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When ministers were digging in for a fight...

Eric Caers

Universiteit Antwerpen and Universiteit Hasselt

Abstract

In order to make 'sense' of the outside world, categorization should take place. Among categorization devices, metaphorization is one of the more influential. Researchers in Critical Discourse Analysis are aware that 'common sense' is problematic as unthematized ideologies are at work in texts. In this respect, Charteris-Black (2004: 28) argues that metaphor analysis should be a central component of Critical Discourse Analysis. This article investigates how *The Economist* metaphorically frames certain specific target domains (trade unions, government spending) differently from the more 'socialist' oriented *The Guardian*, as typified by their contrastive responses to particular situations and particular ideas during the Winter of (industrial) Discontent, 1978-79. This dark page in British history marked the transition from Keynesian demand management to contentious monetarism, which would later become associated with Thatcherism, a vast political movement that urged for union reform and 'small government'. Thatcherism promised to make a clean sweep with socialism, promoting 'liberal common sense' and sealing 'freedom' as the 'master' signifier in the 1980s. In addition, the psycholinguistic experiment "No pain, no gain in a free-market rhetoric: revisited with authentic materials" was set up to assess whether exposure to that choice of metaphors may have contributed to readers' endorsing the editors' ideology.

I Objectives of the study

Data provided by Boers (1997 and 1999) support the suggestion that HEALTH and FITNESS metaphors may be typical of economic discourse advocating free markets, i.e. 'liberal common sense'. In his study, target domains were mostly limited to abstract entities, such as the economy. However, Boers refrained from investigating the underlying system of evaluation related to any specific target domains, i.e. the exploration of the inner subjectivity of journalists and their perception of specific domains within the socio-economic world. This article, therefore, pursues a quantitative comparative analysis of metaphor use in *The Guardian* and *The Economist* during the Winter of (industrial) Discontent, 1978-1979, with a view to measuring to what extent the choice of metaphors used by the editors reflects their arguments/ideology against the backdrop of an economic landscape marked by the transition from Keynesianism to monetarism. Thus, this article shows that if HEALTH and FITNESS metaphors are examined in naturally occurring texts they occur as part of a metaphor system, a system that is influenced strongly by the points-of-view of the publications.

In addition, section 6.2 "No pain, no gain in a free-marker rhetoric: revisited with authentic materials" attempts to answer the psycholinguistic question if this metaphorical framing may well have contributed to readers' thought patterns and consequently may

indirectly have contributed to a change in public opinion about the socio-economic issues under discussion.

2 Historical background of the sample of discourse under analysis

Former Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan ('Sunny Jimmy') died on the 26th of March 2005. His short tenure at Number 10 was beset with problems with the economy and trade unions and was prematurely brought to an end by the 'Winter of Discontent' strikes. Baroness Thatcher, who beat him in the 1979 election, said he had been a "formidable opponent" and added that "in other circumstances he would have been a successful prime minister"¹. Unfortunately, however, Callaghan had not only history against him but also his own Labour party. On the 7th of October 1978, *The Economist* wrote: "The crew of the socialist ship is in openly mutinous mood" (7.10.78: 21). Describing the Labour MP's as a "mutinous crew" one cannot but feel pity for the captain of the socialist ship. This sailing metaphor instils the feeling that Callaghan was not up to the job of "steering his ship in the right direction" and indeed he wasn't: "Sunny Jimmy" soon became "Jim can't fix it".

This article investigates the use of metaphors in *The Economist* and *The Guardian* during the Winter of Discontent, which spanned the period from September 1978 until April 1979. This dark page of British history marked the transition from Keynesian Economics to monetarism, much to the disadvantage of a Labour government unable to prescribe the right economic remedy. John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) taught that fiscal policy and government economic intervention, particularly through the annual budget, could be used to maintain a high level of economic activity (leading on to full employment, economic growth and constantly rising living standards). Keynesianism was developed in the 1930s, a period of *deflation* when 1/3 of American money had been 'burnt' in the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash and *laissez faire* policies of nonintervention had been proved ineffective. Keynesian policies included the corporatist state, active government and deficit spending. During the 1970s, however, the general validity of his ideas began to be questioned, mainly as a result of the worldwide inflation that followed the fourfold increase in oil prices in 1973. Keynesian policies did not seem to work anymore in this dark period of *stagflation*. A new *ism* came into fashion - monetarism. The conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath (1970-1974) began to flirt with monetarist policies from 1970 but he shrank back as unemployment breached the 1 million mark in 1972, turning to Keynesian policies again. Even the Labour government of the late 1970s was forced to adopt what some considered to be anti-Keynesian policies following the financial crisis of 1976 (Prime Minister Callaghan told the disbelieving delegates at the 1976 Labour Party Conference: "You cannot now, if you ever could, spend your way out of a recession!")². In the latter part of the 1970s, by the ostensibly liberal administration of President Jimmy Carter in the United States and the conservative government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Britain, strong monetarist action was initiated. In the history of economics the age of John Maynard Keynes gave way to the age of Milton Friedman from the Chicago School. The monetarist rejected the post-war Keynesian orthodoxy: Governments should *not* interfere to manipulate the level of demand. A little inflation is *not* acceptable to maintain full employment. Friedman challenged the Keynesian assertion that "money does not matter" and argued that the supply of money does affect the amount of spending in an economy. Monetary theory focuses on inflation as an effect of the

¹ cf. BBC NEWS, Sunday 27 March, 2005 on bbc.co.uk

² cf. Pugh and Garratt (1993: 143)

money supply being larger than the demand for money. Hence, restraint of government spending is the most important single target to restrain excessive monetary growth. Pay policy should be left to market forces (i.e. free collective bargaining), supported by tightish control over the money supply to ensure that immoderate wages lead, not to inflation, but to workers being priced out of the market.

In spite of vehement opposition to wage controls, both within the conservative and the labour party, labour Prime Minister James Callaghan and his Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey took great pains to enforce their own pay policy through the last months of 1978. During the Trades Union Congress in Brighton on the 9th of September and the Labour Conference at Blackpool on the 2nd of October, they vigorously held pay settlements within stage four's 5% ceiling, and ministers were told to prepare for a winter of industrial discontent. Ford car workers wanted increases of up to 30%, ignoring the 5% ceiling imposed by the government. Government ministers made it clear that if there were any breach of the 5% limit the company would face sanctions. On the 4th of November, however, Ford surrendered to the strikers and settled for a 17% pay deal. On the 13th of December, parliament voted against applying sanctions to companies that bust government's pay policy. *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror* advised Callaghan to step down as the pay policy was defeated but on the 23rd of December, the Labour government narrowly won a vote of confidence and Callaghan decided to remain in office, hoping that unions would soon mend their ways. Ford, however, sparked a series of widespread strikes in the public sector, resulting in the 'Blockade of Britain' in January 1979. Many public sector workers went on strike, including refuse collectors, leading to piles of rubbish bags piling up in the streets of the UK. The series of strikes left the Labour cabinet deeply split over the rout of the government's 5% pay policy and the course to take. Callaghan and Healey toyed with fiscal and monetary weapons (i.e. raising taxes and restrictive money supply) to replace the embattled 5% pay limit in the fight against inflation, which led John Pardoe, the former liberal spokesman on economic affairs, to the conclusion that "Healey would often mouth the mumbo mumbo of monetarism, but he could never really make up his mind whether he wanted to be in Chicago [i.e. monetarism] or Cambridge [i.e. Keynesianism]. In the end, he sank somewhere about mid-Atlantic"³. The failure of the Scottish devolution referendum on the 2nd of March and the vote of no confidence ultimately led to a defeat of the Labour party in the 1979 general election when the Conservatives were voted in with Margaret Thatcher determined to take strong monetarist action.

3 Metaphor in socio-economics discourse

Aristotle (in *Poetics*, Ross 1952: 145 7b) defined metaphor as "giving the thing a name that belongs to something else". The problem with Aristotle's definition is that simply moving a word or phrase from one context to another can be done ad hoc. Central to Lakoff's view of metaphor, however, is the Invariance Principle, that is: "Metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology (that is the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain" (Lakoff in Ortony 1993: 215). This means that our image schematic knowledge of the metaphorical target places constraints on the mappings that can occur: "Mappings therefore involve a set of relations rather than single attributes so that what is transferred is a knowledge of a set of properties, their behaviour and interrelationships as they are known in the source domain" (Charteris-Black 2004: 14). Conceptual metaphors are entrenched culturally and cognitively. They are

³ In *The Guardian* (7.5.79)

not surface linguistic entities but rather are conceptual tools that are recruited to form linguistic expressions. Because metaphor has the potential to arouse the emotions it is very often used in persuasive language. There is also some support then for the view that metaphor is important in influencing our underlying political and social beliefs. For Schon (1993: 137), there is a close relationship between metaphors and frame restructuring – that is, the perspective that is taken on a social issue is determined by the way it is metaphorically represented. This accredits metaphor with a central rather than a peripheral role in the human and social sciences. Jonathan Charteris-Black (2004: 28) argues that metaphor analysis should be a central component of critical discourse analysis. The use of metaphor may reflect the ideology of the language user and the rhetorical effect on the reader that is pursued (Eubanks 2000, Rohrer 1995, Zdravko 1995). The language of the press is indeed crammed with metaphors and figurative language to categorize people, events and relations. Metaphors can influence our way of thinking about the economy too. Eubanks in *A War of Words in the Discourse of Trade* (2000) focuses on the conceptual metaphor TRADE IS WAR – a metaphor found wherever people discuss business and commerce – to develop his rhetorical model of metaphor. He argues that metaphor is not just influenced by but actually is constituted by its concrete operation. The metaphors appearing in editorials and ‘financial notebooks’ are rarely value-free. Health metaphors and sports metaphors are frequently used in the discourse of those in favour of a free market. Comparative analysis has shown that these metaphors do occur more often in articles from *The Economist* and *The Financial Times* than in the more left-of-centre *The Guardian* (Boers 1997).

In this study, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (cf. George Lakoff) is used.⁴ CMT deals mostly with conventional figurative expressions (so-called dead or frozen metaphors) and show that these are actually instantiations of conceptual metaphors which are psychologically very much alive, although we are not usually aware of them. These conceptual metaphors are then believed to structure the way we conceive abstract domains, including economics.⁵

4 Research questions

This article aims to investigate how the *The Economist* frames certain *specific* target domains (trade unions, government spending) differently from *The Guardian*. In addition, their response to particular situations and particular ideas during the ‘Winter of (industrial) Discontent’ is investigated, which leads us to the following research questions:

- 1) Does the use of metaphor in *The Economist* and *The Guardian* betray a sympathy for the monetarist policy of blaming the unions, who, through their monopoly power and insistence on free collective bargaining had kept wages above the market clearing rate and had prevented those who were prepared to work for the ‘market’ rate from doing so?
- 2) Does the use of metaphor in *The Economist* and *The Guardian* betray a sympathy for the monetarist policy of reducing the money supply, irrespective of the state of effective

⁴ The conceptual metaphor, then, is the formal statement of any idea that is hidden in a figure of speech that can be inferred from a number of metaphorical expressions and helps to resolve their semantic tension (cf. Charteris-Black 2004: 22).

⁵ It should be noted that ECONOMY IS HEALTH and ECONOMY IS DISEASE are both ‘conceptual metaphors’ that add up to ECONOMY IS A LIVING ORGANISM. In this respect, PATH and JOURNEY metaphors make up the MOBILITY metaphors. The conceptual mappings INFLATION IS A NATURAL DISASTER and INFLATION IS AN UNRULY HORSE constitute INFLATION IS A LIVING ORGANISM, which is a higher level metaphor that explains how several conceptual metaphors are related (cf. Charteris-Black 2004: 16).

demand, in order to improve the supply-side of the economy even if this meant a restrictive consumer-spending and business-investment effect of high interest rates that is not socially neutral? Do metaphors favor a restrictive monetary policy that produces a cure not less painful than the condition remedied?⁶

3) Does the use of metaphor in *The Economist* and *The Guardian* betray a sympathy for the monetarist policy of the political right that abandoned Keynesian demand management as a means of attacking state expenditure and intervention with its consequent effects of stoking up inflation?

The three research questions constitute the main question: Does *The Economist* show a higher frequency of metaphors favoring monetarist principles than *The Guardian*? The reverse question would be: do metaphors with positive connotations regarding Keynesian principles occur more frequently in *The Guardian* than in *The Economist*?

The psycholinguistic experiment “No pain, no gain in a free-market rhetoric: revisited with authentic materials” was set up to assess whether exposure to that choice of metaphors (on top of the actual arguments used) may have contributed to readers' endorsing the editors' arguments/ideology (See section 6.2).

5 Method

In order to try and answer these question, it was necessary to systematically count the instances (i.e. tokens, not types) of the HEALTH, CONFLICT and MOBILITY metaphors in the ‘leaders’ (i.e., the editorials) of all the weekly resp daily issues of *The Economist* and *The Guardian* over an 8-month-period, i.e. from September 1978 (TUC Conference in Brighton) until May 1979 (Labour defeat in the general election). Only articles that clearly dealt with economic subjects were selected, including those dealing with the US economy: Image studies tell us that the hetero-image (our image of ‘The Other’) reveals our auto-image (image of ourselves). In these articles, the editors give their analysis of and opinion about a variety of political and economic topics. This yielded a total sample of about 70,000 words for *The Economist* (usually 3 articles per issue) and 70,000 words for *The Guardian* (usually 3 short editorials and 3 ‘financial notebooks’ per week). The same amount of words was a deliberate attempt to facilitate comparison. The method pursued is the same as the one adopted by Boers (1999) in which he showed the higher frequency of HEALTH metaphors in *The Economist* during the winter season.⁷ Being very well aware of the difficulties that arise when identifying metaphors, a blind judge from the Hasselt University was relied upon for inter-subjectivity measures as well as the frequency principle when dealing with polysemy, which is explained in Frank Boers' article "When a Bodily Source Domain Becomes Prominent" (1999: 50):

Sometimes the context clearly pointed to the source domain of health, but in a number of cases the association with health was hard to determine with any certainty. In those

⁶ It should be noted that disciples of Milton Friedman generally praise low interest rates and tout business investment as more beneficial to the economy than government spending of any kind. However, monetarism “operates against inflation by raising interest rates, which, in turn, inhibit bank lending and resulting deposit – that is, money – creation” (Galbraith 1987: 273)

⁷ Mention should be made of the messiness inherent to parts of metaphor analysis. A “crippling strike” can be regarded both as a HEALTH (or rather: DISEASE) metaphor and a PATH metaphor. If economic action is ‘motion along a path towards a goal’ then the crippling effect of a strike prevents the economy from making headway. In this article, “crippling strike” was counted as an instance of the PATH/ MOBILITY category.

cases, a distinction was made between 'clear' instances and 'vague or ambiguous' ones. To make this distinction the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary was referred to. The entries in Cobuild are organized on the basis of a frequency principle, with the most common usage of a lexical item mentioned first. When the dictionary explanation of this first sense mentioned the domain of physical health, then its figurative use in the sample was taken as a 'clear' instance of the HEALTH metaphor (e.g., *cure*). Otherwise, for instance when only the second entry mentioned physical health (e.g., *remedy*), the items were counted as 'vague or ambiguous'. The quantitative data were analyzed twice: once for the 'clear' instances only, and a second time for all the counted instances, including the 'vague or ambiguous' ones.

In addition, the last section “No pain, no gain in a free market rhetoric: revisited with authentic materials” attempts to answer the psycholinguistic question if this metaphorical framing may well have contributed to readers’ thought patterns and consequently may indirectly have contributed to a change in public opinion about the socio-economic issues under discussion. A fictitious text (business game: a company wanting to penetrate new markets) enabled Boers in “No pain, no gain in a free-market rhetoric” (1997b) to incorporate only one variable, i.e. only the metaphors were different between the two texts, content-wise they were identical. So any statistically significant differences in the ideas put forward by the two groups of participants had to be due to that single variable. Possible criticism is that the texts were so contrived and so full of instantiations of pre-selected conceptual metaphors, that one may doubt if such a thing occurs in real life. Therefore, a follow-up with authentic materials seemed desirable. In 2004, an experiment with last-year students of Economics at the Hasselt University was carried out. Authentic materials were used: the contrastive full text reactions of *The Economist* and *The Guardian* to the publication of the Conservative Manifesto in April 1979. 56 students were asked to read the editorial from *The Guardian* and 55 students were asked to read the editorial from *The Economist*. After they had read their articles, they were requested to write a letter to the editor in which they should agree or disagree with the ideas put forward. It was explicitly mentioned on their answer sheets that there were no true or false answers and that their written contributions would not be used for any political purposes. The problem there, of course, is that there are more variables involved (not just the metaphors differ, but the whole content and argumentation, too), so that any different responses/ideas by participants need not be due to the metaphors they have been exposed to, but quite simply by the content of the articles. The only way of estimating whether exposure to the metaphors had any effect is to calculate correlations between the participants' own metaphor choice (imitating the source text or not) and the ideas put forward in their own essays/letters to the editor). This was done for the new data through the Spearman Rank Correlations test.

6 Results and discussion

6.1 The corpus-based study

6.1.1 About labour and trade unions

Both *The Economist* and *The Guardian* are in favour of the government’s pay policy because the alternative measures to curb inflation would be harsher: diminished investment and lost jobs through contraction of the money supply, high interest rates and reduced public spending (cf. infra):

(1) What time bombs there have been this summer lay in the home money markets. Throughout the summer interest rates have been pushed up to levels much too high for pre-election comfort and the Bank of England reached for, and then extended, the corset to restrain bank lending. The targets for money supply are due to be overhauled next month, and Mr Healey prattled cheerfully at budget time of lowering them if inflation fell as he hoped. Like his budget-time forecasts for the 1977-1978 pay round, that was wishful thinking; the present target for domestic credit expansion for 1978-1979 (£6 billion) will prove hard enough to hit it (*The Economist* 9.9.78: 15).

(2) [I]t is now privately accepted that over-aggressive wage demands are one cause of inflation and unemployment. From that lesson springs a second: a return to unreformed collective bargaining is no answer to the nation's ills (*The Guardian* 4.9.78).

The Economist and *The Guardian* recognise the ironic fact that Mr Callaghan's union allies talk endlessly about returning a Labour government (which will then continue to oppose free collective bargaining) and that no unionist has a kind word to say about the Tories (who happen to believe in free collective bargaining):

(3) Propaganda will triumph over logic at next week's pre-election Trades Union Congress in Brighton. The faith of free collective bargaining will be restored as the official dogma of the TUC (*The Economist* 2.9.78: 19).

I suggest that this shows evidence of a conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS RELIGION, which is well illustrated by Charteris-Black (2004) in his analysis of British Manifesto and US Inaugural Corpora. This means that the sort of decisions that unions take are framed as the sort of decisions one might take about spiritual matters and that this creates the basis for an ethical discourse. Framing political decisions in such a way implies the high moral integrity of the party that is framing the issues. It also implies a lack of morality and honesty of the party that has been holding office. Recognising the irony in the discourse, *The Economist* represents the unionists as starry-eyed zealots who are mortgaging the future of the UK. Its leaders are repeatedly called "union barons", evoking the image of the robber baron who seized opportunities in the Wild West for unbridled profit-making and unchecked financial prospecting:

(4) Minimum lending rate is up to 12 ½%, but still Britain's trade unions are going for broke. The slow union slog towards recovery has been abandoned in favour of quick wages grab, whatever the danger signals of the coming squeeze. Make no mistake about the consequences if – as now seems likely – the unions pull it off: Britain's moderately encouraging recovery from the near hyper-inflation three years ago will be bust. Mr Callaghan knows this; Against him marches a growing army of car workers, lorry drivers, bakers [...] (*The Economist* 11.11.78: 83)

The "slog towards recovery" taps into the PATH schema that is mapped onto economics through the PATH metaphor: ECONOMIC ACTION IS MOTION ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A GOAL. The destination of the path corresponds to the goal of the policy. It should be noted that a single metaphor can have different evaluative uses: whether or not a destination is 'good' depends on the nature of that destination, i.e. whether one actually wants to go there or rather avoid it. According to the experiential 'logic' of the PATH metaphor, motion towards the goal (i.e. economic recovery) is good. Anything that impedes the mobility is considered as bad. Those "impediments" take many metaphorical forms. Unions (i.e. unionized workforces) as well as extreme-left-wing Labour MP's are typically described as impediments, blowing the government off the course and disrupting the process towards salvation:

(5) But in Britain “concerted action” would be a step in the right direction, for it would be one step away from the adversary politics which every four, seven, or 13 years send Britain lurching back along whichever track it was following (*The Economist* 2.9.78: 16).

(6) A union, or a band of rebels? Strikes hurt. They are meant to hurt. That is why they are called. Without the damaging and disruptive effects of strikes, free collective bargaining [...] would be a dishonest nonsense (*The Guardian* 13.1.79)

(7) Lorry drivers have turned down 15%, and are slowly paralysing the country to win more than 20% (*The Economist* 13.1.79: 1).

(8) It is unlikely that Britain will ever get half-way to an economic miracle until the immense power of the unions to resist industrial change and generate wage inflation is harnessed instead to economic policies designed to increase their members’ real living standards. A labour government could best do the harnessing were it minded to: whatever the Tories attempt is bound to be misconstrued or misrepresented. That anyway, is the theory – belied only by two facts that no Labour government since 1969 has been so minded, and that this one, even were it so minded, is weakly placed to do whatever about it (*The Economist* 11.11.78: 83).

The Economist repeatedly uses the verb “harness”. We can see that “working people” need harnessing to economic policies. If they remiss, inflation will rise. Let us consider for a moment the epistemological basis of this metaphor; we know that horses are harnessed so that they may be controlled by a rider who is sitting on their back. Moreover, the working people are called upon to resume their duties and pull the economic chariot forward. We may infer that social progress requires that the objects of harness – inflation and working people – are both conceptualised as being in need of control. Both are represented as having the type of energy that requires control:

(9) The events at Ford have been a depressing spectacle. Shop stewards plumped for a national strike as soon as Ford made its offer of 5% plus productivity talks. Mr Moss Evans, the new general of the TGWU, still lacks the stature to stem such a tide. So he swam with it (*The Economist* 30.9.78: 18).

(10) Mr Callaghan has little alternative, if he is eventually to be re-elected, except to stand firm. A crowd of other workers [...] are standing by ready to pour through the breach if Ford workers end up with anything like the 30% they are demanding (*The Economist* 30.9.78: 18).

(11) So the unions look like an irresistible force. Is Mr Callaghan an immovable object? Within his careful phrases last week it was possible to detect areas where he might be ready to yield a little ground (*The Economist* 7.10.78).

(12) Whether or not the pay floodgates can be controlled by monetary squeezes in the private sector and cash limits in the public sector, the convergence of words confirms that the back of Mr Callaghan’s government has been snapped by pay policy. Just as Mr Heath’s was. [...] He now hopes to bob along on the top of a wage tide over which he has next to no control (*The Economist* 6.1.79: 11).

Comparing both unionists and inflation to “tidal waves” and “usurious powers”, makes them not only intertwined but also undetachable from each other: unions are complicit in the creation of inflation.

CONFLICT metaphors abound in both *The Economist* and *The Guardian* as they both criticise unions for unruly behaviour in the “leapfrog game”⁸ that threatens a stoppage. It is worth noticing that while both want to combat inflation, *The Economist* has more CONFLICT metaphors than *The Guardian* that urge for union defeat and union reform: an average of 20.7 clear instances per stretches of 5,000 words versus only 11.9.

(13) The loss of the power to impose sanctions [on Ford, EC] may mean, as Mr Callaghan told the Commons during the debate on the vote of confidence, that the government is left to fight the good fight against inflation with one hand tied behind its back (*The Guardian* 16.12.78)

(14) Mr Callaghan did not want to fight an autumn election. Now he has to fight the unions instead (*The Economist* 30.9.78: 18).

(15) Engineering union leaders are determined to quash another toolmakers’ revolt at British Leyland before it leads to the widespread disruption of last year’s rebellion. The first skirmish has been mounted by 32 toolmakers at SU Fuel Systems [...] (*The Economist* 26.8.78: 81)

(16) But none of the major unions will declare open war on Labour’s 5% limit on pay rises, at least not this side of a general election (*The Economist* 2.9.78: 19).

6.1.2 About monetarism

Callaghan and Healey told delegates in Brighton and Blackpool that rigid fiscal and monetary measures (i.e. raising taxes and restrictive money supply) would have to be applied in the fight against inflation, if the pay policy was rejected. Any breach of the 5% limit, would have to be paid out of increased interest rates. In this respect, both *The Guardian* and *The Economist* repeatedly defend the pay agreement:

(17) Short of a U-turn by the TUC, the best [the government] can do is to try to stick to the 5% in the public sector, use what weapons it can to keep private-sector settlements down and ensure productivity deals are not unduly bogus (*The Economist* 14.10.78: 107).

(18) If Mr Callaghan wants incomes policy to stick – as he should and, as we believe, he does – then it should stick for multi-nationals with large investment plans [...] as well as for little local companies who are fighting merely to keep their heads above water (*The Guardian* 23.9.78).

The pay agreement is regarded as the means to curb inflation against ‘irresponsible’ free collective bargaining and the resulting defence mechanism of tight monetary control propped up by high interest rates: “[...] Mr Callaghan toys with fiscal and monetary weapons to replace the embattled 5% pay limit in the fight against inflation” (*The Economist* 4.11.78: 14). Moreover, the monetarist idea that control over the money supply would automatically price aggressive workers out of the market is regarded as an illusion since employers become the first victims of restrictive money supply: “Pay agreement must be better than squeeze” (*The Guardian* 13.10.78). Both *The Guardian* and *The Economist* claim that raising taxes, cutting money supply targets and reducing public spending will not stop a wage explosion. Nor would they allow the government to take a back seat when it comes to public-sector negotiations. Nor would they hit hardest those who cause trouble. Both *The*

⁸ *The Economist* 20.01.79: 11

Guardian and *The Economist* display an array of HEALTH and CONFLICT metaphors to defend these viewpoints. It is striking, however, that *The Guardian* tends to highlight the dangerous consequences of credit squeezes from the perspective of employees (excessive wages and tight monetary control lead to unemployment) whereas *The Economist* judges the whole problem from the perspective of the employer (excessive wages and tight monetary control lead to bankruptcy):

- (19) Monetary measures destroy jobs and damp down the economy unnecessarily – if voluntary wage restraint - which does the same job painlessly – did not materialise this winter (*The Guardian* 9.10.78)
- (20) The stock market's antidote for free collective chaos (*The Economist* 20.1.79: 103)
- (21) The monetarists' axe is an indiscriminate weapon that can kill small companies while merely bruising giants like Ford (*The Economist* 11.11.78)
- (22) A firm monetary policy was supposed to give [employers] backbone. And so it should have: most are strapped for cash [...] Monetary policy is now more likely to break than stiffen their backs (*The Economist* 3.2.79: 68).

The Economist admits that monetarism is fashionable among captains of finance in the City, who look forward to the relaxation of dividend and exchange controls. The monetarist insistence on free collective bargaining, however, is regarded as a danger:

- (23) A common rationalisation in the stock market is that there is not much to choose between Mr Callaghan's tattered pay policy (better than nothing), money supply target (good), and price controls (bad), and Mrs Thatcher undiluted monetarism (good), but no pay policy (bad). (*The Economist* 20.1.79: 103)

We can infer from the evidence that *The Economist* has its reservations about monetarism when it comes to 'squeezes', but that its advantages are recognised as well, especially when no other remedy against inflation is available. Moreover, *The Economist* emphasises that the advent of monetarism has made the traditional method of funding the government's debt anachronistic. A game of cat and mouse with the institutions in the gilt-edged market becomes more difficult: "[...] From the moment that the government, at the behest of the International Monetary Fund, openly announced targets for money supply and domestic credit expansion, it was forced to show its cards to the other players" (*The Economist* 4.11.78: 14). If the Bank of England wants to decrease the money supply, it sells bonds because the people to whom the Bank is selling the bonds have to give money, which the Bank then locks away in a vault so that it no longer circulates. By buying or selling bonds in this way, the amount of money out in circulation can be very precisely controlled, meaning that the Bank of England can, in turn, keep tight control over interest rates. Lower bond prices mean higher interest rates. In this respect, *The Economist*, dreading the spectre of inflation, allows monetary policy to be used as a tool to restrict (excessive) money supply, which is repeatedly compared to a "tidal wave", a "hurricane" or "a force unleashed" (see also 6.1.1):

- (24) For only if [the financial institutions] buy bonds can the money supply be reined in (*The Economist* 4.11.78: 15).
- (25) Money supply is coming under the lash (*The Economist* 11.11.78: 83)

The description of inflation as "an excessive money supply that has to be reined in or lashed" evokes the image of a wild horse that needs leather straps attached around his neck

(i.e. reins), and assumes the metaphor INFLATION IS A VIOLENT FORCE, which implies that monetarism is justified to eradicate it. Thus, monetarism is viewed by *The Economist* as a movement with its Pros and Cons. It is repeatedly emphasised that monetarism is catching on in the City (i.e. the stock market) but its shortcomings and loopholes are pinpointed as well. Old monetarism is not enough to ensure a sound economy: “It is unfortunate for Mr Healey that the gilts market does not accept pure monetarism. If it did, its view of inflation would not be conditioned by union posturing this autumn, but why what happened to the money supply two years ago” (*The Economist* 25.11.78: 83).

The Guardian repeatedly denounces monetarism as an anti-Keynesian “sect” that is doomed to failure at the theoretical level. On the 20th of October 1978, financial expert Hamish McRae in “The Archmonetarist” discusses the (faulty) logic upon which monetarism is built. He is backed by the ideas of John Pardo, the former liberal spokesman on economic affairs, when he states that monetarism only accepts changes in money supply as the truly causal factor that affects prices but not output. He thereby challenges the pre-Keynesian view that market economies are inherently stable in the absence of major unexpected fluctuations in the money supply. He regards Denis Healey as a crypto-Monetarist who blends fiscal and monetary policy in an attempt to be pragmatic.

The Guardian is altogether sceptical about monetarism, probably because it is sympathetic to Labour in its more ‘Keynesian’ form. Cuts in government spending to restrain excessive monetary growth are regarded as quintessentially monetarist/ Thatcherite measures that have already affected or contaminated the centrist Callaghan-Healey administration.

6.1.3 About welfare and government spending

If the views expressed in *The Economist* and *The Guardian* converged on the issue of pay policy, they tend to diverge on the issue of government spending. When it comes to public spending, MOBILITY metaphors and HEALTH metaphors are instantiated almost three times more in *The Economist*: an average of 14.7 clear instances per stretches of 5,000 words versus only 5.4, respectively.

The PATH schema is mapped onto economics through the PATH metaphor: ECONOMIC ACTION IS MOTION ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A GOAL. The destination of the path corresponds to the goal of the policy. According to the experiential ‘logic’ of the PATH metaphor, motion towards the goal is good. Consequently, mobility is good and immobility is bad. Anything that impedes the mobility of entrepreneurs is considered as bad. In *The Economist*, those ‘impediments’ take many metaphorical forms. We have already seen that unions (i.e. unionized workforces) are also typically described as impediments. Deficit spending, too, takes metaphorical forms with negative connotations:

(26) The rich world’s public spending is taking off again. Without a new flight plan (*The Economist* 26.8.78: 63)

(27) Taxation did not keep pace with spending (*The Economist* 26.8.78: 63)

(28) The road forward in all low-paid public-sector jobs must be through genuine productivity deals (*The Economist* 10.2.79: 13).

Similarly, making an economy or an economy “fit” or “healthy” again requires discipline and hardship (sacking personnel, stopping unprofitable product lines etc.), but sacrifices are justified by eventual rewards. “Slimming” has become a common euphemism for laying off employees, as in the case of British Leyland:

(29) J[aguar] R[over] T[riumph]- MG range will still be intact to form the kernel of a slimmed down, but profitable car company (*The Economist* 23.9.78: 120).

(30) Another dilemma for BL is how to cut its swollen 190,000-strong labour force down to size (*The Economist* 17.3.79: 107).

Being overweight and fat is valued negatively, because it impedes good performance and undermines physical condition. The most straightforward ways of getting rid of redundant fat are dieting and exercise. A good macroeconomic “climate” helps companies to stay “healthy” (i.e. profitable). As long as companies or economies are “healthy,” intervention is unnecessary. Long-term state interference may even be damaging in the long run. Hence, *The Economist* pins its hopes on better management to contain expenditure or at least to enable money to be spent more effectively:

(31) Import controls would not cure the British disease (*The Economist* 14.4.79: 73).

(32) [...] the British Medical Association, along with the Labour party and the trade unions, keeps calling for a massive injection of funds into the service. In one of its more fanciful demands the BMA has demanded “multi-millions” of extra cash at once. [...] It is to be hoped that the royal commission will dispel, once and for all, the illusion that Britain has only to spend as large a proportion of its gnp on health care as do wealthier countries for the service’s problems to disappear (*The Economist* 14.10.78: 107).

(33) [North Sea] Oil gives the next government a breathing space to reverse the decline – or an anaesthetic to let it accelerate (*The Economist* 7.4.79: 73).

(34) People like choice. Some super-fatted parts of the welfare state could give it to them more often than they do (*The Economist* 26.8.78:14).

These preliminary data corroborate the conclusions of Boers (1997 and 1999) by supporting the suggestion that HEALTH and FITNESS metaphors may be typical of economic discourse advocating free markets.

The Economist and *The Guardian* commented on the publication of the Conservative Manifesto in April 1979. Their contrastive approach is striking. *The Economist* gives evidence of the conceptual metaphor ECONOMY IS WAR⁹ and the main message is that Mrs Thatcher promises change and that she should be given the opportunity to prove herself. The metaphor of the “harness” appears again, which seems to suggest that the objects of harness – corporate lobbies and powerful existing institutions – are both conceptualised as being in need of control. Both are represented as having a type of raw energy that requires control:

(35) She has stepped forward to challenge the almost identical enemy – that of the modern corporatist state – which just five years ago so comprehensively overwhelmed her predecessor, Mr Edward Heath.[...] The 1970 Heath administration entered office with a harness. [...] In the summer of 1970, this harness was strapped to the workhorse of government, and two years later it duly broke, with Mr Heath’s conversion to incomes policy, lavish industrial support and eventual coalition centrism. [...] In the bitterness of defeat, however, all parties feel an atavistic need to return to their ideological grass roots. In the leadership elections of 1975, Mrs Thatcher emerged as the

⁹ One can argue that POLITICS OF SETTING ECONOMIC POLICY IS WAR is more appropriate as the ‘conceptual metaphor’ and that ECONOMY IS WAR should be regarded as the ‘conceptual key’ that is inferred from a number of conceptual metaphors (cf. Charteris-Black 2004: 16). However, for the sake of simplicity, we shall take ECONOMY IS WAR/ CONFLICT as the conceptual metaphor.

candidate of these roots. [...] Margaret Thatcher is a politician not so much of principle as of will. To write of her in the context of 1970-1974 is to miss the lesson which she herself has drawn from that period of office: that policies must be given a chance to prove themselves even in the bloodiest of battles and that, whatever happens, the will of the leader must not break. It is true that another Tory prime minister held the same belief. Mr Edward Heath's harness was to prove brittle. Mrs Thatcher's own brand of pragmatism is to see the failure of 1974 as the precursor of the success of 1984. It is in this perception that Mrs Thatcher's claim to political originality must lie. If she can break through the myriad forces stacked against her and give government a leaner and sharper edge, if she can achieve a lasting shift in resources from the public to the private sector – and do so in a climate of industrial peace – then she will deserve the place she will certainly gain among the gods of Tory legend.” (*The Economist* 21.4.79: 42)

The Guardian, on the other hand, uses some CRIME metaphors, the value judgement of which should defend the poor and the destitute against what is perceived to be aggressive and ruthless gung-ho at the expense of the weak and needy in society. It should be pointed out, however, that these instances are highly conventional items. The title of the article “A great leap into the past?” refers to its rejection of monetarism as the Neo Classical School of *laissez-faire* noninterventionism that aimed to restore pre-Keynesian principles and that made government spending a dirty word:

(36) [E]specially the less prosperous, will merely find that much of what they take from one government hand is promptly snatched back by another. If this is the only route by which the Conservatives plan to relieve the family budget, then many of those who have been attracted by the promise of really substantial cuts in the tax they pay will soon under a Thatcher Government come to the conclusion that the politicians have conned them again. There are also to be cuts in public spending. Sir Geoffrey Howe talked not so long ago of a net reduction of £4 billions in view of the promises that have already been made of higher government spending on law and order and defence. If the public services on which the great majority of people must continue to depend are not grievously damaged in the search for these economies, then where else will the money be found? [...] Meanwhile, the process of “liberation” will also damage the standards and opportunities of those who cannot afford the fun. Not a word trying to cut the NHS [National Health Service] waiting list. [...] To their great credit, Mrs Thatcher and some of her colleagues like Sir Keith Joseph [...] have been frank about what their revolution would entail. They aim to create a more prosperous society at the cost of creating a less equal society.” (*The Guardian* 23.4.79)

6.2 The experiment: “No pain, no gain in a free-market rhetoric: revisited with authentic materials”

The data from this experiment corroborate the conclusions of Boers (1997b) as they indicate that metaphors do contribute to the construction of a mental framework from which people judge the socio-economic world that surrounds them. Students who had read the *Economist* article were inclined to project the logic of the WAR domain into their own letters to the editor, and came up with WAR metaphors themselves (3.96 v. 0.30, Mann-Whitney U test gives $p < .0001$). These were sometimes conventional (“*government should declare war to aggressive unions*”, “*beat strikes down*”, “*resist socialist threats*”), recycled from the editorial itself (“*weaken the power of the unions*”, “*doing battle*”) or completely new (“*outflank the unions*”, “*roll back the power of big government*”, “*liberate the economy*”). There is a statistical correlation between the use of WAR metaphors and positive evaluations with

regard to privatisation ($p < .02$) and negative ones concerning the “tax-and-spend” welfare state ($p < .01$). Likewise, students from the *Guardian* group were more inclined to use CRIME metaphors (1.68 v. 0.02, $p < .0001$) as well as LIVING ORGANISM metaphors (1.14 v. 0.67, $p < .001$). The use of CRIME metaphors (“government shouldn’t rob people on welfare”, “government shouldn’t steal from its own industries”, “do harm to social services”) correlated statistically with positive evaluations regarding welfare state ($p < 0.05$) and negative ones concerning privatisation ($p < .01$). Moreover, there is a statistical correlation between the use of LIVING ORGANISM metaphors and positive evaluations with respect to welfare state ($p < .05$) and negative ones concerning privatisation ($p < .05$). These were probably created in defiance of the perceived injustice of Social Darwinism that was already hinted at, though not explicitly mentioned, in the *Guardian* article (“I don’t want to live in a Survival-of-the-Fittest-Society”, “the economy is not a self-regulating body”, “government should protect us against the ultra-liberal virus”, “protect us against social ills”). It is noteworthy that the minority of students from the *Economist* group that gave evidence of more leftist leanings (17/55) as well as the small group of right-wing students from the *Guardian* group (3/56) often reused the dominant metaphors from the editorial to make a personal statement to the contrary or to challenge the ideas put forward by the editor. Sometimes, the dominant metaphors from the editorial were substituted by a more suitable one which nevertheless gave evidence of the same conceptual metaphor (“Government should protect the strong, not the weak and sick losers”, “People on welfare are leeches”, “It’s socialism that steals our money”). Worthy of mention is the fact that boys were more inclined to use WAR metaphors than girls ($p < .01$) whereas girls tended to use more CRIME metaphors ($p < 0.05$). Both groups had equal gender distributions.

7 Conclusion and perspectives

Needless to say that CONFLICT metaphors abound in both *The Economist* and *The Guardian* during the Winter of Discontent as they both criticise unions for unruly behaviour in the leapfrog game that jeopardised the economic future of the UK during these grim winter months. It is worth noticing that while both want to “combat inflation”¹⁰, *The Economist* has more CONFLICT metaphors than *The Guardian* that urge for union defeat and union reform: an average of 20.7 clear instances per stretches of 5,000 words versus only 11.9. *The Guardian* tends to cut the unions down to size by means of PATH and CONFLICT metaphors but these CONFLICT metaphors are often significantly less ‘salient’. This accounts for the fact that *The Guardian* gives evidence of more ‘unclear instances’: 23.4 unclear instances per stretches of 5,000 words in *The Guardian* versus 14.2 unclear instances in *The Economist* arguing for union reform. In this respect, *The Guardian*’s frequent use of more ‘conventional metaphors’ reduces our awareness of its semantic tension. The views expressed in *The Economist* and *The Guardian* converged on the issue of pay policy, but they clearly diverged on the issue of government spending. When it comes to public spending, MOBILITY metaphors and HEALTH metaphors are instantiated almost three times more in *The Economist*: an average of 14.7 clear instances per stretches of 5,000 words versus only 5.4, respectively. Both *The Guardian* and *The Economist* display an array of HEALTH and CONFLICT metaphors when emphasising the dangers of tight monetary control supported by high interest rates. It is striking, however, that *The Guardian* tends to highlight the dangerous consequences of credit squeezes from the perspective of employees (excessive wages and tight monetary control lead to unemployment) whereas *The Economist* judges the

¹⁰ A WAR metaphor often repeated in both *The Economist* and *The Guardian*

whole problem from the perspective of the employer (excessive wages and tight monetary control lead to bankruptcy). *The Guardian* is a relentless critic of monetarism, fearing that the New Classical wind will put an end to community values and welfare state. *The Economist* points at the Pros and Cons. During the Winter of Discontent, *The Economist* supported the government's pay policy and criticised right-wing conservatives like Margaret Thatcher (New Tories) for their insistence on free collective bargaining (monetarism). However, restraint of government spending as the most important single target to restrain excessive monetary growth (monetarism) seems to be endorsed by the value judgement of its metaphors. We can conclude that *The Economist* metaphorically framed certain specific target domains (e.g. trade unions) differently from left-of-centre *The Guardian*. *The Economist* favours HEALTH and PATH/ JOURNEYING metaphors to characterise economic progress; conversely, they favour striking DISEASE, CONFLICT, NATURAL DISASTER, and UNRULY HORSE metaphors ("harnessing") when characterising opponents to their plan (i.e. unions and government spending). The use of CRIME metaphors in *The Guardian*, on the other hand, correlates with positive evaluations regarding welfare state and negative ones concerning privatisation of the main industries. Moreover, there is a correlation between the use of LIVING ORGANISM metaphors and positive evaluations with respect to welfare state (HEALTH) and negative ones concerning privatisation (DISEASE). This metaphorical framing may well have contributed to readers' thought patterns and consequently it may indirectly have contributed to a change in public opinion about the socio-economic issues under discussion, as illustrated by "No pain, no gain in a free-market rhetoric: revisited with authentic materials".

There is, of course, a need for a more extensive use of larger corpora to explore further the questions raised in this article, and the answers offered await confirmation, or rejection, as larger corpora are investigated and as the Winter of Discontent spread into the turbulent eighties when Britain was in the grip of monetarism and the Iron Lady...

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