

# Metaphors On The Way To Lisbon: Will The Treaty Go On The Trunk Line Or Will It Be Stopped In Its Course?

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## 1. Introduction

The European Union process of institutional reform has been a much-debated issue among the EU Member States in recent years. Since the rejection of the European Constitution by France and The Netherlands in 2005, the European Union has been proceeding towards the drawing up of a Reform Treaty and its following adoption by all Members States. In 2007 the Lisbon Treaty was signed by all the Heads of State and Government of the 27 Member States of the European Union but its ratification has not been completed yet. Indeed, Ireland's referendum rebuff last June put the European Union in a kind of 'institutional crisis' and all the EU leaders are questioning about the future of Europe.

Against this background, this paper aims to investigate the representation and description of the European Union integration process related to the Lisbon Treaty debate in the British press. In particular, this presentation aims to analyse the most recurrent conceptual metaphors in order to show how these metaphors not only describe the scenario created by the rejection of the treaty but also give information about Britain's perception of the EU and its future. Moreover, the paper also aims to explore, with the investigation of different quality and popular newspapers, to what extent the use of metaphors varies in the British press.

Lakoff and Johnson in 1980s argued that we define our realities in terms of metaphors and then proceed to act on the basis of those metaphors. They also said that in all aspects of our life metaphors are persistent and this is also true of politics. Since then, a number of studies (Musolf 2001, 1996; Schäffner 1996) have been undertaken into the use of metaphors in various fields of research, especially in public political debate about Europe. These studies have shown how metaphors are relevant to politics as they define political problems and find solutions to those problems. They have also shown that with metaphor analysis, it is possible to bring the inner thoughts of politicians and of those who report and express their views on their policies to light.

The corpus on which this analysis is based consists of 14 newspapers for a total of 1200 articles taken from three tabloids and their Sunday editions (*The Sun*, *The News of The World*, *The Daily Mail*, *Mail on Sunday*, *The Mirror*, *The Sunday Mirror*) and four broadsheets and their Sunday editions (*The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Independent*, *Independent on Sunday*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Telegraph*). The data collected comprises the period from June 2007 to March 2009. Their full size consists of 660333 tokens.

The decision to stop the collection in March is due to the fact that it was expected that the Senate of the Czech Republic would give its opinion on the ratification of the Treaty. However, the Senate took its decision only last May. The collection of data occurred in two different steps and the present paper only investigates the first stage which refers to the period from June 2007 to 8 October 2008.

The decision to investigate different broadsheets and tabloids is due to the fact that newspapers tend to express the same thing differently as a result of ideological distinction. Therefore, a metaphor analysis may reveal differences in the use of metaphors which depend on the message newspapers want to convey or transfer to the target audience. This message, of course, is reported from a particular angle as the expression of the ideology of the newspaper industry.

## 2. Metaphor identification and investigation

As Charteris-Black pointed out (2004), the investigation of metaphors needs both a qualitative and a quantitative approach. A qualitative approach is necessary firstly to establish what will be considered a metaphor, and secondly, to interpret the role of metaphors, the type of evaluation they convey and to what extent they are related to the intentions of the language user, to better understand what purposes they have in mind when speaking metaphorically. On the other hand, a quantitative analysis is necessary because it allows us to explore the most recurring metaphors in specific contexts and provides us with insights into the cognitive characteristics of that particular metaphor. Following this approach to metaphor analysis, the identification of metaphors has taken two stages.

### 2.1 First stage of analysis

In the first stage of analysis, a sample of articles (5 percent of the total) has been investigated qualitatively. A close reading is necessary for a first identification of possible recurrent metaphors in the corpus. From the reading, it has been possible to identify different lexical items with a metaphoric sense and group them into different domains (Table 1).

| (A) LISBON RATIFICATION PROCESS IS MOVEMENT<br>FORWARD / DIRECTION |                 | (B) REJECTION OF RATIFICATION PROCESS IS LACK OF MOVEMENT<br>/ OPPOSITE DIRECTION |                         |
|--|-----------------|---|-------------------------|
| <u>Direction</u>   | <u>Movement</u> | <u>Opposite Direction</u>   | <u>Lack of Movement</u> |
| Way  | Move            | Go back   | Stall                   |
| Go along   | Go ahead        | Delay   | Stop                    |
| Proceed  | Plough ahead    |   | Halt                    |
| Path   | Progress        |   | Block                   |
| Course   |                 |   | Gridlock                |
| Track  |                 |   | Impasse                 |
| Route  |                 |   | Standstill              |
| Road   |                 |   |                         |

**Table 1 : List of all the lexical items related to Movement Metaphors.**- The lexical items identified here are only relative to the sample.

The metaphorical domains identified are 33 and they reveal that there is a various distribution of metaphors in the corpus as it is shown in Table 2. This stage has been necessary to make predictions on the basis of which it has been possible to investigate the whole corpus. Moreover, the relationship between the target and the source domains has also been examined in this stage. This process of categorization has led to the identification of various conceptual metaphors.

| Metaphorical domains          | Broadsheets -<br>weekly edition | Broadsheets -<br>Sunday edition | Tabloids -weekly<br>edition | Tabloids -<br>Sunday edition | total  |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Debate                     | 6.01                            | 13.13                           | 2.2                         | 54.16                        | 75.5   |
| 2. War/conflict               | 97.65                           | 178.51                          | 33.4                        | 305.71                       | 615.27 |
| 3. Violence                   | 15.98                           | 56.16                           | 16.43                       | 126.67                       | 215.24 |
| 4. Disease                    | 22.7                            | 42.33                           | 4.01                        | 36.79                        | 105.83 |
| 5. Dying people               | 1.57                            | 103.38                          | 26.27                       | 18.39                        | 149.61 |
| 6. Movement                   | 35.96                           | 42.23                           | 6.21                        | 129.65                       | 214.05 |
| 7. Lack of movement           | 7.61                            | 38.64                           |                             | 55.56                        | 101.81 |
| 8. Transport                  | 26.91                           | 37.29                           |                             | 54.14                        | 118.34 |
| 9. Journey                    |                                 | 19.73                           |                             |                              | 19.73  |
| 10. Personification           | 38.36                           | 49.57                           | 4.4                         |                              | 92.33  |
| 11. Sport/competition         | 34.39                           | 105.58                          | 1.09                        | 148.04                       | 289.1  |
| 12. Game                      | 2.06                            | 21.17                           |                             |                              | 23.23  |
| 13. Love                      | 5.49                            |                                 |                             |                              | 5.49   |
| 14. Architecture              | 7.33                            | 21.17                           | 0.54                        | 18.52                        | 47.56  |
| 15. Construction              | 5.91                            | 6.08                            |                             |                              | 11.99  |
| 16. Boys                      | 10.46                           | 39.87                           | 4.01                        |                              | 54.34  |
| 17. goods/resources/materials | 3.69                            | 53.42                           | 2.2                         |                              | 59.31  |

|                       |        |         |        |         |        |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18. Food              | 3.64   | 30.69   | 2.2    |         | 36.53  |
| 19. Theatre           | 3.42   |         |        | 55.31   | 58.73  |
| 20. Group/Container   | 9.33   | 53.43   | 4.01   | 36.91   | 103.68 |
| 21. Friendship        |        | 12.88   | 4.01   |         | 16.89  |
| 22. Family            |        | 4.93    |        |         | 4.93   |
| 23. Natural elements  | 9.65   | 25.81   |        | 17.1    | 52.56  |
| 24. Animal            |        |         | 2.2    | 37.04   | 39.24  |
| 25. Business          |        | 14.03   |        |         | 14.03  |
| 26. Narration/Story   |        | 77.28   |        |         | 77.28  |
| 27. Picture           |        | 12.88   |        |         | 12.88  |
| 28. Physical activity |        | 25.76   |        |         | 25.76  |
| 29. Religion          |        | 9.36    |        |         | 9.36   |
| 30. Conspiracy        | 5.01   |         | 2.2    | 37.04   | 44.25  |
| 31. Dream             |        | 9.86    |        |         | 9.86   |
| 32. Machine           | 1.57   |         |        |         | 1.57   |
| 33. Liquids           | 1.57   |         |        |         | 1.57   |
| total                 | 356.27 | 1105.17 | 115.38 | 1131.03 |        |

**Table 2: Distribution of metaphors in the corpus-** The occurrences have been normalised to 100000 words. This table refers to results taken from the sample.

As far as the movement metaphors are concerned, from the first reading the following metaphors have been identified.

(A) LISBON RATIFICATION PROCESS IS MOVEMENT FORWARD / DIRECTION

1. No doubt the Eurocrats *will try to go ahead* as though nothing had happened in the Irish referendum.  
(*Mail on Sunday*, 16 June 2008)
2. Mr Brown *has pushed ahead with moves* to ratify the treaty despite Ireland's rejection of it in a referendum and the clear opposition of British voters [...]  
(*The Daily Telegraph*, 21 June 2008)

(B) REJECTION OF THE RATIFICATION IS LACK OF MOVEMENT / OPPOSITE DIRECTION

3. If Ireland votes no, the treaty *is stopped in its tracks* anyway.  
(*The Guardian*, 17 May 2008)
4. In the debate in the House of Lords, one heard longstanding pro-Europeans who spoke of the referendums that did not agree with them as having '*gone the wrong way*'.  
(*Mail on Sunday*, 16 June 2008)

A preliminary outline which was possible to draw is that in this scenario, the ratification process is seen as a movement forward with the institution pressing towards that goal. As a consequence, the rejection of the process is conceived as a lack of movement or as a movement in the opposite direction. The Lisbon Treaty appears as a means of transport whose course has been stopped while the other countries/people that do not want to adopt the Treaty are seen as moving in the opposite direction.

## 2.2. Second stage of analysis

In the second part of the analysis, all the lexical items identified have been examined with the help of the software WordSmith Tools (Scott, M. 2008). In particular, a concordance for each word has been created to determine if their use was metaphorical or literal. Both the non-metaphorical occurrences and the metaphorical occurrences not related to the metaphor under investigation were deleted. As a consequence, the concordance list including only the metaphorical items relevant to this study was saved. The concordances have shown that lexical items are variously distributed in each newspaper as reported in Tables 3 and 4.

| Concordance  | Guar  | Obse | Times | Sun. Times | Indep | Indep. Sun | Mail  | Mail Sun | Mir   | Sun. Mir | Now   | Sun   | Daily Tel | Sun Tel | TOT.    |
|--------------|-------|------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------|
| WAY          | 13.16 | 8.1  | 11.07 | 12.00      | 16.78 | 15.36      | 11.52 | 19.61    | 36.41 |          | 18.53 | 9.12  | 11.77     | 9.86    | 193.29  |
| PROCEED      | 7.52  |      | 6.33  | 10.80      | 10.49 | 15.36      | 4.39  | 19.61    | 14.14 | 36.77    |       | 6.84  | 5.89      | 4.93    | 143.07  |
| MOVE         | 5.64  |      | 9.49  | 3.60       | 6.29  |            | 3.83  | 39.22    | 16.18 |          |       | 13.69 | 21.58     | 14.79   | 134.31  |
| GO AHEAD     | 5.64  | 8.1  | 1.58  | 3.60       | 8.39  |            | 3.29  | 19.61    | 8.09  |          | 18.53 | 4.56  | 9.81      | 9.86    | 101.06  |
| WAY OUT      | 11.28 |      | 1.58  | 4.80       | 6.29  |            | 2.19  |          |       | 18.39    |       |       | 7.85      |         | 52.38   |
| ROAD         |       |      | 4.75  | 1.20       | 4.20  |            | 1.10  |          | 8.09  | 18.39    |       |       |           | 4.93    | 42.66   |
| PUSH THROUGH | 1.88  |      | 3.16  | 1.20       | 2.10  |            | 2.74  |          | 4.04  |          | 18.53 | 4.56  | 3.92      |         | 42.13   |
| DRIVE        |       | 8.1  | 1.58  | 2.40       | 2.10  |            |       |          | 4.04  |          |       | 4.56  | 13.73     | 4.93    | 41.44   |
| PUSH AHEAD   |       |      | 4.75  |            | 4.20  |            | 0.55  |          |       | 18.39    |       |       | 7.85      | 4.93    | 40.67   |
| PUSH FOR     | 1.88  |      |       |            | 2.10  |            | 2.74  |          | 12.14 |          | 18.53 | 2.28  |           |         | 39.67   |
| COURSE       | 3.76  |      |       |            | 2.10  | 15.36      | 2.19  |          |       |          |       | 4.56  | 3.92      | 4.93    | 36.82   |
| ROUTE        | 3.76  |      | 3.16  | 2.40       | 4.20  |            |       |          | 16.18 |          |       | 4.56  |           |         | 34.26   |
| PROGRESS     |       |      |       | 2.40       | 2.10  |            | 1.10  |          | 4.04  |          | 18.53 |       | 1.96      |         | 30.13   |
| PLOUGH AHEAD |       |      |       | 1.20       |       |            |       |          | 8.09  |          |       |       | 1.96      | 9.86    | 21.11   |
| PUSH         | 3.76  |      |       | 2.40       | 2.10  |            | 1.64  |          | 4.04  |          |       | 4.56  | 1.96      |         | 20.46   |
| TRACK        | 1.88  |      | 1.58  | 6.00       | 4.20  |            | 2.19  |          |       |          |       | 4.56  |           |         | 20.41   |
| PUSH ON      |       |      |       |            |       |            |       |          |       |          |       | 4.56  | 1.96      |         | 6.52    |
| PATH         |       |      |       |            | 4.20  |            | 1.10  |          |       |          |       |       |           |         | 5.30    |
| TOTAL        | 33.84 | 16.2 | 22.14 | 27.6       | 48.28 | 15.36      | 20.83 | 19.61    | 68.75 | 55.17    | 74.12 | 38.76 | 54.92     | 39.44   | 1005.69 |

**Table 3. Distribution of metaphors in the corpus**-The results are taken from the investigation of the corpus. The lexical items are relative to metaphor (A). The results have been normalized to 100000 words.

| Concordance | Guar  | Obse | Times | Sun. Times | Indep | Indep. Sun | mail  | Mail Sun | Mir   | Sun. Mir | Now   | Sun   | Daily Tel | Sun. Tel. | TOTAL  |
|-------------|-------|------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| DELAY       | 5.64  |      | 23.74 | 7.2        | 12.59 |            | 2.74  | 19.61    | 4.04  | 18.34    | 18.53 | 9.12  | 17.66     |           | 139.21 |
| IMPASSE     | 11.28 |      | 3.16  | 8.4        |       | 15.36      | 2.74  | 19.61    |       |          |       |       | 1.96      |           | 62.51  |
| STOP        | 7.52  |      | 7.91  | 9.6        | 2.10  |            | 3.84  |          |       |          |       | 4.56  | 11.77     | 14.79     | 62.09  |
| HALT        |       |      | 7.91  | 7.2        | 2.10  |            | 3.84  |          | 8.09  |          |       | 2.81  | 9.81      |           | 41.76  |
| STALL       | 1.88  |      | 1.58  | 3.6        | 2.10  |            |       | 19.61    |       |          |       |       | 1.96      |           | 30.73  |
| BLOCK       | 9.4   |      | 1.58  | 6.0        |       |            | 2.19  |          |       |          |       | 2.81  |           | 4.93      | 26.91  |
| STAND STILL |       |      |       |            |       |            |       |          | 8.09  |          |       | 2.81  |           |           | 10.9   |
| GO BACK     |       |      | 1.58  | 1.2        |       |            |       |          |       |          |       | 2.81  |           |           | 5.59   |
| GRIDLOCK    | 1.88  |      |       |            |       |            |       |          |       |          |       |       |           |           | 1.88   |
| TOTAL       | 37.6  |      | 47.46 | 43.2       | 18.89 |            | 15.35 | 58.83    | 20.22 | 18.34    | 18.53 | 24.92 | 43.16     | 19.72     | 366.22 |

**Table 4. Distribution of metaphors in the corpus**-The results are taken from the investigation of the corpus. The lexical items are relative to metaphor (B). The results have been normalized to 100000 words.

The Tables above show a different distribution of metaphors in each sub-corpus and what is remarkable is that lexical items related to metaphor (A) are more frequent than the ones relative to metaphor (B). In particular what could be relevant is that *The Observer* lacks lexical items linked to metaphor (B) and the *Independent on Sunday* does not use those lexical items apart from *impasse* even though it is not particularly significant because the lemma appears only once. Before introducing a more detailed analysis, it is important to note that the distribution of tokens in each sub-corpus differs and on the basis of this consideration Tables 3 and 4 have been analysed. What emerges from a preliminary analysis, as examples 1, 2, 3 and 4 show, is that the ratification process is seen as a goal difficult to achieve, a matter to be discussed and therefore very problematic. As it could be expected, the EU leaders and those near to EU policies welcome the event as something positive to allow the progress of the institution. While, the ones who

oppose the treaty and the innovation it would bring appear to be negative and regard it as not the road to follow. The situation is reversed when looking at the linguistic manifestation of metaphor (B). EU leaders in fact are portrayed in a negative light and treaty's opponents advocate stopping the ratification as if the only positive thing to do is to stop the EU *juggernaut*.

- (1) Brian Cowen said the European Union has "been the greatest force for peace and prosperity in our history and the history of Europe". In a last-ditch appeal, he urged Ireland to pass the treaty so *Europe can move forward*. The Taoiseach added: "*Europe cannot stand still*. We live in a more competitive and global environment. We must ensure it can compete in that environment".  
(*The Mirror*, 11 June 2008)
- (2) The former EU commissioner Peter Sutherland says if there is a No vote on Thursday, the *EU will just go ahead with the Lisbon treaty anyway*. He says: "I can't believe that *a way will not be found to proceed*". Think about that. This is telling us that EU politicians care so little about democracy they would just ignore an Irish No vote and carry on regardless.  
(*The Sunday Times*, 13 June 2008)
- (3) Ed Davey, the Liberal Democrats Foreign Affairs spokesman, said: *The Government should not proceed with the final stage of ratification*.  
(*Mail on Sunday*, 16 June 2008)
- (4) Mr Cowen will meet other EU leaders at the European Council on Thursday and Friday *to discuss a way forward*. EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said he believes the Treaty is still "alive", while French President Nicolas Sarkozy urged all other member states to continue ratifying it.  
(*The News of the World*, 24 June 2008)

The treaty and its route are not always positive, indeed, their connotations are often negative. Just before the referendum *The Sunday Times* (8 march 2008) reported Ganley's statement which expresses negativity towards the treaty as *it is not the way forward*. And soon after the referendum this is a common view<sup>1</sup>. *The Sunday Times* (15 June 2008) negatively comments the ratification when it states that Gordon Brown has to call Sarkozy and tell him that *it would be wrong to proceed with the treaty*. *The Times* (17 June 2008) also criticizes the Lords if it is their intention to vote for Lisbon (*if the Lords intend to proceed*) and defines this action as *not just unwise but irresponsible*. And *The Daily Telegraph* later (11 July 2008) reports that according to the Czechs *to move the treaty forward would have disastrous consequences*. This image seems to suggest a prediction of a catastrophe if the treaty will be approved and give us the idea that the Czechs are far from being enthusiastic about it. *The Daily Mail* (23 July 2008) referring to the Irish no said that it is not possible to ratify the treaty (*the treaty cannot proceed*).

As far as the rejection of the treaty is concerned, the EU leaders and supporters of the treaty see the Irish no as something that will not cause any problems to the EU. In fact, concordances of such terms as *block, stop, delay* referred to by those participants generally collocate with negation (*not block, didn't come to a halt, would not stop, there should be no delay, should not delay, refused to halt*). The *delay* is seen as negative for Britain – *weakness* or something that *would leave Britain on the sidelines* – according to Miliband and Lord Kinnock as it is reported respectively in *The Independent* (17 June 2008) and in *The Times* (19 June 2008). On the contrary, when these concordances are stated by opponents of the treaty or report some of opponent's statements, the rejection is generally seen as something positive and necessary, the right thing to do (*ratification should stop* [2], *stop ratification immediately*). The analysis of the concordances has shown that the collocation with negations occurs less frequently than positive statements. Moreover, the occurrences are not equally distributed in each sub-corpus but negations are predominant in *The Daily Mail* (4 out of 10 occurrences).

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<sup>1</sup> Declan Ganley is the founder and Chairman of the new pan-European political party Libertas. In June 2008, he and Libertas burst onto the stage of European politics, leading the "No Campaign" in the Irish referendum on the EU's Lisbon Treaty.

### 3. Daily Broadsheets investigation

#### 3.1 *The Daily Telegraph*

A first step in the analysis of the different sub-corpora has been to investigate the quality newspapers which circulate daily. What emerges from the analysis of the occurrences is that *The Daily Telegraph* shows a negative attitude towards the movement forward and appears particularly critical of the EU leaders and the British Prime Minister. In the occurrences of *go ahead* which is used to describe the process of ratification and puts emphasis on the speed of the movement, when the actor is Gordon Brown and the lexical item refers to the opinion of EU leaders, it is evaluated positively as it collocates with the verb *to praise*. This collocation implies EU leaders' support for Brown's action. However, as it is visible in example (5) this action is negatively evaluated as the newspaper uses the contrastive evaluator *but* which contrasts the previous sentence. Moreover, the collocation of Brown with the verb *admit* evaluates his behaviour negatively. It shows that the statement has been produced reluctantly but it also implies that the writer is evaluating Brown's action of ratification as something bad as if he has committed something negative, wrong.

- (5) Mr. Brown has been praised by EU leaders for his "courage" in going ahead with ratification. But at a press conference in Brussels Mr. Brown was forced to admit he cannot give final legal approval until after Lord Justice Richards' judgment

The negative evaluation of the British Prime Minister is also visible in the collocation of the verb *to insist*. This verb attributes a negative connotation to Brown who is trying to obtain his goal forcefully, by imposing his will and refusing opposition. In examples (6), the determination of Gordon Brown is reinforced by the modal *would* which implies certainty for the completion of the ratification. The volition to ratify appears to be brought about by the decision of EU leaders. This might imply that the newspaper not only evaluates Brown and the British Government negatively but also extends its negative evaluation to the whole European Union.

- (6) Gordon Brown insisted yesterday that the government would go ahead with parliamentary plans to ratify the treaty as EU foreign ministers meeting in Luxemburg agreed last week's Irish referendum defeat would not stop the Lisbon process.

The negative evaluation is also visible in example (7). *The Daily Telegraph* seems to be critical of Brown's behaviour. It says that Brown is *unable to steer a clear course*. This metaphor stresses the ambivalent attitude of Brown towards the ratification. It seems as if he wants to be praised by EU leaders but he also doesn't want to create a collision with Ireland. The metaphorical image is also reinforced by the jellyfish image which the newspaper borrows from Mr. Cameron. This representation gives a negative evaluation of Mr. Brown who is unable to decide what to do and freely moves through and forth in waters. This image reinforces the movement metaphor which uses the lexical item *course* to express Brown's inability to take a final decision.

- (7) Mr Cameron told Mr Brown: "I've seen more spine and leadership from a bunch of jellyfish." It was a horrible image: Mr Brown does indeed behave like a jellyfish, swept hither and thither on the ocean of events, well able to sting any Labour rival who swims too near, but unable to steer a clear course or give a straight answer.

When analysing the concordances for *delay*, the newspaper appears more favourable to such an action than other qualities. As it is shown in examples (8) and (9), the newspaper uses neutral reporting verbs *tell/told* when it describes the fact that judge Richards does not want to ratify. This might imply that the newspaper is in favour of a rejection of the treaty. *The Daily Telegraph* does not criticize the judge's behaviour but evaluates judge's intervention as unexpected (unusual) and probably for this reason, it is to be considered important. And later on

it negatively evaluates Brown *forced to admit that ratification will not be immediate*. The verb *admit* in fact implies that Brown has done or said something not considered good that is insisting on ratification. As a consequence, a failure of the delay is negatively evaluated (defeated). On the other hand, a negative evaluation of the opponents of the treaty appears just once. Who evaluates them negatively is Lord Wallace as he refers to the delay as *irresponsible populism*. However, the newspaper seems to have an opposite opinion. He negatively evaluates the peers as they have been unable to prevent ratification (*peers declined to offer the treaty a decent burial*).

- (8) A HIGH Court judge has told Gordon Brown to delay British moves to ratify the EU's Lisbon Treaty. The unusual public intervention of Lord Justice Richards in the political debate over the controversial text has forced the Prime Minister to admit that ratification will not be immediate. Mr Brown has pushed ahead with moves to ratify the treaty despite Ireland's rejection of it in a referendum and the clear opposition of British voters. The judge is considering a case brought by Stuart Wheeler, a Euro-sceptic, which alleges that ministers have acted unlawfully by trying to ratify the treaty without a British referendum.
- (9) Judge tells Britain to delay Lisbon Treaty ratification

### 3.2 *The Times*

Also in *The Times* we have a negative image of the British Government when we look at the concordances for *drive*. As it is shown in example (10), the fact that the British Government is described as willing to drive that bulldozer gives it the image of lack of respect for its people. The British government appears as an authoritative and forceful *driver*. *Bulldozer*, in fact, is a very heavy vehicle with a blade in front used to move earth or knock down buildings. And as a consequence, the newspaper seems to be sympathetic towards British people, passive goals of Government's actions.

- (10) For all its talk, this Government seems to want to be in the driver's cab of a bulldozer that we should be lying down in front of. Before the third reading begins in the Lords, that House retains the ability to return the treaty to committee for further detailed consideration. This is an option very much worth preserving given the current uncertainty. Peers will be given the chance to vote to delay the third reading. They should take it.

A negative connotation of Brown is also visible in the collocation of the actor with the verb *to insist*, example (11). This verb evaluates Brown negatively as if he is determined to go ahead careless of what has happened.

- (11) The initial test comes this week with the third reading in the Lords tomorrow of the Lisbon treaty Bill, the final stage before it becomes law. Mr. Brown has insisted that this will go ahead. David Miliband has said that it is "important that the British position is not in suspended animation, in limbo".

Moreover, the determination of Gordon Brown is reinforced by the modal *will* which implies certainty for the completion of the ratification.

### 3.3 *The Independent*

*The Independent* negatively evaluates the *go ahead* when it refers to the action of excluding Ireland from the process of ratification or when it refers to the reaction of Czech Republic. In the example (12), the action of leaving Ireland apart and continuing with ratification is evaluated negatively. By using the word *fears* (emotivity), the writer underlines how this event is perceived as something dangerous able to cause negative feelings and therefore itself negative. As a consequence the proponents of the treaty are also evaluated negatively. EU leaders in fact collocates with *admit* (2) and *reluctant*. The evaluative adjective and the repetition of the reporting verb imply that EU leaders are not willing to say what they have to and that they say it only to gain the favour of the citizens, that is always for their aims. In the example (13), the go ahead is seen as something negative because it collocates with *pressure*

and *resisted*. The go ahead then is seen as something negative which others are imposing with force and Czech is only able to resist. This gives us the idea that Czech Republic is unwilling to accept it and if it does, it will be only by means of force. This image seems to express sympathy with those forced to act and gives negative connotation of the pressers.

- (12) EU foreign ministers, meeting in Luxembourg yesterday, admitted there could be "no quick fix" as they tried to calm Ireland's fears that the EU will either go ahead with the treaty without Ireland or ignore last week's referendum by pressurising the country to vote a second time on an amended treaty.[...] Privately, EU diplomats say there could be a second Irish referendum next year but admit that it would be wrong to talk up the prospect now as this would give the impression the EU was overriding the wishes of its citizens. The other main option is to abandon the treaty and rely on the existing decision-making procedures - but most EU members are reluctant to do that.
- (13) Despite yesterday's calls for cool heads, differences over the way ahead are not far beneath the surface. Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, said the EU needed the treaty. "Together with Ireland we have to work out a solution and the process of ratification should be finalised in all 26 other countries", she said. "I am sure we will develop a solution for Ireland". But the Czech Republic resisted pressure to go ahead with ratification, saying it would keep its options open.

However, *The Independent* seems to be not favourable to a *delay* at least for Britain. In its concordances, the judge collocates with *order/ed* which gives importance to the actor as it confers authority, the same action is evaluated negatively as the treaty *suffers* it (*treaty suffered a last-minute hitch when a High Court judge ordered the Government to delay ratification*). The positiveness towards the ratification is more evident in another concordance where the delay is described in terms of obstacles. And the fact that Lords rejected the proposal of the Tory makes the *delay* appear as something Lords do not welcome. Moreover, this position seems to be supported by the attributed propositions by Miliband in which he negatively evaluates the delay as a *weakness* for Britain. When the newspaper refers to William Hague's action of delaying the second vote uses the verb *urge*. This implies a negative connotation as *urge* means persuade strongly. These apparently contrastive positions might be explained in the light of the political stance of the newspaper. As *The Independent* is in line with the Labour Party, this might explain why it sees the delay as negative for Britain. However, it does not favour the ratification without Ireland that is something EU leaders are proposing.

### 3.4 *The Guardian*

While the other newspapers display a negative attitude towards the EU, *The Guardian* seems to point out a different position. For example when analysing the occurrence of *way out*, which is used to describe a possible solution to the situation created by the Irish 'no', *The Guardian* seems to positively evaluate the action of EU leaders, especially Sarkozy. In its occurrences, *way out* collocates with verbs such as *chart* (2), *find* (2), and with nouns as *proposals* (1) and *suggestions* (1). These collocations make the *way out* uncertain and not defined. *Charting* the way out is evaluated in terms of importance for Sarkozy (*his focus*) and evidentiality (*it was clear*). From these collocations, the newspaper seems to positively evaluate Sarkozy's action. What is interesting in these collocations, is that when referring to EU leaders' action towards the Irish Government, they appear not forcing anyone but only *hope that Brian Cowen can offer suggestions on a way out of the impasse*. This puts them in a positive position (*hope, can offer*) and may evoke sympathy with them. This feeling of sympathy might be reinforced by the emotional involvement of the writer who defines them as *desperate to find* a solution for the treaty. *The Guardian* also appears more neutral in the use of *go ahead*. This neutrality is evident in the fact that all the occurrences of *go ahead*, for example, are sourced averrals meaning that all the occurrences and comments are based on the evidence of a source. Secondly, it is also visible in choice of adverbs and adjectives which do not carry an emotive impact of the writer. On the other hand, when the newspaper refers to the *delay*, it seems not willing to accept it (examples 14 and 15). In particular, *delay* collocates with *force* whose actor is the High Court

Judge. This collocation gives a negative connotation to *delay* and as a consequence to the enforcer. Moreover, the newspaper seems to evaluate *delay* as problematic for Brown *faced with it*. However, the Prime Minister is evaluated positively as he appears able to continue with ratification (*steamed ahead*). The use of the *steam ahead* reinforces the two metaphors.

- (14) Judge forces delay in ratification of Lisbon treaty to await legal ruling
- (15) One leader who has not blinked is Brown. Faced with demands from David Cameron, William Hague and the eurosceptic coalition to delay the UK ratification until October the prime minister steamed ahead with the final votes in the Lords last night, mocking Tory opportunism.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

In the examples above, it is evident that *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* have a sceptic attitude towards the ratification and EU leaders and are critical of Brown's behaviour. This position might find its explanation in the fact that both the newspapers are in line with the Conservatives and in particular, *The Daily Telegraph* has strongly advocated a referendum. On the other hand, the more neutral stance of *The Guardian* towards the Government is due to the fact that the newspaper is addressed to the Labour Party electorate. The position of *The Independent*, as we have seen, oscillates between an overt support of the ratification to a negative evaluation of the European Leaders. The support of the ratification might be explained considering the fact that the newspaper is in line with the Labour Party, however, this has not stopped the newspaper referring to the rush of ratification negatively.

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