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Abstract

In light of recent political events surrounding the Brexit negotiations, there is still substantial uncertainty around the conditions and repercussions of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. Gibraltar's unique geographical and socio-political emplacement is highlighted by both Spanish and British governments in the negotiations, and the beginning of 2019 witnessed the first political advancements toward a new denomination of Gibraltar in a post-Brexit era. This paper contributes to ongoing research on discourses of Brexit (e.g. Koller et al., 2019; Zappettini, 2019) by critically analysing Spanish online newspapers' treatment of a series of events that led to Gibraltar's new status as a 'colony' under EU policy in April 2019. The analysis describes the representations of these political events in both language and image, their variability across newspapers according to their ideological position, and their potential impact on social attitudes towards the events. The data for this research is sampled from four widely read Spanish online newspapers: El País, El Mundo, ABC, and La Vanguardia. A cognitive linguistic approach to Critical Discourse Studies (CL-CDS; Hart, 2014) is employed with a focus on the linguistic and visual enactors of event-construal, including construal operations of schematisation and metaphor. The qualitative analysis of seventeen online news reports shows that different event construals reflect or instantiate the ideological positioning of these newspapers. However, a general narrative emerges from force-based schematisations (Talmy, 2000) which reflects the accomplishment of Spanish goals and an alignment between Spain and the EU.

Key words: *Brexit, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, force-dynamics, Gibraltar, multimodality, online news discourse*

1. Introduction¹

On 23 June 2016, the British people voted in a referendum that came to determine Britain's exit from the European Union (EU). The conditions and repercussions of 'Brexit', although forecast as negative for businesses, institutions and, above all, citizens, have remained uncertain, at least until the beginning of 2021. Despite the focus of the negotiations on the potential effects that Brexit will have on Britain and the EU, Britain rules over several Overseas Territories (OTs), which will also be deeply affected, among them Gibraltar.

Research into discourses of Brexit has focused on how trade and immigration dominated political campaigns, leading to the Brexit referendum

(Zappettini, 2019), while chapters in Koller et al.'s (2019) edited volume have shed light on both the discursive drivers and consequences of the Brexit referendum. This paper contributes to ongoing research on discourses of Brexit by critically analysing Spanish online newspapers' representation of a series of events that led to Gibraltar's new status as a 'colony' under EU rule in a no-deal Brexit scenario in April 2019. The research questions that motivate this article are:

- How do Spanish online newspapers employ FORCE² in schematisation and metaphor to construe the events affecting Gibraltar's status?
- What text-image (T-I) relationships are observable in news reports, and what ideological functions can these serve to fulfil?
- What implications do these event construals have in the context of the Brexit negotiations?

The events analysed include: (1) the approval by the European Parliament of a draft document on visa rights including a footnote that referred to Gibraltar as a 'colony'; (2) the recalling of the draft document due to a British MEP's objections; (3) the removal of a British MEP (Claude Moraes) from his role of rapporteur for EU no-deal visa-free travel; and (4) the final approval of the visas draft proposal. The analytical apparatus in this paper is based on a cognitive linguistic approach to Critical Discourse Studies that includes linguistic and visual aspects (CL-CDS; Hart, 2014, 2016, 2017).

Section 2 outlines the essential historical context for a situated interpretation of the data. In section 3, the analytical frameworks employed in the analysis are introduced. Section 4 introduces the data and outlines analytical steps. Section 5 presents a qualitative analysis and critical interpretation of the news reports. And finally, section 6 provides a summary of the main findings on event construals and their implications for the framing of Britain's territories in the context of the Brexit negotiations.

2. Gibraltar, Spain, and the Brexit Referendum

2.1 Gibraltar's History

Gibraltar is considered a capital possession for Britain and Spain due to its strategic emplacement at the entrance of the Mediterranean Sea in the south of the Iberian Peninsula. Under Article X of the 1713 Utrecht Peace Treaty, Britain gained factual sovereignty over Gibraltar, but Spain and Britain disagree on how the Article should currently be interpreted (Gold, 2010). Recently, the geopolitical status of Gibraltar in relation to Britain, Spain and the EU has undergone several transformations contributing to its position in the Brexit negotiations. The referendum of 1967, in which Gibraltar decided to remain part of Britain, was essential to subsequent stages of the Gibraltar-Spain relationship (Gold, 2010), and reflected Britain's defence of Gibraltarians' rights and their citizenship. When decolonisation under the principle of self-determination was initiated by Britain regarding Gibraltar, the UN sided with Spain, adopting the position that Gibraltar was not a colony that needed to be liberated (Burç-Yıldız & Çamyamaç, 2017, p. 25). Mut Bosque (2017) and Gold (2010) state that the 2006 referendum, which

rejected joint sovereignty with 98.5% against (Burç-Yildiz & Çamyamaç, 2017, p. 26), asserted Gibraltarians' British identity and sense of belonging to the British territories. Lastly, the 2006 Gibraltar Constitution reflects the special status of Gibraltar in that it 'confers on Gibraltar more autonomy than, for instance, Scotland, and it guarantees Gibraltarians their right to self-determination' (Mut Bosque, 2017, p. 483). Nevertheless, Gibraltar is, in the eyes of the international community, and despite the referendum of 2006, still a colony, due to not complying with the UN's criteria for decolonisation (Gold, 2010, p. 373).

2.2 Gibraltar and the Brexit Referendum

The Brexit negotiations between the EU and Britain highlight Gibraltar's ambivalent status, especially in a no-deal Brexit scenario (Mut Bosque, 2017). More than 96% of Gibraltarians voted 'Remain' and Gibraltar's Chief Minister, Fabian Picardo, described a no-deal Brexit as 'an existential threat to Gibraltar's economic model' (Harris & Morrison, 2017, p. 262). Benwell and Pinkerton (2016) discuss Gibraltar's status regarding Brexit and outline beneficial aspects of the OT's membership in the EU. They emphasize that Gibraltar was the only OT whose citizens were allowed to vote in the 2016 referendum, and they report on the unity in the political response to the event, in which 'its citizens seemingly snubbed pro-Brexit events and campaigners' (Benwell & Pinkerton, 2016, pp. 9-10). As for the Remain campaign, Benwell and Pinkerton (2016) indicate that access to the single market and the free movement of capital and labour were central points. Crucially, Gibraltar's EU membership protects its people from Spain's further sovereignty claims.

EU guidelines for the Brexit negotiations give Spain the right of veto over future Gibraltar-EU relations, which marks a shift in the EU's originally neutral stance towards siding with Spain (Burç-Yildiz & Çamyamaç, 2017, p. 21). One possible explanation for this change is the EU's decision to counter any further rise of Euroscepticism among other EU member states (Burç-Yildiz & Çamyamaç, 2017). Gibraltar is culturally and economically connected to the surrounding Spanish communities (e.g. La Línea, the closest city on Spanish territory), and tens of thousands of both Gibraltarian and Spanish livelihoods could be affected if the negotiations do not materialise in a mutually convenient arrangement. In the context of the events analysed here (namely the process of the approval of a visas draft proposal that would be effective in a no-deal Brexit scenario), it is essential to examine the mediated communications of the political actors involved. This examination requires analysis of deep structures of the construal of meaning by analysing variation and change in verbal and visual event construals of Gibraltar and its political status in the uncertainty and turmoil of Brexit and Spain-EU relations. This includes examining event construals across the most visited Spanish online newspapers, as they instantiate (more or less explicitly) differentiated ideologies that might underpin contrasting coverage of the events. The analytical apparatus designed to conduct such examination is presented in the next section.

3. Analytical Frameworks

3.1 CL-CDS

The analytical framework employed here is based on cognitive linguistic approaches to Critical Discourse Studies (Chilton, 2011; Hart, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2014, 2015, 2016). A crucial tenet for CL-CDS is that language encodes construals, whereby the same situation can be conceptualized in diverse ways, indexed by alternative linguistic and/or other semiotic formulations (Hart, 2014). Different representations in linguistic and imagistic modes can potentially position the reader/viewer in particular ways, for example by using a certain metaphorical framing. Close analysis of linguistic constructions (and visual choices), then, may reveal the potential ideological effects of contextualized discursive input at the cognitive level (Chilton, 2011).

Hart (2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2015, 2016) starts out from the different cognitive-linguistic construal operations theorised by Croft and Cruse (2004). These construal operations are manifestations of domain-general cognitive systems (Croft & Cruse, 2004), and their linguistic realisations provide the objects of analysis in an integral approach (Hart, 2011b). Following Hart's schema for the analysis of construal operations (2014, p. 111), I focus on FORCE in schematisation and metaphor to address differences in event construal and framing.

Image schemas and other resources constitute a 'cognitive grammar' available to speakers (Hart, 2014). Image schemas are instrumental for the construal operation of schematisation, which is grounded in our general cognitive ability of 'constituting experience and giving it structure or a Gestalt, [defined as] a single complex object from seemingly fragmented perceptual sensations' (Croft & Cruse, 2004, p. 63). Image schemas are pre-conceptual structures distilled from recurring experiences that support thought, language, and communicative processes (Oakley, 2007). In schematisation, image schemas are recruited to define the basic topology of an event and the semantic roles within the event-structure; the imposition of image schemas upon scenes in schematisation processes can index ideological uses of discourse as these conceptual structures can attribute defining properties to the actors involved (Hart, 2017, p. 191). For instance, FORCE schemas suggest the presence of some causative force and/or some hindrance to ongoing processes, while MOTION schemas construe more neutral force-dynamics in events, as in self-directed and unimpeded motion (Hart, 2011a).

While some image schemas are grounded in our visual experience (Langacker, 2008), FORCE schemas arise from our somaesthetic and kinaesthetic experience (Mandler & Pagán Cánovas, 2014), and deal with physical force and its metaphorical extensions to psychological relationships and social interactions (Talmy, 2000). In the data for this research, FORCE schemas can serve to encode a 'battle' between entities, thus lending themselves 'to a metaphorical extension [...] where the event is framed in terms of WAR' (Hart, 2014, p. 119).

FORCE analysis is a powerful tool for 'understanding how specific patterns can be used in combination to satisfy different strategic goals' (Oakley, 2005, p. 467). The basic elements of FORCE schemas include an Agonist (Ago) as the focal force entity 'whose circumstance is at issue' (Talmy, 2000, p. 415), an Antagonist (Ant) as the opposing force entity, tendencies to exert force

intrinsic to these entities, relative strength, and resultant of force interaction (Figure 1; Talmy, 2000, pp. 413-441).

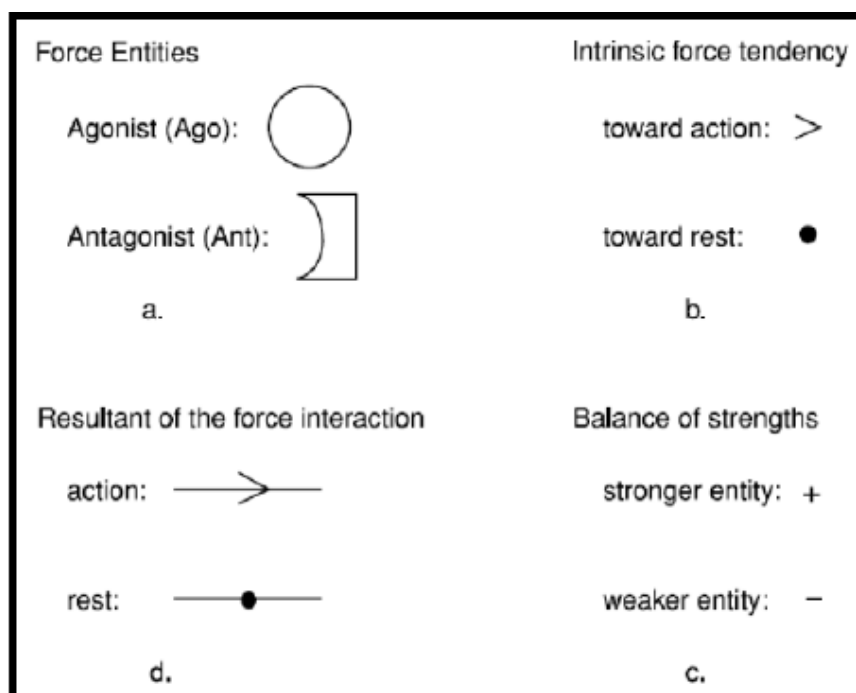


Figure 1. Basic elements in FORCE schemas (Talmy, 2000, p. 414)

Talmy distinguishes between STEADY-STATE (2000, pp. 413-417) and SHIFT-IN-STATE schemas (2000, pp. 417-420). STEADY-STATE schemas depict continuous relationships between entities, which Talmy (2000) divides into ‘despite’ and ‘causative’ patterns. The STEADY-STATE schema in Figure 2, with its linguistic realisation in example (1), takes the shape of a STEADY-STATE:BLOCKAGE schema (Peña Cervel, 2012). (1) schematises an event where Moraes (British ex-MEP), as the stronger Antagonist, constantly blocks the tendency of the drafting the agreement.

(1) *ABC*, 21 March 2019.

Moraes era el obstáculo más importante para la redacción de ese acuerdo
 [Moraes (Ant) was the most important obstacle (STEADY-STATE:BLOCKAGE)
 for the drafting of that agreement (Ago)]

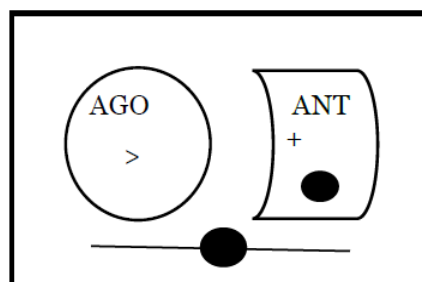


Figure 2. STEADY-STATE FORCE schema (Talmy, 2000)

SHIFT-IN-STATE schemas, conversely, express a change in the resultant of the force interaction (Talmy, 2000). They construe relations of onset-causation or allowing of action, inaction, or motion. For instances that focus on a shift in power relations, I apply Talmy's (2000, p. 418) 'shift-in-balance-of-strength' schema, where 'rather than the Antagonist leaving or entering a state of impingement, the Antagonist remains in place and the shift is in its strength, such that the Agonist either realises its intrinsic tendency or is prevented from doing so' (Hart, 2010, p. 165). This sub-type of FORCE schema is of special relevance in the context of the data for this research as it construes dynamically overcoming hindrances and the empowerment of entities to do so; the focus is on 'whether the Ago eventually manages to realise its intrinsic tendency or is successfully controlled and thus overpowered' (Ullman, 2017, p. 4). Another sub-type of FORCE instrumental in the analysis below involves speech-act verbs (Sweetser, 1990), where certain verbs' illocutionary force can be conceptualized metaphorically in terms of physical force (e.g. 'warn' in (5) below). In the analysis below, I elaborate on the potential ideological import of different configurations of FORCE patterns.

The study of the linguistic instantiations of Conceptual Metaphor (CM) is likewise key to the de-construction of ideologies (Goatly, 2007). CM theory (Lakoff, 1987) focuses on metaphorical thought and its implications for the organization of grammatical knowledge, while in this paper CM is addressed as 'the phenomenon whereby we talk and, potentially, think about something in terms of something else' (Semino, 2008, p. 1). CMs are relatively stable associations between conceptual domains that are routinely enacted through metaphorical expressions reproduced in discourse; CMs 'enable speakers to structure and construe [usually more] abstract ideas of knowledge and experience [target domains] in more concrete experiential terms [source domains]' (Hurford et al., 2008, p. 331). Ideologically, metaphor can be exploited in discourse to promote one version of reality over another, framing events in different ways and therefore differently structuring our understanding of socio-political phenomena as well (Hart, 2014, p. 137). The framing of events is especially important as the perspective presented to the audience can potentially serve to legitimate socio-political (re)actions.

In the context of the recent political debates about the European Union, Musolff (2016a) documents, among many others, the pervasiveness of the POLITICS IS JOURNEY CM, where one of the central conceptual mappings this CM enables is that of POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS HINDERING A POLITICAL PROCESS ARE OBSTACLES ON A PATH (2016a, p. 43). In (1) above, the British ex-MEP Moraes is conceptualized as the Antagonist blocking a political process and is categorized as an 'obstacle', therefore being attributed negative associations that serve to legitimate his removal (see analysis below). Framing political processes in such a manner is ideologically relevant, as the relationships between entities and the processes they are involved in are constrained by the possibilities afforded by the metaphor scenario (Musolff, 2016b). Thus, any development affecting in any way a given political process is potentially framed negatively and, therefore, actions against those developments are legitimated. In the context of the metaphorical patterns examined in this article, it is crucial to focus on discursive conceptual metaphors, as they are 'socially construed and specific to social and political discourses [...] which fulfil specific ideological or persuasive functions' (Hart, 2014, p. 138).

3.2 Multimodality and Text-Image Relations

Although the study of news discourse has pre-eminently focused on linguistic texts, media discourses are, in a majority of cases, multimodal (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Modes are ‘merged’ in texts and communicative events (Lemke, 1998), where online newspapers tend to combine (static) image and linguistic text. Images and texts as enacting discursive strategies can serve as markers of underlying ideologies (Machin & van Leeuwen, 2016). Hart (2014, 2016, 2017) has extended the analysis and theory of his approach to include visual modes. Crucial for this approach is that ‘language use involves the activation of imagery and imagined scenarios based on past experience including, presumably, mediated visuo-semiotic experience’ (Hart, 2017, p. 196). A pivotal claim is that, from a CL perspective, language and image processing share qualities and can therefore both be analysed within the same parameters (Hart & Mármol Queraltó, forthcoming). Enactors of schematisation and metaphor can be realised, and therefore critically analysed, in both modalities. The study of social discourses must include both language and image analysis since they complement each other to create meaning. Hart (2017, p. 197) concludes that the exclusion of either will lead to partial understandings since the meaning of language features in a multimodal text, such as online news, is at least in part modulated by co-occurring devices such as photographs.

Images in news reports play a crucial role in event construal (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). Even though the function of images in news reports is, purportedly, that of documentation, Machin (2007, p. 24) asserts that there is no such thing as ‘neutral documentation’. Text-Image (T-I) combinations allow for the emergence of new meanings (Lemke, 1998), which need to be accounted for when the two modalities co-occur. From a systemic-functional perspective, Liu and O’Halloran (2009, p. 369) introduce the notion of ‘Intersemiotic Texture’, which refers ‘to a matter of semantic relations between different modalities’. This approach complements Martinec and Salway’s (2005) grammar-based unidirectional account by treating visual and verbal components as ‘covariate structures’. This leads to a bidirectional account of T-I relations where modes and elements within the text can co-modify each other (Liu & O’Halloran, 2009, p. 378). Liu and O’Halloran (2009, p. 373) indicate that if both modes share the same transitivity configuration, then ‘Intersemiotic Parallel Structures will take shape in the multisemiotic text’. These structures can potentially give rise to ‘semantic expansions’ such as Similarity, Addition, Cause/Purpose and/or temporal Succession (see Table 1). Liu and O’Halloran (2009, p. 379) further state that images can be related to several linguistic messages, and that for news reports ‘the picture is likely to be connected to its caption, the headline and the report proper’.

Logical Relations		Meaning
Comparative		Similarity
Additive		Addition
Consequential		Cause Purpose
Temporal		Successive

Table 1. Intersemiotic logical relations at discourse level (Liu & O'Halloran, 2009, p. 384)

From a cognitive perspective, T-I relations have been mainly addressed by Forceville's (2008) account of multimodal metaphor. Forceville (2008) identifies four main metaphorical realisations and/or relationships: contextual pictorial metaphor, hybrid pictorial metaphor, pictorial simile and multimodal metaphor. Due to the purported aim of news reports to 'objectively document' events (van Dijk, 1988), one can expect to find contextual pictorial metaphors. These relate the represented object as the target of the metaphor and the visually suggested object as its source. The visual context (here, the interrelated elements available on a given news website; see section 4) is crucial in that it allows the viewer to identify the source domain. In the context of Brexit, Morozova (2017) studied mono- and multimodal metaphors in the British traditional and new media, finding that the use of metaphors serves to reflect the writer's stance, where proponents of Brexit conceptualize it as a controlled action by the UK, while its opponents represent it as an uncontrolled process. Silaški and Đurovic (2019) focused on the JOURNEY metaphor in political cartoons and found that it is used to both simplify the Brexit process and to convey evaluative content, foregrounding 'the notion of wrong and irresponsible decision-making on both sides' (Silaški & Đurovic, 2019, p. 9).

In sum, I have applied a T-I approach anchored in CL-CDS approaches to multimodal discourse (Hart, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), where text and image can be related bidirectionally in diverse ways. The analysis of T-I relations is based on Liu and O'Halloran's (2009) Implication Sequences and Forceville's (2008) taxonomy of multimodal metaphor. In the following section I describe the data collection and methods for this research.

4. Data and Methods

4.1 Data and Elements for Analysis

The data for this research has been collected from four Spanish online newspapers: *ABC*, *El País (EP)*, *El Mundo (EM)* and *La Vanguardia (LV)*. These newspapers combine the largest readership for paid-to-read newspapers (AIMC, 2019) and respond to different ideological inclinations³,

which might at least partially underlie and motivate event construal. Ultimately, media consumption is experiencing an increase in online newspaper readership to the detriment of their print versions (AIMC, 2019), making it essential to analyse representational patterns enacted in this medium today (Labio & Pineda, 2016).

In order to collect the data, the newspapers' integrated search tools were used for the period 1 February to 30 April 2019. This period encapsulates the European Parliament events affecting Gibraltar's status due to its mention in the visas draft proposal. The keyword 'Gibraltar' was put into each newspaper's search tool for this period and those news items that reported the central events in the European Parliamentary process were collected. These events are: (1) the approval by the European Parliament of a draft document of visa rights including a footnote that refers to Gibraltar as a 'colony' (2 February 2019); (2) the recalling of the draft document due to a British MEP's objections (21-22 February 2019); (3) the removal of the British MEP who was against the reference (1-2 April 2019); and (4) the final approval of the visas draft proposal (4 April 2019). The corpus is formed of 17 reports (*ABC*, 7x; *El País*, 4x; *El Mundo*, 2x; *La Vanguardia*, 4x). These reports were put into the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid's UAM Corpus Tool, including its version for image analysis, in .TXT and .JPEG format files. The analytical parameters (schematisation and metaphor) are similar for text and images, in line with the theoretical perspective outlined above.

The qualitative analysis of metaphor and schematisation was limited to (A) headlines, (B) subheadings, (C) images, (D) captions, and (E) the lead paragraph of each news report. These areas have been identified as typical loci of attention for readers/viewers (Holsanova & Nord, 2010). Headlines and images are especially salient elements that constitute potential entry points to news reports, providing a condensation of informative and evaluative features, and activating relevant knowledge structures for news processing (van Dijk, 2012). Subheadings are focal points as they tend to elaborate the information in the headings, whereas lead paragraphs provide an overview of the content of the report (Bell, 1998). The selection addresses design principles and multimedia affordances. These elements (along with other, external information that was excluded from analysis, e.g. adverts) are readily accessible when visualising online newspapers on any given standard PC/laptop screen (see Figure 3).

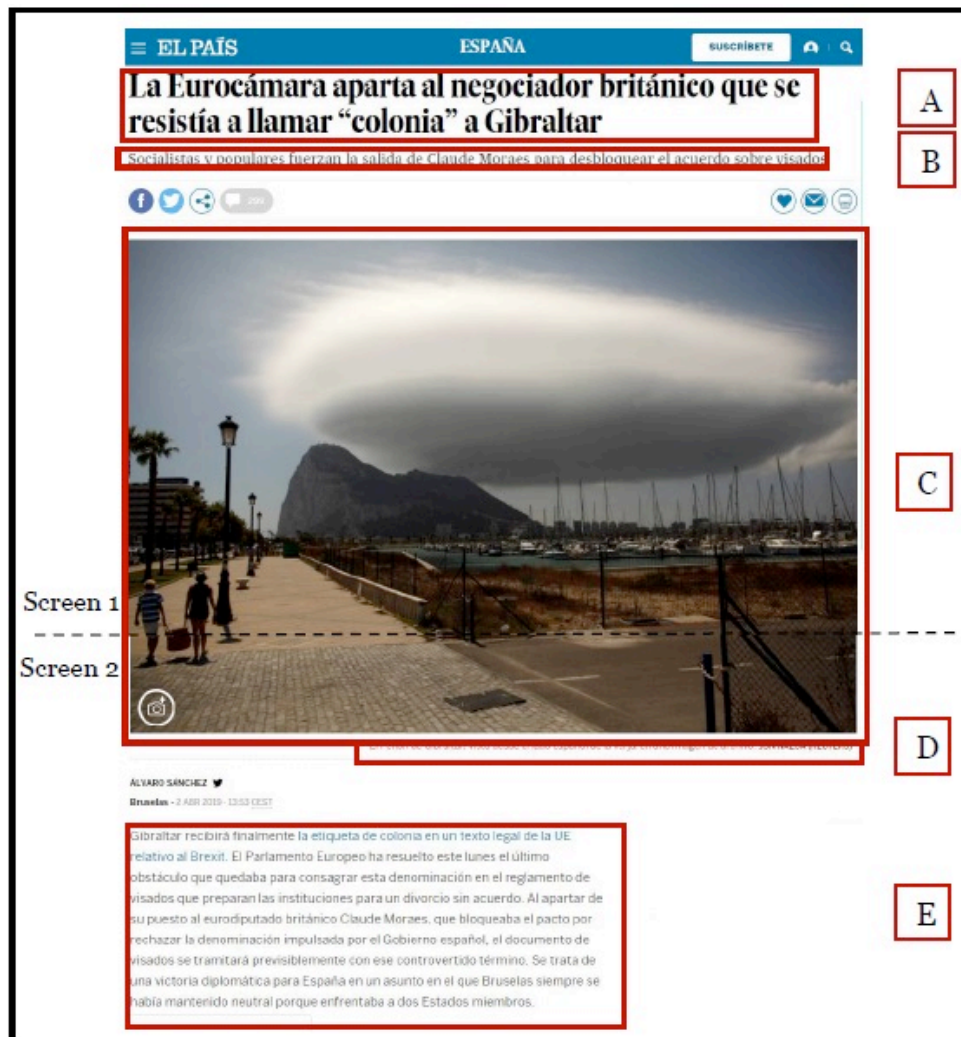


Figure 3. Elements for analysis in *El País* (2 April 2019)

4.2 Analysis and T-I Relationships

The analytical process broadly mirrors the research questions for this investigation:

- How do Spanish online newspapers employ FORCE in schematisation and metaphor to construe the events affecting Gibraltar's status?
- What text-image (T-I) relationships are observable in news reports, and what ideological functions can these serve to fulfil?
- What implications do these event construals have in the context of the Brexit negotiations?

The focus on FORCE in metaphor and schematisation is based on the potential ideological functions these operations can have in texts as well as their potential analytical-interpretative power. Just like metaphor, force-dynamics analysis has been shown to be productive in revealing the ideological and legitimating qualities of discursive representation (Hart, 2011a; Oakley, 2005; Ullman, 2017). The study of FORCE schemas in political discourse, also in the visual modality, is essential as it enables researchers to systematically analyse and interpret discourse structures that deal with the

representation of power dynamics in socially situated texts. Further, the method for this research combines two approaches to T-I relations within an integral cognitive-linguistic critical approach to discourse analysis more generally. On the analytical level, this integration is motivated by the possibilities afforded by their combination. Forceville's (2008) account of T-I relations is fruitful exclusively in the realm of metaphor, but lacks integration with other construal operations that can be ideologically important in (multimodal) event-construal. The incorporation of Liu's and O'Halloran's (2009) framework is instrumental due to its flexibility and explicative power, which allows for the integration of schematisation and metaphor analysis. The combination of both approaches within a CL-CDS approach enables the researcher to examine in detail the specific discursive phenomena collected for this research, and to critically appreciate discursive nuances that other approaches might miss.

In terms of analysing FORCE in schematisation and metaphor, the coding was realised in the UAM Corpus Tool. Coding systems were created for both schematisation and metaphor, reflecting the theoretical lens introduced above. Similar coding systems were employed for the coding of text and image in the respective functions of the corpus tool. The qualitative analysis follows canonical steps in CDS (Fairclough, 1995, p. 133): (a) rigorous description of the selected elements of the multimodal text in terms of CL theory; (b) interpretation, which deals with how the audience might mentally interact with the text; and (c) explanation, which focuses on the relation between discursive and social (economic, political and cultural) processes. The initial stage of analysis is the microlevel description of text and image in news reports. This step entails identifying the lexical units and visual elements that activate relevant conceptual structures which restrict the potential conceptualizations of the construed event. The following step involves theorising how the selection of elements and their configuration in news reports 'work together', implementing Forceville's (2008) and Liu and O'Halloran's (2009) theories. This subsequently enables the researcher to hypothesize how the multimodal text might be interpreted by the audience. The analysis of T-I relations is built upon the linguistic and visual patterns initially observed. The descriptions of language and image feed into the overall structural and rhetorical configuration and subsequent interpretation of the report. This analytical stage is abductive and aims to provide the most plausible interpretations for the role of the observable T-I relations within news reports. Lastly, the analysis connects the discursive representations observed in news reports to the socio-political context more generally. This procedure has been applied rigorously and consistently to the data collected, and the next section reports the findings of this research.

5. Analysis and Discussion

A qualitative analysis is performed on the selected 17 reports from the four mainstream Spanish newspapers, published between 1 February and 30 April 2019. Specific FORCE construals are identified as most relevant because of their position within the selected elements in news reports and their potential ideological functions. These FORCE patterns are subjected to a systematic close

analysis. In what follows, I present the analysis and discussion of news reports in the chronological order of events.

5.1 Initial Visas Draft Approval and its Subsequent Recall

On 1 February 2019, the European Parliament approved a proposal for visa requirements including a footnote that defined Gibraltar as a colony in a no-deal Brexit scenario. In terms of linguistic event construal⁴, *ABC* and *La Vanguardia* (*LV*) converge in the headline, with the EU foregrounded in an ACTION schema in which it ‘tentatively designates’ (*señala*) Gibraltar as a colony (see Figure 4). While *ABC*’s choice of image is arguably neutral, with ‘the Rock’ depicted from afar, *LV* frames the Rock closer, with a cloud casting a dark shadow on it.



Figure 4. *La Vanguardia* (1 February 2019)

This photo is arguably enacting a SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION contextual pictorial metaphor (Forceville, 2008), where the cloud stands for the negative scenario that Gibraltar faces as a consequence of the event construed in the headline. The particular shape, isolation and location of the cloud, along with its saturated colours, suggest that the image contributes to frame the event as a negative (social) situation for Gibraltar, where the event in the headline represents the Cause of the arrival of the (metaphorical) cloud within a Consequential relation (Liu & O’Halloran, 2009). This can potentially resonate with the Spanish idiomatic expression *se acerca una tormenta* [a storm is approaching]. This is ideologically relevant as the cloud would indicate that a storm is coming, metaphorically affecting Gibraltar. Such a complex T-I relation⁵ is enacted in several of the reports analysed (see below).

(2) *La Vanguardia*, 1 February 2019.

Hay una controversia entre España y Reino Unido en cuanto a la soberanía de Gibraltar

[There is a controversy between (STEADY: BALANCE-OF-FORCES) Spain (Ago) and Britain (Ant) regarding Gibraltar’s sovereignty]

In (2) *LV* quotes in the lead paragraph the actual footnote in the draft proposal. This has ideological implications since it construes Britain as the entity opposing Spain in a BALANCE-OF-FORCES schema. *El Mundo* (*EM*) and *El País* (*EP*) also schematise the event primarily employing FORCE, as in (3a, b).

(3) *El Mundo*, 1 February 2019.

(a) *España logra que en los documentos de la UE ya figure Gibraltar como colonia*

[Spain (Ago) achieves (SHIFT-IN-STATE:RESTRAINT REMOVAL) that in the EU's documents Gibraltar already figures as colony]

(b) *El Coreper ... ha aprobado esta mañana un documento que reconoce por primera vez que Gibraltar es 'una colonia'*

[Coreper (Ant) ... approved (SHIFT-IN-STATE:ENABLEMENT) this morning a document (Ago) that acknowledges for the first time that Gibraltar is 'a colony']

In (3a), the Agonist Spain is foregrounded in its achievement without any linguistically encoded opposing entities. The focus is shifted in (3b), where the Antagonist is specified within the EU as the Coreper (Committee of Permanent Representatives), which by means of a SHIFT-IN-STATE:ENABLEMENT schema allows the draft document containing the contentious footnote. Finally, *EP* schematises the event in terms of FORCE similarly to *EM* in (3b), however with Spain (Agonist) succeeding in causing the EU to act. This event is framed in a POLITICS IS WAR scenario:

(4) *El País*, 1 February 2019.

(a) *La UE definirá a Gibraltar como 'colonia' por la presión de España*

[The EU (Ant) will define (SHIFT-IN-STATE:COMPULSION) Gibraltar as a 'colony' because of Spain's pressure (Ago)]

(b) *España ha ganado otra pequeña batalla diplomática*

[Spain has won another small diplomatic battle]

In (4a) Spain is construed as the stronger entity that manages to fulfil its intrinsic tendency causing the EU to act despite the institution's initial tendency to stasis. This event construal is ideologically significant because it confronts Spain both with the EU and indirectly with Gibraltar, since the latter is the recipient of the resultant of the FORCE schema. This implicit meaning is reinforced by the connotations of the image, which in turn is the same chosen by *LV* (see Figure 5): the cloud, due to contextual enrichment, potentially symbolises difficulties for Gibraltar in a SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION contextual pictorial metaphor. This metaphor is especially important in the context of the data for this article due to its pervasiveness and its potential ideological functions. This metaphor is related to the CIRCUMSTANCES ARE WEATHER CM (Goatly 1997, p. 109). While good weather indicates a favourable (social) condition, bad weather implies an unpleasant condition. In the present case, there is a relation of intensity between the weather condition and the social condition, the worse/better the weather, the worse/better the social circumstances. Such uses are underpinned by the common knowledge of the source domain WEATHER and its destructive potential. Thus, weather metaphors can evoke either a positive or a negative evaluation; in the photographs included in the data for this research the emotion evoked is negative in most cases (but see Figure 10

below). Additionally, Goatly (1997) remarks that this metaphor can combine with a POLITICS IS JOURNEY CM, where the weather condition can affect a given political process conceptualized in terms of MOTION (see (6d) below).

On 22 February, the European Parliament recalled the footnote due to the British ex-MEP Claude Moraes' objections. It is worth highlighting *EM*'s omission of this event while it foregrounds another one in which Spain warns the UK regarding the building on soil that Spain considers its own:

(5) *El Mundo*, 26 February 2019.

España avisa a Londres de posibles acciones legales contra Gibraltar

[Spain (Ant) warns (STEADY:COMPULSION) the UK (Ago) of possible legal actions (Theme) against (STEADY:COMPULSION) Gibraltar (Ago)]

Instead of reporting on the unfolding issue regarding Gibraltar's status, which might be considered controversial or negative by *El Mundo*'s audience, *EM* reports on the backlash faced by Gibraltarian authorities from Spain. This is enacted by means of an event schematised as a complex STEADY:COMPULSION interaction (see (5)). Following Sweetser's (1990, p. 69) FORCE structure of speech-act verbs, in which the illocutionary force of speech-act verbs can be conceptualized in terms of FORCE, Spain is the focal entity in a STEADY:COMPULSION event with the UK and Gibraltar as Agonists. The STEADY:COMPULSION schema in (5) construes an event in which the Antagonist (Spain) continuously impinges on the Agonist (Gibraltar) with the aim to deter any future actions, in this case the construction of new buildings; the THEME ('legal actions') encodes the possible repercussions that Gibraltar might face if it decided to go ahead with the construction.

LV, *ABC* and *EP* report on the recall of the draft proposal, but not in the same way. *EP* starts by foregrounding Britain's role in the blocking of the agreement and frames the event by means of four metaphorical expressions:

(6) *El País*, 21 February 2019.

(a) *Reino Unido intenta sabotear el acuerdo sobre visados*

[Britain (Ant) tries to sabotage (STEADY:BLOCKAGE) the visa agreement (Ago)...]

(b) *El acuerdo... está a punto de saltar por los aires*

[The agreement ... is about to blow up]

(c) *...el divorcio entre Bruselas y Londres...*

[...the divorce between Brussels and London]

(d) *El acuerdo ... ha encallado...*

[The agreement ... has run aground...]

(6a) schematises the event as STEADY:BLOCKAGE where Britain intends to undermine the agreement to its benefit. Both (6a) and (6b) are framed within a POLITICS IS WAR CM, while (6c) frames the overall Brexit negotiations within a POLITICAL RELATIONS ARE PERSONAL RELATIONS CM. Alternatively, (6d) is framed in a POLITICS IS JOURNEY CM. These patterns represent the event as a complex political conflict with several dimensions, framed by the various metaphorical expressions. Importantly, the focal entity is Britain in its role of Antagonist in the headline, although the lead paragraph shifts the focus towards the possible outcome of this STEADY schema, with the 'blowing up' of the agreement. Alternatively, (6d) frames the political process as a JOURNEY,

where the FORCE schema in the headline is reconceptualized as a ‘forced pause’ in the negotiations.



Figure 5. *El País* (21 February 2019)

The photograph in *EP* (Figure 5) depicts the Rock in rainy conditions, potentially invoking a SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION contextual pictorial metaphor (Forceville, 2008) that arguably frames the event as a difficult time for Gibraltar and associated entities. However, this is not as clearly the case as in Figure 4 with its darker and more saturated cloud.

As for *ABC* and *LV*, while both focus on the EU's actions in the headline, the relative strength of the institution and its positioning within the event are schematised in different ways:

(7) 22 February 2019.

- (a) (*ABC*) *El Parlamento Europeo cede a la presión de Londres*
 [The European Parliament (Ant) yields (SHIFT-IN-STATE:SUBMISSION TO FORCE) to London's pressure (Ago)]
- (b) (*La Vanguardia*) *El Parlamento Europeo no acepta llamar a Gibraltar colonia*
 [The European Parliament (Ant) does not accept (SHIFT-IN-STATE:BLOCKAGE) denominating Gibraltar a colony (Ago)]

These contrasting FORCE schemas potentially index alternative ideological stances. In (7a) the schema is one in which the balance of strength, previously equal between Antagonist and Agonist, shifts to the Agonist causing the Antagonist (the European Parliament) to submit to the force exerted by the Agonist ('London's pressure'). As a result, the interaction shifts from stasis (rest) to action ('yielding'). Alternatively, (7b) construes the event with the European Parliament as the stronger Antagonist, who blocks the denomination of Gibraltar as a colony (see figure 6b).

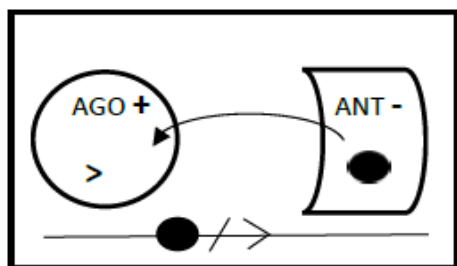


Figure 6a. FORCE schema in (7a)

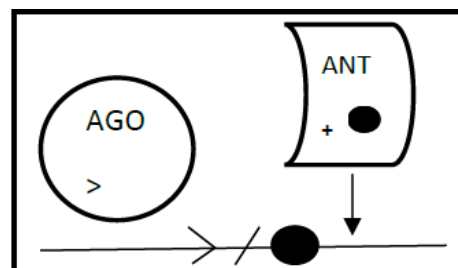


Figure 6b. FORCE schema in (7b)

Both newspapers elaborate these FORCE patterns in the subheading:

(8) 22 February 2019.

- (a) (*ABC*) *Un eurodiputado británico logra bloquear el acuerdo de exención de visados porque España exige que se mencione al Peñón como ‘colonia’*
 [A British MEP (Ant) manages to block (SHIFT-IN-STATE:BLOCKAGE) the visa exemption document (Ago) because Spain (Ago) demands (STEADY:COMPULSION) the Rock’s denomination as ‘colony’ (Theme)]
- (b) (*La Vanguardia*) *España acusa a un diputado británico de bloquear el acuerdo sobre visados*
 [Spain (Ant) accuses (STEADY:COMPULSION) a British MEP (Ago) of blocking (STEADY:BLOCKAGE) the visa exemption agreement (Ago)]

While both (8a, b) construe the action performed by the British MEP as a dynamic/steady BLOCKAGE framed within a POLITICS IS JOURNEY CM, the relative salience of the involved entities is emphasised with potentially ideological implications. (8a) focuses on the British MEP as the focal entity, unlike (8b) where Spain is the entity in focus. Alternatively, Spain is the Agonist (8a) or the Antagonist (8b) of STEADY:COMPULSION events evoked by speech-act verbs encoding FORCE (Sweetser, 1990). Event construal complexity is significant here: in (8a) the MEP reacts against Spain’s demands, while in (8b) Spain’s accusation is a reaction to the MEP’s blockage (hence the contrasting semantic roles). Arguably, these construals reflect competing ideological stances. Overall, *ABC* construes the event as a concession of the EU to Britain’s efforts, these being a reaction to Spain’s claims. Conversely, *La Vanguardia* construes the event with the EU as the stronger, blocking Antagonist, and then focuses on Spain as the Antagonist of a STEADY:COMPULSION schema which schematises the reaction of Spain towards the STEADY:BLOCKAGE carried out by the British MEP.

5.2 British MEP Removal and Final Visas Draft Passing

April 2019 marked the unfolding of the last two events analysed here: (a) the removal of the British ex-MEP Claude Moraes, which subsequently allowed (b) the European Parliament to pass the proposal. Specifically, Moraes was stripped of his role of rapporteur for EU no-deal visa-free travel legislation (Boffey, 2019). Only *El País* and *ABC* report the removal of Moraes. *EP* construes the event in the headline ((9a); Figure 7a), while *ABC* represents it in its lead paragraph as a necessary stage for Spain’s success in the negotiations ((9b); Figure 7b), following the STEADY:BLOCKAGE construal discussed in (1) above:

- (9) 2 April 2019.
 (a) (*El País*) *La Eurocámara aparta al negociador británico...*
 [The European Parliament (Ant) pushes aside (SHIFT-IN-STATE:REPULSION) the British negotiator (Ago)]
 (b) (*ABC*) *El eurodiputado laborista Claude Moraes fue destituido ayer*
 [The Labour MEP Claude Moraes (Ago) was removed (SHIFT-IN-STATE:COMPULSION) yesterday]

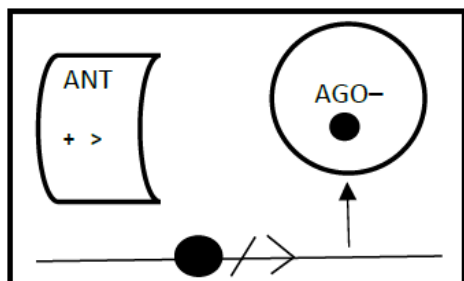


Figure 7a. FORCE schema in (9a)

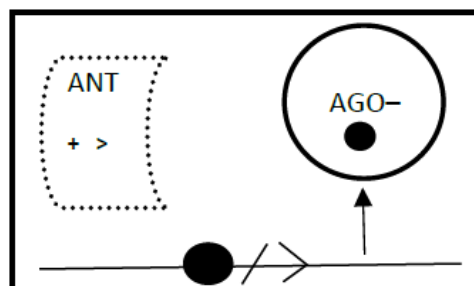


Figure 7b. FORCE schema in (9b)

While *EP* construes the EU as the stronger Antagonist, *ABC* prefers to omit the entity removing Moraes⁶ (symbolized by the discontinuous line and suppressed linguistically in an agentless passive voice construction). However, the Antagonist (the EU) can be inferred from previous sections of the news report. Both (9a, b) encode CAUSED-MOTION (Talmy, 2000) events in which Moraes' forced change in metaphorical location entails the loss of his official status. Additionally, *ABC* frames the event by means of a SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION contextual pictorial metaphor in which a cloud 'engulfs' the Rock (Figure 8).



Figure 8. *ABC* (2 April 2019)

The four newspapers' event construals of the passing of the draft visas document are similar to their construals of the initial event. Mainly, the EU is construed as the ENABLER passing the document (e.g. (10a), where the Agonist is encoded in the relative clause), underpinned by a POLITICS IS WAR CM in that Spain is the *winner* of the diplomatic *battle* (e.g. (4b)). In the case of *ABC*

(Figure 8), the CM is expressed in Spain's winning at 'the first arm-wrestling contest' (*el primer pulso*) against unencoded but discursively retrievable contenders. *LV* alternatively construes Spain as the stronger Agonist against a relatively weaker EU (10b), where the country overcomes the EU's resistance:

(10) 4 April 2019.

(a) (*El Mundo*) *El Parlamento Europeo aprueba que Gibraltar sea una 'colonia'...*

[The European Parliament (Ant) approves (SHIFT-IN-STATE:ENABLEMENT) that Gibraltar will be a 'colony' (Ago)...]

(b) (*La Vanguardia*) *España logra que la UE reconozca que Gibraltar es una colonia*

[Spain (Ago) achieves (SHIFT-IN-STATE:OVERCOMING OF RESISTANCE) that the EU (Ant) acknowledges Gibraltar is a colony]

La Vanguardia's choice of image for this event⁷ depicts a van entering Gibraltar under a green traffic light (Figure 9 below). The green light visually frames the Rock. Arguably, this image is intimately related to the main event construed in the report overall (Spain's 'victory'), with similarly related schemas in every item which resonate with the text. The image depicts a SHIFT-IN-STATE:ENABLEMENT event in which the green light (Antagonist) allows the van (Agonist) to enter Gibraltar on a sunny day.



Figure 9. *La Vanguardia* (4 April 2019)

This depiction arguably resonates with the event construed in the headline, subheading and lead, invoking a POLITICS IS JOURNEY contextual pictorial metaphor (Forceville, 2008), and encoding a relationship of Similarity (Liu & O'Halloran, 2009), where the green light potentially connotes the approval of the proposal by the EU (encoded in the subheading and lead), and the visual framing of the Rock by the traffic lights potentially connotes the final designation for the Overseas Territory (encoded in the headline and lead). Additionally, the photograph also potentially resonates with the Spanish idiomatic expression *dar luz verde* [to give the green light] meaning to grant

permission to proceed with something, which in turn serves to reinforce the potential meanings indicated for this news report.

5.3 General Discussion

Overall, these construal patterns reflect contrasting but comparable stances both towards the events reported and the relationship between Spain and the EU. *El Mundo* construed the events by focusing alternatively on Spain and the EU in stronger roles, reporting only the initial passing of the proposal and its final approval, while in between foregrounding Spain in its stronger role against Gibraltar. *El País* employed several CMs, most prominently POLITICS IS WAR, and the contextual pictorial metaphor (Forceville, 2008) SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION, and construed mostly the EU in stronger roles. *ABC* focused on Spain's achievements, while highlighting the role of the EU in the removal of Moraes and in the final approval of the visas draft proposal. Finally, *La Vanguardia* construed the process primarily focusing on the EU's relative strength, where Spain manages to accomplish its intrinsic force despite Britain/Gibraltar's efforts and the EU's BLOCKAGE.

Despite the differences in focus and the allocation of relative strengths, with *La Vanguardia* and, to a lesser extent, *El País*, opposing Spain with the EU, the four newspapers coincide in clearly portraying the event sequence from the perspective of the 'conceding/enabling' EU and the 'victorious' Spain, with Gibraltar/Britain as blocking entities or in the role of 'opponents' against Spain's actions (but see example 8b). The images selected for these reports feature contextual pictorial metaphors (Forceville, 2008) and complex consequential and/or comparative relations (Liu & O'Halloran, 2009) to purportedly reinforce and/or complement the underlying message of accomplishment of Spain's goals and the potential difficulties for Gibraltar and, by extension, for Britain.

6. Conclusion

Following the research questions stated above, this article has examined the linguistic and visual representations of four central events in the Brexit negotiations on the status of Gibraltar in four Spanish online newspapers, with a focus on FORCE in metaphor and schematisation. This article has also explored the variability across newspapers and the potential ideological import of observable T-I relationships. The analysis has shown that the overall message in the newspapers is one of Spain achieving its goals, with subtle but significant differences. The disparities in event construals are related to the entities focalised in each event (Spain, Britain, Gibraltar and/or the EU), and their relative strength and role within the various FORCE schemas in which they participate. The EU is represented as the ENABLER of the draft proposal, however occasionally its role is that of a BLOCKER. Spain is construed as a powerful entity that either manages to fulfil its intrinsic tendency in SHIFT-IN-STATE schemas or it is the focal entity of STEADY speech-act FORCE events in which it warns/accuses Britain/Gibraltar of hindering the diplomatic process. Conversely, the UK, Gibraltar, or nominated actors in the European Parliament (e.g. Claude Moraes) are mainly construed as opposing entities with ultimately weaker relative forces, or as focal entities in other FORCE

schemas invoked by speech-act verbs. Conclusively, the resolution of the conflict entails shift-in-balance-of-strength schemas (Talmy, 2000) in which either the EU passes the draft proposal, or Spain manages to overcome the EU's or unspecified entities' resistance to its passing. As for Conceptual Metaphors, the linguistic realisations of POLITICS IS WAR and POLITICS IS JOURNEY are central framing devices, along with SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION in its realisations in the visual modality.

This research has demonstrated that a T-I approach to multimodal news discourse grounded in CL-CDS approaches allows for in-depth critical analysis and interpretation of politically situated events, albeit with some limitations. The analysis has focused on the linguistic event construals and the co-occurring image schemas that have potential ideological implications. For the sake of contrast, the analysis had to be selective regarding the number of elements that were deemed ideologically prominent, and in the level of detail provided (see notes 5-7).

In the broader context of the Brexit negotiations, these newspapers' event construals are significant for several reasons. This event-reporting represents a 'domestication' (and simplification) of the Brexit negotiations for the Spanish audience (García Blanco, 2016), displaying various representational patterns but otherwise exhibiting converging perspectives; the reports here examined sustain a narrative in which Europe ultimately supports Spain's national claims. This positive narrative is important in that it serves to represent the EU as 'caring' and 'supportive' of its members. The newspapers' representation of the EU-Britain negotiations may influence the audience's attitude to the EU-Spain relationship and its socio-political value. Previous research indicates that in the recent climate of rising Euroscepticism, partly fuelled by far-right parties claims that the EU has been unable to deal with the challenges of the migration crisis, and unemployment and terrorism threats more generally, Europe's reaction to and the domestication of these events sends a clear message (Burç-Yildiz & Çamyamaç, 2017, pp. 21-22):

Fearing that this [far-right] propaganda could further increase Euroscepticism, the EU has wanted to promote a sense of community by changing its position on the Gibraltar question in Spain's favour at the [cost] of breaching international law. The EU's message is actually very obvious: we are still here and we protect our members.

While this article has focused on the micro-level analysis and interpretation of a specific event-sequence, the political 'battle' regarding Gibraltar is far from over. Until the factual Brexit on 31 December 2020, Gibraltar's status and its implications for its citizens and Spain have remained uncertain, however the beginning of 2021 has been witness to crucial political advancements.

At the moment of writing, Spain and Gibraltar have reached a tentative agreement, the 'New Year's Eve "In-Principle" Agreement', which will be revised after 6 months and its measures will be implemented for an initial period of four years. The Agreement gives Gibraltar full access to the Schengen free movement area within the EU. The Agreement also states that Gibraltar (air)ports, under the responsibility of Spain, become entry points to the Schengen area. However, there are palpable tensions around the role of Spain as 'gatekeeper', due to Spain's duties in the management of the entries

to the Schengen space (González, 2021), and these responsibilities will be performed by Frontex (the European Board and Coast Guard Agency) personnel. Gibraltar's Chief Minister Fabian Picardo declared that Spain would not exercise any control on Gibraltar, asserting Gibraltar's sovereignty: "This is our land. Couldn't be clearer". With Europe's support, Spain's stance and claims over Gibraltar's territory and sovereignty will potentially be of special relevance in the ongoing transition negotiations.

Notes

1. I want to thank the editors of this special issue, my supervisor Chris Hart, and my colleague Carolina Fernández Quintanilla for their invaluable comments on early drafts of this article. Any errors are, of course, my sole responsibility.
2. Conceptual metaphors and semantic domains are indicated in small capitals as per convention.
3. Generally, *ABC* is considered right-wing royalist, *El País* centre(-left), and *El Mundo* centre(-right), while *La Vanguardia* is now considered conservative and Catalan nationalist.
4. I have translated the linguistic texts myself with the aim of reflecting in English the FORCE patterns observed in Spanish. Any errors or inaccuracies are my sole responsibility.
5. A detailed account of the bidirectional relationships occurring here is beyond the scope of this article, but it should be noted that these relationships potentially serve to reinforce the ideological implications for both the linguistic and visual elements in the reports.
6. There are also notable differences in terms of Scope of Predication and Viewpoint that are beyond the scope of this research. See Hart (2015) for a discussion of Viewpoint phenomena in the context of news coverage of political protests and their ideological implications.
7. The detailed description and discussion of these relations are beyond the scope of this article; here I aim at providing the patterns that can be interpreted as ideologically relevant.

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