



Universidad de Jaén

Departamento de Filología
Inglesa

**THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON-
RELATED CARTOONS DURING THE PANDEMIC IN THE
BRITISH NEWSPAPERS: A CRITICAL MULTIMODAL
METAPHOR APPROACH**

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Departamento: Filología Inglesa

Fecha: 16/04/2024

ISBN:
Licencia CC

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my study to my beloved family: parents, siblings, my husband and daughter for their endless love, encouragement and unwavering support during my scholarly journey to achieve this endeavour.

And I also want to dedicate this study wholeheartedly to my supervisor Dr. Jesús M. Nieto García who is the source of inspiration, infinite devotion and motivation. His devotion to excellence has been the cornerstone of this academic work.

- Eman Riyadh Adeeb

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance.” - Eckhart Tolle

Just a few years ago, the idea of reaching the final pages of my thesis felt like an impossible feat. But now, as I approach the final stages of my journey, I extend my heartfelt appreciation and immense gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Jesús M. Nieto García, whose consistent encouragement paved the way for my success. He was the beacon in the night whose constant guidance, infinite patience, and sincere devotion greatly illuminated even the darkest corners of this thesis. I will always owe him a debt of gratitude.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to my family – my father, mother, siblings – for their long-lasting love and spiritual encouragement throughout the various stages of completing this thesis.

Last but not the least, I am immensely grateful to my husband and beloved daughter, Haya, for their unwavering love, support, and patience. Their constant presence has provided me with the strength and motivation to persevere and go on, not just in this journey but in all my future endeavours.

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(*) Inapplicable cartoons, discarded from the analysis

(√) Applicable cartoons

(x) Semiotics resources occurrence

(→) Means, or triggers

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC= British Broadcasting Corporation

BCA = British Cartoon Archive

BCG= Boston Consulting Group

СССР= Союз Советских Социалистических Республик, SSSR 'Soyuz Sovetskih Socialisticheskikh Respublik'

CDA= Critical Discourse Analysis

CMA= Critical Metaphor Analysis/ Critical Metaphor Approach

CMMA= Critical Multimodal Metaphor Analysis

CMT = Conceptual Metaphor Theory

COVID-19 = Coronavirus Disease 2019

EU= European Union

F.O. DFID MERGER= the Merger of Department for International Development with the Foreign Office in the UK

FTSE 100= Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 Index

GAS= Government Announcement Service

GDP= Gross Domestic Product

GMG = Guardian Media Group

Lib-Dem= Liberal Democrats Party

MCDA= Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

MDA=Multimodal Discourse Analysis

MIP = Metaphor Identification Procedure

MIPVU = Metaphor Identification University Amsterdam

MPA= Metaphor Patterns Analysis
NHS= National Health Service
PHE= Public Health England
PM= Prime Minister
PPE= Personal Protective Equipment
SAGE= Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies
SFG= Systemic Functional Grammar
UAM= Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.
UK=United Kingdom
US= United States of America
UTD= United
VAT= VALUE-ADDED TAX
VisMIP = Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure
WHO= World Health Organization
WTO= World Trade Organization
WWI= First World War
WWII= Second World War

ABSTRACT

With the unprecedented emergence of COVID-19 in 2019-2020 and its swift proliferation over the world, scholars and experts have turned their attention to studying the far-reaching impact of this crisis on different spheres of life. As a result, academic endeavours and scientific investigations have provided a considerable amount of research aimed at understanding the crisis and how it has been presented and shaped in the academic discussions for more facilitation, particularly those connected to linguistics studies, as in Haddad and Montero-Martinez (2020), Wicke & Bolognesi, (2020), DeVore, et al., (2021), Semino (2021a, b), Wang (2021), among many others. Additionally, further studies have also focused on how countries have responded to this virus and how their governments directed their plans and policies to reduce its worsening and widespread risk such as wildfire. The great Powers have been the focus of researchers' attention by highlighting how governments of these countries (America, Britain, and China) have addressed the proliferation of the virus and how to reduce its risk as Andersson (2022), Castro Seixas(2021), Craig, (2020) Kazemian, R., & Hatamzadeh, S. (2022), Magaña, et al. (2023).

Thus, this study takes another route of investigation and focus in which it has been devoted to address how the UK newspapers (i.e., *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*) metaphorically conceptualized politicians (namely the former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson) in their political cartoons during the pandemic (February 2020 to February 2021). The focus, therefore, is to identify, interpret and explain Boris Johnson- related metaphorical images employed in these newspapers' cartoons during the pandemic through an implementation of the combination of Critical Metaphor Approach provided by Charteris-Black :2004, 2005, and the Semiotic Analysis and Multimodal Theory provided by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). Adopting this three-staged approach with the implementation of the Image Annotation Process (UAM Image Tool) introduced by O'Donnell (2008), the study successfully offers qualitative and quantitative data which reveals the similarities and differences among the three corpora of the newspapers, concerning the metaphorical domains: the focused themes or target domains and source domains such as image schemas, scenarios, and visual intertextual references that depict Johnson and his government during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The findings obtained from the analysis unveil that the three corpora have differed in their thematic orientation, source domains, metaphorical images, and intertextual references employed in Boris-Johnson- related cartoons. Such metaphorical variation is remarkably influenced by the newspapers' ideological alignment (i.e. right, left, central), political party endorsement (i.e. Conservative, Labour, none). Moreover, the semiotic elements employed in the cartoons have also utilized differently by the newspapers' cartoonists to achieve the editorial purposes of their administrations.

Keywords: Boris Johnson, COVID-19, political cartoons, critical metaphor approach, multimodality.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION: THE STUDY

With the unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 towards the end of 2019 and the declaration of the Chinese authorities about the rapid proliferation of the disease and the situation spiraling out of control there, all countries had taken on swift policies and precautionary measures to curb the virus prevalence, as reported by World Health Organization (henceforth WHO)¹. In the United Kingdom, like in many other countries, the government attempted to respond promptly to the virus to mitigate its severe consequences and lethal effect, despite the mass demonstrations and allegations of negligence and delayed actions. The escalating allegations and accusations also hit the British Prime Minister (henceforth PM) Boris Johnson, who was accused by both citizens and political opponents of downplaying the virus's fatal impact and failing to implement proactive and decisive strategies and measures.

In light of all these circumstances, newspaper cartoonists had their own share in this exceptional event. As such, their comic illustrations and graphic art forms were basically employed to achieve some functions and to evaluate the governments' work around the world. No doubt, political cartoons over years have powerful influence on the community's opinion and public views; they assume ideological and persuasive roles by selectively highlighting or downplaying particular aspects (Cameron, 2007; Koller, 2009; Caballero 2014, among others). Calder et al. (2000) suggest that political cartoons basically function to illustrate attitudes, identities, ideologies, and stereotypes; furthermore, they have an evaluative function, as many other discourse types, when cartoonists assess current events through their artwork.

Pertaining to the onset of COVID-19 and its rapid spread in the UK, most newspapers' political cartoons either intentionally pointed at the condemnation of Boris Johnson's COVID-19 roadmap and its dire consequences, or were employed to ridiculously visualize Johnson's character, his leadership and his backbenches' in the government (the Tories). Thus, these graphic art forms are based upon visual imageries and metaphors to facilitate understanding the abstract issues related

¹ <https://data.who.int/dashboards/covid19/cases?n=c>

to the crisis of COVID-19 and Johnson's measures to cope with the pandemic. It is always said that cartoonists' visual images are mirrors that reflect the reality with a satirical and humorous perspective, while Midalia (1999:131) regards visual images as not different from other representations, they "are never innocent or neutral reflections of reality [...] they re-present for us: that is, they offer not a mirror of the world but an interpretation of it". Such interpretations highlight what is on the ground and simultaneously reveals the hidden relations that exist between language (as one mode of representation), power and ideology.

So, simply, political cartoons according to this interconnected relation are seen as ideology carriers and persuasion holders, since cartoonists can convey humoristic and satiric views and judgments that efficiently affect their audience's perception of reality (Graham, 2003). Ideology, in this respect, is defined by Van Dijk (1995) as "the interface between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action, on the one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups, on the other hand". Thus, the objectives of the study are to investigate and address how political cartoons depicted Boris Johnson during the pandemic, and to provide a critical analysis of multimodal metaphors in Boris Johnson-related cartoons during the first year of the pandemic proliferation. It is basically devoted to showing how cartoonists convey their ideological stances and covert messages through their art and what persuasive strategies and evaluative stances they follow in their Johnson-related cartoons.

The methodological foundation of this thesis is a combination of the approach developed by Charteris-Black (2004), Critical Metaphor Analysis (henceforth CMA) with the Multimodal Discourse Analysis (henceforth MDA) put forward by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). The tenet of Charteris-Black's approach essentially is grounded on a notion of analyzing metaphors in accordance to a three-stage process: Identification, Interpretation, and Explanation. Based on these steps, specific procedures will be adopted to reach out the objectives of the study. As such, the study covers all the cartoons focusing on Covid-19 published by the three newspapers (*The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*) during the time span from February 2020 to February 2021.

1.2. JUSTIFICATION AND MOTIVATIONS

Political cartoons have their unique influence on viewers' perceptions and understanding of world challenges, events and public figures. This perception is well conceived and cognitively formed through the utilization of metaphorical representations and other rhetoric devices utilized in political discourse and cartooning specifically. In line with this, Calder et al. (2000) highlight the crux of political cartoons serving as powerful tools for illustrating attitudes, identities, ideologies, and stereotypes, and utilizing visual imagery to depict politicians' interactions with the public and their actions or lack thereof. As a matter of fact, the study of metaphor in political cartoons has attracted the interests of many researchers and experts not long ago (De Sousa and Medhurst, 1982; Edwards, 1997; El-Refaie, 2009b; Negro, 2013; Muelas-Gil, 2018a; Ma & Gao, 2020, to name a few), as they unravel the profound implications of this art form on political consciousness, ideology dissemination, and democratic engagement. Liepa et al. (2021) contend that metaphor in political cartoons plays a crucial role in representing and reflecting power dynamics within different communities, particularly in crucial times.

To be more precise, the essence of the present study is to bring out how metaphors, and particularly multimodal ones, are ideologically and socially embedded in political cartoons, specifically in rendering Boris Johnson, the British PM, during a momentous stage in the contemporary age, namely, the emergence of COVID-19 and the deadly effect it triggered after its spread around the world. Accordingly, the main justification for this study is also to assess the ideological bias of the UK's newspapers in presenting the character of Johnson in their political cartoons. Thus, three politically and ideologically divergent newspapers were chosen to cover the corpus of the study. It is a matter of fact that during this crisis, most researchers and scholars (Craig, 2020; Castro Seixas, 2021; Charteris-Black, 2021; Crespo-Fernández, 2021; Semino, 2021b; Vereza & Dienstbach, 2021, among others) devoted their works and scholarly efforts to examine how the virus was conceptualized in various discourses and genres, instead of focusing on how politicians or officials were rendered in visual discourses or other genres. Consequently, this study has been undertaken to investigate the multimodal metaphors employed by the UK's cartoonists in instantiating the former British PM, Boris Johnson. So, why Boris Johnson in particular?

Boris Johnson, the former British PM from July 24th, 2019 to July 7th, 2022², as many noticed, has typically been regarded as an iconic political figure to be portrayed by cartoonists. Stallabrass (2023) supports this proposition claiming that “Boris Johnson, with his shambolic, lumbering presence, toddler’s hair, and talent for PR[public relations] stunts and gaffes, was a lavish gift to cartoonists.” In most political cartoons, as explained in Stallabrass’ article (2023), Johnson is consistently and repulsively visualized as a clown, a puppet, an ineffective character, or even as an animal, as shown in the visual metaphor employed in Rowson’s cartoon for *The Daily Mirror* in figure 1.1.



Figure 1.1. Martin Rowson’s cartoon “Evil Boris Clown,” for *The Daily Mirror*, published in May 2019

The portrayal serves as a ridiculous stance on his triumph in 2019 as a PM, alongside the perceived shortcomings of Johnson’s early leadership. Indeed, the Clown-image metaphors in political discourse suggest that the government is absurd and lacks seriousness in its decisions. The conceptual metaphors activated from this cartoon are POLITICAL ACTIONS ARE A CLOWNISH PERFORMANCE, and POLITICIANS ARE CLOWNS/IDIOTS.

In addition to what has been elucidated earlier, Steve Marchant, the leading coordinator at the *Cartoon Magazine* further explains in this regard that “Boris was a gift for cartoonists [...]. All you have to do is draw an egg with some straw on top you’ve got Boris before you even attempt to

² Editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2023, December 11). Boris Johnson. *Encyclopedia Britannica* online, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Boris-Johnson>

draw the face [...]. No cartoonist is going to die poor, thanks to the antics of Boris Johnson” (Marchant, 2022, January 27th). Thus, Johnson’s character, tenure and appearance were in the crosshairs of critics and cartoonists since he was a mayor of London from May 3rd, 2008 to May 9th, 2016. From *The Guardian*, for instance, the cartoonist, Chris Riddell further explains that:

Unlike some of the other politicians I have drawn, Johnson doesn’t really have an ideology; he has a cult of personality. He is a man of costumes, whether he’s on the end of a guy rope, or dressing up as if he’s about to drive a forklift truck. So it has felt natural to dress him up in costume, and the costume of a punk rather suited him. I’ve tremendously enjoyed drawing Boris. I have the ambivalence of many cartoonists, in that I enjoy the more colourful and egregious politicians, and when they go, I feel a pang. It’s often towards the end that you really feel you have captured them (2022, July 31st, *The Guardian*).

Peter Brookes, *The Times*’ cartoonist, highlights this view by claiming that “I’ve always drawn Boris with his hair over his eyes, ever since he was mayor of London. I’ve stuck with that, as it played into that idea of him having no vision. I regret it a bit now though, as the eyes can convey expression and emotion” (2022, July 31st, *The Guardian*). The cartoonist Ella Baron further explained that Johnson’s persona “fitted so well: Boris is a clown and a joker, but also a golden boy and the Tories’ golden ticket” (2022, July 31st, *The Guardian*).

1.3. OBJECTIVES

This section is dedicated to elucidating the main objectives (general and specific) set forth in this dissertation:

- **THE GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

The overarching objective of this study is to scrutinize and investigate how the British PM, Boris Johnson, was metaphorically portrayed in the UK media, particularly in the political cartoons retrieved from three prestigious and highly-circulated newspapers, namely *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Independent*. The corpus of the cartoons includes only those published on the period coinciding with the pandemic of coronavirus.

- **THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To investigate and compare the predominant TARGET domains and the thematic focus prioritized by the cartoonists in the three newspapers in their portrayal of Boris Johnson during the COVID-19 pandemic. More precisely, the study aims to address the similarities and differences in the target domains and contextual focus of the metaphorical configurations in Boris Johnson-related cartoons in *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Independent*, the target domains which are thoroughly specified in chapter III, section 3.3.2.1. By examining the targets of the metaphorical configurations, the study will provide a comprehensive analysis of which aspect dominates the three newspapers' cartoonists' attention in their artworks on Johnson.
2. To uncover the significant similarities and differences in metaphorical configurations, scenarios, image schemata, and intertextual references employed by the three selected newspapers' cartoonists in the portrayal of Boris Johnson during the pandemic of COVID-19. By examining these differences within a national context, the study seeks to grasp the recurring patterns, sources domains and metaphorical images employed by the cartoonists in portraying Johnson or other issues during the pandemic, whilst others have been less in use or editorially overlooked. The investigation, thus, intends to provide insights into the underlying reasons for these distinct patterns and deepen the audience's understanding of how different cartoonists represent Johnson satirically or humorously amidst the pandemic through certain source domains rather than others.
3. To explore the social agency and ideological motifs underlying the metaphorical configurations of Boris Johnson and the related issues during the pandemic in 2020-2021. The study aims to assess the effect of the newspapers' ideological leanings (center, right, left) and their alignment with political parties (Conservative, neutral, Labour, and Lib-Dem) in rendering Johnson and his government's handling of the pandemic. Subsequently, this objective has been dedicated to exhibit any overt or subtle ideological influences and contrasts among the cartoons of different newspapers in terms of their ideological stance.
4. To uncover how the various visual semiotics resources and aspects of representational meaning, such as the characters' relations, speech, actions and (non)transactional identity and symbolic attribute within the images, the interactive meaning, such as gaze, distance, power among characters, size, and colour, and the compositional meaning, such as information value and salience, contribute to the metaphorical configuration of Boris

Johnson or the issues related to the pandemic in the cartoons corpus. As a result of this, we will study whether there are any differences and similarities among the three newspapers?

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

According to the objectives already proposed in 1.3., the study has been outlined to answer the following questions:

1. Across the three newspapers' cartoonists, which predominant target domains and thematic concentrations have been more reflected in the metaphorical representations of Johnson, i.e., what is the focus of the cartoonists' artworks: Boris Johnson's visage, personality, tenure, COVID-19 measures, the second wave, inner issues, or others?
2. What are the differences and similarities in the source domains, scenarios and image schemata exploited in the metaphorical configuration of Boris Johnson by the newspapers' cartoonists amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
3. How do the three UK newspapers' cartoons diverge or converge in their metaphorical configuration of Boris Johnson amidst the pandemic of COVID-19? Has the same political figure been portrayed differently among the three politically different newspapers? Are the cartoonists neutral or strongly affected by the editorial and political stance of their newspapers?
4. How do the various modes of meaning (verbal, visual, gestural, semiotics resources of representational meaning, communicative meaning, and the compositional meaning) in the cartoons assist in the metaphorical configuration of Boris Johnson and the virus-related issues in the cartoons? Additionally, are there any similarities and differences among the three newspapers concerning these resources?
5. Do the ideological stance and the political alignment of the newspapers affect the cartoonists' metaphorical configuration of Boris Johnson in their artworks? How do the ideological and rhetoric motifs contribute in highlighting or hiding certain aspects in the metaphorical configuration of Johnson in the cartoons corpus?

1.5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The present study proposes the following hypotheses, which will be discussed in the different stages of the analysis:

1. The thematic focus and target domains of the UK's political cartoons, particularly those connected with the protagonist (Boris Johnson) during the pandemic of COVID-19 and all the related issues and circumstances, plans and consequences are proposed to be divergent, not convergent. This hypothesizes that the three UK newspapers, namely *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent* will have different contextual themes in their political cartoons during the pandemic. Each has its thematic focus and target.
2. There is notable diversity in the cartoons' source domains and metaphors exploited in the corpus of the UK cartoons. It is believed that these newspapers are somewhat affected by the political parties they align with. This belief is basically built upon the tenet that in periods of adversities and crises, opposing political parties, along with their affiliated media and journalistic entities, seek to highlight the government's perceived shortcomings. Consequently, the metaphorical representations employed are of different sources, intertextual references and image schemata. These differentiations reveal that political cartoons of the opposite political party tend to be cruel and offensive, for instance, the newspapers aligned with the British Labour Party tend to criticize the Conservatives' government led by Johnson and his Party (the Tories), emphasizing and highlighting the deficiencies of the government during the pandemic while downplaying any commendable aspects Johnson's government had.
3. In light of the multifaceted political and editorial stances characterizing UK newspapers, which align with a spectrum of political parties (namely Conservatives, Labour, Lib-Dem, and neutral stances) and the ideological stances (right, left, center), the metaphorical configuration of the British PM, Boris Johnson, in their respective cartoons, manifest notable differentiations and diversity. This essentially suggests that the political leaning significantly influences the newspapers' distinct ideological stances and evaluation of Johnson (leadership, persona, lockdowns, and measures pertaining to the COVID-19 crisis) throughout the period spanning 2020-2021.

4. It is proposed that the various modes of metaphorical representations and the semiotics resources in the cartoons with multimodal structure contribute abundantly to the interpretation of the metaphors utilized in the cartoons. These aspects of representational, communicative and compositional meaning reveal some hidden intentions that are not explicitly revealed by speech.
5. Concerning the metaphors interpretations and explanation of the cartoons, it is hypothesized that the three newspapers' cartoonists will show diverse ways of configuring Johnson metaphorically in their artworks due to the ideological motifs and editorial stance of their institutions. This suggests that this divergence stems from two significant concepts, persuasion and ideology. This means the persuasive strategies the cartoonists employ in their cartoons (dysphemistic and euphemistic, dominance and periphery, highlighting and downplaying) affect the metaphors they tend to focus on. These strategies are reinforced due to the essential ideology of the political party and the social agency behind the employment of specific metaphors over others. Thus, this point, as Charteris-Black (2014:201) explained, proposes that the three different politically aligned newspapers cartoonists' may slightly differ in their persuasive purposes and strategies as ideological, predicative, empathetic, aesthetic, etc.

1.6. THE STUDY'S STRUCTURE

This dissertation has been divided into six chapters which have been established to answer the questions of the study, and to endorse the presumed hypotheses. The study commences with an introductory chapter that provides the main motivations and justification of examining this topic. The chapter also outlines the key concepts, the objectives and the questions that have to be answered in the coming chapters.

Next, Chapter 2 has been divided into three parts that deal with the theoretical foundations of the key concepts of this dissertation; the first part delves into the main theoretical reviewing of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT), its definitions and evolutionary development. It addresses how this theory has been integrated with other theories, as with Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) as developed by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) and Forceville & Urios-Aparisi (2006). Consequently, various perspectives

relating to the categorizations of metaphor in terms of conventionality, generality, and structure have been outlined. This part also presents the metaphorical representations in politics and metaphor and ideology. The second part of this chapter includes political cartooning review, the main characteristics and various functions behind this genre. It presents as briefly but informatively as possible the implementation of metaphors and their visual elements in cartoons. The last part of this chapter aims at examining COVID-19 and the responses of the British government from February 2020 to February 2021 to cover the timeframe of this study. The second section of this part covers the various scholarly studies on the illness and the contributions in the field of the metaphorical configuration and conceptualization of the virus in diverse contexts.

Chapter 3 encompasses the data and the methodology of the dissertation. It has been divided into different sections which present the criteria (general and specific) determined to analyze the corpus accordingly. The chapter also introduces the main stages of the critical analysis adopted in decoding the metaphorical representations in the cartoons (Charteris-Black 2004, 2005) and the various modes of meaning utilized in the discourse (cartoons) purposefully (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Concerning the annotation tool (statistic data), it also investigates the metaphors' domains (source and target) profusely, preferably focusing on the cartoons at the expense of other means of expression.

Chapter 4 is an illustration of the previous principles as connected to the corpus of analysis; it involves the qualitative analysis of the cartoon corpus. This chapter has been dedicated to decoding the metaphorical representations and the various modes of configuration in depicting the iconic figure of this study, namely Boris Johnson. Adopting the three-staged approach founded by Charteris-Black (2004, 2005), all the cartoons underwent the identification, interpretation and explanation steps.

The quantitative approach and the statistics of the cartoons' source and target domains annotations are presented in Chapter 5. These statistic results inevitably enrich the study's reliability with dependable and stable information concerning the employment of certain metaphors rather than others.

Finally, chapter 6 presents the conclusions of the study. This chapter provides all the answers to the questions included in Chapter 1; furthermore, it also offers a follow-up on the hypotheses

and how they are approached. Then, the last part of this study includes the references and the appendices, which represent the different components and annotations of the metaphorical domains for each corpus group and how they are gathered.

**CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
AND LITERATURE REVIEW:
METAPHORIZATION AND THE POLITICAL
CARTOONS, ILLNESS AND THE EMERGENCE
OF COVID-19**

2.1. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON METAPHOR

As this study focuses on the critical analysis of multimodal metaphors employed in political cartoons, specifically those portraying the former British PM, Boris Johnson, amid the COVID-19 crisis, the initial step in this chapter involves examining and addressing the definition of metaphor from various perspectives and the integration of multimodality, as a theory, with Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This integration forms what is hereafter referred to as Critical Multimodal Metaphor Analysis (henceforth CMMA), an approach aimed at representing reality in different modes and demonstrating criticality in the interpretation and explanation of current situations.

2.1.1. A Survey of Metaphor Studies: Definitions and Evolution

Etymologically, the term “metaphor” derives from the Greek word “*Metapherein*”, where “*meta*” signifies “beyond”, and “*pherein*” denotes “carrying” or “transferring” (Charteris-Black, 2005:31). This origin encapsulates the conceptual crux of metaphor as a figurative device that exceeds the literal boundaries of language, facilitating the vehicle of meaning by transporting it into a realm beyond the immediate and concrete. This etymological foundation underscores the inherent capacity of metaphor to transcend mere linguistic representation, serving as a mechanism for subtle expression and the conveyance of abstract concepts. From the lexical point of view, on the other hand, Richards & Schmidt (2005) characterize metaphor as “a word or phrase which is used for special effect, and which does not have its natural meaning [...]. In a metaphor, no function words are used; something is described by stating another thing with which it can be compared”.

By contrast, in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2005:1103), metaphor is literally seen as “the figure of speech in which a descriptive term is transferred to some object to which it is not properly applicable”. So, most definitions have focused on the notion of the transference and conveyance of meaning. Aristotle was among the first to deal with metaphors, so that, according to Youguo (2013:561), “Aristotle was remembered as the father of systematical metaphor study and his famous saying ‘the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor’ is still singing in metaphor researcher’s (*sic*) ears”. This means that many metaphor studies initially dealt with metaphor as an ornamental rhetorical figure in speech, it was typically used to embellish literary works. Therefore,

their philosophical stance involved regarding metaphor as an aesthetic means of generating meaning within literature. So, according to Santa Ana's view (2002:26), metaphor is "more than poetic color and superficial ornamentation. It shapes everyday discourse, and by this means it shapes how people discern and enact the everyday", though classical convention regarded metaphor as a "verbal cosmetics" (Boys-Stones, 2003:4). In this manner, metaphors are employed with precision and functionality within a given context. According to the pragmatics theory proposed by Searle (1993), no two identical metaphors can seamlessly substitute for each other in any context. As such, metaphors serve the purpose of reproducing the semantic content that was initially grasped by the hearer during the utterance (Searle, 1993:111).

Subsequently, following the seminal work *Metaphors We Live By* by Lakoff & Johnson (1980), there was a great shift in the study of metaphor, characterizing it not merely as a linguistic phenomenon but fundamentally as a matter of thought. The shift is identified in the perception of metaphor, transforming from viewing it as primarily a rhetorical or linguistic device to recognizing it as a cognitive phenomenon. This transformation holds understanding and reasoning about abstract concepts by mapping certain features or traits from one domain onto another, thereby serving various discursive functions (Lakoff, 1987, 1993, 2002, 2006; Ortony, 1993). To this end, Lakoff & Turner (1989:xii) underscore the viewpoint that metaphor is a cognitive structure inherent in human minds, stating that "[b]ecause metaphor is a primary tool for understanding our world and ourselves, entering into an engagement with powerful poetic metaphors is grappling in an important way with what it means to have a human life". Richards (1965:94), however, had provided another notion that "[t]hought is metaphoric, and proceeds by comparison, and the metaphors of language derive therefrom". Due to Richards's previous approach, metaphor is still essentially based on the connection between ideas; it is the intercourse between contexts. Furthermore, Gibbs (2008:3) considers metaphor as "not simply an ornamental aspect of language, but a fundamental scheme by which people conceptualize the world and their own action".

Back to Lakoff's tenet, a great deal of attention has been paid to his conceptual theory of metaphor that basically identifies the underlying way of thinking, which in turn determines the lexical choices. It is very pertinent here to know that this theory contends the relationship between language, culture and mind, as the mind has the vital role in processing information in any social context. This intimate relation was later enhanced in van Dijk's (2005) concept of Multidisciplinary Critical Discourse Analysis that geared towards enhancing the connection

between discourse, recognition and society. Cognition, according to van Dijk, is the crucial link between discourse and society.

In accordance with Lakoff's theory of metaphor, language users typically have a tendency to comprehend abstract ideas by associating them with concrete concepts, exemplified in phrases such as 'LIFE IS A JOURNEY'. The image that identifies the essence of life as inherently challenging; therefore, employing metaphorical concepts serves to diminish its inherent opaqueness. In this metaphorical theme, life is cued as a journey; this means that certain features of the *journey* (source domain) have been systematically transferred into the *life* (target domain). Like a journey, human life has a starting point, endings, a target, ups and downs, bumps in its path, dangerous twists, etc. Forceville (1996) and other experts (Semino, 2008; Koller & Semino, 2009) suggest that the process of metaphor mapping relies upon the underlying conceptual knowledge which sees any idea in a more detailed scenario. By way of example, 'LIFE IS JOURNEY', as a metaphor, contains a great number of road elements, as the above-mentioned ones and many others that fully illustrate this scenario. Santa Ana (2002:29) pursues that "[t]he cognitivist focus of attention is not on individual sentences. The object is not any particular linguistic expression of metaphor, but the metaphoric mapping between two semantic domains". For their part, Heywood & Semino (2007:45) contend that the experiential and conceptual knowledge helps in providing "an overview of dominant metaphorical construct".

Charteris-Black (2004) provides a more developed and comprehensive version of the cognitive semantic approach which originated in Lakoff & Johnson (1980). He (2004:21) describes metaphor as "a linguistic representation that results from the shift in the use of a word or phrase from the context or domain in which it is expected to occur to another context or domain where it is not expected to occur, thereby causing semantic tension". In this way, he has also pointed out that metaphor may have at its basis linguistic, pragmatic or cognitive criteria, and has the persuasive potential of influencing opinions and viewpoints (Charteris-Black, 2004). This, of course, means that metaphor is not exclusively a linguistic phenomenon; rather it is seen as a bundle of all the above-mentioned criteria.

2.1.2. The Cognitive Dimension of Metaphor: Lakoff's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

As mentioned earlier in the section above, George Lakoff has been the helmsman who has steered the ship of metaphor from the classical view, shifting its path into a cognition-based tenet. In his *Metaphors We Live By*, with Mark Johnson, Lakoff put forward his new theory of Conceptual Metaphor. According to the essence of his theory, metaphor has been accounted as a mode of thinking and a mental mapping of human experience that figures out our perception of the world (Lakoff & Johnson 1999). Kövecses (2017:15) asserts the focal belief of this theory, perceiving conceptual metaphor as “a systematic set of correspondences between two domains of experience”. It is relevant to mention that Lakoff's theory has paved the way for other scholars and experts to further study this field (Kövecses, 1990, 2000, 2010; Gibbs, 1994; Croft and Cruse, 2004; Dirven & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2010), as it has been regarded as a trustworthy model for any metaphorical study. Johnson (1992:351) thus aligns his perspective on metaphor with Lakoff's theory, affirming it is “a basic imaginative cognitive mechanism”. After all, CMT, as a theory, has simply been drawn upon an assumption postulated by Gibbs (1989) and Kövecses (2000) which considers the majority of our daily language and cognitive processes can be rightfully characterized as metaphorical.

Consequently, this underscores the inherent metaphorical nature of our conceptual system. That system is perceived as possessing “an ontological mapping across conceptual domains”, as Lakoff (2006:192) emphasizes, in which understanding one domain in terms of another one influentially relies upon correspondences across the target and source domains. He states explicitly that mapping is “a set of systematic correspondences between the source and the target in the sense that constituent conceptual elements of B correspond to constituent elements of A” (Kövecses, 2010:7). In this regard, Kövecses (2010:18-22, 37-40) further presents the source domains as the key structures that allow readers to identify metaphors within a context and to understand their extensions. He, thus, suggested the following most frequent and common source domains, as in:

1. The human body e.g. THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT
2. Health and illness e.g., SICK MIND
3. Animals e.g., HE IS A TIGER (Brute)
4. Plants e.g., THE FRUIT OF HER LABOR
5. Buildings and construction e.g., SHE CONSTRUCTED A COHERENT ARGUMENT

6. Machines and tools e.g., THE MACHINE OF DEMOCRACY
7. Games and sport e.g., SHE TRIED TO CHECKMATE HIM
8. Money and economic transactions e.g., SHE SPENDS HER TIME WISELY
9. Cooking and food e.g., WHAT'S HER RECIPE FOR SUCCESS?
10. Heat and cold e.g., SHE HAS AN ICY STARE
11. Light and darkness e.g., HE IS IN A DARK MOOD
12. Forces e.g., DON'T PUSH HER!
13. Movement and direction e.g., SHE WENT CRAZY
14. Death and Life e.g., THEIR RELATION REACHED A DEADLY END
15. War and Conflict e.g., HER ARGUMENT DEFEATED ME
16. Creation and Destruction e.g., HER DREAMS ARE FALLING DOWN
17. Containers e.g., HE KEPT HER MEMORY IN HIS HEART
18. Substances e.g., HER WORDS ARE POISON
19. Physical objects e.g. HE IS OUT OF MONEY
20. Marriage and divorce, e.g., THE POLITICAL ALLIANCE IS A MARRIED COUPLE

Many years before, however, mapping had been already cleared up by Richards (1965:93) as “having two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction”. This suggests that thought is the first and foremost basis in understanding the linguistic phase of metaphor. Thus, in accordance with this perspective, language is seen as a medium through which metaphorical thoughts are expressed. Black, in his “More about Metaphor” (1993), wrote that “[m]y interest in this paper is particularly directed toward the ‘cognition aspects’ of certain metaphors, whether in science, philosophy, theology, or ordinary life, and their power to present in a distinctive and irreplaceable way insight into how things are” (Black, 1993:21).

Roughly speaking, mapping may sometimes be only one aspect of correspondence across the two domains, as Forceville (2007:4) states: “[s]ometimes a metaphor suggests a mapping of a

single feature. When you call your boss an ass, it is very likely that the only feature you intend your interlocutor to map from the source domain ASS to the target domain BOSS is stupidity”. However, what has been confirmed above by Forceville –in his *A Course in Pictorial and Multimodal Metaphor*, a collection of his lectures on metaphor– had been already postulated by Lakoff & Johnson (1980). For them, mapping as a process is partial in nature (the focus will only be on certain features, rather than others), and such partial mapping is mainly required to set up functional analogy. Grady (2012:190) asserts that mapping, in essence, relies on the concept of a “systematic metaphorical correspondence between closely related ideas”. This notion implies the transference of specific or shared aspects from the source domain to the target domain with the intention of achieving particular objectives. The alignment between the two domains is established on a “set of correspondences” (Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández, 2011:162). In line with this, Lakoff (2006) elucidates more precisely the nature of this relationship, which denotes the same perspective that some features are functionally preferred over other ones, as exemplified in the conceptual metaphor ‘LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD’.

Despite the fact that love is conventionally regarded as a source of “passion, inspiration, sacrifice, marriage, sex desire and affection”, *Love*, in this metaphorical image, is conceptualized as a source of pain, revenge and sadness, focusing more on one of the source domain features rather than the elements of the target domain. Thereby, dealing with some aspects of BATTLEFIELD to metaphorically conceptualize *Love* shows that metaphor is a partial systemic process which, due to certain contextual functions, shows a partial mapping. Pertaining to this aspect, Forceville (2013:3) proposes that:

In ‘Love is a battlefield’ we could postulate that ‘the goal to hurt and kill the enemy’ is a feature mapped from ‘battlefield’ to ‘love.’ Other features that qualify for mapping are ‘making victims,’ ‘being costly in terms of lives and material,’ ‘being a cause of misery and bitterness.’ In this fairly simple metaphor, only a few features are mapped.

He adds that “as on the *battlefield soldiers fight the enemy*, often at considerable personal and material *cost*, in order to *kill* or *hurt* him, thereby causing *victims*; just so a *person quarrels* with her *lover*, often causing *grief* to herself, intending to *hurt* him, thereby causing *unhappiness*”. So,

out of this metaphorical conceptualization of ‘LOVE AS A BATTLEFIELD’, several metaphorical expressions can be generated, as in:

- His love *hurts* her.
- She *defended* to survive their marriage.
- He usually *sacrifices* to keep their relation safe.
- They *fight* the world to be together.
- Their love was *in danger*.

So, conforming to this conventional metaphor, lovers have been seen in accordance with the following correspondences or mappings, as in:

- The lovers are fighters, victims, revengers, or traitors.
- Their relation is mapped as being a battleground. It corresponds to war.
- The difficulties, problems, treason and hardships in their relation correspond to fighting to survive/to revenge.

Due to the metaphorical expressions and correspondences provided above, metaphor hence is perceived as the vital key that can facilitate any opaqueness in the target domain and therefore can lead to more understanding of what has been mapped across domains. Thus, mapping LOVE in terms of BATTLEFIELD highlights the offensive and negative feelings of “pain, sadness, victimization and anguish, etc.” Chilton (1996:154), Deignan (2003), and Evans & Green (2006:303) also pointed out that through metaphor certain desired features have been highlighted whilst others have been put aside, as Chilton (1996:154) apparently contends that metaphors “privilege one understanding of reality over others”.

To adventure far deeper in the mapping process, Lakoff & Johnson (1980) postulated that abstract concepts are metaphorically represented as concrete objects, as in ‘TIME IS MONEY’, ‘IDEAS ARE BIRDS’, ‘LOVE IS WAR’, but the opposite never takes place. Accordingly, mapping is systemized as a unidirectional process in which some aspects have been transferred from the source domain into the target domain, as in ‘TIME IS MONEY’, where TIME is typically mapped in terms of MONEY but not vice versa.

2.1.3. Metaphor Categorization

In metaphor interpretation, various models and techniques have surfaced to explore the process of classifying metaphor. As Kövecses (2010:33) suggests, “[t]hese include classifications according to the conventionality, function, nature, and level of generality of metaphor”. Some of these classifications are dichotomized in the following sections.

2.1.3.1. Conventional Metaphors vs. Creative/ Novel Metaphors

Through conventionality, metaphors are seen as entrenched structures. Kövecses (2010:33-34) contends that conceptual metaphors and their linguistic expressions are conventional when they are well-worn and well established among the society members; they are non-creative or even clichéd structures, as in ‘LIFE IS A JOURNEY’, ‘IDEAS ARE FOOD’, ‘THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS’. These conceptual metaphors are conventional and well-known by the community members. The ‘LIFE IS A JOURNEY’ metaphor, as Kövecses (2010) provides in his book, triggers a series of metaphorical expressions that are well illustrated in Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken”³. Kövecses, in this example, attempts to demonstrate how Frost creatively employs the conventional metaphor ‘LIFE IS A JOURNEY’ with an image of different metaphorical expressions. Thus, conventional metaphors are defined as automatic, easy to use and to grasp and broad in use, as Lakoff & Turner (1989:55) defined in their study; to them, conventional metaphors are “automatic, effortless, and generally established as a mode of thought among members of a linguistic community”.

The same perspective is further reinforced by Semino (2008:33-34) by arguing that conventional metaphors serve as carriers of ideology:

When particular uses of metaphor become the dominant way of talking about a particular aspect of reality within a particular discourse, they may be extremely difficult to perceive and challenge, since they come to represent the ‘commonsense’ or ‘natural’ view of things. In such cases, conventional conceptual metaphor can be seen as an important part of the shared sets of beliefs, or ‘ideology’ that characterize a particular social group.

³ <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44272/the-road-not-taken>

Charteris-Black (2004, 2005) further contends that the powerful impact of metaphors is closely tied to their level of novelty, asserting that while conventional expressions may lack the potential power to evoke strong emotional responses; their conventionality facilitates alignment with shared communal values.

Creative metaphors, on the other hand, are characterized as highly unconventional structures or novel metaphors; they are unique, creative and need sophisticated knowledge and efforts to decode. These expressions are not conventionalized or entrenched for their speakers – entrenchment, in *The Cambridge Dictionary*, refers to “the process by which ideas become fixed and cannot be changed”⁴; this definition denotes concepts or constructions that have become “(variably) routinized items in long-term memory” (Schmid 2012:118).

Kövecses (2010:35) further adds in this realm that “[a]s linguistic metaphors, they strike us as unconventional and novel, but the conceptual metaphor that they realize remains conventional”. The following cliché demonstrates this precisely: “Stop the world; I want to get off” (Kövecses, 2010:35). The conceptual metaphor of this statement is conventional; that is, ‘LIFE IS A JOURNEY’, but its linguistic expression is unconventional, nonetheless. Though this dichotomy may seem clear to language speakers, there exists a set of levels between these two scales of conventionality that is somewhat regarded as blurred or difficult to identify (Hidalgo & Kraljevic, 2013).

2.1.3.2. Generic Metaphors vs. Specific/ Individual Metaphors

Lakoff & Turner (1989) also classified metaphors due to their generality and specificity. General or generic-level metaphors, as Lakoff & Turner (1989) delineated, can host a number of instantiations or metaphorical expressions in contrast to those with a more confined scope, which are recognized as specific-level metaphors. For instance, the metaphor ‘DISCUSSION IS WAR’ is categorized as a general metaphor encompassing diverse metaphorical or individual metaphors, such as ‘WORDS ARE WEAPONS’, ‘PARTICIPANTS ARE ENEMIES’, and ‘ARGUMENTS ARE MISSILES’. In accordance to Stefanowitsch & Gries (2006:63-105), the link between the target and the source domains is not always easily recognized and the readers would have missed that relation unless they have been provided with an identification process or method as they suggest in their Metaphor Patterns Analysis (MPA). The example below in diagram 2.1, taken

⁴ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/entrenchment>

from Muelas-Gil (2018b), in an analysis of the expression “He shot down all my arguments”, showcases that the mapping process (generic-specific linking) is apparent in the way the target domain (my argument) and the source domain (being shot down) are recognized easily by the readers.

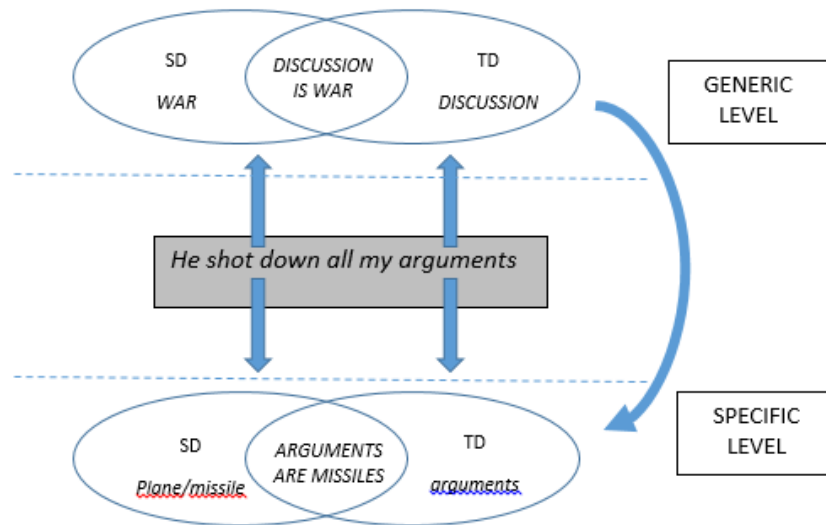


Diagram 2.1. Generic and specific mappings obtained applying MPA (Muelas-Gil, 2018b:118)

2.1.3.3. Structural vs. Non-Structural Metaphors (Source-Domain Nature Classification)

The relevance of this topic was first mentioned by Lakoff & Johnson (1980) in their *Metaphors We Live By* and later studied by Ruiz de Mendoza & Otal (2002), classifying metaphors according to the nature of the source domain as structural metaphors and non-structural metaphors, as will be shown and explained next.

- **Structural Metaphor**

Roughly speaking, this kind of metaphor is based upon the notion that a concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another concept. It provides a cognitive structuring for target domains “to enable speakers to understand target A by means of the structure of source B” (Kövecses, 2010:37). By way of example, in the conceptual metaphor ‘TIME IS MONEY’, the properties and features of the source domain have been transferred to the target domain, as in the following examples:

- Do you have much time left?
- I don’t have enough time to spare for that problem.

- You need to budget your time.
- She has invested a lot of time in that work.

Time is culturally regarded as a valuable commodity that people should use profitably. The set of metaphorical mappings/ linguistic expressions shape our way of understanding the time concept. Thus, the properties of being valuable and a limited resource have been mapped from MONEY to TIME to characterize the entire system. Kövecses (2010:38) also proposes that “[w]ithout the metaphor it would be difficult to imagine what our concept of time would be”.

According to Lakoff & Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1993), Ruiz de Mendoza & Ota (2002), and Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández (2011), among others, structural metaphors involve mapping the structure and logic of one domain onto another, enabling complex reasoning and correspondences. This complex reasoning implies drawing conclusions or making inferences based on the underlying principles or structures associated with a metaphor or image schema utilized. It uses the logical connections inherent in the source domain (the original image) to facilitate or reason about the target domain (what is being described or explained metaphorically). For instance, the metaphor previously given, ‘ARGUMENT IS WAR’ treats arguments as battles, offering systematic mappings between the source (war) and target (argument) domains. Thus, many extensions have been utilized within these structural metaphors to conceptualize the situation of argument, as in: “I thought I was defeated”, which implies that the speaker had a tough time in a debate, so “he would not surrender and would keep fighting to win the debate”. According to Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández (2011:170), language users are getting benefits from the logic of the war metaphor to explain more about the situation of arguments and to facilitate the process to the readers.

In regard to the non-situational metaphors, topological metaphors are characterized as image-schema and image-based metaphors. Image schemata, as defined by Ruiz de Mendoza & Ota (2002:15), are those “conventionalized mental representations of reality as perceived and interpreted by our senses or as determined by culture”. Kövecses (2011:1) further adds that image schemas “are schematizations of some of our most basic experiences that have to do with motion, space, vision, force, and so forth”. Image schemata as sources of metaphorical conceptualizations have a set of more specific details and concepts that relate to the image itself. Thus, the mapping process between the source and the target is based on the transmission of concrete aspects and features from the former onto the latter. Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández (2011) regard

metaphors based on image schemata as having deep reasoning that conducts a plausible correspondence between the source and the target; this proposition serves as a confirmation that “image schemas bear an analogical, rather than an arbitrary, relationship to what they are used to conceptualize. In other words, the conceptualization of the world in the experiential model of the conceptual system is *imagistic*, rather than propositional” (Kövecses, 2011:40).

Hampe (2005:1-2) further demonstrates the following characterizations of the image schemata as follows:

- Image schemata are directly meaningful (“experiential”/“embodied”), pre-conceptual structures, which arise from, or are grounded in, human recurrent bodily movements through space, perceptual interactions, and ways of manipulating objects.
- Image schemata are highly schematic gestalts which capture the structural contours of sensory-motor experience, integrating information from multiple modalities.
- Image schemata exist as continuous and analogue patterns beneath conscious awareness, prior to and independently of other concepts.
- As gestalts, image schemata are both internally structured, i.e., made up of very few related parts, and highly flexible. This flexibility becomes manifest in the numerous transformations they undergo in various experiential contexts, all of which are closely related to perceptual (gestalt) principles.

In reference to the image-schemata taxonomy and classification, numerous researchers, including Johnson (1987), Lakoff (1987), Lakoff & Turner (1989), Gibbs et al. (1994), Cienki (1997) and Clausner & Croft (1999), among others, have paid attention to clarifying the various types. For instance, Johnson (1987:126), as cited in Hampe (2005:2) and Francisco (2019:17) suggested the following taxonomy:

CONTAINER	BALANCE	COMPULSION
BLOCKAGE	COUNTERFORCE	RESTRAINT-REMOVAL
ENABLEMENT	ATTRACTION	MASS-COUNT
PATH	LINK	CENTER-PERIPHERY

CYCLE	NEAR-FAR	SCALE
PART-WHOLE	MERGING	SPLITTING
FULL-EMPTY	MATCHING	SUPERIMPOSITION
ITERATION	CONTACT	PROCESS
SURFACE		

Table 2.1 Image-schemata Taxonomy, as suggested by Johnson (1987)

In addition to Johnson’s (1987) taxonomy, Lakoff (1987) proposed spatial image-schemata (orientational image-schemata) which are seen as another type to be scrutinized in the image-schemata domain, such as UP-DOWN and FRONT-BACK. In line with the recurrent additions to the set of image-schemata, Hampe (2005:2) claims in her study that “the image schema list has never constituted a closed set, and by far not all of the numerous subsequent additions were in such relatively close keeping with its original spirit”. She extends the set of the image schemata as provided by other researchers, to include the following:

- INANIMATE MOTION, ANIMATE MOTION, SELF MOTION, CAUSED MOTION (Mandler 1992:593-596), LOCOMOTION
- EXPANSION (Turner 1991: 171), STRAIGHT (Cienki 1997), RESISTANCE (Gibbs et al. 1994: 235), LEFT-RIGHT (Clausner & Croft 1999:15)

On the other hand, image metaphors, as another type of structural metaphor, involve the notion that the source and target domain should have concrete images based on visual similarity. Lakoff & Turner (1989) acknowledged that this type is a distinctive instance of structural metaphor. By way of example, Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández (2011:171) underscored such metaphors as “the tears of the clouds” draw on the analogical resemblance between rain, resembling tears, and clouds, akin to a person’s eyes. Thus, the statement “Tears were streaming down the cheeks” metaphorically correlates the substantial flow of water on the ground with the profusion of tears on an individual’s face. Muelas Gil (2018b:145) in her study elucidated that metaphors could be structured according to the image schemata that is called a metaphorical schema. Her study shows how the three types of metaphorical schemata are structured upon the conventional source domains of metaphors, as is shown in table 2.2.

CONVENTIONAL DOMAINS

Propositional Schemas	Human being, weather conditions, family, house or building, animals or plants, illnesses, natural and supernatural forces, objects and machines
Image Schemas	Front-back, force-weight, path, up-down, link, container and spiral
Event schemas	War, competition, show, mission, game, business, therapy

Table 2.2 List of conventional domains of the economy (Muelas Gil, 2018b:145)

- **Non- Structural Metaphors**

In contrast to structural metaphors, which make use of the entire structure or logic of one concept to understand and shape another, non-structural metaphors are simpler in their essence and nature. The source domain of a non-structural metaphor focuses on a single attribute or feature of a physical entity or a basic spatial abstraction, such as direction (Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández, 2011). This contends that non-structural metaphors work by emphasizing either one distinctive attribute or a closely connected cluster of attributes. These selected attributes are perceived to be similar across different domains, enabling a straightforward comparison between the source and target concepts. This type of metaphor has the following common types:

- **Ontological Metaphor**

Ontology is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of existence and being, also it shows the relationship between concepts and things in a subject area⁵. This kind of metaphor refers to conceiving our abstract concepts and experiences in terms of substances, objects and containers; it is functionally characterized as Entity and Substance Metaphor. Kövecses (2010:38) postulated that “[t]heir cognitive job seems to be to ‘merely’ give a new ontological status to general categories of abstract target concepts and to bring about new abstract entities”. He regarded these events, experiences, ideas, emotions and abstract concepts as “not clearly delineated, vague, or abstract” (Kövecses, 2010:39). This metaphor constructs these delineated, abstract and vague concepts in terms of physical entities to be sharply delineated; for instance, in the metaphor

⁵ <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/ontological>.

‘INFLATION IS AN ENTITY’ as represented in “Inflation is hacking us into a corner” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980:27).

In this instantiation of the conceptual metaphor ‘INFLATION IS AN ENTITY’, the experience of increasing prices and falling in the purchasing value of money has been metaphorically clued as an entity that kicks us roughly and widely into a corner. Lakoff & Johnson (1980:27-28) specified the functional purposes of utilizing this metaphor as “referring, quantifying, identifying aspects and causes, motivating and setting goals”. So, as Kövecses (2010:39) also pointed out, through this kind of metaphor non-human objects are given human qualities and this is what we can grasp as personification.

- **Oriental Metaphor**

Lakoff & Johnson (1980:15) called attention to this kind of metaphor, describing it as follows: “[it] organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another [...], most of them have to do with spatial orientation: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral”. It is indispensable here to know that the polar role of an orientational metaphor is to provide a spatial dimension to everyday concepts, for instance: HAPPY/LIFE AND HEALTH/CONSCIOUS/MORE/HAVING CONTROL ARE UP, whereas SADNESS/ILLNESS AND DEATH/UNCONSCIOUS/LESS/BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL ARE DOWN. Thus, the linguistic expressions derived from this metaphorical framework unquestionably ground themselves in a tangible foundation. By way of example, phrases such as “I am feeling up/down today”, “he is really low these days”, “she sank into a coma”, “my spirit rose”, “I am up already”, “he came down with the flu”, and “his health is increasing” distinctly illustrate this connection to physical experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Kövecses called this type of metaphor “Coherence Metaphor”, describing the concept of “Coherence” in the following way: “certain target concepts tend to be conceptualized in a uniform manner. For example, all the following concepts are characterized by an ‘upward’ orientation, while their ‘opposites’ receive a ‘downward’ orientation” (2010:41). According to Kövecses (2010), upward orientation is rationally connected with positive evaluation, whereas a negative evaluation is generally connected with downward orientational metaphors. Moreover, such positive-negative evaluation process does not merely go altogether with Up-Down orientational metaphors; rather it may go along with all orientational metaphors, as whole-not whole

expressions. For example, the sentence “He is half the man he used to be” carries a negative evaluation (Kövecses, 2010:40).

- **Imagistic Metaphor**

The last type of the non-structural metaphor is imagistic metaphors, which are based on the assumption of a correspondence between two concrete objects; the source and the target domain highlight one attribute, or as Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernandez (2011:169) suggest, as a “tight-knit cluster of related attributes that are perceived to be similar across domains”. This attribute possesses a visual quality that allows the reader to visually associate the process of mapping. Lakoff & Turner (1989) thus argue that this attribute is “quintessential” in the source domain and should be highlighted and reinforced in the target domain attribute, as in Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernandez’s example (2011:170), “she is a raven haired women”, where the quintessential feature is darkness. The darkness of the woman’s hair is understood in terms of the darkness of a raven’s feathers. Such metaphors emphasize only one feature or a set of features that address the visual similarity across domains.

To sum up this taxonomy, diagram 2.2, provided by Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández (2011:170), citing Ruiz de Mendoza Otal Campo (2002) illustrates the nature of the source domains in metaphorical mapping and the classification of the various types.

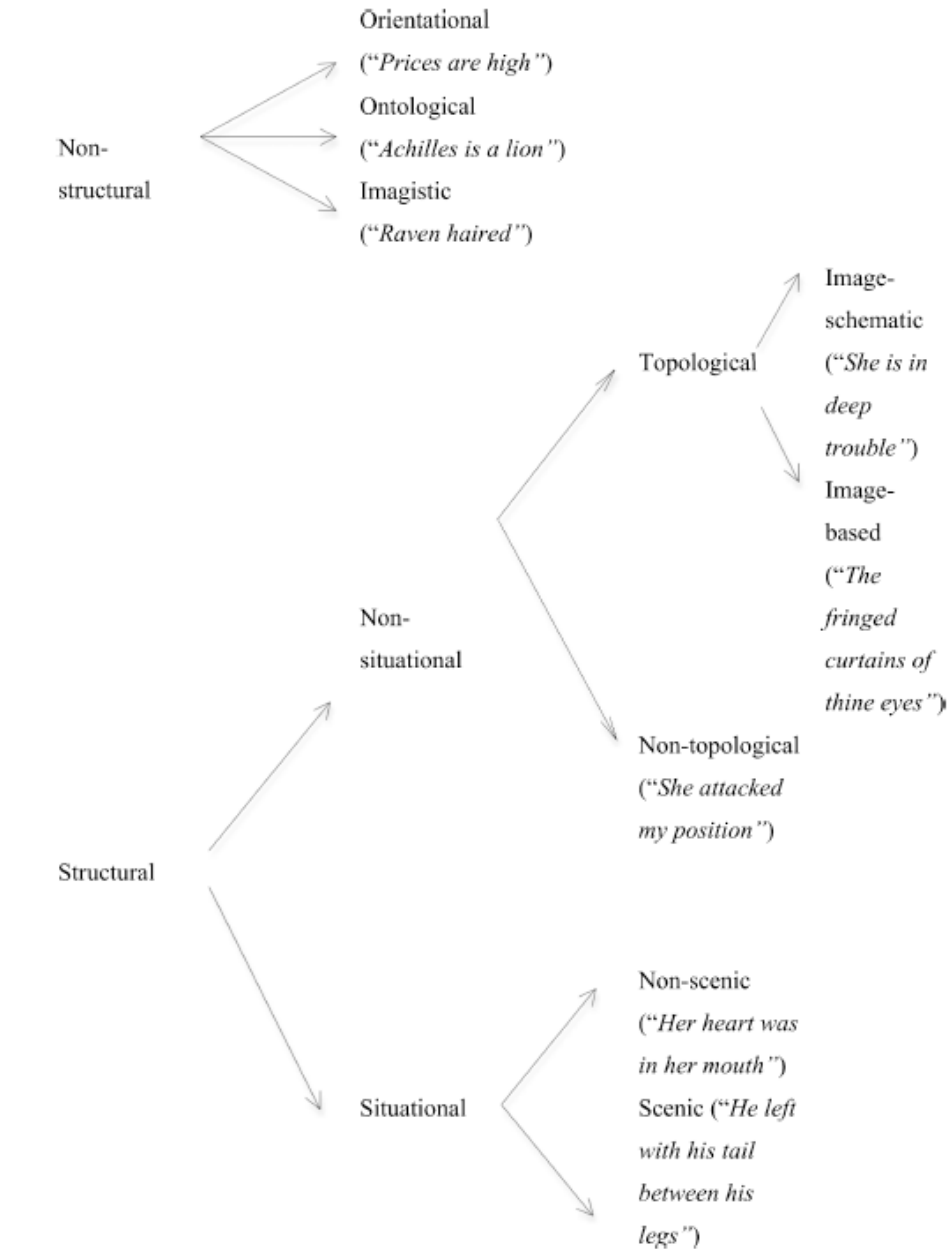


Diagram 2.2. Ruiz de Mendoza & Ota1’s metaphor classification (2002), as cited in Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez- Hernández (2011:170)

It is significant to mention in this regard that other diverse categorizations of metaphors have been posited by various researchers and experts, for instance, Newmark (1988) undertook a comprehensive classification, delineating distinct types of metaphor which aimed at the examination of metaphor types within specific contextual frameworks, particularly focusing on

translation considerations. Newmark's classification encompassed cliché, dead, standard, original, metonym, weakened, and redundant metaphors. Similarly, scholars like Black (1993) and Goatly (1997) contributed to the classification of metaphors, delineating types based on their degrees of utilization. Their typologies included descriptors such as dead, inactive, active, dormant, and others, reflecting the detailed nature of metaphorical expressions and their usage patterns.

2.1.4. The Concept of Criticality within the Framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

For the first time, in the study of language use and analysis, Cognitive Linguistics primarily concentrated on understanding the cognitive foundations of language. However, it initially did not consider the influence or impact of socio-cultural factors on language use. This means the emphasis was placed on the mental processes involved in language, without taking into account how social and cultural contexts might shape or affect language usage. Wei (2016:92) has claimed that “cognitive linguistics, for a long period of time, appears to be the representative of de-contextualization and naturalization of ideologically loaded phenomena”, so cognitive linguistics has been criticized for reducing such complex social, cultural and political phenomena into universal cognitive structures.

Fowler (1991:89), taking a different view, advocated that critical analysis in linguistics intrinsically “proposes that analysis using appropriate linguistic tools, and referring to relevant historical and social context, can bring ideology, normally hidden through the habitualization of discourse, to the surface for inspection”. Criticality in social sciences and linguistic studies typically preferred to make a change in the social and political relations, and since the late 1970s, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has paved its path from Critical Linguistics. The main interest of CDA was to make use of linguistic expressions used in a context to reveal the hidden ideologies and to scrutinize the relationship between language, power and ideology. Fairclough (2001:1) sums up the main purposes of using CDA to “correct a wide underestimation of the significance of language in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power [...], to increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step to emancipate”.

In the same vein, van Dijk (1993:252) suggests that CDA is “primarily interested [in] and motivated by pressing social issues” and, we might add, in how discourse is utilized to constitute

and negotiate such social issues. So, the key belief here is that each discourse has a hidden intention and ideology that CDA attempts to unveil. CDA is therefore perceived as a range of theories which all emphasize one single idea; that is, highlighting the role of power, ideology, control, manipulation and inequality in discourse. Machin & Mayr (2012:5) highlight the role of CDA in Discourse Analysis stating that it is “[e]xposing strategies that appear normal or neutral on the surface but which may in fact be ideological”.

For his part, Charteris-Black (2004:29) asserts that “CDA is concerned with increasing our awareness of the social relations that are forged, maintained, and reinforced by language use in order to change them”. So, CDA pursues to capture the interrelationship between language, power and ideology throughout the linguistic elements employed in a text (Fairclough, 2001). Fairclough (2001, 2003, 2010) highlights this interrelationship, as he purposefully intended to elucidate what he described as IN-OUT investments in text and to reveal power relations and political ideology.

Returning to the emergence of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), its foundational development can be traced back to the ideas and contributions of Fairclough, Ruth Wodak and Teun van Dijk. Their primary emphasis was on the implicit shaping of power relations within discourse practices. Fairclough & Wodak, in particular, underscored this aspect by delving into “how power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse” (1997:272). Furthermore, the field has been significantly enriched by numerous scholars and researchers, including Scollon (1998), Rogers (2004), and Richardson (2007), who have introduced a variety of critical approaches. It is then relevant to state that three theories and approaches have been developed in the field of CDA:

- The Dialectal-relational Approach (Norman Fairclough)
- The Socio-Cognitive Approach (Teun van Dijk)
- The Discourse-Historical Approach (Ruth Wodak)

Thus, the vital aim of CDA, as suggested by Fairclough (1993:135), is to

[s]ystematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony.

Affirming Fairclough's perspective, Attia (2007) concurs that the majority of CDA studies place considerable emphasis on exploring the relationship between the linguistic analysis of any text and the socio-cultural factors in the context. In the study of CDA, one of the key issues is to accentuate certain categories or ideas within discourse types, as in political or economic discourses. So, Ball (1990:3), like many other scholars, asserts that CDA highlights some desirable ideas, stating "why, at a given time, out of all the possible things that could be said only certain things are said", but simultaneously keeps some other undesirable ideas out of focus. That is the conventionality of certain ideas at the expense of some others in discourse, as Stubbs (2001:149) points out:

The world could be represented in all kinds of ways, but certain ways of talking about events and people become frequent. Ideas circulate, not by some mystical process, but by a material one. Some ideas are formulated over and over again, such that, although they are conventional, they come to seem natural.

As mentioned earlier, CDA has an interest in the socio-cultural factors inherited in language use along with the aim of revealing overt intentions of text producers. This emphasizes Wei's view that "CDA emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary work in order to gain a proper understanding of how language functions in constituting and transmitting knowledge, in organizing social institutions or in exercising power" (Wei, 2016:92). To investigate the hidden ideologies and implicit intentions of producers in social and cultural context, Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) was put forward by Charteris-Black (2004) in his *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis*. Thus, CMA is a typical incorporation of CDA, Cognitive Linguistics, Pragmatics, and Corpus Linguistics. It does not dismiss the conceptual nature of metaphor; instead, it aligns with the core premise of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory that metaphor is fundamentally and inherently governed by cognition. Simultaneously, it positions metaphor as a form of argumentation and stylistic expression. Therefore, the selection of metaphors not only relies on cognition and semantics but also necessitates an understanding of pragmatics and consideration of ideological dimensions (Charteris-Black 2004; Zibin 2020). Thus, Charteris-Black (2004:2) argues that "[m]etaphor can only be explained by considering the interdependency of its semantic, pragmatic and cognitive dimensions".

In his book, Charteris-Black asserts that in the process of explaining metaphors, cognitive semantics primarily offers insight into how metaphors are perceived and understood by recipients. Notably, he emphasizes that cognitive semantics places little emphasis on exploring the underlying reasons or purposes driving the use of metaphors. So, according to him metaphors are selected in any discourse and they are ideologically triggered to achieve the goal of persuasion (2004:247). He (2005:13) further adds in this respect that “ideology, myth and metaphor are similar in that they share a common discourse function of persuasion and the expressive potential for cognitive and emotional engagement”. He also asserts that a theory of metaphor must include not only the cognitive and semantic perspectives, but also the pragmatic perspective, as an incorporative role in explaining the purposes of using specific metaphors in *ad hoc* contexts (persuasion). This theory is in line with what Levinson (1983:156) had already asserted:

A pragmatic approach will be based on the assumption that the metaphorical content of utterances will not be derived by principles of semantic interpretation; rather the semantics will just provide a characterization of the literal meaning or conventional content of the expression involved, and from this, together with details of the context, the pragmatics will have to provide the metaphorical interpretation.

CMA basically has relied upon earlier studies that fundamentally linked language usage with social theory, including Chilton (1996), Lakoff (1996), Baklin (1998), Stockwell (2000) and Musolff (2004). Since the rise of this trend in metaphor analysis, numerous studies have followed and expanded upon this trajectory, including works by Koller (2006), Hart & Lukeš (2007), and Crespo-Fernández (2006, 2014).

Back to Charteris-Black’s (2004) work, it posits that a critical analysis of metaphor within any discourse has the potential to unveil the language producer’s hidden ideologies and perhaps unconscious intentions, manifested as linguistic representations or visual images. A crucial and distinguishing aspect of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) in comparison to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) lies in its emphasis on a corpus-based approach to metaphor analysis. In Charteris-Black’s (2004:31) definition within his book, a corpus is explicated as:

any large collection of texts that arise from natural language use; in a linguistic context, it is in contrast to other types of text that were invented specifically for illustrating a point about language.

The notion of attested language is very important in corpus linguistics and implies that data are not invented for the benefit of a model but rather that the model emerges from large and representative samples of language. Other than this, there are no constraints on corpus composition nor are there any constraints on corpus size; these are determined by our purposes in designing the corpus in the first place.

In another respect, Cameron (2007:201) adds that identifying metaphors can detect, or at least make reference to the speaker's implied stances and underlying intention, this mainly means that any conceptual metaphor has implicit ideological outlook. Figuring out the ideological effects of metaphor, particularly in political discourse, facilitates the process of identifying and interpreting the metaphorical representations (Charteris-Black, 2005).

CMA, as developed by Charteris-Black (2004:21-22), focuses on redefining the most important terms, as can be seen when he mentions that

[a] metaphor is a linguistic representation that results from the shift in the use of a word or phrase from the context or domain in which it is expected to occur to another context or domain where it is not expected to occur, thereby causing semantic tension. It may have any or all of the pragmatic and cognitive characteristics that are specified above.

In line with Charteris-Black's words, conceptual metaphor serves as a mechanism that is basically utilized to harmonize the semantic incongruity present in a given set of metaphors, elucidating their inherent relationships and interconnections. Forceville (1996:35), on the other hand, has affirmed this view in the following way:

The production and interpretation of metaphor include reference to many contextual elements that are at best only partly linguistic in character. Since situational context plays such a dominant role in metaphor, a semantic view of metaphor must always be complemented by a pragmatic one.

And the analysis he has taken up in his theory supports to some extent Lakoff's CMT in that "by analyzing metaphors in a corpus it is possible to understand better the conceptual level of metaphor and how this relates to underlying ideology"(Charteris-Black, 2004:244).

According to Charteris-Black's CMA theory (2004), the conceptual level aforementioned is hierarchically systemized into conceptual key, conceptual metaphor and then metaphor. Charteris-Black (2004:245) specifies that one of the roles of CMA is to show the potentiality of examining and investigating interrelationships among the different domains, for instance politics, press, sport, religion, etc., and it therefore leads the recipients to set connections in such various domains. Diagram 2.3, cited from Charteris-Black (2004:245), shows a hierarchical interrelationship between discourses of sports reporting, politics and religion, as in:

- 'LIFE IS *A STRUGGLE* FOR SURVIVAL'
- 'ECONOMIC LIFE IS *A STRUGGLE* FOR PROFIT'
- 'SPIRITUAL LIFE IS *A STRUGGLE* FOR SALVATION'

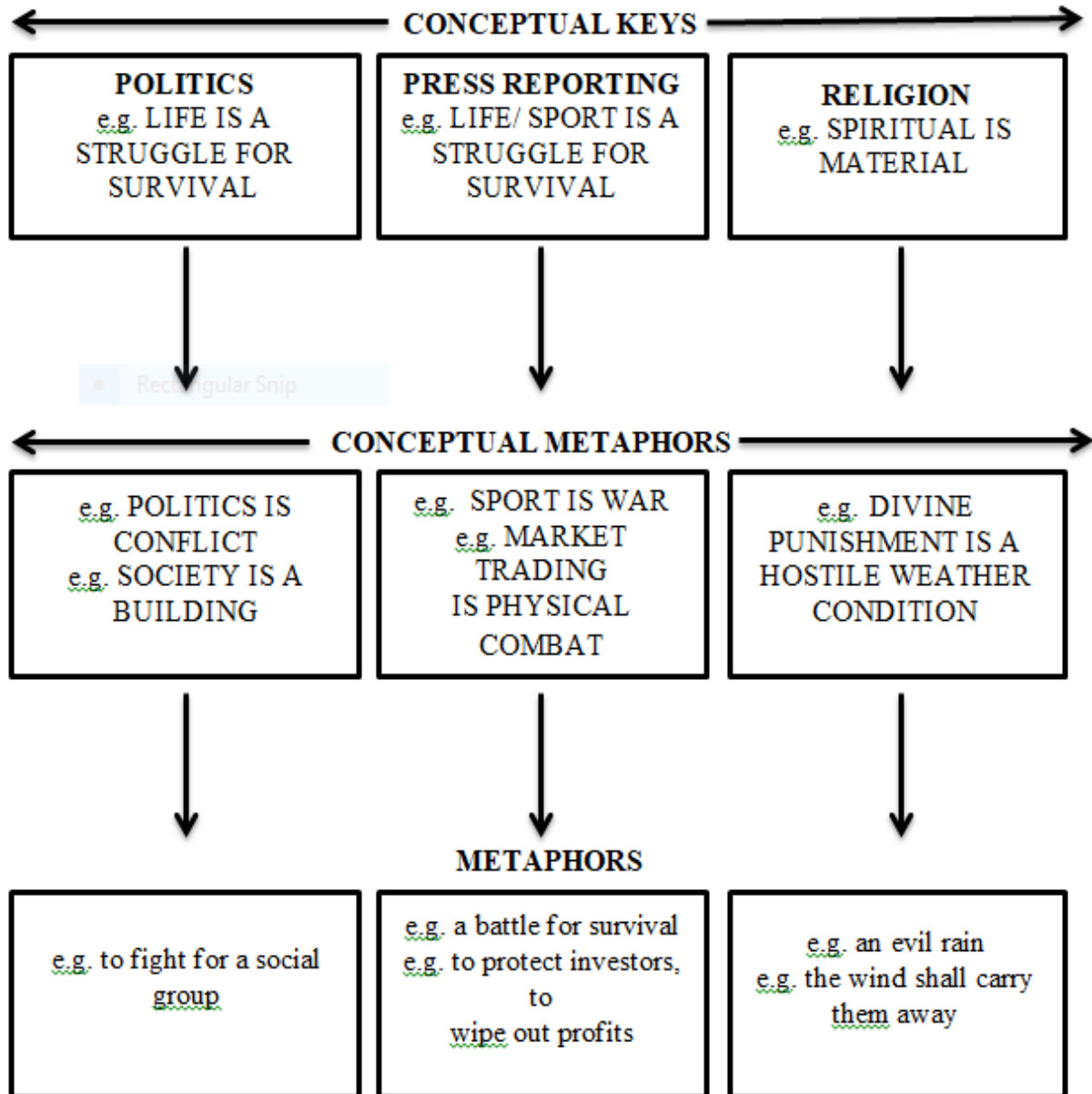


Diagram 2.3 A hierarchical cognitive model of metaphor (cited from Charteris-Black, 2004:245)

As shown above, the conceptual keys almost provide metaphors that ultimately exist in each of the discourse types and this helps us to understand the similarities across unconnected areas of our enquiry. As for Charteris-Black’s view, for instance, the notion ‘STRUGGLE’ is utilized metaphorically across the domains (Politics, Press, and Religion), but each domain specifies the prominent goal of the notion itself. In politics, for instance, ‘STRUGGLE’ represents a contest to

attain the social ideals and morals against the opponents. In sport press, however, the notion conveys the goal of winning competitions, while in religion discourse ‘STRUGGLE’ achieves the goal of getting a place in paradise.

Charteris-Black (2004:246) also asserts that the conceptual metaphors for each of the discourse types are basically conceptualized in terms of the discourse itself, that is, in politics and the sport press, the conceptual metaphors of the conceptual key ‘STRUGGLE’ have been represented in the domains WAR and PHYSICAL CONFLICT, as in “Battles against corruption”, “fighting to survive economics”, etc. Struggle in religion is almost conceptualized in terms of spiritual efforts against forbidden and despicable acts, and as Charteris-Black (2004:246) argues, “in the case of religion, struggle is conceptualized in terms of a relationship with a divine being that has the capacity to inflict punishment on the non-believer”.

Diagram 2.3 illustrates Charteris-Black’s (2004:248) model of selecting metaphors in any discourse. Following this model, metaphors have been identified in combination with a set of individual and social resources.

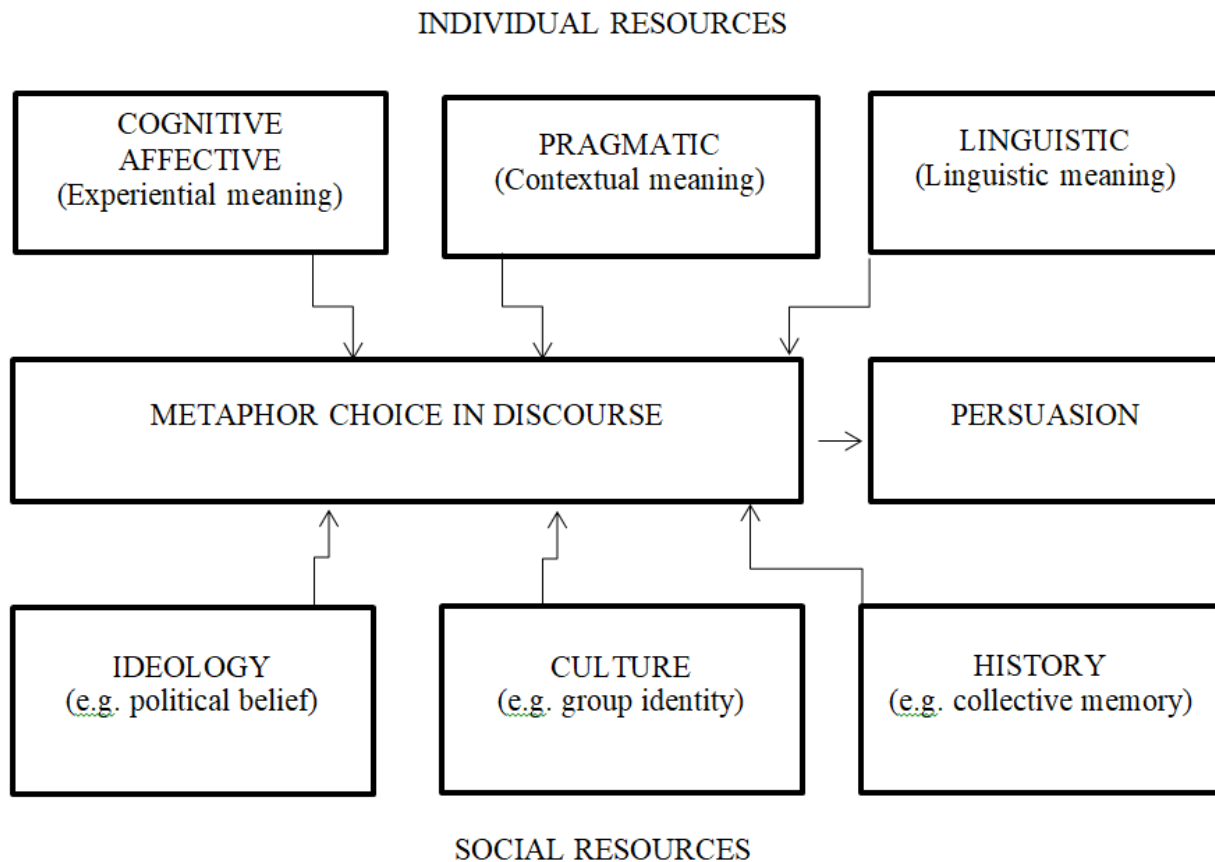


Diagram 2.4. A Discourse Model for Metaphor by Charteris-Black (2004:248)

In this model, Charteris-Black (2004) pinpoints the resources that determine the choice of metaphors in discourse. These resources are individual and social ones, with individual ones subdivided into three types: the cognitive resources which constitute our thoughts, experiences and the affective resources in general; the pragmatic resources, concerned with the purpose and intention behind the choice of a specific metaphor in context; and the linguistic resources, which represent the command of a given language.

On the other hand, the social resources include the underlined ideology, the positive and negative evaluation in discourse and the identity and historical dimension of the target group. Charteris-Black (2004:248) claims that “[the] social bases for metaphor choice are ideological outlook –primarily political or religious viewpoint– and historical and cultural knowledge”.

In the methodology of metaphor analysis, many scholars and researchers (Cameron & Low, 1999, Charteris-Black, 2004, 2005) followed the three steps of Fairclough’s CDA of identification, interpretation, and explanation, which in turn have the same basis of Halliday’s Functional

Linguistics (1985). Charteris-Black's (2004:35) three steps methodology begins with the identification of metaphors, which is concerned with Halliday's ideational meaning; that is, whether metaphors are present in a text or not and "the presence of incongruity or semantic tension—either at linguistic, pragmatic or cognitive levels—resulting from a shift in domain use". The second stage is metaphor interpretation, which has a concern with interpersonal meaning; that is, to identify the social relations constructed between the domains through examining the relation between metaphor and other elements (pragmatic and cognitive) in a text. Wei (2016:94) further argues that this phase "indicates the identification of conceptual metaphors, and where feasible, conceptual keys. Conceptual metaphors are used to resolve the semantic tension between metaphors while conceptual keys are identified to solve the semantic tension between conceptual metaphors". The third and last step in metaphor analysis is the explanation of metaphor use in a text, that is, why certain metaphors are selected in certain situations whereas others are not. Metaphor explanation highlights the social role of metaphors in a text and identifies the ideological triggers and rhetorical motivations of these metaphors. In this avenue, Charteris-Black (2004:39) contends that "[e]vidence for the ideological and rhetorical motivation comes from the corpus in which metaphors occur rather than from the intuition of the analyst".

Many other scholars and experts have also emphasized the rhetorical role of metaphor and its persuasive impact in a text, such as Mazrui (1998), Johnson (2007), Musolff (2007) and O'Halloran (2007). To sum up this perspective, the ideological trigger of metaphor basically depends on its rhetorical role of persuasion. Mio (1997:121) claimed that in political discourse metaphor as a persuasive tool can have three roles: first, the simplification role of metaphor in making the political events more understandable; second, the symbolic representations that metaphors resonate in their recipients; the last role is the ability of metaphor to stir emotion and fill the gaps between logical and emotional forms of persuasiveness.

2.1.5. The Incorporation of Multimodality, Criticality and Conceptual Metaphor Theory in the Formation of Critical Multimodal Metaphor Analysis (CMMA)

Multimodality, as Kress & van Leeuwen (2001:20) point out, is basically considered as "the interplay between different representational modes, for instance, between images and written/spoken word. Multimodal representations mediate the socio-cultural ways in which these modes are combined in the communication process". Jewitt (2009:14) also postulates that

multimodality in its essence could be perceived as “approaches that understand communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend to the full range of communicational forms people use –image, gesture, gaze, posture and so on– and the relationship between them”.

So, there is a persistent need to know what is meant by the modes of representation, interaction and communication as stated in Kress & van Leeuwen’s definition (2006). At the start, it is significant to know what a mode is. Kress, in his “What is Mode?”, describes it as “a socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning. Images, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving images, and sound tracks are examples of modes used in representation and communication” (2009:54). These modes or resources of meaning, “semiotic resources”, can be combined and interrelated to each other within a particular discourse and thus achieve particular functions.

Forceville (2009:22) considers a mode is “a sign system interpretable because of a specific perception process [...]. This approach would link modes one-on-one to the fine sense [...]: (1) the pictorial or visual mode; (2) the aural or sonic mode; (3) the olfactory mode; (4) the gustatory mode; (5) the tactile mode”. His characterization encloses modes to the human sensory realm, presenting a challenge due to variations in identification and interpretation across cultures. The delineation of what constitutes a mode is intricate and subject to cultural and temporal disparities. Because of that, more categories have been added to cover all modes of representation, as postulated by Forceville (2009:23):

- 1- pictorial signs
- 2- written signs
- 3- spoken signs
- 4- gestures
- 5- sounds
- 6- music
- 7- smells
- 8- tastes
- 9- touch

Modes as semiotic signs have functional values in discourse, as each achieves something. Kress (2010:1) asserts that, for instance, “[u]sing three modes in the one sign –writing and image and colour as well– has real benefits. Each mode does a specific thing: image shows what takes too long to read, and writing names what would be difficult to show. Colour is used to highlight specific aspects of the overall message”. Kress & van Leeuwen (2002) consider colours as having grammatical structure and patterns; they have compositional value in the interpretations of the images they are used in. They (2002:345) further add that “colour is a semiotic resource like others: regular, with signs that are motivated in their constitution by the interests of the makers of the signs, and not at all arbitrary or anarchic”.

Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) further add to the multimodality theory what has been intrinsically referred to as a structural patterning of the semiotic resources and choices. For them, the modes of meaning are not organized within a discourse haphazardly, rather they follow a grammatical diagram that enables image readers to read one single image in multiple ways and investigate its meaning due to this organization. According to them, each discourse has a set of elements that integrate together to perform certain functions and convey meanings. According to this premise, Kress & van Leeuwen’s (2006) seminal work *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* postulates that these semiotic resources and tools are employed to achieve certain meta-functions within discourse, namely representational, interactive and compositional meaning, as summed up in diagram 2.5.

The representational meaning basically refers to relationships existing in the context between the semiotic tools and also the relation between the representational participants and the actions they perform in the image. This function is divided into two processes; the first is dynamic and distinguished as a “narrative process”, which is essentially broken down into two sub-divisions as “actional” and “reactional”. The actional process generally bases on the internal relation between the actor (the action doer) and the goal (the action undergoer), with the help of the “vector” to be labeled as a transactional relation. It may also be non-transactional, with the absence of the goal or the other participants, and the vector’s role, in this case, is zero. Concerning the other subdivision of the narrative process is the reactional process, which is marked by the eye-line vector and also has the same dichotomy as the previous one, transactional and non-transactional (the existence or absence of the eye-line vector between the sensor and the phenomenon).

The second process of the representational meaning is recognized as stable in nature; it is a conceptual process that has been divided into three sub-processes, the classificational process, the analytical process and the symbolic process, which comes later. As with the first sub-process, the meaning is set up according to the relationship of the participants, who are seen as subordinate and superordinate, with an overt or covert manifestation, while the analytical represents the relation between the whole and the part, which are referred to as carrier and possessive attributives. Finally, the symbolic relation describes the relationship between the participants, who were identified as carrier and symbolic attributes.

The second function in Kress & van Leeuwen's (2009) multimodal discourse analysis theory is the interactive meaning, which is well manifested in discourse through various sub-processes, as shown in diagram 2.5, which are the contact established by gazing and image acts, social distance and power relations. They contend that this stage relates "with the things we can do to, or for, each other with visual communication, and with the relations between the makers and viewers of visual 'texts' which this entails". In this stage, each of these sub-processes has other divisions and semiotic aspects to achieve the target through their manipulation. Thus, for example, the contact reflects the existent relation between the participants by the employment of (in)direct gazing, which basically represents the demanding or offering function. Kress & van Leeuwen (2009:17) comment on this notion: "Gaze is one such resource: a depicted person may be shown as addressing viewers directly, by looking at the viewer. This conveys a sense of interaction between the two parties. But a depicted person may also be shown as turned away from the viewer, which will convey the absence of a sense of interaction". The distance sub-process, on the other hand, has three shots that represent the social intimacy or impersonal relation depending on the shot's closeness or distance. The final division of the interactive meaning is dedicated to power involvement, and the angle of the element in the image, so that when participants are vertically arranged the upper one has power and dominance over those at the bottom, whereas the horizontal axis essentially indicates the involvement of the participants within the action or not. In accordance to this assumption, the elements manifested in the frontal axes are distinguished as involved, whilst those at the oblique angle are addressed as detached or having no real involvement in the action.

The final process in this regard is the compositional function, wherein the semiotic tools and elements have particular values concerning the information, salience and framing they have, for

instance the zone, placement, relative size, colour, foreground and background, sharpness of the pose and the dividing line that connect the elements with each of these resources in the image. The information value of the compositional meaning conducts the placement of the elements as centered-polarized, top-bottom and left-right. These positions and zones represent different values to the image, for instance, the centered elements represent the nucleus and the focus of information, while the polarized or margined elements have no value to mention. The top-bottom illustration represents the contrast between the elements at the top and those at the bottom. The top-positioned resources are marked as 'ideal', whereas those at the bottom are 'real'. Such comparison is also well conceived through the left-right placement of the semiotic elements; the-left placed elements are regarded as 'given', whereby the information provided is regarded as already known and not new, while the ones on the right are seen as 'new'.

Frame, as another key compositional tool, stands for how the elements are connected to each other by the dividing lines or not. This is the indication of what is signified as a source of "individuality and differentiation", or "group identity". These structures are clear in some images wherein the elements are connected by dividing lines which enable the viewers to distinguish between the elements easily. Thus, this aspect signifies the elements as having one come identity or as separate elements with different identities. Saliency, on the other hand, represents the elements as colour, size, foreground and background, and sharpness. For instance, Kress & van Leeuwen (2002) contend that the colour element also has its valuable role in the viewers' responses. They elucidate in their study the distinctive features of colour, such as differentiation, saturation, purity, modulation, value, and hue, and how these aspects can be exploited to create meaning in a text. According to them, colour has an intrinsic relationship with emotion or affect, and it can be used to create emotional affect in viewers. Moreover, size as a meaningful semiotic resource has its effect on the compositional meaning and on other processes as well, so that oversized objects might be seen as superordinate, having high social status, and emphasized, whereas the undersized objects usually convey the sense of de-emphasizing, subservience and subordination.

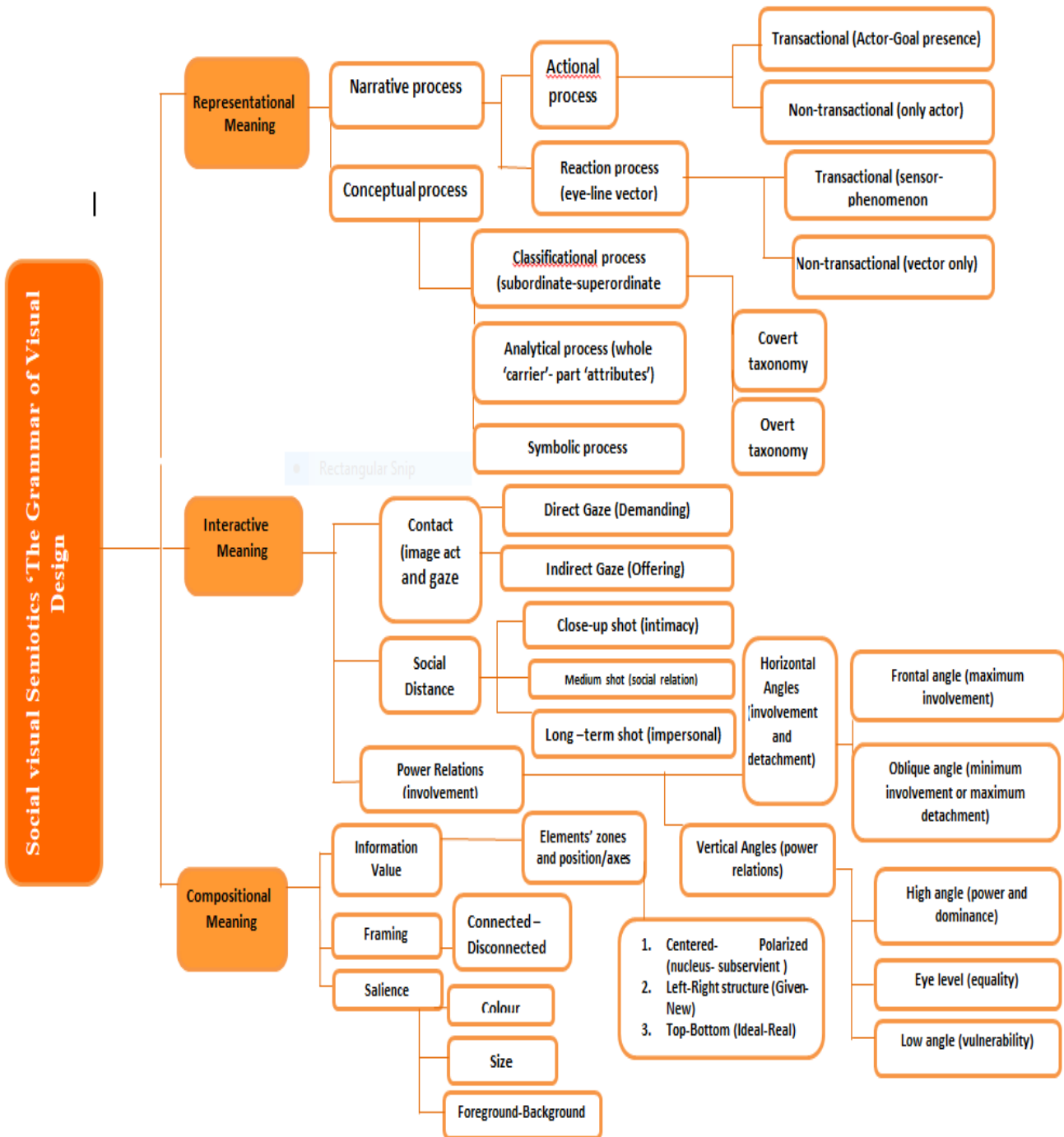


Diagram 2.5 Kress & van Leeuwen's (2006) Visual Social Semiotics in Multimodal Discourses (the Grammar of visual Design)

It is not surprising that though discourse types can present an enormous variety of modes or use very many semiotic resources, as mentioned above, the verbal and visual modes of those meanings have received the focused attention of scholars and experts (Forceville 1996, 2007, 2008, 2009; Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001; Baldry & Thibault 2006; Zbikowski 2009; Eggerstsson & Forceville 2009; Urios-Aparisi 2009; Ventola & Moya Guizarro 2009, among others). Furthermore, many other studies have been dedicated to determining not only the modes of metaphorical representations in discourse, rather they tend to determine and categorize the dominant mode of representation (textual, visual, complementary, or other modes of metaphorical expression). For instance, some studies, such as McCloud (1993), Feng (2011), Yu (2013), Negro (2014) and Tasić & Stamenković (2015), have focused on the verbo-pictorial type of multimodal metaphor to identify the dominant mode of representation in discourse, exhibiting the dominance of certain modes over others.

Concerning the relation of multimodal discourses and metaphor, multimodal metaphor is based on the assumption that in this type of metaphor, the metaphorical domains (target and source) are rendered in two different modes to create meaning. For instance, the target may be represented in verbal and visual modes at the same time. Thus, this type of metaphor has gained the focus of abundant studies focusing on how it is employed in various discourse types, as in advertisements, politics, and economics (Phillips & McQuarrie 2002; El-Rafaie 2009b; Geong 2008; Forceville 2009, 2012; Negro 2011, 2014; Bounegru & Forceville, 2011; Caballero 2014), to highlight the characteristics of each discourse form through this integration. In this aspect, Forceville (2012) and El-Rafaie (2013) argue that multimodal metaphors have some features, such as creativity and originality, in which they “allow a much wider opportunity for creativity than their verbal counterparts” (El-Rafaie, 2013:239), the creativity stems from the diversity in the mode of metaphorical representations which in turn advocate the viewers’ interest to decode the multimodal metaphors within the visual discourses. Moreover, this kind of metaphor has much more emotional effect on their viewers, as it is much easier to draw the viewers’ attention through multiple modes rather than just one mode.

Consequently, Negro (2014:64), in accordance with what Forceville (2008:463) had already figured out, summarizes the distinctiveness of the multimodal metaphors from the verbal ones, concerning the following:

- 1- The specificity that this kind of metaphor has, according to the perceptual immediacy their modes have compared to the verbal metaphor. Forceville (2008:463) suggests that “the pictorial or multimodal nature of target and source means that they are apprehended differently from their verbal counterparts”.
- 2- Multimodal metaphors have different, medium-determined ways of cueing the similarity between the two domains.
- 3- Multimodal metaphors are easier to recognize since they do not depend on verbal codes.
- 4- Multimodal metaphors have much more emotional impact than the verbal cues.

The amalgamation of Multimodality and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly within the context of metaphorical representations, presents a foundational theoretical framework that, in one way or another, introduces a novel approach to examining metaphors across diverse modes of communication. More specifically, the integration of multimodal discourse with political metaphor unveils a critical perspective applied to various issues. It is noteworthy that numerous studies have hitherto focused their inquiries and perspectives exclusively on the examination of critical metaphors within textual discourse (Hart, 2007; Koller, 2009; Musolff, 2012). Nonetheless, CMMA has emerged as an approach that integrates “the semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions with the different modes involved in the metaphor (verbal, visual, aural...)” (Muelas-Gil 2018a:108). This method is designed to scrutinize, as posited by Charteris-Black (2004), the ways in which metaphors encode hidden ideologies that mirror aspects of social power, inequality, dominance, and manipulation within discourse. Notably, the theoretical foundation of this approach uniquely encompasses all modes of metaphorical representations (multimodal metaphors).

2.1.6. Metaphor in Political Discourse and Media Narratives

This section is devoted to revealing the influence of metaphors in various types of discourse, namely political discourse and the discourse of printed media, or the press. It addresses the functional targets of employing metaphors in these structures and what strategies are utilized as underpinnings of favoring certain metaphorical images over others. These strategies are designed

either to highlight certain features through framing the issue, or to hide some other features for ideological purposes (Muelas-Gil 2018a).

2.1.6.1. Metaphorical Representations in Political Discourse

In the field of political discourse, an enormous number of different genres have been examined and analyzed, particularly those connected with presidential talks, inauguration speeches, press conferences, political parties' manifestos and campaign debates. Accordingly, political discourse could simply be defined as “the talk and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels” (van Dijk, 1997:12). Not surprisingly, metaphor has forced its way as a powerful tool not only in verbal discourse, but farther in pictorial and multimodal discourse alike. Accordingly, many scholars have paid considerable attention to its inevitable role in all genres of political discourse (Miller, 1979; Wodak, 1989; Thompson, 1996; Mio, 1997; Beard, 2000; Musolff, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2016; Charteris-Black, 2005; El-Refaie, 2009; Negro, 2013, 2014). Plainly, Xue et al. (2013) argue that the analysis of conceptual metaphors and the metaphorical representations in political discourses, especially those engaged in the inaugural speeches, reveal the intentions and hidden ideologies of the coming presidents.

Charteris-Black (2005) claims that most metaphors used in politics are powerful tools to uncover the values (positive or negative) that sustain the abstract notions in discourse. They are employed, as Muelas-Gil (2018a) perceives, either to highlight certain aspects, domains and scenarios or to de-emphasize or to hide some other ones. Thus, the emphasis or de-emphasis of these aspects or scenarios is fundamentally related to the politicians' intentions, ideologies and values. In line with this, Mio (1997:113-14), citing Edelman (1971), asserts that metaphor in this vein “can be a subtle way of highlighting what one wants to believe and avoiding what one does not wish to face”, while Woods (2022:6) facilitates a more straightforward elucidation stating that “political figures use conceptual metaphors to craft a narrative in their listeners' mind”.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980:159) highlight the relevance of metaphor in politics claiming that “metaphors play a central role in the construction of social and political reality”. In his book *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, Lakoff (2002) often asserts that each of these political parties, the US liberals and Conservatives, encapsulate distinct moral values, which can be metaphorically employed to reinforce and embody their ideological framework. His theory was

based on the conceptual metaphors ‘NATION IS FAMILY’ and ‘GOVERNMENT IS PARENT’. As Cienki (2005) contends, Lakoff’s model presents a dichotomy which shows politicians from those two factions as ‘strict father=conservatives’, or as ‘nurturant parent=liberal’. Additionally, many linguists have paid attention to the strategic and persuasive functions of metaphor in political discourse (van Dijk, 2001, 2002; Chilton, 2004, 2005; van Leeuwen, 2007; Musolff, 2007; Hart, 2007). Chilton (2004), in his *Analyzing Political Discourse*, also establishes the principal strategic functions of language in discourse as Coercion, Legitimization and Delegitimization, and Representation and Misrepresentation. In his discussion, Chilton (2004) considers these functions as the strategies that affect discourse to provide positive representation of the self and negative misrepresentation of the others. He contends that throughout the legitimization/delegitimization strategy of language in politics, politicians use language that provides them with values, morals and authority, yet also with delegitimization, for the acts of language that are allotted to represent the others negatively. He (2004:47) points out that

The strategies of *delegitimation* (of the other) and *legitimation* (of the self) may perhaps be conceptualized as lying at opposite ends of a scale. These end points may coincide with positive face (being an insider and legitimate) and negative face (being not only an outsider and thus not legitimate but also under attack). Delegitimization can manifest itself in acts of negative other presentation, acts of blaming, scape-goating, marginalizing, excluding, attacking the moral character of some individual or group, attacking the communicative cooperation of the other, attacking the rationality and sanity of the other.

Charteris-Black (2018:202) points out that metaphors in political genres often “influence public events by reinforcing and legitimizing the outlooks and beliefs of supporters and by attacking and delegitimising those of opponents”. To figure out the purposes of using metaphors in political discourse, Charteris-Black, in his *Analyzing Political Speeches*, ascertains the persuasive functions that metaphors achieve in discourses in general and in politics in particular. Hence, figure 4 below exposes the persuasive purposes as follows:

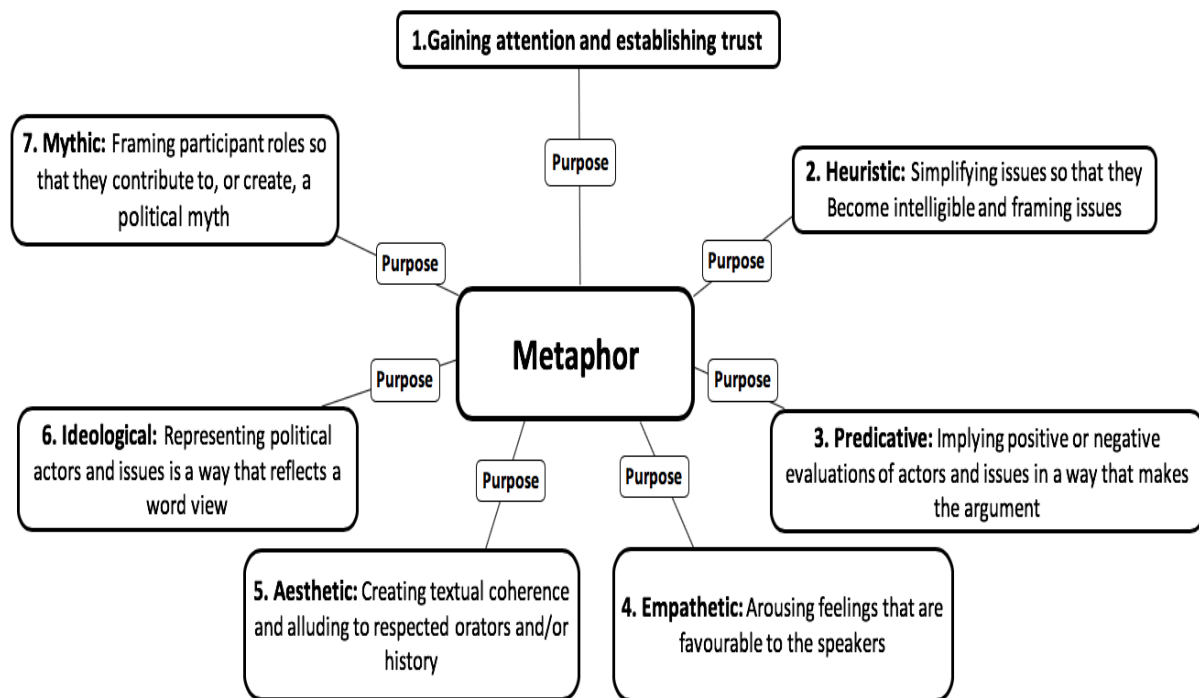


Diagram 2.6 Persuasive Purposes of Metaphor (cited from Charteris-Black, 2014:201)

The purposes of metaphors as means of persuasion, then, are the following:

1- Gaining attention and establishing trust

According to this purpose, the actor is shown as having the right intentions and must be trusted by their audience. It basically appears at the beginning of the political speeches and debates. Charteris-Black (2018:202) states that metaphors “are purposeful when they contribute to a speaker’s efforts to convince others that he or she is right”. This function has been explored by many researchers and scholars (Chilton and Ilyin, 1993; El Refaie, 2003, 2009a, 2009b; Beer and De Landtsheer, 2004; Teng, 2009). Summing up this aim, McGuire (2000) posits that the persuasive efficacy of metaphors resides in their capacity to capture the audience’s attention more effectively than non-metaphorical language. The expressive nature of metaphors enables them to prominently register in the minds of viewers, readers, or listeners. However, McGuire contended that the persuasive impact of metaphors is contingent upon factors such as recall, comprehension, and interest. To exert persuasive influence, the audience must successfully retain the metaphor (recall),

comprehend its meaning (comprehension), and exhibit interest not only in the metaphor itself but also in the broader product and/or service context (interest). McGuire asserted that these three components elucidate the variability observed in the persuasive potential of metaphors.

2- Heuristic Purpose

It is purposely utilized to simplify complex issues and to frame them to be more understandable and tangible. In this line, metaphor is a device that has been explored to construct reality, and Mio & Katz (1996:1) highlight this function claiming that “politics, being an abstract entity, rely (*sic*) heavily on metaphors to make concepts more tangible”.

3- Predicative Purpose

This function is generally used to refer to the actors’ positive and negative evaluation. It commonly refers to the speaker’s attributes and stances. This function is often utilized to convey the speaker’s viewpoints, opinions, or judgments about various subjects. It commonly involves the speaker expressing their own attributes or positions on any given matter.

4- Empathetic Purpose

It is associated with intertextuality and personification; thus it arouses the audience’s emotions and feelings that are favorable to the speakers. Cook (2001) contends that intertextuality encompasses references and allusions within texts, forming a common practice in most discourses where existing texts are integrated into new ones. Fetterman et al. (2021) suggest that this purpose enables individuals to better imagine and relate to the experiences and emotions of others. Pinar-Sanz (2020:20-21) classifies the sources of intertextuality and visual metaphors in cartoons, which carry out the empathetic purposes in the context as:

- Contemporary popular culture,
- Classical sculpture,
- Literature and illustrations of literary works,
- Paintings.

5- Aesthetic Purpose

In this aspect, metaphors are preferred to add coherence and logical balance to the talk. It essentially makes reference to historical use of metaphors.

6- Ideological Purpose

Ideology, as Kress & Hodge (1993:15) postulate, is “a systematically organized presentation of reality”. It is the hidden face of our beliefs and values. Metaphor therefore is used to represent

political ideologies and issues and to reflect the views and values that are inherently shared by any social group. So, according to this function, communicating ideologies is best done through the useful utilization of metaphor (Charteris-Black, 2004:28). Consistent with this perspective, Goatly (1997:155) asserts that

Metaphor in this realm creates long-term mental representations and conventional metaphor conceptualization of some issues of reality. Metaphor is not a mere reflection of pre-existing reality but a construction of reality, through a categorization entailing a selection of some features as critical and others as non-critical.

7- Mythic Purpose

This happens through providing myths and historical stories to engage the audience and to frame the roles of the participants in the political myths (Charteris-Black, 2014:215-218).

To sum up the interconnection between political discourse and metaphor, Ungerer and Schmid (1996:149) assert that “politics is an area in which we would expect metaphorical expressions to be used. Indeed, political speech is one of the recognized types of classical rhetoric, of which metaphors are an integral part”.

Metaphor functions are basically linked to the meta-functions of language suggested by Halliday & Hasan’s (1989) Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), which are the following:

- Textual: through this function, metaphor adds clarity and understandability to the text, transferring abstract concepts to more tangible and concrete ones.
- Interpersonal: this meaning refers to the relation between the addresser and the addressee in the interaction. Metaphor is thus utilized to get the addressee’s attention and to get a better grasp of meaning. In journalism, as in other spheres, the relationship between the journalist and the reader is crucial, that is, the journalist has the intent to get the attention of their readers through the purposeful use of metaphor. Herrera Soler (2008:54) asserts that the relationship between the journalist and readers also triggers better comprehension of the discourse in addition to metaphor, arguing that “the knowledge between journalists and readers facilitates the understanding of linguistic metaphors”.
- Ideational: here, in this function, the use of metaphor is exploited to build and maintain experience. It is argued that all discourse types convey ideas through which a specific type of discourse has to be shaped and framed. Using metaphor as one of the strategic tools to

shape experience and to create mental models or long-term representations, language users have the power to manipulate their partners' comprehension, interpretations and reactions.

Accordingly, Semino (2008) among others adds in this regard that some metaphors are much more prevalent and preferable in political discourse than others, such as WAR, JOURNEY, CONTAINER, SPORTS AND GAMES metaphors. Such preference results from the ideological purposes that politicians tend to highlight, whilst others are consciously downplayed or discarded.

2.1.6.2. Metaphor and Ideology Interaction in Media Discourse

Fowler (1991:10) states that “language is not a clear window, but a refracting, structuring medium”. Language according to this view is perceived as an ideology container; it represents and constructs the values and beliefs of society, it is not an empty nest. Along the same line, Semino (2008:90) contends that ideology is a cognitive phenomenon that represents “conceptualization of particular aspects of reality”.

The recognition of the relevance of ideology within discourse, interconnected with its inherent and intricate bond with metaphor, prompted Dirven et al. (2007:1223) to define ideology either broadly or more restrictedly; from a broad understanding, ideology is seen as “a system of thought [...], an implicit or explicit set of norms and values which provide patterns for acting and/ or patterns for living within a given social network”. But the narrow understanding of ideology as postulated by Dirven et al. considers ideology as a “modality of power”. This view is essentially intertwined with the CDA view, which considers ideology as “establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation” (Fairclough, 2003:9). For van Dijk (1998, 2000, 2001), as an example, ideology is perceived as a belief system shared within a group, representing the foundational propositions that indicate what is considered beneficial or favorable for that group or not. This belief system, which perpetuates the norms and values of a community, plays a crucial role in shaping the representation of social issues. Thus, the intimate relation between language and ideology has attracted the linguists' attention, coalescing into CDA (Hawkins, 1997; Van Dijk, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2001; Fang, 2001; Fairclough, 2004).

Ideologies, in their essence, are combinations of long-term representations inherently shared by the members of society (Semino, 2008). Each discourse loads specific ideologies that are highlighted or downplayed through the utilization of some rhetoric tropes by the society members.

Fairclough & Wodak (1997:273-75) also argued that ideologies are specific ways of illustrating the relations based on power, dominance, inequality and exploitation. In CDA, ideologies are basically regarded as “a significant element of processes through which relations of power are established, maintained, enacted and transformed” (Fairclough, 2010:26). Ideology, as a concept, gets the attention of scholars who may define it differently. Thompson (2013) postulates that ideology refers to potentiality of studying how meaning is shaped and conveyed, cultivated or even reinforced by using specific symbolic forms. Van Dijk (2006:116) considers ideologies as “belief systems which are socially *shared* by the members of a *collectivity* of social actors”. Previously, he had also pointed out that ideologies are socio-cognitive phenomena focusing on the social relationship between the sender and receiver, thus, ideology is “the interface between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action, on the one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups, on the other hand” (1995). Luke (2002), on the other hand, focuses on the powerful dimension of ideologies claiming that language can get powerful potentiality when influential and highly dominant people make use of it. Hence, it has so far been claimed that there is a tight relation between language and power. This evokes the impression that ideology not only represents social reality but rather it constructs and reflects social identity and beliefs.

There is no doubt that ideology exists in all social life areas, thus it can be found in our daily experience and knowledge. And within CDA, ideology is mostly characterized as that system of ideas, beliefs and values adhered to by dominant groups in society to oblige predominance and hegemony over subjugated groups (Kress & Hodge, 1993; van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Machin & Mayr, 2012). Concerning the relationship between metaphor and ideology, metaphor is mainly seen as a powerful tool of persuasion, through which certain aspects of reality might be highlighted at the expense of some other hidden ones (Ferrari, 2007). In accordance to this regard, Silaški (2012:209) claims that “[a] strong ideological basis of metaphors allows their creators to influence the way we conceptualize certain concepts and phenomena, which makes them a powerful and dangerous weapon in the process of shaping opinions”. So these ideological forms may spring up because of the foregrounding of particular metaphorical representations and back-grounding of some alternative ones. Wolf & Polzenhagen (2003:263) identify that conceptual metaphor has three major (strategic) ways of construing ideology, which we are addressing next.

- **Highlighting vs. Hiding or Downplaying**

The first strategy is connected to the potentiality of conceptual metaphors to highlight or hide particular effects in discourse, as for instance in medical discourse the use of WAR metaphor represents the author's ideology and stance. The focus on particular metaphorical representations, as opposed to others, stems fundamentally from the deliberate intention of the language user to emphasize one theme more prominently than another. Consequently, this choice of metaphor highlights the combative nature of diseases, showing the patients as fighters and the diseases as foes and the entire atmosphere as hostile. Here, the focus is on negative metaphors, such as 'THE CONFRONTATION OF DISEASE IS A BATTLE' and 'DISEASE IS AN ENEMY', rather than on a more positive alternative one, such as 'RECEIVING TREATMENT IS A JOURNEY' (Wolf and Polzenhagen, 2003:263). Deignan (2005:23) asserts that "the case for metaphor as ideological is developed from the observation that the interpretation of situations and events presented by any metaphor is only partial, and therefore flawed". Indeed, this claim is in line with what Lakoff & Johnson (1980) had already argued that metaphors follow a principle of highlighting and hiding aspects of a given concept.

The role of metaphor, in this regard, is to represent the political actors as legitimate and authentic sources, as discussed in section 2.1.6, and at the same time to aggress the rivals' views and ideas. And this is what van Dijk's Ideological Square (1998:284) elucidates as follows:

- 1- Express/emphasize information that is positive about Us.
- 2- Express/emphasize information that is negative about Them.
- 3- Suppress/de-emphasize information that is positive about Them.
- 4- Suppress/de-emphasize information that is negative about Us.

In accordance with van Dijk's ideological square, the emphatic and de-emphatic options are basically construed as manifestations of positive and negative evaluation, as contended by Muelas-Gil (2018b) in her study on economy and metaphor. These evaluations, whether negative or positive, are marked as polarity (Channell, 2000). These polarities signify that accentuating the positive aspects of the target while hiding its negative aspects is designated as positive polarity. Conversely, highlighting the negative aspects of others and suppressing their positive attributes and aspects is marked as negative polarity.

However, the representation/misrepresentation strategies as also postulated by Chilton (2004), who asserts that political control holds the management of information supplied to the audience. So, metaphor is essentially used by politicians to represent information either positively or negatively, and the negative representation of information is regarded as problematic, and vice versa.

- **Dominance vs. Periphery**

In this strategy, ideological construal occurs as a result of the fact that CMT assigns certain roles in the text which are characterized as the syntactic roles of agent, patient and others. In this realm, the choice of these roles is assigned by metaphor; the agent gains a higher level of dominance and control whereas the patient is predominantly assigned the role in the object position. This happens for instance in the WAR metaphor, in which the agent controls the mental state of the action.

From a different perspective, the ideological construal is also related to whom the metaphor producer's decision is assigned to, that is, whether the metaphorical cues or labels are related to a specific domain than yet another alternative one. More precisely, in media, for example, the language of the press is ultimately different from all other forms of daily language. Typically, it does not resemble literary discourse either, nor educational discourse. Such discrimination probably lies upon the assumption that press discourse is loaded with ideological orientations that vigorously affect its language.

In journalistic discourse, for instance, as Cubo de Severino et al. (2001) assert, the exploitation of metaphor is essentially regarded as one of the vital strategies to hide their users' intentions and ideological attitude. Silaški (2012:209) points out that "[a] strong ideological basis of metaphors allows their creators to influence the way we conceptualize certain aspects and phenomena, which makes them a powerful and dangerous weapon in the process of shaping opinions". And that is why Charteris-Black (2004) argues that CMT aims at not only conceptualizing the aspects of reality but also at "influencing opinions and judgments by persuasion". Accordingly, the link between persuasion and ideology is basically innate, as any discourse has an ideologically shaped goal to have an impact on its readers' ideas and views and to persuade them to adopt its views (Sopory & Price 2002).

- **Euphemistic vs. Dysphemistic Strategies**

The other strategy that is consciously planned in the political sphere and media discourse is euphemism and dysphemism. Allan & Burrige (2006) argue that these two devices are utilized to achieve the speaker's persuasive purposes. Euphemism, as Terry (2020) defines it, is an avoidance of offensiveness, directness and taboo words in discourse, for instance, in the political sphere euphemistic expressions are often exploited by statesmen to minimize and attenuate the offensiveness of their speech and to save the face of the interlocutor or the one being referred to. Crespo-Fernández (2014:12) further suggests that “euphemism is a twofold phenomenon. It is not only a lexical process whereby distasteful words are replaced, but also a set of discursive tactics acting on verbal behaviour which does not conform to expectations and conventions of politeness”.

Dysphemism, on the other hand, according to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, is “the substitution of a disagreeable, offensive, or disparaging expression for an agreeable or inoffensive one”⁶. Allan & Burrige (1991:26) define dysphemism as “an expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and it is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression just for that reason”. Moreover, they argue that “dysphemisms are motivated by fear and distaste, but also by hatred and contempt; and, in contrast to euphemisms, they are motivated by the desire to offensively demonstrate such feelings and to downgrade the denotatum or addressee (31). Gray (1992:33) further adds to this field that “if euphemism is the practice of ameliorating the asperities of perceived reality, as such, its converse, dysphemism, is the practice of representing reality as worse than it is”.

2.2. POLITICAL CARTOONING REVIEW

An adage tells us that “A picture is worth a thousand words”. So, if a picture speaks a thousand words, a cartoon will incontrovertibly speak even more. In this way, “cartoons reveal a side of political culture not found in official memoranda, public speeches and newspapers editorials, theoretical tracts, and ideological pamphlets. They, hence, provide access to “everyday reactions

⁶ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dysphemism>

to politics that even public opinion polls cannot capture” (Duus 1999:995). This means that cartooning not only paves the way to understand reality in a humorous or satirical manner; rather it is commonly perceived as a reality-addressing medium which is purposefully constructed to tell a story or convey information through a series of drawings or visual analogies (Seymour-Ure, 2001; Pinar-Sanz, 2008, 2012). Therefore, Greenberg (2002:194) conjectures that “while cartoons are normally understood by readers to be satirical depictions of real events, they nevertheless draw from an available stock of public knowledge and reproduce a common sense view of the world.”

Other perspectives scrutinize political cartoons’ symbolic artistic illustration that has a humorous effect on its audience with or without an explanatory help of witty commentaries on all social, cultural, economic and political issues. This artistic representation, as pointed out by Edwards & Winkler (1997), is “typically designed in a one-panel, non-continuing format to make an independent statement or observation on political events or social policy”. Thus, it is a satirical representation and subjective observation on complicated political issues that conveys a cartoonist’s message humorously, ridiculously, or even insultingly. Caswell (2004:14) considers cartoons as carrying “both opinion-molding and opinion-reflecting”, as they have the power to reshape the public views and even more to affect the politicians’ image stored in their people’s mind. In the political realm, cartoonists employ their work to critique politicians and highlight their shortcomings. For instance, Martine Rowson, *The Guardian*’s cartoonist, is recognized for a style that is described as “visceral and deliberately offensive”, similar to the approach taken by James Gillray in criticizing politicians (Rowson, 2001, paragraph 3). This illustrates that cartoonists in most of their artworks tend to embrace a specific track, but mostly directed towards satirizing men in power.

El-Refaie (2009b:181) highlights the same view through suggesting that a political cartoon essentially “refers first to metaphorical codification and second to a satirical or humorous genre through which a cartoonist subtly informs, criticizes and entertains his (*sic*) audience”. Looking back at the last century, cartoons have always been regarded as a key tool that reflects the tangible political bond between government and society and they also build public opinions on social and political issues. And many views and arguments were raised to identify the significance of cartooning in press. In *Encyclopedia Britannica*, for instance, political cartoons are addressed as any drawing primarily devoted to conveying editorial standpoints of freedom in newspapers and magazines. Thus, cartoons are identified as “a typically non-realistic or semi-realistic drawing or

painting is this 2009a, or 2009b?intended for satire, caricature, or humor, or to the artistic style of such works”⁷. Going deeper into the style and construction of these drawings, Samson & Huber (2007) have characterized the cartoons’ style and construction as simple and concise in wording, if they have any, and they contain hybrid features and simplified figures besides a sketch-like structure. In addition to all of the above, political cartoons have an evaluative role that pursues to affect the audience’s states of mind, views, beliefs and judgments on the political events such as presidential elections, economic and financial affairs, world wars, and even the reputation of the country, etc. (Edwards, 2001; El-Refaie, 2003).

To sum up the overall views around the concept of political cartoon, Negro (2014:66) elucidates abundantly its defining features as follows:

1. Cartoons have a descriptive value inasmuch as their ability to elucidate the whole situation, persons and all interrelated factors visually.
2. They are profoundly established upon factual knowledge to depict reality in a correct and authoritative way.
3. As Edwards (1997:8) points out, “cartoons act as a bridge between fact and fiction”. El-Refaie (2009a,b) highlights this notion in the transferring of meaning from fiction to fact typically happening in visual representation.
4. Cartoons have a satirical and humorous nature in illustrating either events or persons.
5. Cartoons have a critical effect on events.
6. One of the vital and argumentative devices in political cartoons is metaphor, as many researchers have thus far asserted (Philippe, 1982; Morrison, 1992; Morris, 1993; Edwards, 1997; Templin, 1999; Lan & Zuo, 2016).

In this light, for instance, Shilperoord et al. (2009:214-215) have pointed out that “editorial cartoons are a metaphor-rich communicative area”. This of course means that metaphorical scenarios and imaginary scenes, as in hospital scenarios, funeral scenarios, marriage, cooking, etc., are the most influential themes of cartoons’ depiction. It is worth noting also that cartoons not only

⁷ [History Of Cartoon; Amazing Facts And Insider Info Await! - Toons Mag](#)

provide a visual mode of event representation, but they enrich their explanatory perspective with the verbal or textual component. Thus, cartoons are categorized either as monomodal in structure, with the typical inclusion of the visual mode only, or multimodal cartoons, which have a combination of visual and verbal modes (Tsakona, 2009; Agüero Guerra, 2016).

In a profound examination of the pivotal role of the verbal component, Barthes (1977) delves deeper, suggesting that the inclusion of captions in political cartoons carries significant values clarifying the nuanced meanings embedded within the visual imagery. Furthermore, López López (2019) assigns a functional relationship between these two modes of representation, as follows:

The text may extend the meaning of the image or viceversa (*relay*), or it may elaborate on the image (*elaboration*). In this sense, [Barthes] also distinguishes between two types of *elaboration*; a) when the image illustrates the text; and b), when the text is a restatement of the image in a more definite and precise way (López López, 2019:12).

Doubtlessly, the functional integration between these two modes adds more explanatory perspective to the cartoon and fulfills certain persuasive roles through offering a fertile environment that paves the way for better utilization of multimodal metaphor in political discourse (Philippe, 1982; Morrison, 2004). Ma & Gao (2020:25) have built upon what other scholars already agreed on, as “cartoon is a visual modal discourse that combines the two symbols of image and language. It contains a large number of multimodal metaphors and can insight into the ideology behind it through witty and vivid cartoons”. Subsequently, cartoons can be better understood and interpreted once the discursive context exists in its structure; moreover, this discursive knowledge has a comprehensible role to clarify the visual symbols (El-Refaie, 2003; Saraceni, 2003).

2.2.1. Characteristics and Functions of Political Cartoons

In political discourse, cartoons have always been referred to as “the most neglected genre of political communication” (De Sousa & Medhurst, 1982:84). The reason behind this claim is the misbelief that political cartoons only have a satirical aspect that triggers the viewers’ stances and attitudes towards social and political issues. But over time, this view has shifted, as these political depictions have not only been characterized as a humorous depiction of reality but as a powerful

means of persuasion addressed to the public with their cartoonists' thoughts and judgments. Thus, Walker (2003:13-14), for instance, regards these visual representations as a mouthpiece through which the cartoonists reveal dissatisfaction with political issues such as corruption, inequalities, segregation and economic recession, thereby raising potential calls to encounter these phases of government incompetence. In *Encyclopedia Britannica*,⁸ this view has been summed up simply in one impressive line: "political cartoons play a role in the political discourse of a society that provides for freedom of speech and of the press. They are a primarily opinion-oriented medium".

In addition to what has been mentioned above, one of the key characteristics of political cartoons is being narrative in structure; cartoons often provide their audience with mental preparation to imagine and conceptualize an imaginary scenario of what has been depicted. El-Refaie (2009b:183), for instance, argues that political cartoons create a sense of action being stored in the viewers' minds as a mental dynamic knowledge; this dynamic background knowledge (*scenario*) is very familiar to the audience. So, cartoons by themselves are suggestive in nature because they often help their viewers move smoothly from the linguistic level to the visual level inasmuch as their ability to create interrelated connections between unrelated objects goes beyond the text level. But what is even more interesting in this sphere is that cartoons by their nature need more cultural knowledge to be interpreted well. El-Refaie characterizes cartoons as genres that should be open to various interpretations, she justifies that "if cartoons were too easy to understand, they would probably provide the same sense of pride and achievement to those viewers who manage to solve these intriguing mental puzzles" (2009b:182).

As mentioned earlier, a political cartoon is an effective form of transmission of ludicrous political events in a succinct manner. The power of cartoons lies in the vigorous influence they create on the public views and opinions beside their ability to make any opaque event more vivid. Although the general perspective of political cartoons is to illustrate the social, political, economic and cultural issues in a humorous and/or critical way, their most significant goal is to present the negative and shameful aspects of these issues rather than to highlight them positively. Cartoons by nature are easier and more precise to be transmitted communicatively. Brantner et al. (2013)

⁸ Knieper, T. (n.d.) Political cartoon. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Retrieved 22 March 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/political-cartoon>

characterize the main trait of cartoons as representing a political event in a comic or entertaining manner but hiding the cartoonist’s ideological direction. In this realm, DeSousa & Medhurst (1982:88-93) identify the key functions of exploiting political cartoons in media, as can be seen in diagram 2.7.

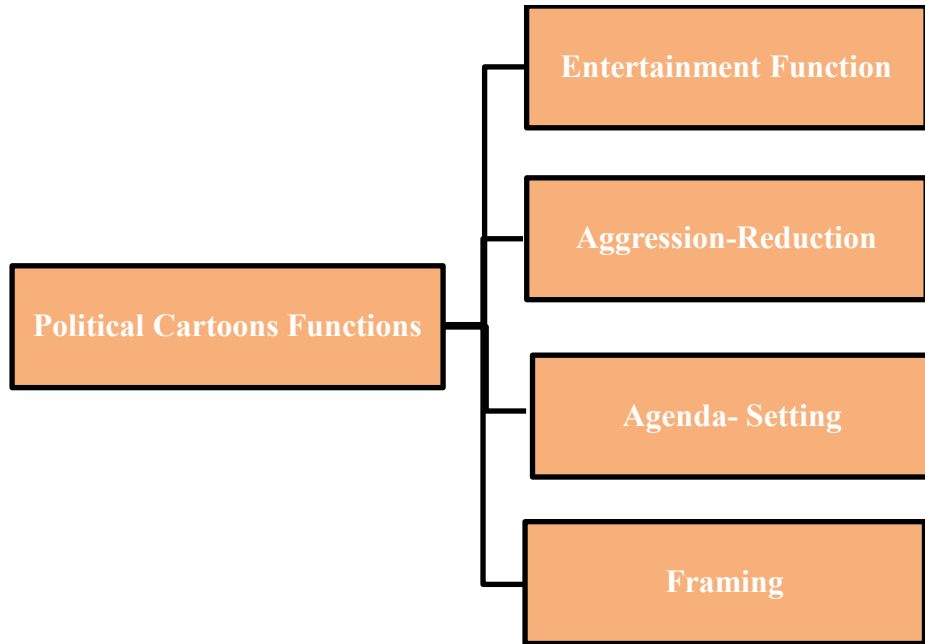


Diagram 2.7 DeSousa & Medhurst’s classification of political cartoons functions (1982)

According to DeSousa & Medhurst (1982), the first common function of using cartoons is *entertainment*, creating a comic and humorous spirit that makes the audience laugh at the shortcomings of the imaginary representation and/or the public figures (as in caricatures). Of course, the entertainment function of cartoons is not only regarded as comic in nature but also as ethical portraits and critiques of wrong acts, such as duplicity, infidelity, hypocrisy, vanity, etc. This function is basically achieved through the use of visual analogies and caricature to add humorous flavor to the issue the cartoonist constructs. Werner (2004) states that cartoons have three sources of visual analogy:

- (1) mundane situations and everyday objects that most newspaper readers have experienced,
- (2) contemporary popular culture –such as current movies, TV shows, national sports events, etc.– with which many readers have some acquaintance, or

(3) historical events and personages, and past literary and aesthetic texts, that fewer readers recognize.

In the second function, *aggression-reduction*, the ability of reducing or getting rid of any frustration and inconvenience in unpleasant situations or for disingenuous individuals is regarded as the outlet of all aggressive emotions and hostility (DeSousa & Medhurst, 1982:88). Cartoons, in this line, often tend to reflect violent events prevalent in real life, and accordingly they can be considered as a sanitizer of these violence consequences and catharsis. Mateus (2016:199) confirms the emotional unloading role of cartoons to “prevent the escalation of conflict”, if it exists.

DeSousa & Medhurst pinpoint the third function that cartoons have, *agenda-setting*. Simply through this function, political cartoons are communicatively seen as mirrors of the current issues; a political cartoon accordingly is “an important index to the major issues of the day” (1982:92). In this context, hence, the agenda-setting function calls attention to certain issues and/or individuals through providing “substantial relevance that may follow or influence the public agenda” (Mateus, 2016:199).

Finally, the *framing* function of political cartoons is somehow connected to the third function in that it puts events “within a field of meaning” (DeSousa & Medhurst 1982). In other words, framing in political cartoons refers to the cognitive structures that present an intricate issue, event or even an individual in a fine-grained manner to be more understandable. According to Greenberg (2002:182), “[c]artoons ‘frame’ phenomena by situating the ‘problem’ in question within the context of everyday life and, in this way, exploit ‘universal values’ as means of persuading readers to identify with an image and its intended message”.

Lakoff (2004), in his *Don't Think of an Elephant!*, defines the frame function of language as “mental structures” that have the ability to shape our thought and mind. Moreover, these structures not only enable us to understand our world easily, but rather they even affect our perception and responses. He adds that “all words are defined relative to conceptual frames. When you hear a word, its frame (or collection of frames) is activated in your brain” (Lakoff, 2004: xv).

2.2.2. The Visual Representative Elements of Metaphors in Cartoons

As already stated, political cartoons are considerably different from other types of discourse. They have an influential role in reshaping, changing, reinforcing the audience's views and states of mind. Additionally, this purpose is also aligned with the interpretation and explanation of these cartoons; this means the audience must have an adequate knowledge of the cultural, political, contextual and historical grounds of any political issue. Not only this, most political cartoons have the spirit of criticizing the topic or at least creating a negative stance against that topic. Metaphors in cartoons have a key role in conveying this spirit.

Over the last decades, many studies have devoted the bulk of their investigation to study the different types of metaphors, whether they are verbal or visual, in various forms of discourse and genres (e.g. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999; Phillips and McQuarrie, 2002; Van Mulken, 2003; Bowdle and Gentner, 2005; Van Mulken et al., 2005; Gibbs, 2006; Forceville, 2007, 2009, 2016a, 2016b; Cienki & Muller, 2008). In cartooning genre, visual metaphors have a growing exploitation in reshaping their audience's perception of reality and influencing their conceptualization of the political issues to a certain domain or frame. So, the frame of the cartoon has a function that is to consider the viewers as part of the dramatic world of the cartoon and to expose an imaginary world as opposed to the real world. Going along this line, many authors argue that visual metaphors in cartoons have an effectively remarkable significance (Messaris, 1994; Kress, 2000). El-Refaie (2009b:177) believes that "the visual mode differs from language in that it is simply not possible to represent abstract meaning visually without recourse to symbols, metonyms, or metaphors". Meyers-Levy & Malaviya (1999:56) and Jeong (2008:63) assure that visual metaphors have a fundamental role in understanding and recognizing the world we live in with various representative elements of depiction.

In determining and interpreting the visual (*pictorial*) metaphors in cartoons, the two domains of mapping and conceptualizing should be realized first to understand how they are presented in the image. Forceville (1996) and Phillips & McQuarrie (2004) distinguish the three main elements of visual representative or what are called Metaphor Linkage Elements. Phillips and McQuarrie (2004:120) divided these visual representative elements in metaphors into three types: juxtaposition, replacement, and fusion. Juxtaposition is defined as the comparison between two separate domains the reviewer is required to compare and connect these domains in the light of similarities and dissimilarities (Teng & Sun, 2002). So, this linkage element provides viewers with

the ability of solving what is called Cognitive Dissonance. Through this linkage element, a metaphor is designed carefully to help its receiver figure out the similarities and differences between the two domains. More than this, through the side-by-side images comparison, the metaphor users can imply their ideological stances and views and highlight certain aspects that have never been recognized before. For instance, Schilperoord et al. (2009:222), in their study, compare objects that are cognitively asymmetric, as in figure 2.1.



Figure 2.2 TELEVISION IS A DOG cited from Schilperoord et al. (2009:222)

In the cartoon in figure 2.2, the conceptual metaphor is SUMMER TV PROGRAMING IS A PET LEFT BEHIND. The visual representative element of metaphor in this cartoon is juxtaposition, where two unrelated objects are tied side-by side to the same tree. More significantly, the task of the viewer in this aspect is to figure out the relevant connection between these two objects and to make acceptable assumptions about them. To solve the cognitive dissonance in this figure, the viewers should have a contextual, cultural and historical knowledge about the topic as a whole. The connection between the two objects reveals that summer programing in the Netherlands looks like a forsaken pet, thereby both are metaphorically grouped as “deplorable and contemptuous human behavior” (Schilperoord et al., 2009:222).

The second visual representative element in metaphor is replacement. Jarvis (2009:17) claims that it is:

A linkage element that easy (*sic*) to recognize, yet hard to define. Replacement relates to the one element in a metaphor that does not seem like it belongs. In this case, it is the image in the advertisement that is unfamiliar, yet with the correct interpretation of that particular image, it is supposed to portray the meaning of that entire metaphor.

On this basis, replacement essentially represents one domain in a metaphor that does not really belong to it. In this line, unfamiliarity plays a pivotal role in having metaphorized one domain visually portraying its meaning on the basis of another domain. So, through the replacement element the source domain is almost absent and substituted visually with the target domain, as in figure 2.3.



Figure 2.3. FOOTBALL IS THE SUN, cited from Schilperoord et al. (2009:222)

The conceptual metaphor of this cartoon is ‘FOOTBALL IS THE SUN’, the sun is metaphorically replaced by a football, which suggests a positive attitude that football is as significant in our world as the sun. In the replacement representation of metaphor, the image or the idea can easily be realized and interpreted without its real counterpart. Thus, the source domain with this kind of metaphorical mapping is visually absent to be replaced by the target domain.

The last linkage element of visualizing metaphor is fusion. In this interaction, the two domains are integrated and fused into one image. They are visually blended producing one hybrid pictorial

image that illustrates the desired metaphor. Jarvis (2009:17) points out that when the two images are merged in one setting “the viewer needs to make meaning between those two items [...] to figure out why an advertiser would put two items, objects, or images together, that more or less have nothing in common”. In figure 2.3, Silaški and Đurovic (2019:6) conceptualize the European Union verbally decoded and symbolized by the euro sign € as a huge iceberg verbally decoded by the cartoonist. Also Britain has been portrayed as a ship that is about to sink because of the terrible collision with the iceberg (EU). In this cartoon, the fusion element is purposefully achieved through the emerging and blending of the visual images of ‘ship and iceberg’, and the verbal captions on these images.

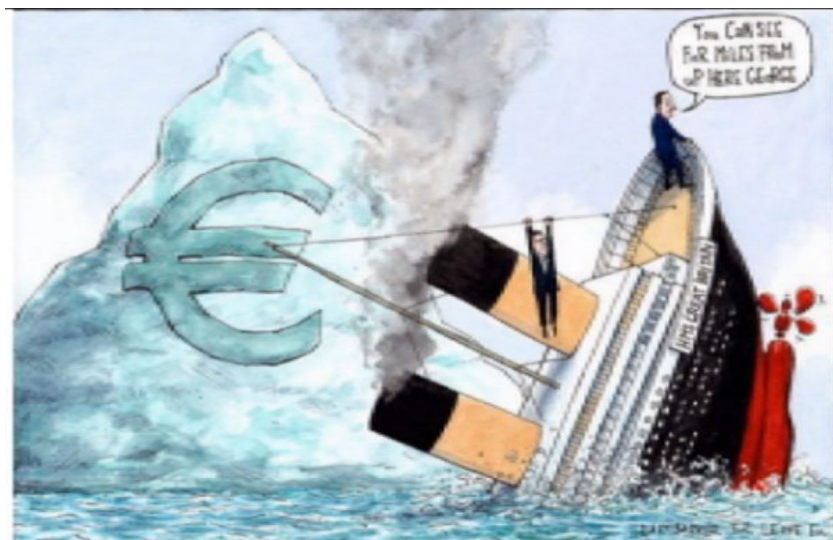


Figure 2.4 Silaški and Đurovic (2019). The JOURNEY metaphor in Brexit-related political cartoons <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2019.100318>

It has been perceived that this type of linkage elements in visualizing metaphors is deliberately preferred in depicting political issues, particularly in cartooning discourse. Political cartoonists and comic strip creators tend to blend some certain features of any famous event or person onto yet another object or being, and to highlight these remarkable features at the expense of unimportant ones.

2.3. COVID-19, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSES AND ILLNESS METAPHORIZATION

This section is essentially devoted to shedding light on an unprecedented global pandemic that has swept the world from the far north to the far south leaving behind more than 760,360,956 confirmed cases and 6,873,477 million deaths.⁹ Coronavirus, or as labeled by the World Health Organization (WHO) COVID-19, basically causes a severe acute respiratory syndrome. So, it has been worthy of attention to investigate, as shown below in section 2.3.1, the historical frame of the pandemic in the UK since its emergence and spread from the beginning of February 2020 to the beginning of February 2021 (the temporal scope of this study). As such, the focus also is devoted to outline the UK Government's responses and measures to cope with the crisis emergency. The PM's official statements (Boris Johnson's daily conferences and press announcements on the pandemic outbreak) have been delineated to understand the British government's responses to the virus spread. In section 2.3.2, an academic examination of the theoretical literature pertaining to the metaphorical conceptualization of illness is elaborately presented. This includes an in-depth examination of metaphorical representations and focused themes of COVID-19 across different discourse types, showing how scholars and researchers have scrutinized and rendered this pandemic within diverse domains of knowledge.

2.3.1. Timeline of UK-COVID-19 Measures: February 2020 to February 2021

Since the outbreak of the virus in December 2019 from China-Wuhan, most countries all over the world were not in well-established preparation to cope with this new enemy. The UK, like other countries, did not realize the gravity of the virus, which in turn cast its shadow over the enormous number of losses. The Official Government Website (Gov.UK coronavirus in the UK) reported that the virus up to 13 January 2022 had caused about 14,967,817 confirmed cases and 151,342 deaths¹⁰.

⁹ According to the World Health Organization's reports on 16 March, 2023 as shown in: <https://covid19.who.int/>

¹⁰ The official UK government website for data and insights on coronavirus (COVID-19), [UK Summary | Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK \(data.gov.uk\)](https://www.data.gov.uk/), retrieved on 13 January 2022.

To trace back to the exact historical timeline of the virus in the UK, the first two COVID-19 positive cases there were reported on 29th of January 2020 (Aspinall, 2020). At first sight, the UK government seemingly did not implement any further drastic or strict restrictions to slow the sharp viral increase, which in turn led to a huge amount of losses later. Contact tracing was the only process that the government began in late January to February, to identify persons who might have been in contact with other infected ones, to stop virus transmission among people.

On the 12th of March 2020, the first COVID-19 preventive approach, Herd Immunity¹¹, was officially adopted by the UK government to control the virus spread, but not to track and trace the contacts, as other countries were doing. This strategy was predominantly based on the idea of general infection across the populace through broadening the peak of the virus spread, “to protect ourselves from this in the future”, as Sir Patrick Vallance, the Chief Scientific Advisor of the UK government claimed. The main pretext of imposing this strategy, as the UK government alleged then, was to preserve the country’s economy from any possible risky ramifications (Johnson, 12 March, 2020). Despite the fact that the herd immunity strategy was set out to slow down the disease spread and to save lives, regrettably it helped increase the amount of fatalities and infected cases and, as the PM announced in his press conference, “Families are going to lose loved ones before their time” (Johnson, 12 March 2020). Johnson’s statement in fact ignited the spark of widespread criticism against the government’s complacency and inefficiency in tackling the virus. After that statement, however, Johnson announced in a later press conference on 19 March 2020 that people with the government could beat the virus and swing its gear. As he said, “the UK will turn the tide of the disease and beat it together” (Johnson, 19 March, 2020); the language used in this statement shows that Johnson attempted to achieve two targets: to arouse feelings of togetherness and to warn the population at the time of the imminent danger of the pandemic.

But in the interim, Johnson announced on 23 March 2020 the first national lockdown in the UK escalating his government’s response to the virus in the light of gigantic protest rally and popular criticism against the belated lockdown. He warned the British population about the virus using a metaphorical concept that ‘THE VIRUS IS A KILLER’, as “we are seeing the devastating impact of this invisible killer” (Johnson, 23 March, 2020). Moreover, he asked the public to stay

¹¹ For more information on the strategy of Herd immunity, this website is highly recommended: <https://www.politico.eu/article/herd-immunity-was-never-uk-coronavirus-strategy-chief-scientific-adviser-says/>

at home and to protect their National Health Service (NHS) and their household's lives. So on 26 March, national lockdown legally comes into force to fight back the virus and to halt its spread across the country. Notwithstanding the fact that the UK imposed some stringent measures and national lockdown, the government was accused of lacking efficiency and being very late in responding to the pandemic. After extending the national lockdown for three weeks, five tests were imposed before easing the restrictions. And by the end of April, Johnson declared that "we are past the peak and we are on the downward slope" of the pandemic (Johnson, 30 April, 2020).

From the 10th of May 2020, the focus of the government shifted to fight the decline in economy, business, and other activities through lifting incrementally the national lockdown. Hence, Johnson announced what is referred as a CONDITIONAL PLAN: "to chart our progress and to avoid going back to square one, we are establishing a new COVID Alert System" (Johnson, 10 May, 2020). The Alert System Johnson announced would basically rely upon R^{12} and the number of confirmed cases. Beech (2020) explains the effectiveness of the 'R' number in rating the virus spread as follows:

Here's how that works. Say a disease has an R of 1.5. This may seem like a manageable figure, but a glance at the figures quickly proves that isn't the case. An R of 1.5 would see 100 people infect 150, who would in turn infect 225, who would infect 338. In three rounds of infection, the number of people with the virus would have more than quadrupled to 438. As worldwide cases now exceed 3.5 million, this helps explain why the novel coronavirus was able to rip so quickly among a global population with no previous immunity.

At the start of June, particularly on 1st-15th, the government set out the three-phased plan to ease the national lockdown with reopening schools, academic premises, non-essential shops in England, and to announce later, on the 23rd of June, by its PM that "National Hibernation" would come to its end. Relaxing many complex restrictions would "make life easier for people [...], and

¹² This is a factor that gauges the capacity of the virus to spread; it refers to 'Effective Reproduction Number', which means the average number of people that one infected case will pass the infection on to other ones.
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/covid-19-what-is-the-r-number/>

to help businesses get back on their feet and people back into jobs” (Johnson, 23 June, 2020). It is worth noting here that in July and August 2020 many restrictions were further eased, such as reopening theatres, cinemas, pubs and restaurants. In accordance with this tendency, the British government set out the offer-scheme “EAT OUT TO HELP OUT”¹³, to boost businesses which were suffering badly during the crisis.

On 8th of September 2020, the UK’s Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces a new change in the government’s current guidance “Rule of Six”¹⁴, to avoid the virus’s second peak. He said that “the changes we will bring in, which will come into force on Monday, at the social settings you can gather in groups of no more than six”. Accordingly, social gatherings would be banned and forced with fines if they were of more than six attendants (BBC News, 2020; 00:01-01:39)¹⁵. Moreover, on the 9th of September, the PM set out a rapid mass programme to rump up the UK’s testing capacity for COVID-19, called “Operation Moonshot”¹⁶. Although this mass test was endorsed by the government, particularly by Dominic Cummings –the PM’s Chief Adviser on the COVID 19, so it was to be referred to as the Dominic Cummings Scheme–, many reports regarded it to be so costly that the government would have to spend more than £100 billion. It was said at the time that the huge cost of the programme would be partially shared by some private companies and private consultants.

At the start of October, and with the ongoing rise of infections, a new three tiered system started in England to be synchronized with Johnson’s 30 September statement that “we faced the sad reality that on these figures we could expect many more daily deaths” (Johnson, 30 September, 2020). The system, as explained in table 2.3 below, simplifies the local rules and measures set at the medium, high and very high levels.

¹³ This is called the EOHO Scheme, it is one of the government’s measures and policies to support the economy, with businesses reopening after the COVID-19 lockdown. It basically refers to 50% discount on meals to be applied from Monday to Wednesday from 3rd-31st August 2020 in England. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8978/>

¹⁴ It refers to a COVID-19-related regulation of restrictions that aims at limiting social gatherings to six people. The rule was imposed as a measure to curb the spread of the virus. However, the restrictions of such regulations can change based on the evolving situation and government decisions. For more information, the following website is helpful: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/11/the-rule-of-six-what-are-the-new-uk-coronavirus-rules>

¹⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-54081131>

¹⁶ Mass Population Testing Plan, it was a mass testing plan that projected to deliver up to 10 million tests per day. [Operation Moonshot - Wikipedia](#)

The coronavirus three-tier system explained

	Tier 1: Medium	Tier 2: High	Tier 3: Very high
Social contact	"Rule of six" restrictions	No indoor socialising outside your household or support bubble. "Rule of six" applies outdoors	No meeting other households indoors or in gardens or hospitality. "Rule of six" in public, open spaces
Duration	Regulations expire after six months, with 28-day review	Area review every 14 days	Area restrictions expire after 28 days, measures expire after six months
Hospitality	Open with restrictions such as 10pm curfew and table service only	As Medium	Pubs and bars shut. Restaurant patrons can only order alcohol with a "substantial meal"
Travel restrictions	No restrictions	May continue to travel to open venues in the area but should minimise the number of journeys	As High, plus people should not move in and out of areas, with the exception of work and school
Schools and colleges	Open	Open	Open

Table 2.3 The three-tiered system levels in the UK¹⁷

In a subsequent development on October 16, 2020, Johnson expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the local authorities and mayors across the UK. He acknowledged their collaborative efforts in transitioning their respective areas, including “London, Yorkshire, Slough, Coventry, Warrington, Luton, Oxford, and many other parts,” into the VERY HIGH LEVEL of COVID-19 alert. He extended thanks for their constructive cooperation, stating that “they worked constructively” with the government (Johnson, October 16, 2020). The move announced by the government from “High” to “Very High” in some parts of the UK comes as a result of the steep increase in the infection rates across the country’s areas. And with this, the most critical situation was that of the Greater Manchester area, where Andy Burnham, the Mayor, could not reach an agreement with Johnson’s government concerning the imposition of tier 3 on his area.¹⁸ Johnson commented on the Mayor’s reluctance: “I cannot stress enough –time is of the essence. Each day that passes before action is taken means more people will go to hospital, more people will end up in intensive care, and tragically more people will die [...] I urge the Mayor to reconsider and engage constructively” (Johnson, 16 October, 2020).

¹⁷ [COVID-19 England: Three Tiered System - The British Beauty Council](#)

¹⁸ <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/manchester-tier-3-row-johnson-lockdown-cheap-burnham-a4572282.html>

In November 2020, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland entered their second lockdown, the UK was in “Full Lockdown”¹⁹. In the meantime, a modified tiered system was publically reintroduced after the announcement of the Government’s COVID-19 Winter Plan²⁰ in the House of Commons. Johnson declared in his public statement to the parliament that “While the previous local tiers cut the R number, they were not quite enough to reduce it below 1, so the scientific advice, I am afraid, is that, as we come out, our tiers need to be made tougher” (Johnson, 23 November, 2020). During that statement, Johnson pointed out that there would be some easing measures during the Christmas period, stating that “we are working with the Devolved Administrations on a special, time-limited Christmas dispensation” (Johnson, 23 November, 2020), later releasing a press issue by the Government’s Cabinet and the Devolved Administrations on joint arrangements for easing some of COVID-19 restrictions over this Christmas time. The Christmas plan was set out to facilitate the socially implemented rules from 23 to 27 December and to allow up to three households to form a ‘Christmas Bubble’²¹. According to this five-day break from 23 to 27 December, Johnson wished the population would have a “Merry Little Christmas” –a statement that re-ignited the spark of criticism against the government’s incautious decisions–.

In December 2020, particularly on the 19th, Johnson announced much tougher restrictions for London, the South East and the East of London, as the virus was spreading steeply there. He declared that “[i]t appears this spread is now being driven by the new variant of the virus” (Johnson, 19 December, 2020). As a result, these areas were moved up from Tier Three into Tier Four²², alongside other areas (Johnson, 19 December, 2020).

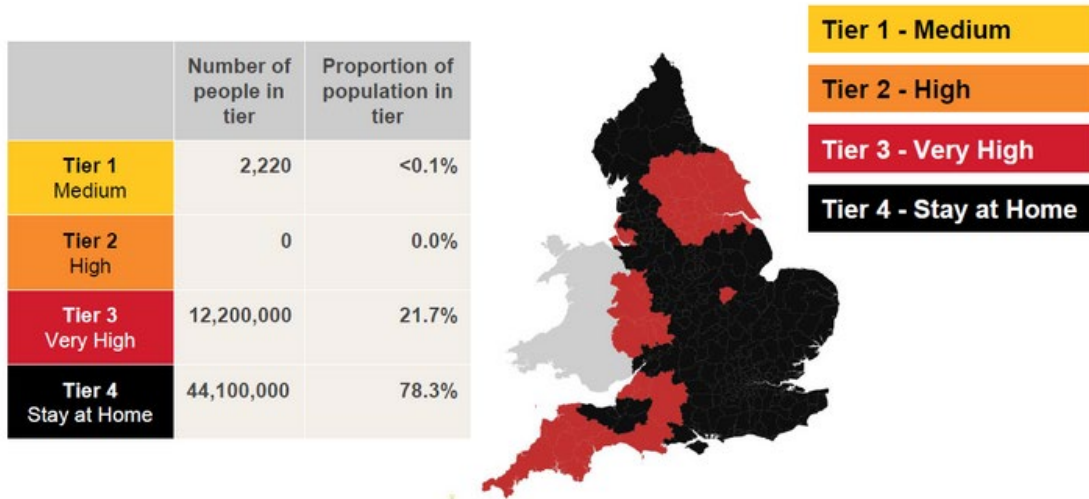
¹⁹ It was a new national lockdown which came into force on the 5th of November 2020, so the old three-tiered system was set aside.

²⁰ The plan included the reintroduction of a new modified three-tiered system launching from the 2nd of December 2020 alongside more effective ways to manage the spread of the virus during Christmas time and to route back to normal life. The COVID-19 Winter Plan Summary can be found in the following official link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-winter-plan/covid-19-winter-plan-summary>

²¹ [Joint statement on UK-wide Christmas arrangements from the UK Government and Devolved Administrations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statements/2020/11/24/joint-statement-on-uk-wide-christmas-arrangements). A statement delivered by the Cabinet Office on 24 November, 2020.

²² A new tiered level, the “Stay at Home” alert, came initially into force in London and the South East of England, and many other areas entered it thereafter.

Local restriction tiers in England, from Thursday 31 December



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/full-list-of-local-restriction-tiers-by-area> and Office for National Statistics mid-2019 population estimates
 Further details on data sources can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/slides-and-datasets-to-accompany-coronavirus-press-conferences>



Figure 2.5 Local restriction tiered system in England, 31 December, 2020²³

According to this announcement, Tier four restrictions were regarded as more stringent than ever, and three quarters of England moved into this tier to control the spread of the virus. The restrictions are listed in the detailed figure 2.6.

²³ [COVID-19: Three quarters of England will be in Tier 4 from tomorrow as rules extended \(yahoo.com\)](https://www.yahoo.com/news/covid-19-three-quarters-england-will-be-tier-4-tomorrow-rules-extended-123456789.html)

HM Government | NHS

CORONAVIRUS TIER 4

STAY AT HOME

gov.uk/coronavirus

If you live in a Tier 4 area, you cannot join or form a Christmas bubble. You must not leave or be outside of your home except for specific purposes.

MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY No household mixing, aside from support bubbles and two people meeting in public outdoor spaces.	BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS Hospitality closed, aside from sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.	RETAIL Essential shops can open. Non-essential retail must close and can only open for click-and-collect and delivery.	WORK AND BUSINESS Everyone must work from home unless they are unable to do so.
EDUCATION Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open during term time. Registered childcare, other supervised activities for childcare purposes, and childcare bubbles permitted.	INDOOR LEISURE Closed.	ACCOMMODATION Closed (with limited exceptions)	PERSONAL CARE Closed.
OVERNIGHT STAYS You must not stay overnight away from home. Limited exceptions apply.	WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS Funerals of up to 30 people permitted. Wakes and other linked ceremonial events can continue in a group of up to six. Weddings of up to six can continue in exceptional circumstances.	ENTERTAINMENT Indoor entertainment closed. Some outdoor attractions may remain open.	PLACES OF WORSHIP Open for private prayer and communal worship, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.
TRAVELLING You must stay at home and only travel for work, education or other legally permitted reasons. If you must travel, you should stay local, and reduce the number of journeys you make. You must not leave a Tier 4 area or stay overnight away from home. Residents in Tiers 1 - 3 should not enter Tier 4 areas. Do not travel abroad if you live in a Tier 4 area unless an exemption applies.	EXERCISE You can leave your home to exercise by yourself, with your household or support bubble, or with one person from another household. Outdoor sport allowed but gatherings limit applies except for youth and disabled sport.	RESIDENTIAL CARE You can visit relatives in care homes with COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits.	CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE The Clinically Extremely Vulnerable are advised to stay at home as much as possible, except to go outdoors for exercise or to attend health appointments.

For support and more information visit: gov.uk/coronavirus

HANDS FACE SPACE

Figure 2.6 Tier four restrictions in the UK²⁴

With the beginning of 2021, Boris Johnson declared on the 4th of January that his country must go into tougher new national lockdown to curb the new variant of the virus, saying that “Today the United Kingdom’s Chief Medical Officers have advised that the country should move to alert level 5” (Johnson, 4 January, 2021). Though the vaccinated people in the UK were at the time many more than in other European countries, Johnson announced a national lockdown and instructed his fellow citizens to stay at home and save lives²⁵. He closed his national lockdown announcement pointing out to the vaccination roll out in England saying “the UK has vaccinated more people than the rest of Europe combined and we will continue to accelerate our vaccination programme at pace” (Johnson, 4 January, 2021).

²⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>

²⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-announces-national-lockdown>

2.3.2. Illness and Virus Metaphorical Representations in Discourse: Theoretical Overview

Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick (Sontag, 1979:3)

In light of the emergence of diseases and addictions such as the Plague, Cholera, Spanish influenza, drugs, AIDS, etc., scholarly endeavours have shifted towards elucidating and facilitating nuanced aspects of these maladies. This includes their inherent risks, symptomatic manifestations, causative factors, and resultant impacts. Researchers employ various linguistic devices and techniques such as metaphor, simile and analogy to enhance the precision and efficacy of their discourse on these health phenomena.

Unquestionably, any study or contribution on the field of metaphors and illness should be traced back to the sociologist Susan Sontag's classic treatises "Illness as Metaphor" (1979/1991) and "IDS and its Metaphors" (1989/1991), her works remain a foundational resource, emphasizing the enduring relevance of understanding and modifying the symbolic dimensions and the metaphorical influence on illness discourse. Demjén & Semino (2017) and Tay (2017) further explain that the term 'illness' encompasses both physical and mental diseases that can create a sense of sensitivity and worry.

Accordingly, this experience can be metaphorically perceived, which means that certain aspects of the illness may be emphasized at the expense of others. Concerning Sontag's seminal essay "Illness as Metaphor", she touched upon the notion of punitive measures that metaphors around illness and various diseases create. She teased out that some diseases such as cancer and tuberculosis are associated with humans' psychological repression. She criticized the excessive use of military language in representing diseases, particularly cancer, enforcing the necessity of eliminating the hyperbolic utilization of such metaphorical representations that encode illness as 'invader', 'foe', 'attacker', and 'aggressor'. Not only this, she regarded the scheme of showing patients as victims of a culprit 'DISEASE', or as being shunned by others, which is a crucial problem that should be solved through the literal use of language instead. Sontag argued that using

military and war language in this describing metaphor is regarded as “incitement to violence” through enforcing “fatalism and justifies ‘severe’ measures” (1991:84).

She adds also in this respect that the use of metaphor in cancer description is no more valuable, as it would be “obsolete”, and people with cancer “are also hardly helped by hearing their diseases name constantly being dropped as the epitome of evil” (85-88). Incompatible with this view, some other researchers and scholars consider that humans are at war since the emergence of COVID-19; they regard the virus as a foe and governments are fighting it (Chapman & Miller, 2020; Musolff, 2020). Similarly, Hillmer (2007:23) justifies the use of militaristic and combative language in illness discourse claiming that “since an illness includes innumerable chemical processes inside the body which cannot directly be seen, we use the source domain of war to make those processes easier to understand”.

In their seminal works, Lakoff & Johnson (1980) and Lakoff et al. (1991) have predominantly framed the conceptualization of illness through the WAR metaphors, highlighting the adversarial nature of the encounter and strategies for resistance. Regrettably, the aspects pertaining to adapting or acclimatizing to illness have not received commensurate attention. Their theoretical frameworks incorporate entailments such as ENEMY, FOE, ATTACK, DEFENSE, KILLER, VICTIM, among others, to elucidate the metaphorical constructs shaping the discourse on illness. Since the end of the 20th century, many studies have allotted their scope to investigate the role of metaphor in conceptualizing and personifying illness and physical disease with a reference to War image (Gibbs & Franks, 2002; Reisfield and Wilson, 2004; Chiang & Duann, 2007; Koteyko et al. 2008; Appleton & Flynn, 2014).

2.3.3. Recent Studies on COVID-19 and Metaphor

As indicated earlier, COVID-19 has been characterized as a global pandemic, merely after a few months of its emergence on December 31st, 2019 in Wuhan in China, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (2020), characterized COVID-19 as an international pandemic. Seriously and unprecedentedly, this contagious virus has wrapped the world with immense changes and global lockdown to cause more than 100 million infected cases and more than two million deaths. People’s lifestyle, of course, has undergone huge

and severe shifts. Subsequently, most of the political addresses and speeches presented by politicians invoke wartime language, as in the COVID-19 press conference delivered by Boris Johnson²⁶ on March 17th 2020. He stated that “We must act like any wartime government and do whatever it takes to support our economy [...]; this enemy can be deadly, but it is also beatable – and we know how to beat it”. Along the same line with this use of wartime language, the President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron announced repeatedly in his solemn address that “We are at war [...] with an invisible, elusive enemy”²⁷.

In her 2022 thesis, Maria conducted a comparative analysis of metaphors frequently employed by American, UK, Canadian, and Australian politicians during the crisis, focusing on JOURNEY, WAR, and NATURAL FORCES. Her study explores how these metaphorical images serve functional purposes in conveying hidden messages in the politicians’ statements. Thus, while warlike metaphors are strategically utilized to underscore the severe challenges of the virus, researchers like Tamkin (2020) and Sanderson & Meade (2020) argue against that exaggerated and irresponsible use, echoing concerns previously raised by Gibbs (2017) in the ‘War Metaphor’ discourse.

Yet with the panic spread by this deadly virus, many studies and researches have been carried out to investigate all its aspects and effects. Moreover, the English lexicon also has witnessed an awful quantitative and qualitative expansion in its vocabulary. More than 500 items have been added to English vocabulary since the emergence of the pandemic (Ma. et al., 2020, where the COVID-19 related vocabulary items are compared in English and in other languages, namely Chinese). Their paper underscores the importance of the bilingual COVID-19 terminology system, “COVID Term”, for disseminating information, enabling data reuse, and advancing intelligent techniques. Thus, they express a commitment to ongoing refinement and expansion of the system to enhance its utility in the context of the evolving pandemic. It is relevant to show that such

²⁶ Rawlinson, “‘This enemy can be deadly’: Boris Johnson invokes wartime language”. *The Guardian* 2020 March 17 [Cited 2021 February 12]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/17/enemy-deadly-boris-johnson-invokes-wartime-language-coronavirus>

²⁷ Pietralunga & Lemarié, “«Nous sommes en guerre»: face au coronavirus, Emmanuel Macron sonne la «mobilisation générale»”. *Le Monde* 2020 March 17 [Cited 2020 October 6]. Available from: https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2020/03/17/nous-sommes-en-guerre-face-au-coronavirus-emmanuel-macron-sonne-la-mobilisation-generale_6033338_823448.html

neologisms are set into action to fill the gaps in the lexical system and to attain the needs of communicating in this time and to achieve the target of simplification (Haddad & Monterero-Martinez, 2020).

Delving further into other studies exploring the same or at least similar metaphorical representations of various diseases, Taylor & Kidgell (2021), for instance, present a comprehensive analysis of flu-like pandemic metaphors across different time periods, revealing that the ENEMY/WAR and CONTAINER metaphors persist, though there are shifts in emphasis concerning the source domains and scenarios. Though the overuse of WAR metaphors in the study of diseases discourse is not commonly desirable, or may be controversial, many researchers and scholars tend to still utilize this metaphor (Castro Seixas, 2021; Imani, 2021; Kazemian & Hatamzadeh, 2022; Polonskaya, 2023, among others). However, over time, there are noticeable changes in the framing, with increased emphasis on the societal impacts and responses to diseases as with influenza in later periods, accompanied by a decreased attribution of agency to the virus.

Concerning the conceptualization of COVID-19 in various studies, many studies have been set out for conducting the manipulation of metaphors in this discourse. Abdulrahman (2020), for instance, scrutinized a set of metaphorical themes of COVID-19 in both English and Kurdish newspaper articles. He claimed that this pandemic has been understood in accordance with numerous perspectives, each of these based on the cultural diversity between these two communities. For instance, in the newspaper articles written in both languages, COVID-19 is conceptualized as a PERSON, JOURNEY, WILD ANIMAL, FIRE and WAR, etc., in which the universality of the CMT has been reinforced in the discourses of both languages. Semino, in her article (2021a) “‘Not Soldiers but Fire-Fighters’ – Metaphors and COVID-19”, suggested that the virus spread could be more conceptualized with the FIRE metaphor than other themes. She asserts that the Covid-19-FIRE conceptualization is the most suitable but not the only one, and not even the most versatile one in framing the virus. She in this article attempts to set out that FIRE metaphors are the most influential scenario that inevitably succeeds in manifesting the virus’s lethal danger and its swift spread, as in the following conceptual metaphors:

- PEOPLE ARE TREES AND FUEL
- COVID-19 IS FIRE (Semino, 2021a, 2021b).

These metaphorical expressions show that COVID-19 is spreading like wildfire, as in:

- PEOPLE ARE COUGHING INVISIBLE SPARKS OF FIRE (COVID-19)
- PEOPLE GET SICK ARE CAUGHT BY THEIR INVISIBLE EMBERS OF FIRE (Tufecki et. al, 2020).

Wilson (2020) also adds in this respect that if COVID-19 is regarded as a forest fire, all people are trees. He hypothesized that the more social contact, the faster the fire will be in tearing through the forest. We are the firewood of this fire. More interestingly, Wilson in his article asserted the inevitable importance of the preventive measures (quarantine and social distancing), comparing them to fire lines. He says that “[a] few fire lines –quarantines and social distancing measures– keep the fire from hitting all the trees”. Furthermore, Wang (2021) conducted in his study that political cartoons have been depicted with various modes of representations during the crisis of COVID-19. He argues that in COVID-19 related cartoons, the non-English speaking cartoonists (Chinese) have an interest and orientation in making use of pictorial metaphors to conceptualize the virus, whereas the English speaking cartoonists prefer to use more than one mode of metaphorical representations to convey their political views.

Kozlova (2021), on the other hand, takes another route through examining the cognitive metaphors of the virus in business news and how this pandemic has been represented metaphorically in the business and economic sphere. And like many other studies, Kozlova’s study reveals that military metaphors are utilized to depict the virus as a common foe and the world as a war zone. The pervasiveness of this kind of metaphorization is basically traced back to the nature of the concept ‘DISASTER IS WAR’. And this is also asserted by many, as mentioned earlier, to fulfill certain lexical gaps in the communication process and to add realistic understanding of the pandemic aspects. For instance, Wicke & Bolognesi (2020) claimed that in this pandemic, COVID-19 discourse was widely based upon making excessive use of war metaphors along with monstrosity and family metaphors to assist the communication process concerning the pandemic aspects.

In political discourse, Gillis (2020) draws attention to how politicians, officials and the law-makers make use of war metaphors and military language aspects to justify their legislative measures to respond to the crisis. She (2020:159) suggests that

While metaphors of war and battle are effective and possibly even necessary to quickly mobilize a widespread social response to the virus, their use in this way should be viewed with some caution. The metaphors function in a way that makes it difficult to question governments' responses to the crisis and the extreme restrictions on rights and liberties which those responses effect.

In the same regard, Rinaldo (2020) scrutinizes the metaphorical language utilized by the UK PM Boris Johnson in his talks with the nation concerning the global outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis. She investigated the political strategies adapted to cope with the spread of the pandemic since the first wave in March to the second one in September 2020, and how Johnson consistently conveyed his messages through metaphors. Rinaldo (2020:57) says the following:

The WAR metaphorical setting appeared to dominate in all the analyzed statements, being regularly reinforced by metaphors based on the POLITICS IS WAR, CORONAVIRUS IS AN ENEMY/KILLER and PEOPLE/NHS/NURSES and DOCTORS/GOVERNMENT ARE SOLDIERS metaphorical concepts.

Regarding the types of metaphor examined in the corpus, it has been revealed that the most dominant type of metaphors in this study is the structural metaphor. Moreover, the study relies upon unearthing the contextual functions that the PM employed with these metaphors in his speech.

Charteris-Black, in his 2021 book *Metaphors of Coronavirus: Invisible Enemy or Zombie Apocalypse?* addresses how metaphorical conceptualizations have been employed in politicians' discourses. The book is essentially based upon Haidt's (2012) Moral Foundations Theory, exploring the metaphorical framings in the British press, investigating the moral bases for decision-making during the pandemic. The book chapters address prevalent metaphors, such as the WAR frame, FIRE and FORCE OF NATURE, and delving into their effectiveness and impact on public behavior. The work also investigates science fiction metaphors, metaphor-based scientific expressions, disease-related confinement, containment metaphors, metonymy, and the use of metaphor in misinformation and pro-versus anti-vaccine discourses. Charteris-Black (2021) simply emphasizes the role of metaphorical language in leaders regaining trust during the

pandemic crisis, taking examples from some politicians' and officials' announcements, such as Boris Johnson, Donald Trump and many others.

In the same regard, Neshkovska and Trajkova (2020) also examined how political leaders as Emmanuel Macron, Angela Merkel, Boris Johnson and Donald Trump made use of metaphorical conceptualizations in their speeches during the first peak of the virus spread, in March, April and May. Their findings reveal that they all used war metaphors as a predominant theme to show the gravity of the disease. Moreover, not only in their politicians' speeches did this metaphor play an influential role, but even in media, as examined by Prokhorova et al. (2022), exploring the impact of COVID-19 on language, specifically the prevalence of war and military metaphors. This highlights the politicization of the virus, its effect on public perception, and the need for empathetic narratives that prioritize individuals during crises, whereas DeVore et al. (2021) addressed how media frame the moral panic and its linkage to the virus, comparing this metaphorical framing in China, South Korea, and the U.S.

In alignment with what has been discussed earlier, Rajandran (2020) investigates the metaphorical choices preferred in other cultures, revealing how war metaphors were used by politicians from non-Western communities, namely the PMs of Malaysia and Singapore to frame COVID-19. The study contends the need for further research on metaphors in political discourse, including different metaphors and mediums. It highlights the importance of implementing suitable conceptualizations of diseases and mentions alternative metaphors related to JOURNEY, ART, and SPORT. Against the War-metaphorization perspectives, Rohela et al. (2020) critique the widespread use of this metaphorical representation in discussing the pandemic, asserting that it harms social cohesion, healthcare, and the physician-patient relationship. Many issues raised include patient stigmatization, neglect of non-COVID-19 care, and strained alliances. The authors propose alternative metaphors, like sports and ecology, advocating for a language shift in public health communication to mitigate adverse effects and better navigate the pandemic's complexities.

On another side of the metaphorical representations of the pandemic, the JOURNEY and MOVEMENT metaphors have also been used frequently by the politicians alongside many other themes, to show that the pandemic is “[a] difficult travel across a precarious terrain” (Neshkovska & Trajkova, 2020:162). Their study, among many others (Craig, 2020; Andersson, 2022; Rommel, 2022; Magaña et al., 2023), contends that metaphors of journey and movement towards unpleasant

ends or downward destinations occupy a high level of focus in rendering the crisis, particularly the conceptualization of the second wave of the virus and its rapid prevalence. The journey scenario is commonly structured by the schema Source-Path-Goal, as shown in Neshkovska & Trajkova (2020), which is purposefully favoured by politicians (Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, Angela Merkel, and Emanuel Macron). They tend to use this scenario at the specific stage of the virus' contagion spanning from March to May to conform to the strategies and policies they attempt to impose upon their people. This simply means that at the beginning of the crisis, the politicians' accent in their fight against the virus was directed towards the restrictions they imposed upon their population (March Speeches), then, the spot was placed on the strategies of easing the bad effects of the virus (April Speeches), etc.

CHAPTER III: DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION: THE STUDY CORPUS (CORPUS SELECTION AND SELECTION OF THE STUDY CRITERIA)

As has been noticed, the foregoing chapter has presented an overview of the theoretical background of metaphor, political cartoons and the utilization of metaphorical images in illness narratives, so this chapter will deal with the methodological part of the study, i.e., the study corpus at hand and the methods adopted. The chapter has been divided into five sections, each section covers a phase of the methodology the researcher followed; the first section starts with the comprehensive presentation and selection of the data under study (the benchmarks of selecting the corpus in question and the newspapers specified). As such, the main consideration of the study has been shifted to the process of identifying multimodal metaphors utilized in the corpus and the methods implemented and the semiotic elements employed to achieve the persuasive purposes. Next, a critical analysis of the ideologies and political powers hidden behind certain metaphorical conceptualizations and images has been addressed to evaluate the cartoonists' covert intentions and the newspaper's editorial stance.

The corpus of the study compiles a set of ninety-eight cartoons gathered from three prestigious English newspapers, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Independent*. The cartoons under research are those that embody the metaphorical configuration of the British PM, Boris Johnson, and his COVID-19 responses (lockdowns, precautionary measures, governmental policies and daily announcement) against the new foe COVID-19 and the consequences of his plans then. These cartoons were selected to show how Boris Johnson's COVID-19-related visual representations were employed in these forms of expression, covering event timeframe (February 2020 - February 2021), and they were retrieved from different sources: the official websites of the three newspapers, the cartoonists' official websites or their twitter accounts, the British Cartoon Archive (BCA)²⁸, and the political cartoon gallery²⁹. Two subtypes of selection were needed to achieve the objectives of the study and to determine the corpus in accordance with certain conditions: the

²⁸ <https://archive.cartoons.ac.uk/>

²⁹ <https://www.original-political-cartoon.com/cartoon-gallery/uk-cartoons/>

general criteria, presented in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 below, and the specific criteria, which will be found in section 3.1.3.

3.1.1. General Criteria (Newspapers Selection)

This study, as already stated, aims at analyzing the political cartoons that metaphorically depict Boris Johnson during the COVID-19 crisis in the UK from February 2020 to February 2021. Though an accountable number of newspapers was available to select the study corpus from, yet the researcher had determined that the essential criteria followed to achieve the study objectives are the ones presented in this section.

3.1.1.1. The Political Spectrum and Ideological Orientation of the UK Newspapers

The first standard proposed to choose ad hoc newspapers over others is the intention to cover, as much as possible, the ideological spectrum prevalent in the UK (left, right and centre), and the political alignment or the political party that supports each newspaper (i.e., Conservative, Labour, Lib-Dem or none). So with a concern for this criterion, there is a belief that each newspaper has its own way of producing specific discourse and imparting news, though possibly at times not so distinctly. As shown in figure 3.1 below, each UK newspaper has its own political stance.

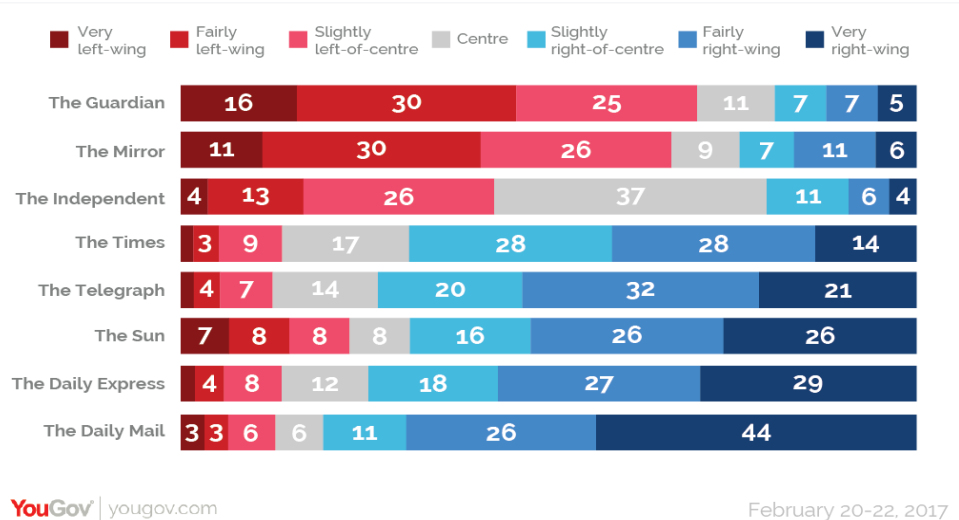


Figure 3.1 Political stances of British newspapers as published by *The Times* in 2017³⁰

According to this information, the British newspapers under study are politically characterized as *The Times* being Right, *The Guardian* being Left, and *The Independent* Centre, though it is significant to mention that it is not that easy to specify the concrete political spectrum that a newspaper follows, as can be gathered from the survey included in Figure 3.1 above. That is why most of these newspapers, in some cases, are realistically categorized as centre-left or centre-right.

To go beyond the ideology that each newspaper adopts, more or less plainly, each newspaper in the UK supports a political party and adopts its ideologies. This entails that the newspapers under study, as many others, also support different political parties and advocate their ideological stances, as summarized in table 3.1 below.

³⁰ The results of the survey expose how the British newspapers have been described by the Britons. the spectrum provided the British newspapers' ideologies which has been graded as 'very left wing, fairly left wing, slightly left of centre, centre, slightly right of centre, fairly right wing, very right wing'. The very left newspaper according to the survey is *The Guardian* which is seen by 16% of Brits as such. on another hand, *The Daily Mail* is seen by 44% of the Britons as the very right wing newspaper in the UK. The centrist newspaper is *The Independent* which gets 37% of the Britons' opinions on its ideological bias. For more information concerning other newspapers visit the link:https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/17715-how-left-or-right-wing-are-uks-newspapers?redirect_from=%2Ftopics%2Fpolitics%2Farticles-reports%2F2017%2F03%2F07%2Fhow-left-or-right-wing-are-uks-newspapers

The Newspapers as Ideological and Political Corpus	Stance	Political Party Alignment in the General Elections of 2019
<i>The Times</i>	Centre- Right	Conservative
<i>The Guardian</i>	Centre- Left	Labour party with some lean to the Lib-Dem
<i>The Independent</i>	Centrist	None

Table 3.1 The ideological stance and political alignment of the three British Newspapers

3.1.1.2. The Newspapers’ Circulation and Readership

It is a matter of fact in the world of journalism that circulation and readership walk side by side; they are in a relatively close relation. Circulation, for instance, plainly refers to the copies – distribution numbers and the number of accesses to the online version of a newspaper. In the *Cambridge Dictionary*, circulation refers to “the number of people that a newspaper or magazine is regularly sold to”³¹. Readership, on the other hand, addresses the number of people who read newspapers and access their sites. It has been said that though these two concepts superficially look the same and are interchangeably utilized, there is a difference in their essence. The difference arises out of the difficulty to calculate and verify readership average, since a number of people may read the same newspaper copy.³² Thus, the readership figures are predominantly higher than the figures of circulation.

3.1.1.3. The Newspapers’ Periodicity

Periodicity is closely attached to the precedent criteria, as it fundamentally refers to the frequent publication of newspapers as daily, weekly, semiweekly, triweekly, biweekly and so on. This study covers the newspapers that are published daily to enhance the frame of the study that concerns the PM’s COVID-19 up-to-date announcements, press conferences and measures. Consequently, the

³¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/circulation>

³² <https://www.gale.com/intl/essays/ed-king-british-newspapers-1860-1900>

cartoons are chosen from these daily-published newspapers, as it is much more convenient to the scope of the study, that is, the political cartoons.

3.1.1.4. The Formats of the Newspapers

A common characteristic that the newspapers in question share is the existence of an online version. Having online and free access versions enables readers to access them easily. The British newspapers in this study were initially identified as broadsheets, as with *The Guardian* and *The Times*, then, since 2004 their typeface has been shifted to a compact format, in a bid to attract young readers' interest and to make them easier to read when using public transport. *The Times*, for instance, shifted to compact in 2004 after 219 years of broadsheet format, whereas *The Guardian* has changed to compact since 2018. *The Independent*, on the other hand, shifted from the broadsheet to tabloid in 2003 then to have only an online format since 2016.

3.1.2. The British Newspapers Selected for the Analysis

Deacon (2004:10) states that England has “the largest concentration of national newspapers in Europe”, this view is basically drawn upon their incomparable capacity to follow and record the events accurately and scrutinize minutely political measures, politicians' attitudes and opinions. Despite the online distribution of the UK newspapers, printed newspapers maintain their unique role as a record of British society and events, both domestically and internationally (Cotter, 2001). Over the UK, newspapers are distributed as twelve daily newspapers and eleven Sunday-weekly ones.³³ Commonly, UK newspapers can characteristically be divided into two categories. Firstly, broadsheets, or what is more genuinely referred to as ‘Quality Press’ because of their sober language, intellectual news and seriousness in imparting events, as *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Observer*, etc. And secondly, some other newspapers marked as Tabloids, or what is commonly labeled as ‘The Popular Press’, as in the case of *The Sun*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Star*, etc.³⁴ Jones & Wardle (2008:59) suggest that in this dichotomy the central difference between these two distinct kinds of newspapers is the spot focus of the broadsheet

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_the_United_Kingdom

³⁴ For more information concerning the history of the UK newspapers, visit the following site: <https://newsmediauk.org/History-of-British-Newspapers/>

newspapers on political issues and serious events; whereas the tabloids are characterized as newspapers more commonly interested in celebrities and people in general. Most newspapers have their own political stance and ideological alignment, as they have been owned exclusively by opinion groups connected to political parties. Consequently, the general criteria of this study are to analyze political cartoons in three different well-known newspapers; the differences are due to their political support and ideological positions. In accordance with these criteria, three newspapers were chosen to achieve the objectives of the study (*The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*).

3.1.2.1. *The Times*

Since its foundation in 1785 by John Walter, it was known as *The Daily Universal Register*, yet on January 1st 1788, it became *The Times*.³⁵ It is a daily newspaper which is commonly regarded as the oldest and most preeminent British national newspaper. *The Times* is currently owned by News UK (News Corp UK & Ireland Limited) and edited by John Witherow. It has good reputation and it is regarded as the most influential newspaper in Britain. By virtue of its reputable status and influence on the public, it has always accounted as one of the three biggest British newspapers (*The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* being the other two). Concerning its political alignment, and especially at its early stage, *The Times* was generally seen as independent, criticizing the Conservative Party and its candidates. In spite of this detached political status, the newspaper endorsed the Labour party between 2001 and 2010, then its support changed towards the Conservatives and its PM, Boris Johnson, during the Conservative Leadership election in 2019. Moreover, *The Times* has been typically defined as a ‘centre-right’ newspaper, as it leans towards this political spectrum and its ideologies and beliefs, such as ‘liberalism and democracy’.

In addition to the printed version of *The Times*, it has also had an online presence since 1996. The print version of the newspaper has shifted from the broadsheet format to the compact and tabloid format.

³⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Times>

3.1.2.2. *The Guardian*

Its first print edition was published in 1821. Formerly known as *The Manchester Guardian*, it underwent a name shift in 1959, becoming *The Guardian* to reflect a more national orientation. It was owned by the Guardian Media Group (GMG), and now its editor-in-chief is Katherine Viner. *The Guardian* is regarded as one of the oldest British newspapers and has high prestige, thus regarded as one of the leading newspapers in the UK.³⁶ Since its foundation, *The Guardian* was best known for its dispassionate reputation and political independence, Engels (2003 [1845]) stated in this respect that *The Guardian* is “an organ of the middle class”. It has been remarked that with the end of the Second World War (WWII), the newspaper witnessed a decisive shift in its political orientation, leaning implicitly towards the Labour Party and its ideologies. Politically *The Guardian* is now considered supportive of the Labour party and of left-wing politics.

The format of the newspaper has consistently followed steps of changes; the first format was a broadsheet, then it changed to a berliner format –similar to the Spanish *El País* and many other European newspapers, intermediate between broadsheet and tabloid– to be the first newspaper in the UK with this format. On 15 January 2018, the new compact (tabloid) format was announced as *The Guardian*’s final switch. In 1999, *The Guardian*, like other British newspapers, launched its digital version with free access to its news and stories.

3.1.2.3. *The Independent*

This newspaper was first published as a print version in 1986 with a broadsheet format till 2003.³⁷ Later, it changed to a tabloid format till 2016, to become finally a fully digital newspaper. *The Independent* is currently owned by Sultan Muhammad Abuljadayel, Evgeny Lebedev, Alexander Lebedev and some minor shareholders, and its editor-in-chief is Christian Broughton. Concerning its political orientation, *The Independent* has generally been described as centre in its views and having no political biases to any political spectrum, though some claims regard it as liberal, or more accurately as liberal-left, with a supportive stance on economy. Consequently, its emergence came as a result to its founders’ belief “that many of Britain’s educated and affluent citizens desired

³⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Guardian-British-newspaper>

³⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Independent-British-newspaper>

an objective source of daily news, one without the strong political biases of the country's established newspapers"³⁸. To sum up its political endorsement and ideological attitude, *The Independent's* political leaning is broadly seen as centrist, and economically and socially liberal.

Table 3.2 below summarizes the whole information concerning the three British newspapers in question.

Information	<i>The Times</i>	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Independent</i>
Foundation	1785 (Broadsheet version) 1996 (Online version)	1821 (Broadsheet version) 1999 (Online version)	1986 (Broadsheet version) 2008 (Online version)
Formats	Broadsheet, Compact and Online	Berliner/Compact and Online	Broadsheet and Online
Political Party Endorsement	Conservative	Labour	None, with leaning to the Liberal-Democrat party.
Ideological alignment	Centre-Right	Centre-Left/centrist, social-liberal	Centrist, economic-liberal
Circulation	479,107 in 2016 ³⁹	A daily circulation of 105,134 in 2021 ⁴⁰	56,074, a daily circulation in 2016 ⁴¹
Periodicity	Daily newspaper	Daily newspaper	Daily newspaper

Table 3.2 English Newspapers Summary

³⁸<https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Independent-British-newspaper> (paragraph 1).

³⁹<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/apr/21/times-ft-guardian-independent-sales-lift-mirror-sun>

⁴⁰https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Guardian

⁴¹<https://www.marketingweek.com/the-independents-circulation-holds-up-after-launch-of-the-i/>

3.1.3. Specific Criteria (Cartoons Selection)

Having determined the general criteria required in the process of selecting the newspapers appropriate to the scope of the study, some other more specific criteria have to be set out in selecting the cartoons. The specific criteria are the following.

3.1.3.1. The Corpus of the Study

1. All the cartoons in question should include the former British PM, Boris Johnson, as the protagonist and the representational actor in the cartoon during the crisis of COVID-19. Thus, this study shifts the analytical emphasis from the virus-related concern to the management of media, specifically visual media, involving the depiction of political figures during crises (in this case, Boris Johnson during the pandemic). The objective, accordingly, is to scrutinize the impartiality of British media and expose whether there is an opportunistic exploitation of challenging circumstances, or not, and to unveil the social agencies and motifs behind the depiction of Johnson and his COVID-19 responses (strategies, precautionary measures, government policies and weekly announcement).
2. This study primarily emphasizes multimodal discourse analysis as implemented in the metaphorical presentations in political cartoons, specifically examining the systemic visual semiotics resources and tools suggested by Kress & van Leeuwen in their seminal work *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* that incorporate the three meanings of interpretations, representational, interactive, and compositional, as shown in chapter 2, section 2.1.5 and diagram 2.5. Thus, the cartoons that have verbal and pictorial modes with the various semiotics resources have been selected to analyze how these modes metaphorically impact the interpretational analysis of the metaphors in the images. The study's categorization aims to underscore the relevance of multimodal elements in conveying nuanced metaphorical meanings within the realm of political cartoons.
3. A selection process was undertaken to analyze the cartoons related to Johnson during the pandemic, with a deliberate choice of two editorial cartoonists from each

newspaper, to undertake a more reliable and objective study. For *The Guardian*, two editorial cartoonists were chosen, namely Steve Bell and Chris Riddell. Bell's cartoons chosen for analysis are those classified under the category 'The Guardian Opinion Cartoon', whilst the comic strips, in the 'Steve Bell's if...' category, have been discarded. Steve Bell argues that he employs art as a confrontational tool to penetrate the politicians' masks, expressing this as "firstly commending them for their idealism and subsequently kicking them up the arse (*sic*)" (Bell, 2011).

Concerning Steve Bell's depiction of Johnson, it has notably been found that Bell tended to portray Johnson in most of his artworks as a face resembling buttocks or an ass. Forceville (2007) has turned on to this topic in his study, elucidating that the metaphorical configuration of a boss as an a** highlights only one distinct feature in the metaphorical mapping process, that is, foolishness and absurdity. The buttocks-like face, or what Bell often utilizes in his Johnson's portraits as a 'bum face', has its significance in the communicative value of the cartoons and their interpretations. It has become Bell's hallmark in his treatment of the British PM, particularly after Johnson's PM presidency winning on July 24th, 2019. This point is further discussed in Chapter 4, in the qualitative analysis of Steve Bell's cartoons.

Chris Riddell, on the other hand, embraces a distinctly different style in comparison to Bell's. His art works rely heavily on his background as a children's illustrator. Thus, he identifies his artistic style as "polite, but rude", exposing visual elements inspired by the works of John Tenniel and William Heath-Robinson. His political attitude toward politicians and political entities is essentially marked by empathy rather than cruelty.

For *The Times*, the cartoons by Peter Brookes and Morten Morland were selected to represent the corpus of this newspaper. Brookes is well known for upholding his editorial thoughts and art line of transferring reality in his work. He is renowned for his art trajectory similar to David Low's⁴², following a line of action that basically adopts the assumptions that cartoonists should be in continuous disagreement with

⁴² David Low (1891-1963) is a New-Zealand British Born journalist who was well known for his spirit and ethics in political cartooning and caricatures. His world reputation remarkably increased during WWII and because of his special hatred of Adolf Hitler, which was well noticed in his artworks, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/David-Alexander-Cecil-Low>

the government, which means “attacking something that [they] think is wrong, disagree with or is [patently] absurd”. Moreover, Brookes is identified as a reader-oriented cartoonist, as he once argued that “I work for (a) myself and (b) readers [...] it is the readers who you are having a conversation with and you hope might take notice” (Brookes, 2005).

Finally, Dave Brown and Brian Adcock were chosen to represent *The Independent’s* cartoonists; therefore, only their works amid the crisis of COVID-19 in 2020-2021 were scrutinized and examined. Brown is regarded as the most prominent cartoonist in *The Independent* though he actually considers himself as a “visual journalist”. Brown’s artworks are often based upon the “Old Masters”⁴³ and visual intertextuality. He chiefly represented as a continuation of James Gillray⁴⁴. Brown writes about the influential inspiration of Gillray on his works: “Gillray was not just one of the greatest satirical cartoonists to have lived, but one of Britain’s greatest artists in any genre”⁴⁵. According to Brown, political cartooning is “a way of taking back a little power from the bullies who run our lives [...], something that niggles at them” (Unknown author, 2016 in British Cartoon Archive).

3.1.3.2. The Study’s Timeframe

Stake (1995) contends that in every study within an academic domain, establishing temporal boundaries or delineating time parameters is essential. This practice serves the dual purpose of maintaining focus and enhancing comprehension. In line with this tradition, the present study encompasses a time frame from February 2020 to February 2021 in the United Kingdom, during which all the cartoons published in the three newspapers selected within this period were meticulously examined to ensure their relevance and suitability within the context and scope of

⁴³ The term “Old Master” refers to the prominent European artists from 1300 to 1800, extending to the Early Renaissance to the Romantic Movement. It includes various art forms, such as “oil paintings or frescos, but also drawings and prints”, more information on this in the following site: <https://www.theartstory.org/definition/old-masters/>

⁴⁴ James Gillray (1756-1815) is a British cartoonist and caricaturist known for his political artworks that criticize George III of England and Napoleon I. His cartoons were often marked as abusive and critical through highlighting the dramatic sense of situation and analogy. More information in <https://www.britannica.com/biography/James-Gillray>

⁴⁵ <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/cartoonists-dave-brown-james-gillray-b1959488.html>

the research, particularly the cartoons that conduct the character of Boris Johnson during COVID-19 in UK.

3.2. CARTOONS CHOICE APPLICATION

After selecting the newspapers that best fit the methodology and objectives of the study according to the general criteria mentioned above in subsections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, the next step is the collection of data as determined in the previous subsection (3.1.3). As a reminder, the data of this study includes a collection of political cartoons that depict the British PM during a specific time of the pandemic.

Consequently, to sum up again the specific criteria for the selection of cartoons, the data needed to:

- Portray the character of the British PM as a key figure ‘protagonist’ in the cartoon, even when these cartoons have various contextual themes.
- Identify only the cartoons with multimodal metaphors that portray Boris Johnson during the pandemic, which means discarding the mono-modal metaphorical representations.
- Cover the time span between February 2020 and February 2021.
- Select two cartoonists from each newspaper, for more reliability and objectivity, to analyze their editorial cartoons.

The first step in collecting this set from the corpus (the British Newspapers) was to extract the data consistent with the criteria stated in the previous sections. In so doing, all the cartoons that were published during the period from February 2020 to February 2021, especially those which depict the British PM (the cartoons’ protagonist) were retrieved from the Newspapers’ Official Websites/ cartoons section, the official twitter accounts of the cartoonists, and BCA. As already stated, the corpus is made up of cartoons that were selected from the works of two cartoonists from each newspaper.

Having collected the cartoons of each of the cartoonists manually, it was found that the total number of cartoons that portray Johnson at the time of the study was 380, dealing with diverse issues, such as the pandemic, Brexit, economic problems, the government’s corruption, external

affairs, etc. The 380 cartoons had been distributed as follows: 133 cartoons from *The Times*, 73 cartoons from *The Guardian*, and 174 from *The Independent*. It is important to remark here that though these cartoons include Boris Johnson as the main figure (protagonist) in the cartoon, only those that cue him at the pandemic with multi-modes of metaphorical representations were analyzed and underwent the next stage of analysis.

Table 3.3 below outlines which cartoons are compliant with the limitations of the study (modality, timeframe, context, and the metaphorical configuration) and distributes them according to the newspapers in which they were published.

The UK newspapers	Number of cartoons including Boris Johnson as Protagonist	Number of cartoons compliant and non-compliant with the study's criteria (limitations)		
<i>The Times</i>	133	Compliant	28	√ ⁴⁶
		Non-compliant	105	* ⁴⁷
<i>The Guardian</i>	73	Compliant	28	√
		Non-compliant	45	*
<i>The Independent</i>	174	Compliant	42	√
		Non-compliant	132	*

Table 3.3 Total number of cartoons gathered from the three newspapers (February 2020-February 2021) and their compliance with the criteria

In line with the results of table 3.3, the study corpus, thus, is made up of 98 cartoons compliant with the criteria and limitations of the study, the corpus is distributed as shown in table 3.4.

⁴⁶ The (√) symbol represents that the cartoons are compliant and contain all the study parameters (the study's protagonist, timeline frame, and the modality of metaphors, with only the multimodal ones included).

⁴⁷ (*) refers to the cartoons discarded from the study as they do not fit the study's parameters and set limits.

The newspaper	UK's The cartoonists	Number of cartoons under study
<i>The Times</i>	Morten Morland	13
	Peter Brookes	15
<i>The Guardian</i>	Steve Bell	20
	Chris Riddell	8
<i>The Independent</i>	Dave Brown	21
	Brian Adcock	21
Total No.		98

Table 3.4 The number of cartoons with a reference to the editorial cartoonists

3.3. STAGES OF THE APPROACH TO CRITICAL MULTIMODAL METAPHORS IN THE CORPUS

After the process of gathering, selecting and organizing the study's corpus in accordance with the initial criteria of selection, the study progresses to the next step, which involves how to approach the analysis of the multimodal metaphors in the cartoons under study, adopting Charteris-Black's (2004, 2005) CMMA and Kress & van Leeuwen's (2006) Multimodal Discourse Analysis and the semiotics tools employed in the images. The processes adopted for the cartoon's analysis have been meticulously staged; namely, identification, annotation, interpretation and explanation.

The first part of the corpus analysis was dedicated to analyze the metaphorical representations in the cartoons qualitatively, starting with the first step of identification of existence of multimodal metaphors in the corpus and scrutinizing the prominent visual and verbal elements employed in the domains of the metaphor, then the quantitative analysis of the focused and target themes and metaphorical sources upon which the cartoons have been created during the pandemic of COVID-19 was conducted by using the annotation tool to uncover the key similarities and differences

among the three newspapers' corpora. Then, the final stage is dedicated to the interpretation and explanation of the metaphorical images and scenarios exploited in the cartoons.

3.3.1. Critical Multimodal Metaphor Identification Procedure

At the start, it is significant to mention that over the past few years numerous linguists have dedicated their academic endeavours and considerable attention to the identification of metaphors within diverse discourses (Fass 1991; Stefanowitsch 2006; Pragglejaz Group 2007; Steen et al. 2010; Berber Sardinha 2011), and visual metaphor identification also has a focus of that interest, but not on the same scale (Forceville 2002, 2008; Kaplan 2005; Andriessen, et al. 2009).

Though many methods are specified in identifying visual metaphors, the process of reliably recognizing metaphors continues to preoccupy the minds of academics. For this study, the process adopted for the identification of metaphors is the Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure (henceforth VisMIP) introduced by Šorm and Steen (2018), which as they claimed (2018:47) brings together insights from the visual metaphor identification procedure with insights from the verbal one to make “a substantial advance in visual metaphor identification”. The key premise of this procedure is the presence of incongruity or more accurately incongruous elements in images. This suggests that those visual incongruous elements could be replaced by some other feasible and congruous ones. And for that reason the exploitation of these incongruities in images, particularly in political cartoons, creates metaphors which in turn creates humor that affects the way the audience conceive the world they live in. The procedural steps followed to identify the metaphorical representations and to grab their meaning were the following:

1. Establish general understanding.
 - 1a. Describe denotative representational meaning.
 - 1b. Search cues to symbolic, connotative meaning (abstract concepts/features).
 - 1c. Describe argumentation (standpoint) and general topic, or what is referred to as the communicative purpose of the image.
2. Structure conceptual/semantic roles of the units.
3. Find incongruous visual units. Distinguish topic incongruous from property incongruous. Incongruity accordingly can occur either between the elements of the referential meaning and

the topic of the image, on the one hand, or between the elements themselves independently of the topic of the image. This means the discrepancy lies within the elements of the referential meaning of the cartoon without any connection to the general topic of the image.

4. Test whether the incongruities are integrated in the topic by comparison with something else.

Is there a unit or property that would be literal (congruous with the topic)?

5. Test if comparison is cross-domain (to exclude metonymy).

6. Test if comparison is indirect discourse.

7. If 4-5-6 are true, then mark visual metaphor.

As this is a multimodal analytical study, there is a need also to identify the verbal texts accompanying the cartoons as captions, and the speech as balloons. To identify the potential metaphors in these written texts, another linguistic metaphor identification procedure was needed to achieve this goal. For this purpose, another procedure was developed by Steen et al. (2010), called Linguistic Metaphor Identification University Amsterdam (MIPVU); the method is regarded as a developed and refined version of the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The main steps of the MIPVU procedure are the following, according to Steen et al. (2010:5-6):

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.

2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse.

3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.

(b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be:

—More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.

—Related to bodily action.

—More precise (as opposed to vague).

—Historically older. Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.

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

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical. Ptiček & Dobša, (2023) have recently illustrated the comparison between the two methods as shown below.

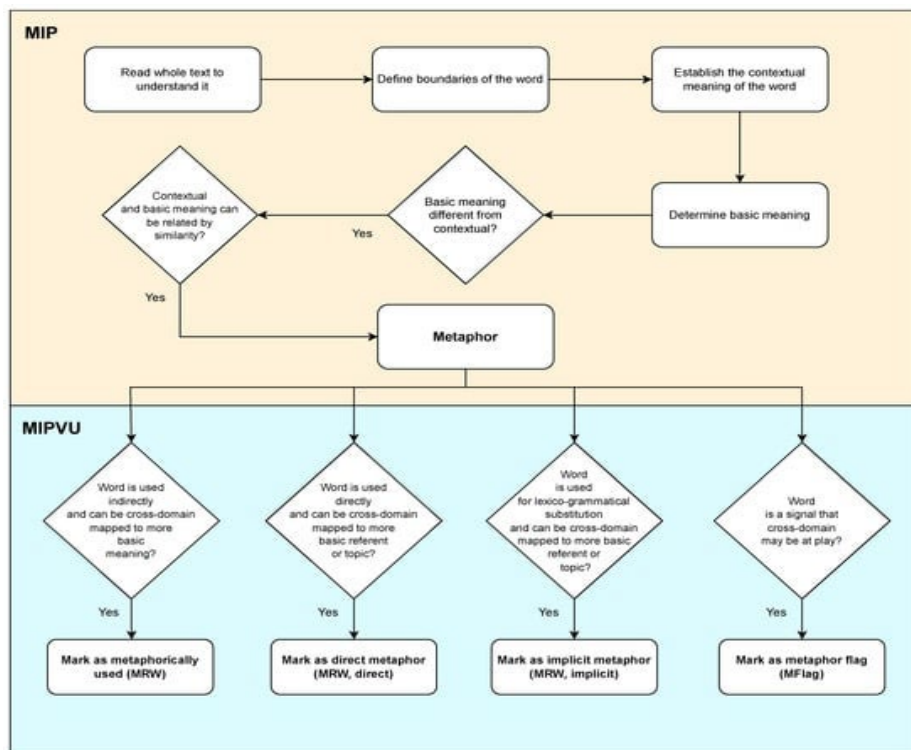


Diagram 3.1 Flow diagram of MIP and MIPVU, showing the overlap between them (Ptiček, & Dobša, 2023)

3.3.2. Multimodal Metaphors Annotations and Decoding Elements (UAM Image Tool)

Once all multimodal metaphors in the newspapers' cartoons were identified, the total number of cartoons in the three newspapers would undergo a subsequent process of metaphor-domains annotation. Specifically, the source domains identified within each visual element would be

annotated alongside the target domains or the thematic focus of the cartoons related to the metaphorical presentations of Boris Johnson during the crisis. To conduct this goal accurately, a digital image annotating tool called the Image Annotation Process (UAM), Image Tool 2.1, by O'Donnell (2008), was utilized as a valuable digital software that provides accurate statistics related to the occurrence of the two domains of metaphors in Johnson-related cartoons. The tool helps in analyzing and facilitating the subsequent stages of the study from an academic standpoint. The tool's function generally categorizes and annotates the images to expose the similarities and differences among the three newspapers. The tool consists of different layers with schemata and segments and the files could be uploaded wholly or as single images to undergo the systems and features determined by the study objectives, as show in figure 3.2.

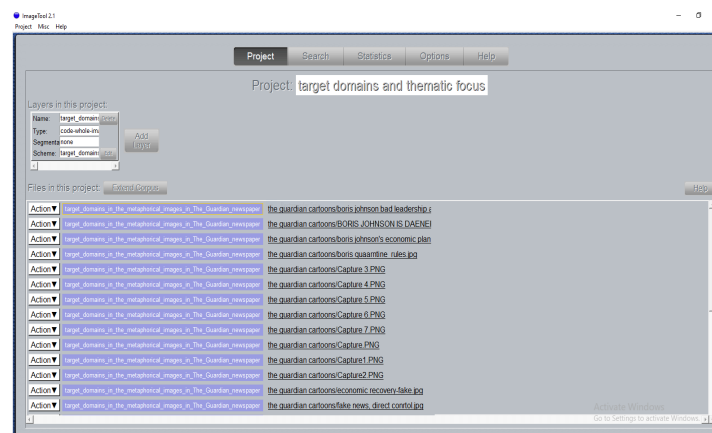


Figure 3.2 The screenshot of the annotation digital system, with the images incorporated according to the systems and features proposed

More precisely, the layers in the tool represent the corpus of each newspaper and the schemata and segments each layer has. The tool provides a start feature which is the key layer that encompasses a set of systems which in turn have other minor features, as shown in the example below in figure 3.3.

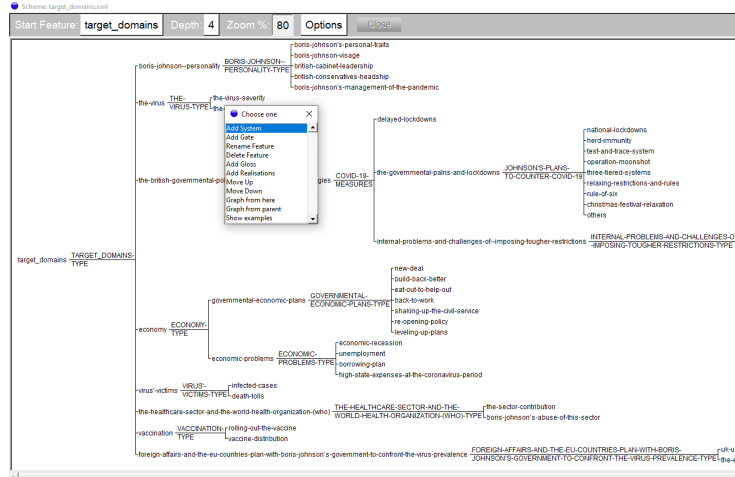


Figure 3.3 A screenshot of the forming of a new system and the features (Target Domains), in UAM Image Tool 2.1

After using this annotation tool with the study’s corpus, statistics are offered as the result of the features’ occurrences in the main system. The units were uploaded manually and processed semi-automatically, and in accordance to the features’ coding measured in the tool, the statistics are provided easily and accurately. The section of the statistics of the corpus’ annotation allowed to analyze each newspaper’s annotated data by describing a dataset using a feature’s coding without any need to export them to other external statistics software, such as Excel. Figure 3.4 displays a screenshot of how the data were described statistically concerning the target domains in the cartoons.

Feature	N	Percent
Total Units		
Total Units: 42		
TARGET-FOCUS (N=42)		
-boris-johnson	12	28.57%
-the-british-governm	19	45.24%
-economy	8	19.05%
-vaccination	1	2.38%
-death-toll-and-conf	0	0.00%
-the-second-wave-of-	2	4.76%
BORIS-JOHNSON-TYPE (N=12)		
-boris-johnson's-lea	7	58.33%
-delayed-reactions	1	8.33%
-boris-johnson's-ri	1	8.33%
-boris-johnson's-soc	3	25.00%
THE-BRITISH-GOVERNMENT (N=18)		
-national-lockdowns	4	22.22%
-test-and-trace	2	11.11%
-tered-system	6	33.33%
-christmas-easing-me	2	11.11%
-operation-moonshot	0	0.00%
-the-governmental-su	3	16.67%
-imposing-new-restr	1	5.56%
ECONOMY-TYPE (N=6)		
-economic-recovery-a	6	75.00%
-economic-recession	2	25.00%

Figure 3.4 A screenshot of *The Independent*'s target domain statistics after using the Image Annotation Process (UAM) Image Tool 2.1

For each specific unit (cartoon), the image's details, such as the representational participants – the actors, goals, and setting – could be annotated as a full, zoom-in image, as in figure 3.5.

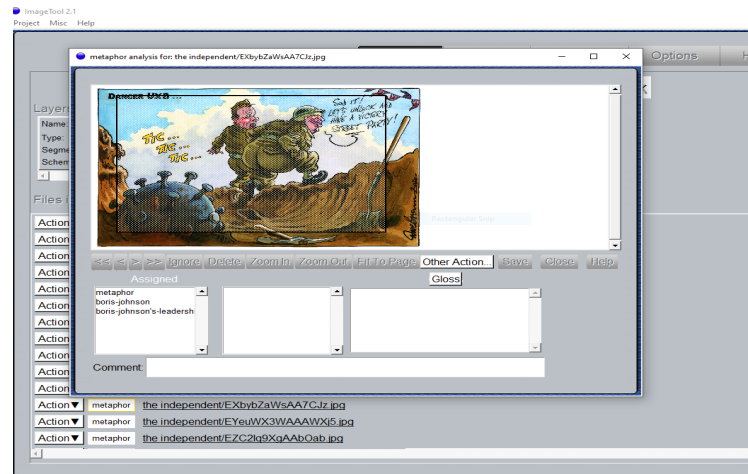


Figure 3.5 A screenshot of *The Independent*'s cartoon by Dave Brown showing the assigned features provided for annotating the target domain (UAM 2.1)

For both domains (source and target), the annotation tool has specific Layers# Systems# and Features# which have been employed to draw the similarities and differences among the three newspapers' cartoons and how the cartoonists add variety and creativity to their portrayals. The subsections below shed more light on the two annotations.

3.3.2.1 Target-Domains Categorization (Cartoons' Thematic-Focus Annotation)

After the metaphor identification procedures (visual and verbal) were conducted, the corpus underwent a subsequent stage, that is, the target-domain categorization and focused themes annotation. Though the study's key element is how Boris Johnson, has metaphorically been rendered as a protagonist in the UK media during the pandemic, the analysis was also directed to unveil the thematic and contextual focus that the UK cartoonists abundantly addressed. It is well known that most metaphorical studies have been adapted either to investigate how the target domains have been represented by a set of source domains, labeled as 'target-domain oriented studies', or to study the resonance of the source domains in any given discourse and how they are mapped onto the target ones, 'source-domain oriented studies'. In line with this, Stefanowitsch (2006:7) clears up the key differences behind the use of these two types of studies:

[W]hile source-domain oriented studies often reveal a much broader set of target domains for any given source item than we might have expected on the basis of introspective data, target-domain oriented studies constrain this range by allowing us to identify those mappings and source domains that are significantly associated with a given target domain.

Thus, this study has a set of thematic focused issues and target domains that gained the cartoonists' concern and interests. The list of these targets, additionally to Boris Johnson (personal traits, visage, the cabinet leadership of the English Conservative Party's head, the crisis mismanagement, his false daily briefings and information, his infection, etc.), encompasses the following:

-The British governmental policies and precautionary strategies, which are:

- a. Delayed lockdowns and precautionary measures
- b. The governmental plans and lockdowns to counter the virus prevalence, as in national lockdowns, herd immunity, test and trace system, operation moonshot, three-tiered systems, relaxing and tightening restrictions, rule of six, Christmas festival relaxation, and others
- c. Internal problems and challenges of imposing tougher restrictions, such as the local lockdowns and measures on the north of England than other areas, the great Manchester problem with its mayor, Marcus Rashford's campaign against Johnson's rejection of extending the free school meals for vulnerable children during the pandemic, Scotland's independence referendum during the crisis

- The virus severity and its waves

- Economic aspects:

- a. Governmental economic plans (New Deal, Build Back Better, Eat Out to Help Out, Back to Work, shaking-up the civil service, Leveling Up plans)
- b. Economic problems (economic recession, unemployment, high taxes, borrowing system, high State expenses at the coronavirus period)

- The virus victims (Infected cases and death tolls)

- The healthcare sector and the World Health organization (WHO); this target involves two aspects:
 - a. The sector’s contribution and dedicated efforts during the pandemic and the vaccine rolling-out
 - b. Boris Johnson’s abuse of this sector and his governmental support
- Rolling out the vaccine and vaccination
- Foreign affairs and the EU countries’ plan with Boris Johnson’s government to confront the virus spread

Thus, only cartoons that depict the British PM during the crisis period, with a clear reference to specific targets and concepts through metaphors, will be considered for inclusion. The targets were classified and annotated to reveal which object was emphasized and highlighted more by the cartoonists, as shown in figure 3.6.

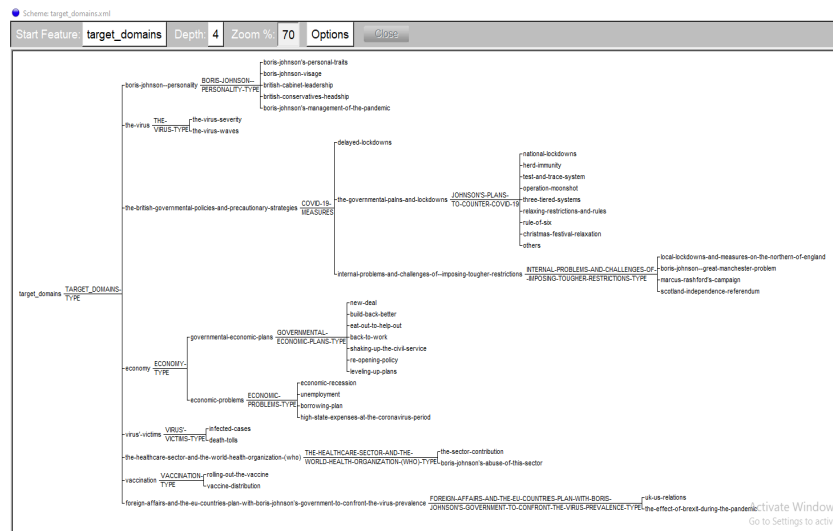


Figure 3.6 A screenshot of the tool UAM 2.1 exposing the target objects ‘Thematic focus’ annotations

3.3.2.2. Source-Domains Annotation

In this phase of the study, the other objective was to investigate the source domains, scenarios, image schemas and intertextual references utilized by the cartoonists in the three specific

newspapers. The cartoons were also annotated using the same Image Tool 2.1 and were categorized relying on the framework proposed by Kövecses (2010), as mentioned earlier in subsection 2.1.2. He provided a list of some source concrete elements and images that are employed in the metaphorical representations to facilitate difficult notions and to clarify their abstractness. In addition to Kövecses' (2010) categorized source domains, other objects, image schemas and scenarios were covered in the qualitative analysis of the cartoons to uncover the frequency of these source domains among the cartoonists of the three newspapers. The annotation project consisted of a set of source domains listed in the main layer, then the corpora of the study were uploaded manually to organize these cartoons into a structured hierarchy of source domains systems. The screenshot below in figure 3.7 was taken from the corpus analysis.

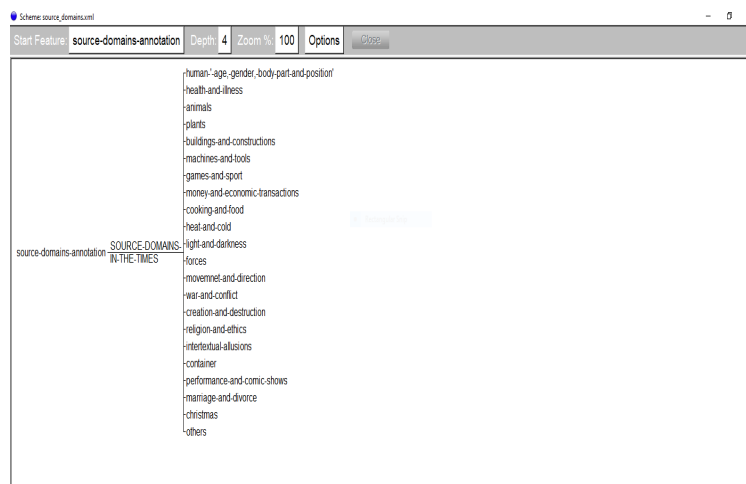


Figure 3.7 A screenshot of the UAM annotation image tool 2.1 used in the source-domains annotation of the corpus

3.3.3. Critical Multimodal Metaphor Interpretation

At this stage, an answer to the question ‘which conceptual metaphors were used in the cartoons?’ is put forward. According to Charteris-Black (2004:37), metaphor interpretation involves “establishing a relationship between metaphors and the cognitive and pragmatic factors that determine them”. Thus, the role of the analyst at this stage is to examine how metaphors are connected to the mental and practical aspects that influence their creation and understanding. To this end, the interpretation stage shows how the metaphors shaped by the newspapers’ cartoonists depend on the cognitive factors and how they are used in real-life communication and situations

(pragmatic factors). Moreover, the key role of metaphor interpretation is to decide which elements were transferred in the metaphorical mapping and which elements were not.

Broadly speaking, this stage is the decision on which source domains gained the most focus from the cartoonists and the general frames that contain the conceptual metaphors. According to Li (2016:94), metaphor interpretation aims at

[a]scertaining the relationship between metaphors and the cognitive and pragmatic element that determine them, which indicates the identification of conceptual metaphors, and where feasible, conceptual keys. Conceptual metaphors are used to resolve the semantic tension between metaphors while conceptual keys are identified to solve the semantic tension between conceptual metaphors. At this stage, it is likely to consider the extent to which metaphor choices account for constructing a socially important representation.

After deciding the metaphors and the conceptual metaphors used in the cartoons and the general images and source domains that they include, it was inevitable to identify these sources and annotate the cartoons. In addition to the annotations conducted for the two domains, this stage also uncovers the diversity (similarities and differences) of the semiotic aspects used by the cartoonists in their portrayals and how the representational, interactive and compositional aspects affect the interpretations of the cartoons. The study determines how Kress & van Leeuwen's Visual social Semiotics as shown in chapter 2, section 2.1.5, has been employed by the cartoonists and what effective sense they add to the interpretation of the images. Each cartoon has also been examined and scrutinized in accordance to the semiotic elements and multi-modes of meanings (representational, interactive and compositional elements) artfully and purposefully employed and what communicative and persuasive functions they add to the metaphorical images in the cartoons.

3.3.4. Critical Multimodal Metaphor Explanation

This is the last stage in the metaphor analysis process, as provided by Charteris-Black (2004). Its essence is to explain the reasons and purposes behind using certain metaphors rather than others. So, to achieve this, it is necessary to decide which social agency is involved in this process and the social role they play in persuasion. This stage explicates the ideological motivation and rhetorical purposes of utilizing metaphorical expressions. Muelas-Gil (2021:69) adds in this realm that

metaphor explanation is seen at this stage as “the most critical part as it takes ideology and the potentially persuasive load and tries to explain how they have motivated the cartoonist to use the metaphors in question”. Thus, it has been seen by many analysts as the most in-depth level that takes sociocultural considerations of context into account. It addresses the ideological stance and power relations existing behind the use of metaphors in discourse. At this level, the researcher needs to analyze critically the multimodal metaphors the cartoonists used and how and why they depict Johnson and the related objects.

**CHAPTER IV: THE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF
THE CORPUS**

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, it is relevant to note that prior to embarking on the task of analyzing the different newspapers' cartoons and decoding the hidden meanings conveyed through the metaphors employed, the cartoons of each newspaper were gathered and organized in a meticulously chronological sequence to systematically investigate the sequence of events and how they are portrayed in the images with reference to Boris Johnson. This chronological organization would inevitably provide insights into how the depiction of the British PM during the crisis of COVID-19 in the three newspapers evolved and changed. Thus, this chapter is regarded as the essence of the present study, as it helps to understand how each newspaper's cartoonist have their own metaphorical configuration of Johnson during the crisis of COVID-19 and what the ideological and rhetorical motivations that influence their portrayals are.

After the meticulous chronological arrangement of the cartoons, each set of cartoons was analyzed in which the metaphors were identified through Šorm and Steen's VisMIP (2018). The goal was to identify the incongruous elements in the images and to replace them with more congruous ones. It essentially determines the presence or absence of metaphorical representations in the images. The next step, according to Charteris-Black's critical approach to metaphor (2004), is the interpretation of the metaphorical conceptualizations in the cartoons of each newspaper to discern the metaphorical mappings that portray Johnson during the COVID-19 crisis. This stage specifies the elements or symbols utilized for metaphORIZATION over the other ones. This is intended to consider how the attributes or qualities associated with the source domains are applied to the target domains (Boris Johnson and the already mentioned related themes and issues in 3.3.2.1.) during the pandemic, thereby creating a metaphorical representation.

Finally, the explanation stage was provided to build up the ideological underpinnings and social motifs behind the diversity in the metaphorical configurations of Johnson. It detects the social agency (the cartoonists' attitudes, the ideological stance of the newspapers, the political alliance and party support) involved in the production and understanding of the cartoons' role in persuasion and ideology. This stage seeks to explore the cartoonists' motivations and intentions

driving the use of metaphors, their persuasive functions and the ideological implications they carry. The sections below analyze the metaphorical choices and the interpretations of these clues with reference to the metaphorical domains employed.

4.2. THE ANALYSIS OF THE METAPHORICAL DEPICTION OF *THE TIMES*' BORIS JOHNSON-RELATED CARTOONS

In this section, the cartoons retrieved from *The Times* between February 2020 and February 2021 were subjected to the study's constraints and limitations outlined in Chapter 3. The cartoons have been organized and are presented in chronological order, as previously mentioned.

- Cartoon 1.1

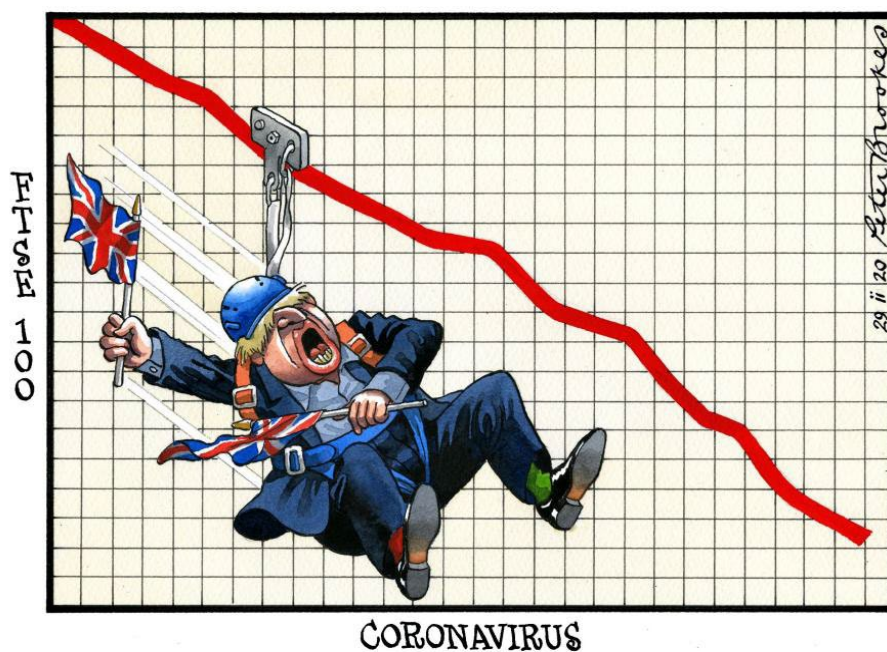


Figure 4.1 Peter Brookes' cartoon about the sharp fall in FTSE 100, published in *The Times*, February 29th, 2020



Figure 4.2 The British PM Boris Johnson is riding a zip-wire during the 2012 Olympics in London⁴⁸

Peter Brookes, in the cartoon shown in figure 4.1, draws his visual depiction of Boris Johnson upon the MOVEMENT and DIRECTION source domains to metaphorically conceptualize the unprecedented falling in the British Stock Market due to the increasing fears of the pandemic, as recorded in February 2020⁴⁹. Brookes skillfully fused the shot of Johnson riding of a zip-wire during the 2012 London Olympics, as shown in figure 4.2, with a rapid falling in the British Stock Market. The cartoon is verbally framed with two written texts, the vertical axis is labeled (FTSE 100)⁵⁰, whereas for the horizontal axis appears the word CORONAVIRUS. These compositional dimensions according to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) elucidate the meaning of the image, for instance, the vertical axis in this cartoon indicates a swift transmission from high to low position,

⁴⁸ <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnsons-unusual-reaction-stuck-21090796>

⁴⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/live/2020/feb/27/stock-markets-plunge-ftse-100-dow-correction-trump-coronavirus-investors-business-live?filterKeyEvents=false&page=with:block-5e57f25a8f08e1332474b6cd#block-5e57f25a8f08e1332474b6cd>

⁵⁰ FTSE 100 Index, or what is informally called Footsie. It is a Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 Index which encompasses a list of 100 companies in the London Stock Exchange. This index is mainly maintained by the FTSE Group. For more information, visit the site https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FTSE_100_Index. The severe impact of the pandemic on the market is shown in <https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-investors-run-for-cover-on-fears-of-covid-19-pandemic-11941960>

a descending movement in the stock market, whilst the horizontal one is an indication of the proliferation of the virus across the country. Therefore, these axes in their dimension help Brookes depict the swift transmission in the stock market from high to low accompanied with the horizontal prevalence of the virus.

In the image, Johnson, the only represented actor, has been metaphorically rendered riding the FTSE 100 index instead of the zip-wire as seen in the original photography, and clutching two British Union Jacks (SYMBOL FOR COUNTRY/ flags for countries), with a blue helmet on his head and wearing one red and one green sock (COLOUR FOR INSTITUTION/ BLUE FOR THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVES PARTY)⁵¹. The narrative process which expresses the change in position from high to low reflects a non-transactional pattern. Concerning the interactive meaning, the image of Johnson has no direct connection with the viewer, as Johnson has no direct gazing. What is relevant here is the employment of colours, which is exploited artfully with the symbolic process by Brookes, for instance the socks as red and green stand symbolically for SELL and BUY in the stock market. The green is high and the red is low, which indicates a rapid fall in the stock market on either side during the crisis.

So, the cartoon essentially has the following set of individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A RIDER OF AN FTSE 100 INDEX DESCENDING.
- THE UK'S FTSE 100 INDEX IS A ZIP WIRE DRIVEN DOWN VERY FAST.
- THE UK'S STOCK MARKET IS A THEME PARK RIDE.
- THE UK'S FTSE 100 INDEX SHARP INCLINE IS A DESCENDING ZIP WIRE RIDDEN DOWN VERY FAST BY THE PRIME MINISTER.

Apparently, the rapid descending movement of the index evokes the orientational metaphor and its conventional domain within image schema (UP-DOWN) to activate the metaphor LOW STATUS IS DOWN. Moreover, the facial expression of Johnson represents his panic from the sharp fall in the stock market due to the virus rapid spread. Thus, the whole visual action of riding

⁵¹ The British Conservative Party, or the Tories, have been almost always coupled with the blue colour, “settled on blue to Hoover-up Liberal (who previously used blue) votes and build a broad social coalition (presumably against Labour ‘reds’)” (<https://www.verivide.com/the-colour-of-politics-why-are-the-tories-blue-the-labour-party-red-and-the-liberals-orange/>).

the index by Johnson and driving it downwards indicates his sole responsibility for the descending status in the stock market by implementing ineffective plans. In accordance with the above-stated details and the individual (specific) metaphors, the cartoon is issued to uncover Brookes' negative attitude against Johnson's personality and the mismanagement of the crisis as an incompetent leader whose policies (Brexit and COVID-19 lockdowns and measures) are leading the stock market to unpleasant ends. The evaluation (polarity) thus reveals the severe damage on the UK's stock market and economy and the lack of Johnson's government's control to cope. The portrait as a whole generally activates the following metaphors: 'THE UNCONTROLLABLE DOWNWARD TRAJECTORY OF THE STOCK MARKET DURING THE PANDEMIC IS RIDING A ZIP WIRE DOWNWARDS BY BORIS JOHNSON', and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S WRONG DECISIONS IN THE BRITISH STOCK MARKET DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE RIDING A ZIP WIRE DOWNWARDS'.

- **Cartoon 1.2**



Figure 4.3 Morten Morland's cartoon 'playing for time' published in *The Times*, March 10, 2020



Figure 4.4 A chess-game original scene between death and the knight Antonius Block, from the movie *The Seventh Seal* (1957)⁵²

Morland's cartoon was published one day before the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, not only in the UK but around the world. Upon close examination, it is noticeable that the cartoon has been inspired from a visual intertextual reference to the 1957 Swedish film *The Seventh Seal* to satirically remark on Johnson's government's response to the emergence of COVID-19. The original scene of the movie is based on a source domain of GAME and SPORTS, wherein the protagonist, the knight Antonius Block, is playing a game of chess with death personified.

The cartoon, accordingly, is signified as relying on a narrative pattern and reactional process in which there is an eye contact between Johnson and death. Johnson is the actor of the action and death is the phenomenon to whom Johnson is talking and with whom he is playing. The reactional relation between the two characters certainly depends on the presence of the vector which is accordingly signaled as a transactional narrative process in addition to the verbal dialogue between Johnson and death. Before delving into more details, the source of the cartoon is verbally and visually indicated through the verbal comment "PLAYING FOR TIME...", which is aligned with the visual configuration of Johnson. Thus, the target is Johnson's delayed response to the

⁵² *Det sjunde inseglet* is a Swedish historical fantasy about the spread of the plague (Black Death) in Sweden where the protagonist of the fiction had to win his chess match against death to survive (<https://www.apotpourriofvestiges.com/2012/06/seventh-seal-1957-legendary-swedish.html>).

emergence of the virus. In the light of this, the playing image encompasses a set of specific entailments, as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CHESS PLAYER (THE KNIGHT ANTONIUS BLOCK).
- DEATH IS A CHESS PLAYER (GRIM REAPER).
- THE VIRUS IS THE PLAGUE (BLACK DEATH) IN EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES.
- THE UK AT THE TIME OF COVID-19 IS EUROPE AT THE TIME OF THE PLAGUE IN THE MIDDLE AGES.
- THE UK'S GOVERNMENT'S CONFRONTATION OF THE VIRUS IS A CHESS GAME.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S DELAYED ACTIONS OF HANDLING COVID-19 IS A MATTER OF PLAYING FOR TIME.

Examining the other details in the cartoon, such as Johnson's question "HAVE YOU DISINFECTED THE PIECES?" which is regarded as the verbal process, in addition to his gesture towards the chess pieces, display Johnson's absurdity and negligence during this critical time, as he has focused on less important issues. This configuration triggers the negative stance the cartoonist reveals against Johnson's handling of the pandemic's emergence. So the details and the individual metaphors addressed above highlight the following metaphors: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LACK OF SERIOUSNESS IN CONFRONTING THE PANDEMIC IS LOSING A GAME WITH DEATH', and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S HANDLING OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE VIRUS IS A USELESS STRATEGY OF PLAYING FOR TIME WITH DEATH'. Though these metaphors emphasize the theme of delay and indifference, which has been a point of criticism against Johnson's responses to the pandemic, it might also have served as a neutral evaluation on Johnson's attempts to save time and protect his country, as he has been playing with death, in a comparison with the knight's strategy in the film of playing for time for the people, rather than for himself.

- Cartoon 1.3



Figure 4.5 Peter Brookes' cartoon about Boris Johnson's Emergency Bailout during Coronavirus Crisis in England, *The Times*, March 19, 2020



Figure 4.6 *Oliver Twist*, 'Oliver asking for more food, drawn by George Cruikshank for the first edition of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, 1837-38

The present cartoon, by Peter Brookes, relies on the source domain of FOOD and COOK which is inspired by George Cruikshank's⁵³ illustrations of Charles Dickens' novel, *Oliver Twist*. The contextual knowledge of the cartoon indicates that it comes as a response to the emergency bailout⁵⁴ that Johnson's government announced in March 2020 to support businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The bailout implemented was criticized for the following aspects: its slow disbursement to those in need, exclusion of some sectors and self-employed workers, and inadequate measures to address underlying economic inequality and precarious work. Thus, Brookes, in his portrayal, attempts to present this bailout and Johnson's emergency policies by referencing the iconic scene of Oliver's plea for more gruel from Mr. Bumble. Through this visual fusion, Brookes intentionally renders Johnson as the cruel Bumble, who stands near a basin holding a ladle, gazing in stupefied shock at Oliver. Behind him stands shocked his assistant, Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor of the Exchequer from 13 February 2020 to 5 July 2022. The cartoon is drawn upon the narrative reactional process in which the characters are in direct touch and eye contact (Johnson, Sunak and the orphan). Moreover, the relation is also signified as a superordinate-subordinate classificational process, which implies an overarching hierarchical relationship between Johnson and the orphan, where Johnson, or Mr. Bumble, shows the government's dominance over the well-being of his people. The orphan's appeal for more help underscores the power dynamic, highlighting the stark contrast between Johnson's authority and the orphan's vulnerability.

The symbolical and metaphorical configuration of Johnson as Mr. Bumble effectively draws attention to the latter's disgraceful personal traits, as transferred to the former through metaphorical mapping. The scene shows the placement of the characters as Johnson and Sunak at the left, which suggests Given information, adding nothing new to the event's analysis. On the contrary, the orphan is displayed at the right side, to represent New information, as the cartoonist attempts to convey and to engage the viewers in the interpretation. Another compositional aspect that gives value to the information delivered in any image is size. This aspect is skillfully employed in the cartoon, relying on the conceptual metaphor IMPORTANT IS BIG; in the cartoon, Brookes

⁵³ Cruikshank was a British book illustrator and caricaturist who is famous for his illustrations for some authors and novelists, such as Charles Dickens (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/George-Cruikshank>).

⁵⁴ In March 2020, Boris Johnson's government announced a £330 billion (\$420 billion) bailout package to support businesses badly affected by the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic. For more information, visit the following site: <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18312866.coronavirus-350bn-bailout-stop-britain-going-broke/>.

has attempted to highlight certain aspects through the oversized entities and to downplay other ones in the metaphorical depiction of Johnson. For example, the depiction of an orphan holding an oversized bowl and asking for more gruel saying “PLEASE, SIR, I NEED SOME MORE” suggests that the British people need more financial aid from the government. On the contrary, the undersized ladle carried by Johnson, with its weak amount of money, underscores the fact that the emergency bailout promised by the government is inadequate in combating the severe economic downturn.

Furthermore, the metaphorical image here accentuates other certain distinct features that critically perceive Johnson’s government as indifferent and unsympathetic towards the welfare of the British people during the pandemic. Concerning the textual modes exploited in the cartoon, it is notable that the ingredients in the basin are labeled with written tags such as LOANS, ZERO HOURS CONTRACT⁵⁵, VAT (VALUE-ADDED TAX)⁵⁶ and GIG ECONOMY⁵⁷, which signify the government’s promises to level up economy, for instance, Johnson’s plan to address the economic crisis has involved a combination of measures, including low-interest loans to businesses and a temporary reduction in VAT to stimulate consumer spending and supporting the economy during the pandemic.

Hence, the whole scene supplies a set of individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE MASTER OF HOUSEWORK, ‘MR. BUMBLE’.
- THE UK’S PANDEMIC EMERGENCY BAILOUT IS FOOD TO ITS POPULACE.
- LOANS, TAXES AND MONEY ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF FOOD.
- RISHI SUNAK IS MR. BUMBLE’S ASSISTANT.

⁵⁵ A zero-hours contract is an employment agreement that enables an employer to not guarantee regular work hours to the employee, but it requires the employee to be available to work if and when the employer requires their services (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/zero-hours-contract>).

⁵⁶ VAT is a consumption tax added to goods or services at each stage of production or distribution, ultimately paid by the final consumer and collected by businesses. It is used in many countries and it taxes only the value added at each stage, not the full value of the finished product (https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/what-vat_en).

⁵⁷ Gig economy is a term used to describe a labor market where workers are often hired on a short-term or freelance basis rather than being employed full-time. It refers to the individual jobs or projects that workers take on within this economy. Examples of this kind of jobs include ride-sharing services, food delivery and freelance work in various industries. (<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gig-economy.asp>).

- BRITS ARE ORPHANS, ‘OLIVER TWIST’.
- THE UK IS AN ORPHANAGE.
- MORE EMERGENCY BAILOUT NEEDS IS AN EMPTY BOWL TO BE FILLED WITH FOOD.
- THE GOVERNMENT’S EMERGENCY BAILOUT DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC IS TO GIVE FOOD TO HUNGRY ORPHANS.

Concerning the persuasive load and the ideology that motivate Brookes to manipulate this metaphorical image, it has been proposed that Brookes is criticizing Johnson’s failure to provide adequate and sufficient financial support during the pandemic, and he is the only figure responsible for that deficiency. Typically, Brookes’ criticism invokes the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S PANDEMIC EMERGENCY BAILOUT IS AN AUSTERITY MEAL’.

- **Cartoon 1.4**



Figure 4.7 Peter Brookes’ cartoon about Boris Johnson’s draft plan to ease the lockdown, published in *The Times*, May 6, 2020

This cartoon covers another crucial issue representing the UK’s government’s launching of a plan to get the country back to work. The Back-to-Work plan aims at promoting jobs in the building industry and manufacturing to return to work with the avoidance of public transport. Johnson, in

his daily conference on 30 April, 2020, elucidated that his government was developing a new road map for safely reopening workplaces⁵⁸. According to that futile announcement, waves of criticism were raised against Johnson and his plans. So, in line with this aspect, many cartoonists critically highlighted Johnson's return to work plan throughout their portrayals using different source domains of metaphorical conceptualization. Peter Brookes, for instance, in this image bases his cartoon on a visual intertextual reference to contemporary popular culture, namely the first major animated film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*⁵⁹, by Walt Disney Productions, which is based on the 1812 German fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm.

The cartoon is verbally bottomed with the dwarfs' encouraging song "HEIGH-HO, HEIGH-HO, IT'S BACK TO WORK WE GO!" In the cartoon, Johnson is the represented participant who is metaphorically portrayed as Snow White, holding a megaphone and ordering the dwarfs to "KEEP YOUR SOCIAL DISTANCE, AND ONLY ONE DWARF PER LIFT", and "SOME OF YOU LOOK WELL OVER 70 TO ME!" Those aged dwarfs stand for the British workers, some depicted as blue-collar workers with hammers, picks, and helmets, while others are presented as white-collar workers carrying briefcases. This intentional variation in the depiction of the dwarfs' occupations serves as a symbolic reference to Johnson's measures, which are seen as having far-reaching implications, negatively impacting workers from diverse sectors across the UK. The cartoonist draws his image on a narrative pattern with non-transactional process, though the verbal process conveyed through Johnson's orders to the dwarfs suggests that there is no intimacy between Johnson and the workers.

The verbal process represented in the cartoon by Johnson's speech to the dwarfs implies that though the dwarfs may appear older, Johnson is indifferent to the risks faced by people over 70. This could suggest that the government cares little about workers' safety, potentially exploiting them beyond the age of retirement. The metaphor ignited from this scene's details is 'BORIS JOHNSON'S BACK-TO-WORK PLAN IS A LACK OF CONCERN FOR THE PHYSICAL SAFETY OF WORKERS'.

⁵⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/apr/30/britain-is-past-peak-of-coronavirus-outbreak-says-boris-johnson>

⁵⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Snow-White-and-the-Seven-Dwarfs-film-1937>

Other salient semiotic aspects in the compositional meaning also have their key role in the image, such as size and the foregrounding-backgrounding dimension. Thus, the size of the characters featured in this image is metaphorically cued IMPORTANT IS BIG, which emphasizes the power dynamic between the workers and the government, and highlights the potential for exploitation and neglect of their safety and well-being. Moreover, the foregrounding position of the dwarfs while Johnson is in the background signifies that Johnson has been using the workers as a scapegoat since he ordered them to go back to work with no protective instructions or clear guidelines to follow. For this reason, the metaphorical configuration of the British workers as dwarfs standing in front of Snow White represents their vulnerability and powerlessness in relation to the Johnson's power, who is rendered as Snow White, their ruler in the tale, standing behind to protect herself from any risk.

Concerning the persuasive function of implementing this metaphorical configuration, it is relevant to mention first that though the character of Snow White commonly has culturally positive connotations as being innocent, virtuous, young and beautiful, Brookes is mapping onto Johnson from Snow White the undesirable features that are likely related to the fact that Snow White is also often seen as a naive and vulnerable character who is easily manipulated by those around her. In this case, Brookes attempts to imply that Johnson did not take the necessary precautions to protect workers or even to take their concerns seriously; rather he just gives orders without any real and serious concern to their safety.

- Cartoon 1.5



Figure 4.8 Morten Morland's cartoon about the Conservatives' handling of the pandemic, published in *The Times*, May 11, 2020

The cartoon presented by Morten Morland relies upon the source domain HUMANS and PEOPLE, precisely children's immaturity and irresponsible behavior. The cartoon, thus, brings to mind the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICIANS ARE IMMATURE CHILDREN', wherein the individuals in a position of power and authority behave in a childish and irresponsible manner. The contextual knowledge of the cartoon suggests the chaos ruling during the crisis and the conflicting plans the government announces. The cartoon encodes a group of toddlers wreaking havoc in a messy playroom with banners and painting stuff scattered everywhere, each one is writing a slogan or a phrase on those banners. They are, starting from the left of the image, the Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick, the Home Secretary Priti Patel, the senior advisor Dominic Cummings, Boris Johnson, the Health Secretary Matt Hancock, and Chris Whitty, the UK's chief medical advisor, while some others, like Michael Gove, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Cabinet Office Minister, are hidden behind a 10 Downing Street door. Morland in his cartoon successfully depends on the reactional pattern but non-transactional process, since the participants are busy with their messy actions and have no direct eye-contact. Symbolically, they stand for the

Tory party as they are the representatives of Johnson's political party and cabinet. It is noteworthy that all the characters in the cartoon are shown using painting or writing supplies to create their banners except for Cummings, who is shown using a chip paintbrush with red paint. This is used as a salient aspect by means of which the cartoonist intended to convey his hidden stance towards Cummings, who was commonly regarded as the source of controversial tactics and the main power in Johnson's decision-making process. The other salient aspect in this cartoon is the connection between the participants, each is depicted busy with their own slogans, messy works, but they have no shared connection, which suggests that the government's members do what they like individually, and there is no coherent correlation between them in making or implementing decisions.

Thus, the cartoon activates the following individual metaphors:

- THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS A GROUP OF NAUGHTY CHILDREN.
- THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S COVID-19 MEASURES AND PRECAUTIONARY POLICIES ARE CHILDREN'S MESSY WORKS.

Morland conveyed through this group of childish politicians and the words they are writing on the banners that they are immature and that they are indulging in trivial activities, rather than focusing on their duties and responsibilities during the crisis. The fact that they are making a mess reinforces the idea that they are behaving carelessly and without regard for the consequences of their actions. As such, this image evokes the metaphors 'THE CONSERVATIVES' COVID-19 MEASURES ARE CHILDREN'S CHAOTIC PLAY' and 'BORIS JOHNSON AND HIS GOVERNMENT'S MEMBERS ARE CHAOS MAKERS', which reveal the cartoonist's negative evaluation of the Conservatives' leadership and members. So, this metaphor certainly assesses the government's handling of the virus spread as a result of their lacking experience, control and wisdom.

- Cartoon 1.6



Figure 4.9 Peter Brookes’ cartoon on Boris Johnson’s government’s response to the crisis of care homes, published in *The Times*, May 15, 2020

The cartoon presented by Peter Brookes was published by *The Times* on 15 May, 2020 after the increasing criticism the UK’s government faced for its mishandling of the situation, with some accusations of being slow to respond and failing to provide an adequate support and resources to care homes. Prof. Martin Green, the Chief Executive of Care England, had declared earlier that “[w]e should have been focusing on care homes from the start of this pandemic [...]. What we saw at the start was a focus on the NHS which meant care homes often had their medical support from the NHS withdrawn.”⁶⁰ As such, Brookes, like many other cartoonists, attempted to criticize Johnson’s inadequate and delayed actions through a novel metaphorical configuration of Johnson.

Accordingly, Brookes constructs his image upon the source domain HUMAN BEINGS, specifically *aging*, as shown in Figure 4.9. Following Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), Johnson is the only represented participant in the cartoon, who has no relation with other elements. Thus, the image represents a non-transactional nature of meaning. The cartoon takes a form of a hexptych

⁶⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-52727221>

art figure in which the panels profile Johnson in different sitting positions and aging stages. Forceville (2011) argues that within the Source-Path-Goal schema, time passage could also be framed within this schema and activates the metaphor 'TIME IS A JOURNEY', in which time is metaphorically encoded as a trip we take to reach our goals by passing through different turns and roads. Consequently, Brookes renders Johnson's responses to the English care homes as a temporal journey across his own lifespan.

The top of the cartoon is framed with a verbal caption that reads CARE HOMES CRISIS; GOVT RESPONSE..., which serves as the target of the cartoon, and represents the crisis that care homes experienced during the pandemic and the corresponding response of Johnson. The six segments of the cartoon illustrate Johnson's slow response to the appeals made by care homes during the pandemic to protect them. So, the sequence of the image parts evokes the conceptual metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S RESPONSE TO THE CARE HOME CRISIS IS A SLOW AND PAINFUL JOURNEY TO OLD AGE'.

The first image depicts Johnson with an unenthusiastic attitude, with his hands clasped together in front of him. This posture, which can be viewed as a metonymic gesture (GESTURES FOR ATTITUDES), signifies his unwillingness to extend support or protection to the care home sector during the pandemic. In the second segment, Johnson is portrayed with his arms crossed, indicating his passive attitude towards the care home crisis and disagreement with the appeals made by the sector. In the third image, Johnson is leaning on a walking stick, implying that his ability to move is affected by age. The subsequent three images of the cartoon feature Boris Johnson as an elderly, incapacitated person confined to a wheelchair and helped by a caregiver, indicating his loss of power and influence.

The final image of the cartoon is a highly evocative and painful portrayal of Boris Johnson as a frail and vulnerable resident of a care home. The image captures him in a state of exhaustion, illness and isolation, as he can be seen shouting "AAARGH", an onomatopoeic expression that conveys his deep sense of suffering and desperate need for assistance, or possibly fear of being taken to a Care Home, which might result in his death. This powerful visual representation effectively illustrates the paradoxical situation in which Johnson may find himself in the future, having been indifferent to the care homes crisis during his time in power. It is worthy to note here

that in the interactive meaning of the visual social semiotics by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), the position of the characters in the image reveals their power dynamics and dominance, for instance, the first two panels display his dominance and negligence of the home cares problems while the other panels, particularly the fourth one, show a hand trying to help him up, which suggests his position is low in comparison to the hand (home cares), he is not the PM any longer.

To sum up, Brookes intended through this conceptualization to show that the domain of experience of aging is mapped onto Johnson's response to the care home crisis. He dysphemistically evaluates Johnson's responses and plans to help those in the front lines of confronting the virus spread as inadequate and time-consuming.

- **Cartoon 1.7**



Figure 4.10 Morten Morland's cartoon on Dominic Cummings's breaching of COVID-19 lockdown, published in *The Times*, May 27, 2020

The cartoon in Figure 4.10 was published for *The Times* after days of the revelation of a resounding scandal⁶¹ on Dominic Cummings' trip to Durham during the COVID-19 lockdown

⁶¹ The trip was seen as a blatant violation of the rules that instructed people to remain at home and avoid nonessential travel. The justification for this breaching, as Cummings stated, was to secure childcare for his son in case he and his wife became ill with COVID-19. For more information concerning the scandal and Cummings' Durham trip, visit the following site: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominic_Cummings_scandal.

rules. Thus, Boris Johnson's attitude towards that breaching of the rules was to stand by his senior advisor, justifying that Cummings had acted "responsibly, legally and with integrity".⁶²

Pertaining to Morland's cartoon, the image has been framed with the shrewd title 'BLINDSPOT', which symbolically refers to the source of the cartoon comparing Cummings' disregarding action towards the measures the government imposed during the lockdown to a blind spot in the car collision. So, this represents the source of the cartoon, which is metaphorically mapped onto Cummings' scandal and his influence over Boris Johnson, who often supported Cummings' actions. Morland relies on a CAR ACCIDENT SCENARIO combined with a FAMILY SCENARIO to convey two attributes (ignorance of rules and Cummings' power).

The image presents Cummings running away from a crashed car, carrying a baby car seat and Boris Johnson is sitting on it, rendered as Cummings' baby. Accordingly, this image conceptualizes Johnson as a little toddler, which profiles the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A LITTLE TODDLER TAKEN CARE OF BY DOMINIC CUMMINGS', and 'THE ADVISOR'S TREATMENT OF HIS BOSS IS A FATHER'S TREATMENT OF HIS SON'. Again, the use of children to metaphorically conceptualize politicians definitely suggests the negative attitude of the cartoonist against some politicians' leadership or behavior. Concerning the analysis of the visual and social semiotics suggested by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), the representational participants in the cartoon are depicted in a narrative process with non-transactional relation, since the two characters are not in real connection, rather they are depicted as having a father-son relation which metaphorically evokes the concept of superordinate-subordinate. Moreover, the size and foreground-backgrounding dimension also add to the compositional meaning of the image. The STAY HOME banner is very big in size, which stands for its importance and urgency. In spite of its significance, Cummings has collided with it severely and run away. Positioning Johnson and Cummings in the front line whereas the banner is in the background uncovers the cartoonist's intention to get the viewers' attention to Cummings' scandal and his power over Johnson.

⁶²https://www.google.com/search?q=boris+johnson+said+%22responsibly%2C+legally+and+with+integrity.%22&rlz=1C1GCEU_enES973ES976&oq=boris+johnson+said+%22responsibly%2C+legally+and+with+integrity.%22&qs=chrome..69i57.5150j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:05154718,vid:oH73zengC0A

Moreover, portraying Cummings as a baby caregiver or as Johnson's father implies that he has control over Johnson and over his decisions. This notion surely evokes the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICAL INFLUENCE IS PHYSICAL CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT', in which Cummings is portrayed as having the power to direct the actions of Johnson and subordinates him in much the same way that a father might control the movements of a child who seems to be applauding, unaware of the gravity of the situation.

Furthermore, the car, with a number plate inscription 1 RULE, relevantly stands for the lockdown rules the British government had imposed upon people at the time. The car accident with an oversized banner that represents the NHS slogan STAY HOME, PROTECT THE NHS, SAVE LIVES, reveals that the decision makers in Johnson's government are reckless and breaching the measures they set out to prevent the spread of the virus. Thus, the whole image ignites the following metaphors: 'DOMINIC CUMMINGS' BREACHING OF THE IMPOSED LOCKDOWN IS A CAR CRASH/PHYSICAL DAMAGE' and 'DOMINIC CUMMINGS' IMPACT ON BORIS JOHNSON IS CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT'.

- **Cartoon 1.8**



Figure 4.11 Peter Brookes' cartoon about the PM's responses during the pandemic, published in *The Times*, June 10, 2020

Peter Brookes' cartoon in figure 4.11 was published in *The Times* during the wave of criticism against Johnson's government slow and ineffective responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was drawn upon the source domains DESTINATION and TRANSPORTATION, exposing that the pandemic-related measures Johnson's government should have taken then were destinations to reach. According to this metaphorical frame, Brookes employed the image of a bus as a metaphor for the route Johnson's government should take in response to the pandemic.

Once again, the cartoon was conceived in a hexptych art image, wherein each segment illustrates a certain plan or issue. Johnson is the only representational participant so the process is a narrative one with non-transactional nature in which no vector exists. The compositional meaning of the image renders Johnson as the protagonist of the event, presenting him as a bus passenger desperately trying to catch different buses to reach his destinations. Moreover, Johnson's facial expressions (firstly running, then tired, and gasping for breath in the last image) and his body language also convey a sense of urgency and the need for swift action to address these issues effectively during the early stages of the pandemic in particular. They may also show that Johnson's efforts to address the above-mentioned issues were insufficient or ineffective, which led to a sense of frustration and disappointment among the public and the government as well.

The upper left verbal caption ALWAYS LATE..., on the other hand, represents the target domain of the cartoon, which indicates a criticism of Johnson's slow responses and policies towards the pandemic. This is metaphorically rendered as missing a bus. In each of the six segments, Johnson is seen sprinting to catch the buses, making gestures that represent his failure to catch the buses he wants and missing the targets he intended to achieve. Each bus in the cartoon has a different destination, displayed respectively as LOCKDOWN, TESTING, PPE⁶³, CARE HOMES, SCHOOLS, and RACE DEBATE⁶⁴, which are regarded as the responses, actions and plans that Johnson should have taken to combat the virus promptly.

⁶³ PPE stands for Personal Protective Equipment.

⁶⁴ Debates discussed the racial disparities in health outcomes, see <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-06-04/debates/ABB50B2B-D9B8-4E3C-BC60-A6D039DF2973/PublicHealthEnglandReviewCovid-19Disparities>.

Thus, the cartoon, according to these scenes along with Johnson's body movements, triggers the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A BUS PASSENGER WHO IS ALWAYS LATE.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S UPCOMING COVID-19 PROCEDURES AND MEASURES ARE BUSES THAT HAVE BEEN MISSED.
- COVID-19 CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES ARE DESTINATIONS TO REACH.
- NOT REACHING THE SUPPOSED MEASURES AROUND THESE ISSUES IS MISSING BUSES.

Throughout the individual metaphors above, the cartoonist has negatively evaluated Johnson's responses as slow, inadequate and ineffective, considering him as the primary cause of the fatal outcome at the time. The ALWAYS LATE... caption, which metaphorically compares Johnson's slow action during the pandemic to an always-late passenger who misses all buses, is fundamentally seen as the unsatisfactory evaluation of Johnson's government responses during the pandemic.

- Cartoon 1.9



Figure 4.12 Morten Morland's cartoon about Boris Johnson's Re-opening Plan, *The Times*, June 15, 2020

The cartoon in figure 4.12 was published on the heels of the British Government's announcement of setting a list of retailers allowed to open their doors to their customers under certain guidelines on 15th of June 2020⁶⁵. In the cartoon, seemingly one of the cultural references is a china shop image, wherein two represented characters are depicted with non-transactional-reactional narrative process. The cartoon reveals a chaotic scene with an inscription written on the store display window, RISHI & BULL. The cartoon is framed with THE GRAND REOPENING... textual caption on the top-left side of the image, which represents the target of the cartoon and the verbal process in the cartoon, while the source domain is visually represented as a wrecked retailer and a grand bull inside.

Concerning the other visual semiotics, mainly size and body posture, Morland draws a grand bull with shaggy blonde hair in aggressively uncontrollable movement to metaphorically configure

⁶⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-high-street-shops-department-stores-and-shopping-centres-to-reopen-safely-in-england>

Johnson. The image of a grand bulky bull in this way suggests Johnson's leadership and dominance (destructive power) or even his mismanagement during the pandemic. Due to this distinctive look, it is extremely easy to deduce that this grand, aggressive bull is Johnson, with his destructive management of the pandemic. Moreover, the image of the bull aggressively moving inside a retailer's is probably referenced as a cultural intertextual to one of the well-known British idioms, 'like a bull in a china shop'⁶⁶, destroying everything around such as cups, vases, dishes and shelves.

Not surprisingly, depicting Johnson as a mad aggressive bull evokes and highlights some earlier negative attributes from the source object ANIMAL/BULL onto the target object, Boris Johnson. Strikingly, a bull, like any other member of an animal categorization, has twofold meanings that cartoonists may make use of in their cartoons. It may be either a positive sense, that is a symbol of leadership, fertility and hard work, or a negative meaning, intrinsically referred to aggressiveness and obstinacy in political discourse. The other character in the image is Rishi Sunak, who stands holding two ANTI-BACTERIAL cleaners in his hands, as if ready to disinfect Johnson. What attracts the attention more here is Sunak's speech to Johnson, "ALL SET!", which seemingly refers to the new recovery guidelines that the government set at the time. Humorously, the "ALL SET!" script is utilized to criticize the whole proposed policies Johnson and Sunak set to cope the economic recession then.

The whole scene suggests the following metaphorical sub-mappings:

- BORIS JOHNSON'S REOPENING POLICY DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO GET AN UNCONTROLLABLE BULL INTO A CHINA SHOP.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A RAMPAGE BULL.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CHAOS MAKER.
- BRITAIN IS A WRECKED CHINA SHOP.
- RISHI SUNAK IS A SHOP OWNER.

To sum up, the whole cartoon and the individual metaphors ignite the metaphor 'THE GOVERNMENT'S REOPENING POLICY IS A MESS/A WRECK IN A RETAILER SHOP',

⁶⁶ A person who is described as being "like a bull in a china shop" is characterized as being extremely careless in their movements or behavior (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/like-a-bull-in-a-china-shop>).

which is in turn based on the general metaphor ‘GOVERNMENTAL CORRUPTION IS A DESTRUCTIVE FORCE’. The cartoon reveals the cartoonist’s negative attitude and evaluation of Johnson’s decision of reopening certain retailers as creating harm or turmoil as a result of his failure to recognize or consider the consequences of this action, while Sunak is seemingly evaluated as attempting to fix the mess Johnson made.

- **Cartoon 1.10**



Figure 4.13 Morten Morland’s cartoon about Boris Johnson and the Civil Service, *The Times*, June 30, 2020

The cartoon shown in figure 4.13, created by Morten Morland, features the domains MACHINES and TOOLS. It was published after the British government declared its plan to make huge reforms expressed by those politicians, Dominic Cummings and Michael Gove, who explicitly indicated a need for substantial changes within the civil service⁶⁷. This is well expressed in the government’s declaration:

Almost overnight, the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has transformed the work and workplaces of the public sector. Public servants are playing a leading role in the response to the pandemic.

⁶⁷ More information concerning the issue can be found in this link: <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-50982413>.

Healthcare workers are keeping medical systems functioning and families safe. Civil Servants are finding novel ways to design and channel unprecedented economic stimulus spending and manage severe spikes in unemployment (Public servants and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: Emerging responses and initial recommendations, 2020).

Morland, like many cartoonists dealing with this issue, created a cartoon depicting how Johnson and his government planned to reform the civil service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the portrayal is based on the metaphor 'THE UK GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIONS ARE VEHICLES'. In the cartoon, Johnson, Michael Gove and Dominic Cummings are working on a classic Rolls Royce car to make sweeping changes, along with another figure inside the car who seems to be the driver, he looks puzzled because of the changes and is supposed to represent the stereotyped British civil servant, wearing a bowler hat, unlike the 'blue collar workers' (i.e., the four members of the Cabinet). This depiction suggests that the cartoon is artfully built upon the non-transactional reactionary nature of the representational meaning. The object of the cartoon thus is the UK's civil service, represented by a white Rolls Royce car with a number plate that reads CIVIL SERVICE. This white color, as a salient aspect of the compositional process, is metonymically used to represent Whitehall and the British civil service. This aspect is often used as a salient feature to emphasize certain valuable information in the image.

Johnson, Cummings and Gove are characterized as AUTOMOTIVE MECHANICS with blue work wear, symbolizing the British Conservative Party's proposed reforms in the civil service during the crisis of coronavirus. Their position contributes to the interactive and compositional implications of the image. For instance, Cummings is situated atop the car, while the others are positioned beside it in a lower place, except for the civil servant within the car, which suggests his status depends on Johnson's government's irrational decisions. This is regarded as a power relation in which Cummings is the mastermind behind the government's reform, so according to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) he is the nucleus and the other characters are subservient to his decisions. Thus, the image suggests a power dynamic where Cummings exerts authority over the situation, Johnson appears vulnerable, and the civil servant is visibly shocked by their actions and confined by them. This portrayal implies Johnson's subservience to Cummings, who is depicted in an elevated position. Actually, shaking up the UK's civil service, as already noticed, was utilized by Johnson's cabinet as an attempt to revive the economy and control inflation and unemployment,

all of it caused by the emergence of the pandemic. Despite the setting being a well-equipped place, Morland chose to portray it as a messy and cluttered garage, which symbolizes the potential chaotic outcomes of the government's reforms in the civil service. In the depiction, Johnson is seen applying paint to the car's exterior, creating a sporty appearance with lively shades of yellow and orange, evoking a sense of high speed. The tire he holds is typical of those found in sports cars, known for their low section height and large rim diameter.

Going deeper into the actions of the cartoon's participants, Gove is depicted as attempting to install a turbocharger in the classic car's engine hood, in order to enhance its overall capabilities and performance. Meanwhile, Cummings is shown sawing off the roof of the car to give it a more modern and retractable appearance, and an unidentified person is seen adding a spoiler, painted like the Union Jack, to the back of the car, to improve its stability and agility. Additionally, the cartoonist replaces the emblem of the Rolls Royce car, the 'Spirit of Ecstasy'⁶⁸, with John Bull's⁶⁹ emblem. This replacement may suggest a deliberate departure from the conventional, possibly elitist, image of the UK's civil service, and Johnson's government's determination to restructure or rebrand, as Cummings often urges, to align the civil service with different values that may connect to the Conservatives' alleged values.

Generally, this image yields the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A MECHANIC.
- THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE LEADERS ARE MECHANICS.
- THE UK'S CIVIL SERVICE IS A CLASSIC ROLLS ROYCE.
- THE CONSERVATIVES' PLANS TO REFORM THE CIVIL SERVICE ARE UNREALISTIC MODIFICATIONS TO A PRESTIGIOUS CAR.

Thus, the aforementioned entailments activate a more general metaphor, 'THE GOVERNMENT'S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF THE CIVIL SERVICE IS DAMAGING A

⁶⁸ This is a sculpture of a woman on Rolls-Royce cars. She is leaning forward with outstretched arms and a puffy, wing-like piece of fabric flowing from her arms to her back. It is an iconic symbol of elegance, luxury, and high-end living, which embodies the commitment of the company to excellence, attention to details and exclusivity. For more information, the following site is recommended: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirit_of_Ecstasy.

⁶⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/John-Bull-English-symbol>

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE’, which reveals the cartoonist’s negative evaluation of the government’s proposed reforms as damaging and leading to unpleasant and unreal outcomes.

- **Cartoon 1.11**

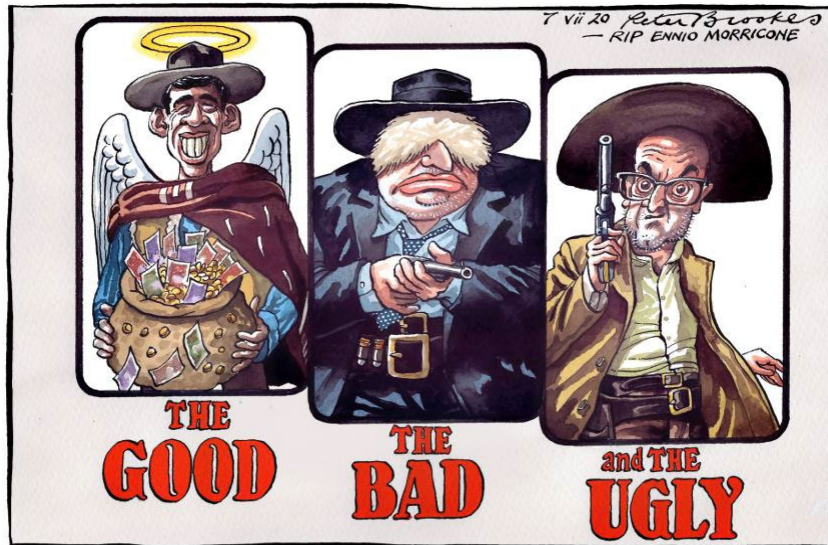


Figure 4.14 Peter Brookes’ cartoon about *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* in the British Government, published in *The Times*, July 7, 2020



Figure 4.15 The original poster of the movie *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*, released in 1966

The cartoon shown in figure 4.14 is a satirical version of one of the famous classic western movies, *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (figure 4.15), which was released in 1966⁷⁰. Brookes in this image encoded Boris Johnson and two of his cabinet members as the main characters in this movie; Johnson was presented as Angel Eyes (BORIS JOHNSON IS THE BAD), on his left is Rishi Sunak as Blondie (RISHI SUNAK IS THE GOOD), and on the right we find Dominic Cummings rendered as Tuco (DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS THE UGLY).

The cartoon relied upon the CONFLICT and STRUGGLE domain, wherein the characters are in conflict to achieve their personal gains and goals. The figures in both images have the same body postures and representative details, except Rishi Sunak, who is deliberately portrayed as a smiling angel holding a bag full of cash and gold instead of a pistol. Thus, Brookes depends on the narrative pattern in which the participants are in non-transactional processes. The central character represents his vital role during the pandemic. This thematic alteration has communicative value in the compositional meaning of the image and the characters' roles, for instance Sunak was the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, so he is responsible for designing and implementing various economic support packages⁷¹. Though he is depicted as an angel, but he may be seen as a deceiver thanks to his cunning and resourcefulness, so he is ultimately portrayed as a morally ambiguous character with both good and questionable traits. In relation to Kress & van Leeuwen's theory of multimodal discourse analysis (2006), the compositional function of the semiotic

⁷⁰ The movie events turn around three main characters, Blondie, Angel Eye and Tuco, who are searching for a cache of Confederate gold during the American Civil War. Throughout the movie, the characters are engaged in a series of betrayals, shootouts, events and escapes, trying to outsmart each other to find the gold. For more details, this site is helpful: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-summary-characters.html>.

⁷¹ Before July 2020, Rishi Sunak announced a number of measures and policies to support the UK's economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the key measures he announced include the following: on March 20th, 2020, Rishi Sunak announced the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which allowed employers to furlough workers and receive government support to cover a portion of their wages. On March 26th, 2020, he disclosed a package of measures to support the self-employed, including the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). On March 23rd, 2020, he announced a number of measures to support businesses, including a package of business loans, grants and tax deferrals. On March 24th, 2020, he announced a package of measures to support the housing market, including a mortgage holiday for homeowners. On June 1st, 2020, he announced an extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme until the end of June 2020. For more information, these two websites are recommended: <https://www.uhy-uk.com/covid-19/self-employment-income-support-scheme-faqs> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-screening-equality-impact-assessment/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme#:~:text=The%20Coronavirus%20Job%20Retention%20Scheme.coronavirus%20to%20retain%20their%20employees.>

resources or elements is probably achieved through the gazing and close-up shots in addition to frame and the connected lines among the represented participants.

Thus, Brookes depicted the three characters gazing directly at the viewers, the importance of kinesics for communication has been already emphasized by Halliday (1989) and Kress & van Leeuwen (2006). The straight gaze by the participants, as Kress & van Leeuwen (2006:116-17) mention, is an additional resource to the meaning of the metaphorical image of the characters, and it has at least two functions: “In the first place it creates a visual form of direct address”, and “[i]n the second place it constitutes an ‘image act’. The producer uses the image to do something to the viewer. It is for this reason that we have called this kind of image a ‘demand’”. Thus, in this image, the direct gaze demands the viewers to enter in an imaginary relationship with the participants; it is not only to receive information from them, rather the viewers have to analyze what is behind the participants’ direct gazes. The vector is done through the eye line of the participants towards the viewers. Thus, the facial expressions of the participants and the close-up shots represent Brookes’ other tendency to engage the viewers in the interpretational stage. This ideological tendency is being reinforced by Brookes’ utilization of frame disconnection among the participants, the frame that conveys Johnson’s cabinet elements are not in cohesive relations, and they are independent in their views and ideologies.

The cartoon, according to the above assumed metaphorical representations, as many others, brings to mind the conceptual metaphor ‘POLITICIANS ARE ACTORS’, which interplays with the more specific metaphors ‘THE CONSERVATIVES’ CORONAVIRUS POLICIES AND STRATEGIES ARE ACTION MOVIES’ and ‘THE CONSERVATIVES’ CORONAVIRUS MEASURES AND POLICIES ARE MEANS OF VIOLENCE AND BETRAYAL AMONG POLITICIANS’.

It is noteworthy that the cartoon exposes Brookes’ satirical attitude towards these three politicians, portraying how they were perceived by the public during the pandemic and their responses to the crisis. The main characters from *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* are metaphorically employed to convey Brookes’ negative evaluation of Johnson’s cabinet as a whole and Johnson’s leadership in particular. For instance, portraying Cummings as Tuco suggests that though he always seen as the most predominant and effective character in Johnson’s government,

but in this scene he is rendered as a comic figure and , as Tuco, under the Good’s control. Johnson (the Bad) represents the opposite, being the most malevolent in his actions, especially in handling the pandemic and imposing strict measures on the people. The protagonist in this cartoon is Sunak (the Good), who appears as striking a middle ground between the two extremes, representing both morality and cunning. Like in the movie, Sunak is depicted with a sense of honor and fairness, but he also engages in deceptive and manipulative actions to achieve his goals. As a result, he can be considered a combination of both good and morally ambiguous qualities, rendering him as an interesting and multidimensional character in the film.

- **Cartoon 1.12**



Figure 4.16 Morten Morland’s cartoon on Boris Johnson’s reaction to the home care crisis with the increase in the number of fatalities, published in *The Times*, July 8, 2020

This cartoon was published in *The Times* after days of accusations sparked by the British PM’s perceived attitudes against the British care homes for not adhering to proper protocols and procedures during the pandemic. Johnson alleged that “too many care homes didn’t really follow the procedures,” then, he shifted the blame onto the care homes managers for causing an increase in the death toll, which at the time stood at “44,236, up 16 on the day”⁷². The cartoon as presented by Morland is based upon the source domain COMPETITION, illustrating how Johnson’s

⁷² <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jul/06/anger-after-johnson-appears-to-blame-care-homes-for-their-high-death-toll>

government may be striving to achieve its own goals at the expense of home care workers and their welfare.

The caption BOOBY PAGEANT... in the top-left corner of the cartoon represents the target of the cartoon, which metaphorically conceptualizes the whole situation as a beauty pageant where contestants are in competition to win. But instead of the word ‘beauty’, Morland utilized wordplay through the use of ‘booby’, which according to the *Macmillan Dictionary* and WordNet 2.1 means a stupid and foolish person. ‘Booby prize’ in the *Cambridge Dictionary* means “a prize given as a joke to the person who finishes last in a competition”.⁷³ Thus, the two terms imply a negative connotation and satirical assessment of Johnson’s false allegations and foolish behavior towards the protection of the home cares and the increase in death tolls there. Thus, the accusation of Johnson as making statements that are inaccurate or misleading, especially regarding the role of social care homes in the spread of the virus, is emphasized also through the employment of the title MIS-SPEAK instead of the expected MISS BEAUTY or MISS SPEAK title in a pageant, which serves as a satirical evaluation of Morland against Johnson’s information and allegations and their impact on public perceptions and attitudes.

Regarding the visual and social aspects, the cartoon successfully relies upon the narrative – reactionary process in which the actor (Johnson) has a non-transactional relation with the other two men standing in the background; on the left Dominic Cummings, and on the right Jacob Rees-Mogg, the leader of the House of Commons and Lord President of the Council from 2019 to 2022. These two other figures are supposed to be also contestants in the ‘Booby Pageant’, like Johnson, and Johnson has defeated them by being the dumbest and most foolish among them, hence he has been chosen to receive the booby prize for Mis-speak(ing). Concerning the interactive meaning of the cartoon, with Johnson in the center and at a frontal angle, emanates the metaphor ‘IMPORTANT IS CENTRE’, which provides a sense of responsibility and dominance; this position reveals that Johnson is the nucleus in the process and the source of misinformation. The salient aspect of the compositional meaning and the value of information, on the other hand, is well identified through placing Johnson in the foreground whereas the two other participants stand in the background, which also suggests Johnson’s responsibility and leadership during the

⁷³ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/booby-prize>

pandemic. The compositional frame suggests that they have connected lines among them and approval of what Johnson is talking about, that is why they are depicted happy and clapping to Johnson.

Instead of expressing thanks and gratitude to the audience, as we often see in such events, Johnson is presented blaming them saying “GOSH, THERE ARE SO MANY I’D LIKE TO BLAME...” while the two other contestants are clapping behind, the verbal process in the cartoon reveals Johnson’s vulnerability. Through the metaphorical configuration of this cartoon, the entailments that ignite the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S BLAMES ON THE CARE HOMES ARE A GULLIBLE CONTEST’ are the following:

- BRITISH POLITICS IS A BOOBY PAGEANT.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS ‘MIS-SPEAK’ IN THE BOOBY PAGEANT.
- THE UK CONSERVATIVES ARE CONTESTANTS IN THE BOOBY PAGEANT.
- JOHNSON’S COVID-19 BRIEFING CONFERENCES REGARDING THE CARE HOMES ARE PART OF THE BOOBY PAGEANT.
- THE UK IS THE STAGE.
- THE NATION IS THE AUDIENCE.

To sum up, the above-mentioned individual metaphors uncover Morland’s negative attitude towards Johnson’s false allegations and his constant blames that the British care homes did not follow the healthy protocols nor utilized the PPE for protection, thus the cartoon implies the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S CARE HOME ACCUSATIONS ARE LIES AND A FORM OF MISINFORMATION IN A PAGEANT’.

- Cartoon 1.13

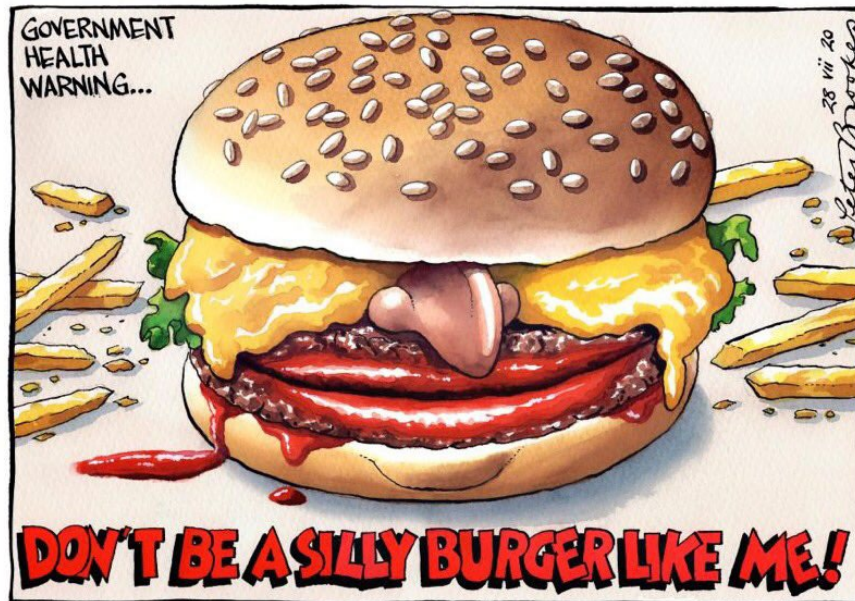


Figure 4.17 Peter Brookes' cartoon on Boris Johnson's full-fat, high calorie quarter pounder burger, published in *The Times*, July 28, 2020



Figure 4.18 Silly Burger is a talking burger that appears throughout Toca Life Stories⁷⁴

Peter Brookes' cartoon, published in *The Times*, was a response to Boris Johnson's battle with COVID-19 in March 2020 and the British government's introduction of what was called the

⁷⁴ https://tocalifestories.fandom.com/wiki/Silly_Burger#Personality

‘Better Health’ campaign⁷⁵ on July 27th 2020. The campaign’s goal was to encourage people to enhance their health amidst the pandemic. In response to this initiative, Johnson posted a tweet advocating for adherence to this strategy, emphasizing the significance of making modest lifestyle adjustments to enhance well-being. He remarked “[l]osing weight is hard but with some small changes we can all feel fitter and healthier. If we all do our bit, we can reduce our health risks and protect ourselves against coronavirus – as well as taking pressure off the NHS”⁷⁶. This sentiment was reaffirmed in October 2020 when he openly acknowledged that he “was too fat”⁷⁷.

In the cartoon, Brookes utilizes the source domain FOOD and COOKING with a combination of a visual allusion to Silly Burger, a character appearing in a 2D computer-animated web series⁷⁸, which was accused of being bad tempered and trivial. The term ‘Silly Burger’ may also trigger a wordplay on ‘a silly bugger,’ which establishes a humorous allusion. In this way, Brookes subtly aims to mock down Johnson’s actions and statements as both foolish and inappropriate. Johnson is the sole represented character in the cartoon and, like most cartoonists, Brookes tends to hide his eyes with the PM’s untidy shaggy hair, although the image is regarded, with a direct gaze at the viewer, to be a ‘demanding’ image that attempts to establish an imaginary relation with the viewers to be engaged. The close shot also signifies intimacy and more connectedness between the participant and the viewers.

In addition to these semiotic aspects, the cartoon encompasses other details that add ridicule to the theme, such as the image of a full-fat quarter pounder burger, with melted cheese over Johnson’s eyes, representing his blonde hair, the ground beef in the burger rendered as Johnson’s face, ketchup as his lips, and scattered fries. The image serves as a satirical criticism of Johnson’s personality and his administration’s handling of the crisis. Thus, it highlights Brookes’ perception of Johnson’s government as superficial in dealing with the virus. To emphasize this notion, the cartoonist accompanied the image with a caption at the top-left side GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING... and the inclusion of what seems to be a speech bubble featuring Johnson saying

⁷⁵ <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

⁷⁶ <https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1287649130655997959>

⁷⁷ “‘I was too fat’: Boris Johnson Explains His ‘nasty’ Brush with Covid”, 6 October 2020, video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyPMIOGGXMs>).

⁷⁸ https://tocalifestories.fandom.com/wiki/Toca_Life_Stories

“DON'T BE A SILLY BURGER LIKE ME!”, which was interpreted as a satirical reference to the British government’s health strategy being seen as ineffective and inadequate.

Thus, this satirical portrayal contributes to the metaphors that emerge from the image, namely ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS A SILLY BURGER’ and ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS A FULL-FAT QUARTER POUNDER BURGER’⁷⁹, underscoring the perceived hypocrisy and absurdity in his leadership during the crisis. The metaphors highlight how Johnson’s appearance and lifestyle choices are incongruent with the guidance he imparts to others, such as maintaining a healthier lifestyle. This inconsistency may symbolize Johnson’s perceived lack of seriousness, leadership and competence in the crisis’ management.

- **Cartoon 1.14**



Figure 4.19 Morten Morland’s cartoon about the second wave of COVID-19, published in *The Times*, August 3, 2020

In image 4.19 Morten Morland utilizes the metaphorical domain NATURAL FORCES to encode the risk of a second wave of the COVID-19 virus, as announced by the UK’s government

⁷⁹ This is a type of hamburger typically found at McDonald's, consisting of a 4-ounce (113 gram) beef patty, cheese, lettuce, onions, pickles and condiments served on a sesame seed bun (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quarter_Pounder).

earlier.⁸⁰ The caption at the top-left corner of the image, SECOND WAVE..., verbally represents the target object of the cartoon, which is visually rendered in this way. The cartoon absurdly exhibits Boris Johnson sitting on a chair in the sea near the beach, wearing diving fins on his hands, inflatable sleeves on his ankles, and an improperly worn scuba diving mask on his mouth. He also wears a swimming ring around his waist and swimming shorts over his suit trousers. Johnson's foregrounding placement suggests his role as a leader to be in the first fighting lines to defeat the virus whereas in the background the iconic white cliffs of Dover are visible, and several people are on the beach looking at him. Thus, this position displays Johnson as the only character who is a representational participant in the cartoon and should take responsibility.

The symbolic process in the cartoon is well shown through Morland's use of the white cliffs of Dover, which serves as a symbolic reference to the UK and triggers the sense that Britain is under closure because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cliffs are a typical symbol of British strength and resilience, but they are also a barrier that separates the nation from the rest of Europe. By placing Johnson in front of the cliffs facing the sea, Morland attempts to suggest that Johnson is trying to defend the nation against the virus, but his efforts are ultimately futile and absurd, as his personal protective equipment is improper and absurd. The medium term shot of the cartoon also reveals Johnson's facial expression reflecting the inner feelings of worry and failure in a perilous situation, and the absurd attempts to curb the second wave of the virus. This depiction, with the indirect gaze of Johnson, transmits the cartoonist's purpose to convey an item of information.

The depiction of Johnson in this perilous situation activates a set of metaphorical triggers under the metaphor 'THE VIRUS SPREAD IS AN OCEAN TIDAL WAVE', which are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS AN UNSKILLED DIVER CONFRONTING HIGH WAVES.
- CORONAVIRUS IS AN ANGRY OCEAN FULL OF DANGEROUS WAVES.
- CORONAVIRUS' SECOND WAVE IS A COMING SEA WAVE.

⁸⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/02/coronavirus-england-boris-johnson-looking-at-second-wave-lockdown-scenarios> and <https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-why-talk-of-a-second-wave-of-covid-19-may-be-premature-12038563>

- BORIS JOHNSON'S MEASURES AGAINST THE SECOND WAVE OF THE VIRUS ARE INAPPROPRIATE DIVING GEARS.

- INACTIVE AND FRAGILE COVID-19 MEASURES ARE THE MISUSE OF DIVING AND SWIMMING GEAR.

Doubtlessly, these entailments uncover the critical and humorous evaluation of the cartoonist against Johnson's management of the coming wave of the virus, regarding it as inefficient and absurd, and at the same time activate a more general metaphor, 'BORIS JOHNSON'S POLICIES TO CONTROL THE SECOND WAVE OF THE VIRUS ARE AN INADEQUATE GEAR TO CONTROL THE HIGH WAVES OF THE SEA'.

- **Cartoon 1.15**



Figure 4.20 Peter Brookes' cartoon about the stress created between the Government and the civil service, published in *The Times*, August 23, 2020

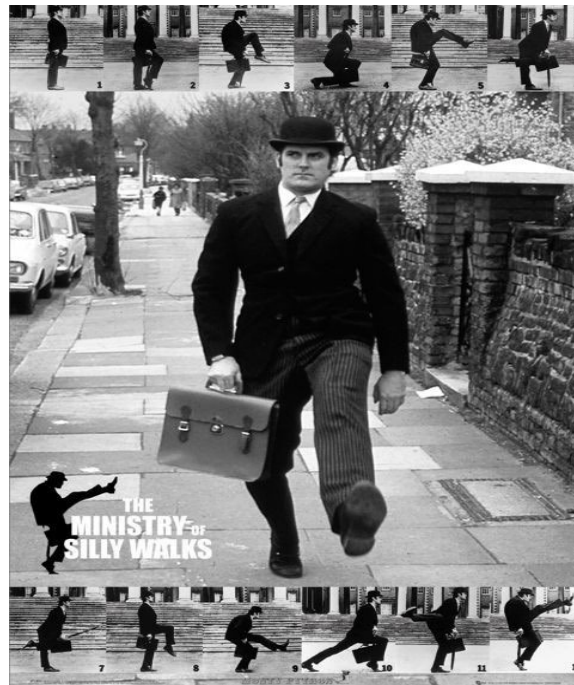


Figure 4.21 Monty Python’s poster of “The Ministry of Silly Walks”, with John Cleese as a Civil Servant in the Ministry, 1970

The cartoon displayed in Figure 4.21 comes as a criticism of Johnson’s governmental plan to fire a long list of Whitehall figures and make essential changes to the civil service, as described by Dominic Cummings. Such plan was put into action as a result to the negative financial effect of the virus and the government’s insufficient funding then. Therefore, most accusations were centered on Johnson’s government’s persistent attempts to oust senior civil servants and former mandarins, following the scandal of the mutant algorithm and exam fiasco⁸¹. The cartoon is visually inspired by an old Monty Python sketch, “The Ministry of Silly Walks”⁸², which satirized the bureaucratic system followed by the government at the time. The cartoon portrays a non-transactional narrative process in which the main represented participants are Johnson and Dominic Cummings, who is putting the civil servants into the skip bin (container). The characters have no eye contact with each other and no vector is transmitted among them. The analysis of the

⁸¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/education-53923279>

⁸² The “Ministry of Silly Walks” is a sketch from the British comedy show “Monty Python’s Flying Circus” that first aired in 1970. It features John Cleese as a government minister responsible for regulating and developing silly walks. The sketch is a satirical take on government bureaucracy and is known for its absurd and surreal humor. It has become one of the most iconic moments in British comedy history (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ministry_of_Silly_Walks).

visual process reveals that Johnson and Cummings have been rendered as construction workers, with both in construction hi-vis garments, pointing at a yellow skip bin where civil servants are walking into in a silly manner. It is significant to mention here that this portrayal generates a novel metaphor, 'POLITICIANS ARE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' who either build or demolish through the efficiency and relevance of their leadership. Thus, the cartoon is based on the source domain BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION.

The skip bin, or the container, beside which the two men are standing, reads SKIPGOAT CO. LTD, which is regarded as a humorous wordplay, since the use of 'skipgoat' instead of 'scapegoat' highlights the unfair targeting of the government's civil service reshaping plan. This in turn activates another metaphor, 'CIVIL SERVANTS ARE THE SCAPEGOATS OF UNJUST GOVERNMENTS'. Additionally, there is a banner on the skip bin that reads CIVIL SERVANTS ONLY, which is used as a metaphor to illustrate how the government may see civil servants as expendable or useless, comparing them to trash that needs to be discarded (i.e., implying that CIVIL SERVANTS ARE WASTE MATERIAL).

Precisely, the image in this figure, thus, triggers the following metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CONSTRUCTION WORKER DISPOSING OF CIVIL SERVANTS IN A SKIP BIN.
- CIVIL SERVANTS ARE SCAPEGOATS.
- THE UK GOVERNMENT'S RESHAPING PLAN IS A SKIP BIN.
- THE UK'S GOVERNMENT POLICY TO DISMISS CIVIL SERVANTS IS TO THROW THEM IN A SKIP BIN.
- FORMER CIVIL SERVANTS ARE RUBBLE THROWN INTO A SKIP BIN.
- CIVIL SERVICE BUREAUCRACY IS A SILLY WALKS SHOW.

The inspiration of the Ministry of Silly Walks in this cartoon shows Brookes' negative evaluation of the government's treatment of the civil service as being bureaucratic, inefficient and absurd, particularly in conducting challenging issues during the crisis. The aforementioned suggestive individual metaphors profile the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT'S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF CIVIL SERVICE'S RIGHTS IS THROWING THEM INTO A WASTE BIN'.

- Cartoon 1.16



Figure 4.22 Morten Morland's cartoon on the UK sharp economic downturn during the crisis, published in *The Times*, September 6th, 2020

Cartoon 1.16 relies on the source domains MOVEMENT and DIRECTION, which interplay here with LIGHT and DARK. The image provided by the cartoonist, Morten Morland, for *The Times* is a visual representation of the government's difficult financial status. Thus, this cartoon was published in response to Johnson's revelation of the devastating impact of the virus on economy and finances. The cartoon is a portrayal of a sole represented character (Boris Johnson) in a non-transactional narrative process. The shot of the image is very close to the viewer, which suggests the sense of informing and engaging the viewers in the matter. Thus, the metaphorical image presents Johnson as being shocked and perplexed, looking at a red dispatch box⁸³. The red dispatch briefcase is a symbolic representation for the UK's Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; it metonymically stands for the financial position of the government and its budget (SYMBOL FOR INSTITUTION). In addition to this, the informational value process as reinforced in the compositional pattern reveals the high and low position contributing to the meaning of the

⁸³ It is a "red Budget Box", or what is also known as the Chancellor's "dispatch box", actually these are two different names for the same thing. The red box is a leather box traditionally used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and regarded as a symbol of authority and responsibility. It contains the official Budget documents, including the speech, which are presented by the Chancellor to the House of Commons on Budget Day to outline the government's tax policies and to design plans for the year ahead (<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/3028947/red-budget-box-chancellor-despatch/>).

information provided, for instance the dark hole with a stair and a call resonating out of it expresses the dramatic status of the financial position and activates the metaphor and image schema 'LOW STATUS IS BAD'.

In the cartoon, the briefcase is metaphorically conceptualized as a dark hole with a ladder going down into it, and a voice is coming out of it saying "I DON'T WANT TO SOUND DRAMATIC BUT...". This visual depiction suggests the metaphor 'BRITAIN'S FINANCIAL SITUATION DURING THE CRISIS IS A DARK ABYSS', which is an outcome of the conceptual metaphors 'HAVING A FINANCIAL DISTRESS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS A FALL INTO A DARK HOLE' and 'FINANCIAL PROBLEMS ARE A DARK TUNNEL'.

Accordingly, the use of the metaphorical visualization of the red box as a hole, along with the verbal balloon and Johnson's worried expression, underscore and highlight Morland's negative attitude towards the UK's financial situation as quite dire and difficult, and Johnson's uncertainty about how to handle the challenges caused by the virus spread. In short, the cartoon criticizes and clarifies for the public how Johnson's Government's mismanagement and inefficient planning is the major cause of such critical situation. This as a whole activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INEFFICIENT FINANCIAL PLANS DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE A FALL INTO A DARK ABYSS'.

- **Cartoon 1.17**



Figure 4.23 Morten Morland’s cartoon about the Moonshot operation, published in *The Times*, September 11, 2020

On the 9th of September 2020, the UK’s government introduced in the words of its Health Secretary Matt Hancock a new massive-screening approach called OPERATION MOONSHOT⁸⁴. The operation was essentially intended to deliver up to 10 million tests a day to reopen public life facilities and to prevent perhaps a second nationwide lockdown. In this regard, Booth (2020) states that “[s]ome consider the ‘moonshot’ a hopeful vision [...]. To others it is a quixotic distraction to the hard work of fixing a test and trace system overwhelmed by sharply rising infections”. Two days after the announcement, Morland published the cartoon in figure 4.23, relying upon a DIRECTION AND MOVEMENT domain to illustrate the operation. The verbal caption on the bus reads 10 MILLION TESTS A DAY, which metaphorically represents the target of the cartoon.

⁸⁴ An ambitious testing program designed to combat the virus, aimed at testing more than 10 million Brits a day and costing \$130 billion. For more information, the following website is valuable: <https://www.bmj.com/content/370/bmj.m3558>.

Morland's portrayal relies upon a narrative pattern and a non-transactional contact between the two participants in the image. Boris Johnson, the representational participant (actor), has been cued as an astronaut, standing next to a bus which was seemingly ready to begin a space travel. Inside the bus at the wheel, there is another participant who is thought to be Matt Hancock. Hancock was responsible for the testing strategy implementation, comprising facility expansion, test distribution, the development of the 'Test and Trace' system⁸⁵, and public health communication⁸⁶. This depiction activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS AN ASTRONAUT ATTEMPTING TO REACH THE MOON BY ABSURD MEANS'. The two characters show two different facial expressions and gestures, Johnson, for example, looks happy and raising his thumb upward, which represents confidence and positivity, while Hancock is worried and looks hopeless. The virus, on another hand, was cued as a very far moon, the far distance between Johnson's moonshot bus and the virus expresses that Johnson's program is very far-fetched, or better to say an impossible mission to achieve with an absurd and ineffective spacecraft. Without a doubt, showing the *operation moonshot* vehicle as a bus rather than a spacecraft reveals Morland's ludicrous stance towards Johnson's unrealistic and futile strategies to curb the virus spread.

To sum up, the image as a whole activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INEFFECTIVE OPERATION MOONSHOT IS A TRIP TO THE MOON WITH A BUS'. Morland accordingly underscores not only that the operation moonshot is practically and scientifically futile, but also the unrealistic planning of the government to cope with this invisible enemy, as it does not match any strategy that yet exists on the ground.

⁸⁵ This is a government-funded service to track the individuals who have symptoms of the virus or have been in close contact with infected people. Visit this site for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>.

⁸⁶ <https://www.harwichandmanningtrestandard.co.uk/news/national/18711438.matt-hancock-defends-operation-moonshot-amid-laughter-mps/>

- **Cartoon 1.18**



Figure 4.24 Peter Brookes' cartoon about the disagreement between Boris Johnson and his chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, on the tier system restrictions, published in *The Times*, October 14th, 2020

This cartoon by Peter Brookes was apparently drawn upon the well-entrenched scenario of MARRIAGE and LOVE interplaying with a CONFLICT domain. Musolff (2006:6) asserts that using scenarios for conceptualizing political issues and relationships is more effective than the use of domains, since a scenario “allows us to determine which aspects of a metaphorical mapping dominate public discourse in a given topic area from the distribution patterns for domain elements and associated argument structures”. The scenario of Love-Marriage-Family also has a cognitive mapping of the relationship that exists between the target and the source domains. In line with this, Brookes took advantage of this common scenario to conceptualize the strained relationship between Boris Johnson and his chief medical officer, Chris Whitty. At first sight, the cartoon depends on a transactional-narrative process, in which the two actors are portrayed with eye

contact existing between them. The reactional pattern shows that there is gaze from Whitty to Johnson.

Concerning the classificational process, and the power relation in this image, it portrays a superordinate-subordinate relation between them. Though according to the interactive meaning they are at eye level and have some sort of equality, it seems that Johnson is the superordinate and has power and dominance over Whitty, who seems to be subordinate to Johnson's actions and power dynamics. The disagreement between the two men was about the restriction of the tier system implemented to curb the virus spread and some other related issues, Johnson was looking forward to easing these measures to support and level up economy whilst professor Whitty advocated for further strict measures in certain areas. , this relation was spotted by media which reported that Whitty "was professionally compromised by Boris Johnson" during the pandemic, in which he always accused Johnson's government of having been too late in response to the first wave of the pandemic.

Focusing on the visual conflict rendered in the image, Brookes presents Johnson as a bridegroom who is trying to strangle his bride, and she (Witting) is defending herself. Both characters are on a three-layered cake which represents the different levels of restrictions (tier 1, 2 and 3) in the tiered system. The two characters are presented as a couple quarrelling. This quarrel has been highlighted by Brookes in so far as the powerful domains of the characters have been pinpointed, for instance Johnson's power as a PM over Whitty is well represented by the blood on Whitty's face and clothes, and by his action in trying to strangle him. This, for sure, implies that Whitty seems to be more of a victim than Johnson. He is a victim of Boris Johnson's failed policies and Johnson's inability to take the right positions to counter the spread of the virus and the rise in victims beyond expectations. This means *The Times'* cartoonists attribute a central, if not exclusive, responsibility for government failures to Boris Johnson rather than implicating the entire political party. Thus, this visual conceptualization shows the following metaphorical sub-mappings:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A BRIDEGROOM QUARRELLING WITH HIS BRIDE.
- PROFESSOR CHRIS WHITTY IS BORIS JOHNSON'S BRIDE.
- THE CORONAVIRUS TIER SYSTEM IS A WEDDING CAKE.

- DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FIGURES IS A FAILED MARRIAGE.

It is relevant to mention that the caption at the top of the cartoon THE UNHAPPY COUPLE... is addressing the target of the cartoon and manifesting the metaphor 'POLITICAL DISAGREEMENTS ARE UNSUCCESSFUL COUPLES'. Moreover, this metaphor interplays with another metaphor, namely 'THE UK'S GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES DURING THE CRISIS ARE A SOURCE OF UNHAPPINESS AND CONFLICT'. Typically, the wedding cake is a symbol of union and celebration, but in this context it is used to emphasize the destructive nature of the tier system and the characters are depicted as violent and bleeding in the image, which might be intended to show the negative consequences of disagreeing or opposing the tier system and the negative role of Johnson in the entire scenario during the crisis.

- **Cartoon 1.19**



Figure 4.25 Morten Morland's cartoon about the introduction of three local COVID alert levels, published in *The Times*, October 13, 2020



Figure 4.26 An original photo of The Beatles' performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, February 9, 1964

The cartoon in figure 4.26 was drawn by Morten Morland for *The Times* after the announcement of new restrictions in the country by Johnson's government⁸⁷. The announcement came in the mouth of Boris Johnson in his official tweeter account arguing "We're simplifying and standardizing local rules in England by introducing three Local COVID Alert levels, with each level accompanied by proportionate restrictions"⁸⁸. In this cartoon, Morland exploited the source domains ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE and SHOWS, which essentially prompted the conceptual metaphors 'POLITICS IS A PERFORMANCE' and 'POLITICIANS ARE PERFORMERS'. This image identifies the non-transactional narrative process, where there is no vector from the representational actors to the goals. The conceptual process does not convey a relation between superordinate and subordinate characters, they are equal and the only difference is their distance and position. Explaining the narrative of the cartoon, Morland made an intertextual reference to

⁸⁷ In mid-September, the UK imposed new and stringent restrictions prohibiting gatherings of more than six people both indoors and outdoors. Shortly after, bar, pubs and restaurants were ordered to close between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. Those restrictions were implemented across the country during this crucial period. On October 14th, the government announced a "three tier system" to rationalize local restrictions, with most of the country placed in the least restrictive tier one initially, and more areas moving to higher tiers over time. For more information, visit <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9068/>.

⁸⁸ <https://twitter.com/borisjohnson/status/1316008705461084160>

the influential British pop band of the 1960s The Beatles and particularly to their famous song “We can Work it out”⁸⁹. Ironically, he conceptualized Johnson and some of his government members and allies (Rishi Sunak, Matt Hancock and the drummer, Chris Whitty), as The Beatles’ band members, singing and playing guitars while some face masks and a list of some of their songs, such as “Come Together”, “Help”, “I want to hold your hand”, “Let it be”, etc.’ have been thrown on the floor. Strikingly, some of the songs have been crossed out while others have not. Such titles’ modifications also intentionally implemented by Morland to suggest what things that can (or cannot) be done by Johnson’s government, or which are necessary, during the pandemic. For instance, the song “help” is not crossed out which apparently represents the government’s lack of efficiency required to get out of crisis, whereas the “ I want to hold your hand” song has been modified by using negation as ‘I won’t hold your hand’ which satirically suggests the negligence of Johnson’s government to support people during the pandemic.

In this way, the intentional verbal modification of some songs’ titles, the band’s name as THE BUNGLES inscribed on the drum and the negative version of the song, “WE CAN’T WORK IT OUT, WE CAN’T WORK IT OUT”, reveal the cartoonist’s stance towards Johnson and his government. More precisely, the noun ‘bungle’ as a derogatory term, defined as “ a mistake or failure, typically one resulting from mismanagement or confusion”⁹⁰ is combined with the negatively reversed lyrics of “We can work it out” to convey Morland’s negative evaluation of Johnson’s governmental failure in defeating the virus, particularly the coming threat of the third wave. Though the original song of The Beatles has a positive message (“Life is very short, and there’s no time/ For fussing and fighting, my friend”), and the cartoon might be regarded as an intertextual reference to an optimistic song, the cartoonist employed it to ironically criticize the Tories and their head as unprofessional and mess-makers.

Therefore, from the visual and verbal aspects of representational meaning, the metaphor activated here is ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S GOVERNMENT IS A BAND OF BUNGLES’, which suggests incompetence and ineffectiveness of Johnson’s government in general, and its response to the third wave of the virus in particular. Going beyond the visual and verbal modes, the other

⁸⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qyclqo_AV2M

⁹⁰ <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/language-linguistics-and-literary-terms/english-vocabulary-d/bungle>

modes of meaning also contribute to Johnson's metaphorical configuration. For instance, distance and position (foregrounding and backgrounding), the distance among the characters suggests a certain perspective, Johnson is positioned frontal and central (foregrounding), while Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer, is in a far distance, positioned at the back of the scene (backgrounding), which suggests that his role is subservient to Johnson's inappropriate strategies and to his dominance as the head of the government.

To sum up, the last stage in the analysis is to elucidate the cartoonist's evaluation in the cartoon. Morland in this figure is mocking down Johnson and his government; he emphasizes Johnson's government's inability to effectively manage the crisis by implementing even further local restrictions.

- **Cartoon 1.20**

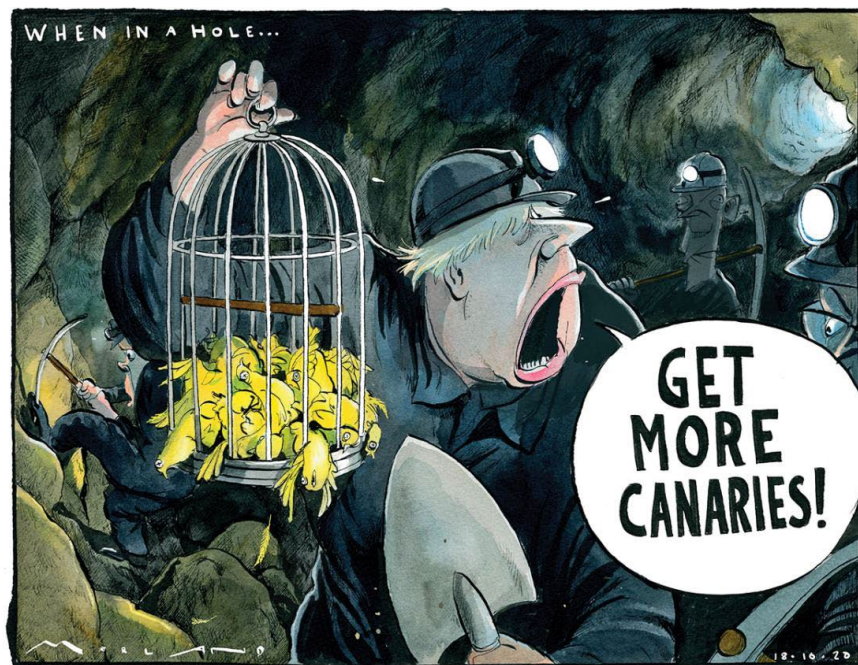


Figure 4.27 Morten Morland's cartoon on imposing tier level three on Greater Manchester, published in *The Times*, October 18, 2020

This cartoon by Morten Morland was published during the height of the conflict between Johnson's Government and mayors from the north and west of the country over the tiered COVID-19 restrictions. Andy Burnham, the mayor of Greater Manchester, had strongly opposed the

government's plan to move his region into tier 3, calling it an "experimental regional lockdown strategy" and accusing Johnson and his government of treating his region as a "canary in the coalmine"⁹¹. Burnham's announcement brings to mind the story of canaries in the UK coalmines, a tradition of using birds, mostly canaries, to detect carbon monoxide and other poisonous gases in coal mines before any human activity takes place.⁹² Morland portrayed Boris Johnson and some members of his government and allies (Dominic Cummings, Chris Whitty and Robert Jenrick⁹³) as miners with shovels and pickaxes, searching for minerals in a dark and dangerous mine, and holding a cage with some dead canaries. The cartoon has a transactional-narrative pattern and the reactionary process are well presented through the eye contact among some of the characters. The interactive meaning of the cartoon is identified through the social distance between the characters; they are portrayed close in distance to each other, sharing a verbal process signified through their conversational discourse. Thus, the close-up shot between them is likely to represent their common attitude, intimacy and convergence in stances towards their rift with Great Manchester.

The image is framed with a caption reading WHEN IN A HOLE..., which can suggest more than one meaning. It might indicate that Johnson's government is facing a challenging situation, similar to being stuck in a hole⁹⁴, as it attempts to curb the COVID-19 crisis and impose restrictions in the face of opposition from some mayors and regions. However, it can also refer to how these regions suffer from the stringent measures imposed on them. 'When in a hole' may also trigger thoughts about the saying 'When in Rome...' ('Rome' and 'hole' rhyme). In this regard, the follow up would be '... do as miners (or drillers) do', and it seems to refer to the lack of empathy shown by the government: instead of looking for solutions to the crisis, they simply implement further restrictions on the population, especially in some areas. The idea thus is reinforced by Johnson's

⁹¹ <https://twitter.com/bbcpolitics/status/1316755238121099264?lang=bg>

⁹² Using canaries in coal mines was introduced by John Scott Haldane, who is known as "the father of oxygen therapy". He proposed employing canaries as "sentinel species" since they have heightened sensitivity to colorless, odorless gases like carbon monoxide. If the canaries exhibited distress or died, it would signal miners to evacuate, thus enhancing safety underground. This innovative approach by Haldane significantly improved mine safety, at the expense of birds' lives (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/story-real-canary-coal-mine-180961570/>).

⁹³ Jenrick is a British politician and a parliament member, in 2020 served as the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in Boris Johnson's government then (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Jenrick).

⁹⁴ The definition of 'being in a hole' implies that a person is facing a challenging or uncomfortable circumstance, one that probably poses difficulties or social problems (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/in-a-hole>).

words in the cartoon “GET MORE CANARIES”. Consequently, the mining scene depicted in the figure activates the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A COAL MINER.
- THE UK’S GOVERNMENT IS A GROUP OF COAL MINERS.
- THE NORTH-WEST AREAS ARE DEAD COALMINE CANARIES.
- THE THIRD TIER RESTRICTIONS/CLOSEDOWN IN THE GREATER MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL AREAS ARE A POISONOUS COALMINE/A DARK HOLE.

These visual metaphors activate a more general one, ‘THE UK’S GOVERNMENT’S COVID-19 STRINGENT MEASURES ARE MEANS OF KILLING/PHYSICAL HARMING ITS CITIZENS’, which also ignites a metaphor on Johnson’s tiered system as a whole, ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S COVID-19 TIER SYSTEM IS A DARK POISONOUS HOLE’. However, these metaphors imply that the north-west areas are severely affected by the UK’s governmental closedown, as the lack of economic activity will result in the death of the region. The cartoon as a whole reveals Morland’s negative evaluation against Johnson and his government’s unfair handling of the crisis. They are characterized as unsympathetic to their citizens, and instead of looking for technical solutions they merely ask for more canaries (i.e. more regions for experiments) to be taken into the hole/coalmine (i.e. more stringent regional lockdowns).

- Cartoon 1.21

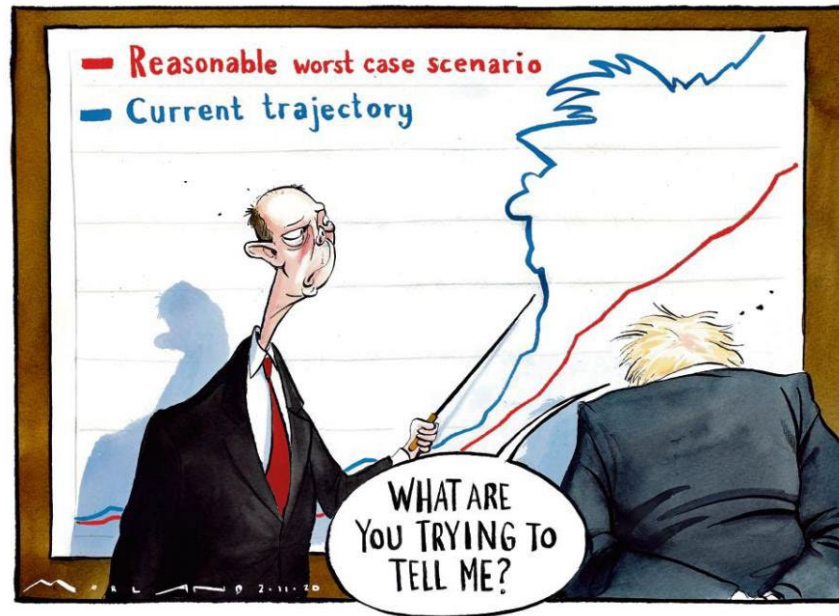


Figure 4.28 Morten Morland's cartoon on 'Reasonable worst case scenario and the British Prime Minister', published in *The Times*, November 2, 2020

In the cartoon above, two figures have been depicted, as represented characters, Chris Whitty and Boris Johnson. The transactional narrative process is identified through the verbal process between them and Whitty's gaze direction. The visual depiction of the cartoon renders Whitty pointing at a line graph chart which stands for the trajectory of the 'reasonable worst case scenario'; this scenario is a projection made by the UK's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) of what would happen if the government did not take appropriate measures to control the spread of the virus. Positioned adjacent to Whitty, Johnson is portrayed standing with his hands behind his back ('HANDS BEHIND BACK FOR LACK OF COMPREHENSION'). This body posture, 'hands behind back', is generally employed to suggest his mental posture of not fully engaging or comprehending the situation. This interpretation is strongly affirmed by Johnson's question: "WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME?"

The line chart Whitty is pointing at encompasses two lines; the red line, which stands for the sensitive model REASONABLE WORST CASE SCENARIO⁹⁵, developed by SAGE to cope with the most challenging scenarios that could happen during the coming winter (REPRESENTATION FOR EVENT METONYMY). The blue line, on the other hand, is the CURRENT TRAJECTORY metonymically represented by the profile of Johnson (FACE FOR PERSON). The implementation of this profile, as a visual metaphor for the trajectory of the pandemic, suggests that Johnson's policies and actions have contributed to the worsening of the situation. This, thus, features the conceptual metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 MEASURES ARE WORSE THAN THE WORST-CASE SCENARIOS FOR THE PANDEMIC'. This metaphor promptly conveys that Johnson's measures are intensifying the situation rather than improving it. Concerning the compositional meaning, salience is one of the key aspects, in which color also has its effective influence in the informational value, for instance, the blue color of the line 'current trajectory' represented by Johnson's profile has a representative meaning that stands for the Conservative Party in the UK (BLUE FOR THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PARTY). This triggers the notion of responsibility behind such increasing rates and the worst case scenario. On the other hand, the elements' zones and positions also add to the value of the information given to the viewers, for instance Johnson's position on the right side signifies New information that viewers should focus on (Johnson's lack of comprehension and his failing contribution), while the left-side positioned elements suggest given information and already known points.

This metaphorical image implies that Johnson's measures and strategies, or lack thereof, have contributed to the situation's degradation, and the current trajectory of the pandemic is an apparent result of his failures. The metaphor deduced from the cartoon can be interpreted as a scathing criticism of Johnson and his government's responses to the pandemic. Morland criticizes Boris Johnson considering him as the origin of the worst case during the pandemic, with everything this implies.

⁹⁵ This is a sensitive model developed by SAGE to confront the worst or most challenging consequences that would reasonably happen concerning COVID-19 in the coming winter of 2020 in the UK. The essence of this model is to estimate the excess deaths in England and Wales. It cannot be regarded as a predictive state, rather it provides valuable information to help the NHS and local authorities react and respond to different scenarios. For more information concerning this model, check <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-09/technical-advisory-group-new-worst-case-scenario-for-winter.pdf> and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Dr2hlsF_uY.

- Cartoon 1.22



Figure 4.29 Peter Brookes' cartoon on Boris Johnson's efforts to roll out a vaccine, published in *The Times*, November 12, 2020

Figure 4.29 was also drawn from the domain of GAMES AND SPORTS, where the British PM was illustrated as playing dart-throwing. First and foremost, it is relevant to note that the cartoon was published after Boris Johnson's statement on November 9th 2020, about the effectiveness of the vaccine in protecting people against COVID-19. The cartoon is a transactional narrative process, in which Johnson is the only represented participant (actor) in the image, and the goal is the dartboard. Before analyzing the visual details of the image, it is relevant to mention that Peter Brookes framed his cartoon with a satirical verbal interrogation at the top-left side wondering, **WOULD YOU TRUST THIS MAN?** The question is answered through the visual elements employed by Brookes in the cartoon, particularly the failing dart-throwing game. Brookes built his portrayal upon the phenomenon of hypophora (a figure of speech in which a writer raises a question, and then immediately provides an answer to that question)⁹⁶ to attract the attention of his audience and further maintain new areas for more discussion.

⁹⁶ For more information and examples, see the following site: https://literarydevices.net/hypophora/#google_vignette.

Brookes, thus, exploited the GAMES and SPORTS domain to highlight specific aspects and attributes, and to facilitate abstract concepts by utilizing concrete objects. Johnson is rendered with the usual look of shaggy hair covering his eyes and untidy appearance, provoking the sense of being incompetent and unreliable enough to roll out the COVID-19 vaccine. He is depicted hopelessly attempting to hit the target with the darts, but in vain. In this regard, the cartoon reveals the interactive meaning between Johnson and the target through the distance between them. The cartoon signifies that there is no considerable distance between Johnson and the dartboard, yet he has kept on missing the target hit, and has lost many close attempts. All these details contribute to the interpretation of the metaphors in the cartoon, which is critical of the government's handling of the vaccination campaign and indicates that there are probably concerns about the vaccine's effectiveness, as a result of previous tests of other vaccines.

Another aspect is the verbal statement “MY VACCINE ROLLOUT WILL BE **WORLD-BEATING!**”, which might be ironic or skeptic, as Brookes is suggesting that Johnson's attempts to promote the success of the vaccination campaign are hyperbolic claims, just like his attempts to hit the target in the game, even if he is very close to the dartboard. This, of course, implies that Johnson has not accomplished a level of excellence yet to be regarded as surpassing all other comparable rolling out vaccines around the world.

To sum up the image's details, the following individual metaphors are triggered:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A FAILED DART-THROWER.
- VACCINE ROLLOUTS ARE A FAILING DART-THROWING GAME.
- VACCINE ROLLOUT ATTEMPTS ARE MISSING DARTS.
- THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BRITISH VACCINE IS EQUATED TO HITTING THE BULLSEYE OF A DARTBOARD.

According to the metaphorical mappings provided above, the cartoon essentially suggests the more general metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON'S VACCINE ROLL OUT PROMISES ARE MISSING DARTS BY AN INCOMPETENT PLAYER’. The cartoonist made use of this metaphor to negatively criticize Johnson's promises of a successful vaccine rollout, suggesting that they are falling short, or ‘missing the mark’.

- Cartoon 1.23

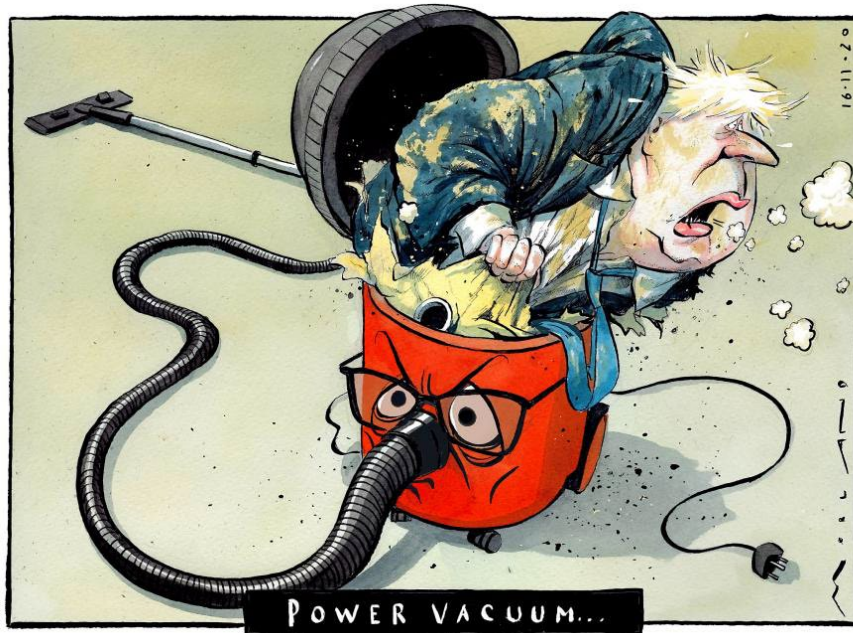


Figure 4.30 Morten Morland’s cartoon on POWER VACUUM after Cummings’ resignation, published in *The Times*, November 16, 2020

This cartoon was published in *The Times*, after trading videos of Dominic Cummings’ departure⁹⁷ from Downing Street in November 2020. Cummings’ resignation was prompted by the escalation of public outrage over Cummings’ scandal of breaching the Covid-19 lockdown measures and his travel during the pandemic – see the analysis of cartoon 1.7 above. The cartoon illustrated by Morten Morland was captioned with the title POWER VACUUM..., wherein the image seemingly relies upon a CONTAINER image schema. Power vacuum takes place, in politics, when somebody in power resigns or is dismissed and there’s no one else to replace them. It is defined as “a situation where there is a lack of leadership in a government or organization, often because an existing leader has left or been lost”⁹⁸. This implies that Cummings is the real leader and has control and exerts power over Johnson. The narrative process is non-transactional, in that there is no eye-contact between the two characters and the conceptual process is characterized by the classification of the participants’ relation. This is based on a superordinate-

⁹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHvkbAAatK>

⁹⁸ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/power-vacuum>

subordinate relation between Johnson and Cummings. The symbolic analysis of the cartoon uncovers what the cartoonist attempts to convey implicitly: Johnson being stuck in Cummings' container symbolizes the power dynamics between Cummings and Johnson, and how it has affected his decisions and leadership. Though Johnson is contained in Cummings' container, their facial expressions and body movement suggest the absence of framing and connection lines between them.

Concerning the visual analysis of metaphorical images within the frame, Johnson is manifestly trying to get painstakingly out of a vacuum cleaner, which is metaphorically fused with Cummings' angry face. According to the above specified details of the vacuum cleaner image, and the representational meaning of the characters, some individual metaphors could be mapped as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS DUST INSIDE A VACUUM CLEANER.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS AN UNPLUGGED VACUUM CLEANER.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS BORIS JOHNSON'S CONTAINER.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS' RESIGNATION IS A POWER VACUUM IN BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT.

Other elements of interactive and compositional process also have their vital role in the image interpretation. For instance, the image schema of being contained suggests the interactive process that is based on the classification of the power dynamics between the characters. Thus, Johnson's confinement with Cummings' body provokes a sense of losing control and of dominance of Cummings over Johnson; the relation between them is of a superordinate-subordinate kind. Thus, Morland attempts to highlight certain aspects and attributes in the dominance of Cummings over Johnson, since the latter is politically seen as vulnerable whilst Cummings has the power to lead Johnson. Furthermore, color further adds to the interpretation, portraying Cummings as a red vacuum cleaner; as Cerrato (2013:4) suggests, red is associated with blood, danger and energy, so it has connotations that indicate power and strength.

Thus, the whole image of Cummings as a red vacuum cleaner, filled with Johnson as dust and unplugged from its power source, serves to suggest the presence of multiple faults during Johnson's tenure. Moreover, the symbolism of the unplugged vacuum cleaner may be interpreted

as a sarcastic reference to the eventual decreasing of Cummings' influence over Johnson's government after his resignation. Consequently, through the CONTAINER image schema, Morland attempted to reveal that Cummings has the power of taking decisions during the crisis of coronavirus rather than Johnson. To sum up the cartoon's interpretation, the following implied metaphor which unveils the cartoonist's ideology has been inferred from the above-mentioned details and individual metaphors: 'DOMINIC CUMMINGS' POLITICAL BRIEFING IS A CONTAINER OF BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP'.

- **Cartoon 1.24**

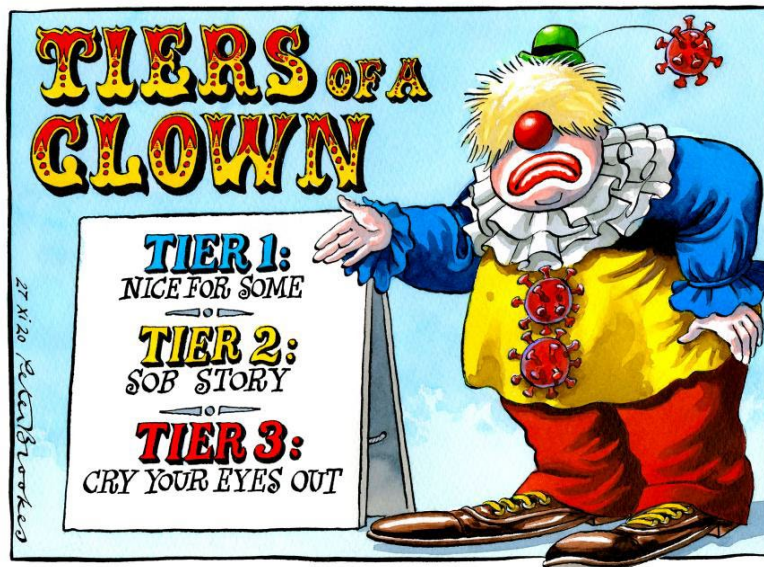


Figure 4.31 Peter Brookes' cartoon about Boris Johnson's Tiers system published in *The Times*, November 27, 2020

The cartoon above designates Boris Johnson as a clown; the image is essentially derived from the domain ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS. In his lengthy article published in 2021, Docx starts with a thought-provoking question that seems to humorously refer to Boris Johnson: "Boris Johnson is the archetypal clown, with his antic posturing and his refusal to take anything seriously. So how did he end up in charge?" This allusive reference has based upon numerous inquiries into Johnson's capacity to successfully handle crises and lead his country to safety. One of these inquiries was the political cartoons that attack and criticize Johnson's policies and measures during the pandemic of COVID-19 in 2020-2021. Brookes, among other cartoonists,

attempted to ridiculously connect Johnson's leadership during this challenging time, particularly in COVID-19 pandemic, to that of a circus clown. Admittedly, the prototypic image of a clown often evokes the portrayal of a person who makes others laugh and amuses them, either by comic performance or flamboyant appearance. But, alongside this perception, Miller's (1995) WordNet 3.1⁹⁹ suggests a more negative meaning for the word 'clown' that is "a rude or a vulgar fool". In line with this negative sense, the clown's image might indicate a person who has no self-respect, nor dignity, and who is often deceived and ridiculed by others.

The image depends on a non-transactional narrative process wherein Johnson is the only representational actor. Johnson is metaphorically visualized as a sad clown, wearing a clown's suit with colorful dress and bright makeup, pointing at a double board which is supposed to contain the clown's performance program. The interactive element in this image is presented through the relation between Johnson as the actor and the respective viewers; the interactive meaning is carried through the image's contact and gaze direction. Johnson is gazing directly at the viewers, which implies a demand and asking the viewers to engage in an imaginary relation with what is exposed.

The verbal process is also achieved through the caption written above: the double board reads TIERS OF A CLOWN, which mocks down Johnson's three-tiered system. It is relevant to notice here that Brookes made a ridiculous reference to Johnson's tiered system through the employment of wordplay. The words 'tier' and 'tear' are manipulated, in the sense that the expression 'tears of a clown' is in the contextual theme of the cartoon, as it is used "to describe a person who appears joyful and chipper around people but is actually emotionally distraught"¹⁰⁰. Thus, this caption implicitly suggests that the tiered system of Johnson's government would lead the country to pain, grief and unpleasant ends.

Elucidating the visual elements in Brookes' portrayal, the tiered system is visually rendered as a clown's program with different labeled levels, each has a special name through which Brookes metonymically evokes the feelings they cause (SAD FEELINGS FOR HARD ACTIONS), for instance, the first tier reads NICE FOR SOME, which probably suggests how Johnson's politics

⁹⁹ The other sense is "a person who amuses others by ridiculous behavior." The online version is accessible at: <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=clown+&sub=Search+WordNet&o2=&o0=1&o8=1&o1=1&o7=&o5=&o9=&o6=&o3=&o4=&h=>.

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=tears%20of%20a%20clown>

might be seen by some people as moderate on this occasion. This first caption may be seen like this since it allows for more freedom of movement and social interaction than the other tiers. The second one is SOB STORY, which may involve that some people regard the second tier of restrictions as too strict, causing emotional and financial difficulties for people and businesses. It may also suggest that some people were exaggerating their concerns or using their personal stories to gain sympathy or attention. The final one reads CRY YOUR EYES OUT¹⁰¹, which may trigger that the third tier of restrictions was the harshest, causing remarkable emotional and financial hardships for individuals and businesses in affected areas. This means that the concerns and complaints were taken to be seriously, as they are genuine. The diagram below is a reminder of the tier system set out by the UK's government in 2020 against the pandemic:

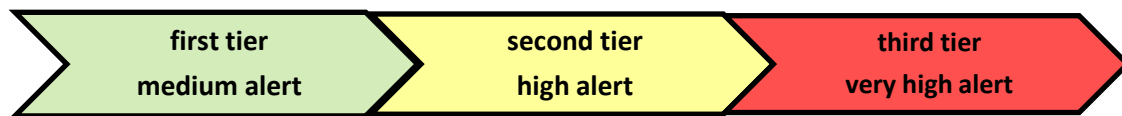


Diagram 4.1 COVID-19 alert stages of the UK's tiered system

To sum up what has been explained above concerning the scene of the clown's program scene, the potential individual metaphors triggered by the cartoon are outlined as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CLOWN.
- THE UK'S TIERED SYSTEM IS A SAD CLOWN'S PERFORMANCE PROGRAM.
- THE CURRENT SITUATION IS A CIRCUS.
- THE UK'S POPULATION IS A CIRCUS AUDIENCE.

The aforementioned mappings generate the following metaphor: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 ALERT TIERED SYSTEM IS A HARMFUL PROGRAM'. Consequently, the cartoon reveals Brookes' negative evaluation of both, Boris Johnson as an incompetent leader and his tiered system as a tough system, designating Johnson as somebody who has been deceived, ridiculed and fooled and is causing a lot of grief, pain and tears among his people.

¹⁰¹ An idiom that means to cry a lot, as presented in the *Cambridge Dictionary*: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/cry-eyes-out>.

- Cartoon 1.25

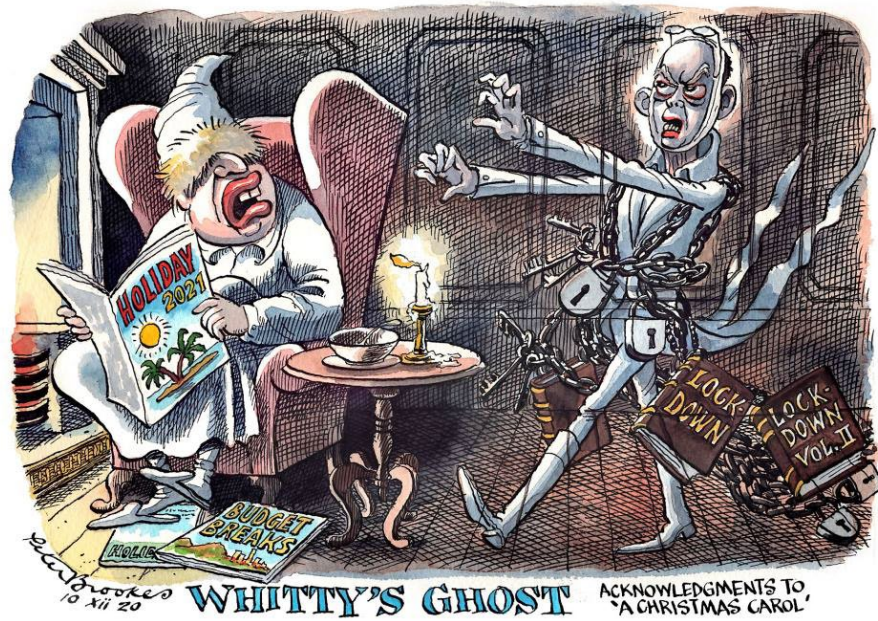


Figure 4.32 Peter Brookes' cartoon about COVID-19 lockdown and Christmas, published in *The Times*, December 10, 2020

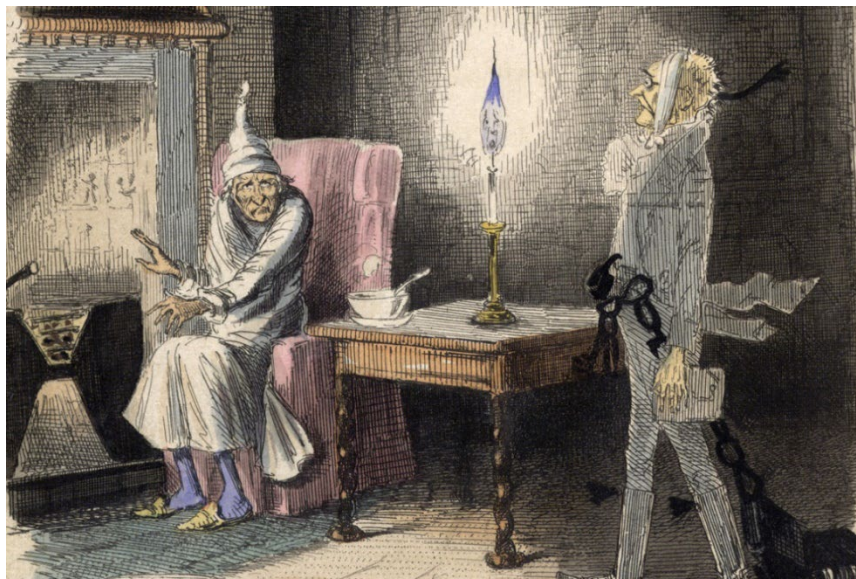


Figure 4.33 John Leech's illustration of Scrooge encountering Jacob Marley's Ghost in "A Christmas Carol", the novella by Charles Dickens, 1843

Like many of Brookes' cartoons, the figure in question here contains a literary intertextual reference, this time to one of the most famous Christmas short stories, "A Christmas Carol", written by Charles Dickens in 1843. In this cartoon, the image is based on a transactional narrative process in which the two represented participants, the key participant (Boris Johnson) and Chris Whitty. Brookes portrays Johnson as the character of the elderly miser, Ebenezer Scrooge, who is generally known for his heartlessness and miserly behavior. The character of Scrooge is commonly described as "the embittered miser and not as the reformed sinner, and 'Scrooge' has entered the English language as a synonym for a miser"¹⁰². In the cartoon, Johnson is presented sitting by the fireplace, holding a brochure titled HOLIDAY 2021 while other brochures entitled BUDGET BREAKS and HOLIDAY are at his feet which suggest Johnson's inclination to reduce lockdowns during the Christmas time.

Whitty, the other figure in the image, is visualized as the character of the ghost of Jacob Marley, Scrooge's former business partner, chained with padlocks, keys and dragging volumes marked LOCK-DOWN, LOCK-DOWN VOL. II, etc. These chains symbolize the strict lockdowns and restrictions recommended by Whitty. Brookes employs this metaphorical configuration of Johnson and Whitty to convey Johnson's blindness to the COVID-19 situation and lockdowns, as he is cued by his standing hair, which probably suggests his inability to evaluate the crisis adequately. Whitty's ghost, on the other hand, is shown visiting Johnson to warn him not to ease COVID-19 restrictions during the Christmas period and to abandon any medium-term plans for the summer holidays of 2021; otherwise, he will be tortured eternally. Whitty's angry facial expression suggests that this is not the first time Whitty has advised Johnson to keep the national lockdowns and the tough restrictions, but in vain. This may also uncover the strained relation between Johnson (the head of the government) and Whitty (healthcare system representative) regarding the relaxing and tightening of the lockdowns and measures. Concerning the interactive meaning and the compositional meaning, there is no direct gaze addressed to the viewers, thus, it suggests that the viewers are offered with the characters as a matter of contemplation. The distance between them, on the other hand, assumes that they have no agreement concerning their stances on the relaxation of the Christmas or future measures.

¹⁰² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ebenezer-Scrooge>

The compositional meaning in this cartoon has been conducted through the informational value of the aspects such as the placement of the elements and the zone of their existence in the image, Johnson is positioned on the left, which means the information is already given, while Whitty and the locks, chains and books are the focus of the cartoonist, hence he is located on the right side to convey the sense of new information on the relaxation of the Christmas measures. So, this scene triggers the following metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE MISER SCROOGE.
- CHRIS WHITTY IS THE GHOST OF JACOB MARLEY.
- COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS ARE CHAINS OF GREED AND SELF-ISOLATION.

Undoubtedly, portraying Johnson as a greedy and miserly character conveys Brookes' negative assessment of Johnson's incompetent handling of the crisis, particularly his willingness to relax the measures during the Christmas time. This implies that Johnson is acting inhumanely and negligently toward his people's welfare. The scene of Marley's ghost visit in this cartoon evokes the following metaphors: 'COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS IN THE UK ARE HEAVY CHAINS' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT'S MISTREATMENT OF CITIZENS AND UNILATERALISM IS A FORM OF STINGINESS AND MISERLINESS'.

- Cartoon 1.26



Figure 4.34 Peter Brookes' cartoon about Christmas relaxation Covid-19 rules by Boris Johnson, published in *The Times*, December 16, 2020

Like figure 4.33, this cartoon was also published as a response to Johnson's government's announcement of a new plan to relax Covid-19 restrictions, during the Christmas festivities despite facing opposition and warnings from the healthcare system about the potential for a third wave of the virus due to the alleged relaxation. Peter Brookes employs metaphorical imagery to portray Johnson as a small fairy with a magic wand, but with a falling star instead. This humorously profiles the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A CHRISTMAS TREE FAIRY TOPPER', which implies Johnson's perceived insignificance or lack of impact during the Christmas time.

The image relies on a non-transactional representational process. Though they are very close to each other, yet the characters seem not to be in agreement to relax the measures of Christmas. The whole image may suggest that Johnson's plans to ease the lockdowns are ineffectual and may lead to disastrous consequences, as the Christmas tree is adorned with baubles and ornaments, but it is entirely wrapped with yellow caution tapes held by the figures of Patrick Vallance, the Chief Scientific Advisor, and Chris Whitty. The utilization of the Christmas tree is a symbolic reference to the annual Christmas season, whereas the CAUTION, HAZARD and KEEP AWAY tapes

around the tree are a symbolic reference to the prohibition of celebrating Christmas at the time because of the grave risk of easing the lockdown measures and rules over Christmas.

Furthermore, the cartoonist strategically employs other modes of representative meanings, such as size, gestures and position, to convey his evaluative stance towards the easing plan. In the first instance, Johnson is deliberately depicted as a tiny, worried, and seemingly unstable topper. This tiny size is based upon the conceptual metaphor IMPORTANCE IS SIZE, signifying certain attributes of Johnson, such as the perceived lack of power or significance during this critical period of the pandemic. This means he is vulnerable and has no power to curb the virus. The facial expressions of Vallance and Whitty (red cheeks) express their disagreement and nervousness since the situation is critical and dangerous. On the other hand, the positioning of Johnson at the top of the Christmas tree also carries symbolic meaning, conveying the conceptual metaphors IMPORTANCE IS CENTRALITY and MORE IS UP, which negatively represent Johnson's perceived negative and dangerous impact on his people. Accordingly, his COVID-19 easing plans are seen as the central danger of the crisis during the Christmas season; his plans are at the top of all the dangerous and risky issues. This portrayal underscores Brookes' critical view of Johnson's easing actions and decisions during the pandemic, presenting them as the root of danger during the Christmas time.

- Cartoon 1.27



Figure 4.35 Peter Brookes' cartoon about Boris Johnson and Christmas 2020, published in *The Times*, December 17, 2020

Figure 4.35 has the same theme of the two previous cartoons, the planned relaxation of COVID-19 rules for Christmas. Brookes, in this figure, also based his cartoon on the intertextual references to the popular Christmas legend of Santa Claus, which is associated with the Christmas holiday season, especially his journey to distribute gifts. This image, thus, relies on the source domains MOVEMENT and DIRECTION. The cartoon portrays Boris Johnson, as Santa Claus, dressing in a red and white suit trimmed with fur. The mapping of the image of Santa Claus (a jolly, gift-giving person associated with Christmas Eve) onto the image of Johnson highlights specific attributes, mainly the gift-giving feature and the goal of the journey itself. The cartoon is regarded as a non-transactional narrative image, in that Johnson is the actor of the action and the elements are the target of his action. Since Johnson is depicted as Santa Claus, he is the dominant figure and the leader of the journey.

The interactive meaning of the cartoon can be achieved by the gaze, social distance and the power relation between the elements. The gaze is indirect, and through it the cartoonist just attempts to present this issue. The distance, on the other hand, between Johnson and his elves (Gove and Whitty) reveals their subordinate role, as a result of their handling of the pandemic and making decisions.

Concerning the visual details in the image, Johnson has been rendered riding a sleigh pulled by reindeer, with a group of figures dressed as grim reapers leading his way. The grim reapers figures are shown saying “THERE IS NO STOPPING US NOW!”. The grim reapers are a symbol of death, so this represents the escalating increase of the virus will probably result in an increase of the death tolls because of Johnson’s relaxing rules. On the other hand, Johnson looks on with a smile on his face and his left thumb pointing upwards, showing approval. Behind him on the sleigh are Michael Gove and Professor Chris Whitty, dressed as his elves. Thus, the Santa Claus image scheme in this cartoon triggers the following metaphorical cues:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS SANTA CLAUS RIDING HIS SLEIGH SHEDDING DEATH.
- MICHAEL GOVE AND CHRIS WHITTY ARE SANTA CLAUS’ ELVES.
- GRIM REAPERS ARE THE LEADERS OF SANTA CLAUS’ JOURNEY.
- THE VIRUS’ SPREAD IS SANTA CLAUS’ GIFT.
- DEATH IS THE LEADER OF THE JOURNEY.

The implied metaphors inferred from these sub-mappings in the cartoon are ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S CHRISTMAS RELAXATION OF COVID-19 RULES IS AN UNSTOPPABLE JOURNEY TOWARDS A FATAL DESTINATION’ and ‘DEATH IS BORIS JOHNSON’S CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE NATION’. The use of grim reapers is traditionally associated with death, so their leading the way suggests that Johnson’s relaxation plan to ease the measures is leading the country towards disaster and a high number of deaths during the pandemic. Despite this risky situation, Johnson looks happy and smiling, which may indicate that he is either oblivious to the danger he is putting the country in, or that he is actively enjoying the power and control he thinks he has over the situation.

Finally, the facial expressions of the elves uncover their attitudes towards Johnson's decisions. For example, Gove's facial expression, which appears to be one of wonder or astonishment, suggests that he is subservient to Johnson and lacks independent judgment and decision-making. In contrast, Whitty's frown implies that his expertise and previous advice had been ignored and that he was forced to comply with Johnson's agenda. Thus, the cartoon reveals Brookes' message of criticism towards Boris Johnson's leadership in general and his COVID-19 relaxing rules over the Christmas period, which was seen as a journey towards death then.

- **Cartoon 1.28**



Figure 4.36 Peter Brookes' cartoon about Boris Johnson in Blunderland, *The Times*, January 6, 2021



Figure 4.37 John Tenniel's illustration of The White Rabbit in Lewis Carroll's 1865 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

The image in figure 4.36 was created by Peter Brookes, for *The Times* on January 6th, 2021. The cartoon was published after Boris Johnson's announcement of England entering the toughest lockdown ever alongside the alarming increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. Johnson in his announcement stated that "On 29 December, more than 80,000 people tested positive for COVID-19 across the UK – a new record. The number of deaths is up by 20 per cent over the last week and will sadly rise further"¹⁰³. The cartoon is a form of non-transactional narrative pattern, in which the represented participant is Boris Johnson talking to himself with no any connection to the viewers. Since the image is a visual intertextual reference to John Tenniel's illustration as shown in figure 4.37, Brookes is restricted to the dimensions and setting of Tenniel's portrayal.

Thus, this cartoon was portrayed to address the fatal consequences of Johnson's mishandling of the crisis. With the caption framed at the left upper part of the image, which reads BORIS IN BLUNDERLAND..., Brookes offers a political parody of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). It is worth noting that the replacement of 'Wonderland' –a magical and enchanting place– with 'Blunderland' –a place full of mistakes, mishaps and confusion–

¹⁰³ Johnson, 4 January 2021: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-address-to-the-nation-4-january-2021>.

represents Boris Johnson's delayed actions, catastrophic mistakes and foolish flaws during the pandemic. It could also suggest a place where things go wrong or do not work as expected. In the cartoon, Boris Johnson is portrayed as Nivens McTwisp, the fictional character of the White Rabbit in the novel. Babbling to itself with the common phrase "OH DEAR! OH DEAR! I SHALL BE TOO LATE!", Johnson was represented in a hurry glancing at a pocket-watch.

Though the metaphorical conceptualization of humans as Rabbits typically holds a positive connotation and euphemistic reference such as renewal, fruitfulness, prosperity, good luck, and devotion to self-improvement, in this cartoon Carroll's White Rabbit character holds a negative and pejorative meaning, as indifferent, greedy, and often-being late. In Carroll's novel, the White Rabbit leads Alice to his mysterious hole to explore an unknown life and also danger in some situations. Nonetheless, in Brookes' cartoon Johnson appears passing across a graveyard where many tombstones are seen, in contrast with what appears in Tenniel's original drawing. Though Alice is not portrayed explicitly, the cartoon ignites the notion of misguidedness. To summarize the explicit and implicit metaphorical cues in the cartoons, the image triggers the following metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE TARDY WHITE RABBIT IN *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* (MISLEADER).
- BORIS JOHNSON'S POLICIES DURING THE CRISIS ARE THE CAUSES OF LIVING IN BLUNDERLAND.
- THE BRITISH POPULATION IS ALICE (PREY TO JOHNSON'S POSTPONED MEASURES).
- THE UK DURING THE PANDEMIC IS A GRAVEYARD.

These entailments trigger the implied metaphorical configurations 'BORIS JOHNSON'S SLOW MEASURES DURING THE CRISIS ARE A PATH TO A GRAVEYARD/TO DEATH' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP IS THE WAY TO BLUNDERLAND', which reveal Brookes' negative evaluation of Johnson's misguided and delayed policies which would ultimately lead to a path of catastrophic consequences and death.

4.3. THE ANALYSIS OF THE METAPHORICAL DEPICTION OF *THE GUARDIAN*'S BORIS JOHNSON-RELATED CARTOONS

- Cartoon 2.1



Figure 4.38 Steve Bell's cartoon on Boris Johnson and the coronavirus crisis, published in *The Guardian*, March 17, 2020



Figure 4.39 The original poster by Boris Efimov of Josef Stalin, the “Captain of the land of the Soviets leads us from victory to victory”, published in 1933

This cartoon was published for *The Guardian* a few days after Boris Johnson issued his statement on March 16th, 2020 on the action plan he had set up to combat the spread of the virus and to boost economy. His statement reinforced various objectives, such as sustaining economic growth, ensuring equitable access to essential treatments, and actively supporting businesses and economy during these challenging times¹⁰⁴. Steve Bell, in this cartoon, relies on a non-transactional narrative process and Johnson is the only represented participant who is carrying out the action of navigating. The restrictions of the inspirational image settings and dimensions are the reason to identify specific semiotic aspects. In the image, the interactive meaning is well-achieved through the direct gaze of Johnson at the readers, though he has no normal facial features, which functions to engage the viewers in the image's interpretation.

Engaging in the visual analysis of the metaphorical image in the cartoon, it has been noticed that Boris Efimov's poster¹⁰⁵ of Joseph Stalin as shown in figure 4.39 serves as its basis, and establishes a ridiculous comparison between Johnson's economic plans to face the virus's effect and Joseph Stalin's socialist principles. Thus, the functional purpose of this visual allusion reveals that Bell attempts to ironically mock down Johnson's plan. This direct allusion has been combined with the scenario of journey and its image Source-Path-Destination which highlights the progress in Johnson's alleged economic plans during the pandemic and the obstacles which hinder that progress.

Concerning the details of the cartoon, Johnson is portrayed navigating a ship, an image which is typically regarded as a representative of a country's leading towards a destination (symbolic process). Thus, Johnson is navigating his country to a particular destination or goal, as he is the head of the government. Unlike the original poster, with Stalin at the ship's helm marked "СССР"¹⁰⁶, which indicates his leading role in guiding the Soviet Union in a direction tied to the Soviet state and a red star behind symbolically standing for the Communist Party¹⁰⁷, Bell's cartoon delivers a message ironically and contradictorily. In Bell's cartoon, the ship's steering-wheel has

¹⁰⁴ Retrieved on 20 January 2022 from the website <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-on-coronavirus-16-march-2020>.

¹⁰⁵ Retrieved on 20 January 2022 from <http://smarthistories.com/russia-under-stalin/>

¹⁰⁶ СССР (Союз Советских Социалистических Республик, SSSR 'Soyuz Sovetskikh Socialisticheskikh Respublik' in Latin script) is a Russian abbreviation for the Soviet Union, or Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/СССР_\(disambiguation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/СССР_(disambiguation)).

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/communist-party-politics>

the words BOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY instead, which suggests wordplay, where BOCIALISM is a blend of Boris Johnson and Socialism. This term, which implies Johnson's political and economic policies and ideologies, resembles the term Thatcherism¹⁰⁸. In this way, Bell attempts to convey that Johnson's leadership, and his economic and political ideologies, are a doctrine compared to socialism as a movement which should be adopted by others. Moreover, the ironical depiction of Johnson as Stalin, with a red star on his cap and a Bocialism-inscribed steering-wheel advocate that his economic policies are his only concern, neglecting the crucial issues associated with the crisis and the stringency of his economic plans.

Consequently, the image in Bell's cartoon draws metaphorical representations and parallels with the original Stalin poster and ship navigation, triggering the following mappings:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS JOSEPH STALIN LEADING THE UK TO AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION.
- THE UK IS A SHIP.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY IS BOCIALISM.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY IS TO NAVIGATE A SHIP.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S IDEOLOGY AND STRATEGIES ARE THE STEERING-WHEEL OF THE SHIP.
- IMPROVING ECONOMIC STATUS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO SAIL TO A DESTINATION.

Furthermore, some other aspects of image's compositional meaning should get some considerations in the analysis, such as the facial expressions and color, particularly Johnson's bum face, as referenced to in Chapter 3, subsection 3.1.3.1). Color as a salient resource in the ideational meaning, as Kress & van Leeuwen (2002) argue, can be used denotatively for people, states, events or places. The blue flag, then, in this cartoon denotes something related to a political party; it activates a metonymic expression (Blue for the British Conservative Party). Instead of the red flag of Socialism, as represented in the original poster, the flag in the cartoon represents the UK's Conservative party, which triggers their responsibility for managing the economy during the

¹⁰⁸ This was regarded as a movement or ideology with different political and economic views and policies, inspired by Margaret Thatcher's politics. For more information, the following website is valuable: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Thatcherism>.

pandemic and revitalizing it. On the flag, the British Conservative Party logo features a tree, which was satirically accompanied by a butt-shaped sickle, to criticize the perceived inadequacy of Johnson's government in addressing the economic crisis during the pandemic of COVID-19. The cartoon thus contrasts this with the traditional socialist symbol of the hammer and sickle¹⁰⁹.

Moreover, the verbal mode FIVE DAY PLAN phrase on the flag, instead of the Socialist economic framework FIVE YEAR PLANS,¹¹⁰ suggests an ironical hint at Johnson's government's narrow economic vision and inability to set out a competent plan for growth in the long term. Furthermore, another mode of metaphorical representation is the gestural mode and the facial expressions, which uncover the ideological and rhetoric motivations. Bell, in most of his Boris Johnson-related cartoons, renders Johnson with a butted face, which suggests foolishness or being headstrong. Hadfield further contends that Steve Bell's depiction of Johnson as an arse carries a satirical connotation: "A person's buttocks or a stupid, irritating or contemptible person"¹¹¹. Bell regards Johnson as an unprincipled and absurd figure who lacks genuine human emotions or empathy. The lack of eyes or facial features underscores this premise by suggesting that he is incapable of perceiving or understanding the situation's gravity, or the consequences of his actions. Before moving on to another detail, it is relevant to reflect on the progression in Bell's cartoons that depicted Johnson over years. Bell, like many other cartoonists, considered Johnson as a golden gift to draw, and Bell's portrayals of Johnson during his tenure as a mayor of London was less harsh and offensive, focusing more on his behavior and leadership than on his physical appearance. Figure 4.40, which includes images of 2019, in contrast with the other cartoons in this section, dated in 2020 and 2021, can show how Bell progressed in depicting Boris Johnson from an initial more general or less harsh portrayal in 2019 to a later more cruel and offensive one.

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-Union-of-Soviet-Socialist-Republics>

¹¹⁰ This was a framework first implemented in the Soviet Union by Joseph Stalin in 1928-1932 to help grow the country's economic status over a five-year period. Its essential tenet was to develop industry, agriculture and other sectors. For more details, see this site: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Five-Year-Plans>.

¹¹¹ <https://hughhadfield.com/4-2-contemporary-caricature/>



(1) ¹¹²

(2) ¹¹³

(3) ¹¹⁴

Figure 4.40 Steve Bell's progression of Boris Johnson's visages in cartoons in 2019 (Steve Bell in *The Guardian*, (1) 12 June; (2) 29 May; (3) 13 June, 2019)

Shortly thereafter, Bell adopted a derogatory style of illustrating Johnson and other PM presidency candidates during the BBC television debate of the Conservatives' Party leadership campaign of 2019, on June 19th 2019¹¹⁵, with buttock-like faces. Tracing back to the cartoon captioned with THE BEAUTY CONTEST FROM HELL, published in *The Guardian*¹¹⁶, Bell launched this stable visage of Johnson and other Tory members which suggests that they are idiots and behave in a pompous manner, as defined in the *Online Slang Dictionary*¹¹⁷. Since then, Johnson was commonly depicted by Bell with this pair of buttocks under his mop of golden toddler's hair with no any facial features, no eyes, no mouth and no nose, which implicitly assumes that he is senseless, an idiot and apathetic.

¹¹² <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/picture/2019/jun/12/steve-bell-on-boris-johnsons-tory-leadership-pitch-cartoon>

¹¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/commentisfree/picture/2019/may/29/steve-bell-on-boris-johnsons-claims-about-brexite-cartoon>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/picture/2019/jun/13/steve-bells-if-mcvey-flies-in-for-the-tory-dinosaur-hustings>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-48673698>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/picture/2019/jun/19/steve-bell-on-the-tory-leadership-debate-cartoon>

¹¹⁷ <http://onlineslangdictionary.com/meaning-definition-of/ass-face>



Figure 4.41 Steve Bell’s cartoon on the Tory leadership debate, published on June 19th, 2019, in *The Guardian* (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/picture/2019/jun/19/steve-bell-on-the-tory-leadership-debate-cartoon>)



Figure 4.42 Boris Johnson, Jeremy Hunt, Michael Gove, Sajid Javid and Rory Stewart BBC television debate for the Conservative Party Leadership in June 2019¹¹⁸

From that point onward, Bell was known for presenting Johnson with that hyperbolic derogatory portrayal, i.e. his bum face, which is defined in the *Urban Dictionary* as “one who is of such an annoying temperament that they are worthy of being compared to someone with a bum for a face”¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁸ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/06/18/won-bbcs-tory-leadership-debate-writers-have-say/>

¹¹⁹ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=bum%20face>

Bell is known also for his style of satirizing and caricaturing political figures through his potent rhetorical portraits, he, for example, created his hallmark in portraying certain politicians, such as as David Cameron, with a condom wrapped around his face, Donald Trump with a toilet bowl and Johnson's face was replaced with "a pair of buttocks topped with a mop of blonde hair" (Harris, 2020; Slattery, 2010). As delineated within the discourse presented in the article by London Walks, the focus was directed towards the formidable cartoons illustrated by Bell:

Well, you can probably guess what's grabbed him about Boris Johnson. He's given him an arse for a face – an arse topped to the north with an unruly mop of blonde hair. No eyes, no nose, no ears – just an arse under that out of control mop of blonde hair. What does that say about what Steve Bell sees in – and thinks of – the man who's currently occupying the highest office in the land? Well, our Head of State is of course the queen. But – as Steve Bell puts it – the Head of Government in the United Kingdom is an arse. A plump arse – both from the neck down and the neck up. A plump arse with blonde hair... Anyway, Adam maintains that not since Rowlandson and Gillray and Hogarth – savagely brilliant cartoonists, all of them – has London rejoiced in such a crop of deadly assassins as today's cartoonists. And the 007 of them all – the one with the License to kill – is *The Guardian's* Steve Bell¹²⁰.

To sum up, the cartoon as a whole discloses Bell's negative stance towards Johnson's incompetent plan of revitalizing economy which in turn evokes the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S NARROW ECONOMIC VISION DURING THE CRISIS IS NAVIGATING THE COUNTRY INTO OBSCURE DESTINATIONS'.

¹²⁰ <https://www.walks.com/podcast/cartoonist-savages-boris-johnson-10-year-old-girl-bests-the-city-of-london/>

- Cartoon 2.2



Figure 4.43 Steve Bell’s cartoon about the UK government’s protective ring supplies around care homes, published in *The Guardian*, March 20th, 2020

This cartoon was published as a result of Matt Hancock’s speech at a digital news conference on the COVID-19 outbreak in London on May 15th, 2020. The conference focused on the potential policies the British government could implement to address the issues in the UK’s care homes. Though Hancock declared “[w]e will keep working to strengthen the protective ring that we have cast around all of our care homes”¹²¹, many criticisms were raised as a result of the unreasonable impact of Johnson’s policies to protect care homes and hospitals from COVID-19. Before going through the analysis of the visual conceptualisation of the figures in the cartoon, it is worth mentioning that Charteris-Black (2021:200) comments on the protective ring metaphor as “one that heightened the agency of the government and in particular the Health Secretary. There are clear transitivity relationships as ‘throw’ is a transitive verb and one does not ‘throw’ a lifebuoy ring around oneself, but around someone else, and the viewpoint is from the subject of ‘throw’”.

¹²¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-carehomes-idUKKBN22VIP3>

Therefore, the focused theme of Bell's cartoon is the metaphorical use of protective rings that Hancock and Johnson pledged to prevent the spread of the virus among care home residents, who are some of the most vulnerable individuals in society. So, the title at the bottom reads PROTECTIVE RING SUPPLIES ARE AT RECORD LEVEL!, which represents the cartoonist's ironical stance on Johnson's poorly implemented and inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE). Concerning the contextual knowledge associated to the image, not surprisingly, Bell, like many other cartoonists, draws his image on a mix of more than one source domains or scenarios. Thus, the source domains GAME and DIRECTION are combined in this cartoon to show the misdirected target which Johnson's government is aiming at concerning the British care homes.

It has been supposed that the one and only reason why Bell intentionally based his cartoon upon the archery game is Hancock's recurrent use of the phrase 'protective ring' in most of his May 2020 speeches¹²². The protective ring notion is visually rendered in the cartoon as archery targets that have rings to be hit by the head of the government, with either Hancock or the care homes at the centre.

In the depicted scene, firstly, it is significant to notice the semiotic elements that affect the representative, interactive, and compositional meaning of the image, such as the representational elements, position, size, distance, foregrounding and backgrounding, and gaze. The cartoon is based on a transactional narrative process in which Johnson is depicted as the represented participant (the actor), while Hancock and the home cares are the goals of the process. Accordingly, the vector is transmitted from Johnson to Hancock instead of to the care homes. Concerning the interactive pattern, Johnson's gaze is directed at Hancock, and not to the health sector, which suggests his concern and focus on his government's members rather than the home care workers.

Moreover, the depiction of Johnson behind Hancock, directing the arrow not towards the presumed target, but at Hancock himself, probably either indicates a lack of precision in his aim

¹²² On 15 May 2020, Matt Hancock declared that “[r]ight from the start, it’s been clear that this horrible virus affects older people most. So right from the start, we’ve tried to throw a protective ring around our care homes”. Then after a few days, he repeated the same phrase, saying: “We absolutely did throw a protective ring around social care, not least with the £3.2 billion-worth of funding we put in right at the start, topped up with £600 million-worth of funding on Friday”. Such emphasis on the notion of the protective ring motivated cartoonists and other critics to highlight its communicative value. More details concerning Hancock's use of the image of the protective ring can be found at <https://fullfact.org/health/matt-hancock-protective-ring-care-homes/>.

and it positions him behind Hancock, rather than in front of the intended target. Or, rather, it may reveal Bell's skeptical view of Johnson's claims of providing protection to the care home workers. The distance between Johnson and Hancock might also suggest the incohesive relation among the government during this critical time; that is why Johnson is depicted in the background of the image, whilst Hancock is presented in the frontal position and looking directly at the viewers to convey a demanding meaning and to engage them in this context. The central position is dedicated to the home care target, which activates the metaphor IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL. Furthermore, the representational elements' size also has its intrinsic roots in the compositional meaning of the image, for instance, the home care target is oversized and centered, while Hancock's is polarized and undersized, to represent the high priority of protecting care homes during the pandemic in addition to the sector's important role in confronting the virus; this interpretation is then drawn upon the conceptual metaphor BIG IS IMPORTANT.

Consequently, this depiction implies that Johnson may be considered as an ineffective archer, thereby raising questions about the authenticity of his pledged protections. The image holds the potential to yield insightful interpretations based on these metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A FAILED ARCHER UNABLE TO HIT THE BULLSEYE.
- MATT HANCOCK IS AN ARCHERY TARGET.
- THE BRITISH CARE HOME ISSUES ARE THE ESSENTIAL ARCHERY TARGET TO HIT.
- THE UK GOVERNMENT'S PROTECTION POLICY FOR CARE HOMES IS A MISSING ARROW.

It is worthy to mention hence that the aforementioned details uncover Bell's stance towards Johnson and Hancock's allegations and false information, which in turn ignite the following metaphors: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S CARE HOME PROTECTION POLICIES ARE MISGUIDED ARROWS TOWARDS A TARGET' and 'POLITICAL SUCCESS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO HIT THE BULLSEYE OF A PROTECTIVE RING'.

- Cartoon 2.3

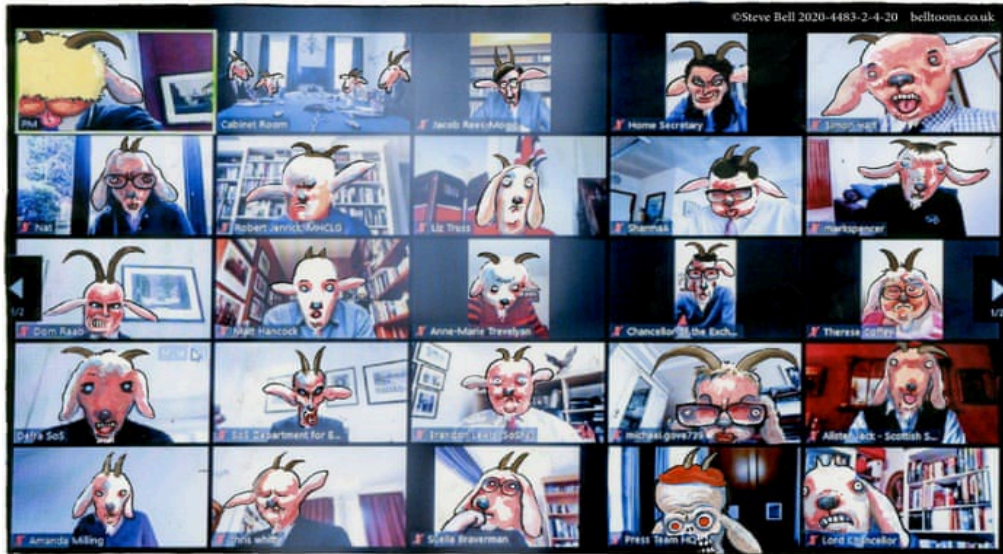


Figure 4.44 Steve Bell's cartoon on Boris Johnson's virtual cabinet, published in *The Guardian*, April 2, 2020



Figure 4.45 The screenshot of a cabinet meeting via zoom video conferencing app as tweeted by the British PM

This cartoon was published in *The Guardian* the day after Boris Johnson shared in his tweeter account a screenshot of his cabinet conference via the Zoom app on March 31st, 2020. Steve Bell's cartoon was a response to the growing criticism sparked by that tweet, which displayed personal information such as the session's ID and politicians' official emails. Bell, in this figure, drew his cartoon upon the source domain ANIMALS to map certain idiosyncratic features onto the politicians. Unsurprisingly, the metaphorical configuration of politicians as animals is a common technique in political discourse, and as seen in Figure 4.44, the depiction of the UK cabinet as goats arises from the conceptual metaphor HUMANS/POLITICIANS ARE ANIMALS and conveys a dysphemistic value and negative evaluations. The cartoon is based on a non-transactional narrative pattern, in which the image is an intertextual reference to Johnson's tweeter post. There is no reactional process among the participants who are regarded as actors (virtual conference holding action).

Bell portrayed the UK Conservatives as a herd of goats to ridiculously evaluate Johnson's cabinet's behavior and undesirable characteristics during the pandemic and the full closure following. Moreover, it may also suggest that they all have the same limitations in thinking and are reckless, clumsy and foolish. The semiotic resource that is purposefully employed in this image is the characters' direct gaze at the readers, which implies Bell's editorial and ideological stance to engage the viewers' in an imaginary relation with the represented participants. The cabinet members were depicted with disconnected frames in which they have no cohesive relation and each lives in their own world. According to van Dijk (1998), ideologies are socially employed to express or suppress certain information about others, thus, the cartoonist employed his ideological stance to criticize the British Conservative Party, which was the ruling party at that time, regarding its members a herd of goats. The image, therefore, highlights the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S CABINET IS A HERD OF GOATS', which reveals Bell's pejorative stance and negative evaluation of the cabinet as a whole and perhaps suggests that the cabinet members are acting irresponsibly and foolishly.

- **Cartoon 2.4**

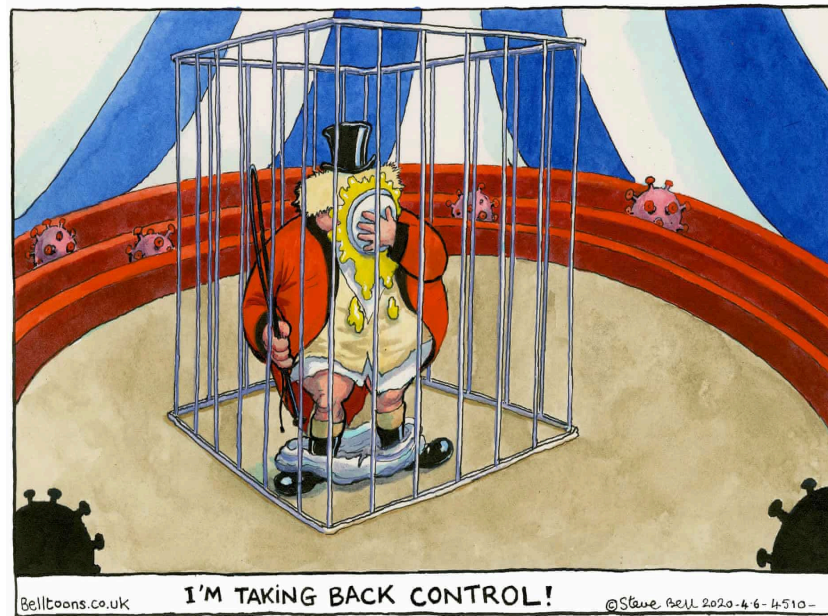


Figure 4.46 Steve Bell's cartoon on Boris Johnson's taking direct control of pandemic responses, published in *The Guardian*, April 6, 2020

This cartoon was published by Steve Bell on April the 6th 2020 for *The Guardian* after a few days had passed since the announcement of Boris Johnson's testing positive for COVID-19 on 27 March, 2020. Johnson posted a video on his tweeter account declaring that he was in self-isolation¹²³ and could not leave quarantine. Thus, the cartoon was issued as a response to Johnson's infection and self-isolation during the pandemic. The visual structure of the cartoon exposes that Johnson is the represented participant in the image, which takes the form of a non-transactional process. Hiding the face with a pie highlights the absence of the vector from the actor to the goal. The conceptual process also emphasizes the depiction of the characters, for instance the classification of the elements as superordinate and subordinate prompts that Johnson is subservient and being controlled, caged by the virus figures. Additionally, the composition of the cartoon is artfully achieved through the focus on the value of the information and the salient aspects and framing lines. In this regard, the central position of Johnson with a foregrounding aspect reveals

¹²³ <https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1246042407973662721?s=20>

Bell's critical stance towards Johnson's vulnerability and mishandling of the crisis. The cartoonist attempts to highlight his skeptical views on Johnson through the compositional aspects.

Concerning the visual depiction and the details of the cartoon, Bell presents Johnson as a beast-tamer being locked up in a cage surrounded by a vast majority of figures which are those of the virus. Again, the circus image is essentially employed in political cartoons to express an insult to politicians who amuse the public rather than serving the latter's interests. Though the image of a circus has positive connotations (amusement, happiness, and fun), yet in political discourse the circus metaphor has some negative implications, such as absurdity, frivolity, or a lack of serious actions.

Thus, depending on the source domain ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS, Bell portrayed Johnson as a caged beast-tamer, carrying a whip. This visual metaphor is very powerful here. Apart from the cake on the face and Johnson's trousers down (partially representing him as a clown), which make him a fool, the cage schema also suggests one of either two interpretations: the first proposes that Johnson has lost his control over the spread of the virus, and the only control he can take in this regard is to perform ridiculous and absurd acts. However, it may also uncover the reverse of reality, that is, Johnson is an idiot who has been tamed and caged instead of beasts, because of his uncontrollable dangerous actions.

In line with the cage schema, the use of the spatial-orientational metaphors IN-OUT in this cartoon activates more general metaphors, such as UNCONTROLLABLE IS OUTSIDE, and CONTROLLABLE IS INSIDE, which trigger a passive evaluation of Johnson's control of the pandemic. This means that Johnson is under control while the virus is out and spreading everywhere. This might suggest that Johnson's self-isolation is a cage for him, or it may also mean that he is as dangerous as a beast. In this way, the cartoon's theme is Johnson's taking back control, as written at the bottom side of the image: "I'M TAKING BACK CONTROL!". All this indicates that the only control that Johnson has been taking back was over himself instead of over the virus spread. The metaphorical representations derived from this cartoon are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CAGED BEAST-TAMER PERFORMING AN ABSURD PRESENTATION (overt metaphorical representation).
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CAGED BEAST (covert metaphorical representation).

- CORONAVIRUS IS FREE/UNCONTROLLABLE BEASTS.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S CONTROL OVER THE VIRUS IS A SUPERFICIAL SHOW.
- THE UK DURING THE PANDEMIC IS THE STAGE OF ABSURD ACTIONS.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S MEASURES OF CURBING THE VIRUS SPREAD IS A CIRCUS SHOW.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S SELF-ISOLATION IS BEING CONTAINED IN A CAGE.

These entailments render implied metaphors and interpretations, such as 'THE REAL DANGER DURING THE PANDEMIC IS BORIS JOHNSON'S NEGLIGENCE OF PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES', and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES ARE A FOOLISH SHOW'. Bell reveals his negative stance on Johnson's policies and actions suggesting that the whole situation surrounding Johnson's plans to curb the virus is chaotic and resembles a circus, while Johnson is behaving in an absurd and foolish manner.

- **Cartoon 2.5**



Figure 4.47 Steve Bell's cartoon about the return of the British PM to giving the daily press conference, published in *The Guardian*, April 30, 2020



Figure 4.48 The original image of The Resurrection of Christ, from the right wing of the Isenheim Altarpiece, c.1512-1516, by Matthias Grünewald (Mathis Nithart Gothart), c.1480-1528¹²⁴

This cartoon was published in *The Guardian* on the same day of Johnson’s return to giving a daily briefing of the epidemiological situation in the country after his infection with the virus on April 30th, 2020.¹²⁵ The cartoon was drawn upon the source domains RELIGION and ETHICS, as it was inspired by one of the German Renaissance masterpieces, “The Resurrection of Christ” by Matthias Grünewald, the right wing of the Isenheim Altarpiece. The original painting shown in figure 4.48 represents the scene of the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, as mentioned in the New Testament of the Bible. Bagdanov (2021) comments on this scene in the

¹²⁴ Retrieved from the website <https://www.kellybagdanov.com/2021/03/31/grunewalds-resurrection-from-the-isenheim-altarpiece/>.

¹²⁵ https://www.google.com/search?q=boris+johnson+return+to+give+breifing+on+coronavirus+30-4-2020&rlz=1C1GCEU_enES973ES976&sxsrf=AJOqlzXo5Qb09p_MplUx-oh_eVnf-LvXQw%3A1673962042602&ei=OqLGY-6zJLeckdUPk9iSqAs&ved=0ahUKEwjuuKrH2s78AhU3TqQEHR0sBLUQ4dUDCA8&uact=5&og=boris+johnson+return+to+give+breifing+on+coronavirus+30-4-2020&gs_lcp=Cgxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAQAz0ECCMQJzoECC4QOzoNCC4QxwEQ0QMO1AIQQzoOCC4QgAQOQxwEQ0QMO1AI6BQgAEIAEOgsILhCABBDHARDRAzoFCC4QgAQO6CAguEIAEENOCOggILhCABBDLAToLCC4QgAQO1AIQywe6CAgAEIAEEMsBOgoIABCABBKEMsBOgYIABAWEB46CAgAEBYQHhAKOgUIIRCGAToICCEQFhAeEB06BAghEBU6BwghEKABEAo6BwgAEB4QogRKBAhBGABKBAhGGABQAFjJjAFgopABaAJwAHgAgAGVA4gBg1GSAQowLjU4LjUuMC4xmAEAoAEBwAEB&scient=gws-wiz-serp#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:91da973e,vid:T6qBiBPjuA

following terms: “an intriguing combination of the Transfiguration, Resurrection and Ascension, Grunewald has given us a vision of the victorious Christ that radiates his glory.”

Bell’s image illustrates Johnson floating in the air with a halo behind him, and exploding glorious rays of light from his hands towards the two characters standing beside him, Chris Whitty on his right and Dominic Cummings on his left. The target of the cartoon was an ironic reference to Johnson’s COVID-19 recovery which was cued as the resurrection of Jesus. Cummings, on the other hand, also has his share of Bell’s ironic allusion; he is consistently rendered as the character of a Dalek¹²⁶ with a saucer-like shape skull head with red eyes. This metaphorical representation implies that Cummings is as merciless as the Daleks, who eliminate those who oppose their strategies. This metaphorical conceptualization of Cummings as a Dalek is also regarded as a hallmark of Bell in portraying Cummings. Moreover, it implies Bell’s negative stance against Cummings, who is seen as an emotionless figure prioritizing the achievement of his intents over others.

Before further elaborating the details of the metaphorical conceptualization in the cartoon, it is important to mention that the cartoon is a non-transactional narrative image in which Johnson is the represented participant while the other characters are the phenomenon; there is no eye contact or vector between Johnson and the other figures. The central position of Johnson and his higher status over others probably indicate his superiority and dominance over them. Moreover, the interaction between the three characters is apparently absent, since all gaze directly at the viewers, with no connection lines or frames among them. This emphasizes the lack of cohesion and harmony in Johnson’s government during the pandemic. Furthermore, Cummings and Whitty are placed within an equal distance from Johnson and from each other, which means that Johnson is equidistant from them in terms of decision making.

¹²⁶ These are fictional extraterrestrial mutants mostly presented in the British science fiction television series *Doctor Who*, created by Terry Nation. They first appeared in 1963 and they were villains seeking to destroy everything non-Dalek. They are shaped as tanks of mechanical shells with globes on their base units. The Daleks, as an alien race, may be regarded as a representative concept of the “other”. Their dangerous effect can be seen as a symbolism of power, genocide, fascism, totalitarianism and the deadly threats of technology. For more information, these sites are helpful: <https://thedoctorwhosite.co.uk/dalek/>, <https://doctorwho.fandom.com/es/wiki/Dalek> and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalek>.

The compositional aspect of the image is also highlighted through the upper position of Johnson, which suggests ideal information given by the cartoonists to attract the viewers' attention whereas the others are positioned low to represent real information. Johnson, accordingly, is the nucleus of the cartoon as he is the centered element, whilst Cummings and Whitty are subservient in the matter of daily (mis)information briefings. Additionally, the tonal gradient and radiation of the halo behind Johnson and out of his hands' palms reflect the ironical intertextuality drawn by Bell in rendering Johnson as the Christ.

Strikingly, on the speech podiums, we read the inscriptions DEATH, RESURRECTION and TAKE BACK CONTROL OF THE NARRATIVE respectively for Whitty, Johnson and Cummings; they in one way or another reflect Johnson's COVID-19 infection timeline in March 2020. The progression from the mild symptoms, then to brushing with death, and then being on the mend are the phases of Johnson's case. The word DEATH on Whitty's podium may be a reference to his job as a medical chief who is responsible for the daily briefings of virus infections and death tolls. The RESURRECTION caption, on the other hand, metaphorically stands for Johnson's illness and recovery from his virus infection, which was regarded in the media and by some of his supporters as something like a miracle. Accordingly, the religious reference to Christ was likely meant to highlight the messianic image that some had attributed to Johnson, as well as to ironically criticize his perceived absurdity and arrogance. This interpretation ignites the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 RECOVERY IS THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST'.

The other inscription on Cummings' podium, TAKING BACK CONTROL OF THE NARRATIVE¹²⁷, is a reference to how Johnson is going to begin his control back of the pandemic through directing his advisor to re-shape the public perception of the whole situation over the crisis. To sum up, the cartoon is portrayed in this way to reveal how Bell criticizes Johnson and his way of handling the pandemic, alongside the daily announcements, which are regarded as a source of misinformation. Thus, through the above-mentioned details, the cartoon ignites the

¹²⁷ This phrase is commonly used to refer to the idea of regaining control of the way a story is being portrayed in public perception. So, it suggests that the current narrative is not accurate and there is a need to change it. It can also be used as a tool, manipulating or setting propaganda to re-control the public opinion and reshape it with misinformation (<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/compassionate-citizenry/taking-back-the-narrative/>).

metaphor ‘THE GOVERNMENT CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING CONFERENCES ARE MANIPULATIONS OF THE TRUTH’.

- **Cartoon 2.6**

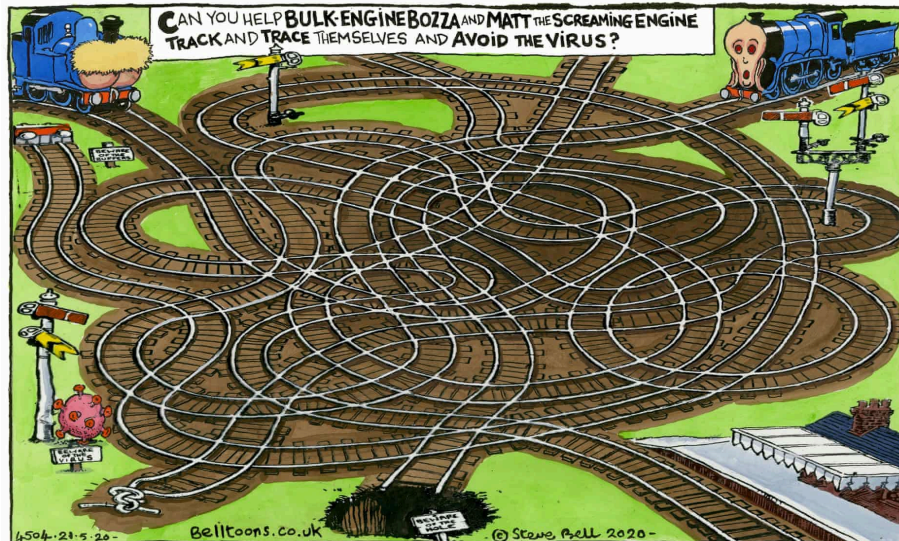


Figure 4.49 Steve Bell’s Cartoon on Boris Johnson’s Track and Trace system, published in *The Guardian*, May 20, 2020

The cartoon in figure 4.49 was published in the aftermath of the government’s announcement of its ‘world beating’ program in May 2020, as stated in Boris Johnson’s words¹²⁸. The system was based on tracing those suspected of having been in direct social contact with positive COVID-19 cases. In this cartoon, Bell renders Boris Johnson and Matt Hancock as train locomotives and engines heading to unknown ends. The source domains used here are MOVEMENT and DIRECTION, in combination with TOOLS and MACHINES to feature the British Track and Trace System as a complex intersection of tracks.

Firstly, the cartoon is captioned with a satirical question posed by Bell: CAN YOU HELP BULK-ENGINE BOZZA AND MATT THE SCREAMING ENGINE TRACK AND TRACE

¹²⁸ The speech in the UK Parliament that exposed the new program of Boris Johnson and his Secretary of State for Health and Social Care was allotted to unveil the new program of tracking and tracing the suspected cases. Simply put, this track and trace system aimed at recruiting 25,000 trackers to trace 10,000 cases daily by the start of June 2020, and testing 200,000 cases daily as well. More information available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-track-idUSKBN22W1MW>.

THEMSELVES AND AVOID THE VIRUS?, which probably undermines the public's confidence in Johnson's government's ability to manage the crisis or even to protect its members. Delving into the details of the visual metaphor, the two engines are the bulky 'Bozza'¹²⁹ (referring to Boris Johnson, who is affectionately called this by his friends) and the screaming Matt Hancock, who are shown as requiring help to avoid the virus and take the right track. They are the representational participants who present a non-transactional narrative pattern. The image shows the two characters as having no vector, no direct eye-contact, which suggests the absence of interactive meaning between them. The maze image is also used to reinforce the premise of the disconnection between the members of the government in handling the crisis. Surely, the utilization of the maze schema in this cartoon is considered as a cultural intertextual reference to one of the kids' quiz journals games wherein they are asked to follow the right track to help somebody get out of a maze.

Each track ends in a disaster, as seen in the cartoon, with a bottomless pit featuring a warning sign that reads BEWARE OF THE HOLE, a knotted-up track with a sign that reads BEWARE OF THE VIRUS, and a sign with a warning message reading BEWARE OF THE BUFFERS. The tracks taken by Johnson and Hancock lead to the pit and knotted-up track, while the correct track is empty.

Thus, Bell's image activates a set of metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A BULK ENGINE LEADING TO A PIT TRACK.
- MATT HANCOCK IS A SCREAMING ENGINE LEADING TO A KNOTTED-UP TRACK.
- THE COVID-19 TRACK-AND-TRACE SYSTEM IS A MAZE OF BRANCHING RAILWAYS.
- THE TRACK AND TRACE PROGRAM IS A WRONG RAILWAY TRACK THAT THE GOVERNMENT FOLLOWS.

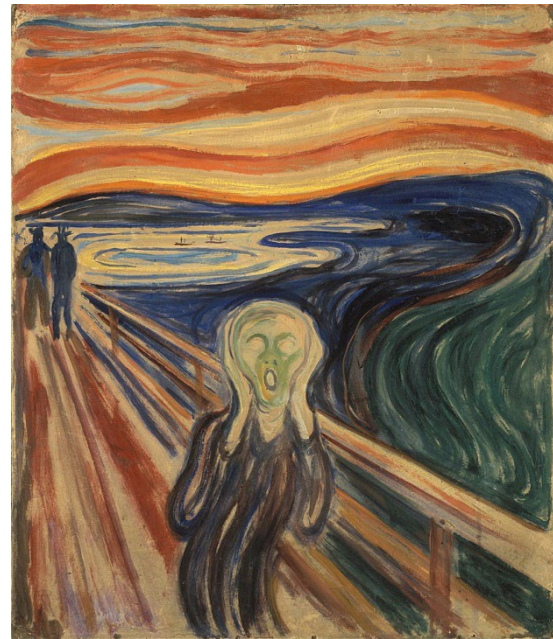
Additionally, it is significant to point out that the engine characters used by Bell in this cartoon share in visual intertextuality which is inspired from various well-known and iconic figures in

¹²⁹ Many other nicknames were used to refer to Boris Johnson as he was in office, some considered derogatory while others are perceived as affectionate and complimentary. More information can be found here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_nicknames_of_prime_ministers_of_the_United_Kingdom.

popular culture and literature, for instance, bulk-engine Bozza has its roots in a fictional character in the popular TV show *Thomas & Friends*¹³⁰. Through this intertextual reference Bell is attempting to feature Johnson as overconfident in his responses to the virus (the trace and track system, for instance), which is portrayed as a maze of branching railways leading to catastrophic ends. In contrast, Hancock is portrayed as an engine with a screaming face, inspired by the famous artwork “The Scream”¹³¹ by the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch. This portrayal implies the emergency, panic and angst Hancock may have been experiencing in relation to the virus’ swift spread.



Figure 4.50 Thomas the Tank Engine



4.51 Edvard Munch, “The Scream”, 1893

Finally, it is worth also considering that following up Johnson’s track it has been found that it eventually falls into a dark abyss, while Hancock’s track leads into the knotted end. These

¹³⁰ Thomas the Tank Engine is a fictional locomotive character that has human-like qualities and travels on the tracks of a made-up place called Sodor. The popular TV show *Thomas & Friends* features Thomas as the main character. For more information, see <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Thomas-the-Tank-Engine-fictional-character>.

¹³¹ The picture was created by Munch representing an inhuman ghostly figure screaming and behind it an orange sky. It is a well-known representation of a panic attack. The painting is characterized as “an uncharacteristic moment of panic. It symbolizes the darkly troubled times Munch was experiencing as he dealt with mental illness and trauma, and his attempt to rationalize and explain his experience through what he knew best; painting.” More information about this piece of art can be found in these sites: <https://www.edvardmunch.org/the-scream.jsp> and <https://medium.com/everything-art/the-scream-a-deeper-analysis-of-edvard-munchs-anxiety-wrought-piece-c36d9bbbb4cd>.

indications activate the metaphors ‘THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT’S LACK OF CREDIBILITY IN DEALING WITH THE CRISIS IS GOING ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A FATAL DESTINATION’, and ‘THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT’S TRACK AND TRACE SYSTEM IS A MAZE LEADING TO NO END’. In this cartoon, Bell reveals the negative consequences of this system in the long term and the incompetence of the British government in defeating this virus, as politicians are depicted as engines losing their right destination and the whole system looking like a maze.

- **Cartoon 2.7**



Figure 4.52 Steve Bell’s cartoon on Boris Johnson and Black Lives Matter protests, published in *The Guardian*, June 10, 2020

This cartoon was published in response to Boris Johnson’s message on Black Lives Matter during the coronavirus crisis, making an allusion to the death of George Floyd in the US. Bell’s cartoon serves as a retrospective reference to Johnson’s controversial remarks concerning Muslim women and black Africans in 2019.¹³² The cartoon relies upon Johnson’s metaphors with Bell’s satirical touch; therefore, the image is a visual fusion of Johnson and the statue of Edward Colston

¹³² The British PM had a history of making contentious remarks regarding Muslim women, gay men and black Africans, which were widely perceived as racially insensitive statements. In a previous statement made in 2019, he drew comparisons between Muslim women and “letterboxes”, referred to gay men as “bumboys”, and made derogatory references to black Africans with phrases such as “watermelon smiles” and “piccaninnies”. Further details regarding these comments can be found in the following source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/boris-johnson-record-sexist-homophobic-and-racist-comments-bumboys-piccaninnies-2019-6>.

(the slave trader), as shown in figure 4.53¹³³, with the following message written on its plinth: HE'S MUCH MUCH LESS RACIST THAN HE USED TO BE.



Figure 4.53 Statue of Edward Colston

The cartoon also includes a letterbox, which metaphorically refers to Johnson's previous controversial comments on Muslim women wearing burqas, comparing them to 'letterboxes', with a watermelon smile, which also includes another racial stereotype and derogatory portrayal of black minorities. By associating Johnson with these attributes, the visual mode in the image suggests that Johnson shares similar discriminatory views or behaviors as Colston, linking them both in terms of their controversial actions or attitudes. The details of the cartoon reflect a non-transactional narrative process, in which Johnson is the only character and no vector is to be regarded accordingly. As such, the representational meaning is achieved through the sole depiction of Johnson as the statue in figure 4.53. The direct gaze of Johnson at the viewer reveals the cartoonist's attempts to build an imaginary link between the viewers and the cartoon's elements. Thus, all these aspects highlight that Johnson is the central figure in this matter and he has gained

¹³³ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jun/08/who-was-edward-colston-and-why-was-his-bristol-statue-toppled-slave-trader-black-lives-matter-protests>

the prominent focus of the cartoonist, thus, he is placed in the high-center part of the image with a foregrounding pose.

Concerning the explanatory process, on the other hand, the cartoon reveals Bell's negative stance against Johnson's lack of sincerity in addressing racial equality in the UK, particularly during the crisis time. The cartoon, accordingly, activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS EDWARD COLSTON'S STATUE WITH A BUTTOCK-FACE, A LETTERBOX SHAPE AND WATERMELON SMILE'. So, from a critical perspective, Bell's metaphor exposes the power dynamics, racial biases and discriminatory attitudes present in Johnson's behavior before and after the pandemic. As a whole, it reflects a critical stance towards his leadership and raises questions about his commitment to addressing racial injustices. The metaphor also serves as a form of social and political critique.

- **Cartoon 2.8**



Figure 4.54 Chris Riddell's cartoon about Boris Johnson letting in a few goals, *The Guardian*, June 21, 2020

This cartoon was published by Chris Riddell, the cartoonist for *The Guardian*, on June 21st 2020, coinciding with the resumption of England's premier League then. In light of this, the cartoon's theme was drawn upon the domain GAMES AND SPORTS. Accordingly, the general conceptual metaphors 'POLITICS IS A FOOTBALL GAME' and 'POLITICIANS ARE

PLAYERS' were brought to mind. The cartoon is structured as a non-transactional narrative process with a reactional pattern. Boris Johnson is the main represented participant and the main figure, while Dominic Cummings is depicted as another represented participant, with no real connection between him and Johnson.

Concerning the visual metaphors in Riddell's image, Johnson is illustrated as a football goalkeeper who lets several goals into his net. He is wearing a blue shirt, a color (salient and compositional aspect) which stands for the British Conservative party, and a BLUSTER UTD team label on his shirt. The BLUSTER UNITED label is probably employed as a play on words combining Manchester United, a famous English football club, with the term 'bluster'¹³⁴, which means to speak aggressively and to make boastful statements with no authority or little effect, comparable to a goalkeeper who lets balls pass through the goal. So, Johnson is encoded as an incompetent boastful goalkeeper who is seen as the cause of his government's failure and who makes no real effect.

Moreover, the goals recognized in Riddell's cartoon represent the controversial policies and measures Johnson's government implemented to face the virus' risk, FREE SCHOOL MEALS U-TURN¹³⁵, TEST AND TRACE APP RETHINK¹³⁶, and F.O. DFID MERGER¹³⁷, inscribed on the balls inside the goal. Behind Johnson, Dominic Cummings is depicted as a Disc Joker who is broadcasting these football cheers: "HEAR! HEAR!", "WELL PLAYED, SIR!", "JOLLY GOOD SHOW..." and "BEND THE KNEE". These cheers are a mixture of two records Dominic is using. The first record is labeled STAY ALERT, NOW THAT IS WHAT I CALL TORY CROWD NOISE, which is a reference to the UK's government's slogan during the COVID-19 pandemic,

¹³⁴ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/bluster>

¹³⁵ After the campaign run by the Manchester United team player Marcus Rashford against Boris Johnson's inhuman decision to stop the government's support to low-income children with free school meals during summer, Johnson was forced to make a U-turn in June and to dedicate £120m as a fund for Covid-19 summer food for millions of children in the UK (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jun/16/boris-johnson-faces-tory-rebellion-over-marcus-rashfords-school-meals-call>). For further information on this, see below, cartoons 3.12 and 3.30.

¹³⁶ After technical problems and privacy concerns, as in Bluetooth handshakes, hidden data and train trouble, the UK's government decided to discontinue on the original plan for a centralized contact-tracing application and adopt a decentralized approach. More information can be found at <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-52995881>.

¹³⁷ F.O. DFID MERGER refers to the UK government's decision to merge the Department for International Development with the Foreign Office, which was enormously criticized for potentially undermining aid efforts to poorer countries. The announcement was made on 16 June, 2020. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-announces-merger-of-department-for-international-development-and-foreign-office>.

“Stay alert, control the virus, save lives”. The second record, on the other hand, has the label GAME OF THRONES¹³⁸ ‘BEND THE KNEE’ MIX THEME. Doubtlessly, the phrase ‘Bend the knee’¹³⁹ was typically used in the *Game of Thrones* series by those who have authority and power over others, therefore, bending the knee here is a symbolic gesture which stands for loyalty and submission to a higher authority or ruler. Thus, the phrase ‘bend the knee’ implies a submissive posture, suggesting that Cummings holds great power and influence over Boris Johnson and the party members. This satirical reference gives rise to the following metaphors: ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S LACK OF POLITICAL CONTROL IS TO LOSE THE CONTROL ON THE TEAM’S GOAL NET’ and ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S INCOMPETENT GOVERNMENT IS A FAILED GOALKEEPER WHO LET BALLS IN’, which was basically established upon the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A BLUSTER UTD TEAM’S GOALKEEPER.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS A DISC JOCKEY.
- THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS A BLUSTER UNITED TEAM.
- THE GOAL’S NET IS JOHNSON’S GOVERNMENT.
- THE CONTROVERSIES ON BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 POLICIES AND DECISIONS ARE GOALS AGAINST.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIOR IS TO LET GOALS IN THE NET.

Moreover, the absence of interaction between the characters is notable, with Johnson engaged in ball hitting while Cummings concentrates on his recordings. Johnson’s gaze is indirect, contrasting with Cummings’ direct focus, implying the cartoonist’s intention to involve the viewer in the interpretation of the cartoon and the image contemplation. The most prominent element is the characters’ position, with Johnson centrally located, symbolizing his pivotal role and significance in executing essential plans. Conversely, the right position is locus of New

¹³⁸ *Game of Thrones* is a popular TV series that aired from 2011 to 2019. The show is set in a fictional medieval world and revolves around the struggle for power between various noble families.

¹³⁹ In the series, the phrase is used as a powerful catchphrase by characters who are claiming or asserting their authority over others. For example, Daenerys Targaryen uses the phrase to demand the submission of the lords of Westeros to her rule as the rightful queen (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJbsXeRc_Fw).

information, which is purposefully occupied by the balls, cheers, and Cummings, underscoring their prominence in the scene and gaining the viewers' attention to these elements.

Rising above the verbal and visual representations and visual semiotics in the metaphorical configuration of Johnson in the football game scenario, some other details also have their roots in the compositional meaning of the cartoon, for instance, the characters' facial expressions and the way the goals happen, and the spectators' existence. For instance, the facial expressions of Johnson and Cummings reveal that the former is frustrated and perplexed, whereas Cummings is looking confident and malicious, which once again proposes that Cummings had power over Johnson, and that his opinions and views were often taken very seriously by Johnson.

Moreover, the balls' movement into the net may imply Johnson's lack of attention to the goal's net and his failure to address the issues written on them, which were the results behind scoring more goals against Johnson's team. This consistent representation can be compared to a goalkeeper being out of position, making it easier for the ball to get past him and into the goal. For instance, by using the FREE SCHOOL MEALS U-TURN ball, Riddell refers to Johnson's initial opposition to the Manchester United striker Marcus Rashford's free school meals campaign during the crisis and how Johnson was later forced to make a U-turn in June of the same year with "£120m COVID-19 summer food fund for 1.3 million pupils in England"¹⁴⁰. The movement of the ball shot between the goalkeeper's legs suggests the campaign's ability to slip through Johnson's defenses and succeed in achieving a goal.

On the other hand, the TEST AND TRACE APP RETHINK¹⁴¹ ball is portrayed hitting the top crossbar of the goal before going in. To explain this, it has been commonly viewed that the original plan by Johnson was criticized as ineffective and inconsistent in the government's handling of the crisis, and they simply had to rethink and change the strategy. Finally, the F.O. DFID ball is kicked by Johnson into his own net, resulting in a goal for the opposing team. This is regarded as the most severe mistake, as Johnson's actions directly result in the failure of the program, which was established to promote international development. The last detail to be accounted for is the empty

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jun/16/boris-johnson-faces-tory-rebellion-over-marcus-rashfords-school-meals-call>

¹⁴¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-52995881>

seats behind the scene in the cartoon, which may suggest either a lack of public support and enthusiasm for the government's actions to curb the virus' contagion or the impact of the stringent measures and lockdowns the government imposed upon the public as a result of the pandemic.

- **Cartoon 2.9**



Figure 4.55 Steve Bell's cartoon on Boris Johnson and the Leicester lockdown, published in *The Guardian*, July 2, 2020

This figure, created by Steve Bell for *The Guardian*, came after the announcement of a localized lockdown extension in Leicester by the British government on June 29th, 2020. The decision was made in response to fresh outbreaks of the virus in the city.¹⁴² As Murphy & Walker (2020) comment on this lockdown, “[i]t means the city of more than 300,000 people will have to wait while the rest of England enjoys new freedoms, including the reopening of pubs and restaurants from 4 July, on what has been labelled Super Saturday”.

As general information, and before delving into the cartoon's details, it is relevant to mention that Leicester is known for its multicultural nature and ethnic diversity, as indicated by the 2011 Census, which announced it as the “most ethnically diverse” city in the UK¹⁴³. This cartoon by Steve Bell is a visual repetition of a previous cartoon, 4.52, wherein the same image of Johnson was replicated, that is, a letterbox with a watermelon smile. The image as formerly mentioned is a

¹⁴² <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-leicester-idUKKBN2401JN>

¹⁴³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census> and <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-leicestershire-20678326>

ridiculous reference to his previous derogatory comparisons with ethnic and racial implications. The cartoon forms a transactional-reactional narrative pattern, wherein two participants are in direct eye-contact and having verbal interaction. Johnson is the sensor, while Keir Starmer, the leader of the Labour Party since 2020, is the phenomenon. In this context, the classification aspect does not happen as both characters are positioned equally, with no apparent dominance. However, the interactive dynamics in this image indicate that Johnson and Starmer lack social intimacy, since they maintain a moderate social distance and appear as visually equal in terms of power.

Back to the racial allusion in Bell's image, Johnson is encoded as a letterbox in the House of Commons, facing Starmer, who looks at Johnson with astonishment. Johnson is portrayed holding and using a dog-shaped whistle, which implies another racial slur, a dog whistle¹⁴⁴. In political discourse, the concept of a dog whistle refers to a coded language or subtle signal that can communicate prejudiced or discriminatory messages to a specific group in the audience while maintaining "plausible deniability" (Trott, 2020). Such a language is used by politicians to achieve specific discriminatory purposes for a certain group of people with no clear reference to that discrimination by those who cannot recognize it. Furthermore, Johnson's statement addressed to Starmer, "...THERE HAVE BEEN PARTICULAR PROBLEMS GETTING PEOPLE IN LEICESTER TO UNDERSTAND...", clearly reveals Bell's negative evaluation of Johnson's COVID-19 measures and lockdowns as being based on racial factors and ethnic motivations. Concerning the compositional process in the cartoon, it is relevant to notice that the value of the information is given in Johnson's mouth and his right position while Starmer's left position provides nothing new to the viewers (left-right polarization). This frame also plays a significant role through the absence of connection lines between the two figures, which presents them as separate from each other.

Finally, the cartoon as a whole invokes the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LEICESTER'S LOCKDOWN IS RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AMONG THE POPULATION', and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW LOCKDOWN IN LEICESTER IS A DOG WHISTLE', which suggest and reveal a communicative message and evaluative stance that the

¹⁴⁴ The concept of dog whistling is often associated with political discourse and can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and systemic racism. This technique allows individuals to express or promote racist ideas without explicitly stating them, thus appealing to a certain group's prejudices while avoiding direct criticism or accountability (<https://defendingmanagement.com/2018/11/05/dog-whistle-racism-in-the-workplace/>).

lockdown measures are being implemented in a discriminatory manner, with negative consequences for the affected community.

- **Cartoon 2.10**



Figure 4.56 Chris Riddell's cartoon on the Prime Minister's plan to tear up planning regulations, published in *The Guardian*, July 5, 2020



Figure 4.57 A shot of Boris Johnson promising to help England build its way out of recession during the crisis, London, June 30th, 2020¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7JXsijUs>

This cartoon was published after Boris Johnson's wide-range speech in Dudley, in the West Midlands, on 30th June 2020, pledging to recover economy and announcing a new plan, 'Build, Build, Build'. The new plan Boris Johnson pledged to achieve basically relied on bringing forward £5bn to, as he insisted, Build Britain Better¹⁴⁶. This New Deal mainly set out to "Build Back Better", through fueling extra jobs and spending more on infrastructures to boost the UK's economic status during the crisis. As Johnson declared, "[w]e will build the hospitals; build the schools, the colleges. But we will also build back greener and build a more beautiful Britain". To address this plan, Chris Riddell draws his portrayal upon the domain DESTRUCTIVE FORCES to represent a consequence of the government's policies. The cartoon takes a non-transactional narrative pattern; the represented participants are Johnson and Dominic Cummings. In the image, Johnson is depicted with a direct gaze at the viewer, which is a demanding gaze that pertains to the cartoonist's intention to engage the viewer in the image setting. The image act function in this cartoon reveals either that Johnson is vulnerable and cannot take any serious action about unemployment or that he is unaware of the gravity of the situation.

Delving deeper into the visual elements of the cartoon, Johnson is illustrated introducing his new BUILD plan to the public, as he firmly slams his fist on a podium displaying the words BUILD, BUILD, BUILD. In addition to this, he simultaneously makes the V-sign with his other hand, which is generally regarded as an ironical reference to Winston Churchill's famous V-sign. This is an ironic comparison that other cartoonists also establish between Churchill and Johnson to highlight the perceived gap between Johnson's self-promotion and his actual leadership ability. According to the media, Johnson was trying to position himself as a great leader like Churchill, but this was falling short of that standard.

In the background, Dominic Cummings is portrayed holding a newspaper and murmuring "BREXIT, BREXIT, BREXIT"; this is another set which also begins with a letter 'B', like the others in the cartoon, as if they were connected beyond what is already said. Building is the wrong kind of measure Johnson is pledging, and Bluster is how Johnson's policies are seen, while Brexit is behind all this, as something that influences all actions. In addition to all that, the two figures

¹⁴⁶ On 30th June 2020 Boris Johnson pledged a package of reforms to recover Britain's economy. He announced that the government would "bring forward £5bn of capital investment projects, supporting jobs and the economic recovery". At the center of his priorities he put infrastructure and jobs (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/build-build-build-prime-minister-announces-new-deal-for-britain>).

are portrayed unaware of the destructive force that is about to hit them –the ball that reads MASS UNEMPLOYMENT. Further to this detail, Johnson was also criticized by Riddell in the cartoon as being a man of empty talk, not of real action, by repeating the word “BLUSTER” three times instead of the word “BUILD” as in his 30 June speech. The repetition of the word “BLUSTER” thus implies at least two points: Johnson’s windy rhetoric and shameless ignorance, as many specialists marked his speech then as “epistemic insouciance”¹⁴⁷.

The cartoon, therefore, provokes the following set of metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON’S ECONOMIC RECOVERY POLICY/BREXIT MEASURES ARE A VACUOUS JABBERING/EMPTY TALK.
- MASS UNEMPLOYMENT IS A BIG DESTRUCTION BALL.
- THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT’S POLICIES ARE CREATING A HARMFUL POWER MOTIF.

Additionally, some other visual elements of compositional meaning should be taken into account in analyzing this cartoon, such as the facial expressions and the salient size of the characters, and framing. For instance, the facial expressions and hand movements add sense to the interpretation of the metaphorical representation of the government’s stance towards the real situation over the crisis. It has been noticed that most of Riddell’s Boris Johnson’s portraits are featured with a direct gaze at the viewers which represents his unawareness, ignorance and indifference. As such, Johnson’s gaze, the V-sign and the hand slamming might suggest his vain and empty boasting and an arrogant show of courage.

Size, on the other hand, has its own compositional addition to the whole image interpretation, as the oversized destruction ball (IMPORTANT IS SIZE/WEIGHT) in comparison to Johnson and Cummings metaphorically represents the magnitude of the unemployment crisis and its potential impact on the two politicians’ careers. Frame and foregrounding and backgrounding also contribute to the interpretation of the communicative message of the cartoonist, for example the frame lines between Johnson and Cummings and their close distance suggest they share the same identity and stance towards the situation and that they belong to the same ideology. Depicting

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/jun/05/is-bluster-really-the-best-word-for-boris-johnsons-vacuous-jabbering>

Johnson in the center with a frontal angle and foreground pose suggests his responsibility and significance as the head of the government during the pandemic. In summary, the cartoon hence activates the metaphors ‘AN INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT IS A DESTRUCTIVE POWER THAT THREATENS TO REMOVE THE GOVERNMENT’ and ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S BUILDING DEAL IS A BLUSTERING SHOW’.

- **Cartoon 2.11**



Figure 4.58 Steve Bell’s cartoon on Boris Johnson’s slap for carers, published in *The Guardian*, July 8, 2020

This cartoon was published in light of the strong criticism against Boris Johnson as he accused the UK’s care homes of being responsible for the significant number of deaths caused by the pandemic. Johnson stated, during his visit to a construction site in East Yorkshire, that “[w]e discovered too many care homes didn’t really follow the procedures in the way that they could have, but we’re learning lessons the whole time”¹⁴⁸. Such announcement sparked the crisis with the care homes sector and his opponents, who accused him of attempting to deflect responsibility for his own failures. Despite the outrage expressed by the care sector in response to Johnson’s remarks, both Downing Street and the Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, dismissed calls for an apology, asserting that the PM’s statements had been misconstrued.

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jul/07/care-home-chief-denounces-clumsy-and-cowardly-boris-johnson-comments>

Addressing this problem, the cartoonist, Steve Bell, aimed to criticize Johnson's previous campaign of appreciation for carers and the NHS on March 26th 2020, known as the 'clap for carers'¹⁴⁹, as shown in figure 4.59. Bell considered this applause to be more of a slap and deceitful, as it represented no valuable realistic support to this sector. Thus, this impression is well exposed in Bell's cartoon via the verbal and visual elements. The representational meaning of the cartoon shows that the image is characterized as a non-transactional narrative pattern in which Johnson is the key participant and Hancock is his follower. There is no eye contact between the participants and no hints of a superordinate-subordinate relation between them. Depending on this process, the metaphorical depiction portrays Johnson as an excavator driver, usually referred to as a digger, who is clapping while simultaneously digging graves for care homes. Alongside him, Matt Hancock stands with a look of disappointment, attempting to clap but seemingly without success. This gesture can be seen as a metonymic representation of his inability to uplift and safeguard the carers (DISAPPOINTMENT FOR FAILURE), symbolizing Hancock's failure to provide the necessary support for this sector. Johnson, on the other hand, is portrayed saying "IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, BRAVE HEROES!", a comment that carries with it that Johnson unprofessionally blames care homes for the increasing number of deaths rather than supporting them.



Figure 4.59 Boris Johnson applauds outside 10 Downing Street during the Clap For Our Carers campaign in support of the NHS, as the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). A picture taken by Hannah McKay for *REUTERS*, on March 26, 2020

¹⁴⁹ This was a campaign in support for health carers in the UK. It was regarded as a thanking expression organized as a national show of appreciation for those in the care homes and hospitals. For more information, this site is suggested: <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-johnson-idUKKBN21Y34I>.

Concerning Johnson's gestural aspect, it has been noticed that though he displays contentment and enthusiasm through clapping for the home carers' role, his digging and speech imply the opposite. This suggests that despite the grave implications of his plans and policies, Johnson seems oblivious of the negative outcomes of his inadequate PPE and remains unwavering in his approach. Moreover, the burial ground, with two CARE gravestones and numerous smaller CARE signs inside the only open tomb in the middle, symbolizes the disregard for the well-being of the care homes and highlights the paradox and duplicity in Johnson's speeches and actions, in that he led a campaign of applauding and appreciating the home carers calling them "BRAVE HEROES" while simultaneously blaming them for their high death tolls, "ALL YOUR FAULT".¹⁵⁰

Furthermore, regarding the interactive aspects of the elements in the cartoon, it has been noticed that the represented characters (Johnson and Hancock) stand close to each other and performing the same applause appreciation. This also suggests they show the same stance towards the sector. The compositional aspects and the salient modes utilized by Bell are established by the social distance and the frame lines of connection which represent they belong to the same group and have the same ideological identity.

On the reverse, it is significant to mention here that the visual representation of the British PM's support campaign in cartoon 2.11 incorporates a DEATH metaphor, to uncover the fatal consequences of Johnson's government's support for the health sector, which is commonly seen as inadequate and poorly implemented. The cartoon, as a whole image, suggests the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S APPRECIATION FOR THE CARERS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO DIG GRAVES FOR THEM'. This also reveals the cartoonist's negative and critical stance against Johnson's Janus-faced support to this sector, regarding it as a kind of harm to the workers as rendered in the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A DEATH SUPPORTER/ A GRAVEDIGGER' and 'THE UK'S CARE HOMES ARE THE VICTIMS OF JOHNSON'S SUPPORT'.

¹⁵⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jul/06/anger-after-johnson-appears-to-blame-care-homes-for-their-high-death-toll>

- Cartoon 2.12



Figure 4.60 Steve Bell’s cartoon on Boris Johnson’s failure to shelter the NHS from US interests, published in *The Guardian*, July 23, 2020

Steve Bell’s cartoon was published for *The Guardian* after the declaration of the New Trade Bill¹⁵¹ in the UK and the Labour party’s contention over the inclusion of a specific clause, new clause 17, in the UK Trade Bill to protect the NHS from future trade agreements. As stated in *The Guardian* on 22 July 2020,

[b]y rejecting Labour’s proposed amendments¹⁵², the government has left our health service at the mercy of hungry US corporations [...]. There is now no safety net when it comes to future trade deals. Protections governing NHS and food and farming standards are not enshrined in law, so there is nothing to stop this government, or a future Tory government, from allowing those protections to be undermined in a trade deal, whether deliberately or not¹⁵³.

¹⁵¹ This legislation is considered the foundation of the UK’s post-Brexit trade deals, and it includes many rules, frameworks and clauses that outline how the UK will run its trade negotiations, trade agreements and trade-related matters after Brexit. The Trade Bill was regarded as the legal basis for the UK to engage in international trade independently with other countries, such as the US. For more information, visit the link <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-07-20/debates/D5201166-082F-458F-9016-60B1D01CE750/TradeBill>.

¹⁵² Labour’s contention concerning that the point was that the UK’s Trade Bill should include a specific clause explicitly exempting the NHS from the provisions of future trade agreements. The purpose of proposing this new clause 17 was to eliminate the need for repetitive debates at the outset of each trade negotiation regarding the inclusion of the NHS in them. Johnson’s government, backed by all of its backbenchers in Monday’s vote, firmly maintained that the NHS was “not for sale” and dismissed any suggestion to the contrary as a mere scare tactic..

¹⁵³ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jul/22/the-tories-new-trade-bill-means-the-nhs-is-now-unquestionably-up-for-sale>

According to this agreement, the UK's NHS was on the table and for sale because of the Tories' legislation. Thus, the cartoonist creates his cartoon on the pattern of a transactional narrative process in which the representational participants (the two men on the table) are ready to consume the turkey (goal). This representational meaning reveals that the image is occupied with symbolic hints and images, as will be seen later. This being said, Bell, in his cartoon, renders Boris Johnson as an oven-ready turkey on the table holding four Union Jacks (representing the four constituents of the United Kingdom, England, Wales, Scotland, and the northern portion of the island of Ireland), and on his cloaca a rainbow NHS emblem (the rainbow representing the NHS color since 2018). Depicting the NHS as this part of the body activates a part-whole schema which also has metonymical roots, wherein the Deal Bill probably refers to the negative effect of that trade agreement on all aspects. The turkey is ready to be eaten (Johnson is the goal) by the then American President Donald Trump, a stereotypical image of a toilet bowl on Trump's head, as Bell often used to portrait him¹⁵⁴, and Mike Pompeo, the US Secretary of State from 2018 to 2021, who are holding cutlery. All the above elements and their representations serve to enhance the notion of beneficiaries and victims, where the US, represented by Trump and Pompeo (the represented participants), is portrayed as the consumer, and the UK, along with the NHS, as the victims. The cartoon structures the relation as a transactional narrative in which the represented participants are gazing directly at Johnson (the presence of vector) and ready to devour him. Thus, the cartoon evokes the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICAL DEALS ARE EDIBLE FOOD'.

In terms of the verbal mode of the cartoon, the image includes a caption that reads OVEN-READY TRADE DEAL PAST SELL-BY DATE SHOCK. The use of the idiom 'past sell-by date', as defined by the *Cambridge Dictionary*¹⁵⁵, implies that Johnson's trade bill is no longer effective; it has lost its utility and has become outdated. In this context, Bell employs irony and metaphor to symbolize Johnson's trade agreement with the US as a turkey that has exceeded its sell-by date, making it unsuitable for consumption and suggesting that it can be bought at a lower

¹⁵⁴ Steve Bell once declared (2017) that he saw the US president Trump's hair as a toilet bowl and satirized: "It was born of the despair. On the morning waking up to the news that he's actually come to power and I just despairingly did him as a toilet bowl. His hair is a kind of golden toilet seat, but it kind of works, there is something utterly disgusting about Trump [...]. He's too easy, you can't satirise him. He's orange, and he has this ridiculous hair, he's the most odd-looking bloke" (<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/saturday/audio/201836267/steve-bell-drawing-dissent>).

¹⁵⁵ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/be-past-sell-by-date>

cost. This portrayal may reflect Bell's critical perspective on Johnson's policies, illustrating the notion that the UK, grappling with the challenges of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic, is no longer a secure and healthy place to reside, and therefore, it can be acquired inexpensively by the US, potentially impacting elements such as the NHS. The food image in this cartoon contains the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS AN OVEN- READY PAST SELL-BY DATE TURKEY FOR CONSUMPTION BY THE US.

- DONALD TRUMP AND MIKE POMPEO ARE HUNGRY CONSUMERS.

- THE AGREEMENT ON THE BRITISH DEAL BILL IS THE ACT OF CONSUMING THE OUTDATED TURKEY BY THE US.

- THE NEGOTIATION TABLE BETWEEN THE US AND THE UK IS A DINING TABLE.

- THE NHS IS THE CLOACA OF THE TURKEY.

The interactive and compositional meanings signify certain points that add to the communicative aspect of the image. For instance, the depiction of Johnson on a table ready for consumption by the US expresses Johnson's government subservience and vulnerability to the power of Trump's decisions and plans, even where these decisions are harmful to the UK. Trump and Pompeo take a higher position than Johnson, who is lying on the table, this position as top-bottom represents the ideal-real information dichotomy, so that the ideal for the US politicians is to gain the agreement.

Depicting Johnson as a bird prepared to be cooked and consumed by the US signifies a critical stance against his trade agreement, which could have catastrophic consequences for the UK. The interpretation of these individual metaphors suggests that Boris Johnson is the cause of harm to the UK and the NHS in particular, by placing this sector on the negotiating table with the US. As a result, the entire image ignites the metaphor 'THE CONSERVATIVES' TRADE BILL WITH THE US DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO OFFER EXPIRED AND CHEAPLY SOLD FOOD TO THE US'S HUNGRY CORPORATIONS'.

- Cartoon 2.13

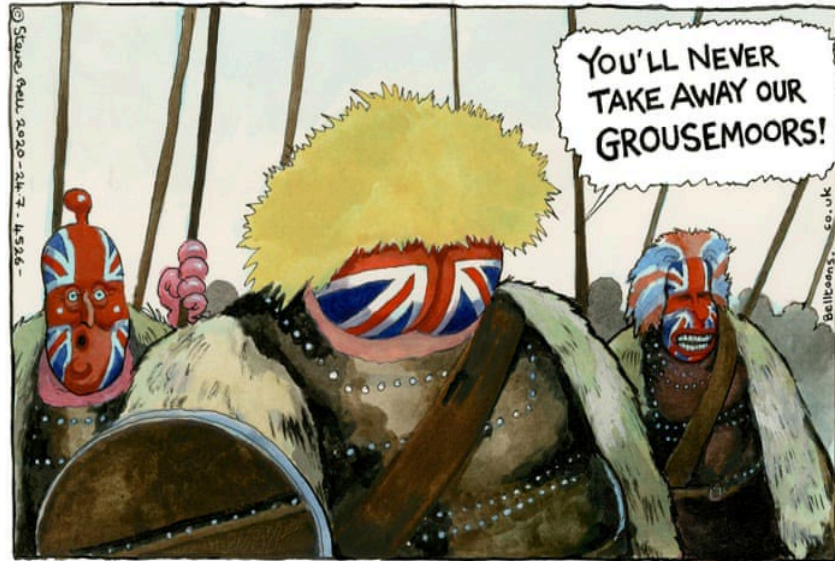


Figure 4.61 Steve Bell's cartoon on Boris Johnson's trip to Scotland, published in *The Guardian*, July 24, 2020

This cartoon by Steve Bell was published shortly after Boris Johnson's trip to Scotland, which aimed to enhance and reinforce the level of support for the union with the different regions comprising the UK amid the ongoing pandemic. During his trip, Johnson was faced with a surge of public outrage with chants and signs saying "Hands off Scotland". Many accusations were raised against Johnson, alleging that he exploited the crisis as an opportunity to reject any possibility of an independence referendum in Scotland. Concerning the representative meaning in the cartoon, Steve Bell artfully portrays his image as a non-transactional narrative process, there is no vector among the represented participants (the actors). The image itself is a symbolic reference to the British government's struggle with the Scots. Thus, successfully, Bell relies upon the source domains WAR and CONFLICT to reflect this ongoing conflict on Scotland's independence. Bell, in order to illustrate this conflict, drew his image with an intertextual reference

to the epic historical movie *Braveheart*¹⁵⁶ and the character of the warrior William Wallace¹⁵⁷. In the image, Johnson is depicted as William Wallace, the Scottish warrior. It is significant to clarify here that though the character of Wallace has positive connotations, Bell attempts to add some kind of ironic flavor to this incongruous correlation between the two characters. The ironical metaphor is anchored on the assumption that Johnson's aggressive stance towards Scotland was satirically compared to the noble and heroic attitude of Wallace for independence. Though the two comparable characters have no thematic correspondence, Bell attempts to degrade Johnson's unjustified aggression towards the Scots in comparison to Wallace's justified stance.

Moreover, depicting the other two main characters in the background and behind Johnson signifies his dominance over them, and they are identified as his fellows. An analysis of the other two characters shows, on Johnson's right, the leader of the British Conservative Party from 2005 to 2016 and PM of the UK from 2010 to 2016 David Cameron, who is portrayed as one of Johnson's fellow Brits with a condom on his face¹⁵⁸. On his left, the character's identity probably symbolizes Queen Elizabeth II, who seems to be unwilling to give away her areas. Additionally, the depiction may also represent what is commonly known about the queen's keenness to hunt in Balmoral, in Scotland¹⁵⁹. Before embarking on the other details, the interactive process often achieved through the direct gaze and the social distance among the participants must be mentioned, thus, a close-up shot represents intimacy and common stances and views among them, it exposes their agreement on Johnson's aggressive stance towards the Scots.

Concerning *Braveheart's* scene image as a whole, it metaphorically stands for the British authority's rejection of Scotland's independence, which in turn effectively evokes the metaphor

¹⁵⁶ The film tells the story of the Scottish warrior William Wallace, who leads a rebellion against English rule during the First War of Scottish Independence in 13th-century Scotland. Wallace gathers his fellow Scots, triggers their spirits to struggle for their liberty, and achieves many triumphs against the English military forces. Then, he faces betrayal and personal tragedy along the way. At last, Wallace is captured, tortured, and executed, but his legacy lives on as a symbol of Scottish resistance and national identity. More information can be retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Braveheart>.

¹⁵⁷ https://www.worldhistory.org/William_Wallace/

¹⁵⁸ This is one of Steve Bell's hallmarks in his politicians' depictions. Bell justifies the reason to portray Cameron with a condom on his head by highlighting his physical attributes such as "smoothness, plumpness, watery eyes, and a baby-like complexion". He further adds that the imagery of the condom symbolizes Cameron's moral opportunism and inflated sense of responsibility. Despite initial resistance, Bell felt that that configuration was fitting and appropriate, so he ultimately chose to proceed with it. For more information, visit this site: <http://jonslattery.blogspot.com/2010/11/steve-bell-why-i-put-cameron-in-condom.html>.

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/royal-family/2022/09/08/balmoral-queen-elizabeth-death/>

‘BORIS JOHNSON’S REJECTION OF A SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM IS A DECLARATION OF WAR’. The metaphor reveals Johnson’s disagreement, as he had already declared that the advantages of the Union have “been proved throughout this crisis [...]. We cannot just deal with the health crisis but work to deal with the economic consequences together”¹⁶⁰. On the other hand, the verbal element (the verbal process) in the cartoon came as an assistant to the visual imagery of Johnson’s fight against the Scots. Johnson’s statement “YOU WILL NEVER TAKE AWAY OUR GROUSE MOORS!” probably suggests the British government’s strong resistance against any perceived threats, including Scotland’s autonomy or attempts to separate from the UK.

Along these lines, Johnson considers Scotland and all other areas as the Brits’ “grousemoors”, which implies a sense of ownership and attachment to certain privileges and traditions associated with the area. More precisely, though in the original movie the most precious gift for Braveheart was freedom; in the cartoon it seems to be the opposite. Johnson speaks instead about “grousemoors” as a place belonging to the Scots but actually ‘owned’ and used by the English; which is another paradoxical reference, as this is the place where well-off English people go hunting. Moreover, the compositional aspects of the cartoon also present the features of salience, frame, and informational value, for instance, depicting Johnson in the frontal central position signifies his thorough responsibility for leading this conflict against Scotland. Moreover, The position of the other characters behind Johnson, along with their physical proximity in the cartoon, highlights a framing element that emphasizes the connectedness among the three participants. This closeness reveals that all the British successive governments hold a consistent ideological stance towards Scotland (aggression).

The cartoon, accordingly, triggers the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS WILLIAM WALLACE.
- DAVID CAMERON AND QUEEN ELIZABETH II ARE WALLACE’S FELLOWS.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S STANCE TOWARDS SCOTLAND’S AUTONOMY DURING THE PANDEMIC 2020 IS WALLACE’S STRUGGLE AGAINST ENGLAND IN 1297-1298.

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.itv.com/news/2020-07-23/boris-johnson-hails-uk-might-as-he-visits-scotland-with-independence-row-brewing>

- SCOTLAND IS JUST GROUSEMOORS FOR THE BRITS.
- THE SCOTS ARE THE ENGLISH ARMY.

To sum up the metaphorical configuration employed by Bell, the cartoon uncovers the cartoonist's ironical and satirical stance towards Johnson and the successive British governments and how Johnson's perceived exploitation of the pandemic has been evaluated as a leveraging tool in the pursuit of this stance.

- **Cartoon 2.14**



Figure 4.62 Steve Bell's cartoon about Boris Johnson defending the UK's quarantine rules, *The Guardian*, July 29, 2020

This cartoon was published by Steve Bell for *The Guardian* on the issue of the 14-day quarantine on the travelers from Spain since the 25th of July 2020 due to a spike in the infection cases in Spain¹⁶¹. Thus, such stringent restrictions motivated cartoonists to dedicate their artworks to highlight their effect on the people. Thus, the figure is drawn upon the source domains ANIMALS compiled with WAR and CONFLICT. Concerning the former domain, it is typically known that the ANIMAL domain is employed to illustrate the conceptual metaphor 'HUMANS

¹⁶¹ The plan was to impose further stringent restrictions on those travelers coming from Spain; the passengers were asked to self-isolate for a couple of weeks upon their return. For more information, the following website is very helpful: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/25/uk-holidaymakers-returning-from-spain-to-face-quarantine>.

ARE ANIMALS’, mapping certain traits –mostly the idiosyncratic ones– of the source domain onto the target one. Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez-Hernández (2011) argue that this kind of metaphorical conceptualization implies a non-structural metaphor in which a single feature or attribute of the ANIMAL domain has been mapped onto the target domain. Bell, thus, is attempting to singly map a quintessential feature from a bulldog onto Johnson.

In the cartoon, therefore, Bell profiles Boris Johnson as a British bulldog (representational participant) standing at the white cliffs of Dover with a rivet spiked studded leather collar (symbolic process) around his neck, a WWI German imperial pickelhaube aged spiked helmet on his head, and a British Union Jack harness on his body. For sure, the utilization of the white cliffs of Dover and the flag metonymically stand for Britain (SYMBOLS FOR COUNTRY). The cartoon uses a non-transactional narrative pattern in which Johnson is the sole representational participant (an actor) with no eye contact with the viewers. The interactive process also does not show any real contact between Johnson and the viewers, which suggests that Bell in this image just offers Johnson as an item of information concerning his stringent unjustified quarantine rules on British travelers.

The target object of the cartoon has been verbally expressed through the bottom positioned title BRITISH BUMDOG STANDS FIRM, in which Bell cued Johnson as a bulldog standing firm on the white cliffs of Dover to protect the land and never let *them* in. At first, the word ‘bumdog’¹⁶² is satirically used as a wordplay instead of ‘bulldog’, to convey a negative portrayal of Johnson as having a bum face, a hallmark of Bell’s frequent depiction of Johnson in cartoons, as a symbol of stupidity and uselessness. This was first utilized in Bell’s cartoon in figure 4.41.

Within this context, it is relevant to shed light on the symbolic reference of the term ‘bulldog’ in British culture; it is culturally regarded as a national icon of courage, tenacity and bravery. In addition to this symbolic value and positive connotations, sometimes people can be compared to these dog breeds due to some shared physical traits. By World War II, for instance, the then historical wartime British PM Winston Churchill was typically nicknamed as THE BRITISH BULLDOG, probably because of his jowly appearance, portliness and temperament¹⁶³. Moreover, Brewer’s *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (2000)¹⁶⁴, defines a bulldog person as “a man of

¹⁶² <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/bum>

¹⁶³ <https://winstonchurchill.org/publications/finest-hour/finest-hour-106/bulldog-churchill-the-evolution-of-a-famous-image/>

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.infoplease.com/dictionary/brewers/bull-dog>

relentless, savage 'disposition'". Yet in an academic context, the term BULLDOG refers to someone who is intense and stubborn in defending their viewpoints.

Back to the event depicted in the cartoon, which was to defend the quarantine rules set out by Johnson against the British passengers returning from Spain, the balloons of the verbal texts said by Johnson include "WE SHALL NEVER LET THEM IN" and "NO SPIKES ON THE BLIGHTY¹⁶⁵ BEACHES, NO SPIKES ON THE BLIGHTY CLIFFS AND FIELDS...". These lines are a humorous and ironical version of Churchill's historic speech "WE SHALL FIGHT THEM ON THE BEACHES..."¹⁶⁶, which was about the severity of the situation during WWII and the need for persistence in the face of the imminent danger by Nazi Germany. In Bell's cartoon, Johnson's speech "WE SHALL NEVER LET THEM IN" was satirically utilized in comparison to Churchill's speech: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender...", just to criticize Johnson's savage stance towards the British travelers. Furthermore, the cartoonist corrupts the implied comparison of British travelers to Nazis by depicting Johnson wearing a WWI German spiked helmet, which also indicates Bell's negative assessment of Johnson's unjust and severe measures towards his own fellow citizens.

Moreover, concerning the use of the term 'spikes', it has been confirmed that it is literally used in various contexts to refer to an increase or partially to mean rise in certain issues, mostly with collocations having negative and unappealing consequences, as with food waste, alcohol deaths, oil prices and violence to women. In coronavirus discourse, the employment of this term also came

¹⁶⁵ "Blighty" is chiefly British, and it essentially refers to one's native land (England). In <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Blighty>, "Blighty" is described as a term that was generally used by British soldiers during World War I to refer to their home country. It is believed to have originated from the Hindi word "bilayati", which means "foreign" or "European", and was used by Indian soldiers in the British army to refer to Britain. During the war, soldiers would often long for the comforts and familiarity of home, and the term "blighty" used to represent those feelings of nostalgia and homesickness. It was also used more generally to refer to anything British, such as British food or British customs. Today, the term is still sometimes used in a nostalgic or sentimental way to refer to Great Britain or to something typically British (<https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/whizz-bangs-and-wind-ups-10-tommy-slang-terms>).

¹⁶⁶ The speech was delivered during WWII to the House of Commons on 4 June 1940, on the impact of a possible attempted invasion by Nazi Germany; the speech was a part of Churchill's report on the evacuation of British and Allied forces from Dunkirk, France, which had taken place just a few days earlier (<https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/we-shall-fight-on-the-beaches/>).

from the edged increase in infected cases and death tolls. In connection with this, Charteris-Black (2021: 144) contends:

So the ‘spike in’ metaphor that was widely employed in relation to Covid-19 in the context of ‘cases’, ‘infections’ ‘deaths’ semantically broadened to other negative social phenomena associated with pain and suffering. This was probably because ‘spike in’ itself primes the audience for negative senses as it is never used to refer to an increase in anything socially appealing.

In Bell’s cartoon, the ‘spikes in coronavirus crisis’ function as an act of warning to Britons abroad. This is again paradoxical, as Johnson is actually presented with spikes all over him in the cartoon, as if he alone could prevent people from getting in. This coincides with his other words (“WE SHALL NEVER LET THEM IN”). The compositional meaning of the cartoon also can be easily addressed through the use of salience, as in the foregrounding and backgrounding of the elements’ zone and position in the informational value aspect, for example the portrayal of Johnson at the top of the White Cliffs of Dover signifies (idea) information, for his country’s protection, and this emphasis has been highlighted through the foregrounding of the participant.

Finally, the image triggers the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A BRITISH BULL(/M)DOG.
- THE PANDEMIC PERIOD IS WWII.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S STANDPOINT ON BRITISH TRAVELERS FROM SPAIN IS A WAR WITH AN ADVERSARY.
- THE BRITISH TRAVELERS FROM SPAIN ARE NAZIS/ENEMIES.
- THE PROLIFERATION OF COVID-19 DUE TO BRITISH TOURISTS RETURNING IS THE NAZI GERMAN INVASION.

The whole image published by Bell suggests his negative evaluations on Johnson’s unjust and severe measures towards his own fellow citizens, this is well established through the manipulation of the word ‘bulldog’ to be ‘bumdog’, alongside the verbal texts provided in Johnson’s mouth.

- Cartoon 2.15



Figure 4.63 Steve Bell’s cartoon on the UK’s economy plunging into deep recession, published in *The Guardian*, August 13, 2020

In this image, Steve Bell exploited an intertextual reference to a very well-known 1929 American song, “Happy Days are Here Again”¹⁶⁷, to conceptualize the economic recession the UK had plunged into. The cartoon was published after an interview with Rishi Sunak, on 12th August, confirming that “hard times are here [...], hundreds of thousands of people have already lost their jobs and sadly many more will”¹⁶⁸.

Sunak’s downbeat announcement came as a direct result of Johnson’s failure to take sufficient action to prevent mass unemployment. Though the government assured, in Sunak’s words, that “nobody will be left without hope or opportunity”¹⁶⁹, the imposed measures, which were

¹⁶⁷ The song was composed by the American lyricists Jack Yellen and Milton Ager in 1929. It was a standard song and it appeared also in the *Chasing Rainbows* movie in 1930. The song was closely related to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1932 presidential campaign in the USA. and it was regarded as the campaign song for the Democratic Party. The song’s lyrics can be retrieved from http://protestsonglyrics.net/Great_Depression_Songs/Happy-Days-Are-Here-Again.phtml.

¹⁶⁸ After records asserted that the UK had entered into the toughest economic recession so far. More details in <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/uk-recession-rishi-sunak-hard-times-unemployment-job-losses-a9666426.html>.

¹⁶⁹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/uk-recession-rishi-sunak-hard-times-unemployment-job-losses-a9666426.html>

implemented to recover the economic status the country had lost during the virus epidemic, were not sufficient.

Regarding the representational meaning of the visual semiotics in the cartoon, the image is recognized as a non-transactional narrative pattern in which the two represented characters have no vector between them. It is relevant to note that the characters' direct gaze at the viewers, while facing away from each other, represents two points: firstly, according to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), it suggests demanding the viewers to participate and take a serious role. Secondly, depicting Johnson and Sunak in no vectorial relationship signifies the lack of harmony and consensus between Johnson as the head of the government and Sunak as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The cartoon, hence, renders the image of Johnson as 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A WAITRESS', holding six mugs of beer, and looking worried. On the far side of the image, Sunak is portrayed dancing and singing one of Yellen and Ager's songs, "Happy Days are Here Again". However, Sunak's song reads "HARDER DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN, YOUR JOBS ARE GONE, YOU ARE IN FEAR AGAIN, WHY NOT BUY A SNACK AND A BEER AGAIN? HARDER DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN", with pessimistically satirical lyrics. The symbolic process in this pattern is also apparently distinguished through Sunak's hat, which is drawn with the British Union Jack, and metonymically represents the country (flag for country). According to all these representational meanings, the cartoon, hence, mocks down and criticizes Johnson's economic recovery policies during the pandemic, conveying a sense of hardship and loss the country would experience. This criticism stands in contrast to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's new economic plan to recover the US economy and with his campaign in the 1930's. By humorously changing the original song's title to reflect Bell's hidden message, Bell outlines a ridiculous variation on the theme.

Concerning the visual elements and the theme of the image, the cartoon offers an implicit criticism and mockery of Sunak's answer when questioned about why the UK's economy was

being impacted more severely than other G7 countries¹⁷⁰, as he said that “[s]ocial activities –for example going out for a meal, going to the cinema, shopping [...] comprise a much larger share of our economy”¹⁷¹. This unpersuasive answer was satirically employed in Bell’s cartoon through the suggestion to buy a snack and a beer as a feasible coping plan for dealing with the crisis. Bell is mocking this suggestion as an unsustainable and ineffective solution for dealing with this challenging time. The cartoon, according to these details, profiles the individual metaphor ‘THE BRITISH RECOVERING MEASURES TO LEVEL UP ECONOMY DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE TO BUY SNACKS AND BEERS’.

Furthermore, some other compositional and interactive aspects should be analyzed. These include bodily movement, color, physical appearance, setting, position and gazing. The color blue, which is seen in the clothes of both figures in the scene, represents the British Conservative party, as already stated (COLOR FOR POLITICAL PARTY). Additionally, Sunak’s clownish appearance, dancing ridiculously, and his body movements, uncovers the government’s incompetent stance towards the economic recession at the time (PART FOR WHOLE). His physical condition as covering his ears may suggest that he does not want to hear any possible negative comments from anybody. He was then in charge of managing the country’s finances, including taxation, public spending and economic policies, with the aim of promoting growth and stability in the UK’s economy. However, the scene in its entirety suggests that Johnson’s government was unaware of the economic problems and instead put on an absurd show.

Concerning the setting, it is also crucial in depicting the severity of the economic crisis. The empty restaurant with scattered chairs conveys the real situation on the ground as chaotic and dramatic. It further highlights Johnson’s government’s lack of consciousness of the crisis. This messy situation reinforces the message that the government’s response is ineffective and that even basic establishments like restaurants are impacted, but the Tories’ government is not taking any necessary actions to address the situation. Moreover, the frontal-right to central plane and foregrounding of Johnson in the cartoon suggests his essential involvement in the crisis and

¹⁷⁰ G7 is a group of seven of the world’s largest and most advanced economies, including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, which meets annually to discuss global economic and political issues (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Group-of-Seven-international-organization>).

¹⁷¹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/uk-recession-rishi-sunak-hard-times-unemployment-job-losses-a9666426.html#>

responsibility for coming up with competent strategies. Sunak's position in a backgrounding-left plane suggests his power detachment and less effective role upon the situation. He is just a vulnerable fellow to the central protagonist.

Accordingly, the scene's overall metaphor is 'THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S UNAWARENESS OF THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM IS AN ABSURD PERFORMANCE'. This visual metaphor uncovers the negative evaluation of Bell concerning Johnson's response to the economic recession as inadequate and that his government's actions were more focused on maintaining a show of stability rather than addressing the real economic issues.

- **Cartoon 2.16**

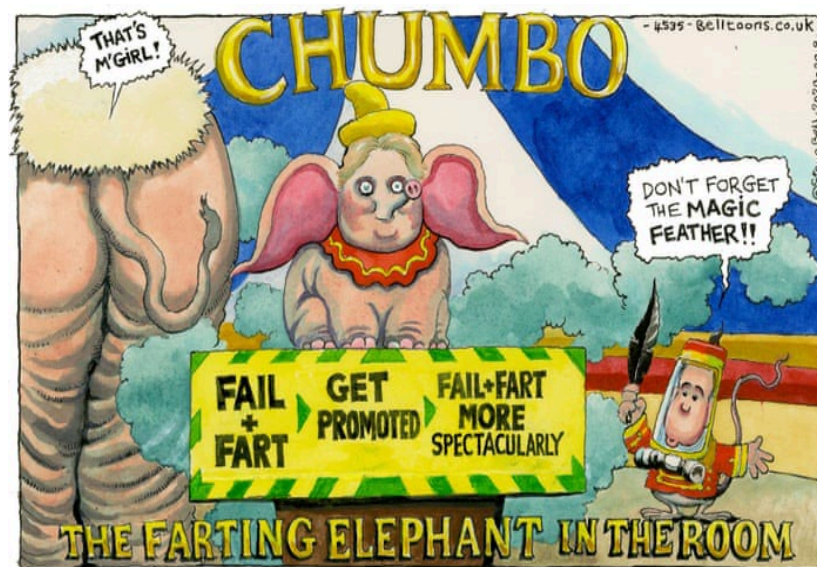


Figure 4.64 Steve Bell's cartoon on Dido Harding running new health body during the crisis, published in *The Guardian*, August 20, 2020

This cartoon by Steve Bell for *The Guardian* was published in response to the appointment of Dido Harding, a Conservative businesswoman, to lead a new National Health agency and replace Public Health England (PHE)¹⁷². It is noteworthy that Bell's cartoon contextual knowledge is

¹⁷² In 2020, Boris Johnson's government appointed Dido Harding as the chief person in charge of the test and trace program to curb the virus spread and as CEO of a new healthcare agency to replace PHE. Harding's new appointment

seemingly taken from Harding's photograph during her speech at 10 Downing Street after the government's declaration on 17 August 2020 of her appointment as an interim chair of the National Institute for Health Protection to replace Public Health England (PHE) as shown in figure 4.65.

The cartoon's visual metaphor anchors upon an intertextual reference to a well-known animated Walt Disney's film from 1941, *Dumbo*¹⁷³. At the beginning of the visual analysis, the cartoon represents a circus scene, wherein Boris Johnson is ridiculously portrayed as the arse of an elephant, seemingly Mrs. Jumbo, who is Dumbo's mother. He is standing next to Harding, who is also playfully represented as little Dumbo, standing on a podium and expelling gases. The last character is Matt Hancock, who takes on the role of Timothy Q. Mouse, putting a gas mask on his face and asking Harding to take a magical feather¹⁷⁴. The magic feather, as known, in the movie was the mouse's little trick that gives Dumbo enough confidence to start flying, even if it was not magical at all; similarly, Harding will need some magic (ultimately ineffectual) to make something work. This proposes that she was a failure in all positions she held and Hancock's support is no more than a non-magic trick. In this regard, the cartoon uses a non-transactional narrative process; the characters are not in connection with each other nor having any direct eye contact among them. Harding is looking directly at the viewers, which is an interactive aspect that triggers the viewers' attention and engages them in an imaginary relation with the cartoon; it is a demanding gaze. The social relation between Johnson and Harding is like that of a mother-daughter relation so it suggests a superordinate-subordinate relation depending on also the verbal process "THAT'S M'GIRL!"

sparked scathing criticism and widespread public disapproval, accusing the conservative government of allocating senior roles within the health system to the Conservative party members only (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/aug/17/dido-harding-to-run-agency-to-replace-public-health-england>).

¹⁷³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dumbo>

¹⁷⁴ For further analysis of the characters, the following website is recommended: [https://disney.fandom.com/wiki/Dumbo_\(character\)](https://disney.fandom.com/wiki/Dumbo_(character))



Figure 4.65 The original photo of the conference held by Dido Harding at 10 Downing street by Andrew Parsons (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/aug/17/dido-harding-to-run-agency-to-replace-public-health-england>)

On the other hand, the verbal element of the cartoon has its communicative value in the narrative process, which will be better explained in two parts.

Firstly, the cartoon was framed with a verbal caption at the top of the image acting as a cartoon title, CHUMBO. The term ‘Chumbo’, here, is a coined word resulting from the blending of two words, “chum”, which refers to a close friend or companion, while the other word is ‘Dumbo’, which represents the title of the movie, although the meaning of this word in the *Collins Dictionary*¹⁷⁵ is that of “an unintelligent or foolish person”. This creative amalgamation serves to create a new word that embodies the idea of favoritism and stupidity in Johnson’s government (concerning the appointment and promotion of Dido Harding as the test and trace system chief and her foolishness and absurdity). Thus, the title of Bell’s cartoon unveils his satirical and critical stance regarding Johnson’s practice of assigning high-ranking positions in his government to members of his party and friends, ‘chums’, even when they have a history of past failures, as with Harding’s situation. For this reason, the inclusion of the coined term CHUMBO in the cartoon exposes Johnson’s corruption, as he has built his government on favoritism and deception. Furthermore, Johnson’s comment, “THAT’S M’GIRL!”, further emphasizes the idea of favoritism and mutual benefits. According to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), the element placed at the top of the image contains an ideal information, and the central and most prominent value that the

¹⁷⁵ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/dumbo>

cartoonist tends to focus on. In this way, Bell placed CHUMBO atop to emphasize the corrupted nature of Johnson's government.

The second verbal function in the cartoon is dedicated to the title written beneath the image, which reads THE FARTING ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM. This title encompasses two components; the first is based upon the informal idiom 'an elephant in the room'¹⁷⁶, which suggests that there is a problem or a difficulty that is hard to solve or even to discuss. The second component is the word "farting", which according to *The Britannica Dictionary*¹⁷⁷ means an "annoying and unpleasant person". Thus, the combination of these two segments proposes the cartoonist's evaluation on Harding's role in managing the new National Institute for Health Protection as both irritating and ill-conceived, and regarding her as a socially unappealing person. Besides, the words on the podium, reading FAIL + FART, GET PROMOTED, FAIL + FART MORE SPECTACULARLY, might be conceived as a satirical resonance of Samuel Beckett's quote "Ever tried, ever failed, try again, fail again, fail better", in which the quote is purposefully paraphrased by Bell to mock down the way Johnson's administration faces officials' appointments. Thus, in spite of Harding's being socially perceived as a failure and unpleasant (FAIL+ FART= fail + foolish), she got promoted (GET PROMOTED) and she is part of the show put on by Johnson's Government (FART MORE SPECTACULARLY).

Furthermore, the compositional process also has its communicative role in the analysis of the cartoon, particularly the informational value, the frame and the salient aspects. In the image, Harding is centered, which signifies the cartoonist's intention to make her the nucleus figure in the image, whereas the other figures are polarized to right and left. The left structure (Johnson) contains no new information to be given to the viewers, whereas Hancock is placed on the right hand to signify new information, which is symbolized in the magic feather in his hand. Bell attempts through this placement to gain the viewers' criticism and wrath on Hancock's support and Johnson's favoritism.

All the above analyzed visual, verbal and symbolic aspects show that Boris Johnson's government is a circus and this also activates the more general metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S

¹⁷⁶ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/elephant-in-the-room>

¹⁷⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/fart>

GOVERNMENT IS A FAILED CIRCUS WITH AN ABSURD SHOW', which came up from the following individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE BUTTOCKS OF THE ELEPHANT MRS. JUMBO (DUMBO'S MOTHER).
- DIDO HARDING IS DUMBO (CHUMBO).
- MATT HANCOCK IS TIMOTHY Q. MOUSE (DUMBO'S MENTOR).
- MATT HANCOCK'S SUPPORT TO DIDO HARDING IS A MAGICAL FEATHER.
- DIDO HARDING'S MISMANAGEMENT AND FAILURE IS TO RELEASE GASES.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S APPOINTMENT OF HARDING AS A CEO FOR RUNNING THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH PROTECTION DURING THE PANDEMIC IS A CIRCUS SHOW.
- MATT HANCOCK'S SUPPORT OF HARDING'S APPOINTMENT IS A MAGIC FEATHER.
- THE FAVORITISM IN BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT IS A MATERNAL RELATIONSHIP.

Thus, Bell in his cartoon is criticizing Johnson's government's perceived absurdity of certain appointments and promotions and highlighting the deficiency of his government in appointing suitable individuals for high-ranking positions.

- Cartoon 2.17



Figure 4.66 Chris Riddell’s cartoon about a Brexit winter coming, published in *The Guardian*, September 9, 2020

This cartoon, like many others, has an intertextual reference to literary works, and more particularly to fictional characters or events. This visual intertextuality has been combined with the source domains WAR and CONFLICT to convey Chris Riddell’s intentions and ideologies. In this respect, Riddell inspired his cartoon in the first episode of the first season of the medieval fantasy television series *Game of Thrones*,¹⁷⁸ called “Winter is Coming”. This episode sets the stage for the complex power struggles, political conspiracy and supernatural elements that disclose throughout the series, as various characters navigate their way through a dangerous and faithless world. Thus, the cartoon was symbolically drawn upon a comparison between fictional characters and real-life political figures and the struggle they live in. So, the conceptual metaphors this cartoon primarily is based on are ‘POLITICS IS WAR’, ‘POLITICIANS ARE FIGHTERS’ and more importantly ‘POLITICIANS ARE FICTIONAL WARRIORS’. Beginning with the analysis of the characters depicted in the image and the visual elements Riddell utilized, the cartoon is characterized as a transactional narrative image in which the represented characters are connected through a vector which is accomplished through the eye contact of one of them on the other. The

¹⁷⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Game-of-Thrones>

verbal process also plays a pivotal role in reflecting the warning message Riddell attempts to convey.

Delving into the analysis of the visual depiction, the cartoon presents a tall imposing fictional character, with a pointy crown on his head and an ice-like skin covered with a flowing cloak, that is, the knight king character. He is warning Boris Johnson and declaring “WINTER IS COMING”, whilst Johnson looks indifferent and apathetic to that, with his often-direct gaze at the viewers (demanding). The knight king is depicted holding a sword with the caption NO DEAL BREXIT and a spear with the caption CORONAVIRUS. These inscribed weapons are the means of killing the British people.

On the other side of the image, Johnson is visually depicted as Daenerys Targaryen, a fictional character, often referred to as the “Mother of Dragons”. Johnson is presented in a blue garment (blue for the British Conservative party) and gazing directly at the viewers while grasping Dominic Cummings. Cummings is ridiculously fused with a fictional creature, Daenerys’ dragon. Johnson’s words imply that he has done what needs to be done, reading “RELAX, DOMINIC AND I HAVE GOT THIS COVERED” while the dragon looks worried.

Moreover, the interactive meaning can also be manifested through direct eye contact, power dynamics, and the social distance between participants. For instance, Johnson’s spatial proximity to the virus implies the immediacy of the danger it poses, while his direct and indifferent gaze toward the virus underscores his indifference to the virus’ threats. The depiction of Johnson and Cummings so close to each other also signifies their intimacy and closeness in ideological stances and views towards the crisis.

So, the metaphorical entailments inferred from this cartoon are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS DAENERYS TARGARYEN, WHO IS STRUGGLING WITH DEFICIENT PLANS.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS DAENERYS’ INFANT DRAGON.
- THE KNIGHT KING IS A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE BRITISH PEOPLE.
- A NO DEAL BREXIT IS THE SWORD OF THE KNIGHT KING TO KILL BRITISH PEOPLE.

- CORONAVIRUS IS THE SPEAR OF THE KNIGHT KING TO KILL BRITISH PEOPLE.
- THE BRITISH PEOPLE ARE THE SEVEN KINGDOMS UNDER A RECURRING THREAT.

It is also worth mentioning that depicting Johnson as Targaryen discloses Riddell's negative attitude towards Johnson, though Daenerys has positive connotations, such as being often powerful and ambitious, yet her leadership style is often recognized as controversial. Thus, the visual metaphorical configuration of Johnson in the image lies in the salient attribute of making impulsive and rash decisions and paying no attention to people's suffering, as Daenerys does. Furthermore, the compositional elements, such as frames and places, all suggest that the danger is very close and the government is unaware of this. Another compositional aspect is significant in the analysis, that is size, with the portrayal of Dominic Cummings as Daenerys' dragon. Though in the movie the difference in size signifies his powerful influence over Daenerys, in the cartoon his tiny size activates the conceptual metaphor 'IMPORTANCE IS SIZE', which conversely represents 'LACK OF IMPORTANCE IS SMALL'. Accordingly, Cummings' size as an infant dragon is of no help or threat to Johnson or, probably, to anybody. It looks more like a lizard than a dragon which in this issue has no real influence.

In addition, the no-deal Brexit sword and the coronavirus spear the knight king is holding are the weapons with which he will kill people and destroy their lives. Thus, the entailments derived from this cartoon ignite the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S APATHETIC STANCE TOWARDS HIS CITIZENS IS A WAY OF KILLING PEOPLE'. Overall, the cartoon unveils the cartoonist's negative evaluation of Johnson's stances and deals such as Brexit and COVID-19 measures, considering that the final result will be the demise of people.

- Cartoon 2.18



Figure 4.67 Steve Bell’s cartoon on the three-tier system introduced by the British Prime Minister, published in *The Guardian*, September 10, 2020

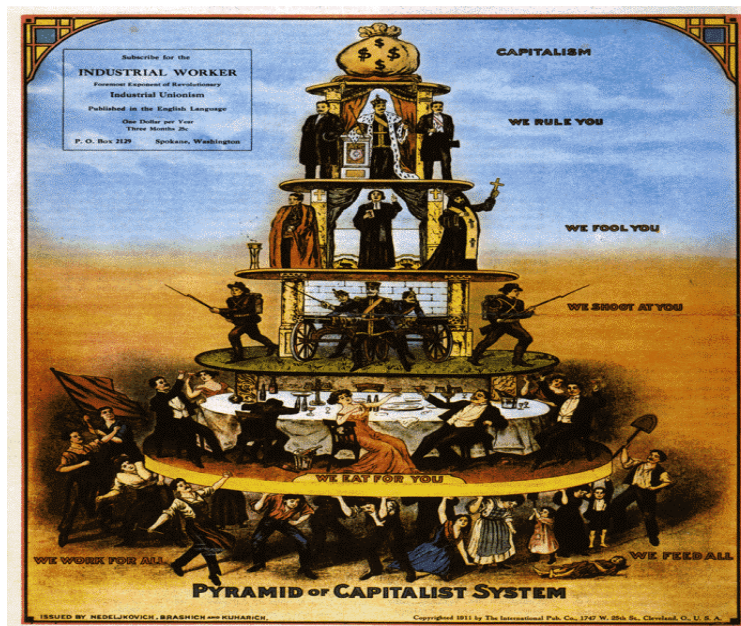


Figure 4.68 An American classic 1911 poster: “The Pyramid of Capitalist System”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/content/%E2%80%9Cpyramid-capitalist-system%E2%80%9D-1911-ce>

Like in many other cartoons, here intertextual reference has its influential effect on depicting politicians and political issues. Though Steve Bell has based his cartoon on the source domains COOKING and FOOD, the inspiration was essentially activated from an illustrious well-known American poster published in 1911. The original poster embodied a critical attitude against Capitalism, as shown in figure 4.68. The original illustration was formed as a pyramid of social classes (social stratification) in the capitalist system, whereas the cartoon portrayed a similar pyramid with further different details, as a three-layered cake pumping out solid human or animal waste or mud from drainpipes. The caption reads THAT THREE TIER SYSTEM, EXPLAINED... and it represents the target of Bell's cartoon, which visually criticized the government's corruption and the three tiered system imposed then.

Before analyzing the image metaphorically, it can be seen this is a non-transactional narrative cartoon in which all the represented participants have no vector with each other and no direct eye contact between them, rather they have a direct gaze at the viewers which proposes the sense of demanding. The cartoonist tends to engage the viewers in an imaginary relationship with the represented actors. Also the interactive aspect of physical closeness or the distance reveals that they have intimacy and share the same ideological and social stance towards the others.

To analyze the visual elements and characters positioned at the top layer, it has been grounded with the Royal Standard of England,¹⁸⁰ which typically symbolizes the British monarchy and the English crown as an institution. Alongside this visual symbolism of drawing the Royal Standard, four characters have been positioned, from left to right as follows: Queen Elizabeth II, Boris Johnson, Rupert Murdoch and Dominic Cummings. Firstly, Queen Elizabeth II stands at a distance which seemingly highlights the non-political and more symbolic role of the monarchy, so separating her role from the immediate political context. Conversely, Boris Johnson has been presented in the center, in a position that stems from the metaphor 'IMPORTANT IS CENTRALITY'. It is relevant to mention here that the visual grammar of the characters in an image brings out the influential role, dominance and power dynamics they have over each other or even on the status quo at that time. Thus, the frontal-central position of Johnson means that he is the most influential figure at the time and he is in charge of managing this crisis. The man standing

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.historyhit.com/locations/the-royal-standard-of-england/>

next to Johnson is the owner of *The Sun* and *The Times*, Rupert Murdoch,¹⁸¹ who is depicted holding *The Sun* in one hand, and an umbrella in the other. This daily newspaper is well known for its ideological and political alignment with the government and its policies. Lastly, the Dalek, Dominic Cummings, is seen holding an umbrella. The utilization of umbrellas by the three characters except the Queen implies their awareness that they need protect only themselves and the Queen in this tempestuous weather. Thus, the stormy weather is a metaphorical representation of the pandemic.

Concerning textual inscriptions and representations, the first level reads WE RULE YOU, WE FOOL YOU, which shows that the ruling class (government, monarchy, the media) in the UK is badly ruling the populace and fooling them with the implementation of this incompetent tiered system. This layer is visually portrayed as pumping out solid human or animal waste and dirt on people (negative attitude). Thus, it evokes the metaphors ‘THE FIRST LEVEL OF THE TIERED SYSTEM IS PUMPING DIRT ON PEOPLE’ and ‘THE GOVERNMENT’S HARMFUL TREATMENT IS A DIRTY JOB’.

Next, the second layer of the tiered system is presented as being covered with the Union Jack and the verbal comment WE FORK OFF, with many forks around which represent the benefits and privileges the ‘WE’ which the message alludes to takes from implementing its strategies. Underneath, WE DIE represents the Britons who suffered from the government’s stringent rules and the tiered system. This means that the presence of the four forks and the Union Jack symbolize Johnson’s government purportedly unfair handling of the situation with regards to all four constituent countries –England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland– and the different measures the government imposed to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Then, in the last and toughest layer in this system, WE DIE, symbolizes the very high levels of restriction and lockdown, this time with the metonymic representation of pairs-of-eyes-as-people as a background (PART FOR WHOLE). In this layer, Bell draws the populace as needy masses who are suffering the severity of the lockdown, struggling through muddy conditions and experiencing a great deal of pain that is leading to their end. The stratification of the UP-DOWN layers and the position of the figures with up-down orientations represents that only the common

¹⁸¹ He is an Australian businessman, well-known for owning hundreds of newspapers, mainly in Australia.

people are under the toughest tier of restrictions and lockdown, since they are at the bottom of the pyramid, whereas the state leaders and the royalty are in safe from dirt –‘stringent restrictions’– and rain –‘the virus spread’. Thus, the cartoon as a whole triggers the following set of metaphorical configurations: ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S COVID-19 TIERED SYSTEM IS A CAKE PUMPING OUT SH*T EVERYWHERE’, ‘THE COVID-19 TIERED SYSTEM IS A PYRAMID OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM’, or ‘THE COVID-19 TIERED SYSTEM IS A DEATH MAKING SYSTEM’.

- **Cartoon 2.19**



Figure 4.69 Chris Riddell’s cartoon about pantomime dame Boris Johnson and his-not-so-magical lamp, published in *The Guardian*, September 13, 2020

The cartoon in figure 4.69 was published in *The Guardian* on September 13th 2020, in the light of increasing criticism for Boris Johnson’s proposal to introduce new legislation that would override the Brexit agreement and the protocols and agreements that were made during the negotiations, specifically the Northern Ireland protocol.¹⁸² Thus, considerable opposition and criticism were forwarded against that irresponsible change, as announced by many politicians, who argued that it would violate international law. The former British PMs, John Major and Tony Blair,

¹⁸² This is a set of rules, procedures and conventions which is regarded as an integral part of the UK Withdrawal Agreement (Brexit), and it aims to prevent a hard border in Ireland. This site is highly recommended: <https://www.bbc.com/news/explainers-53724381>

declared then that they “both opposed Brexit. We both accept it is now happening. But this way of negotiating, with reason cast aside in pursuit of ideology and cavalier bombast posing as serious diplomacy is irresponsible, wrong in principle and dangerous in practice.”¹⁸³

The cartoon in figure 4.69 is drawn upon the ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE and SHOW source domains with a reference to a famous comic show, namely a pantomime performance image schema, which is likely preferred as a source of satirizing the absurd actions of some politicians. Chris Riddell in his cartoon has based his work on a famous musical comedy show, pantomime.¹⁸⁴ The cartoon uses a transactional narrative process in which the represented characters are performed with a vector existing between them. Some have eye contact while others do not. In the image, the whole performance is a symbol of Johnson’s plans and strategies, which are seen as a negative symbolic reference to his leadership. Thus, the image shows Johnson as a pantomime dame with a flamboyant garment decorated with Coronavirus representations, which again metonymically represents the color of the British Tories (blue, COLOR FOR POLITICAL PARTY), who may be accused of being responsible for the virus swift spread due to the ineffective measures and policies taken (compositional aspect). Examining Johnson’s overall look more closely, we see a caption reading RULE OF SIX inscribed on the dress, which refers to the limitation of any social gatherings to no more than six people. The other compositional aspect is sizing; the oversized hat on his head may have two indications: it either implies a metaphorical representation of OPERATION MOONSHOT, a program led by the government to increase the number of tests to reach ten million tests per day, or the hat-as-moon can be seen as a human bottom, as in mooning actions of protest (that is, showing your bottom in public).¹⁸⁵ The flamboyant dress and oversized hat reflect the metonymy CLOTH FOR EVENTS, which could serve to interpret the cartoonist’s negative attitude towards these policies as deceptive flamboyance and lacking seriousness in Johnson and his government’s approach to certain policies.

¹⁸³ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/sep/13/blair-and-major-hit-out-at-boris-johnsons-plans-to-override-brexit-deal>

¹⁸⁴ This is a comedy stage production typically performed during the New Year season and Christmas. The most prominent feature in this kind of show is the use of mimes, dancing with funny and extravagant costumes, such as flamboyant, heavily decorated and over-the-top garments and wigs and exaggerated hats (<https://www.pantomime-mime.com/mime-history>).

¹⁸⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mooning>

Johnson, as shown in the figure, is rendered holding a magic lamp labeled WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT in one hand, which is a visual reference to the Brexit agreement, and in the other, a deflating balloon labeled TEST AND TRACE which actually has Dido Harding's worried face on it (and her name too). Not surprisingly, by representing Dido Harding as a deflating balloon, Riddell may be suggesting that her conducting of the Test and Trace Program (likely referring to the COVID-19 contact tracing and testing initiative) has been marked as ineffective or a failure. Thus, the deflating balloon symbolism can denote a loss of credibility or deflation of promises and expectations concerning the program.

Once and again, Johnson is presented looking straight at the viewers and declaring "WE ARE NOT CANCELLING CHRISTMAS, IN FACT THE PANTOMIME SEASON HAS STARTED EARLY..." His direct gaze and speech may suggest that his actions and policies are comic or absurd shows, and he is just mocking his people and has no real solution but is demanding others' help. Behind Johnson, we find a genie coming out of the lamp with an inscription on it that reads INTERNATIONAL LAW. The genie seems angry, unwilling to obey Johnson's orders and ready to hit him, as he says "I AM NOT BEHIND YOU", which means that Johnson cannot expect to have international legal support for his actions concerning Brexit. Furthermore, another prominent figure in the cartoon is Michael Gove,¹⁸⁶ who is attired in a unicorn costume, a choice laden with potential allusions to the unicorn featured in the Royal Coat of Arms of the UK.¹⁸⁷ Notably, the presence of the term BREXIT within this visual composition served to symbolize Scotland's oppositional stance on the relevant deal and its struggle for independence.¹⁸⁸ Undoubtedly, the presence of Gove inside the unicorn costume adorned with the Brexit word emphasizes his crucial involvement in the preparations and negotiations between the UK and the EU.

According to all the above-mentioned visual allegories and metaphorical cues, it is relevant to mention individual metaphors and visual allusions that instantiate the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICAL ACTIONS ARE COMIC PERFORMANCES', which interplays with the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICIANS ARE COMEDIANS':

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Michael-Gove>

¹⁸⁷ <https://www.britroyals.com/arms.asp>

¹⁸⁸ The majority of Scots voted to remain in the EU, leading to renewed calls for Scottish independence and discussions about a second independence referendum. The practical consequences of Brexit, such as changes in trade and economic relationships, have also affected Scotland (<https://www.gov.scot/brexit/>).

- BREXIT IS A FANCY DRESS.
- BRITISH POLICIES AND DEALS ARE CLOTHES AND DECORATIONS IN A PANTOMIME.
- THE EU AND THE UK ARE THE AUDIENCE.
- THE CONSERVATIVES ARE COMEDIANS.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A PANTOMIME DAME IN A COMIC PERFORMANCE.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S BREXIT AGREEMENT IS A WISH TO THE GENIE.
- DIDO HARDING'S TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM IS A DEFLATING BALLOON.
- INTERNATIONAL LAW IS AN ANGRY GENIE.

The additional details in this cartoon and the modes of representations could be interpreted as follows:

- The lamp being non-magic suggests that the withdrawal process was not as smooth or straightforward as it was expected to be, so that Johnson's government was not able to achieve the desired consequences of the withdrawal process, particularly the Northern Ireland protocol. The genie's speech and its facial expression, on the other hand (GESTURE FOR FEELING), illustrate the EU's refusal of the UK's new plan to grant Johnson's wishes. Thus, this gesture implies the discontent of the EU with the British government's actions or decisions on the withdrawal agreement and the changes Johnson is calling for concerning the hard borders.

- The conceptualization of Dido Harding as a deflating balloon with the inscription TEST AND TRACE on it suggests the shortcomings of this system, which was designed to help track and control the spread of COVID-19. The deflating balloon in this cartoon is a response to numerous reports highlighting the system's inefficiency.¹⁸⁹ The metaphor employed here is that of a CONTAINER, which encapsulates various related concepts such as 'inside/outside',

¹⁸⁹ Tony Prestedge, the chief operating officer of the NHS's Test and Trace service, admitted in a webinar to staff that the programme would be "imperfect" at launch, adding that he hoped it would be operational at a world-class level within three to four months (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jun/04/nhs-track-and-trace-system-not-expected-to-be-operating-fully-until-september-coronavirus>). There, some statistics were provided to show that the test and trace system would be successful in quickly and effectively identifying and controlling COVID-19 cases, with a study conducted by Imperial College suggesting that the R number, which represents the rate of transmission of the virus, could potentially be reduced by up to 26% (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/what-has-gone-wrong-with-englands-covid-test-and-trace-system>).

‘fullness/emptiness’, and ‘in control/out of control’ (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Therefore, in this image, the deflation of the balloon underscores the limitations or constraints of the system, including the loss of its intended qualities or effectiveness.

To sum up, it is also worth mentioning that the metaphor ‘POLITICIANS ARE PANTOMIME DAMES’ is often used as a derogatory term to describe politicians or those in power positions as unmanly or weak, with an allegory of clowns. For sure, this metaphorical configuration can imply that they are not genuine or trustworthy, and that their actions or statements should not be taken seriously (Harris, 2000). Thus, the cartoon as a whole uncovers Riddell’s social and ideological motifs and reasons behind the utilization of this metaphorical image. The essential purpose is to convince the populace of the absurdity, ineffectiveness and vulnerability of Johnson’s government during crucial issues such as Brexit and COVID-19. The cartoon as a whole ignites the general metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S LEADERSHIP IS AN ABSURD PERFORMANCE’.

- **Cartoon 2.20**

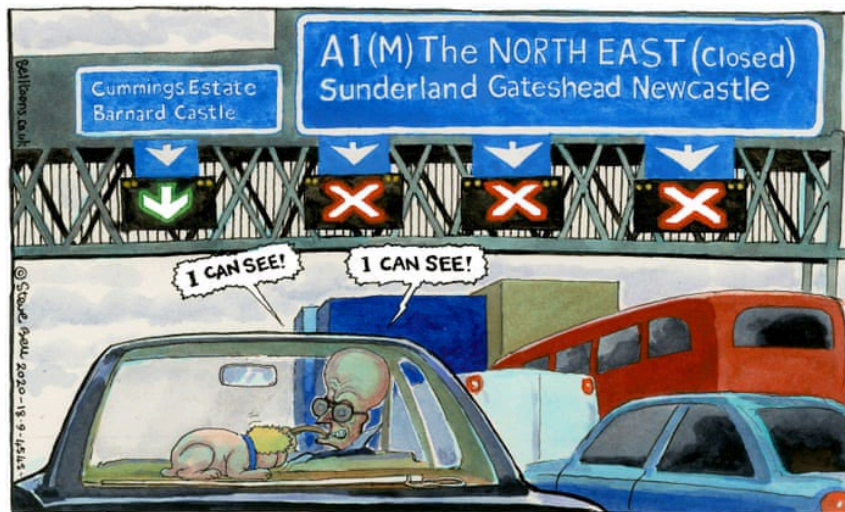


Figure 4.70 Steve Bell’s cartoon on the UK government’s coronavirus capers, published in *The Guardian*, September 18, 2020

Again, like in many other political cartoons, here Steve Bell anchors his cartoon in the conceptual metaphor ‘HUMANS ARE ANIMALS’, which in turn triggers the metaphor ‘POLITICIANS ARE ANIMALS’. Such metaphorical representations configure the critical stance

of the cartoonists in encoding particular idiosyncratic attributes. The focused theme in this cartoon is on the new stronger restrictions and measures the government imposed on the north east of England, which were implemented to confront the escalating rates of infection on September 17th, 2020.¹⁹⁰ The cartoon has a transactional narrative structure in which the participants have direct contact with each other; Dominic Cummings is looking at Boris Johnson and talking to him. Strikingly, the image exposes Johnson as a small nodding dog on the rear dash of Cumming's car. This configuration triggers the individual metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A SMALL DOG UNDER DOMINIC CUMMINGS' CONTROL'.

Based on the above analogy, Bell suggests that Johnson is Cummings' pet and he is extremely subservient to Cummings' power and control, this activates the aspect of power dynamics in the image. The setting of the cartoon illustrates a traffic jam scene, in which two roads are present, the left one reads 'A1(M) The NORTH EAST (Closed) Sunderland Gateshead Newcastle', and it is headed for the North East of England, which is closed and crowded with cars and other vehicles. The other road reads 'Cummings State Barnard Castle', it is heading for Barnard Castle and open for Cummings' car only. The reference here is to Cummings' highly publicized scandal of violating COVID-19 lockdown restrictions by traveling from London to Durham, then to Barnard Castle, to test his eyesight, as he alleged.¹⁹¹ This popularly rejected allegation is successfully and humorously employed by Bell in his cartoon through the verbal balloon uttered by Cummings "I CAN SEE!" which sounds like a joke on the fact this visit was not as necessary as he said it was. This is also the typical thing drivers sometimes say to other people in the vehicle when they tell drivers which road must be taken. The use of the two signs atop of the cartoon is a compositional aspect that signifies that the top-placed information is the idea, with the cartoonist's intention to gain the attention of the viewers and to criticize the government's unfairness.

Furthermore, sizing is another compositional aspect that is valuable here, as it helps in interpreting the image and uncovering some hidden messages. For instance, portraying Johnson in a small size has an influential effect in conveying meaning, which suggests his lack of control and effective influence as a leader, 'LACK OF CONTROL AND EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE IS

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/stronger-measures-introduced-in-parts-of-the-north-east-to-tackle-rising-infection-rates>

¹⁹¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2020/may/25/dominic-cummings-says-he-drove-to-barnard-castle-to-test-his-eyesight-video>

SMALL SIZE’. This aligns with the general metaphor ‘IMPORTANCE IS SIZE’, indicating that a smaller size signifies a diminished sense of power and impact and vice versa. The framing aspect also suggests that Johnson is very close to Cummings and subservient to his orders, they have the same attitudes.

All the above-mentioned visual details and metaphors reveal the cartoonist’s negative stance towards Johnson’s subservience to Cummings’ dominance and power; this suggests that Johnson’s decisions and measures are implemented unfairly, with public accountability only imposed on the general public while government members and politicians evade the rules and measures.

- **Cartoon 2.21**



Figure 4.71 Chris Riddell’s cartoon about Boris Johnson and his world-class test and trace system, published in *The Guardian*, September 20, 2020

Since the emergence of COVID-19 in late 2019, the virus was often presented as natural overwhelming forces. In these natural forces metaphors, COVID-19 was presented in the shape of an uncontrollable and inevitable power that beat up the country, such as wildfire, tsunamis and storms. Chris Riddell, in this portrayal, made use of this metaphor to confirm the gravity of this threat (the second wave) and the uncontrollability of its spread and nature. Thus, the cartoon is based on a non-transactional narrative process, in which one actor only exists. Johnson has been portrayed standing with direct eye contact with the viewers. Such visual contact, as Kress & van

Leeuwen (2006) explained, suggests a sense of demanding and creating a relation with the viewers. In this aspect, the direct eye contact Riddell employed, as he often does, in this cartoon may also activate the impression that Johnson is unaware of the threat that is approaching and he is holding a tiny blue umbrella to shield him from turbulent waves filled with coronavirus figures. It is relevant to notice that the target domain is visually and textually rendered in Riddell's cartoon through the caption on the umbrella WORLD CLASS, TEST AND TRACE, pointing out that the NHS's Test and Trace System is the program through which Johnson's government would track and curb the spread of the virus. Briefly, the image yields the following individual metaphors:

- THE COVID-19 SECOND WAVE IS A CHOPPY TSUNAMI WAVE.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM IS A TINY UMBRELLA CONFRONTING THE HIGH WAVES OF THE VIRUS.

Insofar as this analysis is a semiotic one, it highlights other compositional aspects beyond the verbal metaphor. For example, the color and size of the elements depicted in the cartoon can cue a conceptual metaphor. For instance, the blue color of the umbrella, as already stated, is basically used as a metonymic connection to the British Conservative party, which is commonly referred to as the "Tory Blue". Thus, this metonymic reference represents the responsibility of the Conservatives for managing the goal of this system. The element of sizing, on the other hand, has its communicative value, portraying the Test and Trace System as a small umbrella which metaphorically stands for its lack of importance and adequacy. To sum up, the whole image suggests that the World Class Test and Trace System is inadequate and fragile in responding to the dangerous resurgence of the virus over different areas. This would suggest a more general metaphor for the whole image, 'BORIS JOHNSON'S TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM FOR THE SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19 IS A FRAGILE UMBRELLA AGAINST a SEVERE TSUNAMI'.

- Cartoon 2.22



Figure 4.72 Steve Bell's cartoon on coronavirus and herd immunity, published in *The Guardian*, October 14, 2020

This cartoon was published as a response to the warnings delivered by Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the head of WHO, during a meeting in Geneva in October 2020. These signals were related to Boris Johnson's plan which helped spread the virus faster through attaining what is called herd immunity; the plan was seen by Ghebreyesus as unethical: "[a]llowing a dangerous virus that we don't fully understand to run free is simply unethical. It's not an option."¹⁹² Accordingly, many critics and cartoonists ridiculed this plan, highlighting its gravity and fatal consequences. Charteris-Black (2021:26-27) comments on this as follows:

Many people were confused by 'herd immunity' because it was both a technical term in epidemiology but also one that had popular connotations and carried implications when applied to the 'body politic'. Agency is always a key issue in attributing blame, and the desire to avoid blame in the future influenced many official statements on coronavirus policy but they appealed to reason rather than to Haidt's elephant of intuition.

Steve Bell, thus, makes in this cartoon a humorous reference to the new campaign which launched on September 9th, 2020, to curb the spread of the virus, as shown in figure 4.73.

¹⁹² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/12/who-chief-says-herd-immunity-approach-to-pandemic-unethical>



Figure 4.73 The ‘Hands- Face-Space’ public information campaign in 2020 in the UK¹⁹³

Bell’s cartoon was primarily drawn to address Johnson’s government’s intention to impose a stringent lockdown on Liverpool, as stated by its mayor, which was generally seen as a “spiral back to the bleak days of the 1980s”,¹⁹⁴ particularly with the absence of the government’s adequate support. The cartoon in its essence is a mirror showing the cautions against the British government’s deliberate intention to spread the virus among the population to achieve herd immunity. All over again, Bell relies his work on the ANIMAL configuration to negatively evaluate Johnson’s behavior and Trump during the COVID-19 crisis. The image, therefore, activates the conceptual metaphor ‘POLITICIANS ARE ANIMALS’, which captures the most offensive and undesirable characteristics to be transferred onto the characters. The cartoon takes the form of a non-transactional narration in which two characters have been fused in one body, one is the head and the other is the arse. There is no direct connection or eye contact between them to activate the interactive meaning in the cartoon, yet, being the arse of someone’s body signifies a sense of subservience and close connection, and this will be discussed next.

Bell depicts Johnson as the arse of the bull, which is easily characterized by his typical shaggy hair and buttocks-like face, while the bull itself represents Trump, with his usual toilet bowl hair. It is significant to mention here that the dysphemistic characterization of these two characters as animals or body part emphasizes certain points or motifs that stand behind as, for instance, the metaphorical configuration ‘DONALD TRUMP IS A BULL’, which could suggest that Trump as

¹⁹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-campaign-to-prevent-spread-of-coronavirus-indoors-this-winter>

¹⁹⁴ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/12/liverpool-lockdown-anger-confusion-streets-city-singled/>

the president of the US has a lot of power and influence on Johnson and he is seen as unyielding, inflexible and obstinate in imposing much tougher restrictions and rules. On the other hand, the metaphorical image ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS THE BUTTOCKS OF THE BULL DONALD TRUMP’ might connote Johnson as vulnerable, lacking perception and competence in handling the crisis. Moreover, it might instantiate him as the backside of Trump, which suggests Johnson’s perceived subservience or subordinate position to Trump. This animal depiction, simply, suggests Bell’s dysphemistic view of Johnson’s relationship with Trump and the adverse effects of their strategies during the crisis (fast herd immunity). Both have been evaluated as lacking professionalism, competency and intelligence in managing the spread of the virus.

Concerning the verbal elements, HERD IMMUNITY – IT’LL GET US ALL IN THE END as the cartoon’s framed caption is the theme of the cartoon, which unveils Bell’s satirical view on the leaders’ incompetent policies to curb the spread of the virus by implementing failing plans as herd immunity. Thus, this caption probably suggests that the pursuit of herd immunity in the UK, without appropriate measures, may in the long term lead to negative consequences for the population there. This suggestion is fundamentally based on the use of the referent IT in the caption, which may suggest two possible interpretations, as it may either refer back to the plan of HERD IMMUNITY, or to an unnamed threat, Coronavirus itself.

Moreover, since the metaphorical depiction shows Trump as the animal, the bull, whilst Johnson is only its arse, this symbolically proposes that Johnson is subservient to Trump’s power. He is the back part of the whole body, though both are distinguished as an animal. Concerning the stains on the animal’s body, they are located differently and have their communicative value in their interpretations. Here it is important to mention that the STAIN metaphor, as Jensen (2020) contends, enables language users to “understand unmoral or socially unacceptable behaviors in terms of something or someone being dirty, filthy, impure, blemished, tainted, contaminated, unclean, polluted, stained”. This metaphorical representation derived from the general conceptual metaphor ‘CLEAN IS GOOD AND DIRTY IS BAD’ in addition to the metaphor ‘MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS’. Thus, in this regard, the stains located on Johnson’s bum face represents the UK’s campaign implemented by the UK’s government to prevent the virus spread, ‘HANDS, FACE, SPACE’. This satirical portrayal activates the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S

CAMPAIGN TO CURB THE VIRUS IS A WORK OF DIRT'. Likewise, in Trump's government's slogan the stain on the bull's side represents the negative value of the plan implemented in the US, 'do-not-resuscitate'.¹⁹⁵

Another interpretation can be deduced from the STAIN metaphor in this image: since they are stains, they are supposed to be something transitory and negative, and something that can be easily suppressed after washing. This triggers the vulnerability of the government's slogans and plans. On the other hand, it seems as if the slogan reads "you must wash your hands, protect your face and keep social distance, and if all this fails, you should not try resuscitation on the patient",¹⁹⁶ which looks like an even more extreme measure, as most people actually survived contagion.

Additionally, there is a stain on the ground labeled SCOUSE,¹⁹⁷ which refers to the city of Liverpool, highlighting the stringent tiered system and lockdown imposed upon the region of Liverpool city's than other areas in England. So, the stain SCOUSE on the ground might represent the negative consequences and chaos Johnson has brought on his public. As a result to this dysphemistic depiction of Johnson as Trump's arse, the cartoonist attempted to convey a negative attitude towards Johnson and Trump as leaders who were seen as chaos makers and disarray causers. Thus, the cartoon activates the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON'S HERD IMMUNITY STRATEGY IS AN ACT OF CAUSING CHAOS' and 'THE WORLD LEADERS' PLANS OF HERD IMMUNITY IS AN ACT OF DIRT'.

¹⁹⁵ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37778695/>

¹⁹⁶ "Do not attempt resuscitation" is a medical instruction commonly used in medical contexts to indicate that any life-saving procedures should not be performed on a patient in certain situations, for instance, when the condition is terminal or resuscitation is futile. It guides healthcare providers on the appropriate action to take based on the patient's condition and wishes (<https://www.britannica.com/science/do-not-resuscitate-order>).

¹⁹⁷ Scouse is a reference to Liverpool, or a dialect spoken in Liverpool, as defined in *Cambridge Dictionary* (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/scouse>), or it might also refer to a watery stew. As stated in <https://www.irishtimes.com/sport/soccer/english-soccer/we-are-not-english-we-are-scouse-why-liverpool-boo-the-anthem-1.4883966>, the "word 'Scouse' is regarded as an insult that was re-appropriated by those it was used against. In the poorest areas of Liverpool, a century ago, the malnourished residents –who were children of immigrants and who mainly identified as Irish– relied on soup kitchens and cheap street vendors for food. What they were served was 'Scouse', a watery stew".

- Cartoon 2.23

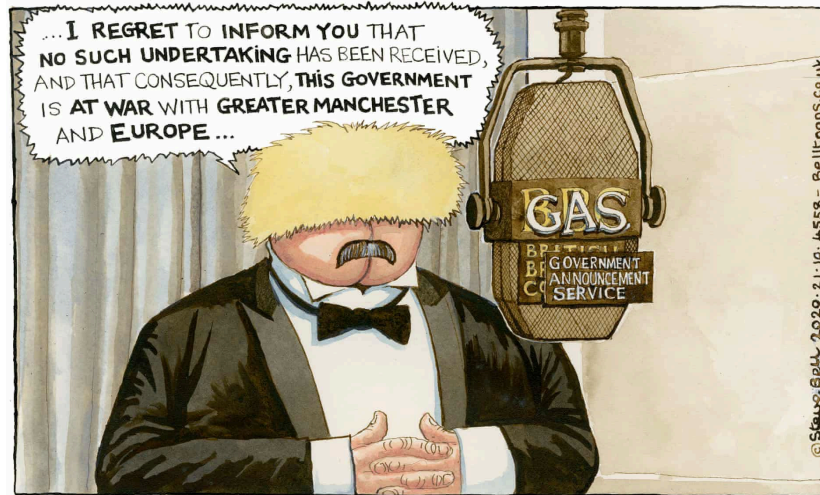


Figure 4.74 Steve Bell’s cartoon on the breakdown of talks between Manchester and the government, published in *The Guardian*, October 20, 2020

The present cartoon was published after breaking down the negotiations between Andy Burnham and Boris Johnson over the strictest measures the government announced to impose on Greater Manchester (see also cartoon 1.20). Bell’s cartoon is based on the source domains WAR and CONFLICT, combined with a historical reference to one of the world famous war declarations in WWII; the one that was done by the then British PM, Neville Chamberlain,¹⁹⁸ against Nazi Germany in 1939. Thus, the cartoon essentially profiles the general metaphorical concepts ‘POLITICS IS WAR’ and ‘ARGUMENT IS WAR’, as it addresses the collapse of the talks between Johnson’s government and Greater Manchester.

The cartoon depicts only one represented participant with no contact with other elements, thus, Boris Johnson was portrayed as Neville Chamberlain, quoting Chamberlain’s famous declaration of war against Germany as shown in figure 4.75: “I have to tell you now that no such undertaking [i.e., German troops’ withdrawal from Poland in September 1939] has been received, and that

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Neville-Chamberlain>
<https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/anniversaries/september/war-announced/>

and

consequently this country is at war with Germany”. Johnson, thus, was visually presented as declaring war against Greater Manchester and Europe, as seen in his speech: **“I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT NO SUCH UNDERTAKING HAS BEEN RECEIVED, AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY, THIS GOVERNMENT IS AT WAR WITH GREATER MANCHESTER AND EUROPE”**. The cartoon, accordingly, shows that the tension between the government and the region of Greater Manchester resembles the destructive conflict in WWII between Britain and Germany. Concerning the interactive meaning of this cartoon, since there is no direct gazing from Johnson to the viewers (demand), Bell just offers Johnson as an item of information.

The historical allusion in this image triggers a set of individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN DECLARING WAR ON GERMANY IN WWII.
- THE GREATER MANCHESTER DISTRICT IS THE ENEMY/ NAZI GERMANY.
- THE COLLAPSE OF THE GOVERNMENT-GREATER MANCHESTER NEGOTIATIONS IS THE DECLARATION OF WWII.
- THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT AND GREATER MANCHESTER IS WWII.
- EUROPE IS THE ENEMY.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S GOVERNMENT IS BRITAIN.
- COVID-19’S TOUGHER RESTRICTIONS IMPOSITION ON GREATER MANCHESTER ARE HOSTILITIES.

As mentioned earlier in other cartoons, the compositional elements add to the communicative value of the image, such as salience, information value and frame. The central position of Johnson in the image signifies his aggressive attitude towards Greater Manchester and the problematic issue he has with that area, which is well-symbolized through his interlocking hands.

According to these metaphorical representations, the cartoon activates the following metaphors with the same implied explanations: ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S GOVERNMENT’S ACTIONS TOWARDS BRITISH CITIZENS DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE FORMS OF CONTROL AND OPPRESSION’, and ‘THE UK’S GOVERNMENT’S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF PEOPLE’S RIGHTS IS A WAR DECLARATION’.



Figure 4.75 A photo of the then British PM, Neville Chamberlain, announcing war with Germany, in September 1939¹⁹⁹

The interpretation of further elements, such as the abbreviated letters on the microphone alongside Johnson's hand gestures, supports the cartoonist's evaluation of Johnson's stance on internal issues. The replacement of the BBC²⁰⁰ sign with GAS, as presented by Bell to stand for Government Announcement Service, carries a pejorative association. Although, in the cartoon Bell has written the full meaning of the acronym, he has probably perceived Johnson's daily announcements during the pandemic as GAS, or empty talks, lacking substance or influential impact. In regards to his hand gestures, clenching hands commonly shows frustration or lack of action, and it may suggest that he is suppressing negative emotions related to the negotiations and the Greater Manchester area.

¹⁹⁹ A statement was delivered to the country through a broadcast on the BBC Home Service at 11.15 AM on Sunday, September 3, 1939 (<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/chamberlain-announces-war-with-germany-1939>).

²⁰⁰ This is the abbreviation of British Broadcasting Corporation, the national broadcaster of the UK, headquartered at Broadcasting House located in London (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/British-Broadcasting-Corporation>).

- Cartoon 2.24



Figure 4.76 Chris Riddell's Halloween Brexit special, published in *The Guardian*, November 1, 2020

This cartoon by Chris Riddell was included in *The Guardian* on November 1st, 2020. The contextual knowledge of the cartoon exposes that its date coincides with the Halloween festivities. Thus, the cartoon features this by portraying a Halloween-themed scenario, where people dress up in horror-themed clothing. Therefore, Riddell connects his cartoon to one of the most famous American horror films series, *Friday the 13th*, which started in 1980.

Before delving into the details of the metaphorical image of the cartoon, the image shows a non-transactional narrative pattern in which there are two representational participants who have no eye contact to be regarded as a vector between them. The interactive meaning, on the other hand, shows that Boris Johnson is the superordinate since he is placed frontal and leading the action. They are depicted close to each other in the shot to signify the gravity of Johnson's plans which lead to expeditious and lethal outcomes.

The cartoon profiled Johnson as the main actor of the series *Friday the 13th*, Jason Voorhees, with his famous hockey mask –the main horror antagonist and fictional character in this franchise– holding an axe with the word BREXIT on it, which is metonymically used to represent CAUSE FOR RESULT. This triggers that Brexit as a deal is commonly considered as a weapon for killing

people through the harmful impact of the deal on British citizens. On the other hand, a bucket inscribed with AUSTRALIA TYPE DEAL²⁰¹ indicates also the negative effect of this deal in increasing obstacles to trade with the EU, reduced access to the EU market and increased competition among different industries which in turn affect severely the domestic industries and workers. Strikingly, the bucket's metaphorical representations in this figure represent how the government collects its treats from the Britons. The treats here are the benefits, advantages in Johnson's government gain from Brexit and the COVID-19 crisis.

Johnson, in the cartoon, appears to be knocking at a door, possibly to ask for the Halloween treats and candies, saying "TRICK OR TRICK" instead of the Halloween familiar phrase 'trick or treat'. This emphatic repetition of the word TRICK suggests that, no matter which the response will be, Johnson's government's intention is to deceive his people. Thus, Johnson's request reveals Riddell's skeptical and critical attitude towards Johnson's proposed policies which are essentially related to the Brexit withdrawal and the Australia-type deal, as well as those related to the coronavirus pandemic, such as the Test and Trace System.

Additionally, the compositional aspects also add some points to be discussed, for instance the foregrounding plane of Johnson in the image gives rise to emphasize his significant role as the head of the government and the one responsible for the deadly policies and bad deals. In the background of the image a grim reaper, a symbolic personification of death, stands holding in one hand a scythe inscribed with the message COVID-19, which indicates that the virus is a killing tool, and a bucket with TEST AND TRACE on it in the other hand. The frontal and backward plane of the figures in the cartoons evokes the sense that Johnson has powerful dominance over the whole situation and death is Johnson's fellow and subordinate. Moreover, the frame lines between the two participants reveal that they are connected, since Johnson is depicted very near

²⁰¹ This is a trade agreement that Australia did with the EU; the agreement is generally known as Australia Style Deal. The most important point is that it is not a free trade agreement, though it has gone through various negotiations and meetings with the EU since 2018. For that matter, Australia has other agreements with the EU in place concerning other different issues, such as EU crisis management operations, passenger name records, mutual recognition agreements, etc. What is significant concerning this kind of agreement is that it is commonly coded as no deal, since Australia, according to the World Trade Organization (WTO), has no all-inclusive free trade deal with the EU. In this regard, the no deal agreement for the UK's formal bilateral ties with the EU means a cut in their relations not only in trade but in other areas. For more information, the following websites are available: <https://ukandeu.ac.uk/explainers/what-is-an-australian-style-deal/> and <https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/negotiations/aeufta/australia-european-union-fta-fact-sheet>.

the death character, and both act the same performance of trick or treat. All the visual and textual elements in this scene suggest that Johnson's government's COVID-19 systems and Brexit deals are leading to one end, that is, lethal effects and economic problems for the country.

The metaphorical representations entailed from the Halloween image and the *Friday the 13th* film series are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS JASON VOORHEES/A SERIAL KILLER.
- DEATH, AS A GRIM REAPER, IS JOHNSON'S COMPANION.
- CORONAVIRUS IS THE GRIM REAPER'S SCYTHE TO KILL THE BRITS.
- BREXIT IS AN AXE FOR KILLING THE BRITS.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S AUSTRALIA STYLE DEAL IS A BUCKET FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S BENEFICIARIES.
- THE TEST AND TRACE PROGRAMME IS DEATH'S BUCKET CONTAINING THE DEATH TOLLS.

All the above-mentioned individual metaphors point at the following metaphors: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S POLICIES DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE DEATH CAUSE' and 'CONSERVATIVE POLITICIANS ARE DECEITFUL KILLERS'. The interpretation of individual metaphors basically interplays with the more general metaphor 'WRONG POLICIES ARE DEATH CAUSES'. Depicting Johnson as a serial killer followed by a grim reaper is an obvious reference to Riddell's negative evaluation of Boris Johnson's government's action as a whole, from the Brexit withdrawal in 2020 to the strategies and plans allegedly applied to curb the virus spread, such as test and trace. Thus, this portrayal maps some of the attitudinal features of a killer who actually plans to end his victims' (Brits') lives by using tricks (his ineffective policies).

- Cartoon 2.25



Figure 4.77 Steve Bell’s cartoon about Boris Johnson managing expectations around the COVID-19 vaccine, published in *The Guardian*, December 2, 2020

Like many cartoons issued by Steve Bell, the present image combines the source domains GAME and DIRECTION along with an intertextual reference to the legendary heroic outlaw, the prince of thieves, Robin Hood.²⁰² The cartoon was published after the announcement by Boris Johnson of the rapid rollout of the vaccine expectations in the House of Commons, although he warned people not to “get their hopes up”.²⁰³ Thus, Bell in this figure criticized Johnson’s warning and its social implications through this visual presentation. The cartoon is divided into two panels, which activate the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS ROBIN HOOD’. This visual allusion to the prince of thieves uncovers Bell’s hidden intention to criticize Johnson as a leader of corrupt individuals and beneficiaries, including his government members and the Tories as a whole. Regarding the representational meaning, the cartoon displays a non-transactional narrative process in which Johnson is the only represented participant, he has no vector either with the setting of the cartoon or with the viewers. The cartoon generally symbolizes the rolling-out process of the vaccine as a failing process of throwing an arrow by Robin Hood.

²⁰² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Robin-Hood>

²⁰³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaqLCinhbW0>

The first part of the cartoon presents Johnson trying to hit the target with an arrow which is visually portrayed as a vaccine syringe and warning his people: “DON’T GET YOUR HOPES...”. The whole scene activates the metaphor ‘VACCINE ROLLING OUT/ DISTRIBUTING IS THROWING AN ARROW’. In the second part of the image, Bell intends to add a sense of ridicule by depicting the target-shooting process as disappointing and failing. Accordingly, Johnson is portrayed throwing the vaccine syringe at his own foot instead of hitting the intended target. Such failing action triggers the metaphor ‘THE UK’S VACCINE ROLLING OUT/ DISTRIBUTION IS A MISDIRECTED/FAILED ARROW’. Moreover, Johnson’s commentary in the second part “... UP TOO HIGH!!” with the slapstick comedy represented by his pants falling down, as used before in Bell’s cartoon 2.4, also emphasizes Bell’s negative evaluation of Johnson as a failing leader who lacks the potential to beat the world with the UK’s vaccine. So, once again Johnson is conceived as a clown or as a thief seeking his personal interests only. Thus, the whole image stimulates the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S BEATING THE WORLD WITH HIS VACCINE ROLLOUT IS SHOOTING AN ARROW AT ONESELF’.

To sum up, though the legend of Robin Hood is typically associated with highly respected connotations as a defender of the poor and a hero, in this realm Bell employs this intertextual reference in a critical way, implying that Johnson is not acting as a defender of the poor, but instead is acting more like a gang boss who is stealing from the poor to help the rich, as a failed Robin Hood. In this regard, Bell attempts to express a negative assessment of Johnson’s warning and his stance towards rolling out and distributing the vaccine. The depiction of the vaccine hitting his own foot symbolizes Johnson’s corruption, as he prioritizes the interests of his Tory donors over the justified and effective distribution of the vaccine among the public.

- Cartoon 2.26



Figure 4.78 Chris Riddell's cartoon on Boris Johnson and the ghost of Christmas present, published in *The Guardian*, December 19, 2020



Figure 4.79 John Leech's illustration of Scrooge's encounter with the Ghost of Christmas Present, Ignorance and Want, in *A Christmas Carol*, novella by Charles Dickens, 1843

Once again, the present cartoon draws inspiration from Charles Dickens' novella *A Christmas Carol*, as shown above in cartoon 1.25 by Peter Brookes. Cartoon 2.26 was published in *The*

Guardian on 19th December 2020, in the light of the government's declaration of new restrictions in some parts of London²⁰⁴. As in the aforementioned cartoon, Boris Johnson is portrayed as the miser Ebenezer Scrooge in one of his famous scenes, holding a candle and encountering the ghost of Christmas present and two wretched, frightful, skinny and hideous children beneath the folding of the ghost's robe; the girl represents COVID WANT and the boy is BREXIT IGNORANCE. It is noteworthy in this context that the two children are presented in Dickens' novella to symbolically represent the poor in the Victorian era and the inhumanity of society towards them.²⁰⁵ Conversely, instead of this notion, Chris Riddell draws the two figures as symbolic representations of the serious results of Brexit and COVID-19 combined. Thus, the cartoon presents a transactional narrative process, as the represented participants have eye contact and a verbal communication by the ghost. In distance they are close to each other, which signifies that the government knows about these great problems, but gives them its back.

The ghost is introducing himself to Johnson saying "ACTUALLY, I'M THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT...", the inclusion of the word 'actually' presumably means that Johnson expected it to be something else, maybe the Ghost of Christmas Past. According to *Collins Dictionary*, the use of 'actually' may express "an opinion that other people might not have expected from you"²⁰⁶, what is remarkable about him is that it is personified as a grim reaper (Symbol of Death), which means that the cartoonist draws his target upon the DEATH domain to highlight certain dangerous challenges and the drastic results of Johnson's Christmas relaxing policy. Furthermore, the metaphorical representation of the concepts IGNORANCE and WANT with reference to COVID and BREXIT as two poor skinny children suggests that Riddell presents a negative evaluation on Johnson's economic policies and hardship of the poor.

Additionally, the composition of the cartoon also reveals some points that effectively add to the interpretation and explanation stages of the cartoon, for instance the depiction of the children

²⁰⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-19-december-2020>

²⁰⁵ These two children were used by Charles Dickens to criticize the rich people's attitudes towards the poor. They are the outcomes of humankind. *Ignorance* represents the carelessness of people towards the poor and *want* represents the harsh reality of poverty and its severe impact on individuals and society. Together, these two characters serve as a powerful critique of the cruelty and indifference exhibited by the rich people towards the poor (https://www.cram.com/essay/Theme-Of-Ignorance-In-A-Christmas-Carol/PCFWTSFGXDV#google_vignette).

²⁰⁶ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/actually>

and the ghost at the right hand of the image signifies the new information the cartoonist tends to focus on more. Thus, the new information incorporated here is ‘Johnson’s plans are means of harm and suffering’, whereas Johnson is placed on the left side, which suggests given information. Moreover, the size and color of the two children signify the deadly results of Johnson’s plans regarding BREXIT and COVID-19, which lead to austerity and death. Frame, on the other hand, presents the two children as one group and closely related to each other, while they are disconnected from Johnson, who represents the oppressive power.

This configuration reveals that Johnson is not prioritizing the needs of his people; rather, he is neglecting them. All of these implications give rise to the following metaphors: ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S POLICIES ARE CAUSING PHYSICAL HARM TO THE BRITISH PEOPLE’, ‘COVID-19 MEASURES AND BREXIT AGREEMENTS ARE IGNORANCE AND WANT AS CHARACTERS’, and ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S POLICIES ARE THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT’.

- **Cartoon 2.27**



Figure 4.80 Steve Bell’s cartoon on the deadliness of the British COVID-19 Variant, published in *The Guardian*, January 26, 2021



Figure 4.81 Oxford's Bullingdon Club 1987 at Brasenose College. Boris Johnson is the third one from the left, sitting²⁰⁷

This cartoon was published in *The Guardian* on 26th January, 2021, a few days after Boris Johnson's announcement on January 22nd 2021 about a new variant of COVID-19 (B.1.1.7, or the UK variant)²⁰⁸ which might be regarded as "30% more deadly" than the original one.²⁰⁹ Thus, Steve Bell textually framed his cartoon with a satirical question at the top of the image, which reads IS THE BRITISH VARIANT REALLY SO MUCH MORE DEADLY? The question might apparently convey the sense of uncertainty or skepticism about the British government's claims that the new variant of COVID-19 is substantially more deadly than previous strains. Yet, what really lies behind the question is Bell's criticism on the Conservative leaders, and the successive governments headed by the Tories and their policies are much more deadly than the new variant. As such, the visual depiction of the Tories leaders as exhibited in the second panel of this cartoon shows David Cameron²¹⁰, the British PM 2010-2016, standing the second one from the left in the same way he is represented in cartoon 2.13 and Boris Johnson sitting, the third one from the left.

²⁰⁷ This is an exclusive all-male dining club at the University of Oxford. It is known for its wealthy and aristocratic members, and for its reputation for wild and unreasonable behavior. It has been the subject of criticism and controversy, with some accusing its members of elitism, privilege and a lack of accountability for their actions. Some of its members became leading prominent figures, such as the former British PMs David Cameron and Boris Johnson. They are mainly characterized as influential right-wingers from Oxford University. The following websites are useful for more information: <https://iconicphotos.wordpress.com/2010/03/14/the-bullingdon-club/> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullingdon_Club.

²⁰⁸ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/victoriaforster/2021/03/15/uk-coronavirus-variant-significantly-more-deadly-says-new-study/?sh=48cafb516a1e>

²⁰⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-22-january-2021>

²¹⁰ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/David-Cameron>

Therefore, Bell through this part of the cartoon made use of his satirical question for criticizing the Conservative leaders and PMs, particularly their general policies and response to the pandemic and the benefits they would gain from such conditions.

Concerning the other panels of the cartoon, it has been found that each segment has a label below which elucidates a special issue, thus, the cartoon formation takes a computational equation structure. The sequence of these panels triggers the scenario of Boris Johnson's response to the new deadly variant. The first segment visualizes Johnson with his usual pejorative face trait and red spike proteins on his face, with a capture reading BUMOCRACY. This is satirically regarded as a reference to Johnson's previous infection with the virus on 27th March 2020 because of his violation of social-distancing rules. The term 'BUMOCRACY' is a play on words that works as a blending of 'bum' and 'bureaucracy'. The cartoonist, in this first panel, uses direct gaze and a close-up shot to engage the viewers in the interpretation process and to build an imaginary connection between the representational participant and the viewer. This panel as a whole, concerning the visual, verbal and other semiotic tools, satirically reveals Bell's stance towards Johnson's leadership and system as ineffective, incompetent, or foolish. For instance, the use of 'bum', as already explained in cartoon 2.14, and seen in many other cartoons by Bell, adds pejorative connotations to the whole image, implying an offensive and pompous behavior combined with stupidity and incompetency.

The second panel, as already elucidated, has been captioned with CHUMOCRACY, which has been connected to figure 4.81. Here, the combination of a term for the concept 'friends' ('chums', as previously stated in cartoon 2.16) with the Greek suffix -cracy, 'a type of government',²¹¹ builds up a satirical term referring to a ruling elite who has the same social background, made up of politicians who are friends to each other and who often use their connections to keep power.²¹² Accordingly, Bell employs this term to highlight the lack of meritocracy and fair opportunity within the political system in the UK during the Tories' tenure. Moreover, the term 'chumocracy' might also be accounted as a pun on the word 'cronyism', which emphasizes that Johnson's Tory government is essentially run by a small group of insiders who are more concerned with their personal connections and interests than with serving the public. They were marked as opportunists,

²¹¹ https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/cracy#google_vignette

²¹² <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/chumocracy>

profiteers, or corrupt officials. Moreover, in the other semiotic elements of the narrative process, the participants are disconnected and a vector does not exist among them. This premise is effectively reinforced by depicting them with faces without any real facial traits, with the only exception of David Cameron, drawn as in cartoon 2.13, and Boris Johnson. This reveals Bell's critical stance towards the Tories as a whole regarding them as generally having no cohesive relations to build the country; in addition, they are beneficiaries and each has his own benefits and concerns.

The last scene is the result of combining the two previous panels. It is captioned with the word EFFOCRACY, in which 'effo'²¹³ refers to a non-Anglo person and stranger to the UK culture, as defined in the *Urban Dictionary*. According to this reference, Bell attempts to convey more than one point within the visual illustration of the V-sign and the visual intertextuality of Winston Churchill. Firstly, Bell depicts Johnson holding an oversized vaccine syringe in one hand and making a vulgar V-sign gesture with his palm facing inward instead of outward, which is culturally considered as offensive and a sign of disrespect in the UK. All this probably suggests that the rolling-out operation of the vaccine is failing and valueless, since Johnson ignores or fails to convey the victory sign of accomplishing the target of rolling out the vaccine. Secondly, giving the victory V-sign gesture wrongly may also suggest the unprofessionalism and absurdity of Johnson's government in handling the rolling out process of the vaccine. Additionally, the Tommy-gun syringe is used to uncover Bell's ironic and humorous stance on Johnson's world-beating vaccine.

Concerning the intertextual hint to the appearance of the previous British PM Winston Churchill in this cartoon, Stallabrass (2023) comments on this usage exhibiting that despite the frequent controversy raised by Winston Churchill as a politician, he was regarded as "a serious intellectual who had a sustained if noxious political project in his defense of the British Empire. By contrast, Johnson is an opportunist with few convictions whose pandering to Tory Party's nostalgia for the grandiose imperial ghost has trashed any lingering British international influence". Thus, the original image, shown in figure 4.73 below illustrates Churchill wearing a pinstripe suit and top hat, smoking a cigar and holding a Tommy gun to inspire the British soldiers

²¹³ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Effo>

during WWII, and it is combined by Bell with Churchill's popular gesture of the V sign for victory²¹⁴.



Figure 4.82 Winston Churchill holding a Thompson submachine gun, known as Tommy gun, in the darkest days of WWII²¹⁵

To analyze the cartoon as a whole, it is worth noting that the three panels with the three different situations accentuate Johnson's government's inefficiencies and lack of accountability. Thus, the image triggers the following individual metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER WINSTON CHURCHILL DURING WWII.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC IS A GROUP OF BULLINGDON CLUB MEMBERS/PROFITEERS.
- THE NEW BRITISH VARIANT OF COVID-19 IS THE AXIS POWERS IN WWII.
- THE BRITISH PEOPLE WHO MUST BE VACCINATED ARE THE BELEAGUERED BRITISH SOLDIERS SEIZED BY THE NAZIS.

²¹⁴ The British PM Winston Churchill used the 'V-sign' to symbolize Victory during WWII, and this became a popular gesture of defiance against Nazi Germany. Churchill's 'V-sign' was also used to rally support and boost morale among the British people, as it was seen as a symbol of hope and determination (<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/winston-churchills-v-victory-sign-18337048> and <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/V-sign>).

²¹⁵ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2885687/Found-74-years-Tommy-Gun-Churchill-used-rally-British-troops-1940-Hitler-prepared-invade.html>

- THE BRITISH VACCINE ROLLOUT IS A WWII WEAPON AGAINST THE AXIS POWERS.

To sum up, the whole cartoon with its three panels highlight Bell's negative evaluation and critical stance on the Tories' leadership considering them as beneficiaries, stakeholders and absurd.

- **Cartoon 2.28**



Figure 4.83 Steve Bell's cartoon about Boris Johnson's slow progress in tackling COVID-19, *The Guardian*, January 28, 2021

This cartoon was published in *The Guardian* on 28th January 2021. Once again, Steve Bell draws his visual portrayal on the source domain ANIMALS, with a combination of MOVEMENT and DIRECTION. Unquestionably, cartoonists often make use of the former domain, which is contextually regarded as a fertile ground to criticize political parties and politicians through mapping the unique attributes of animals onto them. The cartoon presents a transactional narrative image in which the represented characters do not show eye contact to each other, rather the virus is looking directly at the viewers. Concerning the image details, Johnson is visually rendered as a three-toed sloth lying on the ground, barely crawling along a path led by a COVID-19 representation acting as a jockey. The functional integration of the two source domains in this image provokes the conceptual metaphors (IN)ABILITY IS UP (/DOWN), (LACK OF) POWER IS UP (/DOWN) and (LACK OF) CONTROL IS UP (/DOWN).

In this framework, the interactive and compositional processes in the image are achieved through the placement of the characters in the cartoon, which has a vital role, for instance the virus is portrayed in an upper position (top) of control and power, while Johnson is depicted in a lower position (bottom) of powerlessness and inaction. The up-down relationship reinforces the idea that the virus is hindering the government's ability to take effective action, thereby obstructing progress. Thus, the visual composition of the image portrays a set of individual metaphors that work together to convey Bell's evaluative intention, as in the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A THREE-TOED SLOTH.
- CORONAVIRUS IS A JOCKEY.
- THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S TARGET TO DEVELOP ITS ECONOMY IS A PATH TOWARDS SINGAPORE-ON-THAMES.
- THE SINGAPORE-ON-THAMES MODEL IS A PATH TOWARDS THE SUN.

A road sign showing a direction to a certain destination that Johnson wants to reach can be seen a central element which represents the nucleus information and the central point. The road sign, which reads HEALTHY BOOMING, SINGAPORE-ON-THAMES²¹⁶ shows the direction to reach Singapore's model (the Quest), a model of economic boom and health prosperity. The source domains MOVEMENT and DESTINATION activate the journey image schema, through which the structure of the image is profiled as source-path-goal. Lakoff (1993) suggests in this respect that the purpose of journey metaphors is related to the notion of achieving goals and intentions, so the conceptual metaphor triggered here is 'ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS REACHING A DESTINATION', which highlights the journey itself and the obstacles, hindrances and turns we may face along the path. Based on this reasoning, Bell visually presented Johnson as not only struggling to reach the success of the Singapore Model of Economic and Healthy Booming, but also being physically hindered by the virus, forcing him to lie on the ground and crawl towards his goal.

²¹⁶ Singapore on Thames is a possible model that England wanted to achieve after Brexit; it first floated to the media by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond in 2017. The term simply means low tax rates, an economy open to business and light regulations for markets (<https://www.culs.org.uk/per-incuriam/brexit-could-singapore-on-thames-become-reality>).

Some additional details highlighted in this cartoon that support the suggested identification of metaphors are also worth examining. Firstly, the sloth's portrayal with overweight (size) signifies that Johnson is an obstacle to health's prosperity or economic progress, not the workforce, who are being accused of being old, fat and inflexible. Johnson's words "WE'RE GETTING THERE!..." and "...IF THE WORKFORCE WEREN'T SO OLD, SO FAT AND SO INFLEXIBLE!" signify that he is engaging either the viewers or the virus in this journey towards prosperity symbolized by the sun. Additionally, the utilization of the pronoun WE, here, indicates a high degree of confidence regarding the successful achievement of the initial goal. Following Van Dijk's Ideological Square (1998), Johnson is intensifying the collective identity represented by WE as he highlights the advancements made toward adopting the Singapore Model of Economic Prosperity, while simultaneously downplaying the contributions of the workforce. Secondly, Bell uses the sloth as a metaphor for Johnson's display of sloth, or acedia in theology and moral discourse, emphasizing the government's perceived lack of care and action towards the economy and health sectors. To sum up, the cartoon ignites the conceptual metaphor 'LACK OF ABILITY TO ACHIEVE THE ECONOMIC PLANS IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT', which reveals Bell's evaluation on Johnson's government as slothful, careless and inactive.

4.4. THE ANALYSIS OF THE METAPHORICAL DEPICTION OF *THE INDEPENDENT'S* BORIS JOHNSON-RELATED CARTOONS

- Cartoon 3.1

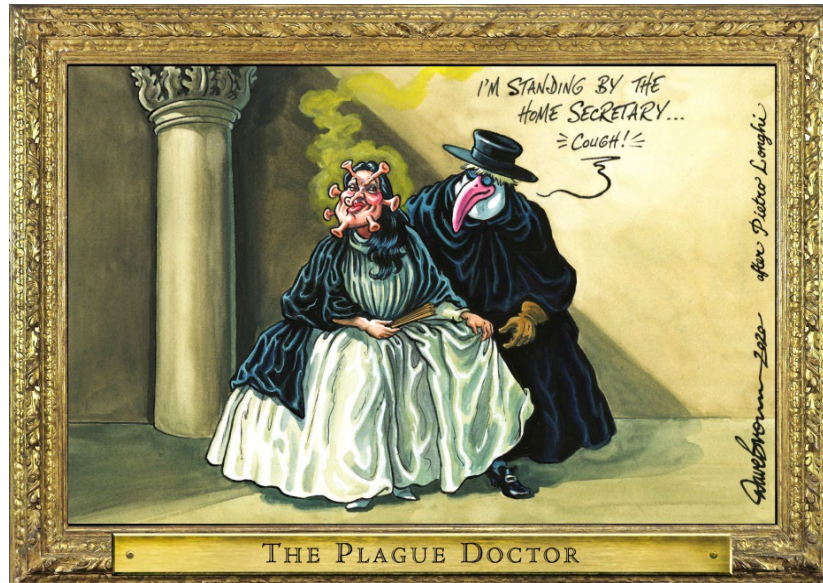


Figure 4.84 Dave Brown's cartoon about Priti Patel's bullying and Boris Johnson's full confidence in her, published in *The Independent*, March 6, 2020



Figure 4.85 Pietro Longhi's painting 'The Charlatan', 1757



Figure 4.86 Pietro Longhi's painting 'The Ridotto', 1750²¹⁷

²¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pietro_Longhi

The present cartoon is an allusive image to the flirtatious couple illustrated in the Venetian artist Pietro Longhi's canvases 'The Charlatan', 1757, and 'The Ridotto', 1750, as shown in figures 4.85 and 4.86. Dave Brown's cartoon was published for *The Independent*, on March 6th 2020, in the light of the scandal and the damaging leaks surfaced about the bullying behavior of the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, towards a top civil servant at the Home Office in particular and with many other officials.²¹⁸

In the cartoon, Boris Johnson is visually rendered as a flirtatious man talking to Patel, saying "I'M STANDING BY THE HOME SECRETARY... <COUGH!>", and looking at her showing intimacy, while wearing a plague mask on his face to protect himself from the toxic smell/viral contagion seemingly coming out of Patel as the virus. Brown framed his cartoon with the caption THE PLAGUE DOCTOR, which is noticeably based on the visual intertextuality of Longhi's paintings in accompanying with the source domains HEALTH and DISEASES, and LOVE and COUPLING as a goal. Additionally, the olfactory reference in the cartoon helps in revealing Brown's negative attitude towards Johnson's government. For instance, Johnson is depicted wearing a bird-beaked mask to protect himself from the plague, which is a metaphor for Patel's bullying behavior. Moreover, Patel's head is represented as the coronavirus, signifying her dangerous and inhumane behavior, which Brown suggests as having a foul/contagious smell. The cartoon also alludes to the wider problem of the government's corruption during the crisis, as seen in the settings of Longhi's paintings (gambling halls and charlatan chambers) and the smell emanating from Patel's head, which implicitly refer to the scandal.

The function of the satirical allusion cited from Longhi's artworks along with the source domains is to criticize the notion of favoritism in Johnson's cabinet. Thus, the portrayal of Johnson as a plague doctor who is flattering Patel metaphorically represents his public support and defense of her, despite the investigation showed that Patel had flouted the ministerial code. Moreover, the cartoon's semiotic resources reveal Brown's success in creating a narrative process in his cartoon through the reaction process among the characters, for instance the vector transmitted by the eye-line between the two represented participants, Johnson and Patel, suggesting a kind of closeness and intimacy between them. This premise is highlighted through the other interactive and

²¹⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/feb/24/priti-patel-bullying-claims-dismissed-as-absolute-nonsense>

compositional resources as the distance, framing, and vertical angle. Thus, the closeness of the two characters with no real concrete distance between them in the image and a connected framing line between them, as belonging to the same political stance, convey a meaning of unity (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). These aspects definitely emphasize what the verbal text and the visual depiction suggest, Johnson's government being based on mutual interests and corruption, which is shown through the presence of ideological and political favoritism.

Thus, below are the individual metaphors triggered from Brown's cartoon:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE PLAGUE DOCTOR FLIRTING WITH PRITI PATEL.
- PRITI PATEL IS A FLIRTATIOUS WOMAN.
- PRITI PATEL'S SCANDAL OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IS A TOXIC SMELL/A PLAGUE/A CONTAGIOUS VIRUS.
- PRITI PATEL'S POLITICAL REPUTATION HAS A STINKY SMELL.
- JOHNSON'S DEFENSE OF PATEL IS A FAKE MEDICAL TREATMENT AGAINST THE PLAGUE.
- BORIS JOHNSON AND PRITI PATEL ARE A FLIRTATIOUS COUPLE.
- THE CONSERVATIVES' NEGATIVE POLICIES ARE FACE MASKS.

All the above-mentioned individual entailments evoke the metaphors 'POLITICAL SCANDALS HAVE A STINKY SMELL' and 'POLITICAL ALLIANCES ARE A FLIRTATIOUS/CORRUPTED COUPLE', which in turn activate more general metaphors for this image: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S DEFENSE OF PRITI PATEL IS A FORM OF FLIRTATION/FAKE REMEDIES' and 'THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY MEMBERS ARE CONTAGIOUS VIRUSES'.

- Cartoon 3.2



Figure 4.87 Dave Brown’s cartoon about Boris Johnson’s response to the virus and the emergency powers, published in *The Independent*, March 16, 2020

The cartoon in figure 4.87 was illustrated with a reference to the source domains MOVEMENT and DIRECTION combined with GAMES AND SPORTS. It was thus published as a result of an earlier declaration of the British Government to implement some Emergency Powers²¹⁹ to curb the virus spread. The image presents Boris Johnson riding on a virus-like bouncing ball while carrying a document that reads EMERGENCY POWERS in his pocket. The virus is portrayed as a large orange spiky bouncing ball; the virus is active, enthusiastic and wild-looking. Noticeably, at the top of the cartoon, a textual caption reads TO DRACONIA AND BEYOND! which represents the thematic focus of the image. This textual caption is a play on the phrase “To infinity and beyond!” from the movie *Toy Story*.²²⁰ The use of this modified phrase is a form of intertextuality, suggesting that Johnson is leading the country into a difficult and uncertain future; the late lockdown and the

²¹⁹ In March 2020, the UK’s authorities were afforded emergency powers via the Coronavirus Act 2020 to “enforce COVID-19 lockdowns, close businesses, restrict travel and detain individuals”. Though there were concerns about civil liberties, the measures were seen as necessary to control the virus then. These emergency powers were due to expire on March 25, 2022, but new legislation introduced in September 2021, the Health and Social Care Levy Bill, extended some of these powers until March 2023 (<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/article/explainer/government-emergency-powers-and-coronavirus>).

²²⁰ See the following website for the movie’s plot and characters: <https://www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com/movie-storystructure/toy-story/>.

complacency of Johnson's government would lead to a full proliferation of the virus, which is visually portrayed as a bouncing ball.

Thus, concerning the representational meaning, Brown portrayed a transactional narrative process. Johnson riding a bouncing ball is the actor and the COVID-19-like bouncing ball is the goal. Regarding the conceptual process, the symbolic process, for instance, is regarded as a key aspect in which each object in the cartoon is a signifier. Johnson, for example, represents the British government and symbolizes its attempts to curb the virus spread. The bouncing ball virus represents the swift spread of the virus everywhere. Another key aspect of the conceptual process is the classification one, where Johnson is depicted as a super-ordinate whereas the virus is the subordinate. The subordinate status of the virus is also portrayed through Johnson riding on the virus, indicating his control and help in spreading the virus. The interactive process in the cartoon does not show direct gazing or contact between either the participants or with the viewers (offer). Brown, hence, offers the participants to the viewers as objects of information. Lastly, the power relation highlighted through the vertical angle suggests that Johnson has the central role in spreading the virus through his delayed measures and ill-conceived plans.. He is the leader of this movement and proliferation.

Concerning the verbal mode, it indicates that the word DRACONIA potentially stands for two targets: the first is the concept 'draconian measures', the measures which are distinguished as harsh and severe laws or policies implemented by Johnson's government in response to the emergence of the virus. Brown, in this regard, may be suggesting that Johnson is implementing excessively severe measures in response to the pandemic, such as the ones included in the EMERGENCY POWERS document in his pocket. The second alternative target is the possible reference to the digital video game "Draconia", in which the main characters confront dragons, in this aspect the visual comparison draws a cognitive parallel between the pandemic situation or encountering the virus and the challenge of facing dragons, which links to the wild-looking aspect of the virus and to the fact that it cannot be easily tamed or regulated, even when somebody is riding it. Thus, with all these interpretations Johnson is seen as the leader of this bouncing ball and helping it spread fast through his inefficient measures.

The composition of the cartoon can be addressed through the aspects of framing, informational value, salience and sizing. Johnson's position, as already stated, reveals his control and dominance, while the size of the ball and its aspect also signify its danger and the threat it represents. To sum up, the cartoon uses several elements to convey the cartoonist's intentions. Firstly, the use of a virus-like bouncing ball to represent the pandemic spread, as in the metaphor 'THE VIRUS SPREAD IS A BOUNCING BALL MOVING FAST', interplays with the other visual metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S RECENT COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IS TO RIDE A BOUNCING BALL AND MOVE UNCONTROLLABLY'. So, the whole image uncovers Brown's negative evaluation on Johnson's measures to curb the virus, which is reinforced by Johnson's position, riding on top of the virus, suggesting a lack of control over the situation: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INABILITY TO CURB THE VIRUS SPREAD IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT'.

- **Cartoon 3.3**



Figure 4.88 Dave Brown's cartoon "Turning the Tide", published in *The Independent*, March 20, 2020



Figure 4.89 The original painting of King Canute, rebuking his flattering courtiers, by Alphonse-Marie-Adolphe de Neuville²²¹

After the British government announced on March 17th, 2020 an exponential increase of the number of infected cases and death tolls, Johnson definitively pledged to curb the virus spread within twelve weeks, declaring:

Now I cannot stand here and tell you that by the end of June that we will be on the downward slope. [...] But what I can say is that this is going to be finite, we will turn the tide, and I can see how to do it within the next 12 weeks.²²²

In accordance with this frame, Dave Brown drew his cartoon on the source domain NATURAL FORCES along with an intertextual historical reference to King Canute's, or Cnut's (990-1035) legend of ordering the tides to back down.²²³ Before elucidating the image's metaphorical representations, it must be said that the cartoon takes the form of a non-transactional narrative pattern where the represented participants are Boris Johnson and his courtiers. Johnson is acting, as he asks the tides to obey and follow his orders. The image shows no direct contact between Johnson and other elements nor with the viewers, which is also reinforced through the analysis of

²²¹ <https://nobility.org/2016/07/king-canute-rebuked-sycophants-stops-wearing-crown/>

²²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzeBsTuOU1E>

²²³ The story characterizes Canute the Great as an arrogant ruler who, apparently, placed his throne on the banks of the Thames and awaited the incoming tide. Upon the tide's rise, King Canute purportedly stood and outstretched his hand, commanding the waves to recede, which naturally they did not. More details about King Canute can be found in <https://kellyaevans.com/nqhistory/waves-2/> and <https://www.viking.no/the-viking-kings-and-earls/canute-knud-the-great/>.

gaze in the interactive meaning of the image. Concerning the symbolic process in the image, Johnson represents the government and its arrogance and indifference to the real gravity of the virus, and the White Cliffs of Dover symbolize the UK. On his robe, the logo of the British Conservative Party is metonymically embroidered to exhibit his political stance (the tree for the British Conservative Party).

The cartoon is using one of the different interpretations of Canute's story, Brown based his image upon the arrogance and foolishness of the King. Thus, Johnson was presented sitting on the shore of the River Thames (Foregrounding), with the White Cliffs of Dover behind him (backgrounding), holding his hand out and foolishly commanding the virus-like tides to recede and not to rise onto his country. The source object of this image, as of many others, is a combination of NATURAL FORCES and allusive figures. So, the metaphorical representations in this cartoon are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS CANUTE THE GREAT.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO CURB THE VIRUS SPREAD ARE ARROGANT ORDERS TO SUBDUE A ROUGH SEA.
- COVID-19 IS THE THAMES' RISING TIDE.

Moreover, the compositional elements in the cartoon also have their vital roles, for instance, the central element's zone is occupied by the key participant, Johnson; the position signifies Johnson's nucleus importance in the image as a leader and the information highlighted through this position. Consequently, the visual entailments above trigger the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 MEASURES TO CURB THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 ARE ARROGANT COMMANDS ADDRESSED TO THE THAMES' TIDES', which unveils the cartoonist's stance towards how Johnson's government react ridiculously against the rapid outbreak of the pandemic. Another verbal comment has a significant representation in the meaning of the cartoon, the courtier's caption "STUPID CNUT!" though adds a pun on CNUT/CUNT; according to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, the word 'cunt' is either used as "an offensive word for a very unpleasant or stupid person"²²⁴, or it might also detect a negative evaluation implicitly being

²²⁴ The term carries an additional derogatory connotation, serving as a highly impolite term for the female genitalia (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/cunt>).

raised by Brown considering Johnson arrogant and foolish in confronting the crisis. Thus, the motivations and ideological stance implied in this cartoon suggest that Johnson is unaware of the real risk that the country is facing and comparing Johnson to King Canute, both being proud and arrogant in their attitude.

- **Cartoon 3.4**



Figure 4.90 Brian Adcock's cartoon on Boris Johnson's balancing act between the death cost and economy cost of the virus, published in *The Independent*, April 26, 2020

The cartoon in this figure was published after Boris Johnson's announcement of the plan of people going back to work in April 2020 (as with cartoon 1.4). This announcement coincided with a tragic increase in the death toll, which had surpassed 20,000 then. Thus, Brian Adcock in his cartoon attempts to underscore how Johnson has balanced between the two issues. In the cartoon, Johnson is portrayed standing on a balancing ball, trying to counterbalance two bowls. Strikingly, the use of the virus as a balancing ball is a visual hint that the entire situation at the time was affected by the pandemic. The left bowl in the cartoon represents an economic downturn (symbolized by the £ pound symbol for ECONOMY), and beside it, an angry-looking man with a banner reading FREEDOM represents people's reaction to the government's strict lockdown measures. On the right bowl, there are tombstones, acting as a symbol of the UK's coronavirus death toll during the pandemic.

Thus, the cartoon as a whole activates the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S BACK-TO-WORK PLAN IS TO STAND ON A BALL TO BALANCE BETWEEN THE COVID-19 DEATH TOLL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS’, which is in turn built upon the following metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON’S PLAN OF RETURNING TO WORK IS A TROUBLED BALANCE ON A STABILITY BALL BETWEEN DEATH TOLLS AND ECONOMIC RECESSION.
- THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS IS A STABILITY BALL.
- ECONOMIC RECESSION IS A SCALE BOWL.
- COVID-19 DEATH TOLL IS A SCALE BOWL.

Moreover, other semiotic resources should also be accounted, for instance, the narrative process is non-transactional in that the actor (Boris Johnson) is the only element included and no vector is introduced. The interactive meaning of the cartoon also reveals that Johnson is gazing directly at the viewers (demand). Moreover, the composition of the cartoon also reveals that the character of Johnson is placed in the central, frontal angle of the cartoon standing on a virus-like entity, which suggests that he is the vital character during the pandemic and responsible for handling the crisis successfully and should be able to control the whole situation. The facial expression of Johnson (fearful for failure) reflects his worry and fear of the challenges of balancing the economic cost with the death toll caused by the fatal virus, thus, Adcock attempts through Johnson’s facial expression to uncover the skeptical attitude towards Johnson’s government’s ability to strike a balance. The utilization of the troubled face-gesture suggests that Johnson is not competent enough to balance successfully between these two critical issues. Thus, the cartoon as a whole reveals Adcock’s neutral evaluation that Johnson is attempting hard to strike a balance between the increase in death rates and the economic and financial challenges. Consequently, the metaphorical representation in the cartoon is essentially exploited to illustrate the gravity of the situation and Johnson’s efforts.

- Cartoon 3.5



Figure 4.91 Dave Brown's cartoon about Boris Johnson and Matt Hancock's plan on easing lockdowns since May 2020, *The Independent*, May 8, 2020



Figure 4.92 The original poster of *Danger UXB*, 1979

The cartoon in figure 4.91 was drawn by Dave Brown and published in *The Independent* on May 8th, 2020. The cartoon's date strikingly marks the 75th anniversary of V-E DAY.²²⁵ Accordingly, the cartoonist has attempted to link this commemoration and the thematic focus of

²²⁵ This is Victory in Europe Day, which is annually celebrated as a commemoration of the end of WWII after nearly six years of fighting against Hitler and the Nazis. After the declaration of victory and the end of the war in Europe by the PM Winston Churchill, many people rushed out of their homes and shops to the streets to celebrate. For more information, the following website is very helpful: <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/uk-news/meaning-ve-day-europe-observe-23896757>.

his cartoon. This attempt has been done through the inspiration of a famous British television series, *Danger UXB*²²⁶, released in 1979, which is cited in through the upper-left caption DANGER UXB... In the cartoon, Brown rendered Johnson and Matt Hancock as the two main characters in the original series; Johnson was portrayed as the character of the Second Lieutenant, Brian Ash, while Hancock was portrayed as Sergeant James. The cartoon presents Johnson and Hancock walking away from a ticking bomb shaped like the virus which emits an onomatopoeic sound TIC...TIC...TIC... The bomb has been brought to the surface using primitive tools like a shovel and pickaxe, which have been discarded later. This metaphorical image symbolizes Johnson's government's ill-conceived plans to ease the national lockdown since early May. Furthermore, the portrayal of the bomb being brought to the surface without proper processing implies that Johnson's government has a hand in rapidly spreading the pandemic through easing its lockdowns.

Furthermore, the verbal bubble spoken by Johnson "SOD IT! LET'S UNLOCK AND HAVE A VICTORY STREET PARTY!" reveals Johnson's apathy towards the imminent danger of easing the lockdowns, in which the word "sod" in *Collins Dictionary* means that they are expressing anger or showing that they do not care about something. The exclamation "SOD IT!" by Johnson, addressed to Hancock, metaphorically illustrates his call for a victory party despite the imminent danger (an unexploded ticking bomb). This reveals the cartoonist's criticism on Johnson's irrational call to unlock and allow people to move freely, along with the idea of a victory street party, which brings people together despite the risk of contagion from the unexploded 'virus bomb'.

This war scenario is shown through the following individual metaphors:

- THE UK DURING THE PANDEMIC IS A MINEFIELD.
- CORONAVIRUS IS AN UNEXPLODED TICKING-BOMB.
- DEFEATING THE VIRUS IS A V-E DAY.
- CONFRONTING THE VIRUS IS A BOMB DISPOSAL.
- EASING THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN IS BRINGING UP AN UNEXPLODED TICKING-BOMB ONTO THE SURFACE.

²²⁶ The series was about WWII and it was mainly concerned with unexploded bombs during the battle of London and the exploits of a Bomb Disposal Unit in Tunneling Company in London during the German bombing campaign.

- THE RAPID VIRUS CONTAGION IS TO EXPLODE A BOMB.
- THE GOVERNMENT'S MEASURES AND POLICIES ARE INADEQUATE TOOLS OF DISPOSING OF THE BOMB.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS AN INDIFFERENT BOMB- DISPOSAL OFFICER.
- MATT HANCOCK IS A WORRIED BOMB-DISPOSAL OFFICER.

Additionally, it is relevant to note also that other elements of the representational, interactive and compositional meaning have their effective role in the interpretation of metaphorical images in the cartoon, for instance the physical closeness between Johnson and Hancock whereas the bomb is far from them represents that the British government pays more attention to its personal interests and mutual benefits at the expense of the gravity imposed by the virus and people's lives. The depiction of the bomb in a close-up shot with frontal angle while the representational participants are in the medium term shot with oblique angle suggests that the gravity of the virus spread is relatively close and serious, yet the government is unaware of this. Placing the virus at the left side suggest Given information, which commonly refers to the danger of the virus, as all people know, whilst the right side is occupied by Johnson and Hancock to deliver New information to the viewers, through this placement, that the government is indifferent to their lives. Some other visual details are also valuable to elucidate, for instance, Hancock's facial expression exposes his anxiety as he glances back; this suggests his concern and worry about the severity of the pandemic. The framing aspect also shows Johnson and Hancock are very close to each other, which signifies that they have a coherent unity and harmony as they walk side by side.

Conversely, Johnson's portrayal of walking away from the ready-to-explode bomb, and turning his back on it, could be interpreted as a demonstration of his disregard and carelessness about the whole situation. Additionally, the employment of onomatopoeic sound effects to describe the bomb's ticking in yellow conveys a sense of imminent danger and the potentially disastrous consequences that may occur. Brown is suggesting through all these semiotic elements that Johnson is not taking the threat of the pandemic seriously and is behaving irresponsibly in the face of the imminent danger and easing the lockdowns, which in turn will lead to a rapid spread.

To sum up, the visual elements of the cartoon, Johnson's victory speech (verbal mode) and the visual and semiotic elements are all regarded as clear indicative references to Johnson's

government's failure and indifference towards imminent disasters. These indications accordingly activate the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LACK OF CONCERN FOR THE IMMINENT DANGER OF THE VIRUS IS TO IGNORE A TICKING TIME BOMB' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S ILL-CONCEIVED POLICIES ON THE VIRUS ARE BOMBS READY TO EXPLODE'.

- **Cartoon 3.6**



Figure 4.93 Dave Brown's cartoon on Boris Johnson's controversial 'Stay Alert' slogan, published in *The Independent*, May 12, 2020

This cartoon was published after Boris Johnson's controversial statement of a new warning phase under the slogan STAY ALERT²²⁷ on coronavirus and return-to-work plan on May 10th, 2020.²²⁸ The announcement was commonly regarded as irrational, vague and confusing, as Johnson asked people to take their tentative paces to return to work with staying alert and saving lives. Consequently, the slogan was modified from 'Stay at Home' to the ambiguous 'Stay Alert'. Thus, Dave Brown, like many cartoonists, attempts to shed light on this change in Johnson's government's stance and what effects it may trigger accordingly. Firstly, the cartoon depicts a non-transactional narrative process in which Boris Johnson is the only represented participant in the

²²⁷ This plan meant unlimited time outdoors and the partial re-opening of schools and shops from the first of June, as restaurant businesses would be in July.

²²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-address-to-the-nation-on-coronavirus-10-may-2020>

image and he is the actor of the action (singing and playing the piano). The cartoon shows a direct gaze, from Johnson to the viewers, which suggests the tendency of the cartoonist to engage the viewers in an imaginary relationship with the actor. Additionally, the close-up shot of the represented participant implies involvement with the viewers.

Concerning the structural aspect of the cartoon and the metaphorical representations, the cartoon was built upon an intertextual reference to one popular culture example; in connection with this, Delaney (2007) contends that intertextual references can be of various genres, including “popular music, print, cyber culture, sports, entertainment, leisure, fads, advertising and television”. Hence, this cartoon presents Johnson as the famous rock and roll American singer Richard Wayne Pennimana, who was professionally known as Little Richard (1932-2020). Johnson was rendered standing up, playing the piano in a humorous way and singing one of Little Richard’s famous songs, “Tutti frutti”.²²⁹ Though paraphrased ironically as “A-Wop-Bop-A-Loobop-A-Wop-STAY-ALERT!” and “MUMBO-JUMBO, HEY DUMBO, MUMBO-JUMBO, IT’S BUNCO, MUMBO-JUMBO, ALL JUNKO...”, the song has an implied message Brown intends to convey.

Concerning the verbal process, the caption MUMBO-JUMBO²³⁰ represents Johnson’s nonsense and absurdity in handling the crisis, and the vagueness of Johnson’s government’s briefings. Brown, in fact, criticized Johnson and his unprofessional leadership through what comes between the lines of the revised lyrics of the original song “Tutti frutti”, for instance with his reference to the words in the lyrics of Johnson’s song, placed on the left-hand side of the image, ‘Dumbo’ (=dumb, stupid), ‘bunco’ (=cheat, swindle) and ‘junko’ (=junk). Thus, these words involve that Johnson is addressing his citizens as dumb as he is, cheating them with his junk words and nonsense briefings during the crisis. So, the verbal element of metaphorization evokes the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S COVID-19 PROTECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS ARE JUNK’.

On the other hand, the visual elements of symbolism, for instance the depiction of the piano as a virus symbolizes that Johnson takes the virus crisis as a tool to blind British people with his

²²⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F13JNjpNW6c>

²³⁰ According to <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/mumbo-jumbo>, this expression means nonsense and gibberish.

improper and worthless administration. The cartoon, accordingly, may suggest a discrepancy between the back-to-work plan and the severity of the situation on the ground. Therefore, the show scenario exposes a set of metaphorical entailments, which trigger the metaphor ‘THE BRITISH HEALTH SLOGANS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR COVID-19 MEASURES RELAXATION ARE MEANINGLESS SHOWS’, as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE SINGER LITTLE RICHARD.
- THE STAYING ALERT WARNING IS LITTLE RICHARD’S REVISED SONG “TUTTI FRUTTI”.
- COVID-19 IS THE PIANO.
- THE DETAILS OF HIS HEALTH SLOGANS AND PLANS ARE THE IMCOMPREHENSIBLE LYRICS OF THE SONG.
- THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IS THE AUDIENCE.

The compositional elements within this cartoon also imply the importance attributed to the value of information and the prioritization of certain participants by Brown. For example, the positioning of elements from left to right in the cartoon highlights the greater relevance ascribed to the novelty of virus danger and threats (right/New) over Johnson’s efforts to mitigate proliferation (left/Given). Besides, the large size of the virus-like piano underscores the perceived gravity or seriousness of the virus. This performance scene reveals Brown’s negative evaluation on Johnson’s government’s instructions and plans which are here regarded as nonsense and worthless, as they make people confused.

- Cartoon 3.7



Figure 4.94 Dave Brown's cartoon about Boris Johnson and his Transport Secretary's encouragement statements to return to work, published in *The Independent*, May 13, 2020

Like the cartoon in figure 4.90, the contextual theme of Dave Brown's cartoon is a response to the announcement of Johnson's government that people could return to work safely and end working from home. The cartoon is framed with a textual caption at the top-left part of the image, reading **BACK TO WORK**, which is the target of the image. Dave Brown draws his image upon the source domains **MOVEMENT** and **DIRECTION** and the use of the image's source-path-goal', more specifically the train ride image to instantiate the disastrous destination of making people go to work during this crisis with no safe guidelines or clear instructions. Brown's cartoon, thus, displays Johnson and the then Secretary of Transport, Grant Shapps, making hard efforts to push passengers onto the tube train, as they are rendered as underground staff. Surprisingly, the cartoonist attempts to ironically evaluate Johnson's plan through the masks on his face and Shapps while his people do not put on any face covering, which also suggests the government's concern for its benefits at the expense of its people's health.

Strikingly, Brown drew the locomotive of the tube train as a giant human skull and its driver as a grim reaper to express the fatal consequences of the British government's encouragement to its people to go back to work again with no safe guidelines. Furthermore, the destination line

displayed on the front of the train reads NECROPOLITAN LINE²³¹, which is a wordplay used instead of METROPOLITAN LINE to suggest death is its destination, or the cemetery, where people are buried. The semiotic elements Brown made use of in his cartoon are also worth addressing, for instance the narrative process is successfully achieved through the transactional vector between the train's staff, Johnson and Shapps, and the train's driver, Death, which suggests the staff help him in accomplishing its task and reaching its destination. The train workers are both involved in the same horizontal axis, which represents their attempts to get people onto the death train. The compositional function also exposes the informational value through the placement of the characters within the image, as such the placement of Johnson and Shapps at the left angle, which commonly suggests Given information, and the death train at the right, New information, suggests the cartoonist attempts to inform the audience that the new back-to-work plan is a path towards death. Framing also has its significance in revealing certain values, for instance the collaboration between Johnson and Shapps in pushing the passengers in signifies their closeness, as they have the same group identity.

The cartoon thus triggers the following entailments:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS AN UNDERGROUND STAFF WORKER.
- THE UK GOVERNMENT MEMBERS ARE UNDERGROUND STAFF.
- BRITISH WORKERS ARE THE PASSENGERS.
- DEATH IS THE DRIVER.
- THE LINE TRAVEL IS HEADED FOR A NECROPOLIS.
- BRITISH PUBLIC TRANSPORTS ARE DEATH CAUSING TRANSPORTS.

The above-mentioned individual metaphors activate the general metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT'S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF PEOPLE IS LEADING THEM TO THEIR DEATH', which also interplays with the related metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S BACK-TO-WORK POLICY IS A JOURNEY TO A GRAVEYARD'. These metaphors undeniably highlight the idea that the government's decision may lead to lethal consequences, and

²³¹ An adjective derived from the word *necropolis*, a place where the dead people are buried. Necropolis derives from the Greek "nekros", meaning "dead", and "polis", meaning "city". So it refers to a large, elaborate cemetery or a city of the dead (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/necropolis>).

the travel to the graveyard symbolizes the potential for death. The whole image is considered as a strong and direct way of expressing the cartoonist's criticism of the government's ill-conceived decision.

- **Cartoon 3.8**



Figure 4.95 Dave Brown's cartoon about easing lockdown, published in *The Independent*, May 15, 2020



Figure 4.96 The original painting "The Blind Leading the Blind", by Pieter Bruegel, 1568

Cartoon 3.8, like the two previous ones, was published after the government's announcement on May 10, 2020, to ease the imposed lockdown and return to work plan. This provoked public

outrage regarding the government's ineffectiveness in managing the crisis. In the portrayal, Brown relies upon Pieter Bruegel's well-known painting "The Blind Leading the Blind"²³², which is in turn mainly based on the source domains MOVEMENT and DIRECTION. The cartoon, therefore, represents the cartoonist's skeptical stance on Johnson's ill-devised plans to ease the lockdown, which was evaluated as a "recipe for chaos"²³³ at that time.

The source of the cartoon is verbally and visually mentioned at the bottom of the cartoon as THE BLONDE LEADING THE BLAND, which is satirically quoted from Bruegel's work "The Blind Leading the Blind". Strikingly, Brown's "blonde leading the bland", is a play on words which likely refers to Johnson's distinctive blond hair and his perceived lack of substance or depth in his leadership. Moreover, the "bland" probably suggests that the members of Johnson's government are dull, boring and unexciting²³⁴, they are following Johnson's lead without questioning or challenging his decisions. Thus, the representational meaning of the cartoon is a non-transactional narrative in which the represented participants have no vector among them. They follow each other with no eye contact or verbal process to connect them. The interactive meaning, on the other side, is artfully done through the close-up distance between them in which they are depicted; the depiction then signifies intimacy and harmony in their attitudes and stance towards the treatment of the crisis. This premise is recurrently reinforced through the compositional aspect of framing, which indicates that they belong to the same group and have the same group identity and ideology.

The cartoon renders Johnson as a blind person being led towards an abyss by the grim reaper, who is surprisingly called Dr. Death in the cartoon, while Johnson orders three men, Matt Hancock, Dominic Raab (Deputy Prime Minister of the UK) and Robert Jenrick (Secretary of State Housing, Communities, and Local Government) to follow him: "FOLLOW ME... I'M FOLLOWING THE SCIENCE!" The employment of the phrase 'following the science' in this portrayal is viewed as an ironic reference to Johnson's allegations that his government follows science in all its steps. Brown's use of this cartoon is a form of criticism directed at Johnson's 'following the science'

²³² This is a masterpiece painting which basically represents a blind man leading other blind figures with different afflictions in their eyes, more details can be found here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Blind_Leading_the_Blind.

²³³ This phrase was used by Frances O'Grady, the Trade Union Congress's general secretary, to describe Boris Johnson's speech on the return of people to their works and sites with no apparent safety measures.

²³⁴ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/bland>

approach, and portrays him as following Dr. Death's mortal end rather than scientific evidence. In fact, Johnson's use of this reference has been criticized by many, including Charteris-Black (2021:129), contending that this metaphorical use could be regarded as "[a] classic non-answer. Indeed 'following the science' has predictably become every politician's go to when they have no real answer or indeed can weaponise the phrase to score political points".

Brown's cartoon strikingly suggests that Dr. Death is the leader of those men who is steering them to a dire end, making a thumb-up sign which indicates that everything is alright with him. In the course of that, Johnson is rendered holding the scythe of the grim reaper and leading his backers to the same destination. The metaphorical implications of the image are as follows:

- EASING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IS A DESTINATION TO AN ABYSS.
- DEATH IS A LEADER TO AN ABYSS.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A BLIND LEADER LEADING HIS GOVERNMENT'S MEMBERS TO DEATH.
- THE MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET ARE BLIND FOLLOWERS.

Accordingly, the metaphors activated from the interpretation of the cartoon, which can be regarded as a negative evaluation of Johnson's government's lockdown-easing measures and the fatal outcomes they are presumably led to, are: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LOCKDOWN-EASING MEASURES ARE A PATH TO A FATAL ABYSS' and 'THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PARTY MEMBERS ARE BLIND FOLLOWERS MOVING TOWARDS AN ABYSS OF DEATH'.

- Cartoon 3.9



Figure 4.97 Dave Brown’s cartoon about Boris Johnson and Matt Hancock’s protective ring, published in *The Independent*, May 20, 2020

As in cartoon 2.2 by Steve Bell, Dave Brown devoted his cartoon to shed light on one of the most crucial statements delivered by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in the UK, Matt Hancock, who announced that the government was working on creating a “protective ring” around care homes in the country to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, proclaiming:

Right from the start, we’ve tried to throw a protective ring around our care homes. We set out our first advice in February, and as the virus grew, we strengthened it throughout. We’ve made sure that care homes have the resources they need to control the spread of infection. [...] From the start, we’ve worked incredibly hard to throw that protective ring around our care homes.

Matt Hancock (05:06 and 09:12)²³⁵

Hancock’s claim that the government was working hard to protect care homes faced mounting criticism. For instance, Charteris-Black (2021:199) urges that “agency implied by ‘throwing a protective ring’ was one that implied a heroic life saver, casting out a lifebuoy ring to a drowning person and [Hancock] clearly enjoyed depicting a scenario that emphasized the agency of the

²³⁵ <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/united-kingdom-coronavirus-briefing-transcript-may-15-with-matt-hancock>

government in caring for the elderly”. So, Brown, like many other cartoonists, made a metaphorical configuration of Hancock’s allegory to depict how the agency of the government at the time attempted to protect the care homes and the NHS workers.

Thus, amusingly, Brown drew his “protective ring” cartoon on a tragic accident, the Titanic tragedy, to depict the gravity of the situation in the care homes and Johnson’s government’s alleged claims that his government was working on providing protection to the care homes during the early stages of the pandemic. No doubt, the metaphorical use of ‘protective ring’ in this cartoon relies upon the container image, which implicitly evokes the sense of ‘protecting’, but in this cartoon the container is not matching the real risk surrounding the care homes, it increases the risks instead. In the image, the serious risks the UK care homes faced were flawlessly presented as the collision of the Titanic with an iceberg during her first voyage in 1912. The verbal caption PROTECTIVE RING... frames the cartoon, criticizing Hancock’s statement and Johnson’s government’s fragile support for the sector. Concerning the representational process of the cartoon, Johnson is the represented participant who is doing the action of saving the care homes (goal) with a protective ring (means). Noticeably, there is a vector between Johnson and the sinking building though there is a remarkable distance between them.

To elucidate the metaphorical representations, the cartoon shows a building which represents a care home colliding with a coronavirus-shaped iceberg and Johnson is hopelessly trying to protect it by throwing a life buoy representing Hancock’s face. Overall, the cartoon uses different metaphorical entailments to highlight the severity of the situation in the care home sector during the pandemic. They are the following:

- BRITISH CARE HOMES ARE A SINKING SHIP (THE TITANIC).
- THE PRECARIOUS SITUATION FACED BY CARE HOME WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IS THE TRAGEDY OF THE TITANIC SINKING.
- COVID-19 IS A HUGE ICEBERG.
- CARE HOME WORKERS AND RESIDENTS ARE THE TITANIC’S PASSENGERS.
- CARE HOME DEATHS ARE THE VICTIMS IN THE TITANIC.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A COWARDLY LIFESAVER THROWING A USELESS BUOY RING TO SAVE THE TITANIC.

- MATT HANCOCK IS A USELESS LIFE BUOY RING.

With this satirical allusion to the tragedy of the Titanic, Brown criticized the Conservatives' false allegation that they were protecting the health sector during the pandemic in various ways. The visual elements apparently expose those allegations. Moreover, the employment of other semiotic elements of interactive and compositional meaning, such as distance, placement in foregrounding/backgrounding, and size, has its functional values on the analysis of this metaphorical image. For instance, the propositional distance (long-term) between Johnson, the sinking care home building, people drowning and the iceberg indicates Johnson's insufficient awareness and indifference to the real danger this sector is facing during the pandemic and his ignorance to the virus' gravity in general. The placement element further adds to the interpretation of the metaphorical image, the placement of Johnson and Hancock on the other hand represents various points, for example they have been placed in the right side of the image (New information) while the virus and the home cares are in the left (Given), this resource means that Brown tends to get the viewers' attention on the fragile support and false allegations provided by Johnson and Hancock. He is then trying to persuade his readers that the British government's stance is indifferent to the risks of the situation as a whole. The same premise is reinforced through the compositional element of foregrounding (Johnson and Hancock) and backgrounding (care homes and the iceberg), which uncovers the cartoonist's highlighting of Johnson's trivial support and concern about the severity of the situation.

Besides these variations among the characters in the cartoon, the noticeable size-variation among the care home sinking ship, the COVID-19 iceberg and the Hancock life buoy ring substantiates the proposition that the existing situation represents a significant and imminent threat, while the extent of governmental support and protection was fragile and worthless. To sum up, the whole image triggers the conceptual metaphor 'THE UK'S GOVERNMENT'S PROTECTIVE RING AROUND CARE HOMES IS A SMALL LIFE BUOY TRYING TO SAVE A LARGE SINKING SHIP', which likely reflects Brown's criticism regarding the sufficiency of the protective equipment that Johnson's government announced to protect this sector.

- Cartoon 3.10



Figure 4.98 Dave Brown’s cartoon on Dominic Cummings’ lockdown breach, published in *The Independent*, May 27, 2020



Figure 4.99 Tammy Wynette singing “The Bottle on Hee Haw”²³⁶

This cartoon was published in response to calls for Cummings’ resignation over his resounding scandal as shown in cartoons 1.7, 1.23, and 2.20. Again, an intertextual reference has a rich value

²³⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=s7dqptY1dls>

in portraying the issues related to Johnson during the crisis of COVID-19. Accordingly, Dave Brown relies the image upon a successful and influential American artists, Tammy Wynette²³⁷. The representational meaning of the cartoon is well indicated through the depiction of Boris Johnson as the only represented participant who is seemingly proposed as having a direct gaze at the viewers (demand).

In line with this allusion, Brown based this image on a show scenario that instantiates the conceptual metaphors ‘POLITICIANS ARE ARTISTS’ and ‘POLITICAL DISCOURSE IS ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE’. Thus, Dave’s cartoon parodied Tammy Wynette’s name, as TAMMY WHY-NOT... This textual labeling represents the cartoon’s target, especially Johnson’s defense of Cummings’ lockdown rules breaching. The cartoon, hence, renders Johnson as Wynette playing the guitar and singing Tammy’s song “Stand by Your Man”²³⁸ in a satirical way: “SOMETIMES IT’S HARD TO BE A P.M. GIVING ALL YOUR LOVE TO JUST ONE SPAD, YOU’LL HAVE POLL DIPS, WHILE HE HAS ROAD TRIPS, DOING THINGS THAT YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND ... STAND BY YOUR SPAD!” The satirical paraphrasing of Wynette’s song emphasizes Johnson’s blindly supportive stance towards his advisor, or SPAD²³⁹, despite the latter’s actions threatening Johnson’s government’s credibility and popularity. Definitely, the verbal process in the cartoon signifies the attitude of the cartoonist and signifies the supportive stance that Johnson provides to his advisor. The upper inscribed caption, in this domain, signifies ideal information, that is, Johnson’s illegal support. Concerning the interactive and compositional aspects, the element’s position in the center of the cartoon suggests that Johnson is the key element in this matter and his illegal support is the spot of criticism.

The metaphorical representations deduced from this cartoon are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A SINGER.

²³⁷ Wynette was born on May 5, 1942 in Itawamba County, Mississippi. Her original name was Virginia Wynette Pugh. She was an American singer who became widely known as the “first lady of country music” between the 1950s and 1980s. Her most famous song, “Stand by Your Man”, was released in 1968. Wynette passed away on April 6, 1998 in Nashville, Tennessee (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Tammy-Wynette>).

²³⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cVd69WMpz4>

²³⁹ According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, SPAD is an informal term used in the UK to refer to the government’s special advisers who are employed by government ministers to give advice and support on political matters, media relations and political strategy; they are not civil servants (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/spad>).

- BORIS JOHNSON'S DEFENSE OF CUMMINGS' RULE VIOLATION IS SINGING A SONG.
- THE NATION IS THE AUDIENCE.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S SUPPORT OF CUMMINGS IS AN ABSURD SONG.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS TAMMY WYNETTE'S LOVER TO BORIS JOHNSON.
- THE GOVERNMENT'S MEDIA BRIEFING ROOM IS A STAGE.

Therefore, the explanation of the metaphorical conceptualization of Johnson as a female singer who is singing a song dedicated to her man probably implies Brown's negative evaluation of how much power Cummings has in the government, or the fact that he might have serious influence on Johnson to pull this off. Thus, Brown's cartoon expresses a critical attitude towards Johnson's persona and the unjustified power that Cummings had over him, which consequently means a negative evaluation of the impact of Cummings over Johnson as a dominant character.

- **Cartoon 3.11**



Figure 4.100 Brian Adcock's cartoon about the PM's difficult decision on relaxing the social distance measure, published in *The Independent*, June 14, 2020

The cartoon in figure 4.100, also drawn by Brian Adcock, was published in *The Independent* on June 14th 2020, following the announcement of the British PM's new relaxation of measures, which included reducing the two-meter social distancing rule. The relaxation of this rule by Johnson's government, despite the cautionary advice from the medical and scientific advisors, was substantially appealed by the Conservative parliament members to recover economy during the pandemic. Like Brookes' cartoon for *The Times* in Figure 4.1, Adcock also relies on the domains MOVEMENT and DIRECTION to reveal the economic status of the UK after the relaxation of the measure to keep the two-meter physical distance. In a press conference in June 2020, Johnson openly declared his intent to reduce this rule, stating "[w]e want to take some more steps to unlock our society and try to get back to as normal as possible. Eventually I would like to do such things as reducing the 2-metre rule, for instance"²⁴⁰.

Despite this bid was done to recover the UK's economy, yet things did not go as planned. Analyzing the cartoon's meanings, according to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), Johnson and the virus are the represented participants, who have no direct contact. The cartoon, thus, uses a non-transactional narrative process and the characters are not connected by means of any vector. The interaction between them does not exist and the close-up shot shows the facial expressions of the two characters. Concerning the compositional elements, the placement of the participant as in left-right structure shows Johnson on the right side of the cartoon, which represents the New information Adcock attempts to convey through this placement. The left side, on the other hand, was dedicated to the virus (Given information), which adds no informational value for the viewers. The information Adcock highlights through Johnson's right placement is the two-meter physical distance after the relaxation measures he announced. Johnson's visage is rendered perplexed and he is scratching his hair with his hand, which cues the metonymy (frustrated gesture for mishandling). Johnson's body posture and facial expressions definitely indicate that he cannot do anything, as he must keep the distance by law 'the 2-meter rule', about the virus itself or about the economy, as he cannot approach either. It's a way of saying both his health measures and his economic measures are ineffectual and may led to a fiasco, as many critics and opponents expected.

²⁴⁰ https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/03/boris-johnson-says-he-wants-to-relax-2-metre-physical-distancing-rule?utm_term=Autofeed&CMP=tw_t_gu&utm_medium&utm_source=Twitter

Concerning the portrayed presentation of the virus, the cartoon shows it standing on a black ground sign that reads 2 METRE with a scary two-handed gesture and a evil smile, suggesting that there is still a serious risk of further outbreaks after easing social distancing measures. This risk, indeed, not only increased infection rates but also badly influenced the economy, as portrayed by the red falling economy index in the financial bar chart which represents the decline in the UK's economy after the relaxation of the 2-meter rule, which was caused by the government's lack of appropriate economic vision. Thus, the whole cartoon activates the conceptual metaphor 'LACK OF APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC VISION IN THE UK'S GOVERNMENT IS A DOWNWARD MOTION IN A GRAPH', which suggests that the government's economic policy is misguided, leading to negative consequences. Furthermore, it reveals Adcock's negative attitude towards Johnson's plans to reactivate his country's economy during the crisis as misguided and leading to a decline in the economic status.

- **Cartoon 3.12**



Figure 4.101 Brian Adcock's cartoon about Marcus Rashford's campaign against Johnson's food vouchers cancelation, published in *The Independent*, June 17, 2020

This cartoon was published as a result of the campaign Marcus Rashford ran over the Conservative government, as already examined in cartoon 2.8 by Chris Riddell for *The Guardian*.

Adcock exploited one of the most frequent scenarios that is profoundly related to the thematic focus of the cartoon, that is the source domains GAMES and SPORTS. In political spheres, the game metaphors commonly trigger the conceptual metaphors ‘POLITICS IS A GAME/COMPETITION’ and ‘POLITICIANS ARE COMPETITORS’. The idea lies on the metaphorical configuration of political speeches, arguments as a game or a competition with two teams playing to win. Before delving into the analysis of the metaphorical configuration of Johnson, the cartoon uses a transactional narrative process in which the two characters are represented as participants who are acting to win the game (goal). A vector exists in this image, as Rashford is looking in the direction of Johnson. Adcock, accordingly, does not depend on direct gaze to establish interactive meaning nor to engage viewers. Instead, the characters are visually depicted in a communicative exchange solely to convey information to the viewers about the subject matter (Rashford’s campaign).

In accordance with this scenario, Johnson is visually rendered as a goalkeeper lying on his back, raising his hand up to acknowledge Rashford’s win with the exclamation “EXCELLENT GOAL, MARCUS, AND I HAVE DECIDED TO ALLOW IT”. Johnson’s acknowledgement implies his reluctant consent to Rashford’s campaign for free school meals which is visually and verbally rendered as a ball hitting his paunch. Hitting Johnson’s paunch rather than the net or any other part of his body serves as a covertly satirical stance on Johnson’s obesity while there are more than 1.3 million suffering children in the UK; also, it may allude to the campaign’s focus, which is providing food for children during the pandemic. Additionally, a goalkeeper does not normally decide to allow a goal in, but here he grants permission because of Johnson’s fear of losing popularity and votes, so acting as a goalkeeper and referee. In the end, he is working for his personal benefits rather than the wellbeing of his people. To sum up this multimodal analysis, the following individual metaphors can be inferred:

- MARCUS RASHFORD’S CAMPAIGN AGAINST BORIS JOHNSON’S CANCELATION OF FREE MEALS FOR CHILDREN IS A FOOTBALL GAME (COMPETITION).
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A DEFEATED GOALKEEPER.
- MARCUS RASHFORD’S CAMPAIGN TARGET IS HITTING THE GOAL NET.

- THE CAMPAIGN FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS ARE BALLS ENTERING THE GOVERNMENT'S GOAL NET.
- CONSENTING TO THE PILED PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT BY MARCUS RASHFORD'S CAMPAIGN IS TO ENTER THE GOAL NET.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S DEFEAT AGAINST RASHFORD'S CAMPAIGN IS HIS LOSS OF A FOOTBALL MATCH.

Other semiotic resources and aspects of the compositional process should be taken into account, for instance the placement of Johnson at the bottom axis reveals his vulnerability and subservience to the player. Rashford's position and body posture, on the other hand, with crossed arms and a smile on his face, is also metonymically used to express his win over Johnson, he feels contempt toward Johnson's reaction to his plea and at the same time is proud and confident after his win over Johnson. Standing up and showing confidence suggests the conceptual metaphor 'GOOD IS UP', whereas Johnson's lying position reveals his incompetence and failure, 'BAD IS DOWN'.

Moreover, the left-right angle of informational value also presents that the New information of the British government's consent to Rashford's campaign is rendered through the portrayal of Johnson at the right side of the image. In addition, colors have a vital role in this image, as blue, worn by Johnson, is used to stand for the color of the British Conservative Party, whose leader was Johnson from 23 July 2019 to 5 September 2022, this means that Johnson's political party has been working against the benefits of his vulnerable citizens (the opposing team). This in turn reveals Adcock's negative stance against the whole party and their attitude during the crisis regarding them as responsible for their people suffering. To sum up, Adcock's cartoon uncovers his negative stance on Johnson's unfair initial measure: though the source domain employed in the cartoon is not so harsh, the cartoonist attempted to persuade people that Johnson is indifferent to their problem.

- Cartoon 3.13



Figure 4.102 Brian Adcock's cartoon about British Economy and Boris Johnson's policies, published in *The Independent*, June 29, 2020

This cartoon was published in the wake of Boris Johnson's announcement in June 2020 of a recovery plan to promote and level up economy and infrastructure investment during the COVID-19 pandemic, as reported in *The Guardian*: "Boris Johnson sets out plan to 'build back better and bolder' after Covid-19 crisis"²⁴¹. So, Johnson vowed to launch a 'New Deal' for Britain and ramp up spending in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, pledging to re-double his efforts towards this objective²⁴². The cartoon is framed with a textual caption (verbal process) at the top reading FIT AS A BUTCHER'S DOG²⁴³, which could mean a deceptive reference to the implied condition of a butcher's dog being over-weight due to their excessive consumption of food scraps. The idiom here can be connected to the British government's borrowing during the COVID-19 crisis in that excessive borrowing can create a burden of debt and interest payments, hindering the government's ability to achieve its goals. The cartoon's representational meaning shows a non-

²⁴¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jun/30/boris-johnson-vows-to-act-fast-to-fix-economy-in-wake-of-coronavirus>

²⁴² For more information concerning the new deal and Johnson's pledge, the following website is helpful: <https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnson-new-deal-for-britain-fdr-spending-covid-19-crisis-458348>.

²⁴³ The phrase 'as fit as a butcher's dog' means being in very good physical condition or health, often used to describe someone who is strong, energetic and robust. For more information, the following website is highly recommended: <https://literarydevices.net/as-fit-as-a-butchers-dog/>.

transactional narrative process wherein the represented participants have no direct eye contact with each other, nor a vector exists among them. The interactive meaning is probably achieved through the gaze coming from the characters (indirect gaze/offer), through which the cartoonist offers information to the viewers about the situation and the government's mismanagement.

In the image by Adcock in figure 4.102, Johnson is portrayed lying on the ground (bottom placement/out of control, and vulnerability), exhausted and burdened by the weight of the economic challenges. According to Kövecses (2010:64), difficulties are conceptualized as heavy burdens people carry on their shoulders or act out to show the difficulty of the situation. Thus, in this cartoon, Johnson is seen carrying a burden on his shoulders to show the difficulties his government is encountering (economic challenges) during the pandemic (top/serious problems). The top-bottom compositional aspect shows how Johnson is struggling unsuccessfully to rise, as he declares "MY RECOVERY PLAN WILL LEVEL UP THIS ECONOMY!" while he utters the verbal noise "NNNNG!" On his back is seen a large sack filled with money and Rishi Sunak inside looking happy, while Dominic Cummings is sitting reading a newspaper with the headlines BORIS SLUMPS IN POLLS and UNEMPLOYMENT THREAT. Meanwhile, a personified coronavirus is approaching from behind, shouting "WAIT FOR ME!" and holding a banner that reads SECOND WAVE.

Sizing also has its vital function in the composition of the image, for instance, the oversized sack of money with a caption reading BORROWING visually represents the British government's increasing debts to fund its response to the pandemic and its economic recovery plan. This signifies heavy financial and economic problems. This multimodal representation activates the metaphors 'THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S BORROWINGS ARE A HEAVY SACK' and 'RISHI SUNAK'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN IS A BIG BURDEN ON BORIS JOHNSON'S BACK', which is inferred from the more familiar conceptual metaphor 'MONEY IS A HEAVY OBJECT' and the more universal metaphor 'DIFFICULTIES ARE BURDENS' (Kövecses, 2010:64). The sack serves as a symbol of the economic challenges or difficulties that the government is currently facing, with Sunak inside it as the person who stands behind these politics. It is relevant to notice that Johnson's body placement, his prone position, suggests that he is totally overwhelmed by the economic challenges and burdened by the debts sustained in response to the

pandemic. Positioning Johnson down and the sack of debts up gives rise to the conceptual metaphor ‘LACK OF CONTROL IS LOW’, which is the opposite of ‘CONTROL IS HIGH’.

The burdens on Johnson’s back are the borrowing plans that Sunak stands behind and Cummings’ inefficient advice, which have led to the slumping in polls as written in the report he is reading, while the virus is running in their direction, to ride on Johnson’s back too. This satirical portrayal uncovers the cartoonist’s evaluation against Johnson’s leadership and handling of the crisis as vulnerable and subservient to ill-conceived plans suggested by his government’s members. In addition, the high-low position as one of the powerful value elements assumes that Johnson has no power over his cabinet or the situation as a whole, whereas those on his back have power and dominance over his fateful decisions and leadership. Moreover, the virus on the background while the other representational characters are on the foreground suggests that these are much more harmful to economy and Johnson’s government and they create more pressure than the virus. The whole image unveils the cartoonist’s evaluation of Johnson’s government and his government members during the pandemic of coronavirus, regarding Johnson as helpless and fully governed and controlled by other people, particularly in recovering from the economic recession or controlling this issue. They are the cause of Johnson’s failure as a leader.

- **Cartoon 3.14**



Figure 4.103 Dave Brown’s cartoon about the New Deal for Britain, *The Independent*, June 30, 2020



Figure 4.104 President Franklin D. Roosevelt in Warm Springs, Georgia, in 1939²⁴⁴

In figure 4.103, we find another cartoon that evokes a game metaphor, particularly a gambling metaphor. The source that invokes a set of metaphors, such as ‘POLITICS IS GAMBLING’ in which politics has many parallels with the game of gambling as with “risk-taking, uncertainty, winning and losing, and stakes and consequences” (Hellín-García, 2014), so this will be the focus of our discussion in the analysis of this image. Dave Brown’s cartoon sheds light on the New Deal, already mentioned in cartoons 2.10 and 3.13, by means of which Johnson pledged to beat the drastic impact of the virus on economy and health. Brown therefore framed his cartoon with the satirical comment NUDE DEAL, which is a pun using the word ‘nude’²⁴⁵ instead of ‘new’ as they are practically identical in pronunciation in this sequence. This satirical pun is employed in this context to criticize the multibillion pound stimulus package Johnson insisted on to achieve the target, at a cost that might lead the country into more austerity.

Before indulging in any analysis of this image, it is indispensable to mention that in Johnson’s 30th June 2020 announcement he arrogantly compared his new plan to the US president Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1933 new plan²⁴⁶, which aimed to support the US economy after the economic upheaval of the Great Depression. Johnson’s controversial allegory at the announcement led

²⁴⁴ <https://www.thebalancemoney.com/fdr-economic-policies-and-accomplishments-3305557>

²⁴⁵ A term that means wearing no clothes, as defined in <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/nude>.

²⁴⁶ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/roosevelt-new-deal-boris-johnson-infrastructure-building-plan-comparison-a9593461.html>

critics and cartoonists to criticize Johnson with a reference to that comparison. In line with this context, Brown visually depicts Johnson as Roosevelt, satirically referring to one of his iconic photos (figure 4.104). Johnson was rendered with the famous physical features of Roosevelt, including a top hat, eyeglasses, a bow tie and cigarette, based on the conceptual metaphor ‘IDEOLOGICAL SIMILARITIES ARE PHYSICAL RESEMBLANCE’.

Despite the physical resemblance Brown utilized in his portrayal, which was used as an ironical reference to Johnson’s unfair comparison to Roosevelt’s deal, the two plans had very different scales and goals. There is no real co-thematic relation between the two domains. The representational meaning of this cartoon hence includes a transactional narrative process in which the two participants are represented as actors; they have direct eye contact and the close up shot of the image reveals who the winner in the game of poker is. Concerning interactive semiotics, Brown depicts the represented participants to his viewers as informational elements, he just offer them as such. Concerning the power relations between them, the horizontal axis shows the employment of an oblique angle to express the viewers’ detachment from the participants’ world. Furthermore, the close-up shot enables the viewers to capture the characters’ facial expressions that mirror internal emotions of defiance (the virus) and failure (Johnson).

Concerning the event and the characters’ interactive relation, the image shows Johnson playing poker with a COVID-19 skeleton. Both players are naked, the skeleton because it has to be, Johnson because he only has his clothes and a pack of peanuts to bet, as he seems to have lost everything else. The central position is occupied by the packs of peanuts and cards, which are regarded as the nucleus of the cartoon and to gain the viewers’ attention. Another compositional element is the left-right placement. In it, Johnson’s clothes decorated with the Union Jack are depicted at the right side of the image, which is regarded as conveying New information on the problems of British economy. This instantiation is intrinsically derived from a conceptual metaphor (‘ECONOMY IS CLOTHES’) which connects with the economic problems and with austerity. The above-mentioned composition of the image ignites a more specific metaphor, ‘BRITISH ECONOMIC AUSTERITY IS TAKING OFF EVEN SOMEBODY’S CLOTHES’, which uncovers Brown’s critical view on Johnson’s ‘new deal’ that might lead the country to imminent recession or to more austerity. Moreover, the skeleton is portrayed betting seriously and holding all the winning cards, while Johnson, who has nothing but peanuts and his clothes to

bet, seems worried about the rules of the game. The denotation of ‘peanuts’, as can be found in the *Cambridge Dictionary*²⁴⁷, suggests that Johnson’s new deal plan will lead the country to gain nothing significant but austerity, unlike the virus’s power and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the joker cards with Johnson’s face on them reveal the cartoonist’s negative perspective towards Johnson’s character as a clown or jester, more than as a serious contender.

The poker ‘gambling’ scenario in this cartoon profiles the following individual metaphors:

- BRITISH ECONOMIC RECESSION IS THE LOSS OF CLOTHES OR BETS IN A GAME OF STRIP POKER.
- LOW STAKES IN BRITISH ECONOMY IS TO PLAY FOR PEANUTS.
- THE GOVERNMENT’S ECONOMIC AUSTERITY IS TO PLAY FOR PEANUTS TO WIN.
- THE VIRUS IS A WINNING COMPETITOR.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S NEW DEAL FOR LEVELING UP ECONOMY IS A LOSING POKER GAME.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS A FAILED NUDE POKER PLAYER PLAYING FOR PEANUTS TO WIN.

Finally, the textual balloon in the cartoon also reveals a critical perspective of Johnson’s economic policy, as his question to the virus “...UM... RAISE YOU...?” suggests a willingness to take risks and maintain an overly optimistic outlook towards the UK’s economic recovery in the midst of the pandemic. The use of RAISE YOU as a phrase in a poker game context implies recklessness and disregard for the results of actions, emphasizing the cartoonist’s critical stance towards Johnson’s strategy. So, the gambling metaphor in this image serves a persuasive function, that is, Johnson attempts to take risky plans to rise up economy though these plans are seen as trivial bets and lead to dangerous consequences.

²⁴⁷ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/peanuts>

- Cartoon 3.15



Figure 4.105 Brian Adcock’s cartoon on the government’s radical civil service shake-up, published in *The Independent*, June 30, 2020

The cartoon in figure 4.105 was published after the announcement of the British government’s intent to dismiss a number of civil service seniors in Whitehall and asking for uncommon candidates to apply for Government posts, as reported by Dominic Cummings, the government’s chief advisor. Cummings publicly announced in one of his blogs: “We want to hire an unusual set of people with different skills and backgrounds to work in Downing Street with the best officials, some as spads and perhaps some as officials. If you are already an official and you read this blog and think you fit one of these categories, get in touch”²⁴⁸.

In response to a proposed “shake-up” plan of the British Civil Service, Brian Adcock depicts Boris Johnson, with a childish face and attitude, holding a crystal snow globe with a label CIVIL SERVICE and excitedly asking Cummings if he can shake it again: “HA, HA! CAN I SHAKE IT AGAIN?” It is significant to note that Johnson’s ‘shaking up the civil service’ plan is literally a means to cause large changes in the British Civil Service in order to make improvements, something that coincides with the general meaning denoted in the *Cambridge Dictionary*. Yet here

²⁴⁸ <https://dominicummings.com/2020/01/02/two-hands-are-a-lot-were-hiring-data-scientists-project-managers-policy-experts-assorted-weirdos/>

in the cartoon the changes are configured as an external force that cause people to fall down. Consequently, this visual image invokes the conceptual metaphor that attributes the characteristics of that force to negative actions or events, 'NEGATIVE ACTIONS ARE PHYSICAL FORCES'. This metaphor conveys the notion of altering the stable position of an object through the application of an irregular force. Within this context, Johnson's authority to implement thorough changes resonates with the concept of exerting physical forces.

Moreover, inside the crystal globe, many people-like figures are seen being violently shaken and thrown about, symbolizing the disruptive effects of the British government's proposed plan. This image, thus, conveys a sense of subservience to those in power, as Johnson is willing to comply with the whims of Cummings, who is portrayed with crossed arms, conveying, in combination with the expression on his face, a sense of superiority, indifference or apathy towards the struggles of the Civil Servants. Through this imagery, Adcock emphasizes the imbalance of power and lack of empathy towards the impact of proposed radical changes within this organization.

Furthermore, other elements of representational, interactive and compositional meaning also have their vital roles in the cartoon's interpretation, for instance the represented participants (Johnson and Cummings) have a transactional vector, as Johnson is depicted talking to Cummings and because of his gaze direction, addressed at him. Cummings seems to be to Johnson's left, and gazing at Johnson's action. The cartoon, thus, has a transactional narrative pattern. The close-up shot of Johnson and the ball represents the important point Adcock seems to emphasize (Johnson's trivial actions) as he is playing and laughing while Cummings is depicted indifferent and tough. Concerning the size element, drawing up the British Civil Service as a small snow globe in Johnson's big hand manifests Johnson's predominance over it, as in the metaphors 'POSSESSING IS HOLDING'; 'IMPORTANCE IS SIZE'. The small size here triggers this organization, despite its great role, as vulnerable and subservient to the ruling class. Concerning the compositional and informational value, Adcock positioned the snow globe (CIVIL SERVICE) in the center of the cartoon to enhance his positive and sympathetic attitude toward this sector which is provoked by the conceptual metaphor 'IMPORTANCE IS CENTRAL'. Therefore, the whole scene embraces the following metaphorical entailments:

- THE BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE IS A CRYSTAL SNOW GLOBE IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S MAJOR CHANGES IN THE BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE ARE TO SHAKE A SNOW GLOBE/USING PHYSICAL FORCES.
- THE BRITISH CIVIL SERVANTS ARE SNOWFLAKES SUSPENDED INSIDE A SPHERE.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S POWER OVER OTHERS IS A PHYSICAL SHIFT.
- CIVIL SERVANTS’ RESIGNATIONS ARE SNOWFLAKES FALLING.

All in all, the interpretation and explanation of the cartoon reveal the negative attitude of Adcock towards Johnson’s and Cumming’s treatment of the Civil Service during the pandemic, and the illustration of Johnson playing with the snow ball while people inside are falling down violently uncovers two interpreting points: Firstly, Johnson’s government is indifferent and careless of the seniors of the civil services’ suffering. Secondly, depicting the seniors of the civil service as figures inside a snow globe and the government playing with their destination suggests that though the notion of inclusion provokes the container image which is characterized by Charteris-Black (2021) as protection, care and lifesaving, here the container image has negative connotations of dominance and supremacy. Thus, the metaphorical entailments mentioned above generate the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF THE BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE IS TO SHAKE AN OBJECT FOOLISHLY’.

- Cartoon 3.16



Figure 4.106 Dave Brown’s cartoon about the second wave of COVID-19 and pubs opening, published in *The Independent*, July 3, 2020



Figure 4.107 Hokusai’s woodblock print “The Great Wave of Kanagawa”, 1831

Dave Brown published this cartoon in July 2020, after Johnson’s announcement that pubs and restaurants would re-open on the 4th of July 2020, a thematic context that coincides with other cartoons, 1.9 and 2.9. The image of this figure is framed with the bottom-captioned title SECOND

WAVE. This caption serves as the textual target of the cartoon, which was visually conceptualized through the woodblock print of the Japanese artist Hokusai²⁴⁹ during the Edo period²⁵⁰. Figure 4.107 represents the original work done by Hokusai in 1831, in which boats are facing the turbulent great waves of Kanagawa. Thus, Brown has referenced the theme of his cartoon, which addresses the second wave of the virus, from Hokusai's work.

Before delving into the analysis of the details, it must be remembered that Semino (2014:144) asserts that the severity of political problems resembles the hostility of weather, and the lack of control of these problems is the inability to resist these weather conditions. Brown combined the visual intertextuality cited from Hokusai's work with the sailing metaphor, which renders Johnson's trail to overcome. Therefore, this source domain depicts Johnson and four individuals navigating through a turbulent sea of beer, activating the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICS IS SAILING', as discussed by Hellín-García in 2014. In the cartoon, Johnson and the men are portrayed (represented participants) as sailing in a coffin rather than a conventional boat (action), which symbolically stands for peril and death. In this context, the boat scene is a common metaphorical device used to conceptualize symbols, wherein the country is seen as a boat, the political leader as the captain, and the political goal as the destination they are sailing toward. The image is a non-transactional narrative pattern; the participants have no vector to connect them with each other. The shot reveals the magnitude of the potential risk that may be caused by Johnson's reopening plans.

The image, therefore, suggests that the actions of Johnson may be steering the UK towards a tragic end, as the boat is tiny in comparison with the immensity of the waves. Notably, Johnson's exclamation "DRINK... DRINK... DRINK...", while holding the British Union Jack, symbolizes a sense of reckless abandon and irresponsibility. In contrast, the other men in the boat are depicted drinking beer from the beer sea, emphasizing their complicity in the scene's underlying message.

²⁴⁹ He was a popular artist in what was called 'Ukiyo', or what is now called 'Floating world' school of Japanese arts. His famous painting "The Great Wave Off Kanagawa" that swept the whole world was done at the age of seventy (<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/may/19/hokusai-japanese-artist-late-blossoming-great-wave-mount-fuji>).

²⁵⁰ The period, which derived its name from Edo, or what is called now Tokyo, lasted from 1603 to 1867, at a time when Japan was under the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate. It had a great reputation due to its economic growth, constant peace and strict social rules. It came to its end in 1868 with the Meiji Restoration. More information can be found in <https://www.britannica.com/event/Tokugawa-period>.

Moreover, the compositional elements, such as the information value, salience and framing also have their own key roles in the analysis of the image. For instance, the depiction of the boat in the center of the image signifies the seriousness of the danger caused by Johnson's ill-conceived plans. The framing lines, on the other hand, indicate that Johnson and his government's members share the same ideological stance.

In accordance to the previous discussion, the sailing scene evokes the following individual metaphors:

- THE CORONAVIRUS SECOND WAVE IS A TURBULENT SEA OF WAVES OF BEER.
- THE UK IS A COFFINLIKE BOAT SAILING TOWARDS DEATH.
- THE CONSERVATIVES ARE BOAT ROWERS HEADED FOR DEATH.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE CAPTAIN OF A COFFINLIKE BOAT SAILING TOWARDS A PERILOUS DESTINATION.
- THE REOPENING OF PUBS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO SAIL IN A BEER STORMY SEA TOWARDS DEATH.
- THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S REOPENING POLICY OF PUBS IS TO SAIL IN A STORMY SEA OF BEER TOWARDS DEATH.

It is worth noting that the depiction of Johnson's policy of re-opening pubs and restaurants during the pandemic as a stormy sea of beer, formed by coronavirus-like waves, conveys the cartoonist's satirical evaluation of Johnson's ill-conceived plans which are leading the country to death. The juxtaposition of beer and coronavirus in this manner highlights the potential dangers of reopening pubs and restaurants too soon at the time, and the risks associated with ignoring the ongoing public health crisis. Thus, the cartoon's details instantiate the conceptual metaphor 'THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF REOPENING PUBS IS TO NAVIGATE IN A TURBULENT SEA TO A MORTAL DESTINATION', and the overall image of the hazardous sea shows the cartoonist's criticism of Johnson's ill-conceived decisions and policies which lead the country to a disastrous end.

- Cartoon 3.17



Figure 4.108 Brian Adcock's cartoon on Johnson praying for the divine vaccine deity to come and save us all, published in *The Independent*, July 20, 2020

The cartoon published for *The Independent* by Brian Adcock is based on the source domains RELIGION and ETHICS. Thus, the image triggers the metaphor 'THE HOPE OF ROLLING OUT THE VACCINE TO CONFRONT COVID-19 IS A RELIGIOUS PRAYER'. In the cartoon, Boris Johnson is depicted as a supplicant kneeling in front of an altar in a church praying at a Christian Cross, which is metaphorically replaced with a VACCINE syringe to come and protect the British population from the virus. Meanwhile, at the other side of the image, the virus is depicted as a pew sitter, which is disrespectfully sitting behind Johnson and sticking out its tongue at him and at the vaccine. Hence, Adcock's cartoon depicts a non-transactional visual narrative where the represented participants (Johnson and the virus) lack any form of direct eye contact or interactional link. This absence implies Johnson's indifference and underscores the pervasive nature of the virus's spread. The image's close-up shot reveals the facial expressions of the participants as Johnson's subservience and fear and the virus's mockery.

According to the details identified above, the metaphorical representations of this cartoon might be the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A SUPPLICANT TO THE VACCINE SYRINGE FOR PROTECTION.
- THE VACCINE SYRINGE IS A DIVINE SAVIOR.
- THE VIRUS HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FROM JOHNSON OR THE VACCINE.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S HANDLING OF THE VIRUS ROLLOUT IS MERELY PRAYERS TO THE VACCINE SYRINGE.

There is no doubt that the idea that the vaccine is a savior is similar to how Jesus in Christianity is seen as a savior. So, Johnson is praying for the divine deity vaccine to protect his country from the spread of the virus, which was then spreading everywhere and out of control. Other elements of representative meaning should also be accounted, for instance, the facial expressions, and size. Concerning the facial expressions, Johnson's face is portrayed as worried, frustrated and weak, with tears on his cheeks; this humiliating image suggests his vulnerable or powerless stance in facing the power of the virus. In contrast, the virus's face with its tongue out at Johnson and practically lying comfortably on the pew, instead of respectfully sitting, means its control, prevalence and confidence. Thus, these expressions convey the cartoonist's evaluation of Johnson's world-beating vaccine as powerless in comparison to the power of the virus. The placement of the characters in left-right dimensions indicates that the information related to the virus is New while Johnson's related information concerning rolling-out the vaccine is Given and media consuming.

Moreover, the compositional element of size also has its essential role in this image; the size of the vaccine syringe, which is built upon the conceptual metaphor 'IMPORTANCE IS SIZE', highlights the ultimate relevance of rolling out the vaccine according to Johnson, who regarded it as the only savior to overcome the virus. Thus, Adcock is criticizing Johnson's lack of real action to handle effectively and thoroughly the pandemic or to actually roll out the vaccine to save lives.

- Cartoon 3.18

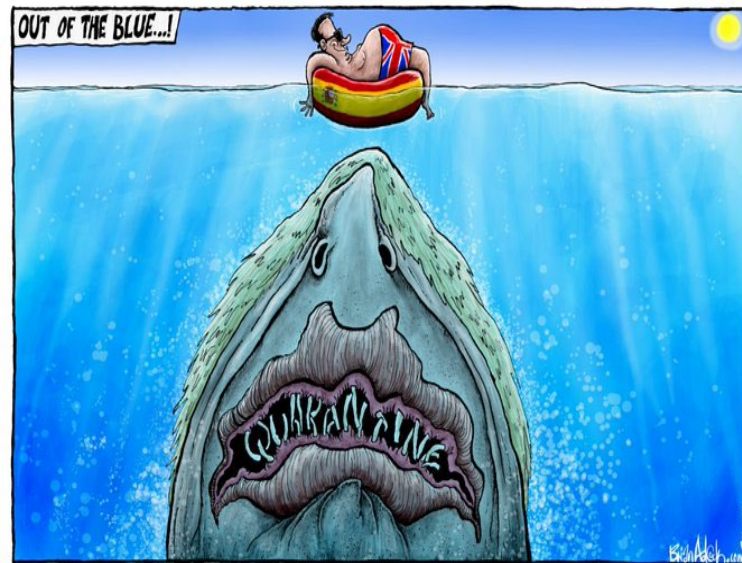


Figure 4.109 Brian Adcock's cartoon about Boris Johnson's Quarantine, *The Independent*, July 26, 2020

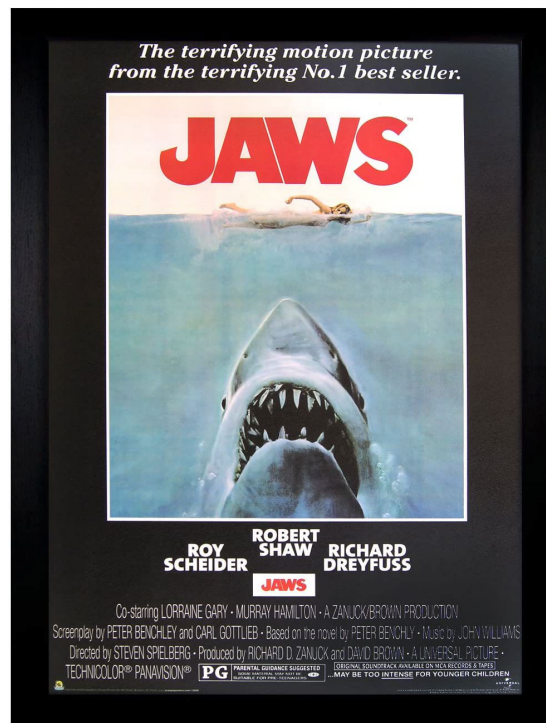


Figure 4.110 The original poster of the 1975 thriller movie *Jaws*

The cartoon in figure 4.109 was published in *The Independent* the day after the announcement of re-imposing a mandatory 14-day quarantine for the British travelers back from Spain since the 25th of July 2020, as already analyzed in cartoon 2.14, for *The Guardian*. In line with this controversial measure and the views that urged its efficacy, Brian Adcock related his portrayal of this topic to the source domain ANIMALS, accompanied with an intertextual reference to a very well-known American thriller movie, *Jaws*. Maintaining his most prominent characteristic traits of unkempt blonde hair and plump lips, Johnson was satirically depicted as a ruthless, greedy shark stalking to attack his unsuspecting prey.

The human-shark configuration has its roots in metaphorical analysis and is well explained by Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez-Hernández (2011:166), who posit in their study, for instance, that humans, particularly those in the legal profession (lawyers) can be metaphorically conceptualized as sharks due to their perceived qualities of being “ruthless, dishonest, and greedy”. Yet, this comparison is based on a partial analogical resemblance, since only the aspect of being ruthless is transferred from the source onto the target. Sharks are not greedy or dishonest by nature. In so doing, Adcock successfully draws his cartoon upon the metaphor ‘HUMANS ARE SHARKS’ to map the distinctive or idiosyncratic feature of being ruthless. Moreover, the use of a specific shark from a movie emphasizes the characteristics of predation and ruthlessness associated with this animal and it easily recalls the bloody image stored in the mind of people concerning the shark’s pursuit of prey and attacking them. This suggests that only the predatory attribute has been mapped from the shark-image onto Johnson’s stance towards his people (DeSousa & Medhurst 1982: 49).

Back to the cartoon context, Adcock framed the work with the caption OUT OF THE BLUE..!, using color as one of the compositional elements also signifies certain communicative points, for instance the ‘out of the blue’ phrase suggests either the unexpectedness of something²⁵¹, as with the re-imposition of quarantine on the British travelers without earlier warnings, or the literal meaning that signifies a sudden appearance of the shark from the depths of the blue sea. Pertaining to the elements in the cartoon, Johnson, the aggressive shark, is about to attack a fat man with his QUARANTINE-inscribed teeth. The heavy-set guy is seen using some inflatable canoe with the

²⁵¹ As an idiom, this means that something is completely unexpected, as can be seen in <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/out-of-the-blue>.

Spanish flag, which is metonymically used to refer to a Spanish holiday resort or plainly to Spain (FLAG FOR COUNTRY), and wearing sun glasses and Union Jack swimming trunks, which also represent the country. Thus, the image could be summed up as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A PREDATORY SHARK WHO IS LURKING FOR HIS PREY.
- COVID-19 QUARANTINE ON THE UK IS SHARP TEETH/A KILLING WEAPON TO KILL THEM.
- BRITONS ARE A PREY.
- SPAIN IS AN ENTERTAINING HOLIDAY RESORT FOR THE UK.

Moreover, other elements of compositional and interactive function also have their far-reaching effect on the analysis of the cartoon, such as body posture and distance, facial expressions, elements' zones and size. For instance, profiling the fat guy as calmly lying on a canoe taking a sunbath probably represents his unawareness of the government's severe imposition of a quarantine. Also, Johnson's open jaws and his deadly sharp teeth express his imminent willingness to pounce on his prey and tear it apart. The close distance depicted between the prey and Johnson reveals the harmful treatment of Johnson's government towards his people, which seemingly appears very near to them. A top-bottom structure is employed in this cartoon in which the top element (the prey) signifies the ideal, relaxation and lack of awareness of travelers, and the bottom element (the shark) signifies the real to give information of what is happening (a forced quarantine imposition). Concerning the other salient element, sizing, the shark's giant size in comparison to the traveler's size highlights the severity and lethal impact of this quarantine on innocent people and on their lives. All the above-mentioned details uncover Adcock's negative evaluation of Johnson's two-week quarantine as severe, inadequate and lacking in previous warnings and notifications, and leading to fatal effects on people and on the economy and tourist industry. A more general metaphor created from the overall images can be activated as 'THE UK'S GOVERNMENT'S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF RIGHTS IS A FATAL ATTACK ON PEOPLE'.

- **Cartoon 3.19**



Figure 4.111 Brian Adcock's cartoon on the second wave and the PM driving the UK, published in *The Independent*, August 2, 2020

The cartoon illustrated in figure 4.111 triggers a journey scenario with the metaphorical image of source-path-target, in which the image has combined this metaphor with the metaphorical source domains MOVEMENT and DESTINATION. The narrative process has been successfully achieved through the depiction of the represented actor (Johnson) alone without a transactional relation with any entity. At first, it is relevant to know the contextual knowledge of the cartoon, which apparently is about the second wave of the virus, the theme that gained the attention of the UK's cartoonists at the time, as in cartoons 2.21 and 3.16, in which the virus's second wave is visually portrayed as a tsunami and as turbulent sea waves. In this cartoon, Adcock adopted another metaphorical image to illustrate the virus and its severity, away from turbulent natural forces; he exploited a journey metaphor through a forest of intertwined trees.

Thus, Boris Johnson is visually depicted driving a blue car at high speed towards a road sign reading SECOND WAVE and EXIT. The car is marked with a number plate reading BRITAIN and a roof painted with the British Union Jack (SYMBOL FOR COUNTRY). These visual elements suggest that Johnson is driving his country towards a specific destination, as politicians are often seen as car drivers or ship captains. Thus, these metaphors evoke the universal metaphors 'A NATION IS A VEHICLE' and 'LEADERS ARE VEHICLE DRIVERS', which entail the metaphor 'LEADING A NATION IS DRIVING A VEHICLE', as figured out below.

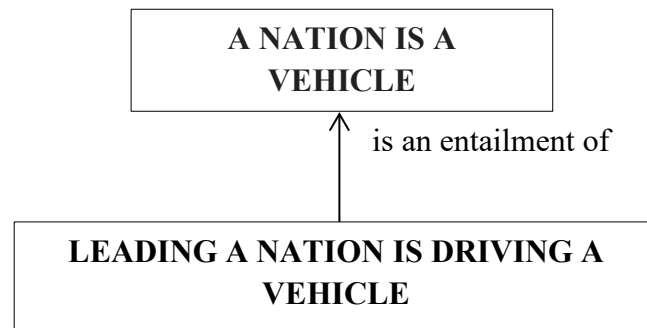


Diagram 4.2 How to relate metaphors

In this journey image, Adcock successfully utilizes the scenario of driving a vehicle through a dark forest to emphasize the seriousness of the situation. The details portray Johnson as a careless driver who has crashed his car, symbolizing the UK's situation, against a road sign. Consequently, he no longer knows which path leads out of the forest, representing the handling of COVID-19, which leads to the second wave. Notably, the trees in the forest represent the virus, cleverly embedded as the tree tops. Therefore, the individual metaphors that illustrate this image can be summarized as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A CARELESS VEHICLE DRIVER MISSING THE RIGHT WAY OUT OF A FOREST.
- THE UK IS A CAR.
- COVID-19 IS A DARK WOODLAND.
- THE END OF THE PANDEMIC IS THE EXIT OF THE FOREST.
- THE SECOND WAVE OF THE VIRUS IS TO TAKE THE WRONG DESTINATION.

It is also relevant to expose that other aspects of interactive and compositional meanings should be accounted here, such as facial expressions, the color codes, the sound effect (verbal and mental process) and the onomatopoeic sounds which have an influential effect on interpreting the cartoon; the OOPS!²⁵² verbal balloon, for example, represents Johnson's dismay and hesitancy to take the right way, as already stated he no longer knows the right way to take, the destination is vague for him. This representation is visually reinforced through his facial expression, which shows his hesitation and incompetence to take decisive steps towards the right destination. Moreover, the

²⁵² This is an expression of surprise or feeling sorry for making mistakes (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/oops>).

blue car represents the nation, which is governed by the Conservative Party and their ill-conceived strategies and plans.

In consideration of the above, the combination of the visual, textual and gestural modes raises the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S LACK OF EFFICIENCY DURING THE SECOND WAVE OF THE PANDEMIC IS BEING LOST IN THE FOREST OF COVID-19’.

- **Cartoon 3.20**



Figure 4.112 Brian Adcock’s cartoon about the roller coaster that was life then, published in *The Independent*, August 13, 2020

“The scheme reminded us why we as a nation love dining out and I urge diners to maintain the momentum to help continue our economic recovery”²⁵³, declared the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak in August 2020. In response to Sunak’s words, Brian Adcock focused his cartoon on the EAT OUT TO HELP OUT²⁵⁴ scheme –an initiative through which the UK’s government

²⁵³ <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/wetherspoons-launching-eat-out-discount-18853952>

²⁵⁴ This is one of the policy measures the UK government launched to support economy, particularly after the virus lockdown, it is regarded as one of the strategies of the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak’s summer economic updates in July 2020. The essence of this measure was to offer 50% discount on meals up to 10 pounds per head. More details about this policy and its main points can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-a-discount-with-the-eat-out-to-help-out-scheme> and <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8978/>.

intended to promote the economy and to support businesses and the hospitality sector. This cartoon was published in *The Independent* after the British government's announcement of applying the EAT OUT TO HELP OUT strategy, and easing further restrictions across the country. Thus, Adcock criticized the British government's decision to lift some urgent restrictions during the crisis in order to boost the economy. The cartoon contains a transactional narrative structure, depicting Johnson, Sunak and the virus engaged in a reactional process. Notably, the virus is portrayed gazing directly at Johnson and Sunak with a mocking smile and triumphant expression, while Johnson and Sunak exhibit expressions of worry and fear as their vehicle descends rapidly.

The cartoon employs the metaphor of an amusement ride on a roller coaster, portraying Johnson and Sunak riding in one car and moving rapidly downwards. The caption on the car reads GDP, which stands for Britain's Gross Domestic Product²⁵⁵. Meanwhile, the virus is depicted riding in another car and moving quickly upwards, with a caption reading COVID CASES, representing the increase in infection cases. This cartoon effectively utilizes the source domains DIRECTION and MOVEMENT to metaphorically stand for the relationship between the two variables.

Thus, the visual metaphors employed in the image are the following:

- THE UK'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IS A CAR MOVING DOWNWARDS IN A ROLLER COASTER.
- COVID-19 CASES IN THE UK ARE A CAR MOVING STEADILY UPWARDS.
- THE UK'S GOVERNMENT (BORIS JOHNSON AND RISHI SUNAK) ARE ROLLER COASTER RIDERS.

So, Adcock's cartoon conveys the target object –the consequences of COVID-19– verbally, with messages written on the cars, while the source objects are visually represented by the roller coaster cars moving up and down. Moreover, the virus's question "ENJOYING THE RIDE?" and smile apparently suggest that the virus is enjoying the ride while the two men in the other car are

²⁵⁵ A nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a crucial economic indicator that measures the total value of goods and services produced within the borders of any country during a particular period, almost a year, by individuals, businesses, and the government. It is calculated by adding four components: consumption, investment, government spending and net exports. See the following link for more information: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gdp.asp>.

freaked out as their car is running downwards. The facial expressions of Johnson and Sunak serve as an interactive aspect, signifying their fears and concerns regarding the significant and unprecedented increase in the number of infected cases and death tolls, as well as the dramatic decline in the economy and GDP. Furthermore, the power dynamics are evident in the contrasting high-low movements, indicating the virus's dominance and rapid spread compared to Johnson and Sunak's subservience and inability to achieve their plans successfully. Additionally, the compositional element of framing contributes to the cartoon's meaning, in which the connection lines show Johnson and Sunak as sharing identity and stance on the issue, emphasizing their alignment within the depicted scenario.

These modes of expression, power, and connection, in one way or another convey the perception of the government's failure in handling the economic problems. Consequently, Adcock formulates two overarching metaphors: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S ECONOMIC LEVELING-UP PLANS ARE A VEHICLE MOVING DOWNWARDS RAPIDLY' and its contrasting metaphor, 'THE VIRUS'S INFECTION CASES ARE A VEHICLE MOVING UPWARDS RAPIDLY', which imply his critical assessment of Johnson's economic leveling-up strategies, portraying them as contributing to economic decline and aggravating the virus's spread across the UK.

- **Cartoon 3.21**



Figure 4.113 Dave Brown's cartoon on Johnson's propensity to try and distract from bad news –in this case around Covid-19–, published in *The Independent*, August 26, 2020



Figure 4.114 The image of a woman in a valkyrie Brünnhilde dress representing the part ‘it ain’t over till the fat lady sings’ in an opera

In line with the two previous cartoons published by Dave Brown, this image relied upon the source domains ENTERTAINMENT and PERFORMANCE. Thus, the image ignites the conceptual metaphors ‘POLITICS IS A STAGE PERFORMANCE’ and ‘POLITICIANS ARE PERFORMERS’. The cartoon is framed with the textual caption IT AIN’T OVER TILL THE PM SINGS...²⁵⁶, which ridiculously illustrates the target of the image, that is, the public’s distraction and misdirection with fake news and the government’s frequent U-turns, with the wearing of face masks in schools, and masks being made mandatory for secondary school students and staff in communal areas as examples.

Before the analysis of the metaphorical depiction of Boris Johnson in this cartoon is faced, it is significant to notice the semiotic elements implemented by the cartoonists. Thus, the image contains a transactional narrative structure in which Johnson is looking directly at the reviewers and he is the only represented participant within the image. The verbal process in the cartoon is indicated through Johnson’s verbal performance, which signifies the misinformation Johnson

²⁵⁶ This idiom refers to a colloquial expression that means, according to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, that one should not assume the outcomes of any situation until it has actually ended. This phrase is often used in a context where people are prematurely declaring a result, assuming that the outcome provided is certain, yet in reality there may still be unexpected events or twists that could change the outcome. For more information concerning the origin of this phrase, the following website is recommended: <https://knowyourphrase.com/aint-over-until-the-fat-lady-sings>, and for the meaning, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/it-isn-t-over-until-the-fat-lady-sings>.

often provides his people with. The explanation of the cartoon reveals some other compositional elements which enrich the analysis with more valuable information.

To analyze the elements in the cartoon, Johnson was humorously portrayed as a fat woman dressing as valkyrie Brünnhilde²⁵⁷, with a mask covering his lower parts, wearing a coronavirus-like crown and holding a shield with the UK's flag on it (symbolic reference to the UK). Strikingly, the image exposes Johnson singing the British patriotic anthem "Land of Hope and Glory" on the stage, but with a satirical and ironical flavor, changing its lyrics as follows: "LAND OF HOPELESS TORIES, / COUNTRY SCARED TO BREATHE, / HOW SHALL I DISTRACT THEE..?.. / WITH MY LATEST WHEEZE. / WIDER STILL AND WIDER. / SHALL FAKE NEWS BE CAST, / GUFF THAT HIDES OUT U-TURNS / AND COVERS MY FAT A ...!" It is worth noting that Johnson's words in this ridiculous version unveil Brown's criticism of Johnson's delivering of fake news, U-turns and cover-ups to mislead his people from his failures and lack of effective action in response to the pandemic. So, in this aspect, the compositional element of size, as one of the salient elements, and the verbal process indicated in the satirical anthem and the use of face covering as underwear present Brown's negative attitude towards Johnson's government's incompetence and lack of accountability and transparency. The cartoon, like many other cartoons that rely upon ART and PERFORMANCE, has a set of individual metaphorical configurations, which are the following:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A PRIMA DONNA.
- THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE SONGS.
- THE 10 DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM IS A STAGE.
- THE BRITISH NATION IS THE AUDIENCE.

In this case, the metaphors instantiated from this scenario and from the above-mentioned metaphorical entailments are 'THE TORIES' FAKE NEWS ARE COVERINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S LACK OF COMPETENCE AND SHORTCOMINGS' and 'BORIS

²⁵⁷ She is a character from Richard Wagner's tetralogy *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*). Brünnhilde is one of the nine Valkyries, who are mythical warrior maidens in Norse mythology. In Wagner's operas, Brünnhilde is a central character who appears in all four parts of the saga. Brünnhilde is often portrayed as a courageous and powerful woman who challenges the gods and ultimately brings about their downfall. She is also known for her passionate and tragic love affair with the hero Siegfried, which ends in her death (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Brunhild-Norse-mythology>).

JOHNSON'S DISTRACTION OF THE NATION FROM BAD NEWS IS TO PERFORM A MOCKERY SHOW'. These profile Johnson's government as dishonest and deceitful, as well as lacking transparency or accountability.

- **Cartoon 3.22**



Figure 4.115 Dave Brown's cartoon on Boris Johnson and his right-wing comedy, published in *The Independent*, September 1, 2020

As done by many other cartoonists, Dave Brown's cartoon relies upon the scenario of a comic show, which brings to mind the conceptual metaphors 'POLITICS IS PERFORMANCE' and 'POLITICIANS ARE STAGE ACTORS'. In this cartoon, Brown incorporates several comic characters from widely-known British comedy sitcoms and TV series, such as *UP Pompeii*, *Dad's Army*, *League of Gentlemen*, *The Young Ones* and *Hancock's Half Hour*, to satirize the political influence of Boris Johnson and some of his right-wing Tories in a humorous satirical manner. The caption written above reads 'The return of the right-wing comedy...', which is regarded as the thematic focus of the cartoon that metaphorically represents the right-wing Tories/politicians as comedians. Thus, the cartoon not only indicates Brown's negative stance towards this ridiculed band, but also prompts that their policies and actions to curb the virus are a kind of comic absurd performance.

The image reflects a non-transactional narrative scene in which the characters are represented as participants with no vector or direct eye-contact between them. Each actor in the image has a

direct gaze at the viewers, which signifies a connection between the participants and the viewers to interpret and explain their actions. The interactive process depends on the gazing, social distance and power relations. The close distance among the characters signifies their intimacy and convergence in orientation, and leading by Johnson as the frontal element in the group suggests his dominance and all participants are involved in this action (frontal angle).

The metaphorical analysis shows the characters inside the House of Commons, arranged from left to right as follows: Boris Johnson as Lurcio, a Roman slave in the British TV series *UP Pompeii* (1969-1991) who usually tends to get into ridiculous situations. The depiction, hence, is employed to draw attention to Johnson's perceived flaws or shortcomings. He is leading a group of his Tories members, making a V-victory sign as usual, and saying "NO ... TITTER YE NOT, MISSUS!"²⁵⁸ The phrase is a combination of two of Lurcio's catchphrases, "Oooh no, missus" and "titter ye not". These phrases are used by Brown in the cartoon to highlight Johnson's dismissive and trivializing attitude towards the seriousness of the pandemic and its impact on the country, so the government's actions during the pandemic lead to mockery and laughing. Thus, the cartoonist is suggesting that Johnson's leadership is worthy of ridicule and condemnation, and that his pandemic policies are harming the country in various ways, politically, educationally, in health and economically, at least. Secondly, Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education between 2019 and 2021, is visually portrayed as Private Pike's character in *Dad's Army* (1968-1977), who was always referred to as stupid and dumb. Dominic Cummings, on the other hand, is then presented as Vyvyan, from *The Young Ones* (1982-1984), a character known for his psychopathic, sociopathic, sadistic, aggressive and unruly behavior. Michael Gove comes next, he is depicted as Tubbs, or Tulip, from *League of Gentlemen* (1999-2002), a serial killer character known for being ruthless and deceptive. Finally, Matt Hancock is rendered as Tony Hancock in the radio and TV comic series *Hancock's Half Hour* (1954-1961).

All of the characters metaphorically represent perceived flaws or shortcomings of the Conservative politicians and Johnson's cabinet, such as Johnson's tendency to get into ridiculous situations, Williamson's perceived lack of intellectual keenness, Cummings' aggressive and

²⁵⁸ A titter is "a short, half-suppressed, laugh". 'A nervous titter going through the congregation' suggests that a speaker has made a comment that was not appropriate to the occasion but with which most people sympathized (https://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin_board/27/messages/611.html).

unmanageable behavior, Gove's alleged deceitfulness and ruthlessness and Hancock's perceived incompetence. Brown, thus, used these characters to satirize or criticize the Conservative right-wing politicians and their policies in a comedic or satirical way. Figure 4.116 illustrates the original photos of those characters.

(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)

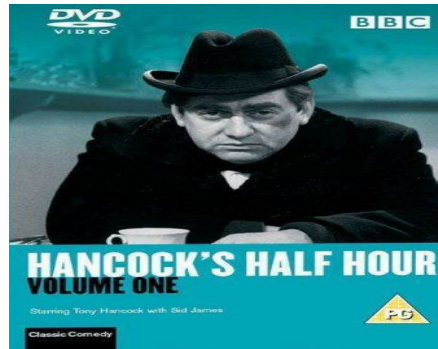


Figure 4.116 The main comic characters in cartoon 3.22 have been inspired by:

- 1- Lurcio in *UP Pompeii* (1969-1991)
- 2- Private Pike in *Dad's Army* (1968-1977)
- 3- Vyvyan in *The Young Ones* (1982-1984)
- 4- Tubbs, or Tulip (the wife), in *League of Gentlemen* (1999-2002)
- 5- Tony Hancock in *Hancock's Half Hour* (1954-1961)

In this cartoon, the conceptual metaphor 'THE UK'S CONSERVATIVE RIGHT-WING POLITICIANS ARE COMIC PERFORMERS/COMEDIANS' is activated from a set of metaphorical sub-mappings that are expressed next:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE HEAD OF THE COMIC PERFORMERS.
- THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S COVID-19 POLICIES ARE TV SITCOMS.
- THE UK HOUSE OF COMMONS IS THE STAGE.
- THE TORIES ARE COMEDIANS.
- THE UK'S PARLIAMENT MEMBERS ARE A COMIC SHOW AUDIENCE.

Before coming to the final evaluation of the cartoon, the compositional elements also add more to the communicative intention of the cartoon; for instance, the framing element suggests a connection between the characters and signifies their group identity as right-wing politicians. According to all the above-mentioned details, Brown's attitude towards the British Conservative Party and its leaders is critical and negative; he is highlighting what he perceives as the absurdities and flaws in their ill-conceived policies and actions, particularly in response to COVID-19. In this way, the cartoon as a whole serves as a sharp critique of the right-wing government and its policies,

drawing attention to the drastic consequences of their actions through humor and satire. The cartoon is regarded as a direct critical attack to the right wing of the Conservative party.

- **Cartoon 3.23**



Figure 4.117 Dave Brown's cartoon about Boris Johnson's warning message to his country to "flatten the hump" of the virus, *The Independent*, September 17, 2020

This cartoon was published after Boris Johnson's interview with *The Sun*²⁵⁹ on 17 September 2020, declaring a bundle of tough restrictions and warning messages to his people to stop the surge of the virus and to, as he said, "arrest the spike, stop the second hump of the dromedary, flatten the second hump... Dromedary or camel? I can't remember if it is a dromedary or a camel that has two humps? Umm. Please check". So, according to this warning message and the 'flatten the hump' metaphor employed in Johnson's speech, Brown, the cartoonist, made a successful use of the ANIMAL source domain. The dromedary's hump metaphor employed by Johnson in his speech, as mentioned above, is portrayed by Brown to essentially provoke the conceptual metaphor 'MORE IS UP', comparing the second wave of the virus to the dromedary's humps that must be flattened, resulting in 'ENGLAND'S TRAJECTORY OF RESURGENT TRANSMISSION OF THE VIRUS IS TO FLATTEN A CAMEL HUMP'. The cartoon makes use of a non-transactional process in which there is no other participant to contact and no direct eye contact with the viewers, either.

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<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-8741531/Stop-virus-surge-protect-Christmas-warns-PM-restrictions-expected.html>

The cartoon renders Johnson asking the camel or the dromedary to pass through the eye of the needle, and saying “C’MON... HUP! HUP!!”, the needle is oversized in this image to convey the informational value that Brown attempts to convey. The camel passing through the eye of the needle eye is a religious intertextual reference to a verse from the Gospel of Matthew (19:23-24)²⁶⁰, which is a religious domain, comparing the impossibility of the camel going through the eye of the needle to the difficulty of the rich entering the kingdom of God. In this aspect, stopping the virus’s surge and flattening the virus infections rate is regarded as impossible as having the camel pass through the eye of the needle. So, what does the needle symbolize in this context? Indeed it is probably suggested that Johnson’s world-beating system of testing is the eye of the needle, in which it is impossible to let the camel pass through the second wave and the increase in the viral infection. Thus, this explains the caption at the top of the cartoon, TESTING TARGET..., which instantiates the metaphors ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S TESTING SYSTEM IS TO FLATTEN THE DROMEDARY’S HUMP’, and ‘THE GOVERNMENT’S CONTROL OF THE VIRUS SURGE IS TO MAKE A CAMEL PASS THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE’.

In addition to the camel’s hump image utilized, Brown’s cartoon also relies on a GAME HUNTING scenario, visually portraying Johnson as a grouse hunter who is riding a camel, holding a hunting rifle and with a sombrero on his head. The presentation of Johnson wearing the sombrero is a sarcastic reference to Johnson’s “squash the sombrero” metaphor which was first introduced in his speech on 12 March 2020²⁶¹. The sombrero visual metaphor represents the line graphs that display the virus data and the rate of infections and fatalities reported, whereas squashing the sombrero suggests Johnson’s government’s attempts to control the virus surge. These attempts imply the government’s restrictive rules and the national lockdowns which are visually metaphorized as squashing the hat, then to flatten the rising line in statistics. In this regard, Charteris-Black (2021:139) asserts that “‘Flattening the curve’, ‘squashing the sombrero’ and other colourful versions such as ‘the hump of the dromedary’ were all novel metaphors based on

²⁶⁰ 23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich (*plousios*) to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich (*plousios*) to enter the kingdom of God.” [Matthew 19:23-24]

²⁶¹ This refers to the metaphorical representation that was used by the British PM to compare the first wave of the virus in England to a sombrero hat, ‘THE FIRST WAVE OF THE VIRUS SPREAD IS A SOMBRERO HAT’. The metaphor that implicitly conveys the government’s message to its public to obey the national lockdown suggests the conceptual metaphor ‘OBEYING THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN IS TO SQUASH A SOMBRERO HAT’.

the shape of line graphs displaying data on Coronavirus. These were widely used to refer to the numbers of cases and fatalities on the y-scale and time on the x-scale”.

Back to the contextual knowledge and the interactive aspects of Brown’s cartoon, it is relevant to mention that grouse hunters typically shoot the grouse while walking, whereas in this cartoon Johnson was rendered riding a camel and making a mess around, this unusual image thus arouses the metaphorical expression ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS A FAILED GROUSE HUNTER’, as he ignores the basic rules of conducting the issue. Moreover, analyzing other details and elements, such as the number of grouse on the ground and the characters’ facial expressions, they have their relevance within the image for the interpretation. For instance, the depiction of some grouse being shot and scattered around proposes the metaphor ‘BRITS ARE GROUSE TO PRACTISE SHOOTING IN JOHNSON’S GOVERNMENT’S TESTING SYSTEM’, which suggests that Johnson’s systems are incompetent and may lead to many fatal mistakes. Also, the facial expressions of Johnson and the camel reveal the difficulty of the situation and the impossibility to achieve the target since the system has been poorly conceived; the camel is portrayed angry and refusing to obey Johnson, whose facial features are unclear. He, thus, expresses his ignorance and lack of awareness of the seriousness of the situation as a whole (covered eyes for unawareness), and the things scattered on the ground, dead grouse, camel manure, and empty cartridges have their communicative function in uncovering the shambles of Johnson’s rules (testing systems, easing lockdowns, internal problems with different areas in the north, and many others).

Additionally, the placement of the needle at the right part of the cartoon represents the New information the cartoonist intends to emphasize in this zone, and the oversize of the needle also signifies the serious difficulty that Johnson’s system encounters. Thus, the fusion of the grouse hunting scene with the camel passing through the eye of a needle adds a ridiculous flavor to the whole image, Brown is implicitly criticizing the world-beating system as fragile and Johnson’s responsibility for handling the crisis, which results in a mess. This scenario inevitably unveils Brown’s negative evaluation of Johnson’s world-beating system and his incompetency to handle the crisis, which ignites the metaphors ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S COVID-19 TESTING SYSTEM IS A SHAMBLES’ and ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S COVID-19 TESTING SYSTEM IS A CHAOTIC GROUSE HUNT’.

- Cartoon 3.24

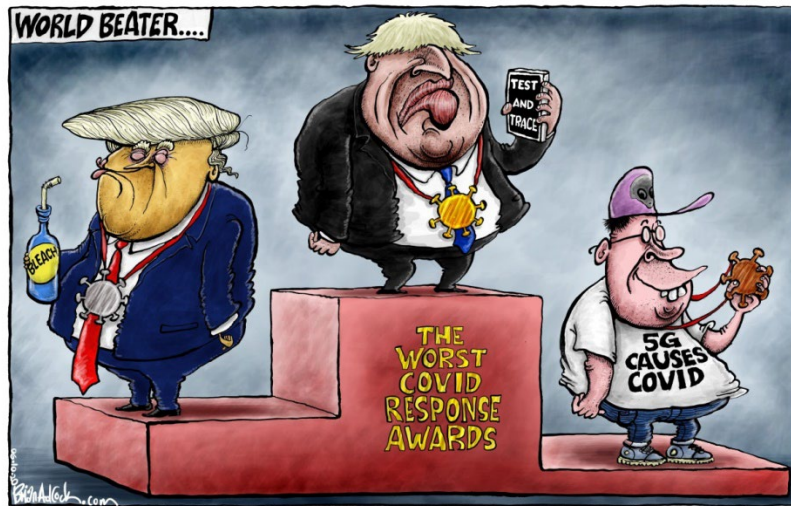


Figure 4.118 Brian Adcock’s cartoon on Boris Johnson’s getting the gold medal at fighting COVID-19, published in *The Independent*, October 6, 2020

Adcock’s cartoon relies upon the source domains COMPETITION and GAME, which resorts to the conceptual metaphors ‘POLITICS IS COMPETITION’ and ‘POLITICIANS ARE COMPETITORS’. This time, the image is featured to represent the last step in any competition, which is the announcement of the winner and awarding the medals to the competitors. The cartoon, according to this image, is an illustration of awarding medals to the WORLD BEATER at having given THE WORST COVID RESPONSE AWARDS, as inscribed on the left-top part of the image and on the podium, as a response to the challenge faced by the world leaders in the COVID-19 crisis. In the image, Adcock has depicted three leaders as athletes competing in a race, where each one represents a different award. The image is a non-transactional narrative structure in which the three participants as actors share no vector or direct eye contact, as the goal of their action is to win the gold medal in the competition.

The characters in the cartoon, from the right of the image, are Xi Jinping, Donald Trump and Boris Johnson. The president of the People’s Republic of China, Xi Jinping, has come third with

a 5G CAUSES COVID²⁶² message written on his shirt, which uncovers Adcock's criticism against Jinping's spreading of misinformation about the virus, particularly his claims that 5G technologies are the cause of the virus, which proved not to be true. This is a reference to a conspiracy theory that circulated online publicly, claiming that the rollout of 5G networks was the reason behind the rapid spread of the virus. The second-place award goes to Donald Trump, who is rendered holding a bottle of bleach. Trump's portrayal is a humorous reference to his statement made during a press briefing where he suggested that injecting disinfectant or bleach could help kill the virus, which was widely criticized by medical experts and advisors²⁶³. Then, the first-place award goes to Johnson, who is depicted holding an object with the message TEST AND TRACE on it, the program publicly criticized for its slow response and inadequate results.

Furthermore, other semiotic elements also make their contribution to the analysis of the cartoon, for instance body posture and placement can serve as a semiotic tool of meaning, and can also be seen as a metonymic representation of these leaders' attitudes. As such, the way Xi Jinping and Donald Trump compete against each other with their postures (turning their, turning their backs on each other for indifference and degradation instead of facing the audience. Johnson, on the other hand, is portrayed with a depressed and discontented posture which may reflect his perceived failure in implementing his program (depressed-looking face for failure). Moreover, the central position of Johnson with a higher rank in comparison to the two other leaders conveys informational value that Johnson is the winner in the race of the worst response to the virus.

So, this visual depiction exhibits the cartoonist's evaluation on Johnson's test and trace system regarding it as the worst response to COVID-19 ever. The whole image activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM IS THE WINNER IN THE WORST RESPONSE TO THE VIRUS AWARDS'. This metaphor is triggered from a set of some other individual metaphors, as follows: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S RESPONSE TO THE VIRUS IS THE WORST PERFORMANCE IN THE WORLD COMPETITION', 'FAILED LEADERS ARE THE WORST ATHLETES', and 'LEADERS' RESPONSES TO THE VIRUS ARE A POLITICAL AWARD/A COMPETITION'.

²⁶² This refers to a conspiracy theory that links the emergence of COVID-19 with 5G technology. The following article addressed this issue more extensively: <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1329878X20952165>.

²⁶³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/04/24/disinfectant-injection-coronavirus-trump/>

- Cartoon 3.25



Figure 4.119 Dave Brown's cartoon about the northern lockdown and Boris Johnson's tiered system, published in *The Independent*, October 9, 2020



Figure 4.120 Gustave Doré's illustration of the famous windmill scene in *Don Quixote*

The cartoon shown in figure 4.119 was published by Dave Brown for *The Independent* as a response to the crisis that erupted between the Northern regions and the government after the latter's intention to impose stricter lockdown measures on these areas without providing additional

financial support. In the image given, Dave Brown made a humorous allusion to one of the famous illustrations by Gustave Doré. The visual allusion to the windmill scene in the classic novel *Don Quixote*²⁶⁴ by Miguel de Cervantes was utilized as the source domain of Brown's cartoon. Before delving into the details of the metaphorical representations in the cartoon, it must be said that the image contains a non-transactional narrative process, Boris Johnson is the represented participant. There is no direct eye contact between Johnson and the phenomenon, and the image has no interactive meaning with the viewers.

The cartoon, thus, was framed with an inscription at the bottom that reads DONKEY SCROTI, which is likely a pun on the original novel title *Don Quixote*, representing a satirical attitude towards Johnson's stance towards the Northern regions and the stringent measures it imposed on people. The pun manipulated in the textual frame of the cartoons has two probable interpretations:

1. It might suggest a ridiculous reference to the movie *Donkey Xote*, a "3D computer-animated children's film broadcasted in 2007 and produced by Lumiq Studios"²⁶⁵, as shown in figure 4.121 below. This interpretation is the closest to the cartoon's context in that Matt Hancock in the cartoon is visually rendered as Rucio, the donkey of Sancho Panza, Don Quixote's squire, and how it wished to be the horse of Don Quixote.
2. The other reference of the pun in the cartoon is DONKEY SCROTI, which is the latinized plural form of 'scrotum'.

²⁶⁴ A novel written in two parts (1605-1615) by Miguel de Cervantes, regarded as a satirical reference to the chivalric romances. The story begins in a Spanish village located in La Mancha, where a gentleman's fascination with chivalric novels inspires him to become a knight-errant and to adopt the name Don Quixote. The novel dealt with his adventures (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Don-Quixote-novel>).

²⁶⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donkey_Xote



Figure 4.121 The original theatrical poster of the movie *Donkey Xote*

Brown in his cartoon adds a ridiculous flavor to Gustave Doré's windmills scene by depicting Johnson riding Rucio the donkey instead of his horse Rocinante, and charging at a small signboard which reads THE WINDMILL instead of fighting a windmill, as in the original scene, with a long spear. The signpost belongs to a pub, that traditional British local institution, as these were affected by the lockdown and owners were afraid they might have to close down. Johnson is attacked to the point of bleeding by the pub defending itself.

Strikingly, Johnson is observed carrying various unrelated items, such as an umbrella, a saucepan, a rubbish bin lid for a shield and a spear, presumably to defend himself against the alleged giant. He is wearing a shin protector, used in cricket, as part of his armor, which cannot protect him. Additionally, the use of an umbrella instead of his sword, besides the shin protector and the pub sign, are all loaded with traditional British referents dating many years back. There is no doubt that such idiosyncratic portrayal suggests that Johnson is ill-prepared and employing inappropriate ways to defeat the spread of the virus in the north.

Thus, Brown's cartoon has the following metaphorical sub-mappings inferred from the metaphorical illustration:

- THE NORTHERN REGIONS ARE A PUB'S SIGNBOARD.

- BORIS JOHNSON IS DON QUIXOTE FIGHTING THE SIGNBOARD OF A PUB.
- MATT HANCOCK IS DON QUIXOTE’S DONKEY, RUCIO.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S MEASURES AND POLICIES OF A LOCKDOWN IN THE NORTH ARE TRIFLING AND INEFFECTIVE WEAPONS.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S MISHANDLING OF THE NORTHERN LOCKDOWNS IS AN UNREALISTIC FIGHT WITH A PUB’S SIGNBOARD.

These sub-mappings activate the conceptual metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S APPROACH TO THE NORTHERN LOCKDOWN IS A DELUSIONAL STRUGGLE WITH A NON-EXISTING FOE’. Thus, Brown’s portrayal of Johnson and Hancock suggests that Johnson is not competent to make decisions about the Northern lockdown measures and lacks wisdom.

- **Cartoon 3.26**



Figure 4.122 Brian Adcock’s cartoon about the COVID-19 tier system and Boris Johnson, published in *The Independent*, October 12, 2020



Figure 4.123 A screenshot of Donkey Kong video game

This cartoon was published by Brian Adcock for *The Independent* on October 13th, 2020, one day after Boris Johnson’s announcement of the new three-tier rules system for COVID-19 restrictions in England, the same topic already discussed in cartoons 1.19 and 2.18. Depending on the general metaphors ‘DISEASE TREATMENT IS A COMPETITION’ and ‘THE CONFRONTATION OF THE VIRUS IS A GAME’, Adcock portrays his cartoon relying on the source domain of a game image, specifically the visual intertextual reference to the video game Donkey Kong²⁶⁶, to metaphorically configure the levels of the tiered system imposed on the UK in October.

With a more humorous hint, Adcock renamed the game DONKEY KOVID instead of “Donkey Kong”, referring to the confrontation between Johnson’s government and the Corona virus. Thus, Johnson is portrayed as a jumping man/Mario who attempts to navigate through the three levels while avoiding the barrels that the grim reaper throws at him. The barrels are shaped like the virus over which Johnson has to jump to achieve his goal and to win the game. Accordingly, the cartoon is structured as a non-transactional image where characters have no vector or relations through direct eye contact. The represented participants (Johnson and the grim reaper) have no vector linking each other or to the viewers which suggest that the image is structured to express the action is being done.

Concerning the visual details and metaphorical implications, each level in the game becomes progressively more difficult and has extra challenges and obstacles. Thus, the levels of the British

²⁶⁶ <https://www.indieretronews.com/2017/11/donkey-kong-classic-game-is-hopefully.html>

tier system are metaphorically presented as the levels (girders) of the game, with inscriptions reading TIER ONE, TIER TWO and TIER THREE, and they indicate the difficulty of each level in the system. As shown in Adcock's cartoon, the tiers are increasingly difficult, with more obstacles and a higher number of coronavirus figures, denoting the severity of each level. The first tier is the easiest one, while the third is the most severe, with too many hurdles for Johnson to be able to get over them. Thus, the whole image can be metaphorically analyzed as follows:

- FIGHTING THE VIRUS IS A COMPETITION.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS MARIO/A JUMPING MAN.
- DEATH, PERSONIFIED AS A GRIM REAPER, IS DONKEY KONG.
- COVID-19 IS A NUMBER OF OBSTACLES.
- THE THREE-TIER SYSTEM LEVELS ARE GIRDERS TO OVERCOME.
- DEATH TOLLS ARE THE SCORES OF THE GAME.

In addition to what has been discussed above, the interactive meaning is achieved through the actor's gaze, social distance and power relations. No direct gaze exists between the participants, nor with the viewers. The distance between Johnson and the grim reaper suggests that Johnson's tiered system is far from getting its targets because of the gravity of the situation. There is no doubt that depicting the virus at the third level with a much higher number of COVID-shaped barrels – seven– than those in level one –just one– and two –three barrels– suggests the broader prevalence of the virus in comparison to other low tiers.. Moreover, the vertical angle also shown in the high-low position of the participants in the cartoon signifies that the virus is dominant, superordinate, while Johnson is subservient and vulnerable.

Finally, the compositional salient aspects, such as color, also have its effective role in the communicative meaning of the cartoon, for instance, the blue color of the girders has a compositional value in which it is used to represent the responsibility of the British Conservative Party for the restrictive system. Furthermore, the top-bottom structure in the image also signifies the 'ideal' results of the game, which is a negative score (-9.70623) representing the success of the virus and the losses Johnson's government encountered during the pandemic. Approaching -10 also either suggests a rising number of infections or of death tolls. Thus, the integration of words

and visual elements shows Adcock's negative stance towards Johnson's tier system, activating the metaphor 'THE TIER SYSTEM IS A FAILING GAME'.

- **Cartoon 3.27**



Figure 4.124 Dave Brown's cartoon on Boris Johnson's Circuit Breaking, published in *The Independent*, October 14, 2020

Dave Brown drew this cartoon for *The Independent*, after a revelation of documents by SAGE which exposed that the scientific advisors had warned the government to implement a two-week lockdown (also known as a Circuit Breaker)²⁶⁷ as far back as September 21st. The advisors were concerned about potential drastic consequences if their advice was disregarded. However, their advice was not heeded and Johnson only introduced limited measures such as a 10 p.m. curfew for pubs, recommendations for people to work from home and stricter restrictions in areas that were hit hardest by the pandemic²⁶⁸. The term 'circuit breaker', as Charteris-Black (2021:146) suggests, has a positive connotation which conveys the notion of protection and safety. Moreover, in the

²⁶⁷ A circuit breaker in the COVID-19 context refers to a short-term, partial suspension of specific activities and industries implemented to decrease social contact and curb the transmission of the virus. These interventions and measures are typically instituted for a predetermined period and may entail prohibitions on group gatherings, closure of non-critical businesses and travel limitations (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circuit-breakers-implementing-partial-lockdown-for-2-weeks-over-half-term-24-september-2020>).

²⁶⁸ For more details, visit this website: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/keir-starmer-urges-pm-to-impose-circuit-breaker-lockdown-on-england>.

context of COVID-19, this term is elucidated by analogical connection “with the more familiar metaphor of fire-breaker” (2021:148).

On the left top part of the cartoon, a caption reads CIRCUIT BREAKER..., which indicates the cartoon targets and visually discloses that Brown has based his cartoon upon the source domains MACHINES and TOOLS to address Johnson’s government’s mechanisms in implementing the measures or releasing the lockdowns. The cartoon has a non-transactional narrative structure; Johnson and Cummings are the represented participants. The cartoon exhibits no eye contact between the two characters. The close-up shot of this cartoon assists in capturing the intended meaning of the cartoonist and analyses the facial expressions of Johnson and Cummings. The characters’ faces also have their contribution to the conceptualization of the characters’ attitudes and feelings as they cue the metonym GESTURES FOR FEELINGS. Johnson, the protagonist, is cued as frustrated, inactive and totally damaged, as seen by means of the smoke leaking out of his damaged body, and saliva leaks out of his mouth, which implies lack of control and energy. Cummings looks angry and dissatisfied with SAGE’s attempts to repair the disruptive physical harm the government has caused, which possibly means SAGE’s calls for a national lockdown circuit breaker and to follow scientific counsel.

Delving into the metaphorical representation of the setting of the cartoon and the represented characters shows that Johnson has been rendered as a damaged machine (damaged PM for damaged system) with a malfunctioning electric circuit on his back and a spanner inscribed with SAGE trying to repair the damage caused in the machine. This suggests that Johnson, since he is the head of the government, is a failure and so is his government as well. Strikingly, Dominic Cummings is depicted as a broken light bulb-like head coming out of Johnson’s head. The image hence shows the following metaphorical representations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS A MALFUNCTIONING CIRCUIT BREAKER MACHINE.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS IS BORIS JOHNSON’S MIND.
- DOMINIC CUMMINGS’ ROLE IN THE COVID-13 MEASURES IS A PHYSICAL HARM THAT DESTROYS JOHNSON’S CORRECT DECISIONS.
- SAGE IS THE SPANNER TO REPAIR THE PHYSICAL DAMAGE.

- BORIS JOHNSON'S INDIFFERENCE TO THE SAGE CALLS IS LEADING TO A PHYSICAL DAMAGE IN THE WHOLE SYSTEM.

Furthermore, other significant semiotic elements also have their interactive and compositional meaning and influence on explaining the metaphorical representations utilized by Brown, for instance, the characters' position, distance, and sizes. There is no doubt that showing Cummings as a broken light bulb is regarded as a satirical evaluation of his ideological influence on Johnson. Elmore & Luna-Lucero (2017) contend in this field about the bulb metaphor that 'IDEAS ARE LIGHT BULBS', thus, the existence of Cummings inside Johnson's head is a symbolic reference to his ideological influence on Johnson and it regards him as Johnson's mastermind. This depiction in turn is based on the conceptual metaphor 'IDEAS ARE PEOPLE', which means that the ideas and insights are representations of their creators. Thus the close-up shot of Johnson with a left angle while SAGE is depicted in the right angle on Johnson's back. This depiction unveils the cartoonist's negative evaluation on Johnson handling the crisis and it supports the advice proposed by the medical and health sectors.

Finally, this cartoon reveals Brown's critical stance towards Johnson's government's ignorance of the demands for an urgent national 'circuit breaker' proposed by SAGE to curb the prevalence of the virus and the disastrous consequences of this. Moreover, the image uncovers the negative evaluation on Johnson's leadership, regarding him as the cause of physical and real damage during the pandemic, suggesting that he is vulnerable and thoroughly governed by Cummings. According to what has been discussed above, the cartoon as a whole evokes the metaphors 'THE CONSERVATIVES' FAILING DECISION IS CAUSING A DRASTIC PHYSICAL DAMAGE IN THE WHOLE SYSTEM' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S DISREGARD FOR SAGE'S CIRCUIT BREAKER ADVICE IS A VERY SERIOUS PHYSICAL DAMAGE TO THE COUNTRY'.

- Cartoon 3.28



Figure 4.125 Dave Brown's cartoon about corruption in the British Government and the Test and Trace system, published in *The Independent*, October 15, 2020



Figure 4.126 John Heartfield's photo DER SINN DES HITLER GRUSSES, in English THE MEANING OF HITLER'S SALUTE, October 1932²⁶⁹

This cartoon was published for *The Independent* as a result to the reports included in the media with ongoing criticism of Johnson's expenditure of £12 billion on the Test and Trace system.

²⁶⁹ <https://www.everypicture.org/the-meaning-of-the-hilter-salute->

Furthermore, the scandal badly influenced the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), in which some important leaked documents reported that the private sector consultants were paid up to £7,000 a day by Johnson's government to work on the Test and Trace system. As a result of a scything criticism on this resounding scandal against Johnson's policy, Brown and many cartoonists illustrate it in their artworks. Thus, Brown's cartoon in figure 4.125 portrayed this scandal by utilizing an intertextual reference to one of hundreds of works done by John Heartfield in the 1920s and 1930s²⁷⁰.

This visual allusion works to satirically render Johnson's alleged support of the health sector. In figure 4.125, Johnson is visually depicted as Adolf Hitler in Heartfield's photo, standing in front of a large cat, which seemingly represents the private consultants, as shown in the dangling identification tag 'Felix Stout, PRIVATE CONSULTANT, TEST & TRACE'. The over-sized cat is portrayed taking money from Johnson instead of handing over money to him. It is important also to notice the anthropomorphic features of the large cat: he is wearing a suit and tie and smoking a cigar, both of these are common signs of wealth, prosperity and huge profits. The cartoon is a non-transactional narrative image, wherein two represented participants have been presented. The cartoon shows no direct eye contact between them. The interactive process highlights the social distance between the two participants, which is very close; this close-up shot signifies their intimacy and Johnson's support of the private consultants.

But what are the main similarities and differences between Heartfield and Brown? The analysis of the visual elements reveals the following points:

1. In Brown's, the money passes from Johnson's government to the health industries, not as with Hitler's image, which also suggests the suspicious stance of Brown concerning Johnson's financial funding for the NHS sector.
2. Johnson cannot use his right hand for clapping because he is too busy giving public money to the industrialists in the health sector, whereas Hitler is not using the other hand, since

²⁷⁰ He was a Germanic visual artist, graphic artist and photographer and poster designer. Heartfield was considered as a leading defender among the Dadaists of photomontage. Politically, he was commonly known for his extremely scathing critique of Adolph Hitler and the third Reich as he was a member of the German Communist Party. Hence, his artworks and stances were thoroughly directed towards criticizing Hitler's regime in Germany at the time. For more information, visit this site: https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Heartfield.

the image presents his iconic posture raising one hand, as in figure 4.127. Harvey (2014) comments on Hitler's body language in the following terms: "Hitler standing with his hands open as he looks toward the sky and makes a facial expression which appears almost frightened or confused. His hands are positioned as if he has just thrown a basketball". Along this line, Brown depicted Johnson clapping with a single hand, as the phrase written above him, which reads THE SOUND OF ONE HAND CLAPPING FOR CARERS, is an ironic hint to Johnson's support for the NHS during what was called then THE CLAP FOR OUR CARERS²⁷¹ campaign in the UK. The phrase was changed by Brown to express his negative assessment towards Johnson's support for the NHS, as clapping with one hand causes no sound effect, which metonymically stands for the worthless and ridiculous effect of his applause (no perceptible support with just one hand clapping).

Both images have the same textual caption as such, in Heartfield's German phrase "Millionen stehen hinter mir!" and its English equivalent in Brown's image 'Millions stand behind me!', which both seemingly imply the popular masses that stand behind Johnson, as he claimed, and Hitler, whereas in reality the two artists uncover the suspicious deals of bribes and illegal payment by Johnson and Hitler. Thus, this aspect reveals Brown's skepticism about Johnson's public praise for the NHS staff and carers as insincere or hypocritical, because he is outsourcing some NHS services to private companies, and not providing adequate funding and support for the public healthcare system.

3. About the consultant's name, 'Felix' (similar to 'feline'; the scientific name is *felis silvestris catus*) is commonly used for cats, and he is Stout²⁷² because the private consultants do not work as hard as the NHS workers or the home carers, rather they obtain much more financial funds in comparison to other workers. These funds, in this context, are symbolically regarded as food given to stout cats as a result of hardly moving.

²⁷¹ This was a campaign in support for health carers in the UK. It was regarded as a thanking expression organized as a national show of appreciation for those in the care homes and hospitals (<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-johnson-idUKKBN21Y34I>).

²⁷² A term that refers to a bulky and fat body, as in a stout bird or a stout cat (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stout>).



Figure 4.127 Hitler's famous body language

Moreover, the other interactive and compositional elements also have their vital roles in the communicative meaning of the cartoon. For instance, in the power relation, the vertical angle that exhibits the high and low relation suggests dominance and vulnerability. Thus, the private consultants are more dominant and powerful, whereas the PM looks smaller and lower in his zone, which suggests his vulnerability and subservience. The compositional aspects, on the other hand, also contribute to this notion through the difference in size and position.

The cartoon as a whole shows the following metaphorical configurations:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS ADOLF HITLER.
- BRITISH PRIVATE CONSULTANTS FOR THE TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM ARE A LARGE CAT/FELINE.
- BORIS JOHNSON'S INCONSISTENT BOOST TO THE NHS IS A CLAP WITH ONE HAND.

This configuration typically suggests two metaphors which interplay with each other, and uncovers the cartoonist's criticism of Johnson's applause, which was supposed to show appreciation or support but which is ultimately insufficient or insincere, 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INEFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR THE BRITISH NHS IS A ONE-HANDED CLAP' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S MULTIFACETED GOVERNMENT IS A SPONSOR OF CORRUPTION'.

- Cartoon 3.29



Figure 4.128 Brian Adcock's cartoon on the UK's tiered system, published in *The Independent*, October 19, 2020

This cartoon was published for *The Independent* by the cartoonist Brian Adcock, on October 19th 2020, after days of announcing the Government's local alert levels, namely the 'three tiers system', as already configured in cartoons 1.19, 2.18, and 3.26. Adcock in his cartoon based the context of the image on the source domains CREATION and DESTRUCTION, to metaphorically illustrate the inefficiency of Johnson's system and how badly it had been imposed on various local areas in the UK. Commencing with the target of the image, the inscription written at the top left side, THE TEAR SYSTEM..., is a wordplay by Adcock to satirically denote the British TIER SYSTEM. Strikingly, this pun is also later used by *The Times'* cartoonist, Peter Brookes, in his cartoon on 27th November, 2020, as shown in cartoon 1.24. Both cartoonists criticized Johnson's tiered system by employing that satirical wordplay on 'tier' and 'tear'. It is relevant to mention here that Adcock in this cartoon used the word 'tear' instead either to denote the grave dangers faced by those responsible for implementing and maintaining a system which looks fragile, or to show that this system would lead the country into pain, grief and unpleasant ends.

The cartoon contains a non-transactional narrative structure in which the three characters in the image are performing the same action of weeping. There is no direct eye-contact between each other and the close-up shot reveals their facial expressions of failure and vulnerability. The theme

of this depiction is the tiered system, which is rendered as a large ramshackle pyramid-like structure with the levels of severity, wherein Boris Johnson, Dominic Cummings and Michael Gove are weeping bitterly and attempting to prevent the pyramid from falling down. There is no doubt that the symbolism of the falling parts from a building or the existence of cracks in the structure suggests the weaknesses and flaws in the building. Thus, Adcock's depiction of the British tiered system as a ramshackle cracked pyramid highlights its fragility to encounter the unprecedented spread of the virus. Moreover, this rendering of politicians weeping suggests the Conservative Party's failure in implementing and maintaining the tiered system. The weeping facial expression, accordingly, is a symbolic reference to a government's failure in achieving its goals.

Furthermore, the position of the characters in the image has a compositional meaning that affects the analysis of the cartoon and the interpretation stage. Thus, the informational value has been depicted through placing Johnson in the center while other characters are in the margins, coinciding with what Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) contend in their seminal work:

A central object or idea, placed in the centre of the visual space, is the Carrier, and in which the Possessive Attributes are arranged around this centre and connected to it by non-vectorial lines, forming some kind of star diagram. We call these connected analytical structures. It is the structure of mind maps and concept maps.

Thus, Johnson's central position in the image reveals his importance as the head of the government and being in charge of all measures and policies implemented at the time. This positional centrality basically triggers the metonymic expression IMPORTANT FOR CENTRAL. Also, the color and size of the structure signifies the severity of the proliferation of the virus, the oversized structure reveals its significance and each tier of it has its own color connected to the severity of the virus.

Consequently, the cartoon, with all its details and elements, triggers the metaphors 'THE BRITISH TIERED SYSTEM IS A CRACKED PYRAMID' and 'THE LACK OF EFFICIENCY IN THE BRITISH TIERED SYSTEM IS A HALF-DESTRUCTED STRUCTURE'. These two metaphors could be interpreted as a reference to Johnson's unstable and fragile systems during the pandemic, which have a harmful effect on people and the government.

- Cartoon 3.30



Figure 4.129 Brian Adcock's cartoon about Boris Johnson's fight with Marcus Rashford over the free meals for school children, *The Independent*, October 25, 2020

As shown previously in cartoons 2.8 and 3.12, this cartoon is a visual depiction of the fight between Boris Johnson and Marcus Rashford over free meals for children. The cartoon relies on a historical reference to the Queen of France from 1774 to 1793, Marie Antoinette; Johnson has been rendered wearing blue to represent the British Conservative Party (represented participant). Johnson is shown apathetically shrugging off Rashford, who stands behind him in despair, saying "LET THEM EAT TORY IDEOLOGY!" while holding a sign reading UNIVERSAL CREDIT²⁷³. And that's your lot! Behind the represented characters, three children are seen waiting behind a window in rainy weather, indicating they are in need of help (backgrounding). The visual depiction and the verbal captions suggest that, instead of offering more public jobs, or implementing other social measures, Johnson's government decided to raise this universal credit twenty pounds a

²⁷³ Universal credit is "a payment for people over 18 but under State Pension age who are on a low income or out of work. It includes support for the cost of housing, children and childcare, and financial support for people with disabilities, carers and people too ill to work". More information on this in this site: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/universal-credit#:~:text=Universal%20Credit%20is%20a%20payment,people%20too%20ill%20to%20work>.

week. As Rashford supported the poor in the previous crisis, Johnson is now telling him that his government is also in favor of helping the poor, although by using questionable measures, such as this. Beyond that, they must eat Tory ideology without complaining. On the other hand, with this system the children in the street have no future and no real chances.

Upon closer investigation of Adcock's cartoon, it is evident that the visual metaphor IN-OUT is employed to convey the cartoonist's hidden motifs and ideas. The image depicts the disadvantaged school children outside while Johnson remains inside; invoking the conceptual metaphor 'OUT IS BAD'. This suggests that Johnson's treatment of the UK's citizens or those in need is harmful and lacking care, as implied by the metaphorical representation 'LACK OF CARE IS OUT OF PLACE'. Moreover, other elements in the interactive and compositional meanings also have their roles, for instance, the cartoon reveals no interaction exists between Johnson, who is the represented participant, and the children and Rashford as the interactive participants. Johnson is giving his back to them as a way of showing negligence and apathy. The same notion has been reinforced through the social distance between Johnson and the children and the oblique angle between them, which represents the detachment from the world of the participants. Moreover, Johnson has been posed in the foreground while the children are in the background; the long distance between Johnson and the children is a reflection of the impersonal relation and the absence of real intimacy between the leader and his citizens. In regard to this perspective, the cartoon exposes the cartoonist's negative evaluation on Johnson's real support for his people during the crisis.

Thus, the whole scenario is based on the following sub-mappings:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE QUEEN OF FRANCE MARIE ANTOINETTE.
- POOR BRITISH SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE STARVING SUBJECTS.
- MARCUS RASHFORD'S FREE SCHOOL MEALS PLEA IS THE DEMANDS OF FRENCH REVOLUTIONARIES.
- TORY IDEOLOGY IS FOOD TO BE CONSUMED BY THE STARVING CHILDREN.

But what is more essential in this cartoon is the historical intertextuality between the cartoon and the words supposedly uttered by Marie Antoinette, "Let them eat cake". This yields the conceptual metaphor 'IDEOLOGICAL SIMILARITY IS PHYSICAL RESEMBLANCE'. The

metaphor suggests that there are perceived similarities between Johnson and the French queen based on their political beliefs and actions. For instance, just as Marie Antoinette was criticized for her perceived indifference towards and ignorance of the suffering of the poor, Johnson also in this context has been perceived as heartless or out of touch with the struggles of low-income individuals, so ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S INDIFFERENCE TO LOW-INCOME PEOPLE IS MARIE ANTOINETTE’S INDIFFERENCE TO FRENCH PEASANTS’.

Strikingly, the key difference between the two individuals is that Johnson is offering his ideas for children to eat, replying to Rashford’s campaign with “LET THEM EAT TORY IDEOLOGY!”, which signifies his perceived indifference to the struggle of the poor. The reference to TORY IDEOLOGY in the speech bubble reinforces this idea, implying that Johnson’s political beliefs and actions are motivated by ideology rather than a concern for the welfare of the most vulnerable members of society.

- **Cartoon 3.31**

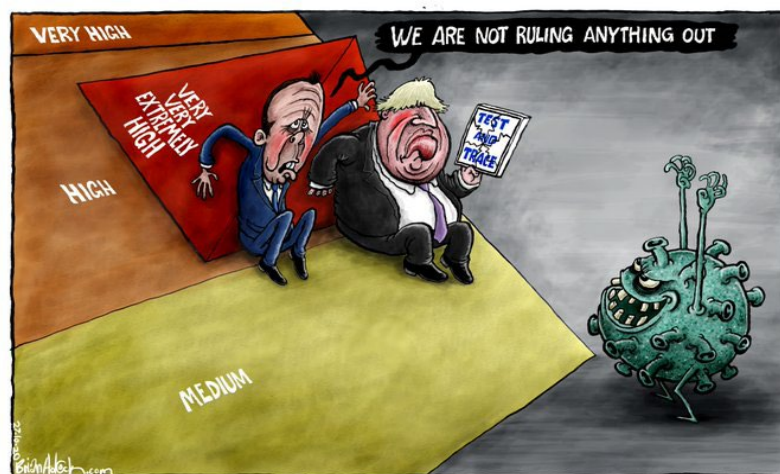


Figure 4.130 Brian Adcock’s cartoon on the incompetence of the tiered system, published in *The Independent*, October 26, 2020

In connection with the earlier discussion of cartoon 3.29 by Brian Adcock, this figure is drawn upon a MOVEMENT domain to illustrate the new tougher restrictions Johnson’s government intended to impose then. The cartoon was published as a satirical reference to Matt Hancock’s

vigorous defense of implementing further stricter measures than those in the most stringent tier 3, as he declared on October 13th 2020²⁷⁴: “We do not rule out further restrictions in the hospitality, leisure, entertainment or personal care sectors. But retail, schools and universities will remain open.. Moreover, Adcock’s image was released in synchrony with Hancock’s defense of the Test-and-Trace system shortly after the publication of a critical assessment of the NHS’s Test-and-Trace system by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE).

As depicted in cartoon 3.29, Adcock in this cartoon rendered the new tiered system as the slippery surface of a pyramid with four or more levels of restrictions instead of three, where Johnson and Hancock are going down though trying hopelessly to cling on to its top, so all their attempts are in vain. Therefore, the VERY VERY EXTREMELY HIGH level of the system is depicted as the pushing force that drives Johnson and Hancock down swiftly, whereas the virus awaits their arrival there, ready to get them. The top part or the peak is apparently detached from the rest and is rolling down the pyramid and threatening Johnson and Hancock. This satirical depiction suggests that the system is bad for Britain, as the situation is perceived as a serious threat (DANGEROUS IS BIG) and it conveys the sense that the virus is in control and will win. Like the previous cartoon, the structure of the representational meaning is characterized as a transactional narrative process, where the three presented participants (Johnson, Hancock and the virus) are the actors and there is direct eye contact between the virus and the two other men. The interactive meaning includes the characters’ gaze and the power relations among them. The oblique angle in the representation of the characters signifies the detachment of the cartoonist’s viewers from the world of the represented participants in the image.

In the investigation of the cartoon’s details, it is noticed that Johnson is portrayed looking very worried and holding a sign with a broken TEST AND TRACE inscription, while Hancock is saying “WE ARE NOT RULING ANYTHING OUT”, which may imply that they do not have a competent plan or solution in place, and their system is not stable enough to defeat the gravity imposed by the virus spread. Also, the portrayal of Johnson’s and Hancock’s faces (frustrated faces for failure) suggests their frustration and fear from the virus, which is conceptualized as threatening, victorious and in control of the whole situation. Depending on these details, the whole

²⁷⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/hancock-turns-on-tory-lockdown-sceptics-ahead-of-key-covid-votes>

image activates the metaphor ‘FAILURE IN THE UK’S TIERED SYSTEM IS A PERILOUS DESCENT TOWARDS THE VIRUS’, which is based on the two individual metaphors ‘THE INCOMPETENT TIERED SYSTEM IS A SLIPPERY SURFACE’ and ‘THE NEW COVID-19 TIERED SYSTEM IS A CAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT’S FALL’.

Thus, the interpretation of the cartoonist’s hidden motifs and ideas reveal that he evaluates negatively the new tougher level Johnson’s government intended to impose on certain local areas and the Test and Trace system as well.

- **Cartoon 3.32**



Figure 4.131 Brian Adcock’s cartoon about the impact of COVID-19 on Europe, just in time for Halloween, published in *The Independent*, October 31, 2020

Figure 4.131 was drawn by Adcock for *The Independent*, after the announcement of the government to implement further national measures (new lockdowns), as explained in the previous cartoon 3.32, which suggests the implementation of a tougher system to fight the second wave of the virus. The alleged lockdown was seen by many members of the cabinet as the four-level

continuation of the three-tier system²⁷⁵. To be in harmony with this challenge, Adcock employed the CONFLICT and STRUGGLE source domains to illustrate the problems faced by Johnson's government in their attempts to combat the spread of the virus across the country. So, the cartoon was inscribed with a single word that represents verbally the object domain, SURGING..., which symbolizes the accelerating spread of the virus across Europe and a surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths. The cartoon is a non-transactional image in which the represented participants (Johnson and the grim reaper) are not in direct eye contact. The close shot of the image reveals the facial expressions of the participants, Johnson is drawn worried and frustrated while the grim reaper and the virus figures show the expressions of triumph and happiness. The cartoon portrays Johnson desperately trying to secure the borders with France and Germany, which were symbolically represented by their flags (flags for countries).

In a humorous manner, some of the compositional elements have their communicative value in the cartoon, for instance, size and color. Johnson is drawn assembling small, colored pieces that represent the different levels of the new tiered system, but holding the smallest and darkest one. Doubtlessly, the smallness of the system blocks suggests the inefficiency and fragility of the system to curb the virus, which is shown oversized and depicted with a close-up shot to represent its gravity and unexpected spread. Thus, this satirical comparison in size exposes Johnson's tiered system or lockdown was relatively inefficient compared to the imminent threat posed by the second wave of COVID-19 at the time. Behind Johnson, the grim reaper has been portrayed standing and spreading the virus as inflated balloons in the UK and other countries. The presence of the grim reaper in the UK in particular suggests that the country is facing an unexpected rise in COVID-19 related fatalities, surpassing the numbers in France and Germany, at a time when Johnson was occupied with implementing ineffective and inadequate lockdowns. All the above-mentioned details concerning the metaphorical representations, the modes of size and facial expression activate the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S NEW TIERED SYSTEM IS A FAILED

²⁷⁵ Many tweets were sent concerning the nature of this lockdown and its naming, as posted in this link: https://twitter.com/BethRigby/status/1322580353819774977?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1322580353819774977%7Ctwgr%5E0305fa2761df1fcbcc799f73af93072bdf67299%7Ctwcon%5Es1&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theguardian.com%2Fworld%2Flive%2F2020%2Foct%2F31%2Fuk-coronavirus-boris-johnson-to-give-press-conference-on-new-lockdown-live-news%3Fpage%3Dwith3Ablock-5f9d8d028f080c5c2d37733f.

BORDER BARRIER TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY’, which reveals the cartoonist’s negative assessment of the system.

- **Cartoon 3.33**



Figure 4.132 Brian Adcock’s cartoon about an unemployment tsunami on the way, published in *The Independent*, November 8, 2020

The NATURAL FORCES metaphorical domain holds incomparable and informational value in expressing the potential threat people may encounter during certain crises. In Brian Adcock’s cartoon, it is seen that Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak are portrayed building a sandcastle with the British Union Jack with the word ECONOMY written on it. The image of sandcastles is typically associated with the image of structures built by children at play on the beach, they lack solidity and stability, easily collapsing and fading by even minor sea waves. In contrast to the overwhelming UNEMPLOYMENT tsunami, Adcock utilizes the vulnerability of sandcastles to waves to emphasize the fragility of Johnson’s measures to address the rising rates of unemployment during the pandemic. Thus, the cartoon reveals an apparent evident difference between the wave size (UNEMPLOYMENT) and the fragility of sandcastles (JOHNSON’S INCOMPETENT/ILL-CONCEIVED PLANS) portrayed in Adcock’s cartoon, which conspicuously serves as an emphasize of the potential for the catastrophic effects of a COVID-19 outbreak in the UK’s economy. Before the analysis of the metaphorical representations in the

image, it must be said that the cartoon shows a transactional narrative process in which the two participants have direct eye contact with each other and a vector from Johnson to the other actor.

According to what has been mentioned earlier, the cartoon's theme addresses the potential danger of an UNEMPLOYMENT tsunami wave that could collapse the British economy castle. The two men are illustrated busy with building the castle and trying to keep the castle from falling apart, even if it has inappropriate foundations (broken sticks, ice-cream and tiny equipment, such as a fork and spoon, as if meaning that the recovery may come from restaurants, bars and pubs). However, their facial expressions (worried and frustrated expressions), combined with the textual balloon by Johnson "THANK GOD WE HAVEN'T HAD A SECOND COVID WAVE", shows Johnson's government's vulnerability and fragility to face any serious risks caused by the virus; it only conveys the absurdity of Johnson in addressing the virus challenges. Moreover, the body postures of the two participants further add to the interpretation of the cartoon's meaning, for instance giving their back to the danger may mean unawareness of the severity of the risk. These modes of representation add another layer of irony to the cartoon, since they reveal that Tories may be unaware or in denial of the potential danger facing the economy, despite evidence of a potential second wave of unemployment. The tsunami scene in this cartoon is based on the following individual metaphors:

- THE ECONOMY OF THE UK IS A FRAGILE SAND CASTLE.
- UNEMPLOYMENT IS A TSUNAMI WAVE.
- BORIS JOHNSON AND HIS CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER ARE SAND CASTLE BUILDERS (CHILDREN).
- THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES TO RECOVER THE ECONOMY IS A FRAGILE SANDCASTLE.

Moreover, the compositional salient aspects of size and frame also have their impact in the interpretation of the cartoon, for instance portraying unemployment as a great tsunami wave and the British economy as a small sand castle ignites a negative evaluation, that is, how fragile the British economy is in the face of the great and dramatic increase in the unemployment rates while the government is unaware of that danger and busy with the second wave of the virus with no realistic plans. Also, the framing lines also exhibit that the two men have the same identity and stance towards the economic problems. Thus, they are ideologically connected. The image, hence,

suggests a contrastive depiction displaying the fragility and triviality of the British leveling-up economy plans and the great increasing risk of unemployment, which is revaluated as even more devastating for the British economy than the risk of a second wave of COVID-19. Thus, the metaphors cued from this cartoon are ‘AN INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT IS THE OCCURRENCE OF DESTRUCTIVE NATURAL FORCES’, and ‘THE GOVERNMENT’S POLICIES TO LEVEL UP ECONOMY ARE A FRAGILE STRUCTURE’.

- **Cartoon 3.34**



Figure 4.133 Brian Adcock’s cartoon on Boris Johnson’s self-isolation, published in *The Independent*, November 16, 2020

This cartoon was published after the announcement that Boris Johnson was forced again to self-isolate with a handful of Tories members after a face-to-face meeting with them in no. 10. Johnson declared via his twitter account he would be in self-isolation for two weeks after that contact²⁷⁶. For this cartoon, Brian Adcock used the fool or the jester’s image, relying on the ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE and SHOWS source domains. The image is basically regarded as showing a transactional narrative pattern wherein the participants are in direct connection and the

²⁷⁶https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1328231093359812610?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetemb ed%7Ctwterm%5E1328231093359812610%7Ctwgr%5Eb401112c659990375432e357e2076762211fae89%7Ctwco n%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.politicshome.com%2Fnews%2Farticle%2Fboris-johnson-among-handful-of-tory-mps-forced-to-selfisolate-after-meeting-with-colleague-who-has-tested-positive-for-covid19

vector exists between them. The represented participants in this cartoon are Boris Johnson and the virus figures. The interactive process of the cartoon shows that the virus is more dominant as it is located atop while Johnson is lower in position, which signifies his vulnerability and this premise is reinforced through the close-up shot of the participants' facial expressions, which suggest the virus' triumph and mockery of Johnson's failure and foolishness.

Accordingly, the cartoon is verbally inscribed on the left top side with a caption which reads THE FOOL to render Johnson as the FOOL²⁷⁷ and to criticize his absurd actions during the pandemic. The cartoon, therefore, ignites the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A JESTER/A FOOL' who is sitting in his office, wearing a blue costume (the British Conservative Party Color) with a fool's cap on his head and trying to face delayed work as shown in the filing desktop trays, the IN-OUT documents and files. On these trays, two coronavirus figures are laughing at the annoyed Johnson. The conceptualization of the virus, as in most of Adcock's cartoons, renders the conceptual metaphor 'CORONAVIRUS IS AN ORGANISM', in which the virus is often seen as a personified organism overwhelming Johnson's government, yet in this cartoon the virus is seen as two figures, which may imply the spread of the virus everywhere, or even the ease with which the virus can move about, as it will get IN and OUT without any restrictions. The virus on the IN-filing tray, for instance, is depicted making mockery of Johnson and criticizing his foolish behavior, saying "...AND THEN HE HAD UNNECESSARY FACE TO FACE MEETINGS AND NOW HAS TO SELF-ISOLATE!", while the other one is sitting on the OUT- empty tray, which symbolizes the government's failure to face its duties and their lack of competence or even procrastination to reach its work goals.

On the whole, these metaphorical and metonymic representations examined above trigger the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S POLITICAL ABSURDITY IS CAUSING DISRUPTION IN THE PACE OF THE STATE DURING THE PANDEMIC', which unveils Adcock's negative assessment of Johnson's impulsive behavior, his failure to handle the pandemic or even to save himself.

²⁷⁷ A fool, commonly called a jester, or court jester, usually performs comedy, jokes and other humorous acts to amuse their audience. They are often associated with medieval times and were employed by kings and nobles to provide entertainment at court. Jesters wore colorful costumes and hats called "fool's caps" and they used witty jokes and satire to amuse and sometimes criticize their audience.

- Cartoon 3.35



Figure 4.134 Dave Brown's cartoon about Boris Johnson's COVID-19 Tiered System, *The Independent*, November 26, 2020



Figure 4.135 Diego Maradona's hand of God goal in the 1986 quarter-finals of the World Cup between England and Argentina

The cartoon drawn by Dave Brown, published in *The Independent* on November 26th 2020, uses a soccer game scenario which relies upon the conceptual metaphors 'POLITICS IS A FOOTBALL MATCH' and 'POLITICIANS ARE SOCCER PLAYERS'. As Delaney (2007) points out, among many other elements, sports and TV programs "are arguably two of the most widely consumed examples of popular culture, and they also represent two examples of popular culture with great staying power". In line with this perspective, these two genres have their in-depth influence on conceptualizing most events and issues.

The cartoon was published after the announcement of Boris Johnson of the new tougher tier system of COVID-19 restrictions declaring “I’m sorry to confirm that, from Wednesday, most of England will be in the top two tiers with the toughest measures”²⁷⁸. Brown, therefore, entrenched his cartoon on one of the most controversial world sport events, that is, Diego Maradona’s ‘Hand of God’ goal²⁷⁹ during the 1986 World Cup against England, which is metaphorically employed in the left top caption reading HAND OF CLOD... The phrase HAND OF CLOD is regarded as a wordplay in which the word CLOD is pejoratively employed to refer to a stupid awkward person²⁸⁰. This makes Johnson appear awkward, unrefined, or lacking intelligence and flexibility. Before beginning the analysis of the metaphorical configurations in the cartoon, the image is seen as a non-transactional narrative structure in which the participants have no vector produced between them. The absence of direct eye contact between the represented participants (Johnson and the goalkeeper) prohibits a clear interactive process that reveals dominance or subservience.

To identify the visual elements represented in this cartoon, for instance, Johnson was illustrated as Maradona with his blue equipment metonymically standing for the British Conservative party’s color, which reveals the responsibility of the party, coincidentally the same color used by Argentina in the match, as can be seen in figure 4.135. In the cartoon, Johnson is portrayed as a plump player punching the ball with his hand. In spite of this foul action, Johnson is not scoring the goal that he was aiming for, in fact he is sending the ‘ball’ far away from the goal, unlike Maradona. The virus, in contrast, is depicted as the ball Johnson is striking high toward the public, very far from the opponents’ goal. This depiction might also suggest that throwing the ball towards the audience instead of achieving a goal hitting the net ignites a container metaphor which suggests that hitting the net would be striking a goal (containing the virus inside for safety). On the other hand, throwing the virus-like ball towards the audience may also suggest Johnson’s assistance in spreading the virus among his people. Moreover, the verbal element which represented by the sport

²⁷⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-26-november-2020>

²⁷⁹ The ‘Hand of God’ goal is still regarded as a contentious goal scored by Diego Maradona in the 1986 FIFA World Cup quarter-final match between Argentina and England. In that match, Maradona used his hand to punch the ball into the net in the 51st minute of the match, which should have been disallowed as a foul but was allowed by the referee. Maradona later said the goal he scored, the first in the match, was “a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God”. For more information, visit this site: <https://www.fifa.com/fifaplus/en/articles/maradona-england-and-the-hand-of-god>. The historical context of the match was also relevant, as the echo of the Falklands war between the UK and Argentina (April-June 1982) was still present for many Brits and Argentinians.

²⁸⁰ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/clod>

commentator's speech as "OH! ... AND FOR ALL HIS CYNICAL CHEATING IT'S JUST HEADING INTO THE TOP TIER!" also expresses the cartoonist's negative evaluation on Johnson's performance during the pandemic. Though the wording (OH! AND FOR ALL ... IT'S JUST HEADING INTO...!) commonly used to praise a player's actions in a game, yet in this context, with the vocabulary of COVID-19 (TOP TIER) and the negative evaluation of Johnson's mishandling of the pandemic (CYNICAL CHEATING), is turned to be seen as a way of criticizing Johnson and considering him a key element in spreading the virus faster 'throwing the virus-like ball toward the audience' instead of hitting the goal and accomplish the target.

Thus, the whole adopted scenario for this cartoon shows the following metaphorical entailments:

- THE CONFLICT AGAINST THE VIRUS IS A FOOTBALL MATCH.
- THE UK IS A FOOTBALL PITCH.
- THE BRITS ARE SPECTATORS.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS DIEGO MARADONA.
- CORONAVIRUS IS A FOOT BALL.
- THE TOUGHER RESTRICTIONS OF THE TIERED SYSTEM ARE THE 'HAND OF GOD' GOAL.

Depicting coronavirus as the ball that Johnson is punching far but towards the public emphasizes that he is cheating his citizens concerning the tiered system he is imposing on them and he might be seen as the figure behind the virus spread in various areas. The virus is portrayed as the ball that the government is trying to score into the net, even by means of an illegal action. As such, a ball, in a football game, is the key element around which the game is played, likewise COVID-19 is the central issue around which the current world crisis is happening. This suggests the metonymic expression IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL, which underscores the importance and the centrality of the pandemic in the current situation, and how Johnson's government is conducting it.

The analogy then could be that just as Maradona's 'Hand of God' goal was an act of cunning at a decisive moment during the game, Johnson's management of the pandemic with tougher tiers

in certain areas is seen as audacious, dishonest or cunning, though ineffectual. Accordingly, the cartoonist's attitude towards the new system the government has set in place to curb the rapid spread of the virus is negative, which triggers a metaphor for the whole scene: 'IMPOSING THE VERY HIGHEST LEVEL OF THE TIERED SYSTEM IS A DECEPTIVE WORK OF UNFAIR ADVANTAGE AND IT IS NOT GETTING THE EXPECTD RESULTS'. The evaluation of the cartoon implies that Brown might be suggesting that Johnson is using the crisis to his advantage and ignoring the negative effects of his actions and plans on the people.

- Cartoon 3.36



Figure 4.136 Brian Adcock's cartoon about Boris Johnson's expiry date of the new coronavirus tier system in England on 3 February 2021, *The Independent*, November 29, 2020

Figure 4.136 was published after the UK's PM, Boris Johnson, announced the expiry date, or what he preferably called the "sunset"²⁸¹, of the plan for a new tiered system of coronavirus regulations on 3 February 2021. The plan faced the abstention of the Labour party and more than seventy Tories not supporting the government's plan²⁸². The cartoon is a transactional narrative

²⁸¹ <https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/uk-news/uk-pm-writes-to-upset-mps-assures-new-three-tiered-covid-system-has-sunset-expiry.html>

²⁸² <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/live/2020/dec/01/uk-coronavirus-live-gove-johnson-tory-mps-covid-restrictions-tiers-latest-updates>

process in which Johnson is the only represented participant who is gazing directly at the viewers and produces a vector from the actor to them. In this image, Brian Adcock depicts Johnson as a chef wearing a white toque and coat, offering a seemingly weird stinky cake. The interactive process shows Johnson is gazing directly at the viewers, which is a demanding aspect that expresses Johnson's begging and persuasion (system). In fact, the depiction of Johnson as a food preparer is a symbolic reference to his entire responsibility in making major decisions to curb the virus spread, as cooking and food images are often used to represent political strategies, policies and ideas. Johnson in this cartoon is drawn as in commitment to suppress the anger and criticism over the new system and to persuade his backbenchers to support his decision.

Therefore, the preference of utilizing cooking and food preparation scenarios in politics relies on how well it depicts certain ideologies and measures, thus it provokes the conceptual metaphors 'CREATING IDEAS IS COOKING FOOD' and 'IDEAS/IDEOLOGIES ARE FOOD'. Though the cooking scenario here does not concentrate on food preparation steps, yet it highlights the final result of the whole process, i.e., the final offer the food preparer makes. Food commonly and inclusively represents policies, strategies, measures and even decisions that people prepare to offer. Thus, Adcock through this scenario was in a successful bid to present Johnson's measures. The cartoon is framed with a textual caption on the top left side of the image MMM, YUMMY..., which is satirically employed to suggest that the new tiered system Johnson implemented then is very pleasing and attractive.²⁸³

Concerning the verbal process, Adcock depicted Johnson holding a cake box with a caption that reads 'Expiry date 3rd Feb 2021', which unveils the date by which the 'cake' must be eaten, while holding a pen in his hand as a reference that he is the only decision maker of this target date, as he has actually fixed and added the expiry date on the box. There is no doubt that the cake with its three tiers and the brown color grades apparently stands for the new tiered system imposed on England. The use of the cake metaphor suggests that the tiered system is like a cake that has gone bad and is now attracting flies, indicating that the system may not be effective in controlling the spread of COVID-19 and may have negative consequences for the citizens of the UK. The employment of the stinky cake metaphor and the imagery of flies and a stench create a sense of

²⁸³ The term YUMMY is generally used to refer to a delicious meal and pleasing dish, as can be seen in <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/yummy>.

disgust and highlights the negative consequences of the whole system. Each tier represents the increasing severity of the system, how hard it is for the British people and what fatal consequences it will lead to. The first tier of the cake, for instance, has a smiley face emoji, embodying the MEDIUM tier with relaxing regulations. The second tier, with scissors and antidepressant syrup, represents the HIGH tier with even more stringent regulations, while the top tier of the cake is decorated with a large skull, bones, a scythe and an eyeball, along with signs such as CLOSED and GONE OUT OF BUSINESS. All of this symbolizes the rising number of fatalities resulting from the imposition of the VERY HIGH LEVEL of alert and, possibly, the outcome of the measure. Accordingly, this scene underlies a set of individual metaphors which construct the COOKING scenario, as follows:

- BORIS JOHNSON IS THE CHEF OF A STINKY CAKE.
- THE COVID-19 TIERED SYSTEM IS A STINKY CAKE.
- COVID-19 MEASURES AND CONSEQUENCES ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF THE CAKE.
- PEOPLE ARE CONSUMERS OF THE GOVERNMENT’S BAD COOKING.
- THE EXPIRY DATE TO IMPLEMENT THE TIERED SYSTEM IS THE CAKE’S EXPIRY DATE.

Besides that, it is a matter of fact that the stinking food image as a whole typically triggers the more conventional metaphor ‘BAD IS STINKY’, which negatively evaluates the whole condition as ineffective and might lead to catastrophic endings, as in the graph of relations in diagram 4.3.:

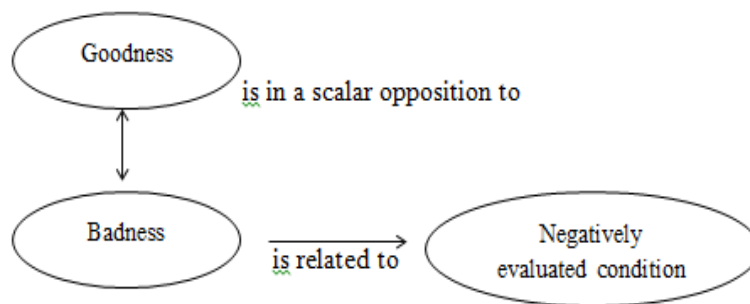


Diagram 4.3 The frame relation of the conceptual metaphor ‘BAD IS STINKY’

Consequently, this metaphoric derivation activates the more specific metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S TIERED SYSTEM AGAINST COVID-19 IS A STINKY CAKE’, through which Adcock criticized Johnson’s high risk of people’s lives because he was subservient to his backbenchers’ demands and his personal benefits. All of this is accompanied by his utterance “EAT UP, IT WON’T LAST FOREVER!”, used as a form of persuasion which represents an appeal to the emotions of the audience, aiming to influence their behavior and opinions.

- **Cartoon 3.37**

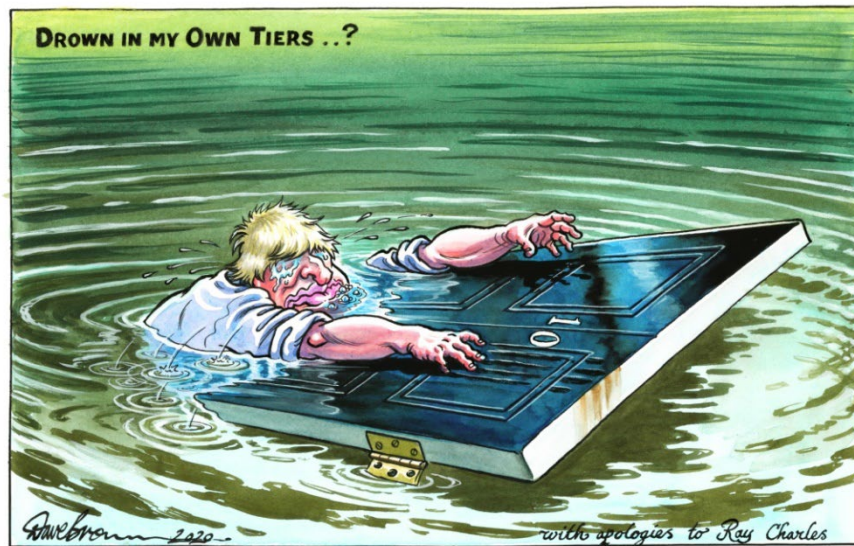


Figure 4.137 Dave Brown’s cartoon about Boris Johnson’s coronavirus tier system, published in *The Independent*, December 1, 2020



Figure 4.138 Philip Zec's cartoon "The price of petrol has been increased by one penny. Official", published on 5th March, 1942 in *The Daily Mirror*.

This cartoon, like the previous one in figure 4.137 by Brian Adcock, was published in the light of the unexpectedly dangerous developments that the UK in general and the Tory Government in particular were going through on December 1st, 2020, concerning Johnson's plan to impose a tougher tiered system for further control of the situation. The cartoon seemingly has two historical-intertextual references. The first visual intertextuality is apparently inspired by one of Philip Zec's important cartoons, as shown in figure 4.138²⁸⁴, in which the protagonist was portrayed as a torpedoed sailor covered in oil on a raft. The other intertextual reference is the verbal caption DROWN IN MY OWN TIERS...? at the left top side of the image, which is satirically paraphrased and quoted from one of Ray Charles' famous songs, "Drown in my own tears"²⁸⁵, recorded in 1955. The use of this pun in this caption, reading 'tier' instead of 'tear', which is similar in form to what had been already offered in cartoons 1.24 and the opposite in 3.29, can indicate several points: the hard time Johnson has been going through because of the abstention of the British

²⁸⁴ On March 5th, 1942, *The Daily Mirror* published this cartoon by Philip Zec, criticizing Churchill's government's decision to raise petrol prices and the challenges attached to that decision. Zec's cartoon depicted a torpedoed sailor covered in oil on a raft, with a caption suggesting the rise of prices imposed by the government. This led to many interpretations; some regarded it as a call to tolerate wartime hardships, while others assumed it portrayed sailors risking lives for the home petrol companies' profit. Churchill interpreted it as a criticism addressed to his Conservative government, so he wanted to censor the paper. For more information, this website is highly recommended: [Philip Zec \(spartacus-educational.com\)](http://spartacus-educational.com).

²⁸⁵ This song was written and first performed by the American musician Ray Charles in 1955. Its lyrics are very expressive and have a sense of sadness, loneliness and despair (<https://www.itsallaboutray.com/song-reviews/drown-in-my-own-tears>). The intertextual connection between the song and the cartoon is made explicitly by Brown's 'apologies to Ray Charles', as seen at the right bottom corner of the image.

Labour Party and some of his Tories backbenchers on this issue; his hopeless attempts to gain the help from the Tories members in the Parliament concerning his new restrictions approach; or lastly, it may also suggest that the tiered system is not working, causing more problems than it is solving. These two related intertextual references are considered as the thematic focus of Dave Brown's cartoon.

Before delving into the metaphorical conceptualization of the cartoon, it can be said that the image is characterized as having a non-transactional narrative structure in which Johnson is the sole represented participant. Thus, the cartoon is contextually based on the NATURAL FORCES source domain, which depicts Johnson drowning in a swamp, crying and struggling to get out of it by using no. 10 Downing Street door as a raft. No. 10 Downing Street door is commonly regarded as an iconic symbol of political power and authority in the UK²⁸⁶, and metonymically stands for the PM's office and the UK's government (10 Downing Street door for the UK's government).

Concerning the close-up shot of the image, it reveals Johnson's facial expression and body posture. These further add clarification to the conceptualization of the status quo, with Johnson's tears, sadness and sense of despair which all unveil Brown's negative evaluation of Johnson's tiered system and the incompetency he is showing during the pandemic. Moreover, depicting Johnson alone with no other participants probably suggests Brown's attempts to highlight Johnson's responsibility for all the challenges and problems that have happened due to his failing system. In regard to what has been elucidated above, the image as a whole contains a set of individual metaphors:

- BORIS JOHNSON'S INCOMPETENT TIERED SYSTEM IS A SWAMP.
- THE GOVERNMENT'S VOTING FOR THE TIERED SYSTEM IS A FLOATING DOOR (RAFT).
- GETTING THE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT ON THE NEW TIERED RESTRICTIONS IS CLINGING TO THE DOOR OF 10 DOWNING ST. FOR SURVIVAL.

²⁸⁶ <https://selo.global/10-downing-street-story-behind-britains-famous-door/>

To sum up, all these metaphorical representations along with Johnson’s facial expression reflect the metaphors ‘LACK OF COMPETENCE IS CAUSING PHYSICAL DANGER’ and ‘PROVIDING POLITICAL SUPPORT IS SAVING FROM PHYSICAL HARM’.

- **Cartoon 3.38**



Figure 4.139 Dave Brown’s cartoon about the British PM’s Christmas Gift, published in *The Independent*, December 16, 2020

This cartoon was published after Boris Johnson’s announcement of the ‘five-day break policy’ for Christmas, specifically from December 23rd to 28th, 2020. This measure was intended to lift some urgent restrictions during the holiday season and to allow people to travel freely without more restrictive rules, and to meet with relatives indoors and outdoors. However, according to the waves of criticism raised from an ill-conceived announcement, many cartoons were devoted to attack Johnson’s mishandling of the pandemic during the Christmas season. The cartoon in figure 4.139, by Dave Brown, metaphorically depicts Johnson’s relaxation measures as a Christmas gift from the PM to his people during the pandemic. The cartoon presents a non-transactional narrative image in which again Johnson is the focus and the only represented participant, he has no direct eye contact with viewers, and this signifies the cartoonist’s tendency to offer information to the viewers.

The visual details of the cartoon show Johnson covering his face with a mask while clutching a wrapped gift adorned with Christmas decorations and hollering “SURPRIIIIISE!!” The gift resembles the virus shape whereas Johnson’s body posture suggests he is terrified of being infected by it. The gift’s spiky, sun-like form implies that the Christmas present is a container for the virus (CONTAINER FOR CONTENT). This implies that Johnson’s relaxation of restrictions will spread the virus, leading to further infections and deaths. Moreover, the tag on the gift reads ‘To: UK. Happy Xmas! From: Boris XX’²⁸⁷, which hints at this gift being Johnson’s Christmas present to his country during the Christmas season (verbal process). In the light of this, the question lying here is how could the virus be Johnson’s gift to the UK? The relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions at Christmas by Johnson’s government is presented in the image as a reckless and dangerous move that will lead to a surge in infections and deaths. Thus, the initial metaphor provoked from the image is ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS A CHRISTMAS GIFT-GIVER’.

Moreover, the image employs the compositional elements of salience, such as sizing and body posture of the depicted figures to contribute to the interpretation of the image. For instance, the oversized gift serves as a metonymic representation of the potentially catastrophic impact that it may cause to its receiver. Lifting restrictions during Christmas may contribute to a rapid spread of the virus or it may also be intended to evoke a sense of urgency in the viewer, emphasizing the severity of the situation and the need for careful decision-making and caution. Additionally, Johnson’s physical appearance as fatigued and disheveled conveys the severity of the situation and may also suggest a lack of control or capability in handling the crisis. Therefore, the metaphors profiled from this image are ‘THE SWIFT SPREAD OF COVID-19 IS BORIS JOHNSON’S GIFT TO THE UK’ and ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S RELAXATION OF COVID-19 MEASURES DURING CHRISTMAS IS A DANGEROUS GIFT TO THE PEOPLE’. These metaphors convey Brown’s negative attitude towards Johnson’s decision to relax restrictions during the holiday season, which the cartoonist regards as a contributing factor to the rapid spread of the virus, so increasing the number of infections and death tolls.

²⁸⁷ Sending a text with the final short cut XX is regarded as something very popular in the UK and is now preferred by the young “to send kisses or show affection in a text message”. For more information concerning the meaning, origin and usage of XX in a text, the following site is highly recommended: <https://loveenglish.org/xx-meaning-in-text/>.

- Cartoon 3.39



Figure 4.140 Brian Adcock's cartoon about the cancellation of Christmas and the imposition of the fourth national lockdown, published in *The Independent*, December 20, 2020

The present cartoon was published after the announcement of Boris Johnson of a new lockdown in London and the south-eastern regions of England on 19 December, 2020. This lockdown –referred to as tier 4– came as an inevitable result of fears raised by the emergence of a new and highly transmissible strain of the virus. Additionally, Johnson also declared that Christmas that year would be cancelled due to the new variant of the virus. The cartoon uses a transactional-reactional narrative process in which the two represented participants are in direct eye contact and the vector is apparently produced and received.

The image was accompanied by a caption at the left top part reading MUTATION! CORONA GRINCH..., which visualized the new variant of the virus as the Grinch, 'CORONAVIRUS IS THE GRINCH'. This is a fictional character created by Dr. Seuss in the 1957 children's book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*²⁸⁸; the character was known for ruining Christmas and stealing the

²⁸⁸ The book portrays the Grinch, an unpleasant character who destroys the festivities of Christmas in Whoville. The Grinch attempts to steal Christmas by his sneaking into Whoville's homes on Christmas Eve and stealing their presents, decorations and food. However, his efforts to ruin Christmas are futile as he realizes the true meaning of Christmas which goes beyond material possessions. In the end, the Grinch has a change of heart, returns the stolen

holiday presents, food and decorations from Whoville's homes. In the image, Johnson is dressed as Santa Claus standing vulnerable and powerless, while the virus is metaphorically cued as the Grinch taking Johnson's pants, boots, hat and beard, and asking for the jacket: "...AND THE JACKET". In this metaphorical image, depicting the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS SANTA CLAUS', whose suit has been taken from him by the Grinch, instantiates two possible metaphors. The first is 'THE NEW VARIANT OF THE VIRUS IS A JOY ROBBER', in which Santa's suit is generally associated with joy and festivities. This metaphorical configuration conveys the idea that the virus is responsible for the cancellation or disruption of joyful events, such as Christmas festivities. The second metaphor seems more relevant, as 'LACK OF CONTROL IS STRIPPING OF CLOTHES', in which the demand for Santa Claus' clothes could be interpreted as a metaphorical demand for resources or control, with the virus attempting to take over or dominate the situation. This conceptualization reveals Adcock's negative view on Johnson's vulnerability and exposure, implicating that the English government is weak, unprotected and not in control.

The other modes of representational and compositional meaning could also convey the cartoonist's intended messages and hidden ideologies, such as the characters' face expressions, body postures and size. For instance, the facial expressions of both characters reflect who defeats whom, in which Johnson looks frustrated and overpowered by the virus' threat and power; this proves the virus' dominance over Johnson's government's decisions and its effective ability to hinder Johnson's attempt to confront that. On the other hand, the characters' sizes manifest their power and dominance, the oversized image of the virus reveals its imminent threat of the highly contagious new strain, which definitely activates the metaphor 'DANGER IS SIZE'. Thus, the whole cartoon exposes Adcock's critical stance on Johnson's mishandling of the pandemic during the Christmas season.

items to the Whos and joins them in their celebration. The story highlights the importance of love, kindness and togetherness, and the real meaning of Christmas. There is a live-action film released in 2000, directed by Ron Howard and starring Jim Carrey as the Grinch (for more information on this, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_the_Grinch_Stole_Christmas! and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_the_Grinch_Stole_Christmas_\(2000_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_the_Grinch_Stole_Christmas_(2000_film))).

- Cartoon 3.40

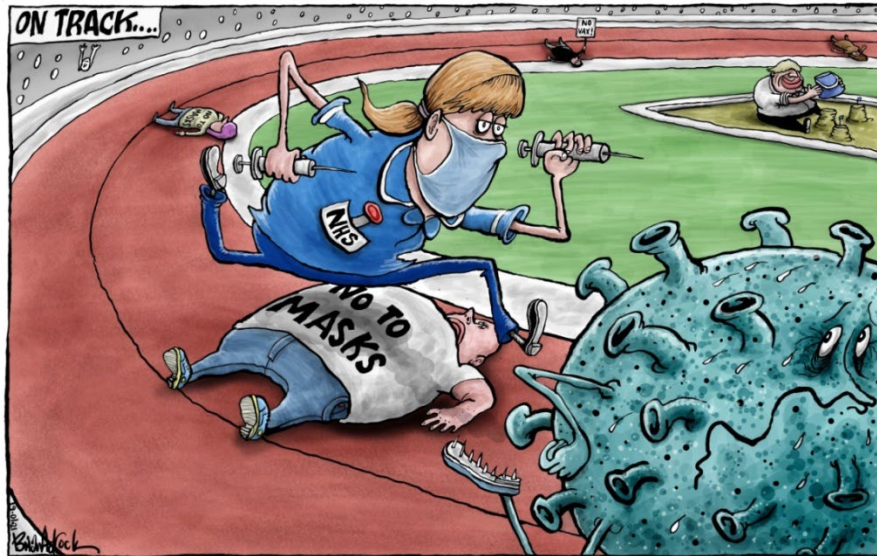


Figure 4.141 Brian Adcock’s cartoon about the NHS’s efforts to defeat the virus, published in *The Independent*, January 19, 2021

Brian Adcock has used the source domains GAME and SPORT, particularly the track scenario and the image of Source-Path-Goal. The track hurdling race scenario prototypically depicts the hurdles the sprinters have to jump over, an image Brain Adcock presents in his cartoon rendering the NHS worker’s struggle with the virus. Adcock’s cartoon was published after Johnson’s announcement on 30th of December 2020 of the approval of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, stating in the press briefing that “we have two valid vaccines and we are racing, as I say, to get them out”²⁸⁹. The cartoon uses a transactional-narrative reactional image in which the represented participants –not including the lying hurdlers, who have a passive role, equating to an object rather than a person– are in direct eye-contact (the NHS worker and the virus), whereas the other represented participant (Boris Johnson) is located in an oblique angle to represent that he is detached and absent from the whole action (defeating the virus).

The cartoon title framed at the top side of the cartoon ON TRACK... points out that the NHS staff is well under way to roll out the vaccine and save people’s lives. The foreground object of

²⁸⁹ The full transcript can be retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-30-december-2020>.

the cartoon is an NHS worker running and jumping over lying hurdlers with a syringe in each hand. Her goal is to catch up to the virus and control its spread through vaccination, making her run a race to defeat the virus. Adcock employs people lying on the NHS worker track to stand for those who refuse to wear masks or get vaccinated, metaphorically configuring them as hurdles on the NHS worker's track. Those opponents with signs such as NO TO MASKS and NO VAX slogans are all placed along the NHS's track, while the virus's track is open and free. This means that the NHS's task is much harder than the virus's, and in spite of this they counter the danger produced by the virus and the refusal of the community to receive treatment or follow health instructions.

In the background of the cartoon, Adcock portrays Johnson playing in the sandpit and making sandcastles in a far corner of the image, indicating a critical attitude towards his actions during the crisis as lacking empathy and concern. The metaphorical configuration of Johnson's playing in the sand and making sandcastles suggests that his role in the process of rolling out the vaccine and defeating the virus has no value in comparison to the danger of the situation, as making sandcastles can be seen as a shallow childish activity that distracts from more important matters, especially as the sand in the sandpit is intended for other uses and he may even be an obstacle for the competition. The cartoonist reinforces this notion through the contribution of color elements to the whole image, for instance a blue pail in the sandcastle scene may symbolize the Conservative Party's actions are temporary, fragile and impermanent, much like a sandcastle that can be easily destroyed.

Additionally, other elements have a vital role in activating the metaphorical conceptualization in the cartoon, for instance the size and position of the participants (the NHS worker, Johnson and the virus, and the facial expressions of the characters). Regarding the size, the NHS worker and the virus are shown larger than Johnson, who is noticeably smaller, as he can be seen at the back. This size and position difference emphasizes superiority of the NHS worker's role in combatting the virus (on track) in comparison to Johnson, who is seemingly insignificant and out of touch with the crisis (out of track). Moreover, the facial expressions of the characters reveal that the virus appears fearful rather than the usual stereotype of the triumphant virus, as it is chased by an NHS worker who is determined to combat it through vaccination, meanwhile Johnson seems busy with

the sandcastles and indifferent to the entire situation. Thus, the cartoon triggers the following individual metaphorical entailments:

- THE COVID-19 VACCINE ROLL-OUT IS A COMPETITION WIN.
- THE COVID-19 CRISIS CHALLENGE TO ROLL OUT A VACCINE IS AN OBSTACLE RACE TRACK.
- THE NHS WORKER IS AN ATHLETE ON THE HURDLING RACE TRACK.
- THE INDIVIDUALS WHO DO NOT ADHERE TO HEALTH GUIDANCE DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE OBSTACLES ON THE NHS TRACK.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS AN INDIFFERENT SANDCASTLE MAKER OUT OF THE RACE TRACK.
- COVID-19 IS A COMPETITOR.
- THE GOVERNMENT'S COVID-19 ACTIONS ARE SANDCASTLES.
- VACCINE/MASK-WEARING OPPONENTS ARE HURDLES/JUMPING OBSTACLES.

The cartoon, with all the entailments and interpretations mentioned above, suggests a more general metaphor, 'BORIS JOHNSON'S ACTIONS IN DEFEATING THE VIRUS ARE FRAGILE SANDCASTLES', which conveys a message of criticism towards the UK's government's handling of the crisis as fragile, indifferent and ineffective.

- Cartoon 3.41



Figure 4.142 Brian Adcock’s cartoon on Boris Johnson’s weakness in handling the virus crisis, published in *The Independent*, January 11, 2021

Like cartoon 3.40, this image published for *The Independent* by Brian Adcock relies upon the source domains GAME and COMPETITION, which are often used in this context to portray and highlight the conceptual metaphor ‘CONFRONTING THE VIRUS IS A COMPETITION’. Contextually, Adcock’s cartoon came as a response to the calls raised by Keir Starmer, the leader of the British Labour Party, for immediate national lockdown then because the virus was “out of control”²⁹⁰ and because of the increase in the death tolls and infected cases. Thus, the cartoonist attempted in his image to depict this issue and the events relevant in Johnson’s reaction to Starmer’s calls. The representational process of the image is a transactional narrative process in which the two represented participants have a vector from Starmer to Johnson. The cartoon presents Johnson playing in a TEST YOUR STRENGTH attraction, or what is commonly labeled as a ‘High Striker’ or ‘Strength Tester’²⁹¹ with a mallet used to test his power and strength.

²⁹⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jan/03/keir-starmer-calls-for-immediate-lockdown-in-england-as-covid-cases-soar>

²⁹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_striker

In the image, the scale bell which is supposed to be hit is visually fused with the virus shape, and a caption reads TEST YOUR STRENGTH. This depiction suggests the metaphor ‘BORIS JOHNSON'S COMPETENCE AGAINST THE VIRUS IS TO HIT THE BELL OF A HIGH STRIKER ATTRACTION’, so that the handling of the virus surge successfully is metaphorically compared to hitting the bell of the game powerfully. Yet in the image, Johnson is portrayed as vulnerable and feeble in strength and failing to hit the bell successfully, a depiction which is furthermore reinforced by Starmer’s body posture (hands on the hips) revealing his negative unsatisfied evaluation of Johnson’s action as incompetent and inactive. The placement of the participants also reveals the value of the information, as Johnson’s central position as he stands near Starmer might suggest a kind of direct evaluation by the Labour Party and its leader on Johnson’s government actions.

Moreover, the foregrounding-backgrounding structure as shown in the foregrounding of the high striker game while the background reveals a fleet of ambulances is probably employed to persuade the viewers of Johnson’s ill-conceived policies and to stand for the surge in death tolls and infected cases due to the delayed lockdown. The framing aspect further elucidates the lack of harmony or cohesive connection between the two participants, indicating their different and individual identities through disconnected framing lines.

Consequently, Starmer, who is conceptualized in the cartoon as the owner of the game, evaluates Johnson’s strength, saying “HE IS NOT FIT FOR THE JOB”. Adcock’s stance towards Johnson’s incompetent and fragile handling of the increase in the death tolls and infected cases, thus, evaluates Johnson’s leadership as vulnerable and failing.

- Cartoon 3.42



Figure 4.143 Dave Brown’s cartoon about Quarantine Hotels imposed by Boris Johnson, published in *The Independent*, January 26, 2021

The cartoon in figure 4.143 was published after the announcement of Boris Johnson and his then Home Secretary Priti Patel of a new policy to force the UK travelers returning to Britain from the red list countries²⁹² to go through a ten-days quarantine in accommodations provided by the government, such as hotels. Brown, in his cartoon, resorts to an animal-taming scenario, particularly a stable. Brown’s cartoon resorts to the idiom ‘closing the barn door after the horse has bolted’, which principally implies that Johnson is taking action only after the damage has already been done and the situation cannot be reversed. In line with this idiom and its interpretation, Brown depicted Johnson as a stableman holding a paint can and a brush and looking at the sign STABLES, which has been replaced by QUARANTINE HOTEL. In the background, a rampaging black horse is fleeing away from the stable, while Johnson is incognizant of its escape.

It is necessary to mention in this context that horses in most cultures have euphemistic and positive connotations such as heroism, determination, courage, strength and many others, but in this cartoon Brown made a specific reference to a black color prototype, fusing the horse and the virus into one hybrid visual image and hence activating the metaphor ‘CORONAVIRUS IS A RAMPAGING DARK HORSE’. This metaphor brings to mind the more general metaphor

²⁹² <https://www.statista.com/chart/22573/countries-where-travel-from-uk-advised-against/>

‘VIRUS IS AN ANIMAL’, yet in this case Brown highlights some properties of the black horse in particular (power, speed, stubbornness and an association to death) to ascribe the rapid and dangerous spread of the threat. The metaphorical entailments derived from this image are the following:

- QUARANTINE HOTELS ARE A STABLE.
- BRITISH TRAVELERS ARE ANIMALS.
- BORIS JOHNSON IS AN INDIFFERENT STABLEMAN.
- CORONAVIRUS IS A FLEEING, RAMPAGING HORSE.
- BORIS JOHNSON’S PROTECTION POLICIES AGAINST THE VIRUS ARE MEANS OF SPREADING THE VIRUS.

As a matter of fact, through this cartoon, Brown seemingly attempts to evaluate negatively the new policy of the ten-day quarantine that Johnson imposed on the British travelers, regarding the quarantine accommodations as stables where the virus is tamed (i.e., as a virus spread prevention). Thus, this visual configuration ignites the spatial metaphors ‘CONTROL IS IN’ and its converse ‘UNCONTROL IS OUT’, which are based on the metaphors ‘CONTROLLING THE VIRUS SPREAD IS PUTTING AN ANIMAL IN A STABLE’, and ‘UNCONTROLLED VIRUS IS A FLEEING ANIMAL OUT OF THE STABLE’. Since the animal is out of the stable, this triggers that the virus is spreading fast, like a rampaging horse, and therefore it is uncontrolled.

Other semiotic resources of representative and compositional meaning can also be noticed. First, the representational participant shows that there is non-transactional relation between Johnson and the other elements and the viewers; there is no vector to convey the internal relation between the characters. Secondly, the connotative meanings of the colors utilized in this cartoon also express Brown’s critical attitudes towards Johnson and Patel’s new quarantine policy; for instance, the sign in red QUARANTINE HOTEL metonymically represents the target of the cartoon, namely the high risk of implementing ‘a hotel quarantine system’, whereas the use of black for the rampaging horse, which is fused with a coronavirus shape, metonymically stands for death and danger. On the other hand, the mess Johnson is making and the red-hand sign printed on his butt are humorous indications of the government’s utter folly in conducting the crisis. Another element is the placement and position of the characters, as such the backgrounding placement of

the angry horse and Johnson's foregrounding suggest that the informational value of Johnson's new hotel quarantine occupies the cartoonist's interest and it is presented as more important for the viewers to know and analyze.

Moreover, positioning the stable in the right side of the image gives it the value of giving new information to the viewers about Johnson's new hotel quarantine plan. In short, the whole image, with the individual metaphors given above build up the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S QUARANTINE HOTEL SYSTEM IS TO RELEASE A WILD HORSE OUT OF CONTROL'. Once and again, the visual elements such as body posture, indirect gaze and the interactive relationship between the characters in the cartoon represent the indifference of Johnson to the threat caused by his ill-conceived ten-day quarantine. These elements, with the verbal captions, all represent the cartoon crux since they unveil the cartoonist's hidden beliefs and motifs, yet in this cartoon, like in many of *The Independent's* cartoons, Johnson is portrayed as indifferent, apathetic and vulnerable.

**CHAPTER V: THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS
AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF BORIS
JOHNSON-RELATED CARTOONS**

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the quantitative analysis of the corpus data, which is the statistic frequency of the source and target domains employed in the UK newspapers' cartoons. As already mentioned in Chapters III and IV, after the qualitative analysis of the cartoons regarding the critical multimodal metaphorical representations of Boris Johnson in the three newspapers' cartoons, the present chapter is devoted to demonstrate the statistic occurrence of the cartoons' source domains, as suggested by Kövecses (2010) and seen in section 2.1.2., and the target domains or thematic focuses in the cartoons as elaborately elucidated in section 3.3.2.1. The quantitative analysis of these domains facilitates the metaphorical explanations of the cartoons' metaphorical images and provides accurate answers to the questions raised in chapter I. The digital tool employed in this study also functions as a statistic tool in addition to its image segmentation and annotation tool.

In addition to the tables that represent the statistic occurrence of the source and target domains in the three newspapers, the interpretation of each table is provided to explain why certain metaphors have been preferred in conveying the cartoonists' critical messages behind Johnson's depiction. Moreover, the chapter also addresses the similarities and differences concerning the thematic focuses and the contextual knowledge of the metaphorical configuration of Johnson in the cartoons (target domains), and to explain what persuasive functions stand behind such diversity. As a constant relation to this aspect, in political discourse, metaphorical images are not commonly used as rhetorical devices for decorative purposes, rather they have persuasive purposes that express the power dynamics and predominant ideologies that could affect, shape and reshape the way people conceive the world and talk about its objects. In line with this tenet, i.e., the critical stage of constructing metaphors derived from the ideological power that metaphors have and the social agency made use of through them, Silaški (2012:209) further adds that

By choosing which aspects of a phenomenon they will highlight or hide, metaphor creators consciously reveal their own value judgments and ideological stances. A strong ideological basis of metaphors allows their creators to influence the way we conceptualize certain concepts and phenomena, which makes them a powerful and dangerous weapon in the process of shaping opinions.

Thus, this chapter will exhibit in which way the three newspapers' cartoons are different or similar, mainly in the source domains (image schemas, scenarios, and intertextuality) or in the

target domains and themes, and it will explore the ideological stances and political perspectives that drive cartoonists to employ such political encoding.

5.2. THE QUANTITATIVE RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE RELATED CARTOONS IN THE UK NEWSPAPERS

As mentioned above, this analysis of the results is devoted to addressing the quantitative part of this study, the source and target domains distributions and comparisons among the three newspapers. Thus, in accordance to Charteris-Black's (2004) CMA, the interpretation and explanation stages have precisely and smoothly been addressed with the help of the annotation tool. Thus, to provide an accurate reply to each of the study objectives, this chapter has been divided into the following sub-sections:

- The annotation and interpretation of the thematic focus domains and the frequent target domains of each newspaper.
- The annotation and interpretation of the source domains and the frequent scenarios and metaphorical images of Boris Johnson-related cartoons of each newspaper.
- A reflection on how the different multimodal metaphors in Boris Johnson-related cartoons are artfully utilized in the three newspapers.

5.2.1. The Annotation and Interpretation of the Thematic Focus Domains and the Frequent Target Domain of Boris Johnson-Related Cartoons in *The Times*

After identifying and qualitatively analyzing the metaphorical configurations employed by *The Times*' cartoonists in chapter IV, this section delves into the similarities and differences among the three newspapers' cartoons regarding the thematic focus (target domains) and the underlying motifs and what political stances stand behind such employment. Thus, the essential purpose is to unfold the distribution of the thematic focus of the cartoonists (Morten Morland and Peter Brookes) in portraying Boris Johnson during the pandemic and to display the influence of their ideological stance and political alignment in their portraits. The target domains in *The Times* during

the coronavirus crisis (2020-2021) are annotated in regard to their distributions in the cartoons and the descriptive statistics as shown in table 5.1.

Feature	Percent	N
TARGET_DOMAINS-TYPE	N=29	
boris-johnson--personality	34.48%	10
the-virus	3.45%	1
the-british-governmental-policies-and-precautionary-strategies	31.03%	9
economy	24.14%	7
virus-victims	0.00%	0
the-healthcare-sector-and-the-world-health-organization-(who)	3.45%	1
vaccination	3.45%	1
foreign-affairs-and-the-eu-countries-plan-with-boris-johnson's-government-to-confront-the-virus-prevalence	0.00%	0

Table 5.1 The descriptive statistics and distribution of the TARGET DOMAINS in *The Times*' cartoons 2020-2021

Thus, the themes and targets the cartoonists in *The Times* gave more attention to could be interpreted as follows:

1. While *The Times* commonly aligns itself with center-right or more conservative views, its cartoonists adopt a relatively negative stance when depicting Boris Johnson's personality and leadership amid the pandemic. It has been found that 34.48% of the total distribution average turns around Boris Johnson's persona, leadership and accountability. In this theme, *The Times*' cartoonists devoted their attention to Johnson's mishandling of the pandemic, his leadership faults and his socially inadvisable announcements and scandals. Most of the cartoons that represent Johnson's mismanagement of the crisis are essentially based on the negative influence that Cummings exerts on Johnson's cabinet in general and on Johnson in particular, in addition to the government's decision-making, so accordingly Johnson is portrayed either as a child held by Dominic Cummings, as in cartoon 1.7, or as dust contained by Dominic Cummings-as-a-vacuum cleaner, as in cartoon 1.23. In so doing, *The Times* criticizes Johnson's management of the pandemic considering it as a chaos work or a way leading to a fatal end.
2. The second rank is taken by the British governmental policies and strategies, with a score

of 31.03%. The main theme of this domain relies upon examining Johnson's specific measures and precautionary strategies alongside the internal challenges and problems. The measures Johnson's government implemented during the pandemic gained the interest and focus of cartoonists. The metaphors inferred from the cartoons reveal Boris Johnson's measures during the crisis as unrealistic, as in cartoon 1.17, where Johnson is rendered as an astronaut attempting to achieve his goal to curb the virus spread in a largely useless way, comparing it to a trip to the moon on a bus. Sometimes, Johnson's measures and restrictions are visually depicted as a source of conflict and sadness during the crisis, as in cartoons 1.18 and 1.24, in which the tiered system is metaphorically rendered as a program of grief and hence it ignites a more general metaphor, 'THE UK GOVERNMENT'S TIERED SYSTEM IS A SOURCE OF UNHAPPINESS AND SADNESS'. This system is depicted as a source of grief not only for the British citizens but also for the government. Consequently, many of Boris Johnson-related cartoons in *The Times* during the pandemic are framed to highlight the ineffective and apathetic role of his government, as they negatively affected the well-being of the population. Moreover, the easing measures, such as the ones adopted around Christmas, and the tiered levels lifting, alongside the rift caused between Johnson and the top medical advisors, are given notable value through the depiction of Boris Johnson as the cause of danger and conflict, as in cartoons 1.18, 1.21, 1.25 and 1.26. These cartoons, thus, evoke the interpretative value of the metaphor that reveals that 'BORIS JOHNSON IS THE MOST FORMIDABLE THREAT DURING THE CRISIS'.

3. The third rank is occupied by the economic crisis, shedding light either on the government's level-up economic plans or on the economic downturns, in 24.14 % of the cartoons. The metaphorical representations employed here are typically directed to showing that Johnson was the only cause (the representational actor) of the financial and economic problems during the pandemic since the early stages of the virus. For instance, cartoons 1.1 and 1.16 underscore that Johnson's insufficient decisions and inefficient plans had a devastating impact on the UK's economy and finances, as in the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON'S ERRONEOUS DECISIONS IN THE BRITISH STOCK MARKET DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE LEADING TO A PERILOUS ZIP WIRE DESCENT' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INEFFICIENT FINANCIAL PLANS DURING THE

PANDEMIC ARE A FALL INTO A DARK ABYSS'. The metaphors in this field are employed to display the perilous results of Johnson's ill-conceived decisions and plans rather than the economic problems resulting from the pandemic itself. The economic decisions, thus, occupy *The Times*' cartoonists' focus, particularly those connected to his failing 'Back to work' plan in cartoon 1.4, the notorious emergency bailout in cartoon 1.3 or the reopening policy that lacks proficiency and accuracy, as in cartoon 1.9, portraying Johnson and his plan as a RAMPAGE BULL IN A RETAILER SHOP. Most of the cartoons in the field of economy convey *The Times*' cartoonists' review that Johnson plans are a way to fatal ends or disasters.

4. The final area of emphasis in *The Times*' cartoons pertains to three target domains, the virus, the health care sector, and the vaccination plans. They have the same average, 3.45% for each. The main focus in this field was directed towards the subdivisions related to the main features, such as the vaccination's rolling out process and its unfair distribution, the looming potential of a second wave of the pandemic in the UK and Johnson's abuse of the home care sector. As substantiated by the statistical analysis, it is evident that *The Times*' cartoonists paid comparatively less attention to depicting the vaccination rollout process and the governmental shortcomings in meeting its pledges. In the light of the discussion thus far, it has been revealed that though *The Times*' cartoonists address various aspects of the pandemic in their cartoons, their emphasis in most illustrations tends to gravitate more toward portraying Boris Johnson's personality and the related aspects of leadership, the party's headship and his own accountability. They tend in most cartoons to present a narrative process with Johnson as the only actor rather than repeatedly rendering other members of the British Conservative party or of the cabinet. In this way, the deliberate objective is to visually convey diverse themes through the satirical depiction of Johnson. This approach to a *leader-centric focus* is not intended as a critique of the entirety of the Conservative party, its members, or even Johnson's cabinet ministers, rather the intention is to distinguish the negative evaluation of Johnson's individual traits, leadership and mismanagement from the broader political ideology associated with his party. Thus, the cartoonists attempted to detach Johnsonism as leadership from the Conservative party, criticizing the PM's leadership attributes, decisions and conduct, while sidestepping a sweeping condemnation of the entire government.

5.2.2 The Annotation and Interpretation of the Source Domains and the Frequent Scenarios and Metaphorical Images of Boris Johnson-Related Cartoons in *The Times*

The analysis in chapter IV reveals that *The Times*' cartoonists aimed to be balanced in their depiction of Boris Johnson during the crisis of coronavirus. Not being too harsh in the metaphorical configuration of Johnson is the most noticeable feature of *The Times*' cartoonists. This was seen in some depth through the descriptive statistics of the images' annotation concerning the preferred sources and scenarios. This section, therefore, is devoted to highlighting the source domains and the scenarios the cartoonists focused more intensely on in their Johnson-related cartoons during the pandemic. The annotation of the UAM Image Tool uncovers the following divergence, as shown in table 5.2.

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= Descriptive Statistics: Features
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Project: source metaphors
Unit: source_domains_and_scenarios:source_domains_and_scenarios
Date: Thu May 25 18:16:42 2023

Feature Mean      N
SOURCE_DOMAINS_AND_SCENARIOS-TYPE-THE-TIMES:  N=28
human-beings: 7.14%  2
animals: 7.14%  2
plants: 3.57%  1
journey-scenario: 17.86%  5
forces: 3.57%  1
game-and-sports: 7.14%  2
creation-and-destruction: 7.14%  2
building-and-construction: 7.14%  2
light-and-darkness: 7.14%  2
heat-and-coldness: 0.00%  0
religion-and-ethics: 3.57%  1
health-and-illness: 0.00%  0
death-metaphor: 0.00%  0
container-and-confinement: 3.57%  1
money-and-transactions: 0.00%  0
food-and-cooking: 7.14%  2
machine-and-tools: 0.00%  0
war-and-conflict: 3.57%  1
family-scenario: 0.00%  0
marriage-and-divorce: 3.57%  1
artistic-performance-and-shows: 10.71%  3

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Table 5.2 A screenshot of the annotation and the descriptive statistics of the source domains and scenarios in *The Times*' cartoons 2020-2021

The table presented above displays the occurrence and statistical averages of the metaphorical source domains and the specific conceptualization of metaphors in *The Times*, as outlined below with the interpretations of the metaphors.

1. It is apparent that metaphors related to a JOURNEY SCENARIO hold the highest frequency, ranking at 17.86%. Although this metaphorical conceptualization typically serves ideological purposes by emphasizing governmental progress and accomplishments, essentially embodying the notion that ‘POLITICAL ACTIVITY IS GOING ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A DESTINATION’ (López López, 2019:92), it was inverted in this context to negatively assess Johnson’s handling of the pandemic. So, it activates the metaphors and the interpretative values that follow.
 - ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S WRONG DECISIONS IN THE BRITISH STOCK MARKET DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE RIDING A ZIP WIRE DOWNWARDS’ → *Johnson’s policies are a descending motion.*
 - ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S INEFFICIENT FINANCIAL PLANS DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE A FALL INTO A DARK ABYSS’ → *Johnson’s policies lead to drastic ends.*
 - ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S SLOW MEASURES DURING THE CRISIS ARE A PATH TO A GRAVEYARD/TO DEATH’, and ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S LEADERSHIP IS THE WAY TO BLUNDERLAND’ → *Johnson’s policies have deadly outcomes.*
 - ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S RESPONSE TO THE CARE HOME CRISIS IS A SLOW AND PAINFUL JOURNEY TO OLD AGE’ → *Johnson’s policies are a slow movement towards an unavoidable target.*
 - ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS AN ASTRONAUT ATTEMPTING TO REACH THE MOON WITH A BUS’ → *Johnson’s policies lead to an unreasonable, inadequate journey.*
 - ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S CHRISTMAS RELAXATION OF COVID-19 RULES IS AN UNSTOPPABLE JOURNEY TOWARDS A FATAL DESTINATION’ → *Boris Johnson’s policies are a deadly journey.*

Summing up this point, the metaphors above ignite the following interpretations: Boris Johnson as a government leader is the cause of a perilous descent in economy in which his inefficient measures and plans during the pandemic are metaphorically instantiated by *The Times’* cartoonists as a fall into a dark abyss or a journey towards deadly outcomes.

2. Another significant source domain and scenario employed by *The Times*' cartoonists revolves around ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS. This domain gets 10.71%, which reveals that the cartoonists attempt to portray the humorous and incompetent impact of Johnson's leadership and COVID-19 policies during the pandemic, often likening them to clownish shows, as with the exemplification of the tiered system in cartoon 1.24, in which it looks as a miserable clown program and Johnson is the sad clown. As a point of recall, in political discourse, the metaphorical domain of acting scenes has long been utilized to humorously conceptualize politics as a ridiculous performing scene, with politicians as actors. Thus, this domain generally activates the conceptual metaphor 'POLITICAL ACTION IS ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE', which derives from Shakespeare's renowned quote "All the entire world is a stage" (Penskaya & Kupper, 2019:208). However, in this aspect, the utilization of the performance scene domain to depict Johnson's COVID-19 measures and approaches in combating the spread of the virus aims to underscore their lack of seriousness and effectiveness, as shown in the metaphors and their interpretative values:

- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 ALERT TIERED SYSTEM IS A SAD CLOWN PERFORMANCE' → *Boris Johnson imposed a stringent system.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON 'MIS-SPEAKS' IN A BOOBY PAGEANT' → *Boris Johnson is a liar.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S GOVERNMENT IS A BAND OF BUNGLES' → *Johnson's government's performance during the pandemic is characterized by ineptitude, mishandling, or mismanagement.*

3. Other domains, such as HUMAN BEINGS, ANIMALS, LIGHT AND DARK, GAME AND SPORTS, FOOD AND COOKING, CREATION AND DESTRUCTION and BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION, all come at the next level with 7.14%. These domains were artfully employed by *The Times*' cartoonists to achieve the communicative and persuasive value of their political images and to portray the lack of effectiveness and competence in Johnson's government in handling the crisis of coronavirus. For instance, the age sub-section 'childhood and aging' in the HUMAN BEINGS source domain type in the UAM tool image reveals Johnson's immaturity as the head of a government and his tardiness in implementing rapid responses, as in the metaphors:

- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A LITTLE TODDLER TAKEN CARE OF BY DOMINIC CUMMINGS' → *Boris Johnson is immature and lacks power.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON AND HIS GOVERNMENT'S MEMBERS ARE NAUGHTY CHILDREN' → *Boris Johnson's government is a group of chaos makers, not problem solvers.*
- BORIS JOHNSON'S RESPONSE TO THE CARE HOME CRISIS IS A SLOW AND PAINFUL JOURNEY TO OLD AGE → *Boris Johnson is careless and tardy to take decisive actions.*

Similarly to the metaphors activated in the earlier point, the scenarios and source domains of GAME AND SPORTS, FOOD AND COOKING, BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION, CREATION AND DESTRUCTION, LIGHT AND DARK were also used by *The Times*' cartoonists to criticize Johnson's COVID-19 measures and leadership. For instance, the metaphorical conceptualization relying upon the GAME AND SPORTS source domain portrays Johnson as a failing player, whose efforts are not successful to win the game against the virus, notably his attempts to roll out the vaccine, which is metaphorically portrayed as failing darts.

It is relevant to mention in this line that the cartoons in *The Times* were less harsh in portraying Johnson during the crucial period of coronavirus, with an avoidance of direct criticism of Conservatism or the right-wing of the party. Thus, the cartoonists tend to focus more on portraying Johnson individually in cartoons during the pandemic without more satirical reference to the party's members. So, according to the polarity employed, the cartoonists tend to be critical and provide negative evaluation of Johnson's leadership as a whole rather than focusing on the whole government. This approach aligns with the newspaper's historical support for the Conservative Party and allows for a targeted satire and critique of Johnson's leadership decisions. At the bottom of the ranking, a group of metaphors have originated from the other source domains, PLANTS, CONTAINER AND CONFINEMENT, FORCES, RELIGION AND ETHICS, WAR AND CONFLICT, and MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. Each of these source domains represents a mere 3.57% of the total occurrences of other sources, while the rest of the metaphor domains are entirely absent.

5.2.3 The Annotation and Interpretation of the Thematic Focus Domains and the Frequent Target Domain of Boris Johnson-Related Cartoons in *The Guardian*

Concerning the same target domains or focused themes, the UAM Image Tool annotation of *The Guardian's* cartoons revealed the emphasis of the cartoonists (Steve Bell and Chris Riddell) over certain issues amid the crisis; these are issues already stated which in one way or another related profoundly to Boris Johnson and his tenure during COVID-19. Table 5.3 represents the statistical occurrence of the target domains in the cartoons portraying Johnson during the pandemic in *The Guardian*.

Feature	Percent	N
TARGET_DOMAINS-TYPE		N=28
boris-johnson--personality	39.29%	11
the-virus	0.00%	0
the-british-governmental-policies-and-precautionary-strategies	32.14%	9
economy	14.29%	4
virus'-victims	0.00%	0
the-healthcare-sector-and-the-world-health-organization-(who)	10.71%	3
vaccination	3.57%	1
foreign-affairs-and-the-eu-countries-plan-with-boris-johnson's-government-to-confront-the-virus-prevalence	0.00%	0

Table 5.3 The statistical occurrence of the TARGET DOMAINS AND THEMATIC FOCUS in *The Guardian's* cartoons (2020-2021)

The following targets are the frequent themes the cartoonists were more engaged in.

1. The predominant target domain that occupies the highest level of frequency in the thematic focus of *The Guardian's* cartoons is Boris Johnson's personality, his leadership, his accountability and his mismanaged approach throughout the crisis of coronavirus. This constitutes a substantial 39.29 % of the entire distribution.

As was suggested in section 3.1.2.2, *The Guardian's* ideological identity is distinctly center-left, and politically lends its support to the Labour Party in the UK. Consequently, its ideological resonance in some manner represents the newspaper's coverage and editorial stance, particularly its cartoonists' views on political figures. Within this context, *The Guardian's* cartoonists concentrated their drawings on matters directly associated with Johnson's leadership and accountability, such as Brexit and the mismanagement of the pandemic of coronavirus, rather than extensively addressing some other pandemic-related issues such as the death tolls, governmental responses, or economic challenges. For instance, cartoon 2.19 depicts Johnson's mismanagement of the pandemic as a comic show expressing all the faults and shortcomings during Johnson's tenure rather than the pandemic focus itself, activating the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP IS A PANTOMIME SHOW'.

Furthermore, through their illustrations and satirical stances, *The Guardian's* cartoonists conveyed a viewpoint that was skeptical of Johnson's effectiveness and highlighted what they perceived as shortcomings and missteps in his governance, extending this to highlighting his rift with local regions, exemplified by the situation with Greater Manchester, as in cartoon 2.23. Johnson's discord with some local areas amid the crisis was satirically profiled by *The Guardian* as a war declaration, particularly the lockdowns he intended to impose on the northern part of the UK, namely Scotland, which in turn led the Scots to call for a new independence referendum. Such discriminations in the crisis handling give rise to *The Guardian's* cartoonists to focus more on the metaphors as shown in cartoons 2.13 and 2.23: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S REJECTION OF A SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM IS A DECLARATION OF WAR' and 'THE UK GOVERNMENT'S HARMFUL TREATMENT OF PEOPLE'S RIGHTS IS A WAR DECLARATION'.

2. The second area of interest that *The Guardian's* cartoonists examined during the crisis was the COVID-19 measures implemented by the British Government. This subject matter accounted for 32.14% of the total instances. As previously indicated, this target domain in Johnson-related cartoons during the crisis encompassed a set of measures and policies.

Throughout the analysis of *The Guardian's* collection of cartoons, it is evident that the cartoonists adopted a critical stance when portraying Johnson's governmental COVID-19 measures. They appear to evaluate his implemented measures negatively with pejorative hints. For instance, in cartoon 2.6 there is a critical portrayal of the Test and Trace system, symbolized as a maze leading to a disastrous outcome. In this cartoon, the artist, Bell, is persuading the audience that Johnson's lack of credibility in handling the crisis is leading the country down a dangerous path. Going even further, the easing of restrictions and plans for Christmas festivities is portrayed in an extremely harsh light, as seen in cartoon 2.24. In this cartoon, Riddell depicts Johnson as Jason Voorhees, a notorious serial killer. This representation strongly conveys the message that the easing of restrictions is seen as endangering people's lives.

3. The third rank was occupied by economy, which gets 14.29% out of the total occurrence of the thematic focus and target domains. Again, instead of giving most of their attention to the gravity of the pandemic, *The Guardian's* cartoonists shed light on the lack of sufficient economic support and the narrow vision of the economic plans Johnson's government planned to put in practice. Thus, the focus was on the economic recovery plans and policies for leveling up, such as 'eat out to help out', and 'shaking up the civil service' to increase the performance and to make radical changes that encounter the accelerating rhythm of the pandemic.

The Guardian's cartoonists, in this aspect, attempt to convey their critical evaluation of the economic recovery plans implemented by Johnson during the pandemic, characterizing them as unsustainable and ineffective or even leading to dangerous outcomes. For instance, in cartoon 2.1, created by Steve Bell, a metaphorical representation is employed, showing that Johnson's economic approach during the crisis is navigating the nation toward uncertain and unfavorable outcomes. This metaphor, 'BORIS JOHNSON'S NARROW ECONOMIC VISION DURING THE CRISIS IS NAVIGATING THE COUNTRY INTO OBSCURE DESTINATIONS', symbolizes a lack of clarity and foresight in Johnson's economic policies.

Furthermore, cartoon 2.15, for example, sheds a negative light on Johnson's "eat out to help out" initiative, employing the metaphor 'THE BRITISH RECOVERING MEASURES TO LEVEL UP ECONOMY DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE TO BUY SNACKS AND BEERS'. This verbo-pictorial metaphor underscores the cartoonists' view that the government's economic recovery efforts appear as superficial and focused on short-term consumerism rather than addressing deeper economic issues.

To sum up this point, *The Guardian's* cartoonists aimed to convey their pessimistic perspective regarding Johnson's responses to economic challenges, including recession and unemployment. They portrayed Johnson's progress as slow and lacking control over the economic situation. For instance, cartoon 2.28 employs the metaphor 'LACK OF ABILITY TO ACHIEVE THE ECONOMIC PLANS IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT', highlighting the perceived inefficacy and lack of command in Johnson's economic policies. These cartoons collectively serve as vehicles for critiquing the government's handling of economic matters during the pandemic, as viewed through the lens of *The Guardian's* editorial stance.

4. The fourth rank in occupancy is taken by the health sector and the home cares. It occupies a mere 10.71%. This feature is subdivided in two blocks; the first addresses the contribution of this sector during the pandemic, whereas the second part is about Johnson-Home cares relations and his abuse of the sector in general. Cartoons 2.2, 2.11 and 2.12, for instance, uncover the cartoonists' negative attitudes towards Johnson's government's abuse of the health sector. His lack of support of the health sector and the home care service was regarded as a violation of promises, deception and lack of commitment towards this sector. Thus, in the above-mentioned cartoons the metaphor can be ignited from the focus on Boris Johnson's lack of support of the WHO measures and home cares as 'BORIS JOHNSON'S CARE HOME PROTECTION POLICIES ARE MISGUIDED ARROWS TOWARDS A TARGET'. This tendency can be much severer when they compare Johnson's appreciation of this sector as digging graves, as in the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S APPRECIATION FOR THE CARERS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO DIG GRAVES FOR THEM', which highlights concerns about the inadequate supply and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to healthcare workers, including those in home care

settings. It thus underscores the perception of governmental negligence in providing genuine support during the crisis.

5. Within the target themes spectrum recurrently featured in *The Guardian's* cartoons, the lowest rank is attributed to the vaccination type, which occupies a mere 3.57% of the overall representation. The limited attention allocated to this specific theme by the cartoonists serves as a prominent indicator of their tendency to underscore the perceived inadequacies of Johnson's government in its crisis management rather than primarily highlighting the tangible outcomes of the virus itself. This can be seen in cartoon 2.25, with the metaphor 'THE UK'S VACCINE ROLLING OUT/ DISTRIBUTION IS A MISDIRECTED/FAILED ARROW' and cartoon 2.27, in which the vaccination rolling-out process is metaphorically criticized in the metaphor implied as 'THE BRITISH VACCINE ROLLOUT IS A WWII WEAPON AGAINST THE AXIS POWERS'

This editorial choice is particularly noticeable since it directs the focus away from the immediate consequences of the virus, such as death tolls or confirmed cases. Instead, the cartoons carefully underline Johnson's effectiveness and competence in addressing the crisis, principally by featuring depictions of Johnson and the members of his political party. This strategic emphasis on the government's performance reflects a broader commentary on leadership and governance, as exemplified in the cartoons.

6. In apparent contrast to *The Times*, *The Guardian* adopts a notably different editorial stance in its political cartoons. Rooted in its clear center-left ideological leaning and firm support for the British Labour Party, *The Guardian's* cartoons reflect a distinct 'government-centric' approach or at least tend to add a sense of group-orientation, that is, presenting the Tories as a political party that was responsible for the faults and inadequate plans during the pandemic. This approach is characterized by a systemic critique that extends to the entire Conservative Party, rather than singling out individual figures within the government. Utilizing metaphors and allegorical portrayals, the newspaper's cartoonists often depict government members as animals or comedians, symbolizing their criticisms and conveying messages of incompetence and ridicule. The overarching goal is to throw a wider blame net, positioning the Conservative Party as the source of perceived failures and incompetence, asserting that these issues are

governmental and systemic rather than the result of Johnson’s actions alone. *The Guardian’s* approach invites its respective viewers and readers to see the Conservative Party as a collective entity, amplifying their critique of the party’s overall performance.

5.2.4. The Annotation and Interpretation of the Source Domains and the Frequent Scenarios and Metaphorical Images of Boris Johnson-Related Cartoons in *The Guardian*

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- Descriptive Statistics: Features
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Project: source metaphors
Unit: source_domains_and_scenarios:source_domains_and_scenarios
Date: Thu Jun 08 16:15:33 2023

Feature Mean    N

SOURCE_DOMAINS_AND_SCENARIOS-TYPE-THE-GUARDIAN:  N=28
human-beings:  3.57%  1
animals:       25.00%  7
plants:        0.00%  0
journey-scenario:  7.14%  2
forces:        7.14%  2
game-and-sports: 10.71%  3
creation-and-destruction: 0.00%  0
building-and-construction: 0.00%  0
light-and-darkness: 0.00%  0
heat-and-coldness: 0.00%  0
religion-and-ethics: 3.57%  1
health-and-illness: 0.00%  0
death-metaphor: 14.29%  4
container-and-confinement: 7.14%  2
money-and-transactions: 0.00%  0
food-and-cooking: 7.14%  2
machine-and-tools: 0.00%  0
war-and-conflict: 7.14%  2
family-scenario: 0.00%  0
marriage-and-divorce: 0.00%  0
artistic-performance-and-shows: 7.14%  2

LIBMAN DETRICE TYPE:  11-1

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Table 5.4 A screenshot of the annotation and the descriptive statistics of the source domains and scenarios in *The Guardian’s* cartoons 2020-2021

According to table 5.4, the source domains and scenarios that *The Guardian's* cartoonists purposefully utilized in depicting the British PM during the pandemic reveal that they concentrate on some specific metaphors to communicate their ideological stances. The table shows the following.

1. The ANIMALS Source Domain occupies the highest level of frequency with 25% of the total occurrence of the sample. Steve Bell and Chris Riddell attempted to expose the idiosyncratic features through mapping them from the source domain ANIMALS onto the target domain BORIS JOHNSON AND HIS GOVERNMENT. This metaphorical configuration, thoroughly examined by Kövecses (2020), is based on the general metaphor 'HUMANS ARE ANIMALS' and the more specific ones 'THE OBJECTIONABLE HUMAN BEHAVIOR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOR' or 'OBJECTIONABLE PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS'. Even the positive associations that some animals have in British culture, such as the British bulldog, are seen under negative connotations. This dog has been typically regarded as a symbol of British tenacity and determination, and it was historically associated with Winston Churchill, as discussed in cartoon 2.14. Thus, the metaphor was 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A BRITISH BULLDOG'. Johnson's character has also been metaphorically configured as a sloth animal in achieving the economic leveling-up plans for prosperity and development, as in cartoon 2.28, which activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A THREE-TOED SLOTH ANIMAL'. This analysis triggers the conceptual metaphor 'LACK OF ABILITY TO ACHIEVE THE ECONOMIC PLANS IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT'. The analysis in Chapter IV activated a set of metaphorical conceptualizations that show Johnson and his cabinet's members as animals which lead to the following interpretations, as in

- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S CABINET IS A HERD OF GOATS' → *Boris Johnson and the Tories represent mischief and folly.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A BRITISH BULLDOG' → *Boris Johnson is aggressive towards his own people.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS THE BUTTOCKS OF A BULL' → *Boris Johnson is vulnerable and lacking perception and competence in handling the crisis.*

- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A SMALL DOG UNDER DOMINIC CUMMINGS' CONTROL' → *Boris Johnson lacks control and has no influence as a leader.*
 - 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A THREE-TOED SLOTH ANIMAL' → *Johnson's government is slow, careless and inactive.*
2. The DEATH metaphor occupies the second rank of the statistical occurrence of all source domains, occupying 14.29%. *The Guardian's* cartoonists tend to be much severer in depicting the crisis showing Johnson's Conservative government as death makers and the restrictions implemented as causes of drastic ends or commonly leading to lethal ends, as in the following metaphors:
- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S APPRECIATION FOR THE CARERS DURING THE PANDEMIC IS TO DIG GRAVES FOR THEM' → *Boris Johnson is apathetic towards the danger that other people can face.*
 - BORIS JOHNSON'S POLICIES DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE A CAUSE OF DEATH → *Boris Johnson is responsible for the increase in death tolls.*
 - CONSERVATIVE POLITICIANS ARE DECEITFUL KILLERS → *The Conservatives' measures of curbing the virus are death makers.*
 - BORIS JOHNSON'S POLICIES ARE THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT/ A GRIM REAPER → *The measures taken during the crisis are a harmful power.*

Thus, the use of death metaphors in the cartoons can be attributed to their symbolic power in conveying the gravity of the consequences resulting from Johnson's implemented systems or closure. By employing death-related imagery, *The Guardian's* cartoonists emphasize the perceived harm caused by Johnson's decisions, potentially increasing the impact of their critique. Not far from this point, Bultinck (1998) in his study shows that death metaphors could be conducted through the use of conceptual sources such as MOVEMENT, DOWNWARD MOVEMENT, SLEEP, LOSS, SURRENDER, LIGHT GONE OUT, and END-POINT. So, the conceptualization of death metaphors can be done euphemistically or dysphemistically relying upon the argumentative functions and the contextual composition. As with the examples above, in the literary allusions and source domains of End-points, *The Guardian's* cartoonists succeeded in negatively portraying Johnson's measures of COVID-19 as tools for killing or roads to unpleasant ends.

It is worth noting that these metaphors draw on cultural associations with death as a profound and negative outcome, highlighting the message of the cartoons and reinforcing the newspaper's critical stance towards Johnson.

3. The third rank is occupied by the focus on using the GAMES AND SPORTS source domain to conceptualize Boris Johnson's leadership or measures during the pandemic. This source domain, therefore, gets 10.71% out of the total utilization of sources for metaphors. These metaphors function as a critical view on Johnson's COVID-19 measures and policies, characterizing him as unqualified and irresponsible. The game metaphors, as Ching (1993), Semino and Masci (1996) and Hellín-García (2014) suggest, expand into various aspects of life, where many social concepts could be described in terms of skill, winners, losers, and competition. In American culture, the prevailing metaphor is 'LIFE IS PLAYING A GAME', capturing multiple meanings concisely, as noted by Ching (1993). He argues that life is commonly metaphorized as a game due to its ongoing challenges, risks and struggles. This perspective thus leads to the related metaphor 'TO LIVE IS TO PLAY'.

Politics can be conceptualized using various source domains and scenarios. Politicians are metaphorically portrayed as players, winners, losers and competitors. Semino and Masci (1996), in their study, view politics as a strategic competitive game, analogous to football, complete with rules, strategies and objectives. Politicians are thus seen as participants in this political 'game', making strategic decisions and employing various tactics and maneuvers to achieve their objectives, whether it involves winning elections, passing legislation, or advancing their political careers.

Furthermore, political cartoons also utilize this source domain to serve persuasive functions in discourse. For instance, the cartoonists from *The Guardian* have notably portrayed Johnson as an unskilled player who fails to achieve his goals in curbing the virus. These metaphorical representations underscore Johnson's apparent disregard for the seriousness of the challenges he faced:

- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S CARE HOME PROTECTION POLICIES ARE MISGUIDED ARROWS TOWARDS A TARGET' → *Boris Johnson is an unskilled player.*

- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIOR IS TO LET GOALS IN HIS OWN NET' → *Boris Johnson is a failed leader.*
 - 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A FAILED DART-THROWER' → *Boris Johnson is unskilled.*
 - 'BORIS JOHNSON'S BEATING THE WORLD WITH HIS VACCINE ROLLOUT IS SHOOTING AN ARROW AT HIMSELF' → *Boris Johnson is unskilled and apathetic.*
4. The other source domains, such as WAR, CONTAINER AND CONFINEMENT, FOOD AND COOKING, JOURNEY SCENARIO, ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS, and FORCES, follow closely with a statistical frequency of 7.14%. Concerning the WAR AND CONFLICT source domain, *The Guardian* often employs intertextual references to political or historical figures, such as the former British Prime Ministers Winston Churchill and Neville Chamberlain, historical leaders such as William Wallace or fictional epic characters such as Daenerys Targaryen. In this regard, the cartoonists tend to ironically draw non-identical comparisons between those characters and Johnson. Moreover, instead of portraying the government's challenges to curb the virus as a declaration of war on a foe, they focus on Johnson's conflicts with local areas, particularly regarding the imposition of stricter lockdowns, as seen in the cases of Greater Manchester and Scotland. Consequently, these mappings activate the following metaphors: 'THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND GREATER MANCHESTER IS SIMILAR TO WWII', and 'BORIS JOHNSON IS DAENERYS TARGARYEN, WHO STRUGGLED USING INADEQUATE PLANS', which trigger an interpretation that Johnson is apathetic toward the needs and suffering of the populace amid the crisis, and also may suggest that his decisions lead to disorder and chaos. Concerning the other source domains, for instance the JOURNEY SCENARIO and ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS, these source domains express the decreasing credibility in Johnson's ability to handle the crisis, potentially leading to a grim outcome. Thus, *The Guardian's* cartoonists highlighted through their images the metaphors 'THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S LACK OF CREDIBILITY IN DEALING WITH THE CRISIS IS GOING ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A FATAL DESTINATION' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S MEASURES ARE COMIC SHOWS' (an absurd performance).
5. The last rank affects the domains HUMAN BEINGS, and RELIGION AND ETHICS, which occupy 3.57% each. Concerning the religious and ethical scenarios, it has been found

that such metaphorical images are preferably employed in cartoons to add virtue, righteousness and moral lessons. Thus, *The Guardian's* cartoonist Steve Bell artfully and ironically criticized Johnson's recovery and his return from the infection to deliver his daily briefings as the resurrection of Jesus (cartoon 2.5). Comparing Johnson's recovery to the resurrection of Jesus is regarded as an exaggerated and ironic way to emphasize the significance or dramatic consequences of this event. Furthermore, it might also suggest that Johnson or his supporters are presenting his recovery from the virus as miraculous or extraordinary, similar to a religious event, in order to support his image or deflect criticism.

5.2.5. The Annotation and Interpretation of the Thematic Focus Domains and the Frequent Target Domain of Boris Johnson-Related Cartoons in *The Independent*

Like the other two previous sections (5.2.1 and 5.2.3), this section also shows the thematic focus and the targets *The Independent's* cartoonists concentrated more on during the pandemic in depicting Boris Johnson. The descriptive statistics of the UAM Image Tool for this newspaper displays the following aspects.

Feature	Percent	N
TARGET_DOMAINS-TYPE		N=43
boris-johnson-personality	23.26%	10
the-virus	2.33%	1
the-british-governmental-policies-and-precautionary-strategies	39.53%	17
economy	25.58%	11
virus'-victims	0.00%	0
the-healthcare-sector-and-the-world-health-organization-(who)	4.65%	2
vaccination	4.65%	2
foreign-affairs-and-the-eu-countries-plan-with-boris-johnson's-government-to-confront-the-virus-prevalence	0.00%	0

Table 5.5 The statistical occurrence of the TARGET DOMAINS AND THEMATIC FOCUS in *The Independent's* cartoons (2020-2021)

1. Based on the findings by using the digital software, the primary subject of focus in the

cartoons' credibility is Johnson's measures and plans, constituting 39.53%. This indicates that the cartoonists, Dave Brown and Brian Adcock, maintain a degree of impartiality, balance and independence in their editorial stances towards Johnson's personality or leadership. It is noteworthy that this is consistent with the newspaper's editorial identity, which was previously established as neutral and politically unbiased, moderate and supporting pragmatic policies. Accordingly, the first subtype of thematic focus on the British governmental measures type is the tiered system, which reveals that *The Independent's* cartoonists placed more emphasis on the tiered system and criticized its effectiveness and competence. Most of the cartoons related to the tiered system were used to illustrate its failures and vulnerability in controlling the virus. Therefore, the majority of cartoons in this category were designed to convey this theme, as seen in cartoons 3.26, which employs the metaphor 'THE THREE TIERED SYSTEM IS A FAILING GAME', and cartoons 3.29, 3.31, 3.32 and 3.37, which also metaphorically instantiate the British tiered system and its consequences as a descent or as a swamp, such as referring to it as a COLLAPSING or FRACTURED PYRAMID, A FAILING GAME, A SWAMP. The criticism was directed at undermining the system itself rather than targeting Johnson or the Conservative Party. The most prominent theme that comes next in this category is the criticism of national lockdowns, which somewhat connected to the levels and implementation of the tiered system, as it criticizes national lockdowns, suggesting they could cause physical harm.

2. The second rank is devoted to the Economy Type, which accounts for 25.58% of the entire set of target domains and thematic focus. In this type, the recurrent cartoons were dedicated to highlighting Johnson's leveling-up economic plans, including the back-to-work plan, the New Deal, the civil service shaking up policy and the re-opening policy. All of these were metaphorized as fragile and ramshackle structures, for instance as sandcastles, broken-down cars and losing games, as seen in cartoons 3.14 and 3.33, which evoke the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON'S NEW DEAL FOR LEVELING-UP THE ECONOMY IS A LOSING POKER GAME', and 'THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES TO RECOVER THE ECONOMY ARE A FRAGILE SANDCASTLE'. Moreover, another preferred representational metaphor which relies on the movement downwards includes a coaster car moving rapidly downwards, as depicted in cartoon 3.20, invoking the metaphor 'BORIS

JOHNSON'S ECONOMIC LEVELING-UP PLANS ARE A VEHICLE MOVING RAPIDLY DOWNWARDS'.

Concerning the primary focus within this category, as already mentioned, is a criticism of Johnson's return-to-work policy, commonly perceived as either leading to a lethal end or causing a remarkable increase in infection cases and death tolls, as depicted in cartoon 3.4, where Johnson's return-to-work policy is represented as standing on a balancing ball. Additionally, cartoon 3.7 activates the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S BACK-TO-WORK POLICY IS A JOURNEY TO A GRAVEYARD'. In the second rank of this type appear economic recession and unemployment, which present dangerous indicators of a deteriorating economy and rising unemployment. These indicators are often metaphorically portrayed as massive natural forces.

3. The third most prominent theme in *The Independent's* cartoons is Boris Johnson's personality and leadership and ill-advised announcements, which collectively account for 23.26% of the focus, as seen in table 5.5. It is noticeable that the highest emphasis here is placed on his leadership. This focus often results in metaphorical representations of Johnson as a FAILED PLAYER, a BLIND GUIDE, or an INDIFFERENT LEADER. These metaphorical representations reveal the cartoonists' unfavorable and critical view of Johnson's leadership and his mishandling of the pandemic. These negative aspects are characterized by traits such as arrogance, absurdity, favoritism and deception, as exemplified in the following cartoons: 3.3, depicting Boris Johnson as CANUTE THE GREAT, 3.30 as the Queen of France Marie Antoinette, 3.5, portraying him as an indifferent bomb-disposal officer, 3.12, showing him as a failed goalkeeper/player, and 3.8, representing him as a blind guide following death and leading his followers to an abyss. In line with the implied meanings of these metaphorical images, it is evident that *The Independent's* cartoonists were critical but not overly harsh in their depictions of Johnson during the pandemic in comparison with *The Guardian*.
4. The next emphasis is dedicated to the healthcare sector and the vaccination rolling-out process. They come next with the same average, 4.56%. It has been noticed through the careful investigation of the newspaper's cartoons that most of *The Independent's*

cartoonists paid little attention to these domain in comparison to other previous themes. The allusions to the healthcare sector have been divided in two parts, the contribution and role of this sector and the government's abuse of this sector. The descriptive statistics show that the second part gains the prominent focus of the cartoonists, as they paid most of their attention to how badly Johnson's government treated the healthcare workers as shown in cartoon 3.28, 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INEFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR THE BRITISH NHS IS A ONE-HANDED CLAP', which expresses Johnson's worthless support. The focus of cartoon 3.40, on the other hand, though it represents the invaluable role of the NHS in rolling out the vaccine and confronting the virus spread, has been extended to cover the trivial role of the government, which is ridiculously rendered through the backgrounding image of Johnson making a sandcastle in the sand track of a sports field. Thus, this part of the target domains reveals the cartoonists' evaluations of Johnson's role in the vaccine rolling-out as trivial or even absent.

5. According to the annotation process of the images, the last target domain is the virus itself, which scores a mere 2.33 %. This type is divided into two subtypes: the severity of the virus and its second wave's metaphorical portrayals. *The Independent's* cartoons presented the virus as a natural force that Johnson's government attempts to defeat, as in cartoon 3.16, 'THE CORONAVIRUS SECOND WAVE IS A TURBULENT SEA OF WAVES OF BEER', or cartoon 3.19, 'THE SECOND WAVE IS A DARK FOREST WHERE BORIS JOHNSON IS LOST'. Thus, the ideological tendency of *The Independent's* cartoonists is to evaluate the second wave of the virus as an uncontrollable power with a lack of professionalism of Johnson's government to defeat the virus.

5.2.6. The Annotation and Interpretation of the Source Domains and the Frequent Scenarios and Metaphorical Images of Boris Johnson-Related Cartoons in *The Independent*

This section is dedicated to revealing the generic source domains utilized by *The Independent's* cartoonists, Dave Brown and Brian Adcock. The previous chapter includes the qualitative analysis

of their cartoons and the metaphorical representations that portray Johnson during the pandemic in the newspaper. Thus, here, the descriptive statistics of the cartoons in this newspaper bring out that some sources are much more useful to the cartoonists, as these metaphors achieve the main target of persuading the viewers of this newspaper. Table 5.6 illustrates the occurrence and the statistics of the source domains and scenarios utilized by *The Independent's* cartoonists in configuring Johnson.

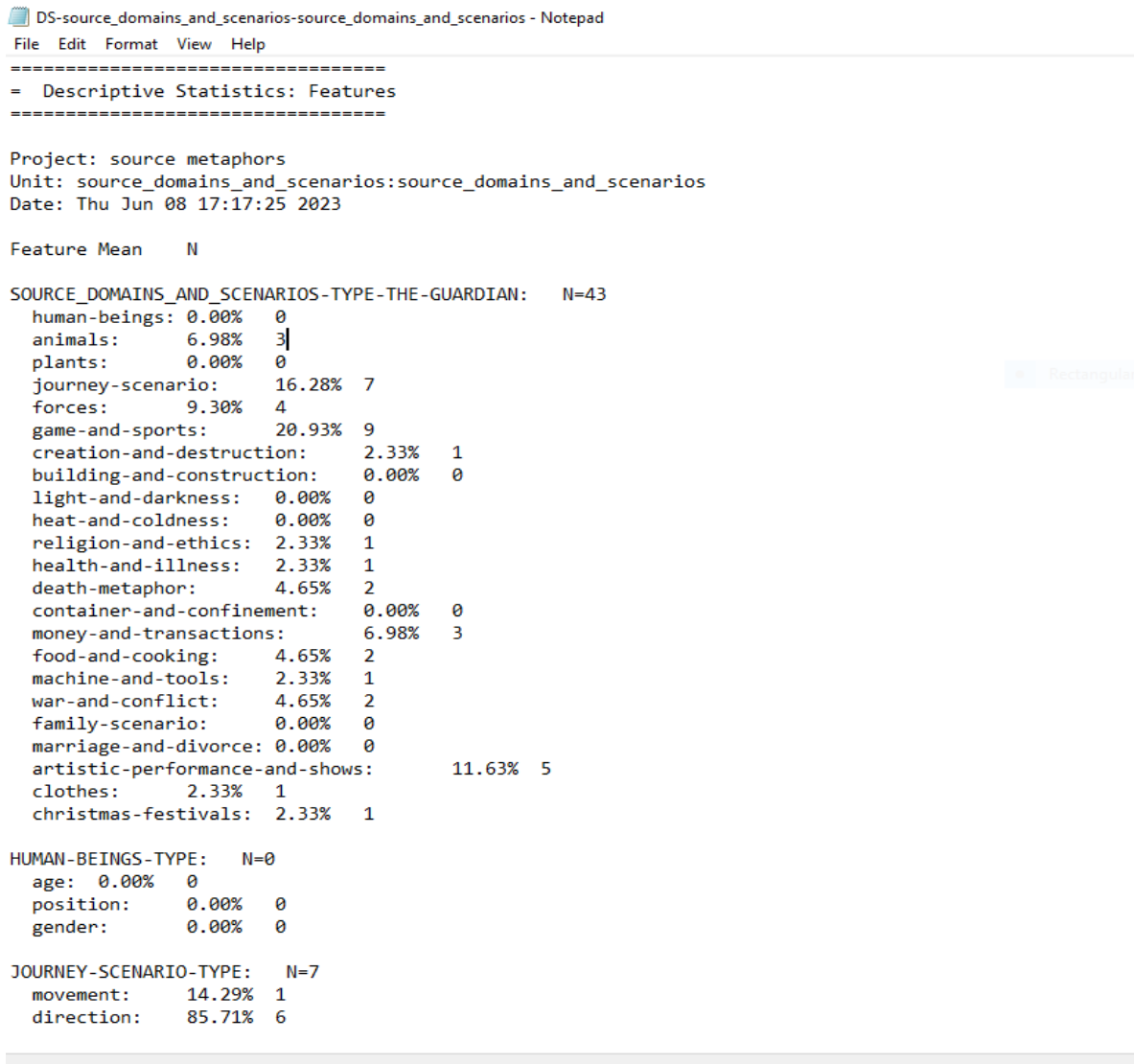


Table 5.6 A screenshot of the annotation and the descriptive statistics of the source domains and scenarios in *The Independent's* cartoons 2020-2021

1. The dominance of the source domain GAME AND SPORTS, comprising 20.93% of the total recurring metaphors, is a noteworthy trend in these cartoons. This domain serves as a framework that resonates with the general public, simplifying complex political issues, as commonly observed by Schilperoord et al. (2009:228-29). Within this framework, the themes of games and competition highlight elements of challenge, rules, victory and defeat, drawing parallels with broader aspects of life and societal concerns. Consequently, a significant number of cartoons in this category depict Boris Johnson as lacking the skillful professionalism and competence required to manage the crisis. Metaphorically, he is portrayed as an unsuccessful player and seen as the primary cause of economic problems, the spread of the virus and its severe consequences. The interpretations of the cartoonists' ideological stance reveal a critical perspective on Johnson's leadership and the consequences of his decisions as seen below.

- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A DEFEATED GOALKEEPER IN THE FACE OF RASHFORD'S CAMPAIGN' → *Boris Johnson has no skillful proficiency in handling the pandemic and its outcome.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S NEW DEAL FOR LEVELING-UP ECONOMY IS A LOSING POKER GAME' → *Boris Johnson is a failed leader.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON'S RESPONSE TO THE VIRUS IS THE WORST PERFORMANCE IN A WORLD COMPETITION' → *Boris Johnson is a failed leader.*
- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A PLAYER OUTSIDE THE COMPETITION TRACK' → *Boris Johnson has no effective role in fronting the virus.*
- 'DEFEATING COVID-19 IS TO HIT THE BELL OF A HIGH STRIKER ATTRACTION' → *Boris Johnson is vulnerable, feeble and a failure.*

Thus, the tendency of *The Independent's* cartoonists is to conceptualize Johnson as a failed player, which activates the impression of being an inactive, feeble and failed leader in turn.

2. Metaphors related to the JOURNEY scenario, highlighting the link between a destination and the process of moving from one place to another, come in second place, representing 16.28% of the cartoons. Many of *The Independent's* cartoons suggest in their depictions that Boris Johnson is on the wrong path, potentially leading the country towards a perilous end, as in the following:

- ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS A CARELESS VEHICLE DRIVER MISSING THE RIGHT WAY’ → *Boris Johnson can be seen as partially responsible for the propagation of the second wave of the virus.*
- ‘BORIS JOHNSON’S LACK OF EFFICIENCY DURING THE SECOND WAVE OF THE PANDEMIC IS BEING LOST IN THE FOREST OF COVID-19’ → *Boris Johnson can be seen as partially responsible for the propagation of the second wave of the virus.*
- ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS THE CAPTAIN OF A COFFINLIKE BOAT SAILING TOWARDS A PERILOUS DESTINATION’ → *The second wave of the virus can be seen as a consequence of the policies implemented by Boris Johnson.*
- ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS A BLIND PERSON LEADING HIS GOVERNMENT’S MEMBERS TO DEATH’ → *Boris Johnson is inefficient and he is mishandling the crisis.*
- ‘BORIS JOHNSON IS AN UNDERGROUND STAFF WORKER’ → *Boris Johnson’s Back-to-work plan is the cause of the virus spread.*

In the depicted visual narrative and the motifs within the cartoons in this section, the JOURNEY scenario metaphors and the movement and destination source domains essentially represent Boris Johnson’s government’s trajectory and his leadership during the pandemic. Thus, the portrayal of Johnson as a leader lacking clear vision, as with a blind leader, an inconspicuous staff member navigating underground, or a lost driver, collectively evokes a pervasive sentiment of inadequacy and unprofessionalism in managing the crisis and steering the nation towards a secure resolution.

3. The integration of the ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS metaphors, accounting for 11.63% of the content, serves as a fundamental conceptual tool within political metaphors designed to elucidate the nature of Johnson’s governance and mismanagement of the pandemic. This approach is prominently observed in *The Independent’s* editorial cartoons, wherein the utilization of musical and theatrical elements becomes a recurring motif to symbolize the perceived shortcomings of Boris Johnson’s government and the British Tories as well. Notable examples include cartoons 3.6 and 3.10, in which musicians and singers are employed as symbolic agents, contributing to the cartoonists’ efforts to underscore the perceived triviality and absurdity characterizing Johnson’s response to the crisis. The metaphors are interpreted as follows.

- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A PANTOMIME DAME IN A COMIC PERFORMANCE'
→ *Boris Johnson is untrustworthy.*

- 'BORIS JOHNSON IS THE HEAD OF THE COMIC PERFORMERS' → *The British Conservatives' measures and strategies to curb the pandemic are absurdities and flaws.*

4. FORCES metaphors account for 9.3% of *The Independent's* cartoons, evoking the impression that the pandemic and its consequences can be conceptualized as PHYSICAL FORCES. The pandemic is metaphorically portrayed as a natural force, reminiscent of a surging river or turbulent sea, as exemplified in cartoons 3.3 and 3.16. In these instances, the second wave of the virus is depicted in this manner, emphasizing its wide spread and rapid transmission among the public. Furthermore, FORCES metaphors can be effectively utilized to illustrate the profound economic impacts of the virus, as shown in cartoon 3.33, where 'UNEMPLOYMENT IS A TSUNAMI WAVE'.

5. The subsequent categories encompass ANIMALS, MONEY AND TRANSACTIONS, each accounting for 6.98% of the total instances within *The Independent*. Conversely, the source domains remaining are DEATH, WAR AND CONFLICT, and FOOD AND COOKING, in which each of them represents 4.65% of the total occurrences. In contrast, other source domains, including CLOTHES, CHRISTMAS FESTIVALS, CREATION AND DESTRUCTION, RELIGION AND ETHICS, HEALTH AND ILLNESS, and MACHINE AND TOOLS, individually constitute 2.33% each.

5.3. THE EXPLANATORY DISCUSSION OF THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE METAPHORS AND SEMIOTIC RESOURCES IN BORIS JOHNSON-RELATED CARTOONS IN THE THREE NEWSPAPERS

After identifying and interpreting the metaphors used in the cartoons using the annotation software, as discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, the final step in the critical analysis of this study involves explaining why particular source domains, scenarios, semiotic resources and intertextual references were preferred over others in the metaphorical conceptualization. Subsequently, this part aims to provide insights into the reasons for favoring these choices over other alternatives, taking into consideration the targets of the metaphorical representations and the overall thematic focuses of the cartoons. While the study primarily focuses on the British PM Boris Johnson as the main character and the represented participant within the sample, it also emphasizes the specific focused targets of the cartoons as summarized in section 3.3.2.1. It underscores that UK cartoonists have reasons for selecting metaphors that depict Johnson during the pandemic. Metaphors, serving as potent tools, effectively convey persuasive messages. The meticulous selection of these metaphors is vital, as they serve as influential means of conveying these persuasive messages. Table 5.7 summarizes the main motifs and sources used by the three newspapers under study, aiming to explore the differences and reasons behind their metaphorical choices.

<i>The Times</i>	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Independent</i>
JOURNEY SCENARIO (source-path-goal)	ANIMALS	GAME AND SPORTS
ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS	DEATH	JOURNEY SCENARIO
HUMAN BEINGS, ANIMALS, LIGHT AND DARK, GAME AND SPORTS, FOOD AND COOKING, CREATION AND DESTRUCTION, and BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION	GAME AND SPORTS	ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND SHOWS

Table 5.7 the Motifs and Sources of metaphors in Boris Johnson-related Cartoons 2020-2021

The analysis of the examined corpora indicates that *The Times*' editorial cartoons adopt a less severe and less critical approach in their portrayal of Boris Johnson and his government in comparison to the two other newspapers, or at least to *The Guardian*. This editorial stance is rooted in the newspaper's ideological and political alignment, which is categorized as center-right and aligned with the British Conservative Party. A notable proportion of *The Times*' cartoons centers on presenting the measures undertaken by Johnson's government to curb the virus spread. To this end, these cartoons often depict Johnson as a representational character in a narrative process with non-transactional relation with other participants. Thus, Johnson is typically depicted independently, with minimal interaction with other elements or the viewers. This focus on Johnson as a singular figure is particularly prominent in *The Times*' cartoons, where the metaphorical framing primarily revolves around Johnson's personality traits, with less emphasis on other members or aspects of the Conservative Party. In this context, *The Times*' cartoonists frequently employ the JOURNEY SCENARIO metaphors. These metaphors serve to underscore the perceived slowness of the British government's strategies in confronting the virus, such as the Test and trace system, the Tiered system, and the Moonshot program. The recurring use of this kind of metaphor primarily serves to depict the challenging circumstances rather than critiquing Johnson's personality or leadership. The aim is to criticize the government using less cruel metaphorical representations. JOURNEY SCENARIOS dominate the metaphors in *The Times*' cartoons, symbolizing an evaluation of Johnson's government as vulnerable and ineffective in navigating the correct path, potentially leading to perilous outcomes. These metaphors, thus, give rise to expressions like 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INCOMPETENT COVID-19 MEASURES IS A LACK OF FAST MOVEMENT', or 'BORIS JOHNSON'S MISMANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS LEADS TOWARD A DIRE SITUATION'.

Furthermore, *The Times*' cartoons also make use of metaphors related to ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE and SHOWS to suggest that Johnson's leadership during the crisis is a theatrical performance or a comical display. This results in metaphors such as 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP DURING THE CRISIS IS A COMIC AND ABSURD PERFORMANCE' or 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 POLICIES ARE A COMICAL SPECTACLE'. It is worth noting that *The Times*' cartoonists often portray Johnson in isolation in most of their cartoons, he appears as the sole represented actor, this ideological and editorial tendency highlights his personal

accountability for shortcomings and consequences rather than implicating the Conservative Party cabinet or the Tories. More precisely, when other members of Johnson's government are depicted, their gestural cues or visual representations often position them as opponents, or, at the very least, as individuals who do not have a framing of connected lines, as supposed to be in the compositional framing aspect, to endorse disruptive measures to mitigate the virus pandemic, as evidenced in cartoons 1.17, 1.18, 1.21, 1.25 and 1.26.

This approach can be attributed to the newspaper's political alignment with the Conservative Party and its center-right stance, which subsequently influences the cartoonists to adopt a less severe and more centrally focused approach when representing Johnson, rather than encompassing the entire spectrum of party members.

In contrast, *The Guardian's* editorial cartoons exhibit a markedly higher degree of severity and critique, with recurring employment of metaphors centered on ANIMALS and DEATH. Animal metaphors have been consistently utilized within these cartoons to depict Johnson in a derogatory light, particularly in the context of his COVID-19 measures, policies and conduct. This portrayal relies on the association of Johnson with irrational and undesirable traits and behaviors. Given *The Guardian's* editorial alignment with the Labour Party, situated along the left-center ideological spectrum and in opposition to the principles of the British Conservatives, their cartoonists frequently highlight perceived shortcomings in Johnson's administration and its responses during the pandemic crisis. Most cartoonists of *The Guardian* tend to rely their cartoons on the representational structure of reactional process and a framing connection between Johnson and the members of his government to highlight the group identity and ideological convergence. This gives rise to metaphors such as 'THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVES ARE ANIMALS' or 'THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVES ARE COMEDIANS' and 'THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVES ARE FAILED LEADERS'. Concerning the source domain and the metaphorical image, the cartoonists prefer the ANIMAL source domain to play down Johnson's leadership.

Furthermore, the DEATH metaphors emerge as another prominent source domain within *The Guardian's* editorial cartoons, critically scrutinizing Johnson's COVID-19 policies and decisions. This source domain manifests itself in metaphors like 'BORIS JOHNSON'S MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE VIRUS ARE WAYS TO DEATH' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S

CONFRONTATION WITH THE WIDESPREAD VIRUS IS A COMPETITION WITH DEATH'. This metaphor form has emphasized the failure of Johnson in handling the pandemic.

Moreover, *The Guardian's* cartoonists also tend to employ historical figures and iconic politicians, such as Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt, to satirize Johnson's measures and leadership, highlighting that his economic and political plans to combat the virus are subject to irony and hypocrisy. This strategy aligns with *The Guardian's* editorial voice, aiming to engage readers in political discourse through humor and historical references.

The third corpus is *The Independent's* cartoons, which make recurrent use of the sources GAME and SPORTS and the JOURNEY SCENARIO metaphors to map Johnson's measures and programs. This newspaper commonly maintains no alliance with any political party in the UK and is renowned for its ownership structure that is intentionally designed to uphold editorial independence. Though *The Independent* also endorsed the critical stance on Johnson's handling of the pandemic, yet its cartoonists were less cruel and more moderate in portraying Johnson. Thus, most cartoons are designed to maintain a balance between the severity of that unprecedented crisis and the British government's attempt or efforts to defeat it and curb its spread. Conceptualizing that confrontation is done through GAME AND SPORTS metaphors, and *The Independent* is also identified as an unbiased newspaper. These metaphors address the government's failure to win the competition with the virus, either because of the lack of competence and seriousness, or the severity of the second wave of the virus. Thus, the competition metaphors have been devoted to instantiate a general metaphor: 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP DURING THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19 IS A FAILING GAME'.

On the other hand, the JOURNEY SCENARIO explores the thematic importance of Boris Johnson's leadership and responsibility. In most movement or direction metaphors, Johnson is depicted as a leader who seems lost, perplexed or blindly leading people towards a dangerous outcome. *The Independent's* cartoonists emphasize the target of various measures, including economic plans, initiatives for social justice and the government's support during the pandemic. Their focus is on highlighting Johnson's efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of the virus, rather than focusing on death tolls, infection rates, or vaccination progress. The newspaper's editorial stance is generally less critical when compared to *The Guardian*. Most of *The Independent's*

cartoons revolve around illustrating a swift decline in the economy or the healthcare sector, as opposed to *The Guardian's* emphasis on more severe and fatal scenarios.

Also, we find *The Independent* favors the use of the ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE and SHOWS metaphors, including musical shows, TV shows and series to represent and critique Johnson's leadership. This preference results in a more neutral and less harsh tone compared to other forms of humor or ridicule commonly seen in the cartoonists' creations. Unlike some cartoons in *The Guardian* or *The Times*, *The Independent* avoids using clowns or comic shows, like pantomime, jesters or clowns, to portray Johnson in a humorous or ridiculous light. Instead, they focus more on the effect of the verbal elements like speech bubbles, framed captions and written comments to convey their criticism. This combination of visual and verbal elements allows *The Independent* to offer a unique and more measured approach to political commentary, emphasizing their editorial perspectives on Johnson's leadership without resorting to exaggerated humor or satire.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS

The last chapter of this study is devoted to the conclusions drawn upon the results and discussions derived from the corpus of the three UK newspapers' cartoons. The study has been built upon a set of hypotheses and questions that have been addressed and answered in the two previous chapters. Thus, for this study, the current chapter is regarded as its final stage which provides in short the findings the researcher reached.

As such, the conclusions chapter provides the main findings and answers to the questions already pinpointed in chapter I, as the study basically was outlined to reveal the main similarities and differences among the UK newspapers in the metaphorical conceptualization of the British PM, Boris Johnson, in their editorial cartoons during the first year of the emergence and spread of the virus (COVID-19). The newspapers have been characterized as ideologically and politically diverse (right, left, and center). Subsequently, the findings which are the answers to the study questions are identified to contrast the three newspapers as follows.

1. The thematic focus and contextual targets of the three newspapers' cartoons reveal that *The Times* and *The Guardian* focus on Boris Johnson's personality, mainly the deficits in his political personality. For instance, *The Times*' cartoonists tend to highlight the failures of Johnson's management in confronting the virus and his delayed actions were the main reason behind the spread of the virus since its emergence in 2019, as shown in Appendix 1. In accordance to this view, the cartoons have portrayed Johnson's leadership as incompetent and failed to conduct and defeat the virus, thus he lacks efficiency and adequacy. They focused more in displaying Johnson as a delayed leader, indifferent and absurd. This editorial tendency is widely exhibited in most cartoons.

Thus, most of *The Times*' cartoon corpus has focused on the targets that represent (1) Boris Johnson's failure and absurdity in leadership, and (2) the dreadful influence of his COVID-19 policies.

The Guardian's cartoonists, on the other hand, also concentrate on Boris Johnson's personality, but the focus was more on his bad cabinet leadership, as in his failure as a leader, corruption, favoritism and most of his harmful policies, such as BREXIT. Accordingly, their target domain was Johnson's ineffective leadership, as shown in Appendix 2. Thus, they are harsher in their metaphorical images depicting Johnson as dumb, foolish, racist and a dictator. Conversely, *The Independent*'s cartoonists concentrate their target domains on the British governmental policies and precautionary strategies, mainly the government's plans and lockdowns (easing and tightening), as seen in Appendix 3. Most of the targets of this newspaper activate the metaphor 'BORIS JOHNSON'S INABILITY TO CURB THE VIRUS SPREAD IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT'. Hence, the cartoonists in this newspaper tend to be more moderate, balancing and focusing more on the government's plans and strategies, notably in the economic sector. Johnson, accordingly, is characterized as vulnerable, incompetent and unaware of the magnitude of the risk. The cartoonists of this newspaper are less cruel as they focus on the severity of the pandemic depicting it as a wood or a great tsunami, and Johnson's government is unaware of the virus' gravity.

2. The first point to show in the source domains utilization, according to the analysis of the corpus, is that *The Times*' cartoonists employ a remarkable set of source domains and metaphorical images to depict Boris Johnson, as shown in table 5.7, which reveals their ideological and editorial tendency to be not too tough in depicting Johnson and to add creativity to their metaphorical images. The cartoonists in *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, on the other hand, build most of their cartoons on a limited number of sources to highlight the negative outcomes of Johnson's management of the crisis. This source-

domain diversity, hence, suggests that *The Times*' cartoonists tend to be more neutral or at least to avoid any direct criticism to the Tories.

Concerning the source domains recurrently employed by the cartoonists of the three newspapers, it has been found that *The Times* and *The Independent* are characterized as less harsh in comparison to *The Guardian*, whose cartoonists adopt an opposing stance against Johnson and the Tories in general. Most cartoons in *The Guardian* are thus orientated towards criticizing the party as a whole and its members, rather than an individual orientation in evaluation of Johnson's inadequacy in handling the crisis. Thus, the presence of Johnson's cabinet members within the image and the nearness in the social distance among them in most of *The Guardian's* cartoons implies that the Tories are responsible for any failure and for a likely disastrous end. In line with this premise, the source domains and metaphors lie heavily upon ANIMAL, DEATH and DESCENDING MOVEMENT. These sources accordingly activate the pervasiveness of the metaphors: (1) 'BORIS JOHNSON IS AN ANIMAL', 'THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MEMBERS ARE ANIMALS', and (2) 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 MEASURES ARE LEADING TO DEADLY ENDS'.

Conversely, *The Times*' cartoonists are less cruel, although their cartoons were orientated to criticize Johnson they only focused on him as the head of the government with no real or focal reference to the Tories as a political party responsible for any defeats or shortcomings, so reflecting the newspaper's political alignment. Their metaphors are commonly related to JOURNEY scenarios and comic performances by Johnson, highlighting the metaphors (1) 'BORIS JOHNSON'S HANDLING OF THE CRISIS IS TO MOVE TOWARDS DRASTIC ENDS', and (2) 'BORIS JOHNSON'S LEADERSHIP DURING THE PANDEMIC IS A COMIC SHOW'. Also, *The Independent's* cartoonists focus on the source domains GAME AND SPORTS and JOURNEY to convey the sense of neutrality in their views by rendering that Johnson's administration is exerting its efforts to combat the viral outbreak, though all are in vain. Such common visual depictions activate the metaphors 'BORIS JOHNSON IS A FAILED PLAYER' and 'BORIS JOHNSON'S COVID-19 POLICIES ARE AN IMPEDIMENT TO MOVEMENT'. Thus, the analysis

reveals there is a noticeable divergence in the source domains and the metaphorical representation of the cartoons collected from the three newspapers.

3. The analysis and interpretation of the cartoons in chapter IV highlights the ideological diversity among three newspapers, particularly their editorial coverage of the issues directly related to the pandemic. For instance, concerning the economic ideology of the government during the pandemic, it has been found that *The Times*' cartoons seldom address topics related to social justice, instead it emphasizes issues such as taxation, government spending and regulations, from a perspective almost aligned with the British conservative economic ideology. So, the issue, for example, of free meals and high government spending have not been covered or reported by *The Times*, whereas *The Independent* covers these issues more extensively. Furthermore, *The Guardian*, while also addressing the same issues related to free meals, focuses more on highlighting the government's failures across various domains, including taxation. The difference in coverage suggests detached editorial priorities and ideological leanings among the newspapers. For instance, *The Independent's* emphasis on issues like free meals and social justice indicates a greater concern for social welfare and the challenges faced by the populace.

Conversely, *The Guardian's* focus on the government's economic failures, particularly regarding taxation and economic deals, suggests a critical stance towards governmental policies and actions. This divergence in coverage reflects the newspapers' respective ideologies and their perceived roles in society. *The Independent* may prioritize advocating for social justice and addressing immediate societal needs, while *The Guardian* may prioritize holding the government accountable and exposing systemic shortcomings. Thus, the different emphases in coverage shed light on the newspapers' editorial agendas and their interpretations of societal issues.

4. Craig (2020), Crespo-Fernández (2021), Vereza & Dienstbach (2021) and Semino (2021a,b) contend in their studies that most studies conducting and investigating the pandemic of COVID-19, particularly in press reporting and cartooning, politicians' announcements and daily briefings for the measures and policies, employed the source

domains of WAR and CONFLICT, and FORCES OF NATURE, particularly in rendering the government's confrontation against the virus. However, the UK cartoons that focus specifically on Boris Johnson during this crisis made less actual employment of these source domains. Such changes in focus were made to show that Johnson's government was not serious and keen to defeat the virus or to curb its proliferation. Instead, the cartoonists of the three newspapers utilize other source domains, such as JOURNEY, ANIMAL and ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE and SHOW. Thus, the powerful effect of persuasion in these cartoons is not only for evaluation but also to provoke the feelings of the audience.

5. In the light of analyzing the semiotic elements in the three newspapers' cartoons, it has been revealed that the cartoonists of each newspaper have a tendency in exploiting these aspects, representational participants, symbolic process, framing, salience (coloring and sizing), and placement. Though most cartoons seem the same in their exploitation of these resources, there are some diverging points, as shown in chapter IV. For instance, *The Times*' cartoonists mostly identify the discourse of absurdity, indifference and individual responsibility, these themes have been the predominant ones for the metaphorical images exposed by *The Times*' cartoonists. The compositional elements have their great impact through identifying the gravity of the virus and the individual accountability of the PM. *The Guardian*'s cartoonists, on the other hand, identify the discourse of failing leadership, group responsibility (the Tories' collective identity), and Johnson's foolishness. These themes were highlighted through such semiotic aspects as the connected lines of framing among the represented participants, eye-contact and the whole-part connection between the actors and their attributes. *The Independent*'s cartoonists, finally, used these elements to convey their implied meaning, which suggests that Boris Johnson is vulnerable and the main source of mess and failure during the pandemic.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: a screenshot of the descriptive statistics of the target domains in *The Times*' cartoons: the layers and features as provided by the UAM Image Tool

Descriptive Statistics: Features

Project: target domains in Boris Johnson- related cartoons
Unit: target_domains.target_domains
Date: Tue Jan 30 21:05:58 2024

Feature	Percent	N
TARGET_DOMAINS-TYPE		
N=29		
boris-johnson--personality	34.48%	10
the-virus	3.45%	1
the-british-governmental-policies-and-precautionary-strategies	31.03%	9
economy	24.14%	7
virus'-victims	0.00%	0
the-healthcare-sector-and-the-world-health-organization-(who)	3.45%	1
vaccination	3.45%	1
foreign-affairs-and-the-eu-countries-plan-with-boris-johnson's-government-to-confront-the-virus-prevalence	0.00%	0
BORIS-JOHNSON--PERSONALITY-TYPE		
N=10		
boris-johnson's-personal-traits	0.00%	0
boris-johnson-visage	0.00%	0
british-bad-cabinet-leadership	40.00%	4
british-conservatives-party-headship	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-mismanagement-of-the-pandemic	50.00%	5
boris-johnson's-false-announcement	10.00%	1
boris-johnson's-covid-19-infection	0.00%	0
THE-VIRUS-TYPE		
N=1		
the-virus-severity	0.00%	0
the-virus-waves	100.00%	1
COVID-19-MEASURES		
N=9		
delayed-lockdowns	22.22%	2
the-governmental-plans-and-lockdowns	66.67%	6
internal-problems-and-challenges-of--imposing-tougher-restrictions	11.11%	1
JOHNSON'S-PLANS-TO-COUNTER-COVID-19		
N=6		
national-lockdowns	0.00%	0
herd-immunity	0.00%	0
test-and-trace-system	0.00%	0
operation-moonshot	16.67%	1
three-tiered-systems	33.33%	2
relaxing-restrictions-and-rules	0.00%	0
rule-of-six	0.00%	0
christmas-festival-relaxation	50.00%	3
others	0.00%	0
INTERNAL-PROBLEMS-AND-CHALLENGES-OF--IMPOSING-TOUGHER-RESTRICTIONS-TYPE		
N=1		
local-lockdowns-and--tough-measures-on-the-northern-of-england	0.00%	0
boris-johnson--great-manchester-problem	100.00%	1
marcus-rashford's-campaign	0.00%	0
scotland-independence-referendum	0.00%	0
ECONOMY-TYPE		
N=7		
governmental-economic-plans	57.14%	4
economic-problems	42.86%	3
GOVERNMENTAL-ECONOMIC-PLANS-TYPE		
N=4		
new-deal	0.00%	0
build-back-better	0.00%	0
eat-out-to-help-out	0.00%	0
back-to-work	25.00%	1
shaking-up-the-civil-service	50.00%	2
re-opening-policy	25.00%	1
leveling-up-plans	0.00%	0
ECONOMIC-PROBLEMS-TYPE		
N=3		
economic-recession	66.67%	2
unemployment	0.00%	0
borrowing-plan	0.00%	0
high-state-expenses-at-the-coronavirus-period	33.33%	1
VIRUS'-VICTIMS-TYPE		
N=0		
infected-cases	0.00%	0
death-tolls	0.00%	0
THE-HEALTHCARE-SECTOR-AND-THE-WORLD-HEALTH-ORGANIZATION-(WHO)-TYPE		
N=1		
the-sector-contribution	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-abuse-of-this-sector	100.00%	1
VACCINATION-TYPE		
N=1		
rolling-out-the-vaccine	100.00%	1
vaccine-distribution	0.00%	0
FOREIGN-AFFAIRS-AND-THE-EU-COUNTRIES-PLAN-WITH-BORIS-JOHNSON'S-GOVERNMENT-TO-CONFRONT-THE-VIRUS-PREVALENCE-TYPE		
N=0		
uk-us-relations	0.00%	0
the-effect-of-brexit-during-the-pandemic	0.00%	0

Appendix 2: a screenshot of the descriptive statistics of the target domains in *The Guardian*'s cartoons: the layers and features as provided by the UAM Image Tool

Descriptive Statistics: Features

Project: target domains in Boris Johnson- related cartoons
 Unit: target_domains/target_domains
 Date: Tue Jan 30 18:42:22 2024

Feature	Percent	N
TARGET_DOMAINS-TYPE		
N=28		
boris-johnson--personality	39.29%	11
the-virus	0.00%	0
the-british-governmental-policies-and-precautionary-strategies	32.14%	9
economy	14.29%	4
virus-victims	0.00%	0
the-healthcare-sector-and-the-world-health-organization-(who)	10.71%	3
vaccination	3.57%	1
foreign-affairs-and-the-eu-countries-plan-with-boris-johnson's-government-to-confront-the-virus-prevalence	0.00%	0
BORIS-JOHNSON--PERSONALITY-TYPE		
N=11		
boris-johnson's-personal-traits	0.00%	0
boris-johnson-visage	0.00%	0
british-bad-cabinet-leadership	54.55%	6
british-conservatives-party-headship	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-mismanagement-of-the-pandemic	36.36%	4
boris-johnson's-false-announcement	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-covid-19-infection	9.09%	1
THE-VIRUS-TYPE		
N=0		
the-virus-severity	0.00%	0
the-virus-waves	0.00%	0
COVID-19-MEASURES		
N=9		
delayed-lockdowns	0.00%	0
the-governmental-plans-and-lockdowns	66.67%	6
internal-problems-and-challenges-of--imposing-tougher-restrictions	33.33%	3
JOHNSON'S-PLANS-TO-COUNTER-COVID-19		
N=6		
national-lockdowns	16.67%	1
herd-immunity	16.67%	1
test-and-trace-system	33.33%	2
operation-moonshot	0.00%	0
three-tiered-systems	16.67%	1
relaxing-restrictions-and-rules	16.67%	1
rule-of-six	0.00%	0
christmas-festival-relaxation	0.00%	0
others	0.00%	0
INTERNAL-PROBLEMS-AND-CHALLENGES-OF--IMPOSING-TOUGHER-RESTRICTIONS-TYPE		
N=3		
local-lockdowns-and--tough-measures-on-the-northern-of-england	33.33%	1
boris-johnson--great-manchester-problem	33.33%	1
marcus-rashford's-campaign	0.00%	0
scotland-independence-referendum	33.33%	1
ECONOMY-TYPE		
N=4		
governmental-economic-plans	50.00%	2
economic-problems	50.00%	2
GOVERNMENTAL-ECONOMIC-PLANS-TYPE		
N=2		
new-deal	0.00%	0
build-back-better	0.00%	0
eat-out-to-help-out	50.00%	1
back-to-work	0.00%	0
shaking-up-the-civil-service	0.00%	0
re-opening-policy	0.00%	0
leveling-up-plans	50.00%	1
ECONOMIC-PROBLEMS-TYPE		
N=2		
economic-recession	50.00%	1
unemployment	50.00%	1
borrowing-plan	0.00%	0
high-state-expenses-at-the-coronavirus-period	0.00%	0
VIRUS-VICTIMS-TYPE		
N=0		
infected-cases	0.00%	0
death-tolls	0.00%	0
THE-HEALTHCARE-SECTOR-AND-THE-WORLD-HEALTH-ORGANIZATION-(WHO)-TYPE		
N=3		
the-sector-contribution	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-abuse-of-this-sector	100.00%	3
VACCINATION-TYPE		
N=1		
rolling-out-the-vaccine	0.00%	0
vaccine-distribution	100.00%	1
FOREIGN-AFFAIRS-AND-THE-EU-COUNTRIES-PLAN-WITH-BORIS-JOHNSON'S-GOVERNMENT-TO-CONFRONT-THE-VIRUS-PREVALENCE-TYPE		
N=0		
uk-us-relations	0.00%	0
the-effect-of-brexite-during-the-pandemic	0.00%	0

Appendix 3: a screenshot of the descriptive statistics of the target domains in *The Independent's* cartoons: the layers and features as provided by the UAM Image Tool

Descriptive Statistics: Features

Project: target domains in Boris Johnson- related cartoons
Unit: target_domains.target_domains
Date: Tue Jan 30 23:28:31 2024

Feature	Percent	N
TARGET_DOMAINS-TYPE		
		N=43
boris-johnson--personality	23.26%	10
the-virus	2.33%	1
the-british-governmental-policies-and-precautionary-strategies	39.53%	17
economy	25.58%	11
virus'-victims	0.00%	0
the-healthcare-sector-and-the-world-health-organization-(who)	4.65%	2
vaccination	4.65%	2
foreign-affairs-and-the-eu-countries-plan-with-boris-johnson's-government-to-confront-the-virus-prevalence	0.00%	0
BORIS-JOHNSON--PERSONALITY-TYPE		
		N=10
boris-johnson's-personal-traits	0.00%	0
boris-johnson-visage	0.00%	0
british-bad-cabinet-leadership	30.00%	3
british-conservatives-party-headship	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-mismanagement-of-the-pandemic	40.00%	4
boris-johnson's-false-announcement	10.00%	1
boris-johnson's-covid-19-infection	20.00%	2
THE-VIRUS-TYPE		
		N=1
the-virus-severity	0.00%	0
the-virus-waves	100.00%	1
COVID-19-MEASURES		
		N=17
delayed-lockdowns	5.88%	1
the-governmental-plans-and-lockdowns	76.47%	13
internal-problems-and-challenges-of-imposing-tougher-restrictions	17.65%	3
JOHNSON'S-PLANS-TO-COUNTER-COVID-19		
		N=13
national-lockdowns	7.69%	1
herd-immunity	0.00%	0
test-and-trace-system	7.69%	1
operation-moonshot	0.00%	0
three-tiered-systems	46.15%	6
relaxing-and-tightening-restrictions-and-rules	23.08%	3
rule-of-six	0.00%	0
christmas-festival-relaxation	15.38%	2
others	0.00%	0
INTERNAL-PROBLEMS-AND-CHALLENGES-OF--IMPOSING-TOUGHER-RESTRICTIONS-TYPE		
		N=3
local-lockdowns-and--tough-measures-on-the-northern-of-england	0.00%	0
boris-johnson--great-manchester-problem	33.33%	1
marcus-rashford's-campaign	66.67%	2
scotland-independence-referendum	0.00%	0
ECONOMY-TYPE		
		N=11
governmental-economic-plans	63.64%	7
economic-problems	36.36%	4
GOVERNMENTAL-ECONOMIC-PLANS-TYPE		
		N=7
new-deal	28.57%	2
build-back-better	0.00%	0
eat-out-to-help-out	0.00%	0
back-to-work	42.86%	3
shaking-up-the-civil-service	14.29%	1
re-opening-policy	14.29%	1
leveling-up-plans	0.00%	0
ECONOMIC-PROBLEMS-TYPE		
		N=4
economic-recession	50.00%	2
unemployment	25.00%	1
borrowing-plan	25.00%	1
high-state-expenses-at-the-coronavirus-period	0.00%	0
VIRUS'-VICTIMS-TYPE		
		N=0
infected-cases	0.00%	0
death-tolls	0.00%	0
THE-HEALTHCARE-SECTOR-AND-THE-WORLD-HEALTH-ORGANIZATION-(WHO)-TYPE		
		N=2
the-sector-contribution	0.00%	0
boris-johnson's-abuse-of-this-sector	100.00%	2
VACCINATION-TYPE		
		N=2
rolling-out-the-vaccine	100.00%	2
vaccine-distribution	0.00%	0
FOREIGN-AFFAIRS-AND-THE-EU-COUNTRIES-PLAN-WITH-BORIS-JOHNSON'S-GOVERNMENT-TO-CONFRONT-THE-VIRUS-PREVALENCE-TYPE		
		N=0
uk-us-relations	0.00%	0
the-effect-of-brexit-during-the-pandemic	0.00%	0

Cartoon 2.4		x				x		x		x		x				x	x			x		x	x					
Cartoon 2.5				x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x		x	X	x		x							
Cartoon 2.6				x		x	x	x			x			x							x							
Cartoon 2.7		x				x	x	x			x										x							
Cartoon 2.8			x			x	x	x	x	x							x				x		x	x	x			
Cartoon 2.9			x		x		x	x	x		x						x	X	x	x								
Cartoon 2.10				x	x	x	x	x	x		x			x	x					x			x	x	x			
Cartoon 2.11		x				x	x	x			x				x	x	x	X			x			x	x			
Cartoon 2.12				x	x	x	x	x			x					x	x	x				x		x				
Cartoon 2.13		x			x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x			x			x	x			
Cartoon 2.14		x			x	x	x		x		x			x	x													
Cartoon 2.15				x			x	x	x		x	x									x	X	x		x	x		
Cartoon 2.16	x				x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x	X	x		x		x				
Cartoon 2.17			x		x	x	x	x	x							x	x	x	X	x		x		x				
Cartoon 2.18			x		x	x	x	x			x			x	x	x	x	X			x			x	x	x		
Cartoon 2.19				x	x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x				x		x	x	x			
Cartoon 2.20			x		x	x	x	x			x	x			x	x					x	X			x	x	x	
Cartoon 2.21		x				x	x	x	x												x	X				x	x	
Cartoon 2.22				x	x	x	x	x			x	x				x	x	x							x			
Cartoon 2.23		x			x		x		x																			
Cartoon 2.24		x			x	x	x	x			x										x	X				x	x	
Cartoon 2.25		x				x		x																				
Cartoon 2.26				x	x	x	x	x			x										x	X	x			x	x	
Cartoon 2.27		x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x								x	x	x	X			x	
Cartoon 2.28				x	x	x	x	x			x										x						x	

The Independent

Cartoon 3.1			X		X	X	X	X		X		X				X	X	X			X						
Cartoon 3.2		X			X	X	X	X		X	X						X									X	X
Cartoon 3.3				X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X			X	X							X	X
Cartoon 3.4		X					X		X	X		X		X	X			X								X	
Cartoon 3.5				X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X				X	X	X
Cartoon 3.6		X					X		X	X		X					X	X							X		
Cartoon 3.7			X				X	X	X		X		X														
Cartoon 3.8	X		X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X			X	X		X	X							
Cartoon 3.9	X		X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X				X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Cartoon 3.10		X					X		X	X		X					X										
Cartoon 3.11				X			X	X	X		X		X		X	X			X			X		X		X	
Cartoon 3.12			X	X			X	X	X		X		X			X	X			X	X		X				
Cartoon 3.13			X		X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X			X		X	X			X	X	X	X
Cartoon 3.14				X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X	X		X		X				X	X	
Cartoon 3.15			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X				X			X		X		X			
Cartoon 3.16	X				X		X	X	X		X		X				X		X		X		X				
Cartoon 3.17				X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X			X			X		X				
Cartoon 3.18				X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X			X			X	X	X			
Cartoon 3.19		X			X		X		X		X		X												X		
Cartoon 3.20				X			X	X	X		X		X		X	X			X			X	X				
Cartoon 3.21		X					X		X		X		X				X										
Cartoon 3.22				X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X	X	X		X		X						
Cartoon 3.23		X					X		X		X		X				X	X			X		X				
Cartoon 3.24				X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X			X			X		X					
				X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X			X		X		X					

