present the faltering confidence of investors due to the crisis and then moved on to use different domains to establish growing confidence. In addition to that, Cheng concluded by stating that metaphors are not only useful to portray emotions in the reports but also reflect the corporate culture of the establishments.

Examining the sample texts of Prime Minister of Malaysia, Najib Razak's speech and forewords, Rajandran (2013) reported on the metaphors deployed to describe Malaysia's Economic Transformation Program of the year 2010 (ETP). His study revealed that the program was described as a journey, a vehicle and a plant. The author also claims that the journey metaphor lends a temporal dimension to the ETP. The journey of the plan was also quoted to be 'long and arduous' implying that the citizens should not look for results too quickly. The research also presents evidence where the government portrayed themselves as an expert on economic matters (drivers) and the citizens are non-experts who should place their faith on them to lead the transformation plan. The research reports that such portrayal creates an image of a 'binary and dependent' relationship where the government is solely in control of the plan and act as a decision-maker. The frequency of using metaphors were also found to be higher when the plan was introduced to the audience. Thus, the metaphors acted as a tool to help the audience conceptualize abstract information. The economic plan is also filled with terminologies and statistics that may only be familiar to a small portion of citizens. Therefore, the author believes that metaphors acts to make the plan more personal and understandable to a wider range of people because it usually relates to their daily life. He says that the onus is on the government of Malaysia to portray the ETP as a functional plan that will turn around and have a positive impact on Malaysia's economy because they had just lost the two-third majority in the 12th general election. His concluding thoughts bears resemblance to the findings of the aforementioned research by Awab and Norazit. In both these researches, the choices of metaphors were found to carry ideologies of the ruling government.

A more gruesome aspect of utilizing metaphors would be how they are capable of suppressing the realities of war and conceptualize it into something that is nothing more than just a 'game'. Charteris-Black (2004), summarizes that this is an ideologically motivated reason because there are businesses with an added interest in supporting the

war (e.g. maintaining low oil prices). These businesses are also capable of controlling large sections of the media. Inevitably, it will result in an altered portrayal of war. One way to do this is by strategically utilizing sports metaphors to mask war as just another ‘game/match’ to be won. The less palatable aspects of war such as loss of lives, suffering, and destruction of environments will be suppressed in the process.

2.3.4. Metaphors and Construction of Thoughts

In another research combining the fields of architecture and linguistics, Caballero (2011) argues that metaphors should be included in the syllabi of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) taught to architecture students at polytechnic schools in Madrid. He states that metaphors play an important role in an architect’s to informed practice; starting from the designing phase to the post-construction assessment (the building review). The research also points out that metaphors have played an important role in ‘furnishing architects with a system for thinking and talking about space’ because it is otherwise difficult to imagine the concepts. The imagination of space is said to be ‘ineffable’ without metaphors. Some of the examples provided in her work include referring to one side of the building as an ‘a knife cut through the sunflower system’ or the internal streets of the buildings as ‘snakes’.

Steen and colleagues (2017) propose that there is a difference in cognitive processes between conventional and novel usage of metaphors in news on issue viewpoints. Researching the use of both metaphors in news, they state that both type of metaphors accounts for different routes in cognition and thought processes. They cited the example of a failing economy. In the first instance, where a novel metaphor is used, the stock market is said to be ‘keeling over’. The act of relating a stock market to such an unusual concept is said to provide a small puzzle for the readers to solve. This enables them a fresh and unusual insight into something familiar. Therefore, novel metaphors are

able to positively influence the affective responses to the messages delivered and compare the concepts mentioned.

Besides that, novel metaphors are also said to increase ‘message attractiveness’. On the other hand, conventional methods of illustrating the same concept of a failing economy is cited as ‘the stock market collapsed’. They propose that with conventional metaphors, there is a shift in the mode of processing the information presented from comparison to categorizing. This is because the information is already stored in the recipients' minds due to the repeated exposure of such mappings. They serve to ease the process of understanding and allow readers to conceptualize and concentrate on the concepts even better by providing a structured framework of thinking. These differences in functions served by metaphorical mapping are discussed by Gentner and Bowdle (2005) in their proposed Career of Metaphor theory. A more detailed example of how conventional and novel metaphors are used in the same mapping is provided in their earlier work in 2001:

Mapping: Debate is a War

Example A: Conventional Metaphor

Dan wanted to *devastate* the audience with his debate arguments. He did not *desert* his *line* of argument. He *attacked* the opposition's arguments from the start. He won the debate because he *oriented* the judges to his interpretation.

Example B: Novel Metaphor

Dan saw the big debate as a *war*: he was determined to be victorious. He knew that he had to use every *weapon* at his command in the competition. He mapped out his strategy

to ensure he established a *dominant position*. After months of debating practice, Dan knew how to present his conclusions. If he could only *marshal his forces*, he had a good chance of winning. Before long, he felt the audience was receptive to his arguments. Then, he *intensified the bombardment* as he made his last key points. His skill left his opponent *far behind him* at the *finish line*.

Both these mappings point to a similar concept of a debate being a war. However, they utilize different lexical sets to make their point. The research concluded that readers read metaphorical mappings faster when they are conventionalized as opposed to texts that need them to internalize new mappings.

This view is also supported by Charteris-Black (2004) when he says that conventional metaphors are metaphors that have been socially established and require less cognitive processing. Lakoff and Turner (1989) also proposed that a metaphor becomes conventional when it is automatic, effortless and generally established as a mode of thought among members of a linguistic community. Citing this, Charteris-Black (2004) however, stresses that distinguishing between these two metaphors is not necessarily black and white or clear-cut because there are differences between individuals' experiences of the language. This can be applied to people who speak the same language but come from different geographical points because metaphors, at its base, is derived from the sensory experiences of the speakers. Differing geographical points may result in varied experiential basis. Therefore, there are certain exceptions on how conventionalized a metaphor is across geographical boundaries. As with all metaphors, conventional metaphors start out as a novel metaphor but with frequent usage, they turn conventional. Goatly (1997) also points out that with excessive usage, conventional metaphors become inactive then die and become fossilized. However, Charteris-Black (2014) states that it is impractical to obtain data and arrive at a cut-off point in terms of the number of years before a metaphor becomes dead due to excessive usage.

Writing on the corpus-based functions of metaphors, Stefanowitsch (2005) identifies two related hypotheses – the stylistic hypothesis and the cognitive hypothesis. The stylistic hypothesis suggests that metaphors are merely ornamental and serve no cognitive purposes. This hypothesis will not be discussed in detail here as it does not contribute to the analysis of the data in this research. However, her quantitative research gathered enough evidence to prove that metaphors do play a cognitive function in communication:

‘The application of distinctive-collexeme analysis to near-synonymous pairs of literal and metaphorical expressions has yielded clear evidence for the cognitive hypothesis. First, for all of the pairs investigated, the distinctive collexemes showed systematic differences; this in itself is already evidence against the idea that metaphor is merely ornamental in nature. Second, the differences are clearly semantic in nature, and in the overwhelming number of cases, they can plausibly be related to the factor of complexity’

She concluded the research by stating that metaphors do not only help us understand abstractions, they also present us many different pathways in understanding them.

Chapter 3 : Research Methods and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Largely motivated by the interest in metaphors, many scholars have derived methods to identify and analyze metaphors in corpus data. After the emergence of cognitive theories of metaphors, scholars depended on their knowledge of the language and intuition to reveal conceptual domain mappings in the documents/texts that they were studying. However, the main disadvantage of this approach was that such an eclectic collection of metaphorical expressions was still far from representing real usage and providing empirical validation of the theoretical claims (Lopez & Llopis, 2010). Several researches then suggested more critical methods to study metaphors, especially those occurring in a corpus document. Some of the notable ones are the Critical Metaphor Analysis by Charteris-Black, the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by the Pragglejaz Group and the extended version of the MIP known as MIPVU.

Although the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) forms the theoretical framework to this research, the analytical framework used in this research is the Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) introduced by Charteris-Black in his book, 'Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis' in the year 2004 as it is the most suitable approach that can be used to study metaphors in a corpus such as the education blueprint. The later version of CMA was re-introduced in 2014 his book, 'Analysing Political Speeches: Rhetoric, Discourse and Metaphors'. However, the perspective and focus shifted to political speeches. It also lessened the emphasis on the corpus-based approach that can be taken to analyze metaphors as it was already addressed in the first book. Therefore, this research adopted the earlier 2004 version of the CMA. In his work, Charteris-Black explores the methods of identifying, interpreting, and explaining the

metaphors existing in different documents covering discourse areas such as religion, sports, war, and politics.

The CMA consists of three stages. The first stage will identify and determine which metaphors occur in the text and if they have any relation to a literal source domain and metaphorical target domain. The next stage would determine the type of social relations built through the metaphors identified. Finally, the last stage, known as metaphor explanation, is about the way metaphors communicate within the context that they occur in.

The first two stages of CMA are concerned with the first research question that looks to identify how the metaphors are constructed (i.e domain mapping) within the document. It did not, at this stage, form any connections or attempt to explain the ideology attached to the document. The goal was just to identify, extract, and map metaphorical references. The next research question that is concerned with uncovering the functions of the metaphors was answered by the explanation stage in the CMA. It provided a platform for the research to look deeper into the motivation behind the employment of metaphors and find the ideological motivations behind it.

3.2. Metaphor Identification

The CMA suggests two steps in identifying metaphors. First, Charteris-Black suggests a close reading of sample text to identify candidate metaphors. The next stage is a qualitative phase where the identified metaphors are read and vetted through. The CMA defines metaphors within the three criteria – linguistic, pragmatic and cognitive. In his book, Charteris-Black identifies the following processes that causes semantic tension in the linguistic criteria (p. 21)

1. *Reification* – referring to something that is abstract using a word or phrase that in other contexts refers to something that is concrete.

2. *Personification* – referring to something that is inanimate using a word or phrase that in other contexts refers to something that is animate.
3. *Depersonification* – referring to something that is animate using a word or phrase that in other contexts refers to something that is inanimate.

Pragmatic is the next criterion and it is concerned with the persuasive aspect of metaphors. Charteris-Black states that these metaphors are often an indication of the covert intentions of the speaker/author and they function generally to influence opinions in a particular context of use. The last criterion is cognitive, similar to the definitions given by Lakoff and Johnson. A cognitive metaphor is one that causes (or may be caused by) a shift in domain.

The CMA suggests a closer reading of the corpus text to identify potential metaphors. The candidate metaphors are then examined further for ‘the presence of incongruity or semantic tension-either at linguistic, pragmatic or cognitive levels - resulting from a shift in domain’ (p.35). The words that did not meet these requirements are then eliminated from further analysis. The remaining words are then categorized as metaphor keywords. He then suggests a quantitative search to extract the keywords from the corpus. It is also important to note here that Charteris-Black advised against considering words that are always metaphorical because it no longer has semantic tension attached. He suggests, instead, to look for keywords that have the tendency to be metaphorical. His views were considered in identifying metaphors in this research.

To collect data for this research, a sample text was analyzed from the content page and the executive summary of the blueprint. Both these chapters provided a wealth of candidate metaphors relating the education system and the strategies employed by the blueprint to enhance the education in this country. The four most dominant concepts were related to journey, military operations, investment, and constructions. Upon further

reading and assessment, these candidate metaphors did cause a semantic tension and a shift in domain. Therefore, no elimination occurred, and all the metaphors were categorized as keywords.

During the next step in identification, a simple word search function was employed in the PDF software to extract all the keywords identified from the entire blueprint. These parts were read for further analysis. Reading the parts in detail is important to ensure that all the keywords are metaphorical in the context that they occurred in. The keywords that occurred to denote a more literal meaning in the text were eliminated from further scrutiny. Moreover, reading these parts also resulted in more keywords related to the domains. This is because the paragraphs that carried the candidate metaphors also contained related lexicon for the conceptualization to be effective. These additional words were also categorized as metaphor keywords and examined further in the analysis.

Additionally, three online dictionaries were also used to define the meanings of the metaphor keywords. They are the Oxford Dictionary, Merriem-Webster Dictionary, and Cambridge Dictionary. Using these dictionaries helped to further strengthen the argument that the keywords are indeed metaphorical in the context it appears in. This is because the definitions would help readers understand the literal meaning of the keywords identified.

3.3. Metaphor Interpretation

In the interpretation stage of CMA, the relationship between metaphors and the cognitive and pragmatic factors that determine them are studied. At this stage, the conceptual metaphors are studied to understand how far they are pro-active in constructing a ‘socially important representation’. The keywords are related to a larger conceptualization that can be applicable to the readers. For instance, in the blueprint, some of the identified

keywords are ‘crossroads’ and ‘roadmap’. They exist to explain the overhaul of the education system that will take place. Hence, these keywords are categorized together to form the conceptualization that the ‘TRANSFORMATION AGENDA IS A JOURNEY’. This statement is defined as ‘conceptual key’. A conceptual key function to ‘resolve the semantic tension of a set of metaphors by showing them to be related’ (p. 21). The grouping and interpretation of all other keywords resulted in four conceptualizations as mentioned earlier. They are discussed in the data analysis chapter.

3.4. Metaphor Explanation

The explanation stage is concerned with identifying social agencies that are involved in the production of metaphors and their social role in persuasion. This can be achieved by forming the right conceptual metaphors and conceptual keys. For the explanation stage to be valid and reliable, Charteris-Black suggests that discourse functions of metaphors must be studied within the corpus. They cannot come from the intuition of the analyst. The ideological and rhetorical motivation behind the conceptualization must emerge from the data and by comparing the findings with the same metaphors in a much larger corpus. In this research, the second part of the analysis would be the explanation of the metaphors found and identified in the previous two stages.

3.5. The PATH Schema: A Brief Introduction

Turner (1997) highlighted several textbook titles for language learning that have elements of the journey metaphor. Some examples include geographical points (frontiers, horizon, crossroads, checkpoints), locations of progress (starting, opening, advance) and other lexicons directly reflecting the source-path-goal schema (departures, connections, directions and destinations). Domain mapping using journey metaphor is also a prototypical example provided by Johnson (1987) while demonstrating the source-path-

goal image schema (henceforth PATH schema). It would be comprehensible to structure the analysis of the journey metaphor existing in the blueprint using the PATH schema.

The PATH schema is a theory that was developed by Mark Johnson in 1987 and documented in his book 'The Body in the Mind. It stemmed from the concept that human cognition is rooted to our bodily experiences with the environment. According to Johnson (1987), "an image schema is a recurring dynamic pattern of our perceptual interaction and motor programs that gives coherence and structure to our experience." The PATH schema proposes that our cognition had been rooted in spatial references and movements since childhood. As we get older, our experiences contribute to the image schema (mental structuring of abstract concepts) and help us comprehend the reality around us better. The PATH schema was derived based on the idea that there is a starting (source) and ending (goal) point to a journey. Along that trajectory of motion (path), there will be other things to be considered such as unrealized trajectory, time and previous locations. Studying the computational system using image schemas in conceptual blending, Hedblom, Kutz and Neuhaus (2015) explain a few examples of how conceptual metaphors are embodied in the source-path-goal schema. It is interesting to note that some of the conceptual mappings may not even cover all the three parts of the PATH schema. The examples quoted from their books include 'running for president', 'going for a joy ride' and 'life is a journey'.

The analysis of the conceptual key 'Education is journey' is reported through the lenses of the PATH schema as it had fulfilled the criteria of the schema. The mappings found would be easily adapted to fit into the PATH schema, hence confirming that the conceptual metaphors used aids comprehension in readers. This is because the PATH schema offers a dynamic yet straightforward way of imagining the conceptualization.

The following is an image that was used to demonstrate the PATH schema that was used to analyze the journey metaphors in the blueprint:

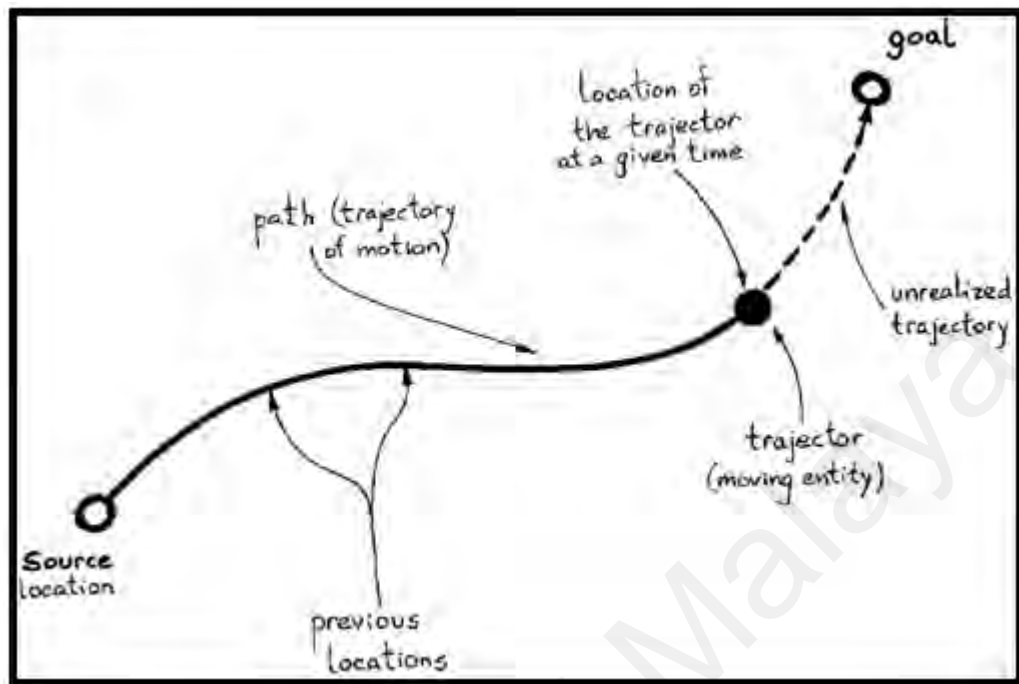


Figure 1. PATH scheme – location and goal (Lakoff & Nunez, 2000, p.18)

The image was taken from Lakoff and Nunez's (2000) book, 'Where Mathematics Comes From'. Here, the authors explained the difference between location and goal. The moving object is a trajectory and while there is a pre-set goal for the trajectory, it may not always achieve it. This could be due to several factors and can be generally regarded as the troubles along the route that caused the premature stop of the movement to reach the goal. A simplified example of this was presented by Hedblom and colleagues (2015) whereby they presented the case of a child observing the movements of a billiard ball. When the billiard ball does not fall into the hole (goal) but is stopped by another billiard ball (location of trajectory), the child is surprised because the location and the goal does not correspond to each other. Due to this blockage, the child then acquires a new image schema: the blockage. Therefore, he or she will no longer be surprised by the sudden changes. This example is important to demonstrate how image schema that exists in the minds of people can be altered and how new schemas are learned. The blueprint has an elaborate and complex goals for the system that is explained using the metaphor of

journey. The first part of analysis will cover the mappings and conceptualization using the PATH schema.

However, at the present time, this document has been in place for almost six years. Therefore, it would be interesting to see if the location of the trajectory and the goals mentioned correspond.

University of Malaya

Chapter 4 : Data Analysis

4.1. Introduction

The data analysis will be divided into two parts. Subchapters 4.1 to 4.4 will discuss the metaphors identified in the blueprint. This will include a detailed explanation of how they are mapped from the source domain to the target domain. Here, the metaphors are also interpreted using the conceptual keys. Several examples and excerpts that are taken from the blueprint is presented to aid comprehension. These are the first two stages of the CMA and helps to answers the first research question. The second part, subchapter 4.5 is the explanation of the conceptualization and domain mapping found in the corpus. This section will be largely based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, past and current performances of the education system, government policies, history of the education system in Malaysia and other critical developments related to the blueprint.

4.2. Transformation Agenda is a Journey

'The education system is also about to embark on a major transformation effort'
(p. E8)

The blueprint has organized content; starting from the issues that prompted its creation in the first place to aspirations and visions for the future. It then proceeds to roll out strategies to achieve the objectives and aspirations. Most of the metaphorical expressions used to illustrate the *strategies* to ensure the success of the blueprint stems from the conceptual key that the TRANSFORMATION AGENDA IS A JOURNEY.

4.2.1. The Education Roadmap and Pathways: The Source

Ideally, at the departure point of a journey, one would have a plan to ensure that they reach the desired destination. In the blueprint's case, the plan is 'the roadmap'. The roadmap in the blueprint is broken down into several categories that serve as a guide for improving student learning, teachers and school leaders as well as the transformation of the ministry and the entire system structure. These are the definition of the word 'roadmap' taken from the dictionaries.

Cambridge:

1. [noun] *A plan for how to achieve something*

Merriam-Webster:

1. [noun] *A map showing roads, especially for automobile travel.*
2. [noun] *A detailed plan to progress toward a goal.*

Oxford:

1. [noun] *A map, especially one designed for motorists, showing the roads of a country or area.*
2. [noun] *A plan or strategy intended to achieve a particular goal.*

The following table illustrates the details of the roadmap as taken from the content page of the blueprint:

CHAPTERS	ROADMAPS
Chapter 4: Student Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing and applying 21st century curriculum and assessment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening delivery of STEM across the education system. • Creating language proficiency at scale. • Moving towards inclusive education for special needs students. • Accelerating school improvement through states and districts.
Chapter 5: Teachers and School Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming the teaching profession into a profession of choice. • Ensuring high performing leaders in every school.
Chapter 6: Ministry Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing the implementation gap. • Maximizing the student outcome for every ringgit. • Adopting a common standard for school infrastructure, adapted to local needs. • Leveraging ICT for learning. • Matching high performing education system.
Chapter 7: System Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching high-performing education systems • Creating multiple education pathway • Providing equitable and transparent support to all schools • Improving interaction and integration across all schooling options • Moving towards a learning system

Table 1. The Roadmap (pp. 17-19)

The chapters 4 to 7 encompass key stakeholders in the education system and ways to improve each of their performance. The roadmaps for those chapters are identified collectively in the blueprint as ‘the roadmap of policies and initiatives’ (p. 54). Each roadmap is broken down into three parts; and interestingly, these parts are referred to as: **waves**.

The dictionary definitions of wave are provided below:

Cambridge:

1. **[noun]** *A raised line of water that moves across the surface of an area of water, especially the sea.*
2. **[noun]** *the pattern in which some types of energy, such as sound, light, and heat, are spread or carried.*
3. **[noun]** *a series of slight curves in a person's hair:*
4. **[verb]** *to raise your hand and move it from side to side as a way of greeting someone, telling someone to do something, or adding emphasis to an expression:*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[noun]** *a moving ridge or swell on the surface of a liquid (as of the sea).*
2. **[noun]** *a sweep of hand or arm or of some object held in the hand used as a signal or greeting.*
3. **[noun]** *something that swells and dies away: such as a surge of sensation or emotion.*

Oxford:

1. **[verb]** *to motion with the hands or with something held in them in signal or salute.*
2. **[noun]** *a moving ridge or swell on the surface of a liquid (as of the sea).*
3. **[noun]** *a marked change in temperature: a period of hot or cold weather.*

The waves represent the timeline at which the transformation would happen. Referring to the partial (if not complete) overhaul of an existing system as a ‘wave’ is not surprising. More interestingly, each wave carries its own lexicons of journey.

WAVE/YEAR	TRANSFORMATION
Wave 1 (2013 – 2015)	Turn around system by supporting teachers and focusing on core skills.
Wave 2 (2016 – 2020)	Accelerate system improvement.
Wave 3 (2021 – 2025)	Move towards excellence with increased operational flexibility.

Table 2. The Transformation Waves and Lexicons of Journey (p. E-26)

If the roadmap is the comprehensive plan for strategies, the transformational wave would be the stages at which these plans are implemented. The first step towards transformation appears to be an overhaul of the system by **turning around** the system that was already in place.

The Ministry’s focus during this phase will be on delivering a **rapid turnaround** programme. During this period, the focus will be on raising teaching quality by upskilling the existing pool of teachers, raising school leadership quality by improving how the education system appoints and trains principals, and improving student literacy (in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language) and numeracy through intensive remedial programmes. The Ministry will also strengthen and empower state and district offices to improve the quality of frontline support provided to all schools. By the end of Wave 1, the Ministry will ensure that all teachers, principals, and schools have achieved a minimum quality standard.

Excerpt 1. Turn Around System (p. E-26)

The expected result of the first wave is to at least meet the minimum quality standard set by the blueprint. The turn-around of a system suggests that existing plans will either be replaced or improved to ensure that Malaysian students are globally competitive.

The second wave aims to ‘accelerate’ the improved system from the first wave.

During the second wave, the Ministry will roll out structural changes aimed at **accelerating the pace of change** (planning for all these initiatives will likely need to begin during Wave 1). These include moving all 410,000 teachers and 10,000 principals onto a new career package, restructuring the federal, state, and district offices to align with the revised roles laid out in Wave 1, and introducing a standard secondary and revised primary curriculum that addresses concerns regarding the knowledge, skills, and values needed to thrive in today’s global economy.

Excerpt 2. Accelerate System (p.E-26)

The second wave is indeed massive and ambitious as suggested by the Excerpt above. Therefore, the use of the word ‘accelerated’ is motivated by the goal of conveying the idea to the readers. The dictionaries describe accelerate as below:

Cambridge:

1. **[verb]** *When a vehicle or its driver accelerates, the speed of the vehicle increases:*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[verb]** *to move faster: to gain speed*

Oxford:

1. **[verb]** *(especially of a vehicle) begin to move more quickly.*

The blueprint was not only aiming to overhaul and transform the entire system together (the turn-around), but it was also looking to do it within the span of five years (hence, accelerate). The third wave appears to be less aggressive, having settled with ‘moving towards’ excellence. However, there are greater expectations by the end of the third wave. The end goal of the journey is to create a ‘self-sustaining system that is capable of innovating and taking achievements to greater heights’ (p. E-27).

4.2.2. The Educational Pathway

Besides the lexical sets of journey mentioned above, the word ‘pathway’ also appeared various times in the blueprint. The metaphorical mentions are listed below.

- career pathway
- vocational education pathway
- education pathway
- accelerated learning pathway
- academic pathway
- technical pathway
- learning pathway
- alternative pathway
- religious education pathway
- multiple education pathway

The dictionary definitions of the word ‘pathway’ are:

Cambridge:

1. **[noun]** *a track that a person can walk along.*
2. **[noun]** *a set of actions you take in life.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[noun]** *a track specially constructed for a particular use*

Oxford:

1. **[noun]** *A track that constitutes or serves as a path.*

If the roadmaps are the birds-eye view of the plan, the pathways are the worms-eye view, providing the readers with a detailed plan for the various format of learning that is offered in the education system. However, both have the same goal of providing the ‘journey’ with a clear direction and end goal. Just like how the roadmaps are supported by the structured waves, the pathways are also supported by detailed explanations and images. The pathways can be divided into two; one is student-centric whereby various learning opportunities are offered and the other is personnel-centric that allows teachers, school leaders and other officers to choose their career paths. The pathway for underperforming teacher (p. 147) also consists of four ‘**checkpoints**’ (evaluation, coaching, support and post evaluation). Should the teacher successfully get past these checkpoints they are then allowed to ‘return to their normal path’. If they fail, they are then proposed to be ‘redeployed’ to other functions.

4.2.3. Embarking on Transformation: The Path

Once a plan is in place, it usually requires mechanisms to see it through. If it is a journey, the mechanism is most likely to be a mode of transportation. The second part of the PATH image schema focuses on the path taken to arrive at a set goal. At this stage in the blueprint, it offers insights on ‘**navigating**’ issues, ‘**piloting**’ other options and ‘**driving**’ day-to-day implementations to see the roadmap and pathway through. The definitions for each of these words are provided below:

NAVIGATE:

Cambridge:

1. [**verb**] *to direct the way that a ship, aircraft, etc. will travel, or to find a direction across, along, or over an area of water or land, often by using a map.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[verb]** *to steer a course through a medium, specifically: to operate an airplane.*

Oxford:

1. **[noun]** *Plan and direct the course of a ship, aircraft, or other form of transport, especially by using instruments or maps.*

PILOT:

Cambridge:

1. **[verb]** *to fly an aircraft.*
2. **[verb]** *to direct a ship into a port or through an area of water.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[verb]** *to act as a guide to : lead or conduct over a usually difficult course.*

Oxford:

1. **[verb]** *Be the pilot of (an aircraft or ship).*

Having explicitly explained the issues at hand, the blueprint made it clear that the journey ahead will be hard. In fact, it appears to be a deliberately chosen the harder path to success, as illustrated:

Malaysian education stands at a **crossroads**, and the Ministry, taking the voices of the *rakyat* to heart, has chosen the more difficult, but ultimately more rewarding path.

Excerpt 3. The Crossroad (p. E-27).

4.2.4. Delivering Success: The Goal

The Ministry has established the Education Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) to **drive delivery** of all Blueprint initiatives across the Ministry and schools. Specifically, PADU will monitor progress, problem-solve implementation issues with the responsible officers, and manage communication with stakeholders with regard to the transformation. PADU will draw from both the public and private sector to secure the best talent available.

Excerpt 4. Driving the Delivery of the Blueprint (p.E-27)

The above excerpt is taken from the final chapter of the blueprint (chapter 8) that discusses the delivery of the roadmap. Here, it can be concluded that the roadmap is viewed as something tangible that can be delivered to be acted upon further by the parties involved. Since the blueprint starts out as a plan, there cannot be a review of success at this juncture. There can only be an imagination of what success would look like. Based on the excerpt above, it can be concluded that the Education Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) is on the driver's seat to **'deliver'** the plan across stakeholders to ensure success. Although the past successes were credited in the blueprint, the underlying belief is that the nation needs to **'move forward'** due to the increasingly competitive national and international **'landscape'** (p.54).

4.2.5. Interpretation

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that the conceptual metaphor of journey is employed to represent the transformation agenda of the blueprint. The PATH schema helps to breakdown the metaphors according to the stages that they occur in rather than individually. The success of the roadmap is viewed as 'a task of great complexity in both breadth and depth, particularly given that most education system reforms around the world have fallen short of their aspirations' (p. 48).

It is also important to note that the blueprint is filled with initiatives and plans that spans over the course of 13 years. This is quite ambitious when compared to any other reform agenda that the education sector has ever faced. Hence, referring to the whole reform process as a journey is not a surprise. A journey is much more complex than, say, a 'visit' or a 'trip'. Lakoff recategorized the journey metaphor as a 'purposeful activity is travelling along a path towards a destination'. Charteris-Black (2004), while discussing this representation mentions that the use of the verb of motion highlights 'movement' and the use of destination highlights 'goal-orientation'. Keeping this in mind, proposing that the nation needs to 'move forward' to be able to survive the national and international 'landscape' is a purposeful activity.

The blueprint is a document that is meant for public viewing. In fact, before being signed off by the Cabinet in January 2013, it was put up for public consultation for three months and was open to feedback from both the general public and selected stakeholder groups. As the document is not a piece of literature to be admired for aesthetic values, the metaphorical references aren't merely decorative. It serves the greater purposes of easing the comprehension of objectives. Every initiative that was to be carried forward had a roadmap that serves as a general plan. It was followed by three waves (each for the three stages of the blueprint). Some waves may leave devastations in their wake, but these waves seem to imply that with each wave, there will be fresh changes, for the better. The pathways in this document generally refer to the multiple choices that are available for both the working force and students. For instance, a poor performing teacher will pass through several 'checkpoints' before being reabsorbed into the teaching force or redeployed. Choices for the learners are more varied and they can choose from the many prescribed pathways to determine their learning based on interest and talent. Both the roadmap and pathways serve as a guide, for everyone involved. Turning around,

accelerating, navigating, driving and piloting implies that the blueprint is a consignment that will be ‘delivered’ efficiently.

The stakeholders, particularly the officers and teachers are the navigators behind the wheel of transformation. Some tasks require a ‘driver’, while other complex ones lie in the hands of a ‘pilot’. Therefore, representing the transformation agenda by metaphorically mapping it onto a journey paints a more concrete picture, helping readers to digest the complex plans and structures in the document.

4.3. Conflict Metaphors: Education Personnel as Armed Forces

The prevalence of war and military metaphors in public discourse and news outlet is quite common (Flusberg, Matlock and Thibodeau, 2018). The common practice is to metaphorically wage a war against issues on hand. The blueprint’s metaphors, however, lean heavily on concepts related to military practices and discourses used among the members of the military. Although it can be argued that some of these references denotes literal meaning, is important to note that they co-exist with several other military operations that will be discussed throughout the analysis. It exists as a concept rather than a standalone reference.

4.3.1. Recruitment of the Teaching Force

Several times in the blueprint, there were mentions of lexemes related to the word ‘**recruit**’. The Nvivo analysis and the transcripts below sheds light on how the words relate to several concepts throughout the document:

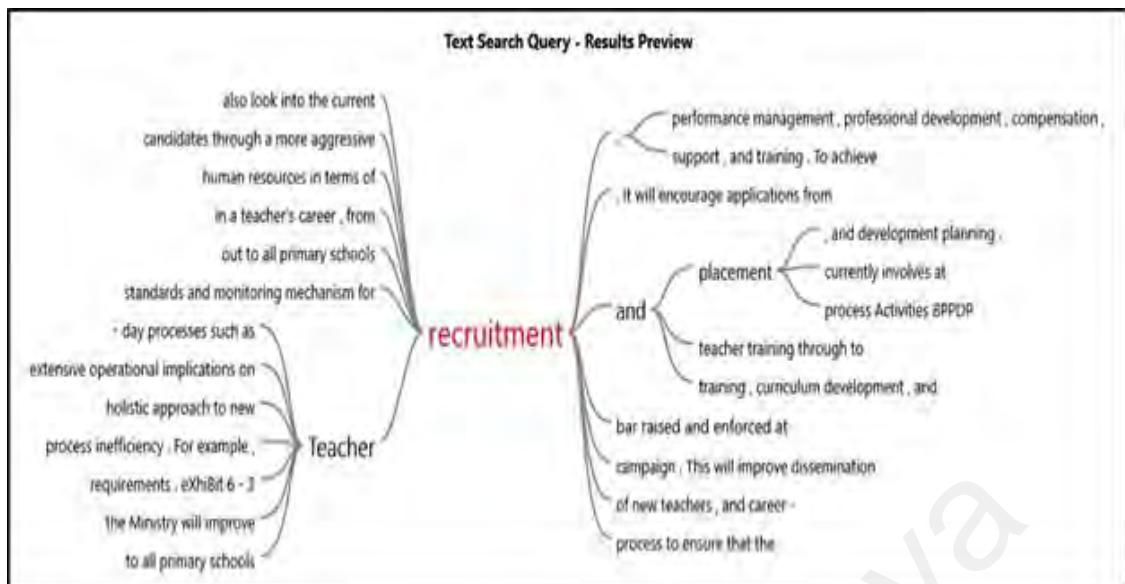


Figure 2. NVivo Analysis of Recruitment

Rather than simply adding staff and facilities, there is now a need to understand and improve the dynamics of the teaching and learning process. To this end, the Government has developed the Education Blueprint. It provides a comprehensive plan for a rapid and sustainable transformation of our education system through to 2025. And by building on the range of initiatives introduced as National Key Result Areas, it sets out the fundamental changes that we require. From how we approach student learning, **the way we recruit, train and reward our teachers and principals** right through to how the Ministry of Education itself operates, it lays out a process for that change.

Excerpt 5. Recruit, Train and Reward (p.7)

The Ministry intends to run a targeted marketing and **recruiting campaign**, focusing on high-performers and other specific segments where there is a shortage of teachers. This includes areas such as English, Science and male teachers. It will also run roadshows at targeted schools, education fairs, and TV commercials to strengthen the teaching brand.

Excerpt 6. Recruiting Campaign (p. 144)

The dictionary definitions for the word 'recruit' are as below:

Cambridge:

1. **[verb]** *To persuade someone to work for a company or become a new member of an organization, especially in the army.*
2. **[noun]** *A new member in the organization, especially in the army.*
3. **[verb]** *To persuade someone to become a new member of an organization.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[verb]** *To fill up the number with new members.*
2. **[noun]** *A newcomer to a field or activity specifically a newly enlisted or drafted member of the armed forces.*
3. **[noun]** *A fresh or additional supply.*

Oxford:

1. **[verb]** *Enlist (someone) in the armed forces.*
2. **[noun]** *A person newly enlisted in the armed forces and not yet fully trained.*

The blueprint's objective is to employ more capable candidates and to subsequently train and reward them to improve the dynamics of the teaching and learning process through 'recruiting campaigns. The NVivo analysis shows that the keyword recruitment has been used with significant phrases such as teacher training, candidate, performance management, professional development, and human resource. Besides that, the blueprint also states that the teacher recruitment bar will also be raised and enforced in IPT and IPG. Standards of new recruits would be raised, and the education ministry aims to make teaching a profession of choice, only selecting the best candidates for the job (page 49). Aligned with the principle of recruiting, those who are already in the teaching system are referred collectively as the 'teaching force'.

4.3.2. Deployment of the Workforce

More metaphorical references to military practices were identified through the usage of lexemes related to 'deploy'.

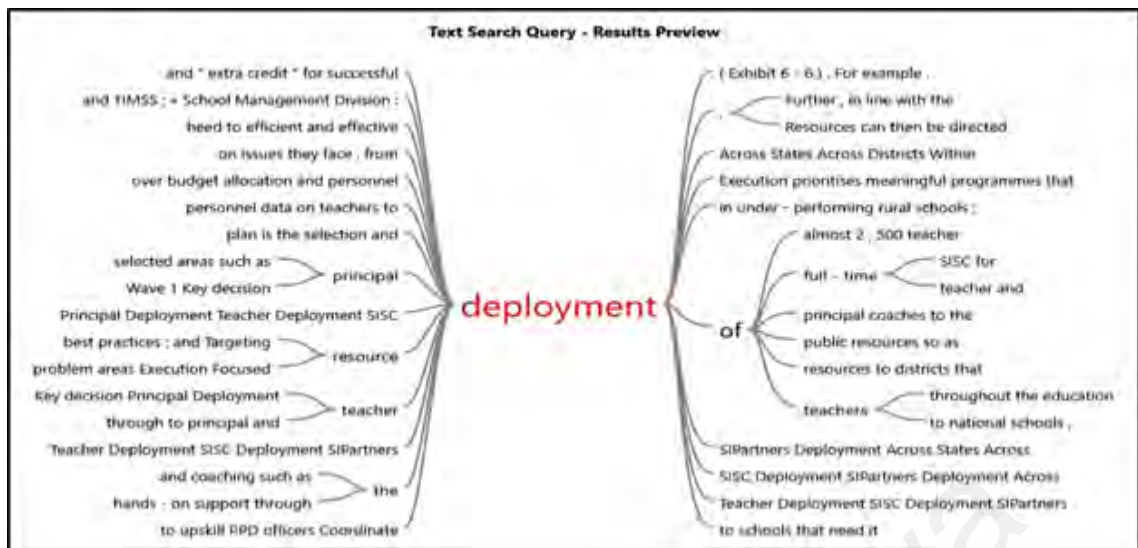


Figure 3. NVivo Analysis of Deployment

Building off the success of the GTP 1.0 School Improvement Programme, every District Education Office or Pejabat Pelajaran Daerah (PPD) will be empowered to tailor the support provided to schools on dimensions from student attendance through **principal and teacher deployment**. Resources can then be directed to where they are most needed.

Excerpt 7. Deployment of Teachers and Principals (p.37)

Principals who struggle to meet the minimum standard will receive extra coaching support and principals who consistently underperform despite this concerted support will be **redeployed** back to a teaching position in another school.

Excerpt 8. Redeployment of Underperforming Principals (p.39)

The verb '**deploy**' is defined as below in the dictionaries:

Cambridge:

1. **[verb]** *To use something or someone, especially in an effective way.*
2. **[verb]** *To move soldiers or equipment to a place where they can be used when they are needed.*
3. **[verb]** *To put something into use.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[verb]** *To extend (a military unit), especially in width or to place in battle formation or appropriate positions.*
2. **[verb]** *To place in battle formation or appropriate positions.*
3. **[verb]** *To spread out or function while being deployed.*

Oxford:

1. **[verb]** *Move (troops or equipment) into position for military action.*
2. **[verb]** *Bring into effective action.*

As evident from the definitions above, deployment is a verb that is consistent with the military actions, mostly before battles or as a part of the battle plan. The blueprint uses this term to illustrate the strategic use of the workforce resource within the education system to yield better results across the schools. Those with less than satisfactory performance is **redeployed** to other positions or functions. The NVivo analysis illustrates that the term deployment is used in association with officers attached to the district education departments (School Improvement Partners), principals and teachers.

4.3.3. The Frontline of the Education System

The comb through the blueprint also found repeated usage of the phrase ‘frontline support’. Dictionaries define the word frontline as below:

Cambridge:

1. **[noun]** *A position where opposing armies face each other in war and where fighting happens.*
2. **[adjective]** *Involved in fighting during a war.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[noun]** *A military line formed by the most advanced tactical combat units or an area of potential or actual conflict or struggle.*
2. **[noun]** *An area of potential or actual conflict or struggle.*
3. **[noun]** *The most advanced, responsible or visible position in a field or activity.*

Oxford:

1. **[noun]** *The military line or part of an army that is closest to the enemy.*
2. **[noun]** *The most important or influential position in a debate or movement.*



Figure 4. NVivo Analysis of Deployment

The organisational structure will be rationalized with more personnel deployed to the frontlines. These measures should yield more consistent and effective policy implementation across all states and districts.

Excerpt 9. Deploying Personnel to the Frontline (p. 41)

The Ministry will also strengthen and empower state and district offices to improve the quality of frontline support provided to all schools.

Excerpt 10. Improving the Quality of Frontline Support (p.47)

As the closest Ministry entity to the frontline of schools, PPDs, in particular, are expected to be very hands-on, providing direct support to schools and managing their performance.

Excerpt 11. Improving the Quality of Frontline Support (p.162)

The excerpts above highlights some of the context of usage of the word ‘frontline’ in the document. The blueprint refers to the teachers and officers ‘on the ground’ as ‘entities that are the closest to the frontline of schools’. Also, it is interesting to note that they are expected to provide ‘hands-on’ support to these schools and manage performances. It appears to show that district education officers and their officers serve as the first lifeline to schools. The first excerpt also denotes that more personnel will be hired to ensure the success of the implementation of policies across educational institutions, especially in schools. This is logical because the entity closest to the schools in terms of hierarchy is the district officers.

4.3.4. Interpretation

The lexical sets of military actions that are used in the blueprint evokes an important question: What, then, is the figurative battlefield here? Based on the reports provided by the document, there can be a few possible answers to the question.

One of the functions of the blueprint is to evaluate the current performance and provide an objective report on the findings. The reports subsequently showed that there is a need for a holistic change in the education system. It is stated that employers are voicing their concerns about adequately preparing the youths of the future to meet the demands and challenges of the 21st century and so are the parents. The performance of students in international assessments are also below the satisfactory level. For instance, Exhibit 8-1 (page 218) shows that Malaysia is among the 43 countries with ‘stagnating or declining system’ based on the trends of scores on the universal scale since the year 2000. Furthermore, when Malaysia first participated in TIMSS in 1999, its average student score was higher than the international average in both Mathematics and Science. By 2011, the last published cycle of results, the system’s performance had slipped to below the international average in both Mathematics and Science with a commensurate

drop in ranking (page 25). There is an increasing gap between the Malaysian education system and other systems that are rapidly growing judging by the students' performance levels. All these findings are causes for concern, hence the battlefield can be the current system. It is a warfare against systems that are in place – systems that need to be 'revamped' and 'shifted' to arrive at certain goals. As discussed earlier in the introduction chapter, a primary function of metaphor is to present abstract and complex information in a relatively simple manner.

However, in addition to that structural framework, the choices of cognitive metaphors are notable for the conception and emotions that they can convey and evoke in readers or listeners. Several metaphors can be employed to describe the same situation to achieve different goals. For instance, the misuse of opioids in the US is metaphorically phrased as the 'opioid epidemic'.

In the Philippines, however, President Duterte's drug policy is popularly referred to as the 'Philippines Drug War'. Both countries face a common issue – that of drug misuse. However, these metaphors offer insights on different ways of how a drug is misused, and the measures taken to address the problem. Furthermore, Flusberg et al (2018) highlights that the knowledge of a war is widespread in the community. Important wars of the past are taught in history lessons, ongoing wars are discussed in news and social media and many video games have war-like simulations. Discussions that are argumentative in nature, such as sports and politics are also rich with war metaphors (Flusberg et al, 2018; Charteris-Black 2004). Therefore, war metaphors are meaningful because of the frequent exposure in our experiences. It provides a very strong cognitive structure that shapes how we think about an issue and shape our ideas around them.

Thus, it can be concluded that the blueprint's choice to employ metaphors of war is reflective of how serious their approach is in handling grave issues at hand. Interestingly, the metaphors are also concentrated on the human factors in problem-

solving. It starts with recruitment processes and ends at deploying officers to the frontlines. It leaves the impression that the key to a better system is by radical empowerment of human resources. Although in the conventional war metaphors, the mapping usually showcases two entities at war, it was absent in the blueprint. The references are not threatening and focuses on the improvement of human resources and the betterment of the current system. This could logically be attributed to the fact that conceptualizing current education issues and challenges in war domains could evoke a sense of panic, fear, and threat in the minds of the readers. However, applying the same conceptualization to revamp the system creates an idea that the government is committed to delivering a better education for all in the future. With reports that are already showcasing failures of the system in international standards, the blueprint must be presented in a manner that could be reassuring to the readers.

The metaphorical concept relating to military practices does exactly that – promote that the government is serious in their efforts to revamp the education system and its policies without treating past decisions as one would an enemy. Therefore, it can be concluded that the blueprint is trying to build on a new system using the past policies as a foundation instead of completely doing away with it and starting over from scratch. There seems to be no war – just tactical military operations.

4.4. Education as an Investment

At times when necessary, the blueprint also utilized business metaphors to illustrate several key points. The metaphorical mappings are presented below:

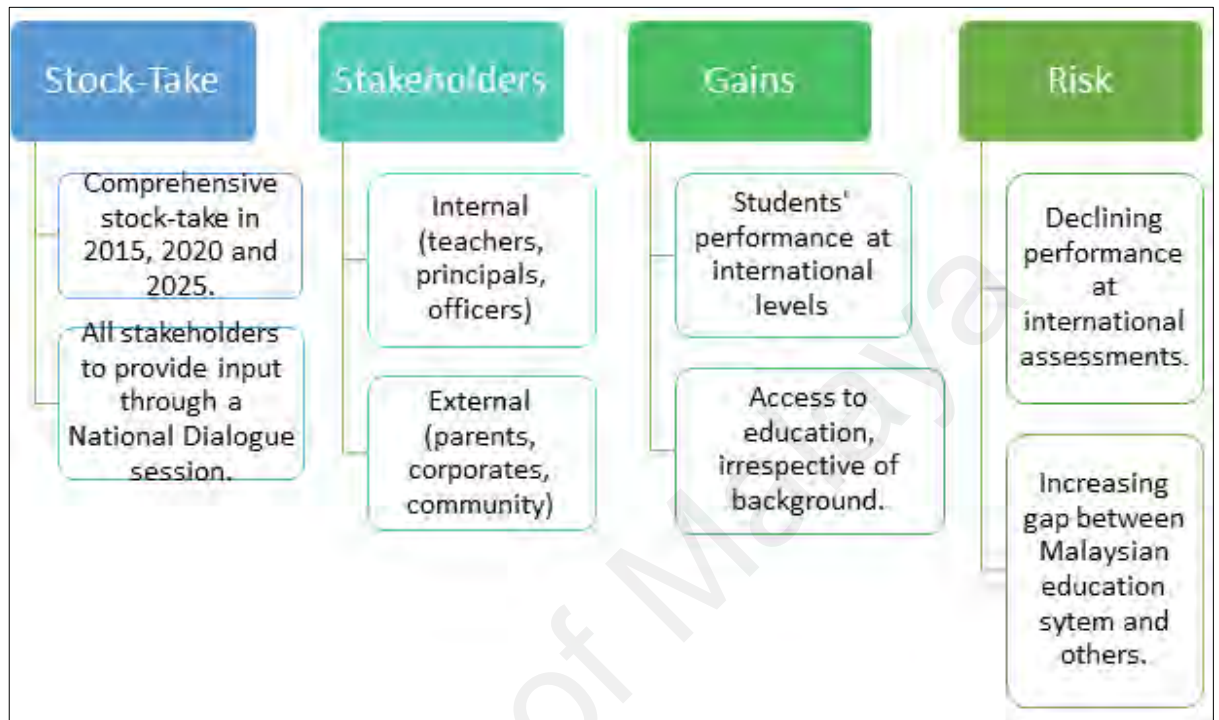


Figure 5. Metaphorical Mapping: Investment

4.4.1. Stock-Taking and the Stakeholders

The blueprint presents a comprehensive mapping of investment theories to education.

Stocks are defined as below in the dictionaries:

Cambridge:

1. **[noun]** *a supply of something for use or sale.*
2. **[noun]** *the total amount of goods or the amount of a particular type of goods available in a shop.*
3. **[noun]** *money that people invest in the government, producing a fixed rate of interest.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[noun]** *the frame or timbers holding a ship during construction.*
2. **[noun]** *the inventory of goods of a merchant or manufacturer.*
3. **[noun]** *the production and presentation of plays by a stock company.*

Oxford:

1. **[noun]** *The goods or merchandise kept on the premises of a shop or warehouse and available for sale or distribution.*
2. **[noun]** *The capital raised by a company or corporation through the issue and subscription of shares.*
3. **[noun]** *Liquid made by cooking bones, meat, fish, or vegetables slowly in water, used as a basis for the preparation of soup, gravy, or sauces.*

Based on the definitions provided by the dictionaries above, stocks can be generally defined as good, merchandise or capitals that are available in hand as an asset. In businesses, a stock-take can be defined as an inventory checking. Physical verification of the quantities and conditions of items held in a warehouse are carried out to provide an audit of existing stock. The frequency of the stock-take usually varies depending on the needs of the business. It is usually undertaken for use in a company's financial statements. Similar to a business stock-take, it is stated that the ministry will conduct a 'stock-take' at key milestones in the blueprint's journey (page 47). The stock-take will provide a platform for all 'stakeholders' to provide input through a National Dialogue on the shortcomings of the system that were put in place. During 'non-stock take' periods, there is an alternative suggestion to carry out a national survey to gather feedback from relevant parties. The stock-takes are planned for three years, in 2015, 2020 and 2025 respectively.

The Ministry will undertake a **stock-take** at key milestones in the Blueprint journey. As part of this stock-take, all **stakeholders** will be able to provide input through a National Dialogue process on what is or is not working well within the system, and what the Ministry could do about the situation.

Excerpt 12. Conduct Comprehensive Stock-Takes in 2015, 2020 and 2025

Here, the stock takes function to provide ideas and inputs from various parties regarding the performance of the systems that were put in place. It also provides an avenue for parties to have a say on the policies and initiatives. The education policies in Malaysia, right from post-independence were drawn to consider the racial sentiments of the citizens. Due to the increasing demands and competition at the global level, there is now a need to have a more inclusive input from all the stakeholders before decision making. Stakeholders can be defined as below:

Cambridge:

1. **[noun]** *a person or group of people who own a share in a business.*
2. **[noun]** *a person such as an employee, customer, or citizen who is involved with an organization, society, etc. and therefore has responsibilities towards it and an interest in its success.*
3. **[noun]** *a person who is in charge of the prize money given by people betting on the result of a game or competition and who gives it to the winner.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. **[noun]** *one that has a stake in an enterprise.*
2. **[noun]** *one who is involved in or affected by a course of action*

Oxford:

1. **[noun]** *(in gambling) an independent party with whom each of those who make a wager deposits the money or counters wagered.*

2. **[noun]** *A person with an interest or concern in something, especially a business.*

The key-stakeholders are listed as parents, government agencies, community groups, and the private sector. They are not only active contributors to policy-making but they will also be informed on the progress that the system is making through an annual ‘progress report’. The stakeholders will now enjoy a degree of transparency that has ‘never before existed’. The Education Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) has been tasked to monitor, engage and collect feedback across stakeholders. The decision to include a broader group of stakeholders can be counted as a wise one, considering that Malaysia is a developing country and there is a need to factor in other criteria before making major policy shifts in education.

By addressing the parties involved as stakeholders rather than merely labelling them as parents or officials levels the weight carried by them in policy making. For example, the blueprint states that parents will no longer only attend sports day or report-card days but will play a stronger role in education not only through National Dialogues but also through Parent-Teacher Association. The increasing demand for education to be inclusive of technological advancements also resulted in the corporate raising their concerns on the standard and quality of the graduates and whether they will be equipped to handle the challenges. In August 2018, Free Malaysia Today published a statement by the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) that graduates from foreign universities have an edge over local graduates due to communication issues. The main point raised by the MEF was the poor command of English language and bad communication skills. It was not the first time such concerns were raised by the MEF. Earlier in 2015, MEF had raised the same issue and this view was supported by key stakeholders across industries (The Edge, 2017). These issues regarding employability coupled with poor performances of

students in the international arena are causes for concerns. Therefore, including the employers and other experts in the field as ‘stakeholders’ would be an assurance that the government is listening to everyone and are dynamically improving the education system to suit the changing times.

4.4.2. Risks and Gains

It is true to the nature of investment that there are risks and gains involved. The laments of the blueprint regarding the past performances are metaphorically captured with the statement that *‘return on investments is not as high as desired’* indicates that the education is a commodity that is valued against money spent. Any loopholes in the system is calculated as a risk. Consider the following statement on money spent on education based on the federal budget (p. 98)

‘In 2011, Malaysia’s basic education expenditure was RM36 billion (in terms of money spent on operations and development). This amount represents 16% of the total 2011 federal budget, the single largest share among ministries. In addition to this budget, another RM12 billion is allocated to MOHE and other ministries that provide education related services. Collectively, this expenditure demonstrates Malaysia’s very serious financial commitment to improving the education of its children, which should be celebrated. (Hereafter, all discussion on Malaysia’s education expenditure refers to the operating and development expenditure of the Ministry only.)’

The statement above indicates that the government is extremely serious about developing the education system by pumping in a lot money.

In fact, it also takes pride in the fact that the Malaysia government had spent more than regional countries:

Malaysia's expenditure as a percentage of GDP is twice the ASEAN average

The 2011 World Bank review of government expenditure found that Malaysia's public expenditure on basic education, such as preschool through to secondary, as a percentage of GDP is more than double that of other ASEAN countries (3.8% versus 1.8%), and 1.6% higher than the Asian Tiger economies of South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, and Singapore (Exhibit 3-31). It is also slightly higher than the OECD average of 3.4%.

On the other hand, there are also discussions on the eventual 'gains' that would be 'delivered' within the first year of implementation of the new system (page 48). The gains include enhancing the quality of English teachers and teacher recruits, launching of parent engagement toolkit, better internet access across the country and improving school systems to cater for all types of learners. Typically, the term 'gain' is used as a noun to describe an increase in wealth or resources. In the blueprint, it is mapped as the benefit that would be reaped from implementing a system.

In addition to that, the blueprint also discusses student performance versus money spent on the education system. Consider the following paragraph (p. 168):

The Roadmap: Maximising student outcomes for every ringgit

*Moving forward, the Ministry will ensure greater effectiveness in education expenditure, **raising the ROI**, and conducting a clear socioeconomic cost-benefit analysis of each major investment. The goal is to minimise the requirement for additional funds while maximizing the ROI in critical areas such as student outcomes. To this end, the Ministry will seek to reprioritise and rationalise the current set of policies and programmes to ensure that funds are directed to the most important priorities. The Ministry also commits to implementing the*

recommendations of the Auditor-General, such as more careful monitoring of expenditure, compliance to financial regulations, and improved disbursement of allocated budgets.

Based on the examples provided above, it can be concluded that the conceptual key 'Education is Investment' can be applied here. The education is conceptualized as the 'stock' and the returns are measured by the student's performance. The blueprint even inadvertently addressed these by using phrases such as 'raising and maximizing ROI' and 'cost-benefit analysis'.

In addition to that, the blueprint also identifies four major risks to the current system: The gender gap, students' performance at international levels, grasp of the English language as well as keeping up with the systems around the world. Exhibit 3-26 (page 93) highlights that female students perform better than boys from the primary level until tertiary. Moreover, boys are also at risk of dropping out of school. Although steps are underway to improve both the English language command and the performance of Malaysian students internationally, there is a worry that other systems are equally (if not more rapidly) improving, therefore the gap will remain the same or widen. The blueprint suggests that there are students from some systems in Malaysia that are performing on international standards and these systems can be an example across the country.

As seen here, metaphors can and were used to describe the education system as an investment that has both long term and short-term gains. The roles and functions of stakeholders are clearly defined, and the risks were spelled out to establish a baseline before moving forward. Here, the investment metaphors function to establish a fresh perspective on how the stakeholders should view the new system. Everyone has an equal responsibility in ensuring the success of the new system. Using business language to describe the target domain is also unique because it means the education system no longer

rests solely on the government's shoulder. Everyone has an equal say and by the way it is portrayed, everyone will get a profitable share, if the investment succeeds.

4.4.3. Interpretation

Conceptualizing something from an economic, business or investment point of view is no longer a novel concept. We often hear metaphorical concepts such as 'early bird gets the worm' and 'time is money' used in the English language to remind us to work hard and not to waste time. These concepts are familiar to the people; therefore, it becomes conventionalized. Similarly, the representation of the education system in terms of an investment process would ensure better understanding among the public. It would highlight the gains and the challenges to be expected from the improvement of the system.

4.5. Construction Metaphors: Education Personnel are Buildings

In addition to the concepts explored above, the blueprint also took to construction metaphors in the explanations. Although there were only two keywords to this concept – **pipeline** and **foundation**; it was important enough to be analyzed because it was used repetitively in the blueprint. The term '**pipeline**' appears five times and all the mentions were metaphorical. On the other hand, the term 'foundation' appeared forty-nine times and fifteen of it was metaphorical. The definitions of both the keywords are provided below.

PIPELINE

Cambridge:

1. [noun] *a very long large tube, often underground, through which liquid or gas can flow for long distances.*
2. [noun] *a series of connected tubes for transporting gas, oil, or water, usually over long distances.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. [noun] *a line of pipe with pumps, valves, and control devices for conveying liquids, gases, or finely divided solids.*
2. [noun] *a state of development, preparation, or production.*

Oxford:

1. [noun] *A long pipe, typically underground, for conveying oil, gas, etc. over long distances.*
2. [noun] *A linear sequence of specialized modules used for pipelining.*
2. [noun] *(in surfing) the hollow formed by the breaking of a very large wave.*

FOUNDATION

Cambridge:

1. [noun] *an occasion when an organization, state, etc. is established.*
2. [noun] *a body or ground upon which something is built up or overlaid.*

Merriam-Webster:

1. [noun] *an underlying base or support especially: the whole masonry substructure of a building.*
2. [noun] *the structures below the surface of the ground that support a building.*

Oxford:

1. [noun] *The lowest load-bearing part of a building, typically below ground level.*
2. [noun] *An underlying basis or principle.*
2. [noun] *The action of establishing an institution or organization.*

Malaysia faces an acute shortage of qualified teachers and special education needs specialists. For example, there are only 50 clinical psychologists, 157 speech therapists and 157 audiologists employed by the government. The Ministry will allocate resources to support the training of specialists and special education needs teachers, and the sharing and dissemination of knowledge, experience, and best practices. The Ministry also plans to train all teachers on the basics of handling special education needs students and ensure that special education teachers are equipped with the most relevant knowledge in the field.

Excerpt 13. Creating a Pipeline of Trained Teachers and Other Specialists

The Ministry will adopt a holistic approach to new teacher recruitment. It will encourage applications from diverse academic and ethnic backgrounds, without compromising on stringent requirements for entry, including academic qualifications, pre-disposition and teaching aptitude of applicants. The IPG will offer different programmes (diplomas, undergraduate and post-graduate degrees) to cater to candidates with varying experience levels (fresh graduates and midcareer leavers).

Excerpt 14. Strengthening the Pipeline of Teacher Trainee Recruits

The keyword **‘pipeline’** in the blueprint was used in the sub-chapters describing trained teachers and specialists. The blueprint’s use of the term to describe experts in the field can be linked to constructions because of the mappings that are present in both scenarios. In constructions, as evident from the definitions provided above, pipelines would generally refer to tubes that are underground as a means of transporting liquid or gasses. Similarly, in education, these experts are termed as pipelines perhaps because are in the ‘underground’ of the system, carrying out the policies and seeing them through.

When the structure of the metaphorical representation is further simplified it can be deduced that teachers and other officers on the ground form the main body of a building that supports everything else above the structure. The teachers and specialists that are experts in their field will be utilized to share and disseminate their knowledge. On the other hand, the new teacher trainee recruits are put under ‘pipelines that need strengthening’. While it is premature to conclude that the government may relate to the previous system as having loopholes in terms of trainee intake due to their choice of metaphors, Excerpt 14 highlights significant changes in entry requirements and

guidelines. For instance, the intake process will be ‘holistic’ and does not ‘compromise on stringent entry requirements for entry’.

The keyword ‘foundation’ appeared to be metaphorical when it was used to describe the process of reformation itself. It is interesting because it occurs in parts that gradually build up from the previous foundations.

4.6. Functions of Metaphors

4.6.1. Simplifying Complex Concepts

The blueprint is a document set for restructuring the entire education system to meet the demands of the 21st century. It involves changes that affect policies, curriculum and even work culture within the system. In addition to that, the timeline set for these changes to occur is thirteen years long. Given these circumstances, the document is naturally bound to contain complex plans on a very large scale. After factoring in the fact that this document was meant for public viewing, some of the metaphors in the blueprint exists to enable readers to comprehend the blueprint in an easier way.

One such metaphorical concept that was discussed earlier is the metaphor of journey that recurs throughout the blueprint. While most of the works of scholars reviewed earlier points to a one-time conceptual mapping, this document contains mappings that are complex and interwoven with other concepts from start to finish. The domain mappings are illustrated below with reference to the PATH schema discussed earlier:

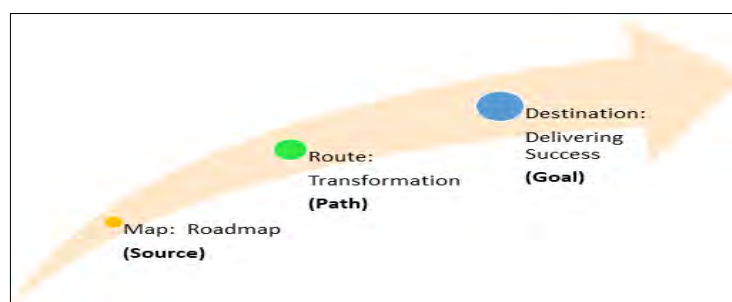


Figure 6. PATH schema

The readers are presented with the roadmap at the beginning of the document and it appears until the end to discuss government policies and initiatives. The pathways are added to showcase the breakdown of the map. There are ten different pathways and each of them discuss separate sectors of the education system. The pathways are embedded in the roadmap, but they provide a more detailed explanation. While the pathways branch out, the road map acts as a binder and eventually, they function to lead the stakeholders of the education system into one common goal – to deliver success.

Moreover, using terms such as ‘delivery’, ‘driver’ and ‘pilot’ help to capture the abstract concepts of success, system and policies and convert them into something more tangible and concrete. It would help readers to conceptualize the policies and initiatives as something that can be delivered physically. The government plays a role in drawing out for the map and the pathways while the officers and teachers’ job is painted to be the driving force to ensure the ‘parcel’ gets delivered. The ‘EDUCATION IS A JOURNEY’ conceptualization is tailor-made to ensure that the public would be able to understand the exhaustive list of policies and concepts easily. The representation of such heavy materials using the metaphors related to journey is effective because the concept of a journey is pervasive in our daily lives. Even a short trip to a destination involves planning, stops, roads, navigation and someone helming the vehicle. Considering the fact that the journey metaphor is one of the most complex and intricate in the blueprint, it carries equally complex concepts with it.

In addition to that, the success of the education system is viewed as a profitable commodity, again, with the aim to conceptualize the abstract notions of education to mean something more concrete. The conceptual key EDUCATION IS AN INVESTMENT eases the understanding process because investment is a concept that is prevalent everywhere. With the current technology that are available at our disposal, investment banking made easy, the process of investing has become easier. A large part of the

population has access to or are aware of the process of investment. Therefore, the use of investment and business metaphors in the document captures the domain that is already present in the minds of the readers and presents the success and failure of the education system as profit and loss.

The choice of metaphors here is a deliberate attempt to present the success of the students as a 'return on investment' that would benefit all the stakeholders. The risks were carefully laid out and even the plans to minimize the risk were a move to enhance and maximize the return on investments. It was also interesting to note that the stakeholders mentioned was a sweeping reference to everyone directly or indirectly involved in the education system. The metaphorical reference suggests that they have laid out the responsibility of the education system on the stakeholders' shoulder. This is like to be an effective representation because it emphasizes the importance of active participation from all the parties involved to assure the success of the blueprint.

Similar ideological motivations can be attributed to the usage of construction metaphors employed by the blueprint, too. Buildings are everywhere around us and we live in structures that also involve pipelines and foundations. Unlike the other representations, this reference conceptualizes the human side of policies – the teachers and personnel that carry them forward.

4.6.2. Construction of Realities

Metaphors are also influential in creating and altering realities. This can be seen when the metaphors of military practices are used to denote the actions primarily involving the officials, teachers and the execution of plans. Consider, for example, the effects of hyperbole that was used in describing the workforce. The teachers were categorized as recruits and part of the recruitment force included deployment of the force to the frontline.

While the conceptualization using metaphors related to journey, investment and constructions are not surprising, the repeated use of military metaphors in the blueprint appears to have caused more semantic tension. Charteris-Black (2004), while analyzing metaphors in British Political party manifestos states that conflict metaphors are commonly used when evaluating social goals, so that social ills can be considered an 'enemy'. Given that the education system is highly relatable to social goals it could be the reason why military metaphors were used in the blueprint. However, as mentioned earlier, there seems to be no real enemies that were mentioned. There were only discussions about where the system is lacking, previous failures and lack of achievements. The only conclusion that can be drawn after analyzing the blueprint is this: military metaphors were used to describe the workforce and other operations within the education system to combat the failure and lack of achievements that were plaguing the system previously.

There are also other possible reasons for the absence of mentions of war or enemies in the blueprint. One, as a country, the last war Malaysia has been in dates to the pre-independence days. In today's world, we are more used to experiencing war by reading the news and engaging with such materials through social media. Therefore, the conceptual keywords will not be very effective here. Secondly, portraying the previous policies, initiatives, and programs as the enemy that needs to be tackled creates a very negative impression to the readers on the severity of its failure. The blueprint was honest in admitting to the shortcomings of the previous system but was cautious enough to not portray it as an enemy in its entirety. Instead, they chose to address the issues briefly and designed the document to employ metaphors of military actions to communicate the seriousness of the government in tackling it. There were no changes of administrative powers and parties before and after the publication of the blueprint.

The system that was in place before the blueprint was implemented had been one to cause much uproar over across the stakeholders. Complaints include the state of English among local graduates and their failure to perform at interviews. The world around us is slowly changing and the demands of the 21st century continues to weigh down on the government. The brain-drain of local graduates seeking greener pastures elsewhere was not helping much, either. On the other hand, there were also mixed responses with regards to the use of English as the medium of instructions for the teaching of Science and Mathematics. It was a sensitive subject that saw protesters taking it to the streets to voice out their concerns. Additionally, there were also concerns about the poor performance of local students in the TIMSS and PISA test. These were the common issues cited in the blueprint. Although there was no indication that these were grave issues, the measures put in place to contain these issues were metaphorically represented through the strategic usage of military metaphors.

The government was motivated by the need to showcase to the public that they are serious in tackling the issues. Therefore, the use of military metaphors achieves the objective of portraying the image of a government that is tackling the issues within the education system aggressively with radical plans. They imply that some sort of aggression and hard-driven moves are necessary to achieve the objectives and a more stable position in the international platform.

Chapter 5 : Discussion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the explanation stage of the Critical Metaphor Analysis. The explanation stage will discuss the social agency that could be involved in the usage of the metaphors and their roles in persuasion. In this stage, the identified conceptual metaphors and the conceptual metaphor keys will assist in explaining why they can have a persuasive role. Here, the evidence obtained from the blueprint and other contextual information is presented to validate the ideological and rhetorical motivations behind the metaphors used.

The blueprint's metaphors are unique because they are not standalone keywords. They occur throughout the document and were used repeatedly in several contexts to form conceptualization of ideas and concepts related to the policies that were being discussed. The different types of conceptual metaphors identified in the document co-exist to form a cohesive narrative. The explanation stage focuses on what emerges from the analysis of the metaphors in the blueprint.

5.2. The Government is Malaysia's Saviour

The power of metaphors lies in its ability to influence people by means of persuasion and constructing or altering realities. This is one of the main reasons why it is often found in political discourses and speeches of leaders around the world. They are often effective in painting politicians as individuals working for the greater good of the society. The metaphors in the blueprint also appears to operate with a similar intent. A stark observation from the analysis of the metaphors was the portrayal of the government as

the entity responsible for overhauling the education system and prepare the upcoming generation for the demands of the 21st century.

There are a few examples in the blueprint to illustrate this point. For instance, if we were to look at the policy as a commodity to be delivered to the public, the government assumes the dual role of creator of the policies and delivery personnel that are responsible to ensure it reaches the public. Consider the metaphors of ‘navigating’ issues, ‘piloting’ options and ‘driving’ implementation that were discussed earlier in subchapter 4.1. These metaphors are well anchored in the document and occur alongside other metaphor keywords such as ‘pathways’ and ‘roadmaps’. Recurrent usage of transportation and journey metaphors in the blueprint appears to portray the government, particularly the education ministry to be at the helm of the system. It personifies the government and related personnel as the navigators behind the education system that were beginning to show signs of ‘ailment’. The metaphors of journey and transportations also imply that while the government paved the way for the transformation, education personnel and other related officers function to deliver the system by operating on it.

The framing of something in terms of a journey has been reformulated by Charteris-Black (2004) as a ‘purposeful activity is travelling along a path towards a destination’. Where the blueprint is concerned, the journey metaphors conceptualizes the education system to a time-based travelling. It highlights that the initiatives are goal-based by structuring the plans as a commodity to be ‘delivered’ at the end of the ‘roadmap’.

Given the importance of the transformation program and what it promises to reform in the education system, it is important that the government is portrayed as the leaders in charge.

In the executive summary (p.22), it was mentioned that there was an active effort from the government's part to engage all the stakeholders before drafting the blueprint:

“Furthermore, the Ministry engaged with the rakyat on a scale never seen before. Over the course of a year, over 55,000 Ministry officials, teachers, school leaders, parents, students, and members of the public across Malaysia, were engaged via interviews, focus groups, surveys, National Dialogue townhalls, Open Days and roundtable discussions. More than 200 memorandums were submitted to the Ministry and over 3000 articles and blog posts were written on the issues raised in the Blueprint. The Ministry also appointed a 12-member Malaysian panel of experts and a 4-member international panel of experts to provide independent input into the review findings.”

The data was gathered in three phases. Whilst the first two pages researched issues on ground, the third phase focused on the feedbacks obtained after the launch of the preliminary blueprint. It was stated that all the issues presented by the public and other stakeholders were studied critically and the steps to overcome them were spelled out in the blueprint.

Here, the government was portrayed as the leaders and the people were conceptualized as followers of a system that's been placed in the trusted hands of the government. The strategic use of the journey and vehicle metaphor would ideally help to create such an image in the minds of the readers. It conceptualizes the plans that were devised for the initiatives in the blueprint in a more systematic way, helping readers create a mental image on the initiatives and strategic planning. In addition to assisting readers create a mental image of the complex and intricate processes behind the blueprint, the

metaphors also picture the government as a responsible entity that listens to the voice peoples' and acts upon them.

A commendable approach that the blueprint has taken is to present the issues within the system without sugar-coating it. Although it sometimes took a soft-landing approach by comparing Malaysia to other developing and neighbouring countries, the problems were discussed at length. Public opinion and demands did not appear to be concealed either. Then, by strategically conceptualizing the plans using journey and vehicle metaphors, the blueprint reassures the public that the plans in motion were well-thought-out and solid. It puts the government at 'helm' of the system.

5.3. Issues and Failures are Conflict

Any conflict metaphor carries the notion of an ongoing war or battle against the enemy. Charteris-Black (2014) describes the conflict metaphors by categorizing them into three different categories: metaphors of defense, metaphors of attack and metaphors of struggle. In the blueprint, the usage of military jargon to frame education personnel and other officers imply that the government is serious and committed to resolving the issues surrounding the system. The military metaphors included words such as 'deployment', 'frontline' and 'recruits' when describing the changes that will take place within the system. These metaphor keywords are more inclined towards the 'struggle' category. Deployment of personnel and recruiting new members to the 'frontline' of the education system sends a message to the readers that the government is strictly regulating the practices within the system. Also, by framing the officers as military personnel, the issues then viewed as the 'conflict'.

As discussed earlier in Chapter 1, the landscape of the education system in Malaysia has never been easy to start with. After taking over from British rule over sixty years ago, there were numerous changes in the education system, done to accommodate

the needs of the times, the economy and the society. However, those changes were done on a smaller scale and it always stemmed from the ideas of an experts committee. The blueprint, however, is a comprehensive plan that is idealistic, futuristic and seems to weigh in on public opinion, unlike the previous times. Previously, the changes focused on issues such as vernacular schools, social cohesion through the education system, as well as the formation and changes in the curriculum.

The current blueprint, on the other hand, focused on issues that were not brought to the limelight before. Taking on the equity from the gender perspective, the document presented what was termed the ‘Lost Boys’ issue (p. 93):

“The gender gap is both significant and increasing (Exhibit 3-26). Girls consistently outperform boys. The difference in performance is already evident at UPSR level and increases over the course of a student’s academic career. Further, boys are more likely to drop out, leading to a situation wherein the male to female ratio for any given cohort decreases from Year 1 to Form 5. At the university level, female students comprise up to 70% of the latest incoming cohort in some universities. This gap between the genders has widened at the PMR and SPM level over the last five years, a trend that if unchecked, runs the risk of creating a community of educationally marginalized young Malaysian men. Fortunately, the trend has reversed in 2011 for UPSR results, with the performance gap falling from about 11 to 10 percentage points. Interviews with parents, teachers, and principals suggest that some boys struggle with the mainstream academic curriculum and would probably benefit from greater access to vocational training or more applied coursework. However, the limited number of places in vocational and technical schools prevents this from occurring. This problem is compounded by the fact that boys from poor families are also more likely to drop out of school

to start work early in order to help support their families. The higher rate of dropouts and lower academic performance among boys is a cause for concern for the Ministry. Alienated youth are a source of great social and political instability, as has been seen across the world in the recent past. It is imperative that Malaysia find a way to engage boys in education to ensure that they become a valuable source of human capital.”

The excerpt above discussed the generation of boys that are ‘lost’ from the education system, due to either dropping out of school or underperformance. This is a case for serious consideration because if the trend continues, there will be a generation of men who are left behind academically and may engage in social ills.

The blueprint also discussed the possibility of providing more vocational and skills education to these boys. In addition to that, the urban-rural divide and the impact of socio-economic status on students’ performance were also discussed at length. Studies show that students from poor families perform are more likely to underperform. Socio-economic status was reported in the blueprint as one of the major contributing factors to performance-gaps. The homogenous environment in both vernacular and national type schools presented a challenge to the government as educational institutions in Malaysia were long viewed as a platform to foster national unity. Although there is convergence in secondary school, some students still received less exposure to the multicultural society as they transfer to schools such as Independent Chinese Schools or religious schools post-primary education.

Given the importance of the issues that were discussed as well as the challenges that lie ahead, the changes that are proposed to the education system will have a significant impact on the economy and social growth of the country. The use of conflict metaphors in some parts of the document reflects this. Again, it enhances the functions of

the journey metaphor as it appears to reiterate that the government is serious in resolving the issues in the education system.

Conflict metaphors also resonate well with the readers because conflicts could heighten the emotions of people, therefore activating their unconscious emotional associations. It is the reason why they are often used to fulfill ideological purposes. In the blueprint's case of using conflict metaphors, they activate mental representations of the conflicts around the world and the military actions on them. Most of it are causes for serious concerns. However, the blueprint gave it a positive image by taking on the 'education is a struggle' perspective. There was no enemy to be attacked but there was an imaginary 'frontline'. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the struggles are against the well-defined issues presented earlier. Thus, framing the education personnel in military jargon implies that the government is sending out all the 'help' that they can to keep the situation under control.

5.4. Education is Investment

Besides persuasion, a key function of metaphor is to create tangible and concrete representations of something abstract. One way the blueprint does this is by envisioning the education system as an investment. The success of the system is a commodity that could generate income. On the other hand, before the system could be successful, there are various challenges that lie ahead, conceptualized by the keyword 'risk'. Therefore, there is a process that the blueprint describes as a 'stock-take' to collect data on the implementation of the blueprint. It will happen periodically at 'key milestones' of the blueprint.

In a business, the stakeholders are usually people who can affect or be affected by the actions of an organization. The blueprint refers to almost everyone within the system as a stakeholder. Parents, teachers, students, education personnel, members from the

corporate sector and officers within the ministry are described as the stakeholders. Such labelling seems to imply that the success of the blueprint is now a collective effort. The executing stakeholders are the ones who operate within the system. For instance, teachers and district officers who carry out the orders and implement the policies on the ground. Parent groups and corporate members are no in the immediate system. However, by referring to them as stakeholders, the responsibility is distributed equally. In a business and profit-based organizations, the success or failure of it highly depends on the decisions by the stakeholders. Here, the framing of the members within and outside the system as stakeholders operates with a similar intent. More importantly, it also implies that the government is hearing the voices of the people and reassuring them that their concerns and demands are being met. By placing trust and responsibility in such a way, it is a win-win situation for both parties.

Additionally, the framing of the education system as an investment appears to view success as the achievement of pupils in international assessments. The following statement was taken from the blueprint on the lion's share of the federal budget that was given to the education ministry (p. 97):

“In 2011, Malaysia’s basic education expenditure was RM36 billion (in terms of money spent on operations and development). This amount represents 16% of the total 2011 federal budget, the single largest share among ministries. In addition to this budget, another RM12 billion is allocated to MOHE and other ministries that provide education-related services. Collectively, this expenditure demonstrates Malaysia’s very serious financial commitment to improving the education of its children, which should be celebrated. The 2011 World Bank review of government expenditure found that Malaysia’s public expenditure on basic education, such as preschool through to secondary, as a percentage of GDP

is more than double that of other ASEAN countries (3.8% versus 1.8%), and 1.6% higher than the Asian Tiger economies of South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, and Singapore (Exhibit 3-31). It is also slightly higher than the OECD average of 3.4%.

The expenditure covers the investment of additional infrastructure, teacher's salary as well as the overall cost of operations. However, the blueprint was also quick to point out that the government's expenditure has translated to better access but not quality. Access was measured by the near-universal student enrollment in schools, especially preschools and upper secondary schools. On the other hand, the quality of education was pointed out to be below par and this assessment was made from analyzing the results from international assessments. The blueprint also analyzed the expenditure made by other countries (ASEAN, Asian, and OECD) and concluded that despite spending more money than them, the results were not satisfactory. As mentioned earlier, the failure was metaphorically captured as ***'return on investments is not as high as desired'***.

This failure was part of the main reason why the blueprint was drafted in the first place. However, this framing is rigid and quite straightforward in the sense that every ringgit spent to improve the system is valued against the success in international assessment. There were critical measures taken to analyze the budget against student performances, but it reduces the importance placed on the holistic development of the students. As the blueprint claims to be an advocate for a more holistic education, the measurement of success should ideally be holistic, too. The data available sporadically discusses the unemployment and dropout rates as one of the risks to the system. However, it did not objectively discuss the results of the investment on crime rates, mental and emotional well-being of the students. The framing, then, successfully conceptualizes education as a system that measures success in immediate and tangible evidences. There were 11 shifts proposed in the blueprint to 'transform the system' and one of them is to

‘maximise student outcome for every ringgit’. The student aspirations following the investment are mentioned as: knowledge, bilingual proficiency, thinking skills, national identity, leadership skills and ethics and spirituality. In ethics and spirituality, there were brief discussions on the importance of establishing a set of principles that includes ‘strong shared values held in common by all Malaysians’. This included civic responsibility, spirituality, and integrity. However, no working plan was rolled out in the blueprint on how to achieve this. Most of the discussions focused on infrastructure, operational procedures, curriculum shifts, teacher education, and STEM education. The framing of the education system as an investment seems to dehumanize it and focuses on the tangible gains such as enrolment rates, success in international assessments, closing the urban-rural and gender gap as well as literacy among the students nationwide. Although these are crucial points listed as key outcomes from the blueprint, it is equally important that the system is ‘humanized’ to include other aspects of education such as mental health advocacy, character development, leadership skills, and emotional management strategies.

5.5. Transformation Agenda Is a Journey

*“Malaysian education stands at a **crossroads**, and the Ministry, taking the voices of the rakyat to heart, has chosen the more difficult, but ultimately more rewarding path.”*

The Malaysian Education Blueprint (p.48)

The journey metaphor was one of the most prominent metaphorical framing in the document. It is intricate and complex compared to the other metaphors and was well connected throughout the document. This is because a journey domain resonates well

with the general public as many of us would have gone on a journey at some point in our lives. Next, it is also versatile and can be used to include many entities within the blueprint. For example, it was used to describe the transformation agenda, the issues within the system and the end goal, as explained earlier with the PATH schema. Moreover, the recurrent usage of the framing of the blueprint's plans and policies as a journey suggests that the government was driving home the important message that success does not come easily or appear overnight. A journey, compared to other lexicons of travel (such as a trip, visit or tour) implies a longer duration of travel. Therefore, the choice of journey metaphors to frame the transportation agenda is well-executed. It sends a message across that in order to achieve success, the people will have to be patient and should not expect immediate or instant results. This is because the ultimate reward is far too valuable compared to the 13-year long journey.

By framing success as the 'ultimately rewarding path', the blueprint effectively constructs an argument that a promise is being made on a revamped education system as a result of the blueprint. It evokes a sense of security in the minds of the people that the system is in good hands and success, albeit slow and difficult, is a guarantee. Although the statement quoted above is not directly a part of the more organized conceptualization of the transformation, it is critical as it sheds light on how the ideological motivation behind the framing. Chateris-Black (2004) suggests that journey metaphors positively evaluate policies because the ends are socially valued ones. Similarly, here, the end of the journey promises to bring a sweeping change to the education system, starting from pre-school education to tertiary education. If execute as per plan, the changes will affect a larger part of the population and the stakes are high. The end-goal of the journey was the key-outcomes promised by the document. Journey metaphors are also said to have a strong positive orientation even when the negative aspects of the journey are highlighted

by the metaphors. This reassures and promises the people that there is something valuable to look forward to, despite the effort and patience required to reach the destination.

Next, the blueprint was broken down into waves, has roadmaps, crossroads and checkpoints as well as means of transportations and destinations. These elements come together to form the blueprint in its entirety. Besides helping readers understand the plans and policies by drawing a mental image of them, the journey metaphor also provides them with possibilities of challenges and goals. The metaphor keyword 'crossroads' in the excerpt above denote the issues at hand and it implies that there are many options ahead to resolve them. However, the Ministry says that it chose the more 'difficult but ultimately rewarding path' after listening to the voices of the '*rakyat*' (people). It is common in political discourse to see the journey metaphors used to frame politicians' actions conceptualized as the destination of the travelers. Similarly, this framing implies that people's voices are being heard and the journey was planned by the Ministry based on what the public wants. We should also note that while the statement suggests a government that listens to the voices of the people, in a very roundabout way, it also holds them accountable for the decisions made at a very critical juncture – the crossroad.

Chapter 6 : Conclusion

6.1. Metaphors – Conceptualization and Persuasion

The blueprint is one of the most complex and comprehensive documents produced to ‘embark’ on the transformation of the education system post-independence. The conceptual metaphors and their framing in the blueprint assisted the delivery of a complex policy document to the public by conceptualizing the plans in a concrete manner. Next, they acted as an effective linguistic tool to convince the public that the ministry has taken control of the situation and is doing everything they can to get the system back on track.

One of the key objectives of the blueprint is to present a system that has been drafted out based on the ‘voices of the people’ after analyzing the current issues. By framing education as a journey with exhaustive domain mapping throughout the blueprint, it has structured the plans effectively. Also, by repeating and sustaining the journey metaphors across sentences, paragraphs and chapters, it created a textual cohesion that was crucial in aiding comprehension among the readers. In fact, the journey metaphor formed the central image of the blueprint. Adhering to the principles of the PATH schema, the framing was a binding factor that brought together several plans and conceptualized it as one purposeful activity towards a goal – the journey. By exploring the journey metaphor, the blueprint seems to convince the people that the ministry is a responsible entity with a solid action plan to change the education system for the better.

6.2. Novel Metaphors

A metaphors’ ability to function effectively stems from the interpretation of the readers and the semantic tension it causes. Using novel metaphors can heighten the awareness of the semantic tension among hearers and readers. The blueprint used novel metaphors

effectively by framing education as an investment and the issues in the system as conflict. Education in Malaysia has been mostly associated with the functions of imparting knowledge and uniting the multi-racial citizens. However, by framing it as an investment, the blueprint highlighted the critical role the education system plays in the economy of a country.

The blueprint also compared the expenditure done by the government on the education system in Malaysia with several other countries. The results showed that despite spending the largest portions of allocations on education, Malaysia was lagging. This seems to hint at the financial constraints it has caused on the government, without fruition; especially when compared to countries with similar and even lower economic performance. The framing also seems to justify the transformation that the ministry has planned. In addition to that, the novelty of the framing allows the readers to view education as a tool to generate income by enhancing the system to produce citizens who excel academically. It shifts the focus of the readers and allows them to see the education system from a monetary point of view.

Similarly, viewing the issues in the system as a conflict also projects the image of a ministry that is serious in its approaches to handling them. Amidst calls for transformation plans and criticism, it was pertinent that the government showed itself as an entity capable of dealing with international failures and other problems. War and conflicts are capable of evoking strong emotions among readers. Therefore, repeated usage may paint an aggressive image. It could be the reason why the conflict metaphors are not used as often as journey metaphors in the blueprint. The usage was limited to the officers within the system.

Therefore, it can be concluded the usage of metaphors in the blueprint served more than just aesthetic purposes. Besides aiding comprehension, it also fulfilled pragmatic goals such as reassuring the public and evoked a sense of belief among the readers. By

using investment metaphors, the blueprint encouraged the public to adopt a more economical perspective when evaluating the system. Finally, conflict metaphors, although brief and contained, sends the message across that transformation considers the issues at hand. It can be said that the blueprint had strategically employed metaphors to serve its purposes.

This research has explored the metaphors used in the blueprint and the possible motivations of use in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. Charteris Black (2004) suggests that metaphor analysis should ideally integrate linguistic, semantic, cognitive and pragmatic criteria since any one component alone isn't enough to provide a comprehension explanation of the metaphors. Therefore, further research could explore public interviews and conduct an opinion poll to validate the arguments behind the motivations of use. The research can also be extended to other types of discourse that document policies and government planning to compare the metaphorical framings used.

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