Ideology, metaphor and persuasion in times of elections: a corpus-based study of British and Spanish economic reports

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Abstract. Metaphor has been studied as a pervasive and intrinsic discourse tool over the last decades in many different types of discourse (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Semino 2008, Kövecses 2010, etc.). Considering the strong effect it has on the discourse participants and how it can persuade them towards one side, action, or thought (Charteris-Black 2004, Silaski 2012), it is necessary to study it when the timeframe and the discourse where it is used are ideologically loaded. Based on recent studies on metaphor in economics (Alejo 2010, Herrera-Soler and White 2012, Soares da Silva et al. 2017), metaphor in the press (Koller 2004/2008) and metaphor and ideology (Goatly 2007, Silaski 2012), this article presents a corpus-based study of metaphor in reports of economic affairs in the English and Spanish press during the pre-election week of 2015. The corpus (about 160,000 words) consists of reports published by six newspapers that support different political spheres (left, centre and right): *The Guardian, The Independent* and *The Telegraph* in English, and *Público, El País* and *ABC* in Spanish. From a Critical Metaphor Analysis perspective (Charteris-Black 2004), the study starts from the hypothesis that the political stand of each newspaper might condition the metaphors. Indeed, metaphors pointing at certain side of political spheres appear in all the sub-corpora of the study, but in distinctive ways, as will be shown. In any case, critical factors such as cognitive and cultural reasons beyond the political stand of the media in question need to be acknowledged as well, which conveys further and more comprehensive analyses.
Keywords: metaphor, ideology, persuasion, media discourse, contrastive studies.

[es] Ideología, metáfora y persuasión en tiempos de elecciones: un estudio de corpus de noticias económicas en prensa británica y española

Resumen. La metáfora como herramienta constante e intrínseca del discurso en diferentes ámbitos ha sido objeto de estudio durante las últimas décadas (Lakoff y Johnson 1980, Semino 2008, Kövecses 2010, etc.). Teniendo en cuenta el efecto que tiene en los participantes del discurso y cómo puede persuadirles hacia un lado, acción o pensamiento (Charteris-Black 2004, Silaski 2012), es incluso más urgente estudiarla cuando el marco temporal y el discurso en el que se usan están cargados de ideología. Basado en recientes estudios sobre metáfora y economía (Alejo 2010, Herrera-Soler y White 2012, Soares da Silva et al. 2017), metáfora en la prensa (Koller 2004/2008) y metáfora e ideología (Goatly 2007, Silaski 2012), este artículo presenta un estudio de corpus de metáforas en noticias de índole económica en la prensa española y británica durante la semana pre-electoral de las elecciones generales de 2015. El corpus (que contiene unas 160.000 palabras) consiste en noticias publicadas por seis periódicos que apoyan diferentes ideologías políticas (izquierda, centro y derecha): *The Guardian, The Independent* y *The Telegraph* en inglés, *y Público, El País* y *ABC* en español. Desde una perspectiva del Análisis Crítico de la Metáfora (Charteris-Black 2004), el estudio parte de la hipótesis de que el sesgo político de cada periódico puede condicionar las metáforas usadas. De hecho, se han encontrado metáforas señalando a un lado u otro de la esfera política en los diferentes sub-corpus analizados, pero de diferentes y distintivas formas, como se mostrará. En cualquier caso, es necesario también

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prestar atención a ciertos factores críticos como las razones cognitivas y culturales, más allá del soporte político de los medios en cuestión, lo cual conlleva análisis muchos más exhaustivos.
Palabras clave: metáfora, ideología, persuasión, discurso de los medios, estudios contrastivos.

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1. Introduction: metaphor as an element of media discourse

Since the so-called parents of conceptual metaphor introduced it as a component of all types of every-day discourse with the worldwide known *Metaphors We Live by* (Lakoff & Johnson 1980)*,* this resource has been vastly studied over the last decades as a pervasive element of not only discourse but also thought (Kövecses 2010). During the last years, there has been a change towards a more socio-cognitive approach that sees metaphor as an embedded component of society more than a unique element of thought (Bernárdez 2008; Soares da Silva et al. 2017; Romano & Porto 2018). In other words, metaphor is not seen only as an element of discourse, but as discourse strategy of specific social, political contexts, genres, etc.; an element which is, therefore, reflected in language use and discourse. It is also essential to see it as an element that has the power to transform the original, less familiar message and the more abstract reality it entails and portray a completely distorted view via a more concrete, human-oriented discourse choice (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Brandimonte et al. 2006). Moreover, studies into cognitive linguistics and natural discourse have also recently turned towards more empirical, experimental and corpus-based supporting evidence, which can be tested and proved statistically (Kristiansen et al. 2006; Kristiansen & Dirven 2008; Glynn & Fischer 2010, in Romano & Porto 2016). Taking these views into account, metaphor can be considered an intrinsic component of all social discourse exchanges. Within such group, there is a type of discourse that may not be directly used in humans' conversations, but actually surrounds every person's day in a more or less direct way: the discourse of the press or, in other words, media discourse. Media discourse appears in the news on television, on the radio, on the newspapers and, in a technological era, on the internet that we consult every day. Even though the reader of the media discourse is not having a direct conversation with the writer, there is social communication, and this has, as all types of communication, different components to be considered: a context where the discourse is created, the process of discourse creation itself, the context where it is transferred, the context where it is received, and, finally, the consequences it may have on the receiving part. It is precisely this pursued consequence or goal that motivated this study, which analyses metaphor as an intrinsic element of economic media discourse and observes the potential objective (in persuasive terms) it can have.

There are two essential factors to introduce that justify the present study: the topic and the timeframe. The subject of the study is economic discourse, or the discourse used in economic reports. In recent decades, studies on metaphor and economics have been of vast interest, and many scholars have presented different perspectives on the field (Henderson 1982, McCloskey 1983, Charteris-Black and Ennis 2001, White 2003, Herrera-Soler and White 2012, Muelas-Gil 2016, among many others). However, considering that the economy is an intrinsic part of a country's development and is therefore constantly evolving, its discourse shall not be taken for granted as it also evolves and therefore needs to be continuously studied. As for the second factor, the timeframe is also important for the study, as it consists in a critical political period: the previous week to the national elections of 2015 in both countries of study (the United Kingdom and Spain). Ideology and metaphor combined have been previously studied (Dirven 1990; Goatly 2007; Silaski 2012; Díaz-Peralta 2018; among others), but few scholars have located the analysis in a specific or delimited time frame like this one aimed at doing.

Another relevant variable is the platform from which the discourse is analysed, and that is the digital press. The justification for this choice of source lies not only in a major facility to retrieve the information but also in the deduction that, if I can access the reports more easily, so can all individuals. In fact, according to the results published by the Libro Blanco de la Prensa and the National Readership Survey in 2015 (which inform about the state and readership of the Spanish and British press, respectively), the number of readers of online press has notably increased over the last years, due to their accessibility, to the fact that most of them can be read free of charge and to the evolution of digital devices. In consequence, there is a necessity to analyse not only printed but also digital discourse. This constitutes another motivation of this study. Aside from the timeframe, it is of common sense to think that all media sources have an ideology, whether they confess it or not and whether they openly say whom they support. In any case, we need a detailed analysis to decipher the linguistic elements that reflect such ideology, its origins and its finality. With this aim, a Critical Discourse Analysis approach, or, more specifically, Critical Metaphor Analysis, is taken, as initially postulated by Charteris-Black (2004), who argued that metaphor, as a set of semantic, cognitive and pragmatic components, has the objective of influencing people's opinions and judgements through persuasion (Silaski 2012). In line with this view, we can assume that if metaphor is used in an economic text, like our corpus, it can transform the economic reality it portrays and thus influence its readers' opinions and judgements. Thus, this study aims at observing how metaphors are applied to affect the public's views. In other words, we aim to determine whether it is true that metaphor is used as a persuasive tool in economic discourse and, if so, what implications it can have on the public.

Considering the gaps mentioned above in economic discourse and ideology and metaphor studies, this article will first briefly refer to the main theoretical tenets; it will then present the data of the corpus of this case study together with the methodology applied. Finally, the results will try to shed more light on the different branches of study addressed herein.

2. Metaphor and (1) economics, (2) the MEDIA (3) AND ideology

As introduced, there are three variables to account for in the discourse analysed here: economic discourse, media discourse and electoral discourse, which is entirely load-

ed with ideological overtones. As there is already a vast literature on metaphor and economy (as referred to in the previous section), special attention shall be devoted to the last two in turn.

2.1. The discourse of the press: print media discourse

Anne O'Keeffe refers to media discourse as the "interactions that take place through a broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer. [...] media discourse is a public, man-ufactured, on-record, form of interaction. It is not ad hoc or spontaneous (in the same way as casual speaking or writing is); it is neither private nor off the record" (2011). Nowadays, media discourse is familiar to the majority of the public, and its characteristics may seem obvious; however, all these features are crucial to all investigations analysing this complex discourse. The fact that print media discourse is public is relevant because of the social nature of its interactors, the producer and the receiver since it is not a private conversation between two parts but an open interaction between one producer (sometimes more) and an infinite readership. Its manufactured nature means that it is not spontaneous language, and the producer will have time to think and plan what they want to say and the receiver will have time to process and respond to the information received. The fact that is is on-record makes it really appealing to all discourse analysts since not only what is produced today can be studied, but also what was produced decades ago (especially with the introduction of new technologies and all the available online data which all the pub-lic can access now).

Some of the first relevant studies analysing this different discourse type include: Biber et al. (1999), who see print media discourse as one of the most relevant discur-sive registers; Swales (1990), who focuses on this specific genre compared to other better-known ones; Toolan (1988), on the language used in advertisements in print media; and, coming to more recent studies, Reah (2002), who describes in detail the characteristics of newspapers from a linguistic perspective; and Bednarek (2006a, b), who presents a corpus-based analysis of newspapers headlines.

2.2. Metaphor and ideology

As mentioned above, the language used in the discourse of the press, both spoken and written, is not the spontaneous language of daily conversations; it is not the language found in literature either, nor the language used in the educational context. Because of the nature that surrounds the media, the language and the discourse found in it have proved to be different and unique. Thus, the metaphors used and found in print media will be different and unique from those found in other genres as well.

One of the main natural properties of the discourse of media is the ideologi-cal load that it has; all newspapers and media companies stand for their ideals and support, more or less openly, a given ideology and/or political party or movement. Thus, the journalists that write a report on the press will be portraying their ideals. Moreover, they do not only have to comment on current affairs, but also make them accessible and understandable for the public. Being more specific, the language used fields such as Economy and Market reports might be too abstract for the general public. It is true, though, that the expert reader might be familiar with the concrete

economic language; however, if analysing economic reports on general newspapers (not only focused on Economics), and of public access, the journalist has to consider that any person can read it and therefore needs to make it readable for all. As Koller summarizes it, "there is an imperious necessity for newspaper language to display clarity and facilitate...the readability of its text' (White 1997: 242) and metaphor is indeed instrumental in achieving that end" (2004/2008: 2).In line with this, Resche claimed that "journalists take their inspiration from the core metaphorical terms stemming from the root metaphors and extend the metaphors by choosing elements from everyone's experience of everyday life. Obviously, surface metaphors as developed by the press need to find an echo in every reader" (2012: 93).

   Taking Hallidays' theory of the three macro-functions of language (textual, interpersonal and ideational) (1978), the third one logically relates to ideology. This work starts with Van Dijk's definition of the concept. Viewing it as a socio-cognitive phenomenon, he defines 'ideology' as "the interface between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action, on the one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups, on the other hand" (1995:18). In other words, ideology in discourse is shaped by the purpose we have, our final objective and our view and representation of what we are transmitting, together with the relationship with the receiver and the desired impact or influence on this part. In addition, as Wolf and Polzenhagen claim, "ideological patterns may arise from the application of a particular metaphor and the neglect of alternative ones" (2003: 268). In other words, the use of one metaphor can impinge on the ideological reasoning and on the consequent and potential impact on society. Cubo de Severino et al. also refer to this inherent relation between metaphors and strategic ideological purposes by claiming that "the use of metaphors in journalistic discourse is an ideological strategy that masks underlying intentions" (2001: 220). Additionally, Semino also points out that

> when particular uses of metaphor become the dominant way of talking about a particular aspect of reality within a particular discourse, they may be extremely difficult to perceive and challenge, since they come to represent the 'common-sense' or 'natural' view of things. In such cases, conventional conceptual metaphor can be seen as an important part of the shared sets of beliefs, or 'ideology' that characterize a particular social group (2008: 33-34).

Silaski (2012) also refers to the discrete but powerful ideological function of metaphors, claiming that "the connection between ideology and metaphors most frequently functions unconsciously–ideologies are neatly hidden behind the metaphorical veil since metaphors structure concepts and phenomena in a simple and artificially simplified manner". This is precisely why Critical Metaphor Analysis perspectives are required, as presented by Charteris-Black, who argued that metaphor, seen as a blend of semantic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions, has the goal of "influencing opinions and judgements by persuasion" (2004). Taking all these views and studies into account, it is of paramount importance to analyse how this neatly hidden connection between metaphor and ideology can affect the receiver of a message, and how it can potentially persuade him to think or act in one way or another, in a presumably unconscious way. We understand persuasion and ideology as two terms which are innately linked, since one of the direct goals of ideologically shaped dis-

course is to persuade the listener/reader or the opponent to adapt or at least understand the speaker's views, *id est*, to persuade them.

Persuasion in discourse through metaphor can be found in different ways, being one of them through highlighting and hiding, a strategy first introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In short, when the metaphorical source domain is manipulated in such a way that it focuses on one aspect of the mapping, emphasizing some aspects or features in contrast to others that may also be present in the target domain, what the metaphor is doing is highlighting them; this will inevitably cause a shift of attention by the reader/listener, who will, therefore, focus on the highlighted features. Parallel to this, if some aspects are highlighted, this means that others are hidden, concealed or made smaller, with a consequent loss of attention, even ignorance towards them by the receiver. This is another example of how metaphors can serve as ideological and manipulative tools, since they present "a particular interpretation of situations and events" (Deignan 2005: 23) and they will, therefore, emphasize or conceal certain aspects, depending on the pursued persuasive goal, which is precisely why they need to be critically analysed.

In his critical approaches, Charteris-Black adopts a three-step method: Identification, Interpretation and Explanation of conceptual metaphors. By metaphor identification, he observes "the presence of incongruity or semantic tension—either at linguistic, pragmatic or cognitive levels—resulting from a shift in domain use" (2004: 35). If there is incongruity, then the metaphorical expressions are considered to be of potentially critical importance in the discourse, and such potentiality is confirmed in the interpretative step. Metaphor interpretation refers to the analysis of the relationships between the potential metaphors identified in the previous step and the cognitive elements they are embedded in. Once metaphors are identified and interpreted, an analytical approach needs to explain why a given metaphor is preferred against another one in that discourse type. In order to solve this, "the analysts need to identify the social agency that is involved in the production of metaphoric expressions and their social role in persuasion, that is to say, the ideological and rhetorical motivation of a metaphorical expression" (Wei 2016). The explanations obtained should then reveal "understanding or thought patterns which construct people's beliefs and actions" (Cameron & Low 1999: 88).

Finally, it can be agreed that the speaker/writer knows when and how to use metaphors as ideological tools, and that is why metaphors are relevant in discursive events. However, and more importantly, it also needs to be critically analysed from the perspective of the listener/reader, as, according to Charteris-Black, metaphors enable us to challenge existing ways of thinking and feeling about human behaviour and its relation to language, and they also help us to present "alternative ways of thinking and feeling about the world" (2004: 252). Thus, stipulating how metaphors can persuade the receptive part is of utmost relevance. Some recent studies and applications of CMA include Koller (2006), Hart (2008, 2010), Rojo-López and Orts-Llopis (2010), Lee (2015) or Soares da Silva (2016) and Soares da Silva et al. (2017), among others; these scholars applied CMA to different discourse types, yet all shared a tenet: they all involved power and ideology.

3. Case study: corpus of economic reports

The present study originally considered and reviewed an extensive list of newspapers in both languages and countries; however, it was decided that all had to meet

a list of common criteria for analytical purposes, such as free online access, daily publication, addressed to a common, non-specialized readership and falling within one of this three ideological sides (left, centre and right). As for the reports of the corpus, they also had to meet the following conditions: being written by reporters of the corresponding newspaper and not by news agencies, found within the sections of 'economy', 'finance', 'market' or 'business' and published within the 7 days previous to the national elections of each country. Table 1 below summarizes the six newspapers that met all the conditions above and therefore, constituted the corpus of this study:

Table 1. Sources of the corpus.

Political Stance	Spanish corpus	British corpus
Left	*Público*	*The Guardian*
Centre	*El País*	*The Independent*
Right	*ABC*	*The Telegraph*

The next step consisted in the creation of the corpus, which involved data collection and data cleaning. For such purpose, different digital tools were used. *Import.io* was applied to retrieve all the reports that met the conditions summarized in the previous paragraph in each newspaper; however, there were some limitations, which implied a second stage of human-performed filtering, thus advocating for an ideal combination of digital and human tools. The total size of the corpus is presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Final corpus of the study.

	Spanish corpus			English corpus		
	Público	*El País*	*ABC*	*The Guardian*	*The Independent*	*The Telegraph*
Number of texts	26	29	143	15	55	18
Tokens per source	12,833	21,596	71,292	9,420	27,664	14,813
Tokens per corpus	105,721			51,897		

3.1. Research questions

As previously noted, this study observes whether potential persuasion through metaphor is present in the corpus and, if so, whether its presence through the strategy of highlighting/hiding is motivated by a given variable. Given this, the research questions were as follows:

- Is there a dependency relation between the presence of persuasion hidden in metaphors and a given language? In other words, are Spanish newspapers more persuasive than English newspapers, for example?
- Is there a dependency relation between the presence of persuasion hidden in metaphors and ideology? In other words, are left-wing newspapers more persuasive than the other newspapers? Do they use persuasive strategies as a whole more frequently?
- Assuming that persuasion is found, is there a dependency relation between the variables of polarity and language? For example, does the Spanish language use positive polarity more frequently and English negative polarity, or is it the inverse way?
- Finally, is there a dependency relation between the variables polarity and ideology? *Id est*, does the ideology of the newspaper affect the choice of negative or positive polarity?

4. Methodology

The corpus tool *#Lancsbox* (Brezina et al. 2015) was used to organize the corpus and retrieve useful information such as metaphor frequency, previous to the more qualitative analysis that this study pursues. To identify metaphors in discourse, a list of common targets within economy was drawn, based on previous studies of the same nature (references are given in Section 1) and on readings and different consultations with economy and finance experts (both human and digital references were consulted). The final list of targets, contrasted with general corpora and selected as those with the highest relative frequency in both languages, includes: *bank/banco, company/compañía, crisis/crisis, economy/economía, finance/finanzas, investor/inversor, market/mercado, money/dinero, product/producto, recession/recesión, sector/sector, share/acción* and *stock/bolsa*. The corpus tool was used to look for each component of the list in all languages and newspapers, but it also looked at the possible derivatives of each word; in other words, it would not only look for "investor" but, by using the lemma "invest*", it could also retrieve all the instances of "investment" or "investing".

The next step of the study was to identify the metaphors within the corpus. For this, a two-step method was applied or, in other words, two existing methods which present different advantages individually were combined, in order to obtain even more accurate results. First, Metaphorical Pattern Analysis (Stefanowitsch 2006) was applied. This method starts from the premises of what he refers to as 'metaphorical patterns', or a "multi-word expression from a given source domain (SD) into which one or more specific item from a given target domain (TD) have been inserted" (ibid.: 66). In other words, to those instances in which the target appears in close proximity to the source. This was of great practicality to our study as it is a target-based one, and it could be perfectly used to locate all the metaphorical patterns derived from the 13-list previously drawn. However, this method relies mainly on the analyst's knowledge and intuition when deciding whether a given pattern is metaphorical or not. In view of this, MIPVU (Steen et al. 2010) was used as a second method, acting as a confirming filter, since, as its creators defend, it offers a more empirical, reliable approach to metaphor identification. The main advantage of this

is that, since it uses dictionaries as references in order to discard or select what may appear metaphorical, it provides a more complete, contrasted outcome. Thus, all the instances of patterns tagged as 'metaphorical' or 'potentially metaphorical' by MPA underwent analysis through MIPVU to contrast and confirm (or deny) such metaphoricity.

Having applied both identification methods and then identified all the metaphorical instantiations in the corpus, the metaphor density was obtained dividing the number of linguistic metaphors by the total number of words of each corpus and then calculating their size per 1000 words (Cameron 2008). This result would be of relevance for the consequent calculation of persuasion frequency per corpus.

Finally, the qualitative part of the analysis involved the last two steps of Charteris-Black's proposal of Critical Metaphor Analysis (2004): interpretation and explanation. Once all the metaphors had been located, retrieved, organized and classified, they had to be qualitatively interpreted and explained addressing ideology and persuasion. The analysis of such ideological and persuasive load of metaphors was done through the strategy of highlighting and hiding, as already commented. It is important to note here that it was the linguistic metaphor (the metaphorical pattern plus its immediate co-text), not the conceptual one, that was considered in this part of the analysis. In other words, this part of the study analysed the metaphors in context in order to interpret and explain them.

Before commenting on the trichotomy applied for persuasion classification, it is important to note that several restricting guidelines were also set when accounting for persuasive uses of the metaphors found, which were: (1) what concerns this study is what the journalists or reporters say or write, which means that when the piece of news is using the direct speech uttered by someone else (indicated by inverted commas), the message is not actually said by them and, if there is persuasion, it is not the newspapers that are "using" it. Consequently, direct speech was not tagged as persuasive. (2) It is mainly national economic affairs that concern this study; this means that, if a piece of news mentions a detail about Chinese or Italian economy, this shall not be tagged as persuasive (in terms of national economy). However, there were numerous cases of metaphors referring to the economy and the Stock Market of the United States, pointing it as a reference of the global market, as well as to the economy of the European Union. In these two cases, where the Stock Market of New York is seen as a global indicator of the economy of the entire world, and the state of the European economy affects national economies in Europe as well, we did evaluate the persuasive power, if existing.

Finally, Van Dijk's theory of "us" vs "them" (1998) was taken as a reference but simplified and adapted to the purpose of this study. Thus, the tagging options of the analysis are as follows:

A. It highlights the positive or hides the negative aspects of the economy (marked as 'positive polarity').
B. It highlights the negative and hides the positive aspects of the economy (marked as 'negative polarity').
C. It does neither highlight nor hides a given aspect of the economy (marked as 'NA' (for non-applicable). This is marked when there is persuasion found, but the strategy is not clearly polarity (other strategies, such as euphemism vs dysphemism were also observed during the general study in a separate way,

but are not included here). For length reasons, they can be consulted in Mue-las-Gil (2018).

5. Results and Discussion

As explained, the first result obtained in the analysis, previous to the most qualitative part, would be the metaphor density per newspaper and per sub-corpus (Spanish and English). The results are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Metaphor density of the corpus.

	Metaphorical patterns	Out of () hits of all targets	Rel. freq.	Corpus size	Met. Density
PÚB	73	286	25.52	12,833	5.69
PAÍS	115	436	26.38	21,596	5.33
ABC	381	1513	25.18	70,611	5.40
Spanish	569	2235	25.46	105,721	5.38
GUARD	148	336	44.05	9,420	15.71
INDEP	205	799	25.66	27,664	7.41
TELEG	201	429	46.85	14,813	13.57
English	554	1564	35.42	51,897	10.67
TOTAL	**1123**	**3799**	**29.56**	**157,618**	**7.12**

As observed, while the Spanish corpus was twice the size of the English one (105,721 words and 51,897 respectively), this does not prove to be a marker of a higher metaphor frequency, since the latter actually presents a higher value (almost double) in metaphor density than the former (10.67 versus 5.38), which implies that it notably makes more use of this device; we cannot extrapolate this to the entire English language, but the numerical results obtained in this part of the analysis do deserve further attention in forthcoming contrastive studies of metaphor density across languages, and an explanation or interpretation of why such difference is obtained would also be desired. Concerning the ideological factor, metaphor density does not present a consistent value, meaning that no ideological side of this study (left, centre or right) seems to offer a higher number of metaphors. Still, the values shall be considered for subsequent steps of the analysis.

5.1. Persuasive load per corpus

The total number of metaphorical cases found in the corpus (1123, as seen in Table 3) were individually analysed following the guidelines that have been aforementioned in order to observe whether there was a persuasive use of the metaphorical

pattern or not. Again, it is important to remind that the linguistic metaphor (*id est*, the expression as a whole), not the conceptual one, was observed at this point of analysis and that persuasion was tagged applying the strategy of "highlighting and hiding" certain aspects through the choice of a given metaphor. To serve as an example, the following excerpts from the corpus are provided to clarify why a given case, which may have appeared to be persuasive, was tagged as non-persuasive in the end. Examples of excerpts where polarity was found will be provided in turn as well:

(1)

ExcID	NewsID	File	Left	Node	Right
79	Público	24	esta rebaja en la tasa de mora ""avanza en línea con el **saneamiento** del sector	bancario""	y apunta ""lo lejos que está el sector de mantener unos márgenes suficientes para hacer

Sp. for: "this reduction in the default ratio goes forward in line with the sanitation of the banking system and points how far it is from maintaining enough margins to make…"

Excerpt 79 from the Spanish newspaper *Público* is an example of the aforementioned direct speech, *id est*, discourse (and therefore, metaphors) that are not produced by the newspaper or the journalist writing the report but said by someone else. In this case, File 24 reports on an interview with a trade analyst and the words within which the metaphor had been spotted ("saneamiento del sector bancario") are said by him. Therefore, this metaphor was directly marked as non-persuasive, as nothing is being highlighted nor concealed, at least by the journalist himself.

(2)

ExcID	NewsID	File	Left	Node	Right
3262	The Independent	4	BHP Billiton joined it in negative territory after Citi gave a gloomy outlook for the	sector.	Rio **fell** 64p to 2,915.5p, while BHP was 25.5p lower at 1,564p.; On the mid-cap

There are several metaphors in this excerpt, yet the case of interest here is the underlined target, "Rio" (a company) and the word "fell", portraying the source of the vertical line and thus referring to the well-known VERTICALITY image schema (as understood in Pecican 2007, Orts-Llopis & Rojo-López 2009, Soares da Silva et al. 2017). This is a very representative case of how persuasion has been analysed in our corpus. To start with, there is a high frequency of the conceptual metaphors MORE IS UP and LESS IS DOWN, which are based on image schemas; however, most of them occur in pieces of news containing market reports, and they were simply informing about "movements" of the companies or products in the abstract vertical line on which money and values move (or fluctuate) up/down in the Market. In oth-

er words, if a company lost value, the verb "fell" would be objectively informing about this. Companies and products move along this imaginary vertical line daily, and market reports serve to inform about whether they move upwards or downwards, but they do so, in most cases, objectively. In consequence, they were marked as non-metaphorical in the corpus. If, on the contrary, these verbs depicting this movement upwards or downwards were accompanied by a modifier, like the adverb "drastically" or if they were projected in an exaggerated way such as "tumble" or "se desplomó" (real examples from the corpus), it was considered that the movement was being somehow 'decorated'. This hyperbolic or exaggerated choice of words might be considered as an example of a combination of metaphor and hyperbole, as treated in Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 202).

Thus, considering the guidelines and all cases where there was no persuasive load, calculations were carried out to observe the frequency of persuasive strategies within and between corpora. Figures 1 and 2 below summarize the proportion of persuasive versus non-persuasive metaphors per language and per ideology, respectively.
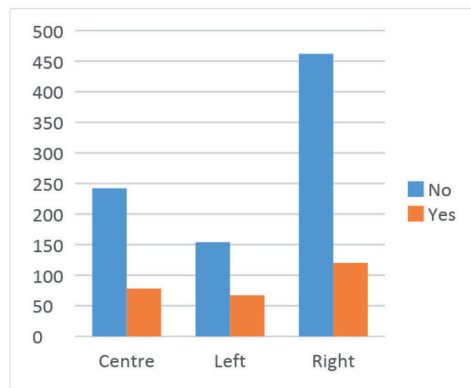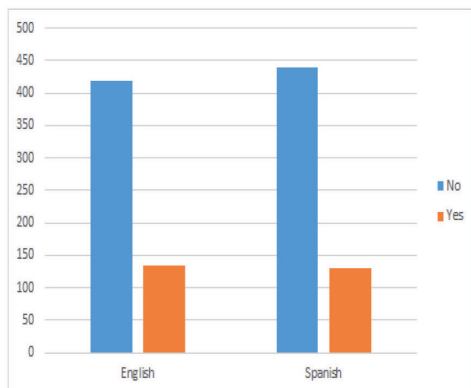

Figure 1. Persuasion frequency & language.   Figure 2. Persuasion frequency & ideology.

As depicted, there is a noticeable prevalence of non-persuasive metaphors over persuasive ones. The coincidence is even more notable when contrasting languages, since both have a very similar number of metaphors carrying persuasion (130 in Spanish and 135 in English), as well as a very similar number of non-persuasive cases (439 and 419, respectively). This, however, needed to be confirmed by statistical tests (see Tables 4 and 5 below). As for ideology, differences in proportions seem to vary more, which is why Tables 6 and 7 are also necessary to infer statistical interpretations.

Table 4. Proportion of persuasive/non-persuasive metaphors per language.

		Persuasive	Non-persuasive	Total
Spanish	Count	159	410	569
	% within lang.	27.9%	72.1%	100.0%
English	Count	106	448	554
	% within lang.	19.1%	80.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	265	858	1123
	% within lang.	23.6%	76.4%	100.0%

Table 5. Chi-Square test for language and persuasion.

	Value	df	Symp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.085	1	.001

Table 6. Proportion of persuasive/non-persuasive metaphors per ideology.

		Persuasive	Non-persuasive	Total
Left	Count	50	171	221
	% within ideol.	22.6%	77.4%	100.0%
Centre	Count	63	257	320
	% within ideol.	19.7%	80.3%	100.0%
Right	Count	152	430	582
	% within ideol.	26.1%	73.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	265	858	1123
	% within ideol.	23.6%	76.4%	100.0%

Table 7. Chi-Square test for ideology and persuasion.

	Value	df	Symp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.878	2	.087

The results of the statistical tests prove how important it is to calculate proportions and values to confirm or dismiss visual results, which at first sight might be of help but can also cause misperceptions, as has been the case. A Chi-Square test was run to obtain the potential relation between language and persuasion (in other words, to know whether a given language affects the presence of persuasive strategies through metaphor). According to such test, the answer to such relation was affirmative, since

there is a significant difference in proportions between the affirmative and nega-
tive cases of persuasion across languages, with a value of *p=* .001. Percentages in
Table 4 show a considerably higher proportion of persuasive metaphors in Span-
ish (27.9%) than in English (19.1%), in spite of the apparently similar result in the
graphics above. This answers the first research question of the study and points to a
more frequent use of persuasive strategies in Spanish than in English. Moreover, this
also points at a necessary future step in the analysis, which is that of observing the
relation between metaphor density and the proportion of persuasive metaphors; as
observed in Table 3, the English language showed a higher metaphor density; thus,
these two values combined (metaphor density and persuasive metaphor density) can
provide interesting outcomes in what the language variable is concerned.

   Concerning ideology, the difference in proportions seemed to be more notable in
the graphic depiction above, yet statistical comparisons result in a nonsignificant dif-
ference, according to the value *p=* .087 in Pearson's chi-square test. Answering to the
second research question, this outcome suggests that the ideology of a given newspa-
per does not have an effect on the frequency of persuasion through metaphor, at least in
numerical terms. In other words, neither left-wing nor right-wing or centre newspapers
seem to show a significantly higher number of persuasive metaphors than the rest.

5.2. Polarity through metaphor

As introduced, the approach towards polarity in this study is based on the capacity of
metaphors to highlight or hide certain aspects of the source and the mapping at the
same time (Deignan 2005). In combination with this capacity, whenever a metaphor
from the corpus is used for persuasion, polarity will be present provided that the met-
aphor highlights positive aspects of economy or hides the negative ones (considering
global, European or national economy). As presented, there are three possible values
for polarity in this study: positive (when it highlights something positive about the
economy), negative (when it highlights something negative) and 'NA' (when there is
persuasion, but the strategy used is not polarity [see Muelas-Gil for further examples
and strategies]). The examples below may serve as an example of the use of this
strategy in the present corpus and the justification for each classification.

(3)

ExcID	NewsID	File	Left	Node	Right
354	El País	11	fuerte catalizador para que los precios encuentren un soporte". Las petroleras europeas **se hunden** en	Bolsa	La bajada del precio del crudo se deja sentir también en los mercados de valores.

Sp. for: "…a strong agent of change so that the prices find a support. The European
oil companies sink in the Market. The decrease of the price of crude has also been
felt in the value markets".

   The first example from the Spanish corpus is taken from the more central newspa-
per *El País*. Here, the target is "Bolsa" (Market) and it refers to companies sinking in

it (depicting the propositional schema of the OCEAN[2]). This propositional schema is somehow combined with the image schema of VERTICALITY since "sinking" implies going downwards in the ocean. According to the principle of Graded Salience presented by Giora (2003, 2008)[3], I marked OCEAN as the main source, but this vertical sense is helpful when analyzing persuasion. As commented before, all instances of this verticality being portrayed as simply "going upwards/downwards" or "rising/falling" were considered to be objective unless there was something subjective. That is the case in the present excerpt, as the movement downwards is not referred to as something objective, but the negative aspect is being highlighted by emphasizing the act of sinking. Consequently, this case would be tagged as persuasive and as "negative polarity".

(4)

ExcID	NewsID	File	Left	Node	Right
1247	ABC	119	la venta del percebe, todo apunta a que el sector consolidará la **salida** de la	crisis	este 2015. Lo hace en paralelo con la curva del PIB por demanda, que refleja

Sp. for: "…barnacle sales, it all points at the sector leaving the crisis in 2015. It does so parallel to the curve of GDP due to demand, which reflects…"

Excerpt 1247 from the right-wing newspaper *ABC* has "crisis" as the target in the node; as for the source, it is not directly in the sentence, but a reference to it does appear. More concretely, the word "salida" (or "way out") is a reference to the CONTAINER image schema (as previously addressed in Alejo 2011, Silaski & Kilyeni 2011, Soares da Silva et al. 2017, among many others), understanding that the crisis is a container from which companies get out. Thus, the more generic metaphor A CRISIS IS A CONTAINER is tagged, and the specific[4] one FINISHING A CRISIS IS GOING OUT OF THE CONTAINER. All references to crisis and recession in the corpus are practically always loaded with a persuasive movement, being this metaphorical or not. After all, an economic crisis as the one suffered by many countries such as Spain entails negative aspects that can, therefore, be highlighted or hidden depending on the message that wants to be spread. In this case, the message is affirming and thus highlighting that there will be an end to the crisis ("se consolidará la salida de la crisis"). Thus, although the container itself is negative, going out of

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[2]   Propositional schemas are "abstractions which act as models of thought and behaviour" (Quinn 1987, in Sharifian 2011) and represent relations between the different elements of the metaphorical mappings within the expressions found in discourse; it is based on the well-known GREAT CHAIN OF BEING (Lakoff & Turner 1989; Musolff 2005).

[3]   According to Giora's Hypothesis of Graded Salience (2003: 10), salient meanings are "coded meanings foremost on our mind due to conventionality, frequency, familiarity, or prototypicality".

[4]   The generic-level and specific-level metaphors distinction were introduced by Lakoff & Turner (1989). In short, generic-level metaphors are those that can be filled with many instantiations or metaphorical expressions. For example, the well-known metaphor DISCUSSION IS WAR would be a generic metaphor because there are many possibilities or potential metaphorical expressions that could be classified within this conceptual metaphor (to mention some: ARGUMENTS ARE MISSILES, PARTICIPANTS ARE ENEMIES, WORDS ARE WEAPONS, etc.). On the other hand, these last examples are specific metaphors that belong to the same generic one, and cannot be filled with as many metaphorical expressions as the former.

the container is consequently positive, which means this concrete metaphor would be market as 'positive polarity'.

(5)

ExcID	NewsID	File	Left	Node	Right
2565	The Guardian	6	denting profits at the bailed-out bank in the first three months of the year. But	shares	in the bank **jumped** more than 7% to above 83p as analysts considered whether to

Regarding English newspapers, Excerpt 2565 is taken from the left-wing newspaper *The Guardian*. It also depicts the VERTICALITY image schema as the previous example did, but it is not embedded within any other schema like Excerpt 1247. It has been taken as an example because the MORE IS UP metaphor is subjectively projected here, since the target "shares" are not said to "rise" or "go up" simply, but to have "jumped more than 7% to above". Using the verb "to jump" is optional, since they could have used the objective, neutral form of the previous verbs. However, a choice to highlight the upwards movement in the imaginary Market line means that persuasion is hidden, and this was marked as "positive polarity", for it is a positive aspect of the economy that is being highlighted.

(6)

ExcID	NewsID	File	Left	Node	Right
3239	The Independent	29	just 0.3 per cent– much lower than expected– as the construction industry **slid back into**	recession	and the UK's dominant services sector slowed sharply.; The Cips blamed the stronger pound for

Finally, Excerpt 3239 from the English newspaper *The Independent* has a synonym of "crisis", "recession", and the CONTAINER image schema is depicted again through the preposition "into". As commented above, being in a recession is portrayed as being within the container, which entails negative connotations. If going out of the container was interpreted as something positive (and marked as "positive polarity"), being "dragged into it" (which is in itself an exaggeration) again is consequently something negative, since the negative aspect is being highlighted. Thus, this case would be tagged as 'negative polarity'. It has to be noted that there are multiple metaphors present as the target "sector" is metaphorically projected alongside the source "slowed", subjectively modified by the adverb "sharply"; in brief, and although this has been counted and analyzed separately, polarity is also present in a negative form.

Having shown some examples, Figures 3 and 4 below summarize the distribution of metaphors within the strategy of polarity. For these graphs, as well as for the statistical tests at this stage, only 'positive' and 'negative' polarity cases have been considered, leaving those tagged as 'NA' aside.
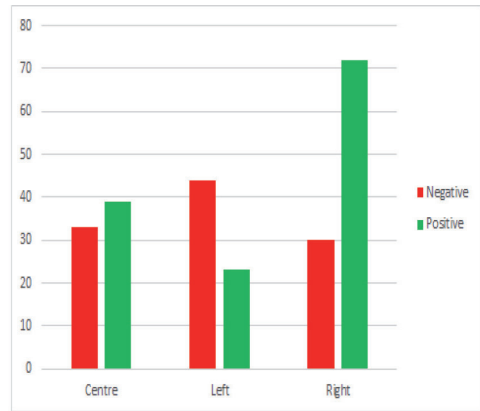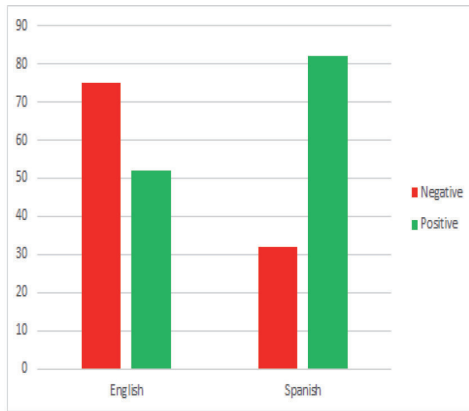
Figure 3. Presence of polarity per language.   Figure 4. Presence of polarity per ideology.

To start with language differences, a very notable one is observed since, while the English corpus shows a larger number of cases with negative polarity, Spanish newspapers use positive polarity not only more frequently than its English counterpart, but also with a much larger difference with the negative instances. This seems to point at a relation between language and polarity choice, being Spanish much more positive than English. This is to be confirmed by the statistical tests run and summarized in Tables 8 and 9 below.

Concerning ideology, Figure 4 also reveals interesting outcomes. On the one hand, left-wing newspapers (*Público* and *The Guardian*) show more negative polarity than positive and, even if centre newspapers (*El País* and *The Independent*) show more positive polarity, the difference with negative outcomes is not very large. On the other hand, right-wing newspapers (*ABC* and *The Telegraph*) show a notable preference for positive polarity, which seems to confirm our original hypothesis. Still, statistical tests are required.

Table 8. Positive and negative polarity per language.

		Positive	**Negative**	**Total**
Spanish	Count	82	32	114
	% within lang.	71.9%	28.1%	100.0%
English	Count	52	75	127
	% within lang.	40.9%	59.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	134	107	241
	% within lang.	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%

Table 9. Chi-Square test for language and polarity.

	Value	df	Symp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.364	1	.000

The crosstab and the Chi-square both confirm in numerical and statistical terms the re-sults depicted in the previous graphs. As observed, the relation is not only inverse (*id est*, Spanish newspapers tend to have a much higher proportion of positive polarity while English shows more negativity), but also very notable, since the percentages in the cor-pus are approximately 70% versus 30% in Spanish (positive/negative respectively) and around 40% versus 60% in English, showing a minor difference. The statistical value is $p= <.001$, which points at a strong relationship between the variable 'language' and the proportion of one side of this persuasive strategy and the other; this answers to the third research questions of the study in an affirmative way. Without considering ideolo-gy, Spanish newspapers are much more positive than English. It could be hypothesized that right-wing newspapers would present more positive polarity since they would be supporting the Government to be re-elected by highlighting the positive aspects of the present (at that time) economy. Although language and ideology are taken as independ-ent values, an explanation for the strong relation between Spanish language and positive polarity may be due to a high number of metaphors within the Spanish right-wing news-papers *ABC*. In order to confirm this and find an explanation for such value, another layer was added to this analysis, obtaining the results summarized in Table 10 below:

Table 10. Chi-Square test language+ideology and polarity-

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Left	14.189	1	.000
Centre	3.096	1	.078
Right	21.250	1	.000
Total	23.364	1	.000

As observed, the statistically significant difference in the proportion and value of the Chi-square test when adding the layer 'ideology' is maintained in two of the three ideologies. While right-wing and left-wing newspapers (the two opposite poles) still show significant differences and therefore a positive relation between ideology and language, the central ideology does not result in statistically significant differences across languages ($p= .078$). This points at a higher load of persuasion through po-larity (either positive or negative) in the two more clear-cut newspapers in terms of their political stance. However, this does not mean that the hypothesis expecting higher negativity in left-wing newspapers and higher positivity in right-wing ones is confirmed yet. Ideology as an independent variable needs to be contrasted as well. To this end, Tables 11 and 12 below gather numerical and statistical results that have been visually shown in the figures above.

Table 11. Positive and negative polarity per ideology.

		Positive	**Negative**	**Total**
Left	Count	23	44	67
	% within ideol.	34.3%	65.7%	100.0%
Centre	Count	39	33	72
	% within ideol.	54.2%	45.8%	100.0%
Right	Count	72	30	102
	% within ideol.	70.6%	29.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	134	107	241
	% within ideol.	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%

Table 12. Chi-Square test for ideology and polarity.

	Value	**df**	**Symp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	21.623	2	.000

The values point at a significant difference in the proportion of positive and negative polarity across ideologies, with a statistical value of $p= <.001$. Observing percentages, visual outcomes are confirmed, since there is a notable preference for negative polarity in left-wing newspapers (approximately 35% positive versus 65% negative) as well as for positive polarity in right-wing newspapers (approximately 70% positive versus 30% negative). Moreover, although centre newspapers do show a difference in percentage, it is more balanced (approximately 55% positive and 45% negative). This answers the fourth and last research question and confirms that there is indeed a relationship between the ideology of a newspaper and the polarity of the metaphors it uses, and that left-wing newspapers show more negativity, which can be justified by the fact that they were advocating for a change in government in each country (for a more liberal, left-stance one) and therefore needed to highlight the negative aspects of the economy in 2015, right before the elections took place.

To conclude this section, it has to be noted that results at this stage of the analysis have been varied: while the language variable seems to affect the frequency of persuasive metaphors in a corpus, ideology does not seem to be a significant indicator of a higher load in any of its spheres (centre, left and right). Moreover, within the existing persuasive cases, negative and positive polarity are used differently both cross-linguistically and cross-ideologically. Spanish newspapers are not only more persuasively loaded, but they seem to show a more positive tone than their English counterparts; concerning ideology, there is also a significant relation between left-wing newspapers and negative polarity on the one hand and right-wing newspapers and positive polarity on the other.

6. Conclusions

This article has presented a critical, corpus-based, contrastive analysis of metaphors in the economic discourse published by the national newspapers of Spain and the United Kingdom in the seven days previous to the national elections of 2015. In line with previous studies which had observed metaphor frequency in discourse, it aimed at providing further insights into the use of this resource as a persuasive tool in critical discourse communication as it is the digital press accessible to all citizens, observing persuasion through metaphor and its capacity to highlight given aspects of reality and, thus, discourse. Moreover, it also pursued the objective of contrasting the different ways ideological spheres use metaphor to persuade the readers; in other words, how left-wing, centre and right-wing newspapers would somehow manipulate the reality of the economy of the country in a way that the receivers of the message would be persuaded to follow their particular goal (voting for one party or another, for instance). Following a systematic, meticulous methodology, the study has offered quantitative and qualitative results that can derive in different conclusions.

First, it has been observed that there is a prevalence of non-persuasive metaphors over persuasive ones, and the difference is higher in the English corpus. These findings contribute to studies of persuasion through metaphor in the sense that they point at an inexistent relation between metaphor frequency and persuasion since the English corpus presented a higher metaphor frequency than its Spanish counterpart, but a lower number of persuasive metaphors.

Second, different polarity strategies have been identified both cross-linguistically and cross-ideologically. To start with, while negativity was more frequently found than positivity in English, the Spanish corpus seems to be more positive. In other words, English newspapers seem to highlight the negative aspects of the economy more notably than its counterpart. Moreover, and as expected, left-wing newspapers are more negative than right-wing ones, and centre newspapers showed more balanced results. However, combining both variables (language and ideology) provided interesting findings, as it enabled us to determine why cross-linguistic or cross-ideologic comparisons result one way or another. Since no studies have been found addressing this combination of variables, the present one may serve to open a new area of research that can provide more specific results in terms of how persuasion is used in the discourse of the economic press.

To conclude, the present study sheds light on the field of persuasion in the economic press, since there is not much literature that directly addresses this area, and more concretely, which takes different variables into account (language and ideology combined and set within a specific, decisive timeframe as the present one). In spite of the limitations, it can be taken as motivation to expand the existing literature and research on metaphor as a powerful, persuasive tool, seen, at all times, as a social element of discourse that evolves as the real world where it is deployed does so. In any case, further studies are still needed to contrast the outcomes of this research whatsoever.

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