

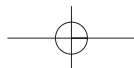
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# 5

## *Non una donna in politica, ma una donna politica:* Women's Political Language in an Italian Context

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### 5.1 Background

Politics in Italy is a complicated business. There is a bewildering number of parties representing every possible hue of the political spectrum. New parties spring up almost yearly – some fielding only one candidate – and coalitions are formed and dissolved with remarkable ease. Stemming from this situation is a widespread interest in the politicians themselves, and the ways in which they negotiate, pontificate and manipulate through language. No Italian political figure is better documented in this respect than Silvio Berlusconi, who has exploited his background in the mass media to the full. His adoption of football metaphors (Semino and Masci 1996) was one of a number of successful rhetorical strategies which, by appealing to the wider populace, won him the first of his three premier-ships. Similar strategies were adopted the second time, attracting a greater number of in-depth linguistic studies (see, for example, Amadori 2002; see also Bolasco et al. 2006 for a quantitative analysis); however, his third successful election campaign in 2008 was characterised by a remarkable absence of such rhetoric and a shift towards the more sober political style of the elder statesman.

While there can be no doubt that Berlusconi's persuasive language has provided linguists with ample material for study, tracing the rhetoric of one politician alone overshadows the changes in politics and society which have taken place over the past decade and a half. Italy's importance as a global economic power is now well established, and its politics are therefore of interest and relevance beyond its borders; and while many Italians hold to traditional roles and values, the once clearly delineated gender roles of man as breadwinner and woman as homemaker are

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dissolving, at least in the public sphere. Women are postponing child-bearing, and birth rates have been at 'crescita zero' [zero growth] for over a generation. These demographic signs reflect the increase in career opportunities for women, and their ever-increasing prominence in the country's economy.

The rising prominence of women in the Italian workforce is also reflected in parliament. Numbers of female 'deputati' [members of parliament] grow with every election called, and more of them are acceding to positions of power. Although it is still true that women are more likely to be assigned to ministries without portfolio than be entrusted to oversee the 'hard politics' of Defence or Home Affairs, the Prodi-led government, which was in power when this study was undertaken, saw women heading the ministries of Health, and International Trade and Commerce – often deemed to be male preserves – in addition to the more archetypically feminine concerns of Citizens' Rights and Equal Opportunities, Family Policy, and Youth Policy. This increasing presence of women ministers has sparked an interesting sociocultural debate originating from and perpetuated by the mass media: the 'femininity' of many of these ministers is often questioned, and allegations regarding their 'ambiguous' sexuality are rife. The ambiguities appear to stem not so much from what the ministers say, but from how it is said.

The language of women has long been held to display peculiar traits (see Jespersen 1922: 237–54). One of these is that women's vocabulary is less extensive than men's, 'follows the main road of language' (ibid.: 248) and that it tends to refer 'to their immediate surroundings, to the finished product, to the ornamental, the individual, and the concrete; while the masculine preference is for the more remote, the constructive, the useful, the general, and the abstract' (Havelock Ellis 1894, cited in Jespersen 1922: 48–9). This chapter focuses on the metaphorical content of Italian women politicians' speech<sup>1</sup> to investigate if such 'feminine' traits can indeed be identified, and if they cannot, whether an absence of such traits may lie at the basis of the media speculation mentioned above.

## 5.2 Hypothesis

If women in general are believed to use more 'feminine' language than men, this might also be revealed in the metaphors they use; and if women ministers are somehow perceived as 'unfeminine', this may be because their metaphors are not particularly 'feminine'. For instance, the tired stereotype of the woman-as-negotiator might be turned on its

head if women ministers appear to engage in 'conflict talk' in their discourse, as suggested by *WAR* metaphors<sup>2</sup> (see Section 5.5).

In this study, a wide range of metaphor themes<sup>3</sup> are identified, and these will be labelled as 'masculine', 'feminine' or 'gender neutral'. It should be stressed at this point that the division into 'masculine' and 'feminine' consciously draws on stereotypical and often outmoded notions of gender roles and merely serves to aid the initial classification of the data (see Fondas 1997: 260–1 for a brief overview of masculine and feminine traits and their role in gender theorising). The 'feminine' label is assigned to metaphors which appear to be related to the woman's traditional role as mother and homemaker, including childbirth and child rearing (Friedman 1987), nurture (feeding, and by extension, food preparation and cooking), care for the elderly, sick and injured, domestic chores including cleaning, and craftwork (Flannery 2001), the house and its material contents. Also included are metaphors related to weakness, subordination and surrender, all character traits which are stereotypically feminine (Fondas 1997). 'Masculine' metaphors draw mainly on the historical male roles as hunter and warrior and thus include war. This wide-ranging domain is broken down into a number of several subdomains in this study including violence and aggression, and (violent) crime, hunting (Flannery 2001: 630), and metaphors relating to work tools and machinery (see Murphy 2001). In addition to these role-related metaphors, character traits including competitiveness, dominance and strength, which also feature within war and sports metaphors, are also labelled as 'masculine' (Fondas 1997). Metaphors which cannot credibly be assigned to either gendered group are classed as 'gender neutral', though they may not be labelled at all in the course of the analysis (in Section 5.4).

Once the metaphors have been identified and discussed for each of the ministers (Section 5.4), comparisons will be drawn between different ministers' uses of recurring source domains (Section 5.5). Discussion of the data will consider ministerial remit, gender, and sociocultural issues in interpreting the metaphors found.

### 5.3 Data and methods

#### 5.3.1 Data selection and preparation

This study starts from the hypothesis that it is ministerial remit that conditions the use of a politician's language more than any other single factor. This hypothesis will be tested in an Italian context by examining a corpus of speeches, press interviews and press releases covering the period June 2006 to May 2007 for five Italian women ministers over a single

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Table 5.1 Corpus size (running words) and composition

/	Subcorpus*	Total	Speeches <sup>4</sup>	Communiqués	Interviews <sup>5</sup>
R. Bindi	FamPol	119,085	32,067	13,658	73,360
E. Bonino	Trade&Com	110,058	78,926	31,132	–
L. Lanzillotta	RegPol	14,273	5,172	9,101	–
G. Melandri	YouthPol&Sport	98,328	4,664	30,543	63,121
B. Pollastrini	EqualOpps	45,264	3,107	42,157	–
		387,008	123,936	126,591	136,481

\* FamPol = Family Policy; Trade&Com = International Trade and Commerce; RegPol = Regional Policy; YouthPol&Sport = Youth Policy and Sport; EqualOpps = Citizens' Rights and Equal Opportunities

year. Using the full year's political activity allows for any seasonal factors to be ironed out, and helps to counteract the potential skewing of the data as a result of short-lived political or sociopolitical issues; limiting the data to a single year ensures the homogeneity of the data set, an essential consideration in an Italian context where governments rarely survive to see out their full term. The text data were downloaded from the ministerial homepages, located via the Italian government homepage ([www.governo.it](http://www.governo.it)). Full details of the composition of the corpora are provided in Table 5.1.

The corpus is made up of all the available speeches and communiqués (press releases) of five female ministers: Rosy Bindi, Giovanna Melandri, Emma Bonino, Linda Lanzillotta and Barbara Pollastrini:<sup>6</sup> as Table 5.1 shows, interview data were only available for Bindi and Melandri. The corpus represents a cross-section of political departments of varying levels of prominence – reflected in the size of each minister's output – and covers a reasonably representative sample of government interests at the time of compilation.

Although genre-based analysis was not envisaged, the three distinct text types were stored as separate text files, which made it possible to identify some basic features which were of direct relevance to the identification and interpretation of metaphors, namely that the concise, information-rich communiqués contained negligible occurrences of metaphor, unlike the persuasive language of speeches and presentations where most of the identified metaphors occurred. In interviews, the ministers were often seen to be at the mercy of the interviewers, who seem set on putting words into their mouths (see Section 5.4.1). The raw text was minimally coded to facilitate retrieval with query software, but was not lemmatised or POS-tagged because tools for doing so are not generally

available for Italian. Each document was assigned a 'speaking header' to allow full details to be located if necessary.<sup>7</sup>

### 5.3.2 Locating metaphors in corpora

While metaphor studies working with general language (see especially Pragglejaz group, 2007) have a very wide-ranging view of metaphor, this study, which works with a series of specific text domains, has adopted a less inclusive stance: within a specialised discourse, some metaphorically motivated words may be more usefully classed as items of terminology and therefore eliminated from the study of metaphor in that discourse. Justification for this approach to metaphor will be explained in this subsection, drawing on existing studies of metaphorical language in economics, one of the domains to be examined in Section 5.4.

Previous studies of economics discourse (Henderson 1982, 1999, Mascull 1996) have identified a wide range of metaphors which are used consistently enough in the text domain to be considered recurrent metaphor themes. Some of these themes, however, particularly metaphors of GROWTH and ORIENTATION, such as THE ECONOMY IS A PLANT (Henderson 1982) and PROFITS AND LOSSES ARE UPS AND DOWNS (Partington 1998) respectively, seem more terminological than metaphorical. By terminological, the implication is that (i) there is limited variety in the forms used, typically only one lemma, (ii) the preferred form recurs frequently, and (iii) the preferred form is statistically significant (here, chi-square) within the domain in which it is used. Being terminological, its use is not governed by choice, but by necessity.

The keyword list for the 110,000-token Trade&Com corpus (see Appendix 5.1) supports this view not to treat metaphorically motivated terms as metaphors proper. Here the metaphorically motivated terms 'crescita' [growth], 'flussi' [flows] and 'sviluppo' [development], can be found, but no other metaphorical items. Additionally, there are no synonyms for these three words in the corpus (see Philip 2008), and the metaphors do not occur in related semantic areas: only one metaphorical cluster (Cameron and Stelma 2004) in the entire corpus exploits a water metaphor which, however, has no bearing on MONEY IS WATER, which maps onto fresh water (streams and rivers), not the sea (Example 1).

- (1) Il mondo non è il posto dove rischiamo di *naufregare*, ma la nostra *ancora di salvezza* contro i *rischi di impaludamento* che corriamo se restiamo nei nostri piccoli mercati locali. (Trade&Com\_speech/doc046)<sup>8</sup>

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The world is not the place where we risk being *shipwrecked*, but our *safety anchor* against the *risks* we run of becoming *stuck* in our small local markets.

The fact that no synonyms appear for the metaphorical terminology and, perhaps more importantly, no metaphorical use is registered for domains which are central to the discourse (determined by calculating the keywords, see below), seems to corroborate Hoey's (2005: 82) claim that the senses of polysemous words tend to avoid each others' textual environments. It would be very odd indeed if the central subject matter of the specialised corpus – the metaphorical target domain(s) – should simultaneously function as metaphorical source domains in the same data.<sup>9</sup> This observation serves as the basis for extracting metaphor source domain candidates semi-automatically from corpus data.

Other metaphors identified, however, exploiting source domains such as ROMANCE, WAR and HEALTH (Mascull 1996), are not central to the discourse of economics and do not feature amongst its terminology. These source domains are realised in text by a variety of semantically related forms, none of which occurs frequently or is statistically significant. Their use is a matter of choice, not necessity, so they may reveal aspects of the speaker's stance which go beyond the subject matter in hand.

Most scholars have sought to overcome the problems of locating metaphors in corpus data by analysing a sample of the data then using the findings of this preliminary analysis as the basis of queries carried out on the entire corpus (Partington 2003, Charteris-Black 2004, and Semino and Koller, this volume), an approach which combines traditional discourse-analytic techniques with corpus methodology. Although this approach provides a detailed picture of all metaphorical activity in the texts studied, there are some drawbacks to such a method, including the time taken in carrying out detailed preliminary analysis, and the constant risk of missing metaphors which were not identified during the manual analysis.

The analysis carried out in the present study started off from the hypothesis that the 'aboutness' of the corpus would correspond to metaphor target domains, never metaphorical source domains, and that the lower frequency and statistically insignificant lexis should be divided into (i) congruent with the 'aboutness', and therefore non-metaphorical and (ii) incongruent with the 'aboutness' and therefore potentially metaphorical. Words assigned to the latter category might

form semantic or lexical sets which would then become potential metaphor source domains.

WordSmith Tools (Scott, 1998) was used to carry out all of the corpus analysis described in this chapter. First of all a raw frequency list was generated for each of the six subcorpora, plus a 'master list' for the six corpora combined. The central content of each subcorpus was determined by using the 'keywords' function (see Scott 2001: 115–16), which extracted the 'outstanding' words in the subcorpus compared to the reference corpus (see Table 5.2). Using the combined political corpora rather than a general reference corpus as the reference ensured that the terms identified as key were central to each of the ministries, and not to politics in general.<sup>10</sup> Once extracted, the keywords were grouped into semantically related categories, which sum up the 'aboutness' of the corpus and also represent likely metaphorical target domains. Tables containing these groupings are provided for each of the subcorpora in Section 5.4.

In order to locate the potential source domain lexis, the focus of inquiry lies with the low-frequency content words (LFCWs), which were grouped into semantically related categories. 'Low frequency' is defined relative to the keyness counts and raw frequency: the cut-off point in the present study is signalled by the lowest-frequency keyword (for example, 'affitto' [rent] and 'credito' [credit] in YouthPol&Sport, both occurring 29 times). Thus LFCWs are defined as the bottom 15 per cent of tokens

Table 5.2 Top 10 keywords in Trade&Com corpus

Keyword	Trade&Com		Reference		Keyness	P-value
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
COMMERCIO*	328	0.36	375	0.09	287.82	0.0000000000
IMPRESE	388	0.43	539	0.14	268.39	0.0000000000
INTERNAZIONALE	282	0.31	386	0.1	198.86	0.0000000000
COMMERCIALE	210	0.23	230	0.06	192.9	0.0000000000
MERCATI	232	0.26	280	0.07	191.35	0.0000000000
PAESI	331	0.37	525	0.13	188.51	0.0000000000
INTERNAZIONALIZ- ZAZIONE	175	0.19	188	0.05	164.01	0.0000000000
È	1,001	1.11	2,703	0.68	160.18	0.0000000000
PIÙ	463	0.51	1,001	0.25	143.86	0.0000000000
PRODOTTI	159	0.18	181	0.05	124.29	0.0000000000

\*Translations are (from top to bottom): commerce, businesses, international, commercial, markets, countries, internationalization, is, more, products.



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(approximately 85 per cent of types, around half of which are hapax legomena, and in any case occur less than seven times).

The groupings which were congruent with the target domain categories were merged with them, while incongruent groupings were separated out as 'potential source domains'. Tables containing these LFCW groupings are provided for each of the subcorpora in Section 5.4. These 'source domain' LFCWs were then concordanced, initially to verify that they were indeed metaphorically used, and then to identify consistent mappings which would indicate the presence of metaphor themes.

The method outlined above is an approach to metaphor identification which makes provision for the different degrees of metaphoricity present in specialised discourse. By separating terminology from other metaphorically motivated language, this method creates a distinction between metaphors which seem to be imposed by the discourse and those which are more likely to be a matter of free choice. Using these methods, the metaphors used by Italian women ministers are revealed in Sections 5.4 and 5.5.

## 5.4 Metaphors in the ministries

### 5.4.1 Bindi: family policy

In Italy, the family is very much a political unit as well as a private one; the state is secular, but the Church exerts considerable influence, especially on matters related to relationships, procreation and the family. When this corpus was compiled, the civil partnership legislation (DICO)<sup>11</sup> was being debated, and religious authorities reacted vociferously to the implication that homosexuals could 'marry'. The FamPol keywords reflect this situation: 'chiesa' [church] and 'laicità' [secularity], 'democratico' [democratic] and 'conciliazione' [reconciliation] are all present. The other keywords found in Table 5.3(a) are more obviously related to the ministerial remit.

Having established the thematic content of the subcorpus, the remaining, incongruous lower-frequency content words were grouped loosely into semantic or lexical sets based on their literal and most salient meanings (summarised in Table 5.3(b)). The categories were refined or conflated as new items were added, and single-item classes (one-off metaphor mappings) are not considered in this analysis.

FamPol is the largest of the corpora, so the number of source domains identified is quite wide and varied. As the figures in Table 5.3(b) show,<sup>12</sup> the most prevalent by far are the 'masculine' areas of WAR and VIOLENCE. These will be discussed in Section 5.5. Other recurrent source domains

Table 5.3(a) Keyword groupings in FamPol

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Family	9	'natalità' [birth rates], 'maternità' [maternity], 'anziani' [elderly]
Children	6	'asili nido' [crèches], 'minori' [minors], 'bambini' [children]
Welfare	7	'povertà' [poverty], 'solidarietà' [solidarity], 'assegni' [cheques]
Relationships	5	'coppie' [couples], 'matrimonio' [marriage]
Religion	4	'chiesa' [church], 'laicità' [secularity], 'cattolici' [Catholics]
Politics	4	'politica' [politics], 'partito' [party], 'democratico' [democratic]

Table 5.3(b) LFCW groupings in FamPol

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types*</i>	<i>Examples</i>
War	108	'vincere' [to win], 'conquista' [conquest], 'scontro' [clash]
Food preparation	48	'cucinare' [to cook], 'pelare' [to peel], 'tritare' [to mince], 'alimentare' [to feed]
Domesticity	23	'tappeto' [carpet], 'polvere' [dust], 'finestra' [window]
Body parts	21	'piede' [foot], 'pugno' [fist], 'orecchio' [ear]
Vision	18	'miopia' [short-sightedness], 'sguardo' [glance]
Health	17	'ferito' [wounded], 'incurabile' [incurable]
Sea	14	'ancorati' [anchoring], 'approdo' [berth], 'sponde' [shores]
Crime	10	'delinquenza' [delinquency], 'criminale' [criminal]
Natural disasters	8	'scossone' [tremor], 'valanghe' [avalanches], 'terremoti' [earthquakes]
Tools	8	'strumenti' [instruments], 'perno' [linchpin], 'aratro' [plough]

\* Here and elsewhere the number of distinct word forms (types), not the overall number of instances (tokens), is indicated: all types are low frequency (<7 tokens).

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relate to the SEA, NATURAL DISASTERS, FOOD PREPARATION, TOOLS, VISION, HEALTH, BODY PARTS and DOMESTICITY.

Of the 'feminine' source domains identified, FOOD PREPARATION, in particular the lemma 'alimentare' [to feed], refers to conflict (see concordances in Figure 5.1). However, concordancing the other terms belonging to the potential source domain of food fails to pick up metaphorical activity: instead, magazine interviewers often inquire into the minister's home-making skills, with the result that many items of lexis which are not central to her remit crop up, in their literal sense, in the corpus data. The exception to this rule is a small group of FOOD PREPARATION terms which suggest the presence of a metaphor theme, RUNNING THE ECONOMY IS COOKING: as investments are 'congelati' [frozen] so they do not 'fermentare' [ferment]; and profits are 'tritati' [minced], that is, churned out.

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sociale e di sviluppo, senza **alimentare** il conflitto tra le generazioni.

premier e il mondo cattolico, **alimentare** conflitti, separare Prodi e la

più grande: aver governato **alimentando** la logica delle corte

, corre un rischio grave. Di **alimentare** la reazione laicista che mira a

la logica della paura che **alimenta** il fanatismo e costruire percorsi

per trasformare la realtà e, **alimentati** dai valori in cui si crede, si

e ha contemporaneamente **alimentato** paure e diffidenze nella

stabilità, socialità che **alimentano** e rigenerano il legame sociale e

---

Figure 5.1 Concordances for 'alimentare' [feed, fuel] in FamPol

As far as the DOMESTICITY domain is concerned, one clear metaphor theme was identified: THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY IS A FABRIC, which can be torn and darned (see Example 2). However, it should be mentioned that most items assigned to the group were used as part of conventional, idiomatic phrases (all single occurrences) including 'cucirsi la bocca' [to *zip/button* (lit: *sew*) one's lips] and 'mettere la *polvere* sotto i *tappeti*' [brush *sth* (lit: the *dust*) under the *carpet*].

- (2) Con creatività e generosità ha colmato i vuoti e *ricucito le smagliature* che via via si sono aperti nel nostro sistema di welfare. (FamPol\_speech/doc57)

it (the family) has creatively and generously filled the gaps and *darned the runs* that have begun to appear in our welfare system.

A further, marginal theme is OPPORTUNITIES ARE (OPEN) DOORS AND WINDOWS (Example 3), which can be traced to the home-as-prison and its doors and windows as means of escape.

- (3) Non *rientra dalla finestra* dell'Europa quello che è *uscito dalla porta* dell'Italia. (FamPol\_int/doc35)  
 Whatever has *gone out of Italy's door* cannot come back in through *Europe's window*.

The metaphors identified by concordancing the words assigned both to the SEA and the NATURAL DISASTERS groupings are primarily used with reference to differences of opinion, especially between Church and state over the civil partnership legislation. The principal theme identified is DIFFERING OPINIONS ARE DIFFERENT SHORES, emphasising the irreconcilable nature of the differing opinions, which also cause rifts, or 'sportiacque' [partings of the waves] [spartiacque]. Firmly held views, which are conventionally expressed with the adjective 'radicati' [rooted] are here defined as 'ancorati' [anchored], thus maintaining the nautical theme. Finally, discussions on civil partnerships cause 'tempeste' [(political) storms].

All the VISION lexis in the subcorpus is used metaphorically and is found to relate to the same metaphorical mapping, namely PLANNING IS EYESIGHT. The metaphor target is family policy (matters of safeguarding the family unit), where ill-advised legislation is 'miope' [short-sighted], yet when well-planned, 'lungimirante' [far-reaching/sighted]. In contrast, the lexis in the BODY PARTS and the HEALTH AND ILLNESS categories, when viewed in context, are actually quite disparate, and fail to coalesce into metaphor themes. When figurative, the lexis is used in conventional metonymies (the arm representing strength, the heart representing emotion or sincerity) rather than metaphors proper.

This last observation explains why LFCW groupings are *potential* source domains, as they remain merely potential until concordancing the individual words confirms their use as metaphorical or not. In FamPol (and elsewhere), several potential source domains proved to be red herrings, with the words being used literally. The interview data in FamPol played a major part in creating literal LFCW groupings, with the 'feminine' domains of cooking, food preparation and caring for the sick originating here: interviewees working for women's magazines would draw the minister into conversations about her private life rather than

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her political life, with the consequence that domestic activities momentarily become the main topic in the data.

The final category, *TOOLS*, covered a range of implements, from the household ‘forbici’ [scissors] to the agricultural ‘aratro’ [plough], and the mechanical ‘cinghia’ [belt]. Yet while all *TOOLS* were metaphorical, the metaphor targets differed considerably and resisted formation into semantic groupings. This made it impossible to move beyond the individual linguistic metaphors and locate metaphor themes.

#### 5.4.2 Bonino: international trade and commerce, and European policy

Emma Bonino is a seasoned politician with experience at national and European levels. Unlike Rosy Bindi and Giovanna Melandri, who also hold high-ranking ministerial positions, she appears not to give magazine and newspaper interviews, or, when given, these texts are not posted on her ministerial home pages. She is not one who allows others to put words into her mouth.

The *Trade&Com* corpus contains a substantial proportion of speeches given to industry leaders and politicians in Italy and elsewhere. These include the economy, business and industry, and global markets, and are shown in Table 5.4(a).

As one would expect with persuasive discourse, there is considerable metaphorical content in these speeches, and although the figures in Table 5.4(b) may appear low, there was a much higher type-token ratio

Table 5.4(a) Keyword groupings in *Trade&Com*

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Business and industry	17	‘imprese’ [firms], ‘settore’ [sector], ‘industriale’ [industrial]
Global markets	12	‘internazionalizzazione’ [internationalisation], ‘importazioni’ [imports], ‘esportazioni’ [exports]
The economy	11	‘investimenti’ [investments], ‘bilancia’ [balance], ‘economico’ [economic]
Geography	10	‘Cina’ [China], ‘India’ [India], ‘Mediterraneo’ [Mediterranean]
Marketing	5	‘promozione’ [promotion], ‘capacità’ [abilities], competitività [competitiveness]

Table 5.4(b) LFCW groupings in Trade&amp;Com

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
War	55	'battaglia' [battle], 'conquista' [conquest], 'sconfiggere' [to defeat]
Submission and suffering	15	'sfruttato' [exploited], 'servitù' [servitude], 'sacrificio' [sacrifice]
Feelings	13	'emotivo' [emotional], 'sentimenti' [feelings], 'sensibilizzato' [sensitised]
Health	12	'sano' [healthy], 'ferito' [injured], 'convalescente' [convalescent]
Hunting	10	'preda' [prey], 'caccia' [hunt]
Body parts	10	'cervelli' [brains], 'ombelico' [belly button], 'labbra' [lips]
Death	9	'soffocamento' [suffocation], 'strozzature' [strangulation], 'sterminio' [extermination]
Risk	8	'rischio' [risk], 'sfida' [challenge], 'salvaguardare' [to safeguard]
Birth	7	'embrionale' [embryonic], 'gestazione' [gestation], 'nascita' [birth]

in this corpus than the other four, where types rarely occurred more than once. The most frequently used class is WAR AND VIOLENCE (see Section 5.5); others were HUNTING, SUBMISSION, RISK, HEALTH, BIRTH, DEATH, EMOTION and BODY PARTS, and there were a further 56 ungrouped single-lemma classes.<sup>13</sup>

Metaphors of LIFE AND DEATH, as well as those of HEALTH, feed into THE ECONOMY IS A LIVING ORGANISM, a conventional metaphor theme in economics and business discourse (Mascull 1996), suggesting the more specific mapping THE ECONOMY IS A (LIVING) PERSON. This metaphor complements the metaphorically motivated terminology related to growth ('crescita' [growth] and 'sviluppo' [development]), but its variety of lexical realisations keep the metaphor active, whereas the terminological use is dead (Example 4):

- (4) ... hanno fotografato l'Italia economica come un *paziente convalescente ma robusto*, con una grande *voglia di vivere*, che è pronta ad adattarsi ad un mondo che cambia rapidamente. (Trade&Com\_com/doc035)

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...they have pictured economic Italy as a *convalescent patient*, though *strong*, with a *great will to live*, and ready to adapt to a rapidly changing world.

Connected to this metaphor theme is ECONOMIC SUCCESS IS HEALTH: the economy doing acceptably well is 'sano' [healthy]; the economy which is slowly improving after a downturn is said to be 'convalescente' [convalescent], and factors which limit economic well-being are the causes of illness (Example 5):

- (5) Piccola dimensione, scarsa capacità di innovazione, bassa produttività, ridotta capacità di esportazione. Queste le *malattie* di cui soffre il *paziente italiano*. (Trade&Com\_com/doc017)  
Small-scale, limited innovative capabilities, low productivity, reduced export capabilities. These are the *illnesses* which the *Italian patient* is suffering from.

The coverage of the ECONOMIC SUCCESS IS HEALTH mapping is well documented in this corpus, and appears to be a domain-specific metaphor: its overall frequency (43 tokens) is realised by only 15 distinct types (an average of nearly 3 tokens per type; elsewhere in the corpora this ratio is less than half that figure), and the lemma/type average is very high, at 7.1. 'Salute' [health] (7 tokens) appears on the cut-off point established for determining LFCWs (Section 5.3.2), making it a borderline case which, in a larger corpus, may well appear in the keyword listings. HEALTH also features terminology such as 'risanamento' [lit: bringing back to a healthy state], whose application is limited to contexts of finances and funding, not to the economy as a whole, and the metaphor is revitalised by other words, such as 'paziente' [patient], which are not terms and whose metaphorical mappings are less constrained.

BIRTH AND DEATH are well-known metaphor themes referring to beginnings and endings respectively. The Italian 'nascita' [birth] has a wider range of reference than its English equivalent (Philip 2006), even in the everyday language referring conventionally to the starting up of businesses and the initiation of trade agreements. For this reason, BIRTH IS BEGINNING cannot reasonably be classed as a feminine metaphor, and its use in text does not reveal a 'female perspective' (see Friedman 1987). Example 6 illustrates conven-

tional metaphorical uses of ‘nascita’ [birth] and ‘sviluppo’ [development]:

- (6) ‘Per l’Italia, favorire la *nascita* di nuove imprese ed il loro *sviluppo* rappresenta una priorità’ (Trade&Com\_speech/doc023)  
For Italy, promoting the *starting up* (lit: *birth*) of new businesses and their *development* is a priority.

As far as ENDING IS DEATH is concerned, it is interesting to note that the death is never a natural one, and is often linked to BREATHING (see Section 5.4.5): the dominant lemma is ‘soffocare’ [to suffocate], inflected forms of which account for five of the nine types assigned to this category, along with ‘strozzature’ [strangulation]. What is interesting to note is that ENDING IS DEATH is viewed from the point of view of the victim, not the killer: the strangulation is performed by abstract entities such as ‘caro energia’ [high energy costs], ‘protezionismo’ [protectionism] and ‘atteggiamenti politici di corto respiro’ [short-lived political behaviour], and the victim is always ‘la nostra economia’ [our (the Italian) economy]. As a result, DEATH is an extension of SUBMISSION AND SUFFERING and hence falls into the ‘feminine’ categories set up in Section 5.2.

Of the other potential source domains identified, those of SUBMISSION AND SUFFERING, and FEELINGS remain as the only others through which the minister’s ‘feminine’ side might be revealed:<sup>14</sup> yet both groups resist such pigeon-holing. None of the lemmas originally assigned to SUBMISSION AND SUFFERING were used in a way that can be described as gendered: Italy as a nation ‘suffers’ as a result of inefficiency, red tape and lack of infrastructure, but it does not suffer (endure) maltreatment. ‘Sfruttare’ [to exploit] is seen to have a positive semantic prosody (Louw, 1993) in these data. The trade opportunities which are opening up as a result of internationalisation are to be ‘sfruttati’ [made the most of] rather than ‘exploited’, and this shift towards the positive entails a shift in power from subordinate to power holder (and thus from ‘feminine’ to ‘masculine’). In a similar fashion, ‘sopruso’ [exploitation, abuse] is abuse of power, not physical abuse, again removing the element of physical suffering and powerlessness.

As far as FEELINGS are concerned, the concordance data revealed a lack of metaphorical activity, with pragmatic functions of language being of greater importance. All tokens (12) of the verb ‘sentire’ [to feel] are in fact used to structure the discourse (for example, ‘mi sento di fare ...’ [I wish to ...] or in formulaic greetings (‘le mie più *sentite*



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congratulazioni' [my most *sincere* congratulations], not to express emotions as such. The lemma 'senso' [sense] too played a textual role, particularly in fixed collocations ('ai sensi dell'art. ...' [according to the law ...] and hedges ('nel senso che ...' [in the sense that ...]). The third principal lemma, 'sensibile' [sensitive] (24 tokens), while attracting stable collocational environments, did not appear to adhere to any metaphorical mapping.

Although this section has discussed some categories which can be construed as being 'feminine', the actual use of each of the terms assigned to the categories, as viewed in the Trade&Com data, fails to support their status as female-oriented. HEALTH metaphors used do not conform to the stereotype of 'caring for the sick'; SUBMISSION metaphors surprisingly express control rather than victimisation; and both BIRTH and EMOTION are used in conventionalised ways, making any kind of gender attribution meaningless. Bonino is often described as unfeminine, or indeed masculine in her professional behaviour; the gender-neutral language observed in this subsection supports this popular perception.

### 5.4.3 Lanzillotta: regional affairs

The Department for Regional Affairs and Self-governing Regions is one of the less prominent ministries; the RegPol subcorpus is correspondingly small, though homogeneous in content. Three of the four groupings identified (Table 5.5(a)) are seen to be closely related (bureaucracy, legislation and negotiation).

In this small data set, the number of potential source domains identified is also low, including only WAR (Section 5.5), VISION, TOOLS and

Table 5.5(a) Keyword groupings in RegPol

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Bureaucracy	13	'istituzionale' [institutional], 'federalista' [federalist], 'enti' [official bodies]
Legislation	12	'normativi' [legislative], 'statuto' [statute], 'costituzionale' [constitutional]
Geography	11	'montagna' [mountain], 'territorio' [territory], 'Sardegna' [Sardinia]
Negotiation	5	'paritetico' [joint], 'commissione' [committee], 'autonomie' [autonomy]

Table 5.5(b) LFCW groupings in RegPol

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Tools	18	'leva' [lever], 'cardine' [hinge], 'strumenti' [instruments]
Vision	12	'strabismo' [squint], 'visione' [vision], 'speculare' [mirror image]
Architecture	9	'pilastro' [pillar], 'cornice' [cornice], 'gradino' [step]
War	5	'invasivo' [invasive], 'lotta' [fight], 'reagire' [react]

ARCHITECTURE. Other linguistic metaphors also appear, but being one-token classes they are not recorded in Table 5.5(b).

In Section 5.4.1, VISION metaphors had legislation as their targets, but VISION and the related 'quadro' [picture] metaphor are used in RegPol to define regional identity and the political future of the self-governing regions.<sup>15</sup> The 'quadro' metaphor, separated from its terminological function (translated as 'framework'), often 'paints a picture' (Example 7). Thus REGIONAL IDENTITY IS A DETAILED DRAWING in which the distinctive characteristics of the regions are expressed visually, not emotively.

- (7) *Il quadro del paese illustrato dal presidente Biggeri conferma le preoccupazioni che il centrosinistra esprimeva da mesi sullo stato dell'economia italiana. (RegPol\_com/doc001)*

The *picture* of the country *illustrated* by President Biggeri confirms worries about the state of Italy's economy which the Centre-Left has been expressing for months.

As far as TOOLS are concerned, a subgroup relating to MECHANICAL MOVEMENT ('manovre' [manoeuvres], 'motore' [motor] represents PROGRESS IS FORWARD MOVEMENT, with 'inerzia' [inertia], in its literal sense, representing the opposite, LACK OF PROGRESS IS LACK OF MOVEMENT. Legislation, in particular its progress and implementation, is the metaphor target for all members of the MECHANICAL MOVEMENT subgroup. The ARCHITECTURE grouping turned out to be literal.

Only two actual source domains were present in the RegPol sub-corpus, neither of which can be construed as being 'feminine'; on the contrary, TOOLS is an incontestably 'masculine' domain (Murphy 2001), as well as being conventionally used of bureaucratic procedures (mechanisms).

#### 5.4.4 Pollastrini: citizens' rights and equal opportunities

The EqualOpps subcorpus is also small and homogeneous, with four keyword groupings identified (shown in Table 5.6(a)). Only three potential source domains were identified in this subcorpus: WAR, FAMILY and FEEDING (Table 5.6(b)). On closer inspection, FAMILY was used only literally.

The FEEDING metaphors were limited to two synonymous lemmas: 'alimentare' and 'nutrire' [to feed], and their use mirrors that observed in Section 5.4.1: dissent and conflict of opinion are fed/fuelled. There is a suggestion of a CONFLICT IS FIRE theme (that is, feeding flames), which, however, cannot be confirmed by only two lemmas.

It is of interest to note that this subcorpus counts terms relating to fighting amongst the keywords, and WAR in the LFCWs (see Table 5.6(b)), thus revealing the juxtaposition of literal and metaphorical aspects. Linguistically speaking, this is highly unusual, but on close inspection it can be seen that the presence of negatives signals literal meaning ('antiviolenza' [anti-violence] and 'contro' [against]: rights are conventionally fought for (metaphorically and literally) and one of these rights is a woman's right *not* to suffer violence. Absence of negative markers in these data corresponds to the metaphorical senses, while their presence is indicative of literal meanings.

Table 5.6(a) Keyword groupings in EqualOpps

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Rights	8	'diritti umani' [human rights], 'doveri' [duties], 'parità' [equality]
Men and women	5	'donne' [women], 'femminile' [female (attrib.)], 'uomini' [men]
Sexuality	3	'omosessuali' [gays], 'orientamento' [orientation]
Fighting	3	'violenza' [violence], 'antiviolenza' [anti-violence], 'combattere' [fight]

Table 5.6(b) LFCW groupings in EqualOpps

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
War	18	'nemico' [enemy], 'battaglia' [battle], 'colpo' [blow]
Family	10	'adozione' [adoption], 'orfano' [orphaned], 'eredi' [heirs]
Feeding/fire	6	'alimentare' [feed/fuel], 'nutre' [nurtures]

#### 5.4.5 Melandri: youth policy and sport

Giovanna Melandri's ministry deals with the distinct areas of young people and sport,<sup>16</sup> as can be seen in Table 5.7(a).

Table 5.7(a) Keyword groupings in YouthPol&Sport

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Sport	14	'atleti' [athletes], 'calcio' [football], sportivo [sport]
Youth	5	'giovani' [young people], 'ragazzi' [kids], 'giovanile' [youth]
Social matters	5	'anoressia' [anorexia], 'affitti' [rents], 'società' [society]
Politics	5	'riforma' [reform], 'candidatura' [candidacy]

Table 5.7(b) LFCW groupings in YouthPol&Sport

<i>Semantic field</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Nautical	29	'ancoraggio' [anchoring], 'affondare' [sink], 'inondo' [inundate]
War	24	'battaglia' [battle], 'bomba' [bomb], 'conflitto' [conflict]
Food preparation	20	'bolla' [boils], 'setaccio' [sieve], 'fetta' [slice]
Health and illness	14	'comatoso' [comatose], 'paralisi' [paralysis], 'ferita' [wound]
Domesticity	13	'polverone' [dust] 'spazzare' [sweep], 'cornice' [frame]
Weather	13	'nuvole' [clouds], 'pioggia' [rain], 'tuonano' [thunder]
Tools	12	'agganciare' [hook onto], 'perno' [linchpin], 'chiodo' [nail]
Religion	12	'demonizzare' [demonise], 'rito' [rite], 'tempio' [temple]
Supernatural	11	'spettro' [spectre], 'fantasma' [ghost], 'incubo' [nightmare]
Imprisonment	7	'gabbia' [cage], 'recinto' [fenced area], 'trappola' [trap]
Breathing	6	'affanno' [breathlessness], 'respiro' [breath], 'soffio' [blow]
Hunting	5	'caccia' [hunt], 'ferocia' [ferocity], 'lupo' [wolf]
Fire	4	'scintilla' [spark], 'accendere' [to light], 'spengere' [extinguish]
Gardening	3	'coltivare' [cultivate], 'giardino' [garden], 'pianta' [plant]

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The subcorpus is quite large and composed of interviews in addition to press releases and speeches; as was noted in Section 5.4.1, interview data increase the range of the incongruent LFCWs, with the result that this subcorpus features a very wide range of ‘potential source domains’ (Table 5.7(b)), including WAR, HUNTING and IMPRISONMENT (see Section 5.5), RELIGION and the SUPERNATURAL, THE NAUTICAL, TOOLS, DOMESTICITY and FOOD PREPARATION, GARDENING, HEALTH AND ILLNESS, BREATHING, FIRE and WEATHER.

The NAUTICAL metaphor echoes DIFFERING OPINIONS ARE DIFFERENT SHORES (Section 5.4.1), but this time allegiances and beliefs are ‘anchored’ [ancorati] in the sea, with the ‘approdo’ [berth] of each group being fixed in a different location: the implication is that ‘clear blue water’ prevents compromises being reached. A subgroup of the NAUTICAL metaphor includes ‘affondere’ [sink] and ‘sommergere’ [submerge], both of which refer to the quashing of unpopular or unwanted policies and opinions: REPRESSION IS SINKING. Land-related alternatives such as ‘sepoltura’ [burying], which would share the ‘pushing and keeping down’ sense, do not appear in the data.

One reason why suppression metaphors are only rendered with ‘watery’ vocabulary may be that earth-bound metaphors with the same target form a GARDENING group, and cultivation is the opposite of quashing. POLICIES – especially controversial ones – ARE PLANTS which require delicate treatment if they are to flourish (Example 8). ‘Radici’ [roots] are historical foundations connected to society and its values.

- (8) E’ una *pianticella* preziosa che va *coltivata* e non *calpestata*.  
(YouthPol&Sport\_int/doc066)

It is a precious little *plant* which needs to be *cultivated*, not *stamped on*.

The presence of RELIGIOUS and SUPERNATURAL metaphorical lexis marks this corpus out from the others. Although there were many references to religion in the FamPol corpus (Section 5.4.1), these appeared amongst the keywords or were isolated linguistic metaphors of biblical origin, while YouthPol&Sport contains 27 tokens in these two categories, all of which are used metaphorically. However, only two thematic areas can be identified: one can ‘demonizzare’ [demonise] the undesirable (three tokens), and an undesirable individual can be called ‘Belzebù’ [Beelzebub]; but the negativity expressed by these and other religious terms is general and resists classification into themes. ‘Fantasma’ [ghost], ‘spettro’ [spectre] and ‘incubo’ [nightmare] all refer to unwanted people or things which are ‘resurrected’: TORMENT IS HAUNTING.

A further seven metaphorical areas are present in the data. Of these, FOOD PREPARATION and DOMESTICITY are 'feminine' ones, TOOLS 'masculine' and the remainder gender neutral. The FOOD PREPARATION grouping revealed no sign of consistent metaphorical mappings connecting the linguistic metaphors, while the two most frequent forms in DOMESTICITY ('cornici' [picture frame] and 'specchio' [mirror] both expressed the mapping EXAMPLARS ARE FRAMED IMAGES, thus loosely corresponding to other VISION-related metaphors (Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.4). The TOOL category was a disparate one, with no consistent mapping identifiable; and the same was true of HEALTH AND ILLNESS, which contained a mixture of literal and figurative meanings. The remaining three categories represented simple mappings, all conventional: FREEDOM IS BREATHING; HOPE IS A FLAME; and good or bad WEATHER (sunny or stormy) represents positive or disruptive states respectively.

Once again, there is no evident sign of either 'masculine' or 'feminine' preferences in the metaphors discussed in YouthPol&Sport, despite the variety of metaphors and metaphor themes present in the data. However, Melandri's metaphors are both more varied and more plentiful than those of the other ministers, and this may contribute towards a popular perception of enhanced femininity on her part. By means of summary to end this section, Table 5.8 states which LFCW groupings (potential source domains) were indeed found to be metaphorically used in the five corpora.

## 5.5 Women and war metaphors

While none of the ostensibly 'feminine' domains was used by all five ministers, the 'masculine' domain par excellence, WAR, is. The

Table 5.8 Source domains used metaphorically by the ministers

<i>FamPol</i>	<i>Trade&amp;Com</i>	<i>RegPol</i>	<i>EqualOpps</i>	<i>YouthPol&amp;Sport</i>
Body parts	Birth	Tools	Family	Breathing
Domesticity	Breathing	Vision	Fire	Domesticity
Fire	Death	War	Feeding	Food preparation
Food preparation	Health		Nautical	Gardening
Health	Risk		War	Health
Natural disasters	Submission			Religion
Sea	War			Supernatural
Tools				Tools
Vision				War
War				Weather

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prevalence of media coverage of war over the past decade may explain why this metaphor is common to all five data sets, as familiarity with a domain is crucial to its successful use as a metaphor source. This would also explain the presence of some specific source domain vocabulary, such as 'attentato' [terrorist attack], which is only metaphorical in these data, but appears only to be literal in a general reference corpus. The WAR source domain has been subdivided into a number of more narrowly defined source domains to facilitate discussion of the data: Table 5.9 lists the subdomains and the ministries in which they are used.

This section considers the three most prevalent war metaphors used in the Italian political corpora: INVASION, BATTLES and DEFENCE. As might be expected, the use of these metaphors is related to the interests of the ministries, with the result that more than one metaphor theme can emerge from a source domain. The different metaphors effectively separate the 'man's world' of economics from the 'women's world' of family, young people and minorities.

The INVASION source domain can be found in three of the five sub-corpora. In two of these – FamPol and YouthPol&Sport – the underlying metaphor is CURIOSITY IS INVASION, with the context of use unfailingly referring to violations of individuals' right to privacy. Trade&Com's INVASION metaphor eschews personal matters entirely to focus on the established theme, BUSINESS IS WAR (Mascull 1996). Forms of the lemma 'invadere' [invade] is used of China and India (the aggressors), which are attacking Italy (the victim): EXPANSION IS INVASION. However, if it is Italy expanding into new markets, war rhetoric comes to the fore, with an analogous situation being viewed from the aggressor's standpoint: the term used in these contexts is 'penetrare' [penetrate, break into].

Fights, battles and skirmishes in Trade&Com are linked to the trade of goods rather than negotiation and other aspects of business. For Italy to maintain its position in world markets, it is a 'battaglia' [battle]; while eliminating or removing counterfeit goods – a threat to the

Table 5.9 Summary of war metaphors by subcorpus (number of types)

<i>FamPol</i>	<i>Trade&amp;Com</i>	<i>RegPol</i>	<i>EqualOpps</i>	<i>YouthPol&amp;Sport</i>
Defeat (20)	Battle (10)	Battle (2)	Attack (7)	Battle (10)
Defence (23)	Defence (18)	Defence (2)	Battle(4)	Gun warfare (4)
Fighting (38)	Hunting (3)	Invasion (1)	Defence (5)	Hunting (4)
Imprisonment (22)	Invasion (20)		Gun warfare (3)	Imprisonment (6)
Terrorism (5)	Victory (4)			

luxury 'Made in Italy' brands – is a 'lotta' [fight, struggle]. The lexis, while apparently synonymous, is not transferable, and is suggestive of different strategies being adopted: MAINTAINING ECONOMIC SUPREMACY IS A BATTLE; PROTECTIONISM IS A FIGHT.

In the remaining three ministries, BATTLES are tied to moral issues. In these subcorpora, the BATTLE and DEFENCE domains are seen to merge, as the fight is viewed from the perspective of the weaker side: fights for the right to work and equality are instigated by those who do not yet possess the right, while fights against undesirables such as crime and discrimination are conducted by the individuals suffering the consequences. OBTAINING RIGHTS IS A BATTLE can be found in FamPol, RegPol, EqualOpps and YouthPol&Sport. The rights being fought for, or attacked by others, include women's equal treatment at work and in the law, the secularity of the state, the family unit, and the right to a living wage. BUSINESS IS WAR also operates through DEFENCE lexis which it is only found in Trade&Com. Here business success and survival are the greatest concern, with the high quality and reputation of 'Made in Italy' products having to be defended in the national interest: PROTECTION IS DEFENCE is a companion metaphor to PROTECTIONISM IS A FIGHT.

These different uses of the same source domain are closely related to the discourse of the individual ministries. It would be incongruous for sociopolitical rights to be more important than business concerns in Trade&Com, just as economic affairs are peripheral to the other four ministries. The 'masculine' metaphor is therefore a reflection of in-group talk, not individual choice.

## 5.6 Discussion

The metaphor themes discussed in this chapter have been identified through a methodology which has not previously been applied in metaphor studies. It makes no claims of exhaustiveness; metaphorical uses of words are defined phraseologically, so it is inevitable that not all metaphors in the corpora have been located, but this is true also of the other corpus-based approaches discussed in Section 5.3.1. However, the advantage of this methodology is that it allows for the identification of metaphor themes which are almost invisible at a textual level, and can only emerge by concordancing substantial quantities of data, and therefore makes a useful contribution to the semi-automatic identification of metaphors in corpora.

By focusing on keywords and ignoring their textual function in the early stages of analysis, hypothetical source domain groupings can



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be identified, and their metaphoricality is subsequently confirmed or refuted by concordancing. While not all low-frequency words are used metaphorically, it has been illuminating to find evidence that metaphorical source and target domains tend to shun one another: with the exception of the overlaps discussed in EqualOpps (Section 5.4.4), target domains (keyword groupings) and source domains (LFCW groupings) occupied distinct semantic fields. That this is seen to happen over discourses, not just texts, is an important extension to existing theories of metaphor use: within specialised domains, the keywords may indeed be metaphor targets, but they cannot be metaphor sources.

The identification of metaphor themes requires recurrent lexis, whether consisting of a handful of lemmas used several times, or of a wider range of hapax legomena which can be grouped semantically. In this study, only recurrent metaphors have been considered, irrespective of their status in the language as a whole, as the use of a metaphor theme once or twice in a year's worth of data cannot be considered as a preference; it is thus impossible to comment on the range of vocabulary used metaphorically, nor on aspects regarding innovative or creative uses which, as Jakobsen asserted (1922: 248), are aspects which are believed to differentiate men's and women's language. All of the women ministers make use of some 'feminine' vocabulary, but none can be said to use it frequently or consistently in comparison with gender-neutral or 'masculine' themes. When 'feminine' themes recur, they seem to be closely linked to the ministerial remit, on the one hand, and on interference from outside influences – journalists – on the other. This is most evident in the FamPol data (discussed in Section 5.4.1). The DOMESTIC and FOOD PREPARATION groupings were overwhelmingly found to occur in interview data, not speeches or press releases, as interviewers steered the topic of conversation away from Rosy Bindi's professional views on the family and probed into her private family life, including her cooking and home-making skills. While this occurred when the journalists were working for women's magazines, those writing for Catholic publications were keen that minister professed her faith (again focusing on private life), the implication being that she would not support legislation that might undermine Christian family values. The effect of interviewer 'interference' on the political data does not spill over into other text types, however: neither Bindi nor her colleagues draw attention to their private lives through their metaphors in speeches and communiqués.

Why then does the belief hold that women speak differently from men? Perhaps the answer is hidden by the data, rather than revealed by it. In order to hold a senior post, a female politician – like her male

counterparts – must have the necessary political gravitas, and this can partly be judged by how successfully she has adapted her language to the norms dictated by the political genre. This same linguistic behaviour seems to mark her language as no longer belonging to that of women’s discourse, which results in her being ‘ostracized as unfeminine by both men and women’ (Lakoff 1975: 61). Throughout the period of the Prodi government, especially while the civil partnership legislation was being debated, all but one of the ministers discussed in this contribution were the subject of rumours that they were lesbian, their language use being held up as ‘evidence’ to support the allegations. Yet what emerges from the data is that, put simply, in order to get ahead in the political arena, women and men are expected to speak the same language: politics. As Emma Bonino’s quote in the title to this contribution makes plain, they are ‘not women in politics, but female politicians’.

### Appendix 5.1

Keywords in International Trade and Commerce subcorpus (alphabetical listing). Content words only.

AGROALIMENTARE [agroindustrial]  
 AREA [area]  
 AZIENDE [companies]  
 BILANCIA [balance]  
 BIOTECNOLOGIE [biotechnologies]  
 CAPACITÀ [capacity; ability]  
 CINA [China]  
 COMMERCIALE [commercial]  
 COMMERCIALI [commercial (*pl.*)]  
 COMMERCIO [commerce]  
 COMPETITIVITÀ [competitiveness]  
 COOPERATIVE [cooperatives]  
 CRESCITA [growth]  
 DOHA [Doha]  
 ECONOMIA [economy]  
 ECONOMICA [economic (*f.*)]  
 ECONOMICO [economic]  
 EMERGENTI [developing]  
 ESPORTAZIONI [exports]  
 ESTERO [foreign; abroad]

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FLUSSI [flows]  
GERMANIA [Germany]  
GLOBALE [global]  
GLOBALIZZAZIONE [globalisation]  
GOLFO [Gulf]  
IMPORTAZIONI [imports]  
IMPRENDITORIALE [entrepreneurial]  
IMPRESE [businesses]  
INDIA [India]  
INDUSTRIA [industry]  
INDUSTRIALE [industrial]  
INDUSTRIALI [industrial (*pl.*)]  
INTERNAZIONALE [international]  
INTERNAZIONALI [international (*pl.*)]  
INTERNAZIONALIZZAZIONE [internationalisation]  
INTERSCAMBIO [exchange]  
INVESTIMENTI [investments]  
ITALIA [Italy]  
ITALIANE [Italian (*f. pl.*)]  
MEDIE [medium-sized]  
MEDITERRANEO [Mediterranean]  
MERCATI [markets]  
MERCATO [market]  
MILIARDI [billions]  
MISSIONE [mission]  
MONDIALE [world (*attrib.*)]  
NEGOZIATO [negotiated]  
PAESI [countries]  
PARTNER [partner]  
PICCOLE [small (*f. pl.*)]  
PRESENZA [presence]  
PRODOTTI [produce/products]  
PRODUTTIVO [productive]  
PRODUZIONE [production]  
PROMOZIONE [promotion]  
QUALITÀ [quality/-ies]  
RIPRESA [upturn]  
RUSSIA [Russia]  
SALDO [steady]  
SETTORE [sector]  
SETTORI [sectors]

SISTEMA [system]  
 SVILUPPO [development]  
 TRADIZIONALI [traditional (*pl.*)]

### Notes

- 1 The data are not compared with male politicians' metaphors. In order to do make a valid comparison, male/female from the same ministries would have to be represented; however, data from past Italian government ministries are unavailable.
- 2 For clarity, source domains, as well as conceptual metaphors/metaphor themes, will be indicated by small capitals in this chapter.
- 3 The theory-neutral term 'metaphor theme' (after Black 1993) is used throughout in preference to 'conceptual metaphor' (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980).
- 4 Speeches take the form of extended notes or scripted talks, not transcripts, as the latter are not publicly available.
- 5 Interviews are the published (edited) forms: unedited transcripts and audio files are not generally accessible.
- 6 Rosy Bindi was minister for family policy (Ministro delle Politiche della Famiglia); Giovanna Melandri was minister for youth policy and sport (Ministro per le Politiche Giovanili e le Attività Sportive); Emma Bonino was minister for international trade and commerce (Ministro del Commercio Internazionale); Linda Lanzillotta was minister (without portfolio) for regional affairs and the self-governing regions (Ministro per gli Affari Regionali e Autonomie Locali); and Barbara Pollastrini was minister (without portfolio) for citizens' rights and equal opportunities (Ministro per i Diritti e le Pari Opportunità). Livia Turco, minister for health, was not included in the study as virtually all of the relevant data was available only as image files of scanned newspaper pages which were impossible to convert into text for inclusion in the corpus.
- 7 Text types are '*communiqué*' (or press release), '*speech*', and '*interview*'. Thus trade&com\_com/doc030 is the thirtieth press release from the International Trade and Commerce corpus.
- 8 For details of the corpora used and the identification codes, see Section 5.3.1.
- 9 This is true of data drawn from a specialised domain, where the content or 'aboutness' can be clearly defined; data whose specialised nature are determined, for example, by genre may not display the same degree of homogeneity, making it more difficult to separate target domains from the rest of the text.
- 10 Different keywords would emerge with different 'master lists', but in determining keyness it is important to compare like with like if detailed and reliable results are to be obtained. As the WordSmith Tools help file suggests, 'compare apples with pears, or, better still, Coxes with Granny Smiths ... and avoid comparing apples with phone boxes!' Comparing specialised data to a general corpus is also revealing, but would have highlighted words which are key to political language in general, or to the period of data collection, obscuring those which are relevant to this study.
- 11 'Dichiarazione di CONvivenza' [cohabitation declaration].

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- 12 The number of tokens per distinct type is rarely more than one; unless otherwise stated, types have not been lemmatised.
- 13 Single-lemma classes in an inflected language can potentially contain more tokens than other, multi-lemma classes, but in the absence of alternative lexical renderings it is impossible to distinguish between collocational preference and metaphorical mapping.
- 14 The BODY PARTS lexis turned out to be used literally in two texts on womens' rights in the developing world; HUNTING and RISK were defined as 'masculine' metaphors (Section 5.2) and this categorisation is supported by the data.
- 15 The self-governing regions ['regioni autonome'] are the islands (Sicily and Sardinia), and the regions in the north which border with France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. All are considered culturally distinct, both from one another and from the rest of Italy; the border regions are officially bilingual.
- 16 In Italy, 'young people' is not limited to 'minors', that is, under-18s, but to the under-30s; sport is prominent in the keyword listings as the period the data cover coincides with Italy's 2006 World Cup victory, and ensuing media attention involving the minister.

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# 6

## The Metaphorical Construction of Ireland

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### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter is part of a project on the linguistic behaviour of Irish female politicians in the last two centuries. Researchers have argued for the existence of a distinctive female style as compared with a male style (for example Coates 1988, Holmes 1995) and have categorised the differences claimed to distinguish one from the other. The evolution from the 'deficit', 'dominance' and 'difference' approaches to the 'discursive construction of gendered identities' (Sunderland 2004, Litosseliti 2006) took more than three decades. A patently biased chapter by Jespersen (1922) pointed to some features addressed since then. Robin Lakoff (1975) suggested that the most significant characteristics of feminine language included hypercorrection, lexical constraints, less complex structures, limited topic selection, no interruption, no turn-taking control, preference for polite interaction, and a tendency towards conversation accommodation. These features indicate how people establish their relationship with interlocutors and the way they construct their (public) persona. One instrumental element in understanding this idea involves figurative language, particularly metaphor. Conceptual metaphors show how we comprehend, conceptualise and evaluate the world (Lakoff and Turner 1989, O'Halloran 2007). They interpret 'a fragment of the society's history [and bear] implications for the construction of the society's future' (Zinken 2003: 517). As Cameron (2007: 200) remarks, conceptual metaphors are 'evidence of thinking and perspective'.

In this chapter, I examine the conceptual metaphors structuring the discourse of Irish male and female political leaders; that is, expressions 'whose [uses are] conventional, unconscious [and] typically unnoticed' (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 80), with special attention to how these

expressions form the idea of Ireland. I do so by first examining the historical conceptualisations of the country, and then by contrasting these to differing modern conceptions as viewed through the metaphors of Mary McAleese (Ireland's president from 11 November 1997 onwards) and Bertie Ahern (Irish prime minister from 26 June 1997 to 7 May 2008). Taking into account the conflicts this territory has experienced, including the struggle to become a state, I examine how notions like 'Irishness' and 'nationhood' are metaphorically represented. My interest is to see which patterns are typical in McAleese's and Ahern's speeches, the frames they invoke, the meanings they encapsulate and, subsequently, their differences. This may suggest whether, in a political context, there exists 'women's language' as distinct from 'men's language'.

## 6.2 Diachronic conceptualisation of Ireland

In a 1909 speech, Constance Markiewicz commented on the role women played in changing Ireland. Their main goals were to fight for Irish independence and to gain female emancipation through a pro-suffrage constitution. From her statements, we can draw conclusions about her understanding of the metaphor COUNTRY AS A WOMAN IN NEED OF LIBERTY. The identification between the women she spoke to and the country they lived in was no coincidence. She claimed the two were enslaved. The new, free condition of the latter had much to do with Irish females getting rid of what prevented them from acquiring social and political visibility:

- (1) ... a strong tide of liberty seems to be coming ... carrying ... all the outposts that hold women enslaved [...]. Fix your mind on the ideal of Ireland free, ... and no one will be able to side-track you [...] arm your minds with the ... memories of your country and her martyrs ...<sup>1</sup>

By that point in history, Irish women were on the move. They would not be deviated from their road to freedom. A metaphorised liberty, portrayed as a flowing stream that was increasingly harder to control, became an agent of force driving them to action, removing the obstacles and symbols of their disempowerment, in this case represented by buildings typical of those found in a military camp. It is significant that Markiewicz employs the possessive 'her' when referring to Ireland. The country is portrayed as an animate entity,



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human and female, one without the right to choose but, instead, at the mercy of a master. In her name and for her life, many sacrificed their own.

Ireland, today referred to as the 'Celtic Tiger', was symbolised earlier by Cathleen Ni Houlihan, a mythical figure and emblem of Irish nationalism. She stands for a mysterious old woman who fears that there are strangers occupying her home. The strangers represent the English rule. Ni Houlihan wants to remove them and recover what she was robbed of. That is why she calls on her children to defend her four fields, at the advent of the 1798 French invasion in support of the oppressed Irish. This symbol returns in 1902, when W.B. Yeats wrote the homonymous play, a national(ist) exaltation for his beloved Maud Gonne in which her character proclaims blood sacrifice to liberate the nation. Miraculously, when followed by Irish lads, she is transformed into 'a young girl ... with the walk of a queen' (Yeats 1989: 88).

Gonne, who performed the role very successfully to the delight of both mesmerised playwright and audience, became as influential as Markiewicz in regard to Irish nationalism and feminism. On 25 October 1897, *The New York Times* reported that, when Gonne addressed the Irish National Alliance at the Grand Opera House, she depicted England as a critic, a robber and an enemy.<sup>2</sup> This portrayal may have activated entailments such as: 'Ireland, an object of criticism'; 'Ireland, the victim, abused and in her oppressor's hands'; and 'Ireland, the passive antagonist of John Bull (a national personification of England)'. Through Gonne's statements, the COUNTRY IS A WOMAN metaphor was invoked: either as the young woeful virgin (Dark Rosaleen) or Sean Bhean Vhocht (the Poor Old Woman). This reminds us of how the Irish constructed their perception of the nation. Women have been used repeatedly to represent Ireland. The cherished features of these icons were femaleness, motherhood, purity, beauty and submissiveness. The early writings of Éamon de Valera, the author of the Irish Constitution, show some depictions of Ireland in this vein, once again including the dramatic ingredient of slavery. For centuries, the master-England restricted the freedom of the mother-Ireland, which, under the threat of being hit with its whip, became its prisoner. De Valera, by then national leader, pleaded with his compatriots to participate in taking off the manacles depriving the nation of happiness:

- (2) Sons ... of the Gael ... it is ... your highest duty ... to help to break the chains that bind our sweet, sad mother.<sup>3</sup>
- (3) ... Ireland, 'held in forced bondage by powerful imperial neighbours'.<sup>4</sup>

- (4) ... Ireland's independence should be abandoned under the lash of an alien government.<sup>5</sup>

In one speech delivered before the Irish National Literary Society on 25 November 1892, Douglas Hyde, the Republic's first president, offered another picture of Ireland.<sup>6</sup> His critique was directed against Ireland's propensity to imitate English traditions instead of promoting the original Irish ones. Hyde worried that his race was 'diverging ... from the right path', that the Irish tongue was 'a corpse on the dissecting table', that 'West-Britonism ... [would] overwhelm us like a flood', and that 'the Gaelic people ... remain[ed] tied to the apron-strings of another race'. This image is pessimistic. By looking in the British National Corpus (<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>) at the collocates of the outstanding lexical items in the examples above (that is, 'corpse', 'flood', 'diverging', 'tied to the apron-strings'), the obvious is confirmed: the implied meanings are death, loss, damage, chaos, wrong, helplessness and victimisation. 'Excess of a negative force' is a metaphorical expression that is commonly associated with weather conditions (Charteris-Black 2004: 211). Here the Irish are portrayed as being a dry area of land covered suddenly by the destructive power not of water but of the malpractice of aping English habits.

The Irish are also like adult sons or daughters still controlled by a parent; they remain immature and dependent and, seemingly, lack in self-esteem because of their alleged inability to handle situations. Their stepmother (England) does not give them freedom; they are neither ready to make decisions nor dare to. Moreover, the attribute central to the condition of Irishness, their tongue, is dead, which is their fault. In these circumstances, Hyde understands that it is an obligation to 'cultivate what they have rejected, and build up an Irish nation on Irish lines'. This idea is one contemporary Irish politics resorts to the most: the nation is a building, and those who inhabit it must build it. The constructors become farmers who prepare a metaphoric land where, with care and effort, the crops and plants of their customs should grow.

De Valera's political views were moulded by his Catholic faith and traditional values. On 17 March 1943, this father of seven depicted Ireland by means of a metaphor that is related to Hyde's building metaphor – THE NATION IS A HOME:

- (5) ... Ireland ... would be the home of a people who valued material wealth only as ...<sup>7</sup>

The Irish nation his government was alleged to stand for resembled a pleasant place where one lived in contentment on a permanent basis

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because of the ties of affection and loyalty. His ideal Ireland was a physical, mental and spiritual space where everybody was safe living in the same household and looked after by a surrogate family, de Valera being the head. In this framework, THE NATION AS A FAMILY metaphor (Lakoff 1996) is potentially recoverable. The feeling of emotional attachment plus the sense of dependability from, reliability on, and respect for, the parents are likely entailments of this representation of Ireland. These children (the Irish) are under the authority of their father (de Valera), who will direct, support and protect them. In response to his devotion, he expects their selfless commitment to the family-nation.

In the same speech, the unity of the national territory and the revitalisation of the Irish language were also at stake, and de Valera asked his country to act accordingly:

- (6) A vessel for three thousand years ..., the language is for us precious [...]. To part with it would be ... to lose the key to our past, to cut away the roots from the tree ...

In this extract, de Valera employs several metaphors: THE LANGUAGE IS A KEY TO A DOOR, THE LANGUAGE IS THE ROOTS OF A TREE and THE LANGUAGE IS A VEHICLE (BOAT). The boat-language correlation illustrates the essentials of a seafaring nation. For the Irish, this method of transport was indispensable for moving goods and people between the islands. Vessels also encourage the growth of enterprises and the wealth of countries by facilitating the exchange of raw materials, products, workers and experiences. From de Valera's perspective, Gaelic was a boat that could not weigh anchor without the Irish people on board, a boat that would take them to their final destination: full nationhood.

This is not the only time that Ireland's history has been viewed in terms of a journey. This same image is repeated again and again. As for the other metaphors, I am especially interested in THE LANGUAGE IS THE ROOTS OF A TREE, one of the favourite mappings of present-day politicians when referring to Ireland, the state, society and so on. As shown later, these entities are depicted mostly as a living organism, mainly a plant. Roots get water and nutrients from the soil, enabling plants to grow. They also help plants to stand firm against wind and water currents. Likewise, roots facilitate vegetation to endure dry weather and cold climates. By invoking some basic knowledge of biology, one can infer the importance of the role of any language for the development and continued existence of the tree-country/nation.

Before the 1990s, Ireland stood for some of the values entailed by these metaphors (that is, IRELAND IS A WOMAN, IRELAND IS A CHILD, IRELAND IS A FAMILY, IRELAND IS A FLOODED AREA and IRELAND IS A BUILDING). Ulterior changes after that time, however, required new conceptual configurations.

### 6.3 Synchronic data

The president of Ireland's official website (<http://www.president.ie/>) has archived the speeches of Mary McAleese since she succeeded Mary Robinson as the elected head of state in 1997. We can find the speeches of Bertie Ahern, the Irish prime minister in office from 1997 to 2008, at the Department of the Taoiseach's website (<http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/>). In my research, more than 1000 speeches and official addresses have been analysed (see Table 6.1). This constitutes a non-lemmatised corpus of around 1.5 million tokens, consisting of two thematically comparable subcorpora of balanced size as far as representativeness is concerned. Data were processed using the concordance kit WordSmith Tools 3.0 (Scott 1999). The web-based environment Wmatrix and its word-sense tagger (Rayson 2007) have allowed me to process the key semantic fields in the corpus. This was a convenient step towards a comprehensive study of the potential conceptual metaphors in discourse.

Table 6.1 Corpus metadata

<i>Politician</i>	<i>Tokens</i>	<i>Date range</i>	<i>Speeches</i>
Ahern	1,063,345	19 July 1997–26 July 2007	834
McAleese	442,877	11 November 1997–12 July 2007	356
Total	1,506,222		1,190

### 6.4 Theoretical background

Conceptual metaphor theory has evolved since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) (Reddy's and Schön's 1979 articles being its precursors). Its development (for example Lakoff 1987, Gibbs 1992, Kövecses 2002) has not always provided grounds for agreement (McGlone 2007). In this chapter, I rely on the original principles, although some limitations must be noted, including the identification and interpretation of metaphoric utterances as different from literal ones; see, for example, the notions of delexicalisation and semantic prosody in Louw (2000), and contextual abnormality and conceptual contrast in Romero and Soria (2005).

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The goal of this chapter is to describe how the politicians in question use metaphors and verify whether their gender is an influential factor in the way concepts are embodied in the corpus. I have no prejudice regarding the relationship between language and gender. Previously, I observed (Hidalgo Tenorio 2002) that some views on the topic were inapplicable to my data. Other variables, such as period, age, status, religious background and ideology, should play a role as well. One can assume that the images depicted by them are dissimilar, although it is necessary to test this in the data. I hypothesise that, if throughout the corpus there is consistency in the exploitation of the same imagery, I will be in a position to name some of the values inherent to these people in power. The most often repeated conceptual metaphors found are the following: NATION AS A PERSON, NATION AS A BUILDING and NATION AS A PLANT. I will track the extent to which Ahern and McAleese are alike in using these metaphors and suggest how they construct gender discursively (and if stereotypes might still work in this field).

### 6.5 Method

Initially, it was difficult to decide on which procedure to follow, because I wanted to study all the metaphors in the corpus. Other researchers had listed the typical metaphors in the public arena (for example Chilton and Ilyin 1993, Lakoff 1996, Semino and Masci 1996, Mio 1997, Musolff 2004, Charteris-Black 2005). This method became a starting point for data collection to work with, such as: personification, depersonification and reification; the contrast between health and disease, life and death, and light and darkness; the body politic metaphor system; and war, family, sports, journey, finance, machine, natural catastrophe, master-servant, crime and punishment, and creation and construction metaphors.

Investigations grow thanks to what one expects to find in texts and to what texts offer to readers. Nowadays, we know more about linguistic phenomena that cannot be explained by trusting intuition alone. Besides, human beings are incapable of manually analysing large collections of data in a limited time frame. Therefore, it is essential to rely on corpus-based studies (for example Charteris-Black 2004, Musolff 2004, Deignan 2005, Stefanowitsch 2006). This approach makes research exhaustives and findings more pertinent and consistent. Replicability is crucial. As Peters and Wilks (2003: 172) state, this allows for the extension of researchers' scope 'beyond introspection and ad hoc construction of relevant examples'.

I first focused on linguistic metaphors present in McAleese's and Ahern's speeches in order to categorise the conceptual metaphors standing out in each politician's discursive construction of Ireland. Cameron (1999: 130) specified conceptual metaphors' description conditions as: domain incongruity, novelty or conventionality of topic-vehicle combination, attitudinal impact, explication, familiarity, cognitive demand, explicitness of metaphorical intention, connotative power, and systematicity. Steen (1999) also developed a method to identify propositions behind linguistic metaphorical expressions. Later, *Language and Literature* devoted one of its issues to this question and presented the conclusions of PALASIGMET, a team that elaborated on identifying propositions behind linguistic metaphorical expressions and worked on metaphor annotation in electronic corpora (see Crisp et al. 2002, Heywood et al. 2002).

Eventually, I became convinced by Charteris-Black's critical metaphor analysis and Stefanowitsch's metaphorical pattern analysis. One of the reasons I find the former interesting is that this 'is a method for understanding *how* political myths communicate ideology' (Charteris-Black 2005: 24). Another is the author's ability to analyse in detail the discourse practice of outstanding twentieth-century politicians. In addition, I find the latter interesting because of its straightforwardness and effectiveness. Furthermore, they each combine qualitative and quantitative methods cleverly.

To begin, I first checked the five key domains in each subcorpus by using Wmatrix (<http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/>) (see Table 6.2). The only similar concept in both was 'government'. My original goal was to track these leaders' depictions of Ireland. I knew that I would find relevant data, since they alluded to the situation of the country, the government and so on in most of their public appearances. The differences between their concerns and styles were marked. McAleese's speeches focused on closeness and personal attachment and for giving a positive

Table 6.2 Ahern's and McAleese's five key lexical domains

<i>Ahern</i>		<i>McAleese</i>	
18,877	Location and direction	3,665	People
11,542	Government	3,312	Government
11,441	Wanted	2,967	Evaluation: good
10,855	Helping	1,305	Alive
8,389	Important	721	Polite

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assessment of states of affairs and participants, thereby placing great stress on the role of Irish citizens and the nation in her agenda. During his term of office, Ahern's pragmatism and right-to-the-point attitude shaped and coloured speeches mainly produced to make public his strategies for achieving goals benefiting the institution of the Irish state.

In addition, a list of keywords was generated using WordSmith Tools. Apart from an interesting number of Gaelic expressions used to reinforce her interest in community roots, content words such as 'hope', 'lives', 'women', 'journey', 'human', 'culture', 'love', 'friends', 'family', 'hearts', 'home', 'Ireland', 'blossom', 'homeland' and 'warm' occur more often in the McAleese corpus. The superficial profile of the female leader was already significantly distinguishable from the prime minister's. Deeper analysis would confirm this.

Next, I searched for the occurrences of the lexical items in the corpus that referred to the target domain of my interest (that is, Ireland, state, nation, country, republic, home, homeland, land, island, citizen, Irish people, emigrant, emigration, community, society and Europe) and extracted 1000 instances of each. See below an example of the concordance lines in which the search word was 'Ireland':

N	Concordance
60	vitaly important link in Ireland's road network to
61	settlement in Northern Ireland . Considerable pr
62	research community in Ireland . We are also co
63	very successful visit to Ireland . An area in which

Then, I identified metaphorical expressions of which the search word is part; for example, in 'to a ripened and mature Ireland, an island flying on two strong wings', I recognised two conceptual metaphors: IRELAND IS A PLANT and AN ISLAND IS A BIRD. Concordance lines often provided enough information concerning the metaphorical nature of an utterance. If the context was insufficient to understand the meaning of the word string, I expanded the five-word window, the maximum being nine to the left.

Later, I classified these into different groups according to the source domains (for example person, building, journey and so on). Following Stefanowitsch (2006), I expected to obtain a catalogue of all the metaphorical mappings underlying the construction of Ireland (see Table 6.3). The core feature of my examples is that the source and target domains coexist in the verbal instantiation of the metaphors; in 'we are now a nation of newly opened doors', the words 'nation' and

Table 6.3 Target domains and metaphorical expressions

<i>Ahern</i>			<i>McAleese</i>	
<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Metaphorical expressions</i>	<i>Target domain</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Metaphorical expressions</i>
5,317	109	Ireland	3,090	139
1,422	69	Community	640	51
1,296	99	Country	535	113
1,261	86	Europe	589	73
1,027	169	Society	451	97
722	42	State	191	13
624	48	Island	346	62
428	17	Home	401	21
300	5	Irish people	100	4
194	55	Nation	154	66
120	8	Land	68	7
105	5	Citizen	49	3
83	8	Republic	82	8
16	2	Emigrants	77	9
2	0	Homeland	62	7
Total			Total	
12,917	722		6,835	673
(1 metaphor every 1,473 words)			(1 metaphor every 658 words)	

'doors' co-occur in the same sentence but are not congruent. Therefore, I realised that I would use only a subset of all the possible types in my corpus.

Lastly, I described and interpreted the slots, relations and properties in the source domain that were mapped onto the target domain and tried to explain to what extent there existed some differences in each politician's usage of conceptual metaphors.

## 6.6 Analysis and discussion

### 6.6.1 From WOMAN to TIGER

One article in *The Economist*, dated 24 May 2001, lists the main factors of change in 1990s Ireland. EU membership, low corporate taxation, restraint in state spending, education improvement, the weakness of Europe's currency, and the ICT sector expansion have influenced two decades of continuous buoyancy. The first sentence of the text states, 'The Celtic tiger continues to roar, albeit at a more sustainable pitch.'<sup>8</sup>



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After centuries of subordination, poverty and mass migration, which caused (political) unrest, Ireland's new condition brought about a change in icons. The miracle of the country moving from being one of the poorest in Europe to the most rapidly growing economy could hardly go unnoticed. It was necessary to have a metaphor that referred to the phenomenon and the country itself. A UK economist saw the Republic as a tiger for the first time around 1994.<sup>9</sup> Behind this term, Kevin Gardiner made obvious the similarities between Ireland and some Asian economies (Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea).<sup>10</sup> A mammal predator, the tiger is well known for its speed; the idiosyncratic feature of this new mapping of Éire embodied this attribute, which was applied to the country's fast pace of economic development.

From 1997 to 2007, Ahern and McAleese used the phrase 'Celtic Tiger' in their various official addresses. Despite its being a popular collocation,<sup>11</sup> the number of times '(Celtic) Tiger' occurs in the corpus is not spectacular. Furthermore, its metaphorical readings are even less common (2 out of 30, plus one problematic example, for Ahern; 2 out of 23, for McAleese). In ten years, it became natural to describe this phenomenon of Ireland's rapidly growing economy as a Celtic Tiger, which transformed the originally creative metaphor into a dormant one. As some bloggers have commented, the Irish media have used cartoons of green-striped tigers as a symbol of this change.<sup>12</sup> However, it seems that in the genre of political speeches, collocutors are so familiar with them that the image of this animal as representing the country's biggest economic success does not seem to be triggered. In this case, the above-mentioned figures may not be significant. Nevertheless, the fact that this animal has become another emblem of present-day Ireland is enough reason to site examples of the Celtic Tiger before analysing the depiction of Ireland through the conventional metaphors these politicians systematically exploited.

To begin with, McAleese does not like the Celtic Tiger label. Instead of focusing on the animal's best quality, she focuses on those that, although as distinctive as its speed, are less positive. She cannot associate the notions 'predator' and 'obligate carnivore' with the Irish. The tiger is a nocturnal, solitary animal that first kills then devours its victim. She cannot conceive of her country, or the people of her country, fitting in this category. McAleese's views of the Irish encapsulate a culture 'working with those whose boats don't always rise with the tide unless someone gives them a push'. Thus, in her usage of the

metaphor, she never refers to Ireland as the (Celtic) Tiger but instead to Ireland's economic evolution:

- (7) For those who seem to have missed the boat named the Celtic Tiger, modern Ireland can be a very scary place, where all you can see in front of you are the far-off backs of those who are making rapid headway in this new time ...
- (8) They are the unsung heroes who ... work with ... other groups who ... are weaker than those the Tiger favours. They ... remind us that the Tigress fiercely protects her vulnerable offspring, ensuring each is nurtured ... until able to stand alone ...

The contextual information reinforces the impression that she is not in agreement with these changes because of the consequences affecting the disempowered. Ireland nourishes economic opportunity; this is metaphorically represented as a boat; its name is *The Celtic Tiger*. Curiously, here speed is not a property of the vehicle but of the people who did not miss it; they run a race filled with more obstacles for those who do not belong to the privileged segment of society. An interesting issue is the distinction she makes between the tiger and the tigress. From her perspective, the former does not take care of the weakest, whereas the latter does. Therefore, by tradition Ireland cannot be the male but the female animal.

In contrast, for Ahern the expression is clearly positive. He feels that at the heart of this success is the effort and expertise of his cabinet and other social forces. The tiger stands for the rapid growth of the Irish economy. At the same time, the Irish people are ascribed one feature that is a characteristic of the animal: its deep and loud voice. In some way, the Irish are also the tiger:

- (9) The number of extra jobs created ... exceeded all commentators' estimates ... the best result since 2000 when we were roaring along with the Celtic tiger ...

On the other hand, the fact that he uses inverted commas in Example 10 may weaken its metaphorical reading. I alluded earlier to this as a problematic case. Here it seems that the speaker is avoiding the phrase 'the "Celtic Tiger"' (that is, the phenomenon of miraculous development), which he very often made explicit in past speeches. To speculate why

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he chose this alternative is risky; he may be aware of the stark contrast between the president's and his own perception of the Celtic Tiger, and a metalinguistic usage may deprive the expression of its metaphorical weight. Nonetheless, this becomes more complex, because he reformulates the attributes of the referent of this phrase, which is 'no orphan':

- (10) ... success has many parents and failure is an orphan. The 'Celtic Tiger' is no orphan, and the Irish Public Service can ... claim its share of the credit ...

When a proverb gets involved, the metaphorical interpretation is transformed or diluted. What looks relevant is the usage of the family metaphor and the subversion of an allegedly negative old aphorism, such as 'success has many parents ...'. If things go well, many are willing to accept the credit for the success; if things go wrong, few will accept the responsibility of failure. In his opinion, the boom is not a failure and many are responsible for this. On the one hand, his peculiar choice of words reinforces the positive side of Ireland's economic expansion; on the other hand, these words let him avoid mentioning what could become controversial in a Catholic country: multiple or dubious parenthood.

In connection with the metaphorical parenthood of the Celtic Tiger, Ahern deals with a matter that, on the surface, seems to do with the tiger's questionable nationality. This is something he would probably have liked to get away from, because this could imply that success was only partly due to Ireland's endeavour, as shown in Example 11:

- (11) ... the Celtic Tiger is in part an American tiger with a green face ...

From this, the creature may look monstrous to the reader. For centuries, this colour has symbolised the Emerald Isle. But, when this colour is now associated with an animal who is claimed to be American by birth (its body representing the US) and whose face reminds us of its Irishness, the Celtic Tiger metaphor is reformulated in new terms.

As we can see, Ahern and McAleese use the X IS THE CELTIC TIGER metaphor differently. The sex of the animal is significant, especially because of its association with the traditional value of motherhood. This is not the only case in point, though. In the following sections, I will show the most frequent metaphorical patterns in both politicians' discursive practices and discuss other contrasts.

### 6.6.2 The operator vs the people's president

On 18 February 2006, Gerry Adams, the president of the IRA's political wing, referred to his idea of Ireland in terms of the conventional metaphor THE NATION IS A BUILDING:

(12) Another great challenge will be to build an Ireland of equals ...<sup>13</sup>

Below is a systematic enumeration of the mappings characterising this metaphor (Kövecses 2002: 111):

- (a) foundation → basis that supports the entire system
- (b) framework → overall structure of the elements that make up the system
- (c) additional elements to support the framework → additional elements to support the structure of the system
- (d) design → logical structure of the system
- (e) architect → maker/builder of the system
- (f) process of building → process of constructing the system
- (g) strength → lastingness/stability of the system
- (h) collapse → failure of the system

Despite numerous past displays of violence by Sinn Féin supporters, by means of this architectural metaphor the party's actual policy encourages the ideas of a new beginning, of gradual construction, of putting things together in order to erect something new, and of a structure solid in its foundations. The participants (that is, the builders), whose identity is left inexplicit, must: know their job and which materials to use; learn to work as a team to accomplish their goal; and be aware of when to start and when their function has finished. Agreement on the design and reliance on specialists in civil construction are expected in order to direct and coordinate consultants, contractors and developers. A large investment in time and money plus hard work, determination, tolerance and little recognition are some of the items in a long list of requirements for eventual success. Therefore, after personification, *x* IS A BUILDING is the most common conceptual metaphor in my corpus (see Table 6.4). The prime minister and the president seem to construct Ireland, the nation, the country, the Republic, the community and society in a similar way. In addition, they also describe Europe as a building. Nonetheless, as we will see later, dissimilarities are noticeable.

In the title of the news article by David McKittrick for *The Independent* on 30 September 2006, there is an indication of the profile of

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Table 6.4 List of the recurrent source domains for both politicians

<i>Ahern</i>			<i>McAleese</i>	
<i>Metaphorical expressions</i>	<i>Percentage (out of 722)</i>	<i>Source domain</i>	<i>Metaphorical expressions</i>	<i>Percentage (out of 673)</i>
229	31.7	Person	311	46.2
142	19.7	Building	88	13.1
106	14.7	Organism	43	6.4
74	10.2	Journey	61	9.1
36	5.0	Product	23	3.4
25	3.5	Container	25	3.7
18	2.5	Garden/farming land	9	1.3
6	0.8	Business	7	1.0
3	0.4	Tiger	2	0.3

Bertie Ahern, who is said to be an ‘operator’. Some lines later, the journalist claims Ahern ‘has the antennae to sense looming crises, the expertise to manage the economy, and the savvy to remain Prime Minister for almost a decade’.<sup>14</sup> Two other phrases describe him quite well: the architect and the cultivator. Conversely, Mary McAleese is not only known as another ‘uncrowned Queen of Ireland’,<sup>15</sup> but also as ‘the people’s president’.<sup>16</sup> I will show that, in fact, the metaphors both politicians select are consistent with these depictions. But first, I will make a brief comment on some of the categories of the taxonomy employed.

The metaphor *X IS A PERSON* (where *X* stands for the target domains of my corpus) includes examples in which *X* is said to be involved in processes in which only a human being can be involved, or *X* is ascribed qualities only humans possess. The following are some in Ahern’s speeches:

*X IS A PERSON (BODY PARTS)*

- (13) ... win the British Open, and a Nation’s heart is skipping a beat ...

*X IS A PERSON (EXPERIENCER)*

- (14) Ireland deeply regrets the loss of cohesion ...

*X IS A PERSON (ATTRIBUTE: ILL)*

- (15) ... elements essential to healing a divided society ...

*X IS A PERSON (WORKER)*

- (16) Ireland is committed to working with Cyprus ...

X IS A PERSON (HOSTESS)

(17) ... hospitality for visiting dignitaries and guests of the nation ...

X IS A PERSON (PUPIL)

(18) Ireland as the 'star pupil' of Europe, having moved from bottom ...

X IS A PERSON (SOLDIER/LEADER/WARRIOR/SENTINEL)

(19) ... it also signals Ireland's intention to campaign on this issue ...

X IS A PERSON (OPPONENT)

(20) The Government does not seek to ... score political points ...

X IS A PERSON (IN CONTROL/MASTER)

(21) ... making Ireland a country which [*sic*] harnesses cutting-edge knowledge ...

X IS A PERSON (UNDER CONTROL/SLAVE)

(22) ... emigration, which held this country in its grip ...

X IS A PERSON (MOTHER/CAREGIVER)

(23) ... intervention in areas like this as 'nanny state' ...

X IS A PERSON (ADULT)

(24) ... its adoption marked Ireland's coming of age as a State ...

The journey metaphor embraces several subcategories apart from the general one – X IS A JOURNEY; X IS A DESTINATION, X IS AN ENTITY IN MOTION and X IS A MEANS OF TRANSPORT (CAR/BOAT/AEROPLANE). The ideas of movement and progression are made explicit in most cases. Sometimes, x is responsible for this advance; other times, x is moved by different forces so that it can reach its goal – the traveller will be journeying or sent to abstractions or stages, rather than to physical places. To illustrate this, I will choose examples from McAleese:

X IS A JOURNEY

(25) That notion of Europe ... as a journey towards the very completion of ourselves ...

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X IS AN ENTITY IN MOTION (AGENT)

(26) Saudi Arabia and Ireland have travelled a long road ...

X IS AN ENTITY IN MOTION (AFFECTED)

(27) ... they have set their country on the most exhilarating journey of peace ...

X IS A MEANS OF TRANSPORT

(28) ... join me in a toast to the man who is at the nation's helm ...

X IS A DESTINATION

(29) ... within our reach, the great destination of an egalitarian republic ...

As for the organism metaphor, the main ideas considered when categorising verbal instantiations in this fashion were birth, growth, change and adaptation to the environment of what we perceive as natural organic forms undergoing these processes (in particular, plants). Potential decline or death, one of a plant's key properties, is rarely present. The garden/farming land metaphor should be mentioned in this section as well. Although I have made a distinction between the two for the sake of specificity, they can be integrated into the metaphor category of nature. Their interrelation is determined by the importance of soil for plants to grow. Here metaphorical plants are the people, the community, various sectors and companies, the economy, partnership, harmony, mutual respect and social fairness. Interestingly, McAleese tends to envision how abstract notions blossom, whereas Ahern is generally more pragmatic and speaks about thriving benefits and businesses:

X IS AN ORGANISM (PLANT)

(30) They were determined that Ireland should not languish ... (Ahern)

(31) ... transition is critical to the way in which we mature as a nation ... (Ahern)

(32) ... contributed greatly to this ripening Ireland ... (McAleese)

(33) ... ending these twin repetitive blights upon our society ... (McAleese)

X IS A GARDEN/FARMING LAND

(34) ... the arts ... can facilitate people to ... flourish in an Ireland that ... (Ahern)

- (35) ... the success of Comhaltas has been that it is firmly rooted in the community ... (Ahern)
- (36) ... shoots of hope and peace will blossom on this island ... (McAleese)
- (37) ... a homeland where a true social order flourishes ... (McAleese)

Now that I have clarified the labels chosen, I will focus on the most significant ones. The president of the Republic's speeches abound in more metaphorical expressions in which the source domain is people (see Table 6.5). This is a strategic way to bring politics closer to the population. By making abstractions or inanimate objects human, agency is explored in a different light. Because of their proximity to human beings, countries, states or organisations may become less subject to criticism or attack. The ascription of human qualities transforms institutions into a member of the human race, a creature with thoughts, emotions and weaknesses; a creature who deserves equal legal rights, the same opportunities, affection, sympathy and so on.

Table 6.5 Main subclasses of the metaphor X IS A PERSON

<i>Ahern</i>		X IS A ...	<i>McAleese</i>	
<i>Metaphorical expressions</i>	<i>Percentage (out of 722)</i>		<i>Metaphorical expressions</i>	<i>Percentage (out of 673)</i>
23	3.2	friend/neighbour	55	8.2
11	1.5	mother/caregiver	31	4.6
20	2.8	soldier	21	3.1
16	2.2	person under control	18	2.7
12	1.7	person in control	1	0.2
0	0	raped woman	1	0.2

In the list of metaphors identified, X IS A MOTHER/CAREGIVER is still a recurrent pattern in Ahern and McAleese, although it occurs more often in the latter's subcorpus (1.5 vs 4.6 per cent). Undoubtedly, she is the 'people's president':

- (38) Ireland looks forward to ... healing Europe, and watching its children grow healthy ...
- (39) ... ancient nation whose sons and daughters played a significant ...



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- (40) ... statehood during the last century. For Ireland it was a violent and painful birth ...

The mother first experiences the intense pressure and sharp pain of the delivery of the baby from her womb. Later, she feeds, nurtures and protects her offspring; she influences their behaviour and ideas, sacrifices herself for them, and suffers if illness or misadventure occurs. These mappings might also imply others, though one is particularly worrying. Since citizens are (immature) children, they have to be under constant vigilance. In my sample, I came across this possibly patronising tone on just one occasion. Ahern depicts the country in this vein:

- (41) ... reflections of the men and women who nursed this country into existence ...

In my analysis, I have generally focused on a high degree of frequency. For instance, *X IS A FRIEND/NEIGHBOUR* is preferred by McAleese, who is concerned with constructing social and emotional relationships at home and abroad (3.2 vs 8.2 per cent):

- (42) ... how true a friend Austria was to Ireland at her most difficult times ...  
 (43) ... the neighbours who share the island of Ireland who need to ... know each other ...

Interestingly, although Ahern prefers *X IS A PERSON IN CONTROL* (1.7 vs 0.2 per cent), in the whole corpus the number of occurrences of metaphorical expressions such as *X IS A PERSON UNDER CONTROL* and *X IS A SOLDIER* appears balanced (2.2 vs 2.7 per cent, and 2.8 vs 3.1 per cent, respectively). Here we see the contrast between an Ireland dominated by a coloniser like England or circumstances such as hunger and emigration, and a country capable of overcoming this situation by leading a (metaphorical) struggle for peace and change:

- (44) ... ensure that Ireland remains to the forefront ... (Ahern)  
 (45) ... have thrown off shackles of under-development to become a confident nation ... (Ahern)  
 (46) Ireland and Cyprus ... are Europe's sentinels, fighting with words ... (McAleese)

- (47) ... every nation that had to wrench its freedom from the reluctant grip of empire ... (McAleese)

Nonetheless, it is also worthwhile to look at another example whose appearance is very rare – THE COUNTRY IS A RAPED WOMAN. In her attempt to describe Northern Ireland's past, McAleese uses Czeslaw Milosz's words taken from his poem 'Sarajevo':

- (48) While a country murdered and raped calls for help from the Europe which ...

The visual imagery this expression activates is harsh. First, there is the victim: attacked reiteratively; submitted to sex by force; under threat of harm; identity crisis; lack of self-respect; and temporary or permanent physical damage. Second, there is the rapist: a violent man with some psychological deficiency; inclined to show little sensitivity for others; belittles and bullies victim; negates the woman's rejection or plea; and may kill the victim for pleasure.

Finally, I will exemplify some of the ideas mentioned at the beginning of this section concerning the prime minister's style. In the Ahern subcorpus, there is a high tendency for the target domains to be described by means of the plant and the architecture metaphors. Earlier, we saw their essential characteristics and some differences between both politicians with respect to the nature metaphor. As for the building metaphor, I have already listed its mappings and will thereby focus on the additional elements making up its framework.

The Ireland the Ahern government is erecting in cooperation with the Irish grows vertically. It is an open place, ready to admit anyone, with its wood-burning fireplace supplying warmth. The bricks are their national feeling; the foundations, the principles of a democratic society; its basic pillar, Ireland's buoyant economy. Its doors and windows, locked for too long, are opened, even though we cannot see them. Its most notable citizens, who have become the metaphorical structure covering the top of the building, provide protection from the elements. This Ireland is also the opening in the fence surrounding the fortified piece of land Europe has turned into; that is why a person's entry into the continent is often said to be illegal:

- (49) Ireland ... is a warm home for everybody ... It must be a cold house for no one ...

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- (50) ... to build anew ... the Gaelic nation, we find ourselves despoiled of the bricks of nationality ...
- (51) ... free speech is one of the foundations of a free open society ...
- (52) For a society built on the principles of democracy ...
- (53) Ireland is the ideal Gateway to Europe ...
- (54) ... put a roof over all of Ireland ...
- (55) He inherited an economically depressed country and he ... opened it up ...

McAleese's Ireland, which is portrayed as a cloth and a tapestry within which multiple relationships of interdependence are interwoven, grows both vertically and horizontally:

- (56) ... neighbourliness, which weaves together the caring fabric of our country ...
- (57) ... communities that make up the tapestry of this modern country ...
- (58) ... a new warp, a new weft, for a healthier new emerging society ...
- (59) ... we are now a nation of newly-opened doors ...
- (60) ... love of this vocation, which is the very hearth of our country ...
- (61) It was no way to run a country, even without the glass ceiling for Catholics ...
- (62) ... our shared vision of a land where everyone sits around the best table of life ...

Remarkably, the house the country has become has visible doors, hearth and ceiling. The people involved in the process of its construction, as well as its founders, are given prominence. The president's personal touch is evident in the metaphorical expression *THE LAND IS A SITTING-ROOM*. Comfort, familiarity and intimacy are some entailments of this metaphor.

## 6.6 Conclusion

Linguistic choice (both conscious and unconscious) is meaningful at all levels (Fowler 1986). Charteris-Black (2004: 253) claims that 'metaphor both reflects and determines how we think and feel about the world'. A recurrent pattern in discourse is an index of the verbal performance

of identity, one of the building blocks in the construction of social representations. It is in these terms that we can explain the subtle differences found in my corpus.

Although the McAleese subcorpus is smaller by comparison, she uses metaphorical expressions more than twice as often as Ahern. This should already be taken as indicative. Furthermore, despite the politicians' resorting to the same metaphors, McAleese elaborates on some further aspects by sometimes embracing a more humane, intimate perspective, which results in what some might call a 'feminine' approach. The five key domains in each politician's discourse practice are also different. Whereas Ahern's focus on location and direction appears information-oriented, McAleese's main concerns are Ireland, its government and the Irish; her approach can be considered more people-oriented. The way she expresses her views is characteristic of the style known as 'cooperative' (Maltz and Borker 1982), in which politeness features and positive evaluation stand out. Furthermore, it is worth noticing that not only do the prime minister and the president use metaphors differently, but also the imagery persistent before their political era is (as shown in the diachronic data) different from those images employed by the two politicians. The desperate woman/mother who needed help to fight for the freedom of her people while suffering humiliation and oppression has become a nurturing person/parent who is self-sufficient. Other contemporary metaphors are the house open to all, the tree growing healthily, a beautifully complex fabric, and an animal of great size and power native to Asia. The reasons for these dissimilarities may have to do with their gender or with how their experiences shape their language usage. Background, party loyalties and their own political functions should also not be ignored.<sup>17</sup>

Likewise, the similarities between McAleese and Ahern can be explained on the grounds of their community of practice. Despite their different roles in Irish politics, the public arena requires the same general strategies: to produce optimistic portrayals of the country's current state in contrast to the past, for which they are not to blame; to rely on traditional values that may encourage a new direction taken by society; to consolidate a feeling of unity for the future ahead; to stimulate the sense of belonging and self-identification; and to promote ideals, such as national pride, communal commitment and genuine enthusiasm, in order to generate a higher degree of confidence. All of this explains why both are fond of the basic mappings of the *NATION AS A BUILDING* and the *NATION AS A PLANT* metaphors. However it may be, what is manifestly clear is that Ahern and McAleese opt for a variety of formulae to describe the new Ireland they

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have been constructing discursively and through their offices during the last ten years.

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### Notes

- 1 'Speech to Women', <http://www.from-ireland.net/history/countessspeech.htm>, date accessed 25 January 2007.
- 2 'England Hotly Arraigned' <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9905E1D71F39E433A25756C2A9669D94669ED7CF>, date accessed 1 March 2007.
- 3 'A Race that has never Ceased to Strive', 17 March 1920 (Moynihan 1980: 35).
- 4 'Ireland's Request', 27 October 1920 (Moynihan 1980: 40).
- 5 'Civil War', 28 June 1922 (Moynihan 1980: 107).
- 6 'The Necessity for De-Anglicizing Ireland', <http://www.gaeilge.org/deanglicising.html>, date accessed 30 January 2007.
- 7 'Speech to the Nation', 17 March 1943, <http://www.searcs-web.com/dev.html>, date accessed 20 December 2006.
- 8 [http://www.economist.com/markets/indicators/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=E1\\_GPGQNV](http://www.economist.com/markets/indicators/displaystory.cfm?story_id=E1_GPGQNV), date accessed 15 January 2007.
- 9 <http://www.finfacts.ie/irecon.htm>, date accessed 15 January 2007.
- 10 <http://www.austrade.gov.au/The-Celtic-Tiger-keeps-earning-its-stripes/default.aspx>, date accessed 15 January 2007.
- 11 The 608,000 occurrences found in Google indicate the 1990s boom is relevant socially and politically. In the British National Corpus there are none, though.
- 12 <http://01wolfar.blogspot.com/2007/03/jaywalking-chapter-1.html>, date accessed 15 January 2007.
- 13 <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/sf/ga180206.htm>, date accessed 15 March 2007.
- 14 'Bertie Ahern: the Operator', <http://news.independent.co.uk/people/profiles/article1772288.ece>, date accessed 21 July 2007.
- 15 *The Southern Star*, <http://www.southernstar.ie/article.php?id=214>, date accessed 21 July 2007.
- 16 Forbes.com, <http://www.forbes.com/lists/2005/11/UO45.html>, date accessed 21 July 2007.
- 17 On paper, the president's function is ceremonial. Since the president has no executive position, he or she does not maintain a working relationship with the cabinet. Nonetheless, the Constitution states that the prime minister must keep the president informed of home and international policy. In some respects, the Irish presidency resembles a monarchy, except it is not hereditary. Although he or she may be above party politics generally, the president can still make life difficult for the government. That was the case of Mary Robinson, who started reconsidering what the president could say, how and where (Horgan 1997: 164-87).

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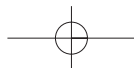
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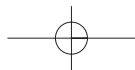
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## Part II

# Gender and Conceptual Metaphors in Political Debates







# 7

## Metaphor and Gender in British Parliamentary Debates

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### 7.1 Introduction

One of the major changes in the composition of the House of Commons during the current period of New Labour dominance in the British Parliament has been a rapid increase in the number of women Members of Parliament (MPs) with over 100 women becoming MPs in 1997; this has arisen out of the Labour Party policy of requiring equal numbers of male and female candidates for elected positions within the party. One question this raises is whether the expansion of the number of women in British politics has had any impact on rhetorical style, particularly, as far as this chapter is concerned, on the nature and purpose of the metaphors used in Commons debates. When Tony Blair and John Prescott resigned from their roles as prime minister and deputy prime minister on 10 May 2007, the new prime minister, Gordon Brown, required a deputy leader. There were six candidates, two women and four men, who were voted for by the Labour Party; this chapter examines metaphor use in parliamentary debates by four of these candidates over the previous five years, comparing them also with two more experienced female politicians, to address the following research questions:

1. Do female and male MPs employ metaphors with similar frequency?
2. Are there similarities or differences in the metaphors used by female and male MPs?
3. Are the rhetorical purposes for which metaphors are used by female MPs similar to, or different from, those of male MPs?

This chapter will illustrate how metaphors are employed in British parliamentary debates by male and female MPs. In addition, their rhetorical

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purposes will be analysed according to a model that incorporates an Aristotelian view of rhetoric.

## 7.2 Theory of metaphor in political communication

Metaphor is a persuasive aspect of discourse because it mediates between conscious and unconscious persuasion – between cognition and emotion; it is therefore a central strategy for political legitimisation. Earlier research was primarily interested in the role of particular types of metaphor such as sports metaphors, security metaphors, family metaphors and health metaphors in the discussion of political issues (for example Chilton and Ilyin 1993, Jansen and Sabo 1994, Musolff, 2001, 2003, Semino and Masci 1996, Thornborrow 1993), although Howe (1988) considered broader issues concerning the role of metaphor in politics generally and this line of research has continued (Beer and De Landtsheer 2004, Charteris-Black 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, Chilton 2004). In addition, Lakoff (1996) showed how conceptual metaphor theory could be extended to a broad understanding of the differences between the political left and political right in framing political issues. The principal purpose of the research described here is to identify the extent to which an interaction between gender and the use of metaphor in political rhetoric contributes to a particular style of political communication.

Central to Aristotle's views on rhetoric were the notions of *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*. Aristotle argued that in addition to taking a stance that was morally worthy (*ethos*) and providing proofs in support of argument (*logos*), the successful rhetorician should also be able to arouse the feelings (*pathos*). This was a significant shift from Plato's largely negative view of the feelings as interfering with clear thinking; for Aristotle, although arguments could influence feelings they could equally be influenced *by* the feelings, so emotional arousal could further rhetorical persuasion and *pathos* could enhance *logos*. My approach to political communication is summarised in Figure 7.1.

Metaphors can establish a politician's ethical self-representation as a politician who *has the right intentions*. Intentionality is central in measuring an individual's ethical value but when expressed directly it risks communicating a self-righteous persona; when expressed indirectly through metaphor it communicates good intentions in a more pragmatically acceptable style. Covert, deontic self-representation permits political supporters to be represented as insiders who share an ethical outlook, while political opponents can be represented as morally deficient outsiders. This view of metaphor fits well with a recent theory of political

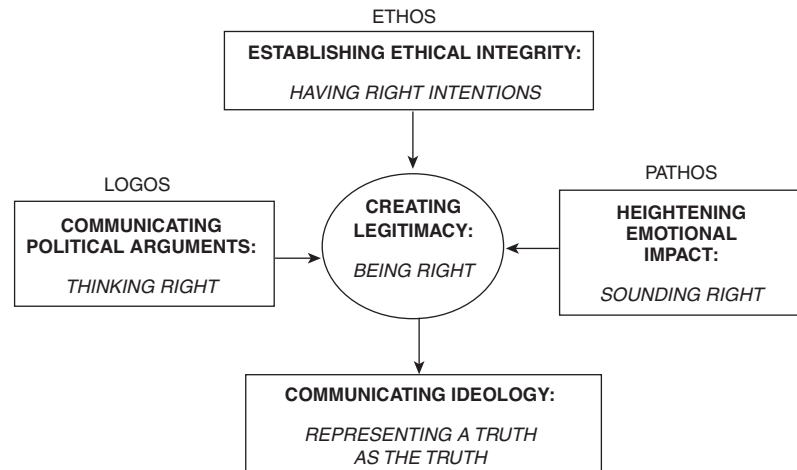


Figure 7.1 A contemporary model for political communication

communication developed by Chilton (2004) that proposes that the basis for evaluation is spatial proximity to the Self: 'the general idea is that Self is not only here and now, but also the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right' (Chilton 2004: 59). Deontic metaphor permits a range of rhetorical possibilities including self-evaluation by the speaker, evaluation of policies, of political opponents or of groups in society. Positive self-representation of the speaker arises from the implied virtue of their concern for particular groups in society as in the following example (here and elsewhere, metaphors are indicated by italics):

May I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for East Carmarthen and Dinefwr (Mr. Williams) on securing this debate? ... He has carried *the torch of justice* for miners and is *now shining a bright light* on what we both believe is an indefensible irregularity. (Peter Hain, 13 March 2001)

The use of two evocative evaluating metaphors to compliment another member of the House – combined with the use of the inclusive 'we' – serves to ally the speaker to what is represented as a good cause thereby establishing his right intentions.

Increasing the emotional impact is a vital role for metaphor in a range of political situations and is what I refer to as *sounding right*. Pathos can often be expressed by a personification that provides an emotive and cognitively accessible conceptual framework because it relies on pre-existent

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culturally rooted stereotypes to communicate emotionally potent evaluations. Here we can see the use of personification in a negative evaluation:

*The cold shadow of poverty* had been cast across the generations.  
(Alan Johnson, 13 October 2004)

Another means for heightening pathos is through the use of hyperbolic metaphor:

If the Hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Djanogly) represented a slightly different area, he would know that older people, in particular, *have been plagued by the misuse of air weapons*. (Hazel Blears, 14 November 2005)

Health metaphors evoke powerful emotions that are associated with illness and fear of illness. Heightening the pathos is not necessarily a separate and distinct purpose from establishing ethos since political rhetoric typically evokes strong emotions by addressing ethical issues; however, it is the use of hyperbole that particularly characterises this rhetorical purpose.

Arguments are central to persuasive political communication because they show that the leader has the ability to *think right*. Metaphors are effective when they provide cognitively accessible ways of communicating policy by proofs or warrants that support arguments and have specific entailments. They may be exploited, manipulated or even reversed, in order to communicate a particular political argument. Metaphors can be used to frame political arguments and, like myths, they create scenarios that suggest particular conclusions. In the following discussion of power-sharing in Northern Ireland, Peter Hain combines a series of 'journey' (or source-path-goal) metaphors to refer to a sequence of events leading to devolution in Northern Ireland by analogy with the same process that had already occurred in Wales:

I believe that the proposals in the White Paper provide a practical, common-sense *road map* to sensible, *staged* improvement of the existing arrangements. One of the key reasons why the transition to devolved government in Wales has been smooth is that we have *moved at a pace determined* by the people of Wales. (Peter Hain, 15 June 2005)

If one accepts the premise that devolution can be described in terms of a journey, then one also accepts the entailments of this metaphor

frame which include purpose and outcome as indicated in the conceptual metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS. The logic of the metaphor is that there is a planned process leading to inevitable arrival at the predetermined 'destination' of power-sharing.

My approach to contemporary political communication modifies the Aristotelian view of rhetoric by integrating ideology with the rhetorical components of the classical model. An ideology is a set of meanings through which a particular group is able to form and sustain itself; it therefore serves to create group identity by establishing and reinforcing shared meanings within the group and by communicating this group identity to others as an act of self-legitimation. An ideology claims that what is in the interests of the group is in the interests of all; it is a representation of what is truthful *for some* as being truthful *for all*. These sets of meanings can relate either to politics or to religion, or to any form of social activity. I propose that metaphor is one of a number of linguistic, cognitive and symbolic resources employed by political leaders for communicating ideology (Charteris-Black 2007). By establishing a shared view about what is right and wrong, good and bad, a group engages in a process of self-legitimation through which it aspires to power. It is difficult to analyse this role of metaphor as separate from other rhetorical purposes because it is the reiteration of 'thinking' and 'sounding' 'right' over time, according to shared values, that creates an ideology that is often resistant to analysis. However, I have illustrated one way that it can be analysed is by considering Tony Blair's ideological use of the 'rogue state' metaphor which was employed to justify the invasion of a country that at the time presented little threat to the United Kingdom (Charteris-Black 2009). Metaphor also makes an ideological appeal in the following:

Having met the First and Deputy First Ministers together, I have been struck since by ... their cordial and warm personal interaction. Above all, they have shown that age-old enmities can be overcome. That is truly inspirational, as we saw yesterday when they *preached together at Stormont a common gospel of healing*. (Peter Hain, 9 May 2007)

Here the use of a 'healing' metaphor is intended to overcome ideologically based sectarian difference with reference to the ideology of Christianity through the use of 'gospel'. It was probably rhetorically effective to use a metaphor from the domain of religion when making appeals in the setting of the power-sharing assembly to two groups

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whose social identity – though labelled by religious affiliation – is politically constituted.

### 7.3 Gender and metaphor

Current research into gender and metaphor is primarily concerned with the role of metaphor in the social representation of gender and typically explores its contribution to social constructions in which one gender is conceptualised as having power over the other. Research from such critical perspectives describes and explains how metaphors reinforce gender stereotypes. For example, Koller (2004) demonstrates how typical 'masculine' metaphors of war, sports and evolutionary struggle are used to represent businesswomen so as to conceptualise business as an essentially masculine social domain. Hines (1999) illustrated how WOMEN ARE DESSERT and Velasco-Sacristan and Fuertes-Olivera (2005) identified gender representations in *Cosmopolitan* advertisements such as A WOMAN IS A SEXUAL OBJECT. Men and, more typically women, are conceptualised as entities to be 'consumed', thereby creating an equivalence of woman with food, so that the sexual act is represented metaphorically as 'eating'. Such metaphors perpetuate hegemonic representations that conceptualise gender in terms of power relations because they imply that men are entitled to sex in the same way that they are entitled to food. The research described here takes a different approach towards metaphor and gender. Rather than examining how language contributes covertly to the formation of social constructions of gender in non-political texts, this chapter compares the use of metaphor by male and female MPs in an overtly political setting.

Characterising both the 'dominance' and the 'difference' paradigms in sociolinguistic accounts of gender has been the belief that there are binary differences in gender styles. Within these paradigms, which have themselves been implicated in the support and promotion of language ideologies, the female style is described as one of rapport, sympathy, intimacy and cooperation while the male style is one of reporting, problem-solving, independence and competition (Talbot 2003: 475). Women are perceived to dominate the private sphere of the home where self-disclosure is less face threatening. The distinction between 'private' and 'public' was also made by Tannen (1992): women feel they are 'backstage' when there are no men around and become 'onstage' when men are present. From this perspective women would become silenced in the adversarial style of public discourse that characterises British parliamentary debates.

Cameron (2003) observes that the view that men and women are everywhere the same is an important component of popular language ideology, arguing that in late modernity the stereotype of masculine emotional reticence is part of a wider male deficit model. This model is also implicated in a concomitant and equally stereotyping female sufficiency model, in which the language associated with women's style is perceived to be desirable as we move into a primarily service economy where interpersonal functions of communication are at a premium:

... the conditions obtaining in late modern societies have given rise to a new linguistic ideal: the skilled interpersonal communicatory who excels in such verbal activities as cooperative problem-solving, rapport-building, emotional self-reflexivity and self-disclosure ... (Cameron 2003: 459)

She proposes a late-modern trend towards an informal and conversational style in Western public discourse so that the public increasingly takes on the characteristics previously found in the private (*ibid.* 460), illustrating this with reference to the public 'new man' styles of leaders such as Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. Cameron (2007) rejects reductive points of view that men and women are essentially different in how they use language by seeing gender as simply one component contributing towards identity. She proposes that speakers have a range of repertoires depending on how far they wish gender to form part of the identity they project to others and that men and women create gendered differences in their speech styles according to specific purposes and contexts.

In the case of this study, it is unclear how far the stereotypically 'feminine' cooperative and problem-solving styles would be acceptable in the stereotypically 'masculine' gladiatorial style of House of Commons debates. There are specific rules governing debates in the House of Commons – in particular that remarks are addressed to the Speaker and other addressees are only referred to using indirect third-person terms such as 'the honourable member for' and that only a speaker who is allocated a turn by the Speaker has the right to speak and must do so from a standing position. However, these rules are regularly infringed by heckling, jokes, insults and non-verbal sounds that contribute a powerful negative evaluation of what is being said. Shaw (2005) explored whether the arrival of over 100 women MPs in 1997 (mainly representing the Labour Party) would cause a shift to a more consensual debating style. However, she discovered to the contrary that women participated in competing for



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speaking turns but with an important difference: they made fewer interruptions and interjections that infringed the debating rules of the House. Just as in the classroom more boys than girls call out of turn – and attract inverted status from so doing – the same gender dynamics persist in the highest debating chamber of the land. Moreover, it seems that women speakers were more likely than men to be censured for rule-breaking, so there were ‘objective’ reasons for keeping to the rules. Cameron (2007: 129) suggests that such breaking of rules by men displays confidence and their reckless courage attracts inverted status; conversely, rule-obeying by women – while intending to show belonging – in fact demonstrates insecurity. However, none of this research addresses the issue of whether there are similarities or differences in the way that ‘men’ and ‘women’ politicians employ metaphor in their rhetoric and how this might contribute to their style of political communication.

#### 7.4 Method

This study utilises the Commons Hansard debates which is the record of actual spoken contributions by all MPs in British parliamentary debates; records of these debates are easily accessible via the online version of Hansard (<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pahansard.htm>). Debates since November 1988 until the present may be searched by date for either *spoken* questions and debates or their *written* questions and statements of an MP; it is also possible to search contributions for all individual members for the current session of Parliament. The advance search facility allows the researcher to search for particular words and for the use of these words by any politician over various time periods and in various sections of Hansard. Initially it was decided to compare four of the six candidates for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party, these were Harriet Harman, Hazel Blears, Alan Johnson and Peter Hain; the two men were chosen as those most likely to win based on the number of supporters they had among Labour Party MPs; however, because of the low incidence of metaphor especially on the part of one of the female candidates I decided also to compare them with two more experienced Labour politicians – Margaret Beckett and Clare Short – since it seemed that age and political experience were other variables that could influence metaphor use. Profiles of these MPs are given in Appendix 7.1.

The first stage was to identify a set of potential metaphors; a set of keywords were identified – these are words that previous research has shown to be commonly used as metaphors in politics using a range of published sources including Charteris-Black (2004), Deignan (1995) and Kövecses

(2002). Each of the contexts in which a keyword occurred was examined to establish its meaning in context. This involved establishing whether the keyword had a more basic sense – that is, it referred to something more concrete, or occurred historically earlier – than its sense in the debate. Where there was a clear contrast between the basic sense and the sense in the debate, the keyword was classified as a metaphor. This method is effective in identifying a ‘conventional metaphor’ – which is one ‘that it is automatic, effortless, and generally established as a mode of thought among members of a linguistic community’ (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 55).

Four source domains of metaphor were selected for analysis – ‘journeys’; ‘light/dark’; ‘plants/gardening’ and ‘health’ since previous research had shown that these source domains are commonly employed in political discourse (Charteris-Black 2004). Keywords are shown in Table 7.1.

The singular form of each keyword was searched in the Commons Hansard debates section over the last two years for ‘journeys’ and for the last five years for the other domains. A shorter time period was used for the ‘journey’ metaphors because it is exceptionally common in political discourse. A record was kept of the number of metaphors used by each politician in each source domain. Of a total of 567 metaphor tokens identified, a random sample of 121 were later analysed in terms of their rhetorical purpose in order to establish whether there are gender differences in how politicians establish legitimacy.

## 7.5 Findings and discussion

Table 7.2 summarises the findings for metaphors by source domain.

A comparison between all the literal and metaphoric uses for keywords is shown in Appendix 7.2.

Table 7.1 Keywords

<i>Journeys</i>	<i>Light and dark</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Plants</i>
avenue	bright	cure	blight
journey	dark	disease	fruit/fruiting/fruitful
move	gloom	diagnose	grow
obstacles	light	heal	nurture
path	shade	healthy	plant
road	shadow	plague	reap
route		remedy	seed
step		therapy	root
trail			

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Table 7.2 Summary of metaphors used in Commons debates

Metaphor	Male MPs and years of experience		Female MPs and years of experience			
	Hain (16 yrs)	Johnson (10 yrs)	Less experienced		More experienced	
			Blears (10 yrs)	Harman (10 yrs)	Beckett (24 yrs)	Short (30 yrs)
Journeys	95	87	38	2	112	7
Light and dark	9	12	6	1	3	3
Plants	40	26	18	4	35	19
Health	18	14	6	0	3	9
Total	162	139	68	7	153	38
% of total	29	25	12	1	27	6
Group total	301 (53%)		75 (13%)		191 (34%)	

In answering the first research question it is noteworthy how many more metaphors were used by the two male MPs; they employed four times more than the two less experienced female MPs over the same time period and over half of all the metaphors identified; the less experienced female MPs used only 13 per cent of these metaphors. There is considerable variation in metaphor use between individual MPs; for example Peter Hain used 29 per cent whereas the eventual winner – Harriet Harman – employed only 1 per cent of the metaphors identified. However, when we consider the more experienced female MPs, who have on average 27 years of House of Commons experience, as compared with 13 years for the two male MPs and 10 years for the less experienced female MPs, we find evidence of a more equal distribution of metaphors between genders; for example, Margaret Beckett employed a similar number of metaphors to each of the two male deputy leader candidates. Therefore, one possibility is that the observed difference may be partly accounted for by debating experience as well as by gender. However, since former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher also employed significantly fewer metaphors than the five male politicians analysed in Charteris-Black (2005) there is growing evidence of an influence of gender. On this small sample, the findings imply considerable stylistic variation in rhetorical reliance on metaphor in parliamentary debates and suggest a tendency for greater use by male politicians.

In addressing the second research question, the difference between the genders was most noticeable in the use of 'light' and 'dark' metaphors which the male MPs strongly preferred. There are some metaphors in this domain that are apparently *only* used by male MPs; for example,

a more general search of Hansard shows that metaphoric use of 'shade' is restricted to male MPs:

As such, it is good to see that it is not contentious and has the agreement of all *shades of the political spectrum*. (Shailesh Vara, 17 July 2007)

I am reminded of former Prime Minister Jim Callaghan's comments about the Franks report on the Falklands conflict: 'for 338 paragraphs, the Franks Report painted a splendid picture, *delineating the light and shade*. ...' (Ingram, 11 June 2007)

While there may be *shades of meaning of the word*, depending on the context, reference to standard dictionaries brings out its basic meaning. (Chope, 15 December 2005)

The only instance of 'shade' by a woman is literal:

I also heard a lovely anecdote about a beautiful, fluffy white cat: if it went out on a windy day with the dust settling on the town, it would come back *a mucky shade of dark grey*. ... (Shona McIsaac, 24 May 2007)

'Shade' is employed metaphorically by male MPs with the sense of 'degrees of opinion' and is used in contrast to the extreme ends of a 'spectrum' of opinion. It may be a sign of insecurity among female MPs that they are reluctant to communicate the middle of the road stance implied by the phrase 'shades' of opinion. 'Shadow' is also used more by male MPs:

... but looking to a future where there are no victims any more, where every child has the best start and every citizen can walk out from *under the shadow of fear*, intimidation and ... (Peter Hain, 23 November 2005)

One of only two metaphoric uses by experienced female MPs was:

That was true back in the 1980s when countries such as Spain and Greece emerged from dictatorship, and it was true in 2003 when the 10 new member states stepped out from the *shadow of communist totalitarianism*. ... (Margaret Beckett, 14 June 2006)

The restriction of 'shadow' to experienced female MPs suggests that a rhetorical preference for metaphor in Commons debates is one that

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is acquired over time by female MPs. The findings were even more striking for metaphoric uses of 'dark' and its variant 'darkness' – of the first 100 uses, only 5 per cent were by female MPs. A further example of male preference for metaphor is that of the 45 uses of 'root-and-branch' in the last two years only six are by women. Although these are rather conventional metaphors, the findings are potentially significant since *if* metaphor is an effective rhetorical device, then female MPs may need greater awareness of how it is used for rhetorical effect – unless for some reason female MPs are strategically avoiding use of metaphor.

The findings for the third research question are presented in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Rhetorical purposes of metaphor

	<i>More experienced male</i>		<i>Less experienced female</i>		<i>More experienced female</i>		<i>Total (n = 121)</i>
	<i>Hain</i>	<i>Johnson</i>	<i>Blears</i>	<i>Harman</i>	<i>Beckett</i>	<i>Short</i>	
ETHOS – to establish the speaker as ethical	10 13%	6	6 8%	3	16 27%	17	58 (48%)
PATHOS – to heighten the emotional impact	8 15%	10	4 3%	0	1 3%	3	26 (21%)
LOGOS – to explain a particular policy	12 20%	12	4 3%	0	9 8%	0	37 (31%)

Nearly half of all the metaphors identified had the primary rhetorical purpose of establishing the speaker as ethical; around one-third were to communicate particular arguments and around one-fifth were to heighten the emotional impact of an utterance. There was not an equal distribution between genders, as experienced female MPs showed a strong preference for establishing the speaker as ethical while male MPs used more metaphors to explain policy – with the other two purposes being used with equivalent frequency. The fact that experienced female MPs employ metaphor more than less experienced female MPs – though not as much as experienced male MPs – indicates that metaphor seems to be a rhetorical skill that develops over time as female

MPs familiarise themselves with the discourse norms of the House of Commons. In terms of developing a political identity, the deontic strategy of establishing ethical integrity is especially important to female MPs. However, an alternative 'feminine' strategy for establishing the speaker as ethical is to avoid metaphor altogether. This may explain why Harriet Harman – whose background in law may encourage her to establish a reputation for plain speaking – rarely employs metaphor; it may be ethically tainted by association with traditional 'masculine' rhetoric which is to be avoided by a politician who positions herself as strong proponent of women's rights and develops a unique political style around this position. I will structure the remaining discussion of findings with a section on each of the rhetorical purposes of metaphor that I presented in Figure 7.1.

#### 7.5.1 Function 1: Establishing ethical integrity (ethos)

Hazel Blears uses source–path–goal metaphors, as they are very commonly used in politics, to establish an ethical political identity based on concepts such as it is 'wrong' to get lost, and that political journeys are towards valued destinations; an example is given in the following:

Several hon. Members have spoken about collaboration and federation. I am not convinced that collaboration would take us *anywhere on the journey* that we need to take. (Hazel Blears, 19 December 2005)

The use of source–path–goal metaphors is highly conventional in politics and is based on the conceptual metaphors *SUCCESS IS MOVEMENT FORWARDS* and *ETHICAL PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS*. In a study of six politicians I found that 'journeys' was one of the most common source domains (Charteris-Black 2005: 200). They are also very common in New Labour discourse in metaphoric uses of words such as 'move forward'; 'stride'; 'mapped out'; 'destination'; 'harness' and of course 'journey' itself. A further linguistic characteristic of ethical appeal of New Labour discourse is the use of nominal phrases in which a 'journey'-related term is post-modified, as in expressions such as 'journey of change' and 'journey of modernisation' (ibid: 152ff.). Hazel Blears' rhetoric reflects such uses in her speeches:

If we can *start the journey of civic engagement* when young, we may have identified and encouraged tomorrow's active citizens. (Hazel Blears, 26 October 2006)

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A related concept is DIFFICULTY IS BLOCKAGE and this is quite common in journey metaphors with the use of words such as 'barriers', 'obstacles' or 'burdens' as in the following:

This is a Labour government, committed to the belief that every individual deserves to live out their full potential, to be the best they can be, to overcome whatever *barriers may block their path*. (Hazel Blears, 26 October 2006)

Blockage metaphors are persuasive because once the speaker has established positive evaluations of forward movements, then it is easy to represent anything that impedes movement as negative. Typically political opponents are therefore negatively represented as inhibiting the attainment of socially valued goals. Hazel Blears therefore shows herself to be establishing a political identity that is both close to New Labour and to Tony Blair since the journey nominal phrases are associated with his persuasive use of metaphors such as a 'Road Map' for the Middle East; however, this may detract from her developing a more unique style of political communication.

She also shows affiliation with the New Labour vision in the persuasive use of 'light' and 'dark' metaphors:

I can tell him that there will be 18,000 more CSOs<sup>1</sup> over the next couple of years, in addition to the present 6,000 officers, and the community call for action will be a practical power to make sure *that a light is shone on problems* that may have persisted for months if not years, so that we can get things done. (Hazel Blears, 6 March 2006)

There is a similar ethical appeal in her use of plant metaphors:

The Respect Action Plan is central to the Government's drive to go broader, deeper and further on antisocial behaviour by *tackling its root causes*; preventing it occurring in the first place for example by ensuring better parenting provision, while not letting up on stopping antisocial *behaviour that blights* many communities. (Hazel Blears, 3 May 2006)

The use of such metaphors is ideological because they permit the speaker to represent their own policies as 'good' and those of opponents as 'bad'. Metaphors of 'blights' and 'uprooting' seem therefore to be part of a wider discourse of positive action in which there is ethical

obligation to remove the causes of society's ills (Schon 1993: 144). In a similar way, health metaphors also provide 'remedies' to social ills:

Almost one of the first things that we did in government was to institute the Acheson inquiry into the extent of health inequalities and to gather evidence about their causes and the effectiveness of possible solutions and *remedies* in trying to close the enormous health inequalities gap. (Hazel Blears, 12 February 2003)

Hazel Blears therefore displays rhetorical accommodation to the discourse norms of New Labour – though perhaps without creating a sufficiently unique political identity to differentiate her ethical discourse from that of male MPs, and in particular that of her mentor Tony Blair. It may be this lack of distinctiveness from other MPs that contributed to her losing to Harriet Harman in the election for Deputy Leader.

Peter Hain employed metaphors from each of the four source domains to establish his ethical credentials with a preference for 'light' and 'dark' and 'plant' metaphors. Ethical purpose is essential to Peter Hain's political identity; he originally became involved in South Africa's anti-apartheid movement and has always sought to present himself as a politician with a strong and forceful social conscience. It was probably for this reason that he was appointed secretary of state for Northern Ireland and Wales, to continue devolution by creating a power-sharing Assembly in Northern Ireland. This has proved to be one of the great (if not the greatest) political achievements of New Labour under Tony Blair. It is therefore relevant to note the use of metaphor by Peter Hain in relation to the topic of conflict negotiation and establishing a sense of common identity among parties that were until recently in a state of semi-armed opposition towards each other. A favoured metaphor is that of darkness as in the following:

The IMC report says that, although it is also significant that the leaderships of both the UDA and the UVF are seeking to move their organisations *away from that dark and violence-strewn past*. (Peter Hain, 25 April 2007)

Those are, of course, five deaths too many, but nevertheless the situation has changed dramatically *from the dark days* of the 1970s and 1980s. (Peter Hain, 31 October 2005)

These metaphors polarise a negatively evaluated past with a positively evaluated future by comparing 'light' and therefore goodness based on



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GOODNESS IS LIGHT with darkness based on EVIL IS DARKNESS; both of these underlying, or conceptual, metaphors have a strong cultural resonance because of their origin in the Bible (Charteris-Black 2004: 185ff.). This of course makes them particularly relevant in the discourse of Northern Ireland which has a highly biblical style – especially in the prophet-like pontificating of the Reverend Ian Paisley. They also activate concepts such as HOPE IS LIGHT and IGNORANCE IS DARKNESS that are politically effective in so far as they establish equivalence between the policy of power-sharing and positively valued entities such as intelligence and hope.

### 7.5.2 Function 2: To heighten the emotional impact (pathos)

There is extensive evidence of this rhetorical purpose in the language of both the male candidates examined. They draw on a range of source domains including ‘journeys’:

I can tell him that the idea that we *are all going to hell in a handcart* in respect of behaviour in schools is not just an insult to teachers, head teachers and today’s youngsters; it is simply not true. (Alan Johnson, 26 April 2007)

‘Plants’:

We have introduced tougher antisocial behaviour measures than any previous Administration, which are *designed to stamp out this blight* on our communities. (Peter Hain, 2 May 2007)

And especially ‘health and illness’ as metaphoric uses of ‘plague’, ‘health’ and ‘remedy’ all occurred more in the contributions of the male MPs examined:

It was too great a risk to leave the Bill as it was, and the amendments would have resulted *in a cure that was worse than the disease*. (Alan Johnson, 8 July 2002)

The Government are determined to clamp down on antisocial behaviour. *It is a real plague* in many of our communities in Wales: on estates and elsewhere in many of our valley communities and throughout the nation. (Peter Hain, 30 April 2003)

The rhetorical style of such emotive metaphors is hyperbole, and it may be that male MPs are contending with a deficit model for male emotionality that implies that men are deficient in communicating

their feelings. In these cases the rhetorical purpose may be to communicate the strength of their feelings about political issues – to show that they *are* passionate caring politicians who can wear their heart on their sleeve – even though they are men.

Some female MPs, such as Clare Short, also show a rhetorical preference for hyperbole:

I share the view that we are facing a disaster. I am afraid that *the shadow of Mugabe* is preventing Governments from responding to the humanitarian appeal, so the people are being punished twice. ... (Clare Short, 11 December 2002)

However, it seems that other female MPs such as Harriet Harman and Margaret Beckett avoid the use of hyperbole in their debating style; this may be because they wish to avoid sounding ‘over-emotional’ and reject a discourse style characterised by high emotional expressivity. In this respect they may be self-consciously doing the opposite of the two male MPs – but for the same reason: a conscious rejection of gender stereotyping in discourse. In this respect we can interpret the adoption of high expressivity by male MPs and low expressivity by female MPs as a type of gender crossing at the rhetorical level in which there is the option for each gender of seeking to perform an individual political identity that contrasts with a stereotyped gender identity.

### 7.5.3 Function 3: To communicate particular arguments (logos/heuristic)

There was again more variation among the female MPs examined in the use of metaphor to explain policy, with evidence for its use by Margaret Beckett and Hazel Blears, but not by Harriet Harman or Clare Short. Both the male MPs made extensive use of metaphor for this purpose; however, Margaret Beckett also affirms strong approval of policies through the use of metaphors from the domain of ‘plants’:

The gentleman is right to say that there is *growing* awareness of the value and potential of biomass and of biofuels. There is *growing* recognition of their potential and a *growing* will to develop the industries in the European Union. (Margaret Beckett, 9 March 2006)

And Hazel Blears employs the same domain for a similar purpose:

All of the 351 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in Wales

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have responded positively to our *seed funding* for Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinators in each CDRP area. (Hazel Blears, 18 April 2006)

The use of such plant metaphors contain the argument – based on the knowledge that growth is inherently positive – that certain policies require government support through funding. The role of metaphor in policy communication seems to be a valuable strategy that politicians might consider employing more systematically as a heuristic for policy development.

#### 7.5.4 Rhetorical interaction

While for the sake of analysis the rhetorical purposes of metaphor have been identified separately, in practice the effectiveness of metaphor in political communication is because it combines a range of interacting rhetorical appeals. Consider the following by Peter Hain, secretary of state for Northern Ireland:

The Government have a responsibility to make sure that devolution can take place quickly when the Assembly request it ... has been a *long and difficult road* to reach that point, but all sides have shown determination and commitment to *take Northern Ireland forward*, and I commend them on doing so. I have no doubt that *any remaining obstacles* can be negotiated *before journey's end* at Parliament Buildings on 26 March next year. (Peter Hain, 13 December 2006)

Here the cohesion of Hain's account of the staged political process towards the policy of an autonomous Assembly in Northern Ireland relies on a source–path–goal metaphor frame; however, the effort required to achieve a political objective implied by 'determination' and 'obstacles' evokes pathos because of empathy with travellers on arduous journeys. The 'destination' is the ethically justified one of peace and the choice of first-person pronouns in evaluating the political process contributes to his ethical appeal. The 'journey' metaphor for conceptualising historical change in Northern Ireland evokes both pathos and ethos in the development of an argument. It is therefore not always possible to separate out the differing rhetorical purposes of metaphors as they may integrate diverse appeals simultaneously. The model for metaphor in political communication presented in Figure 7.1 is not therefore intended to imply that metaphors necessarily perform appeals separately, though they may do so, since a single metaphor may appeal to reason, emotion and morality while simultaneously establishing legitimacy and communicating an ideology.

## 7.6 Conclusion

This study of metaphor and gender in British parliamentary debates has found a tendency for greater use of metaphor by male MPs – especially certain types of metaphor such as ‘light’ and ‘dark’ and health and illness-related metaphors. This has been explained with reference to two considerations: female MPs require experience of House of Commons rhetoric over a longer period of time before they accommodate to its rhetorical norms – as suggested by the greater use of metaphor by more experienced female MPs. Conversely, other female MPs – such as Harriet Harman – may deliberately avoid metaphor because of its associations with a normative masculine rhetorical style emulating which may be seen as a sign of insecurity. However, other female MPs – such as Hazel Blears – have sought to accommodate their style to New Labour rhetoric by employing metaphor for deontic purposes, perhaps as a form of symbolic belonging in an institution in which they may be seen as ‘interlopers’. While the two male MPs use metaphor for all three types of rhetorical purposes, experienced female MPs show a preference for its role in making ethical appeals.

There is some evidence of gender crossing whereby male MPs employ metaphor to emphasise an emotional appeal, while female MPs avoid this use. This may be because male MPs do not want to appear too masculine in their rhetorical style, while female MPs do not want to appear too feminine. The fact that Harriet Harman – who as we have seen made very little use of metaphor – won the deputy leader election seems to conflict with the idea that metaphors are central to communicating ideology. It is possible that the conventional metaphors identified in this study do not necessarily contribute to rhetorical appeal. In some cases – such as when the speaker is a woman with a feminist political identity – part of ‘sounding right’ is to avoid language that is in any way gendered and that this includes avoiding uses of metaphor that are styled as masculine because they are associated with male politicians. Further research is needed across a wider range of politicians and a wider range of discourse types to establish the extent to which rhetorical style is gendered in the various genres of political discourse.

### Appendix 7.1 Profiles of politicians

Hazel Blears was educated at Wardley Grammar School in Swinton and Eccles Sixth Form College. She studied law at Nottingham Trent University and Chester College of Law. She had a dual career as a senior

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solicitor and a north-west councillor and was chair of the Salford Community Health Council from 1992 to 1996.

She was elected in 1997 as MP for Salford, the city where she was born and grew up. She was appointed as public health minister in May 2002. In June 2003 she moved to the Home Office, and was promoted to minister of state with responsibility for crime reduction, policing, community safety and counter-terrorism. In May 2006, she was appointed chair of the Labour Party and minister without portfolio; since June 2007 she has served as secretary of state for communities and local government.

Harriet Harman, the eventual winner and current holder of the post of deputy leader of the Labour Party, obtained a degree in politics from York University, qualified as a solicitor and her first job as a solicitor was at Brent Law Centre in 1974. She has a political identity as a campaigner for equality of opportunity for women and other aspects of equality, human rights and social justice – she formulated the legal framework for the Low Pay Commission and the National Minimum Wage; she introduced the minimum income guarantee and £200 Winter Fuel Payment for pensioners. As Cabinet minister for women she established the National Childcare Strategy and she has initiated policies in tackling domestic violence.

Peter Hain was educated at Queen Mary College, University of London, where in 1973 he obtained a first-class degree in economics and political science. He also holds a Master of Philosophy from the University of Sussex. He is the author or editor of 15 books and has written widely in pamphlets and articles on Labour policy and socialist ideology. He has been MP for Neath since 1991, and a member of the Cabinet since 2002. He was a founder member of the Anti-Nazi League in 1977 and, after a childhood in South Africa where his parents were jailed and banned, he became a leading anti-apartheid campaigner during the 1970s. He served for two years as leader of the House of Commons. As minister for Wales he led the campaign to deliver Welsh devolution and served as energy minister, where he reformed the scheme for sick miners. He is currently secretary of state for Northern Ireland and Wales. In January 2008 he resigned his post as work and pensions secretary as a result of not reporting £100,000 in contributions towards his campaign for deputy leadership.

Alan Johnson has a traditional Labour Party identity associated with the trade union movement. He was born into a working-class family and was educated at Sloane Grammar School, Chelsea; he left school at 15 with no qualifications. He has introduced legislation on trade union

rights, flexible working and women's pensions. He became secretary of state for education and skills in May 2006 with a concern for issues relating to the social class divide.<sup>2</sup> He was very narrowly defeated by Harriet Harman in the election for deputy leader, eventually finishing with 49.56 per cent of the vote. He became secretary of state for health in June 2007.

Margaret Beckett was educated at the Notre Dame High School for Girls (a state school in Norwich), the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, where she qualified as a metallurgist. She was deputy leader of the Labour Party from 1992 to 1994 and was briefly its leader in 1994 following the premature death of John Smith. In Tony Blair's government, she held a series of Cabinet offices, including secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs and foreign secretary. She was foreign secretary in the period 2006–7 and was the first woman to hold the post, and only the second woman to hold one of the great offices of state (after Margaret Thatcher). She is currently a backbencher.

Clare Short obtained a degree in political science from the University of Leeds; she is currently the Independent MP for Birmingham Ladywood, having been elected as a Labour Party MP in 1983, and was secretary of state for international development from May 1997 until her resignation in May 2003. She intends to stand down as an MP at the next general election.

Table 7A.1 summarises this information and also includes profiles of the two more experienced female MPs – although they were not candidates for the deputy leadership.

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Table 7A.1 Profile of candidates for deputy leadership of Labour Party

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Posts held</i>	<i>Years in House of Commons</i>	<i>MPs<sup>3</sup></i>	<i>CLPs<sup>4</sup></i>
Hazel Blears	51	Parliamentary private secretary Public health minister Minister of state at the Home Office Chair of the Labour Party Member of the Privy Council	10	49	36
Harriet Harman	57	Shadow employment secretary Secretary of state for social security Solicitor General Minister of state for justice Minister for constitutional affairs	10	65	60
Peter Hain	57	Leader of the House of Commons Minister for Wales Minister for Africa Minister for Europe Secretary of state for Northern Ireland and Wales	16	51	23
Alan Johnson	57	Parliamentary private secretary Work and pensions secretary Minister for higher education Secretary of state for productivity, energy and industry Secretary of state for education and skills	10	73	45

*Table 7A.1* Profile of candidates for deputy leadership of Labour Party  
– continued

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Posts held</i>	<i>Years in House of Commons</i>	<i>MPs<sup>3</sup></i>	<i>CLPs<sup>4</sup></i>
Margaret Beckett	64	Parliamentary private secretary Member of shadow cabinet Deputy leader of Labour Party Member of Privy Council Leader of the Labour Party President of the Board of Trade Leader of the House of Commons Secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs Foreign secretary	30	na	na
Clare Short	61	Shadow minister for women Shadow transport secretary Secretary of state for international development (member of the Cabinet)	24	na	na



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	<i>Male</i>				<i>Female (1)</i>				<i>Female (2)</i>			
	<i>Hain</i>		<i>Johnson</i>		<i>Blears</i>		<i>Harman</i>		<i>Beckett</i>		<i>Short</i>	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>
avenue	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
journey	2	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
move	41	41	47	43	24	20	6	0	35	31	6	2
obstacle	12	12	2	2	0	0			2	2	0	0
path	10	10	8	3	2	2	0	0	11	11	0	0
road	13	7	14	4	0	0	0	0	10	9	2	1
route	9	9	25	17	2	2	1	1	3	1	4	4
step	23	23	31	16	12	12	1	1	57	57	0	0
trail	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	102	95	129	87	41	38	8	2	119	112	12	7
<i>Metaphor total</i>			182				40				119	

*Table 7A.3* Source domain 'light and dark' – literal and metaphoric uses

	<i>Male</i>				<i>Female (1)</i>				<i>Female (2)</i>			
	<i>Hain</i>		<i>Johnson</i>		<i>Blears</i>		<i>Harman</i>		<i>Beckett</i>		<i>Short</i>	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Meta</i>
bright	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
dark	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
gloom	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
light	9	2	35	3	11	4	2	1	13	1	2	1
shade	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
shadow	9	1	14	3	7	0	1	0	1	0	3	1
Total	23	8	55	12	20	6	3	1	16	2	6	3
<i>Metaphor total</i>			20				7				5	

Table 7A.4 Source domain 'plants' – literal and metaphoric uses

	Male				Female (1)				Female (2)			
	Hain		Johnson		Blears		Harman		Beckett		Short	
	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta
blight	5	5	1	1	4	4	1	1	3	3	1	1
fruit/ fruitful/ fruition	3	3	10	7	6	1	0	0	6	5	0	0
reap	3	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
grow	16	16	10	9	10	9	5	2	35	22	21	17
nurture	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
root	10	10	6	6	3	2	0	0	2	2	1	1
plant	14	4	10	0	0	0	1	1	11	0	4	0
seed	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	4	1	0	0
Total	51	40	40	26	26	18	7	4	63	35	27	19
<i>Metaphor total</i>			66				22				54	

Table 7A.5 Source domain 'health' – literal and metaphoric uses

	Male				Female (1)				Female (2)			
	Hain		Johnson		Blears		Harman		Beckett		Short	
	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta	Total	Meta
cure	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
remedy	7	7	6	6	7	5	0	0	3	2	1	1
heal	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
diagnose	1	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
healthy	4	2	7	6	0	0	0	0	5	1	3	2
disease	7	0	1	1	8	0	0	0	59	0	2	0
therapy	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
plague	5	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	30	18	16	14	24	6	0	0	67	3	14	9
<i>Metaphor total</i>			32				6				12	

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- 1 CSO = community service officer.
- 2 The other candidates for the post were Hilary Benn and Jon Cruddas. Hilary Benn was raised into political career as son of the well-known Labour Party politician Tony Benn. He has been in the Cabinet since 2004 as secretary of state for international development. Jon Cruddas has a political identity as a trade union member and activist fighting for protection for people at work.
- 3 This column shows the number of Labour MPs who supported the candidate.
- 4 This column shows the number of constituency Labour parties who supported the candidate.

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Proof

# 8

## Sex Differences in the Usage of Spatial Metaphors: a Case Study of Political Language

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### 8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we will address the issue as to whether there are differences in metaphor usage between men and women and between members of different political parties, and if so, whether these differences can be related to general differences in cognitive preferences.

The chapter takes as its starting point the conceptual theory of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff and Turner 1987, Lakoff 1993), whose central claim is that metaphor is primarily a conceptual phenomenon – more specifically, a mental projection of a concrete domain of experience onto some more abstract domain such that the more abstract domain can be understood and reasoned about in terms of the more concrete. In this view, metaphorical language patterns are simply manifestations of such general mental projections (referred to as metaphorical mappings).

There is, by now, encouraging evidence for a relationship between metaphorical language and the conceptual system, both psycholinguistic (Gibbs 2008) and corpus-linguistic (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2006). There is also some initial evidence that culture-specific differences in conceptualisation may correlate with differences in the use of linguistic metaphor (for example Boroditsky 2000, 2001, Chung et al. 2003, Stefanowitsch 2004, Casasanto 2005; but see Chen 2007 for a critical review of Boroditsky's work). This evidence raises the possibility that cognitive differences between two groups of speakers in general may lead to differences in the usage of metaphorical language. This is an intriguing possibility, especially in the case of fundamental dimensions of personality, such as biological sex, which will be one focus of this study.

For the purpose of the investigation presented below, we will focus on a source domain for which there are well-documented sex differences: space. There is a substantial body of research that suggests that, on average, men perform better at such spatial cognitive tasks as mental rotation and the tracking of moving objects (see, for example, Linn and Petersen 1985, Geary 1998, Silverman and Eals 1992, Law et al. 1993, Masters and Sanders 1993). These differences seem to be stable across the lifespan and across cultures, so they are arguably language-independent. There is less agreement over the cause of these differences – broadly speaking, the differences could be genetic or they could be the result of differences in socialisation, although the fact that they remain stable over time seems to argue either for a genetic explanation or for an extremely general and deep-rooted social explanation.

If, as the conceptual theory of metaphor claims, metaphorical language is mainly a reflection of phenomena at the conceptual level, then we should expect sex differences in cognitive preferences to be reflected in differences in the use of metaphorical language by men and women. Specifically, the following hypothesis seems to follow relatively directly: men use spatial metaphors more frequently than women do, that is, the token frequency of such metaphors will be higher in the speech of men than that of women. Of course, this is not the only hypothesis derivable from the psychological literature, but it is the simplest and most straightforward one. The reasoning behind it is as follows. As mentioned above, the conceptual theory of metaphor assumes that the function of metaphor is to make things that cannot be experienced directly understandable by relating them to things that can be experienced directly. If men have a better understanding of spatial aspects of experience than women, then it would make more sense for them to relate abstract domains to the spatial domain than it would for women. Consequently, they should make more frequent use of spatial metaphors, while women would make more frequent use of metaphors from domains in which they have a deeper understanding than men.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, the idea that cognitive preferences should be reflected in metaphorical language use requires a number of additional assumptions that warrant closer investigation. For example, it assumes that the difference in cognitive abilities between the sexes is substantial enough to affect metaphorical reasoning (which may not be the case), and it assumes that there are alternative metaphorical conceptualisations for all aspects of experience that are typically talked about in spatial terms (if there are no alternatives, then women would have to use spatial metaphors even if their understanding of spatial

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experience differs substantially from that of men). This latter point is non-trivial, but a serious investigation of it is beyond the scope of this chapter.

This chapter will test this idea on a selection of unscripted debates from the German Bundestag (the federal parliament). Quite apart from any interest in political language as such, the language of parliamentary debates is an ideal testing ground for sex differences in metaphorical language as it provides natural controls for demographic factors other than sex: male and female parliamentarians tend to have similar social and educational backgrounds, they have the same social and professional status, they are paid the same salaries, and so on. This does not mean that there are no differences between individual parliamentarians – their experiences will differ depending on their regional background as there are considerable cultural differences between individual German states, between the north and the south, between the former GDR (German Democratic Republic – ‘East Germany’) and the old Federal Republic of Germany (‘West Germany’), and so on. But these differences should be distributed more or less equally between the parties<sup>2</sup> and sexes, so that they are not systematic confounding factors for the differences focused on in this chapter. This means that any linguistic differences between parliamentarians are likely to be due to stable differences in cognitive preferences (whether those are genetic, social or a mix of both).

In a volume on metaphor, gender and politics, however, it seems fitting to treat political language not just as a way of levelling the metaphorical playing field. In addition to the points just mentioned, it seems worthwhile to investigate the relationship between spatial metaphors and political ideology in its own right. Political language has, of course, long been a focus of metaphor research in a range of linguistic frameworks (cf. the contributions in this volume, but also book-length treatments like Partington (2002), Musolff (2004), Charteris-Black (2005), among others). However, these studies have tended to focus on specific metaphors and imagery rather than general metaphorical mappings such as those underlying spatial metaphors. Of course, *specific* spatial metaphors have been studied extensively, for example the left–right distinction (Hinich and Munger 1997: 9ff.), metaphors of hierarchical relationships (Rasmussen and Brown 2005) and metaphors of imprisonment, displacement and liberation (Price-Chalita 1994). However, in the metaphorical conceptual systems studied by these authors (and others), space simply provides a frame for specific, culturally charged conceptions of reality (related to, for example, the human body, maps, freedom and so on).

Thus, it is difficult to formulate predictions about relationships between particular political ideologies and the use of spatial metaphors in general. There are, however, some general expectations that one can formulate. We can plausibly assume that parties differ substantially in their attitude towards dimensions such as liberty (personal freedom vs governmental control) and stability (progress and change vs strong conservative values and a stable order). The notion 'liberty' can be viewed as a continuum from complete freedom to complete control (by the government), and the notion 'stability' can be seen as a continuum from undergoing no change at all to undergoing complete change. Both liberty and stability are regularly talked about by means of spatial metaphors, thus we might expect differences in the use of such metaphors between parties which are located at opposing ends of these two dimensions.

The German political landscape (as represented in the Bundestag) can be described in categories that are relatively familiar in a Western European parliamentary context. There are five parties: the conservative CDU (Christlich Demokratische Union [Christian Democratic Union]), the SPD (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [Social Democratic Party of Germany]), the liberal FDP (Freie Demokratische Partei – Die Liberalen [Free Democratic Party – The Liberals]), the left-of-centre environmentalist party B90/Grüne (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen [Alliance 90/The Greens]) and the former state party of the German Democratic Republic, the socialist PDS (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus [Party of Democratic Socialism]). On the liberty dimension the FDP and the Green Party occupy the liberal end, while the SPD and the PDS occupy the opposing end (both are in favour of a strong welfare state). The CDU occupies the middle (it has a strong ethic of individual responsibility but not necessarily of individual liberties, as it aims for a broad adherence to a rather narrow range of lifestyles informed by its Christian heritage).<sup>3</sup>

On the conservative–progressive dimension (where conservatives prefer no change, and progressives prefer to see change effected), the CDU and the FDP occupy the conservative end, the Greens and the PDS occupy the progressive end, and the SPD could be placed in the middle (they were traditionally a progressive workers' party, but their political programme is now rather similar to Tony Blair's 'New Labour' or the Democratic Party of the USA).

With regard to metaphor use we could plausibly formulate two expectations: on the one hand, since members of liberal parties (that is, FDP and Greens) are more concerned with personal freedom, they should use



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more spatial metaphors than politicians who value strong state control (that is, SPD and PDS), because freedom is often metaphorically described as the ability to move. On the other hand, people who favour change over stability, thus, members of progressive parties (that is, Greens or PDS), should use more (dynamic) spatial metaphors than conservatives (that is, CDU and FDP) on the basis that change is often described as motion. However, these expectations should be seen more as a guideline for an exploratory analysis than as predictions in the strict sense.

Before the specific corpus-linguistic procedures used in this chapter are described in detail, a few general remarks about corpus-based investigations of metaphor may be in order. The study of metaphor on the basis of quantitative corpus-based methods is a relatively recent phenomenon (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2006). One of the main reasons for this is the fact that metaphor, in the cognitive linguistics tradition that dominates metaphor research today, is seen as a conceptual phenomenon that is *manifested* in language, but is not *tied* to language, let alone particular lexical items. However, corpora, especially once they reach a certain size, can only feasibly be accessed via word forms, and this makes it difficult to study phenomena that are not tied to lexical items. Two general approaches have been taken (cf. Stefanowitsch (2006a) for a more detailed discussion): first, one can concordance vocabulary from the source domain of the metaphor under investigation (a technique first suggested by Deignan (1999) and Partington (1998), see also Stefanowitsch (2005)), or one can concordance vocabulary from the target domain (as proposed by Stefanowitsch (2004) and (2006b)). Both approaches face two problems: first, how to determine which words to select for concordancing (obviously, one can rarely include *all* items from a given source or target domain), and, second, how to separate the metaphorical uses from the literal ones.

In this study, the distinction between literal and metaphorical language is relatively straightforward. We concordanced sets of spatial nouns, verbs and prepositions (see further Section 8.2.1 below) and coded the hits as literal if the truth conditions required reference to an actual location or change of location of a concrete object. If this was not the case, hits were coded as metaphorical. Take the following examples from the corpus:

- (1) Natürlich werden auch die Schiffe der Meyer-Werft weiterhin über die Ems das Meer erreichen können.  
Of course, the Meyer shipyard's ships, too, will continue to be able to reach the open sea via the River Ems.

- (2) Er hat vorgeschlagen, so etwas auf marktwirtschaftlicher Basis, nämlich über Konzessionen, zu erreichen.  
He has suggested to reach this goal on the basis of economic principles, namely via quotas.

Both examples use the motion verb 'erreichen' [reach] in the same construction, 'X über Y erreichen' [reach X via Y]. The difference is that (1) is a description of an actual motion along an actual path, in this case a river on which ships travel. In order for this sentence to be true it must be the case that ships can move from one location (the shipyard) to another (the open sea) along a series of points in space (the River Ems). In contrast, (2) is a description of a change of states from one situation to another by a particular instrument of economic policy. In order for this sentence to be true, none of the participants have to change their location in space. Therefore, (1) was coded as literal and (2) was coded as metaphorical.

As this example shows, the distinction between literal and metaphorical language is relatively clear-cut in the case of a basic experiential domain like space, but in more abstract domains it can become quite a complex task involving many difficult decisions and unclear cases (Steen 2007, Goschler 2007). But even in the spatial domain the identification of metaphors in the corpus can only be achieved by manual inspection of hundreds, if not thousands, of concordance lines and is hence a very time-consuming process, which in turn places additional constraints on the first problem mentioned above: not only is it difficult to find all words that would have to be included in a sample of source or target domain vocabulary, but the sample also has to have a manageable size. In this chapter, we kept the sample size sufficiently small by limiting the size of the corpus and by limiting our research to spatial nouns and verbs that occurred at least five times in the corpus (the precise sets of words investigated are given below). In the case of prepositions, which, as function words, are extremely frequent, we settled on a set of basic spatial prepositions with a low-to-medium frequency as discussed further in Section 8.2.1 below.

Clearly, the fact that we investigated limited sets of spatial expressions rather than exhaustively analysing all spatial language in the corpus may limit the scope of our results, a point that must be kept in mind when interpreting the results.

## 8.2 Corpus Analysis 1: metaphor usage by party

### 8.2.1 Aims and method

This section investigates the expectations about the relationship between political ideology and the use of spatial metaphors.

Given the expectations formulated above, we might see a distinction between the Liberal Democrats (FDP) and the relatively liberal Greens (B90) on the one hand, and the Social Democrats and the Socialists, who favour a strong state, on the other, with the Christian Democrats somewhere in the middle – due to their different ideals of liberty there could be an increased use of spatial metaphors for the more liberal parties because liberty is often metaphorically described as the ability to move without constraints. Alternatively (or additionally), we also might see a conservative/progressive distinction, where the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU) and Free Democrats (FDP) would use comparatively fewer spatial metaphors than the progressive Greens (B90) and Socialists (PDS), with the Social Democrats (SPD) somewhere in the middle, because members of the progressive parties should in general be more concerned about change; and since change is also often conceptualised as motion, it seems plausible to assume that this could be reflected in a more frequent use of spatial metaphors.

The corpus used for this study consists of three transcripts (with a total of 75,000 words) drawn from the official transcripts of the debates in the German Bundestag.<sup>4</sup> Arguably, 75,000 words is not much, but spatial metaphors are extremely frequent and an increase in corpus size would quickly increase the number of data points beyond that which can be reasonably coded manually (also, as Ahrens 2006 shows, even small corpora can yield solid results given an appropriately formulated research question).

The transcripts provided on the webpage of the German Bundestag indicate for each speaker their full name and either their party affiliation or their political function (which allows their party affiliation to be recovered). Three transcripts were selected arbitrarily and coded for spatial metaphors.

As it is unrealistic to extract spatial metaphors exhaustively, we decided to focus on a constrained set of spatial nouns, verbs and prepositions. First, we selected all nouns that referred to some aspect of space, including locations, motion, distances and spatial configurations, and that occurred at least five times in the corpus. These were (in descending order of their frequency in our corpus): 'Bereich' [region/ area], 'Weg' [way], 'Ziel' [goal/target], 'Lage' [position], 'Seite'

[side], 'Schritt' [step], 'Raum' [space/room], 'Stelle' [place], 'Höhe' [height], 'Reihe' [row], 'Position' [position], 'Grenze' [border/boundary], 'Ebene' [level], 'Lücke' [gap], 'Richtung' [direction], 'Linie' [line], 'Stand' [stand], 'Stellung' [position/configuration] and 'Mitte' [middle]. The frequency of these nouns in the corpus ranged from 5 to 123.

Next, we selected all spatial verbs (motion verbs and position verbs) that occurred at least five times. These were (in descending order of frequency): 'gehen' [go], 'kommen' [come], 'liegen' [lie], 'legen' [lay], 'erreichen' [reach (arrive at)], 'stellen' [stand (put)], 'laufen' [walk/run] and 'stehen' [stand]. The frequency of these verbs in the corpus ranged from 8 to 198.

Finally, we selected six spatial prepositions (or rather, five prepositions and one preposition pair) of low-to-medium frequency, namely 'unter' [under, beneath, below], 'über' [over, above], 'vor' [in front of], 'von-bis' [from-to], 'neben' [next to] and 'hinter' [behind]. The frequency of these prepositions in the corpus ranged from 7 to 65. Other obvious candidates, such as 'in' [in], 'aus' [out of], 'bei' [at] and so on, were not selected, because their extremely high frequency would have made the annotation too time-consuming for a single researcher.

All occurrences of the words on these three lists (including all inflectional forms) were identified in the corpus and coded for whether they were used literally or metaphorically. Due to the relatively abstract nature of the subject matter of parliamentary debates, the overwhelming majority of all occurrences was metaphorical (only 7.6 per cent of the nouns, 5.8 per cent of the verbs and 3.6 per cent of the prepositions were literal usages). Finally, the frequency of all metaphorical uses was summed up by word class and by party.

Selecting metaphorical expressions from three different word classes was primarily intended to ensure, to a certain extent, representative results, but, in a cognitive linguistic framework, it allows us to make some additional predictions. In cognitive grammar, word classes are assumed to be meaningful categories, with nouns referring to things (defined as 'regions in some domain of conceptual space', Langacker 1987: 494), verbs referring to processes, and prepositions (among other word classes) referring to atemporal relations (Langacker 1987: 183ff.), prototypically spatial ones. Thus, spatial prepositions are the word class that encodes spatial relations most directly, while spatial nouns reify such relations and spatial verbs refer to processes unfolding in space (and, of course, time). Additionally, note that spatial nouns and

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verbs typically encode non-spatial meanings in addition to the spatial one. Verbs (at least in Germanic languages, cf. Talmy 1985) normally encode a particular manner of motion or position (for example, 'laufen' [walk] means something like MOVE ON FOOT and 'stehen' [stand] means something like REST ON FOOT). Nouns are very diverse in the additional meanings they might encode: if they are derived from a verb, such as 'Schritt' [step/pace] from 'schreiten' [pace], then they include the manner component of that verb, but even if they refer to aspects of space directly, they carry additional semantic information: for example, 'Ziel' [goal] refers not only to the end point of some trajectory (the spatial component), but also to the fact that someone is intentionally trying to reach this end point (otherwise it would not be a goal, but simply an end point); similarly, 'Grenze' [border] refers not only to the contact point between two regions of space (the spatial component), but also carries the connotation that the two regions are qualitatively different, that the border may be difficult to pass, and so on.

From these considerations, it follows that the predicted effects should emerge most strongly with the prepositions for both gender and political ideology, since these are most clearly and unambiguously associated with spatial concepts.

### 8.2.2 Results

The results for the metaphorical uses of the nouns are shown in Table 8.1 with the observed frequencies in the first line and the expected frequencies in parentheses in the line below. The Greens (B90) and the Christian Democrats (CDU) use fewer spatial metaphorical nouns than expected<sup>5</sup> and the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Liberals (FDP) use more; there is no difference for the Socialists (PDS). The differences between the parties are highly significant ( $\chi^2 = 21.48$  (df = 4),  $p < 0.001$ ; the overall effect is due to all chi-square components except that of the PDS).

Table 8.1 Metaphorical uses of nouns

	<i>PDS</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>SPD</i>	<i>FDP</i>	<i>CDU</i>	<i>Total</i>
Metaphors	24 (24.57)	42 (58.67)	237 (200.81)	46 (34.22)	123 (153.73)	472
No. of words	3,893	9,298	31,822	5,422	24,362	74,797

As Table 8.2 shows, the pattern is different for the verbs. The Socialists (PDS), the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Christian Democrats (CDU) use fewer metaphors, while the Greens (B90) and the Liberals (FDP) use more. The differences between the parties are highly significant ( $\chi^2 = 19.91$  (df = 4),  $p < 0.001$ ), but the only two components that contribute significantly to the overall effect are those of the Greens and the Liberals.

Table 8.2 Metaphorical uses of verbs

	<i>PDS</i>	<i>B90</i>	<i>SPD</i>	<i>FDP</i>	<i>CDU</i>	<i>Total</i>
Metaphors	19 (27.01)	84 (64.52)	210 (220.81)	56 (37.62)	150 (169.04)	519
No. of words	3,893	9,298	31,822	5,422	24,362	74,797

As Table 8.3 shows, there are only very small differences between the parties for the prepositions, and these differences are not significant ( $\chi^2 = 5.35$  (df = 4),  $p = 0.25$ ).

Table 8.3 Metaphorical uses of prepositions

	<i>PDS</i>	<i>B90</i>	<i>SPD</i>	<i>FDP</i>	<i>CDU</i>	<i>Total</i>
Metaphors	10 (9.68)	23 (23.12)	78 (79.13)	6 (13.48)	69 (60.58)	186
No. of words	3,893	9,298	31,822	5,422	24,362	74,797

### 8.2.3 Discussion

It seems that there is very little in terms of general patterns that can be said about the relationship between spatial metaphors and political affiliation. Although the Liberals (FDP) used consistently more nominal and verbal spatial metaphors, for the other parties the patterns are reversed for nouns as compared to verbs. In the case of prepositions, where the strongest effect was expected, none of the parties differ significantly from chance.

At best, then, one could tentatively conclude that the use of spatial metaphors is linked to the ideology of liberalness and that the progressive–conservative distinction does not play an important role, but overall it seems that there are no strong associations at all between political affiliation and the use of spatial metaphors.

### 8.3 Corpus Analysis 2: metaphor usage by gender

#### 8.3.1 Aims and method

This section investigates the prediction about the relationship between sex and the use of spatial metaphors.

The corpus and the data were the same as in Corpus Analysis 1. Unlike the party affiliation, the sex of the speakers is not given in the official transcripts, so it was determined on the basis of speaker's first names. Where a first name had an unclear or ambiguous sex reference, the website of the German Bundestag was checked to determine the sex of the speaker on the basis of pictures given on the individual web pages of the members of parliament.

Finally, the frequency of all metaphorical uses was determined by word class and by speaker sex on the basis of the same word lists used in Corpus Analysis 1.

#### 8.3.2 Results

The results for the metaphorical uses of the nouns are shown in Table 8.4. Contrary to the prediction, men use fewer spatial metaphorical nouns than expected and women use more; however, the differences are small and statistically not significant ( $\chi^2 = 1.16$  (df = 1),  $p = 0.28$ , n.s.).

Table 8.4 Metaphorical uses of nouns

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Metaphors	230 (218.32)	242 (253.68)	472
No. of words	34,596	40,201	74,797

As Table 8.5 shows, the pattern seen with spatial nouns is reversed for spatial verbs, with men using more metaphorical spatial verbs than expected and the women using fewer, exactly as predicted; however, again, the differences are small and not significant ( $\chi^2 = 1.13$  (df = 1),  $p = 0.29$ , n.s.).

Table 8.5 Metaphorical uses of verbs

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Metaphors	228 (240.05)	291 (278.95)	519
No. of words	34,596	40,201	74,797

As Table 8.6 shows, the pattern is also as predicted for the prepositions, and here, the sex differences are actually significant ( $\chi^2 = 5.56$  ( $df = 1$ ),  $p < 0.05$ ).

### 8.3.3 Discussion

The results of this analysis can only be very cautiously interpreted as providing some initial support for the hypothesis investigated in this section.

Table 8.6 Metaphorical uses of prepositions

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Metaphors	70 (86.03)	116 (99.97)	186
No. of words	34,596	40,201	74,797

Strictly speaking, we have to conclude that the results are not clear enough to allow us to reject the null hypothesis. However, under a more generous interpretation of our results we could point to the fact that men use more spatial metaphors than women for two out of the three word classes (even though in one case this difference is not significant), and that men use more metaphors than women in the only part of the analysis that yielded statistically significant results. In addition, this statistically significant difference was found with prepositions, the word class that was predicted to show any putative differences most clearly.

## 8.4 General discussion

The two case studies presented here have yielded a mixed picture. While it would certainly be premature to discard the idea that political ideologies and/or gender could shape usage preferences for basic spatial metaphors, the evidence for such an influence is, at present, rather weak.

In the case of political ideology, although there were significant results for two of the three word classes, those results varied across word classes for all parties except for the Liberals. Even though the Liberal Party showed an above-chance usage of basic spatial metaphors in accordance with the expectations formulated in the introduction, this can be seen as relatively weak evidence, if any. First, it is offset by the fact that, for all other parties, results deviated from the expected direction



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in at least one of the three word classes and second, by the fact that there was no effect for prepositions, the word class where an effect should be most clearly visible. Furthermore, there was no consistent significant association between the Green Party and the use of spatial metaphors, even though the party is linked to liberalness as well as progressiveness and the effect should have been particularly strong according to the expectations we formulated. Thus, for the time being it seems most plausible to regard the significant result for the Liberals as a fluke and to assume that there is no relationship between political ideology and the use of general spatial metaphors.

This null result may be due to the fact that spatial metaphors are too basic to the structure of language and/or cognition to be affected significantly by relatively superficial aspects of identity such as political world view. It may also be due to the fact that the political ideologies of the parties and their members are too complex to be meaningfully reduced to the dimensions we have suggested in this study. Finally, the absence of a clear result may be due to the sampling technique used to extract the metaphors: it is possible that a more exhaustive sample of spatial terms might lead to different results. It should be kept in mind, however, that a range of relatively frequent words was sampled here in the case of nouns and verbs, which nevertheless yielded conflicting results. In the case of prepositions, a larger set of words might allow more insight into usage patterns. Finally, it is possible that a more fine-grained categorisation of spatial metaphors, for example into dynamic and static ones, might uncover more systematic differences.

The results for the influence of sex on usage preferences concerning spatial metaphors are just as weak as in the case of political ideology, but they are slightly clearer in terms of their direction. In two out of the three word classes, there was an effect in the predicted direction; however, this effect was significant only for prepositions. Although prepositions are the word class for which the effect was expected to be strongest, the fact that it is the only word class to yield any significant results in this study should make us wary of taking the results of this study as more than a first hint that they may, in fact, be representative of a larger pattern of usage differences.

Thus, as with political ideology, the relatively weak effect of sex on the usage patterns could be due to the sampling technique used in this study and that a more exhaustive sample, or one coded in a way that would differentiate between different kinds of spatial metaphors, would yield clearer differences between men and women.

Alternatively, one reason for the relatively weak effect might be found in the difference between biological sex and cultural gender. This chapter

was concerned with the biological difference between men and women rather than any cultural differences between masculine and feminine identities. However, we believe that there are good reasons to focus on sex rather than gender for studies such as this one: first, the prediction was based on studies showing cognitive differences between biological sexes, not between cultural genders, and second, biological sex does not need to be operationalised in any indirect way but can be determined easily and reliably for all subjects in the corpus.

Still, focusing on sex rather than gender may have predetermined the result to a certain extent: it may well be the case that the superior spatial cognition that has been observed in men as opposed to women is due largely to social factors – none of the studies cited above controls for the difference between sex and gender and thus gender may have been a confounding variable (for example, subjects may simply have been brought up according to relatively traditional social gender roles). In this case, such differences might be expected to disappear in a relatively homogeneous group such as members of parliament. This possibility could be explored further by splitting up subjects in some less specialised corpus according to their degree of identification with particular gender roles, or by looking at texts from cultures or periods where gender roles and sex correlate more closely than in modern Western societies.

Of course, the possibility must be considered that usage patterns of general metaphorical mappings, such as the spatial metaphors investigated here, are simply not affected by differences in cognitive preferences such as the ones observed for spatial cognition. The differences between the sexes might simply be too small to affect basic aspects of language usage or even basic behavioural traits in general. The differences in spatial cognition on which the predictions were based here emerge only under laboratory conditions and even there, they are relatively small compared to the variation within sexes. Thus, one could assume that even if men perform better in spatial tasks, women's abilities might still be well above the level required for structuring abstract concepts via spatial concepts, especially since most of the spatial metaphors we found in the corpus are based on rather simple spatial relations like vertical and horizontal orientation, distance, location and motion.

In this case, an investigation of more specific metaphorical patterns that tie in with differences in socialisation rather than cognitive preferences might yield interesting results. Take the preposition 'unter' [under], the preposition for which the differences between men and women emerged most clearly in our study. There are four major metaphors in

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which *unter* participates: (i) quantity metaphors (MORE IS UP), for example 'über fünfzig Prozent' [over fifty per cent], (ii) categorisation metaphors (A CATEGORY IS ABOVE ITS MEMBERS), for example 'unter dem Namen' [under the name]; (iii) control metaphors (CONTROL IS UP), for example 'unter der derzeitigen Regierung' [under the current government], (iv) situation metaphors (A SITUATION IS ABOVE THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY IT), for example 'unter dem Schutz' [under the protection] or 'unter Druck' [under pressure]. It is plausible that men and women might differ, due to differences in their stereotypical gender roles, with respect to the importance they attribute to control or the way they view situations and their effects on people. In our corpus, the proportions of these metaphors in the usage of men and women do not differ, although it approaches significance for the situation metaphors, which are used slightly more frequently by men than by women. This suggests that if the differences that we observed in the usage frequency of spatial prepositions by men and women can be substantiated in a larger study, they would, for the most part, not be due to differences in the usage of specific metaphors but to a general preference for spatial metaphors by men.

The absence of clear results could also be due to the fact that, although cognitive differences between men and women would be large and stable enough to affect usage patterns in principle, these effects remain invisible because alternative metaphorical systems are simply not available in many cases. Take the metaphor TIME IS SPACE: speakers could not avoid using this metaphor even if they wanted to, as most aspects of time simply cannot be talked about without resorting to this metaphor.

Finally, metaphorical language may be too conventionalised to be shaped by cognitive preferences: spatial metaphors are among the most general metaphorical systems in language and they are instantiated by highly frequent linguistic expressions that may, for the most part, not be transparent enough to respond to differences in cognitive preferences. Certainly, one set of negative (or at least extremely tenuous) results should not lead us to accept this possibility prematurely, but if one contrasts the weak statistical effects found here with the relatively strong effects found, for example, across cultures with the same language (cf. Wulff et al. 2007) or different languages (cf. Stefanowitsch 2004), it is an option that must be taken seriously.

### Notes

- 1 For example, it has been argued that women have a cognitive advantage over men in the domain of social relationships – they have more intimate social relationships and are generally more concerned about them, they are better

at reading facial expressions and body language and should thus be able to analyse social relations better than men. This advantage might lead women to use more metaphors based on social relations, although it should be kept in mind that differences between men and women in social cognition, while significant, are much smaller than differences in the ability to manipulate three-dimensional objects (Pinker 2002: 345; Blum 1997; Geary 1998; Halpern 2000; Kimura 1999), so any effect on metaphorical language use should also be smaller.

- 2 A caveat may be in order with respect to the PDS (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus – ‘Party of Democratic Socialism’), the former state party of the GDR (see below), whose members are currently still primarily from the former GDR.
- 3 We have focused on two ideological dimensions that we consider to be particularly relevant in the context of this study as their effects should be observable in the domain of spatial language. A more detailed discussion of the German political landscape (in German) can be found in Blank and Schubert (2007).
- 4 The transcripts of all Bundestag debates since 1996 are available online as plain text files at [www.bundestag.de/bic/plenarprotokolle](http://www.bundestag.de/bic/plenarprotokolle).
- 5 By ‘expected’ frequencies we mean the chance frequencies computed by the standard statistical procedure. What is relevant for the discussion, then, is the difference between the chance frequencies and the actually observed frequencies.

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# 9

## Conceptual Metaphors of Family in Political Debates in the USA

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### 9.1 Introduction

'Family' is an important part of any campaign for office in the United States, and candidates for office can expect discourse surrounding the campaign and their term in office to include mention of their own family. In addition, policies affecting the family and views on the nature of family are also central to political ideology. See, for example, Lakoff (2002) and Cienki (2005). In the campaign process, debate-type events are part of the canonical campaign landscape in the United States, forming an important part of what the voting public uses for evaluating candidates. Candidates participating in these debates make numerous references to their own families and to families in general. This study will compare conceptual metaphors associated with reference to the candidates' own family members and consider possible differences in usage related to office, political party and gender.

Previous studies of candidates' family representations in political rhetoric in the USA and elsewhere have addressed the presence of family in advertising images, general reference to family members, and testimonials by them (Fox 1997, Jamieson 1992, Kaid and Johnston 2001, Zoonen 2000). Adams (2008) analysed the type and frequency of references to candidates' family members as part of the rhetorical strategies of candidates. Among the large number of terms available to refer to family members from different generations and distinguished by blood or marriage, the candidates' strategies were found to be typically restricted to mentions of nuclear family. This study focuses on three conceptual metaphors attached to these nuclear family references. Charteris-Black (2004) argues that it is important to interpret linguistic and conceptual metaphors within the context of use. By focusing on televised debates,

this project will provide a better understanding of the range of possible metaphors for persuasive and ideological ends in the context of face-to-face disputes with large audiences.

## 9.2 Methodology

The database for this study consists of a corpus of 104 debate forums among candidates running for all levels of political offices in the USA. Most debates were broadcast on national, statewide and local TV stations. A small number appeared on cable networks. All were intended to reach a broad audience.<sup>1</sup> This corpus was collected to create a more balanced view of candidates for political office and of the genre as a whole because many, if not most, studies of political debates in the USA focus only on national-level offices, in particular those for presidential and vice presidential races (for example Dailey et al. 2008). This emphasis on national levels is problematic if the goal is to understand the various constructions of debates by candidates of different backgrounds. Fewer women run for and are elected to the highest levels of office, and in nationwide debates, fewer inexperienced candidates or candidates from third parties are likely to get the opportunity to debate with the major party candidates. The debates in this corpus include races for local and statewide offices in addition to presidential and vice presidential races and United States House of Representatives and Senate races. Moreover, debates that included one, two or more women candidates were collected along with those with only male candidates to balance gendered perspectives. Debates with third-party candidates were also included to provide alternatives to the Democrat and Republican perspectives.

The debates represent the major regions of the United States and cover 21 of the 50 states. They include 20 presidential and vice presidential races; one of these debates is among third-party vice presidential candidates, five others also have independent and third-party candidates. One is a Republican primary and four are Democrat primaries, three of which have a female candidate, and two vice presidential races have female candidates. The 37 US Senate and House races are drawn from 18 different states. Twenty-two of the 37 debates are for races for the House of Representatives and the rest are for the Senate. Six of the races are primaries for the major parties. There are 29 races for statewide offices including treasurer, attorney general, governor, and state house and senate from 12 different states. At the local level, there are 18 debates for city councils, mayoral offices, county legislative



186 *Politics, Gender and Conceptual Metaphors**Table 9.1* Female and male candidates per debate in different types of races

	<i>President, vice president</i>	<i>US Senate, US House</i>	<i>Statewide offices</i>	<i>Local offices</i>	<i>Total</i>
Female	7% (5/71)	40% (39/98)	42% (38/91)	21% (10/47)	30% (92/307)
Male	93% (66/71)	60% (59/98)	58% (53/91)	79% (37/47)	70% 215/307)

districts, county sheriffs, county tax collectors, community college trustee boards and school boards drawn from races in major metropolitan areas in Arizona, Connecticut, New York and Texas.

Table 9.1 provides a breakdown for the number of female and male candidates in each debate for the different level of races.<sup>2</sup> Since the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, tracks women elected for public office and appointed to cabinet and cabinet-level positions in the US executive branch, it is possible to see how balanced the representation of male and female candidates is in these debates. Of the candidates for the local offices, 79 per cent are men and 21 per cent women. While the numbers seem low for women candidates, the local races took place in major metropolitan areas such as Buffalo, El Paso, Hartford and Phoenix where according to CAWP (2008) only 15.7 per cent of the mayors are women. Thus, the number closely parallels elected office holders in these areas. In the statewide races, 42 per cent of the candidates are women, slightly less than double the elected representatives for state legislatures before the 2008 elections (CAWP 2008). At the US Congressional level, 40 per cent of the candidates are women, well over double the current number of actual office holders which CAWP reports before the 2008 races as 16 per cent of the US Senate and 16.5 per cent of the House of Representatives. CAWP (2008) notes that only 12 women have ever run for the presidency of the USA with 4 of these being third-party candidates, and only 5 have run for the vice presidency, with 2 being third-party candidates.<sup>3</sup>

The percentage of third-party, independent and non-partisan candidates in the debates for the presidency and vice presidency is 11 per cent (8/71) and all are male candidates. For the US Congressional races it is 17 per cent (17/98), 17 per cent of the male candidates and 18 per cent of the female candidates. At the statewide level, they are 17.5 per cent (16/91) of the total number of candidates, 8 per cent of the females and 24.5 per cent of the males. The debate participants in the local level

of races are reversed in their affiliations as overall only 21.2 per cent (10/47) of the candidates are identified as Democrats or Republicans; all the rest but one (78.8 per cent) are part of non-partisan races or have no party specified.

Of these debates, a few local and state ones are 10–15 minutes long; however, the majority run 30 minutes to 2 hours. The debates cover a 28-year period starting in 1980 (for one presidential debate); the majority have occurred within the last 18 years. There can be no truly random representative sample of debates as thousands occur during each campaign cycle, but this corpus is much more broadly representative than most and can provide us with suggestive usages. As Table 9.2 shows, the word count of the debate corpus is over 1 million words.

Table 9.2 Word count for types of debates (rounded to the nearest 10)

	<i>President, vice president</i>	<i>US Senate, US House</i>	<i>Statewide offices</i>	<i>Local offices</i>	<i>Total</i>
Word count	324,220	357,640	269,580	98,880	1,050,320

The list of terms searched in the corpus were a standard set of kinship terms including informal and formal ones, as well as terms for marital status, the names of well-known partners of candidates, and terms for children referred to by grade level and age. ‘MonoConc’ software (Barlow 1998) was used for rapid and consistent searches of example morphemes, words and phrases. For each item, the examples that referred to the candidates’ families were separated from those with general reference to family roles.<sup>4</sup>

Each reference to a family member in a particular debate turn was examined including preceding and following turns in order to understand the context of its use. Multiple readings were involved as well as comparisons to family references elsewhere in the debate and among debates. More than one family member or more than one type of marital status could be related to the same conceptual metaphor or to different ones. Sometimes a candidate provided the lexical item characterising the metaphor, and other times the metaphor was inferred from consideration of preceding and following text. For example, in the case of the conceptual metaphor A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY, an utterance will be found usually in an introduction or opening statement referring to either a candidate’s marital state or to a husband, wife or child. This can be seen in Example (1) in a moderator’s introduction to a

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1996 Colorado US House of Representatives debate between Diana DeGette (Democrat) and Joe Rogers (Republican):

- (1) Moderator: ... Joe Rogers is also an attorney. He is the father of two children ... (1996, 1st District, US House of Representatives, Colorado)

In cases like this, what matters is that this utterance was preceded by other factors considered to be general experience for running for office. It is rarer in the debates that a candidate or moderator will specifically use a term related to mastery with reference to the nuclear family as is found in Example (2):

- (2) Mr. Sisolak: Thank you. I don't think being a telemarketer qualifies me, if that's what you're asking, to be a state senator. Uh, I have been in the forefront in advocating reform in telemarketing ... Uh, I think what qualifies me to be a state senator is the fact that I'm a parent, I'm a husband, and the son of 2 senior citizens that live in Las Vegas ... (Steve Sisolak, 1996, Democrat, 5th District, State Senate, Nevada)

Not surprisingly, certain sections of the debates encourage expressions of specific conceptual metaphors related to family. Opening and closing statements where candidates focus on their qualifications may often lead to the metaphor A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY as part of a series of qualifications. However, that does not mean that metaphors are limited to certain positions within the debate, or that each metaphor is expressed alone. Indeed more than one metaphor may be seen in a single utterance about family or several utterances in a row about family may contain two or three. So for example, A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY may also be joined with A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS A BOON as when in an opening statement a Republican male candidate says the following (3) among a list of items qualifying him to run for and hold office:

- (3) ... I have been fortunate to have been part of a loving family ... (Edward Pease, 1996, Republican, 7th District, US House of Representatives, Indiana)<sup>5</sup>

### 9.3 Results

The three conceptual metaphors discussed here in depth account for a prominent number of the mention of candidates' families in the

debates, ranging from 40 to 67 per cent of the total mentions of family made by participants. The campaigns are themselves characterised by the metaphor of an athletic contest. The campaign is referred to as a 'race' and the candidates 'run' for office with a 'winner' and a 'loser' at the end. A candidate may also talk about 'championing' a cause. In the debates themselves, the moderators may use phrases such as the 'opponents will face off' or 'square off'. So the notions of training and skill necessary to 'enter', 'run' and 'win a race' are to be expected. The metaphors to be discussed in depth in this chapter are listed in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 Conceptual metaphors

---

A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY	
A NATIVE BIRTH IS MASTERY	
A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS A BOON	
	NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CO-CANDIDATES
NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CANDIDATES	NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CO-CAMPAIGNERS
	NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CO-PUBLIC SERVANTS
	NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CO-STRATEGISTS

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### 9.3.1 A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY

The conceptual metaphors, A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY and A NATIVE BIRTH IS MASTERY, can be considered as core ones as they may be the only mention of a candidate's specific family. The nature of the mastery characterised here is that the candidate conforms to the preferred societal norms of heterosexual unions, which are perceived also as signs of stability and responsibility. It also allows the candidate, as discussed below, to treat accomplishments and characteristics of family members as those of the candidate her/himself.

Being married and having children is cited as a qualification for running for office not only by the candidates themselves, but also in prepared statements that moderators read or that the station show at the beginning of the debates. This conceptual metaphor is most likely to appear in the opening statements and introductions of candidates and occasionally in the closings or elsewhere such as when candidates are asked a question about the reasons why voters should vote for them. These openings and introductions may be either put together by a candidate's campaign staff for an introduction by a moderator or as a film clip, or the candidate may introduce her/himself with the information. Either way the candidates' campaigns would be expected to approve the material.

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This metaphor is not a required element, but it is common as can be seen from this introduction in a 1996 debate:

- (4) Female Announcer: ...Mr. Anderson is employed by the Arizona Public Services company. He served 6 years in the United States Navy, is currently Libertarian treasurer and was a candidate for the Phoenix city council. Mr. Anderson attended the Navy nuclear power school in Orlando, FL, and is single.

J.D. Hayworth is the Republican Party candidate. His main issue is to reduce taxes and the size of federal government. Mr. Hayworth is completing his first term representing the 6th Congressional District. Before his move to Capitol Hill, Mr. Hayworth was a local television sports anchor, public relations consultant and an insurance agent. He attended North Carolina State University and is married with three children.

Steve Owens is the Democratic Party candidate. His main issue is to create help for working families. Mr. Owens is an attorney. He has also worked as a state director for then-Senator Al Gore and, prior to that, worked as Gore's chief counsel for US House subcommittee. Mr. Owens also served as state chairman for Arizona's Democratic Party. He attended Brown University and Vanderbilt Law School. Mr. Owens is married with 2 children. (1996, 6th Congressional District, US House of Representatives, Arizona)

The placement of marital status in a list providing candidates' qualifications clearly speaks to marital status as perceived relevant training for the campaign and the office. The lists vary in length, but the following encompass most of what the audience hears and the candidates provide: age, party affiliation, place of birth, years of residence in a town/state, place of residence, experience in political offices, community involvement, issues that candidates champion, education, professional training/occupation and family status. This conceptual metaphor can be expressed by the noting of marital status or number of children or mentioning a spouse or children or grandchildren by name or a family role. Some variations in its use described below are related to the ideological status of the metaphor and/or to the status of a candidate.

Mentioning only children or grandchildren means a candidate can avoid referring to an unstable relationship or a divorce or separation, but a children-only mention does not necessarily imply that. It is also rare that a candidate chooses to be characterised as not having a nuclear

family or as having a broken nuclear family. Some of the situations where a candidate is identified as single or divorced parallel Example (4) above when all the candidates had their marital status given as part of a list of qualifications. Three other examples occurred when the information about single or divorced status was volunteered during the debate. The candidates offering the information were running as independents. This supports the notion of the strength of the 'nuclear' family as qualification in dominant political ideology. It would also appear to explain the case noted above in Example (3) where the unmarried Republican male candidate rather than saying he is single asserts nuclear family mastery even though he has not created his own. It also explains a city council debate (5) where a male candidate notes his 'ringless finger' and his mother asking about grandchildren and implies that he will have a nuclear family at a later date when running for office is over:

- (5) After this is over, I'm going to get on to the other things. (Corey Woods, 2008, Non-partisan, Tempe City Council, Arizona)

In a small number of other cases, a candidate's divorce may come into play. In one case, it does so as part of an attack by another candidate over his opponent's paying child support. Clearly, such an attack is also an attempt to move the other candidate out of the acceptable nuclear family ideological place. The dominant expectation is of heterosexual marriage. Open discrimination against alternative sexual identities persists even though there are openly gay and lesbian politicians running for and holding major offices such as governorships, and US House and Senate seats. However, the number of candidates doing so is not large (Martin 2001). Promises of marriage, identification with nuclear family and avowals of continued parental responsibility protect against reading candidates as having alternative identities or as not being 'settled', 'stable' people.

Occasionally some candidates opt out of giving information on marital status even when it fits the ideological norm and other candidates in the same debate are offering it. Examples come from both male and female candidates, but in several cases, Democrat and Libertarian female candidates omitted the information. In one debate, four of the preceding candidates including two other women had mentioned nuclear families, and so the Democrat woman's decision to omit the conceptual metaphor is a sharp contrast along with her shift to focus on issues (6):

- (6) ... there's a bio about me on cards that are out there on a dolly in the hall. I'm going to take this time to tell you why I am

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running ... (Carolyn Maxin, 1984, Democrat, District 27 State House and Senate, Arizona)

A US House candidate in the same debate with Mr Pease in Example (3) above, a female Libertarian (Barbara Bourland), gives this same sharply different style of introduction focusing only on the agenda of the Libertarian Party and not on her own qualifications as her two male Democrat and Republican opponents do. When other Democrat females also focus on issues not family, the question arises as to whether this is a desire to avoid stereotypic views of women as well as to get as much time as possible to introduce their party and ideas.

When the conceptual metaphor of *NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY* is used, the reference often comes later or last in the list of characteristics qualifying one for office as Example (4) above shows. However, Example (7) shows a change in order:

- (7) I am Carol Lamirande. Wife. Mother. Teacher. And business-woman. From these four perspectives, and in that order of priority, I am running for a seat in Congress in District Two. New Hampshire is a state that demonstrates independence. Independence in our government. In our faith. In our lives. And in our motto ... (Carol Lamirande, 1996, Independent, 2nd District, US House of Representatives, New Hampshire)

The reorientation shows that not all types of qualifications given in opening statements are equal. Lamirande is an Independent and female and her opening statement does not state how her family roles impact on her agenda or mastery other than reinforcing her own 'independence' from the usual political parties. In fact, the Republican male candidate in this race who opens next mentions his children but politically contextualises them as future debtors unless responsible politicians are elected. In another debate, a female Democrat candidate also foregrounds her nuclear family mastery (8):

- (8) I am a wife, a mother, a farmer. I am not a lawyer and I'm not a politician. (Judy Olsen, 1996, Democrat, 5th District, US House of Representatives, Washington)

The Republican male candidate in the same debate does not mention his family. Olsen's use distances her from her male opponent whom she characterises as too strongly associated with a Washington DC iden-

tity rather than a State of Washington identity. Using NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY can function to create a contrasting identity from an opponent, an identity that the candidate may see as more electable or more focused on the issues than that of the opponent (Adams 2008).

Male candidates can also foreground the use of family as mastery as did the office seeker in Example (2). He focuses on his family role rather than on his profession. His own type of business was about to be regulated for abuses by the state legislature, and, more importantly, he was able to challenge his female Republican opponent on her lack of caring about family, a bold stance for a Democrat male.

Interestingly, when opposing candidates are asked to say something good about their opponent, they will fall back on A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY indicating that this is a core qualification, and one that all can agree on and perhaps use to avoid more competitive and potentially negative political topics. In the following example, the male candidate in a heated campaign directly challenges the image behind this kind-hearted characterisation by his female opponent and adds a characterisation of her 'toughness' challenging gendered stereotypes and demonstrating his continuing challenges to her framing of answers:

- (9) Mr. Koontz (panelist): Gov. Orr, in the handshake that we had a moment ago I would like to ask in reference to that, what is it that you admire or respect about your opponent?

.  
.  
.

Gov. Orr: ... what I do know about my opponent, which is limited, we only know each other really politically, but what I do know about him, he has a lovely wife and lovely children and a fine family.

Mr. Kramer (moderator): Mr. Nelson, please.

Mr. Nelson: You don't think I'm going to be outdone, do ya? I know she has a very, very wonderful husband, Bill. And I've met at least one of her children. I believe that she, likewise, has a fine family. I think also she's a tenacious adversary and a strong competitor and I admire that in her spirit. (1990, Governor, Nebraska)

Further evidence of the ideological dominance of the NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY conceptual metaphor can be seen in a series of double-voiced



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introductions of candidates debating for three separate offices (6th District US House of Representatives, state governor, state attorney general), on the same evening in 1998 on Arizona PBS-KAET. All candidates were introduced by a moderator's voice. In addition, a list of qualifications printed in white on a blue background appeared on the left-hand side of the screen at the same time as the moderator spoke. In the written list marital status of married or single was given. However, the verbal introduction by the moderator only mentioned the marital status if the candidate was married. One candidate who was perhaps divorced but had children was introduced as having children but without her current single status. The single marital status was literally verbally silenced for all such candidates. We have already seen that unmarried family status is normally only volunteered by candidates who are not members of the two major parties and that its foregrounding by a candidate can indicate an 'outsider' status.

At the presidential and vice presidential level of debate, the use of NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY is less common, occurring often in different contexts in the debate. Part of the explanation for this is that by the time candidates are competing for the highest elected office, their families are fairly well known to the electorate. They have been introduced or reintroduced on national television at the party conventions and have been the subject of much media scrutiny. In only one of the 20 debates in question (Firing Line 1988) were there introductory film clips of the candidates and their families, and this debate would have predated the extensive media coverage for the final winners of the primaries. The other cases at the presidential level with this conceptual metaphor were like Example (9) when candidates were asked to comment on each other's character or on qualities that did or did not separate them as candidates. Interestingly, none of the Democrat presidential or vice presidential women candidates used the metaphor while the 2008 Republican woman vice presidential candidate did. This fits generally with the nature of the office and with differences in gendered occurrences described below.

The use of the NUCLEAR FAMILY AS MASTERY at the presidential/vice presidential level was 28.5 per cent (16/56) of the three metaphors discussed here. This is less than the local level of debates, where this conceptual metaphor makes up 39 per cent (11/28) of the total number of the same conceptual metaphors. While the numbers are small, at the local level male candidates are close in

usage to female candidates, 41 to 33 per cent. In the statewide debates, it accounts for 58 per cent of the three metaphors, and the overall usage for male candidates, 56 per cent (19/34), and female candidates, 58 per cent (19/33), is close. At the US Congressional level its use makes up 48 per cent (27/56) of the three conceptual metaphors, with males using it less (44 per cent (12/27)) than female candidates (52 per cent (15/29)). At the statewide and US Congressional levels of debates, one finds parallels in ranked order of usage among major party candidates. Democrat males are most frequently associated with the metaphor, then Republican females, then Democrat females and lastly Republican males. The occurrences of this conceptual metaphor are small in number as are the differences in use among the major party candidates according to gender. Also candidates may have more or fewer references to a particular metaphor for many reasons, so any implications about these ranked differences are only suggestive. In Example (6) we saw Democrat and Independent women debaters skipping this information on *NUCLEAR FAMILY AS MASTERY*, including the Democrat female candidates for president and vice president, perhaps to avoid stereotypes about women. On the other hand, Democrat males, in Example (2) and in the 2008 vice presidential debate (Transcript of Palin, Biden Debate 2008) laid claim to this characteristic more traditionally allied with the feminine.

### 9.3.2 A NATIVE BIRTH IS MASTERY

The metaphor, *A NATIVE BIRTH IS MASTERY*, frequently occurs in the same turns as *A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY* in introductions, openings and closings. While living in a place in no way guarantees knowledge of issues impacting on the area, the ability to claim local or native birth of the candidate and/or of nuclear family members including one's own children's births is important. This metaphor is one used by both male and female candidates. An example of the consideration some candidates give to it, especially in a region where many citizens might be recent arrivals to the area, can be seen with a candidate who uses his, his wife's and his wife's family's native birth (10):

- (10) I am a native Arizonan. I was born in Prescott ... enrolled in Arizona State College ... and have been in Tempe ever since ... I found a wife in Tempe who was a native Tempean, whose parents were native Tempeans, and I believe that kind of establishes some roots here in Tempe ... (Doug

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Todd, 1984, Republican, District 27, State Representative, Arizona)

A non-native born candidate in the same race tries to address this mastery claim through a joking manner as well as by claiming his children's birthright (11):

- (11) I have lived in Arizona for eight years now ... Since then we have had the good fortune to have two daughters born to us here ... So I believe that although I did not have the foresight to be born here in Tempe, I believe that I have some interest in the community ... (Richard Daggert, 1984, Democrat, District 27, State Representative, Arizona)

At most levels of office, *ROOTEDNESS* over several generations, increases the *MASTERY*; that is, a nuclear family seed 'planted' and 'raised' or 'growing up' in the community as it grows has roots which supposedly intensify knowledge and hold the candidate in place. For some candidates, it can serve not only to mark mastery, but also to indicate a commitment to community that their opponent may no longer have if the opponent's focus has shifted to a wider constituency. These candidates with shifting allegiances may even be considered 'uprooted' and, for example, residents of the Washington DC Beltway, that is, 'Washington insiders', rather than members of their state of birth.

Because candidates appropriate the birthplace of nuclear family members for the use of this conceptual metaphor, the two mastery metaphors of *A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY* and *A NATIVE BIRTH IS MASTERY* are conceptually related to each other. Not unexpectedly the importance of this *NATIVE BIRTH* metaphor varies for different levels of office, but it is used freely by male and female candidates from all parties including independent and third parties. Of the three conceptual metaphors discussed in depth here, *A NATIVE BIRTH IS MASTERY* is most frequently used at the local levels, that is, 54 per cent (15/28). At the statewide level it averages 22 per cent among the candidates of the major parties. For the US Congressional races, it averages 26 per cent. In both these latter cases, it is a little less than half of its use at the local level. At the presidential and vice presidential level, the metaphor takes on a limited role as these offices represent the nation as a whole. To run for these offices, it is required that a candidate be a US citizen, in other words, to have native birth.

Only one candidate mentions where he was born at the presidential and vice presidential level of debate. The purpose of the mention, however, was to indicate mastery of information about issues in that region just as with usages by candidates for other levels of office.

### 9.3.3 NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CANDIDATES

Candidates claim the NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY, and they also appropriate their nuclear family's birthright. It is not surprising then that this same family may also be characterised metaphorically as CANDIDATES (or CO-CANDIDATES). In newspapers, candidates' family members may be referred to as 'surrogates', that is, one substituted for another, or they may be characterised as 'playing a role' in the campaign. In that sense, they share the 'stage' and the activities and ideologies of the real candidate, the race and the office. This metaphor might be considered a conceptual key (Charteris-Black 2004) as it explains a series of conceptual metaphors related to each other. These include CO-CANDIDATE, CO-STRATEGIST, CO-CAMPAIGNER AND SUPPORTER and CO-PUBLIC SERVANT.<sup>6</sup> In the offices of the US president and vice president, but in other offices too, it is common for spouses to have activities related to the office holder's agenda. These positions are so important that polls are conducted evaluating voters' positive and negative perceptions of the candidates' spouses just as they are conducted for the actual candidates. An example of a CO-PUBLIC SERVANT metaphor can be seen when a candidate is discussing policies related to his '1,000 points of light' effort and its implementation (12):

- (12) ... but do not erode out of the system 'the thousand points of light'; the people that are out there trying to help these kids; the programs like 'Cities and Schools'; the work that Barbara Bush is doing so people can learn to read in this country and then go on and get-, break this cycle of poverty ... (George Bush, 1988, Republican, US President, 1st Debate, *New York Times*, 26 September, A11)

When talking about the campaign, family members' CO-CAMPAIGNER activities are mentioned often in closings and combined with other metaphors such as the CO-PUBLIC SERVANT one (13):

- (13) ... Kitty and I are very grateful to all of you for the warmth and the hospitality that you've given us in your homes

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and communities all across this country ... and we hope that we'll be serving you in the White House ... (Michael Dukakis, 1988, Democrat, US President, 2nd Debate, *New York Times*, 15 October, A13)

This CO-PUBLIC SERVANT and CO-CANDIDATE metaphor is carried by some Republican males to the point of declaring their wives as electable candidates in their own right when asked challenging questions or criticised in the press about gender and race equity in elected and appointed offices. In one case, a gubernatorial candidate considered a conservative Mormon elder addresses concerns about sexism saying in his closing that his wife could be as viable an office holder as he (Evan Mecham, 1986, Republican, Governor, Arizona). In another such case, presidential candidates were asked to come up with time frames for '... when [do] you estimate your party will both nominate and elect an Afro-American and female ticket to the Presidency of the United States?' (*New York Times*, 1992, 16 October, A14). Candidate, George Bush, clearly states that his wife is electable (14):

- (14) If Barbara Bush were running this year, she'd be elected ... (George Bush, 1992, Republican, US President, 2nd Debate, *New York Times*, 16 October, A14)

This lack of female perspective and diversity in general at the highest levels of office is noted in these debates in other ways. For example, in a 2004 presidential debate between George W. Bush and John Kerry, they were asked as a final question what was the most important thing they had learned from their wives and daughters, all 'strong women' (The Third Bush-Kerry Presidential Debate, 2004). The need to have this female perspective represented in the debate is also related to uses of the CO-STRATEGIST conceptual metaphor. When asked about issues related to women, male candidates may cite their female family members' perspectives as part of an answer as in (15):

- (15) ... And, you know, according to my mother and my wife and my daughter, this world would be a lot better place if women were running it most of the time. I do think there are special experiences and judgments and backgrounds and understandings that women bring to this process ... (William

Clinton, 1992, Democrat, President, 2nd Debate, *New York Times*, 16 October, A14)

And in response to a question about inner circle influence by minorities and females in politics and business, an independent male candidate awkwardly ends his answer with female family members as CO-STRATEGISTS by relying on a negative stereotype of women as nagging and controlling:

- (16) ... But in terms of being influenced by women and being a minority, there they are right out there, my wife and my four beautiful daughters, and I just have one son. So he and I are surrounded by women giving-, telling us what to do all the time. (Ross Perot, 1992, Reform Party, President, 3rd Debate, *New York Times*, 20 October, A22)

In other contexts, the use of the CO-STRATEGIST can be positive when a family member is seen as a mentor, that is, providing material to learn from (17):

- (17) ...You know, my wife, Hillary, gave me a book about a year ago ... (William Clinton, 1992, Democrat, President, 1st Debate, *New York Times*, 12 October, A14)

The CO-CANDIDATE metaphor appears in numerous contexts and may be negatively implicated when one candidate is attacked on the basis of their spouses' finances or another family member's potential wrongdoing. In such a case, a spouse's fiscal responsibility can be the candidate's fiscal responsibility. Positively, a candidate can make family members' qualifications their own. This is especially common in arenas such as education and business. One candidate in citing her commitment to a district uses her husband's service as her own (18):

- (18) ... So not only do I love this state, my husband has served as a chairman of the school board ... He's been on the planning board. I served in the New Hampshire legislature for 8 years. If anyone is committed to New Hampshire, it is me. (Debra Arnie-Arnesen, 1996, Democrat, 2nd District, US House, New Hampshire)

This does not mean that all candidates for office agree with this CO-CAMPAIGNER, CO-PUBLIC SERVANT role of nuclear family members,

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especially a female politician who states the following in response to a question about conducting a feminist campaign (19):

- (19) ... I don't think that the spouses of politicians should play a role in campaigns. (Nikki van Hightower, 1990, Democrat, State Treasurer, Texas)

Hillary Clinton argues the same in (20):

- (20) ... I believe that this campaign is not about our spouses. It is about us. It is about each of us individually ... (Hillary Clinton, 2008, Democrat Presidential Primary Debate, South Carolina, CNN transcript, Part 3, 6)

In fact the Democrat female presidential and vice presidential candidates in these debates did not bring up their spouses. These CO-CANDIDATE spouses were introduced into the discussions by moderators and opponents and mostly in negative ways. The female candidates then responded to these comments. Clearly in 2007–8, it was dangerous for the leading liberal female candidate, Hillary Clinton, to claim CO-CANDIDACY with her husband. Former President Clinton had high visibility fuelling the importance of what he said, but the importance of gender as an issue in the CO-CANDIDACY metaphor was obvious in the frequent reference to him by other candidates and moderators to criticise Hillary Clinton and challenge her individual voice as in (21):

- (21) Clinton: ... You talked about Ronald Reagan being a transformative political leader. I did not mention his name.  
 Obama: Your husband did.  
 Clinton: Well, I'm here. He's not.  
 Obama: OK. Well, I can't tell who I'm running against some-times.  
 Clinton: Well, you know I think we both have very passionate and committed spouses who stand up for us... (2008, Democrat Presidential Primary Debate, South Carolina, CNN transcript, Part 1, 6)

Some newspapers did not report her final response to the CO-CANDIDACY conceptual metaphor and her attempt to focus on parallel experiences, instead noting only Obama's criticism (for example, Balz and Murray 2008, A4). Six months later, newspapers reported on an interview with

Obama in *Glamour* magazine (22) showing again the gendered nature of this usage:

- (22) ...Obama said attacks on his wife are 'infuriating.' The likely Democratic presidential nominee blamed the conservative press for going after his wife as if she were the candidate. 'If they have a difference with me on policy, they should debate me. Not her,' Obama told the magazine ... Obama's campaign denounced the ad for its 'shameful attacks on the wife of a candidate'. (*The Arizona Republic*, 2008, 18 July, A10)

A state Republican Party's claim that these criticisms were justified as Obama's wife was a surrogate campaigning on his behalf with other supporters was evidently not justification for Obama when it was his wife's positions which were criticised.

As with the other conceptual metaphors, the use of NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CANDIDATES differs in the frequency of use among the different levels of races. At the local level, it only averaged 8 per cent of the mentions. At the statewide level, the use ranged from 12.5 to 30.7 per cent among the major party candidates, with the lowest use of this metaphor among Republican women and the highest among Republican men. At the US Congressional level, the range of usages was from 9 per cent for Republican women at the lowest levels of associated usage to 35.7 per cent for Republican men at the highest level. Among the Democratic candidates, the usage was close to that of the Republican men. It is interesting that the Republican women, as discussed in Section 9.3.1, are more likely to be associated with the use of A NUCLEAR FAMILY IS MASTERY while the Republican males are more likely to be associated with NUCLEAR FAMILY ARE CANDIDATES. Again the number of examples is small and only suggests that further research on these differences could prove interesting. At the presidential level, this conceptual metaphor accounted for 66 per cent overall, well over double that in other races and eight times that in the local ones.

#### 9.4 Conclusion

This study has looked at the mentions of candidates' family members in 100 plus political debates. It has identified three conceptual metaphors that use 'real' family as the target domain and that account for a large percentage of these mentions. In doing so, it has also aimed to evaluate these metaphors as resources for gendered ideologies and