Metaphor, genre and recontextualization

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ABSTRACT

Earlier studies have demonstrated the dynamic properties of metaphor by showing how the meanings and functions of metaphorical expressions can flexibly change and develop within individual texts or discourse events (Cameron 2011). In this paper, we draw from Linell's (2009) typology of 'recontextualization' in order to analyze the development of particular metaphors in three pairs of linked texts, each produced over a number of years, on the topics of medicine, politics and the parenting of children with special needs. We show how key metaphorical expressions from earlier texts or conversations are re-used by later writers, in different genres and registers, to convey new meanings and serve new functions. We account for these new meanings and functions by considering the relevant domain of activity and the differences between the original context of use and the context(s) in which the metaphor is re-used. Our study contributes, from a diachronic perspective, to the growing body of literature that recognizes the dynamic and context-bound nature of metaphorical language.

Earlier studies have identified and discussed the dynamic properties of metaphor within individual texts and conversations. In particular, Cameron and other scholars have argued that the meanings of metaphorical expressions are inherently flexible, and emerge in different ways in different contexts of use. As a result, the same metaphorical expressions are sometimes re-used within the same text or discourse event with different meanings and functions (Cameron and Low 2004, Cameron and Gibbs 2008, Cameron 2011). It has also been shown that particularly prominent metaphors for specific topics can be employed in different ways in different contexts. Such metaphors seem to evolve over time as they are used and re-used by different speakers and writers in different texts or interactions (Musolff 2010). Moreover, a number of studies have demonstrated that the density, forms and functions of metaphors in language can vary substantially depending on context of use, or, more specifically, on genre and register (Caballero 2006, Semino 2008, Steen *et al.* 2010, Goatly 2011, Deignan, Littlemore & Semino 2013).

In this article we draw on Linell's (2009) typology of 'recontextualization' in order to show that the re-use of metaphors across contexts constitutes a particularly interesting case of recontextualization, due to metaphor's flexibility and potential for creative extension. In order to illustrate this point, we analyze the ways in which three specific metaphors from different domains of activity have been developed and adapted over time in different contexts of use. We also introduce an approach to the analysis of metaphor in different genres and registers, which allows the analyst to account systematically for the varied ways in which a particular metaphor may be used in different contexts of use (Deignan, Littlemore and Semino 2013). Using this approach, we identify the factors that seem to account for the success and longevity of particular metaphors, as reflected in their repeated recontextualization in different genres and registers. We also show how the recontextualization of metaphors can involve a variety of changes in terms of form, meaning and function, depending in large part on the relevant domain of activity and on the differences between the original context of use and the context(s) in which the metaphor is recontextualized.

In the next section we outline Linell's typology and introduce our approach to the analysis of the recontextualization of metaphors. We then use this approach to analyze the development over time of three metaphors: a scientific metaphor used to explain a theory of pain, a political metaphor used to describe a prominent Italian politician, and a 'counselling' metaphor used in an account of parenting a child with special needs.

Recontextualization and metaphor

The notion of 'recontextualization' was used by the sociologist Basil Bernstein (1996) in order to examine the processes of production and reproduction of what counts as 'knowledge' through pedagogy, and the implications of these processes for different social groups. In Critical Discourse Analysis, the term 'recontextualization' has been adopted in order to capture the strategies and processes involved in representing and adapting events, knowledge or components of social practices in different contexts (e.g. Fairclough 2003, Calsamiglia and van Dijk 2004, Richardson and Wodak 2009, Williams Camus 2009). Here we draw particularly from Linell (2009), who distinguishes among three types of recontextualization:

First, there are relations of recontextualization *within the same* conversation or *text*; participants make use of the same or similar ideas or expressions several times within the same stretch of discourse (intratextuality). Secondly, one text or piece of spoken discourse may re-use or allude to elements of other specific texts or discourses. These two types of recontextualizations form more concrete forms of intertextuality; they index relations between specific discursive events ('tokens' of discourse), i.e., particular texts or talk exchanges.

Thirdly, there are more abstract forms of recontextualizations; orders of discourse (Foucault), genres or activity types, may also borrow from other genres or activity types […]. (Linell 2009: 248; italics in original)

The first two types of recontextualization can apply to the use, re-use and transformation of metaphors within or across texts or discourse events. A discussion of the first type can arguably be found in Cameron's (2011) work on the conversations between Jo Berry and Pat Magee – the member of the Irish

Republican Army (IRA) who planted the bomb which killed Jo's father, a Conservative Member of Parliament, in Brighton in 1984. Cameron shows how the two interlocutors adopt and adapt each other's metaphors within the same conversation as they negotiate topics and their mutual relationship. The third type of recontextualization can be applied to broader changes in metaphor use. These include, for example, what Fairclough (1992: 6) calls 'an upsurge in the extension of the market to new areas of social life', such as education and healthcare. In terms of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), the MARKET source domain has become an increasingly dominant metaphorical resource for structuring activities, goals and strategies in a variety of areas, or target domains. In this paper we are specifically concerned with Linell's *second* type of recontextualization as it applies to metaphor.

Arguably, from a Bakhtinian perspective, any use of metaphor 'may re-use or allude to' previous uses of the same or similar metaphors in different contexts (e.g. Bakhtin 1981). Such a broad application of Linell's second type of recontextualization does not, however, make for a useful analytical tool. We therefore focus on cases where a specific metaphor is explicitly adopted and adapted in a different context from that in which it was first introduced. By 'specific metaphor' we mean a concrete instance of metaphor use that is originally associated with a particular speaker or writer within a particular discourse event, and that involves specific source and target domains or scenarios, and a specific verbal manifestation. Such uses of metaphor tend to be at least partly creative, and can be described as 'deliberate' insofar as there is substantial textual evidence of the speaker's/writer's intention to draw the listener's/reader's attention to a different conceptual domain or area of experience from the current topic of the text or interaction (the notion of 'deliberate' metaphor is proposed by Steen 2008, and critiqued by Gibbs 2011).

In the following sections, we discuss three such specific uses of metaphor which have been repeatedly alluded to and re-used in different contexts: a metaphor used in a scientific paper to introduce a new theory of pain sensations; a metaphor used by a prominent Italian journalist to support his views on Silvio Berlusconi; and a metaphorical story that aims to convey the experience of having and raising a child with special needs. In order to capture the differences between different contexts of use, we adopt the approach to genre and register which Deignan, Littlemore & Semino (2013) apply to the study of variation in figurative language use. This approach combines Swales's (1990) notion of 'genre' with Halliday and Hasan's (1985) approach to contexts of situation, which can be used to account for variation among 'registers' (Martin and Rose 2003, Nunan 2008, Goatly 2011). From a genre perspective, texts are grouped according to their structural characteristics, their communicative purposes and their association with particular discourse communities – groups of people, who, in Barton's (2007: 75) terms, 'have texts and practices in common' (Swales 1990: 24-7 proposes a more stringent definition of 'discourse community'). For example, specialist academic articles have the purpose of communicating scientific advances, and are produced by and for the members of the discourse community of experts in a particular field. The distinctive characteristics associated with genres can also be explained as differences in 'staging', namely the series of identifiable steps that speakers or writers go through in order to achieve their goals (Bhatia 1993, Martin and Rose 2003).

From a register perspective, texts (or portions or texts) are grouped according to linguistic features and patterns which can be explained in terms of Halliday and Hasan's (1985: 12) three main elements of contexts of situation: 'field' (what is happening), 'tenor' (who is taking part), and mode ('what part language is playing'). Different configurations of field, tenor and mode account for different linguistic and textual patterns, including patterns in the use of figurative language. For example, specialist and

popular scientific articles on a particular topic arguably share the same broad field and mode, as they communicate scientific advances by means of writing and, to a lesser extent, visual images. This accounts for the fact that these different texts share some technical vocabulary about the topic, including technical metaphors. On the other hand, specialist and popular scientific articles contrast in terms of tenor: the former involve communication among experts who are equals in terms of expertise, and who read the texts in their professional role; in contrast, the latter involve communication between a better informed writer and a less informed audience, who are likely to read the texts for general interest. As far as metaphor is concerned, this accounts for differences in the use of the same metaphorical expressions, in the choice of source domains, in the functions that metaphorical expressions perform, in the extent to which metaphors may be used for humorous purposes, and so on (Knudsen 2003, Skorczynska, and Deignan, 2003, Semino 2008: 140-7, Deignan, Littlemore & Semino 2013).

When discussing specific instances of recontextualization, we therefore describe the different texts involved both from the perspective of genre and of different configurations of field, tenor and mode. On the one hand, we aim to show that the notion of recontextualization is useful when investigating different uses of what may be regarded as the 'same' metaphor. On the other hand, we suggest that the re-use of specific metaphors is a particularly interesting case of recontextualization, as the involvement of what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) call 'source' and 'target' domains potentially allows for greater flexibility, complexity and creativity than when the recontextualized stretch of text or idea is (largely) non-metaphorical. We also show how a consideration of genre and situational context can help to explain the different ways in which metaphors are recontextualized in different domains of activity, particularly in terms of differences and changes in function.

Example 1: The 'gate' metaphor for pain from a scientific paper to a self-help book

In this section, we briefly reconsider a metaphor discussed by Semino (2011) in terms of the approach to recontextualization we have just described. In a paper published in the journal *Science* in 1965, two scientists introduced a new theory of pain sensations, which they called the 'Gate Control Theory of Pain' (Melzack and Wall 1965). Within this theory, a particular area of the spinal cord is described as 'act[ing] as a gate control system that modulates the synaptic transmission of nerve impulses from peripheral fibers to central cells' (Melzack and Wall 1965: 975). The notion of a metaphorical 'gate' within the nervous system is used to explain why it is that physical damage is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for the actual experience of pain sensations. Depending on activity in different types of fibers in the nervous system and in the brain, the pain 'gate' may be 'open' or 'closed' to different extents. The more 'open' the 'gate' is, the more pain sensations are experienced.

As Semino explains, (2011), Melzack and Wall's theory has been highly influential, both within and outside the scientific community. More specifically, the notion of a 'pain gate' is often used to explain the mechanisms of pain to audiences who do not belong to the original scientific community of experts addressed by the *Science* article. For example, in a book written by a group of practising clinicians, *Overcoming Chronic Pain* (Cole *et al.* 2005), readers are told that, according to Melzack and Wall's theory,

> there are 'gates' in the nerve junctions, spinal cord and pain centres in the brain. These gates open and let pain messages through the pain system, so that we feel pain. They can also close to stop messages going through the system, so that pain is reduced or stopped. (Cole *et al.* 2005: 40)

Cole *et al.* go on to explain that 'there are no treatments that can shut the gate and keep it closed all the

time' (Cole *et al.* 2005: 41). However, readers are invited to reflect on 'those things or activities that you know affect your own gate', and reassured that the book provides them with skills they can use 'to gain some control over how much the gate is open or closed.' (Cole *et al.* 2005: 41)

The fact that the 'gate' metaphor and its main linguistic realizations are adopted in Cole *et al.* (2005) is partly due to broad similarities in field and communicative purpose between the original paper and the self-help book: both are concerned with pain, and both share the goal of explaining how it works. In addition, the authors of *Overcoming Chronic Pain* are 'experts' in the same way as Melzack and Wall, even though the two sets of authors belong to separate professional discourse communities. In both cases, the mode involves writing and, to a lesser extent, visual images, which allows the detailed introduction and explication of the 'gate' metaphor. The recontextualization of Melzack and Wall's metaphor in Cole *et al.* (2005) and many other texts is arguably also due, in part, to the choice of metaphor itself. Gates are familiar objects, and the opening and closing of gates is a familiar activity. Hence a scenario involving gates can fairly easily be used to explain a complex issue to non-experts, as well as experts.

The recontextualization of Melzack and Wall's theory and its central metaphor in Cole *et al.*'s book also involves a number of contrasts. Melzack and Wall's original use of the metaphor is limited to a few expressions that have precise, technical meanings; the word 'gate' only occurs in the singular form, and the position of the gate is always affected by changes and processes within the nervous system that are not directly perceptible; in addition, the 'gate' metaphor is part of a broader explanation that also exploits other, more established, technical metaphors (e.g. the 'inhibition' of particular processes). Cole *et al.*, on the other hand, develop a simplified and more flexible version of Melzack and Wall's

metaphor. They used the noun 'gate' both in the singular and plural forms; they apply the notion of a pain 'gate' that 'opens' and 'closes' to the effects of everyday activities such as getting stressed or going for a walk, which are under the sufferers' control; they address the reader directly, and personalize the 'gate' by suggesting that it works differently from person to person ('your own gate'); they develop the metaphor by using further, colloquial terms from the source scenario ('shut' the gate); they combine the 'gate' metaphor with other, compatible non-technical metaphors, such as a more general 'movement' metaphor in: 'let pain messages through the pain system', 'fewer pain messages pass through the pain system'.

These differences between Cole *et al.*'s and Melzack and Wall's uses of the 'gate' metaphor illustrate how the richness of the source domain allows it to be exploited and developed in different ways to reflect differences in genre, and in some aspects of the configuration of field, tenor and mode. Although similar at a general level, the goals and fields of the two texts are not the same at a more specific level. Melzack and Wall are concerned with the origins of pain sensations in the nervous systems. They use the notion of a 'gate' to name their new theory and to help provide a new account of pain sensations, which would ultimately lead to new therapeutic avenues. As such, the metaphor has a partly 'theory-constitutive' function (Boyd 1993), or, more generally, the function of 'explaining and modelling' a particular phenomenon (Goatly 2011: 155-8). Cole *et al.* are concerned with the daily experiences of chronic sufferers. They adapt the 'gate' metaphor in order to explain to their readers that pain is not inevitable, and to suggest ways in which they can gain control over it in their daily lives. In addition, the *Science* paper is part of communication among members of the discourse community of scientific researchers, while the self-help book is written by experts for the benefit of a general audience, who form a much looser discourse community insofar as they share some of the textual practices that involve chronic pain sufferers. This affects the tenor of the communication, which involves peers in the case of

Melzack and Wall's paper, but experts addressing non-experts in the case of Cole *et al.*'s book. Cumulatively, these differences explain the contrast between Melzack and Wall's formal, technical and impersonal use of the metaphor in relation to the nervous system as opposed to Cole *et al.*'s more informal, semi-technical, and personalized use of the metaphor in relation to the daily lives of sufferers.

Overall, Cole *et al.*'s recontextualization of Melzack and Wall's metaphor involves primarily the explanatory function of the 'gate' metaphor, which in turn affects the metaphor's persuasive function. In the two texts, the metaphor is used to explain pain within different domains: the nervous system in Melzack and Wall's paper and daily life in Cole *et al.*'s book. As a consequence, the metaphor helps to persuade different audiences of different things: that the account of pain proposed by the authors is valid in Melzack and Wall's paper, and that chronic pain can be controlled in daily life via a number of practical techniques in Cole *et al.*'s book.

In the rest of this paper, we apply this approach to the recontextualization of metaphor to two further examples, respectively from Italian politics and from the discourses surrounding the parenting of children with special needs.

Example 2: Metaphor and recontextualization in politics: a 'vaccine' against Berlusconi

In this section we discuss a metaphor that was coined by a prominent Italian journalist, Indro Montanelli, at the beginning of the 21st century, and which has regularly reappeared after that in debates over Silvio Berlusconi's protracted dominance of the Italian political scene.

Montanelli was one of Italy's most influential journalists and historians of the 20th century. In 1974, he founded the daily newspaper *Il Giornale*, which came under Berlusconi's ownership in 1977. In 1994, Montanelli famously resigned from the directorship in protest at Berlusconi's attempt to influence the newspaper's editorial line in favour of his new political aspirations. Montanelli went on to become an outspoken critic of Berlusconi as a politician. In a television interview conducted in March 2001, Montanelli expressed his concerns about Berlusconi, but somewhat surprisingly added that he wished for him to win the upcoming general election. He then went on to explain why:

1. *Perchè Berlusconi è una di quelle malattie che si curano con il vaccino. E per guarire da Berlusconi ci vuole una bella dose di vaccino di Berlusconi.*

   Because Berlusconi is one of those diseases that are treated with a vaccine. And in order to be treated from Berlusconi we need a good dose of Berlusconi vaccine. (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1cRuGnP30Y; accessed May 2012)[1]

The fact that vaccines are normally used to prevent rather than treat diseases does not seem to undermine Montanelli's use of metaphor to explain his paradoxical position on the next Italian elections: Berlusconi is metaphorically described as a disease; his future political demise is metaphorically described as requiring a vaccine; given the context, this metaphorical immunization presumably corresponds to Berlusconi winning the next election and being able to govern Italy long enough for the Italian electorate to decide not to elect him again (NB: Berlusconi had already been Italy's Prime Minister for a few months in 1994).

Montanelli died later in the same year, but he used the same metaphor again, both in speech and in writing, on a few other occasions. Since then, his 'vaccine' metaphor has been alluded to and re-used in a wide range of contexts: in May 2012, the string 'vaccino Berlusconi Montanelli' returned over 700,000

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[1] All translations from Italian originals are by Elena Semino.

hits in a general google search. A closer look at the top 50 google results shows that some are quotations

or reproductions of one of Montanelli's own statements, while, in other cases, Montanelli's original

metaphor is adapted and developed beyond its original formulation. More specifically, the 'vaccine'

metaphor tends to be recontextualized by left-wing critics of Berlusconi to explain his continued

electoral successes and dominance of Italian politics. The following example is taken from an editorial

in daily left-wing newspaper *La Repubblica*:

2. *Non era vero nemmeno quello che diceva Montanelli [...] Quando te la sei iniettata rischi di renderla cronica quella malattia anziché vaccinarti contro di essa.*

   What Montanelli said was also not true [...]. When you have injected it, you run the risk of making a disease chronic, rather than immunizing yourself against it. (Eugenio Scalfari, *La Repubblica*, 29/1/2006)

A number of reasons can be cited for the frequent recontextualization of Montanelli's metaphor. An

important factor is the prestige of Montanelli himself, and the increasing media visibility he gained

throughout his career: the interview from which we quoted above was conducted by another prominent

Italian journalist, Enzo Biagi, and was broadcast on Italy's main public TV channel, RAI 1, within

Biagi's daily programme *Il Fatto*. In addition, the 'vaccine' metaphor was used in a witty and humorous

manner to explain a paradoxical position, namely, wishing for the success of a politician one

disapproves of. It was a highly evaluative metaphor, as Berlusconi is described as a disease, but it also

implicitly suggested faith in the long-term wisdom of the Italian electorate, who would soon recognize

their mistake in electing Berlusconi again. Hence, the metaphor functioned as an implicit invitation *not*

to vote for Berlusconi in 2001, rather than waiting until the following election. The situation exploited

by Montanelli as source scenario is also familiar and accessible, and part of the rich and flexible broader

domain of HEALTH AND ILLNESS. Finally, the target scenario of the metaphor, namely Berlusconi's

dominant role in Italian politics, continued to be relevant for at least a decade after Montanelli's

interview, and the 'vaccine' metaphor provided a possible frame within which to try to make sense of why this was the case, to evaluate participants and to apportion blame.

In order to show recontextualization at work in a very different genre from Montanelli's original interview, we now consider a thread taken from an online forum in 2009, while Berlusconi was in Italy's Prime Minister. The forum is part of the website of the centre-left organization known as *l'Ulivo* (*The Olive Tree*) – the political movement associated with Romano Prodi, who defeated Berlusconi's coalition in the general elections held in 1996 and 2006. The thread was started by a contributor who calls him/herself 'Robyn' on 24th April 2009, under the title 'Il vaccino di Montanelli' ('Montanelli's vaccine'). The most relevant extracts are given below (NB: the original Italian spellings are provided in all quotations):

3. *Il vaccino di Montanelli*
   di Robyn, il 24/04/2009, 14:28

   [...] Quindi il paese deve ancora completare il suo vaccino e gli eventuali pericoli vanno neutralizzati e cancellati [...]

   Montanelli's vaccine
   By Robyn, 24/04/2009, 14:28

   […] So the country still has to complete its vaccination and the possible dangers need to be neutralized and eliminated. […].

Two forum users, 'pianogrande' and 'franz' responded as follows within 24 hours of the original posting:

4. *Re: Il vaccino di Montanelli*
   di pianogrande, il 24/04/2009, 22:57

   Il vaccino va inoculato in piccole dosi e (se non sbaglio) parzialmente disattivato.
   Berlusconi non è niente di tutto questo.
   Subito dosi massicce e ben vitali.
   Gli italiani, invece di vaccinarsi, si sono intossicati.

Adesso siamo nella fase della dipendenza.
A quel punto si ha un bel dire: "Smetto quando voglio".[...]
Intanto, l'opposizione non avrà ancora tirato fuori gli anticorpi.
I linfociti grossi saranno in lotta con quelli più piccoli e li accuseranno di essere estremisti e velleitari.
I globuli bianchi accuseranno i globuli rossi di essere nostalgici ed ingenui. [...]

Re: Montanelli's vaccine
By pianogrande, 24/04/2009, 22:57

The vaccine needs to be injected in small doses and (if I am not mistaken) partly deactivated.
Berlusconi is nothing of the sort.
Massive and fully active doses from the start.
Instead of being immunised, the Italians have been poisoned.
Now we are in the phase of addiction.
At that point it's easy to say: "I can give up whenever I want." […]
In the meantime, the opposition will not yet have developed the antibodies.
The large lymphocytes will be in a struggle with the smaller ones and will accuse them of being extremist and unrealistic.
The white blood cells will accuse the red blood cells of being nostalgic and naïve. […]

5. *Re: Il vaccino di Montanelli*
   di Franz, il 25/04/2009, 13:50

   Vero, il vaccino non ha funzionato.
   Dopo 5 anni di governo berlusconi, si pensava che la vittoria dell'Unione nel 2006, pur risicata, rappresentasse la reazione degli anticorpi necessari. Anticorpi del paese, non dell'allora (ed odierna) opposizione.
   Invece si è visto caro pianogrande che la malattia non è solo nell'infezione berlusconana ma anche nella nostra compagine.
   E' qui che tra globuli bianchi e rossi (di varie tipologie ed ideologie) non si è imparato nulla e non sono nati anticorpi per vincere settarismo, localismo, provincialismo.[...]

Re: Montanelli's vaccine
By Franz, 25/04/2009, 13:50

True, the vaccine has not worked.
After 5 years of Berlusconi government, we thought that the Union's victory in 2006, however narrow, was the reaction of the necessary antibodies. Antibodies in the country, not in the then (and today's) opposition.
Instead we saw dear pianogrande that the disease is not just in the Berlusconi infection but in our own side.
It is here that among white and red blood cells (of various kinds and ideologies) nothing has been learnt and no antibodies have been produced to win against sectarianism, localism and provincialism. […]

6. *Re: Il vaccino di Montanelli*
   di pianograde, il 25/04/2009, 13:58

   Franz.
   La logica conclusione sarebbe, quindi, diventare autoimmuni. [...]

   Re: Montanelli's vaccine
   By pianograde, 25/04/2009, 13:58

   Franz.
   The logical conclusion would be, therefore, to develop autoimmunity. […]

   (http://www.perlulivo.it/forum/viewtopic.php?f=5&t=1364&start=0&st=0&sk=t&sd=a&hilit=vaccino, 24-25/04/2009)

The title of this thread in the online forum makes a clear allusion to Montanelli's original metaphor.

Each response puts forward an argument within which the metaphor plays a central role, contributing

both to the 'intra-textual' coherence of each post and to the 'inter-textual' coherence of the different

contributions to the thread (Chilton and Schäffner 2002: 29). Montanelli's original metaphor is

creatively and collaboratively extended and transformed, in two main ways. The original 'vaccine'

scenario is developed into different scenarios where the process of immunization has gone wrong,

resulting in an inadequate production of antibodies, or even poisoning and addiction. Moreover, the

inadequacies and errors of Italy's left-wing opposition, which the forum contributors support, are

described metaphorically via a related scenario of conflict among different components of the body's

immune system. The forum posts clearly exploit the narrative potential of the notion of a metaphorical

vaccine (Ritchie 2011): the writers' views of recent and current developments in Italian politics are

expressed via metaphorical stories involving vaccines, patients, overdoses, antibodies and different types

of blood cells. In the concluding post, pianograde rather enigmatically proposes that the only solution

is 'diventare autoimmuni' ('to develop autoimmunity'). In technical terms, this occurs when an organism

fails to recognize its own cells as part of itself, and can therefore develop a reaction against its own

tissues. Here the metaphorical reference to autoimmunity seems to suggest that the Italian Left does not simply need to develop the ability to defeat its political opponents, but also to change decisively some of its own attitudes and behaviours.

The way in which Montanelli's metaphor is recontextualized in the online forum thread can be accounted for more precisely with reference to the approach to genre and situational context we briefly outlined above. The similarities between the metaphor's original context and the new context in which it is re-used can be captured primarily by the notion of field: the broad domain of activity is politics, and the topic is Berlusconi's role in Italian politics. Other aspects of field contrast, however, and there are further contrasts in terms of genre and context that can account for the differences between Montanelli's original metaphor and the exploitation of the 'same' metaphor in the online forum.

The choice of Montanelli's 'vaccine' metaphor on the part of the creator of the forum thread, and its adoption by the other contributors, can be explained in terms of a number of factors. The members of the online forum form a discourse community whose members could take for granted that others within the community were familiar with the metaphor, due to its widespread use in the media. They also shared with Montanelli a negative evaluation of Berlusconi, and a concern for the process that Italy had to go through in order to find alternatives to his leadership of the country. In other words, the metaphor had become a shared resource for vocabulary and ideas, within Italian politics generally and the Left in particular, in order to discuss and criticize Berlusconi's role in Italian politics.

The differences in textual prominence and development of the metaphor can partly be explained by differences between the two contexts of use in terms of genre and the configuration of field, tenor and

mode. Interviews and online fora differ in terms of staging. Interviews consist of sequences of questions

and answers, and questions about the most interesting and controversial topics are often left for the end

of the interaction. In the televised interview conducted by Biagi, questions about Montanelli's views on

Berlusconi and the imminent elections were asked towards the end of the conversation. More

specifically, Montanelli used the 'vaccine' metaphor in response to Biagi's last question, which was an

invitation to express his wishes for Italy's future. Montanelli makes it clear that his answer is likely to be

surprising to the audience, and then uses the metaphor to explain his unexpected wish to see Berlusconi

elected. In the forum thread, a reference to Montanelli's metaphor appears in the title coined by Robyn

and is used again in the first contribution, albeit rather briefly. It then becomes the central plank of

argumentation in subsequent posts, where the re-use and development of the metaphor helps to achieve

the coherence that is an expectation of forum posts within the same thread. Further, the use and re-use of

the metaphor contributes to reinforce a relationship of solidarity among contributors through shared

opposition to Berlusconi, and through reference to shared historical and cultural knowledge. It should

also be noted that the field of Italian politics had inevitably changed since Montanelli's interview, and

had changed in a way that conflicted with the representation of the future provided by the original

'vaccine' metaphor. While Montanelli had to explain his paradoxical wish for the outcome of the

upcoming Italian elections, in 2009 the Italian Left had to explain why they were still in opposition and

Berlusconi in power. All this accounts for the specific ways in which the metaphor is developed.

Some further specific aspects of tenor and mode can help to account for the way in which the 'vaccine'

metaphor is creatively developed in the online forum discussion. As far as mode is concerned, the

contributors interact via written asynchronous communication: this allows for enough thinking and

drafting time to develop metaphorical scenarios in some detail, and by means of expressions that are

normally not used metaphorically (e.g. 'linfociti' / 'lymphocites'). As far as tenor is concerned, the

relationship among forum members involves both solidarity and comradeship on the one hand, and some

degree of competitiveness on the other. The latter aspect is also enhanced by the fact that forum postings

are accessible to anyone, which can lead to the desire to perform for a wider audience too. The particular

way in which the metaphor is re-used and extended across turns can be seen as both a collaborative and

a competitive process: the contributors reinforce their mutual relationship by sharing the same metaphor,

but also engage in some degree of verbal one-upmanship in trying to outdo one another in the

sophistication and originality of their use of the metaphor.

The way in which the different contributors to the forum are able to pick up Montanelli's metaphor and

creatively adapt it to their own purposes reflects the flexible and often underspecified nature of

metaphorical meanings. As we briefly pointed out above, Montanelli's claim that Berlusconi is 'one of

those diseases that are treated with a vaccine' is, strictly speaking, inconsistent with knowledge about

the source domain of HEALTH AND ILLNESS, where vaccines are used to prevent diseases rather than to

cure them. The recontextualization of Montanelli's metaphor in the online forum (and in many other

cases) develops the original metaphorical scenario in ways that more blatantly contradict what is the

case in the source domain, not just from an expert perspective, but also from a folk perspective.

Excessive doses of vaccine may cause side effects but do not, strictly speaking, lead to poisoning as

such, and certainly not addiction. Similarly, the various components of the immune system do not

behave in the way in which the metaphorical blood cells are described to behave by pianogrande and

Franz. This is not an uncommon phenomenon in the use of metaphor: the source domain or scenario is

adapted in order to accommodate the structures and relationships that apply to the speaker's or writer's

view of the target domain. As shown in Semino (2010), this process can be accounted for in terms of Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Blending Theory.

Overall, the recontextualization of Montanelli's 'vaccine' metaphor seems to involve primarily changes in the explanatory and evaluative aspects of the metaphor, which both serve its persuasive function. In the online forum, the metaphor is exploited and developed in order to explain a different political situation from Montanelli's, and also to pass judgement and apportion blame in different ways. Berlusconi was of course negatively described by Montanelli as a disease, but, in the original metaphor, the Italians were implicitly constructed as a body that could fairly straightforwardly be immunized against this disease: Montanelli credited the Italians with enough discernment not to re-elect Berlusconi after being governed by him for an extended period of time. In the online posts, Berlusconi changes from being a disease to a poison and a dangerously addictive drug. The Italians are, at best, at his mercy, and at worst deluded about their ability to be able to get rid of him. The Italian Left, which did not figure in Montanelli's metaphor, is negatively evaluated by being described as infected, unable to develop the antibodies needed to reject a disease, and engaged in harmful internal struggles, so that the only way forward, according to pianogrande, is that it becomes immune to itself. The fact that the recontextualization of the metaphor involves substantial changes in evaluation in particular is arguably characteristic of the political domain, and contrasts with the recontextualization of the 'gate' metaphor for pain, where evaluation did not play a major role. In the next section, we consider a case of recontextualization that also involves changes in the emotional valence of the original metaphor.

Example 3: Metaphor and recontexualization in 'children with special needs' discourse: Welcome to Holland

In this section we discuss the recontextualization of a metaphor that was introduced in a short essay written in 1987 by Emily Perl Kingsley, entitled 'Welcome to Holland'. The essay is concerned with the experience of having a child with special needs. This experience is metaphorically described in terms of a holiday that does not go according to plan. Kingsley, who has an adult son with Down syndrome, is a successful US writer and an activist for the inclusion of people with special needs. She has recounted how she first conceived of the metaphor when her son was still a child, as part of her counselling of another mother who had just had a baby with Down syndrome. Kingsley then produced a written version, which she started sending to other people (http://www.lovethatmax.com/2011/03/interview-with-author-of-welcome-to.html, accessed May 2012).

Welcome to Holland

       I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability – to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this ...

       When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans...the Coliseum, the Sistine Chapel, Gondolas. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting. After several months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go.

       Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland!" "Holland?" you say. "What do you mean, Holland? I signed up for Italy. I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy." But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

       The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place full of pestilence, famine, and disease. It's just a different place.

       So, you must go out and buy new guidebooks. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met. It's just a different place. It's slower paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy.

       But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around. You begin to notice that Holland has windmills. Holland has tulips. And Holland even has Rembrandts. But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy, and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life you will say, "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned." And the pain of that experience will never, ever, ever, go away. The loss of that dream is a very significant loss.

       But if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things about Holland.

After a brief introductory paragraph, Kingsley uses a simile to begin to introduce the scenario that functions as the 'source' for her metaphorical description of having a child with a disability: expecting a baby is explicitly compared to 'planning a fabulous vacation trip to Italy'. In the rest of the essay, the 'holiday' scenario is developed as a kind of allegorical narrative (Crisp 2001). The reader or listener is intended to interpret the whole scenario as applying metaphorically to the experience of a parent who unexpectedly finds out that their new baby has special needs. Within this interpretation, the planned Italian holiday corresponds to the expectation of having and living with a healthy, 'normal' child ('You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans'). The unexpected arrival in Holland corresponds to the abrupt realization that the child is different from what the parent expected, and that raising the child will also go against the parent's expectations ('But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay'). The frustration that arises from seeing others coming and going to Italy corresponds to the feelings that arise when the parent observes others parenting 'normal' children ('everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy'). And the gradual realization that Holland is, in fact, a worthwhile holiday destination corresponds to the parent realizing that there is also much to be celebrated in having a child who is different from what they expected (e.g. 'the very special, the very lovely things about Holland'). Not all the details within the 'holiday' scenario can be interpreted as having a specific counterpart in the target domain, however. This applies, for example, to the sights the story's protagonist is looking forward to visiting in Italy: 'the Coliseum, the Sistine Chapel, Gondolas'. Nonetheless, these can be taken to stand for the stereotypical kinds of experiences that parents normally look forward to, such as seeing their children graduate from university, get married, have children themselves, and so on.

The essay has been translated into several other languages and reproduced many times in books, magazines, television programmes, T-shirts and so on. In a recent interview, Kingsley mentions that she is aware of several children who have been named 'Holland' because of the impact that the piece had on their parents, and of plans to include a 'Welcome to Holland' section in a theme park in Georgia that is intended for children with special needs (http://www.lovethatmax.com/2011/03/interview-with-author-of-welcome-to.html, accessed May 2012). The World Wide Web provides ample evidence of the reach and influence of Kingsley's piece. The essay has its own Wikipedia entry and accounts for the first four results in a general google search for the string 'welcome to holland', ahead of the Dutch tourism website, which comes in 5th position (search conducted in May 2012). More specifically, Kingsley's text has been repeatedly reproduced on websites devoted to children with special needs and their families, and in blogs by parents (usually mothers) of children with special needs. The essay is often accompanied by pictures that metonymically evoke Holland, such as tulips and windmills.

A number of factors can be cited in explanation of the success of 'Welcome to Holland'. The experience of discovering that one's child has a disability tends to be traumatic and emotionally conflicted. Many parents find acceptance difficult, especially in the early days, but also feel guilty for not accepting their child as they are. Even in the longer term, it is common for parents to say that they alternate between moments of despondency and moments of exhilaration while raising their children. The 'holiday' extended metaphor provides a way of expressing these contradictory feelings in a way that accommodates most parents' emotions but that also casts the whole experience into safer, slightly distanced terms. As we noted with the various versions of the 'vaccine' metaphor in the previous section, the source scenario is not in fact consistent with what readers know about Holland and real-

world travel. European readers, for example, may well be aware of Holland's attractions as a holiday destination, and may not have independently selected it as a country to contrast with Italy in this respect. Moreover, anyone familiar with air travel knows that, when flights are diverted, passengers can eventually reach their original destination. The fact that the story's protagonist has to take permanent residence in Holland is a reflection of how the 'holiday' scenario is pressed into service in order to match the experience that functions as 'target' within the metaphor: Kingsley is writing about children whose disability is a permanent part of who they are. Importantly, however, the metaphorical story accounts for the fact that one never fully stops regretting the experience they missed out on, but ends on a positive note: the discovery that Holland is in fact a worthwhile destination ('windmills', 'tulips', 'Rembrandts') suggests that parenting a child with special needs involves many more positive experiences than people initially expect.

Overall, we would suggest that the 'Welcome to Holland' metaphorical story addresses a need that is both semantic and affective: parents need to make sense of what is happening to them and find a way to express, accept and channel their own conflicting emotions. In Goatly's (2011: 164-8) terms, this is an example of metaphor being used primarily for the purposes of 'expressing emotional attitude'. This is particularly evident in the recontextualization of Kingsley's metaphor in parents' blogs, which takes a variety of forms. Generally speaking, bloggers tend to reproduce the story and then comment on it from their personal perspective. The majority of bloggers endorse and embrace the metaphor as a fitting representation of their own feelings and experiences. One such parent even reports creating a Holland section in her own garden by planting tulips, and then visiting this section with her daughter (http://oialee.blogspot.com/2010/04/my-holland.html; accessed May 2012). Other bloggers critique the metaphor in different ways and to different extents. A few reject it and replace it with their own

alternatives (e.g. http://riversofjoy21.blogspot.com/2009/07/welcome-to-holland-i-dont-think-so.html;

accessed May 2012). Many express a combination of agreement and disagreement, and adapt the

original metaphor in order to express their own individual experiences. In the rest of this section we

consider, one such blogger: a mother who writes at HOPE4HAVEN about her experience of raising her

three-year-old daughter, Haven. Haven does not eat by mouth and is therefore fed via a gastric feeding

tube (or G-tube) that delivers food directly into her stomach (http://hope4haven.wordpress.com/,

accessed May 2012).

On 8th March 2011, the HOPE4HAVEN blogger posted an entry entitled 'Thinking of Italy'. The post

begins with a full quotation of Kingsley's 'Welcome to Holland' essay, and continues with a lengthy

comment on the writer's emotions at receiving in the post a book she had bought at the recommendation

of Havens' therapists. The book is entitled *The Out of Sync Child* (NB: original spellings and fonts have

been retained in the quotation below).

> That's where I am at the moment….we were supposed to go to Italy and the flashy thoughts of life there flooded into my Holland reality. It happened Sunday. […]
> There I sat, in the car alone, holding a book that could have been titled… "She's different". And Italy flashed through my mind. […]
> I *know* Haven is "different", I *know* she has challenges to face, but getting slapped in the face with a book that essentially says "Haven is different" is just plain wrong. Both of her therapists suggested it to me. I had seen it several times in the pursuit of knowledge in this whole trip to Holland. But I always thought it was for someone else's child….that it didn't fit my child. Well apparently it is the guide book for this trip to Holland and I am still holding tightly to the guidebook of Italy with all the dog-eared pages and highlighted sights I thought we would see. Calling this life "out of sync", calling *my child* "out of sync" makes me want to throw this guidebook, hijack the plane and get the heck out of Holland-taking my child to the safety of Italy just like we had planned. […]
> Haven is the greatest light in my life. She is beauty I could have never imagined. We dance around the windmills of this life in Holland and it is more glorious than I deserve. Nothing about her is less than Italy. […]
> But…it's the guidebook for this unexpected trip to Holland. The concierge at the front desk (her therapists) said it would be a rough trip without the guidebook. That at the least it would help us understand where we are. Holland. Not Italy. Like I need to be reminded. But, I guess sometimes I do pretend the surroundings are just a part of Italy I'd never heard of. Maybe

this guidebook will help me to more fully embrace Holland. To stop pretending we are strolling through Italy just as planned. […]

I sit trying to think of a wrapped up ending for this post…but I don't have one. […] The outside world knows. It's real. I guess we'll have to start sending out postcards from Holland since everyone knows we are here.

I'm guessing other mom's in my situation will understand….

(http://hope4haven.wordpress.com/2011/03/08/thinking-of-italy/)[2]

The blogger uses 'Italy' and 'Holland' throughout to refer, respectively, to an imagined life with a 'normal' child and her real-life experience with her own daughter (e.g. 'we were supposed to go to Italy and the flashy thoughts of life there flooded into my Holland reality'). However, she also both narrows down and extends Kingsley's metaphorical story in ways that are appropriate to the specific topic and goal of the blog generally and the post in particular – that of expressing very specific experiences as they occur and of eliciting responses from readers.

The reproduction and partial adoption of Kingsley's metaphor on the part of the blogger can be explained in terms of similarities in field and tenor. Both the original text and the blog are part of the same broad field: the expression and sharing of parents' experiences with children with special needs (particularly emotional reactions), and the mutual provision of support. In terms of tenor, the two texts are also similar as they primarily involve parents speaking to other parents.

There are differences, however, in terms of communicative purposes, discourse communities, and staging, as well as in terms of the more precise configuration of field, tenor and mode. Kingsley developed the original metaphor in a self-standing piece of writing, which expressed her own experiences and emotions in a way that would be of help to anyone who needed to understand or accept

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[2] The authors are grateful to the HOPE4HAVEN blogger for permission to quote and discuss an extract from her blog in this paper.

the experience of having a child with special needs. Her text was intended both for insiders and outsiders to the discourse community of parents of children with special needs.[3] It is worth noting that the essay is written in the second-person, so that the addressee is textually constructed as the story's protagonist. Within the essay, Kingsley's personal experiences over a period of time are distilled into a form that would be helpful to others. As far as mode is concerned, the text is primarily part of one-way written communication, even though it has been possible for recipients to enter into dialogue with Kingsley. Within the tenor of this communication, the writer is someone who has greater experience than the intended addressees. All this explains the fact that the metaphor is not only used to account for contrasting emotions, but also to provide a positive, uplifting message: Holland turns out to be an interesting place that is worth exploring for its own sake.

In contrast, the blogger's post is part of a regular online diary, where each post tends to relates to relatively time-bound events and experiences that others can respond to. The specific post is concerned with the blogger's emotional reaction at a very specific juncture – the arrival of a book about children with special needs, which aroused a mixture of mostly negative emotions. The blog is explicitly addressed to a very specific discourse community, that of parents of tube-fed babies who surf the web. The goal of the post is to share the blogger's conflicting emotions and to ask for support and understanding. In this particular case, two sympathetic responses were posted by other parents. In contrast with Kingsley's essay, the HOPE4HAVEN post is written in the first person, as is typical of blog entries.

The quotation and development of Kingsley's metaphorical story are triggered by a salient element of the writer's immediate real-life situation – the book she receives in the post, whose title metaphorically

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[3] In a way, texts such as Kingsley's also contributed to the development of that group as a discourse community, by creating channels of communication and shared experiences with texts.

describes children such as hers as 'out of sync'. The book therefore faces the mother with the reality of her child's 'difference', and makes her feel guilty for accepting this description of her daughter. The blogger exploits Kingsley's references to metaphorical guide books for Italy and Holland by describing her specific book as 'the guidebook to this unexpected trip to Holland' which would otherwise be 'rough'. The whole post then focuses on the notion of metaphorical 'guidebooks', and develops Kingsley's metaphor in ways that partly contrast with the original essay. The therapists who recommended the book are described as 'the concierge at the front desk', and a greater contrast is established between the guidebook to Holland and the 'guidebook of Italy' that the writer already owned. The mother's feelings or regret and frustration are conveyed by references to actual and imaginary actions and reactions within the source scenario that tend to involve the two guidebooks: 'I had seen it several times in the pursuit of knowledge in this whole trip to Holland'; 'still holding tightly to the guidebook of Italy with all the dog-eared pages and highlighted sights'; 'want to throw this guidebook, hijack the plane and get the heck out of Holland'. Similarly, the effort to accept her situation is expressed metaphorically in terms of the guidebook reminding her of where she is: 'That at the least it would help us understand where we are. Holland. Not Italy.'; 'Maybe this guidebook will help me to more fully embrace Holland'. At various points throughout the post, the writer also expresses her love for her daughter and enjoyment of life with her in terms of a comparison between Italy and Holland: 'Nothing about her is less than Italy.'; 'I love my daughter … more than Italy!!!'. At the end of the post, however, the metaphorical reference to writing postcards from Holland as 'everyone knows we are here' seems to be a rather grudging and resigned expression of the need to accept the situation more publicly and openly than in the past, or possibly to begin to see her daughter in the same way as outsiders might see her.

Overall, the way in which the original metaphor is re-used and adapted affects primarily the metaphor's function in the expression of emotions: Kingsley uses the metaphor to account for conflicting emotions, but finally to express joy and optimism; the blogger uses the metaphor to juxtapose positive and negative emotions, but ends on reluctant acceptance rather than resolution. This then allows her to invite others in a similar situation to express their understanding for her situation. The metaphor works well in both contexts as the writers are able to exploit different aspects of the rich scenario that it evokes, and the scenario itself is readily accessible to most, if not all, readers.

Concluding remarks

In this paper we have suggested that different uses of what may be regarded as the 'same' metaphor can be usefully analyzed as instances of recontextualization within a systematic approach to the description of genres and situational contexts. We have also shown that the recontextualization of metaphor can involve a great deal of complexity and creativity, as new users of previously coined metaphors can strategically and imaginatively develop both the 'source' and 'target' domains, and the interaction between them. Our analyses support the view that the meanings of metaphorical expressions arise from a dynamic interaction among a variety of factors, including earlier occurrences of those expressions and the specific and unique circumstances of the current context of use (Cameron and Gibbs 2008).

Throughout the paper, we have reflected on the characteristics that make some metaphors particularly good candidates for recontextualization. Metaphor has been said to have the function of 'lexical gap filling', when a new entity or phenomenon is given a label that is based on a similarity with a familiar

entity or phenomenon, as in the case, for example, of computer 'virus' (Goatly 2011: 154-5). The metaphors we have discussed seem to fill broader 'semantic' or 'affective' gaps and thus help to achieve other, more complex communicative goals. Each of the metaphors we have discussed has multiple functions: each helps to explain particular phenomena or experiences, and potentially has evaluative, persuasive and affective implications. However, it is possible to identify a primary or dominant function in each case:

- To explain a new understanding of a common symptom such as pain in the case of the 'gate' metaphor (cf. Goatly's function of 'explanation and modelling'; Goatly 2011: 155-8);

- To support one's views and attitudes towards an unconventional politician, as in the case of the 'vaccine' metaphor (cf. Goatly's function of 'argument by analogy'; Goatly 2011: 158-61);

- To express a traumatic and challenging personal experience in a way that will help others cope with the same situation, as in the case of the 'holiday' metaphor (cf. Goatly's function of 'expressing emotional attitudes'; Goatly 2011: 164-8).

The three metaphors we have discussed are instances of salient, creative, and arguably 'deliberate' metaphoricity, and the primary functions they perform in their original contexts strongly reflect the main communicative goals of the genres within which they occur, i.e. explanation in a scientific paper, evaluation and persuasion in a political interview, and emotional outlet and mutual support in a counselling essay.

We have shown how each metaphor is developed and, in some cases, transformed in ways that reflect differences from the original context of use in terms of communicative goals, discourse communities, staging and the configuration of field, tenor and mode. Our analyses suggest that the main changes that

each metaphor undergoes tend to affect the ways in which the metaphor realizes its main original function(s). The recontextualization of the 'gate' metaphor from a scientific paper to a self-help book primarily involve changes in the explanatory function of the metaphor, i.e. what exactly the metaphor is used to explain. The recontextualization of the 'vaccine' metaphor from a broadcast interview to a political blog primarily involves changes in the evaluative function of the metaphor, i.e. who it evaluates and how. Finally, the recontextualization of the 'Welcome to Holland' metaphor from a self-standing piece of writing on parenting special needs children to a blog post primarily involve changes in the function of the metaphor as a vehicle for the expression of emotional states, i.e. what emotions it is used to express and to what extent positive emotions prevail over negative ones. In all these cases, the original creators of the metaphors were successful in providing metaphors that fulfilled those functions for their own purposes, and that others could creatively exploit to fulfill their own specific needs in different contexts.

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