

Between the subject and the self

Force dynamics and the divided-person metaphor in acceptance and commitment therapy

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Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) uses metaphor extensively in its exercises with clients (Hayes et al., 2012). This paper analyzes a corpus of ACT defusion exercises to identify the patterns of construal they typically evoke. Findings show frequent use of the Divided-Person metaphor (Lakoff, 1996), with the two aspects of the mind (the Self and Subject) operating within an actual or potential force dynamic (FD) configuration (Talmy, 2000). Two main types of configurations emerge. Deliteralization exercises show shifts in the balance of strength between the Subject and Self. Observation exercises draw a contrast between a steady-state FD configuration involving a coerced Agonist and a secondary steady-state FD pattern in which a potentially coercing force was no longer impinging on the Agonist. The results demonstrate how FD and the Divided-Person metaphor systematically combine to construe mental phenomenology and dispositions. The analysis thus sheds light on the conceptual structures underlying therapeutic discourse in ACT.

Keywords: acceptance and commitment therapy, ACT, divided-person metaphor, metaphor, force dynamics, defusion, deliteralization, observation, therapeutic discourse

1. Introduction

Figurative language has long been recognized as a key feature of psychotherapy discourse, and recent developments in cognitive linguistics (CL) have contributed valuable insights into how particular mechanisms (e.g., metaphor, metonymy, image schemas, and framing) structure mental health discourse (Coll-Florit et al., 2021; Needham-Didsbury, 2014; Silvestre-López, 2016; Tay, 2013, 2017; Tay & Qiu, 2024; Törneke, 2020). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT henceforth)

relies heavily on metaphor (Hayes et al., 1999; Stoddard & Afari, 2014), yet the analysis of the conceptual mechanisms underlying ACT exercises has received scarce attention, particularly from a CL perspective. Among these mechanisms, force dynamics (Talmy, 2000) can offer valuable insights into the representation of inner experience and psychological struggle in ACT; yet it remains largely underexplored.

The present study addresses this gap by analyzing a corpus of cognitive defusion exercises (Blackledge, 2018; Hayes et al., 2012), a specific type of intervention in ACT designed to foster the patients' detachment from maladaptive mental content (see Section 1.2). The aim is to examine how ACT defusion exercises draw on the Divided-Person metaphor (Lakoff, 1996) and specific force-dynamic configurations (Talmy, 2000) to represent inner experience and facilitate patient-practitioner communication.

To contextualize the study, we first provide a brief discussion of ACT and defusion (Sections 1.1 and 1.2), followed by a short overview of Lakoff's (1996) Divided-Person metaphor and Talmy's (2000) force dynamics (Sections 1.3 and 1.4), which together constitute the analytical framework of this paper.

1.1 Acceptance and commitment therapy

ACT is the application of a psychological flexibility model of human functioning comprising six interrelated processes: (1) acceptance, (2) defusion, (3) flexible present moment awareness, (4) self-as-context, (5) chosen values, and (6) committed action (Hayes et al., 2012). As a psychological approach to the alleviation of human suffering and the promotion of human well-being, ACT emerged under its current name in the 1990s as an account of human language and cognition based on functional contextualism (Hayes, 1993), relational frame theory (Hayes et al., 2001), and comprehensive distancing (Zettle, 2005). In the last three decades, it has rapidly increased in popularity as a psychotherapeutic approach to treat a range of psychological conditions such as anxiety disorders, chronic pain, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorders, addictive and avoidance behaviors, or interpersonal conflicts (Zettle & Wilson, 2023).

ACT is notable for its sensitivity to the power of language (and especially metaphor) to evoke alternative construals of a situation. By doing so, it aims to promote greater cognitive flexibility among clients who suffer from intrusive and debilitating thoughts and emotional reactions. Most ACT defusion exercises rely on a central "metaphorical theme" (Törneke, 2017, p. 63) that is exploited to exert a particular effect on the client. For example, the therapist might guide the client to think of troubling thoughts as if they are merely leaves floating by in a stream (Hayes & Smith, 2005). To make metaphor scenarios more acces-

sible and appealing to clients, ACT therapists are also encouraged to modify metaphors so that they involve source domains familiar to clients (e.g., Bach & Moran, 2008, pp.285–292). ACT manuals furthermore advise therapists to repeat and modify metaphors spontaneously introduced by clients during sessions (cf. “vehicle re-deployment” and “vehicle development” in Cameron, 2008; Tay & Jordan, 2015). Such comments show an awareness of how metaphors can shift dynamically within discourse based on the communicative context and background of the interlocutors. In these respects, ACT theorists assume a view of language that bears certain striking affinities with the perspective of CL, which maintains that we “cannot account for meaning by describing objective reality, but only by describing the cognitive routines that constitute a person’s understanding of it” (Langacker, 1987, p.194). Most importantly, both ACT and CL frameworks assume that linguistic signs, in addition to facilitating interpersonal communication, also play a central role in private thought (Lakoff, 1993; Langacker, 1987; Ruiz et al., 2023).

1.2 Defusion

Cognitive defusion is understood to be the opposite of cognitive fusion, “the tendency of human beings to get caught up in the content of what they are thinking so that it dominates over other useful sources of behavior regulation” (Luoma et al., 2017, p.425). *Defusion* is a technical term referring to the reversal of fusion through the creation of a sense of distance between the individual and mental content. It can be defined as the ability to observe one’s thoughts and feelings as transient mental events, rather than perceiving them as unalterable truths (Blackledge, 2018). In other words, defusion exercises are designed to transform the client’s perspective so that they are no longer controlled by ingrained thought patterns.

Within counseling sessions, defusion exercises help clients “view” thoughts, feelings, memories, and physical sensations with greater detachment so as to reduce their automatic effects on behavior. A core feature of these exercises in ACT is the use of metaphors that serve to objectify thoughts to highlight their arbitrary and innocuous nature (Ruiz et al., 2023, p.211). One well-known example is Hayes et al.’s (1999) “Passengers on the Bus” defusion exercise. The client imagines driving a bus, with the route viewed metaphorically as corresponding to the client’s deeply-held values, and the unruly passengers as corresponding to the client’s adverse thought patterns. The client’s task is to remain aware of the passengers’ comments (i.e., the client’s own adverse thoughts) while not allowing the comments to dictate whether the bus stops or changes direction. The exercise thus teaches the client to remain aware of mental content without identifying (i.e.,

“fusing”) with it. As suggested by this exercise, defusion is thought to play a critical role in the development of psychological flexibility and wise behavior that is in line with an individual’s higher-order values.

1.3 The divided-person metaphor

The analyses of defusion exercises in this paper are based on some of Lakoff’s (1996) observations regarding how we think and talk about ourselves metaphorically as consisting of multiple aspects. Lakoff begins his reflections with a consideration of the co-referentiality that occurs in sentences like:

- (1) If I were you, I’d hate me.
- (2) If I were you, I’d hate myself.

He makes the cogent observation that a traditional analysis of such sentences as essentially having the logical form “If X were Y, X would hate X” fails to capture the semantics of the two sentences, which clearly mean different things. He concludes that our interpretation of such sentences is grounded in our construal of a person as consisting of two asymmetric aspects, which he calls the Subject and the Self. He describes the *Subject* as “the locus of subjective experience: consciousness, perception, judgment, will, and the capacity to feel” (p.93), and describes the *Self* as including one’s physical characteristics, name and social role, desires, passions, habits, memories, propensities, and so on. It should be noted that Lakoff’s distinction between the Subject and Self (especially the latter) is somewhat vague. To some extent, this is understandable as he is describing a folk theory rather than a scientific construct. A folk theory, as an implicit culturally-shared system of beliefs that is easily learned, employed, and transmitted, cannot be overly complex, fine-grained, or unintuitive (cf. Dennett, 1991, p.36; Sperber, 1996). Even so, folk-theoretic categories require some clarification if they are to be used for linguistic analysis.

In this paper, we classify thoughts, along with the emotional and psychological complexes associated with them, as aspects of what Lakoff has called the Self. Within ACT, discussions of inner discord generally center on adverse thoughts. As Silvestre-López et al. (2023) have noted, thoughts are often metaphorically construed (especially within Eastern meditation traditions) as objects that can be observed, and similar metaphors for thought (e.g., as objects that exist within the “container” of the mind) are also ubiquitous in Western discourse. The folk-theoretic category of the Subject is perhaps easier to grasp, as it corresponds to our sense of an enduring and witnessing self behind all our experiences. As discussed below, our folk theory of Subject and Self assumes that these two aspects

of the person can often come into conflict or interact in complex ways. To our knowledge, this study is the first to provide a focused analysis of the Divided-Self in terms of force dynamics in ACT defusion exercises (cf. Miró-Sastre, 2018).

1.4 Talmy's theory of force dynamics

A central concern of scholars working within the CL tradition has been the development of accurate and systematic analyses of the conceptual schemas that underlie language and thought. It should be noted that these force dynamic (FD) schemas reflect folk physics (our unreflective intuitive understanding of how forces operate in the world) rather than our scientific understanding of physical interactions. One key schema is that of FD patterns, and the most well-known CL system of FD analysis is that put forth by Talmy (2000). To represent FD relationships, he employs FD diagrams made up of a circle and a concave shape. The former represents the Agonist (the focal entity) while the latter represents the Antagonist (the opposing force). For example, the sentence *Martha pushed her desk across the room* could be depicted as in Panel A of Figure 1 (all the figures are based on those in Talmy, 2000). Since Martha is a pushing or coercing force in this scenario, she (as the Antagonist) appears to the left of the Agonist (the desk). The desk's inherent tendency to remain still is represented by a small dot on the figure. The opposite tendency (toward motion) is depicted using an arrowhead (as in Panel C). As in Panel A, Martha's greater strength, which is able to overcome the desk's inherent tendency to remain at rest, is represented by a plus sign, and the outcome of the struggle (in this case, the movement of the desk) is depicted on the line below the figure. This outcome is actually a redundant feature of the diagrams since it can be determined based solely on the inherent tendencies of the Antagonist and Agonist and their balance of strength.

The first four panels (A, B, C, and D) in Figure 1 show steady-state FD patterns. The next four panels (E, F, G, and H) depict situations in which the Antagonist begins or ceases to impinge upon the Agonist. For example, the sentence *The police showed up and blocked the protesters' march* could be depicted as in Panel F. The divided line below the figure shows the force dynamics for two different times. In the initial phase, the protesters were able to move forward (hence the arrowhead on the left of the line), but in the subsequent phase, the police, who in this case were stronger, entered the situation (depicted by the downward arrow), causing the protesters to stop (depicted by the dot on the right segment of the line below the figure). In some situations, there is a gradual change in the balance of strength, leading to a shift in the outcome of the opposition as in the final four panels (I, J, K, and L). For example, the FD construal in the sentence *When my*

younger brother grew bigger than me, I could no longer push him around could be depicted by the figure in Panel J.

The examples so far have focused on situations involving physical force and have featured sentences in which both the Antagonist and Agonist are overtly mentioned. In many cases, however, the FD situation involves abstract forces (e.g., the coercion of social expectations or reasoning), and the Antagonist is often merely implied. For example, the sentence *I must study tonight* could be depicted by the figure in Panel A in spite of the fact that the Antagonist (perhaps my mother or my teacher) is not explicitly mentioned. I could also be motivated to study by the promptings of my own conscience. In other words, force dynamic construals can also involve multiple forces within an individual (i.e., the Divided-Person metaphor). For example, the sentence *I had to force myself to get up this morning* presents an FD construal (as in Panel A) that involves a battle between my lazy disposition (the Self) and my awareness (the Subject) that I cannot be late for work. As Talmy (2000) has noted, the “divided-self conception” (i.e., the “Divided-Person metaphor” in Lakoff, 1996), does not necessarily involve force dynamics. He gives, as an example, the sentence “I served myself some dessert from the kitchen” (p.461). In this example, the metaphorical roles of host and guest are clearly not viewed as being in opposition.

2. Method

To obtain data for our analysis, a corpus of 41 defusion exercises (the Defusion Exercises Corpus, or DEC) was created through the selection of relevant exercises from four of the most well-known ACT manuals (Blackledge, 2015; Hayes & Smith, 2005; Hayes et al., 2012; Stoddard & Afari, 2014). Only exercises that were clearly designed to facilitate defusion were selected. In practice, this was easy to determine since the exercises were typically labeled as defusion exercises in the manuals. In addition, the exercise text had to provide sufficient detail for analysis. This was typically not an issue since the exercises were usually described in detail and often with example dialog. If the manual only briefly referenced an exercise from another manual, the text was omitted from analysis as it lacked sufficient detail. The exercises were written to guide therapists, so dialogic interactions, when they appear in the texts, were idealized conversations that were presumably based on the extensive experiences of the authors (as therapists) with their clients. A large proportion of the exercises appeared in nearly identical form within these and other ACT books. Duplicate content was therefore omitted.

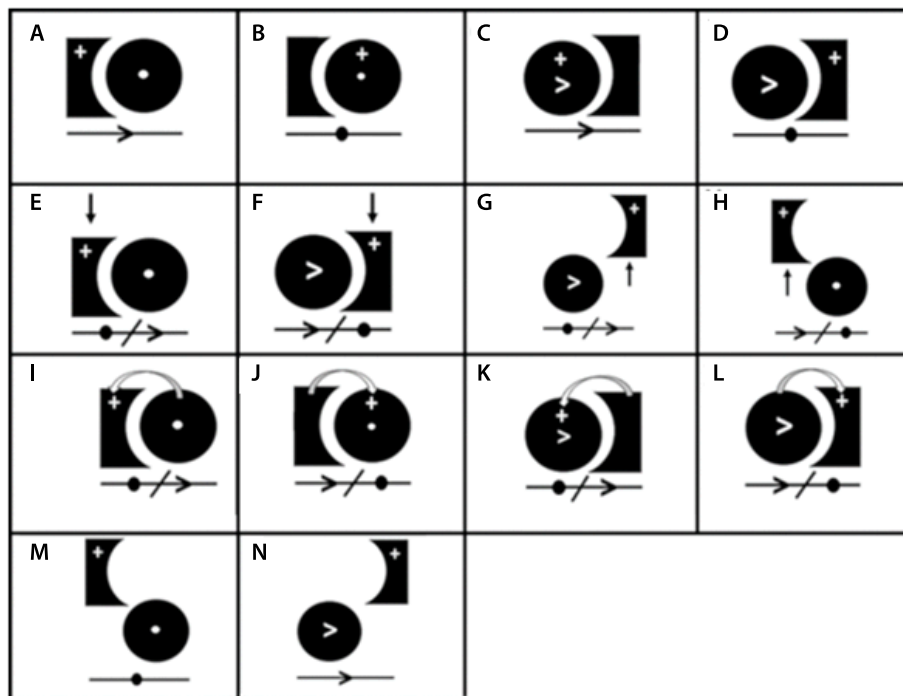


Figure 1. Diagrams showing key FD patterns (adapted from figures in Talmy, 2000)

A collaborative bottom-up approach was adopted for the corpus analysis. The coding was done using the qualitative analysis software ATLAS.ti. An initial set of codes was developed by both authors based on categories used within ACT and the authors' discussion of the exercises, which were found to contain extensive use of the Divided-Person metaphor and construals of opposing mental forces. This resulted in the development of 11 codes. Three codes (Observing, Deliteralizing, and Materializing) were initially used to track the exercise type. Another seven codes were used to track definitions of terms within the exercises. The codes thus tracked the force dynamic construal (if any) evoked by the exercise. To determine this, the analysis also examined which aspect of the person (Subject or Self) was viewed as the Agonist, and which was viewed as the Antagonist. In the exercises where more than one FD construal was evoked, the additional FD configurations were also coded separately. The final stage involved the identification of recurrent patterns across the exercises and the interpretive analysis, with both processes aided by the query and visualization tools available in the software.

To identify linguistic metaphors, we adopted the procedure put forth by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The procedure essentially involves establishing the general meaning of a text, determining the text's lexical units, and determining

whether each unit's meaning in context differs (yet is related to) a more basic meaning of the lexical unit. For example, the procedure identified the underlined words from the following passage as metaphors:

On this bus we've got a bunch of passengers. The passengers are thoughts, feelings, bodily states, memories, and other aspects of experience. Some of them are scary....
(Hayes et al., 2012, p.251)

The underlined portions were marked as metaphors since the words' and phrases' meaning within the text diverged from their more basic senses associated with concrete objects and people. In the passage, the *bus*, construed as a sort of container, refers to the mind, and the passengers represent aspects of the mind (e.g., traumatic memories and so on). The phrase *some of them* was also marked since the anaphoric reference was to metaphors appearing previously in the text. Finally, the phrase *have got* was also marked as metaphor since the text refers to ingrained psychological tendencies in terms of the possession of concrete objects.

Our analysis also examined *metaphor scenarios*, which Musolff (2006) defines as “a set of assumptions made by competent members of a discourse community about ‘typical’ aspects of a source-situation, for example, its participants and their roles, the ‘dramatic’ storylines and outcomes, and conventional evaluations of whether they count as successful or unsuccessful, normal or abnormal, permissible or illegitimate, etc.” (p.28). This theoretical construct is particularly useful for the current analysis since the DEC authors clearly appreciate how metaphors promote specific construals of a situation and display concern for how the individual metaphors in an exercise operate together to form a scenario with consistent target domain mappings. One illustrative case is an exercise in the DEC (discussed below) that uses the metaphorical scenario of a chess game. This general scenario serves to organize the sets of mappings between the more fine-grained individual source and target domains that appear in the exercise (e.g., reference to the black and white pieces, the chessboard, the frantic competitiveness associated with the game, and so on). Within the ACT context, metaphor scenarios reinforce the construal of inner experience as a structured set of elements that can be strategically observed, interpreted, and reconsidered from multiple perspectives. All statistical analyses were conducted in R (R Core Team, 2025).

3. Results and discussion

This section presents the FD construals of the Divided Person that appeared in the DEC. Our analysis revealed that all exercises evoked the Divided-Person metaphor, and that the two aspects of the divided person (Subject and Self) were,

in all but two cases, configured in an FD relationship. The specific FD configurations of the 41 exercises in the DEC are displayed in the Appendix.

Defusion exercises can be broadly divided between those that focus on observation of the content of the mind and those that focus on deliteralization (Stoddard & Afari, 2014, p.65). Observing exercises are designed to cultivate mindfulness of mental content occurring in the present moment, whereas deliteralization exercises are based on the fact that thoughts and rumination tend to take linguistic form (we generally think in words). By viewing thoughts as merely strings of words as opposed to statements of objective fact, a person can purportedly gain more distance from troubling thoughts. The distribution of defusion exercises in the corpus was split between exercises focused on deliteralization (20) and exercises focused on observing (21). Table 1 summarizes these FD configurations (designated as in Figure 1) in terms of frequency of occurrence and exercise type. The two exercises which did not involve a clear FD pattern were not included on the table.

Table 1. FD configurations by frequency and exercise type

FD Configuration	FD Total	FD by Exercise Type	
		Deliteralization	Observing
J	24	17	7
M vs. A	11	1	10
A	1	0	1
A vs. D	1	0	1
G vs. F	1	0	1
N vs D	1	1	0
TOTAL	39	19	20

The analysis revealed two frequent FD configurations (“J” and “M-vs-A”), with clear correspondence between exercise type and FD pattern. Nearly all (17 of 19) of the deliteralization exercises evoked an FD construal in which the Agonist gained in strength so that it could resist the coercion of the Antagonist (Panel “J” in Figure 1), whereas only 7 of the 19 observing exercises evoked this FD construal. On the other hand, half of the observing exercises evoked a contrast between a coerced Agonist (Panel “A” in Figure 1) and the same configuration in which the Antagonist was no longer impinging upon the Agonist (Panel “M” in Figure 1). Only one of the deliteralization exercises evoked this contrast. Only one of the deliteralization exercises and three of the observing exercises evoked other FD construals (for details, see the Appendix).

A Fisher's exact test (2×3) was conducted in R to examine the association between exercise type (observing and deliteralization) and FD configuration type ("J," "M-vs-A," and "other"). The results indicated that the association was statistically significant, $p = .001$. The effect size, measured by Cramér's V (using a chi-square test), was .58, indicating a large association between the variables. A series of pairwise Fisher's exact tests were then conducted to examine pairwise differences between the three FD configuration types. After applying a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons ($\alpha = .05/3 = .017$), a significant difference was found between the occurrence of "M-vs-A" type and "J" type FD configurations, $p = .003$. The effect size (again, based on a chi-square comparison), as measured by Cramér's V (ϕ), was .53, indicating a large association.

The remainder of this section describes the most relevant FD configurations (based on their overall frequency and distribution across exercise types) by illustrating how they are realized in practical exercises. As mentioned above, the "J" type of FD construal was found to be evoked primarily in the deliteralization exercises, though it also occurs, to a lesser extent, in observing exercises. The discussion here therefore begins by describing specific examples of this FD pattern as it occurs in a deliteralization exercise. This is followed by a discussion of exercises evoking the "M-vs-A" FD construal. Since the deliteralization exercises evoking the "J" FD construal were all quite similar, most of our discussion of specific examples in the Results section will focus on the "M-vs-A" FD construals found in the observing exercises.

In deliteralization exercises, it is common to ask clients to observe how their rapid repetition of a word leads to a sense that the word has become meaningless, a phenomenon known as semantic satiation (Smith & Klein, 1990). The "Milk, Milk, Milk" exercise (Hayes & Smith, 2005, pp. 71–73) is a good example of this. In it, the client, after observing the phenomenon with a common word like *milk*, repeats a word or phrase associated with a troubling thought. The client is asked to rate how distressing the word is prior to the exercise and then again immediately afterwards. As depicted in Figure 2, the exercise evokes an FD construal that involves attenuation of the force of the Antagonist (the Self in the form of negative thought patterns). In the FD diagram, this is depicted by an arrow showing the plus sign (indicating greater strength) being transferred from the Antagonist (the concave shape) to the Agonist (the circle).

ACT researchers have noted that thoughts are often associated with excessive rumination and inner dialog that appears in the form of language. Exercises based on a deliteralization strategy are designed to divest thoughts of their meaning and emotional pull. Another example of the FD construal depicted in Figure 2 is found in the "Say It in a Different Voice" exercise (Hayes & Smith, 2005, p. 80). In this exercise, the client is instructed to express thoughts aloud using a different voice,

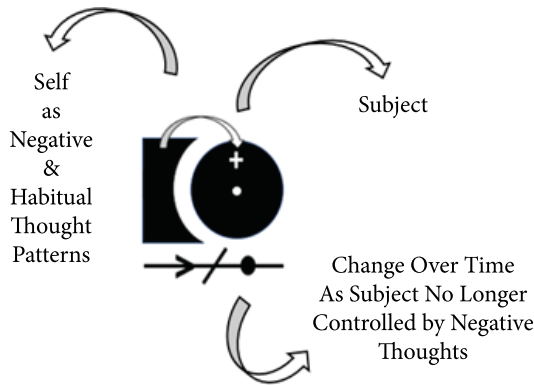


Figure 2. FD construal of Self and Subject in the “Milk, Milk, Milk” exercise

such as that of a cartoon character or a sports newscaster. The aim, in this case, is to provide a more playful context so that recurring thoughts (i.e., the Self) exert less control.

Some of the deliteralization exercises were designed to demonstrate the possibility of alternative construals of a situation. A good example of this is the “Say It in a Different Language” exercise (Stoddard & Afari, 2014, pp.73–75). It begins with the client being asked to reflect on how certain “words in thoughts” can reduce flexible responsiveness to situations and drive destructive behavior. The therapist then translates one of the client’s problematic thoughts into a language the client does not know. The client, who is yet unaware of the meaning of the translated sentence, is then asked to repeat the sentence in the foreign language. The meaning of the foreign sentence is then translated back into English, and the client is asked how the sentence makes her feel:

- (3) **Therapist:** When you have this thought, it seems like it’s very difficult for you not to act on it — a bit like an order that you can’t disobey. Is that right?

Client: Yes, it comes as a loop in my head. I feel depressed, and I have to drink to stop feeling that way.

Therapist: Can you notice that it seems impossible not to react to the words of this thought, and yet when you hear it in another language, you don’t seem as controlled by it? (p.75)

In terms of force dynamics, this deliteralization exercise is focused on altering the relationship between the Subject and Self. When engaged in typical thoughts that manifest in the client’s native language (the FD configuration on the left in Figure 3), the client is “controlled” by strong compulsions to drink when depressed; yet the thoughts that are “heard” in “another language” do not exert any control (the FD configuration on the right). The exercise thus provides an

experience of an FD construal in which the Antagonist initially was, but is no longer, impinging upon the Agonist.

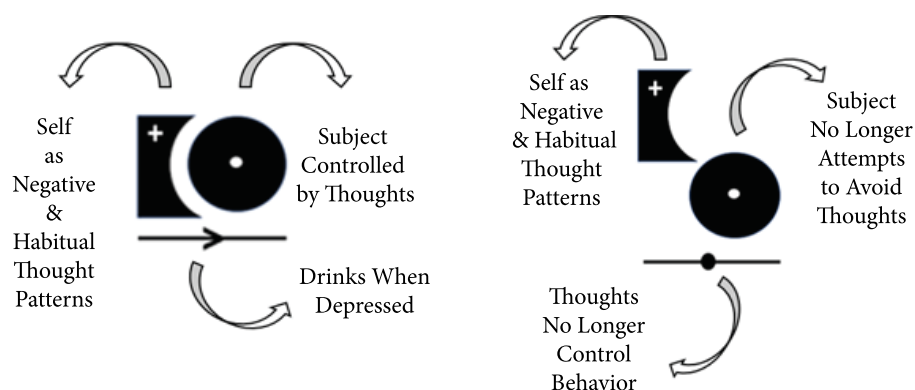


Figure 3. Contrasting FD construals in the “Say It in a Different Language” exercise

An argument can be made that there is little difference between the FD construal in the “Milk, Milk, Milk” exercise and the “Say It in a Different Language” exercise. After all, in many of the exercises of both the “J” and “M-vs-A” types, both the therapist and client discuss the defusion process in terms of an attenuation of force in either the Antagonist or Agonist over time. Even so, we would argue that there are subtle differences in the language associated with attenuated force in the actual texts of the exercises. The “Milk, Milk, Milk” exercise, in particular, provides clear allusions to the weakened force of the Antagonist when it asks the client to monitor the reduced strength of negative thoughts on a continuous scale. The “Say It in a Different Language,” on the other hand, relies on a clear contrast since the thought expressed in an unknown language is presumed to exert no control over the Subject.

The “M-vs-A” FD construal was especially common in the observing exercises. For example, in the Floating Leaves on a Moving Stream exercise (Hayes & Smith, 2005), the client is told to imagine a stream with occasional leaves falling onto the water. This natural metaphorical scenario is then used as the basis for the open monitoring of thoughts:

- (4) Now become conscious of your thoughts. Each time a thought pops into your head, imagine that it is written on one of those leaves. If you think in words, put them on the leaf as words. If you think in images, put them on the leaf as an image. The goal is to stay beside the stream and allow the leaves on the stream to keep flowing by. Don’t try to make the stream go faster or slower; don’t try to change what shows up on the leaves in any way. If the leaves disap-

pear, or if you mentally go somewhere else, or if you find that you are in the stream or on a leaf, just stop and notice that this happened. (pp.76, 77)

This exercise provides an excellent example of the Divided-Person metaphor, according to which the aspect of the person that is conscious of thoughts and directs awareness is the Subject, and the thoughts that “pop into your head” are construed as aspects of the Self. The natural scenario evoked in the exercise thus serves as a source domain whose event structure organizes key elements of the target domain of mental activity. In this sense, the Divided-Person metaphor cooperates with the metaphor *THE MIND IS A FLOWING LANDSCAPE*, a high-level structural metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) motivated by what Ruiz de Mendoza (2024) terms eventive structural similarity, as it involves “the alignment of elements of structure within the context of a dynamic event where entities are subsidiary to the development of the event itself” (p.24). The moving “stream” thus captures the automatic, continuous and at times coercive power of entrenched psychological processes, while the leaves map onto individual thoughts arising within that flow. The scenario also licenses additional mappings that are central to ACT. A key entailment is that if the Subject identifies with the thoughts (aspects of the Self), the leaves metaphorically “carry it away.” This captures the experiential loss of perspective characteristic of fusion. By contrast, remaining on the riverbank and letting the leaves drift by corresponds to maintaining a stable, mindful distance from which thoughts are observed without reacting. Although the latter is the ideal outcome, untrained clients, it is presumed, naturally oscillate between these two experiential states (being carried away by the leaves and remaining watchful on the riverbank). This fluctuation is readily captured by the A (CAUSED) CHANGE OF STATE IS A (CAUSED) CHANGE OF LOCATION (Lakoff, 1993), which allows conceptualizing these shifts in attentional focus as metaphorical movements through the scenario space (cf. Miró-Sastre, 2018, for an extended account).

One notable feature of the Divided-Person construal evoked within ACT therapy (as exemplified by this example) is that the default construal of the Subject exerting force over the Self (Lakoff, 1996, p.101) has been flipped so that it is the Self (e.g., troublesome thoughts) that controls the Subject. This unconventional construal runs counter to prevailing norms since, as Lakoff (p.102) points out, our culture tells us that the Subject should be in control of the Self. This expectation is also subverted metaphorically when the exercise advises the client to resist trying to control the stream or “what shows up on the leaves.” Using Talmy’s (2000) FD diagrams, our getting caught up with thoughts so that we are swept down the stream could be depicted as in Figure 4.

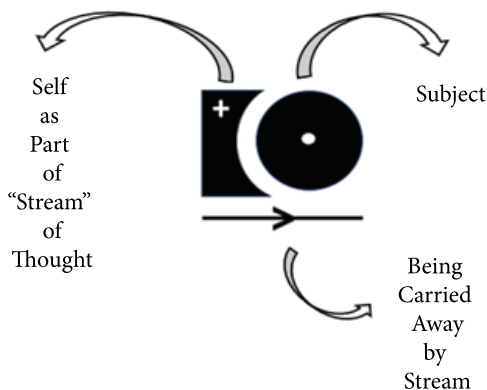


Figure 4. The Agonist (Subject) is coerced by a stronger Antagonist (Self)

The goal of the exercise is to develop the ability to openly monitor the appearance and disappearance of thoughts without identifying with them. In other words, the Subject should ideally resist fusion with the Self (thoughts). The exercise thus makes use of the Objective-Subject metaphor, in which the Self is prototypically viewed as a container for the Subject (Lakoff, 1996, p.103). As Miró-Sastre (2018) points out, the Divided-Self metaphor in this and similar examples relies on an amalgam of two metaphorical mappings that support the brain-mind folk model *THE MIND IS A CONTAINER* and *MENTAL CONTENTS ARE OBJECTS* (cf. also Silvestre-López, 2016, for an account of how these two metaphors cooperate in the so-called ‘observer’s model,’ a recurrent folk model underlying mindfulness and observing-thoughts meditation). The critical point of the metaphorical imagery is that the Subject, instead of resting within the Self (“on a leaf”), becomes spatially disconnected from the Self, remaining “beside the stream.” The ideal FD relationship would thus be like the one shown in Figure 5. According to this construal (i.e., defusion), thoughts (i.e., the Self as the Antagonist) are viewed as having the capacity to carry the Subject (the Agonist) downstream, but the FD relationship now appears solely as a potentiality rather than an actuality. Within the therapeutic context, the client maintains awareness of passing thoughts and emotions (the leaves), but the “stream” of thoughts no longer provokes adverse behaviors (cf. Törneke, 2020, pp.219–220).

One may argue that the FD configuration for the exercise could also be depicted as the FD configuration in Panel H of Figure 1, which shows the Antagonist exiting a state of impingement. However, we would argue that this is imprecise as it suggests clear “before” and “after” states. The exercise text, on the other hand, realistically assumes that most people who attempt to monitor their thoughts in real time will inevitably waver back and forth between FD states involving actual (Figure 4) and potential impingement (Figure 5). In other words,

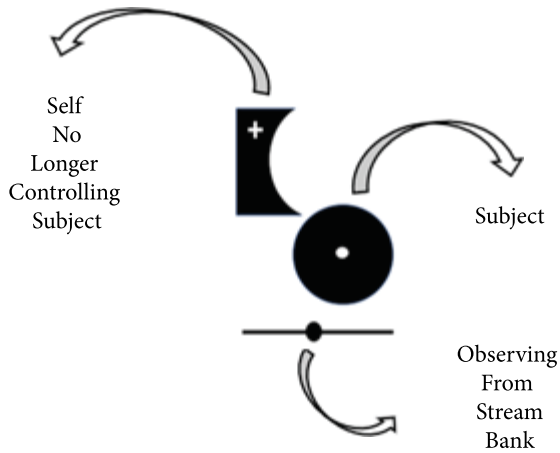


Figure 5. The Antagonist (the Self) not impinging upon the Agonist

the therapist in this exercise, instead of describing the ideal development of a client, is providing the client with a technique that can be repeatedly used to promote defusion. In this sense, rather than a single static configuration, the scenario can be viewed as an ongoing FORCE-COUNTERFORCE interaction (cf. Peña-Cervel, 1999) in which the Subject (Agonist) and the Self (Antagonist) alternate in relative strength until (ideally) defusion is achieved.

A similar yet much more elaborate defusion metaphor appears in an exercise titled “The Mind Train” (Hayes & Smith, 2005). In this exercise, the client is instructed to imagine that they are standing on top of a railway bridge gazing down at three sets of train tracks. Mining trains filled with ore sit on each of the tracks, moving away under the bridge. The instructions continue:

- (5) Now, as you look down, imagine that the train to the left carries only the “ore” of things you notice in the present moment. That ore is composed of sensations, perceptions, and emotions. It carries things like the sounds you hear; sweaty palms you feel; skipped heartbeats you sense; sadness you notice; and so forth. The middle train carries only your thoughts: your evaluations, your predictions, your self-conceptualizations, and so on. The train on your right carries your urges to act; your pull to avoid and look away; and your efforts to change the subject. Looking down on these three tracks can be seen as a metaphor for looking at your mind. (pp.66–68)

Metaphorically, the “ore” corresponds to the Self of the Divided-Person metaphor. In fact, the three “trains” have a rough correspondence to Lakoff’s (1996, pp.102, 104) description of the Self as “bodily and functional aspects of a person” (the left train), “past history” and “social roles” (the middle train), and “that part of us

that acts in the world” (the right train). As in the “Floating Leaves” exercise, this exercise sets up a contrast between an FD configuration in which the Self (e.g., the “train” of thoughts, emotions, and so on) coerces the Subject, and an FD configuration of nonimpingement with the Subject as an objective and uncontrolled observer.

In the exercise, the perspective from the bridge (i.e., that of the Subject) is above the Self. This superficially resembles the SELF-CONTROL IS UP metaphor (Lakoff, 1996, pp. 115, 116), but the actual wording of the text precludes this interpretation since the person on the bridge is not construed as being in control of the “trains” or the “ore” (i.e., currently occurring psychological content). Rather, the bridge’s vertical height suggests a position from which a perspicacious and detached view is possible. The subtle distinction between different configurations involving vertical height can be clarified through a comparison with the metaphorical use of the English prepositions *over* and *above* (cf. Tyler & Evans, 2003, pp. 65, 66). *Over*, when used metaphorically to convey control, (e.g., *overpower*, *overbearing*) prototypically involves a situation in which a person controls a person or animal that is directly under them (thus allowing for optimal employment of their arms and body weight). *Above*, on the other hand, prototypically depicts a contrasting situation in which the trajector is at a distance from the landmark element so that there is minimal influence (cf. *He thinks he’s above the law.*) In the ACT exercise, the client’s ideal perspective on the bridge above the train depicts this “above” form of verticality in which the person is unaffected by their thoughts and emotions.

The exercise stands out in the way it partitions the Self. Following the quoted excerpt, Hayes and Smith provide a simplified picture of three cargo trains with examples of troubling mental content (e.g., “this relationship won’t last,” “avoidance of intimacy”) written atop each train car. The client is then asked to fill in a chart with columns corresponding to the three “trains” (p. 68) based on their current thoughts.

In describing the Objective-Subject metaphor, Lakoff claims that the Self is prototypically construed as a container for the Subject. Both the Floating Leaves and the Mind Train exercises suggest that this is, indeed, the way the Self is typically presented in the defusion exercises, although it should be noted that the “container” in both exercises is metaphorically presented as a separate element that contains the Self (e.g., thoughts, emotions, etc.) and can potentially contain the Subject as well.

Another defusion exercise titled “Fly Fishing” (partly quoted below) is of interest as it demonstrates how the defusion exercises sometimes evoke unconventional construals of agency.

- (6) Our minds can be like really skilled fly fishers. Our thoughts and feelings are like highly specific flies the mind designs – just the ones we’ll bite on. The mind casts them out on the stream in front of us, and they seem so real that we buy them, bite, and get hooked.

Once we’re hooked, the more we struggle, the more we behave in ways that drive the hook in deeper and keep us on the line.

As we swim in the stream of life, there are flies floating by on the surface all the time. As we get better at spotting flies and recognizing that we don’t have to bite them, we get hooked less often and have more flexibility to swim in the direction of our values. (Hayes & Smith, 2005, p.79)

The behavior-based resemblance metaphor (cf. Grady, 1999; Ruiz de Mendoza, 2024) HUMANS ARE FISH is skillfully used in the exercise to highlight our attentional and behavioral tendency to “bite the bait” and become increasingly “hooked” as we struggle with our mental contents. Notice how one aspect of the Self is construed here as a conspiring agent who intentionally deceives us to divert us from our true values.

Ideally, with practice, the Subject should be able to notice these “flies” without reacting to them, avoid their deceptive lure, and gain greater flexibility to “swim in the direction” of its own true values (i.e., the true Self). The contrasted FD configurations differ from those of previous exercises since the Self has been bifurcated into inauthentic and authentic aspects. We can picture the construal of the Subject as “hooked” (and thus unable to move forward) as in the lefthand configuration shown in Figure 6, and the Subject as ignoring the “flies” as in the righthand configuration. The amalgamation of the Divided-Self metaphor and Hooked Fish metaphor is especially rich as it evokes the ulterior motives of the fisherman and the plight of the innocent fish who is captured due to its inability to question ingrained patterns of behavior and desire (cf. Mueller & Richardson, 2025, p.115).

The exercise thus evokes what Lakoff calls the “True-Self” metaphor, according to which the Subject should ideally move away from the false aspects of the Self so that it is in the same “place” as the authentic aspects of the Self. From a philosophical perspective, the bifurcated Self construal evoked by this exercise expresses the notion of second-order volition (Frankfurt, 1971) and the more general idea that we want our decisions to reflect our most deeply-held values (cf. Aristotle’s notion of *eudaimonia* and Heidegger’s notion of *Entschlossenheit*, i.e., resoluteness).

In the “Fly Fishing” exercise, the Subject is construed as aligned with specific aspects of the Self, but other construals are also possible. In one defusion exercise based on a chessboard metaphor, the client is told to picture a chess game with the favored “good” side facing off against an opponent, which corresponds to the “bad” side (Hayes et al., 2012).

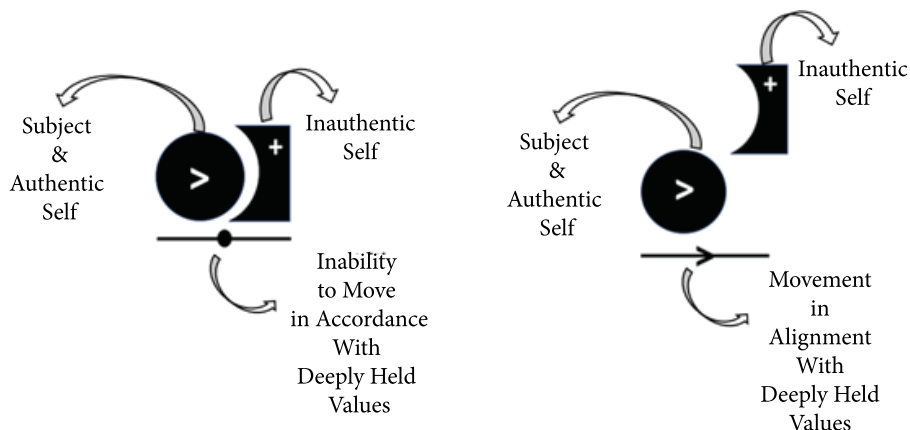


Figure 6. Contrasting FD configurations evoked in the “Fly Fishing” exercise

- (7) You can think of your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs as these pieces; they sort of hang out together in teams too. For example, ‘bad’ feelings (like anxiety, depression, resentment) hang out with ‘bad’ thoughts and ‘bad’ memories. Same thing with the ‘good’ ones. So, it seems the way the game is played is that we select which side we want to win. We put the ‘good’ pieces (like thoughts that are self-confident, feelings of being in control, etc.) on one side and the ‘bad’ pieces on the other. Then we get up on the back of the white queen and ride to battle, fighting to win the war against anxiety, depression, thoughts about using drugs, whatever. It’s a war game. (p. 231)

In this initial (and very intuitive) construal, the evoked FD configuration involves a struggle between elements of the Self bifurcated into positive and negative qualities as in Figure 7 (cf. Lakoff, 1996, pp. 105, 106). Since the strength of the opposing forces is not alluded to, the configuration could be either the one on the left or the one on the right. It may be noted here that Talmy’s (2000) FD theory does not provide any way to depict a situation in which the outcome is uncertain since it assumes that one of the forces is dominant (cf. Wolff & Barbey, 2015). In this sense, a more fitting description of the force-dynamic situation would be Peña Cervel’s (1999) COUNTERFORCE schema. She treats this schema as subsidiary to BLOCKAGE (p. 204), allowing for the description of situations in which the collision of equally strong forces results in no further movement.

This FD scenario involving warring aspects of the Self evokes a structural metaphor of INNER CONFLICT as WAR, a highly intuitive metaphorical construal that is part of our folk conception of inner conflict. The chess analogy then shifts as the therapist claims that our normal construal of our situation can be problematic.

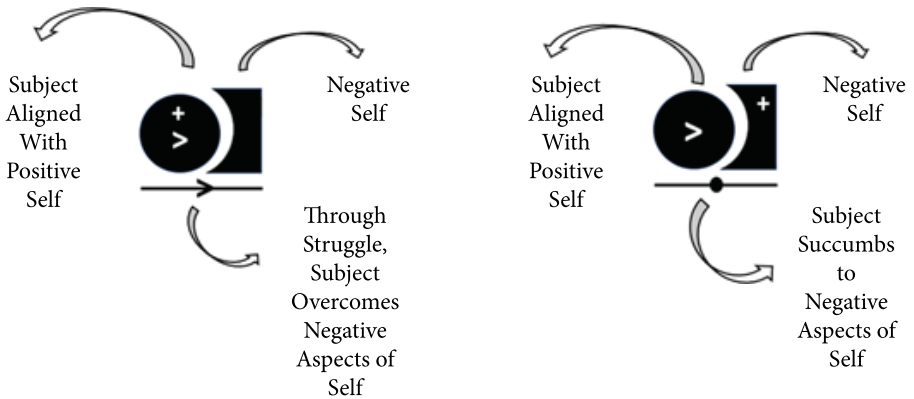


Figure 7. FD configurations for the struggle between good and bad aspects of Self

- (8) But there's a logical problem here, and it's that from this posture huge portions of yourself are your own enemy. In other words, if you need to be in this war, there is something wrong with you. And since it appears that you're on the same level as these pieces, they can be as big or even bigger than you are – even though these pieces are in you. So, somehow – even though it is not logical – the more you fight, the bigger they get. [...] The logical idea is that you will knock enough of them off the board that you eventually dominate them – except your experience tells you that exactly the opposite happens. Apparently, the black pieces can't be deliberately knocked off the board! So, the battle goes on. [...] If you're on the back of that white horse, fighting is the only choice you have because the black pieces seem life-threatening. Yet, living in a war zone is no way to live. (Hayes et al., 2012, p. 231)

The therapist then suggests an alternative to “living in a war zone.” In this scenario, the bifurcated Self continues to exist along with the Subject, but the force dynamic construal becomes highly attenuated. The Subject, in a disengaged and passively observing state, becomes metaphorically associated with the board rather than with the competing black and white pieces.

- (9) It might be useful to look at it that way. Without a board, these pieces have no place to be. The board holds them. What would happen to your thoughts if you weren't there to be aware that you thought them? The pieces need you. They cannot exist without you, but you contain them, they don't contain you. Notice that if you're the pieces, the game is very important; you've got to win, your life depends on it! But if you're the board, it doesn't matter if the war stops or not. The game may go on, but it doesn't make any difference to the board. As the board, you can see all the pieces, you can hold them, you are in intimate contact with them, and you can watch the war being played out in your consciousness, but it doesn't matter. It takes no effort. (p. 232).

As Tay (2013) points out, metaphor variability, as seen in the Chessboard exercise, can co-occur “with significant therapeutic moves such as to take up, modify, challenge, or enrich the prevailing metaphoric conceptualisations.” As such, it need not “be associated with meaning disjunction,” but can, to the contrary, “provide therapists with a useful handle to identify, classify, and subsequently develop the strategic potential inherent in the use of different sources and targets, both by their patients and themselves” (p.120).

The ultimate aim of this observing exercise thus appears to be a state of pure witnessing. As in the “Fly Fishing” exercise, the chess analogy subverts the everyday assumption that the Subject needs to be associated with agency and control. This cognitive turn is particularly consistent with ACT’s therapeutic aim of establishing a stable observing perspective (self-as-context) in which the client is construed as the space in which mental events take place, a process closely related to (and supportive of) cognitive defusion (Hayes et al., 2012).

As can be seen in the previous examples, the Subject has typically been construed as the Agonist within force dynamic configurations involving the Divided-Person metaphor. Within such configurations, the Subject is often confronted by an actual or potential coercive force or is hindered by an actual or potential blocking force. Yet other configurations did appear in the corpus data. In one exercise titled “Kicking Soccer Balls,” the client is asked to imagine standing on a soccer field:

- (10) Take a moment to imagine that you’re at the touchline near the goal, facing the large open field, and there’s a soccer ball right next to you. As you reach down to pick it up, you notice something written on it. As you begin to focus on it, you notice a thought that’s distressing to you. When you can see that thought clearly on the ball, place the ball back on the goal box line, keeping your focus on the thought as you step back to kick it. Now run up to the ball and kick it off into the distance, watching it travel from where you’re standing. As you watch the ball travel off into the distance, take another deep breath.

(Stoddard & Afari, 2014, p.70)

The FD construal in this exercise, rather than evoking the “M-vs-A” FD contrast described in the previous examples, evokes the FD construal depicted in Panel A of Figure 1. It could thus be elaborated as in Figure 8, with the Subject construed as the Antagonist, which is acting upon each thought that arises within the moment.

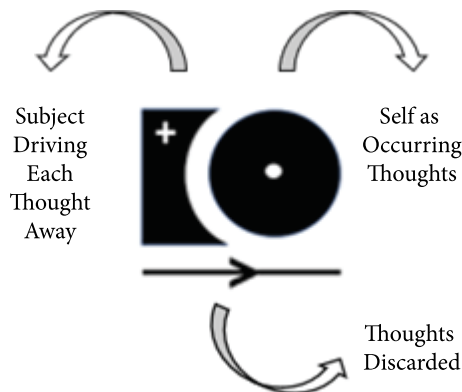


Figure 8. FD construal of Self and Subject in the “Kicking Soccer Balls” exercise

Unlike most of the other exercises in the corpus, which emphasized the need for passive monitoring of current mental content, this exercise stands out for its more active and interventionist approach (in fact, this exercise was the only instance in the corpus of an “A”-type FD configuration with the Subject construed as the Antagonist).

A similar but more elaborate exercise titled “Thoughts on Cards” provides a clear contrast between this interventionist stance and the more passive stance of acceptance and unreactive monitoring of adverse mental content (Blackledge, 2015, pp.116, 117). Consequently, it is more in line with the typical “M-vs-A” FD construals discussed thus far. In the first part of the exercise, the client is asked to write down each of his thoughts on an index card. The cards are then laid down on a table. By writing down each thought and placing it in a physically external place (rather than “in” the client’s head), the client will presumably feel less controlled by the troubling thoughts. This phase of the exercise thus aims to decrease the control of thoughts (the Self) over the Subject (as shown on the left side of Figure 9). Metaphorically, the exercise frames thoughts as physical objects that appear as an external force. Expressed in concrete terms, these external “cards,” whose spatial handling (placing, stacking, flinging, or letting fall) maps onto different degrees of experiential distance. The client’s physical reactions to the cards map onto degrees of resistance or acceptance when confronted with adverse thoughts and emotions. If the client fails to show defusion from mental content, the exercise can be extended to a further phase:

- (11) Stack up the used index cards and ask the client to sit in a chair in front of you. State that you will be “flinging” each card, one at a time, toward the client’s lap, and that his job is to try to keep the cards (and the thoughts and feelings written on them) from touching him. Prior to flinging each card, orient the client toward what is written on it. (p.117)

In this phase of the exercise, the Self is construed as a coercing force that the Subject is unable to completely avoid (the central FD configuration in Figure 9). This phase of the exercise is then followed by an additional phase in which an alternative construal of the situation (the FD configuration on the right of Figure 9) is described.

- (12) Next, inform the client that you will once again fling the cards at him one by one, but that he is to simply let them fall where they will, without fighting to avoid them. As before, he should be told the content of each card before it is thrown. The client can then be asked if he noticed any differences between the two phases. Many different features of the experience can be pointed out by the client or, if necessary, by the therapist. The second phase is easier, since the client does not have to make any effort to evade the cards. The thoughts and feelings are still there and potentially in view, but did they really need to be (unsuccessfully) fought off in the first place? (p.117)

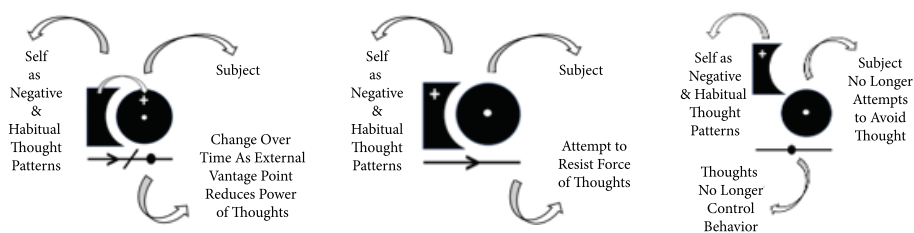


Figure 9. FD construal of Self and Subject in the “Thoughts on Cards” exercise

As this exercise demonstrates, FD configurations can dynamically shift so as to reflect the immediate communicative goals of the therapist. As Tay (2013) points out, “both metaphor consistency and variability are potential strategic” (p.121). The presumed ability of most people to track such dynamic FD configurations in combination with shifts in the construal of the Subject and Self in the Divided-Self metaphor suggests that both construal operations are highly conventional in English, and presumably conventional in other languages as well (cf. Lakoff, 1996, pp.119–122); nonetheless, as Tay emphasizes, their effective use in therapy “requires strategic management by therapists” (p.120), who must decide when to maintain metaphorical consistency and when to exploit variability in order to guide shared understanding and achieve their therapeutic intentions.

4. Conclusions

The ACT defusion exercises analyzed in this paper make extensive use of the Divided-Person metaphor. However, if we consider their use of particular metaphors for the Subject versus Self relationship, the exercises consistently favor a small set of metaphorical construals instead of using the full gamut of possibilities. Overall, our analysis revealed that, while most deliteralization exercises evoke similar FD construals (nearly all relying on a single FD configuration), observing exercises show a wider distribution of FD patterns. The broader range found in observing exercises suggests that this approach may be more flexible in how it engages with the relational dynamics of the Subject-Self. This conclusion is reinforced by the wide variety of metaphorically rich scenarios used in these exercises (e.g., leaves on a stream, freight trains, fishing, chess, and soccer) that draw on structural metaphors, together with other types like those based on resemblance or eventive structural similarity (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza, 2024), with complex source-to-target mappings that turn the client's attention to particular aspects of the dynamic relationship between the Self and Subject. It is also noteworthy that these metaphor scenarios, while often semantically rich and diverse, are frequently combined with more basic ontological metaphors (e.g., the mind as a container) and the "observer's model," in which nonidentification with thoughts is achieved, in part, by treating thoughts as entities external to the observer (Silvestre-López et al., 2023, p.3620). This pattern, already identified in mindfulness and meditation discourse (cf. Silvestre-López, 2016, 2019), was also evident in the specific case of ACT defusion exercises. Finally, the shifting FD configurations in the exercises also suggest that therapist-client interactions often require the ad hoc adjustments within the dynamics of discourse not only to the metaphorical scenarios but also to the underlying FD structuring so that both are more precisely tailored to the experiential needs of the patient (cf. Tay, 2013, p.15).

While the present study has focused specifically on the interaction between the Divided-Person metaphor and a set of recurrent FD configurations in ACT defusion exercises, other metaphorical processes also play a role in shaping inner experience in ACT discourse. Future discourse-oriented studies could fruitfully extend this analysis by examining additional metaphor types and amalgams through conceptual integration-based approaches (cf. Miró-Sastre, 2018; Ruiz de Mendoza, 2024; Ruiz de Mendoza & Galera-Masegosa, 2014), as well as by applying Tay's frameworks on metaphorical consistency and variability in psychotherapeutic talk (2013), and therapist-patient interaction (2016).

The analyses illustrate how tools from CL, such as conceptual metaphor and force dynamics, can be combined to provide insight into the structure and function of ACT language and discourse (and, more broadly, therapeutic language).

By revealing the conceptual scaffolding patterns that underlie defusion exercises, this analysis has direct implications for enhancing ACT therapeutic practice and opens new avenues of future research in both applied linguistics and clinical psychology. The use of metaphor in ACT exercises is often exploited to help clients progress in one or more of the six core ACT processes (Stoddard & Afari, 2014). This may typically be achieved by fostering the (re)conceptualization of a particular aspect of experience or, as also happens in guided meditation, by helping clients “enact” more adaptive responses to their proclivities and inner experience (cf. also Silvestre López, 2016, 2022).

In this study we focused exclusively on one ACT process (defusion) and showed that both deliteralization and observing exercises involve construals of aspects of the mind as either potential or actual competing forces. The exercises tend to evoke two main types of FD configurations that roughly correspond with the two defusion techniques: a shift in strength between aspects of the Subject and the Self in deliteralization exercises (as shown in Panel “J” of Figure 1), and a contrast between an impinging or non-impinging Antagonist (typically construed as the Self) in observing exercises (a contrast between the FD configurations shown in Panel “M” and Panel “A” in Figure 1). Further research should explore how conceptual metaphor and FD construals are evoked in ACT exercises related to the other five ACT processes beyond the defusion exercises examined here, focusing as well on the analysis of the discursive and therapeutic functions of specific FD construals, metaphorical framing, and reconceptualization processes, among others.

This paper examined FD construals and the Divided-Person metaphor in exercises presented within written texts. The exercises often contain idealized conversations with clients, and they occasionally give advice on how therapists should be sensitive to affordances that appear within the dynamic shifts in the conversation. Researchers interested in discourse-oriented features of metaphor (cf. Cameron, 1999; Musolff, 2016; Richardson & Mueller, 2022; Semino, 2008) may wish to examine actual transcripts of ACT sessions to see how metaphors are taken up and adapted in therapeutic interactions. Along these lines, two avenues for future research are particularly recommended. First, researchers should examine the extent to which metaphorical scenarios are adjusted so that the source domains are familiar to the client (e.g., the use of baseball metaphors for someone who plays sports), and the extent to which such adjustments enhance the effectiveness of the therapy. Second, researchers should examine instances in which therapists who detect that a metaphorical construal is failing to have the desired effect, modify and elaborate the currently active metaphorical scenario. While this line of inquiry has received attention in broader therapeutic contexts (cf. Saulsman, 2025; Stott et al., 2010; Tay 2013, 2016; Törneke, 2017), it remains rela-

tively underexplored within ACT and thus merits further investigation (Törneke, 2020). Ideally, such research would combine the analysis of ACT session transcripts with stimulated recall conducted immediately after the session.

In addition, there is a need for research comparing the figurative language in ACT and related therapies with the language used in contemplative traditions such as Zen Buddhism. Researchers writing on ACT and relational frame theory (e.g., Barnes-Holmes et al., 2001) have often noted how Buddhist and other forms of meditation encourage the dispassionate observation of spontaneous thoughts in ways that parallel their own therapeutic practices. In support of this observation, the strategic manipulation of metaphorical construals to promote detachment from mental content has been analyzed in recent research on guided meditation (Silvestre López, 2019; Silvestre López & Navarro i Ferrando, 2017; Silvestre López et al., 2023). Future research is needed to examine whether ACT therapists and meditation guides employ similar linguistic strategies.

One possible area of inquiry, unexplored in this paper, concerns ways in which language (and especially metaphor) is used to both evoke and express unconventional construals of agency. Recent research on religious language (e.g., Mueller & Richardson, 2025; Richardson et al., 2021) has discussed how the language of contemplatives often expresses nonstandard construals of agency through figurative language that involves the Divided-Person metaphor. Mueller and Richardson (2025, Ch.6) further note that there are multiple ways to construe an agent (e.g., as a presence, as a provider of emotional support, as an imposing force, as an aspect of the mind) and that these construals differ somewhat in Buddhist and Christian contemplative discourse. Along related lines, mystics in both traditions also emphasize the need to relinquish the sense of ownership, identification, and control that is associated with a sense of self (Mueller & Richardson, 2025, p.201). It is possible that a more fine-grained analysis of therapeutic discourse in terms of agency patterns would highlight patterns that are missed in FD analyses, which focus on the presence of opposing forces in binary opposition.

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Appendix. FD configurations of Divided-Person Metaphor in the corpus

FD*	Exercise	Type**	Author	Page
A	Kicking Soccer Balls	O	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	69–70
A vs D	Carry Your Keys	O	Blackledge, 2015	75–78
G vs F	Hands As Thoughts	O	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	80
J	Computer Programming Metaphor	O	Blackledge, 2015	66–71
J	Having Thoughts	O	Blackledge, 2015	98–100
J	Rearranging Thoughts	D	Blackledge, 2015	101–105
J	Contrasting Thoughts	O	Blackledge, 2015	105–109
J	Create a New Story	D	Blackledge, 2015	122–125
J	I Am	D	Blackledge, 2015	125–126
J	Reasons Are Not Causes	D	Blackledge, 2015	130–133
J	Teach Me How to Walk	D	Blackledge, 2015	134–136
J	Milk, Milk, Milk	D	Hayes & Smith, 2005	71–73
J	Describing Thoughts and Feelings	O	Hayes & Smith, 2005	78–79
J	Say It Very Slowly	D	Hayes & Smith, 2005	79
J	Say It in a Different Voice	D	Hayes & Smith, 2005	80
J	Create a Song	D	Hayes & Smith, 2005	80
J	Bad News Radio	D	Hayes & Smith, 2005	80
J	Finding a Place to Sit	D	Hayes et al., 2012	247
J	Phishing	O	Hayes et al., 2012	253–254
J	Physicalizing	O	Hayes et al., 2012	286–287
J	Tin Can Monster / Album	O	Hayes et al., 2012	287–289
J	Pickle, Pickle, Pickle	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	71–72
J	For S/he's a Jolly Good ...	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	72–73
J	Don't Do What You Say	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	75–76
J	Name That Toon	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	76
J	News of the World	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	77

Appendix. (continued)

FD*	Exercise	Type**	Author	Page
J	Brain Bingo	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	78–79
M vs A	Thoughts on Cards	O	Blackledge, 2015	116–117
M vs A	Watching the Mind Train	O	Hayes & Smith, 2005	66–68
M vs A	Floating Leaves on a Moving Stream	O	Hayes & Smith, 2005	76–78
M vs A	Chessboard	O	Hayes et al., 2012	231–232
M vs A	Thoughts as Passengers	O	Hayes et al., 2012	250–252
M vs A	Soldiers in a Parade	O	Hayes et al., 2012	255–258
M vs A	Boat on the Water	O	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	70–71
M vs A	Say it in Another Language	D	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	73–75
M vs A	Fly Fishing	O	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	79
M vs A	The Master Storyteller	O	Stoddard & Afari, 2014	80–81
M vs A	Looking at Vs <i>From</i> Thoughts	O	Hayes & Smith, 2005	65–66
N vs D	Be Out	D	Hayes et al., 2012	262–264
	Fish Swimming in Our Thoughts	O	Hayes & Smith, 2005	55
	What Are You Thinking Right Now?	O	Hayes & Smith, 2005	55–56

* Force dynamic configurations with abbreviations referring to the FD diagrams in Figure 1

** The type of exercise classified as deliteralizing (D) or observing (O)

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