

  
Metaphors We Manipulate with**5 | 2020****Metaphors We Manipulate with**

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# Introduction

Denis Jamet Adeline Terry

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- 1 ELAD-SILDA #5, which follows on from an international conference that took place at the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin Lyon 3) in 2019, constitutes a modest contribution to metaphor studies by focusing on the links between metaphor and manipulation. Indeed, since Lakoff and Johnson published their landmark work, *Metaphors We Live By*, in 1980, studies adopting a cognitive approach to metaphor have proliferated and it is nowadays generally acknowledged that metaphors have primarily a cognitive function; they structure both our language and our thought system, as they allow us to conceptualize a target domain thanks to a source domain. Cognitive linguistics, however, was frequently criticized for not considering the ornamental and rhetorical functions of metaphor. Other approaches were thus developed to take these functions into account, including *Critical Metaphor Theory* [Charteris-Black 2004], which largely relies on *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Charteris-Black based his studies on large corpora of political, religious, or journalistic texts and argued that metaphor, because of its cognitive and affective appeal, remained the ultimate rhetorical tool in some genres. He reckoned that lexicalized metaphors in those texts allow us to persuade readers or co-speakers and to convey an ideology, but also to manipulate the reader or the co-speaker by remaining unnoticed, as “the subliminal potential of metaphor is central to the performance of leadership” [Charteris-Black 2005: 2].
- 2 Yet, in Conceptual Metaphor Theory, metaphor largely relies on the principle of highlighting-hiding [Kövecses 2002: 80]; in other words, using one particular source domain allows the speaker to conceptualize one target domain in a particular way, that is to say to highlight some characteristic features of the source domain and to hide others. Metaphor thus allows speakers to manipulate the information by presenting it in a very specific way, as changing the



source domain allows the way in which the information is presented to be changed. Consequently, it seems that metaphor allows speakers to manipulate the co-speaker(s) and the reader(s) by influencing their perception of a given reality. Therefore, wouldn't it be possible to postulate that all metaphors have both cognitive and manipulative functions? Is this last function limited to a certain type of discourse, or inherent to any type of metaphorical discourse? Following Charteris-Black's work on the persuasive function of metaphor ("Metaphor can be manipulative but is more commonly persuasive" [Charteris-Black 2005: 44]), this issue essentially focuses on the manipulative aspects of metaphor – whether or not in combination with other rhetorical strategies and with linguistic or non-linguistic devices.

- 3 All the papers in this issue are based on corpora (discourses, newspaper articles, advertisements) and tackle different societal topics, with a focus on the mechanisms used to manipulate or persuade the audience.
- 4 In the first paper, "**'How to be happy' according to *Cosmopolitan*: The metaphors of happiness at the service of positive psychology and neoliberalism ideology**", Lucia Gomez Vicente focuses on the metaphorical representation of happiness in the women's magazine industry, which appears to be of particular interest at the moment. Indeed, different political, social and economic actors have made happiness become one of the main objectives of Western societies, both at the individual (self-fulfilment, satisfaction, happiness) and at the collective (workplace wellness, well-being of society) level. However, beneath these laudable ideals, and despite their altruistic, apolitical and ideology-free appearance, there lies a discourse that pursues very clear objectives of benefit only to certain interest groups [Illouz & Cabanas 2018]. The women's press represents a privileged source in the understanding of the expectations faced by women [Blandin 2018] and, perhaps in a more general way, by individuals in a particular culture. Finally, the metaphors used enable us to analyze certain thought patterns specific to some discourses [Charteris-Black 2004]. The aim of this paper is thus to understand how happiness is represented metaphorically in *Cosmopolitan magazine* and to determine whether this representation corresponds to an ideological agenda. A corpus-based



analysis of the metaphors of happiness used in the *Cosmopolitan magazine* has been conducted. The results show that most of these metaphors can be categorized according to six conceptual patterns related to the notions of “strength” and “limit”. The metaphors of happiness found in the corpus are shown to be ideologically charged and strongly related to positive psychology and neoliberal ideology.

- 5 The next article, **“What Makes Metaphors Manipulative Tools? A Case-Study of Pro-Life Speeches in the US”**, by Denis Jamet and Adeline Terry, also focuses on ideologically charged metaphors, and more specifically on the use of manipulative metaphors by pro-life supporters, whose aim is to limit the access to abortion and women’s rights in the United States. Manipulation implies a conscious choice from speakers to trigger a change of opinion in the interlocutors and to make them accept their own point of view, i.e. their own vision of the world. As pointed out by Goatly [2007], Charteris-Black [2005, 2014] or Van Dijk [1998], metaphors can be used as manipulative tools. Metaphors have traditionally been considered as figures of speech used by rhetoricians to convince people; cognitivists have demonstrated that they are figures of thought as well, which partly accounts for their manipulative potential. The three underlying reasons to this are, among others, the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors, and the multivalency of metaphors. The manipulative potential of metaphors is examined in twelve speeches from pro-life supporters, ranging from 2006 to 2019. One of the main ideological debates going on in the US has been on abortion, as the pro-life movement has grown stronger in recent years and has been threatening the right to abortion guaranteed by *Roe v. Wade*. The study of the metaphors in those speeches has enabled us to highlight how pro-lifers manipulate people regarding the apprehension of reality by systematically using a limited number of conceptualizations.
- 6 The two following articles concentrate on ideologically charged speeches in the United Kingdom, and more precisely on the metaphors used by far-right politicians in the Brexit debate. In **“Brexit and the Myth of Grandeur”**, Alma-Pierre Bonnet studies the links between metaphor and political myths. The decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union came as a shock to



many. A key player during the referendum campaign was the Vote Leave organisation which managed to convince people that they would be better off outside the European project. Their success was made all the easier as Euroscepticism had been running deep in the country for decades. It is on this fertile ground that Vote Leavers drew to persuade people of the necessity to leave. Using critical metaphor analysis, this paper examines the way Vote Leavers won the argument by developing three political myths, which, once combined, conjured up the notion of British grandeur. Drawing on Jonathan Charteris-Black's seminal works on the relation between metaphors and the creation of political myths in political rhetoric, this paper posits that the Brexit debate was not won solely on political ground and that the manipulative power of metaphors may have also been a key element. This might explain the current political deadlock, as political solutions might not provide the answers to the questions raised during the campaign.

- 7 Pauline Rodet's contribution, "**Metaphor as the Distorting Mirror of Brexit: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Metaphors and Manipulation in the Brexit Debate**", adopts a multimodal approach and offers a corpus-based inquiry into the use of metaphor in the Brexit debate. It aims to stress the link between manipulation and the metaphors that are used to talk about Brexit. It mainly focuses on the cognitive dimension of metaphor, following the Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson. The methodology is largely inspired by Charteris-Black's analysis in three steps: identification, interpretation and explanation. The corpus includes political speeches from various British politicians who strongly got involved in the debate, such as Boris Johnson, Theresa May and David Cameron. In addition, two cases of multimodal metaphors are closely analyzed. The article suggests looking at the links between the conceptual domains at the roots of the metaphors encountered in the corpus and the act of manipulating.
- 8 Two other articles also adopt a multimodal approach; in "**Migrants, Metaphors and Manipulation: a Multimodal Case Study of Trump's Speeches on Immigration (2015-2017)**", Bérengère Lafandra intends to analyze the use of metaphors in a corpus of Donald Trump's speeches on immigration; its main goal is to determine how migrants were depicted in the 2016 American presidential election, and how



metaphor manipulated voters in the creation of this image. This study is multimodal since not only the linguistic aspect of speeches but also gestures are considered. After giving an overview of the theories on metaphor, it provides the theoretical framework and develops the main tenets of the 'Conceptual Metaphor Theory' (CMT). The author also tackles multimodality and explains what modes and gestures are. She finally provides the main source domains as well as other rhetorical tools that are used by Trump to depict migrants and manipulate voters.

- 9 Inesa Sahakyan, in **"The persuasive vs. manipulative power of multimodal metaphors in advertising discourse"**, also focuses on the multimodality of metaphors, but in advertising discourse rather than political discourse. The purpose of this conceptual paper is, first, to contribute to the definition and understanding of features that could help to trace a demarcation line between the notions of *persuasion* and *manipulation*; second, to enquire into some of the possible ways of measuring the manipulative, as opposed to persuasive potential of metaphors and determine whether the use of metaphors necessarily entails a form of manipulation and if so, how; third, to study the implications of the degree of lexicalisation of a metaphor for its persuasive / manipulative force; finally, to enquire into the proportional relationship between multimodality and manipulative potential. In other words, her goal is to understand whether multimodal metaphors bear greater potential for manipulation as compared to their monomodal counterparts. These enquiries are addressed within the framework of the theory of semiotics and pragmatics developed by the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). Some examples of promotional metaphors from the car industry are discussed, such as metaphors which promote green washing.
- 10 The last contribution of this issue, **"Representations of climate in the English-speaking press: building a metaphorical interdiscourse"**, by Caroline Peynaud, deals with metaphors for climate. The press is essentially an intertextual discourse, composed of explicit quotations as well as of more implicit references that situate it within a complex interdiscourse. In particular, it has been shown that the media are inspired by one another, thus creating, between articles, genres and publications, intertextual and interdiscursive links that may evolve in



time. The present study aims to analyze those links and, more particularly, those built by the metaphors applied to the field of climate as they are used in the English-language general-interest press. Metaphors, whether pedagogical or theory-constitutive, are defined as a projection of a domain over another, creating an analogy that allows a better understanding of the target domain. The phenomenon focused on concerns the circulation of metaphors between the press and specialised discourse and, within press discourse, between newspapers, geographical areas and time periods. To understand this phenomenon, a corpus of press articles dealing with climate change and published in *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *USA Today* from 2014 to 2017 was built. It is compared to a corpus of Earth Negotiation Bulletins, reports published during COP21 in 2015. The metaphors related to the field of climate were identified and analyzed especially with the help of WMatrix software and its semantic field identification tool. It appears from the analysis that newspapers are inspired by specialised texts, but they do not necessarily use the metaphors in the same manner. The time period, geographical area and editorial line of newspapers also influence the use of metaphors.

- 11 The papers in this issue reflect the large and growing range of corpora that metaphor studies can help analyze and point to the fact that although metaphor studies are well-developed, they seem to be an inexhaustible source of research. We hope that this volume will contribute to arousing new lines of research blending different theories on metaphor, and more broadly further research on manipulation through language and conceptualisation.

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# “How to be happy” according to *Cosmopolitan*: The metaphors of happiness at the service of positive psychology and neoliberalism ideology

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## Introduction

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# Introduction

- 1 The study of the representation of happiness in women's magazine industry is of particular interest. First of all, happiness has deeply permeated our cultural imagination and now occupies a central place in our lives: self-fulfillment has become the essential aim of the individual, workplace wellness is a key objective for companies, and the well-being of societies is now the unit of measure used to assess the success of political projects [Illouz & Cabanas 2018: 9]. This is why the notion of happiness now plays a fundamental role in our understanding of the individual and the world. Furthermore, women's magazines are a privileged source for studying the construction and reproduction of gender norms [Blandin 2018: 119] and can thus reflect the expectations and injunctions to which women are subjected to in contemporary Western society. In this respect, although these magazines are written for women, this paper does not approach the corpus analysis through the prism of gender, even if I do not rule out such an approach in future studies. I claim that this analysis shows the metaphorical representation of happiness proposed by *Cosmopolitan*. Nevertheless, I do not aim to determine whether this vision concerns only the readers of this magazine, (French) women, or people living in Western countries. That is why the generic term "individual" is used to refer to the person involved in the "emotional event". Finally, the significant media impact of women's press [Soulier 2008: 192] ensures an important diffusion of this representation which also justifies the interest of this study.
- 2 Numerous studies have been conducted on the metaphorical representation of happiness in different languages and cultures [Yu 1995; Kövecses 2000, 2008; Stefanowitsch 2004; Adamizka 2011; Tissi 2008; Csillag 2016]. Nevertheless, and to the best of our knowledge, the ideological dimension of this representation has not been taken into account. The aim of this paper is thus to understand how happiness is represented metaphorically in *Cosmopolitan magazine* and to determine whether this representation corresponds to an ideological agenda. In this regard, I intend to contribute to the study of the happiness metaphor by adding a critical dimension and by evaluating the role that metaphors play in the discourse of happiness. This study also differs from other works on the subject by



considering the notion of happiness in a very broad sense, based on the definition of happiness proposed by positive psychology. This includes concepts such as personal fulfillment, resilience or well-being.

# 1. Happiness and positive psychology

- 3 In this section a general definition of the concept of “happiness” is proposed as well as an introduction to the theory of positive psychology, which will be examined critically.

## 1.1. Happiness

- 4 The term ‘happiness’ mainly refers to two different phenomena. The first phenomenon is momentary, and is defined by Salmela, Pessi & Tissari [2008: 5] as “states of mind of a particular kind”, such as joyous, cheerful, etc. The second phenomenon is rather related to a lifetime period and is defined by these authors as “one’s settled dispositions and [...] one’s objective situation, which, together, make one’s life go well”. This is the type studied in this paper.
- 5 It is important to note that the definition of happiness has changed throughout history. Aristotle considered it as the essential objective of the human being (*eudemonia*), and it was understood as a morally correct life [Davies 2015; Salmela, Pessi & Tissari 2008]. Christianity brought about a radical shift. As a consequence of the original sin, happiness became available only in the afterlife, when the souls of believers came into contact with God [Salmela, Pessi & Tissari 2008; Bruckner 2002]. The Enlightenment restored happiness to its terrestrial condition, and it was once again considered as a fundamental goal in the life of a human being. A theory called Utilitarianism was born in the background of this intellectual movement. Its leading representatives, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, argued that the moral value of a political action depended on the degree of happiness it produced for people. Marar [2003, cited by Salmela, Pessi & Tissari 2008] states that since the Enlightenment we have moved “from morality and the idea of being good [...] towards individual needs and feeling good”. It is not possible to finish



this section without mentioning that happiness has also had a negative connotation through different periods and within different social groups. For example, Bruckner [2002: 63-68] states that happiness has been often related to emptiness since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and that the participants of the 1968 protests in France associated happiness with *niaiserie petite-bourgeoise* (petty-bourgeois silliness) and consumerism. Anyway, this brief introduction allows us to see the relationship that exists between happiness and political action, and to understand to what extent this emotion can be ideologically loaded and represent much more than a pleasant feeling for the individual.

- 6 At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a new and very influential psychological trend was born. It has been named “positive psychology” and it is centered on the concept of happiness. This theory is presented in the following section.

## 1.2. Positive psychology

- 7 Martin Seligman, Professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania and president of the American Psychological Association (APA), founded a new field of study, called “positive psychology” in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The aim of this new field of research is to understand the optimal human functioning in terms of happiness or psychological well-being<sup>1</sup>. Happiness is understood here in a very broad sense, manifesting itself in aspects such as a constant search for personal fulfillment, a positive attitude towards life, satisfaction, resilience, etc. According to this discipline, happiness can be measured scientifically and, more importantly, the skills related to each type of happiness can be learned. The possibility of emotions being learned is fundamental insofar as happiness does not depend on destiny or the circumstances that surround us, such as purchasing power, education, nationality, skin color, sexual orientation, gender, beauty, but essentially on ourselves [Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade 2005]. Thus, according to this theory, individuals have in themselves certain assets, which do not necessarily manifest spontaneously or consciously, but which can be identified and developed by the individual thanks to a positive attitude.



- 8     Positive psychology considers that happiness is a process. As Polley [2009: 231] points out, happiness embodies three different aspects within this process. In the first place, happiness is understood as a life goal and the result of an adequate way of thinking and acting. Secondly, happiness is also considered as the process itself, manifest in the constant positive attitude that the individual must develop to encourage their *personal growth* [Ryff 1996: 17]. Finally, one of the peculiarities of positive psychology is that happiness also constitutes a starting point. According to this theory, the causal link between success and happiness is understood in diametrical opposition to what we have done so far: it is not success that causes happiness, but rather happiness that enables success in very different domains (health, love, studies, work, family, etc.) [Cabanas and Illouz 127: 2018]. In fact, individuals are not happy because they have friends, but on the contrary, they have friends because they are happy (a happy individual will be more pleasant company than a miserable person). The same happens in other areas, such as the professional domain (a person with a positive attitude will find a better job than a depressed person) or even one's health (negativity and stress contribute to the deterioration of physical well-being, while a positive attitude promotes health and cures illnesses). The crucial point of this conceptualization is that not only is happiness available to anyone, so is success.
- 9     For the reasons just outlined, we can conclude that happiness is not considered in this theoretical framework as something utopian, inaccessible, immoral, boring or related to petty-bourgeois conformism. On the contrary, happiness is considered as a set of heterogeneous and positive psychological states, which constitute a desirable and essential objective for the human being and then are the starting point of success. Happiness ultimately depends on individual will, and is available to anyone, provided that there is a proactive attitude to try to get it [Illouz & Cabanas 2018: 10]. According to their representatives, this new trend entailed a 180 degree turn in the field of psychology. Traditionally focused on individual's weakness and the need to overcome mental illness and trauma, psychology now concentrated on human virtues, strengths and well-being, with the aim to construct a better person. However, despite this apparent rupture, it is important to point out that this



scientific trend was built on certain existing ideas, such as utilitarianism, humanistic psychology or the psychology of adaptation. Furthermore, Illouz & Cabanas [2018: 28] claim that this trend is also strongly related to other movements of a more popular nature, such as the whole self-help culture. It is also important to point out that positive psychology has had a great influence in the field of psychology and among the general public. Its success was almost immediate and was due to the prestige of its major representatives, to the attention that this movement has aroused in different interest groups, and to the economic means available to them to develop and implement this theory.

### 1.3. Positive psychology: an ideology?

- 10 A growing number of voices have expressed their concern about the way in which this search for well-being has been transformed into an ideology. This concern is understandable if we consider the term *ideology* in the same way as Goatly [2007: 64], as “meaning in the service of power”. One of the essential reasons to describe positive psychology as an ideology is the implication that this theory has for people. The first consequence relates to people's responsibility for what happens to them. As I have pointed out previously, since happiness depends to a large extent on the psychological constitution of individuals and their attitude to life rather than on the circumstances surrounding their life, individuals become responsible not only for their emotions but also for their successes and failures. The second consequence is related to the responsibility of individuals relative to the common good. In fact, individual happiness is presented as a key requirement to maintain the economic, political and social health of a given community. For example, a positive employee (hard worker and committed to the company) contributes to the success of the business network in which he is immersed, while a depressed employee (not very energetic, often on sick leave) is likely to harm the company economically, and by extension, society. It is important to point out that the economic repercussions of citizens' happiness are nowadays taken very seriously. Davies [2015: 9] cites the example of the United States, where the unhappiness of employees has been estimated as having an annual loss of 500 billion dollars. The fact of having positioned happiness as



a key requirement for individual and collective success has contributed to its consideration as a moral imperative, and to the fact that negative emotions are perceived as moral faults. This line of thinking has been called 'biomoral' [Zupancic 2008; Spicer & Cedeström 2018] and brought us to the conclusion that positive psychology, like most trends in the self-help movement, is a victim-blaming approach [Barbara Ehrenreich 2009; Davies 2015; Illouz & Cabanas 2018; Spicer & Cedeström 2018].

- 11 These authors also argue that positive psychology is closely related to the neoliberal and capitalist values insofar as they present the structural deficits of contemporary societies, such as income redistribution, gender equality, access to health and food, etc. in terms of individual responsibility. The idea that emanates from this ideology is that there are no structural problems but individual deficiencies. It is important to emphasize that the relationship between neoliberalism and positive psychology is not virtual, but very concrete. By way of an example, David Cameron adopted some aspects of this theory as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom [Spicer & Cedeström 2018: 88-89]. He considered that a policy that had happiness as a horizon could substitute public spending to a certain extent, since it supported arguments justifying that the welfare state is not the engine of well-being, but rather a source of laziness for citizens and a brake on their personal fulfillment. In this regard, considering happiness as a political priority against other criteria (equality, freedom, etc.) provides justification to some of the most controversial tendencies of capitalism and neoliberalism. For example, Kelley & Evans [2017] stated that orienting economic policy towards equality and not towards economic growth is a serious mistake, because inequality has no effect on happiness in rich nations (in normal times) and that inequality could be a source of happiness in developing nations. This is because the greater the inequality, the higher the expectations of citizens' progress. This political prioritization of well-being is equally expressed in the birth of new indicators of political success based on happiness, such as the World Happiness Report [see for example Helliwell, Layard & Sachs 2017], which tries to replace others kind of studies essentially based on economic data, such as GDP.



- 12 On the other hand, if we consider that positive psychology is an ideology, it is necessary to determine which interest groups benefit from it. First, this new theory opens a new field of scientific research. This allows researchers to publish articles and survive in an academic world dominated by the maxim “publish or perish”. This approach also benefits psychologists, since it puts at their disposal a new and huge niche of clients: people who do not have psychological problems, but who wish to “improve”. It also benefits a set of professions (coaches, editorial world of self-help, etc.) that are legitimized by the “supposedly” scientific character of this new psychological trend [Illouz & Cabanas 2018: 39-43]. Happiness has also become a vital issue for companies, which are interested in how to get the most out of their employees, fostering attitudes such as commitment, availability, flexibility, productivity, etc. Finally, politicians also benefit from this ideology, to the extent that this doctrine holds the individuals responsible for their situation and minimizes the negative consequences of the social policies implemented by the government.
- 13 It is important to bear in mind that the pressure to be happy constitutes only one more source of pressure among many others. Western citizens are saturated with information and are constantly placed at a crossroad of contradictory messages following different ideological, economic and political objectives and to which they must respond. This is the case, for example, of the relationship between body and health. In this area, individuals face their own desires (drinking a beer, eating a hamburger vs. feeling good about themselves and their appearance), the contradictory expectations of society (eating healthy, exercising, vs having fun, drinking alcohol), advertising messages (eating industrial food vs thinking that a perfect body is a normal body), and articles from women’s magazines (Accept yourself! vs. Lose weight!). The fundamental aspect that must be taken into account is that positive psychology has not been presented as another element of this set of opposing forces, but on the contrary, it has been introduced as the solution to all these pressures. In the same vein, the concept of *happiness*, key to this trend, is completely free of stigma, unlike other concepts such as *individualism*, which have a strong negative connotation [Cabanas 2019: 298]. The fact that positive psychology is characterized within the category of ‘solution’ allows its ideological character and



consequences to be hidden and turns it into a particularly effective tool for spreading strong cultural and ideological values.

- 14 This section concludes by presenting some of the main criticisms that have been made against positive psychology. Spicer & Cedeström [2018: 148-149] denounce the consequences of this theory for individuals, such as a narcissistic drift, the permanent distress that results from being responsible for their fate, and the feeling of guilt that arises when the expected goals are not achieved. Another series of criticisms are related to the lack of scientific rigor of studies on positive psychology. This science is criticized for its religious roots, its great resemblance to the theories of self-help literature, its ethnocentric approach combined with universalist aspirations, the contradictions, tautologies and theoretical and methodological weaknesses of numerous studies, and even its therapeutic efficacy [Cabanas 2019: 300]. However, despite these criticisms, positive psychology has not ceased gaining influence, and has managed to counter the skepticism of its critics by portraying it as an example of retrograde negativity [Illouz & Cabanas 2018: 37]. The success of this psychological trend is extremely important insofar as the dissemination of psychological knowledge does not only contribute to describing human behavior, but also has the potential to build it [Medina Cárdenas 2019: 3].

## **2. Characteristics of the women's press: the case of *Cosmopolitan***

- 15 The women's press covers a large number of heterogeneous publications, which are essentially characterized by the desire to build a female audience around a particular gender identity [Blandin 2018: 107]. Unlike the news press, which focuses more on the darker impulses of our societies, the women's press is characterized by privileging the positive aspects of human existence, such as beauty or pleasure. This does not imply that women's magazines close the door to deeper issues [Soulier 2008: 189]. They adapt to social and political transformations in a desire for permanent modernity, and can sometimes contribute to spreading militant discourses, such as ones related to feminism [Blandin 2018: 120].



- 16 Women's magazines have three essential functions: recreational, educational and coercive [Bruckner 2002: 83]. The recreational function relates the reading of this type of press to a moment of relaxation and pleasure [Soulier 2008: 197]. The educational function is related to the contents of the magazine, such as news reports, makeup techniques or articles about fashion and interior design. Finally, with regard to the coercive function, Eck & Blandin [2010: 15] argue that this type of publication constitutes a call for action. They encourage readers to take charge of their lives and undertake constant improvement on different levels, such as health, beauty or emotions. According to Bruckner [2002: 83], the women's press transmits two contradictory messages. The first message is positive, and insists on the fact that beauty, health and pleasure are available to everyone if we do what is necessary to achieve them. The second message, which is negative, conveys the idea that those who do not make an effort will be the only ones responsible for their failure. As we have seen in the previous section, the responsibility of individuals for their own failure is closely related to neoliberal ideology and positive psychology.
- 17 *Cosmopolitan* magazine is part of the women's press. Readers of *Cosmopolitan* are young liberated women [Blandin 2018: 112] belonging to the highest socio-cultural and socio-professional categories [Soulier 2008: 194]. The editorial line is characterized by a heteronormalized discourse, centered on beauty and sexual attraction, self-realization and personal success. According to authors such as Biscarrat [2013], Winship [1987: 122] or Conradie [2011: 402], these characteristics show how the magazine is embedded in neoliberal and capitalist logic.

### 3. Metaphor and persuasion

- 18 One of the modern theories of metaphor, in the field of cognitive linguistics, was presented by Lakoff and Johnson in 1980 in the book *Metaphors we live by*. This theory was revolutionary in the sense that it challenged some traditional theories of metaphor and, in particular, the idea that conventional language is literal. Lakoff and Johnson argued that metaphor is essential in the daily use of language and, in a more general way, that it is a fundamental element for the cognitive



processes related to conceptualization. This theory is based on the basic idea that some conceptual areas ('source domains') serve as support to conceptualize other more abstract or complex areas ('target domains'). A good example of this theory is the conceptual metaphor *HAPPY IS UP*, which allows us to conceptualize and express emotions in spatial terms and manifests itself in metaphorical expressions such as "How to cheer someone up"<sup>2</sup> or "Matthew is in heaven". Metaphors can be more or less conventional, that is to say, more or less settled in the linguistic usage of a given community of speakers. As Lakoff & Turner [1989] point out, a metaphor is conventional when it is treated cognitively automatically and effortlessly, and when it is a natural way of thinking and expressing a certain concept in a linguistic community. This is the case, for example, in the expression previously mentioned "to cheer someone up" to express the inducement of joy. However, Charteris-Black [2004: 17] mentions that it is important to highlight that conventional metaphors are paradoxically situated in a middle position between literal and metaphorical language, in that its diachronic evolution has shown that originally metaphoric expressions established over time as literal ones. For this reason, it is difficult to establish a clear boundary between literal and metaphorical uses of an expression. In this study we consider metaphorical expressions as such, regardless of their degree of conventionalization or vitality. This is based on the idea that 'metaphor' is not an absolute but rather a relative concept [Charteris-Black 2004: 20].

### 3.1. Happiness metaphors

- 19 In this section, the main metaphors that are used in different languages to express happiness, the cognitive model that has been used to analyze metaphors and the persuasive value of this figure of speech and thought will be exposed.
- 20 Given the preponderance of metaphorical language in emotional discourse, a large number of studies have been devoted to the metaphorical expression of happiness [Yu 1995; Kövecses 2000, 2008; Polley 2009; Stefanowitsch 2004; Adamizka 2011; Tissi 2008; Csillag 2016]. Some metaphorical patterns are particularly recurrent. One of



the main metaphors to express happiness in different languages is the aforementioned *HAPPY IS UP*. Another essential metaphor to represent happiness is *HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER*, instantiated in expressions like “to be full of joy”. Another recurrent metaphorical model is that related to the notion of transfer, which manifests itself in expressions such as “to share joy”. Other significant metaphors are those centered on the concept of ‘quest’, such as *TRYING TO ACHIEVE HAPPINESS IS SEARCHING FOR HAPPINESS*, instantiated in expressions such as “looking for happiness”. The conclusions of Stefanowitsch [2004: 144] regarding these metaphors are particularly interesting. He argues that American English speakers prefer a more active and dynamic view of this search, we can call it ‘pursuit mapping’, while German speakers prefer a less active and dynamic search, we can call it ‘search mapping’. He claims that these different representations have ideological roots. In the case of the United States, individuals are conceptualized as responsible for their well-being, implying an active and conscious approach to achieve it, whereas this is not exactly the same case in Germany. Two other relevant metaphors appear in the consulted studies: *HAPPINESS IS LIGHT*, which is expressed in expressions such as “you are a sunshine”, and *THE PROCESS OF TRYING TO EXPERIENCE AN EMOTION IS A JOURNEY*, which manifests itself in expressions such as “that is the only road to happiness”. As we will see in the results section, all these metaphors are present in the *Cosmopolitan* corpus, and have been categorized according to certain conceptual schemes that allow us to highlight their ideological charge.

## 3.2. The cognitive models of emotion

- 21 This study is based on two cognitive models of emotion that have been integrated into a single final model. The first of these models comes from Kövecses [2000, 2008]. According to him, there are prototypical cognitive patterns with which individuals of a certain linguistic and cultural community intuitively conceptualize emotions. The author presents the following model as the most schematic, which therefore allows very different emotions to be encompassed, and among them, happiness. This model represents an event in which a stimulus causes an emotion and this, in turn, leads to a particular bodily, mental or behavioral response.



**Cause of emotion > emotion > (controlling emotion >) response**

- 22 Our study adds another stage to this model, called ‘cognitive evaluation’. This stage refers to the cognitive analysis that the experiencer makes of the stimulus to which they are exposed, and which does not correspond to the concept of ‘controlling emotion’ proposed by Kövecses. As Ortony *et al.* [1988: 4-5] point out, emotion does not depend only on stimulus, but also on the evaluation process that the experiencer performs in response to it: a film (stimulus) does not cause the same result (emotion) to all spectators (experiencers), since the result depends on how the spectator interprets the movie. For this reason, I propose the following model of the popular conceptualization of emotion in the West:

**Stimulus > cognitive evaluation > emotion > reaction**

- 23 I agree with Kövecses to the extent that both this model and emotional metaphors are based on a force dynamics pattern [Talmy 2000]. Force dynamics is one of the fundamental categories in language structuring and organizing meaning. It has been presented by Talmy as a generalization of the traditional notion of causation and reflects the way in which different entities interact with respect to a given force. Force dynamics can be applied to very different areas, such as the physical one, as in the statement “the hut remained standing despite the storm”, in which the hut maintains its tendency to be upright despite the strength of the rain and the wind. It can also be instantiated in the psychological realm in an expression such as “Marina forced herself to speak”, in which Marina feels she has to speak against her will in response to certain (social) expectations. Finally, force dynamic interactions can also be emotional. It is the case of a statement such as “I cannot hate Pedro despite what he has done to me”. In this example, the subject is not capable of hating Pedro despite his desire to do so and/or despite the fact that this is the socially expected scenario in this type of situation. As we will see below, force dynamics is an essential concept in the metaphorical representation of happiness in the corpus.
- 24 The second model used to represent happiness is the ‘control cycle model’. According to Langacker [2009, 2013], it represents the very general conception of a cyclical process related to the will to take



control over a certain event or entity. It is composed prototypically of four stages. The first stage is characterized by a homogeneous state. In the emotional domain it would be a primary emotional state, such as, for example, being calm. The second stage represents a stage of tension, because of the appearance of an element that disturbs the previous situation. It can be, for example, a comment that can be interpreted as a compliment. The third stage represents the interaction that will solve this tension through a process of force dynamics, which can take many different forms, more or less abstract. It can focus on the energetic process by which the stimulus causes a change in the experiencer (“his flattery made her happy”). It can also be a phenomenon of divided self [Talmy 2000] that happens when a situation of tension occurs within the same individual (“she could not stop herself from being happy about the flattery”). A final example may be one in which the experiencer manages to control the emotion (“she maintains optimism despite what happened”). The fourth stage of this model represents the result of this force dynamic interaction, characterized by representing the continuity of this new state. Figure 1 offers a diagram that summarizes the four phases of this cycle applied to the emotional event.

Figure 1: The control cycle



25     The control cycle model adapted to the emotional event [Gómez Vicente 2012: 2019] allows us to represent the many different ways in which the emotional event can be expressed according to the conceptualization of the speaker, both literally and metaphorically. For example, a metaphorical statement such as (1) presents wellbeing in a static way, essentially focusing on phase 1, i.e. a homogeneous initial state (or phase 4 if this state is presented as a result). On the other hand, a statement such as (2) focuses instead on phase 2, i.e. the tension phase. It highlights the stimulus (the useless thoughts that arise in the brain). Example (2) focuses also on phase 3, i.e. the force dynamics phase (the interaction between the ideas that are



going to enter the brain and the strength of the individual to keep them out).

(1) Bien dans ma peau.<sup>3</sup> Bronzage écru, tongs râpées, libido hors contrôle... La devise de Cosmo : plus on s'en fout, plus on rit ! [CO3]

Comfortable in my own skin. E cru tan, tatty thongs, libido out of control...  
Cosmos's motto: the more we don't care, the more fun it becomes.

(2) Apprendre à reconnaître les pensées inutiles et leur refuser l'accès à mon cerveau. [CO9]

Find out how to recognize unnecessary thoughts and how to deny them the access to my brain.

- 26 I consider that this model of 'emotional control cycle' assimilates the essential phases described in the Kövecses model. For this reason, I will use this model as a schematic representation of the Western vision of the happiness event.

### 3.3 The persuasive value of metaphor

- 27 Metaphorical language is not neutral, but contributes to building, settling and reproducing social ideologies and practices [Goatly 2007: 25]. Conventional metaphors create 'ready-made categories', and the individual assimilates them as part of common sense without realizing the ideological weight they carry. For this reason, it is possible to conclude that metaphors not only have a linguistic and cognitive function but also a pragmatic one. The pragmatic function can often be related to a persuasive intention [Charteris-Black 2004: 10]. In this regard, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) [Charteris-Black 2004] is particularly relevant for this work. It has two essential objectives: the first one consists in explaining the ideological motivations that are hidden in certain discursive practices that reflect and reinforce the structures of socio-political power; the second one is to propose modifications to these practices in order to benefit society.
- 28 I will end this section by saying that the relationship between metaphor, positive psychology and persuasion analyzed here is not necessarily the result of an involuntary process but can be a conscious alliance to achieve certain aims. The conscious nature of this relationship can be seen, for example, in the abstract of the



following article “This Is Your Life! The Design of a Positive Psychology Intervention. Using Metaphor to Motivate”<sup>4</sup>:

“This Is Your Life” is a training aimed at personal growth, or “flourishing”, and is based on the science of positive psychology. The objective of this project was to create a design for a digital version of a book with theory and exercises about **positive psychology**. The target group for the digital version were primary school teachers. A user-centered design approach was used together with **persuasive** and gameful design frameworks. More specifically, a **metaphorical design** was used to **motivate** the target group to **start using** the training and to **continue using** and complete the training. Several metaphors were explored and tested with the target group. Finally, a working prototype of the digital training was developed and tested by the target user group. From this final test we found that the chosen metaphorical design indeed motivated people. [Ludden et al. 2014]

- 29 From my point of view, this type of document might validate the hypothesis that underlies this research, that is, that the use of metaphor in the discourse of positive psychology may be related to the intent to persuade.

## 4. Methodology

- 30 This study is based on the analysis of a corpus composed of 12 articles of the French version of *Cosmopolitan magazine*, belonging to the “Psycho” section (psychology section) and published between 2017 and 2018. Among the issues available in the library, only the articles that referred to happiness were selected.
- 31 Unlike other studies, I do not rely solely on metaphorical expressions in which a certain list of lexemes appears, such as “happiness”, “joy”, “well-being” or “fulfillment”. In this study, all the metaphors that are used to characterize the very general notion of *happiness* are analyzed. Metaphors were selected regardless of the particular realm to which this applies, such as the professional (3) or the psychological (4). The selected metaphors refer to different components of the emotional event, such as the way to achieve happiness (3, 4), the



elements that help to achieve this objective (5) or, on the contrary, the obstacles that hinder it and how to overcome them (6):

(3) Pour avancer, il faut formuler les choses : on n'a aucune chance d'obtenir une augmentation si on ne la demande pas. [CO5]

To move forward, you have to speak up: you have no chance of getting a raise if you do not ask for one.

(4) Le dépassement de soi commence par des petits pas. [CO5]

The surpassing of oneself starts with small steps.

(5) [...] il m'aide à dépasser mes limites. Victor représente une force motrice : il me prend par la main et me tire vers le haut [CO7]

[...] he helps me to go beyond my limits. Victor represents a driving force: he takes me by the hand and gives me a boost.

(6) Donc on apprivoise la source du stress plutôt que de la fuir. [CO1]

So, we tame the source of stress rather than fleeing it.

32 Since there were no metaphorical terms defined in advance, the identification of metaphors was done manually. Specifically, the collection of metaphors was carried out according to the CDA method [Charteris-Black 2004]. The first step was to collect examples of linguistic metaphors for happiness. The second step consisted in the classification and qualitative analysis of these metaphors in order to establish particularly salient conceptual schemes. Finally, thought patterns underlying these schemes were established.

## 5. Results and discussion

33 Thanks to a qualitative analysis of the corpus, it has been found that two concepts are particularly salient in the metaphorical representation of well-being: the concept of 'limit' and the concept of 'force'. On the one hand, the concept of force refers to the representation of the emotional event in terms of force dynamics (the pressure exerted by society on the individuals, the individuals who fight against their drives or thoughts, the individuals who fight against this pressure in order to be happy, etc.). On the other hand, the concept of limit is understood as a cognitive construction used to delimit different spaces related to the individual's happiness. This study is therefore based on the metaphors of happiness related to



these two notions. Six main metaphoric schemes have been found, organized according to the notion of limit. As we can see, each of those schemes is also related to the notion of force. These six schemes are presented in the following subsections.

## 5.1 The internal space of the individual is divided into two spaces: 'bottom' / 'surface'

- 34 This scheme divides the internal space of individuals according to a criterion of depth. Individuals are conceptualized as containers. The entities placed in the bottom represent aspects that are unknown, forgotten or dismissed by individuals, and that they cannot therefore control. This is the case of a part of an individual that has been neglected (7), of questions that someone has not faced (8), of abandoned projects (9) or of true desires of people (10). It is interesting to note that this is the only scheme of our corpus in which individuals rarely take part in a force dynamics interaction. This is clearly explained by the fact that the essential feature of this scheme is the inaccessibility of this space for them. However, it is important to note that individuals can mentally access these elements if efforts have been made. This is the case of (10), in which people must try to decipher their authentic desires despite the difficulty represented by the immediacy of the internet. In this case, the force dynamic interaction is particularly obvious thanks to the expression “ne doit pas nous empêcher” (“should not prevent you”). Finally, these hidden elements are usually positive aspects, and are related in some way to the ‘authentic’ part of the self. As we will see later, the search for the most authentic (and best) part of the individual is fundamental in the imagery of positive psychology.

(7) Mon bilan fait ressurgir ma partie créative, enfouie. [CO5]

My skill assessment makes my buried creative part ‘crop up’.

(8) [...] les questions longtemps enfouies refont surface : qui suis-je vraiment ? [CO11]

[...] long-buried questions are resurfacing: who am I really?

(9) Mes projets avortés refont surface. [...] [CO11]



My failed projects are resurfacing. [...]

(10) L'instantanéité d'Internet ne doit pas nous empêcher de nous questionner sur notre désir profond. [CO10]

The immediacy of the Internet should not prevent us from questioning ourselves about our deep desire.

## 5.2. The internal space of the individual is divided into two spaces: 'center' / 'periphery'

- 35 This scheme also separates the internal space of individuals, but this time according to a criterion of centrality. In this scheme the center is synonymous with essential aspects to achieve well-being, such as pleasure (11), priorities (12), humanity (13), or individuals themselves (14). On the contrary, the periphery is synonymous with superficial aspects of life, which do not help in the search for happiness. In this scheme, individuals must "concentrate", "refocus" (11, 12), stop spreading themselves (14) or put the essential aspects of life in the center (13). The participation of individuals in the force dynamic interaction is very obvious and manifests itself in linguistic aspects such as the imperative mood (11), the middle voice construction (12)<sup>5</sup>, expressions such as "se sentir obligé" ("feel obliged") (13) or modal verbs such as "falloir" ("have to") (14).
- 36 These linguistic aspects highlight the injunction exerted on individuals to achieve a state of well-being. The 'tips' or 'calls to action' of the magazine also highlight the prescriptive values of this journalistic medium in terms of social behavior, as well as its connection with the positive psychology ideology. Finally, the metaphors belonging to this scheme show a pronounced individualism, since it is understood that happiness is obtained thanks to the focus of individuals on their own interests and well-being. The fact of presenting well-being in individual and non-collective terms makes it possible to relate *Cosmopolitan's* discourse not only to positive psychology but also to neoliberalism.

(11) Concentrez-vous sur votre plaisir, et pas sur un objectif, qui a tendance à être culpabilisant quand on ne l'atteint pas. [CO1]



Concentrate on your pleasure, not on a goal, which tends to lead to guilt when it is not reached.

(12) [...] le chemin vers la détox digitale pour prioriser, se concentrer, se recentrer. [CO12]

[...] the path towards digital detox to prioritize, focus, refocus.

(13) On ne se sent plus obligée de ressembler à telle ou telle personne en achetant la même paire de Nike [...]. À la place, on remet au centre ce qu'il y a de plus essentiel, l'humain. [CO10]

We do not feel obliged any longer to look like this or that person by buying the same pair of Nike [...]. Instead, we bring back to the center what is most essential, the human.

(14) Vous le savez : il va falloir faire des pauses dans votre course folle, prendre le temps de vous concentrer sur vous, arrêter de vous disperser pour pouvoir enfin recharger les batteries en profondeur. [CO11]

You know it: you will have to take breaks in your crazy race, take the time to focus on yourself, stop spreading yourself to finally deeply recharge the batteries.

- 37 The metaphors that underlie these schemes are not new; on the contrary, they are related to the prototypical metaphors of emotions, such as PEOPLE ARE CONTAINERS. The important thing is that this study highlights the relationship that these metaphors, organized under conceptual schemes, can have with a certain ideology in a particular context.

### 5.3. The internal and the external space of the individual are separated: 'inside' / 'outside'

- 38 This scheme is particularly recurrent in the corpus. Individuals are characterized as containers. The container layout delimits the internal and the external space of individuals. To achieve happiness, the positive elements must be placed in the inside space and the negative elements in the outside one. Bringing or maintaining the positive aspects within individuals is important insofar as this internal space is subject to a condition of 'emptiness' (15-17). The existential void must be actively filled by individuals, as it is possible to see in the expression "on a sans cesse besoin de" ("we constantly need to") (15) and in the verb "essayer" ("try") (16), which show the force dynamic interaction in which individuals participate.



(15) [...] Et tout ça, renforcé par une société qui érige la consommation en loisir essentiel. Et la possession, en clé du bonheur. On se piège parce qu'on a sans cesse besoin de combler le vide. [CO 10]

[...] And all this, reinforced by a society that makes consumption the essential leisure. And possession, the key to happiness. We are trapped because we constantly need to fill the void.

(16) Il n'y a rien de plus angoissant que d'être mal sans savoir vraiment pourquoi. La rumination donne un support, un sujet. Car nous essayons tous de remplir une faille. [CO9]

There is nothing more distressing than being hurt without really knowing why. Rumination gives support, a subject. Because we are all trying to fill a gap.

(17) Plutôt que de se précipiter pour combler le vide et la peur (naturelle) de la solitude, on prend son temps. [CO1]

Rather than rushing to fill the emptiness and (natural) fear of loneliness, we take our time.

39 Sometimes the emotional event is expressed as a homogeneous state devoid of force dynamics, which corresponds to the static phases of the control cycle model. The following examples present situations in which individuals have positive elements inside them, such as energy (18), ideas (19) or projects (20), which participate in the attainment of well-being.

(18) Moi qui suis pleine d'énergie d'habitude, je suis crevée, irascible avec mes proches [...] [CO11]

I am usually full of energy, but now I am exhausted, irascible with my relatives [...]

(19) J'ai plein d'idées et d'envies pour la suite. Il suffisait de leur faire une petite place pour qu'elles germent. [CO11]

I have lots of ideas and desires for the future. It was enough to give them a small place to germinate.

(20) Avoir un vrai projet en tête, ça change tout ! [CO8]

Having a real project in mind, it changes everything!

40 However, the statements in which force dynamics are present are much more recurrent in our corpus. In this scheme, numerous metaphors present a participant who exerts a force in order to fill the gap with positive things (15-17), to preserve the positive elements in the interior (21), to feel a certain resistance to the irruption of an emotion (22), or even to put the positive aspects that are initially within the participant in a suitable place (23).



(21) Garder de l'humour et une certaine distance, c'est essentiel, mais pas toujours facile. [CO1]

Keeping a sense of humor and distance is essential, but not always easy.

(22) Puis je m'offre l'ensemble survêt (...), et ça me donne envie de le rentabiliser. Rien que de le regarder chez moi, l'énergie m'envahit. [CO5]

Then I offer to myself the overall tracksuit (...) and I want to make it worthwhile. Watching it at home and the energy invades me.

(23) Aujourd'hui, j'ai changé de cabinet, avec un meilleur poste, mais pour moi c'est un tremplin vers une activité qui me conviendra davantage : monter ma propre boîte, et mettre mes compétences au service d'une activité qui me passionne. [CO5]

Today, I changed my law firm. I now have a better position, but for me it is a stepping-stone to an activity that will suit me better: to set up my own business, and to put my skills to the service of an activity I am passionate about.

- 41 Many metaphors indicating that negative aspects must be located outside individuals also appear in the corpus. Individuals must make a classification to decide what should be placed inside or outside (24), take the negative elements out (25-27), or face certain negative stimuli and emotions (28, 29). Individual may exceptionally preserve the negative aspects in the interior, but only if this procedure is aimed to control this emotion (30). Force dynamic interaction is again persistent in this metaphorical scheme, and is performed thanks to the lexical nature of terms such as “se libérer” (“free oneself”) (25), “rester” (“stay”) (26), “évacuer” (“evacuate”) (27), “être capable” (“be able”), “envahir” (“invade”) (28) or “apprivoiser” (“tame”) (30), and also thanks to reflexive (25) or transitive constructions<sup>6</sup> (28-30). These linguistic elements represent the external, internal and internalized pressures that the individual receives in order to manage emotions and be happy.

(24) Je m'allonge, je prends mes idées une par une et je fais le tri. [CO9]

I lie down, take my ideas one by one and sort them out.

(25) Se libérer d'une mauvaise habitude n'est pas qu'une question de volonté [...] [CO1]

To free oneself from a bad habit is not only a matter of will [...]

(26) [...] pourquoi ne pas lister ce qu'on veut faire et tester ? En amateur et sans pressions. [...] Mais on ne reste pas avec des regrets. [CO5]

[...] why not list what we want to do and test it? As an amateur and without pressure. [...] But we do not stay with regrets.



(27) Le soir, on note ce qui nous a pollués dans la journée, pour évacuer, puis on se remémore ce qui nous a fait plaisir. [CO5]

In the evening, we write down what contaminated us during the day, in order to evacuate it, and then we remember what made us happy.

(28) Ça contient la preuve de ce qu'on peut faire avec ses mains, et la preuve aussi qu'on est non seulement capable de s'évader des tourments qui nous envahissent, mais qu'ils peuvent aussi nourrir notre créativité. [CO4]

It contains the proof of what one can do with one's hands, and the proof that one is not only able to escape the torments that invade us, but that they can also nourish our creativity.

(29) [...] les effets de la méditation et du yoga se font sentir : le flot de pensées qui m'assaillaient se calme progressivement. [CO11]

[...] the effects of meditation and yoga make themselves felt: the flow of thoughts that assailed me is gradually calming down.

(30) Donc on apprivoise la source du stress plutôt que de la fuir. [CO1]

So, we tame the source of stress rather than fleeing it.

- 42 This scheme is interesting insofar as it represents individuals as active participants in their own emotions, a kind of 'emotional managers'. Individuals must fill the existential void, which appears as inherent to being human, with positive experiences, emotions and attitudes. At the same time, they have to remove the negative aspects from their existence. The linguistic elements indicating the force dynamic interaction show proactive individuals, emotionally involved in a constant situation of emotional tension and therefore constantly situated in phase 3 of the control cycle model. The introspection and continuous management of their emotional state places them equally within the logic of positive psychology and contributes to the idea of individuals as responsible for their own well-being, their successes and also their emotional and life failure.

## 5.4. The individual is separated into two different entities: 'the divided self'

- 43 This scheme presents individuals as dual beings, constituted by two different versions, i.e. a version of individuals that is true and authentic as opposed to another one that is less so. The mission of individuals is to 'find' (31) or 'discover' (34) the authentic version of themselves, which is considered the best by default. For this reason,



the authentic part of individuals must be celebrated (32) or at least accepted as strength (33). On the other hand, this authentic version of the self is only available to the individual and must be conceived outside any external influence (34, 35). The existential question that underlies this scheme is not so much “what I want to be”, but rather “who I really am”. This implies that the answer to existential questions is not found outside (friends, society, teachers, etc.) but in the individuals themselves.

- 44 On the other hand, it is important to underline the importance of the notion of *vision* in this scheme (33-35). This notion is relevant to the extent that the advice offered in the magazine does not seek to change reality, but rather the individual's perception of reality. This type of attitude corresponds to the precepts of positive psychology, which consider that the important thing is to concentrate on what we can change, i.e. our thoughts, emotions and attitudes, rather than the circumstances that surround us. Needless to say, this type of guidance is very beneficial for companies or the political system, insofar as individuals are advised to divert their gaze from everything that does not work and concentrate on themselves. On the other hand, it is important to specify that force dynamics are also present in this scheme, with lexical resources such as the verb “rompre” (“break”) (32), the noun “force” (33), and also with reflexive constructions such as “s'accepter” (“accept oneself”) or “se détacher” (“detach oneself”) (33, 35), which are particularly pervasive. I agree with Marquis [2014: 153] on the idea that the subject and complement pronouns which appear in reflexive constructions in this type of discourse refer to two different entities. In effect, this scheme often represents a confrontation between two different versions of individuals. One version is encoded by the subject pronoun and is the one that seeks authenticity. The other version, encoded by the complement, is the authentic and ideal version of individuals and must be celebrated, accepted, found or discovered.

(31) Je suis partie au bout du monde pour me trouver [CO8]

I went to the end of the world to find myself

(32) Il ne s'agit pas de célébrer l'obésité ou l'anorexie, mais de rompre avec un regard stéréotypé sur la beauté, et de célébrer la personne que vous êtes. [CO6]



It's not about celebrating obesity or anorexia, but breaking with a stereotypical look at beauty, and celebrating the person you are.

(33) En fait, ce n'est pas la timidité qui devient une force... C'est la façon dont nous considérons ce trait de personnalité. La véritable force de Myriam, c'est de s'accepter telle qu'elle est. [CO7]

In fact, it's not shyness that becomes a force... It's the way we look at this personality trait. Myriam's real strength is to accept herself as she is.

(34) Cette période donne l'opportunité de se découvrir soi-même, sans le regard de l'autre. [CO1]

This period gives the opportunity to discover oneself without the gaze of the other.

(35) [...] on se regarde avec bienveillance, bref, on apprend à se détacher du regard que les autres portent sur nous, pour ne dépendre que du nôtre [regard]. [CO1]

[...] we look at ourselves with kindness; in short, we learn to detach ourselves from the gaze that others have on us, to depend only on ours [gaze].

This scheme clearly highlights the internal struggle of individuals in their search for happiness in the psychological discourse of *Cosmopolitan* magazine.

## 5.5. Division of the individual's social space: 'positive people are inside' / 'negative people are outside'

- 45 This scheme also presents an inside/outside conceptualization, but the boundaries do not correspond anymore to the layout of individuals' body. People who contribute to well-being must be situated in the domain of individuals. Cohabitation in this inner space is expressed by the metaphor of physical contact between the individual and these people. This explains why these people can support the individual (36) or shake hands (37-38). It is interesting to note that, as Medina Cárdenas [2019: 8] maintains, the discourse of positive psychology claims the importance of the individual but also insists on the need of other people. However, these people are often mostly defined as sources of benefit to the individual, which contribute to reinforcing individualism more than peer interaction. In the examples below, people are not valued because of the emotions that they seek as human beings, but because of the help they can provide to achieve the individual's own goals. It is interesting to note that these help-humans are a source of driving energy in terms of



force dynamics: “soutenir” (“support”) (36), “dépasser” (“go beyond”), “force motrice” (“driving force”), “tirer vers le haut” (“give a boost”) (37) “tendre la main” (“reach out”) or “avancer” (“progress”) (38).

(36) Heureusement, mon copain me soutient. [CO8]

Fortunately, my boyfriend supports me.

(37) Je ne dis pas que j'existe grâce ou à travers lui. Simplement qu'il m'aide à dépasser mes limites. Victor représente une force motrice: il me prend par la main et me tire vers le haut. [CO7]

I do not say that I exist thanks to or through him. He just helps me to go beyond my limits. Victor represents a driving force: he takes me by the hand and gives me a boost.

(38) Mais avoir une force de caractère ne signifie pas se construire une armure, ou aboyer « bas les pattes, je me débrouille toute seule » dès que quelqu'un nous tend la main. Ça, ça s'appelle de l'orgueil, et avec lui, on n'avance jamais loin. [CO7]

But having strength of character does not mean building an armor, or barking “leave me alone, I can manage myself” as soon as someone reaches out to us. That's called pride, and with it, we never progress far.

- 46 In parallel, there are multiple utterances in the corpus expressing the idea of moving away from negative people. Two metaphorical source domains are particularly important. The first one is war. Individuals must ‘free themselves’ from an ‘invading’ family (39), must use strategies such as ‘burning bridges’ (40) and defending themselves in a ‘hostile’ environment (41). This implies the consideration of others as potential enemies in the struggle for well-being. The second important source domain is cleansing. Friends who bring negative emotions to individuals, such as guilt (42) or the inability to develop their most authentic self (43), deserve to be eliminated in a cleansing process. In the same way, people who feel negative emotions, such as dwelling on negative issues, must be eliminated from their domain and this even if the individual also possesses this trait (44). Needless to say, both the war process and the cleansing process entail a significant involvement of individuals in these tasks and highlight the force dynamics interaction.

(39) Libérée d'une famille envahissante? [CO1]

Released from an invasive family?

(40) En coupant les ponts avec ma mère, je pensais être enfin capable d'entreprendre sans qu'elle me juge sans arrêt. [CO1]



By burning my bridges with my mother, I thought I was finally able to undertake without her judging me constantly.

(41) [...] force qui me sauve à de nombreuses reprises. Quand je me sens dans un environnement « hostile », je prends le temps de mettre en forme mon discours avant d'entrer dans le débat [CO7]

[...] force that saves me many times. When I feel I am in a “hostile” environment, I take the time to format my speech before entering the debate

(42) Les amis, les vrais, ne nous feront jamais culpabiliser. Dans les cas contraires, il suffit de trente secondes pour faire « contact » « delete » et nettoyer le répertoire. [CO10]

Friends, real ones, will never make us feel guilty. Otherwise, it only takes thirty seconds to click on “contact” “delete” and clean up the contact list.

(43) Côté relationnel, là aussi, on fait le ménage et on refuse le désordre causé par les autres. Ras le bol de tordre notre personnalité et de zapper nos envies [CO10]

On the relational side, too, we do the housework and we refuse the disorder caused by others. We get sick of twisting our personalities and curbing our own desires.

(44) Éviter de m'entourer des gens comme moi. Plus on est de ruminants, plus on rumine. [CO9]

Avoid surrounding myself with people like me. The more ruminants we are, the more we ruminate.

- 47 It is important to note that getting away from negative people is a leitmotiv in discourses inspired by positive psychology. These types of messages encourage loneliness and lack of empathy and convey a warning: “smile and be agreeable [...] or prepare yourself to be ostracized” [Ehrenreich 2009: 55].

## 5.6. From the comfort zone to the happiness zone: the path scheme

- 48 This scheme implies that there is a spatial domain in which each individual is located, and which is different from the space in which happiness is situated. The individual must therefore move from one to another in order to achieve well-being. This type of metaphorical construction of happiness corresponds to the pervasive metaphorical (multimodal) expression “step outside your comfort zone” (Figure 2). The ‘comfort zone’ is the domain in which each individual is situated. This domain is separated from the space where the necessary resources to be happy are located (“where the magic happens”).



Paradoxically, individuals must leave the area in which they feel good to look for what will lead them to true happiness.

Figure 2: the comfort zone [oklanica 2012]



- 49 In the corpus, the elements that lead to happiness are usually outside the domain of individuals and therefore are not within their reach (45, 46). Individuals and the conditions to be happy are in the same domain in only one case in our corpus. The requirements to be happy have been reached with great effort but strangely enough this does not imply that happiness has been reached (47).

(45) Parce que vous n'êtes pas assez qualifiée, parce qu'il n'y a pas d'opportunités à saisir. [CO8]

Because you are not qualified enough, because there are no opportunities to seize.

(46) Le courage, ce sont les efforts que l'on fournit au quotidien pour atteindre notre désir. [CO7]

Courage is the effort we provide on a daily basis to reach our desire.

(47) À la clef un poste de responsable webmarketing avec un gros salaire où je ne compte plus mes heures. J'ai enfin atteint ce pour quoi je me suis préparée toute ma vie, et pourtant, mon moral est au même niveau que mon envie d'aller bosser : à zéro. [CO8]



At stake is a job as a web marketing manager with a big salary where I do not count my hours. I have finally reached what I have been preparing for all my life, and yet, my mood is at the same level as my desire to go to work: zero.

- 50 Since the goal promoted by *Cosmopolitan* is a constant improvement of individuals' life and their self, being motionless is considered a negative situation. Immobility is represented as a situation of tension in which individuals face a force that prevents them from moving (48-52). It is also interesting to note the creativity of some metaphors, which adds a humorous aspect to this conceptualization (51, 52). In any case, the solution to immobility is to start moving (53, 54) and thus move as far as possible (55-56) in the right direction (57-60), which can sometimes resemble a search (61).

(48) Je suis coincée, sortez-moi de là ! [CO8]

I'm stuck, get me out of here!

(49) Neuf fois sur dix, ça permet de réaliser qu'on a tous les mêmes freins. [CO5]

Nine times out of ten, it helps you realize that we all have the same brakes.

(50) être dans l'action, même si elle est minuscule, pour ne pas se laisser paralyser. [CO9]

to be in action, even if it is tiny, in order to stop yourself from being paralyzed.

(51) À croire que le monde entier s'est mué en clone de Gisele Bündchen. Sauf moi, bloquée devant mon bol de Smacks Choco en matant « Phénomène Raven » le dimanche. [CO2]

One would think that the whole world has become a clone of Gisele Bündchen. Except me, stuck in front of my bowl of Choco Smacks while watching "Raven Phenomenon" on Sunday.

(52) C'est comme si vous étiez bloquée dans la saison 1 d'une bonne série. [CO8]

It's like you're stuck in Season 1 of a good series.

(53) Mode d'emploi pour un nouveau départ. [CO1]

Instructions for a new start.

(54) Démarrer du bon pied le matin en évitant par exemple les tristes nouvelles qui vont donner le ton pour le reste de la journée. [CO9]

Get off to a good start in the morning by avoiding, for example, the sad news that will set the tone for the rest of the day.

(55) Pour avancer, il faut formuler les choses : on n'a aucune chance d'obtenir une augmentation si on ne la demande pas. [CO5]



To move forward, you have to speak up: you have no chance of getting a raise if you do not ask for it.

(56) Ça me donne envie d'aller plus loin et je commence un travail avec une coach, sans but réel. [CO5]

It makes me want to go further and I am starting a job with a coach, without real purpose.

(57) [...] pour faire reconnaître ses acquis, se perfectionner ou se réorienter... [CO8]

[...] with the goal of recognizing one's achievements, improving oneself or reorienting oneself ...

(58) Et si je m'étais trompée de voie ? [CO8]

What if I'm not on the right track?

(59) J'ai suivi mon feeling [CO8]

I followed my intuition

(60) [...] une force évolue avec le temps. Elle peut grandir ou s'étioler. Tout dépend des directions que l'on choisit. [CO7]

[...] a force evolves with time. It can grow or wither. It all depends on the direction you choose.

(61) Se prendre en main. Psychothérapie, hypnose, sophrologie, tout est bon à tenter et il faut parfois tester plusieurs solutions pour trouver la bonne. Mais quoi qu'il arrive, je me bouge car c'est en marchant qu'on avance. [CO9]

Take charge. Psychotherapy, hypnosis, sophrology, anything is good to try and sometimes you have to test several solutions to find the right one. But whatever happens, I progress because it is in taking a step forward that we move on.

- 51 The metaphors of this scheme essentially focus on the fact of moving on, i.e. the process, but the arrival, is never represented. This is consistent with considering well-being as a continuous process, but perhaps it would be worth asking if the type of happiness proposed by this theory is not a never-ending road.

## Conclusion

- 52 The first conclusion is that metaphor is a very pervasive resource in the *Cosmopolitan* discourse of happiness. Metaphors are used to represent very different aspects of the emotional event such as the steps to achieve happiness or the obstacles that impede its achievement.



- 53 This study has been based on the Critical Metaphor Analysis methodology. The metaphors in the corpus have been analyzed in order to find underlying thought patterns. I have detected two particularly salient concepts. The first concept is limit, i.e. the cognitive boundaries that define different spaces related to the participant involved in the emotional event. This concept has been selected as a starting point for the categorization of the metaphors present in the corpus<sup>7</sup>. Happiness metaphors have been categorized through six conceptual schemes organized around the concept of limit. The first three schemes are characterized by representing individuals as recipients. The 'bottom/surface' scheme delimits the individuals' interior space in two zones according to the criterion of depth. The elements situated at the bottom correspond to the unconscious and therefore unmanageable aspects of individuals. However, with effort, these elements can be reached and thus managed by individuals. The 'center/periphery' scheme also divides the interior space of individuals into two zones, but this time according to the criterion of centrality. In this scheme, the essential elements for a happy life are located in the center. The elements located in the periphery are characterized by their superficiality. These two schemes show that happiness requires hard, conscious and constant work. The 'inside / outside' scheme separates the inner space of individuals (conceptualized as a container) from their outer space. In order to achieve happiness, positive elements must be placed on the inside and negative aspects on the outside. This scheme shows that individuals who manage their emotions are in a constant state of tension. The fourth scheme is called 'divided self'. Individuals are divided into two different versions of themselves that cohabit in the same body, i.e. the authentic one and the other one. In order to reach well-being, the less authentic part of the self (often encoded as the subject) must work to discover and develop the most authentic version of the self (often encoded as the object). This scheme conveys the idea that the vital quest of individuals is about themselves, which can be seen as an individualistic message. The fifth limit is related to individuals' social space. In this scheme, positive people must be placed in the individual domain, since these people are sources of help in the attainment of happiness. On the contrary, negative persons, often conceptualized metaphorically as enemies or as mess / dirt, must be kept outside the individual domain, since they



are an obstacle to one's well-being. The sixth and last scheme is related to the notion of path. In this scheme, individuals are located in a particular domain, whereas happiness is located in a different one. Individuals must therefore move from where they are towards the happiness location, walking on a path that resembles an endless road where happiness is never reached.

54 I consider that the concept of 'limit' here echoes the call to manage the different aspects of individuals' life in order to achieve happiness. To this end, individuals must categorize the different situations, emotions and aspects of their life, and must manipulate them to obtain well-being (placing essential things in the center or positioning negative people outside). The second of these concepts is 'force' and it is omnipresent in each of the schemes. According to this analysis, the linguistic expressions related to 'force' are instances of the force dynamics notion, which is inherent to the emotional event. From an ideological point of view, these expressions reveal the tension to which individuals are exposed in their quest for happiness. If we take into account the theoretical model proposed for the representation of emotions, individuals involved in the emotional process are predominantly in phase 3 of the control cycle, i.e. the phase of force dynamics interaction. Individuals are therefore continuously in a situation in which various forces interact, such as deep longings / immediate desires, expectations / the actual situation or also the confrontation between the alleged strengths of individuals and their weaknesses. Obviously, it is not a serene vision of this emotion, and it can be the reflection of a society in emotional distress.

55 The association of the happiness metaphors found in *Cosmopolitan* magazine with the concepts of 'force' and 'limit', as well as their categorization in the previously detailed schemes, make it possible to highlight the ideological dimension of these metaphors. The result of our analysis allows us to claim that the metaphorical representation of happiness offered by *Cosmopolitan* in its psychology section perfectly corresponds to the foundations of positive psychology, and by extension, to neoliberal ideology:

- The human beings have inner strengths they might develop, in spite of their circumstances.



- The key to happiness and success is in ourselves and is therefore available to everyone.
- Success or failure is the responsibility of each individual.
- The quest for happiness is a continuous, conscious and individual process.
- To be happy, individuals should not be concerned with changing the world, but rather with the vision they have of their world and themselves.

56 Furthermore, it is important to point out that these schemes perfectly embody the new coercive strategies of our society. Illouz & Cabanas [2018: 24] argue that the ideology of happiness has brought with it a new notion of citizenship, accompanied by new coercive strategies. They consider that society is in a new Orwellian phase of control, in which the physical borders have partially disappeared and have become diffuse and invisible limits. A good example of this idea would be the concept of professional vocation, which is conceived as a source of personal fulfillment and success. Vocational professionals do not count the time devoted to work. In addition, their mobile phone and computer contribute towards blurring the temporal and physical boundaries between professional and personal time. The vocational professional responds to the standards that have been established in the company and in society, but which have been assimilated as their own criteria to judge happiness and success. By doing this, the individual becomes the guardian of their own prison. However, the happiness paradigm is sporadically challenged by some groups of individuals. That's the case of overweight people who said they are at ease with their bodies, but who fail to detach themselves completely from these standards. Escaping the grip of this ideology is particularly complicated [Spicer & Cedeström 2018: 148].

57 It is particularly important to define the role of cognitive metaphor in the psychological discourse of *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Firstly, metaphors have a cognitive role, because they allow the readers to understand an abstract concept, such as emotion, thanks to other more concrete domains, such as space. The fact of presenting happiness metaphorically as a tangible or concrete object favors the conceptualization of this emotion as a truly attainable goal. This can help reinforce the idea that happiness is accessible to everyone, and thus contribute to the persuasion process. Secondly, cognitive



metaphors also have a linguistic role, insofar as metaphorical expressions are part of the communication system. Thirdly, metaphors have a pragmatic role. Concretely, I affirm that metaphor is a persuasive tool in the different discourses that emanate from positive psychology, as it is the case of the psychological discourse in *Cosmopolitan* magazine. This is possible insofar as such a motif is capable of constructing and reproducing patterns of thought without its ideological load being perceived. In this sense, conventional metaphors contribute to the acceptance of this ideology to the extent that they go unnoticed and they are part of the natural way of thinking about happiness. On the other hand, creative metaphors exert a stronger impact on the reader. Creativity in metaphors can be put to the service of humor. The humorous nature of metaphors contributes to blurring its ideological load even more.

- 58 If the psychological discourse on happiness of *Cosmopolitan* magazine is not assimilated by the reader as an ideological and political message, this does not depend solely on metaphor. Other characteristics of this discourse make it possible to hide its ideological character, such as the type of format, i.e. a women's lifestyle magazine, whose message is imagined as apolitical. The term that is selected to describe individuals' life purpose is also essential. The term *happiness* seems innocuous and apolitical, compared to other terms such as *individualism*. Finally, the presence of paradoxical injunctions disguised as 'tips' or 'solutions' also contributes to hiding their prescriptive nature.
- 59 To conclude, we will argue that *Cosmopolitan* magazine can be considered as a product belonging to the happiness industry, which contributes to the widespread dissemination of the (neoliberal) message of positive psychology. At the same time, *Cosmopolitan* magazine benefits from this ideology, since its sales depend in part on offering consumers a generous range of merchandise to accompany a continuous improvement of themselves [Illouz 2019]. This message is not limited to enabling fleeting pleasurable moments but encourages a specific lifestyle according to a particular ideology [Cabanas 2019: 328] that promotes, among other attitudes, the abandonment of critical thinking [Ehrenreich 2009: 199] and a greater conformism [Cabanas & Illouz 2018: 220].



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1 The terms *happiness* and *well-being* are used in the framework of positive psychology indistinctly, as synonyms [Jiménez 2011: 622].

2 Underlined type is used to draw attention to metaphorical happiness utterances.

3 The original examples have been found in French. The translation below each example is my own.

4 I added the emphasis (in bold).



- 5 Middle voice construction allows placing the individual in an active and a passive role [Maldonado 2008; Gómez Vicente 2013].
- 6 According to Langacker [2009; 2013], transitive and reflexive constructions are characterized by highlighting energy transfer (physical, mental, perceptual, etc.) between at least two participants, one who exercises force and another who receives it.
- 7 Some other metaphorical expressions, related to particular source domains such as health or religion, were found. Despite their interest, they have not been analyzed. This study has focused on the metaphors related to recurrent linguistic and cognitive patterns, organized around the concepts of *force* and *limit*, which are particularly salient according to our analysis. The metaphors that have been left out of this study may be analyzed in future studies based on other methodological assumptions.

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## English

The metaphorical representation of happiness in the women's magazine industry appears to be of particular interest at the moment. Indeed, different political, social and economic actors have made happiness become one of the main objectives of Western societies, both at the individual (self-fulfillment, satisfaction, happiness) and at the collective (workplace wellness, well-being of society) level. However, beneath these laudable ideals, and despite their altruistic, apolitical and ideology-free appearance, there lies a discourse that pursues very clear objectives of benefit only to certain interest groups [Illouz & Cabanas 2018]. The women's press represents a privileged source in the understanding of the expectations faced by women [Blandin 2018] and, perhaps in a more general way, by individuals in a particular culture. Finally, the metaphors used enable us to analyze certain thought patterns specific to some discourses [Charteris-Black 2004]. The aim of this paper is thus to understand how happiness is represented metaphorically in *Cosmopolitan magazine* and to determine whether this representation corresponds to an ideological agenda. A corpus-based analysis of the metaphors of happiness used in the *Cosmopolitan magazine* has been conducted. The results show that most of these metaphors can be categorized according to six conceptual patterns related to the notions of 'strength' and 'limit'. The metaphors of happiness found in this corpus are shown to be ideologically charged and strongly related to positive psychology and neoliberal ideology.

## Français

La représentation métaphorique du bonheur dans la presse féminine présente actuellement un intérêt particulier. Le bonheur est devenu pour



différents acteurs politiques, sociaux et économiques l'un des principaux objectifs des sociétés occidentales, tant au niveau individuel (épanouissement personnel, satisfaction, bonheur) qu'au niveau collectif (bien-être au travail, bien-être de la société). Cependant, malgré ces idéaux louables et leur apparence altruiste, apolitique et sans idéologie, on découvre un discours avec des objectifs très clairs, et qui ne profitent qu'à certains groupes d'intérêt [Illouz & Cabanas 2018]. Par ailleurs, la presse féminine représente une source privilégiée dans la compréhension des attentes des femmes [Blandin 2018] et, peut-être de manière plus générale, des individus d'une culture particulière. Enfin, les métaphores utilisées nous permettent d'analyser certains schémas de pensée propres à certains discours [Charteris-Black 2004]. Le but de cet article est donc de comprendre comment le bonheur est représenté métaphoriquement dans le magazine *Cosmopolitan* et de déterminer si cette représentation correspond à un objectif idéologique. Pour cela, nous avons élaboré et analysé un corpus des métaphores du bonheur utilisées dans la revue *Cosmopolitan*. Les résultats montrent que la plupart de ces métaphores peuvent être classées selon six schémas conceptuels liés aux notions de 'force' et de 'limite' et qu'elles sont liées à certains principes fondamentaux de la psychologie positive et de l'idéologie néolibérale.

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#### **Mots-clés**

métaphore, bonheur, néolibéralisme, psychologie positive, persuasion

#### **Keywords**

metaphor, happiness, neoliberalism, positive psychology, persuasion

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# What Makes Metaphors Manipulative Tools?

## A Case-Study of Pro-Life Speeches in the US

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## Introduction

- 1 Manipulation implies a conscious choice from speakers to trigger a change of opinion in their interlocutors and to make them accept their own point of view, i.e. their own vision of the world.  
Manipulation is especially blatant when two opposite views of reality clash, such as the vision advocated by pro-life supporters and that



defended by pro-choice supporters in the USA. This specific issue was chosen not only because of its relevance in the news – several bills aim to restrict the access to abortion in various states, and the Supreme Court will issue a decision in a case related to abortion in 2020 (*June Medical Services, LLC. v. Gee*) – but because the stances are so firm from both sides that they inevitably lead speakers to resort to manipulation techniques to convince their interlocutors. In this paper, we will mostly focus on the use of metaphors and the reasons why they can be used as manipulative tools by conducting analyses on a selection of speeches delivered by pro-life supporters, and comparing them, when deemed relevant, to some speeches delivered by people advocating pro-choice.

- 2 We will therefore try to link metaphors and metaphor themes with a similar attempt by George Lakoff in *Moral Politics* [1996] and Andrew Goatly in *Washing the Brain. Metaphor and Hidden Ideology* [2007], and attempt to see “to what extent the metaphor themes [...] are ideological constructs, dependent upon specific historical and cultural circumstances” [Goatly 2007: 402], and how metaphors can manipulate people and their apprehension of reality.
- 3 The theoretical background regarding the links between metaphor and manipulation is first introduced; the historical context of the pro-life vs. pro-choice debate in the USA, the corpus (or rather set of data) and the methodology are then presented. The last section of the article is based on our corpus and is devoted to the analysis of some metaphorical occurrences used to manipulate the audience of pro-life supporters.

# **1. Theoretical considerations on metaphor and manipulation**

## **1.1. Manipulation and ideology: key concepts**

- 4 Various words may come to mind whenever the word *manipulation* is mentioned: persuasion, conviction, coercion, ideology, belief, rhetoric, etc. It is not always easy to clearly define what manipulation



is really about, as Sorlin [2016: 18] makes it clear when she suggests that there is a continuum between persuasion, manipulation and coercion:

Manipulation can be seen as sharing one external border with persuasion and another with coercion. It might be better still to perceive the three categories along a continuum allowing for some possible overlap. [...] The difference between persuasion and manipulation lies in the fact that, in the former case, the addressee has the liberty to disagree with the arguments advanced by the addresser, whereas, in the latter, the victim's free choice is circumscribed to a superior degree. If one goes still one step further towards coercion on the continuum, the limit exercised on freedom becomes more absolute.

- 5 The noun *manipulation* has four main meanings according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) ['manipulation, n.' 2000]:

**manipulation**, n.

**Origin:** A borrowing from French. Etymon: French *manipulation*.

**Etymology:** < French *manipulation* (1716 in sense 1 (in an account of silver mines in South America), 1762 in sense 2) < Spanish *manipulación* (1619 in sense 2, referring specifically to alchemy; 1730 in sense 1 but probably earlier: compare *manipulante* person who works in precious metals (1713)) < classical Latin *manipulus* (see *maniple* n.) + Spanish *-ación* -ation suffix.

1. A method of digging silver ore. *Obsolete. rare.*

2. *Chemistry.* The action of handling apparatus, reagents, etc., in experiments; experimental procedure; an instance or example of this. Now archaic.

3. *gen.* The action or an act of manipulating something; handling; dexterity. Also (occasionally): the making of hand motions.

*Medicine.* Manual examination or treatment of a part of the body, esp. the production of specific passive movements of joints in chiropractic, osteopathy, or physiotherapy.

4. The action or an act of managing or directing a person, etc., esp. in a skilful manner; the exercise of subtle, underhand, or devious influence or control over a person, organization, etc.; interference, tampering.

- 6 The sense of *manipulation* we will use in this paper is the final sense in the OED (#4), and it is interesting to note that this specific meaning was generated metaphorically. Sense #4 clearly exhibits the two connotations found in the word: a rather neutral, and even positive sense ("The action or an act of managing or directing a person, etc., esp. in a skilful manner") and the negatively-connoted sense ("the exercise of subtle, underhand, or devious influence or control over a person, organization, etc.; interference, tampering"). Consequently, we will use both meanings and consider *manipulation*



as the act of persuading the interlocutor regardless of the consequences. Manipulation will also be related to the notion of *ideology*, defined by van Dijk [1998: 8] as:

the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group. This means that ideologies allow people, as group members, to organise the multitude of social beliefs about what is the case, good or bad, right or wrong, for them and to act accordingly.

- 7 According to Charteris-Black [2011: 13], manipulation – just like persuasion – “should be considered a *speech act*”, because “it is a type of language that changes cognition, rather than simply describes it or how such a change is achieved”.
- 8 As mentioned in the introduction, metaphor can be used as a manipulative tool, and we will therefore follow Goatly [2007: 2], who focuses on “the importance of metaphorical patterns in the vocabulary and grammar of English for representing and shaping ideologies and social practices”, and Charteris-Black [2011: 24], who writes: “[M]etaphor provides a linguistic means for mediating between conscious and unconscious mental activities, between cognition and emotion, between ideology and myth”.

## 1.2. Metaphor, CMT and manipulation

- 9 According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT), the world does not exist *per se*, but is a construct of the mind and the language we speak, as summarized by Goatly [2007: 25, 33]:

We may think, naively, that the information conveyed by language is about the real world. But in fact “we have conscious access only to the projected world – the world as unconsciously organised by the mind: and we can talk about things only insofar as they have achieved mental representation through these processes of organisation” (Jackendoff 1983: 29). [...]

There exists a real world, but we have no direct “real” knowledge of it, since that knowledge is produced discursively and linguistically through conventionalised metaphors, some of which are so



conventionalised we call them literal. Knowledge of the world is mediated through perception, cognition and language / discourse.

- 10 Why can metaphors be used as persuasive or manipulative tools? Probably because before being a matter of language and discourse, metaphors are a matter of thought. As a consequence, the language we speak is determined by our conceptual system<sup>1</sup>, as Goatly [2007: 4] indicates:

[L]anguage is not some transparent medium through which we think, but that it shapes our thoughts and practices. So the conventional metaphors in the discourses of race, sex, politics, defence, economics, environment, and so on, tend to determine our ways of thinking / consciousness and acting/practice in these social spheres.

- 11 Interestingly, Goatly [2007: 25] defines *metaphors* metaphorically by saying that “[m]etaphors are cognitive filters, but different metaphors filter different particles of truth”. According to CMT, metaphorical utterances are “attempt[s] to re-draw semantic boundaries, to redefine [...] concept[s]” and produce “creative or destructive blurrings of categories” [Goatly 2007: 120]. It is because metaphor offers a ‘new vision of reality’ and can be used to ‘convey evaluation’ that it can be used as a manipulative tool. Charteris-Black [2011: 2] makes it clear that metaphor is at the heart of the persuasive linguistic process:

The spoken language is the primary mode of communication in the gentle arts of persuasion and impression management because it projects shared social beliefs about what is right and wrong so that alliances can be formed around these beliefs. Spoken strategies include humour, metaphor and the telling of myth. [...] [The] choice of metaphor is essential to [...] persuasiveness. I will demonstrate the cognitive and affective appeal of metaphor and illustrate how it contributes to persuasion. This, I suggest, is because it exploits subliminal resources that are aroused non-verbally and then developed through language. The subliminal potential of metaphor is central to the performance of leadership.



12 Before exemplifying the manipulative power of metaphor through a case study, this paper will focus on the various reasons why metaphors can be used as manipulative tools, following, among other cognitive linguists, Goatly [2007]. We can list three main reasons why metaphors can be used as manipulative tools: the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors, and the multivalency of metaphors.

13 Firstly, manipulation can be all the more powerful through the 'highlighting-hiding process' at work in metaphors, as Murray Edelman [1971: 68] explains<sup>2</sup>:

Metaphor, therefore, defines the pattern of perception to which people respond. [...] Each metaphor intensifies selected perceptions and ignores others, thereby helping one to concentrate on desired consequences of favoured public policies and helping one to ignore their unwanted, unthinkable, or irrelevant premises and aftermaths. Each metaphor can be a subtle way of highlighting what one wants to believe and avoiding what one does not wish to face.

14 One of the tenets of cognitive linguistics is that reality does not exist independently of the perception we have of the world; the choices speakers make when choosing the source domain to conceptualize the target domain have an effect on the construction of reality, as Goatly [2007: 213-214] makes it clear:

Diverse metaphors are essential for ideological analysis. Since each metaphor highlights and suppresses certain features of a target, or constructs the target in a particular way it both empowers our understanding and limits it.

15 Another aspect that needs to be taken into account is the existence of 'asymmetrical metaphors', which can be used to manipulate, as Goatly [2007: 119] explains:

But language users are by no means always unanimous about what is literal and metaphorical. As I have discussed elsewhere (Goatly 1997: 127-30), there is a species of metaphors that one might call asymmetrical, in that the speaker may regard them as metaphorical and the hearer as literal, or vice versa.



- 16 The ‘multivalency’ of metaphors – i.e. the scopes of targets – and the ‘diversification’ of metaphors – i.e. the scopes of sources – are two other aspects of manipulation. As Goatly [2007: 167] mentions, if MORE IS HIGH and POWER IS HIGH, therefore MORE is often equated with POWER:

two cases by which multivalent sources might create extra ideological equations, MORE IS HIGH + GOOD IS HIGH → MORE = GOOD, and CHANGE IS MOVEMENT + DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS IS MOVEMENT → CHANGE = SUCCESS. [Goatly 2007: 177]

- 17 Goatly [2007: 214] develops the notion of *multivalency* by linking it to the association between different target domains which were not related at first:

[M]ultivalency can lead to association between different targets so that GOOD IS HIGH and MORE IS HIGH taken together suggest MORE = GOOD, which reinforces patterns of excessive wealth accumulation and consumption as part of the Protestant capitalist ethic, despite the objections that SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL. We also explored how CHANGE IS MOVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS IS MOVEMENT FORWARD might suggest that CHANGE = DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS, again an increasingly doubtful and contentious suggestion, though one which the technologically driven retail economies of the West have espoused in the cause of selling the latest and most fashionable consumer products.

- 18 As the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors and the multivalency of metaphors are both a matter of thought and language (just like metaphor), they are prone to giving way to manipulation and deception. Before exemplifying each of those three components in section 3 when analyzing the set of data and seeing how they interact to manipulate the audience, the following section will introduce the historical context. As any occurrence is manipulative only in a specific, given context, it seems necessary to give an overview of the historical and societal context of abortion and the existence of the pro-life movement in the United States. The speeches making up our corpus have been produced in this specific socio-historical situation, hence the importance of



clearly delineating the context of occurrence where manipulation can take place.

## 2. Historical background, corpus and methodology

### 2.1. Historical background and the pro-life movement

- 19 In the United States, a topic that undoubtedly needs much persuasion and manipulation is abortion, as it is still very often considered a taboo topic and widely debated. Some historical conceptualization may be necessary to understand why abortion is such a highly controversial topic in the USA. Abortion was legalized and decriminalized at the federal level in 1973 in the landmark Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*. Before 1973, legislation varied from state to state, and *Roe v. Wade* established a uniform framework, with the following principles: states cannot regulate abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy; in the second trimester of pregnancy, states may regulate abortion if they have a compelling interest to protect the woman's health; and in the third trimester of pregnancy, states may ban abortion to protect the woman's health and to protect the life of the unborn. The Supreme Court found (7-2) that states could not regulate abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy because it did not threaten the woman's health and because there was no scientific proof that life begins at the moment of conception. The Supreme Court determined that states had no compelling interest in protecting human life or the potentiality of human life before the fetus became viable. The Court also argued that women have a right to privacy (created through the Ninth and the Fourteenth Amendment) regarding their decision to have an abortion or not because of the physical, psychological, and economic stress that a woman can be confronted with during pregnancy [*Roe v. Wade* 1973].
- 20 The legalization of abortion has been criticized for several reasons – the main two being political and moral. The political argument is that the Supreme Court is constituted by 9 Justices who are not elected. They are appointed for life by the President of the United States, and



it has been argued that they had no legitimacy to make such a decision and that the decision should have been left to the people – and therefore to Congress – and / or to the states. It was not the first time that the Supreme Court had been criticized by detractors of judicial activism<sup>3</sup>. The second argument, which is exclusively used by pro-lifers, is that abortion should not have been legalized at all because according to them, life begins at the moment of conception and abortion is therefore a form of murder.

- 21 Since this decision, some states – mostly Southern states – have systematically tried to restrict the right to abortion. In 1992, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*<sup>4</sup>, the Supreme Court found that regulations were allowed as long as they did not create an “undue burden” on the woman [*Planned Parenthood v. Caser* 1992], which made the implementation of such restrictions easier for states, even though the right to abortion was upheld. In the first half of 2011, for example, “more than 80 abortion-related restrictions were enacted across the United-States” [Hill 2012]. According to Hill [2012], states have a number of laws to limit the right to abortion:
- firstly, banning abortion before the fetus is viable, despite the fact that this is contrary to what the Court stated in *Roe v. Wade*. Abortions are banned after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy<sup>5</sup> in some states (the fetus is only viable after the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy). Twenty states introduced bills banning abortion once a heartbeat has been detected in the fetus – that is to say, after 6 or 8 weeks of pregnancy (a stage at which most women do not even know they are pregnant);
  - secondly, informed consent and waiting periods (visitation of pro-life centers, fake information on the consequences of abortions, mandatory ultrasounds, etc.);
  - thirdly, restriction on medical abortion;
  - finally, bans on insurance coverage for abortion.
- 22 In April 2019, a bill defining abortion as a form of murder was introduced in Texas [North 2019]. As Texas allows the death penalty for murder, women could be convicted and sentenced to death for having an abortion; the bill did not pass the initial hearing, but it shows how far some pro-life legislators are willing to go to restrict abortion.



- 23 Other kinds of restrictions can be mentioned, such as TRAP laws [Planned Parenthood 2020a], which target abortion providers and which require very high standards for abortion clinics – standards which cannot be met, considering the lack of funding for abortion services since the 1976 Hyde Amendment, which prohibited federal government funding for abortions (it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1978 and 2000) [Ashbee 2007: 204-208]. Funding is unlikely to improve as the Trump administration announced in February 2019 that it would “bar organizations that provide abortion referrals from receiving federal family planning money, a step that could strip millions of dollars from Planned Parenthood and direct it towards religiously-based, anti-abortion groups”, according to *The New York Times* [Belluck 2019].
- 24 As abortion has become a partisan issue and a subject of dissension between the Democrats and the Republicans, restrictions exist at the federal level, as previously mentioned. For *Roe v. Wade* to be overturned by the Supreme Court, a case would first have to be granted *certiorari* by the Court; the Court has agreed to hear a case (*June Medical Services, LLC v. Gee*) that is very similar to *Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt* (2016), in which the Supreme Court found that two restrictions in Texas placed an “undue burden” on women’s right to abortion. It is the first abortion-related case the Court has agreed to hear since Kavanaugh was appointed by Trump to replace Kennedy, and there have been concerns that the Supreme Court could overturn *Roe v. Wade* because there is now a conservative majority [Singiser *et al.* 2018]. However, in theory, abortion is still legal in the United States, but in practice, it is becoming more and more difficult for women to get an abortion depending on the state they live in, and *Roe v. Wade* would not need to be formally overturned for abortion to be almost inaccessible because of the increasing number of laws passed by states and because of the closing of abortion clinics. According to the Guttmacher Institute, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming only have one clinic left [Guttmacher Institute 2020], and according to Planned Parenthood [2020b], the number of clinics keeps decreasing, mostly in Southern states<sup>6</sup>.
- 25 Anti-abortion legislation has mainly been encouraged by the pro-life movement, which has played a significant role in persuading the



general public that abortion is wrong [Ashbee 2007]. There are many anti-abortion organizations in the US, and they resort to different means to persuade crowds to side with them: it goes from demonstrations (mass demonstrations, picketing in front of abortions clinics, etc.) to counseling centers (in which women are forced to go before undergoing an abortion) or online activism. According to the National Abortion Federation (NAF)<sup>7</sup>, acts of disruption<sup>8</sup> went from 1,276 between 1977 and 1989 to 36,509 between 1990 and 1999 to 117,444 between 2000 and 2009 to 281,639 between 2010 and 2017<sup>9</sup>. The NAF also reported a steep escalation of anti-abortion activity between 2016 and 2017, which they link to the political environment [National Abortion Federation 2017, 2018].

In that sense, through their activism, pro-lifers serve an ideology, as stated by Charteris-Black [2011: 22]: “So, once articulated, an ideology serves to bring individuals together for the purpose of some form of *social action*”.

- 26 Recent polls [Jones 2018]<sup>10</sup> on public opinion confirm that there has been an increase in the number of Americans who consider themselves “pro-life” over the past 25 years (33% in 1996 vs. 48% in 2018), even though Americans are overall evenly divided on the issue.

Moreover, more Americans consider abortion as “morally wrong” (48% in 2018) than as “morally acceptable” (43% in 2018).

- 27 There seems to be a discrepancy between the increase in the number of Americans who consider themselves “pro-life” and the increase in pro-life activity. It seems fair to assume that pro-life movements have intensified their activity, notably through more demonstrations, picketing, meetings, and speeches, but it does not necessarily mean that their activity is correlated with public opinion; the polls actually show that half the American population believe that abortion should be restricted to certain circumstances but not entirely banned (50% in 2018 against 54% in 1976), while 29% believe it should be legal in all circumstances (22% in 1976), and 18% think it should be illegal in all circumstances (21% in 1976).



## 2.2. Corpus

28 This historical context and the overwhelming presence of abortion-related speeches in the news in the United States have led us to focus on the manipulative dimension of the pro-life movement through some of their speeches. To constitute a corpus of relevant texts, we have selected speeches dealing with this specific issue. Our analysis mostly focuses on the manipulative techniques used by pro-lifers but we have also, when deemed necessary and relevant, compared and contrasted those speeches with speeches delivered by pro-choice supporters. There is a vast array of speeches delivered by pro-life supporters, especially because of the annual March for Life generally held in January in Washington D.C. since 1974<sup>11</sup>. A selection of contemporary speeches made by supporters, most of the time politicians, attending the March for Life, but not only, was thus made. We selected twelve speeches from pro-life supporters, ranging from 2006 to 2019:

**Figure 1. Speeches from pro-life supporters**

Name of pro-life speaker	Date of speech	Code
<b>George W. Bush</b>	23 January 2006	GWB 2006_01_23
<b>Marco Rubio</b>	1 February 2012	MR 2012_02_01
<b>Monica Snyder</b>	29 January 2014	MS 2014_01_29
<b>James Lankford</b>	20 January 2016	JL 2016_01_20
<b>Lila Rose</b>	9-13 May 2016	LR 2016_05_9-13
<b>Kellyanne Conway</b>	27 January 2017	KC 2017_01_27
<b>Mia Love</b>	27 January 2017	ML 2017_01_27
<b>Mike Pence</b>	27 January 2017	MP 2017_01_27
<b>Mike Lee</b>	8 June 2017	ML 2017_06_08
<b>Donald Trump</b>	19 January 2018	DT 2018_01_19
<b>Paul Ryan</b>	19 January 2018	PR 2018_01_19
<b>Ben Shapiro</b>	18 January 2019	BS 2019_01_18

29 To briefly compare pro-lifers' rhetoric with pro-choice supporters' rhetoric quantitatively speaking, we have selected only 6 speeches



from pro-choice supporters, ranging from 2005 to 2016, as the main focus of the analysis remains pro-life speeches:

**Figure 2. Speeches from pro-choice supporters**

Name of pro-choice speaker	Date of speech
Hillary Clinton	24 January 2005
Rev. Carlton Veazey	17 September 2008
Ilyse Hogue	1 July 2013
Brendan O'Neill	18 November 2014
Hillary Clinton	8 June 2016
Mark Ruffalo	17 August 2017

- 30 The speeches were saved in .txt format so as to upload them onto WMatrix, a corpus linguistics tool.

## 2.3. Identification of the metaphors in the corpus

- 31 As the corpus is quite small, we have been able to identify the metaphors manually, following the recommendations of the Pragglejaz group, who established the MIP (Metaphor Identification Procedure) [2007: 3]:

The MIP is as follows:

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse.
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
- (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be
  - More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.
  - Related to bodily action.
  - More precise (as opposed to vague).



- Historically older.

Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings to the lexical unit.

- (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current-contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

32 We then identified all the metaphors related to abortion in the corpus, and only the metaphors dealing with this specific domain, which means that metaphors related to other conceptual domains were disregarded, as well as metaphors using *ABORTION* as source domain. We marked abortion-related lexical units as metaphors regardless of their degree of conventionality, even though some metaphorical occurrences are so conventional that they may be regarded as literal. After this initial identification, we classified the metaphorical occurrences depending on the underlying conceptual metaphor they were generated from, and more specifically depending on their source domain, as they represent, according to Charteris-Black [2011: 28] “the bread and butter of political language” and because “[a]nalyzing the source domain of a metaphor is therefore a way of exploiting it persuasively in political discourse” [Charteris-Black 2011: 30], as exemplified in section 3.

33 As any manipulative text has to be taken as a whole and resorts to many other rhetorical devices and as metaphors only participate in the manipulative process, our analysis will first be devoted to a brief general overview of the manipulative techniques at work in the corpus, before focusing on the role of metaphors in the manipulative process.

## 3. Analysis of the corpus of pro-life speeches

### 3.1. General overview of the manipulative techniques in the pro-life corpus

34 We uploaded the speeches of our corpora one by one, in a first stage, and then compiled the pro-life speeches (henceforth PL corpus), and the pro-choice speeches (henceforth PC corpus) in a second stage.



The two corpora were uploaded onto WMatrix4, and a word-frequency list for the two corpora was established, first without lemmatization (see Figure 12), then by using a lemma list to lemmatize the most frequent terms (see Figure 13); a stop list was also used to remove the grammatical tokens we did not consider relevant to our analysis:

Figure 3. Token frequency for the pro-life corpus

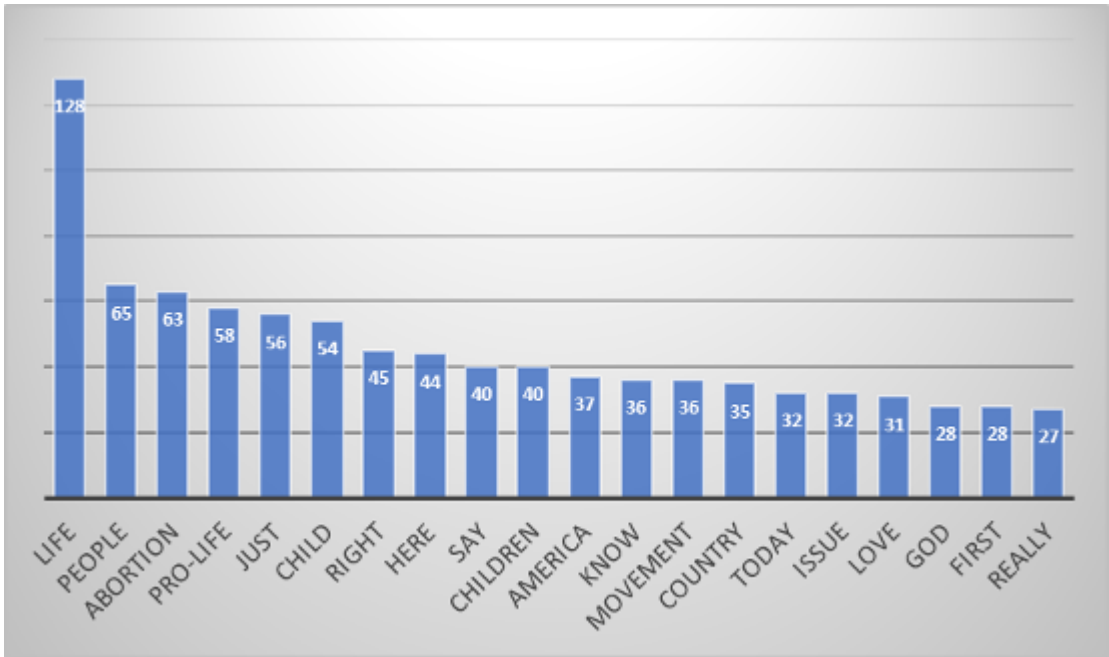
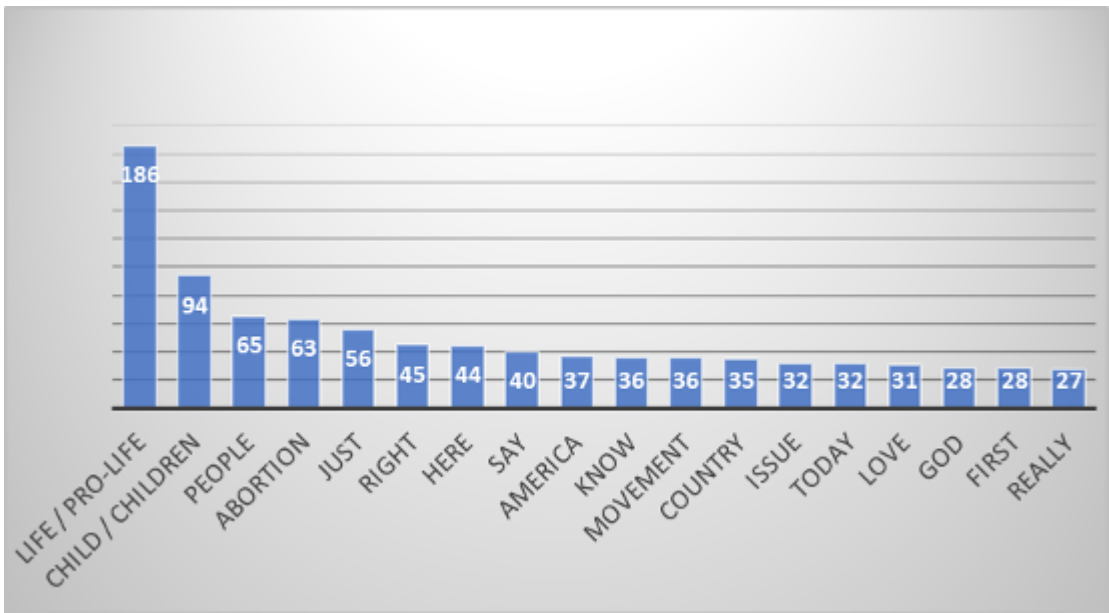


Figure 4. Lemma frequency for the pro-life corpus





The same analyses were performed for the pro-choice corpus:

Figure 5. Token frequency for the pro-choice corpus

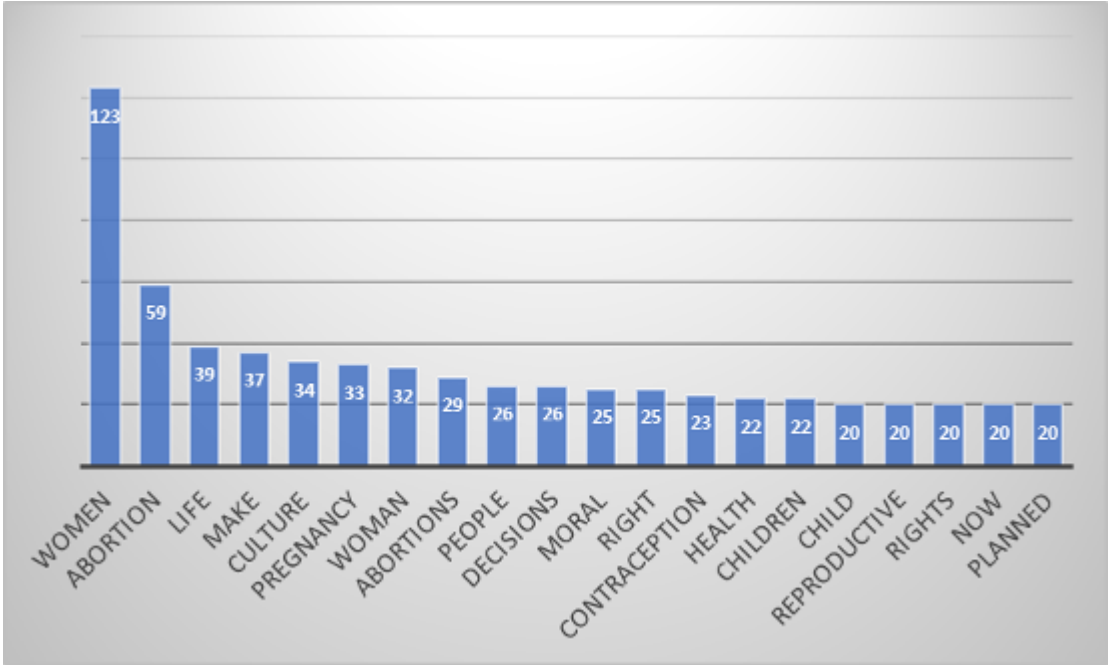
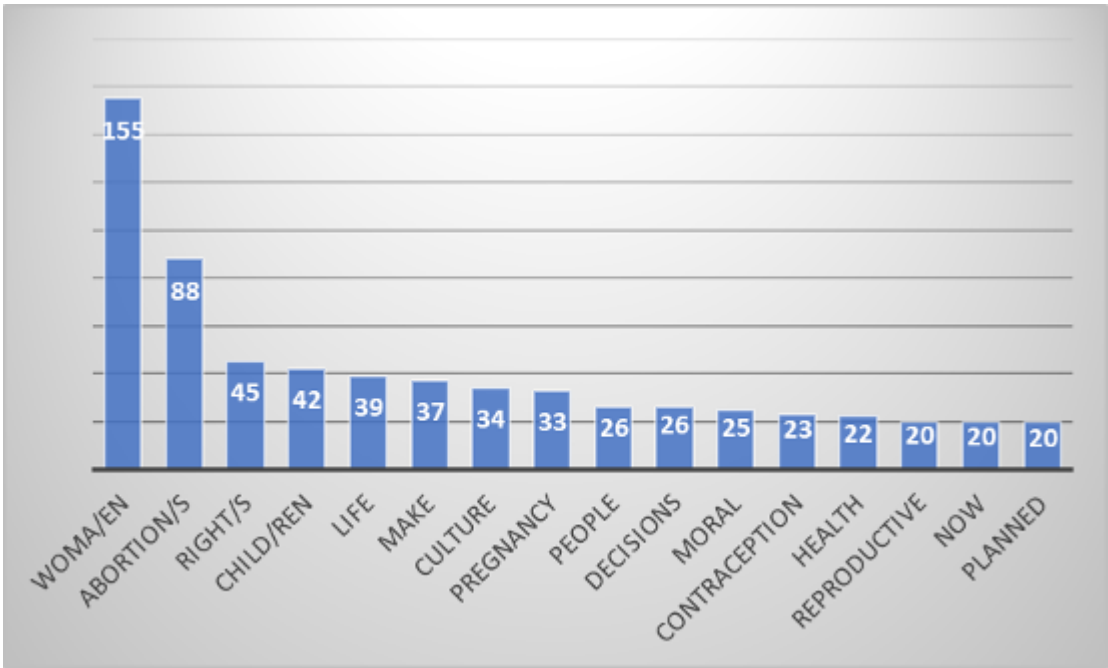


Figure 6. Lemma frequency for the pro-choice corpus



35 It is interesting to note that if words such as *life*, *abortion*, *child* / *children* and *people* are used in the PL corpus and in the PC corpus,



the frequency and order of the words are different: the PL corpus insists on the life of the child / children – who would be considered fetuses by pro-choicers – and words such as *America*, *country*, *God* and *love* are also frequently used to emphasize the fact that resorting to abortion is an act against the USA, against God and against love; on the contrary, the PC corpus insists on words such as *woman* / *women* (which is by far the most frequent word in the corpus), *rights*, *decisions*, etc., to highlight the woman's free choice when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. Manipulation is therefore already present at the lexical level, by the choice of lexical words made by speakers.

- 36 The two corpora were then compared to the American English 2006 (AME06) reference corpus thanks to WMatrix4. We decided to keep only the first 25 results and focus more specifically on the log-likelihood (LL) score, first in the PL corpus:

Figure 7. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-life corpus

	Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
1	Concordance we	249	1.71	3200	0.33 +	404.45	2.37
2	Concordance pro-life	58	0.40	26	0.00 +	385.38	7.21
3	Concordance life	127	0.87	688	0.07 +	385.02	3.62
4	Concordance abortion	64	0.44	63	0.01 +	364.92	6.08
5	Concordance thats	33	0.23	0	0.00 +	277.97	12.10
6	Concordance nt	33	0.23	2	0.00 +	262.69	10.10
7	Concordance our	118	0.81	1288	0.13 +	221.84	2.61
8	Concordance child	53	0.36	198	0.02 +	193.57	4.15
9	Concordance you	204	1.40	4535	0.47 +	171.35	1.58
10	Concordance lila	20	0.14	0	0.00 +	168.46	11.38
11	Concordance thank_you	28	0.19	43	0.00 +	141.90	5.44
12	Concordance theyre	16	0.11	0	0.00 +	134.77	11.05
13	Concordance Im	18	0.12	3	0.00 +	134.48	8.64
14	Concordance unborn	17	0.12	2	0.00 +	130.47	9.14
15	Concordance youre	15	0.10	0	0.00 +	126.35	10.96
16	Concordance because	72	0.50	871	0.09 +	123.70	2.46
17	Concordance cant	16	0.11	2	0.00 +	122.27	9.05
18	Concordance movement	36	0.25	163	0.02 +	119.95	3.88
19	Concordance march	24	0.17	42	0.00 +	116.89	5.25
20	Concordance is	269	1.85	8474	0.88 +	116.36	1.08
21	Concordance that	342	2.35	11909	1.23 +	114.34	0.93
22	Concordance theres	13	0.09	0	0.00 +	109.50	10.75
23	Concordance America	38	0.26	234	0.02 +	107.06	3.43
24	Concordance parenthood	15	0.10	4	0.00 +	106.91	7.96
25	Concordance bless	14	0.10	3	0.00 +	102.17	8.28

- 37 A log-likelihood score above 150 indicates that the word is statistically more frequently used in the corpus under scrutiny than in the reference corpus, i.e. American English 2006. Pro-life rhetoric therefore resorts more often to the words *we*, *pro-life*, *life*, *abortion*, *our*, *child* and *you* than general American English, which is no surprise given the themes tackled by pro-lifers.

The same analysis was carried out on the PC corpus:



Figure 8. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-choice corpus

	Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
1	Concordance women	123	1.15	668	0.07 +	442.24	4.06
2	Concordance abortion	59	0.55	63	0.01 +	365.40	6.41
3	Concordance nt	25	0.23	2	0.00 +	211.64	10.14
4	Concordance pregnancy	33	0.31	36	0.00 +	203.39	6.38
5	Concordance abortions	29	0.27	28	0.00 +	183.60	6.55
6	Concordance parenthood	19	0.18	4	0.00 +	150.48	8.75
7	Concordance reproductive	20	0.19	13	0.00 +	136.72	7.12
8	Concordance 185,000	15	0.14	0	0.00 +	135.51	11.41
9	Concordance culture	34	0.32	152	0.02 +	133.57	4.34
10	Concordance contraception	23	0.22	34	0.00 +	131.65	5.94
11	Concordance we	120	1.12	3200	0.33 +	121.91	1.76
12	Concordance decisions	26	0.24	79	0.01 +	119.08	4.90
13	Concordance Womens	13	0.12	0	0.00 +	117.44	11.20
14	Concordance fetus	14	0.13	3	0.00 +	110.70	8.72
15	Concordance pregnancies	14	0.13	4	0.00 +	107.50	8.31
16	Concordance autonomy	18	0.17	24	0.00 +	105.78	6.09
17	Concordance moral	25	0.23	124	0.01 +	93.77	4.19
18	Concordance planned	20	0.19	62	0.01 +	90.94	4.87
19	Concordance Donald_trump	11	0.10	2	0.00 +	88.26	8.96
20	Concordance unintended	11	0.10	4	0.00 +	82.07	7.96
21	Concordance unwanted	12	0.11	9	0.00 +	79.92	6.92
22	Concordance rights	20	0.19	94	0.01 +	76.86	4.27
23	Concordance im	10	0.09	3	0.00 +	76.36	8.24
24	Concordance pregnant	13	0.12	19	0.00 +	74.63	5.95
25	Concordance theyre	8	0.07	0	0.00 +	72.27	10.50

Quite differently, pro-choice rhetoric resorts more often to the lexemes *women*, *abortion*, *pregnancy*, *abortions*, and *parenthood* than general American English.

- 38 We performed the same search, not in terms of lexical frequency but in terms of semantic tagging, still looking at the log-likelihood test. The PL corpus (Figure 18) and the PC corpus (Figure 19) showed the following results:

Figure 9. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-life corpus in terms of semantic tagging

	Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
1	List1 Concordance E8	2054	14.12	84722	8.76 +	394.23	0.69
2	List1 Concordance L1+	133	0.91	907	0.09 +	352.10	3.28
3	List1 Concordance S2	227	1.56	4225	0.44 +	244.86	1.84
4	List1 Concordance B3	111	0.76	2016	0.21 +	123.53	1.87
5	List1 Concordance A3+	554	3.81	24478	2.53 +	79.59	0.59
6	List1 Concordance S7.4+	70	0.48	1329	0.14 +	73.58	1.81
7	List1 Concordance E4	118	0.81	3830	0.40 +	47.47	1.03
8	List1 Concordance T1.1.3	108	0.74	3496	0.36 +	43.74	1.04
9	List1 Concordance E2+	57	0.39	1360	0.14 +	42.76	1.48
10	List1 Concordance A5.1+	92	0.63	2973	0.31 +	37.41	1.04



Figure 10. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-choice corpus in terms of semantic tagging

	Item	O1	I1	O2	I2	LL	LogRatio	
1	List1 Concordance S2.1	188	1.76	1999	0.21 +	460.32	3.09	Peopler: Female
2	List1 Concordance B3	187	1.75	2016	0.21 +	453.54	3.07	Medicines and medical treatment
3	List1 Concordance X6+	58	0.54	853	0.09 +	111.01	2.62	Decided
4	List1 Concordance L1+	57	0.53	987	0.09 +	101.91	2.51	Alive
5	List1 Concordance X7+	140	1.31	4859	0.50 +	94.35	1.38	Wanted
6	List1 Concordance S2	107	1.00	4225	0.44 +	56.10	1.20	People
7	List1 Concordance S7.4+	51	0.48	1329	0.14 +	53.44	1.80	Allowed
8	List1 Concordance S8	1152	10.79	84722	8.76 +	46.10	0.30	Pronouns
9	List1 Concordance B2	23	0.22	351	0.04 +	42.65	2.57	Health and disease
10	List1 Concordance G2.2+	28	0.26	566	0.06 +	39.67	2.16	Ethical

39 If the PL corpus resorts principally to lexemes related to the semantic domains of *ALIVE* and *PEOPLE*, and uses lots of pronouns, the PC corpus, however, resorts to lexemes related to the semantic domains of *PEOPLE: FEMALE* and *MEDICINES AND MEDICAL TREATMENT*. If the “baby-to-be” is semantically highlighted in the PL corpus, the “pregnant woman who has to decide for herself by resorting to medical treatment” is the focus in the PC corpus. This clearly indicates completely different emphases aimed at manipulating the potential audience.

40 As we mentioned previously, any manipulative text resorts to a variety of persuasive techniques and rhetorical figures of speech, metaphor being one among many; this is the case in the PL corpus, in which there are, for example, many ‘repetitions’, in bold fonts in the excerpts below<sup>12</sup>:

(1) It means, to **stand** up, **stand** tall, and **stand** together against the indifference and the indefensible; and to **stand** up, **stand** tall, and **stand** together on behalf of babies in the womb. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

(2) Looking out on this crowd, I can see there are people here of all ages, from all walks of life, but the young people here is what is so inspiring because it tells me this is a movement that is **on the rise**.  
And do you know why the pro-life movement is **on the rise**? Because truth is **on our side**. Life begins at conception.  
Do you know why the pro-life movement is **on the rise**? Because science is **on our side**. Just look at the ultrasounds that have shown us more about the pre-born child than ever before. How they develop, how they react, how they feel pain. Most importantly, the pro-life movement is **on the rise** because we have love **on our side**. We believe every person is worthy of love and dignity. That is why the pro-life movement is **on the rise**. [PR 2018\_01\_19]

41 Not only are metaphors used in (1) and (2) repetitive, but they are highly conventional, which reinforces their manipulative aspect (see section 3.2.1.). Repetition is particularly salient when it takes the form



of anaphora, that is to say when a sequence of words is repeated at the beginning of several sentences in the nearby textual environment:

(3) You know, **life is winning** in America. And today is a celebration of that progress, the progress that we have made in this cause. You know, I've long believed that a society can be judged by how we care for our most vulnerable – the aged, the infirm, the disabled, and the unborn. We've come to a[n] historic moment in the cause for life, and we must meet this moment with respect and compassion for every American.

**Life is winning** in America for many reasons.

**Life is winning** through the steady advance of science that illuminates when life begins more and more every day.

**Life is winning** through the generosity of millions of adoptive families to open their hearts and homes to children in need.

**Life is winning** through the compassion of caregivers and volunteers at crisis pregnancy centers and faith-based organizations who minister to women in the cities and towns across this country.

And **life is winning** through the quiet counsels between mothers and daughters, grandmothers and granddaughters, between friends across kitchen tables, and over coffee at college campuses. The truth is being told. Compassion is overcoming convenience; and hope is defeating despair.

In a word, **life is winning** in America because of all of you. [MP 2017\_01\_27]

- 42 Another frequent persuasive technique is 'story-telling' [Lakoff 1991]; to demonstrate their point, a majority of the speeches in the PL corpus take one story about a woman who decided not to have an abortion as an example:

(4) Forty-one years ago a struggling couple arrived in America. They left their country, entrusted their two children which they wouldn't see for another five years in the care of family members to come here – to the land of opportunity. It was inconvenient for them to learn to find out that they were pregnant with their third because both had to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. Some would say it would have been easier for them to have an abortion, but this couple had to make a difficult choice – protect the life of their child or always wonder what might have been. [ML 2017\_01\_27]

(5) During the other march in Washington last week I saw the picture of a young, black teenage girl in the crowd who was holding a sign that said, "I survived Roe v. Wade." That young woman beat the odds and was born into a world too far often that favors the abortion of a black girl instead of the life of a black girl. [ML 2017\_01\_27]

(6) Marianne was 17 when she found out she was pregnant. At first, she felt like she had no place to turn. But when she told her parents, they responded with total love, total affection, total support. Great parents? Great? [DT 2018\_01\_19]

Less frequently, the speakers use stories about abortion doctors, who are depicted as being insensitive monsters, just like pro-choicers:



(7) She **recounts a harrowing experience** while performing an abortion: “An eyeball just fell down into my lap,” she says, “and that’s gross.” Her remark was greeted with laughter from her audience. [ML 2017\_06\_08]

This reinforces the ‘we vs. they’ opposition, another frequent persuasive / manipulative technique:

(8) And that’s why **we**’re growing and **they**’re shrinking, and it’s making them desperate! [MS 2014\_01\_29]

43 The comparison between the PL corpus and American English 2006 used as a reference corpus which was conducted through WMatrix indeed showed that 1<sup>st</sup> person plural pronouns (WE, OURS) were overused in PL speeches, which creates both an opposition between WE and THEY and a sense of “in-groupness” [Cacciari 1998: 141].

44 Manipulation can also be achieved through the creation of symbolistic imagery relying on shared knowledge; it is therefore easily taken for granted by the audience, all the more as the most frequent words used by pro-lifers are the words we find in the occurrences related to symbolistic imagery (see section 3.1). We can note the use of religious imagery:

(9) We know that life is the greatest miracle of all. We see it in the eyes of every new mother who cradles that wonderful, innocent, and glorious newborn child in her loving arms. [DT 2018\_01\_19]<sup>13</sup>

or through references to the history of the United States and its destiny, which is, at times, intertwined with religious imagery:

(10) Under my administration, we will always defend **the very first right in the Declaration of Independence**, and that is the right to life. [DT 2018\_10\_19]

(11) And most of all, God, the **God who built and preserved nations**, who brings life and maintains it, who stands with those who suffer evil, he will remember us. He will **remember America and bless her**. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

45 Enumeration is resorted to in a few speeches from the PL corpus, especially to draw up a list of the different pieces of legislation:



(12) We strive to make our time in Congress a March for Life in itself. We strive to fight for the unborn, to **pass important pro-life legislation through Congress**, to work with the Trump administration to pass pro-life policies and laws. And we're making a lot of progress.

In the House, we passed **legislation defunding Planned Parenthood**.

In the House, we passed the **Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act**, which restricts abortions after 20 weeks.

We passed the **Conscience Protection Act**, which ensures no one is forced to perform an abortion against his or her will. Religious freedom is the **First Amendment**. It is the first protection in our **Bill of Rights**.

And just a few minutes ago, today, we passed the **Born-Alive Survivors Protection Act**. It protects the life of those babies who suffer from failed abortions.

[PR 2018\_01\_2019]

- 46 Fake information (accompanied by data, figures, etc.)<sup>14</sup> is also frequently provided in pro-life speeches, following the *logos* principle:

(13) Americans are more and more pro-life. You see that all the time. In fact, **only 12 percent of Americans** support abortion on demand at any time. [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(14) As of last year, **58% of Americans** said they think abortion should be illegal. [MS 2014\_01\_19]

Yet, recent polls (2018) showed that 29% of American citizens believe that abortion should be legal in all circumstances [Jones 2018].

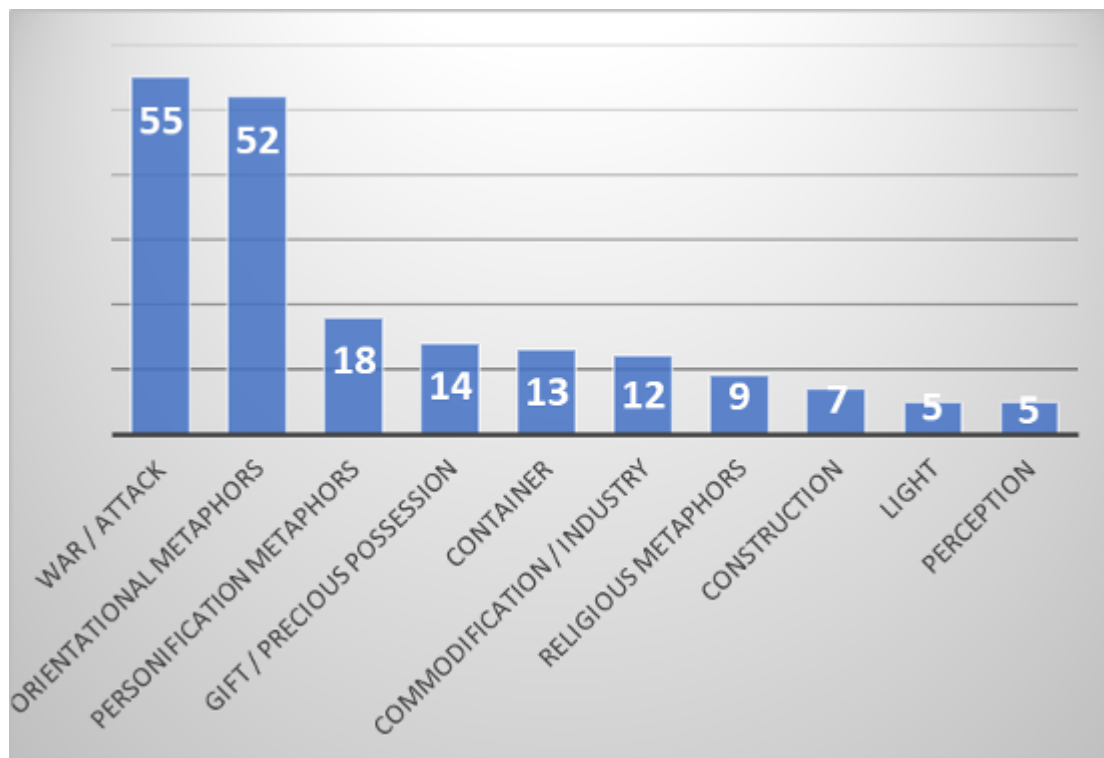
- 47 The main manipulative techniques used in the corpus are thus quite prototypical of the techniques used to manipulate crowds through speech, following Aristotle's classification [2004]: *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos*. As reminded by Charteris-Black [2011: 7], "these three artistic proofs are still relevant to how persuasion is achieved in contemporary political rhetoric". The speakers present themselves as saviors (*ethos*), try to arouse emotions in the audience through images of dying babies (*pathos*), and use linguistic devices, figures and data to be even more persuasive (*logos*). Metaphor is only one of those manipulative techniques; we will now mostly focus on the choice of metaphors, because as Charteris-Black [2011: 3] reminds us, "[u]nderstanding the systematic nature of metaphor choices is therefore necessary if we are to understand how political language becomes persuasive."



### 3.2. How are metaphors used manipulatively in the PL corpus?

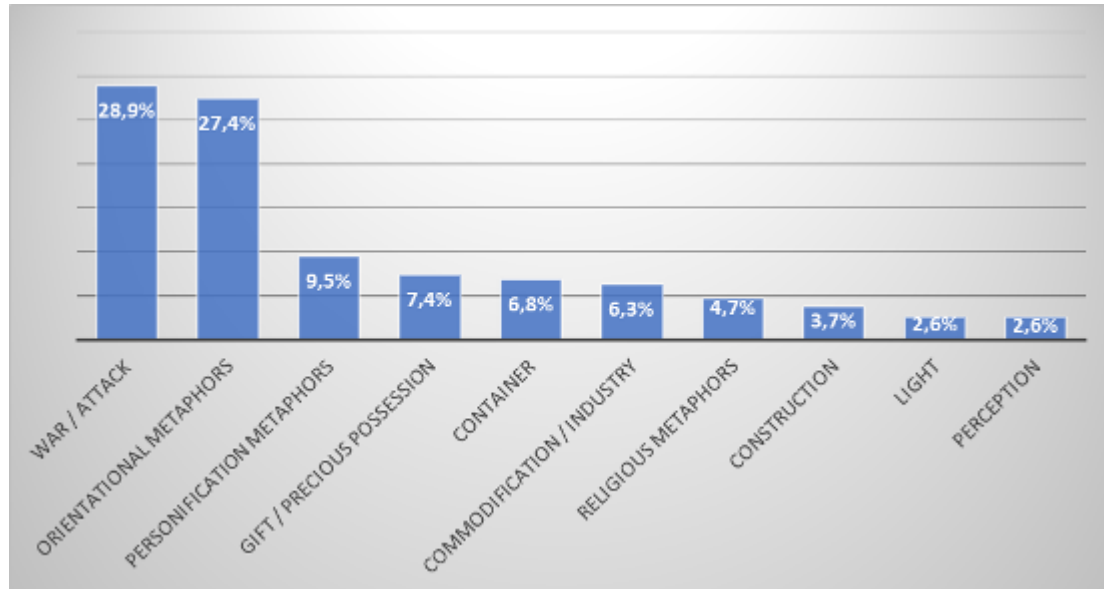
- 48 The 190 metaphors found in the corpus have been divided between orientational metaphors and structural metaphors [Lakoff & Johnson 1980]<sup>15</sup>; the latter were classified according to their source domains. They are distributed as shown on the following graph:

**Figure 11. Frequency of the conceptual domains in the pro-life corpus**





**Figure 12. Frequency of the conceptual domains in the pro-life corpus in percentage**



49 In the following subsections, the metaphorical occurrences from the PL corpus will be analyzed according to their source domain, and particular attention will be given to the manipulative techniques resorted to in the occurrences under study.

### 3.2.1. WAR / ATTACK metaphors

50 The highest number of occurrences (28.9%) derives from the domains WAR / ATTACK (55). We have identified two different kinds of conceptual metaphors related to WAR / ATTACK in the corpus:

- ABORTION IS AN ATTACK: many of those occurrences are considered literal utterances for pro-lifers, as they do believe pro-choicers and legal abortion attack the yet unborn babies<sup>16</sup>, as reminded by Charteris-Black [2011: 32]:

At any one instance in time a word may be more or less metaphoric for an individual speaker because judgements of what is normal, or conventional, depend on language users' unique experiences of discourse.

(15) You have to **destroy the second child** [JL 2016\_01\_20]



(16) What we were engaging in was the **mass killing of the unborn** [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(17) The **dismemberment of babies and torture of tiny bodies** in the womb and we told ourselves we were virtuous for our **ally**, we reversed good and evil, we told ourselves the **killing** had continued because if it did not, we would be imposing economic hardship. [...] we told them to be proud of participating in the **killing of the unborn**. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

51 These occurrences largely rely on another conceptual metaphor, i.e. LIFE IS A JOURNEY; pro-lifers conceptualize the moment of conception as the beginning of the journey; that is how expressions such as “killing babies” become non metaphorical for them. Even though they are not metaphors for them, they are all linked to the frame War and tend to be metaphorical (or at least metonymy-based metaphors) for pro-choicers, who consider that fetuses cannot be killed as they are not viable organisms. This is an example of asymmetrical metaphors [Goatly 2007: 119]: the discrepancy between what some speakers consider as literal and what some others consider as figurative enables manipulation in this specific context.

- ARGUMENT IS WAR, which is itself subdivided into:
  - PRO-CHOICERS ARE LIFE ATTACKERS

(18) They will characterize this nation as **barbarians**. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

(19) as Planned Parenthood and their **allies** in the mainstream media hoped [ML 2017\_06\_08]

- ◦ PRO-LIFERS ARE LIFE DEFENDERS

(20) The pro-life movement **is winning**, because we are THE big **tent!** Do you believe in God? Great, come on in! You don't believe in God? Great, come on in! You're not sure about God? Great, come on in! Everyone who recognizes the horror of abortion is welcome here! [MS 2014\_01\_29]

(21) More than that, they would have never dreamed she would grow up to **fight for** all children and those yet to be born. [ML 2017\_01\_27]

52 Pro-lifers see themselves as victims having to respond to an attack – the attack by pro-choicers on the lives of unborn children; they did not initiate it but have to react peacefully to the aggression from pro-choicers, for example by ‘marching’. The metaphors ABORTION IS AN ATTACK and ARGUMENT IS WAR are therefore quite frequently combined:



(22) we casually don't just try to **fight off the destruction of tissue** in other ways  
[JL 2016\_01\_20]

53 According to Charteris-Black [2011: 37], “[m]etaphors provide the ammunition for debate”, and this participates in the manipulative process because pro-life violent activity has actually been increasing in the past 30 years (see statistics provided in 2.1.): pro-lifers present themselves as non-violent as compared to pro-choicers, as illustrated in (18). Conceptualizing pro-choicers as baby killers allows them to hide the violent dimension their movement can sometimes take.

54 Most metaphors related to *WAR* are lexicalized metaphors or borderline cases of metaphors, which tends to make them less salient and therefore potentially more dangerous, as they can go unnoticed. There are, however, some occurrences which are much more vivid, extended, or combined, such as the following one:

(23) At its core, this is a debate about life and death. And we're **promoting** life, they're **promoting** death. It's like **Coke vs Pepsi**—we're **Coke**, they're **Pepsi**, but instead of **Pepsi** they use **rat poison**. It's **Coke vs. rat poison**! They can have the **coolest cans**, they can have the **funniest commercials**, but in the end it's still a can of **rat poison**! When you peel away the **glossy ad**, the pro-choice position offers death. Nothing more.

[...]

Why you should choose **Coke**, not **rat poison**! Stop by anytime!” [MS 2014\_01\_29]

55 We mentioned repetition as a manipulative technique, and in this excerpt, repetition takes the form of an extended metaphor; this occurrence is quite remarkable, as there is a combination of the *ATTACK / WAR* and *COMMODIFICATION / INDUSTRY* conceptual domains, exemplified in the expression “a can of rat poison”, reinforced by the ‘us vs. them’ opposition. The rare occurrences of those metaphors also participate in the manipulative process, as they resemble storytelling or parables, which places pro-lifers in the position of the ‘good guys’, and pro-choicers in the position of the ‘bad guys’<sup>17</sup>.

56 More generally speaking, *WAR / ATTACK* metaphors tend to create two opposed sides: that of the pro-lifers, who are considered as the ‘good guys’ defending life (*life* is often used metonymically to refer to the fetuses) and that of the pro-choicers, who are actually considered as ‘pro-abortionists’. This deformed vision of reality completely ignores the in-between zone, with which 50% of American citizens identify – that is to say, the belief that abortion should be legal but regulated. Because of the correspondences which are established between the



two domains, WAR metaphors present a much-dichotomized vision of society, with life defenders / good on one side and life attackers / evil on the other side.

### 3.2.2. Orientational metaphors

- 57 There are 52 occurrences of orientational metaphors in the corpus, accounting for 27.4% of all metaphors found in the corpus, which is not surprising given the fact that orientational metaphors are frequent in any type of discourse. Most of these derive from the GOOD IS UP or GOOD IS FORWARD MOVEMENT conceptual metaphors:

(24) We always move **forward toward** the perfection of that promise.  
[BS 2019\_01\_18]

(25) And, yes, we **walk**, we **march**, we **run**, and we **endeavor forward** with you.  
[KC 2017\_01\_27]

(26) Life is winning through the steady **advance** of science that illuminates when life begins more and more every day. [MP 01\_27\_2017]

(27) We **stand** between America and darkness and we will march until that darkness is banished forever and all of our children can **stand** together in the sunlight.  
[BS 2019\_01\_18]

(28) It means, to **stand** up, **stand** tall, and **stand** together against the indifference and the indefensible; and to **stand** up, **stand** tall, and **stand** together on behalf of babies in the womb. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

The occurrences of “stand up” are numerous and generally rely on a syllepsis, as the audience literally stands up and figuratively stands up for life.

- 58 These examples are manipulative through the multivalency of metaphors: in the first three occurrences, the two targets – GOOD and THE PROGRESS BROUGHT BY THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT – become associated or confused into an equation, because they share the multivalent source FORWARD MOVEMENT (GOOD IS FORWARD MOVEMENT + THE PROGRESS BROUGHT BY THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT IS FORWARD MOVEMENT = GOOD IS THE PROGRESS BY THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT); in the last two occurrences, the two targets GOOD and THE RESISTANCE OF THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT become associated or confused into an equation, because they share the multivalent source UP (GOOD



IS UP + THE RESISTANCE OF THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT IS UP = GOOD IS THE RESISTANCE OF THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT).

### 3.2.3. Personification metaphors

- 59 In the PL corpus, personifications, accounting for 9.5% of the overall metaphors, often rely on metonymies (“soul”, “life”, “voices”, etc.) to name the fetuses. According to Charteris-Black [2011: 62]:

Personification is persuasive because it evokes our attitudes, feelings and beliefs about people and applies them to our attitudes, feelings and beliefs about abstract political entities and is therefore a way of heightening the emotional appeal.

- 60 These are used for two reasons: firstly, to name them because there are no physical bodies when women have an abortion during the first trimester; pro-lifers often refer to the “unborn children”. However, personification is also a way to designate the potential of life and to give fetuses the attributes of a real person, not just the attributes of a body, and therefore to reinforce the opinion according to which life starts at the moment of conception.

(29) **stilled** forever, **voices** that could not speak, we dehumanize the most innocent [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(30) to stand here with the **souls** of the future of America [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(31) all **life enjoys** God’s love. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

- 61 The remaining occurrences mainly conceptualize “truth”, “faith”, or “love” as participants in the March for Life, manipulating again the audience by presenting those positively-connoted notions as if they were attending the March for Life, i.e. as members of the pro-life movement:

(32) So we have to be a **voice of truth**, and uncompromising truth, about abortion [and] human life, but we have to be compassionate and say that anybody can change. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

(33) My faith **teaches** me this life will **end** [...] your faith **teaches** you, they almost all **teach** the same thing: you will be **held to account**. [MR 02\_01\_2012]



(34) And that theme is: **Love saves lives**. [DT 2018\_01\_19]<sup>18</sup>

- 62 Once again, this participates in the simple manipulative process through the conceptualization of pro-lifers as ‘the good guys’, who are accompanied by personifications of love, faith, or truth, and in the not so implicit conceptualization of pro-choicers as ‘the bad guys’.

### 3.2.4. LIFE IS A GIFT / A PRECIOUS POSSESSION metaphors

- 63 LIFE IS A GIFT / A PRECIOUS POSSESSION metaphors are not uncommon in the English language [Kövecses 2002, 2006], but surprisingly, not so frequent in the corpus, as they only account for 7.4% of the occurrences. In the set of data, they are closely linked to religion, as LIFE is often conceptualized as A GIFT FROM GOD:

(35) “Human life is a **gift** from our Creator” [GWB 2006\_01\_23]

(36) I think virtually every faith condemns the practice of abortion, recognizes that life is a **gift** from the creator [MR 02\_01\_2012]

LIFE IS A GIFT and LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION are often combined:

(37) every child is a **precious gift from God** [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(38) Life is **precious** and life is **sacred** [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

- 64 The manipulative potential of these metaphors relies on two elements: firstly, the two conceptual metaphors are quite common and therefore entrenched in the minds of speakers. Therefore, they participate in the manipulation of speakers as they are not as salient as novel metaphors and can consequently go unnoticed. Secondly, they insidiously compel speakers to conceptualize life as starting at the moment of conception, because LIFE in those speeches metonymically stands for FETUSES. These metaphors therefore subtly modify the correspondences established between the two domains by moving the source in the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image-schema to the moment of conception.



### 3.2.5. CONTAINER metaphors

- 65 There are 13 occurrences of CONTAINER metaphors in the corpus, i.e. 6.8%. Those are quite frequent metaphors in any type of discourse as well, and it is therefore not surprising that they should be found in the corpus. Some occurrences present a conceptualization of the United States or of a period in the United States as a container that can or cannot be filled with children:

(39) And that is why we declare that America's future will be **filled** with goodness, peace, joy, dignity, and life for every child of God. [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(40) We as a country decided to **erase** them [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(41) we decided we could safely **blot out** millions of souls [BS 2019\_01\_18]

- 66 A full container is generally positively connoted, while an empty one is negatively connoted, mostly because what is supposed to fill the container is life. However, more generally, fullness is regarded as positive while emptiness is regarded as negative [Goatly 2007: 65]. However, CONTAINER metaphors can also be negatively connoted if the container is used to conceal something that is negatively connoted, as in the following occurrence:

(42) then we put **walls around** that lie [BS 2019\_01\_18]

Here, “we” refers to American people and more specifically to pro-choicers rather than to pro-lifers. In most occurrences, however, the notion of fullness – and its very mention – conveys a positive interpretation, whatever the target domain:

(43) The whole world was **opened** to me: I could be with the older kids or the younger kids, I could do extracurriculars that weren't necessarily traditional. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13] (THE VISUAL FIELD IS A CONTAINER)

(44) So I can't thank my parents enough for **pouring themselves into** my education and really setting me up for success to do the most in this cause for life. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13] (EDUCATION IS A CONTAINER)

(45) And one day, soon, we will reaffirm our nation's principles in their dignified **fullness** and avow once again, that all men are created equal. [ML 2017\_06\_08] (THE NATION IS A CONTAINER)



(46) The pro-life movement is winning, because we are THE big tent! Do you believe in God? Great, **come on in!** You don't believe in God? Great, **come on in!** You're not sure about God? Great, **come on in!** Everyone who recognizes the horror of abortion is welcome here! [MS 2014\_01\_29] (A COMMUNITY IS A CONTAINER)

- 67 Systematically associating pro-lifers to fullness allows them to present themselves in a positive light, contrary to pro-choicers, who are rather conceptualized as emptying the United States of all life and of all potential American children.

### 3.2.6. commodification / industry metaphors

- 68 INDUSTRY and COMMODITY metaphors can be found in five different speeches from the corpus and account for 6.3% of the overall metaphors<sup>19</sup>. There are three occurrences of the collocation “abortion industry” in the corpus in two different speeches:

(47) the Center for Medical Progress is once again the target of criminal and civil investigations designed to intimidate further questions about the **abortion industry's** methods and money. [ML 2017\_06\_08]

(48) Learn the facts about the **abortion industry**. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

as well as one occurrence of “abortion chain” [LR 2016\_05\_9-13], one of “abortion-on-demand” [MS 2014\_01\_29], and one of “industry” [ML 2017\_06\_08]. The systematic use of this collocation and of this conceptual metaphor in different speeches throughout the years also participates in the manipulative process, as it contributes to leaving a permanent imprint of this concept in the minds of the audience, so to speak. Those metaphors are also manipulative as they participate in the demonization of pro-choicers. *Industry* is defined in the following words in the OED [‘industry, n. 5.a.’ 2015]:

A particular form or sector of productive work, trade, or manufacture. In later use also more generally: any commercial activity or enterprise. Also with modifying word indicating the type of activity or principal product.

- 69 By suggesting that abortion is a form of lucrative business, pro-lifers imply that the only aim of abortion providers is to make money off women and children and that they want to increase the number of abortions in order to make more money. Therefore, ABORTION IS



AN INDUSTRY is closely linked to A FETUS IS A COMMODITY, which derives from A PERSON IS A COMMODITY, pro-lifers considering that life starts at the moment of conception. Dehumanization in this metaphor is therefore highly dysphemistic<sup>20</sup> as it enables the objectification of people and fetuses and suggests that they can be sold; pro-lifers reverse the argument given by pro-choicers and science according to which life does not start at the moment of conception by pushing it to the extreme and associating abortion not to medicine, but to trade. The association between fetuses and commodities is explicitly mentioned in the text on two occasions:

(49) these were not human beings, human lives at all but disposable balls of meat [...]  
not human beings, human lives at all but disposable balls of meat. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(50) It shows another Planned Parenthood doctor stating that ‘the fetus is a tough little object,’ so ‘taking it apart’ in the womb is ‘very difficult’ [ML 2017\_06\_08]

70 The manipulative process also relies on the fact that pro-lifers argue that those are not metaphorical for pro-choicers and that they literally believe that fetuses are objects that can be tossed away. This completely conceals the underlying metaphor A FETUS IS A COMMODITY and uses a short cut in order to give less credibility to the argument of pro-choicers: if non-viable fetuses are not human lives, then they are objects and can be attributed all the characteristics and functions that can be attributed to regular objects. Attributing those words to pro-choicers participates in their demonization.

71 One occurrence (23) we discussed previously in the WAR / ATTACK section seems to stand out: it is particularly salient because it is both novel, extended and it combines two conceptual metaphors, ABORTION IS WAR / ATTACK and ABORTION IS COMMODIFICATION / INDUSTRY, which makes it all the more manipulative, as it participates in the dehumanizing process:

(23) At its core, this is a debate about life and death. And we’re promoting life, they’re promoting death. It’s like **Coke vs Pepsi** — we’re **Coke**, they’re **Pepsi**, but instead of **Pepsi** they use rat poison. It’s **Coke** vs. rat poison! They can have the **coolest cans**, they can have the **funniest commercials**, but in the end it’s still a **can** of rat poison! When you peel away the **glossy ad**, the pro-choice position offers death. Nothing more.  
[...]  
Why you should choose Coke, not rat poison! Stop by anytime! [MS 2014\_01\_29]



### 3.2.7. Religious metaphors

- 72 Although we have already mentioned a few metaphors that are partially linked to religion<sup>21</sup>, some of them more explicitly present pro-lifers as the incarnation of everything that is good and as believers, while presenting pro-choicers as the incarnation of evil; interestingly enough, there are not many of them in the corpus (4.7%):

(51) The dismemberment of babies and torture of tiny bodies in the womb and we told ourselves we were virtuous for our ally, we **reversed good and evil**, we told ourselves the killing had continued because if it did not, we would be imposing economic hardship. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

Part of those occurrences are probably not entirely metaphorical to pro-lifers as they strongly believe that abortion is a form of murder that is condemned by religion and that should be condemned by society, as exemplified in the following occurrences:

(52) I think virtually every faith **condemns** the practice of abortion, recognizes that life is a gift from the creator [MR 02\_01\_2012]

(53) The way we look at these things in history and **condemn** them, this era will be **condemned** for this [MR 02\_01\_2012]

- 73 The use of religious imagery and the references to history enable to define abortion as something evil that should be unlawful, and therefore to make a parallel between religion and law. The occurrences linked to religion also sometimes rely on metaphor and hyperbole:

(54) the democratic party has **embraced** abortion as a **sacrament** [BS 2019\_01\_18]

This occurrence fosters the conceptualization of good religious pro-lifers as opposed to evil pro-choicers, who are equated with Satanists, reversing the concept of sacrament as Satanists reverse all Christian rites and symbols. However, Ben Shapiro may not literally believe that the Democratic Party is made of Satanists, but the metaphor allows him to manipulate the audience who may not perceive the metaphor as a metaphor. The distinction between metaphor, hyperbole, and pure lie is quite blurred here. It is also



unsure how metaphorical “miracle” is used in the next two occurrences:

(55) life is the **greatest miracle of all** [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(56) speak to the many women who have faced challenges becoming and remaining pregnant – and then welcomed a **miracle** [KC 2017\_01\_27]

- 74 It seems fair to assume that most pro-lifers in the United States are religious and that they do believe that miracles are caused by God; however, the OED [‘miracle, n. 1.a.’ 2002] defines the word *miracle* as “[a] marvelous event not ascribable to human power or the operation of any natural force and therefore attributed to supernatural, esp. divine, agency”, and *life* and *children* cannot be considered as “events”, which makes these occurrences partly metonymic / metaphorical. Moreover, if most pro-lifers are religious, it is probably not the case for all of them, and some pro-lifers may partly accept a scientific explanation to the existence of life. “Miracle” is therefore likely to be interpreted in its metaphorical sense of “something extraordinary” by part of the audience. Even for non-religious people, the very concept of life is somehow miraculous, as it cannot be entirely accounted for. Of course, these occurrences also rely on the assumption that life begins at the moment of conception, but the use of “miracle” gets everyone to agree and participates in the manipulative process.

### 3.2.8. CONSTRUCTION metaphors

- 75 There are two different conceptual metaphors using CONSTRUCTION. Most of the time, PRO-LIFERS are conceptualized as BUILDERS OF A BETTER WORLD / CULTURE:

(57) But you all come for one beautiful cause: to **build** a society where life is celebrated, protected, and cherished. [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(58) you and I are working together, along with others, to **build** what I’ve called a ‘culture of life.’ [GWB 2006\_01\_23]

In these occurrences, pro-lifers are more or less explicitly equated with God or the Pilgrim Fathers:

(59) The God who **built** and **preserves** nations, who **brings** life and maintains it [BS 2019\_01\_18]



(60) We **built** the country for our children, we **build** our lives for our children  
[BS 2019\_01\_18]

CONSTRUCTION metaphors also imply MORE IS GOOD, especially when GOOD is equated with LIFE, which is a case of multivalency of metaphors enabling manipulation by the blurring of the conceptual domains.

76 The second kind of occurrence – only one in the corpus – derives from ARGUMENT IS CONSTRUCTION:

(61) so if you **build** on that, you're already on **slippery sand** [MR 02\_01\_2012]

This metaphor allows to conceptualize the discourse of pro-choicers as not being well-built and on the verge of collapsing.

### 3.2.9. LIGHT metaphors

77 GOODNESS IS LIGHT metaphors [Charteris-Black 2011: 71], even if rare – 2.6% – are present in the corpus:

(62) This is a new day, a new **dawn** for life. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

(63) We stand between America and **darkness** and we will march until that **darkness** is **banished** forever and all of our children can stand together in the **sunlight**. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

They promote the conceptualization of pro-lifers as good and that of pro-choicers as evil. They are also mixed with KNOWLEDGE IS LIFE metaphors, in which the basic assumption is that the fact that life begins at the moment of conception is the piece of knowledge that should be available to everyone and the times when abortion was legal are considered as dark times in the same way as the Middle Ages. The manipulation goes further when science is supposed to be the source of light that helps reveal this piece of knowledge, as in the following example:

(64) Life is winning through the steady advance of science that **illuminates** when life begins more and more every day. [MP 01\_27\_2017]



### 3.2.10. PERCEPTION metaphors

- 78 Finally, there are five occurrences of PERCEPTION METAPHORS in the corpus (2.6%), but the role they play in the manipulative process is not as clear-cut as that of the other occurrences we have mentioned so far, probably because they are not as frequent; manipulation needs some repetitions, to achieve some hammering effect, and if the same metaphors are scarce in a given corpus, it is fair to assume that they will not have a specific manipulative function:

(65) We fought to avoid **looking at the ugly truth** of what we've done  
[BS 2019\_01\_18]

(66) I believe in all my heart that future generations will **look back** at this era of American history and condemn us [...] people will **look back** at this practice [...] we **look back** at the atrocities of the past. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

## Concluding remarks

- 79 The analysis of the pro-life corpus enabled us to confirm that the following elements participate in the manipulative potential of metaphors:
- 80 (1) The three criteria mentioned in section 1 seem to play a part in the manipulative power of metaphors. Firstly, the highlighting-hiding process: for example, WAR metaphors hide the violence displayed by pro-lifers and suggest that pro-choicers are violent attackers; pro-lifers are conceptualized as defenders, but in any war, you are also attackers, and there are casualties on both sides (pro-lifers tend to insist that dead people – fetuses – are only on their side). As Charteris-Black [2011: 44] writes, “[w]hen evaluating metaphor we should therefore always consider how far metaphors conceal a speaker’s intentions”. Secondly, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors: they are indeed quite frequent in our corpus, more particularly in the pro-life corpus, as many religious-based metaphors may not be perceived as metaphors by pro-lifers, but as literal language, or are presented as such. ABORTION IS AN ATTACK metaphors are perceived as real attacks by pro-lifers. A number of metaphors are also in between literal and figurative meaning, and some vivid metaphors (such as “march”) remind us of the original



military meaning as they are surrounded by so many military metaphors; thirdly and finally, the multivalency of metaphors: metaphors contribute to the depiction of pro-lifers as good and pro-choicers as evil. This dichotomized vision of American society is also conveyed by many other elements in the text, as we have seen;

- 81 (2) A number of metaphors in the corpus rely on the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor: the source of the journey is the moment of conception, not the birth *per se*; this underlying assumption participates in the manipulative potential of many conceptual metaphors in the corpus;
- 82 (3) The degree of conventionality of the metaphor also has to be taken into account regarding the potential manipulative force of the metaphor, as conventional metaphors often go unnoticed because they are less salient than vivid metaphors, which may make them even more dangerous. Our corpus exhibits few vivid metaphors, except for a couple of occurrences in which vivid metaphors are also extended; these occurrences often participate in the construction of storytelling and parables. On the other hand, the few vivid metaphors in the corpus are salient and lay emphasis on a specific aspect of reality;
- 83 (4) The same conceptual metaphor is often used throughout the text, which creates textual cohesion and participates in the manipulative process as well.
- 84 Finally, the metadiscursive dimension has to be taken into account: there is frequent resort to metalinguistic / metadiscursive comments on the part of the speakers, as if they were in fact describing the utterance process and conscious of the manipulative nature of the utterance. In the corpus, they can be found in the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor, but also in the following occurrences:

(68) Our goal is to reach every single American, no matter where they are, no matter what their background is, to get them the right kind of media and content that's going to **shape their thoughts** and **touch their hearts** about the abortion issue and about the related issues of human dignity and the human right to life. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

(69) So we have to be **a voice of truth**, and uncompromising truth, about abortion [and] human life, but we have to be compassionate and say that anybody can change. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]



(70) They'll use rhetoric—they'll use rhetoric about freedom, about female empowerment, and that can be very appealing. [MS 2014\_01\_29]

- 85 This study was carried out on a rather short set of data, and further study is needed to see if other criteria can be brought out when it comes to the manipulative dimension of metaphor, in combination with other rhetorical and cognitive devices. As Goatly [2007: 213] writes:

Clearly there is enormous scope for research in exploring the diversity of structuring in relation to other diverse metaphor themes, explaining their ideological and ontological presuppositions, and validating the resulting hypotheses through experimentation, by, for example, testing whether a different metaphorical conception leads to different thought patterns or behaviour.

- 86 Finally, it is fair to say that the success of those metaphors – and by extension, the manipulative effectiveness of those speeches – could be questioned. Indeed, pro-life speeches are mainly aimed at a pro-life audience as they are delivered at pro-life meetings. Therefore, the audience does not really need to be manipulated or, at least, does not need to be convinced that abortion should be banned. The aim is probably rather to keep the audience convinced (through language manipulation, for example) than to radically change the minds of pro-choicers. A further study could be the contrastive perception on metaphor manipulation between pro-lifers and pro-choicers, as well as a lexical analysis of *pro-* in *pro-choicers* and *pro-life*, as it could fuel the manipulative process.

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### Pro-life corpus

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1 Just like Goatly, we will adopt a light version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: “I espouse a weak form of the Whorfian hypothesis, that is, in brief, that the particular language we speak predisposes us to think and act in certain ways. I do not adopt the strong one, which says one’s language totally determines one’s thought.” [Goatly 2007: 24].

2 See also Kövecses [2002: 80].

3 i.e. when judges are suspected of using their personal opinion instead of the law to issue a decision, notably on sensitive issues.



4 In *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the Supreme Court decided to uphold four provisions but to reject the requirement of spousal consent because it placed an undue burden on the woman.

5 A bill entitled *Paid-Capable Unborn Children Protection act* was re-introduced in Congress in January 2019 [available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/784/text>], it has repeatedly been blocked by the Senate in the past.

6 For an illustration of the forecasts by Planned Parenthood on the availability of abortion clinics in the South, see [https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/uploads/filer\\_public/61/7c/617c4b07-46ac-4ad8-8454-553371b291b0/abortion-providers-closed-in-the-south-2-25-16\\_1.gif](https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/uploads/filer_public/61/7c/617c4b07-46ac-4ad8-8454-553371b291b0/abortion-providers-closed-in-the-south-2-25-16_1.gif).

7 The National Abortion Federation is an organization of abortion providers. They release disruption and violence statistics every year (the 2018 report is not available yet).

8 Acts of disruption include hate mail, harassing calls, Internet harassment, suspicious packages, bomb threats, picketing, and obstruction. Picketing acts alone amounted to 189,200 between 2010 and 2017.

9 There has also been an increase in violent acts, from 1,273 between 1977 and 1989 to 2,622 between 2010 and 2017.

10 All poll results mentioned in the rest of this section are from Jones [2018].

11 The March for Life movement is not only found in the US, but in many other countries. In the US, it has a dedicated website: <https://marchforlife.org/>.

12 Techniques such as repetition are in line with theories on populist discourse, which has been widely researched, especially in France (for instance, Dorna [2007]). Populist discourse also resorts to the following devices: simple language with repetition; bipolar discourse: “we” and “the others”; national imagery, etc.).

13 This short paragraph by Donald Trump immediately evokes the Virgin Mary, especially in this specific context.

14 We decided to label those occurrences “fake information” because they were different from the official data (see Figures 8 and 9).

15 “[T]hree general kinds of conceptual metaphor have been distinguished: structural, ontological, and orientational” [Kövecses 2002: 33].



- 16 Note that the terms *babies*, *unborn*, *bodies*, etc. are used, instead of terms like *fetuses* for instance.
- 17 We can mention the conceptual metaphor THE USA IS THE MORAL LEADER in conjunction with good and bad guys, as proposed by Charteris-Black [2005: 177]. Pro-life arguments therefore bring in national morality into the debate.
- 18 As Richard Trim (personal communication) mentioned to us: “All these tend to involve symbolic imagery: God, truth, love, etc. They are generally linked to the morality concept which has formed a part of American constitutional rhetoric since the beginning.”
- 19 The American context of business is important (see Goatly [2007]’s theories of business metaphors and ideology).
- 20 “A **dysphemism** is an expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and it is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression just for that reason” [Allan & Burridge 1991: 26].
- 21 Religious metaphors are not numerous; they have been gathered in the same section even though they do not all use the same conceptual domain.

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## English

Manipulation implies a conscious choice from speakers to trigger a change of opinion in the interlocutors and to make them accept their own point of view, i.e. their own vision of the world. As pointed out by Goatly [2007], Charteris-Black [2005, 2014] or Van Dijk [1998], metaphors can be used as manipulative tools. Metaphors have traditionally been considered as figures of speech used by rhetoricians to convince crowds; cognitivists have demonstrated that they are figures of thought as well, which partly accounts for their manipulative potential. The three underlying reasons to this are, among others, the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors, and the multivalency of metaphors. The manipulative potential of metaphors is examined in twelve speeches from pro-life supporters, ranging from 2006 to 2019. One of the main ideological debates going on in the US has been on abortion, as the pro-life movement has grown stronger in recent years and has been threatening the right to abortion guaranteed by *Roe v. Wade*. The study of the metaphors in those speeches has enabled us to highlight how pro-lifers manipulate people regarding the apprehension of reality by systematically using a limited number of conceptualizations.



## Français

Le concept de manipulation implique qu'il y a un choix conscient des locuteurs qui permet de déclencher un changement d'opinion chez les interlocuteurs et de leur faire accepter leur propre point de vue, c'est-à-dire leur propre vision du monde. Comme le soulignent Goatly [2007], Charteris-Black [2005, 2014] ou Van Dijk [1998], les métaphores peuvent être utilisées comme des outils de manipulation. Les métaphores sont traditionnellement considérées comme des figures de style utilisées par les rhétoriciens pour convaincre les foules ; les cognitivistes ont démontré qu'elles sont également des figures de pensée, ce qui explique en partie leur potentiel manipulateur. Les trois raisons sous-jacentes à cela sont, entre autres, le processus de *highlighting-hiding*, l'existence de métaphores asymétriques et la multivalence des métaphores. Le potentiel manipulateur des métaphores est étudié dans douze discours de *pro-lifers*, ou militants anti-avortement, de 2006 à 2019. L'un des principaux débats idéologiques contemporains aux États-Unis porte sur l'avortement, dans la mesure où le mouvement *pro-life* s'est renforcé ces dernières années et où il menace le droit à l'avortement garanti par l'arrêt de la Cour Suprême *Roe v. Wade*. L'étude des métaphores dans ces discours nous a permis d'étudier comment les *pro-life* manipulent la manière dont leurs interlocuteurs appréhendent la réalité, en recourant systématiquement à un nombre limité de conceptualisations.

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## Mots-clés

avortement, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, métaphore, manipulation, mouvement pro-life, États-Unis d'Amérique

## Keywords

abortion, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, metaphor, manipulation, pro-life movement, USA

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# Brexit and the Myth of Grandeur

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## Introduction

- 1 On 23 June 2016, after more than 40 years of membership, Britain voted to leave the European Union (EU). This decision set in motion a difficult process that uncovered both the incapacity of the government to deliver on the popular result and a real divide within the British society. Now that the EU has agreed to postpone the Brexit deadline to give the United Kingdom (UK) more time to work out a satisfying agreement, it seems that the political polarization of the British society is at an all-time high [Hobolt *et al.* 2018: 4].
- 2 The pro-Brexit camp can be seen as a case in point for that matter. Few are those on the Brexit side who have changed their opinions and a second referendum might not produce the result that we, on the French side of the Channel [Peillon 2019], would expect [Hobolt 2017]. Notwithstanding that the Brexit lies have been exposed, in particular concerning the money that would be given to the National Health Service (NHS) in place of the EU [Abigail 2016], many are those who still want to see Brexit through [Curtice 2019]. The end seems to justify the means: some arguments were based on lies and yet, most



pro-Brexit voters have not changed their minds [Goodwin 2019]. This shows how convincing the Leave campaign was, and in particular the Vote Leave organization, as it used entrenched British Euroscepticism.

- 3 The Vote Leave campaign was designated by the Electoral Commission as the official campaign in favour of leaving the European Union. Among its most prominent and outspoken members were Labour MP Gisela Stuart and Conservative MPs Michael Gove and Boris Johnson. With the addition of political strategists Matthew Elliott and Dominic Cummings, this five-strong group played a key role in the campaign as they coordinated between campaign committee meetings and met on a daily basis [Vote Leave 2016]. In part thanks to their cunning rhetoric, which drew on decades of staunch British Euroscepticism, they won the referendum and took the political debate to another level.
- 4 Indeed, Brexit has highlighted a generational, cultural and educational divide within British society [Goodwin 2016]. Factual arguments failed to really have an impact on the result. The Brexit lure seems to overcome the traditional socio-economic division between Conservative / Labour [Norris 2018]. It runs deeper, it is more subconscious, it resonates with the British soul. It appeals to deep-rooted prejudices towards the European project. This is why rationality seems useless to explain the outcome. We need to go beyond logic, into the collective sub-conscious and into the myth-making process used by Vote Leave. To do this, I will use metaphors as there is no better link between ideology and myth, words and images and between the conscious and the unconscious [Charteris-Black 2011: 38].

# 1. Methodology

## 1.1. Elaboration of the corpus

- 5 To investigate the myth created by Vote Leave, I studied a corpus of 31 texts (Table 1), approximately 50,000 words (statements, speeches, open letters and newspaper articles) from their official website. They span several months, from 17 February to 16 June 2016. As those



documents are still on their website three years after the result, it is fair to assume that they are considered as canonical texts and that they represent essential examples of Brexit rhetoric, and this is why I decided to study them.

- 6 I have decided to adopt a discourse system approach, as defined by Cameron and Low [Charteris-Black 2014: 185]. In other words, I will examine metaphors in a collection of political speeches from a particular genre, because all the documents in the corpus are related to a similar topic, Brexit.
- 7 To establish conceptual categories, I have identified metaphor patterns on the basis of source domains [Charteris-Black 2014: 185]. The different source domains will enable me to establish the different narratives, or myths, developed by the members of Vote Leave and their general ideology [Van Dijk 2005: 17-18] or worldview. As far as metaphor identification is concerned, I will use Charteris-Black's distinction [2014: 176]:

Metaphors in political rhetoric typically occur in phrases, or collocations, rather than as separable words, and for this reason the unit of measurement [will] be the phrase rather than the word.

This approach will enable me to focus on key metaphors in the various documents of the corpus [Charteris-Black 2004: 34-35].



**Table 1: Vote Leavers' metaphors classified by type / source domain.**

Code	Journey	Perso.	Destruction/ violence	Slavery/ freedom	Container	Others	Total
CO1	2	4	5	1		2	14
CO2		1	1	1		3	6
CO3	2		1				3
CO4	3	1				1	5
CO5		1	5			1	7
CO6	1		3				4
CO7	3	6	2	4	1	2	18
CO8					5	1	6
CO9		1		2			3
CO10	2	2		1	1		6
CO11	1		1		2	1	5
CO12	3	6				1	10
CO13	3	3	1	13		2	22
CO14			1		5	4	10
CO15	12	4	1	10	1	2	30
CO16	5	5	4		4	1	19
CO17	5	3	1	2		2	13
CO18			7	1		1	9
CO19		1			2		3
CO20		1	1		4		6
CO21	9		2	1		1	13
CO22		1	1			1	3
CO23		2			3		5
CO24					3	2	5
CO25	1	2		1	2	1	7
CO26	3	2	5		2	1	13
CO27	11	6	9	2	3	4	35
CO28	4	5	1			1	11
CO29		1	4				5
CO30	5	1					6
CO31	2	3				1	6
	77	62	56	39	38	36	308

## 1.2. Theoretical approach

- 8 The reasons behind the Brexit result are manifold and very often intertwined. Political, economic and sociological causes can be found to explain the outcome of the referendum. As far as the Brexit campaign is concerned, one additional element needs to be taken into consideration: the rhetoric used by Brexiters and in particular their extensive use of metaphors. As explained in the introduction, this paper will focus on the use of metaphors in the Vote Leave literature.
- 9 I will use Barcelona's definition of metaphor [2012: 32]:

Metaphor has been defined, within cognitive linguistics, as a conceptual mapping in which the source and the target domain



belong to two different superordinate experiential domains.

In other words, metaphor is “defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain” [Kövecses 2010: 4]. Following the conceptual approach devised by Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 3], I will study the recurrent conceptual metaphors used by the Vote Leave campaign. Kövecses [2010: 4] defines *conceptual metaphor* as:

A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains, in which one domain is understood in terms of another. A conceptual domain is any coherent organization of experience.

- 10 In order to make sense of the different metaphors used by Vote Leavers, I will use critical metaphor analysis [Charteris-Black 2004] as methodological framework for this paper. This approach is particularly relevant in the case of political speeches:

Critical metaphor analysis aims to identify which metaphors are chosen in persuasive genres such as political speeches, party political manifestos or press reports, and attempts to explain why these metaphors are chosen, with reference to the interaction between an orator’s purposes and a specific set of speech circumstances [Charteris-Black 2014: 174].

I will study how Vote Leave managed to convince people that they would be in a better position outside the EU. According to Jonathan Charteris Black [2014: 174]:

Critical analysis of metaphor in public communication demonstrates how this aspect of vocabulary choice influences an audience by providing a favourable representation of speakers and their policies, or an unfavourable representation of opponents and their policies.

- 11 When used systematically, metaphors “create political myths and discourses of legitimization and delegitimization that give rise to ideologies and world views” [Charteris-Black 2014: 174], here the fact that Britain needs to leave the EU. This is why a detailed analysis of metaphors will enable us to see that Vote Leave created a political



myth that echoed with what a majority of British voters felt at heart [McGeever & Virdee 2018].

- 12 My objective is to show the manipulative power of metaphors as they propagated in discourse [Chilton 2005: 15]. Indeed, most Brexit arguments have been debunked<sup>1</sup>, lies have been exposed, the importance of the EU has been showcased and explained and yet, many Brexiters are adamant: they still want to leave. The cognitive dimension of metaphors [Barcelona 2012: 2] seems to have played a key role in convincing British voters that leaving the European Union would be the best option.
- 13 I will examine three key myths: the Enoch Powell myth, the Robin Hood myth, and the idea of British exceptionalism. Once combined, these narratives reinforce the notion of British grandeur and stress the absolute necessity to both leave the EU and to take back control.
- 14 This idea of control represents the backbone of Brexit rhetoric. It is therefore not surprising to see that the four terms that are the most used in the corpus are *people* (202), *will* (434), *take back* (70), and *control* (224). The notion of control is present everywhere and permeates every myth created, as we will see now.

## 2. Overview of key findings

### 2.1. The Enoch Powell Myth

- 15 Euroscepticism has been running deep within British politics for decades [Alexandre-Collier 2014]. It was sometimes played down by Europhile prime ministers, such as Tony Blair, but most of the time it was a reality British decision makers had to take into consideration. It even damaged the careers of powerful figures such as John Major, David Cameron, or even Margaret Thatcher [Schnapper 2000]. It means that attacking the EU was much easier than to support it and would attract more attention. Brexiteers knew that and made the most of it. They also had a structural advantage: promising something new is always more efficient than being in favour of the status quo, in particular if this status quo is based on a very uneasy relationship [Bonnet 2019].



- 16 This is why the Brexiteers displayed much confidence. This debate was a long time coming, they had time to poke and prod British opinion, to assess the general mood towards Europe and use it to their own advantage. The EU being seen as a nebulous organization whose influence is felt everywhere but very hard to define, one key feature of their rhetoric is assertiveness [Buckledee 2018: 27]. They do not suppose, they do not guess, they make assertions and their objective is to unveil the truth. Revealing what he saw as the difficult truth was also what Enoch Powell crusaded for [Schofield 2013].
- 17 Both a scholar and a right-wing British politician, Enoch Powell came to prominence in the 60s as he warned of the danger of mass immigration coming from the Commonwealth, following the introduction by the Labour government of the 1968 Race Relations Act that made it illegal to refuse housing, employment or public services to people because of their ethnic background [Legislation 2020].
- 18 Even if he lacked the common touch, Powell nonetheless was a brilliant orator. The two main aspects of his rhetoric were his use of reported dialogues and his metaphors [Charteris-Black 2011: 109]. In his metaphors, Britain was seen as a container [Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 92-93]: there is only a limited amount of space available. Should immigrants overwhelm the locals, this would lead to a river of blood [Telegraph 2007].
- 19 It seems that Vote Leave sought inspiration from Powell's speeches and the one feature of Powell's rhetoric that Vote Leavers cherished the most is the use of container metaphors. Britain works quite well but being an island, space is limited. Immigration would disrupt this nice (Victorian) order:

(01) **The shortage of primary school places** is yet another example of **how uncontrolled migration is putting unsustainable pressures on our public services**. [CO8]

Here, public services are seen as containers that are being filled by uncontrolled immigration. The implication is that immigration will deteriorate, even destroy, public services. It also implies that local people will be denied access to those schools, hospitals, job centers, etc. Britain will suffocate because of EU policy to allow thousands of



migrants to come to the UK. The situation will be all the worse as migrants, according to Vote Leave literature, will go directly to Britain. Just like the mother country of the Commonwealth in the 60s, Britain is a magnet that is irresistible:

(02) Membership of the EU means we are completely unable to control EU migration, and **that puts unsustainable pressure on school places**. This will only get worse with five more countries – Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey – **in the pipeline to join the EU**. [CO8]

Here, people from countries that are not even members of the EU will be sent directly and without control to Britain (it is difficult to stop and check what is in a pipeline). The term *pipeline* is used 6 times in total and shows that Britain is willing to welcome immigrants. Pipelines are used to provide oil or gas to sustain the economy of a country. The same goes with immigrants who will fuel the British economy and at the same time flood and saturate the job market.

- 20 Consequently, in the eyes of Vote Leavers, it seems that Britain has not learned the lessons from the past. Just like Britain “busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre” in the 60s in the words of Powell [Telegraph 2007], the country is once again described as shooting itself in the foot as it even provides money for those countries to join the EU:

(03) These problems will only get worse when countries **in the pipeline to join the EU become members in the near future**. British taxpayers are already paying nearly £2 billion for Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey to join the EU. [CO23]

The question of money is a central feature, as we will see later. Container metaphors are particularly powerful as they allow Vote Leavers to go beyond fruitless criticisms of immigration. Depicting Britain as an enclosed place highlights its outward looking ambition. For centuries, Britain looked beyond its shores and one of the reasons why it turned into such a vast and influential empire was because of this lack of space [Lynn 2001]. If we read between the lines, it is not immigration *per se* that is problematic, it is the fact that it endangers the very foundations of a country that has always tried to spread its influence abroad [Bonnet 2019].

- 21 Actually, most Vote Leavers use their personal background to celebrate immigration:



(04) I am an immigrant who came to Britain from Germany in 1974 and I ended up an MP and a government minister. [CO7]

(05) I am the proud descendant of immigrants. [CO19]

(06) I'm only here today because Britain welcomed my father as a refugee from Czechoslovakia in 1938. [CO28]

This allows them to show that Britain is a welcoming country and that they are not anti-migration. It proves that their approach is not that of “Little Englanders” [Chotiner 2019] as they do not resent immigration, what they dislike is the way the EU handles immigration.

- 22 We can see here the persuasive power of metaphors. Drawing on collective memory and unconscious representations of the glorious imperial history of the country, metaphors are used to turn what could be seen as narrow-mindedness, that is the rejection of other people coming in, into a celebration of the British liberal past. By celebrating the appeal of the country, as Britain was an economic magnet, metaphors enable Vote Leavers to attack the EU's restrictive policies as they force its members to welcome migrant on supposedly no solid or logical ground.
- 23 The Powell myth shows that the UK is in danger and needs to take back control so as not to be invaded and destroyed by mass immigration. More than that, the country has to fight to disentangle itself from European oppression.

## 2.2. Robin Hood myth

- 24 Dominic Cumming's masterstroke was to come up with the promise that leaving the EU would divert £350M to the NHS [Bennet 2018]. This was a lie, yet it was present in most speeches. It was part of what can be seen as the Robin Hood myth. Basically, the tale of Robin Hood is the confrontation between a group of selfless English people and an unaccountable and illegitimate ruling elite of Norman/ French origin (King John's parents were both French: Henry II Plantagenet and Alienor d'Aquitaine). According to the well-known legend, the group of English Merry Men stole from the rich and gave to the poor



[Seal 2001; Coote & Kaufman 2018]. A similar pattern emerges in the Brexit debate.

- 25 The EU is seen as a self-destructive bully that will harm Britain. This is why metaphors of destruction and violence are widely used. Here is one example among many others:

(07) And just imagine **the utter carnage** that would have affected our economy had we listened to the EU elite and joined the Euro. [CO13]

- 26 The EU is a force for evil that steals the money of law-abiding British citizens. Here metaphors of violence show British people being hurt by the EU:

(08) The unelected and unaccountable Court has ordered us to pay millions in tax refunds to these multinationals – **money that comes straight from working people's pockets**. [CO22]

(09) However hard we try to abide by the rules, it is inevitable that the British tax payer **will be routinely stung by fines**. This makes people risk averse and afraid to consider doing things differently or to try something new. [CO3]

- 27 Personifications also come in handy to reinforce the Robin Hood myth. The EU is a rich despot and the British government becomes its righthand person, just like the Sherriff of Nottingham:

(10) It would in any normal world be a strange choice to make for a British government that whilst bearing down on welfare spending and other budgets since the election we continue to send to **this wealthy EU** hundreds of millions of taxpayers' money. [CO16]

- 28 More than just stealing money, the EU is an oppressive force that prevents people from thinking outside the box. You have to comply, whether you like it or not. In a way, the country is seen as being taken hostage by the EU, as Michael Gove put it on 19 April:

(11) We're voting **to be hostages locked in the back of the car and driven headlong towards deeper EU integration**. [CO10]

- 29 As the EU keeps Britain down and steals her money, she is left with no choice but to break free. The term *free* is used 150 times in total. Freedom / slavery metaphors are very often used in the corpus. Most refer to the EU's tyrannical control over Britain:



(12) [The EU is] a regulatory **straight jacket**. [CO27]

(13) The EU system is **a ratchet hauling us** ever further into a federal structure. [CO15]

Some also show that Britain needs to be free to really prosper:

(14) Just think of the freedom you would have to innovate if **we were no longer forced to compel with every diktat from Brussels**. [CO13]

- 30 There is an inherent tension between slavery and freedom. This rhetorical deadlock needs to be broken by a popular and democratic uprising, that is by the In / Out Referendum. Should Britain remain subjugated to the EU or should she be free? This is a simple, even simplistic vision. It highlights the manipulative power of metaphors in that this Manichean approach (slavery vs. freedom) sidelines the positive dimension of the EU. For example, farmers and universities are granted EU funds, EU regulation guarantees transparency and quality and close economic cooperation has prevented war on the continent. But all this is left in the dark because of metaphors. As Kövecses points out, while metaphors highlight some aspects of a concept, they also necessarily hide other aspects [Kövecses 2010: 91-92]. The negative aspects of the EU highlighted by metaphors hide the positive ones.
- 31 If one bears in mind this highlighting / hiding dimension of metaphors [Jamet & Terry 2019], is it really surprising that some of the most vocal Brexiteers are fishermen? Yes, the EU imposes fishing quotas – but at the same time the Single market enables them to sell more than 70% of their production [Thisismoney 2016]. Metaphors make them see the oppressive side of EU, not the positive – and vital – dimension attached to it.
- 32 The Robin Hood myth is particularly pregnant as it echoes entrenched cultural emotions: the opposition between the people and the elite, freedom and slavery, continental Europe and insular Britain [Schnapper 2000].
- 33 According to this myth, Brexit would lead to an extra £350M allocated to the NHS. Talking about the NHS was indeed the cherry on the cake as it encapsulates all those emotions: created in 1948, right after the war, it has been ever since a symbol of Britishness [Bradley 2007], a



collective reward after what was seen as a people's war against a tyrannical – and European – Nazi regime. Besides, saving the NHS means saving lives. Not only will Brexit save Britishness, it will also save British lives [Bonnet 2019]. It is therefore a patriotic duty in a country attached to its role as a beacon to the world [Charteris-Black 2014: 155].

## 2.3. The myth of British exceptionalism

- 34 Voting leave on 23 June 2016 was both a symbolical and actual parting of the ways. Britain would go it alone, away from the European bloc. At the metaphoric level, this was materialized by the abundant use of journey metaphors. This source domain is the most used by Vote Leavers as journey metaphors account for 25% of all metaphors (table 1).
- 35 Journey metaphors are particularly useful as they are quite easy to understand. Going forward is positive while moving backward or standing still is negative [Charteris-Black 2011: 88]. It is along those lines that Vote Leavers used those metaphors: the EU is on the wrong path while Britain is moving in the right direction.
- 36 The EU has taken the wrong path and is heading toward disaster. The reason for this is that the EU is a “**deeply misguided** and troubled institution” according to Nigel Lawson [CO1]. It simply cannot change as it is wearing blinkers:

(15) The EU is an institution **that keeps to a single trajectory**, incapable of critical self-examination. [CO7]

An outdated ideology is stifling incentives and jeopardizing the future of the whole organization:

(16) Businesses, growth and jobs have all been sacrificed to satisfy **the dogmatic march** towards greater integration and a federal European super-state. [CO13]

Despite her best efforts, Britain is incapable of turning the situation around and therefore has to leave:



(17) We have proved to ourselves time and again that we cannot **change the direction. We cannot change the pace.** We cannot interrupt the steady erosion of democracy, and given that **we do not accept the destination** it is time to tell our friends and partners, in a spirit of the utmost cordiality, that we wish to forge a new relationship based on free trade and intergovernmental cooperation. [CO15]

It is now a necessity for Britain to leave. But not out of selfishness. On the contrary, leaving the EU is a selfless act that will benefit the EU as Britain will set an example for others to follow:

(18) I believe that open, honest and fair trade is **the best vehicle** for lifting people out of poverty. [CO12]

(19) Let me end by saying I also think it could **advance social justice across the whole continent.** A vote to Leave by the British people might be the shock to the EU system that is so desperately needed. [CO16]

This is indeed a brilliant rhetorical spin. What might look like egotism is turned into altruistic bravery. We can see here another manipulative feature of metaphors: as they are image-based, journey metaphors create a narrative whereby Britain becomes a hero that will guide other nations out of European misery [Bonnet 2018]. By walking out of the EU door, Britain will regain her position as a world leader.

- 37 In the eyes of Vote Leavers, the Remain camp notoriously claimed that leaving the EU would be dangerous. This was dismissed as mere scare-mongering by Brexiteers who accused Remainers of creating the so-called “Project Fear” to scare people off [Schnapper 2017]. In the following example, metaphors allow Gisela Stuart to ridicule the Remain camp while offering a hopeful vision of the future.

(20) To those who say leaving is a leap in the dark I say **it is jumping from darkness into light.** [CO7]

The notions of positive light and vision along the way are essential. Brexiteers seem to have seen the light, contrary to Remainers who are depicted as being in the dark, meaning that they will oppress people:

(21) And the people who are hardest-hit will be those who can least afford it. Cameron offered not **a glimmer of light for them.** [CO27]



- 38 Vote Leavers want to offer a brighter future. In this example, landscape metaphors are combined with journey metaphors:

(22) We can see **the sunlit meadows beyond**. I believe we would be mad not to take this once in a lifetime chance **to walk through that door** because the truth is it is not we who have changed. [CO15]

Personifications are also significant for that matter:

(23) I truly believe **the UK's best days lie ahead of us as an independent, free trading, globally competitive nation**. The facts are absolutely on our side. We speak the world's international business language; our contract law is world class and our judicial system is one of the least corrupt in the world. [CO17]

- 39 According to the Brexit rhetoric, outside the EU Britain will once again proudly rise above other nations and regain its rightful place at the top. It will finally be in control of its destiny.

## Conclusion

- 40 Vote Leave managed to strike an emotional chord as it appealed to a nostalgic part of British society [Franklin 2019]. The Powell myth reminded people how precious their land was and the Robin Hood myth showed that it was threatened by the EU. It became vital to leave so as to preserve British exceptionalism. Those three myths put together conjured up the grandeur of Great Britain and highlighted the incongruity for this glorious country to be limited by a European organization.
- 41 Beyond the lies and beyond the manipulation, the Brexit rhetoric, shaped by metaphors, achieved an incredible feat. Yet, even if the myth of grandeur worked well to undermine the EU, it offers no real solutions for the country after the referendum. We can see the pernicious dimension of metaphors. As they both hide, even obliterate, one side of the debate [Kövecses 2010: 91], here the positive contribution of the EU, and their appeal to the sub-conscious [Charteris-Black 2011, 2014], they can lead to emotional rather than rational decisions. This, I think, goes a long way in explaining the current difficult situation.
- 42 All corpus references are available at <http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/>



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1 For example, it has been proved that the £350m figure sent to the EU every week is actually the gross figure of the UK contribution [Travis 2016]. The figure is £136m a week.

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## English

The decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union came as a shock to many. A key player during the referendum campaign was the Vote Leave organisation which managed to convince people that they would be better off outside the European project. Their success was made all the easier as Euroscepticism had been running deep in the country for decades. It is on this fertile ground that Vote Leavers drew to persuade people of the necessity to leave. Using critical metaphor analysis, this paper examines the way Vote Leavers won the argument by developing three political myths, which, once combined, conjured up the notion of British grandeur. Drawing on Jonathan Charteris-Black’s seminal works on the relation between metaphors and the creation of political myths in political rhetoric, this paper posits that the Brexit debate was not won solely on political ground and that the manipulative power of metaphors may have also been a key element. This might explain the current political deadlock, as political solutions might not provide the answers to the questions raised during the campaign.



## **Français**

La décision prise par le Royaume-Uni de quitter l'Union Européenne a été un choc pour beaucoup. Le groupe Vote Leave a été un acteur majeur durant la campagne en réussissant à convaincre les électeurs que la vie serait plus agréable en dehors du projet européen. Leur succès a été facilité par le fait qu'un fort courant eurosceptique traverse le pays depuis des décennies. C'est dans ce terreau fertile que Vote Leave a puisé pour convaincre le peuple. A l'aide de l'analyse critique des métaphores, cet article examine la façon dont Vote Leave a gagné en élaborant trois mythes politiques qui, de concert, célèbrent la notion de grandeur britannique. Grâce aux travaux de Jonathan Charteris-Black sur la relation entre les métaphores et la création de mythes politiques, cet article postule que la victoire en faveur du Brexit ne repose pas uniquement sur la politique et que le pouvoir de manipulation des métaphores a joué un rôle très important. Cela pourrait expliquer l'impasse politique actuelle dans la mesure où les solutions purement politiques ne semblent pas fournir de réponse aux problématiques soulevées durant la campagne référendaire.

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## **Mots-clés**

Brexit, rhétorique, métaphore, manipulation, Vote Leave

## **Keywords**

Brexit, rhetoric, metaphor, manipulation, myth, Vote Leave

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# Metaphor as the Distorting Mirror of Brexit: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Metaphors and Manipulation in the Brexit Debate

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## Introduction

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## Introduction

- 1 “Brexit means Brexit”, but it is difficult to tell what Brexit really means. The term *Brexit* results from a blending of the lexemes *Britain* and *exit*. It was first used in 2012 on a British blog specialised in European political issues. Brexit has been the main preoccupation in the British political sphere ever since the referendum on EU membership was promised in 2013 by former Prime Minister David Cameron. This promise was made by Cameron as an attempt to secure his position at the head of the government, but little did he



know about the scope of his perilous political move. The 2016 referendum profoundly divided British political affairs, and it shed light upon the ever-going conflicts surrounding the place of the United Kingdom in the European Union. As claimed by MacShane [2019: 54], “Brexit has overturned all political norms and rules”. British politicians are now mainly polarised in accordance with the side they endorsed during the referendum campaign: either “Vote Leave”, or “Remain”. Although we are now accustomed to hearing about Brexit, there is still some fuzziness regarding what it truly encompasses, for it is an unprecedented event. It is interesting to note that an extensive number of metaphors have been used to talk about this issue – in the news as well as in political speeches. As pointed out by BBC journalist James Landale [2017], “[l]ike the thin twig of peace, the Brexit metaphor has been stretched out to a melting point”. This is certainly not a matter of coincidence, for metaphor is known to be used as a cognitive and linguistic device that enables speakers to make sense of the unknown. According to Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 4], metaphors structure how we perceive the world, how we think, and what we do. Furthermore, politics is mainly a matter of persuasion and being convincing, which is sometimes achieved through manipulation. Thus, politics is linked to manipulation, and Brexit is linked to metaphor, since politicians resort to it abundantly. Consequently, it is worth wondering about the links between Brexit, metaphor and manipulation. Is there a link between metaphor and manipulation in the Brexit debate? How are Brexit metaphors related to manipulation? This article aims to answer these questions. The word *manipulation* will be used figuratively and understood as a process aiming to influence someone’s beliefs and conception of an issue through unconscious mental operations. In this context of study, *manipulation* is not seen as something necessarily harmful, but as a political tool in the same way as persuasion. As claimed by Coxall [2013: 16], today, governments are mainly reliant on manipulation. In some contexts, manipulation can be used for morally wrong purposes, but not necessarily. To begin with, the theoretical framework of the study will be presented; then, the second part will be devoted to the presentation of the corpus and the methodology; the final part will dig into the interpretation of the results of the corpus-based analysis I conducted.



# 1. Theoretical Framework

## 1.1. Metaphor and Cognition

- 2 Metaphor was originally studied for its ornamental function in works of literature and it was purely regarded as a mere figure of speech likely to be encountered in poetry [Gibbs 1999: 145]. However, fairly recent studies in cognitive linguistics in the 1980s showed that metaphor endorses many other functions. These studies were pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson, who conceived the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, related to the field of cognitive linguistics. Nowadays, most of the studies on metaphor come within the framework of this theory. The founding argument resulting from this theory is that metaphor not only embellishes, but also shapes the way we think. Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 3] affirm that “our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor”. Following this claim, which largely reshuffled the way metaphor was apprehended by researchers, metaphor is now seen as a means to make sense of the unknown. This results from a mapping between two domains (or concepts): a source domain and a target domain. As explained by Kövecses [2002: 4], the source domain corresponds to the domain from which the metaphor is built, whereas the target domain corresponds to what is being conceptualized thanks to the source domain. Usually, the source domain corresponds to something familiar or already experienced. This mapping is represented as follows: *A IS B*, *A* being the source domain, and *B* the target domain. *A IS B* is thus the conceptual metaphor. In discourse, the conceptual metaphor will not be encountered as such, but it will be expressed through the use of linguistic metaphors. For instance, in the 2017 Conservative Manifesto, the following linguistic metaphor is used: “The UK is **embarking** upon another era in our centuries-old story” [C02]. The use of the verb *embark* in this context can be regarded as metaphorical, for it is usually used to talk about boats, so the UK is referred to as if it were a boat. The corresponding conceptual metaphor would then be: *THE UK IS A BOAT*.



- 3 All the more interesting about this theory is the fact that metaphor highlights some common characteristics connecting the source domain to the target domain. Frequently, the conceptual metaphor actually stems from these common characteristics. Consequently, the other defining characteristics of the source and target domains will remain in the shade, and it will be hidden. This process was coined by Lakoff and Johnson [Kövecses 2002: 88] under the name ‘highlighting-hiding principle’. For example, with the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, the competitive aspect of having an argument is highlighted, whereas its collaborative dimension is hidden. This explains why the Conceptual Metaphor Theory is frequently used as the theoretical framework for the studies of metaphor and manipulation. Furthermore, metaphor can be used as an effective means of persuasion due to the connotations engendered. A metaphor may convey a positive or negative connotation depending on the connotations of its source domain. As stated by Charteris-Black [2005: 14], “metaphorical meaning is determined by connotations aroused by the words in their literal use”. Thus, a speaker may decide to use one particular source domain to manipulate their audience.

## 1.2. Metaphor as a Manipulative Device

- 4 Given that metaphor shapes the way we think of the world, it is worth considering its potential manipulative power. How do metaphors adopted to deal with certain issues manipulate or (re)shape the way we think about these issues? This question raises interest among the specialists working in the field of discourse analysis, especially when working on political discourse. Political discourse being mainly aimed at persuading, or manipulating, it is the perfect playing field to study the link between metaphor and manipulation. This link was, for instance, strongly highlighted by Charteris-Black. According to him [2005: 13], “metaphor influences our beliefs, attitudes and values because it uses language to activate unconscious emotional associations and it influences the value that we place on ideas and beliefs on a scale of goodness and badness”. The “unconscious emotional associations” correspond to the mapping from the source domain to the target domain. Thus, some metaphors can be chosen, as a way to arouse specific connotations in the mind of the



addressee. If the source domain is associated with a target domain that is usually negatively connoted, then it is likely to be understood and perceived in the light of these negative connotations. In this case, the link between metaphor and manipulation is blatant. This converges with Gerard Steen's [2008: 222] point of view, who claims that a metaphor used deliberately can change the addressee's point of view on the issue. Multiple examples of this practice can be found in political speeches. To illustrate this point, Enoch Powell's notorious speech known as "the river of blood" [1968] can be cited. In this speech, Powell used a metaphor comparing the immigrants to a river of blood engulfing the United Kingdom. He compared the English Channel to "the River Tiber foaming with much blood", with "blood" referring to the immigrants crossing the Channel. Associating immigrants with "blood foaming" conveys a derogatory connotation, for blood is the consequence of a wound, the sign that something painful has happened, and it is often associated with fear and disgust. The use of such a metaphor can be seen as a way for Powell to try and persuade his audience that immigration is harmful to the country. The association of immigrants and blood is unconscious as it partly depends on the knowledge of the context (here, the migrant crisis in Calais), and how the addressee conceives blood.

- 5 The persuasive power of metaphors also depends on their degree of conventionality. Conventional metaphorical expressions are particularly powerful devices to manipulate, since they are used and understood without being consciously recognised as metaphors [Semino 2008: 5]. For instance, when using verbal expressions from the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR such as "**defend** a claim", speakers as well as addressees generally do not realise that this expression is in fact metaphorical. The mapping between the two domains is made unconsciously. Conventional metaphors are effective means of persuasion, because they act on a subconscious level [Charteris-Black 2005: 13].
- 6 Additionally, metaphor is, indeed, an efficient tool to manipulate and/or persuade since it is linked to the emotional sphere. Charteris-Black [2005: 14] compares metaphors to "emotional-arousing bearers of meaning", insisting upon the emotional response metaphors can generate. According to Aristotle, emotion is one of the key elements necessary to perform an act of persuasion. In Aristotle's



rhetorical triangle, *pathos* is one of the three founding principles of rhetoric, and it refers to the emotions raised by speakers in their audience [De Landtsheer 2007: 57].

### 1.3. Metaphor: Beyond Words Alone

7 As mentioned earlier, conceptual metaphors are expressed through linguistic metaphors. Yet, this statement implies that only verbal metaphors are considered. However, recent studies, such as the ones carried out by Forceville and Urios Aparisi [2009], put forward the idea that metaphor is retrieved from a wider range of means. In *Metaphor and Multimodality* [2009: 4], they claim that “metaphor is not primarily a matter of language”. This claim stems from the Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the belief that we think metaphorically, for metaphor shapes our thoughts, the way we understand and perceive the world. Yet, words are not the only means through which thoughts can be expressed. Hence, this leads to the claim that metaphor should be encountered through other modes of expression. According to Forceville and Urios Aparisi [2009: 4], metaphor is likely to be encountered in other semiotic modes, including music, moving images, gestures, and visual representation at large. When the source domain and the target domain are both from the same semiotic mode, the metaphor is monomodal. In contrast, multimodal metaphor is defined as a metaphor whose target and source domains are expressed through a combination of modes, so non-verbal metaphor is mainly at stake here [Forceville 2009: 25]. Forceville [2008: 469] explains that a multimodal metaphor should meet the following criteria:

- (a) Given the context in which they occur, the phenomena<sup>a</sup> must belong to distinct categories;
- (b) The two phenomena must take the form of a conceptual metaphor and can thus be illustrated by the schema A is B;
- (c) The two phenomena must appear in at least two different modes.

**a.** The term *phenomena* used in this description coincides with Lakoff and Johnson’s conceptual source and target domains.



- 8 Olena Morozova [2017: 272] argues that multimodal metaphor is allegedly more efficient to arouse emotions: “multimodal metaphors appeal to the emotional sphere while verbal metaphors predominantly appeal to reason”. Multimodal metaphors are supposedly emotionally denser than verbal metaphors. However, this argument is debatable since all metaphors arouse emotions, whatever their modes, and the emotional appeal is an element difficult to measure. Besides, a metaphor found in a piece of poetry will be more likely to have an impact on the emotional sphere rather than on the logical sphere. Nevertheless, both verbal and multimodal metaphors can be used as manipulative tools, except that they do not resort to the same rhetorical strategy.

## 2. Object of Study

### 2.1. Corpus

- 9 The corpus serving this research will be composed of verbal and visual data. As for the verbal data, a sample of political speeches on the theme of Brexit was collected. These speeches were taken from emblematic British politicians from either the Vote Leave or the Remain campaign. The aim will be to undertake an analysis revealing how metaphors and manipulation are related in the context of Brexit. To try and answer this question, five verbal speeches, two written documents, and two visual items will be analysed. Among these objects of study, there will be both spoken and written data. The written data include the Conservative Manifesto from 2015, in support of David Cameron, and the one from 2017, in support of Theresa May. The spoken data include speeches from David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson, and Nicola Sturgeon. A large panel of protagonists was selected when sorting out this corpus, and it is important to note that the speakers do not necessarily share the same opinion on the issue. In that respect, a more global vision of the issue will be provided, and the conception of Brexit will be analysed as regards the politicians' positions in the debate. Studying political discourse is a relevant way to enhance the link between metaphors and manipulation since the aim of political discourse is to convince



and/or persuade [Chilton 2004: 12], and to achieve persuasion, politicians often resort to manipulative techniques.

- 10 As for the visual data, the images put together in the corpus were selected with the help of a Google search with specific keywords. To find these images, collocation of the words “Britain, EU, exit” was entered into the Google search engine. Then, two images of different kinds were selected for this entry. They are both graphically designed images, one of them is the illustration of an online article about Brexit, and the other one is a cartoon which also includes verbal elements. An example of a cartoon drawing was chosen for this study since authors of cartoons often resort to humour and exaggeration in a satirical way, to denounce. Cartoons often take a stance on the issue they are drawing about, so they may want to try and persuade their audience that their point of view is more legitimate, hence the potential resort to manipulation.

## 2.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

- 11 This study stems from the hypothesis that metaphor can be used as a device for politicians to manipulate the conception of an event and the mental representation of their audience, depending on the source domain they resort to. This analysis will be motivated by the following questions:

- What are the conceptual domains at stake in the case of the metaphors referring to Brexit?
- What are the connotations aroused by the concepts?
- Why using such domains?
- Are the domains from the verbal data similar to the ones from the visual data?

## 2.3. Methodology

- 12 This corpus analysis will follow the methodology inspired by the Critical Metaphor Analysis as developed by Charteris-Black in *Politicians and Rhetoric* [2005]. According to him, there are three stages for the analysis of metaphor in discourse: identification, interpretation and explanation. A metaphor is easily identifiable as it



triggers a semantic tension, and the word or expression used metaphorically appears in a somewhat unusual context [2005: 28]. To achieve the identification of the metaphorical expressions, steps from the Metaphorical Identification Procedure (MIP), as listed by the Pragglejaz Group [2007: 12], will be considered. When a lexical item is deemed metaphorical, I will determine whether it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the studied context. If so, this expression will be considered metaphorical [Steen *et al.* 2010: 167]. Secondly, interpretation relies on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Finally, for the third step, the point of view and the motive of the utterer will be uncovered and explained. Why did the utterer choose to resort to this source domain in particular? What are they trying to convey? According to Charteris-Black, this method is mainly used to deal with written/spoken corpora. Nevertheless, in this study, the same method will be used to analyse the visual data of the corpus, except that a step will be added as the semantic modes of the multimodal metaphors will also be looked at.

## 3. Corpus analysis

### 3.1. Verbal Data

- 13 The study of the corpus revealed the presence of a large number of metaphors linked to Brexit, with a variety of source domains. A total of 116 metaphorical expressions have been found in the whole corpus. This article will focus on the three most frequently encountered conceptual metaphors: **THE EU/UK IS A PERSON** (30%), **BREXIT IS WAR** (27%), **BREXIT IS A (BOAT) JOURNEY** (21%). The chart underneath lists the various source domains and the number of occurrences for each domain.

**Chart 1. Distribution of the source domains**

Source domains	Number of occurrences	Percentage
<b>PERSONIFICATION (including DIVORCE)</b>	35	30%
<b>WAR</b>	31	27%
<b>(BOAT) JOURNEY</b>	24	21%
<b>OBJECT</b>	13	11%
<b>CONTAINER LIQUID</b>	8	7%



<b>DISEASE</b>	4	3%
<b>GAME</b>	1	1%
Total 116		

### 3.1.1. The EU/UK is a person

- 14 Another possible concept to talk about Brexit involves personification and talking about the nations as if they were human beings. Conceptualising countries as persons is common and not specific to this context. For example, France is often conceptualised as Marianne, the figure of liberty, and the United States as Uncle Sam. In Theresa May and David Cameron speeches, the UK and the EU are often regarded as two friends. According to Chilton [1995: 39], conceiving a nation as a person can give the impression that the nation can enter into social relationships, either as enemies, neighbours, or friends. For instance, Theresa May declared:

I want us to be the **best friends** and **neighbour** to our European **partners**.  
 [...] a country that goes out into the world to build relationships with **old friends**  
 After Brexit, Britain wants to be a **good friend** and **neighbour** in every way [C05]

- 15 These are only a couple of examples, but the occurrence “friend” appears at least 11 times in that same speech. It shows that May clearly wanted to insist on the fact that she was in favour of a “soft Brexit” and willing to maintain good relations with the EU. Consequently, this might be the ideology she tried to hammer in the head of her audience through the use of such metaphors. Resorting to the concept of PERSON allows her to build this bond between the two nations, and to insist upon the importance of maintaining this bond.
- 16 In the Conservative Party Manifesto for the 2015 general election, the NATION AS A PERSON conceptual metaphor allows the speaker to build even closer links between the UK and the EU. As shown in the following example, the nations are considered as family members, thus two people related by blood:

Yes to a **family** of nation states [C01]



- 17 Conceiving entities such as nations as if they were human beings allows politicians to make sense of them in human terms, with experiences that we may have experienced and that are close to us [Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 34]. Besides, this idea of closeness may arouse empathy, and thus connects to the emotional sphere of the addressees. This highlights the link between metaphor and manipulation when personification is used as the source domain. For instance, when the EU and the UK are conceived as a married couple about to get a divorce, empathy can be felt as divorce is often something heart-breaking. An example will be tackled in the next part devoted to the visual data.

### 3.1.2. Brexit is war

- 18 WAR is a source domain frequently encountered in political discourse, and even more during tumultuous political campaigns [Beard 2000: 22]. Then, it is no surprise that this concept is one of the most frequently encountered in the corpus. Politicians, just like great warriors, fight. But instead of fighting with weapons, they fight with words. According to Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 62], this conceptual metaphor is often used in political speeches as it helps us to rationalise and understand an irrational argument thanks to something easier for us to understand: physical conflict. Metaphors tapping into the source domain of WAR may be used to convey the idea of a conflict between individuals, political parties, or government [Semino 2008: 62]. This is presently what is done by Nicola Sturgeon in the two occurrences below:

The UK government's plan still seems to be in a **state of complete chaos** [...] and then be forced to **capitulate** [C07]

Sturgeon was a strong opponent to Brexit, and by using metaphors from the conceptual domain of WAR, she exemplifies her disapproval and her position against the withdrawal from the EU. With words, she declares herself at war with the Leavers, and she positions herself as the leader of a glorious anti-Brexit army.

- 19 Likewise, Boris Johnson also resorted to the WAR domain in his 2016 Vote Leave Speech, except that it does not convey the same image. In



the following occurrence, he compares the day of the EU membership referendum, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, to Independence Day:

I believe that June 23<sup>rd</sup> will be **Independence Day** [C04]

I believe this expression to be metaphorical since “Independence Day” with capital letters is generally associated with the Fourth of July in the United States and the commemoration of the *Declaration of Independence*; the meaning of this lexical item in that context differs from its basic meaning, which is historically older. Thus, there is a discrepancy between the contextual meaning and the historical meaning, and this is one of the hints mentioned in the Metaphorical Identification Procedure [2010: 167]. In the course of history, independence has often been obtained after a series of armed conflicts and bloody wars, as was the case for the United States, for instance. This is why this metaphorical expression can be interpreted as tapping into the domain *WAR*. Here, Johnson conveys his firm commitment against the European Union and portrays himself as a great warrior, (verbally) fighting for the independence of the United Kingdom. This is one way of interpreting this occurrence, but of course, other interpretations are conceivable.

- 20 On another note, Theresa May resorts to the *WAR* domain for other purposes. What is striking in her speeches is the recurrence of the term “allies”, borrowed from the semantic domain of *WAR*, to describe the members of the EU:

our friends and **allies** in the EU  
a partnership of friends and **allies** [C06]

- 21 Contrary to Boris Johnson, she places herself on the same side of the argument as the EU. She is not fighting against, but with the EU. It highlights the cooperative aspect between the UK and the EU to resolve the Brexit crisis. It hints at the fact that she was not clearly in favour of a Brexit *stricto sensu*, but rather amicable negotiations in partnership with the EU. All in all, the *WAR* metaphor allows the creation of a frame in which protagonists take on different roles: the leading figure (the politicians), the opponent (members of the opposition), the victims (the British and/or European citizens) and the entity that is fought for (here, for instance, the EU membership)



[Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 5]. This represents correspondences between the source and the target domains.

### 3.1.3. Brexit is a journey

- 22 As can be deduced from the analysis of the corpus, the concept of JOURNEY serves as a source domain for many metaphorical expressions. This conceptual metaphor belongs to the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema developed by Lakoff [1987: 275]. The SOURCE represents the starting point, the GOAL represents the destination, and the PATH stands for the steps of the process leading to the GOAL. The JOURNEY metaphor originates from the Bible. Charteris-Black [2005: 45] argues that it explains how choices can be made between good and evil paths, and how God can be perceived as a guide. Generally speaking, movement is positively connoted as it is a synonym of progress, whereas being static is negatively connoted, as it involves being stuck, thus not reaching the intended goal [Charteris-Black 2005: 199]. However, the path can sometimes lead to a place where the utterer does not want to go, thus being linked to the idea of “evil path” in the Bible. For example, in his speech at Bloomberg Institute, David Cameron used the following metaphorical expressions:

People feel that the EU is **heading in a direction** that they never signed up to  
 The British people have **set themselves on a path** to an inevitable exit  
 The EU would be greatly diminished by **Britain's departure** [C03]

The collocation of the JOURNEY metaphor with negatively connoted adjectives, such as “inevitable” and “diminished”, shows that Cameron preaches the voters not to follow the path of Brexit.

- 23 The same concept was also used by Boris Johnson in 2016:

The EU is **moving** completely in the wrong **direction** [C04]

Here also, the JOURNEY metaphor is combined with a negatively connoted adjective: “wrong”, which gives the impression that heading to the EU and being close to the EU is not the way to go.

- 24 Theresa May also resorted to the same concept in her speech at Lancaster House:



It [Brexit] will **lead toward** a bright future  
We will follow a better **path** [C05]

In these occurrences, Brexit is conceived as a path leading to the ultimate goal: “a bright future”. The PATH-GOAL schema is, in that context, designed to picture Brexit as something to look for.

- 25 In Nicola Sturgeon’s speech and the 2017 Conservative Manifesto, conceptual metaphors related to the concept of JOURNEY can also be noticed, and more specifically a journey involving a boat:

[...] **embark** on these negotiations with a sensible and credible position [C07]

To **emerge** from Brexit as a strong and united nation  
The UK is **embarking** upon another era [C02]

The metaphorical items here, “emerge” and “embark”, convey an optimistic perception of the future. Both verbs are inchoative and indicate the beginning of a process. The journey has just begun, and although the issue of the referendum put Scotland in a difficult position, the Prime Minister expresses her faith in the future of the country. It may also be a way for her to appear as a strong leader and show that she knows where she is going.

- 26 Additionally, JOURNEY is a concept easily identifiable and experienced by most human beings; it involves a physical movement from a starting point to an end point. Charteris-Black [2005: 199] argued that the starting point is usually in the present and corresponds to something rather familiar, whereas the end point is generally in the future, thus still unknown. Consequently, using JOURNEY as the source domain to talk about Brexit may be a way for political leaders to talk their audience into thinking that they have a clear idea of where they are now, and know precisely where they want to lead the citizens. It places them at the front of the stage, in a leading – even God-like – position [Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 10]. The use of such metaphors allows politicians to manipulate the way they are perceived by their addressees, and this is related to their *ethos*, which is one of the three persuasive devices mentioned by Aristotle together with *pathos* and *logos*. For instance, even though Theresa May was not the most popular Prime Minister in the history of the UK, she tried to place herself as a leading figure by using JOURNEY metaphors. Besides, it is worth noting that some of the terms used in the speeches are



involved in the act of manipulation, for they convey a positive or negative opinion on Brexit. For example, in Theresa May's occurrence cited above, "It [Brexit] will **lead** toward a bright future", the adjective "bright" conveys a positive image of Brexit, so the conceptual metaphor BREXIT IS A JOURNEY associated with this adjective endorses a positive connotation. In opposition, Cameron's following statement: "The EU would be greatly diminished by Britain's **departure**" stresses the negative impact of Brexit, for the adjective "diminished" associated with the metaphor is negatively connoted. This is related to the notion of semantic prosody, which is another potentially manipulative device, especially when combined with metaphors. Semantic prosody is defined by Louw [1993: 157] as "a consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates". Thus, it is always important to take into account the co-text surrounding the metaphorical items to grasp their full effect.

### 3.2. Visual Data

**Figure 1: "What a British divorce from the EU would look like"<sup>1</sup>, illustration by Jonathan McHugh, *Financial Times*, February 2018 [C08]**

- 27 Figure 1 served as an illustration for the online article from *The Financial Times* entitled "What British divorce from the EU would look like". This image is metaphorical, in that it compares the process of Brexit to a divorce, giving the conceptual metaphor BREXIT IS A DIVORCE: the source domain of divorce is used to talk about the target domain of Brexit. This conceptual metaphor is frequently encountered in articles and in the news. The two statues on top of the cake represent the two partners who are about to get a divorce. The woman can be interpreted as a personification of Britain, for, historically, Britain has often been personified as a female figure. For instance, on the British coin, Britain is personified as a female named Britannia. The husband, probably standing for the EU, does not seem to be in a good place, as indicated by its stumbling position and the shade covering him. This could be interpreted as a bad omen for the EU. As for the knife planted in the heart of the European flag, it may represent the issue of the referendum as a stab in the back of the EU. This may invite the viewer to conceive Brexit as an act of treason, as an act that will harm the EU.



**Figure 2: “Abandon Ship”<sup>2</sup>, a cartoon by Ben Garrison, March 2018 [C09]**

- 28 Figure 2 is a political cartoon made by Ben Garrison. This was published on his Twitter account the day following the referendum. The European Union and the United Kingdom are depicted via a combination of multimodal metaphors which include visual and verbal contents. First, both Unions are depicted as boats, giving the conceptual metaphors *BRITAIN IS A BOAT* and *THE EU IS A BOAT*. The title given to the cartoon, “Abandon Ship”, participates in the elaboration of the conceptual metaphors, so the metaphor is here multimodal (the source domain is verbally transcribed). It is interesting to note that the EU is depicted as a boat which is about to drown due to “economic failure”, whereas the UK is sailing towards the setting sun, thus escaping the danger faced by the EU. Consequently, this could be perceived as a way to manipulate the viewers into thinking that leaving the EU will save the UK from the shipwreck that is triggering the potential collapse of the EU. These multimodal metaphors manipulate our conception of the EU as something dangerous, and consequently also manipulate our perception of Brexit as something beneficial and positive for the United Kingdom. Conceiving the UK as a boat may be directly linked to the historical past of the UK. It echoes the glorious days of the British Empire largely resulting from overseas trade and possessions facilitated by its geographical location. This accounts for the fact that *BOAT* is a frequent source domain for metaphorical representation of the UK, both visually and verbally, and this suggests the creation of bridges between the visual and the verbal data.

### 3.3. Data Triangulation

- 29 Interestingly enough, this short corpus-based analysis, based on an analysis carried out on a larger scale [Rodet 2018], revealed that metaphors – verbal and visual – are omnipresent in the Brexit debate, and most of them, especially in the verbal data, are so conventional that they often go unnoticed. The source domains differ from the verbal data to the visual data. In the verbal data, the source domains of *WAR*, *JOURNEY* and *personification* are more frequently encountered, whereas in the visual data the *BOAT* and *DIVORCE* domains



are encountered. However, links can be made between the *JOURNEY* metaphors in the verbal data and the *BOAT* domain in the visual data, since sailing on a boat somehow includes a journey and a motion from one point to another. Likewise, parallels can be drawn between the use of personification in the verbal data and the *DIVORCE* metaphor in the visual data (see Figure 1). Conceptualising Brexit as a divorce induces that the UK and the EU stand for a couple of human beings. It is interesting to note that in both cases, imagery is involved. With visual metaphors, the image is directly presented under our eyes. However, verbal metaphors generate mental imagery unconsciously. A mental representation stems from the mapping between the source and the target domains, and it is generated by words that are heard or read. In a sense, verbal metaphors go further in the act of manipulating, for they turn words into mental imagery. Words are manipulated in order to shape the conceptualisation of an entity.

- 30 Nevertheless, as pointed out by Charteris-Black [2005: 197]: “metaphor is most effective when interlaced with other figures of speech to become part of a wider system of meaning creation”. The analysis of the verbal data revealed the importance of taking into account the semantic prosody of the other lexical items of the utterance in which the metaphorical expressions appear. As for the visual data, it stressed the importance of cultural and historical references of the metaphorical items. In both images, the conceptual metaphors rely on references to the history of the United Kingdom.

## Concluding remarks

- 31 The results of this study show that metaphor is omnipresent in the Brexit debate, sometimes insidiously, sometimes more noticeably. The use of metaphor allows politicians to play with their *ethos*, depending on the concepts they resort to. For example, by using metaphors from the concept of *WAR*, Boris Johnson presents himself as a strong leader, ready to fight for the interests of the UK. The same thing can be said about Nicola Sturgeon, who refuses to “capitulate”. As for Theresa May, the repetitive use of metaphors comparing the EU and the UK to a group of friends shows that she wants to appear as a friendly person who does want to maintain good relations with the EU. Consequently, metaphor can be seen as a way for politicians



to manipulate the conception of an event following the stance they endorse. The cases of Theresa May and Boris Johnson perfectly illustrate this point. May was not necessarily strongly in favour of Brexit, hence her tendency to use positively connoted domains that strengthen the collaborative dimension between the UK and the EU. Conversely, Boris Johnson, leader of the Vote Leave campaign, prefers to use concepts related to violence, and it shows his profound disagreement with the EU. Thus, just like a distorting mirror, the conception of Brexit varies from one point of view to another. In that respect, metaphors can definitely act as manipulative devices.

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1 Description: image showing a wedding cake. The inside of the cake is red, white and blue, hinting at the Union Jack. The icing is designed as the European flag. The cake is topped with two wedding figurines (a bride and a groom). A knife is stuck right in front of the groom, casting a shadow over him. The groom seems to be wavering.

2 Description: two ships heading towards opposite directions. In the background, a ship with the Union Jack raised on its mast is peacefully heading towards the setting sun. In the foreground, a ship with the EU flag is sailing through a storm labelled “economic failure”. The sea is rough, and “waves of immigration” are hitting the ship. A shark labelled “political correctness” is swimming towards the passengers with its mouth wide open. The ship is dangerously standing at the edge of an underwater cliff. It is clearly about to sink.

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## English

This article offers a corpus-based inquiry into the use of metaphor in the Brexit debate. This study aims to stress the link between manipulation and the metaphors that are used to talk about Brexit. It mainly focuses on the cognitive dimension of metaphor, following the Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson. The methodology is largely inspired by Charteris-Black’s analysis in three steps: identification, interpretation and explanation. The corpus includes political speeches from various British politicians who strongly got involved in the debate, such as Boris Johnson, Theresa May and David Cameron. In addition, two cases of



multimodal metaphors are closely analysed. The article suggests looking at the links between the conceptual domains at the roots of the metaphors encountered in the corpus and the act of manipulating.

### **Français**

Cet article s'intéresse à l'utilisation de métaphores dans les discours du Brexit par le biais d'une analyse de corpus, en étudiant les liens qui unissent les domaines conceptuels au cœur des métaphores du Brexit et l'acte de manipulation. Cette étude a pour but de mettre au jour le lien entre manipulation et métaphores utilisées dans les discours du Brexit. On se concentrera principalement sur la dimension cognitive de la métaphore en s'appuyant sur la théorie de la métaphore conceptuelle, développée par Lakoff et Johnson. La méthodologie de cette étude s'inspire des travaux de Charteris-Black et son analyse critique de la métaphore en trois étapes : identification, interprétation et explication. Le corpus comprend des discours de personnalités politiques qui se sont particulièrement investies dans la campagne, comme par exemple Boris Johnson, Theresa May et David Cameron. En outre, deux cas de métaphores multimodales seront analysés.

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### **Mots-clés**

métaphore, manipulation, linguistique cognitive, analyse de discours, Brexit, multimodalité

### **Keywords**

metaphor, manipulation, cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, Brexit, multimodality

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# Migrants, Metaphors and Manipulation: a Multimodal Case Study of Trump's Speeches on Immigration (2015-2017)

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## Introduction

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## Conclusion

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## Introduction

- 1 *Wave, tide, flood, submersion.* These lexemes seem to be only used to describe natural catastrophes. However, they are also very commonly used to depict and dehumanise vulnerable human beings, and more particularly refugees. Those metaphors are indeed resorted to by some politicians to manipulate voters and exacerbate tensions between migrants and the citizens of the host country, creating two different groups [Van Dijk 2008: 9]. Even though this linguistic



phenomenon is not new, the past years have been marked by the 2015 migrant crisis in Europe and by the unexpected rise of right-wing politicians such as Donald Trump in the U.S., who largely resorts to such derogatory lexemes to refer to refugees. In addition, not only has anti-immigration ideology been growing recently, but the use of social media has also been rising, making far-right ideas even more available on the Internet, where users are easily manipulated. As Katz [1998: 33] points out, “a metaphor not only illuminates, it conceals”, which partly explains why immigration metaphors can be seen as dangerous and manipulative since, for example, the quantity of refugees is often highlighted while individuality is completely concealed by the metaphors at stake in political discourse. In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson [1980] paved the way for the ‘Conceptual Metaphor Theory’ (CMT), in which they assumed that metaphors were “part of our everyday life not only in language” but also in “thoughts and actions” [1980: 3]. One of the main tenets CMT relies on is the ‘highlighting-hiding principle’ [Kövecses 2002: 80]. By creating a metaphor, and thus a specific mental picture, the speaker systematically highlights some elements of the target domain, putting some other elements in the shadow. Thanks to metaphors, some constituents of the target domain are highlighted while others are hidden. This does not seem to be dangerous when a metaphor is merely used for its ornamental function but what about political discourse concerning sensitive topics such as immigration and/or discrimination? The aim of this article is therefore to determine to what extent such metaphors ‘conceal’ the truth and how they may have contributed to manipulating voters in the 2016 United States presidential election. In order to do so, I will analyze Trump’s speeches about immigration from 2015 to 2017, as well as his gestures, to carry out a multimodal analysis and answer the following questions: why are some source domains more manipulative than others? Is the manipulative feature inherent to the source domain itself or is it because metaphors combine with other manipulative techniques?

- 2 In the first part, I will give an overview of the theories on metaphors. Then, in the second part I will provide a brief definition of multimodality and tackle the use of gestures in political discourse. The third part will consist in the description of the corpus and



methodology. The last part will finally focus on a case study of Trump's speeches about immigration from 2015 to 2017.

# 1. Theories on metaphors and manipulation

## 1.1. Definition and manipulation

- 3 The first manipulative feature of metaphor can be found in one of its early definitions: "Metaphor is the application of an alien name by transference either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion" [Aristotle 2008: 41]. It conveys the idea that metaphors consist in the use of an unsuitable or inappropriate term (in other words, a term which comes from a totally different notional domain), which is being applied to what is being described, creating parallels and similarities between the "alien name" and the subject. It is therefore because of these parallels, that is to say, because of this "transference" described by Aristotle, that manipulation can occur.
- 4 A metaphor can also be defined as an analogical process that enables the utterer to describe something implicitly, highlighting or hiding the differences or resemblance between two different domains and partly merging them. Nonetheless, they are different from similes since they create a real fusion between the two domains without resorting to the prepositions *as* or *like* as comparative tools. The absence of such tools also contributes to the manipulative function of metaphor since it enables the speaker to erase the distinction between two elements. Saying "X is *like* Y" is assuming that "X is not Y", which is the case with similes, while the metaphor "X is Y" is a misleading approximation that can lead to manipulation since it does not enable the co-speaker to make a distinction between X and Y.
- 5 This first definition of metaphor has evolved since then; according to Lakoff and Johnson [2003(1980): 2] a metaphor can be defined as a "mapping between a source domain and a target domain". This "mapping" is partly responsible for the manipulative function of metaphor since they explain that the two domains have nothing in common or at least that it is difficult to find the existence of a



coherent, logical link between them at first sight. Ritchie [2013: 9] defines the term *mapping* as “a process in which particular words are connected with meanings” and Simpson and Mayr [2010: 43] explain that “the target domain is the topic that you want to describe through the metaphor while the source domain refers to the concept that you draw upon in order to create the metaphorical construction”. In other words, thanks to a metaphor, a connection is created between what is being talked about and an element of a different domain<sup>1</sup>. This definition of *metaphor* will be the working definition used in this paper.

## 1.2. Manipulative types of metaphors

- 6 Vivid, conventionalized and dead: these are the three different types of metaphors that have generally been identified by scholars. Chamizo Domínguez [1998: 47-70] used the terms *creative*, *semi-lexicalized* and *lexicalized* respectively to refer to the same categories. To avoid the existing overlaps between the first aforementioned categories, I will use Chamizo Domínguez’s terminology in this article, as it specifies the degree of lexicalization. ‘Lexicalized’ metaphors are defined by Punter [2007: 146] as “metaphors which have been used so often that they barely stand out as metaphor at all and have descended to the level of cliché” and are therefore found in dictionaries. Those metaphors are opposed to ‘creative’ metaphors, which rely on a new association between the target and the source domains. This new association can be highly manipulative since the two notional domains have almost nothing in common and since it is the speaker who decides to create a cognitive link that did not exist before. The category of ‘semi-lexicalized’ metaphors can be found in between; they are generally not recorded in dictionaries. Those metaphors very often rely on shared knowledge between the speaker and the audience to be understood, which means a sense of in-groupness
- 7 [Van Dijk 2008: 9] and cohesion is created; these metaphors are likely to encourage discrimination since anyone who does not belong to the group cannot understand what is said. Studying these different types of metaphors can be particularly helpful. Punter [2007: 102] explains:



The recognition of metaphor becomes not only a sign of power but also a powerful marker of cultural instability; metaphors need to be considered not only in terms of their endurance but also in terms of their passing away.

In other words, the degree of lexicalization has to be taken into account so as to evaluate to what extent the ideologies conveyed by the metaphor are ingrained in people's mind in a given community for a certain period of time. Widdowson [2007: 71] gives the example of the metaphor “an **army** of immigrants”. He wonders why the lexeme *army* is used instead of *crowd* and explains that such a metaphor creates a real dichotomy between migrants and the members of the host country. Unlike *crowd*, which is rather neutral, the lexeme *army* presupposes that migrants are armed, well-organized and potentially dangerous while it portrays the speaker and their audience as victims. According to Van Dijk [2008: 11], this strategy is widely resorted to so as to defend xenophobic ideologies. It always enables the speaker to create a dichotomy between two different groups, leading to “social inequality and injustice”. Van Dijk [2008: 9] adds that such metaphors usually highlight the positive features of the speaker's group and the negative aspects of the “out-group”, which generates “self-glorification” and manipulation at the same time.

### 1.3. Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the ‘highlighting-hiding principle’

- 8 Lakoff and Johnson [1980] explain that human beings mostly think metaphorically. According to them, metaphors are essential to our ability to conceptualize and make sense of the world, as well as to our ability to communicate. They write that “most of our conceptual system is metaphorically structured” [1980: 61], which means that metaphors are not a mere linguistic phenomenon.
- 9 One of the main tenets of the CMT that can contribute to manipulation is the ‘highlighting-hiding principle’ [Kövecses 2002: 80]. Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 10] describe it as follows:

The very systematicity that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another will necessarily hide other aspects of the



concept. In allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept, a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor.

- 10 Thus, this principle states that when resorting to a metaphor, the utterer consciously or unconsciously manipulates the listeners, since only some aspects of the target domain are highlighted. The ‘highlighting-hiding principle’ is therefore frequently conspicuous in metaphors used in political speeches, especially in speeches about immigration, where the proportion of migrants is very often emphasized while their individuality is entirely concealed by the metaphors at stake. This can thus be dangerous, as pointed out by Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 236]:

Like other metaphors, political and economic metaphors can hide aspects of reality. But in the area of politics and economics, metaphors matter more, because they constrain our lives. A metaphor in a political or economic system, by virtue of what it hides, can lead to human degradation.

- 11 According to them, the fact that metaphors hide some aspects of reality prevents voters from being fully aware of the ideas they are voting for, meaning that their choices are partially influenced and manipulated. More recently, this idea has also been defended by Charteris-Black [2005: 13] who writes that metaphors enable politicians to shape the voters’ opinions and values. In other words, metaphors do enable the speaker to manipulate the audience.

## 1.4. Manipulative functions of metaphors

- 12 One of the first objectives of a metaphor is to create understanding through a new and original mental picture; therefore, the cognitive dimension is the primary function which is to be found in a majority of metaphorical occurrences. Orwell [1968: 134] explains that “the sole aim of a metaphor is to call up a visual image”. Following this idea, Gibbs [1999: 156] writes:



The inseparability of mind, body, and world, and cognitive and cultural models, points to the important idea that metaphor is an emergent property of body-world interactions.

In other words, metaphors are what enables us to relate our body or mind to the environment; that is why the cognitive dimension of metaphors is crucial in our everyday life since it enables human beings to conceptualize and make sense of the world, which is particularly important when describing migrants, as different conceptualizations exist, as Charteris-Black [2006: 565] explains:

The role of metaphor as a cognitive heuristic is likely to be especially important in relation to immigration because of the range of conflicting representations in public discourse. For example, immigration is sometimes represented as desirable because falling birth rates create problems in supporting the cost of pensions for an increasingly aging population, while in other metaphors it is represented as undesirable. There is the possibility of immigrants undercutting the wages of those who are employed, the cost of the social welfare system and an association with human smuggling. The idea of embracing the victims of political repression or economic devastation is counterbalanced by fears of terrorist attack, Islamic fundamentalism and fraudulent asylum seekers.

- 13 Another function of metaphor that contributes to manipulation and which is to be found in political speeches is the didactic function. A metaphor can be used in order to make complex concepts more easily available and to explain them to people who are known to be less experienced in a given domain. Osenga [2013: 31] explains:

To create the best discourse community, the participants must understand the science and the policy components, as well as the relationship between the two. Essentially, metaphors can be used to educate the public about science while framing it within the debate.

This didactic function is commonly used by far-right politicians so as to talk about ideas that are not seen as politically correct or “mainstream” [Delouis 2014: 1]. For example, she explains that migrants are considered the “new colonizer” by far-right politicians, which means that the citizens of the host country are portrayed as



the “indigenous people” by extension. Although such metaphors are sometimes used to simplify some concepts, they are particularly cunning or deceptive, and it is this oversimplification that finally creates manipulation.

- 14 However, in political discourse, the main function is the rhetorical one. Metaphors enable the speaker to create a real community of voters thanks to shared knowledge. Besides, because metaphors resort to the ‘highlighting-hiding principle’, they are frequently euphemistic or dysphemistic. Thus, the speaker’s vision of reality is either attenuated or exaggerated. Allan and Burridge [1991: 11] describe euphemism as “an alternative to a dispreferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face: either one’s own face or, through giving offense, that of the audience, or of some third party”. According to them, a euphemism is a means not to upset someone or not to be seen as unpleasant when talking about a sensitive subject, which is why pro-immigration politicians will, for instance, tend to prefer the adjective *undocumented* to the lexeme *illegal*. On the contrary, dysphemism is defined by Allan and Burridge [1991: 26] as:

An expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and it is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression for just that reason.

- 15 This dysphemistic function is frequently used to talk about migrants as it will be exemplified in the case study. According to Charteris-Black [2006: 569], migrants are for example very frequently referred to as natural catastrophes. He writes:

There are two main areas of metaphor that occur in relation to immigration: the first are metaphors of natural disaster – predominantly the behavior of fluids – and the second are container metaphors – especially those relating to the build up of pressure.

These two main areas (fluid and container) will be further developed in the case study.



## 2. Multimodality in manipulating the audience

### 2.1. A Combination of modes

- 16 Even though manipulation in political speeches is mostly possible thanks to linguistic means, it can also be reinforced with gestures, sounds or images, which is why I have chosen to carry out a multimodal analysis. Forceville [2009: 22] gives the following definition of a *mode*:

What is labeled a mode here is a complex of various factors. As a first approximation, let us say that a mode is a sign system interpretable because of a specific perception process. Acceptance of this approach would link modes one-on-one to the five senses, so that we would arrive at the following list: (1) the pictorial or visual mode; (2) the aural or sonic mode; (3) the olfactory mode; (4) the gustatory mode; and (5) the tactile mode.

- 17 According to him, five different modes exist, and each mode relies on one of the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. He explains that this typology is questionable because it is only based on perception. With this classification, written texts and gestures would thus belong to the same mode and the aural mode would contain “non-verbal sounds”, “music” as well as “spoken language” [Forceville 2009: 22], which can be problematic. This is why Forceville [2009: 23] then came up with a new typology with nine different categories: (1) pictorial signs; (2) written signs; (3) spoken signs; (4) gestures; (5) sounds; (6) music (7) smells; (8) tastes and (9) touch. This new classification enables him to describe multimodal metaphors [2009: 24]. According to him, unlike monomodal metaphors, multimodal metaphors mostly resort to different modes; for example, spoken signs and gestures as well as written signs and pictorial signs frequently combine. This is particularly the case with posters that are created for political campaigns and which frequently display multimodal metaphors that rely on written signs (2) (with the slogan or the title of the poster) and on pictorial signs (1) (with the use of pictures or images).



## 2.2. Manipulative gestures

- 18 Political speeches can often be considered multimodal since they enable the speaker to resort to spoken signs (3) and gestures (4). In the *gestures* category, Müller and Cienki [2009: 301] only take the movements of the forearms and hands into account, while they do not consider head and eye movements, as well as body shifts, as gestures. According to them, “self-adjustment” (for instance, the adjustment of a bow tie) or “object manipulation” (for instance, “lifting a cup to take a drink”) do not belong to the category of gestures. Müller and Cienki [2009: 302] add that “we often find the use of metaphoric verbal expressions without co-occurring metaphoric gestures”. Speakers rarely mimic what they say with gestures; however, when this phenomenon does occur, that is to say when the two modes (spoken signs and gestures) are used at the same time, the same source domain is represented both by the linguistic expression and the gestures, which is frequently the case in Donald Trump’s speeches. For instance, in a speech at the FBI National Academy Graduation Ceremony in Quantico, Virginia, on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Donald Trump delivered the following sentences, explaining that the migrants entering the U.S. were people who were rejected by their own country:

Do you think they are giving us their best people? No (laughter). They give us their worst people, they put them in a **bin**. [T05]

- 19 With the source domain BIN, which tends to lead to the creation of dysphemistic and highly derogatory metaphors, the President of the U.S. portrays migrants as garbage. In addition, Trump’s gestures and paralinguistic vocal features (such as the laughter) are also disrespectful towards immigrants since he accompanies his linguistic metaphor by gestures mimicking someone throwing something into a bin and closing the lid with his right hand, as shown in the screenshot hereafter:



**Figure 1: Donald Trump, “They put them in a bin”, Quantico, Virginia, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, CNN.**



- 20 This metaphorical gesture, which goes together with a co-occurring linguistic metaphor, deeply emphasizes Trump's point of view. The audience has to cognitively resort to two of the five different senses of the human body: hearing and sight. Therefore, his message becomes more powerful and easier to remember; the gesture is only reinforcing what is being said so as to support its effect. Furthermore, Trump's right hand is not static and "motion attracts our attention more than anything else. Even a new-born baby reacts to an object moving across its visual field" [Radden & Dirven 2007: 278]. This is why this multimodal metaphor is likely to have a stronger impact on the audience and to be memorized more easily than a monomodal one, which means manipulation itself is reinforced by multimodality.
- 21 Besides, gestures cannot only be seen as a means to attract the listeners' attention but also as a device enabling the speaker to clarify their discourse, which means the didactic dimension of metaphor is at stake. Following this idea, Müller and Cienki [2009: 313] write:

It is well known that many gestures present abstract ideas, which are being mentioned in the speech, as concrete entities in front of the



speaker: the gestures indicate particular spaces and locations for the idea, or the hands appear to hold an idea, as if it were an object.

- 22 Thus, an idea that was considered as abstract in a political speech becomes more concrete thanks to gestures since it enables the audience to picture this very idea. Müller and Cienki [2009: 313] add that conceptual metaphors indicating evaluations, such as UP IS GOOD or DOWN IS BAD, are frequently resorted to. Such gestural metaphors also contribute to manipulating the audience as they emphasize, once again, the linguistic metaphors, making them more powerful and more likely to be remembered by the audience.

### 3. Corpus and methodology

- 23 The corpus used for this study is composed of American speeches which were collected between November 2015 and December 2017. It consists of official allocutions, debates and interviews, as well as posters and screenshots of different gestures. This corpus is composed of speeches by Donald Trump as well as by Hillary Clinton so as to carry out punctual comparative analyses. 11 spoken sources that specifically include the transcription of 1 interview, 2 debates and 8 speeches were selected. The visual sources are composed of 6 screenshots of gestures and 2 images that were taken from the White House's website. This corpus has been selected in order to tackle the topic of immigration in the 2016 American presidential election. One of the main goals of the case study is to determine whether the metaphors used by Trump contributed to manipulating voters in this presidential election and whether right-wing politicians, such as Trump, resort to those rhetorical tools more frequently than their opponents. The aim is also to study whether Trump resorts to more euphemistic or dysphemistic metaphors, whether they are rather vivid or lexicalized and whether some source domains are more regularly used than others. The focus will be laid more particularly on the study of the manipulative function of these source domains and of their combination with other manipulative tools.
- 24 The sampling has been done according to the productivity of the semantic field of migration. That is to say that terms such as



*immigration, migrant, refugee, deport, asylum seeker, illegal entry, illegal aliens* or *emigr\**, with any ending, have been searched in the transcripts of the speeches. The metaphors were then manually identified according to the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) as defined by the Pragglejaz Group [2007: 3] and then categorized according to the ideas they expressed, their source domains, the conceptual metaphors they belonged to and their etymology. Then, the videos of the speeches, when available on the Internet, have also been studied so as to determine if the linguistic metaphors matched with specific gestures. Besides, some political posters have also been analyzed when the pictorial metaphors had a source domain that had been previously pointed out in the speeches.

## 4. Manipulation in Trump's speeches on immigration

### 4.1. Immigration metaphors in the 2016 United States presidential election

- 25 Immigration is deeply rooted in American history. Since Christopher Columbus's discovery in 1492 and the arrival of British colonists in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the 'New World' has never stopped witnessing people coming to its shores. Much more recently in the United States, Republican candidate Donald Trump unexpectedly won the race to the White House against Hillary Clinton on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, putting immigration issues at the center of his campaign. Donald Trump's main goal was clear: stopping migrants and preventing them from entering the country by building a wall between Mexico and the United States. The aim of this case study is therefore to see to what extent the metaphors used by Trump to depict migrants may have contributed to manipulating voters in the 2016 presidential election. In this study that has been carried out on a total of 170 metaphorical occurrences, Trump resorts to 134 immigration metaphors while Clinton resorts to 36, which shows that Trump uses almost four times as many metaphors as her opponent to refer to immigration. Besides, he frequently talks about immigration, even when it does not seem appropriate to do so. For



example, after the terrorist attack at the Pulse nightclub on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Orlando, Florida, Trump delivered a speech in which he resorted to 32 lexemes such as *migrant*, *refugee*, *immigr\** or *emigr\**, even though the murderer was born in the United States. On the contrary, Hillary Clinton's speech about this attack contains no occurrence of those terms, which demonstrates that Trump definitely centered his campaign on immigration. This strategy may have enabled him to spread false ideas and to make voters believe that migrants were criminals. I thus chose to analyze the main source domains he uses to talk about this topic so as to determine to what extent they are manipulative. I particularly focused on the source domains WATER and CONTAINER – since they are the most frequent source domains in the corpus – and studied how they combined with other rhetorical tools.

## 4.2. WATER metaphors

- 26 One of the main source domains that is frequently resorted to by Trump to depict migrants is WATER as this domain represents 40% of the occurrences in the corpus. The manipulative dimension of such metaphors is inherent to the source domain, since, according to Cunningham-Parmeter [2011: 1580], WATER metaphors highlight three distinct features: direction, quantity and power. Besides, Cunningham-Parmeter [2011: 1580] adds that such metaphors often refer to “great floods [that] have devastated societies throughout human history”, which means that migrants are not only considered as a natural catastrophe but as a dangerous and devastating one. This is why terms such as *tide*, *wave*, *flow*, etc. are very often used by far-right politicians so as to make immigration appear as something risky for the host country, which is a means to manipulate the audience. This is the case in the following examples:

We have to stop the **tremendous flow** of Syrian refugees into the United States. [T02]

But we now have an obligation to control future immigration – following previous **immigration waves**. [T03]

- 27 Donald Trump goes even further since the movement he depicts is not only horizontal but also vertical with the use of the verb *pour* in



the example hereafter:

She wants open borders. People are going to **pour** into our country. [D02]

The verb *pour* is even more manipulative in the sense that the directional dimension pointed out by Cunningham-Parmeter is emphasized. Therefore, unlike the terms *tide*, *wave* or *flow*, which all refer to a horizontal direction, *pour* highlights the idea that immigration is uncontrollable since it can come directly from above. Furthermore, the verb *pour* represents a descending movement and is related to the conceptual orientational metaphor DOWN IS BAD, thus underlining once again the dysphemistic dimension of the WATER metaphor since this orientational metaphor is very often negatively connoted. In this case, the manipulation is therefore inherent to the WATER source domain and emphasized by the orientational metaphor.

### 4.3. CONTAINER metaphors

- 28 So as to talk about immigration, Trump also often resorts to the conceptual metaphor of the CONTAINER. The U.S. is indeed regularly portrayed as a house, and therefore as a unit that has clear-cut borders as well as an inside and an outside. HOUSE metaphors represent 48% of the occurrences. According to Radden and Dirven [2007: 16], those types of orientational metaphors are very efficient and quite frequent in discourse since they are cognitively based on essential spatial features that are related to the human physical world. They explain that these metaphors “make particularly good source domains because they have developed from our earliest bodily and spatial experiences and hence are immediately meaningful to us”.
- 29 Thus, it explains why CONTAINER metaphors tend to be comprehended quite easily since they make the images of the interior and the exterior of things emerge. In speeches about immigration, this is regularly the case, the host countries are depicted as a HOUSE and the borders as the DOORS of this house. Therefore, the manipulative feature is, once again, inherent to the source domain, which is illustrated in the following example:



Immigration law doesn't exist just for the purpose of keeping out criminals. It exists to protect all aspects of American life – the worksite, the welfare office, the education system and much else. That is why immigration limits are established in the first place. If we only enforce the laws against crime, then we have an **open border** to the entire world. [T03]

- 30 When Trump deplores an “open-border immigration system” and depicts the U.S. as a HOUSE, he enables the audience to conceptualize the borders of the country as the DOORS of this house. There are indeed two different correspondences between two conceptual domains in this case: AMERICA IS A HOUSE and AMERICAN BORDERS ARE DOORS. The audience is manipulated because the HOUSE source domain clearly shows the idea of comfort; it can imply that American citizens own the house and that they should be able to choose who is allowed to come in. According to Charteris-Black [2006: 577], such metaphors can, on the one hand, be seen as rather positive if one considers the agent (in this case American citizens), and, on the other hand, they can be considered as dysphemistic when describing migrants. The refugees are portrayed as trespassers in those cases, thus creating a sense of intrusion that is highly manipulative. Furthermore, the CONTAINER source domain is also employed by anti-immigration politicians so as to support the idea that the host country is so small that it is going to burst if more people come in. Charteris-Black [2006: 577] explains that these metaphors describe some “pressures on the container from the inside”. He goes further and writes that politicians who are against migration regularly talk about a “critical point” [Charteris-Black 2006: 578]. So as to stop pressure, some restrictions are looked for, which is why Trump uses the following metaphor:

Those who have left to seek entry under this new system will not be awarded surplus visas but will have to enter under the immigration **caps** or limits that will be established. [T03]

The noun *caps* designates the lid of America. The country therefore becomes the container and migrants the content that has to be limited, which enables Trump to justify and explain his immigration policy.



## 4.4. A Lottery system

- 31 Another means to manipulate the audience is not to criticize migrants themselves but to complain about the immigration system. In order to do so, Trump resorts to the metaphor THE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM IS A LOTTERY, such as in the following example:

You pick people. Do you think the country is giving us their best people? No. (Laughter.) What kind of a system is that? They come in by **lottery**. They give us their worst people, they put them in a bin [...]. Congratulations, you're going to the United States. Okay. (Laughter.) What a system – **lottery** system. We're calling for Congress to end chain migration and to end the visa **lottery** system and replace it with a merit-based system of immigration. [T05]

- 32 This metaphor is similar to the WATER metaphor in the sense that it also emphasizes the uncontrollable and overwhelming aspect of immigration. According to Trump, migrants are chosen as arbitrarily as numbers in a lottery and should be selected according to a “merit-based system”. So as to support his argument and to make it more powerful, Trump also resorts to gestures, and mimics someone who holds the handle of the lottery machine, as in the following screenshot:

Figure 2: Trump, “they come in by lottery”, Quantico, Virginia, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, CNN.





- 33 This gesture can be considered a rhetorical tool that combines with the spoken metaphor so as to reinforce the argument that becomes more manipulative, since two out of the five senses are targeted. In addition, four American flags can be seen in the background and one on Trump's brooch. These elements can also convey the idea that there are two different groups, American citizens, on the one hand, and migrants on the other hand, and this also contributes to manipulation.
- 34 Though the manipulative dimension is inherent to the source domains that are chosen, and more particularly to the WATER and CONTAINER source domains, other rhetorical tools (such as repetitions, determiners or the 'principle of end-focus'), which will be analyzed in the following part, combine with these metaphors and contribute to manipulating voters.

## 4.5. Migrants are uncivilized

### 4.5.1. Us vs. Them

- 35 Determiners are grammatical tools that frequently supplement WATER and CONTAINER metaphors in creating a dichotomy between migrants and the citizens of the host country. Trump very often stresses the so-called possessive determiner *our* and the adjective *American* so as to prove that American citizens are his priority, such as in the following example:

The fundamental problem with the immigration system in **our** country is that [...] it doesn't serve you the **American** people. Our greatest compassion must be for **our American** citizens. [T03]

- 36 In Trump's immigration discourse, this rhetorical strategy is also regularly associated with the semantic isotopy of protection. According to him, the U.S. needs to be protected from immigration as if migrants were a threat. As Van Dijk [2008: 9] explains, this type of isotopy contributes to highlighting the negative aspects of the "out-group", which makes migrants appear as dangerous people such as is illustrated in the examples hereafter:



We have a dysfunctional immigration system, which does not permit us to know who we let into our country, and it does not permit us to **protect our** citizens properly. [...] The immigration laws of the United States give the president powers to suspend entry into the country of any class of persons and I will use this power to **protect the American** people. [...] Each year the United States permanently admits 100,000 immigrants from the Middle East and many more from Muslim countries outside of the Middle East. Our government has been admitting ever-growing numbers, year after year, without any effective plan for **our own** security. [...] When I'm president I pledge to **protect and defend** all **Americans** who live inside **our** borders. [...] America will be a tolerant and open society. America will also be a safe society. We will **protect our borders at home**. [...] We will ensure every parent can raise their children in peace and safety. [T02]

It's time to support our police, to **protect our families**, and to **save American lives**. [T04]

- 37 All these tools therefore intertwine and combine with WATER and CONTAINER metaphors so as to generate manipulation by creating a dichotomy between two groups and by depicting migrants as a threat.

## 4.5.2. Criminality

- 38 Trump also very often emphasizes the idea of criminality and associates the topic of immigration with that of terrorism or crime. In the Phoenix speech, 24 occurrences of the collocate *illegal immigrant* can be found. In Orlando, after the terrorist attack, Trump said:

The killer, whose name I will not use, or ever say, was born to **Afghan** parents who **immigrated** to the United States. His father published support for the **Afghan** Taliban, a regime which murders those who don't share its radical views. [T02].

In this example, he clearly highlights the origins of the murderer by resorting to a repetition. Furthermore, he resorts to the 'principle of end-focus', which puts the most important information at the end of the sentence. In other words, what is the most important for him is that the killer's parents "immigrated" to the U.S. and that they were not born in America. In addition, he assumes that a majority of immigrants are murderers:

We cannot continue to allow **thousands upon thousands** of people to **pour into** our country same thing **many of whom** have the same thought process as this **savage killer**. [T02]

- 39 The WATER metaphor is found, once again, with the use of the verb *pour* and it combines with the repetition of *thousands* as well as with



the use of the quantifier *many* that refers to a great quantity, so as to make voters think this event is not an isolated case and that it is likely to happen again. The combination of those tools enables Trump to make his audience think that almost all immigrants are “savage killers”.

- 40 On the contrary, Hillary Clinton’s goal is to dissociate the attack from the foreign origin of the murderer. During the final presidential debate on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Las Vegas, she even insisted on the fact that the terrorist was born in the U.S. and said:

In fact, the killer of the dozens of people at the nightclub in Orlando, the Pulse nightclub, was born in **Queens**, the same place **Donald** was born. [D02]

So as to contradict Trump’s argument, she also relies on the ‘principle of end-focus’, but this time immigration is not considered the most important element.

## Conclusion

- 41 The analysis of Trump’s speeches about immigration during the 2016 presidential campaign has shown that he very frequently resorts to metaphors to talk about migrants (134 occurrences for him against 36 for his opponent Hillary Clinton). Nevertheless, very few different source domains are used by Trump to refer to this topic. This study has indeed revealed that the two main source domains were WATER (40%) and HOUSE (48%). Thus, Trump often repeats the same metaphors, which enables him to rely on a ‘hammering effect’ that is likely to spread misinformation. The manipulative dimension is inherent to these source domains since WATER metaphors systematically emphasize not only the quantity and direction of migrants but also their power; CONTAINER metaphors, and more particularly HOUSE metaphors, can be seen as highly dysphemistic because they depict immigrants as trespassers and their entry as a violent intrusion [Charteris-Black 2006: 577]. Furthermore, metaphors are all manipulative by definition because they link two domains that usually have nothing in common and since they all rely on the ‘highlighting-hiding principle’ [Kövecses 2002: 80], they hide some aspects of reality.



- 42 However, although manipulation is inherent to the WATER and CONTAINER source domains, they never work on their own and are always resorted to with other rhetorical tools, such as repetitions, specific determiners, collocates, etc. Trump largely resorts to the so-called possessive determiner *our* and the adjective *American* so as to emphasize the dichotomy between migrants and American citizens. Manipulation occurs thanks to those tools and their combination with metaphors, enabling the speaker to reject anyone who does not belong to the “in-group” and nurturing this dichotomy [Van Dijk 2008: 9]. Trump also very often associates immigration with crime or terrorism by using the collocation *illegal immigrant*, which also combines with other tools, such as quantifiers; this contributes to manipulating voters in making them believe a majority of migrants are criminals.
- 43 This case-study has shown that immigration metaphors combine with gestures, which can be considered rhetorical tools *per se*. Trump often mimics his spoken metaphors with gestures and since “motion attracts our attention more than anything else” [Radden & Dirven 2007: 278], gestural metaphors that supplement linguistic ones are likely to be more easily remembered by the audience and the ideas they convey more likely to be voted for. Thus, even though WATER and CONTAINER metaphors are very effective, manipulation in Trump’s immigration speeches is generated thanks to the intertwining of those two source domains in combination with many other rhetorical tools.
- 44 The corpus that was analyzed for this study was centered on Trump’s speeches, with minor comparison to Hilary Clinton’s. For further discussion, Trump’s metaphors on immigration could be compared to those used by his opponents so as to determine whether they are deconstructed or not by Democratic candidates. Besides, the manipulative effect of Trump’s rhetorical tools has been studied in general and further study could focus on specific audience in order to see whether *all* voters are likely to be manipulated by such linguistic tools.
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# Corpus

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<sup>1</sup> Many other scholars have worked on metaphor in cognitive linguistics, but their theories will not be developed in this article. For further discussion see for instance Kövecses [2002], Steen and Gibbs [1999], Grady [1997] or Katz [1998].

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## English

This article intends to analyze the use of metaphors in a corpus of Donald Trump’s speeches on immigration; its main goal is to determine how migrants were depicted in the 2016 American presidential election, and how metaphor manipulated voters in the creation of this image. This study is multimodal since not only the linguistic aspect of speeches but also gestures are considered. The first part consists in presenting an overview of the theories on metaphor. It provides the theoretical framework and develops the main tenets of the ‘Conceptual Metaphor Theory’ (CMT). The second part deals with multimodality and presents what modes and gestures are. The third part provides the corpus and methodology. The last part consists in the corpus study and provides the main source domains as well as other rhetorical tools that are used by Trump to depict migrants and manipulate voters.

## Français

Cet article se propose d’étudier l’utilisation des métaphores dans les discours de Donald Trump au sujet de l’immigration. Il s’agit d’une analyse de corpus ayant pour but de dégager la façon dont les migrants ont été décrits dans les discours de Donald Trump lors des élections présidentielles de 2016, et comment la métaphore peut revêtir un rôle manipulateur dans la création de cette image. Cette étude multimodale prend en compte non seulement l’aspect linguistique des discours mais également l’impact des gestes produits par le candidat. La première partie présente le cadre



théorique concernant la métaphore et expose les principes de la théorie conceptuelle de la métaphore (*Conceptual Metaphor Theory* en anglais, ou CMT). Ensuite, la question de la multimodalité sera abordée, puis le corpus et la méthodologie seront présentés. Enfin, la dernière partie est constituée de l'étude de corpus et détaille notamment les différents domaines sources utilisés par Donald Trump pour faire référence aux migrants et manipuler les électeurs.

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### **Mots-clés**

immigration, métaphore, discours politique, métaphore conceptuelle, gestes, multimodalité, manipulation, linguistique cognitive, domaine source, dysphémisme

### **Keywords**

immigration, metaphor, political discourse, conceptual metaphor, gestures, multi-modality, manipulation, cognitive linguistics, source domain, dysphemism

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# The persuasive vs. manipulative power of multimodal metaphors in advertising discourse

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## Introduction

- 1 Have you ever wondered how come some advertisements make you enjoy watching them? Is it even possible to enjoy an advertisement, whose purpose is, after all, to influence your consumption habits, make you believe certain things and act in certain ways? But we perfectly know that we are being advertised to and like to think that advertisements do not work, or, at least, not on us. Yet, each year



companies spend enormous sums of money on advertising and hiring experts in marketing who should adapt to the ever-changing consumer, understand and anticipate their desires and adapt marketing discourse and strategies to appeal to their target audience.

- 2 Thus, for instance, as awareness of global climate change issues spreads, consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of consumption habits on their environmental footprint. Purchasing a product or using a service is no longer considered to be inconsequential; rather it is thought of as a political act, which goes beyond consumers' needs. These changes in our society have led to the advent of the green and responsible consumer with alternative consumption practices. Quite naturally then, marketers and advertisers have adapted their communicative strategies to target this new 'sustainable consumer'. As Mühlhäusler [1999: 168] explains:

The changing approaches of green advertisers have had a not necessarily unintended side effect: that of shifting the responsibility for the environment away from the big producers to the consumers. The earth is saved not by factories stopping the manufacture of hazardous products, but by consumers making responsible choices.

- 3 As the target audiences of advertising discourse have evolved, the discourse itself has undergone tremendous transformations and drastic shifts to develop into a completely new form. Hence, for instance, as far as the car industry is concerned, Mühlhäusler [1999: 175] notes that:

[...] through sophisticated advertising cars are increasingly presented in or adjacent to natural environments rather than next to glamorous people and opulent mansions as was customary in earlier periods of car advertising.

The almost ubiquitous representation of cars in natural environments, mainly mountainous roads, is of course intentional and bears a specific significance. This technique can be referred to as *framing*, a concept that Kress and Van Leeuwen [2001: 2] define as:

the ways in which elements of a composition may be connected to each other, through the absence of disconnection devices, through



vectors, and through continuities and similarities of colour, visual shape and so on. The significance is that [...] connected elements will be read as belonging together in some sense, as continuous or complementary.

- 4 Therefore, such framing in which cars are represented adjacent to nature is 'suggestive' of the message that the car that is being promoted is environmentally friendly. Inasmuch as this is not true in the majority of cases, this technique can be considered as manipulative. It is all the more manipulative as claims about the environmentally friendly nature of the product are not overtly stated but rather suggested implicitly through framing. The implicit in contrast with the explicit manner in which messages are conveyed is believed to be one of the basic features that differentiate manipulation from persuasion. A rhetoric tool that is largely tapped into in advertising discourse to convey meaning implicitly is metaphor. Enquiring into the manipulative power of metaphors is the purpose of the present study.
- 5 Indeed, metaphors and other manipulative tools are extensively used in advertising to convey messages implicitly. As Hollis [2011] argues:

Successful advertising rarely succeeds through argument or calls to action. [...] No one likes to think that they are easily influenced. In fact, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that we respond negatively to naked attempts at persuasion.

Thus, marketers use sophisticated techniques to appeal to the new 'multiliterate consumer', who is increasingly aware of marketing strategies. Another major challenge for marketers is to succeed in reaching what Hollis [2011] calls "an increasingly digitally distracted and time poor audience". This is one of the reasons why multimodal resources are heavily tapped into to render the promotional message more appealing and capture the target audience's attention. Multimodality, thus, is a key aspect of modern advertising discourse and the present study addresses multimodal metaphors.

- 6 In the opening section, some of the major theories of metaphor are outlined in an attempt to gain understanding of its nature and functions, focusing on a perspective that has been given little



attention so far, namely, the semiotic view on metaphor. Next, an enquiry is carried out into the subtle differences between the notions of *persuasion* and *manipulation* in general, and in particular, as far as multimodal metaphors are concerned. After a brief review of types of metaphors, an attempt is made to determine the source of manipulative power in metaphors and a model of analysis is put forward.

- 7 However, before studying the manipulative power of promotional metaphors, a common ground needs to be reached as to the nature and functions of metaphor in the first place. This endeavour is addressed in the section that follows.

## 1. Defining and understanding metaphors

- 8 From the time that Aristotle introduced it in his *Poetics* in the fourth century, metaphor has been studied extensively by specialists from a variety of disciplines (including philosophy, rhetoric, linguistics and literature); and yet no common agreement has been reached as to the way metaphors are to be defined and understood. The section that follows presents an overview of major theories of metaphor.

### 1.1. Metaphor theories: an overview

- 9 The most prominent views about metaphor put forward so far can be grouped into four major theories as follows. First, the ‘comparison theory’ of metaphor or the so-called ‘similarity view’ [Abrams 1999: 155], as put forward by Aristotle and used traditionally to analyse metaphors until recently, holds that the features being compared actually pre-existed the use of the metaphor. Consequently, metaphor is seen as an analogy, and its use, as seeing the similarity between two disparate things. As Abrams [1999: 155] explains, this view assumes that:

a metaphor serves mainly to enhance the rhetorical force and stylistic vividness and pleasantness of a discourse.



In view of the above quotation, it can be stated that the comparison theory focuses on the rhetorical and poetic function of metaphor.

- 10 The comparison theory was later replaced by the ‘interaction theory’ of metaphor, as developed by Black [1954-1955]. However, Black’s theory was actually an expansion of Richards’s treatment of metaphor. In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* Richards [1936] introduced the terms *vehicle* for the metaphorical word and *tenor* for the subject to which the metaphorical word is applied, and proposed that [1936: 93]:

when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction.

- 11 Almost twenty years later, in his influential essay entitled “Metaphor” [1954-1955], Black refined and greatly expanded Richards’s ideas. Black [1968: 40] later proposed that each of the two elements in a metaphor has a “system of associated commonplaces”, consisting of the properties and relations that we commonly attach to the object, person, or event. These are called by Richards [1936] the grounds of a metaphor. When we understand a metaphor, the system of commonplaces associated with the ‘subsidiary subject’ (equivalent to Richards’s ‘vehicle’) interacts with the system associated with the ‘principal subject’ (Richards’s ‘tenor’) so as to ‘filter’ or ‘screen’ that system, and thus effects a new way of perceiving and conceiving the principal subject. When using a metaphor, we actually use a ‘subsidiary subject’ to foster insight into a ‘principal subject’, this process, for Black [1968: 46], is a distinctive intellectual operation.
- 12 Stanford [see Berggren 1962: 243] calls our capacity to use metaphors “stereoscopic vision”: the ability to entertain two different points of view at the same time. So according to this view, metaphors create similarity. Furthermore, both for Richards [1936] and Black [1954-1955], a metaphor cannot be viewed simply as a rhetorical or poetic tool in that it affects the ways in which we perceive and conceive of the world.
- 13 In his essay “What Metaphors Mean” Davidson [1978] suggested that the question of metaphor is ‘pragmatic’, rather than semantic in that it consists in the use of a literal statement in such a way as to suggest



or imply meaning. In a similar stance, Searle [1979] proposed that to explain metaphor a distinction is to be made between ‘word, or sentence meaning’ (literal meaning) and a speaker’s “utterance meaning” (the metaphorical meaning that a speaker intends to convey). Consequently, Searle attributes a primary role to the speaker’s intention. It could therefore be stated that, in the pragmatic theory of metaphor speaker’s intentionality, as well as the context of utterance, are of key importance to understanding the function of metaphors.

- 14 Finally, the ‘cognitive’ theory of metaphor or ‘Conceptual Metaphor Theory’, known as CMT, prominent since the publication of Lakoff and Johnson’s *Metaphors We Live by* in 1980, claims that metaphor profoundly structures the ways human beings perceive what they know and how they think. Lakoff and Turner [1989] introduced the cognitive view on metaphor with special attention to its relevance for the analysis of metaphors in poetry. They conceive of metaphor as a projection or mapping across ‘conceptual domains’ (source domain and target domain). In using and understanding a metaphor, part of the conceptual structure of the “source domain” is “mapped” onto the conceptual structure of “target domain” in a one-way “transaction” (as distinct from an “interaction”). However, as pointed out by Forceville [2008: 463], a major drawback of conceptual metaphor theory is that it has so far largely ignored multimodal aspects of metaphors.
- 15 In view of the aforementioned theories of metaphor, it seems more relevant to explore the manipulative and persuasive functions of metaphor drawing on the pragmatic view, where the speaker’s intention and the context of utterance are taken into consideration. The view upon which the present account of metaphor will be grounded, within a broader pragmatic perspective, is Peirce’s (1839–1914) conception of metaphor, which as will be demonstrated is consistent with the overall cognitive theory.

## 1.2. The semiotic view of metaphor (C. S. Peirce 1839–1914)

- 16 The use of the term *view* rather than *theory* is intentional, since we cannot really speak of a Peircean theory of metaphor, given that



there are few instances of the term *metaphor* in his writings. Still, Peirce's view on metaphor is insightful in understanding the subtle differences between persuasion and manipulation, as well as the way metaphor fulfils these functions.

- 17 To begin with, metaphors are instances of signs in the broadest sense in which Peirce understood the concept of *sign*. In 1867, Peirce classified signs based on their mode of representation, into Icons, Indices, and Symbols, which represent their objects through resemblance, contiguity and convention, respectively.
- 18 Metaphors, for Peirce, are iconic signs, and he distinguishes several kinds of icons that he calls *hypoicons* and which are further classified according to their mode of representation as follows [CP<sup>1</sup> 2.277, c. 1902]:

[t]hose hypoicons which partake of simple qualities [...] are *images*; those which represent the relations [...] are *diagrams* (example a roadmap that shares a form with some particular territory); those which represent the representative character of a [sign] by representing a parallelism in something else, are *metaphors*.

But what is the ground for the representation of metaphorical icons? Anderson [1984: 458] clarifies that:

the materiality of the metaphor, that is to say the basis for creating the similarity, is a feeling, a first, a pure icon which its creator perceives.

“Feeling” as meant by Peirce, is “distinct from objective perception, will, and thought” [CP 1.302], as feelings are vague and pre-analytical. Thus, as Anderson [1984: 459] explains:

the ground of a metaphor is an “isosensism” between a metaphor and its icon which is created by its author. Moreover, what resemblance obtains between the constituents of a metaphor is created in the articulation of the metaphor.

- 19 This view, which is coherent with the pragmatic theory, highlights the role of the author as well as the context of occurrence of a metaphor. In line with this view, the present study argues that to gain



a thorough understanding of metaphors, the latter need to be studied with regard to their context of occurrence, as well as the speaker's intentionality. The particular context that I am interested in is advertising discourse.

### **1.3. The function of metaphors in advertising discourse**

- 20 The use of metaphors in advertising bears multiple advantages and thereby serves specific purposes, such as facilitating comprehension [Lakoff 1993] and memorisation [Gray & Snyder 1989], as well as enhancing motivation to read and process promotional messages [Goodstein 1993] due to the creative and novel manner in which those are delivered. What is more, metaphors help to unleash imagination [Zaltman & Coulter 1995]. Their use allows advertisers to carry the consumer away from the real world into an imaginary one – what would their life be like if they bought the product or used a particular service? Consuming then equals offering oneself a better future.
- 21 When it comes to considering advertisers' intentions in the use of metaphors, some questions arise. Are metaphors understood at all by the consumer? Are they 'correctly' understood and interpreted after all? As argued by Phillips [1997], promotional metaphors are not always comprehended by the audience in the way their creators intended. Interestingly, thus, these questions turn out to be of no relevance to the advertiser inasmuch as some of the messages conveyed (ambiguous messages) are intentionally meant to be misunderstood, or understood only by a certain category of consumers, while at the same time intentionally excluding others. Therefore, making sure metaphors are correctly interpreted by everyone might not be the intention of advertisers.
- 22 While considering the persuasive or manipulative power of metaphors, the speaker's intention is of key importance, as suggested by the pragmatic view, for the use of metaphors does not necessarily entail manipulation. In other words, metaphors are not inherently and absolutely manipulative, though they constitute a powerful resource which perfectly serves the manipulative intention of those



who tap into them. In this, it is vital to consider advertisers' intentions in using metaphors in the design of their discourse.

## 2. Persuasion vs. manipulation

- 23 When considering the differences between persuasion and manipulation, it could be stated that these two communicative acts differ as far as the target audience's will is concerned. In a persuasive process, reasonable arguments are provided so as to make the target audience change their minds through what seems to be a voluntary decision, whereas in the process of manipulation some form of control is exercised to influence the target audience in, for instance, designing the message and carefully shaping the context in which it is delivered in such a way as to make the target think or believe something regardless of their will. Furthermore, persuasion and manipulation differ regarding the way in which the speaker's intention manifests itself. Thus, for instance, in persuasion the speaker's intention to convince is overt and messages are explicitly conveyed, whereas in manipulation this intention is covert and communication is carried out rather implicitly by means of implying messages instead of clearly stating them. The elements of will and control bring me to a paradigm discussed below, which might serve to draw a further distinction between persuasion and manipulation.

### 2.1. Thinking vs. reasoning

- 24 Examining the operation of thought, Peirce notes that it can be of two kinds – controlled and uncontrolled, the former being referred to as reasoning, against thinking. The role of the uncontrolled thought, i.e. thinking, is particularly remarkable in perception, where the mind analyses the direct impressions of the senses. The evidence they bear is compelling and irresistible [CP 5.115]. Furthermore, percepts as the impressions of our senses are fleeting and can therefore be neither modified nor withdrawn, in that they are beyond our control. However, once the direct percept is formed, it is immediately interpreted by our thought, whereby perceptual judgments or, as Peirce calls them, “perceptual facts” are formed [CP 4.539]. These judgments, which are the descriptions that the mind makes of the



evidence provided by the senses, serve as the raw material for all further reasoning.

- 25 Despite their being intricately linked, a distinction is to be drawn between reasoning and perception, as Peirce explains [CP 2.144]:

reasoning is a very different thing indeed from the percept, or even from perceptual facts. For reasoning is essentially a voluntary act, over which we exercise control.

- 26 Unlike reasoning, perception is forced upon us and is thereby utterly beyond our control [CP 5.115]. The distinction drawn by Peirce between thinking and reasoning is insightful in throwing light into the differences between manipulation and persuasion. While persuasion is based on reasoning and arguments, it is thinking, which is based on perceptual judgments, that underlies manipulation. While reasoning can be controlled, thinking is totally uncontrollable.

- 27 Considering the differences between persuasion and manipulation, it could be claimed that in the former case, the speaker's intention is to talk the interlocutor into something by providing reasonable arguments so that the person would change their minds, whereas in manipulation, the speaker's intention is to influence and tacitly exercise control rather than persuade through careful design of the message to be delivered. There seems to be a strategy underlying manipulation that consists in hiding some information from the audience intentionally, while at the same time highlighting some of its features so as to draw the target's attention to specific aspects of the message that is being conveyed. Manipulation requires deliberate organisation of the information to be communicated. Careful selection is made of the points to which the attention is drawn. Metaphors perfectly serve this purpose in that, first, the choice of a particular metaphor over another directs the target audience's attention away from possible interpretations and focuses on one particular domain. Furthermore, through selective projection and the 'highlighting-hiding principle', as suggested by Kövecses [2002: 79], metaphors allow for the selection of elements to be hidden and highlighted with utmost precision. It is maybe for this power that metaphors have been widely used to convey scientific convictions or



religious and political ideology throughout history, but their use is also particularly prevalent in advertising discourse.

## 2.2. Context of use and user intention in advertising discourse

- 28 To understand the function of promotional metaphors, it might be useful to inquire into the specificities of the context in which they appear, namely, advertising discourse. What is the intention specific to this discourse genre? Is it to make a rational appeal, persuade through reasonable arguments, or influence the consumer implicitly through salient clues and emotional appeal? In advertising discourse, target audiences are prompted to buy a product or use a service without necessarily being reasonably convinced that they need the products or services they are being lured to. As Danesi [2015: 1] points out, the strategy specific to advertising discourse lies in venturing into domains of unconscious thought. That is why, despite the fact that studies [Stern 1988; Morgan & Reichert 1999] suggest that the majority of consumers do not really comprehend and interpret correctly the meaning of metaphors in advertisements, the latter are still widely used by advertisers. The tacit nature of messages delivered in advertising discourse is further put forward by Danesi [2015: 5] when he claims:

[l]ike poetry, advertising discourse is intended to *suggest*<sup>2</sup> meanings through allusion, metaphor, irony, analogy, humour, and the like.

- 29 As mentioned, there are many advantages linked with the use of metaphors in advertising discourse, such as stimulating the public's imagination and facilitating memorisation. But the question to be dealt with at this point is the following: what is the added value of multimodal metaphors as manipulative devices? This question is addressed in the following section, which deals with different types of metaphors.



### 3. Types of metaphors: monomodal vs. multimodal metaphors

- 30 As compared to monomodal (e.g. linguistic or pictorial metaphors), multimodal metaphors have a greater potential for manipulation as in ‘selective projection’ the senses are solicited to project the desired features with greater accurateness.

#### 3.1. Multimodal metaphors and manipulation

- 31 To begin with, let us make it clear that multimodal metaphors should not be assimilated with nonverbal metaphors, as one of the modes involved in the former can be language itself, spoken or written: for instance, a voiceover accompanying images in a video, the lyrics of a song, a running tagline or a printed caption. Forceville [2008: 463] defines multimodal metaphors as:

metaphors in which target, source, and/or mappable features are represented or suggested by at least two different sign systems (one of which may be language) or modes of perception.

Thus, for instance, one of the mappable features can be represented by an image, while another by language or sound. Interestingly, one and the same feature can also be simultaneously represented by several modes. For example, to convey joy or a feeling of happiness several semiotic resources (music, image, sound or language) can be tapped into simultaneously. This definitely constitutes an added value for multimodal metaphors as explained further. The specificities of multimodal metaphors are discussed in the following section.

##### 3.1.1. The specificities of multimodal metaphors

- 32 While discussing the advantages of multimodal metaphors, Forceville [2008: 463] points out the following four features. Firstly, multimodal



metaphors are characterised by ‘perceptual immediacy’. What is meant here is that audiences do not have to engage in complex meaning-making processes in order to perceive and make sense of the message conveyed through an image. Meaning is perceived with great immediacy, unlike some purely verbal messages conveyed through a linguistic metaphor. Secondly, Forceville [2008: 463] explains that multimodal metaphors bear ‘medium determined specificities’:

Pictorial and multimodal representations have different, medium determined ways of cueing the similarity between target and source than language has.

Thirdly, this type of metaphor allows for ‘*greater cross-cultural access*’:

Inasmuch as sounds and pictures are more easily recognized transnationally than (unfamiliar) languages, pictorial and multimodal metaphors allow for greater cross-cultural access than verbal ones.

- 33 While cultural specificities would still markedly dominate the ways in which metaphors are understood and interpreted, due to their perceptual immediacy, multimodal metaphors bear a greater potential to be understood transculturally. Finally, multimodal metaphors are endowed with greater ‘emotional appeal’. As Forceville [2008: 463] puts it:

Pictorial and multimodal source domains probably have a stronger emotional appeal than verbal ones.

After all, as the saying goes “a picture is worth a thousand words”.

- 34 In what follows, two more characteristics of multimodal metaphors will be put forward. First, the ‘simultaneity’ of communicative action exercised through different modes. It consists in communicating a single message simultaneously tapping into different semiotic resources and using different modes of communication. This feature is believed to entail greater capacity of metaphors to ‘impact’ audiences, in that it serves to ‘reinforce’ one and the same message



by simultaneously communicating it through different semiotic modes.

- 35 Another characteristic, which is related to what Forceville [2008] calls *medium determined specificities*, is the ‘accurateness’ of communication afforded by multimodal metaphors. Given that the latter afford numerous and diverse semiotic resources, they can benefit from what is known as ‘semiotic affordances’ in the design of the message to be conveyed. As explained in the *Online glossary of multimodal terms* [MODE 2012], the concept of *semiotic affordances* refers to:

the potentialities and constraints of different modes – what it is possible to express and represent or communicate easily with the resources of a mode, and what is less straightforward or even impossible – and this is subject to constant social work. From this perspective, the term ‘affordance’ is not a matter of perception, but rather refers to the materially, culturally, socially and historically developed ways in which meaning is made with particular semiotic resources.

- 36 This definition is adapted from Kress [2010], who first puts forward the term *semiotic affordances*. Bezemer & Kress [2015: 31] provide a further account of semiotic affordances underlining the social dimension of meaning-making:

What a sign-maker does is shaped by what other sign makers have done before her or him, in response to similar social and semiotic needs. That prior, socially shaped, semiotic work produces socially organized sets of (material and conceptual) semiotic resources, making distinct semiotic organizational entities for meaning-making available to individual sign-makers.

- 37 This characteristic of multimodal metaphors allows their authors to make a careful and accurate selection of semiotic resources at their disposal, based on the specific affordances of a given resource. For example, to make a message memorable, or trigger imagination, visuals can be chosen, while language could most efficiently clarify a message and music would best afford pulling emotional strings. To gain insight into the inner workings of multimodal metaphors, let us



consider the following example of a multimodal promotional metaphor used in a commercial for the New Peugeot 508.

### 3.1.2. Multimodal metaphors in advertising: case study

A CAR IS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

- 38 To promote its second generation 508 series car released in 2018, Peugeot chose a novel metaphor, namely A CAR IS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT. By choosing this metaphor a parallel is drawn between the domains of music (in particular, classical music) and driving: the driver is a musician and an artist, driving is musical performance and the car is a musical instrument. The selective projection focuses on features such as precision, harmony and passion. Semiotically speaking, multiple modes are tapped into to draw the parallel between the two domains, such as language (written text and voiceover), visual mode (images, gesture), music and sound.

**Figure 1. New Peugeot 508 – What Drives You? Opening scene (still 1) [EX1]**



- 39 Figure 1 above shows the opening scene of the commercial. We can see a man approach the car and take the driver's seat. A voiceover asks "Ready?" and some people, probably technicians, walk around and check the last details to make sure everything is ready. This



scene, which is rather dark, reminds us of the behind the scene hustle, preceding an artistic performance, the moment before the artist steps onto the stage. This idea, however, would not be that clear if it were not for the written text (on the bottom left corner) accompanying the scene which reads “RIOPY<sup>3</sup>. Pianist. About to perform a musical stunt”. This image is immediately succeeded by another, representing an ensemble of musicians (a string quarter), starting their performance. As if to accompany the artists with his piano, RIOPY moves his fingers over the dashboard, making a gesture which resembles playing the piano (the dashboard is the keyboard).

**Figure 2. New Peugeot 508 – What Drives You? Gesture to represent the piano keyboard (still 2) [EX1]**



- 40 After the upbeat (the sound of a driving car, and a single piano note), the car comes onto the track: this scene is particularly bright in contrast with the opening scene. The track on which the car drives is represented as a stave<sup>4</sup>, and as the car drives along the track, images are accompanied by dynamic classical music. Interestingly, even though this is not a commercial for a green car (e.g. electric or hybrid), the car is pictured amidst dense vegetation, as Figure 3 below shows.



**Figure 3. New Peugeot 508 – What Drives you? Green framing (still 3) [EX1]**



- 41 Throughout the commercial the car is represented amidst trees and green mountainous scenes. The orchestra, accompanying the artist (i.e. the driver), is installed on the sidewalk, also surrounded by dense vegetation. As mentioned above, this technique serves to suggest the environmentally-friendly nature of the promoted car. We can also see the Peugeot logo, displayed on the bottom right corner throughout the commercial, so that the viewer can associate the commercial with the brand.
- 42 On the bottom left corner, it is written “Zeljavo, Croatia”. By mentioning a place which exists in reality, the advertisers aim at setting the scene for a real event. The message that is conveyed is that everything is real in the commercial. The purpose is to give credibility to the overall promotional discourse.
- 43 As the commercial unfolds, the audio and the video modes allow to map such features as harmony (with nature and among artists performing the music), outstanding and admirable performance (as the public would admire an artist on the scene), success and fame (if you have recognised RIOPY, or read his name in the beginning), precision (as the car drives along the stave and perfectly follows the curves traced on it with notes, also, as two cars drive close to each other without causing an accident), joy of performing, enjoyment and enthusiasm (expressed through gesture: nodding the head with the



rhythm of music), approval and satisfaction (after the performance is over RIOPY looks at the other driver, nods with satisfaction and smiles) and a mixed feeling of calm and energy.

- 44 The mapping of the feature 'precision' is equally realised in the verbal mode with the tagline "Discover the beautiful sound of precision", which appears at the end of the commercial. Thus, the verbal mode comes to reinforce the message previously conveyed through the visual mode. The verbal mode, which is rarely used throughout the commercial, also serves to conclude it by addressing the audience with the following question: "New Peugeot 508. What Drives You?" This tagline throws light into another basic feature the advertisers want the target audience to map – the drive, i.e. the energy, passion and determination to achieve things. Classical music is what drives RIOPY, this is what he is 'passionate' about. Driving the new Peugeot 508 is like indulging in one's passion. You will enjoy driving this car as RIOPY enjoys playing the piano. It will give you the drive and the energy you need to accomplish things you love.
- 45 It should be noted that both mappable features 'precision' and 'performance' have been used in the car advertising discourse before. Already in 1986, Honda used the tagline "Precision Crafted Performance" [Torrance 2016] to launch Acura, its luxury car brand. Therefore, what is novel about Peugeot's commercial is the parallel it draws between the domains of musical performance and driving to map those features.
- 46 To appeal to a larger audience, a different version of the commercial was designed with the tagline "Don't miss a beat" for the Peugeot 308 model. Here the metaphor DRIVING IS MUSICAL PERFORMANCE was adapted to refer to music in general (and not only to classical music). Figure 4 below shows the visual representation of the metaphor used in this commercial:



**Figure 4. Peugeot 308. Don't Miss a Beat. (still) [EX2]**



- 47 As the above discussed examples illustrate, by tapping into different semiotic resources, multimodal metaphors target different senses and engage with various modes of communication to better capture attention, trigger emotions and structure meaning-making processes. Different modes of representation and communication help to reach maximum precision and efficacy in the accomplishment of metaphor's potential by providing more versatile semiotic resources.
- 48 Thus, while conceiving multimodal metaphors, their authors can choose semiotic resources which best suit their communicative intent and the overall context of communication. This brings us to the manipulative intention in the use of metaphors and the need to address the ways in which multimodal metaphors can contribute to the accomplishment of this intention.

### **3.1.3. The added value of multimodal metaphors in manipulation**

- 49 How do simultaneity and accurateness afforded by multimodal metaphors provide them with an added value when it comes to manipulative communication? As mentioned, one of the distinctive features of manipulation is the element of control. Firstly, multimodal



metaphors, due to the simultaneous nature of their communicative action, help to reinforce the message and thereby increase its impact and semiotic pressure on the audience. Secondly, due to the accurateness afforded by multimodal metaphors, advertisers can carefully choose the semiotic modes involved in the design of metaphors, and thereby exercise greater control on the audience. By carefully designing the metaphors and the thoughts, feelings and emotions they will trigger for the public, advertisers are able to better manipulate their target audiences.

- 50 Another added value of multimodal metaphors, as compared to verbal ones, is the greater ambiguity they afford. This might seem quite paradoxical given the arguments that were put forward to account for the accurateness of the communication that can be achieved using multimodal metaphors. When talking about accurateness as a distinctive feature of multimodal metaphors, what is referred to is not the clarity of the message conveyed, but rather the accurateness with which semiotic resources can be chosen to design the message and project the desired features. However, this does not mean that multimodal metaphors are necessarily ambiguous but that if needed, to meet the speaker's specific intentions, greater ambiguity of the communicated message can be reached through the use of multimodal metaphors. As Forceville [2008: 464] argues, in verbal metaphors ambiguity is reduced by linguistic rules that govern them. However, "[i]n pictures [...] there is no such linearity, nor grammatical 'rules' for disambiguating target and source".
- 51 Therefore, it could be stated that multimodal metaphors, unlike monomodal ones, bear a greater potential for manipulation as they better serve metaphor's 'highlighting-hiding principle' [Kövecses 2002: 79]. In particular, in "selective projection" as put forward by Fauconnier and Turner [2002: 47] different modes are involved to project the desired features with utmost accurateness (using sound, colour, form, etc.), while making sure to leave out the undesired properties and relations of the source domain. This selective projection is indeed construed as manipulative in itself.
- 52 However, it should be noted that "semiotic affordances" are not fixed, but, as Bezemer & Kress [2015: 31] argue, they are "*changeable* and



*changing*: sign-makers constantly expand and transform modes and their resources by making new signs”.

- 53 The capacity of metaphors to grow semantically as pointed out by researchers such as Charteris-Black [2000] is addressed in the next section.

## 3.2. Creative vs. conventionalised metaphors and manipulation

- 54 Once created, metaphors become conventionalised through frequent use. Therefore, it is common to speak of novel or creative metaphors as opposed to conventionalised ones. As Anderson [1984: 461] puts it:

[a]t an outset, a creative metaphor [...] has no resembling antecedent and resembles itself alone. [...] [I]t lacks the precision of conventional reference or of a univocal shared quality.

Consequently, Anderson [1984: 463] clarifies: “[t]he referent which a metaphor creates is not fully closed – it is an open individual”.

- 55 In other words, a newly created metaphor’s meaning is “vague in its non-fixity” [Anderson 1984: 464] and therefore open to a range of interpretations. However, metaphors grow semantically, and their referent increasingly moves from vagueness to preciseness. At the outset, we cannot specify comprehensively the meaning of a metaphor, as Anderson [1984: 464] explains:

We select certain parts of the open referent and conventionalize them. The more they are conventionalized, the more symbolic they are in Peircean terms. This, then, finally gives us our second level of metaphor: the new level is merely what is commonly called a frozen or dormant metaphor. Certain parts of the referent are simply crystallized by an interpreter and conventionalized by habitual use.

- 56 Creative metaphors thus serve as ground for conventionalised ones. Once freshly created and vague, creative metaphors grow into conventional signs (symbols) through habitual use and develop a precise meaning which “we accept at face value” [Anderson 1984: 464]. The vagueness or preciseness of a metaphor are determined by



the extent to which the contours of its referent are clearly defined. In other words, whether or not the feature or the set of features to be mapped from source to target domains are clearly determined and known to the public. The process of definition of the contours of a metaphor's referent is accomplished through its use. The more a metaphor is used, the clearer its referent becomes. Therefore, the vagueness of the referent of a creative metaphor is due to its novelty.

As, for instance, in the example discussed above *A CAR IS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT*, at first glance, this creative metaphor is vague as its mappable features are unclear. In contrast, a conventional metaphor, which has been frequently used in car advertisements and whose referent is therefore more precise, is – *A CAR IS POWER*.

- 57 Indeed, *A CAR IS POWER* is probably the most widely used metaphor in the car advertising industry. Its use has been prevalent even in advertisements for gasoline, as in the 1964 advertisement for Esso extra gasoline, with the tagline “Put a Tiger in your Tank” and the promotional claim “New power-formula Esso extra gasoline boosts power three ways” [EX3]. However, the *A CAR IS POWER* metaphor affords a wide range of interpretations. The *Cambridge Dictionary* [2020] defines *power* as “the ability to control people and events”, “strength”, “an official or legal right to do something”. The metaphorical meaning of *A CAR IS POWER* has been made precise through the frequent use of this metaphor throughout the history of car advertising. Below some examples of its most commonly used referents are discussed.

### 3.2.1. CAR IS MASCULINE POWER / VIRILITY

- 58 The *A CAR IS POWER* metaphor has been extensively used in car advertising to refer above all to masculine power or virility. Just to give a few examples, the 1996 slogan for Daihatsu Hijet MPV minivan reads: “Picks up five times more women than a Lamborghini” [EX4]. The *A CAR IS VIRILITY* message is further reinforced through the short text accompanying the image which implies success with women and a warranty for potency:

Forget your Italian racers. This little babe-magnet is the Daihatsu Hijet MPV. [...] Two sun roofs for when things get hot. And even a 3 year/60,000 mile warranty for guaranteed staying power.



- 59 More recently, Fiat's Super Bowl commercial for the crossover 2015 Fiat 500X, entitled "The Fiat Blue Pill" [EX5] equally taps into the A CAR IS MASCULINE POWER metaphor.

**Figure 5. Fiat 500X Super Bowl commercial. "Blue Pill" (still) [EX5]**



- 60 The commercial features an aging lover who is about to take his last remaining "blue pill". As it accidentally falls out of the window, the pill bounces all over the city and lands into the open gas tank of a Fiat 500X (see Figure 5 above). The latter swells up to become "bigger, more powerful, and ready for action". The advertisement ends with the suggestive tagline "Coming this Spring... Hold Out a Little Longer".
- 61 Likewise, the 2004 commercial for VW Golf GTI taps into the A CAR IS MASCULINE POWER metaphor with its slogan "For Boys Who Were Always Men" [EX6]. In a similar stance, Oldsmobile's advertisements with the taglines "Separates the men from the boys" (1968) [EX7] and "If your friends could see you now" (1972) [EX8] tap into the A CAR IS VIRILITY metaphor. One of Mercury's slogans in the late 1960s was "Mercury, Man's Car". Finally, the 2001 advertisement for Toyota Celica, featuring the Little Red Riding Hood with the wolf and the catch phrase "Performance you can use" [EX9] draws a parallel between the car's performance and masculine performance.



### 3.2.2. CAR IS POWER IN NATURE

- 62 The second most widely used context for the A CAR IS POWER metaphor is nature. Though the idea of power is still prevalent, it is now treated differently: owning a car is being powerful, but in relation to nature, so, the power metaphor is to be understood as A CAR IS POWER IN NATURE. Volkswagen resorts to this metaphor to promote its cars, Beetle (Bug) and Rabbit, in a TV spot released in 1964 [EX10] and printed magazine adverts (1979) [EX11]. Thus, in its classic snowplow commercial, which features the Bug driving in a landscape with a heavy snowfall, the voiceover addresses the public, asking the following question:

Have you ever wondered how the man who drives the snowplow drives to the snowplow? This one drives a Volkswagen. So, you can stop wondering.

- 63 The driver of the Bug, who is a snowplow driver, has chosen this model to drive to work for its capacity to stand against the bad weather, manoeuvrability and good performance even during a heavy winter storm.

- 64 Another two-page magazine advert for the Volkswagen Bug draws on the A CAR IS POWER IN NATURE metaphor, namely, the “It Takes You To extremes” (1970) [EX12], featuring the Bug in extreme weather conditions, with the following tagline:

It takes you to extremes. From 40 below to 140 above. From the snows of the Arctic to the sands of the Sahara.

- 65 More recent examples include adverts from Chevrolet, Nissan and Peugeot. In 2010, Chevrolet chose the tagline “Don’t let nature make you insignificant” [EX13] to promote its Captiva Extreme. Similarly, with its catch phrase, “Get Lost. We dare you” [EX14] Nissan makes promotional claims about its SUV’s onboard GPS mapping system, off-road suspension and four-wheel drive, once again harnessing the power metaphor. Other examples include Mini’s “Just Snow” TV spot for its Cooper (2010) [EX15] and the “Let it Snow” printed advert (2012) [EX16] for the Countryman series.

- 66 As the two men featured in the “Just Snow” commercial (2010) [EX15] are trying hard to clean-up their front yards, as can be imagined, to be able to get their cars out (Figure 6), their neighbour, a female



driver of Mini Cooper, gets her car out of the garage quite effortlessly (Figure 7). After all, it is “Just Snow”, for such a powerful car as the Mini Cooper.

**Figure 6. Mini Cooper, Just Snow. 2010 TV commercial (still 1) [EX15]**



**Figure 7. Mini Cooper, Just Snow. 2010 TV commercial (still 2) [EX15]**



67 To conclude, A CAR IS POWER is a conventional metaphor. Its referent has been conventionalised and thereby rendered precise, through the frequent use of this metaphor in the history of car advertising.



### 3.2.3. Volvos are rubbish

- 68 In a paper on car advertising, the title “Volvos are rubbish” may sound quite surprising and provocative. You might think, “Is this a criticism of the Volvo brand?” If not, what might this mean? As the metaphor is creative, its referent is vague and its meaning escapes us. This is, in fact, the official caption for an outdoor poster to claim Volvo’s commitment to reduce their environmental footprint by using “at least 25% recycled plastic in cars by 2025” (2019) [EX17]. Another vivid example of a creative metaphor used in what was to become a legendary car advertisement is Volkswagen’s 1969 advert, featuring a space shuttle and the slogan: “It’s ugly but it gets you there”. This advert, designed by Bill Bernbach of the DDB (Doyle Dane Bernbach) agency to promote Beetle’s efficacy, made a huge impact on the public due to its simplicity and creativity.
- 69 To revert to the above made distinction between creative and conventionalised metaphors as vague and precise respectively, it could be stated that creative metaphors are vague in that, by drawing novel, unusual parallels between previously unrelated domains, they offer diverse avenues of exploration. In contrast, conventionalised metaphors, which have been frequently used and are therefore familiar to us, evoke more specific interpretations. Their referents are more precise and the mappable features – more obvious.
- 70 The distinction between the two levels of metaphors – creative and conventionalised – based on the degree of vagueness and preciseness they carry seems helpful in understanding the differences between the persuasive and manipulative functions of metaphor. In the next section, this distinction is used to establish a paradigm that would allow me to measure the manipulative potential of metaphors.

## 4. Creative and conventionalised metaphors and their manipulative / persuasive potential

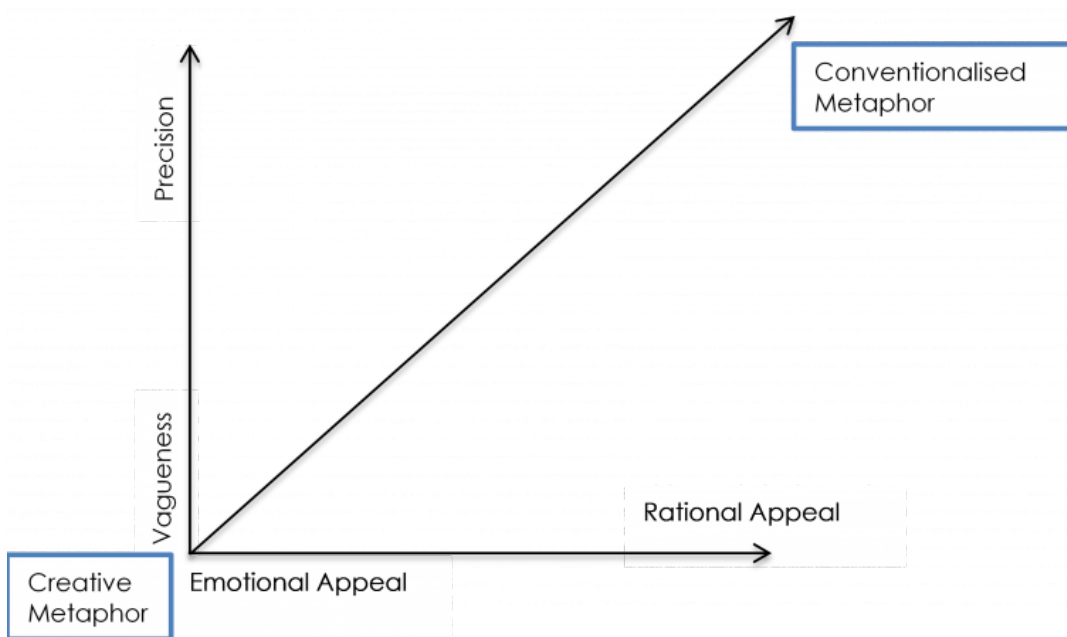
- 71 The present study argues that, in advertising discourse, it is the creative level of metaphors that is tapped into to build manipulative



metaphors, while conventionalised metaphors are used more for their persuasive power. However, conventionalised and creative metaphors should not be thought of as inherently persuasive and manipulative respectively. Instead, we can talk about potentialities they bear for grasping our attention and influencing us regardless of our will or of our being conscious of such influence. As pointed out earlier, the advertiser's intention as well as the context of communication are key factors in the realisation of this potentiality.

- 72 Figure 8 below represents a paradigm, whose purpose is to contribute to the understanding of the metaphor's manipulative power based on the degree of vagueness or precision of its referent.

**Figure 8. Measuring metaphor's manipulative power based on its degree of vagueness**



- 73 The vertical axis represents the variable of vagueness or precision of the metaphor's referent. Thus, a creative metaphor is endowed with vagueness, while a conventionalised metaphor's referent is more precise. As the referent's vagueness moves toward preciseness, creative metaphors grow into conventionalised ones.
- 74 The horizontal axis represents the type of appeal that metaphors make – emotional or rational. Hence, due to the vagueness of their referent, creative metaphors are mostly used to create impressions



and make emotional appeals, while owing to their precision, conventional metaphors might better serve rational argumentation.

- 75 Before going any further, let us clarify what manipulation consists in when it comes to advertising discourse, whose purpose is to influence the target audience's behaviour in terms of consumption choices and trigger the consumer's desire to buy a product or use a service. As Hollis [2011] claims:

Successful advertising rarely succeeds through argument or calls to action. Instead, it creates positive memories and feelings that influence our behaviour over time to encourage us to buy something at a later date. No one likes to think that they are easily influenced. In fact, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that we respond negatively to naked attempts at persuasion. Instead, the best advertisements are ingenious at leaving *impressions*.

- 76 The above quotation is particularly true about car advertisements, since we rarely rush to buy a car after having just seen an advertisement for it. The car being an expensive commodity, its purchase is often a resultant of a long decision-making process. Therefore, what can be particularly manipulative about advertising discourse in general is the impression that the target audience gets – that of not being influenced and making reasonable decisions when it comes to buying a product. Hence, we are fond of some advertisements and we enjoy watching them not because they influence us, but just because we like the way they are designed, or, at least, this is what we like to think. But what this really means is that some advertisements manage to engage with our emotions, insidiously making us forget what the advertiser's primary intention is. Triggering emotions is what creative and multimodal metaphors are particularly good at. They also catch our attention and appeal to us, creating interest and arousing our curiosity. What makes this possible is their novel and creative nature.
- 77 The referent of creative metaphors being vague, the message they carry is elusive. Indeed, the meaning of creative metaphors is often hard to understand at first as in “Volvos are rubbish” or “It's ugly but it gets you there” [EX18]. At first glance, the message seems to be beyond our grasp and is therefore tempting and desirable. The



meaning of a creative metaphor is intriguing, it calls for further investigation, makes us want to know more and thus manages to focus our attention. This is why creative metaphors can bear a greater manipulative potential as compared with the conventionalised ones, which are familiar to us. Let us consider the following commercial, which starts with an epic music, beautiful images of the sky and sounds of the wind. A voiceover accompanies the visuals, adopting a calm and mysterious tone. It says: “It’s like the wind, some say, or gravity” [EX19]. Then an elegant image of a ballerina follows to represent visually the gravity metaphor (see Figure 9 below).

**Figure 9. Creative metaphor example (still) [EX19]**



Then the voiceover continues with:

You can't see it, but you know it's there. You can't find its button on the dash, or its chapter in the owner's manual.

- 78 By now the audience might have guessed that the commercial relates to a car, but still does not know what is being promoted. Our curiosity being aroused, we can then hear:



We have no drawings of it. We don't know how much it weighs... can't time it on the track. Ask ten of our engineers about it and get ten different answers, but there's no debate about its existence. After just one day behind the wheel it's the most valuable part of the car, the irreplaceable component, the thing you love more and more with every passing mile. The thing you instantly miss in any other car.

It is not until the fifty-third second of the commercial that lasts one minute and thirty seconds that the mysterious and intriguing component of the car is unveiled – its soul:

For reasons mysterious and many every Porsche ever built has one and always will.

So, the commercial was for the new Porsche Taycan (2019), an electric car, as the tagline “Soul, electrified” [EX19] announces. As we can notice, it includes no promotional claims or arguments as to the technical features of the car. The only thing the commercial wants us to know and believe is that every Porsche has a soul and that this one's is electrified.

- 79 This example perfectly illustrates the intriguing and mysterious aspect of creative metaphors. It also demonstrates that the whole metaphor does not have to be novel. A creative metaphor can be conceived by simply mapping and focusing on a novel feature. Indeed, the A CAR IS HUMAN / A LIVING BEING metaphor is not new and has been already used extensively in car advertisements. Some of the examples include the 1969 Dodge Charger printed advert “The Eternal Triangle” [EX20], where the car is represented as the mistress and the 1980 Chevrolet Monte Carlo advertisement with the tagline “Even standing still it knows how to move you” [EX21]. Therefore, what is creative about the Porsche commercial and the metaphor it draws on is the feature that has been chosen to be mapped and highlighted – the soul.
- 80 Creative metaphors, as in the Porsche Taycan example, are smart and thereby cognitively more stimulating and attractive. The target audience's mind clings to them and strives to solve the riddle they unfold, to understand the message behind. Indeed, it is the cognitive function of the mind to continue processing information unless it is made sense of. This is how creative metaphors build impressions and become memorable. Their potential of influencing us implicitly is more powerful. It is not the meaning of creative metaphors that is necessarily manipulative, but the intriguing manner in which it is



conveyed and the insidious way in which it acts upon us, grabbing our attention, triggering emotions and becoming memorable.

## Concluding remarks

81 Referring to metaphors Abrams [1999: 156] notes:

philosophers adverted to metaphor only to warn against its intrusion into rational discourse [...] on the ground that figurative language, serves only to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgement.

This view suggests that the primary purpose of metaphors is to mislead, and that its use is thereby necessarily manipulative. However, in line with the pragmatic theory of metaphor, the present study suggests that speakers' intentionality as well as the context of utterance are of key importance in understanding the function of metaphors and measuring the extent to which their use is manipulative. Metaphors are not inherently manipulative but they allow for manipulation.

82 Furthermore, when it comes to measuring the manipulative potential of metaphors, a distinction is to be made between creative and conventional metaphors. The conventional metaphor's referent is known, its use is usual and the meaning it conveys – ordinary, unlike creative metaphors which are novel, unusual and perceived as extraordinary. Because of their preciseness and familiarity, conventional metaphors can make rational appeals, while creative metaphors bear greater potential for manipulation. As metaphors undergo semantic growth and the vagueness of their referent vanishes into precision, they are more likely to serve persuasive purposes.

83 The primary purpose of advertising discourse being to influence consumers and therefore to exercise control over their decisions and the consumption choices they make, it could be claimed that advertising discourse mainly taps into creative metaphors to trigger attention and make emotional appeals. In doing so, advertisers make an extensive use of the manipulative power of metaphors.



- 84 To distinguish persuasion from manipulation, two criteria can be used – the overall purpose of communication and the transparency of the speaker’s intention. The purpose of a persuasive act of communication is to convince the target audience in such a way as to let them make a conscious and thoughtful decision voluntarily. Unlike persuasion, manipulation aims at influencing the public’s decision-making so that decisions are made unconsciously and sometimes against the public’s will. Furthermore, in persuasion the speaker’s intention to convince is overt and messages are explicitly conveyed or stated, whereas in manipulation this intention is covert and communication is carried out implicitly by means of implying or suggesting messages. Therefore, when a message is not clearly and explicitly stated, but only suggested or implied, the advertiser’s communicative intent can be characterised as manipulative. Also, a message is manipulative inasmuch as it is conveyed (for example, visually) without being verbally articulated (as in the case of suggesting the environmentally friendly nature of cars through framing techniques or by using the green metaphor).
- 85 Finally, multimodal metaphors best serve the manipulative intention of advertisers in that they allow for both maximum ‘accurateness’ of representation (in mapping and selective projection) and ‘simultaneous’ transmission of the intended message through different modes. By tapping into different semiotic resources, multimodal metaphors appeal to the senses and convey a more powerful message which is reinforced through simultaneous communication in different modes. The transmitted message therefore carries in it a more powerful impact on audiences.

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[EX3] Esso Extra Gasoline, 1964, "Put a Tiger in your Tank" [printed advert].



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[EX15] Mini Cooper, 2010, “Just Snow” [TV commercial spot], available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KMxCx9\\_loo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KMxCx9_loo).

[EX16] Mini Countryman, 2012, “Let it Snow” [printed advert].

[EX17] Volvo, 2019, “Volvos are rubbish” [outdoor poster].

[EX18] Volkswagen Beetle, 1969, “It’s ugly, but it gets you there” [printed advert].

[EX19] Porsche Taycan, 2019, “Soul, electrified” [YouTube commercial], available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4xJ-4piQxI>.

[EX20] Dodge Charger, 1969, “The Eternal Triangle” [printed advert].

[EX21] Chevrolet Monte Carlo, 1980, “Even standing still it knows how to move you” [printed advert].

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1 The chief published collection of Peirce’s writings is the *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, hereafter referred to as CP. In referring to these volumes, we have adopted the established method of reference used by all Peirce scholars. Thus, CP 2.277 means volume 2, paragraph 277 of the *Collected Papers*. Where relevant, the date of the text is given.

2 Emphasis is added.



- 3 Jean-Philippe Rio-Py, known as RIOPY, is a French pianist and composer.
- 4 The five lines and four spaces between them on which musical notes are written [*Cambridge Dictionary* 2020].

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## English

This is a conceptual paper whose purpose is, first, to contribute to the definition and understanding of features that could help to trace a demarcation line between the notions of *persuasion* and *manipulation*; second, to enquire into some of the possible ways of measuring the manipulative, as opposed to persuasive potential of metaphors and determine whether the use of metaphors necessarily entails a form of manipulation and if so, how; third, to study the implications of the degree of lexicalisation of a metaphor for its persuasive / manipulative force; finally, to enquire into the proportional relationship between multimodality and manipulative potential. In other words, my goal is to understand whether multimodal metaphors bear greater potential for manipulation as compared to their monomodal counterparts. These enquiries are addressed within the framework of the theory of semiotics and pragmatics developed by the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). To ground my argument some examples of promotional metaphors from the car industry are discussed.

## Français

Les objectifs de cet article de recherche théorique sont multiples. Premièrement, il vise à contribuer à la définition et à la compréhension des caractéristiques qui pourraient mettre en lumière les différences entre les notions de *persuasion* et de *manipulation*. Deuxièmement, dans la perspective de contribuer à l'identification de pistes pour mesurer le potentiel persuasif ou manipulateur des métaphores, notre étude se propose d'élaborer un modèle qui permettrait de mesurer ce potentiel. Aussi, l'article vise à déterminer si l'utilisation des métaphores implique forcément une forme de manipulation et, si tel est le cas, de quelle manière. Troisièmement, notre étude propose d'analyser l'impact du degré de lexicalisation d'une métaphore sur sa force persuasive / manipulatrice. Finalement, l'article étudie la relation proportionnelle entre la multimodalité et le potentiel de manipulation. En d'autres termes, nous proposons d'analyser les métaphores multimodales pour comprendre si elles présentent un plus grand potentiel de manipulation que les métaphores monomodales. Ces questions sont abordées à la lumière de la théorie de la sémiotique pragmatique développée par le philosophe américain Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). Pour appuyer nos conclusions, quelques exemples de métaphores publicitaires provenant de l'industrie automobile sont étudiés.



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**Mots-clés**

analyse de discours multimodale, métaphore publicitaire multimodale, industrie automobile, discours publicitaire, persuasion, manipulation

**Keywords**

multimodal discourse analysis (MDA), multimodal promotional metaphor, car industry, advertising discourse, persuasion, manipulation

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# Les représentations du climat dans la presse anglophone : la construction d'un interdiscours métaphorique

*Representations of climate in the English-speaking press: building a metaphorical interdiscourse*

**Caroline Peynaud**

**DOI : 10.35562/elad-silda.912**

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## Introduction

- <sup>1</sup> La presse représente, par essence, un discours « intertextuel » [Adam 1999 : 85] composé à la fois de citations d'experts et de paroles



empruntées à d'autres médias, mais également de reprises de dépêches et de références plus implicites qui la placent dans un « interdiscours » [Charaudeau 1993] complexe, au sein duquel les représentations d'un événement circulent entre articles, genres et publications.

- 2 Les métaphores sont un indicateur particulièrement pertinent dans l'analyse de cet interdiscours. La métaphore est ici définie comme une projection d'un domaine vers un autre [Lakoff & Johnson 1980 : 5], une analogie qui permet de mieux comprendre le domaine spécialisé concerné [Boyd 1993 : 482]. L'étude des métaphores permet ainsi de repérer, au-delà de la répétition d'un mot ou d'une expression, la manière dont un domaine tout entier est envisagé dans le discours et la circulation de cette représentation entre genres, journaux, aires géographiques et périodes de temps. Nous nous proposons d'observer ce phénomène à propos d'un domaine récent, dont le savoir scientifique n'est pas encore figé et les sources scientifiques de nature diverse [Colson *et al.* 2009], celui du changement climatique et de ses représentations dans la presse anglophone. Nous tentons ainsi de déterminer quelles sont les métaphores du climat employées dans la presse, si tous les journaux pris en compte les emploient de la même manière et, enfin, si elles sont développées de manière similaire dans la presse et dans les textes spécialisés.
- 3 Afin de comprendre la manière dont circulent les métaphores du climat, un corpus d'articles de presse portant sur le changement climatique tirés du *Daily Telegraph*, du *Guardian*, du *New York Times* et de *USA Today* et publiés entre 2014 et 2017 a été constitué. Ce corpus est mis en regard des compte-rendu des débats qui ont eu lieu lors de la COP21 à Paris en novembre et décembre 2015. La comparaison entre les deux corpus permet de nous interroger sur l'origine des métaphores, créées par la presse ou issues d'un texte produit par des spécialistes. Les métaphores liées au domaine du climat ont été identifiées et analysées notamment à l'aide du logiciel WMatrix [Rayson 2008] et de son outil d'analyse des domaines sémantiques. Il apparaît ainsi que les différents journaux font référence aux mêmes métaphores, en particulier celles de la guerre et de la maladie, mais ne les abordent pas nécessairement de la même



manière, notamment en fonction de l'aire géographique dans laquelle ils se situent et de la période à laquelle les articles sont publiés.

# 1. Cadre théorique et méthodologique

## 1.1. Intertextualité et interdiscours dans la presse

- 4 La presse est ici considérée comme une variété spécialisée de l'anglais, définie comme suit par C. Resche [2013 : 14] :

*Since any specialized discipline or professional field is based on theory or practice that are expressed through language, language can serve as a starting point for further investigation into specific domains and specialized communities, and into their culture and discourse.*

Dans ce cadre, culture et discours forment un continuum qui doit être analysé comme un tout, dans l'optique de comprendre comment une culture professionnelle donnée produit un discours qui répond à ses besoins. Nous considérons ici la presse comme une communauté de discours cohérente [Swales 2016], caractérisée notamment par des objectifs communs, des mécanismes d'intercommunication, des genres et un lexique spécifiques. Ce fonctionnement cohérent fait du discours journalistique le produit d'un système de relations complexes entre institutions médiatiques, journalistes individuels, sources, pouvoir politique et lecteurs [Charron *et al.* 2002 : 35]. Le journalisme est ainsi considéré comme une activité fondamentalement intertextuelle, qui consiste en partie à tenir compte de ce qui a déjà été écrit [Charron *et al.* 2002 : 32].

- 5 Nous adoptons une définition large de la notion d'*interdiscours*, qui concerne « l'ensemble des unités discursives [...] avec lesquelles un discours particulier entre en relation implicite ou explicite » [Charaudeau & Maingueneau 2002 : 324]. Nous considérons, à la suite de P. Charaudeau [1993 : 57], que l'*interdiscours* concerne des renvois à d'autres discours, mais sans référence précise à la configuration textuelle du discours d'origine, tandis que l'*intertexte* concerne « les



échos libres d'un [ou de plusieurs] texte[s] dans un autre texte »  
[Adam 1999 : 85].

- 6 Le discours journalistique a été décrit comme un discours largement polyphonique [Davies 2009 : 71], s'appuyant sur des sources diverses. Pour S. Moirand [2007 : 85] :

[L]e texte journalistique devient alors une mosaïque de voix, constituée d'une pluralité de fils intertextuels, et le fil horizontal du discours apparaît, dans sa matérialité même, fracturé par des marques de cette *hétérogénéité*.

- 7 Les marques de polyphonie peuvent se trouver sous la forme de citations, dont la fonction est essentielle dans les articles de presse [Peynaud 2011 : 60]. L'attribution de la parole à d'autres sources est l'une des marques de l'effacement énonciatif qui caractérise les discours de la presse [Adam & Lugrin 2006], défini comme un effacement de la parole personnelle du journaliste derrière d'autres voix, qui font autorité. C'est ce que S. Moirand définit comme le fil horizontal du discours, un « patchwork de bribes de paroles empruntées à d'autres » [2000 : 12]. Elle y oppose le fil vertical du discours, révélateur d'un dialogisme intertextuel, composé de « rappels interdiscursifs, qui viennent réactiver la mémoire des discours tenus antérieurement ». Ceux-ci sont révélateurs de la « présence diffuse d'un intertexte propre au monde médiatique » [Moirand 2000 : 21]. Ainsi, au moment de la crise de la vache folle, on trouvait des titres de presse tels que « Alerte au soja fou », concernant le soja OGM, type de titre qui fait apparaître les liens interdiscursifs entre les articles traitant de la vache folle et ceux traitant des OGM. Ce type de référence s'inscrit dans un « moment discursif » [Moirand 2007 : 4], un événement dont la couverture médiatique très large entraîne un « cadre interprétatif » qui influence durablement les discours produits à propos d'autres événements.
- 8 La notion de cadre interprétatif s'inspire de celle de cadrage (*framing*) définie comme suit par R. Entman [1993 : 52] :

*Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular*



*problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.*

Il s'agit d'un cadre ayant pour fonction de définir les problèmes, diagnostiquer leurs causes, énoncer des jugements moraux et suggérer des solutions. D'après l'auteur, cette notion s'applique particulièrement bien au discours journalistique dans la mesure où elle permet de préserver une apparence de neutralité [Entman 1993 : 56] :

*Journalists may follow the rules for "objective" reporting and yet convey a dominant framing of the news text that prevents most audience members from making a balanced assessment of a situation.*

- 9 Dans cette étude, nous posons l'hypothèse que les métaphores sont l'une des marques de l'interdiscours journalistique dans la mesure où elles révèlent la circulation entre articles et entre différentes sources d'un même cadre de pensée, ou « cadre interprétatif », à propos du changement climatique.

## 1.2. Métaphores du climat dans la presse

- 10 Le discours de la presse répond à un ensemble de normes spécifiques à ce domaine spécialisé. Parmi elles, l'exigence de lisibilité, définie par P. Charaudeau [2005 : 194] comme un « travail d'exposition le plus clair possible » qui a pour objectif de produire un discours compréhensible pour la majorité « à l'intérieur d'une cible préconstruite ». C'est ainsi que la presse joue son rôle de médiation [Beacco 1999 : 143]. Le discours doit également respecter un certain nombre de valeurs telles que celles de proximité [Bell 1994 : 264], d'équilibre des opinions, de nouveauté et de personnalisation [Boykoff & Boykoff 2007 : 1191], afin de produire un discours attractif pour le public.
- 11 Les articles de presse traitant de sujets scientifiques sont particulièrement révélateurs de ces normes. S. Moirand [1997 : 36] a notamment montré que le traitement des questions scientifiques



d'actualité dans la presse s'éloignait radicalement du discours scientifique, ou même d'un discours de vulgarisation :

L'analyse des contextes des reformulations rencontrées conduit à se demander si l'on cherche réellement à rendre l'autre plus compétent ou si l'on vise plutôt à diffuser une image du média, qui se montre au courant de 'l'état des connaissances'.

Dès lors, pour elle, « la presse a une visée de visibilité ou de lisibilité plutôt que d'intelligibilité. » [Moirand 1997 : 34]. Le fonctionnement de la science et celui du journalisme diffèrent à plusieurs niveaux, tant dans leur temporalité que dans leur rapport à l'incertitude, valorisée dans la science mais difficilement exprimable dans la presse [Bell 1994 : 263]. Ces différences sont résumées par Singer et Endreny [1994 : 263] dans leur étude sur le traitement du risque par la presse :

*media definitions of risk are based on the drama of the single hazardous event, not on the cumulatively greater but less spectacular risks reflected in annual mortality figures.*

- 12 La question du changement climatique est particulièrement difficile à intégrer dans le discours journalistique du fait de sa grande complexité et de l'incertitude qui la caractérise [Asplund 2011 : 1] :

*the invisible causes and distant impacts of climate changes, as well as the temporal and often geographic distance between cause and effect, make climate change more challenging to communicate than other environmental and sustainability issues*

- 13 Cette difficulté peut expliquer pourquoi la presse ne parvient pas à produire un discours neutre sur la question. Plusieurs auteurs ont ainsi remarqué que le traitement du changement climatique par la presse est nécessairement teinté d'idéologie, influencée par la situation géographique dans laquelle les articles sont publiés, l'organe de presse concerné, ou simplement la vision dominante du monde à un moment donné [Carvalho 2007 : 237 ; Boykoff & Boykoff 2007]. Le contexte géographique dans lequel le discours est produit influence nécessairement la manière dont le changement climatique est représenté, comme l'explique K. Flottum [2017 : 71] :



*diverging national efforts to communicate the gravity of anthropogenic climate change are closely intertwined with national contexts and cultures, political identities, and policy making. Such tailoring to national identity and culture can be seen as a positive step to maximize public resonance by appealing to a set of recognizable values and norms.*

Si ces efforts d'adaptation à la culture locale peuvent conduire à une meilleure compréhension du problème, ils reflètent également le fait que la question du changement climatique n'est jamais représentée de manière neutre.

- 14 Or, les métaphores sont un moyen d'exprimer cette orientation de la représentation. La métaphore est définie comme la projection d'un domaine vers un autre [Lakoff & Johnson 1980 : 5], avec une visée explicative : « *the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another* ». Les métaphores peuvent être constitutives des théories, lorsqu'elles sont employées dans les domaines spécialisés pour décrire un phénomène scientifique pour lequel aucune paraphrase n'existe, ou à visée pédagogique, lorsqu'elles peuvent être paraphrasées [Boyd 1993 : 482].

- 15 Comme le soulignent Kitis et Milapides [1997 : 584] dans leur étude d'un article de *Time*, l'emploi des métaphores dans la presse est un vecteur d'argumentation qui permet de conserver une apparence de neutralité :

*It is interesting to note that the gradual construction of a metaphor can be utilized to transform a neutral narrative style into a crypto-argumentative one by invoking intertextual representations of parallel, paradigmatic myths.*

- 16 Les métaphores fournissent ainsi un cadre de pensée duquel il est difficile de s'extraire. C'est ce que montre G. Lakoff à propos des métaphores employées dans les discours justifiant la guerre du Golfe, par exemple. Pour lui, les métaphores créent un cadre dans lequel se déroulent les débats, sans que la validité de la métaphore ne soit jamais remise en question : « *What metaphor does is limit what we notice, highlight what we do see, and provide part of the inferential*



*structure that we reason with* » [Lakoff 1991 : 32]. Comme le remarque T. Asplund, « *no single metaphor can tell the whole story* » [2011 : 2].

- 17 Dans cette étude, nous comparons des textes de presse issus de différents journaux avec un texte spécialisé afin de comprendre quelle est la fonction des métaphores du climat, quelles représentations du changement climatique elles construisent et comment ces représentations circulent dans différentes aires géographiques et à différents moments. Nous considérons que les métaphores sont révélatrices de la manière dont la presse se saisit de cette question complexe pour l'intégrer dans son discours fortement normé. En ce sens, l'étude des métaphores dans la presse permet de comprendre le fonctionnement de ce discours spécialisé.

### 1.3. Méthodologie

- 18 Afin de comprendre comment circulent les métaphores, nous avons constitué un corpus principal composé de textes de presse et un corpus de comparaison qui contient les rapports des négociations durant la COP21 (*Earth Negotiation Bulletins*). Ces rapports sont rédigés par des experts du domaine, nous considérons donc ce second corpus comme représentatif du discours des spécialistes du changement climatique. Il est d'ailleurs proche d'un discours scientifique, avec de nombreuses références à des articles de recherche et une terminologie spécifique.
- 19 La COP21 s'étant déroulée en novembre et décembre 2015, nous avons choisi de constituer un corpus d'articles publiés dans une période qui débute avant et se termine après ces dates (2014-2017), afin de comprendre si les documents publiés par des spécialistes influencent le discours de la presse. Nous avons choisi quatre journaux, le *Daily Telegraph*, le *Guardian*, le *New York Times* et *USA Today*, ce qui permet dans un premier temps de comparer le traitement du climat dans deux aires géographiques différentes. Dans chaque aire géographique, nous avons également souhaité choisir des journaux qui reflètent des lignes éditoriales diverses, afin que les résultats de l'étude ne soient pas biaisés par l'opinion éventuelle reflétée dans les articles. La sélection des articles a été faite sur la plateforme Europresse à partir de combinaisons de mots clés tels que « *climate change* », « *IPCC* », « *justice* », « *ecology* », « *energy* »



ou « *distribution* ». Le titre des articles a permis d'affiner cette sélection, puisque nous avons retenu uniquement les articles dont le titre suggérait le lien entre le changement climatique et les activités humaines. Le corpus ainsi constitué se distribue comme suit :

**Tableau 1 : Composition du corpus**

Corpus	Nombre de mots	Nombre de documents	Source	Période
Earth Negotiation Bulletin (ENB)	247 709	23	International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services	2015-2016
Press	423 459	436	<i>The Guardian</i> , <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> , <i>The New York Times</i> , <i>USA Today</i>	2014-2017

- 20 Au sein du corpus de presse, 185 articles sont extraits du *Guardian*, 81 du *New York Times*, 68 de *USA Today* et 102 du *Daily Telegraph*. Étant donné que nous avons retenu l'ensemble des articles traitant des sujets qui nous intéressent, le déséquilibre dans le nombre d'article selon le journal reflète une première divergence dans les sujets traités par les différents journaux.
- 21 Il s'agit d'un corpus de taille réduite, ce qui peut être adapté pour l'analyse de phénomènes dans les discours spécialisés [Koester 2010 : 67] :

*Where very large corpora, through their de-contextualisation, give insights into lexico-grammatical patterns in the language as a whole, smaller specialised corpora give insights into patterns of language use in particular settings.*

- 22 Il est également important de préciser que le déséquilibre entre les sous-corpus ne nous a pas semblé représenter un obstacle étant donné que cette étude n'a pas véritablement de visée quantitative. Nous avons donc donné la priorité à la cohérence temporelle plutôt qu'à l'équilibre du nombre de mots.
- 23 Afin de repérer les emplois métaphoriques de mots, nous avons adopté la méthodologie proposée par A. Deignan [2017 : 55]. Elle s'appuie sur la procédure d'identification des métaphores (*Metaphor Identification Procedure*, MIP) décrite par le Pragglejazz Group (2007),



- qui suggère de lire un texte et de se demander, pour chaque mot du texte, s'il est employé dans son sens littéral ou dans un sens métaphorique. A. Deignan adapte cette procédure afin qu'elle soit applicable à des corpus plus grands et propose de s'appuyer sur les lignes de concordance des mots les plus fréquents dans les textes, afin de déterminer s'ils sont employés dans un sens métaphorique.
- 24 À cette fin, nous avons combiné plusieurs outils d'analyse de texte, un seul outil ne répondant pas totalement aux besoins de cette étude. Dans un premier temps, nous avons utilisé le logiciel de textométrie TXM [Heiden *et al.* 2010], qui permet d'extraire les mots les plus fréquents et de faire apparaître leurs lignes de concordance. Nous avons ainsi examiné tous les mots qui apparaissaient plus de 100 fois dans le corpus de presse, afin de déterminer s'ils étaient fréquemment employés de manière métaphorique. Cette première procédure a permis de repérer plusieurs métaphores dans le corpus de presse.
- 25 Nous avons poursuivi cette analyse à l'aide du logiciel WMatrix [Rayson 2008], qui contient notamment un outil d'étiquetage des domaines sémantiques. Notre hypothèse était qu'une métaphore peut être développée à travers une multitude de mots différents, et que le repérage des domaines sémantiques permettrait de mettre en lumière l'ensemble des composants des métaphores repérées. Nous avons par exemple repéré plusieurs éléments, à la lecture des lignes de concordance, qui suggéraient la métaphore guerrière. L'identification par WMatrix de l'ensemble des mots faisant référence à la guerre a permis de mieux comprendre comment fonctionnait cette métaphore. Les deux sous-corpus ont ainsi été analysés à l'aide de ce logiciel.
- 26 Enfin, les mots repérés comme composants des métaphores identifiées ont été systématiquement recherchés dans TXM. En effet, WMatrix ne permet pas d'identifier facilement le texte où se trouve le mot ou de voir le contexte de manière ergonomique. À l'aide de TXM, nous avons ainsi pu identifier dans quels journaux les métaphores étaient employées, à quelle date, et dans quel contexte.



## 2. Description des métaphores du climat

- 27 Dans les deux sous-corpus, nous avons repéré quatre métaphores dominantes, mais parmi elles, seulement deux sont reprises à la fois dans la presse et dans ENB, alors que les deux autres ne sont présentes que dans un seul corpus. La métaphore *NATURE IS ECONOMY*<sup>1</sup>, avec des expressions telles que « *the balance of nature* », « *the human costs of climate change* », « *natural capital* », « *ecosystem good and services* » est uniquement présente dans ENB. À l'inverse, la métaphore *THE EARTH IS A HOUSE*, développée avec « *building a sustainable future* », « *being on the threshold of dangerous climate change* », « *protecting our common earthly home* », « *ravage the garden that is our home* », est uniquement citée par la presse. Notre question de recherche étant la circulation des métaphores dans différents types de textes, nous avons choisi de ne pas les développer davantage ici.
- 28 Les deux métaphores qui sont présentes dans les deux sous-corpus sont *CLIMATE CHANGE IS A DISEASE* [MET1] et *CLIMATE CHANGE IS WAR* [MET2]. Il faut noter que ces deux métaphores sont parfois employées de manière combinées, dans des énoncés telles que « *the planet is under attack from a disease* ». Elles partagent le dénominateur commun de la menace et de la destruction possible. Plusieurs auteurs ont d'ailleurs remarqué que ces deux domaines fonctionnent de manière complémentaire. P. Hodgkin [1985 : 1829] décrit ainsi la métaphore *MEDICINE IS WAR*, employée dans le domaine médical :

*it emphasises that taking action is a virtue, patients are passive, the main protagonists in this drama are doctors and diseases [patients are not the "real" focus], technologies are weapons [and thus, implicitly, the more the better], and we doctors know best as we are the ones in control.*

Réciproquement, G. Lakoff [1991 : 26] remarque l'existence de la métaphore *WAR IS MEDICINE* dans le domaine de la communication de guerre :



Finally, there is a common metaphor in which military control by the enemy is seen as a cancer that can spread. In this metaphor, military “operations” are seen as hygienic, to “clean out” enemy fortifications. Bombing raids are portrayed as “surgical strikes” to “take out” anything that can serve a military purpose. The metaphor is supported by imagery of shiny metallic instruments of war, especially jets.

- 29 Ces deux métaphores entretiennent des liens très forts, il n’est donc pas surprenant qu’elles fonctionnent de manière complémentaire dans les corpus étudiés ici. Dans cette section, nous comparons ces métaphores telles qu’elles sont développées dans la presse et dans ENB. Nous analyserons dans la section suivante comment les métaphores circulent dans le temps et dans l’espace.

## 2.1. MET1 : CLIMATE CHANGE IS A DISEASE

### 2.1.1. MET1 dans ENB

- 30 Le corpus ENB contient de nombreuses analyses scientifiques et des descriptions précises de maladies et de symptômes, il n’est donc pas surprenant que la majorité des termes médicaux ne soient pas de nature métaphorique. Les mots *health*, *disease* ou *symptom* ne sont jamais employés de manière métaphorique dans ENB. Cependant, l’emploi d’autres termes de ce champ sémantique suggèrent bien l’emploi de la métaphore de la maladie. Ainsi, le changement global est décrit comme un syndrome (*syndrome*<sup>2</sup>) qui regroupe à la fois le changement climatique et un ensemble d’autres facteurs, selon la définition suivante :

In this section we elaborate on factors *affecting* ecosystems, operating simultaneously with climate change. These factors share underlining drivers with one another and with climate change to varying degrees; together they form a syndrome known as global change. [IPCC-A : 102]

Il est clair que certaines populations souffrent (*suffer*) de ce syndrome, par exemple :

For example, most of Madagascar, Sudan, and Yemen suffer alarmingly high levels of yield decline and socioeconomic vulnerability to hunger in the poverty scenario. [WB : 66]



Le discours se concentre alors sur les conséquences précises que le changement climatique pourrait avoir sur les nations qu'il affecte.

In agrarian households in Africa, repeated malaria illness has led to a decline in farm output and income [WB : 115]

Il est intéressant que ce phénomène soit caractérisé de « syndrome », terme qui se définit comme suit par le Centre national de ressources textuelles et lexicales [CNRTL 2012] :

Ensemble de signes, de symptômes, de modifications morphologiques, fonctionnelles ou biochimiques de l'organisme, d'apparence parfois disparate mais formant une entité reconnaissable qui, sans présager obligatoirement des causes de ces manifestations, permettent d'orienter le diagnostic.

- 31 Un syndrome oriente donc le diagnostic, et la notion de diagnostic (*diagnosis*) est en effet particulièrement importante dans le corpus ENB. Il s'agit plus particulièrement de diagnostics locaux, pour lesquels est soulignée la valeur de la recherche scientifique dans le combat contre le changement climatique. Une section du rapport s'intitule par exemple : « *Flood fatalities in Africa: from diagnosis to mitigation* » [IPPC-A : 87]. L'une des questions qui est posée est de savoir dans quelle mesure l'environnement va tolérer (*tolerate*) ces changements climatiques : « *tropics indicate that seagrasses tolerate higher temperatures* » [IPCC-A : 201]. Enfin, des traitements sont envisagés :

Changes in other aspects of the climate system, such as cryosphere, oceans, sea level and atmospheric composition.

A regional treatment of these phenomena is often extremely important to gauge real risks. [IPCC-B : 25]

Mais il faut noter que ces traitements sont toujours régionaux, ce qui semble revenir à traiter les symptômes, mais pas les causes du syndrome. Dans ENB, la métaphore de la maladie met donc en évidence l'importance de la recherche scientifique dans le diagnostic et le traitement des symptômes du changement climatique.



## 2.1.2. MET1 dans la presse

- 32 Dans la presse, la métaphore de la maladie est davantage développée que dans ENB. L'analogie entre ces deux domaines est d'ailleurs explicitée dans l'un des articles, qui explique que les symptômes du changement climatique doivent être traités, en particulier par une protection contre les inondations, même si les Républicains n'en admettent pas les causes.

Sometimes doctors have a patient who is sick from an unknown disease. Rather than do nothing, they treat the symptoms, which often is enough to cure the disease or at least keep the patient alive until the disease can be properly diagnosed. I think a similar strategy should apply to climate change. The idea that climate and disease are related dates back at least 2,000 years [USAT-1].

La maladie (*disease*) en elle-même est décrite de différentes manières. Il s'agit parfois du changement climatique en soi, mais nous trouvons également cette maladie identifiée comme « *profound and long-lived environmental disruption* » [TG-1] ou même « *unbridled avarice* » [TG-2]. Dans ces derniers cas, le changement climatique n'est plus qu'un symptôme (*symptom*) d'une maladie plus vaste.

- 33 Dans tous les cas, les symptômes de cette maladie sont fréquemment décrits : réchauffement du climat, modification des précipitations, acidification des océans, hausse du niveau des océans ou tempêtes. Certains des symptômes adoptent clairement un vocabulaire médical : nous trouvons ainsi mentions de « *violent and deadly tornado outbreaks* » [USAT-2], « *the degradation of water quality* » [TG-3], « *the plague of plastic* » [TG-3] ou « *weather shocks* » [TG-4]. Le changement climatique semble être une maladie qui affecte (*plague*) différents types de populations : « *climate change drives the drought and floods that plague Iowa farmers* » [NYT-1]. L'ensemble de ces symptômes peuvent conduire à la mort (*death*), après épuisement (*exhaust*) de l'ensemble des ressources naturelles, par exemple : « *a rise of 2C is tantamount to a death knoll to many small island states* » [TG-5].
- 34 L'ensemble des pays semble souffrir de cette maladie. Ainsi, le changement climatique fait souffrir (*hurt*) les États-Unis et la planète



entière, et encore davantage certains pays tels que les petites îles, l'Arctique ou les pays les plus pauvres :

He said the talks in Paris would succeed if governments managed a solidarity between the industrialised countries and the countries that will suffer the most from climate damage. [TG-6]

The poorest countries of the world, so often left out of international consideration, are those which have done least to create climate change, but will suffer the most from it. [TG-7]

L'Afrique est ainsi décrite comme « *the continent most deeply affected by climate change* » [TG-8]. Les pays les plus pauvres sont représentés comme les victimes du changement climatique, alors que ce sont principalement les pays industrialisés qui l'ont produit.

- 35 Enfin, nous avons cherché à comprendre si la presse propose un traitement contre cette maladie. Nous n'avons trouvé aucune occurrence de *cure*, *prevention*, *treatment* ou même *recovery*. Il semble que l'objectif de cette métaphore n'est pas de proposer une solution à cette maladie, mais davantage de souligner la souffrance qui en découle. Cependant, la métaphore souligne l'intérêt de nettoyer la planète (*clean up*), ce qui fait clairement référence à l'hygiène corporelle. Ce nettoyage peut être réalisé à l'aide d'énergie propre (*clean energy*) ou encore de lois telles que *the clean power plan* ou *the CleanAir Act*. Les traitements disponibles contre cette maladie semblent donc avant tout d'ordre législatif.
- 36 Dans la presse, si les symptômes sont bien définis, la maladie en elle-même, en revanche, ne l'est pas. La métaphore souligne avant tout la souffrance des populations affectées par le changement climatique, mais sans réellement proposer de traitement.
- 37 Il apparaît donc que la métaphore de la maladie est bien employée dans les deux corpus, mais qu'elle ne l'est pas de la même manière. En effet, alors que ENB se concentre avant tout sur le diagnostic et le traitement local des symptômes, la presse souligne davantage la gravité du problème et la mort qui peut en découler. Les traitements diffèrent également, puisque la presse propose des traitements législatifs dans un but très général (*cleaning up the planet*) alors que ENB propose des traitements scientifiques et locaux. Enfin, les victimes sont définies de manière différente. Dans la presse, ce sont



les petites îles ou l'Arctique, un lieu associé à la fonte des glaces dans l'imaginaire collectif. Dans ENB, les victimes sont décrites de manière plus objective, par l'intermédiaire de leur localisation géographique (« *urban areas* », « *the Mediterranean area* »). Ainsi, alors que ENB emploie la métaphore dans un but scientifique, pour souligner le diagnostic des problèmes et envisager des traitements, la presse développe cette métaphore pour produire un discours qui se concentre sur les victimes et leur souffrance. Les deux types de textes traitent également de manière divergente la seconde métaphore, qui associe le changement climatique à la guerre.

## 2.2. MET2 : CLIMATE CHANGE IS WAR

- 38 Il faut tout d'abord noter que le lien entre changement climatique et guerre va au-delà de la métaphore, puisque le changement climatique est réellement une cause de conflit dans le monde. Ce constat apparaît dans les deux corpus, par exemple :

Other parts of the world will be even harder hit and less able to adapt, the IPCC warns. Food shortages and poverty could lead to the outbreak of war, the report says. [DT-1]

Ce lien concret entre les deux phénomènes peut expliquer pourquoi cette métaphore est présente dans les deux corpus. Cependant, elle n'y est pas développée de la même manière.

### 2.2.1. MET2 dans ENB

- 39 Dans le corpus ENB, le mot *war* n'est jamais employé de manière métaphorique, dans le contexte de la guerre contre le changement climatique, sans doute parce que ce mot est très souvent employé pour décrire des guerres non métaphoriques. Cependant, le champ lexical de la guerre est présent. Par exemple, le verbe *combat* est celui qui est le plus fréquemment employé en co-occurrence avec *climate change*.
- 40 Nous avons tenté de comprendre à quel type de guerre cette métaphore faisait référence et quels en étaient les protagonistes. Il semble que la guerre décrite dans ENB correspond à ce que Lakoff [1991 : 2] appelle une guerre juste, définie comme « *a form of combat for the purpose of settling moral accounts* ». La guerre contre le



changement climatique a en effet pour objectif de protéger (*protect*) des populations vulnérables et l'environnement, qui sont tous deux menacés (*threatened*) : « *such massive changes would threaten everyday living conditions* » [WB : 81] « *assessment of climate change threats to Australia's coastal ecosystems* » [IPCC-A : 54], « *protect corals* » [IPCC-A : 5], ou encore :

Forest plantations are generally intended for the production of timber, pulp and firewood, but along with other social and environmental benefits also protect against erosion by stabilizing the soil thus protecting the watershed. [UNEP-AP : 12]

41 Des risques sont également associés aux impacts (*impacts*) du changement climatique, par exemple, des attaques (*attacks*) d'insectes ou de nuisibles. La justification de cette guerre contre le changement climatique est donc la protection des populations vulnérables ainsi que de l'environnement, soumis à des attaques. Il s'agit de garantir la sécurité (*security*) des hommes, comme le montre le sous-titre suivant : « *how climate change may exacerbate specific threats to human security* » [IPCC-A : 128].

42 Cette guerre est par ailleurs décrite comme l'opposition de plusieurs forces (*forces*), notamment « *the forces of nature* » et « *the forces of climate change* » [IPCC-A : 31]. Cependant, la question de la définition de ces forces n'offre pas de solution évidente. Les forces de la nature semblent être passées du statut d'ennemi à celui d'allié :

These recommendations constitute a paradigm shift from fighting the forces of nature with engineered structures to working with nature and providing room for river instead. [IPCC-A : 187]

Mais les forces en présence dans cette guerre peuvent également être de nature culturelle. Dans ce cas, elles ne doivent pas être combattues, mais prises en compte.

Research on the specific interaction of human security and climate change focuses on how cultural, demographic, economic, and political forces interact with direct and indirect climate change impacts, affecting individuals and communities. [IPCC-A : 133]

43 Enfin, les forces de la loi (*regulatory forces*) semblent être celles qui mènent le combat. La métaphore de la guerre comme « politique par d'autres moyens » [Lakoff 1991 ; Semino et al. 2004] a été souvent



décrite et il n'est pas surprenant d'en trouver des traces dans les métaphores guerrières :

Effective management of natural capital and ecosystem goods and services can be accomplished only where there are strong institutions as stewards and a regulatory force to ensure that vulnerable communities are protected from climate shocks and stresses and that growth from climate change is inclusive. [IPCC-A : 65]

Le législateur imagine des stratégies (*strategies*) pour combattre le changement climatique ; on parle ainsi de « *new strategies and policies to steer current performance towards future objectives* » [UNEP-LU : 2], par exemple. Dans ENB, ces stratégies sont multiples dans la mesure où elles sont principalement locales.

- 44 Il est surprenant de constater qu'aucune des forces mentionnées dans ENB ne semble représenter la force ennemie, celle qu'il faut combattre. La nature, la culture et la loi sont au contraire alliées contre un ennemi qui, dès lors, semble mal identifié. Alors que la métaphore de la guerre suggère qu'il existe un ennemi qui peut être combattu, la construction de la métaphore reflète au contraire la complexité de cette question, qui implique une multiplicité de forces en présence.

## 2.2.2. MET2 dans la presse

- 45 Dans le corpus de presse, contrairement au corpus ENB, le mot *war* est employé de manière métaphorique dans 13 occurrences sur 43. Il s'agit d'une guerre contre le charbon, la déforestation ou la pollution, qu'il faut combattre (*combat*). La bataille (*battle*) contre la désertification et pour la protection de la nature est souvent décrite, mais il s'agit également d'une bataille entre des intérêts contraires : « *There is a massive battle of vested interests going on* » [TG-9]. Comme dans ENB, cette bataille s'appuie en grande partie sur la régulation :

The Obama administration unveiled historic environment rules cutting carbon pollution from power plants by 30 % yesterday, spurring prospects for a global deal to end climate change but setting up an epic battle over the environment in this year's mid-term elections. [TG-10]

Le mot *battle* est systématiquement employé de manière métaphorique, dans 47 occurrences, dans des expressions telles



que « *the battle to save the planet* » [DT-1], « *the battle to curb emissions* » [NYT-2], « *efforts to battle climate change* » [NYT-3].

- 46 Cette guerre a également un front (*frontline* – 5 occurrences métaphoriques) d'où les journalistes, devenus reporters de guerre, font des reportages : « *Global Warning: 24 hours on the climate change frontline as Trump becomes president* » [TG-11]. Le changement climatique y est décrit comme une bombe (*bomb*) prête à exploser, dont on espère qu'elle sera désamorcée à temps :

Instead the goal of 1.5C and even 2C will now rely on unproven and currently non-existent technologies such as nuclear fusion, carbon capture with storage or carbon negative technologies. I pray these will come in time but how many people would get on a flight in the hope that someone can defuse the bomb before it blows up? [TG-12]

- 47 Dans la presse, l'ennemi est plus clairement identifié que dans ENB. Il s'agit de combattre le changement climatique, qui est décrit comme une menace (*threat*) donnant lieu à des phénomènes naturels violents (*violent*). Le changement climatique est une force (*force*) qu'il s'agit de contrer :

The future of American energy, according to one widely held view, will include solar panels and wind turbines continuing to proliferate, churning out ever more electricity and eventually eclipsing fossil fuels to help offset the forces of climate change. [NYT-4]

- 48 Bien que *weapon* ne soit jamais employé de manière métaphorique, il est clair, notamment dans la citation qui précède, que les armes contre le changement climatique sont principalement techniques : les panneaux solaires, les éoliennes ou les voitures électriques sont décrits comme des outils ayant un impact (*impact*) sur le changement climatique.

- 49 Afin de gagner ce combat, il est important que les alliés unissent forces (*join forces*) afin de tenir l'ennemi à distance (*at bay*) : « *rich countries should join forces to keep climate change at bay* » [TG-13], « *Nearly 200 nations joined forces against a planet-threatening crisis* » [USAT-1]. Ce combat est décrit comme héroïque (*heroic*) :



Significantly, it calls for an entirely different approach to international diplomacy on the issue of how to combat climate change. “This will require a heroic cooperative effort,” said Jeffrey D. Sachs, the Columbia University economist who directs the Sustainable Development Solutions Network at the United Nations, which convened the multinational teams. [NYT-5]

- 50 Les victimes (*victims*) de cette guerre sont également décrites : ce sont à la fois les populations affectées par le changement climatique, et la nature, victime de populations qui la dégradent. Ainsi, des éléments naturels doivent être protégés (*protected*), par exemple, le lac Tchad, menacé (*threatened*) par la pollution, mais les populations menacées doivent également être protégées, puisque le changement climatique est décrit ainsi : « *the biggest single threat to humanity* » [TG-14].
- 51 Ainsi, il existe plusieurs victimes, et ce qui complexifie encore la situation est le fait que le statut des victimes est parfois ambigu, ainsi : « *the global food system is both a villain and a victim of climate change* » [TG-15]. Alors que l’environnement souffre du changement climatique, l’économie souffre également, d’autant plus que les mesures contre le changement climatique ont tendance à être considérées comme défavorables aux acteurs économiques : « *the coal industry – which will be hit hardest by the new rules* » [TG-10]. Ce statut complexe des victimes explique pourquoi certaines forces combattent les lois environnementales, dont les objectifs semblent s’opposer aux acteurs économiques : « *Our economic system and our planetary system are now at war* » [NYT-6].
- 52 Ainsi, la métaphore de la guerre dans la presse peint un monde dans lequel le changement climatique est l’ennemi, mais dans lequel tout le monde en souffre : le système économique autant que les populations ou les lieux géographiques vulnérables, même si leurs intérêts ne sont pas nécessairement les mêmes. Le changement climatique est présenté comme une question insoluble si l’on cherche à protéger tous les intérêts en jeu, d’autant plus qu’en décrivant le problème à l’échelle mondiale, aucune solution concrète ne peut réellement être proposée.
- 53 En comparant l’usage de cette métaphore dans les deux sous-corpus, il apparaît qu’elle est développée par les deux sources, mais pas de la même manière. Dans les deux cas, il s’agit d’un combat contre le changement climatique qui s’appuie sur les outils légaux et



techniques. Cependant, dans ENB, la guerre a pour justification la protection de la sécurité des hommes contre les phénomènes naturels. Le conflit est avant tout local, afin d'aider les communautés à faire face aux conséquences du changement climatique. La métaphore souligne la notion de protection, qui justifie le combat. Dans la presse, en revanche, deux éléments sont mis en valeur : la menace posée par le changement climatique et la diversité des victimes. Par rapport à ENB, l'emploi de cette métaphore dans la presse suggère plutôt une guérilla où l'ennemi est difficile à combattre car il est partout. De nombreux protagonistes sont en effet à la fois coupables et victimes dans le combat. Suivant son objectif de représenter toutes les opinions de manière neutre, la presse donne voix à tous les intérêts en jeu, ce qui crée une incertitude quant aux forces en présence. La métaphore a ici pour objectif de montrer à quel point le changement climatique est dangereux, mais pas de désigner des coupables ni de proposer des mesures spécifiques.

### **3. Circulation des métaphores dans le corpus presse**

- 54 La section précédente a montré que les deux métaphores sont employées à la fois dans le corpus ENB et dans le corpus presse, même si elles ne le sont pas de la même manière ou avec le même objectif. Cette section se concentre à présent sur le corpus presse afin de comparer plus précisément les emplois de ces deux métaphores tout au long de la période, puis dans les différents journaux qui le composent.

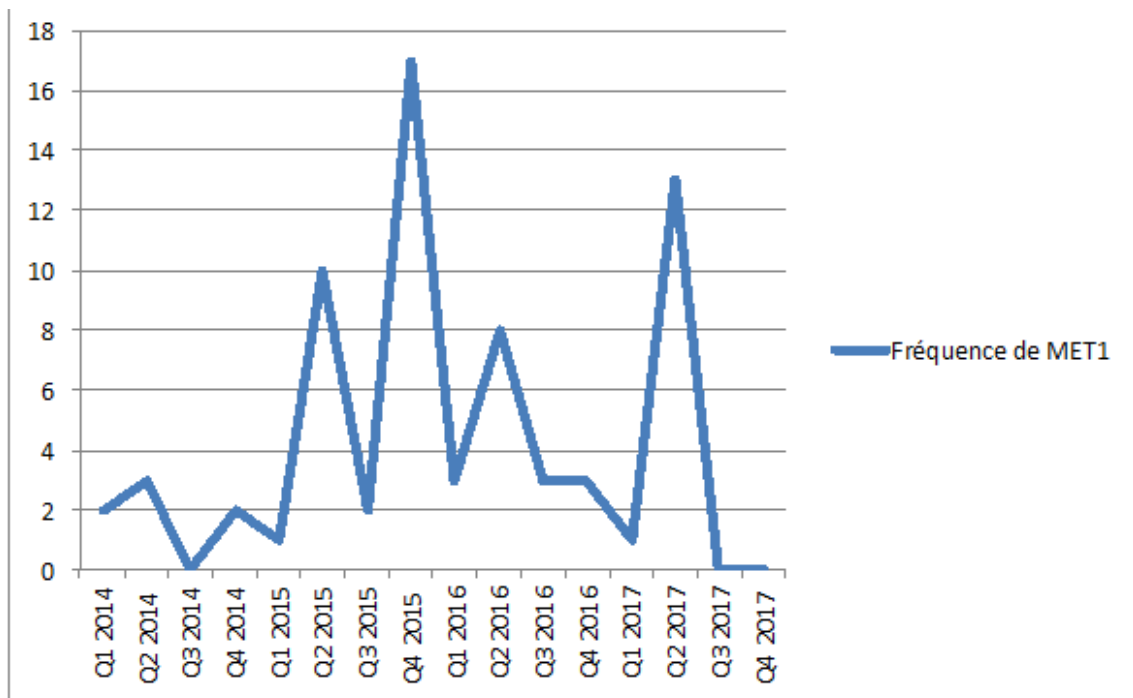
#### **3.1. Évolution dans le temps de l'emploi des métaphores**

- 55 Le corpus ENB a été publié au moment de la COP21 et juste après, c'est-à-dire entre novembre 2015 et janvier 2016. Les dates du corpus de presse, 2014-2017, permettent de comparer l'emploi de la métaphore par la presse avant, pendant et après la COP21. Nous avons donc relevé toutes les occurrences de mots employés de manière métaphorique et relevant de MET1 ou MET2 dans le corpus presse ainsi que les dates auxquelles les articles qui les contiennent

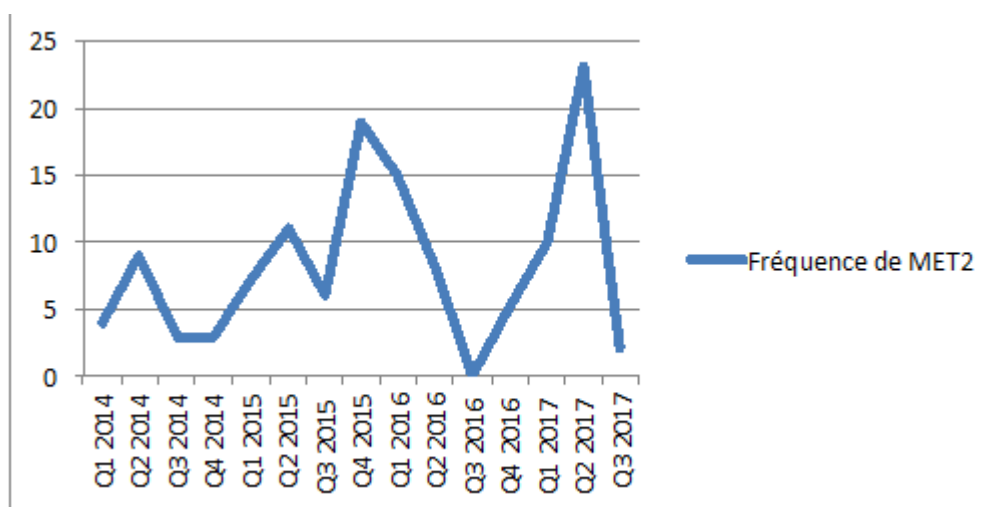


ont été publiés. Nous avons composé des périodes par trimestre et nous avons ainsi pu classer les métaphores en 16 trimestres, puisque notre corpus s'étale sur quatre ans. Les graphiques 1 et 2 présentent les résultats de cette analyse.

**Figure 1 : Fréquence de MET1 par période**



**Figure 2 : Fréquence de MET2 par période**





maladie [MET1] est en effet très peu employée au début de la période, jusqu'au début de 2015. Les mots employés à cette période dans MET1 sont *shocks*, *affect*, *degradation* ou *exhaust*, qui sont probablement ceux qui font référence le moins explicitement à la métaphore de la maladie. Le premier pic d'emploi apparaît début 2015, puis le pic principal fin 2015, au moment de la COP21. Un examen plus poussé des dates conduit d'ailleurs à remarquer que la métaphore est largement employée dès novembre 2015, c'est-à-dire avant la publication des rapports. Il est probable que les journalistes présents lors des négociations de la COP21 ont été exposés au langage des négociateurs, qui emploient cette métaphore, ce qui a pu influencer leurs propres références au changement climatique comme une maladie. C'est à cette période que les mots *disease* ou *death* sont employés de manière métaphorique, on assiste donc au réel déploiement de la métaphore à ce moment. Enfin, le dernier pic d'emploi de cette métaphore est situé autour de juin 2017, ce qui correspond à la décision du président Donald Trump de retirer les États-Unis de l'accord de Paris. Les mots employés à cette période reflètent l'insistance sur la gravité de la situation climatique, avec plusieurs occurrences de *symptoms*, *suffer* ou *disease*, à l'inverse de l'argumentation déployée par le président des États-Unis à ce moment. Il semble donc que l'emploi de MET1 dans le corpus presse soit étroitement lié au sujet de la COP21, que ce soit lors des négociations en 2015 ou lors de la décision de Donald Trump en 2017. Même si l'emploi de la métaphore n'est pas le même dans la presse et dans ENB, la coïncidence d'emploi de la métaphore aux mêmes dates dans les deux documents montre que les négociations de la COP21 sont une source d'inspiration pour la presse dans la construction de son discours sur le changement climatique.

- 57 Le constat est le même pour MET2, bien que la courbe d'évolution ne soit pas exactement la même. En effet, on observe bien une forte augmentation de la métaphore guerrière au moment de la COP21, ce qui suggère que la presse, comme pour MET1, s'est inspirée des débats de la COP21 dans son discours sur le changement climatique. MET1 et MET2 sont employées de manière à peu près égale dans la presse à cette période. Cependant, pour MET2, le pic le plus important est celui qui correspond au retrait de l'accord de Paris, en juin 2017. Il est d'ailleurs frappant de voir que l'usage de la métaphore évolue entre



2015 et 2017. En effet, au moment de la COP21, on observe la prédominance des mots *protect* et *forces*, soulignant la justification de cette guerre et l'alliance qui se préparait dans les négociations. En 2017, en revanche, ce sont *combat* et *battle* qui dominent, mettant en évidence le caractère plus agressif de cette guerre. On entrevoit ici comment l'usage des métaphores peut être un outil d'argumentation, à un moment où le retrait de l'accord de Paris est largement critiqué par la presse.

- 58 Cette analyse fait apparaître deux points essentiels. Tout d'abord, elle met en évidence l'interdiscours qui se construit dans le temps, sur la base des discours produit par la COP21. En effet, à partir de fin 2015, chaque mention de l'accord de Paris dans la presse donne lieu à l'emploi des deux métaphores citées. Elle montre également que si la presse reprend des métaphores introduites ou développées dans ENB, elle les emploie en poursuivant ses objectifs propres et les adapte aux messages qu'elle veut transmettre. Afin d'affiner cette analyse, nous avons cherché à comprendre si les quatre journaux du corpus emploient ces deux métaphores de manière similaire.

### 3.2. Circulation des métaphores entre les journaux

- 59 L'outil d'étiquetage des champs sémantique de WMatrix, combiné à une analyse qualitative des lignes de concordance, a permis de déterminer dans quel journal apparaissent les deux métaphores et quels mots y sont précisément associés. Les figures 3 et 4 résument les résultats obtenus.



Figure 3 : Fréquence de MET1 par journal

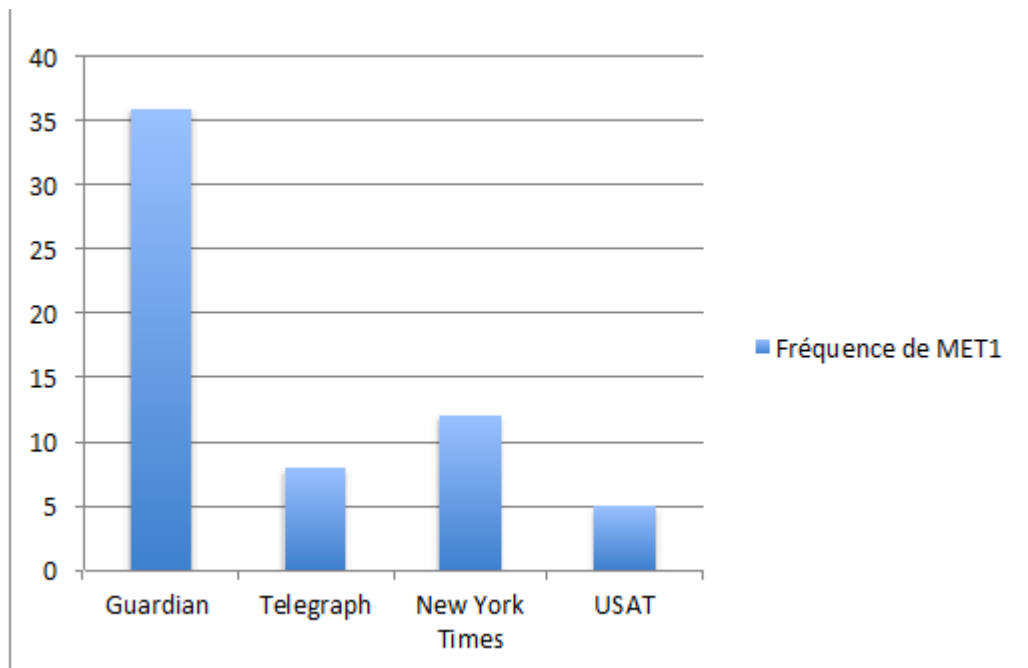
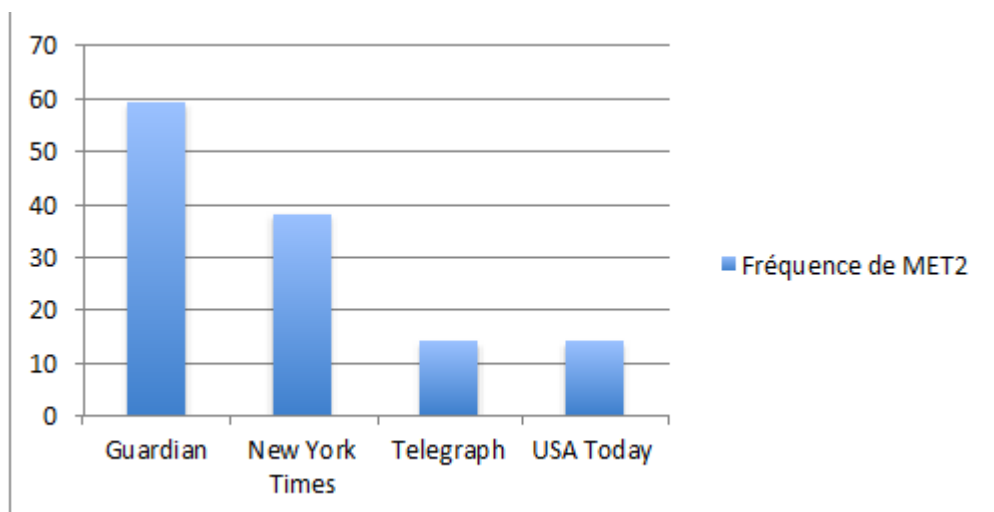


Figure 4 : Fréquence de MET2 par journal



60 Il apparaît clairement que tous les journaux n'utilisent pas les deux métaphores à la même fréquence. Le *Guardian* se distingue tout particulièrement, avec un emploi presque égal des deux métaphores, bien plus fréquentes dans ce journal que dans les trois autres. Le lien entre l'emploi de ces deux métaphores et la ligne éditoriale du journal est ici très clair. En effet, le *Guardian* est un journal ancré au centre-gauche et il a lancé une campagne début 2015 intitulée « Keep it in



*the ground* » [Guardian 2015], contre l'utilisation des énergies fossiles. Ce journal est donc clairement engagé en faveur du combat pour la préservation de l'environnement. Pour MET1, les mots *disease* ou *death* sont uniquement employés dans le *Guardian*. Ce constat se vérifie, dans une moindre mesure, avec l'emploi un peu plus fréquent de la métaphore dans le *New York Times*, qui est politiquement plutôt démocrate et modéré. Les deux autres journaux ne sont pas connus pour leurs prises de position en faveur du combat pour l'environnement et utilisent assez peu la métaphore de la maladie quantitativement. Les mots qu'ils emploient pour faire référence à cette métaphore sont beaucoup moins explicitement liés à la maladie, par exemple, *affect*, *hurt* ou *suffer* qui, s'ils font bien partie des références à cette métaphore, sont assez peu spécifiques.

- 61 Le constat est encore accentué pour MET2 puisque le *Guardian* l'emploie plus fréquemment que MET1 et que le *New York Times* l'emploie également à une fréquence très élevée. Plus précisément, le *Guardian* emploie cette métaphore tout au long de la période, mais il est intéressant de constater que les composants de la métaphore évoluent. Le mot *victim*, par exemple, est très fréquent jusqu'en 2015, ainsi que le verbe *protect*. Au moment de la COP21, ce sont *protect* et *forces* qui sont les plus fréquents, ce qui reflète bien la volonté de présenter un front uni pour protéger les populations vulnérables, en accord avec le motif de la guerre juste. Cependant, la métaphore évolue pour se concentrer en 2017 sur *violent*, *combat* et *heroic*, reflétant davantage le motif de la guerre épique. Dans le *New York Times*, en revanche, les victimes sont très peu citées et la métaphore se concentre tout au long de la période sur la violence du combat avec une fréquence accrue du mot *war* par rapport au *Guardian*. Le *New York Times* emploie particulièrement fréquemment cette métaphore en 2017, ce qui est tout à fait cohérent avec sa position ouvertement anti-Trump. Dans le *Daily Telegraph* et dans *USA Today*, ce sont les mots *combat* (employé comme verbe dans l'expression « *combat climate change* » [TG-12]), *war* et *battle* qui prédominent, sans qu'aucune évolution ne se dégage sur la période, et à des fréquences réduites par rapport aux deux autres journaux. Par exemple, dans *USA Today*, on ne relève que cinq occurrences de *combat* et six de *war* sur l'ensemble de la période.



- 62 Ainsi, les métaphores semblent étroitement liées aux positions politiques des journaux, ceux qui s'engagent pour l'environnement employant ces métaphores à une fréquence bien plus élevée que les autres. Il est également intéressant de constater que le *New York Times* exprime sa position politique principalement à l'aide de la métaphore de la guerre, plutôt que celle de la maladie. Il est possible que le contexte politique américain ait encouragé l'emploi d'une métaphore plus violente pour souligner l'importance d'agir, plutôt que le risque potentiel pour les victimes, comme c'est le cas de la métaphore de la maladie, à l'image des choix faits par le *Guardian*.

## Conclusion

- 63 L'analyse des métaphores du climat dans la presse et dans un texte spécialisé fait donc clairement apparaître un interdiscours fondé sur la représentation du changement climatique et des actions à mener pour le limiter. Ces métaphores ne sont pas créées par le rapport de la COP21, puisqu'on remarque leur présence dès 2014, mais leur présence dans *ENB* suscite leur forte utilisation dans la presse en 2015. Le lien entre l'emploi de ces métaphores et les événements liés à la COP21 est d'ailleurs maintenu de manière régulière jusqu'en 2017, ce qui montre la force de ce cadre interprétatif.
- 64 Une fois ces métaphores ancrées dans les représentations du changement climatique, chaque organe de presse s'en saisit néanmoins de manière particulière, selon ses objectifs propres. Le sens des deux métaphores n'est en effet pas le même dans *ENB* et dans la presse, ce qui montre que la presse s'est inspirée des discours spécialisés, sans pour autant les reproduire précisément. De plus, ces métaphores répondent mieux aux objectifs politiques de certains journaux que d'autres, ce qui engendre d'importantes disparités entre journaux. Il faut cependant noter que même dans les journaux qui y font le moins référence, les métaphores transparaissent malgré tout, ce qui démontre leur prégnance dans l'imaginaire collectif sur le changement climatique.
- 65 Dans un discours comme celui de la presse, qui s'inspire de nombreux discours différents, l'analyse des métaphores permet de dépasser les comparaisons purement textuelles pour s'intéresser aux représentations, à la manière dont les événements sont



conceptualisés dans les journaux. On observe ici clairement comment se construit un interdiscours inspiré de textes spécialisés, mais finalement développé de manière spécifique dans la presse, constitué de représentations collectives à propos du changement climatique.

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1 Nous adoptons ici la typographie en lettres capitales proposée par Lakoff et Johnson [1980] pour le titre des métaphores.

2 Les mots clés associés aux différentes métaphores sont ajoutés dans le texte en anglais et entre parenthèses, afin de bien repérer les sèmes qui composent chaque métaphore. Ils sont également mis en italiques dans les citations, lorsqu'ils n'ont pas encore été mentionnés dans le corps du texte. Tous les italiques dans les citations relèvent de ce procédé.

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## Français

La presse représente, par essence, un discours intertextuel composé de citations explicites, mais également de références plus implicites qui la placent dans un interdiscours complexe. En particulier, il est admis que les médias s'inspirent largement les uns des autres, créant entre différents articles, genres et publications des liens intertextuels et interdiscursifs qui sont susceptibles d'évoluer dans le temps. La présente étude se propose d'analyser ces liens et, plus particulièrement, ceux constitués par les métaphores appliquées au domaine du climat telles qu'elles sont employées dans la presse généraliste anglophone. La métaphore, qu'elle soit pédagogique ou constitutive d'une théorie, est ici définie comme une projection d'un domaine vers un autre créant une analogie qui permet de mieux comprendre le domaine spécialisé concerné. Le phénomène qui nous intéresse ici est celui de la circulation des métaphores entre presse et discours spécialisé et, au sein du discours de presse, entre journaux, aires



géographiques et périodes de temps. Afin de comprendre ce phénomène, un corpus d'articles de presse portant sur le changement climatique publiés dans le *Daily Telegraph*, le *Guardian*, le *New York Times* et *USA Today* entre 2014 et 2017 a été constitué. Celui-ci est comparé à un corpus de *Earth Negotiation Bulletins*, rapports issus de la COP21 en 2015. Les métaphores liées au domaine du climat ont été identifiées et analysées notamment à l'aide du logiciel WMatrix et de son outil d'identification des domaines sémantiques. Il apparaît ainsi que les journaux s'inspirent des textes spécialisés, mais n'abordent pas nécessairement les métaphores de la même manière. La période, l'aire géographique et la ligne éditoriale des journaux influencent également l'usage des métaphores.

### English

The press is essentially an intertextual discourse, composed of explicit quotations as well as of more implicit references that situate it within a complex interdiscourse. In particular, it has been shown that the media are inspired by one another, thus creating, between articles, genres and publications, intertextual and interdiscursive links that may evolve in time. The present study aims at analysing those links and, more particularly, those built by the metaphors applied to the field of climate as they are used in the English-language general-interest press. Metaphors, whether pedagogical or theory-constitutive, are defined as a projection of a domain over another, creating an analogy that allows a better understanding of the target domain. The phenomenon we focus on here concerns the circulation of metaphors between the press and specialised discourse and, within press discourse, between newspapers, geographical areas and time periods. To understand this phenomenon, a corpus of press articles dealing with climate change and published in *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *USA Today* from 2014 to 2017 was built. It is compared to a corpus of *Earth Negotiation Bulletins*, reports published during COP21 in 2015. The metaphors related to the field of climate were identified and analysed especially with the help of WMatrix software and its semantic field identification tool. It appears from the analysis that newspapers are inspired by specialised texts, but they do not necessarily use the metaphors in the same manner. The time period, geographical area and editorial line of newspapers also influence the use of metaphors.

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### Mots-clés

intertextualité, interdiscursivité, métaphore, climat, presse, discours spécialisé

### Keywords

intertextuality, interdiscursivity, metaphor, climate, press, specialized discourse



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