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Do You Read Me?
Metaphor as a Pathway to the Conceptualisation of Literary Identity

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"Ton sens est fait du sens des autres, que tu le veuilles ou non."

(Saint-Exupéry 1948: 370)

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Abstract: Establishing coherent identity patterns for literary characters in novels is a difficult task. In this respect, we assume that readers rely on pre-stored cultural models in order to construct mental models of the text content, including character identity. By significantly extending the approach by Van Dijk and Kintsch and going beyond the related accounts of Schneider and of Culpeper, we aim to clarify the constitutive role of conceptual metaphor as proposed by Lakoff et al. in processes of literary identity construction. The analysis of a corpus of three contemporary novels supports our claim that conceptual metaphors and the mapping of domains involved interact with cultural models and connect text phenomena to such prior knowledge structures. On this basis, we provide an integrated model of literary identity construction which acknowledges the constitutive value of conceptual metaphors in literary identity construction.

Introduction

The reception of novels entails, more often than not, the difficult task to construct coherent identity patterns for the literary characters. Focussing on these patterns, we depart from the assumption that reading entails the construction of mental representations of the content. This includes the characters acting within the (fictional) plot and, importantly, their identity. To construct such mental models,[1] readers draw and rely on pre-stored, mutually manifest schemata, i.e. cultural models. By significantly extending the approach by Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983; 1992)[2] and going beyond Schneider (2000) and Culpeper (2001), we aim to clarify the constitutive role of conceptual metaphor as proposed by Lakoff et al.[3] in processes of literary identity construction. From a cognitive perspective, we claim that conceptual metaphors and the mapping of

[1] Cf. e.g. Strauss and Quinn (1997); Schneider (2001); Strasen (2008).
[2] Van Dijk and Kintsch's model is one of the earliest major processing models of comprehension and much research has been done in the field since then (cf. e.g. the overview in McNamara and Magliano (2009)). Still, we find their seminal theory the most suited as basis for our model, especially since many later theories share their distinction of the basic levels of mental representation. Our propositions can thus be transferred onto those models as well.
[3] Cf. e.g. Lakoff and Turner (1997); Lakoff and Johnson (1999, 2003).

domains involved interact with cultural models and can connect text phenomena to such prior knowledge structures.

The theoretical framework will be tested against a corpus of three contemporary novels from the British Isles, namely Roddy Doyle's *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*, Jeanette Winterson's *Written on the Body*, and Julian Barnes's *England, England*. In doing so, we will highlight sets of conceptual metaphors as vital and basic strategic tools for the construction of the (complex) literary self. The findings suggest the validity of an integrated model of literary identity construction which we want to set forth. To that end, the combination of recent approaches from literary studies and modern cognitive linguistics proved highly fruitful. With this study, we strive to, as Margaret Freeman puts it in her article on cognitive poetics, contribute to bridging the gap that exists between the spheres 'mind' and 'world' (cf. ibid. 2006: 408).

Theoretical Background

The term identity, and literary identity in particular, has recently been used to cover a wide range of phenomena. Here, we primarily focus on the literary character's personal identity as constructed by the reader on the basis of the text, or on the characters as *fictional beings*.[4] Though an analysis might also be performed under the heading of characterisation, we prefer to speak of the character's *identity* for several reasons. First, the term identity includes the aspect of self-reflexivity, i.e. the character's role in first perceiving and then presenting themselves, which is generally not included in concepts such as character or personality, and second, because the term in itself is already indicative of the wider implications that connect personal to collective and cultural phenomena.

When investigating the construction of literary identity, it is fundamental to clarify how we conceive of the characters as part of a general model of reception. It is our basic assumption that literary characters and their identities are constructed as part of a larger mental model in the reader's mind. Drawing on the basic model of text understanding first articulated by Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) and further elaborated for the description of cognitive character construction by Schneider (2000) and Culpeper (2001),[5] we assume that readers construct a mental model of the literary character and their identity within a larger situation model (cf. Fig. 1). According to Van Dijk and Kintsch, this situation model is the centrepiece in the process of understanding texts, since it is here that we find "the cognitive representation of the events, actions, persons, and in general the situation a text is about" (1983: 11). Within this situation model, the reader will

[4] "Fiktive Wesen"; cf. Eder (2008). The term is meant to denote personality, physical, psychological and social traits.

[5] Schneider and Culpeper have proposed similar theories on the mental modelling of literary characters based on Van Dijk and Kintsch's basic model of text understanding. Their approaches have become widely accepted within cognitive approaches to literature and have been further elaborated by e.g. Jannidis (2004) or Eder (2008). Culpeper (2009) in turn offers a summary of the cognitive approach to character construction, also incorporating more recent research in both cognitive studies and narratology. For a more detailed description of Van Dijk and Kintsch, cf. e.g. Strasen (2008).

then construct a mental sub-model including the character's traits, goals, motives, beliefs and emotions (cf. Culpeper 2001: 33).[6] In the construction of both these models, readers draw on textual information, which is mentally represented as the text base,[7] as well as on different forms of prior knowledge.

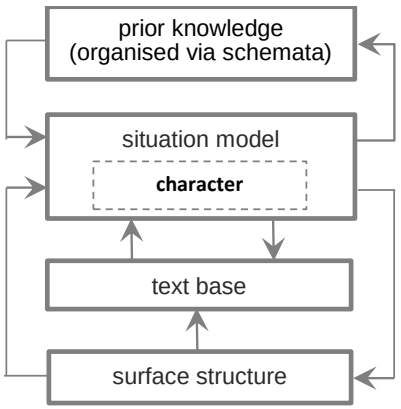

Fig. 1: Constructing literary identity (based on Culpeper 2001)

The organisation of this prior knowledge within long-term semantic memory now plays a vital role, since it determines which knowledge is available for incorporation into the situation model. Though there is a wide array of terminology used (including *prototype*, *frame*, *script*, *schema* or *scenario*), all related theories share the basic assumption that knowledge is structured into organisational units which represent stereotypical situations and experiences. In the following, we will use the term *schema* to refer to these cognitive building blocks, since it is in use as a blanket term while others may also refer to more specialised concepts (cf. Culpeper 2001: 60, Strasen 2008: 37). The clearest definition is still provided by Minsky, who describes schemata (or *frames* in his terminology) as follows:

> A *frame* is a data-structure for representing a stereo-typed situation [...]. Attached to each frame are several kinds of information. [...] The 'top levels' of a frame are fixed, and represent things that are always true about the supposed situation. The lower levels have many *terminals* – 'slots' that must be filled by specific instances […]. Each terminal can specify conditions its assignments must meet. […] *A frame's terminals are normally already filled with 'default' assignments.* (Minsky 1979: 1-2, emphasis in the original)

This approach is widely agreed on in cognitive literary studies. However, only rarely do scholars in the field explain what exactly triggers the activation of these schemata or how it can come about that readers with a shared cultural background tend to integrate similar/the same elements into their mental models while leaving out others. The present study is to be seen as a contribution to answering this question.

[6] By "construct" we mean to refer to an active process on the part of the reader. This process, however, is usually unconscious. The conscious attempt to reconcile information can also be part of the reception process, yet it requires more cognitive effort.
[7] This text base is "the semantic representation of the input discourse" (Van Dijk/Kintsch 1983: 11).

Though reading remains an individual process and interpretations idiosyncratic, we find that readers with a similar cultural background often agree in their basic conception of a character.[8] This is strongly related to the fact that knowledge is never objective, neutral or purely individual but shaped by the particular cultural context in which it is gained. Therefore, readers belonging to the same cultural group share certain knowledge structures[9] and we claim that it is these they frequently draw upon in the reception of literary texts. In fact, we can presume that authors will assume certain knowledge to be shared amongst a particular readership and put information into their texts according to these assumptions – whether consciously or unconsciously. Thus, when describing the cognitive processes of reception we need to distinguish between individual cognitive schemata and those which are shared within a social group, society or culture. Those idealised cognitive schemata, or *cultural models* (Stockwell 2002) will be at the centre of this investigation as they can be regarded as the interface between individual and sociocultural influences (cf. Strasen 2008: 294). This leads to our first hypothesis:

a) In the construction of situation models in general and those related to the identity of literary characters in particular, readers draw not only on their individual knowledge but also on shared cultural knowledge (in the form of cultural models).

The next logical step now should be to identify the cultural models a particular text draws upon. Cultural anthropology, especially the work of Strauss and Quinn (1997), has tried to develop methods to reconstruct cultural models on the basis of collections of individual utterances. This endeavour is not straightforward, however. Problems in this respect start with such basic questions as whether a family's eating habits constitute the same kind of culture as the fuzzy set of values and beliefs often called 'Western culture', and extend to detailed questions regarding the processes of interaction between individual and collective knowledge (cf. Strasen 2008). Strasen convincingly argues that texts should allow us to reconstruct those models with the help of hermeneutic methods that belong to the traditional toolkit of the literary scholar (cf. ibid.: 327). In this context, Strasen suggests an investigation of conceptual metaphor.

In their ground-breaking work *Metaphors We Live by*, Lakoff and Johnson identify metaphors as dominant underlying structures within our cognitive system. As they phrase it,

> metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. […] If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor. (Lakoff/Johnson 1999: 3)

[8] Experimental evidence can, for example, be found in Andersen et al. (1977), who show that most of their informants conceived of a text character as a convict unless they had a background in wrestling, in which case they perceived the character as a wrestler, too.
[9] This is how culture is occasionally defined in cultural anthropology; cf. e.g. Strauss/Quinn (1997).

Lakoff and Johnson thus postulate that our cognitive system is largely (but not exclusively) structured through metaphor since we tend to understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another (cf. ibid.: 5), some of their most well-known examples being the metaphors of TIME is MONEY or LIFE is JOURNEY. Similar to most reception processes, these conceptual metaphors work largely unconsciously but are manifested through metaphorical linguistic expression. While this definition of conceptual metaphor still remains fairly general, it is worthwhile noting that Lakoff and Johnson distinguish different types of conceptual metaphor in later works, i.e. primary and complex metaphors. *Primary metaphors* are basic and general in so far as they "arise naturally, automatically, and unconsciously through everyday experience" (Lakoff/Johnson 2008: 46) and therefore are often connected to direct physical, i.e. *embodied*, experience. *Complex metaphors,* on the other hand, are "built out of primary metaphors plus forms of *commonplace knowledge: cultural models*, folk theories, or simply knowledge or beliefs that are widely accepted in a culture" (ibid.: 60, emphasis ours).

While cultural models can thus be regarded as potential elements in the construction of conceptual metaphor, this process also works the other way around. Lakoff himself describes cultural models (or *Idealized Cognitive Models* in his terminology) as being built around and based on conceptual metaphors (cf. Lakoff 1987: 284).[10] Accordingly, instantiations of conceptual metaphor can indicate underlying cultural models in the text. Even Strauss and Quinn, who show themselves to be very critical of some of the methods promoted by Lakoff et al. (cf. Strauss/Quinn 1997: 159-160), nevertheless emphasise the relevance of (conceptual) metaphors in reconstructing cultural models:

> I have suggested that metaphors are good clues to the cultural understanding that lie behind them because of what they do: In drawing on cultural exemplars and using these exemplars metaphorically to clarify the speaker's meaning for the ordinary listener, they also spell out this meaning, and the cultural understanding behind it for the analyst. (ibid.: 156-157)

However, at the same time, conceptual metaphors can also call existing cultural models into question by establishing new analogies (cf. ibid.: 156).

On the basis of these theoretical reflections, we arrive at the follow-up hypotheses b) and c), which will be tested in an analysis of selected texts:

b) Conceptual metaphors may not only constitute cultural models in themselves they also mediate between individual cognitive structures and cultural models. As such, they can open up new mental spaces for the construction of identity.

[10] To avoid circular reasoning, it has to be pointed out that our position in this regard is not as strong as Lakoff's. While we consider conceptual metaphors as one important element in the construction of cultural models, not every cultural model needs to be traceable to a conceptual metaphor. Similarly, Lakoff et al.'s theory has often been criticised for claiming universality of conceptual metaphors across cultures or failing to clarify whether theirs is a basic universality or a cultural universality (cf. e.g. Shore 1996: 334). Since we are only concerned with members of the same culture, we will not discuss this question in further detail.

c) Since conceptual metaphors find direct expression in language, they make underlying cultural models accessible through an analysis of the text itself.

Conceptual metaphor and identity in three selected novels

On the basis of the theoretical framework and the general assumption that cultural models are made accessible through an analysis of the written text itself, we want to put focus on the metaphors instantiated therein via language. More particularly so, we intend to provide an analysis of sets of metaphors that can be traced back to underlying conceptual metaphors, which in turn can be linked to basal cultural models at work. By identifying conceptual metaphors, we claim to provide ample proof for their constitutive nature in creating character identity. Eventually, we propose a toolset to be incorporated into Schneider's and Culpeper's accounts of Van Dijk and Kintsch (cf. Fig. 1). Our model proposal will be elaborated in the last part of this paper.

Conceptual metaphors, and the array of these employed by the author, help shape (and reshape) the development of identity of the fictional characters featuring in creative novel writing. To show this, we selected three contemporary novels from the British Isles in which the quest for and negotiation of identity, both on individual and supra-individual levels, represent key issues to the understanding and interpretation of the whole texts:[11]

- *The Woman Who Walked into Doors* by Roddy Doyle (1996)
- *Written on the Body* by Jeanette Winterson (1992)
- *England, England* by Julian Barnes (1998)

In this regard, the relative recency of the novels and their closeness in terms of time and place of publication suggest that the cultural models which we, as readers, bring to the text are significantly overlapping with those models dominant at the time of text production. In the analysis that follows, we will lay particular emphasis on the conceptualisation of the identity of the respective protagonists.

The Woman Who Walked into Doors

The plot of Doyle's novel takes place in an Irish, suburban, lower-class setting. It is narrated from the perspective of Paula Spencer, who reminisces about her past. The reader learns that her youth and adult life were characterised by acts of violence done to her, which culminate in the frequent physical abuse by her husband. After denying and concealing her victimhood in addition to indulging in alcohol, she finally aims to set herself free.

We join Paula towards the end of the novel, where she reflects on her recent past:

[11] The texts under concern can, in line with Neumann (2008), be fittingly categorised as *fictions of identity*.

(1) I always saw myself from a distance […]. I lived this life all day; changed bits, added others. I ran away all the time. I ran away […]. Miles from anything Irish. (Doyle 1998: 210)

By tackling the non-literal meaning of "ran away" and "miles from", she conceptualises her life in spatial, i.e. directional terms. These are two examples out of several which serve as instantiations of the LIFE is JOURNEY conceptual metaphor. After Paula makes the reader overtly witness that her life is an incomplete assembly ("changed bits, added others"), she continues:

(2) I ran away in my dreams, the ones I could handle and control. I didn't have real dreams, night dreams. I just went black. I drank myself into the blackness. I could never run away in the real dreams. I didn't let them in. Sometimes, though, they got through. I fought myself awake. I could never move; I couldn't breathe. (ibid.: 210-211)

(3) On good days I knew there was a door there. […] I knew where I was going; I knew why. I could love and think. […] The bad ones weren't days at all. […] There was no door because it didn't exist. (ibid.: 212)

Her past self is summarised by denotations and connotations of alcohol-induced "blackness", i.e. in terms of the concept of dark as opposed to light, along her journey ("went black"). She sees herself as paralysed ("could never move") though barring the outside ("didn't let them in"), while the personified "real dreams" are trying to get "through", i.e. invade her personal confinement. The "door" represents, yet only an occasional, hopeful way out in order to continue life's journey ("where I was going"), which includes the regained ability to "love and think" instead of having to "fight".

The turning point of the plot is when Paula reports how she knocks her oppressor down with a pan:

(4) I don't know what happened to me – the Bionic Woman – he was gone. It was too easy. Just bang – gone. The evil in the kitchen; his eyes. Gone. The frying pan had no weight. (ibid.: 213)

She now depicts herself as a superheroine ("the Bionic Woman"), effortlessly fighting against her antagonist-husband, who is thus turned into the epitome of evil. This act of redemption is the cathartic milestone in the protagonist's identity development and it is transported by the text through metaphors.

With respect to development, the following clusters of identity-shaping conceptual metaphors have been identified so far:

Tradition	Awareness	Emancipation
LIFE is JOURNEY LIFE is FIGHT SELF is CONFINED OBJECT SELF is DARK ALCOHOL EFFECT is DARK	LIFE is PARALYSIS LIFE is INCOMPLETENESS DREAM is INVADER GOOD is LOVE (BY SELF) GOOD is THINKING (BY SELF) GOOD is DOOR	SELF is SUPERHERO VIOLENCE is WEIGHTLESS ENTITY

The tradition group represents widely established conceptualisations which both author and readers can draw upon. We may safely assume that they correspond to everyday conceptualisations, and, more particularly, to prevalent cultural models, which surface in language via metaphors. The tradition metaphors thus suit the cultural models most readers bring to and expect to happen in the text. For instance, DARK is BAD can be exploited as a common ground, hence can be straightforwardly linked up with "blackness" as a negative consequence of alcohol abuse.

A cultural model strongly connected to this tradition group and of particular importance in the novel is that of femininity in Irish culture. This cultural model can easily be exemplified through a brief look at the following extract from the Constitution of Ireland, captioned "The Family":[12]

> In particular, the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.
>
> The State shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home. (Bunreacht 1999: Art. 41, 2.1-2.2)

The extract exemplifies that an Irish woman's role is that of a mother, whose place is in the home. Irishness, an intricate label *per se*, is rather peripheral for the definition of the self in *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*.[13] Rather, the author challenges the stability of whatever "Irish" interwoven traditional cultural models do exist. They underlie the fabric of the story characters at first, such as in terms of alcoholism, gender, sexuality, religious affiliation or social roles and behaviour in general. Doyle's Paula Spencer is Irish, an alcoholic, and a mother, for instance. With regard to family life and motherhood in particular, and with the official passages from Art. 41 of the Irish constitution in mind, we realise that the confinement of Paula's self is actually socially and politically sanctioned.

Doyle avails himself of Paula to challenge established cultural models. In the novel, she makes use of awareness and emancipation metaphors (cf. above), which represent linguistic realisations of subsequent stages of her identity development. As she goes through a process of reassessment of her life, she starts to additionally use metaphors that are less conventional, i.e. less culturally entrenched and more personally specific. Via this catalyst stage, she conceives an exit ("door"; cf. (3)) from her hitherto confined, ill-constructed identity. The protagonist's emancipatory turn is then accomplished by an act of violence, which the reader is inclined to reinterpret in her favour and as clearly justified. On the basis of the metaphors employed (cf. (4)), physical violence, up to that

[12] This codification of family life ideals was already in effect at the time of writing of *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*, and is so still in 2014. This conservatist conceptualisation is all the more interesting as it may be incongruent with that of the individual reader from non-Irish settings, let alone with other (Western) national constitutions.
[13] Cf. the rare instance of negatively connoted Irishness in text example (1) and occasional Anglo-Irish vernacular expletives throughout the novel.

point an exclusively male domain in the novel, is thus converted into a female means of liberation. Afterwards, in overcoming her "ghost" self (cf. Doyle 1998: 186), Paula is even able to leave her identity "box" (ibid.: 223) as she, with superhuman fury, drives off her tantaliser quoting *The Terminator*: "Hasta la vista, baby" (ibid.: 224). In this instance, she borrows the identity from a powerful character and makes it her own. A new (temporary) stability of her adjusted self is hence enabled, and the validity of traditional models that constitute identity is shaken.[14]

In the course of Paula's identity development in *The Woman Who Walks into Doors*, which is instantiated by metaphors, the author forces the reader to question stored (and maybe self-experienced) cultural models. Here, for one, Doyle tackles the conceptualisation of the victim-woman who is valuable when confined to the home and to her traditional, i.e. stigmatising social roles, including man-made power hegemonies.

Written on the Body

In Winterson's novel, a lover-protagonist narrates the plot which is characterised by a series of relationships with individual men and women. The greatest emphasis is put on a passionate affair with Louise, who represents the paragon of desirability for the narrator. Before and after the discovery of Louise's eventual fatal cancer, the relationship with her is reflected upon.

A basic stratagem in *Written on the Body* is the unspecified gender of the anonymous, bisexual narrator. This anonymity is a structural feature that is maintained throughout the novel. The readers are supposed to question and dissolve deadlocked discourse patterns of gender-based identity that they have been imbued with in "conventional narrative" (Winterson in Finney 2006: 189), for instance. The author does away with established dichotomies between man and woman, as well as with stereotypes linked to love, sex and relationships in general. In this respect, Winterson shares with Doyle the aim to break with traditional conceptualisations and bring alternative cultural models to the reader's awareness.

Similar to *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*, the narrator-protagonist of *Written on the Body* goes through identity stages which are discernible in the use of metaphors. A striking abundance of source domains is mapped onto an identity target, either the protagonist's or the other lovers'. The conceptual metaphor pool is taken, among others, from the domains of medicine, religion, politics, war, technology, literature or nature in order to provide clues to either male or female identity.[15] Clearly, Winterson does so to draw red herrings

[14] Referring to the novel, Peach states: "a man is seen as providing the means of her restricted and restrictive family life." (2004: 192). This traditional model, at work in Paula's narrated past, is inverted by her emancipation.

[15] While the specialist discourses of literature and nature, including their particular aesthetics in the novel, appeal to the reader's entrenched attribution to the female, the other mentioned domains rather suit cultural modelling along the simplistic lines of the male as proponent of reason and power. Conceptual metaphor examples that stem from those specialist discourses and that base on the play with the dualistic (social) gender tradition are: BODY is QUANTIFIABLE LIST OF

across the reader's track of gender expectations. In the following, the focus lies again on those metaphorical conceptualisations that forge and develop the identity of the narrator him/herself.

(5) I had a lover once […]. She was a happily married woman. I began to feel as if we were crewing a submarine. […] We sank lower and lower in our love-lined lead-lined coffin. (Winterson 1993: 16)

(6) If I rush at this relationship it's because I fear for it. I fear you have a door I cannot see […]. Then what as I bang the walls like the Inquisition searching for a saint? Where will I find the secret passage? For me it'll just be the same four walls. (ibid.: 18)

(7) I had been an emotional nomad for too long. Hadn't I come here weak and bruised to put a fence round the space Louise now threatened? […] You aren't threatening me, I'm threatening myself. (ibid.: 38-39)

The protagonist's relationships are conceptualised via metaphors along the RELATIONSHIP is JOURNEY pattern ("crewing", "rush", "passage"). The allusions to a submarine crew (cf. (5)), religious inquisition (cf. (6)) and a nomadic state of being (cf. (7)) help the lover to assess his/her self vis-à-vis others. This self-assessment during the early relationships until the narrator meets Louise is performed by having recourse to gender-biased domain conceptualisations, from which we selected examples of traditionally male-biased ones here.

With respect to identity, the lovers' selves are confined spaces ("you have a door", "four walls", "fence round the space"). Louise is the character who, metaphorically put, is able to break the narrator's fence and thus makes his/her further identity development possible.

The reader witnesses instantiations of different kinds of conceptual metaphor sets towards the end of the novel:

(8) Misery is a vacuum. A space without air, a suffocated dead place, the abode of the miserable. Misery is a tenement block […]. Misery is a no U-turns, no stopping road. […] Travel down it at furious speed though the days are mummified in lead. […] There are no clocks in misery, just an endless ticking. (ibid.: 183)

Misery strikes the protagonist as a consequence of Louise's cancer. It is a home ("abode", "tenement block"), though an empty space ("space without air", "dead place"), to the self who is now on a timeless journey ("Travel down it", "There are no clocks"). The protagonist overcomes this state of identity destabilisation by renarrating the self, which is manifested via metaphors again:

BODY PARTS (cf. Winterson 1993: 51, 120), BODY is TERRITORY (cf. ibid.: 20), BODY is SURFACE TO WRITE ON (cf. ibid.: 89), BODY is SEA (cf. ibid.: 80). The diverse body concepts that are displayed in the novel themselves have direct impact on the concept of love, which is, again with the help of metaphors, portrayed as a codependent variable of the body, e.g. LOVE is EXPLORATION (cf. ibid.: 20, 117, 119), LOVE is DROWNING (cf. ibid.: 91).

(9) This is where the story starts, in this threadbare room. The walls are exploding. The windows have turned into telescopes. Moon and stars are magnified in this room. The sun hangs over the mantelpiece. I stretch out my hand and reach the corners of the world. The world is bundled up in this room. Beyond the door, where the river is, where the roads are, we shall be. We can take the world with us when we go and sling the sun under your arm. (ibid.: 190)

Here, identity is clearly depicted as narration ("the story starts"). The ending is a new beginning, confinement dissolves ("walls are exploding") and a new view of the world can set in. An open, filled space awaits the loving selves ("Beyond the door, where the river is"), whose future will be a new journey. In this respect, nature is conceptualised as subject to the adjusting self ("reach the corners of the world", "sling the sun under your arm"). This redefinition of the self takes place entirely beyond traditional gender models, which lies at the core of what Winterson wants to impart to the reader.

In (9), a key passage from the final part of the novel, a cosmic and even transcendental dimension is added to the conceptualisations of relationship and loverhood. In this respect, an excerpt from a *Time Out* magazine review on the back cover of the 1993 issue of *Written on the Body* draws a parallel between the novel and John Donne's "The Good-Morrow":

> For love, all love of other sight controules,
> And makes one little roome, an every where. […]
> Let us possesse one world, each hath one, and is one. […]
> Where can we finde two better hemispheares
> Without sharpe North, without declining West?
> Whatever dyes, was not mixt equally
> (Donne 1960: 23, ll. 10-19)

In fact, we may find an echo of Donne's lines in the redefinition of the protagonist self. Ideal reciprocal love is immortal and can shape a new reality, which is what the narrator of *Written on the Body* envisions for him/herself and Louise. The lover-protagonist thus acts, as Richardson put it, in a "transformative space" (ibid.: 2008: 2), in which not only culturally established models of gender are unsettled, but conceptual conventions of time and space as well. In other words, by employing an eclectic excess quantity of metaphors, Winterson deliberately refrains from confirming assumed common, supra-individual shared knowledge.

We may summarise the identity development of *Written on the Body's* narrator on the basis of subsequent metaphor sets as follows:

play on gender stereotypes	**Destabilisation**	**Redefinition**
RELATIONSHIP is JOURNEY LOVER SELF is… …SUBMARINE CREW MEMBER …NOMAD …CONFINED ROOM/SPACE …FENCEABLE SPACE	MISERY is TIMELESS JOURNEY MISERY is HOME OF SELF MISERY is EMPTY SPACE	RELATIONSHIP is NEW JOURNEY SELF is NEW NARRATION NATURE is SUBJECT TO SELF NEW SELF is UNCONFINED ROOM

On the basis of metaphor, identity is negotiated and shown to be developing. Winterson particularly emphasises that we understand ourselves by narrating ourselves (cf. ibid. in Rubinson 2001: 228). For her, identity is narration, and being human is being text.[16] This may result in hybrid and seemingly fuzzy, incoherent states of individuals. In the novel, the narrator self remains such a hybrid. The success of his/her "degenderisation" strongly depends on the structure dynamics of (old-school) relationship conceptualisations that readers have in mind. This constant re-evaluating of the narrator self vis-à-vis the individual reader's conceptualisation of masculinity/femininity, for instance, is fuelled by the desire on the part of the reader to make meaning from the erratically spread metaphors relating to identity and to synchronise these with prevalent cultural models. The ultimate insight is that this strategy is meant to fail, as gender, and identity in general, is nothing but performed and constructed. According to the novel, this construction of alternative identities is basically linguistic, i.e. metaphorical in nature.

England, England

The plot of Barnes's novel centers on the installation of a theme park replica of England where historical figures and landmarks that are considered archetypically English are anachronistically reproduced and slotted together. The park soon turns out to be more popular than England itself, flourishes and is finally politically separated from England. As a consequence, "Old England" deteriorates sharply. The tripartite arrangement of the farce-like novel corresponds to periods of the life of the protagonist Martha Cochrane, namely her childhood memories, her work for the theme park project, and her eventual return to original England as a person of mellow age.

Barnes addresses identity, i.e. its construction and development, from Martha's individual perspective, which is paralleled by the negotiation of nationhood and the commodification of culture in general. Metaphors prove once again pivotal in shaping identity conceptualisations. In the following, we want to shed light on Martha's self in particular.

At the beginning of the novel, Martha recollects events from her childhood that are connected to her father's disappearance from her life. She deeply regrets that her father did not appreciate or even recall particular shared moments that she considers key to their relationship. She realises that she and her father have incongruent memories in this respect. As a consequence, Martha figures out that identity-shaping events are merely a construction of the individual mind. The third-person narrator of the plot draws on this IDENTITY is CONSTRUCTION conceptualisation and induces it in the reader by referring to a particular jigsaw puzzle Martha used to do:

(10) On the bus, she would reach behind her and push the [jigsaw puzzle] county down the back of the seat. […] There were about fifty counties to

[16] Cf. examples of SELF is NARRATOR OF OTHER in *Written on the Body* (cf. Winterson 1993: 89, 189).

> dispose of, and so it took her almost the whole term. […] At this rate she would never build her character. (Barnes 2000: 18)

The county pieces that form a map of England are incomplete, as one piece, which her father took (and never returned), is missing. She ultimately decides to get rid of all her pieces in a piecemeal fashion. Martha's self is conceptualised as constructed ("build her character"). While completion is the ideal and goal at first, adult Martha realises that such could not be achieved. From this perspective, her past self remains an incomplete construction just like the jigsaw puzzle.

In the course of the novel, the process of self-revision continues. The self-as-construct idea is particularly strengthened during her interaction with others:

(11) "Most people, in my opinion, steal much of what they are. If they didn't, what poor items they would be. [Martha,] [y]ou're just as constructed, in your own less… zestful way […]." (ibid.: 137)

All selves are constructed objects ("items"), the fragmented parts of which can be dishonestly taken away ("steal") from oneself.[17] Subsequently, Martha begins to be convinced that this pessimistic, disillusioned view on identity does in fact generally apply.

The final chapter sees Martha's homecoming to a retrograde England. Martha's age is now a key focal point of the definition of the self via metaphors:

(12) Was it the case that colours dimmed as the eye grew elderly? Or was it rather that in youth your excitement about the world transferred itself onto everything you saw and made it brighter. The landscape she surveyed was buff and bistre, ash and nettle, dun and roan, slate and bottle. (ibid.: 267)

(13) Yet it was a strange trajectory for a life: that she, so knowing a child, so disenchanted an adult, should be transformed into an old maid. (ibid.: 268)

Martha's conceptualisation of the self at this developmental stage combines mappings from different domains, e.g. flora/fauna ("grew elderly")[18] and the colour scale ("dimmed", "brighter"). The environment she perceives around her has changed drastically since the days of her youth. This perception from light past to dark present corresponds to the view of her self as an object that has been cast ("trajectory") through different identity stages. She concludes that life is a makeover ("transformed") of and by oneself, and of and by others:

(14) And perhaps it was also the case that, for all a lifetime's internal struggling, you were finally no more than others saw you as. That was your nature, whether you liked it or not. (ibid.)

In hindsight, Martha judges her life as personal strife ("internal struggling"). Drawing on her experience that matters of memory and perception are a construction of the mind, she gives in to the existential fact that identity, or the

[17] This reminds of Paula Spencer's incomplete assembly of the self in Doyle (1998); cf. *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*, text example (1).
[18] The self is understood here as metonymically realised as "eye" in text example (12).

reality of *the self*, is primarily subject to its perception and construction by *the other*. The individual must thus fail in their attempt to manipulate this "otherly" construction on their own.

The protagonist's identity development in *England, England* is exemplified by the following conceptual metaphors in particular:

young Martha	adult Martha	old Martha
SELF is BUILDING SELF is CONSTRUCTION GOAL OF SELF is COMPLETENESS	PAST SELF is INCOMPLETE CONSTRUCTION SELF is FRAGMENTED OBJECT	OLD AGE is DIM, YOUTH is BRIGHT LIFE is OBJECT ON TRAJECTORY LIFE is TRANSFORMATION LIFE is INTERNAL STRUGGLE SELF is CONSTRUCTION BY OTHERS

The positively connoted yet, according to Martha's retrospection, naive childhood conceptualisations are in line with the prevalent cultural modelling of growing-up. This modelling includes the goal to build individual, well-rounded character in a protected environment. The innocence of youth, however, is recognised to be a mere construction by the protagonist of the novel (cf. ibid.: 274) who, as an adult, goes through a stage of destabilization. If the past self is an incomplete construction, can completeness be achieved at all? Ultimately, Martha repents of having been in a limbo "between the entirely local and the nearly eternal" (ibid.: 270) for too long. As a consequence, she redefines the construction metaphor for her current, old self by conceding that her identity is formed by others rather than by herself. The reader is urged to follow suit, i.e. to question the idealised concepts that are supposed to shape individual identity vis-à-vis the influence of our environment, i.e. the other. *Esse est percipi*[19] – all being and, in the vein of Barnes's *England, England*, identity is constituted as a mental concept on the basis of perception by others. The development up to that point has been highlighted with the help of conceptual metaphor instantiations.

Importantly, the development of the protagonist's self is mirrored in the conceptualisation of the national self. National identity thus constitutes a second, parallel identity strand in the novel, starting with the incomplete England jigsaw puzzle as set out above (cf. text example (10)).[20] Nationhood itself is depicted as an idealised construction from compiled historical fragments, which splendidly shows in the novel characters' planning and running a timeless, pseudo-authentic counterworld, i.e. the theme park replica of England.[21] By subverting "conventional notions of Englishness" (Nünning 2001: 60), the author enforces his challenging of readers' expectations with regard to cultural models by adding yet another, supra-individual layer.

[19] "To be is to be perceived." Cf. Berkeley (1881: 195).
[20] Here: NATIONAL SELF is INCOMPLETE CONSTRUCTION. On metaphors as ideological constructs for identity, cf. e.g. Vengadasamy (2011).
[21] The term "counterworld" as a denotation of the theme park in *England, England* is adopted from Heiler (2004).

Through the examples of Martha[22] and the nation of England, Barnes aims at grey-scaling the traditional black-and-white dichotomies of simulacrum versus original, and constructed versus real. To that end, metaphors serve as a chief tool to put established conceptualisations to the test. According to *England, England*, identity essentially is a construction. Here, it was our aim to show how the dynamic of this construction is performed via (conceptual) metaphors and their interaction with cultural models.

Conceptual metaphor in cognitive identity construction: an integrated model

In these sample analyses, we have been able to show the vital role conceptual metaphor plays in the construction of a mental model of literary character. If we conceive of the character's identity itself as a schema with different terminals, e.g. gender, social roles, nationality or behavioural patterns,[23] which are first filled by default and augmented or substituted in the course of the reading process, we can easily integrate the results provided in the analysis of Doyle's novel above. The traditional conceptual metaphors draw on widespread notions of female Irish identity, and thus on readily available cultural models,[24] for the construction of Paula. Yet in the stages of awareness and emancipation, those cultural models are called into question as valid default assignments. Instead, through conceptual metaphor, other, previously unrelated (and therefore cognitively not activated) cultural models are made available for integration into Paula's identity schema and can, eventually, substitute the traditional ones. Thus we have shown that the integration of conceptual metaphor explains how phenomena on the level of the surface structure can directly influence the activation of knowledge structures within the mental model of identity construction. This, however, is not the only implication of our findings.

We can assume that the cultural model of identity the readers employ as basic schema for the construction of any character's identity also involves one terminal that denotes the state of that identity. We can further assume that the common view – independent of what psychological and sociological research may suggest (cf. e.g. Hall 2000) – still perceives of identity as a stable entity. This holds true for Paula who breaks out of one stable state, namely traditional identity, in order to settle into a new, (hopefully) equally stable emancipated one. The simple act of being able to break out of one identity pattern already calls into question whether "stable" can still be regarded as the default assignment. Winterson's *Written on the Body* then follows in the same vein: We as readers try to construct a stable identity for the narrator-protagonist, yet – especially at the beginning of the novel – we constantly receive information that is difficult to integrate into the web of hitherto activated cultural models. As a result, the models attached to the identity schema have to be constantly

[22] For a corpus analysis of Martha's speech patterning and thought representation, cf. Semino (2004).
[23] These, in turn, can constitute schemata with subterminals and thus involve cultural models.
[24] As an important aside, the reader need not necessarily share the view connected to a cultural model in order to be able to use it in the construction of their mental model (cf. Strasen 2008: 327).

modified, and it appears that “dynamic” instead of “stable” is the correct default assignment for any identity construction, the protagonist’s in particular. This dynamic state can also be seen in the types of conceptual metaphors employed towards the end of the novel.

Barnes, finally, goes one step further. Again, the use of conceptual metaphor, as well as other indicators in the text, questions the default assignments and cultural models involved in identity construction. Additionally though, the different versions of Martha as presented above are difficult to integrate even into an identity schema that sets its default state to dynamic – a state also reflected in the final conceptual metaphors such as LIFE is TRANSITION, LIFE is INTERNAL STRUGGLE or IDENTITY is CONSTRUCTION BY OTHERS. Therefore, what is actually called into question are not the assignments to the individual terminals within the identity schema, but the identity schema in itself. Through the use of metaphor in the construction of identity, *England, England* encourages readers to doubt the established cultural model that equates a person with a single identity, and instead suggests a new conceptualisation, possibly of several synchronous identities. Thus, conceptual metaphors go beyond simply activating established knowledge structures and can help create new ones. These insights lead to a modification of the theoretical model of literary identity construction suggested by Schneider and Culpeper with recourse to Van Dijk and Kintsch (cf. Fig. 2).

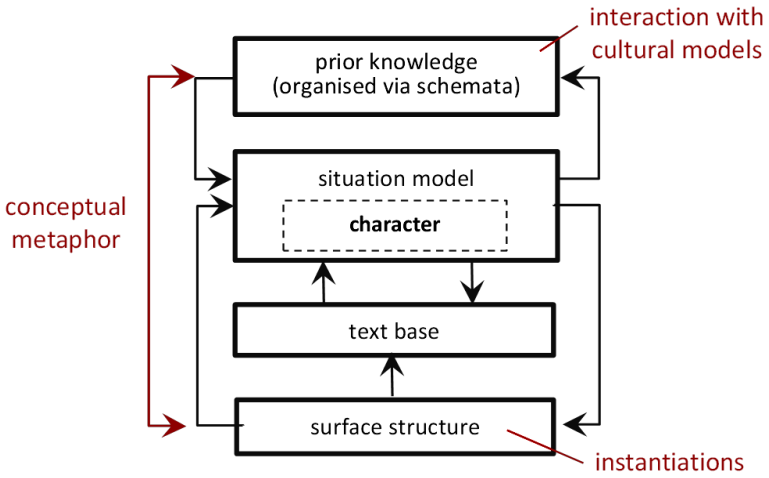

Fig. 2: Constructing literary identity via conceptual metaphor

It was shown here that conceptual metaphors can be of constitutive value in the construction of literary identity. Through instantiations in the text on the one hand and their direct interaction with cultural models on the other, they are able to connect prior knowledge structures directly to the text, which were hitherto unconnected. They can not only activate previously “unavailable” knowledge for integration into the situation model, but also contribute to a change in meta-structures. As such, they represent a vital clue to the researcher for both the reconstruction of the reading process itself as well as the reconstruction of cultural models relevant for the latter. In our contribution, we have provided a first step in the analysis of the prominent role of metaphor (and cultural models)

in the generation of literary identity, which is desirable to be supplemented through further research.

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