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## **A sturdy baby or a derailing train? Metaphorical representations of the euro in British and Italian newspapers<sup>1</sup>**

### **1 Introduction**

On 1 January 1999, eleven European Union countries officially abolished their own individual currencies and adopted a new single currency – the euro. Italy was one of the eleven participants in monetary union.<sup>2</sup> Britain, on the other hand, opted not to participate.<sup>3</sup> In this paper, I examine the metaphors used in reference to the euro in a selection of British and Italian newspapers between the end of 1998 and the beginning of 1999.

#### *1.1 Monetary union, Britain and Italy*

The official introduction of the euro at the beginning of 1999 was the culmination of a long and arduous project within what is now the European Union. The idea of a single currency had been explicitly on the agenda since at least 1970, but it was only at the Maastricht summit in 1992 that agreement was reached on a detailed timetable for monetary union, and that a set of five specific economic requirements for membership (the 'Convergence criteria' or 'Maastricht criteria') were established (see Chabot 1999: 31ff.).<sup>4</sup>

At the Maastricht summit, the British Prime Minister John Major negotiated an opt-out clause which allowed Britain to stay out of the single currency at its inception and only join if and when it wished to do so. At the time of writing, the majority of public opinion and a significant number of politicians are still opposed to British membership, and no date has been fixed for a referendum. In Italy, on the other hand, a belief in the absolute necessity of being part of monetary union was always shared by all the main political parties, and by public opinion at large. The difficulty was that, when the Maastricht criteria were first laid out, Italy's economy conspicuously failed to meet all but one of them. All subsequent Italian governments therefore made it their priority to implement the economic and fiscal reforms necessary to fulfil the convergence criteria.

In many ways, the official introduction of the euro on 1 January 1999 marked an event of huge economic and historical significance. Never before had a group of separate nation states, with separate cultures and national languages, adopted a common currency. Collectively, the eleven euro countries (known as Euroland) form the largest single-currency area in the Western world in terms of population (290 million people), and are second only to the USA in terms of Gross Domestic Product (Chabot 1999: 15-20). Paradoxically, however, this historic event had no obvious or visible impact on the lives of Euroland's citizens. Although local currencies officially ceased to exist on 31 December 1998 and were replaced by the euro for all book transactions, euro coins and notes will only start circulating in 2002. Up until then, a 'no compulsion, no prohibition' rule applies for the use of the euro within Euroland: individuals and companies can, if they wish, opt to use the euro as a unit of account in

their financial transactions (from bank accounts to electricity bills), but they are under no compulsion to do so (Chabot 1999: 6).

The paradox of an official currency that has no concrete, physical manifestation, and that does not even yet need to appear on one's bank statements, makes the role of language, and press language in particular, all the more important in people's perception of what happened between the end of 1998 and the beginning of 1999.

### 1.2 Theoretical background

The decision to focus on metaphor in the analysis of the data is based on the findings and claims of the cognitive approach to metaphor originally pioneered in Lakoff and Johnson (1980) (see also Lakoff 1987, 1993; Lakoff and Turner 1989). Cognitive metaphor theory has drawn attention to two crucial and previously underestimated aspects of metaphor, namely that:

- (i) Metaphor is pervasive in language, i.e. metaphorical linguistic expressions occur frequently and systematically in all kinds of discourse, from informal conversation to poetry.
- (ii) Metaphor is a matter of both language and thought. More precisely, the patterning of everyday metaphorical expressions in language (e.g. 'We can't afford to *lose* this argument' and 'She *attacked* every point I made') point to existence of conceptual metaphors (e.g. ARGUMENT IS WAR), which are a fundamental part of the way in which we ordinarily conceive of ourselves and the world.

Cognitive metaphor theory, in other words, makes an important distinction between linguistic metaphorical expressions on the one hand and conceptual metaphors on the other. The latter are conventionally represented in SMALL CAPITALS and expressed in the form A IS B, where A is the 'target' domain of the metaphor (e.g. ARGUMENT above), and B is the source domain (e.g. WAR above). Another crucial distinction is that between conventionality and creativity, both at the linguistic and at the conceptual level. Conceptual metaphors may be conventional (e.g. LOVE IS A JOURNEY) or novel (e.g. LOVE IS A COLLABORATIVE WORK OF ART), or, more accurately, they may fall at different points in a cline of conventionality (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff and Turner 1989:55). As far as language is concerned, a conventional conceptual metaphor may receive a conventional or a creative linguistic realisation (e.g. 'Our relationship is *off the track*.' vs. 'We are travelling in the fast lane on the freeway of love' as realisations of LOVE IS A JOURNEY (see Lakoff's 1993)). Novel conceptual metaphors, on the other hand, are by definition always realised linguistically by creative metaphorical expressions (see Lakoff and Turner 1989:50).

Although cognitive metaphor theory is supported by a number of empirical studies (e.g. Gibbs 1994), legitimate doubts have been expressed about the validity of making claims about conceptual structure on the basis of linguistic evidence (Murphy 1996, Steen 1994, Steen and Gibbs 1999). In addition, it has been argued that the dominance of cognitive metaphor theory over the last two decades has resulted in a relative lack of consideration for the *linguistic* level of metaphor (e.g. see Cameron 1999a and b; Heywood et al. in press; Steen 1999). More specifically, cognitive metaphor theory has paid insufficient attention to the following issues:

- (i) the criteria by which linguistic patterns are used as evidence for postulating conceptual metaphors (e.g. Heywood *et al.* in press and Semino *et al.* in press),

- (ii) the operationalisation of the distinction between conventional and novel metaphorical expressions, and
- (iii) the nature, patterns and effects of formal realisations of conceptual metaphors in texts.

As far as (i) is concerned, in the course of the discussion I will relate patterns of semantically-related metaphorical expressions to specific conceptual source domains, but I will leave the thorny issue of hypothesizing A-IS-B conceptual metaphors for the Conclusion. With respect to issue (ii), I will base my claims on the conventionality or novelty of specific examples on Goatly's (1997) categorisation of metaphorical words according to the degree of lexicalisation of their metaphorical meanings. Goatly makes a basic distinction between 'active' and 'inactive' metaphorical expressions. The former include cases such as the use of the word 'icicles' in a poem to refer to fingers, where interpretation depends on the context and involves the evocation of the literal meaning of the metaphorically-used word. 'Inactive' metaphorical expressions, on the other hand, include cases such as the use of the word 'leaf' to refer to a page of a book, or 'cut' to refer to budget reductions. Here the metaphorical meanings have entered the lexicon and stand in a relationship of polysemy to the literal meanings, so that interpretation does not normally involve the evocation of the literal meaning (Goatly 1997: 31-8). I will also in some cases mention Goatly's sub-division of inactive metaphors into 'sleeping' and 'tired' (depending on the degree to which the metaphorical meaning has become conventional and fixed in the lexicon) but I will not make strong claims about these distinctions, given that, as Goatly puts it, 'there is no clear line on the continuum of Inactive metaphors between Sleeping and Tired' (Goatly 1997: 33).

As for (iii) above, I will devote most of my attention to linguistic choices and patterns, focusing on the connotations and implications of individual metaphorical expressions. I will also make use of some aspects of Goatly's categorisation of patterns of metaphorical expressions in texts and in lexicons, and particularly of the notions of 'multivalency' (the application of the same source domain to different target domains) and 'diversification' (the application of different source domains to the same target domain).<sup>5</sup> Finally, in my analysis of specific examples of novel metaphorical expressions, I will refer to work done both within and outside the cognitive paradigm on the functions of metaphor, and particularly on the use of metaphor for evaluative and persuasive purposes (e.g. Goatly 1997: (148-67), Deignan 2000).

### 1.3 Data and methodology

The main data on which this study is based consists of all articles on monetary union published in three Italian and three British newspapers on 31 December 1998 and on the first day of publication of 1999, i.e. 1 January 1999 for British newspapers and 2 January 1999 for Italian newspapers.<sup>6</sup> The British set includes *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Independent* and *The Guardian*;<sup>7</sup> the Italian set includes *Il Giornale*, *Il Corriere della Sera* and *La Repubblica*. My main criteria for selection were twofold. First, I aimed to choose mainstream daily newspapers, with high circulation figures.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, I aimed to capture a reasonably broad spectrum of opinion in the political mainstream of each country: each sample contains a right-of-centre newspaper (*The Daily Telegraph* and *Il Giornale*), a left-of-centre newspaper (*The Guardian* and *La Repubblica*) and a middle-ground newspaper (*The Independent* and *Il Corriere della Sera*). The British set contains approximately 30,300 words, while the Italian set contains approximately 60,000 words, amounting to an overall total of 90,300 words.

This material was analysed in detail for metaphorical expressions and constitutes the ‘core’ corpus of my study. This core corpus is what I refer to when I talk about ‘the data’ in the rest of this paper.

The entirety of material at my disposal (in both hard copy and electronic form) is in fact a much larger selection of articles on monetary union in the six newspapers, spanning a period of three weeks between the end of 1998 and the beginning of 1999, from 22 December to 9 January. The articles published before and after those included in the core corpus constitute what I will refer to as the ‘background’ corpus. This material was not analysed in detail for the purposes of this study, but was the subject of selected electronic searches aimed at investigating the general validity of the findings of the analysis of the core corpus. The background corpus contains a total of approximately 188,000 words (115,200 words of Italian and 72,800 words of English). The combination of the core corpus and the background corpus therefore includes 175,200 words of Italian and 103,100 words of English, for a grand total of 278,300 words.

In my analysis, I have identified as metaphorical all those expressions that can be analysed in terms of a mapping between two separate domains (see Steen 1999 and Heywood *et al.* in press). So, for example, in the expression ‘Birth of the euro’, ‘birth’ is regarded as metaphorical because it can be analysed as deriving from a mapping between a domain to do with people and a domain to do with the euro, or currencies more generally. For the purposes of quantification, I followed the practice adopted by Boers (1999) in a comparable study, and counted as *one* instance of metaphorical language all metaphorically used words relating to the same source domain that occur within the same clause. The term ‘metaphorical expression’ will be used to refer generally to one or more metaphorically used words relating to the same source domain and occurring in close proximity to one another. The term ‘metaphorical pattern’, on the other hand, will refer to the presence of metaphorical expressions relating to the same source and target domains across a number of texts within the corpus.

My discussion of metaphorical language in the corpus will concentrate specifically on metaphorical expressions where the euro, or monetary union more generally, function as target domains (as opposed to, for example, other currencies or the process of European integration). I will also focus primarily on frequent and highly conventional metaphorical patterns in each set of newspapers, in order to highlight the *main* ways in which monetary union is constructed in my data. The analysis is divided into three parts. Section 2 focuses on conventional metaphorical patterns that are similar in the two languages; section 3 deals with metaphorical patterns that are peculiarly Italian and section 4 with patterns that are peculiarly English. Section 5 presents the main conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis.

## **2 Corresponding metaphorical patterns in English and Italian**

The analysis of the core corpus has revealed that there are overarching similarities in the main metaphorical patterns involving the euro in the two sets of newspapers. These similarities, I will argue, can be related to two main factors: on the one hand, the fact that there are significant similarities in the conceptual metaphorical systems underlying (British) English and Italian; on the other hand, the fact that there were predictable mutual influences between reports about the euro in different countries. I will also show, more specifically, that the most frequent metaphorical patterns in each language draw from source domains which are not specific to the euro target domain,

but are conventionally applied in both languages to a wide range of other target domains. This phenomenon has been referred by Kövecses (2000) as the ‘scope’ of metaphorical source domain, and by Goatly (1997) as ‘multivalence’. I will show, however, how each source domain provides a particular view of monetary union, emphasizing particular aspects of it and, in some cases, leading to particular value judgements. I will also point out how, in both languages, novel linguistic realisations of the main metaphors tend to be used rhetorically to propose more controversial and partisan views of the European single currency than is the case with conventional metaphorical expressions.

Although the dominant metaphorical patterns are similar in the two sets of data, there are differences in their frequencies and linguistic realisations, partly as a result of differences in the nature and status of particular source domains in the two cultures and partly as a result of differences in the dominant attitudes to the euro in the two countries. Not surprisingly, Italian newspapers devoted more space to monetary union (the Italian section of the core corpus is double the size of the English section), and mainly covered it in the front and/or initial pages, whereas English newspapers often discussed it in later pages, in sections devoted to foreign or business news. Moreover, although both sets of newspapers contain a range of opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of monetary union, Italian newspapers are generally more positive (and sometimes even euphoric) about the euro.

### 2.1 Personification

A pervasive metaphorical pattern in both sets of newspapers is one where the euro is personified, or, minimally, presented as an animate, living being (NB: The metaphorically used words I focus on in each example are underlined):

- (1) Ma [l'euro] avrà lunga vita (*Corriere della Sera*, 31/12/1998)  
[But [the euro] will have a long life]
- (2) the new currency's sustained health (*The Independent*, 31/12/1998)

Metaphor theorists have emphasized how metaphor is a tool whereby we understand and describe abstract, unfamiliar and poorly delineated target domains in terms of concrete, familiar, highly delineated and often ‘embodied’ source domains. In personification, the source domain is provided by our experience of ourselves as animate/human beings, which allows us to make sense of inanimate and possibly alien entities ‘in terms of human motivations, characteristics, and activities’ (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 33; see also Leech 1969: 158, Lakoff and Turner 1989: 72, Goatly 1997: 52). In the examples above, the abstract and distant notion of the future development of the single currency is constructed in terms of the physical and closer notions of life and health.

In their discussion of personification, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) make the important point that :

Personification is not a single unified general process. Each personification differs in terms of the aspects of people that are picked out. (Lakoff and Johnson 1989: 33)

The core corpus contains several examples of ‘generic’ personifications such as (1), where the euro is attributed very general animate characteristics, but many more

examples such as (2), where the value of the euro is talked about in terms of physical well-being. A number of studies have focused on the use of HEALTH/FITNESS metaphors in English to talk about the domain of economics, and have pointed out how these metaphors apply our physical experience of our own bodies to abstract and complex notion such as a company's financial position or the state of a country's economy (e.g. Boers 1999, Deignan 2000). In my data this tendency is most evident in the (highly conventional) description of the value of currencies, and of the euro in particular, by means of the adjectives 'strong'/'forte' and 'weak'/'debole', as well as by other more novel linguistic expressions which will be described below.

Overall, however, the most frequent and arguably most salient specific pattern *within* personification in both sets of data is one where the introduction of the euro is presented as a (human) birth:

- (3) L'annuncio della nascita dell'euro (*Il Giornale*, 2/1/1999)  
[The announcement of the birth of the euro]
- (4) Tomorrow, a new currency, the euro, will be born (*The Independent*, 31/12/1998)

There are 68 similar instances in the Italian section of the core corpus, and 27 in the English section (respectively 1.1 and 0.89 per 1,000 words).<sup>9</sup> In addition, the background corpus contains 58 further Italian examples (realised by the lexical items 'nascita' ('birth'), 'nato' ('born'), 'nasce' ('is born'), 'parto' ('birth'/'delivery') and 'concepito' ('conceived')) and 18 English examples (realised by the lexical items 'birth', 'born' and 'conceived').

Clearly, the frequency of this particular pattern within personification can be explained, in part, by the nature of the target domain, given that my data relates to the time of the introduction of the euro. In both languages, beginnings in general are conventionally talked about in terms of birth, so that, in Goatly's (1997) terms, words such as 'nascita'/'birth' and 'nascere'/'to be born' count as 'sleeping' metaphorical expressions when applied to inanimate entities or abstract phenomena (e.g. 'the birth of television'/'la nascita della televisione', etc.). It is also true, on the other hand, that, the use of the BIRTH/NASCITA metaphor in discourse about the euro constructs an abstract and technical domain in physical and potentially emotional terms. In their discussion of the discursal construction of national identities, Wodak *et al.* (1999: 44) stress the 'suggestive force' and 'vividness' of these metaphors, and show how they can be used to favour identification and empathy.<sup>10</sup>

While the conventional examples presented above are relatively neutral in terms of the construction of the target domain, the suggestive potential of BIRTH/NASCITA metaphors is more evident in the less conventional metaphorical expressions. Expressions drawn from this particular source domain are not just more frequent, but also more varied in the Italian section of the core corpus, where, for example, the process of preparation for monetary union is described as 'gestazione' ('pregnancy/gestation'), and the final process of conversion to the single currency is presented as 'un parto lunghissimo' ('a very long delivery'). In both cases we are dealing with 'tired' metaphorical expressions, given that the relevant metaphorical meanings are not as highly lexicalised as with 'nascita'. More importantly, in both cases the target domain is talked about in terms of physical processes associated with effort, tiredness and pain. As I will show, this emphasis on

the difficulties involved in participating in monetary union is a salient and consistent feature of metaphorical expressions in the Italian data.

Both sections of the core corpus also contain examples of original realisations of the BIRTH/NASCITA metaphor. All these examples more obviously exploit the evaluative, emotional and argumentative potential of the metaphor, even though there are differences between the two languages in the dominant rhetorical use to which specific linguistic expressions are put. The majority of newspapers from both countries provide translated quotations of a statement which the German Chancellor Schröder made about the euro in March 1998. The examples below both date from 31 December 1998 – the day before the official introduction of the euro:

- (5) Schröder: euro ‘un neonato malaticcio e prematuro che costerà posti di lavoro’ (*Corriere della Sera*, 31/12/1998)  
[Schröder: the euro is a ‘sickly and premature baby which will cost jobs.’]
- (6) In March this year he [Schröder] described the new currency as a “sickly premature child” (*The Daily Telegraph*, 31/12/98)

In the quoted extracts, Schröder expresses his negative view (at the time) of the timing and conditions of the euro’s introduction by explicitly describing the euro as a baby, and by attributing to it the characteristics of sickliness and prematurity. The reference to such physical characteristics is presumably meant to convey the abstract and controversial point that, if monetary union goes ahead as planned, the new currency would have a low value and low prestige. The choice of particular lexical items relating to the BIRTH/NASCITA source domain provides the means to express the speaker’s opinion clearly, vividly and succinctly, and also potentially maps onto a technical and controversial target domain the strong emotive associations that go with references to ill and premature infants. It is also interesting that, in both examples above, the (translated) metaphorical expressions attributed to Schröder are enclosed within quotation marks. Goatly (1997: 189) observes that such a device may be used in order either to separate the voice of the reporter from that of the reportee, or to ‘mark off a metaphor from the literal language around it,’ or for both purposes simultaneously (Goatly 1997: 189). The latter seems to be the case in (5) and (6), where the quoted statement is particularly poignant in that it casts a negative light on an event that is, at the time of the reports, irreversibly about to happen.

There are also important differences in the main uses of novel realisations of BIRTH/NASCITA metaphors in the two sets of data. Apart from the quotations from Schröder’s statement above, in the Italian section of the core corpus all creative extensions of the birth metaphor are used to express either neutral or positive views of the euro, as in the examples below:

- (7) L’euro è finalmente nato, pur soltanto virtualmente. Come si presenta? Respira bene? Diventerà adulto? (*Il Giornale*, 2/1/1999)  
[The euro has finally been born, even if only at a virtual level. How does it look? Is it breathing well? Is it going to grow up?]
- (8) l’euro nasce forte, robusto. (*Corriere della Sera*, 2/1/1999)  
[the euro is born strong, sturdy]

Both examples contain lexical items that relate to the NASCITA source domain ('nato', 'nasce') and to the SALUTE/FORMA FISICA ('HEALTH/FITNESS') source domain (e.g. 'respira', 'forte', 'robusto'). In (7) the concept of a new-born baby is mapped onto the euro, the breathing of the baby onto the value/conditions of the currency and the notion of growing up onto the currency's future outlook. In (8) a positive evaluation of the conditions of the currency after its introduction is expressed in terms of the health and physical strength of a new-born baby. While, as I mentioned earlier, 'forte' ('strong') is conventionally applied to the description of currencies, 'robusto' ('sturdy') is not. The latter adjective is commonly used to describe children, and is associated with good physiques and resistance to disease.

In the English data, on the other hand, there are several creative realisations which, rather like Schröder's quotation, express a negative view of the euro, such as the following:

- (9) For three years, the heavyweight baby with the ugly name will not be allowed to appear in public. (*The Independent*, 1/1/1999)

Here the high initial value of the new currency is described not in terms of physical strength/fitness as in (8), but in terms of the notion of excessive weight in a baby. Moreover, the use of 'heavyweight' (rather than 'overweight' for example) also relates to the domain of boxing and results in a mixed metaphorical expression, which might evoke the grotesque image of a baby heavyweight boxer. Indeed, in the post-modifying prepositional phrase, the fact that actual coins and notes will only appear three years after the official introduction is expressed in terms of the enforced seclusion of an unpleasant-looking and unpleasantly named child.

To summarise, the data shows some overarching similarities in the nature and use of personification in the two sets of data. These similarities can be explained not just in terms of parallels between the two language and cultures, but also as a consequence of the international nature of the event in question, and of mutual influences between languages and media in different countries (the wide resonance of the Schröder metaphor is a case in point). In addition, creative realisations of the BIRTH/NASCITA metaphor in both sets of data often deliberately exploit the potential of this particular source domain to express particular opinions in emotive and persuasive terms. On the other hand, the analysis has also shown some differences in the frequency, realisation and rhetorical function of metaphorical expressions drawing from the BIRTH/NASCITA source domain. In the Italian data, such expressions are more frequent and more varied, and there are no original creative uses aimed at conveying a negative opinion of the euro.

The use of bilingual labels for source domains (e.g. BIRTH/NASCITA) should function as a reminder that even domains which have significant biological components may be constructed differently in different cultures, and that these differences will inevitably play a role in metaphorical patterns drawing from those domains (see Faulstich 1999, and Gibbs 1999). For example, the lack of negative descriptions of the euro drawing from the NASCITA source domain in the Italian data (apart from the Schröder quote) may not simply be due to the limitations of my data or to Italy's general euro-enthusiasm, but possibly also to the culture-specific associations of the NASCITA domain. In other words, it may be suggested that the particularly positive evaluation of babies and children which is dominant in Italian

culture discourages the use of negative realisations of NASCITA metaphors in a public context such as the language of the media.<sup>11</sup>

A further element of cultural variation is the existence of patterns related to the BIRTH/ NASCITA source domain which are limited to the Italian data only. The most distinctive Italian pattern is one where the introduction of the euro is presented as a christening:

- (10) Al battesimo della moneta unica (*Il Giornale*, 2/1/1999)  
[At the christening of the single currency]
- (11) senza i padrini anglo-tedeschi (*La Repubblica*, 31/12/1998)  
[without the anglo-german godfathers]

This pattern is fairly frequent, although it has no creative extensions in the core corpus: there are 12 such examples in the Italian section of the core corpus (0.2 instances per 1,000 words), while the Italian section of the background corpus also contains 17 instances of the word ‘battesimo’ (‘christening’) used in reference to the introduction of the euro. The existence of this metaphor in the Italian data only can be seen as a reflection of the fact that Italy is, on the whole, still a less secular society, so that a religious ceremony such as baptism is more salient, and therefore more likely to be used as a metaphorical source domain.

My discussion so far does not exhaust the use of personification in my data. Because it is such a basic and general metaphor, personification may underlie many other patterns, some of which will be discussed below (e.g. the euro as a traveller).

## 2.2 JOURNEY/VIAGGIO metaphors

The source domain of JOURNEYS/ VIAGGI also figures prominently in metaphorical representations of the euro in both sets of newspapers. More specifically, it is possible to identify a range of metaphorical patterns drawing from the source domain of JOURNEY/VIAGGIO, each of which relates to a different aspect of monetary union and/or presents it in a slightly different way.

A frequent pattern in the Italian data is one where VIAGGIO (JOURNEY) metaphors are applied to Italy’s effort and final success in qualifying for the euro. This was a highly salient domain in Italy at the time, and one which, as I will show, is metaphorised in terms of a range of different source domains, giving rise to what Goatly has called ‘diversification’ (Goatly 1997: 258ff.). The difficulty of meeting the Maastricht criteria had received great attention in the media, and a long debate had taken place as to whether the measures being taken by the ruling left-of-centre government would turn out to be adequate. In addition, the imposition of a special tax for Europe had impacted on individual lives in a very concrete way, and had given the whole enterprise a sense of huge collective effort. In (12) this whole complicated process is described as a ‘long, arduous journey’ with the euro as destination:

- (12) ovvero il lungo, faticoso viaggio verso la moneta unica (*La Repubblica*, 2/1/1999)  
[the long, arduous journey towards the single currency]

There are 18 such examples in the Italian section of the core corpus (0.3 instances per 1,000 words). Although this pattern has no straightforward equivalent in the British data, the English section of the core corpus does contain a few examples where the

country's future, hypothetical preparations for adopting the single currency are presented metaphorically in terms of journeys.

In both the patterns mentioned so far, the euro is constructed, implicitly or explicitly, as the destination or final point in a journey. An alternative construction of the introduction of the euro in both languages is in terms of arrival:

- (13) Arriva l'euro (*Corriere della Sera*, 31/12/1998)  
[The euro is arriving]
- (14) considerable satisfaction that it [the euro] has arrived (*The Daily Telegraph*, 31/12/98)

Indeed, the expressions 'the arrival of the euro' and 'l'arrivo dell'euro' were used as alternatives to the more neutral terms 'introduction'/'introduzione', or to BIRTH/NASCITA metaphors, in reference to the event that took place on 1 January 1999.<sup>12</sup> As a consequence, this pattern is rather frequent. The core corpus contains 35 Italian examples and 13 English examples (respectively 0.58 and 0.42 instances per thousand words). The background corpus contains 30 Italian instances identified by concordancing 'avvento' ('advent') and 'arriv\*', and 18 English instances identified by concordancing 'advent' and 'arriv\*'.

The converse of this is the description of the introduction of the euro as departure, or as the beginning of a new journey. In most cases the relevant linguistic expressions are highly conventional:

- (15) la partenza dell'euro (*Il Giornale*, 2/1/1999)  
[the departure of the euro]
- (16) Today the European single currency . . . goes ahead without the UK. (*The Guardian*, 1/1/1999)

The core corpus contains 16 similar examples in the Italian section and 10 in the English section (respectively, 0.26 and 0.33 instances per 1,000 words). In addition, the Italian section of the background corpus contains 53 metaphorical applications to the euro of the words 'partenza' ('departure'), 'partito' ('departed') and 'avvio' ('start'). A related pattern is one where the introduction of the euro is described as a 'launch'/'varo' as in the Italian example below:

- (17) dopo il varo dell'Euro (*La Repubblica*, 31/12/1998)  
[after the launch of the euro]

There are 14 such instances in the Italian section of the core corpus and 36 in the English section (respectively, 0.23 and 1.18 instances per 1,000 words). The Italian section of the background corpus contains 14 metaphorical uses of the word 'varo' in relation to the euro, and the English section contains 39 similar instances of 'launch'.

Finally, both sets of data contain a further pattern where the introduction of the euro is described as *part* of a journey:

- (18) la grande svolta (*La Repubblica*, 31/12/1998)  
[the great turning point]

- (19) after taking the historic step of launching a single currency (*The Daily Telegraph*, 1/1/1999)

The lexical items involved in this pattern (notably ‘passo’ (step) in Italian and ‘step’ in English) are frequently and conventionally used metaphorically in reference to changes and events. I have identified 17 instances of this pattern in the Italian section of the core corpus and 6 in the English section (respectively, 0.28 and 0.19 instances per 1,000 words). In addition, the Italian section of the background corpus contains 39 instances of the words ‘passo’ (‘step’), ‘passaggio’ (‘passage’) and ‘svolta’ (‘turning point’) used metaphorically in reference to the introduction of the euro, and the English section contains 7 similar instances realised by the words ‘step’, ‘road’ and ‘destination’. These can in turn be seen as deriving from the underlying conceptualisation as journeys of wider domains (notably the histories of nations or, in some cases, the process of European integration), of which the introduction of monetary union is part. In some cases the destination of this particular journey is specified as closer political union or even a federal Europe. In the English data, this is usually presented as an unwelcome development, and as part of an argument against joining the euro.

Apart from the self-explanatory Italian use of VIAGGIO metaphors for the process of qualifying for the euro, the similarities between the two sets of newspapers by far outweigh the differences as far as JOURNEY/ VIAGGIO metaphors are concerned. The questions that arises, then is why such metaphors occur so frequently in both sets of data and why there is the variation that there is in the forms that they take. In both languages, the JOURNEY/ VIAGGIO domain is conventionally mapped onto a wide variety of complex experiences and activities (including life, love relationships, careers, and so on). The usefulness of the metaphorical expressions drawn from this source domain can easily be seen in my data. They present a complex and rather abstract set of processes such as organising monetary union in terms of a simple scenario where travellers move along a path towards a destination. They also allow the conceptualisation of the same event in terms of the beginning, the end, or part of a journey, thereby giving differential emphases to future developments, past achievements or the final goal of the process.

Within cognitive metaphor theory, the wide applicability of this domain in English has been related to a generic-level metaphor labelled the ‘event structure metaphor’, whereby states are constructed as locations, changes as movements, purposes as destinations, difficulties as impediments to motion and long-term, purposeful activities as journeys (e.g. Lakoff 1993: 220). Lakoff (1993) introduces the notion of ‘Inheritance Hierarchy’ to explain how this abstract, generic-level metaphor gives rise to the general conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, which, in turn, generates a wide range of more specific conceptual metaphors such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY; A CAREER IS A JOURNEY, and so on (Lakoff 1993: 222). This framework could explain why many different types of purposeful activities, including the euro project, are constructed by means of JOURNEY metaphors. It can also explain the similarities between the specific variants of the JOURNEY/ VIAGGIO metaphors present in my data. On the other hand, the differences between the various patterns (e.g. the introduction of the euro as destination vs. departure) can be related to Lakoff’s (1993) concept of ‘duality’, which he explains as the tendency for the same target domain to be conceptualised in terms of pairs of alternative metaphors – one based on the notion of location, the other based on the notion of moving objects. In the former, the euro is a location on the path of a journey, as in examples (12), (18) and (19) above.<sup>13</sup> In the

latter, the euro is a moving object/traveller, and can therefore arrive or depart, as in examples (13), (14), (15), (16) and (17) above.

### 2.2.1 Novel linguistic metaphors and persuasion: an extended example

All the examples of JOURNEY/ VIAGGIO metaphors provided so far involve highly lexicalised metaphorical expressions, which, in Goatly's (1997) terms would be classified as inactive. On the other hand, like the BIRTH/ NASCITA domain, the JOURNEY/ VIAGGIO source domain also underlies some novel metaphorical expressions, which tend to be introduced for specific rhetorical purposes. In this case, however, the source domain is not so much exploited for its physical salience or its emotive potential, but for the rich inference patterns and evaluations that can be derived from it. In this section, I will analyse in some detail a specific article published in *The Independent* on 1 January 1999, since part of its argument is structured around a particularly complex linguistic instantiation of a metaphor drawing from the JOURNEY source domain.

The article appeared in the 'Comment' section of *The Independent*'s 'Friday Review', with the headline 'Now we have the euro, it is time to prepare for full political union'. In the first five paragraphs, the author focuses on the fact that the countries who have adopted the euro no longer have the power to determine their own monetary, budgetary and fiscal policies, and warns against the conflicts that may arise if some countries continue to follow Euroland's rules and other do not. The sixth paragraph is as follows:

- (20) Think about Emu as a train where all the cars must move at the same speed in the same direction at all times. Unless they do, the train will derail. That is the greatest test faced by a monetary union without political union.

The author then goes on to outline both the positive and negative sides of the euro's prospects.

- (21) To begin with, the monetary tsunami that crashed through the East Asian economies did not derail the Emu train as it moved toward the 1999 starting line. All currencies remained in tandem and on track.

On the other hand, he argues that it is impossible to have independent nation states which can no longer control their own exchange rates, inflation levels and deficit spending. As a consequence, he claims, Euroland's countries will either federate into a single political entity, or claim back their control over the purse and break up. The article ends with the following paragraph:

- (22) Think about trains where each car has its own engine and engineer. Either they all act as one, or the couplings will break and the train will derail.

The author makes use of a specific JOURNEY metaphor, where monetary union is described as a moving train and the nations of Euroland as the train's carriages. The TRAIN JOURNEY source domain does give rise to some conventional metaphorical expressions in the English language generally, as testified, for example, by the fact that a range of enterprises can be described as 'on/off track'. In this article, however, the author's use of the TRAIN JOURNEY source domain goes beyond the conventional mappings, both because of the way in which the source domain is elaborated and because of its application to a very specific target domain – European monetary union

and its implications. As a consequence, some metaphorical expressions are novel or active (e.g. ‘engineer’), while those that would normally be conventional or inactive (e.g. ‘on track’) are revitalised by the explicit and deliberate evocation of the source domain in the co-text.

In the opening of the first sentence of (20), the novel and deliberate nature of the following metaphorical expressions is highlighted by the use of ‘Think of’ – a reference to a cognitive process that can function as a signalling device for metaphorical language (Goatly 1997: 187). The description of Emu as a train is then used to map a particular inference pattern from the source domain onto the target domain: in the same way as the train’s carriages need to move at the same speed to avoid derailment, so, we are invited to conclude, (the economies of) Euroland’s nations need to develop in similar ways in order to avoid catastrophic consequences. In (21) Emu is again presented as a train, but this time it is ‘moving towards the starting line’, which may suggest a mixing of the TRAIN JOURNEY metaphor with a SPORTS metaphor. However, here the focus is on the fact that Euroland’s countries remained unaffected by a recent crisis in the East Asian economies. This is again expressed by drawing from the TRAIN JOURNEY source domain the notions of lack of derailment and of continuing to proceed ‘in tandem and on track.’ In (22) the source domain scenario is further elaborated by presenting a rather anomalous train where each carriage has its own engine (presumably corresponding to each nation’s economy), and its own engineer (presumably corresponding to individual governments). This leads to the more explicit inference pattern whereby the doomsday scenario resulting from discrepancies in different countries’ economies and economic policies is depicted in terms of the break-up and derailment of a train.

The novel extended metaphor drawing from the TRAIN JOURNEY source domain is clearly exploited to present in clear and persuasive terms a highly complex and controversial argument – that political union is now necessary to avoid the fragmentation of Euroland. This was (and remains) a hot topic as far as Emu is concerned: the risks involved in a group of separate and different countries adopting the same currency were fiercely debated at the time and are generally regarded as the biggest potential threat for the success of monetary union (e.g. Chabot 1999). By choosing a particular metaphorical scenario and realising it linguistically in the way that he does, the author presents political union as inevitable: within the TRAIN JOURNEY source domain, the idea that each carriage can move independently of the others is absurd and potentially catastrophic, and the use of the metaphor attempts to apply the same relations and inference patterns onto Euroland’s countries. It is well known, however, that any choice of metaphor presents a partial and potentially biased view of the target domain. For example, it could be argued that there are considerable economic differences between the regions included *within* individual EU states (and Britain and Italy in particular), so that any economic or fiscal decisions made by central governments will often advantage some areas and disadvantage others (e.g. the housing markets in the North and South of England are so different that they would require different mortgage interest rates). If such intra-national differences are taken into account, it could be objected that what the article presents as a dangerous future prospect has been happening within nation states for a long time, which could cast doubts on the overall argument. However, the TRAIN JOURNEY metaphor presents each country as a single and homogeneous unit, and does not allow for the existence of intra-national differences. This is of course central to the author’s argument.

### 2.3 CONTAINER/CONTENITORE metaphors

In the metaphorical expressions I discussed in the previous section, the euro is constructed either as a moving object or as a location – a point on the path of a journey. An alternative and extremely frequent metaphorical conceptualisation of the single currency is exemplified by the quotations below:

- (23) Stare nell'Euro è già un vincolo forte (*La Repubblica*, 2/1/1999)  
[To be in the euro is already a strong tie]
- (24) The longer we spend outside, the more difficult we may find to get in (*The Independent*, 31/12/1998)

Here the euro is talked about as a container or a bounded region in space, so that membership of the single currency is 'being inside', non-participation in monetary union is 'being outside', and becoming a member is 'entering' (see also Faulstich 1999). This metaphor is usually realised by prepositions (e.g. 'in'/'out', 'dentro'/'fuori', etc.), or by verbs such as 'entrare'/'enter' and nouns such as 'ingresso'/'entrance' (NB: the English expression 'opting out' belongs here too). I have identified 31 instances in the Italian section of the core corpus and 37 in the English section (respectively, 0.51 and 1.22 instances per 1,000 words).<sup>14</sup>

In cognitive metaphor theory, CONTAINER metaphors fall under the category of 'ontological' metaphors, which are used to conceptualise a whole range of experiences and concepts in terms of substances and objects (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 25ff.). Lakoff and Turner (1989: 97) describe the notion of container/bounded region as a very basic image-schema, which is conventionally mapped on to a wide range of domains, both concrete and abstract (e.g. being 'in a race' or 'out of consciousness'). Indeed, of all the metaphors discussed so far in this paper, the CONTAINER metaphor is probably the most 'basic', where basicness is defined, with Lakoff and Turner (1989: 56) as 'conceptual indispensability': it would be almost impossible for speakers of both languages to talk about the euro, and monetary union more generally, without making use of the in/out opposition provided by the CONTAINER/CONTENITORE metaphor. On the other hand, this is likely to be the most 'invisible' of the metaphorical patterns discussed in this paper, particularly when it is realised by prepositions: it is highly unlikely that linguistic realisations of the CONTAINER/CONTENITORE metaphor such as the ones quoted above will have been consciously perceived as metaphors by their producers and receivers. Indeed, this is the kind of linguistic usage that would not, by and large, have been recognised as metaphorical prior to the advent of cognitive metaphor theory.

The vast majority of linguistic expressions realising the CONTAINER/CONTENITORE metaphor are highly conventional, especially in the Italian data. There are, however, a few cases where this metaphor appears to be more consciously elaborated, notably by British commentators highlighting the potentially negative consequences of Britain's opt-out from the euro:

- (25) Outside the single currency, we are outside the room when our European neighbours discuss vital matters of monetary policy. The cost of exclusion will grow the longer Britain hesitates on the margins. (*The Guardian*, 1/1/1999)

The notion of being 'outside the single currency' is here elaborated by means of a concrete scenario where 'we' (the British) are 'outside the room' when monetary

policy is discussed at EU level. My dotted underlining under ‘outside the room’ indicates that the expression works both literally and metaphorically: at a literal level, it refers to circumstances where presence at EU meetings is restricted to representatives of Euroland countries, while, at a metaphorical level, the notion of being outside a room can stand metaphorically for lack of participation and influence. The move from ‘outside’ to ‘outside the room’ also suggests that the most relevant source domain here is not that of CONTAINERS but the related one of BOUNDED REGIONS. In the final sentence the more abstract concept of ‘exclusion’ is used to summarise the whole scenario constructed in the previous text, while ‘on the margins’ is another realisation of the BOUNDED REGIONS source domain with connotations of helplessness and lack of influence. Although metaphorical expressions such as ‘outside’ and ‘on the margins’ are conventional/inactive in English, they are revitalised in this context by the density of metaphorical uses of words from the same source domain in the surrounding text.

Examples such as (25) exploit the evaluative associations that the notions of ‘inside’/ ‘dentro’ and ‘outside’/‘fuori’ appear to have in both languages: generally speaking, in the metaphorical opposition between being ‘in’ and being ‘out’, the former is positive and the latter negative, probably because being ‘in’ is associated with the possibility to act and/or interact, and being ‘out’ with inactivity (e.g. ‘being in/out of consciousness’, ‘being in/out of a team’). This may explain why the metaphors drawing from the source domains of CONTAINERS/ CONTENITORI appear to be biased towards a positive evaluation of monetary union, since they are consciously exploited and extended only by those who are in favour of participation. The cognitive theorists’ description of the CONTAINER source as a basic image-schema deriving from our bodily experiences of the physical world also explains the lack of obvious differences between the two sets of data in the realisation of this metaphor (e.g. Lakoff and Turner 1989: 97, Johnson 1987: 30ff.).

#### *2.4 Other metaphors*

A number of aspects of the complex phenomenon of monetary union are also talked about in both sets of newspapers by means of metaphors drawing from different types of sports. Metaphors drawing from the source domain of races are used in both languages for the process of converting to the euro all records in financial institutions, which took place during the so-called ‘Change-over Week-end’ between 1 and 3 January 1999. This process is described using fairly conventional expressions such as as ‘corsa contro il tempo’ (‘race against time’) and ‘three-day marathon’. Similarly, the core corpus contains a few examples where being part of monetary union is presented as taking part in a match, using expressions such as ‘una partita tutta da giocare’ (‘very much a match to be played’) or being ‘a player in monetary union’. Many studies have highlighted a tendency, in both languages, to conceive of complex domains, such as politics and the economy, in terms of SPORTS metaphors (Balbus 1975, Ching 1993, Semino and Masci 1996). These metaphors tend to present complex and abstract domains in very simple, clear-cut terms, and are often used to reinforce feelings of competitiveness and national identity (Balbus 1975, Lipsky 1981, Segrave 1994).

The more frequent patterns in the use of SPORTS metaphors, however, are distinct in the two languages, due to the two countries’ different positions in relation

to monetary union. In the Italian data, SPORT ('SPORTS') metaphors are frequently used to describe Italy's struggle in qualifying for the euro:

- (26) Ciampi non nasconde che la partita è stata molto dura: “una rincorsa iniziata nel luglio 1996” (*Corriere della Sera*, 2/1/1999)  
[Ciampi does not hide the fact that the match has been very hard: “a run that started in July 1996”]
- (27) Ed è arrivato al traguardo sorpassando i tedeschi in rigore monetario (*Corriere della Sera*, 2/1/1999)  
[And [it] has reached the finishing line after overtaking the Germans in monetary rigour]

In (26) the process of getting the country to meet the Maastricht criteria is described first as a 'partita' ('match') which has been 'molto dura' ('very hard') and then as a 'rincorsa' (literally, a run taken before making a jump, or kicking a ball). In (27) the fact that Italy achieved an economic situation which, in some aspects, was superior to that of Germany, is described as reaching the finishing line ahead of the Germans. There are 11 such instances in the Italian section of the core corpus (i.e. 0.18 instances per 1,000 words), and 11 further examples in the background corpus (realised by the words 'aggancio' ('catching up'), 'rincorsa' ('run-up') and 'traguardo' ('finish line')). On the one hand, the presence of this metaphor highlights the salience of the whole enterprise of qualifying for the euro. I have already shown that the same target domain is also metaphorised in terms of journeys, and more metaphors will be discussed in the rest of the paper. On the other hand, this pattern is part of a wider and increasing tendency to conceive of political enterprises in terms of sporting events, especially where a collective effort is involved (see Semino and Masci 1996). In the case of example (27) the relevant sport appears to be cycling, which often functions as a source domain in the Italian data, but never in the English data (Indeed, cycling races are traditionally much more popular in Italy than in England).

Not surprisingly, whereas in Italy SPORT/SPORTS metaphors were applied to the process of qualifying for the euro, in Britain they were applied to the debate over the euro which the country needed to engage in. The following is a particularly elaborated example:

- (28) Britain will not join Emu by accident. Sometimes this Government looks like a football team passing the ball around the pitch, in the hope that eventually it will just end up in goal. But at some point, somebody has to shoot for the goal. (*The Independent*, 31/12/1998)

Here the writer emphasises the untenability of the British government's lack of resolve over the euro by describing the Government as a football team adopting a strategy that could never lead to victory. This is another example of the metaphorical source domain providing an inference pattern and a value judgement which are mapped onto the target domain in order to argue a particular point.

Finally, both sections of the core corpus contain examples where monetary union is presented as (the realisation of) a dream. However, this pattern is rather different from the ones I have discussed so far. Firstly, six of the eight Italian examples and three of the nine English examples are actually quotations from statements made at the time by the euro-enthusiastic Italian Finance Minister Carlo

Azeglio Ciampi, who described monetary union as ‘il sogno di una vita’ (‘the dream of a lifetime’). Secondly, in all of the remaining English examples, the metaphor is used in relation to ‘Europe’, where ‘Europe’ does *not* include Britain:

(29) Today, a European dream comes true. (*The Daily Telegraph*, 1/1/1999)

(30) Europe’s dream, not ours (*The Daily Telegraph*, 1/1/1999)

In example (30), in particular, the writer explicitly opposes ‘Europe’ to ‘us’ (i.e. himself and the rest of the British people), and restricts the validity of the dream metaphor to Europe only.

This is a poignant case of metaphorical usage in several respects. Firstly, it shows once again how the international nature of the event meant that some uses of language, and metaphorical ones in particular, had wide resonance in different languages, and not simply as quotations. The fact that what was originally a single expression used by one person turns up a number of times in my data reflects the way in which the media can magnify a particular utterance and give it wide and international currency (see also Semino and Masci 1996). Secondly, this example shows how metaphors can be contested, or explicitly limited in their scope to a particular set of referents. And thirdly, it highlights once again the presence of a strong euro-sceptic current in the British press, who make a point of questioning the applicability of a particular metaphor to the UK as opposed to ‘Europe’.

In the next section I will turn to metaphorical patterns that occur exclusively or predominantly in one of the two languages.

### 3 Metaphorical patterns peculiar to Italian

I have already pointed out that JOURNEY/ VIAGGIO and SPORT/ SPORTS metaphors are applied in the Italian data to the nation’s effort to meet the requirements for joining the euro. The same target domain is also discussed by drawing from the source domain of examinations:

(31) fino all’esame di ammissione all’Euro (*La Repubblica*, 31/12/1998)  
[up to the entrance exam for the euro]

(32) non condivide lo scetticismo di chi teme che, passato l’esame dell’Euro, noi torneremo spendaccioni e inattendibili? (*La Repubblica*, 31/12/1998)  
[do you not share the scepticism of those who fear that, having passed the examination of the euro, we are going to become spendthrift and unreliable again?]

In (31) the expression ‘esame di ammissione’ (‘entrance examination’) is used for the EU-level selection of countries which had met the Maastricht criteria, while in (32) success in gaining membership of monetary union is described as the passing of an examination. There are 9 similar instances in the core corpus. In addition, on 3 occasions membership of monetary union itself is described as a ‘prova’ (‘test’). In the latter cases the target domain is to do with Italy’s future performance as a member of monetary union. This was a sensitive topic at the time, since there was a worry, both inside and outside Italy, that the country would not be able to sustain in the longer term the financial discipline that it had exercised in the effort to qualify.

These metaphorical expressions are interesting indicators of the way in which Italians perceived the relationship between their country and other members of the European Union. Italy's history of short-lived governments, large public deficit and relatively weak currency generated something of an inferiority complex towards other (more stable and solvent) EU countries, and led to the belief that qualifying for monetary union was a not-to-be-missed opportunity to prove that the country could overcome its traditional weaknesses and be part of Europe's leading group of nations. The ESAME metaphors both reflect and reinforce these views and feelings.

Both sections of the core corpus also contain some metaphorical expressions drawing from the source domain of war. However, these metaphors are significantly more frequent and varied in Italian than in English.

Given the frequent and varied metaphorisation of Italy's effort to qualify for the euro, it will not come as a surprise to find that the same target domain is also constructed by means of GUERRA ('WAR') metaphors:

- (33) Il governatore si lascia andare ai ricordi di una battaglia, quella dell'euro, vinta da tutti. Non solo dal governo. . . . (*Corriere della Sera*, 2/1/1999)  
[The governor [of the Bank of Italy] gives way to memories of a battle, that of the euro, won by everybody. Not just by the government . . .]

Here the process of meeting the requirements for membership is constructed as a battle, and success in this effort is described as a victory. There are 8 instances of this pattern in the Italian section of the core corpus (0.13 instances per 1,000 words).

The majority of war metaphors in the Italian data, however, are applied to a different target domain, namely the monumental task of conversion to the euro that financial institutions undertook between the end of 1998 and the beginning of 1999. Italian newspapers gave ample coverage to this process, and to the work of the thousands of people who spent New Year's Eve in their offices. It is in these articles that many war metaphors are used:

- (34) Euroauguri veloci, poi tutti ai posti di combattimento (*Corriere della Sera*, 2/1/1999)  
[Quick eurowishes, then everyone at their combat positions]

In this example people's offices or desks are described in terms of combat positions. Additional mappings which are linguistically realised involve the whole process and a war/battle, bank managers and army leaders, potential problems and bloodshed, and so on. There are 31 such examples in the Italian section of the core corpus (0.51 instances per 1,000 words).

The frequency of this metaphor may in part be due to the fact that, as many newspapers reported, it was adopted by financial institutions themselves (e.g. by labelling their base room for the euro conversion using the (English) expression 'war room'). Many realisations of the same metaphors in the press have a similar humorous and hyperbolic tone. Several studies have pointed out how metaphorical language can, in some cases have a humorous and entertaining function (e.g. Goatly 1997: 161). This was particularly appropriate at a time of the year preceding the New Year's festivities, especially when the topic of the articles was precisely how bank employees were going to spend New Year's Eve in their offices.

As I announced earlier, WAR metaphors figure much less prominently in the English data. In two cases, WAR metaphors are used to discuss Italy's efforts in

qualifying from monetary union, and at least one of these cases is a translation of a metaphorical expression used in an Italian newspaper. In addition, there are 5 examples where war vocabulary is used in relation to the UK's future debate over the euro, which is described, for example, as 'a battle of ideas which can be won' (As I mentioned earlier, this target domain can be seen as the UK counterpart of Italy's focus on the process of qualifying). Such expressions can be seen as a specific instantiation of the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor that has been widely discussed in the cognitive metaphor literature (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

In spite of the differences in the frequency of WAR/GUERRA metaphors in the two sets of data, it is still possible to note the wide range of target domains that are seen as wars even in this very restricted context. Indeed, the source domain of WAR/GUERRA is highly multivalent in both languages, given that it can be metaphorically applied to a wide range of target domains, from illness to politics (e.g. Sontag 1979, Semino and Masci 1996).

#### 4 Metaphorical patterns peculiar to English

The core corpus contains no examples of peculiarly English patterns involving *multiple* correspondences between two conceptual domains. There are, however, instances of at least two more limited cross-domain mappings which, in different ways, suggest conceptualisations of monetary union that have no equivalents in the Italian data.<sup>15</sup>

The first pattern involves the use of the verb 'lock' to refer to the fixing of the exchange rates between the old Euroland currencies and the euro:

- (35) The precise exchange rates at which 11 member currencies are locked against the euro (*The Independent*, 1/1/1999)

I have identified 7 such examples in the English section of the core corpus (respectively, 0.23 instances per 1,000 words). This use of 'lock' is the default way of referring to the relevant concept in the data, and can therefore be regarded as an inactive metaphorical expression. Nevertheless, the choice of this particular expression may potentially project onto the target domain some of its negative associations, such as notions of constriction and lack of freedom. This could be seen as both reflecting and further reinforcing the eurosceptic view that participating in monetary union would result in a dangerous loss of independence on the part of the United Kingdom.<sup>16</sup> Interestingly, the Italian equivalent ('fissare' ('fix')) does not carry the same negative connotations.

Another metaphorical expression that is peculiar to British eurosceptic views is exemplified by the quotations below:

- (36) A "one size fits all" European interest rate would be more likely to suit . . . (*The Independent*, 1/1/1999)

- (37) it will provide a good test of whether the "one cap fits all" interest policy of Euroland can be applied to economies . . . (*The Guardian*, 1/1/1999)

The issue here is the highly controversial one that was discussed in 2.2.1, namely the fact that the power to set interest rates has moved from individual Euroland countries to the European Central Bank. The English section of the core corpus contains four

examples like the above, where common interest rates within Euroland are described by opponents of monetary union as one-size-fits-all clothes. The background corpus contains three further examples. Although not entirely novel, the expression is much more metaphorically active than most of the examples I have considered so far. This is also suggested by the use in all cases of quotation marks, which, as Goatly (1997: 189) points out, can be used to signal the presence of metaphorical expressions. In this context, the choice of metaphor supports a critical view of monetary union by projecting onto the concept of shared interest rates notions of inflexibility and of potential lack of suitability for individual countries, and for the UK in particular. Indeed, one of the examples occurs within a series of comment pieces that were run by *The Guardian* under the heading 'Why I hate the euro'. Although the issue of interest rates is discussed in the Italian data, there is no equivalent for this metaphor.

## 5 Conclusions

The metaphorical patterns I have discussed in the course of the paper are summarised in Table 1. I have retained the order in which patterns have been introduced in the analysis, and used bold-type margins to group together patterns that relate to the same overarching source domain. (NB: Where a particular sub-section of the corpus contains no instances of a particular pattern, I have inserted a dash. On the other hand, I have left cells empty where it has not been possible to search the Background corpus for instances of a particular pattern.)

As far as target domains are concerned, the table shows how particular aspects of monetary union were metaphorised more frequently than others. It is of course not surprising that most patterns concern the *introduction* of the euro, given that my data was collected around the time of this event. More interestingly, the target domains that stand out in each language highlight different concerns and emphases in the two countries. In the Italian data the process whereby Italy qualified for membership is presented in terms of four different source domains: VIAGGI ('JOURNEYS'), SPORT (SPORTS), GUERRA ('WAR') and ESAMI ('EXAMINATIONS'). As I have said before, gaining membership of Emu was universally regarded as necessary for the country's future, but was also a very difficult enterprise for Italy. On the other hand, the two peculiarly English patterns I have identified both relate to constraints imposed by Emu (on exchange rates and interest rates respectively) that eurosceptics regarded as disadvantageous for Britain. The phenomenon that Goatly (1997) calls 'diversification,' therefore, can be seen to correlate with the salience of a particular (aspect of a) target domain within a particular culture or group at a particular historical point.

As far as source domains are concerned, patterns resulting from personification (or the source domain of HUMANS/ ESSERI UMANI), and from the source domains of JOURNEYS/VIAGGI and CONTAINER/CONTENITORE are by far the most frequent in both sets of data. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a text discussing the introduction of the euro for more than a few sentences which does not make use of expressions drawing from one or more of these source domains. The reason for this, in part, is that these particular source domains are highly multivalent (Goatly 1997) in both languages. Electronic searches of many of the metaphorically used words I have discussed in larger general corpora will confirm how these words can be used metaphorically to talk about a wide range of experiences and phenomena.

The multivalence or wide scope of the dominant source domains has important implications for how one might go about using data such as mine to extrapolate A-IS-B conventional conceptual metaphors in the tradition of cognitive metaphor theory. It

would be tempting to use my quantitative findings to suggest the existence of corresponding conventional conceptual metaphors such as, for example, THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO IS A BIRTH/ L'INTRODUZIONE DELL'EURO È UNA NASCITA, or THE EURO IS A CONTAINER/ L'EURO EUROPEA È UN CONTENITORE. However, the multivalence of the relevant source domains in both languages suggests that generalisations about conventional conceptual metaphors should be made at a more abstract/general level, such as BEGINNINGS ARE BIRTHS/ GLI INIZI SONO NASCITE, or MEMBERSHIP IS BEING INSIDE A CONTAINER/ ESSERE MEMBRI È ESSERE DENTRO A UN CONTENITORE. Such more abstract hypotheses about conceptual metaphors would also be more cognitively plausible: if specific metaphors can be seen as instantiations of more general ones (e.g. THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO IS A BIRTH as an instantiation of BEGINNINGS ARE BIRTHS), one could hypothesize that only the most general ones need to be stored in conceptual structure, since the more specific instantiations could easily be generated and processed by applying the general metaphors to new specific instances of generic target domains (e.g. new instances of BEGINNING). All this highlights the need for more explicit and better informed criteria for the extrapolation of conceptual metaphors from linguistic evidence, and for more research on metaphorical patterns arising from highly multivalent source domains, following on to existing studies on generic-level metaphors (e.g. Lakoff and Turner 1989, Lakoff 1993), Inheritance Hierarchies (Lakoff 1993), and 'primary' metaphors (Grady's 1997, 1999).

The discussion has also shown that the more conventional realisations of dominant metaphors express the most basic ways in which the euro is conceptualised (e.g. as a container or as a moving entity), while the more creative realisations are used to support particular views, whether positive or negative, of monetary union. The similarities in metaphorical usage between the two sets of newspapers can be related, on the one hand, to fundamental similarities in the metaphorical systems underlying the two languages (e.g. the preponderance of JOURNEY metaphors), and on the other hand, to mutual influences between languages in the discussion and reporting of an international event such as the introduction of a single currency within the European Union. The differences I have highlighted can be related partly to cultural differences (e.g. in the salience of christenings) and partly to different views of the phenomenon in question.

I also hope to have shown how the combination of a detailed qualitative analysis of a sample set of data and an automatic quantitative analysis of a larger corpus can be a useful compromise between practical time constraints and the need to verify the generalisability of one's findings. And last but not least, attention for the linguistic realisations of metaphorical patterns often leads to important observations on the effects of connotations and evaluative associations, which can easily be ignored in the current emphasis on the conceptual dimension of metaphor.

Table 1

Sources	Targets	Italian data		English data	
		Core	Background	Core	Background
		<i>Occurrences (and frequencies per 1,000 words)</i>	<i>Selected instances identified by electronic searches</i>	<i>Occurrences (and frequencies per 1,000 words)</i>	<i>Selected instances identified by electronic searches</i>
Birth/nascita	Introduction of euro	68 (1.1)	58	27 (0.89)	18
Battesimo (christening)	Introduction of euro	12 (0.2)	17	-	-
Viaggio (journey)	Italy qualifying for euro	18 (0.3)		-	
Arrival/Arrivo	Introduction of euro	35 (0.58)	30	13 (0.42)	18
Departure/Partenza	Introduction of euro	16 (0.26)	53	10 (0.33)	
Launch/Lancio	Introduction of euro	14 (0.23)	14	36 (1.18)	39
Stage in journey/ parte di un viaggio	Introduction of euro	17 (0.28)	39	6 (0.19)	7
Container/ contenitore	Euro/ Monetary union	31 (0.51)	37 (1.22)		
Sports/Sport	Italy qualifying for euro	11 (0.18)	11	-	
Dream/sogno	Introduction of euro	8 (0.13)	-	9 (0.29)	-
Esame (exam)	Italy qualifying for euro	9 (0.15)		-	
Guerra (war)	Italy qualifying for euro	8 (0.13)		2 (0.06)	
Guerra (war)	Italy's conversion to euro	31 (0.51)		-	
War	British debate about euro	-		5 (0.16)	
Lock	Fixing of exchange rates	-	-	7 (0.23)	-
One-size-fits-all	Euroland interest rates	-	-	4 (0.13)	3

## Notes

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<sup>2</sup> The others were: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Holland, Portugal and Spain.

<sup>3</sup> Denmark and Sweden also decided against adopting the euro, while Greece failed to meet the requirements for membership.

<sup>4</sup> These criteria involved specific limits on inflation rates, government budget deficits, total government debt, interest rates, and exchange rates within the European monetary system.

<sup>5</sup> Goatly (1997) primarily exemplifies these terms to patterns in relation to individual texts, but he points out that they can be applied to the lexicon of a language. Here they will be used in relation to my corpus.

<sup>6</sup> In Italy, 1 January is a holiday, and therefore no daily newspapers are published on that day.

<sup>7</sup> I also included the Sunday equivalents of *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*, namely *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Observer* respectively.

<sup>8</sup> Given the comparative nature of this study, I could not include any tabloid newspapers in the British sample because they have no straightforward equivalent in Italy.

<sup>9</sup> The significance of the frequencies per 1,000 words provided in this paper might be better appreciated if compared with the frequencies provided by Boers (1999) in his study of seasonal variation in the use of HEALTH metaphors in editorials published in *The Economist*. Over a period of one year, the monthly average frequency of metaphorical expressions drawing from the HEALTH source domain varied between 0.6 and 1.12 per 1,000 words (NB: As I mentioned in 1.3, I have adopted the same counting method as Boers).

<sup>10</sup> This potential of personification, and particularly of birth metaphors, was not lost on the organisers of the official ceremony marking the introduction of the euro in Brussels, where 3,000 local children were invited to participate in the launch of 3,000 balloons carrying the picture of a stork depositing on a map of Europe a bundle with the logo of the euro (Note that this was at a time when surveys showed that the citizens of Euroland were generally uninformed about monetary union and uninterested in it).

<sup>11</sup> This does not imply that Italians are actually 'nicer' to children than anybody else, of course: paedophilia and violence against children are a big problem in Italy as in many other countries.

<sup>12</sup> In fact, birth is conventionally talked about in both languages in terms of arrival.

<sup>13</sup> This pattern also includes a less frequent metaphor, which I have not discussed for reasons of space, where the euro is seen as a point of departure.

<sup>14</sup> My calculations are likely to be rather conservative, since it is easy to miss prepositional realisations of conventional metaphors.

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<sup>15</sup> I will not discuss the very frequent metaphorical use of the verb ‘to join’ to refer to participation in monetary union (e.g. ‘Britain is not joining’ (*The Daily Telegraph*, 31/12/98)), since it is conventionally applied to membership in general, including clubs, associations, etc.

<sup>16</sup> Indeed, the negative connotation of this metaphor were exploited in a leaflet distributed in British households in September 2000 by a movement campaigning against British participation in monetary union. The front page carried a peculiar representation of the word ‘Euro’, where the first and final letters were formed by the two halves of a pair of handcuffs, so that the chain of the handcuffs underlined the word, as it were. Underneath was a single sentence reading: ‘In twelve months we could be locked in’. The same metaphor was then used repeatedly in the following pages of the leaflet.

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