

**Reframing metaphor in translation: A cultural-linguistic analysis of *Bumi Manusia* and *Garten der Menschheit* with pedagogical insights**

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**ABSTRACT**

This article examines the conceptual metaphors employed in the Indonesian novel *Bumi Manusia* and its German translation, *Garten der Menschheit*, with a focus on how metaphorical expressions embody cultural cognition and how translation strategies reshape these metaphors across languages. Sixty-four conceptual metaphor was analysed in terms of their cognitive structure, type, cultural grounding, and translation technique. Drawing on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and a comparative cultural-linguistic perspective, the study identifies dominant metaphorical domains including emotion, human character, nature and landscape, modernity, social hierarchy, physical movement, and embodiment. The analysis demonstrates how metaphors are adapted to align with the linguistic and cultural context of German-speaking readers, ensuring that the translated text preserves the depth and nuance of the original. The findings provide a qualitative mapping of metaphorical conceptualizations in both languages and offer insights into the cognitive and cultural processes involved in metaphor translation. In addition, the study outlines pedagogical implications for literary studies, intercultural competence, and metaphor awareness in multilingual classrooms.

**Keywords:** *Bumi Manusia*, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, *Garten der Menschheit*, translation, intercultural competence, metaphor awareness

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**INTRODUCTION**

Metaphor is central to human cognition, shaping the way individuals conceptualize abstract experiences through concrete domains (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). It structures how individuals understand and conceptualize emotions, morality, social relations, time, and the physical world. In translation, metaphors require negotiation between universal conceptual patterns and culture-specific cognitive mappings. To illustrate these dynamics in practice, literary texts provide fertile ground for examining how metaphors operate within and across cultures. One such example is Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Bumi Manusia*, a canonical Indonesian novel, is rich in metaphorical expressions that articulate themes of colonialism, identity, resistance, and personal transformation—reflecting the Javanese worldview, colonial experience, and local embodiment. Its German translation, *Garten der Menschheit*, introduces another interpretive dimension: how metaphors shift, intensify, or transform across languages and cultures.

Studies in cognitive linguistics have completely changed how we think about metaphor, seeing it as something related to how the mind works, not just a tool used for persuasive speaking. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) proposes that metaphor structures human thought by mapping elements from a concrete source domain onto an abstract target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In this view, metaphors such as *life is a journey* or *power is up* reflecting systematic patterns of conceptualization grounded in embodied experience. Subsequent developments have refined CMT by emphasizing embodiment, image schemas, and cultural variation (Johnson, 1987; Kövecses, 2015). While some conceptual metaphors appear to be widely shared due to common bodily experience, their linguistic realization, frequency, and evaluative orientation vary across cultures. This has led to the emergence of a cognitive-cultural approach to metaphor, which views metaphor as both cognitively motivated and culturally embedded (Kövecses,

2010). Literary metaphors are seen as particularly powerful because they integrate conceptual structure with aesthetic and emotional effects, shaping readers' experiential engagement with the text (Kuiken & Douglas, 2018; Porto, 2024; Ziadi, 2025). In the field of language and literature education, research indicates that explicit attention to metaphor enhances learners' interpretive skills, critical thinking, and intercultural awareness (Cao & Yao, 2018; Martín-Gascón, 2024). Cognitive approaches to metaphor have been applied in foreign language teaching to improve vocabulary acquisition and conceptual understanding (Hang, 2024; Hu, 2024).

In the context of Indonesian language education at advanced levels, metaphor analysis can strengthen learners' abilities to interpret literary texts, develop critical reading skills, and understand the cultural knowledge embedded in language. Studies have shown that conceptual metaphors in Indonesian literature provide valuable insights into cultural worldviews and can be effectively integrated into language learning (Lapasau et al., 2020). Moreover, research on metaphors in Indonesian and Acehese proverbs highlights how metaphorical expressions encode shared societal values, making them a powerful pedagogical resource for fostering cultural literacy in advanced learners (Iskandar et al., 2025). However, research linking metaphor analysis, translation comparison, and pedagogical application remains limited. This study aims to analyze the conceptual metaphors in *Bumi Manusia* through the lens of cognitive linguistics, compare them with their German translations to uncover cross-cultural shifts in conceptualization, and derive pedagogical implications for enhancing Indonesian language learning and translation training through metaphor-based instruction.

Early influential studies highlight that effective metaphor translation requires an understanding of source and target domains and their culturally embedded conceptual mappings, positioning metaphors as cognitive bridges rather than decorative linguistic devices (Chunying, 2020). Building on this premise, strategy-based approaches have identified recurring patterns in metaphor transfer, including image preservation, adaptation, and demetaphorization (Manipuspika, 2018), thereby reinforcing the view of translation as an interpretive and culturally mediated practice. Contemporary research on metaphor translation has increasingly emphasized the interdependence of cognition, culture, and ideology in cross-linguistic meaning construction (Gao, 2025; Schäffner & Chilton, 2020; Wang, 2025). He et al., (2021) complemented these findings by developing analytical frameworks that explore metaphor movement across linguistic and cultural boundaries. However, the application of such cognitive-cultural models to Indonesian literary texts remains limited.

Studies situated in the Indonesian context further demonstrate the cultural specificity and semantic sensitivity of metaphors in translation. Research on religious, literary, and academic discourse reveals that literal translation often leads to meaning reduction, ideological shifts, or loss of experiential depth (Nurbayan, 2019; Susini et al., 2019). Other studies emphasize the pedagogical and cultural significance of metaphors in Indonesian literature and language education, particularly emotion-based and grammatical metaphors, while also identifying persistent challenges in learners' conceptual abstraction (Afifi, 2021; Lapasau et al., 2020). These findings highlight the need for translation research that not only documents metaphorical shifts across languages but also interrogates their cultural and pedagogical consequences. Building on this scholarship, the present study examines how metaphors in *Bumi Manusia* and its German translation *Garten der Menschheit* reveal both the possibilities and limitations of cross-cultural meaning transfer, while also offering insights for advanced Indonesian language education.

Despite this expanding body of scholarship, research on metaphor translation in *Bumi Manusia* has predominantly focused on English target texts and strategy classification, leaving cognitive-cultural analyses in non-English languages largely unexplored. Although comparative work on Indonesian–German metaphors exist (Lapasau, 2018), its thematic restriction limits broader generalization. Furthermore, while recent studies have begun to acknowledge the pedagogical potential of metaphor translation in literary education (Ihsani & Capah, 2023; Junyanti, 2024), systematic and empirical integration into translation pedagogy and cross-cultural metaphor instruction remains underdeveloped.

To address these gaps, the present study applies a cognitive-cultural framework to the analysis of experiential metaphors in *Bumi Manusia* and its German translation *Garten der Menschheit*. By comparing conceptual mappings and translation strategies across Indonesian and German, the study advances current scholarship and demonstrates how metaphor functions not only as a cognitive and cultural construct but also as a pedagogical resource in multilingual literary education. Specifically, metaphor analysis can be used to train learners to recognize how meaning is shaped by cultural worldviews, to compare interpretive strategies across languages, and to critically evaluate the ideological implications of translation choices.

In advanced Indonesian language classrooms, such activities foster deeper literary engagement, sharpen critical reading skills, and encourage learners to reflect on the interplay between language, culture, and identity. Thus, metaphors become not merely stylistic devices but tools for cultivating intercultural competence and analytical sophistication in multilingual education.

## METHOD

This study applies a qualitative descriptive–interpretive design grounded in Cognitive Linguistics and translation studies to examine metaphor translation in literary texts. A comparative approach is adopted to analyse conceptual metaphors in *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer and their renderings in the German translation *Garten der Menschheit*. The data consist of 64 metaphorical expressions extracted manually from both texts through purposive sampling. Metaphorical expressions were selected based on their relevance to the study’s focus on abstract domains such as identity, power, struggle, emotion, and social relations. MIP (Metaphor Identification Procedure) is used for the analysis. Passages were first read closely to identify candidate expressions, which were then cross-checked against established metaphor criteria (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). From an initial pool of candidate metaphors, only those that clearly instantiated underlying conceptual mappings and carried cultural or pedagogical significance were retained. This ensured that the sample was deliberately chosen to represent the most salient and analytically rich metaphors for cross-cultural comparison.

Each metaphor was examined by identifying its source domain (the concrete or familiar area of experience from which metaphorical expressions are drawn) and its target domain (the abstract concept that is being understood through the metaphor). The analysis then reconstructs the conceptual mappings that connect these domains, showing how meaning is transferred from one to the other. Finally, each metaphor is classified according to type: structural metaphors, which organize one concept in terms of another (e.g., Effort is physical action); orientational metaphors, which rely on spatial orientation (e.g., Emotion is volume), ontological metaphors, which treat abstract entities as objects or substances (e.g., Emotion is a physical burden); and culturally grounded metaphors, which are specific to a community’s worldview and social practices.

The corresponding German renderings were analysed to identify translation strategies, examine conceptual continuity or shift, and interpret their pedagogical relevance for Indonesian language education and linguistic analysis. The analytical framework draws on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). To ensure analytical rigor, the study applies theoretical triangulation and iterative analysis, allowing for systematic interpretation of metaphorical meaning across linguistic, cultural, and educational dimensions. Intra-rater cross-checking and conceptual clustering ensured thematic consistency.

Herewith the flowchart of searching method employed:

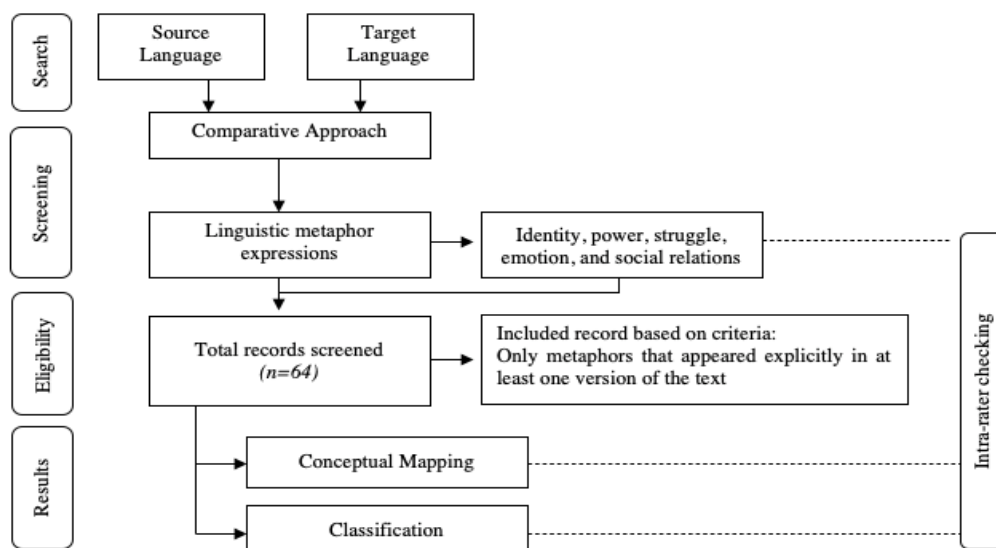


Figure. 1 Flowchart of searching method

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The metaphors identified in the data cluster into eleven conceptual domains. The findings show a strong dominance of embodied and force-based construals, in which abstract experiences such as work, emotion, cognition, and power are systematically mapped onto bodily effort, impact, and material force.

**Table 1. Metaphorical Construal in *Bumi Manusia* and *Garten der Menschheit***

No.	Conceptual Theme	Conceptual Metaphor	Dominant Metaphor Type
1.	Embodiment & Physical Experience	a. Work/ effort is physical damage to the body (Percuma akan jadinya kita berdua membanting tulang).	Structural
		b. Emotion is a physical burden (Aku malu terpenal-pental)	Ontological
		c. Power is physical control ( <i>Aku di tangan orang berkuasa</i> )	Structural
2.	Perception & Cognition as Motion / Force	a. Perception is motion ( <i>Mataku mulai menggerayangi ruang tamu</i> )	Structural
		b. Thought or question is a sudden strike (Pertanyaan itu menyambar bagai kilat)	Structural
		c. Thought is a sudden natural force (Pertanyaan sambar menyambar)	Structural
3.	Emotion as Intensity, Sound, Weight, or Immersion	a. Emotion / bodily arousal is music (Rasanya ada gendang bermain dalam jantungku)	Structural
		b. Emotion is volume (Tentu dada ini menjadi gembung)	Orientalational
		c. Intense emotion is immersion in a liquid (air mata membanjiri kursi)	Ontological
4.	Light–Darkness Metaphor Cluster	a. Loss of reason is darkness ( <i>Kalau tuannya jadi mata gelap dan kau ditembak mati</i> )	Orientalational
		b. Light is a liquid (Cahaya perak memandikan hutan)	Ontological
		c. Light is a violent force (Lampu karbid kereta menyibak kegelapan dengan cara yang tak kenal damai)	Structural
		d. Condition/ fate is light–darkness (Setidak tidaknya bila pulauku diselimuti kegelapan malam, negrinya dipancari surya)	Structural/Cultural
5.	Nature & Landscape as Animate / Human	a. Landscape elements are animate beings (daun daun terbang riang)	Ontological/Cultural
		b. Nature is a human/ spiritual being (Dari jauh tampak gunung seperti pertapa )	Ontological/Cultural
		c. Mountains are ascetic human beings ( <i>Gunung gemunung berdiri tenang dalam keangkuhan, seperti pertapa berbaring membatu</i> )	Cultural
6.	Biological & Organic Growth Models	a. Ideas are living organisms ( <i>Modern! Dengan cepatnya kata itu menggelumbang dan membiak diri seperti bakteri</i> )	Structural
		b. Age is plant / food growth ( <i>Dalam hidupku, baru seumur jagung</i> )	Structural/ Cultural
		c. Intimate association is incubation ( <i>Apa kau tak pikirkan bahaya mengerami nyai?</i> )	Ontological
7.	Consumption, Ingestion & Absorption	a. Submission is total consumption ( <i>Mengapa kau tak melawan, bahkan menyerahkan diri mentah-mentah?</i> )	Structural
		b. Disappearance is being swallowed by the earth ( <i>Tuan lebih kami anggap lenyap di telan bumi</i> )	Ontological
		c. Polygamy is shared sweet substance ( <i>Dengannya ia tak bakal bermadu</i> )	Cultural
8.	Animalistic & Predatory Models of Human Relations	a. Sexual desire is predatory behaviour ( <i>Mata keranjang kita, buaya kita, bulan mana pula sedang kau rindukan?</i> )	Structural
		b. Men are deceptive animals ( <i>Semua lelaki memang kucing berlagak kelinci</i> )	Ontological/Ideological
9.	Technology, Violence & Material Force	a. Infrastructure is a cutting force (Jaringan jalan kereta api telah membelah belah pulauku, Jawa)	Structural
		b. Emission/ pollution is painting (Kepulan asap mewarnai langit)	Structural
10.	Cosmic & Moral Scale Amplification	a. Eyes are celestial bodies (stars) ( <i>Mata berkilauan itu seperti sepasang kejora dan bibirnya tersenyum meruntuhkan iman</i> )	Ontological
		b. Exaggerated responsibility is cosmic guardianship ( <i>Ia terus menggerutu seakan sedang jadi pengawal langit jangan sampai merobohi bumi</i> ).	Structural
11.	Animal metaphor	a. Predatory intent is animal scavenging (Ya, seperti gagak sedang menaksir naksir calon bangkai)	Structural

Cognitive and perceptual processes are frequently conceptualized as motion or sudden force, emphasizing immediacy and affective intensity rather than detached reasoning. A particularly coherent system emerges in the light–darkness cluster, where epistemic, moral, and existential evaluations are organized through a unified metaphorical logic. In addition, the data reveal extensive use of animate and organic metaphors, including personified landscapes, biological growth models, and animalistic construals of social relations. Several metaphors extend experience to technological and cosmic scales, amplifying responsibility, violence, and moral evaluation beyond the human level. Within each conceptual domain, we classify metaphors by type: 1. Structural metaphors, 2. Orientational metaphors, 3. Ontological metaphors, and 4. Cultural metaphors.

## Discussion

The purpose of the discussion is to explain the results based on the theories used, not just to list what was found. It becomes better by looking at the findings from earlier studies that were published in scientific journals. The following will discuss the results of research on conceptual metaphor in the novel *Bumi Manusia* and its translation *Garten der Menschheit* by examining one example for each sub-theme, analyzing source domain, target domain, metaphor type, translation strategy, and pedagogical implication. ST: source text, TT: target text.

### Data 1. Embodiment & Physical Experience

Work / effort is physical damage to the body

ST: *Percuma akan jadinya kita berdua membanting tulang.* (It will be useless for us both to work so hard).

TT: *Vergeblich wäre unsere ganze Mühe...* (All our efforts would be in vain).

The expression *membanting tulang* structures the abstract concept of effort through the concrete image of violent bodily exertion, emphasizing intensity and hardship. The source domain of violent bodily action (*banting tulang*) maps onto the target domain of human effort and struggle. In the German translation, the metaphor is demetaphorized, with the embodied imagery replaced by an abstract noun *Mühe* (effort). While the propositional meaning (futility of effort) is retained, the embodied imagery of bodily strain is lost. The target text paraphrases for clarity, sacrificing metaphorical colour for fluency. This often occurs when local idioms lack the same emotional resonance in the target language. Multiple studies with concrete participant data support this view. Masood & Haseeb (2025) discovered that paraphrasing is the most frequently used method in Urdu–English literary translation, but it often causes a loss of cultural meaning and results in a flat tone. Gebbia (2023) found that using literal and explicit methods leads to more neutral and less emotionally charged translations. When some parts are left out, the translated text loses the variety and unity of metaphors present in the original. The contrast between Indonesian metaphors such as *banting tulang* and their German counterparts like *Mühe* illustrates how linguistic choices shape rhetorical effect: the Indonesian expression conveys vivid bodily exertion, while the German rendering emphasizes effort in a more abstract, rational register. In a pedagogical context, students can be guided to compare these rhetorical effects in argumentative writing, thereby recognizing the trade-off between linguistic colour and readability. Such comparative analysis not only deepens their awareness of how metaphor encodes cultural worldviews but also strengthens their interpretive skills, intercultural competence, and sensitivity to stylistic nuance in both Indonesian and German literary discourse.

### Data 2. Perception & Cognition as Motion /Force

Perception is physical motion

ST: *Mataku mulai menggerayangi ruang tamu* (My eyes began to wander around the living room).

TT: *Meine Augen schweiften...* (my eyes wandered..).

The expression *Mataku mulai menggerayangi ruang tamu* is a structural metaphor, in which visual perception is conceptualized as bodily exploration. The source domain of physical movement and tactile exploration, expressed in the verb *menggerayangi* (“to crawl over, to grope”), is mapped onto the target domain of visual perception and spatial scanning. Translation strategy is metaphor preservation

with modulation. In the German translation *Meine Augen schweiften*, the metaphor is partially neutralized, shifting from tactile exploration to spatial movement without touch. While the translation preserves the idea of visual motion, it reduces the sensory intensity of the original metaphor, resulting in a conceptual attenuation of embodied perception. Lewandowski & Bisiada, (2025) found that translations usually kept the metaphorical mappings from the original language even though some of the conceptual metaphors were lost in translation. However, Valiulienė (2024) found that the original metaphor was kept in only about 30% of the cases, while other translations involved losing the metaphorical meaning through paraphrasing or using literal expressions, and sometimes omitting the metaphor altogether. Indonesian often uses the body as a multisensory tool, while German maintains physical boundaries. This is effective for teaching embodied cognition and stylistic differences in literature.

Data 3. Emotion as intensity, sound, weight, or immersion

Emotion/ bodily arousal is music/ rhythmic

ST: *Rasanya ada gendang bermain dalam jantungku* (It feels like a drum is beating in my heart).

TT: *Mein Herz trommelte.* (my heard was pounding).

The expression *Rasanya ada gendang bermain dalam jantungku* realizes the conceptual metaphor emotion is music/ rhythmic movement, in which intense emotional states are conceptualized through bodily rhythm and sound. This is a structural metaphor. The source domain of musical activity a *drum playing* maps onto the target domain of heightened inner emotion, suggesting agitation, excitement, anxiety, or emotional tension embodied in the heart. In the German translation *mein Herz trommelte*, the metaphor is condensed but preserved, retaining the rhythmic imagery while reducing the explicit musical instrument. This strategy maintains conceptual equivalence while adapting the expression to a more conventional German metaphorical pattern. The translation strategy is conceptually equivalent and embodied. The slight reduction in imagery reflects a cultural preference for lexical economy without substantially diminishing the embodied emotional effect. Teachers can demonstrate how culture shapes emotions e.g. by comparing the musical world of the archipelago versus the mechanical world of Europe. Learners understand that emotions are not universally metaphorical. This is in line with research conclusion by Utami (2025) and Rahardian & Rahardian (2018).

Data 4. Light–darkness metaphor cluster

Loss of reason is darkness

ST: *Kalau tuannya jadi mata gelap dan kau ditembak mati..* (If your master goes blind and you get shot dead).

TT: *Wenn ihr Tuan eifersüchtig wird und dich erschießt...* (If Tuan gets jealous and shoots you...).

The expression *mata gelap* instantiates the conceptual metaphor loss of reason is darkness, in which uncontrolled emotion—particularly jealousy or rage—is conceptualized as a state of visual and moral obscurity. The source domain of darkness and blindness maps onto the target domain of irrational, violent behavior. In the German translation *eifersüchtig wird*, the metaphor is fully demetaphorized, replaced by an explicit psychological state (*jealous*). While the causal link to violence (*erschießt*) is preserved, the metaphorical construal of emotional blindness is lost, resulting in a shift from embodied, moral imagery to a descriptive emotional label. This example can be used in translation pedagogy to train students to identify culture-specific conceptual metaphors such as *mata gelap* and to understand how embodied imagery shapes emotional meaning. Comparing the metaphorical source expression with its demetaphorized translation encourages critical reflection on translation strategies and their impact on cultural nuance (Abdullah & Tian, 2024).

Data 5. Nature and landscape as animate / human

Nature is a human

ST: *Dari kejauhan sana tampak samar samar gunung gemunung berdiri tenang dalam keangkuhan, seperti pertapa berbaring membatu* (From a distance, the mountains stood silently in the distance, like hermits lying motionless).

TT: *Am Horizon zeichneten sich die Hügel ab, die in friedlicher Erhabenheit da lagen wie versteinerte Einsiedler.* (The hills stood out on the horizon, lying there in peaceful grandeur like petrified hermits).

The source text personifies mountains as calm, proud ascetics, attributing human qualities such as serenity, arrogance, and stillness which instantiates the conceptual metaphor nature is a human being. This expression is best classified as a structural metaphor with strong personification. The source domain of a *hermit turned to stone* maps onto the target domain of the mountainous landscape, attributing spiritual stillness and timeless authority to nature. In the German translation *wie versteinerte Einsiedler*, the metaphor is preserved and slightly elevated, with the addition of *friedlicher Erhabenheit* (“peaceful sublimity”) reinforcing the aesthetic and spiritual dimension. This strategy maintains conceptual equivalence while intensifying the evaluative tone, suggesting a shared cross-cultural tendency to conceptualize nature through human and spiritual embodiment. Coscieme et al., (2020) found that in over 60 languages, people often see nature as having a spiritual aspect, meaning they experience it in a way that includes a spiritual dimension. This shows that spiritual views of nature are quite common. This example helps students recognize personification as a conceptual metaphor shaping cultural views of nature. Comparing the preserved metaphor in both languages encourages reflection on metaphor retention and its role in maintaining aesthetic and conceptual equivalence.

Data 6. Biological and organic growth models

Ideas are living organisms

ST: *Modern! Dengan cepatnya kata itu menggelumbang dan membiak diri seperti bakteria* (The word quickly spread and multiplied like bacteria).

TT: *Modern! In Windeseile schlug dieses Wort hohe Wellen und verbreitete sich in Europa wie eine Seuche.* (In no time at all, this word caused a stir and spread throughout Europe like an epidemic).

The expression of *modern* and *membiak seperti bakteria* instantiates the conceptual metaphor ideas are living organisms, more specifically ideology is disease, in which the spread of an abstract concept is conceptualized through biological contagion. The source domain of bacterial reproduction (*membiak seperti bakteria*) maps onto the target domain of ideological proliferation, carrying a strongly negative evaluative stance. In the German translation *wie eine Seuche*, the metaphor is preserved but generalized, replacing the specific biological image of bacteria with the broader notion of a plague. The translation strategy applied here is substitution or amplification, as illustrated in the rendering of *bakteri* into *Seuche* (“wabah”). While the translation maintains the conceptual framing of uncontrolled and harmful spread, it reduces scientific specificity, resulting in a slight conceptual abstraction without diminishing the critical force of the metaphor. This example can be used to teach students how abstract ideas are metaphorically framed through biological processes to express evaluation and ideology. Comparing *bakteria* with *Seuche* helps learners reflect on metaphor substitution, degrees of specificity, and their effects on conceptual framing and stance in translation. Haddad & Martínez (2019) demonstrate “domain loss” when translating the “radiative forcing” metaphor from English to Arabic, showing how translation processes influence semantic information.

Data 7. Consumption, Ingestion & Absorption

Submission is total consumption

ST: *Mengapa kau tak melawan, bahkan menyerahkan diri mentah-mentah?* (Why didn't you fight back, instead of just giving up?).

TT: *Warum folgst du den Lockrufen aus diesem gespentischen Haus?* (Why are you following the siren calls from this haunted house?).

The expression *menyerahkan diri mentah-mentah* instantiates the conceptual metaphor submission is total consumption, in which complete surrender is conceptualized as offering oneself in an unprocessed, defenceless state. The source domain of *raw consumption* maps onto the target domain of passive submission and loss of agency, carrying a strong evaluative judgment. In the German translation, the metaphor is replaced by a different conceptual framing, shifting from bodily

consumption to enticement is a call. This substitution results in a significant conceptual shift: the original metaphor of self-surrender is reinterpreted as voluntary attraction or temptation. While the translation conveys vulnerability, it reframes agency by emphasizing persuasion rather than submission, thereby altering the ideological nuance of the source text. This example is useful for showing students how shifts in conceptual metaphor can substantially alter agency and evaluative meaning in translation. Li (2020) discovered major changes in how Mao is portrayed by looking at how sentences are structured in translations, revealing how language choices affect who holds power and how the story is told. Comparing the consumption-based metaphor with the reframed metaphor of enticement encourages critical reflection on how translation choices reshape ideological nuance and character positioning.

Data 8. Animalistic & predatory models of human relations

Sexual desire is predatory behavior

ST: *Mata keranjang kita, buaya kita, bulan mana pula sedang kau rindukan?* (Our playboy, which moon are you longing for?)

TT: *Hallo du Schürzenjäger, du Frauenheld! Was für Luftschlösser baust du dir da?* (Hey there, womanizer, you ladies' man! What kind of castles in the air are you building?).

The expressions *mata keranjang* and *buaya* instantiate the conceptual metaphor *sexual desire is predatory behavior*, in which male sexual pursuit is conceptualized through animalistic imagery implying instinct, excess, and moral judgment. The source domains of *keranjang* (suggesting indiscriminate looking) and *buaya* (crocodile) map onto the target domain of flirtatious or promiscuous male behavior. In the German translation (*Schürzenjäger/ Frauenheld*), the metaphor is demetaphorized and culturally adapted, replacing animal-based imagery with conventional lexical labels for womanizers. While the translation preserves the evaluative meaning, it removes the embodied and zoomorphic imagery, resulting in a conceptual shift from metaphorical depiction to social categorization and a reduction in figurative vividness. Kamyants (2021) found that in translating opinion articles, there is a general trend of less strong expressions and weaker use of metaphors, which directly supports the idea that the writing becomes less vivid and less figurative. This example helps students see how animal-based metaphors encode moral judgment and cultural attitudes toward sexuality. Comparing the zoomorphic Indonesian idioms with their demetaphorized German equivalents encourages reflection on idiomatic substitution, register adjustment, and the loss of figurative vividness in translation.

Data 9. Technology, violence & material force

Infrastructure is a cutting force

ST: *Jaringan jalan kereta api telah membelah belah pulauku, Jawa.* (The railroad network has divided my island, Java).

TT: *Ein weitverzweigtes Netz von Schienen erstreckte sich über ganz Java, meine Insel.* (A vast network of railways stretched across Java, my island).

The expression in ST instantiates the conceptual metaphor *infrastructure is a cutting force*, in which technological development is conceptualized as a violent physical action against the land. The source domain of *splitting or cutting* maps onto the target domain of infrastructural expansion, conveying a critical stance toward colonial modernization and its disruptive impact on the island. In the German translation, the metaphor is reconceptualized, replacing the imagery of cutting with that of spatial expansion and connectivity. This shift results in a neutralization of the evaluative and destructive force present in the source text, indicating a conceptual attenuation that reframes colonial infrastructure from an act of division to one of coverage and organization. The source text emphasizes the sensation of violence (splitting), which is a political colonial metaphor, while the target text softens it to “stretched out” (*erstreckte sich*). This reduces the explicit criticism of colonialism. The translator may have chosen to make the paragraph more neutral for foreign readers or considered the idiomatic nature of the German language. This example is effective for teaching how conceptual metaphors encode ideological critique, particularly in representations of colonial infrastructure. Cerchiaro (2025) theorizes metaphors as “symbolic infrastructures” that shape what becomes “visible, sayable and legitimate” in discourse. Comparing the violent “cutting” metaphor with the neutralized imagery of spatial expansion helps students critically assess how translation choices can attenuate political stance and reshape historical interpretation.

## Data 10. Cosmic &amp; moral scale amplification

Eyes are celestial bodies (stars) and attraction is moral collapse

ST: *Mata berkilauan itu seperti sepasang kejora dan bibirnya tersenyum meruntuhkan iman.* (Those sparkling eyes were like a pair of stars, and her smile was enough to make anyone lose their faith).

TT: *Diese Augen leuchteten wie zwei Morgensterne; bei ihrem Lächeln konnte man den Kopf verlieren.* (Those eyes shone like two morning stars; her smile could make you lose your head).

This example contains two metaphors, both best classified as structural metaphors, with partial preservation in translation. The expression *mata berkilauan itu seperti sepasang kejora dan bibirnya tersenyum meruntuhkan iman* instantiates the conceptual metaphors beauty is celestial light and desire is loss of control, in which physical attractiveness is conceptualized through cosmic brilliance and moral destabilization. The source domain of *morning stars* maps onto visual beauty, while *collapsing faith* frames desire as overpowering moral restraint. In the German translation *wie zwei Morgensterne; bei ihrem Lächeln konnte man den Kopf verlieren*, the celestial metaphor is preserved, whereas the religiously grounded metaphor is attenuated and secularized, shifting from moral collapse to psychological disorientation. This results in partial conceptual preservation accompanied by ideological softening. This example can be used to show students how multiple metaphors within a single expression may be selectively preserved or attenuated in translation. Bao (2025) demonstrates how metaphors become “sites of ideological syncretism,” with translators embedding “global imperatives in indigenous philosophies.” Comparing the retained celestial imagery with the secularized rendering of moral collapse encourages critical reflection on how translators negotiate cultural, religious, and ideological meanings in figurative language. Obeidat & Mahadi (2019) confirm that religious and cultural meanings require careful negotiation during translation.

## Data 11. Animal metaphor

Predatory intent is animal scavenging

ST: *Ya, seperti gagak sedang menaksir naksir calon bangkai.* (Yes, like a crow eyeing a potential carcass).

TT: *Wie eine Krähe ihre Beute abschätze.* (How a crow assesses its prey).

This expression is best classified as a structural metaphor with animal imagery. The expression *seperti gagak sedang menaksir-naksir calon bangkai* instantiates the conceptual metaphor *Predatory intent is animal scavenging*, in which human calculation is conceptualized through the image of a scavenging bird assessing its prey. The source domain of a *crow appraising a future carcass* maps onto the target domain of opportunistic and morally charged intention. The Indonesian simile frames human behavior through the image of a scavenging bird evaluating carrion, conveying cynicism and ethical judgment. The metaphor structures abstract intent as instinct-driven animal behavior. In the German translation, the metaphor is preserved but slightly sanitized, replacing *calon bangkai* (“future carcass”) with the more general *Beute* (“prey”). This adaptation maintains the predatory framing while reducing the macabre specificity of the original imagery, resulting in a modest attenuation of evaluative intensity. This example helps students understand how animal-based metaphors encode moral evaluation and cynicism in character portrayal. Comparing the preserved but sanitized imagery in translation encourages reflection on how reducing metaphorical specificity can soften evaluative intensity while maintaining overall conceptual framing. Translation is part of cultural and cognitive development, where image metaphors are studied during the translation process, according to Beridze & Nagervadze (2025).

The findings show that the identified metaphors form systematic conceptual patterns rather than isolated expressions. The dominance of structural metaphors indicates that abstract domains such as emotion and cognition are largely conceptualized through embodied and experiential source domains, supporting the central role of embodiment in metaphorical thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Ontological metaphors, particularly personification, enable abstract concepts and natural elements to be construed as bounded and agentive, while orientational metaphors organize evaluation through

perceptual contrasts such as light and darkness. From a pedagogical perspective, the systematicity of these metaphorical patterns suggests that metaphor analysis, especially when combined with literary translation, can be used to foster learners' awareness of embodied meaning construction and cross-linguistic reconceptualization in Indonesian language learning (Hastürkoğlu, 2018; Lee, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

Grounded in conceptual metaphor theory, this study examines how metaphors in *Bumi Manusia* and its German translation reflect contrasting cultural worldviews, with Indonesian metaphors tending toward embodied, spiritual, musical, and naturalistic domains, while the German rendering emphasizes mechanistic, idiomatic, and rational patterns. Using the MIP procedures, metaphorical expressions were systematically identified and compared, revealing how language shapes cognitive reality through metaphor. While the analysis is limited by its focus on a single novel and translation, the interpretive nature of metaphor coding, and the need for classroom-based validation, these constraints highlight the exploratory character of the study. Nevertheless, the findings point to the powerful role of metaphor in bridging cultural perspectives and suggest that explicit metaphor analysis can serve as a medium for teaching cultural literacy, fostering intercultural competence, and strengthening cognitive-based close reading skills in language and literature education.

The metaphors in *Bumi Manusia* reflect an Indonesian worldview that is highly embodied, musical, spiritual, and naturalistic, while the German translation shows a mechanistic, idiomatic, and rational tendency. These differences reveal how language shapes cognitive reality through metaphors. The pedagogical implications of this study suggest that metaphors can serve as a powerful medium to: teach cultural literacy, develop intercultural competence, enhance metaphorical awareness in learning Indonesian and German, and strengthen cognitive-based close reading skills. In literary and translation pedagogy, the use of parallel texts (source text and translation) has been shown to foster metalinguistic awareness and sensitivity to cultural meaning. However, few pedagogical models explicitly integrate cognitive-cultural metaphor analysis into the teaching of world literature, particularly literature from postcolonial contexts such as Indonesia.

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