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Resistance to metaphor in parliamentary debates

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Chapter 3

Uses and functions of figurative analogy arguments in British parliamentary debates¹

Abstract

This paper aims to analyse how committee members in British Public Bill Committee debates argue by means of figurative analogies. In such debates, argumentation is typically employed to support a recommendation for a particular course of action. We will demonstrate that figurative analogies can be a suitable means for making the proposed recommendations clearer and more acceptable to a critical opponent. Using insights from metaphor studies and argumentation theory, we will offer a holistic account of two typical cases in which arguments based on figurative analogy are employed in the context of British Public Bill Committee debates. This account will reveal an argumentative pattern in which figurative analogy arguments are combined with pragmatic argumentation in which a recommendation is made to support a legislative proposal that is more easily accepted.

3.1 Introduction

British parliamentary debates are typically concerned with the deliberation of the consequences of some future course of action set out in government policies or proposed new laws. A typical example is a British Public Bill Committee (henceforth: PBC) debate on the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Bill taking place on July 16, 2013. In this debate, committee members discuss an amendment tabled by the Opposition that seeks to require the Secretary of State to make a statement to the House of Commons when agreed yearly budgets for the high speed rail network are (expected to be) exceeded. Opposition member Lilian Greenwood argues that this is necessary because it will ensure that the House is being kept updated on government expenditure. To support the argument that the House of Commons should be kept updated on government expenditure, Greenwood makes a comparison with the way in which people deal with bank statements:

¹ A slightly modified version of this paper has been submitted as: Renardel de Lavalette, K.Y., Andone, C., & Steen, G.J. Uses and functions of figurative analogy arguments in British parliamentary debates.

- (1) Lilian Greenwood
[...] Our amendment would establish a mechanism requiring the Secretary of State to make a statement should such budget increases occur, or be expected to occur, in advance of the annual statement – it is simply a case of keeping the House updated. An analogy might be how people deal with bank statements: we do not wait until the end of the month to see how much we have spent; we check the account balance on a cash machine, and if we are going to have problems, we might speak to our significant other about that. That is the normal way of controlling budgets – keeping people updated, rather than waiting until the end of a control period.

The prescriptive standpoint that the Secretary of State should make a statement when budget increases occur is here justified by Greenwood by referring to the desirable consequence that this will keep the House of Commons updated on government expenditure. In argumentation theory, such a form of arguing is called ‘pragmatic argumentation’ (Perelman, 1959). This type of arguing is commonly employed in British parliamentary debates, because politicians always justify their plans set out in policy proposals or new legislation by referring to the desirable consequences (Andone, 2015, p. 3).

Greenwood subsequently defends the acceptability of the pragmatic argument that the House should be kept updated on government expenditure by another argument: people dealing with bank statements regularly check their accounts and speak to their significant other when problems might occur. In other words, Greenwood uses a figurative analogy in which she compares the Government’s dealing with yearly budgets to people’s dealing with bank statements, and does so in order to justify that the House should be kept updated on government spending. In example 1, Greenwood hence aims to justify the acceptability of her amendment by first advancing a pragmatic argument, which she in turn supports by a figurative analogy.

Figurative analogies such as these can be used for various reasons. First, framing arguments in metaphorical terms can make an argument clearer, since metaphors typically involve a comparison between an abstract, unfamiliar concept with a concept that is more concrete and well-known, which makes the issue under discussion easier to understand (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Second, metaphors may enhance an argument’s convincingness, because they draw upon established judgements and endorsed values within a tradition or culture, thereby framing arguments into scenarios suggesting particular conclusions about appropriate

action (Aronovitch, 1997; Finlayson, 2007; Musolff, 2004). In example (1), it might not be entirely clear why the Government should keep the House of Commons updated on government spending, whereas most people will probably agree that people dealing with bank statements should talk to their significant other when financial problems occur. They may, therefore, also agree that the Government should discuss unbudgeted expenses with the House.

As of yet, little is known about the argumentative functions of metaphor in parliamentary debates, and the argumentative role of metaphor has received relatively little scholarly attention in argumentation studies (for exceptions see, e.g., Garssen & Kienpointner, 2011; Santibáñez, 2010; Xu & Wu, 2014). While figurative analogies may help politicians in making their arguments clearer and more convincing, argumentation analysts typically consider this type of argumentation weak, unstable and easily defeasible (e.g., Perelman & Olbrecht-Tyteca, 1958/2003, p. 393; Walton et al., 2008, p. 61). The reason for this negative judgement is that figurative analogy involves a comparison between concepts that are obviously different, which affords easy targets for criticism. Additionally, metaphors are often considered to be misleading, because they oversimplify the issue under discussion (see Musolff, 2004, for a discussion on this issue). This raises the question why and how figurative analogies are used in the deliberative process in parliamentary debates.

In this paper, we aim to examine the argumentative role of metaphors in parliamentary discourse by focusing on cases of figurative analogy supporting pragmatic arguments in British PBC debates. In this type of debate, such a way of arguing can be instrumental in increasing the acceptability of legislative proposals, which suggests that a better understanding of the workings of this form of argumentation is required. In our analyses we concentrate on two cases in which figurative analogies are combined with pragmatic arguments. The first case illustrates how figurative analogy arguments can be used to justify the desirability of the envisaged result expressed in the pragmatic argument. The second case demonstrates how figurative analogy arguments can be used to justify the appropriateness of the means employed to reach the envisaged result. We selected these examples by making use of the TheyWorkForYou website. This website features data and information from official parliamentary resources, such as Hansard, and adds features to make them easier to understand, such as a search box for finding mentions of a topic.

To account for the metaphorical properties of the figurative analogies and to analyse their argumentative function, we combine insights from the three-dimensional model of metaphor (Steen, 2017) with insights from the pragma-

dialectical theory of argumentation (Van Eemeren, 2018). This combination allows for providing a more comprehensive account of the form and functions of figurative analogies used in British PBC debates than any single approach has been able to offer so far. The analyses will reveal which metaphors are involved in figurative analogy argumentation, which standpoints are supported by which arguments, and how these arguments relate to each other to increase the acceptability of legislative proposals in British PBC debates.

In the following section, we describe our theoretical framework, in which we specify the tools offered by the three-dimensional model of metaphor and the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation for the analysis of figurative analogies. We also explain how the characteristics of British PBC debates impose constraints on the argumentation employed in PBC debates and which possibilities they create for the use of pragmatic argumentation and figurative analogies. In Section 3.3, we present the analyses of figurative analogy arguments used in support of pragmatic argumentation in British PBC debates. Our analyses uncover an argumentative pattern in which figurative analogy arguments are combined with pragmatic argumentation to support a legislative proposal that is more easily accepted.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 A pragma-dialectical perspective on figurative analogy argumentation in British Public Bill Committee debates

To analyse the functions that figurative analogy arguments fulfil in British PBC debates, we make use of the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation (Van Eemeren, 2018). This approach views argumentation as part of a critical discussion in which the participants try to resolve a difference of opinion on the merits. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004, p. 1) define argumentation as “a verbal, social and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of propositions justifying or refuting the proposition expressed in the standpoint”. This means that in this study we regard figurative analogy arguments as part of an argumentative exchange in which committee members attempt to convince each other of the (un)acceptability of a bill. The pragma-dialectical approach offers various theoretical tools for the analysis of figurative analogies in British PBC debates. However, before we discuss those tools, we will describe the institutional features of British PBC debates that constrain argumentative discourse, as this is pertinent for giving an empirically adequate account of the argumentative exchange.

The purpose of British PBC debates is to discuss the details of a bill, scrutinising each clause and schedule and discussing amendments to clauses and schedules (UK Government Cabinet Office, 2015). The main proposition under discussion can be reconstructed as 'The clause should stand part of the bill' (UK Government Cabinet Office, 2015). To justify the acceptability of this proposition the Government will refer to the desirable consequences of the measure proposed in the clause under discussion. The specific institutional characteristics of British PBC debates hence impose the use of arguments in which recommendations for taking or not taking a course of action are made by pointing at their positive/negative consequences. Doing so results in advancing a prescriptive policy statement, which can only be appropriately supported by pragmatic argumentation.

In pragmatic argumentation, a prescriptive standpoint in which a recommendation for action is made is justified or criticised by referring to the (un)desirable consequences of the proposed action. Pragmatic arguments consist of two propositions: a prescriptive proposition, which is supported by a complex proposition comprising a causal and an evaluative component in which the (un)desirable result is mentioned (Perelman, 1959). The standpoint and the argument are connected by a linking premise, expressing that if the complex proposition is acceptable, then the standpoint is acceptable. The argument scheme for pragmatic argumentation can be represented as follows (Andone, 2015, pp. 8-9):

1. Action X should (not) be carried out
- 1.1 Action X will lead to (positive/ negative) result Y
- 1.1' If actions of type X lead to (positive/ negative) result Y, then those actions should (not) be carried out

Because of the type of argumentation used (pragmatic argumentation) and the institutionally envisaged outcome (proposing new legislative measures), certain critical questions are to be anticipated by the discussants (Van Eemeren & Garsen, 2013, p. 7). Answering these questions results in a specific argumentative pattern, serving the purpose of British PBC's to discuss the details of a bill. The critical questions applying to pragmatic argumentation are aimed at testing the evaluative and the causal component of the argument. The critical question testing the evaluative component reads 'Is result Y really positive?' The critical question testing the causal relationship is 'Do actions of type X automatically lead to results of type Y?' (Andone, 2015, pp. 10-14).

In defending the acceptability of a pragmatic argument, figurative analogy argumentation can be instrumental. According to pragma-dialectics, discussants do not only aim to fulfil the dialectical goal of maintaining reasonableness, but they also try to fulfil the rhetorical aim of being effective. In other words, discussants strive to reasonably resolve a difference of opinion, while at the same time they try to make the other party accept their point of view (Van Eemeren, 2018). Metaphors as used in figurative analogy arguments may be an important tool in achieving these goals. They may make the argument clearer and easier to understand while they may also make an argument more convincing by framing arguments into well-known scenarios, favouring particular conclusions about appropriate action. The use of figurative analogy arguments in support of pragmatic argumentation is therefore not surprising.

Figurative analogy is considered to be a subtype of analogical argumentation (Brown, 1995; Juthe, 2005). This type of argumentation is based on analogy, in which certain elements and relations from an easily-understood or familiar source analog are mapped onto a more abstract or unfamiliar target analog, so inferences can be made about the target analog (Gentner & Holyoak, 1997; Holyoak & Thagard, 1995). This makes analogy a powerful tool for setting up arguments.

In argumentation from analogy it is argued that because two things are similar, that which is true of one is also true of the other. According to Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992, p. 97), analogical argumentation is “presented as if there were a resemblance, an agreement, a likeness, a parallel, a correspondence or some other kind of similarity between that which is stated in the argument and that which is stated in the standpoint”. The following general argument scheme applies to analogical argumentation (Van Eemeren et al., 2007, p. 138):

	Y is true of X,
because:	Y is true of Z,
and:	Z is comparable to X

On the basis of the so-called ‘domain-constraint’, two different types of analogy argumentation can be distinguished: same-domain analogies and figurative analogies (cf. Brown, 1995; Doury, 2009; Juthe, 2005).² In same-domain analogies,

² In addition to the domain constraint, there are various other parameters on the basis of which different scholars distinguish diverging types of analogy arguments (e.g., Govier, 1989;

concepts from the same conceptual domain are compared, such as ‘government expenditure in country A’ and ‘government expenditure in country B’. In this paper, however, we focus exclusively on figurative analogies, in which concepts from different conceptual domains are compared, as happens in the example discussed in the introductory section of this paper, in which Greenwood compares ‘the Government dealing with yearly budgets’ to ‘people dealing with bank statements’.

Some scholars also propose to distinguish a third category called argumentation from metaphor, suggesting that this type of argument involves a comparison between concepts from very distant conceptual domains (e.g., Juthe, 2005; Walton & Hyra, 2018). However, it is unclear how argumentation scholars make the distinction between same-domain and figurative analogies, let alone between figurative analogies and argumentation from metaphor. To solve this issue, we follow conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) in defining metaphor as a “cross-domain mapping in thought” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Accordingly, we do not make a distinction between figurative analogy arguments and argumentation by metaphor, because, by definition, both involve a mapping between concepts from different domains.

There are also scholars who argue that figurative analogy is not a type of analogy argumentation at all, but rather functions as a presentational device used to express other types of arguments. According to Garssen (2009), figurative analogy involves only one relevant similarity between otherwise completely different concepts, and is hence not based on resemblances between cases. Garssen consequently argues that figurative analogy is not a type of analogy argumentation, but a presentational device used to express other types of arguments, such as symptomatic or causal argumentation. In contemporary metaphor research, however, metaphors are conceptualised as mappings across different domains, involving not just a mapping of single elements from a source to a target, but also relational structures and inferences (cf. Gibbs, 2008). As such, metaphors as used in figurative analogy arguments invite an addressee to set up a cross-domain mapping between a source and target domain to derive its point. Therefore, we regard figurative analogy arguments as a type of analogy argumentation, and not as a mere presentational device indirectly expressing other types of argumentation.

For the identification and reconstruction of figurative analogy arguments, we make use of the argumentation scheme, and of specific expressions indicating that two concepts are being compared (cf. Van Eemeren et al., 2007). To uncover

Guarini, 2004; Walton, 2014; for a comprehensive overview of the various categorisations, see Juthe, 2014).

the ways in which figurative analogies are used and which functions they fulfil in British PBC debates, reconstructions are made of the stretch of argumentative discourse under examination. To this end, the proposition(s) under discussion and the standpoints adopted towards these propositions by the different discussion parties are determined. Subsequently, the various arguments advanced by the discussion parties, and the ways in which these arguments are connected to the standpoint and to each other are identified. These steps result in an analytic overview, specifying the type of difference of opinion, the various arguments that are advanced, the types of criticisms that are levelled, the kind of premises that are left unexpressed, the types of argument schemes involved, and the types of argumentation structures that develop.

3.2.2 A three-dimensional model of metaphor

For the analysis of the metaphorical properties of figurative analogy arguments, and to explain which metaphors are involved in this way of arguing, we employ the three-dimensional model of metaphor (Steen, 2017). Since Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*, metaphor is no longer regarded as only a linguistic feature, but rather as a cognitive phenomenon, central to thought. Within their so-called conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor is defined as "a cross-domain mapping in thought", and it is proposed that we understand many, typically more abstract things in terms of more concrete things. Metaphors in language are seen as the linguistic realisations of the metaphors we think by.

Because of its primary concern with the linguistic and conceptual properties of metaphor, and its emphasis on the unconscious and automatic usage of metaphor, CMT does not provide the theoretical tools to also account for the various communicative functions that metaphors can perform in different types of discourse. To also account for this third dimension of metaphor, Steen (2017) developed deliberate metaphor theory (henceforth: DMT). In this three-dimensional model, metaphor is not only seen as a phenomenon with linguistic and conceptual dimensions, but also with a communicative dimension.

When analysts look at the linguistic dimension of metaphor, they identify metaphorical expressions in language and examine their linguistic form. A distinction can be made between indirect and direct metaphors (Steen et al., 2010). With indirect metaphors, the meaning of the metaphorical expression in context arises out of a contrast between a word's contextual meaning (the target domain) and its more basic meaning (the source domain). The source domain concept is hence only indirectly present, and not part of the actual context. With direct metaphors, there is no contrast between a word's contextual and basic meaning.

Rather, direct metaphors involve direct language use about the source domain expressing an explicit comparison with some target domain. If we take the example discussed in the introduction as an illustration, all words from “how people deal with bank statements” to “speaking to our significant other about that” are about some source domain and ‘directly’ metaphorical. Greenwood explicitly compares the Government dealing with yearly budgets to people dealing with bank statements. This means that a cross-domain mapping in thought is triggered by a comparison between two contrastive domains and the source domain referent is part of the context.

Metaphors in language are regarded as expressions of underlying metaphorical structures in thought. Most of these metaphors in thought are conventional mappings, being fixed parts of our conceptual system (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). A metaphor can also be novel, which is the case when it is a newly invented metaphor that is not part of the conventional metaphorical patterns governing our thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 139-146). Greenwood’s comparison between the Government dealing with yearly budgets and people dealing with bank statements is a linguistic instantiation of the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS FAMILY, which is a conventional conceptual metaphor (cf. Lakoff, 1996).

The communicative dimension of metaphor is concerned with the question whether a metaphor is used as metaphor in communication between language users. In this dimension, a distinction is made between ‘deliberate’ and ‘non-deliberate’ metaphors (cf. Reijnierse et al., 2018). A metaphor is used deliberately when it provides an alien perspective on the topic that is being discussed. As such, the addressee is invited “to move away their attention momentarily from the target domain of the utterance to the source domain that is evoked by the metaphor-related expression” (Steen, 2015, p. 68). Specifically, this means that the source domain meaning of a metaphor is part of the referential meaning of the utterance in which it is used. The metaphor advanced by Greenwood is an example of a deliberate metaphor; she makes a direct comparison between the Government dealing with yearly budgets and people dealing with bank statements. As such, an external perspective is introduced into the discourse that directly refers to an autonomous source domain referent.

As a communicative device, deliberate metaphor is particularly relevant for argumentative discourse. Metaphors as used in figurative analogy arguments are aimed at bringing about a transfer of value from the source domain mentioned in the argument to the target domain mentioned in the standpoint. This places the target domain into a new perspective for argumentative purposes. Figurative

analogy arguments hence involve an explicit comparison between two domains, making them direct and deliberate by definition.

3.3 Figurative analogy argumentation in British Public Bill Committee debates

Pragmatic argumentation is instrumental in realising the goal of British Public Bill Committee debates to discuss the acceptability of legislative proposals because it is the only suitable type of argumentation in support of a prescriptive standpoint in which a recommendation is made. In turn, pragmatic argumentation can be supported by figurative analogy argumentation, as this type of argument typically draws upon established judgements and values, framing arguments into scenarios that suggest particular conclusions about appropriate action. In this section, we explain how a combination of figurative analogy argumentation and pragmatic argumentation manifests itself in practice. Because of their complexity, we can only present a limited number of examples to illustrate the argumentative pattern that results from combining figurative analogies with pragmatic arguments. The first case manifests the development of a coordinative argumentation structure, in which a figurative analogy argument is advanced to support the desirability of the result of the proposed measure. In the second case, a coordinative argumentation structure develops in which a figurative analogy argument is advanced to support the appropriateness of the proposed measures.

3.3.1 A figurative analogy justifying the desirability of a result

The first case of a figurative analogy selected for analysis comes from a British PBC debate on the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Bill on July 16, 2013, and was already briefly discussed in the introduction of this article. The debate concerns an amendment tabled by the Opposition that seeks to require the Secretary of State to make a statement to the House of Commons when agreed yearly budgets for the high speed rail network are, or are expected to be, exceeded. Under the bill, the Secretary of State would have the obligation to make a statement on the project's costs only once a year, but according to opposition member Lilian Greenwood this is not enough. She argues that the amendment is necessary because the House needs to be kept updated on government expenditure, and she supports this argument by making a comparison to how people deal with bank statements (repeated verbatim from the Introduction):

(2) Lilian Greenwood

[...] Our amendment would establish a mechanism requiring the Secretary of State to make a statement should such budget increases occur, or be expected to occur, in advance of the annual statement – it is simply a case of keeping the House updated. An analogy might be how people deal with bank statements: we do not wait until the end of the month to see how much we have spent; we check the account balance on a cash machine, and if we are going to have problems, we might speak to our significant other about that. That is the normal way of controlling budgets – keeping people updated, rather than waiting until the end of a control period.

In this fragment, Greenwood defends the prescriptive standpoint that the Secretary of State should be required to make a statement to the House of Commons when agreed yearly budgets are, or are expected to be, exceeded by advancing the pragmatic argument that this will keep the House updated on government expenditure. To support the argument that the House should be kept updated on government expenditure, she argues that people dealing with bank statements also regularly check their accounts and speak to their significant other if problems might occur. This analogy is an instance of figurative analogy: Greenwood talks about the Government dealing with yearly budgets in terms of people dealing with bank statements.

For the identification of the metaphorical words making up the figurative analogy, we applied the MIPVU-procedure (cf. Steen et al., 2010). This procedure specifies that any comparison that is not obviously non-metaphorical should be analysed as being metaphorical. More specifically, whenever two concepts are compared and can be constructed, in context, as somehow belonging to two distinct and contrasted domains (i.e. the Government vs. people's personal life), the comparison should be seen as expressing a cross-domain mapping. Following MIPVU, all words from "how people deal with bank statements" to "speaking to our significant other about that" are hence identified as metaphor-related words.

The metaphor is direct, because Greenwood makes an explicit comparison between the Government dealing with yearly budgets and people dealing with bank statements, which she also signals by introducing the metaphor with the words "[a]n analogy might be". The metaphorical expression is a linguistic realisation of the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS FAMILY. As Lakoff (1996) demonstrates, the source domain 'family' is often used to talk and think about politics, and is considered a conventional metaphor. In the theory of moral reasoning, for example, Lakoff (1996) argues that Americans base their political

preferences on their perspectives on how a family functions best (Strict Father vs. Nurturant Parent). By making a comparison between a large and abstract institution, such as the Government, and a much smaller and better-known social structure, such as a family, the complex and abstract organisation can be brought to human-scale, making it easier to understand and reason about such organisations. The metaphor is also deliberate, because a direct comparison is made between the Government dealing with yearly budgets and people dealing with bank statements, meaning that the source domain is part of the referential meaning of the utterance: the committee members are invited to actively compare the Government exceeding yearly budgets and informing the House about that to people dealing with bank statements discussing financial problems with their significant other, and to derive its point. As a direct and deliberate comparison between two contrasted domains, the metaphor can function as an argument in the form of a figurative analogy.

Following the pragma-dialectical notational system (cf. Van Eemeren, 2018), we reconstruct Greenwood's argumentation as in Figure 3.1. The reconstruction demonstrates that a coordinative argumentation structure develops, in which the figurative analogy and the pragmatic argument together support the standpoint. The figurative analogy is offered in anticipation of the critical question testing the evaluative component of the pragmatic argument: 'Is result Y really positive?' While the desirability of the result is often presupposed and therefore left implicit, that is not the case in this example, because it might not be entirely clear why it is desirable that the House of Commons should be updated on government expenditure, especially when there is already a provision in place that requires the Secretary of State to make an annual statement. In defence of the desirability of keeping the House updated on government expenditure, Greenwood argues that people dealing with bank statements also regularly check their accounts and speak to their significant other when problems might occur. By comparing the complex and abstract concept of a Government to that of the more familiar concept of a family, Greenwood simplifies the issue under discussion and relates it to people's daily experiences.

1. The Secretary of State should be required to make a statement to the House of Commons as soon as agreed yearly budgets for the high speed rail network are, or are expected to be, exceeded
- 1.1a This will keep the House updated on government expenditure

- 1.1b People dealing with bank statements also regularly check their account balance to see how much they have spent and speak to their significant other when problems might arise
- 1.1a-1.1b' If a statement made by the Secretary of State to the House of Commons about exceeding yearly budgets will keep the House updated on government expenditure, and this is comparable to people dealing with bank statements who speak to their significant other when problems might arise, then the measure should be carried out

Figure 3.1 Greenwood's argumentation in defence of the standpoint that the Secretary of State should be required to make a statement to the House of Commons as soon as yearly budgets are, or are expected to be, exceeded.

The figurative analogy is potentially effective because it addresses the critical question that will most likely be asked at this point in the debate: is the result that the House of Commons is kept updated on Government expenditure desirable? While it is clear that informing the House of Commons about exceeding yearly budgets will keep the House updated on government expenditure, it might not be as clear why it is desirable that the House should be informed when yearly budgets are exceeded. The desirability of keeping the House of Commons updated on Government expenditure is predicated on the desirability of people dealing with bank statements informing their significant other about financial problems that might arise. The argument may be effective because the fact that financial problems should be discussed between partners is a generally accepted practice. People might, therefore, also agree that the Government should discuss unbudgeted expenses with the House of Commons. Greenwood presents the situation as a factual state of affairs that is indisputable by emphasising that keeping people updated is the "normal way of controlling budgets".³

³ It may be argued that the figurative analogy can be seen as a device to elicit a general pragmatic principle (e.g. financial accounts of any sort must be regularly disclosed during a term, not only at the end of a term). In my view, however, such a reconstruction would be problematic for two reasons: (1) reconstructing metaphors based on a generalisation from source to target is a process that is little justified in terms of the pragma-dialectical conception of arguments reconstruction (see also Svacinova, 2014); (2) The discussant does not make a general claim, but makes a comparison between two rather specific cases, and I believe that the discussant can therefore not be held accountable for stating some general principle.

While the figurative analogy is used in anticipation of the critical question testing the desirability of the result, it leaves the critical question testing the causal relationship unanswered. Greenwood can hence still be challenged to show that the course of action she proposes will lead to the envisaged result. Moreover, the figurative analogy used to defend the pragmatic argument adds a layer of critical questions that need to be answered on top of the critical questions applying to pragmatic argumentation. Van Eemeren et al. (2007, p. 139) formulated three critical questions that should be asked in response to analogy argumentation: (1) Are the things that are compared comparable?; (2) Are there enough relevant similarities between the things that are compared?; (3) Are there any relevant differences between the things that are compared?

The critical questions relating to figurative analogy differ somewhat from these general critical questions, because the concepts that are compared in figurative analogies come from different conceptual domains. The focus should hence not be on the similarities between the concrete properties of the compared concepts, but on whether there are proportional similarities (Van Eemeren et al., 2007, p. 140). By adding a figurative analogy to the pragmatic argument, Greenwood hence acquires not only the obligation to defend the pragmatic argument from critical reactions, but also the obligation to defend the acceptability of the figurative analogy.

In this particular example, the Government does not criticise the figurative analogy. It agrees with Greenwood that the House of Commons should be kept updated on government expenditure. However, it does not agree that the measure proposed by Greenwood is necessary, because the Secretary of State already has the obligation to report to the House when yearly budgets are exceeded under the so-called 'estimates procedure'. The Government hence challenges the necessity of the proposed measure, not the desirability of the result.

The analysis of this example illustrates how figurative analogies can be used to support the desirability of the result of a proposed course of action. While this can be an effective strategy, parliamentarians should be aware that advancing a figurative analogy brings with it an additional layer of critical questions that could be raised, in addition to the critical questions applying to pragmatic argumentation. This provides opponents with various options to attack an arguer's argumentation in defence of a standpoint: they can attack the pragmatic argument and the figurative analogy argument. Whereas it is the pragmatic argument that is countered in this example, the example in the following section demonstrates how an arguer can also criticise the figurative analogy to attack an opponent's standpoint.

3.3.2 Opposing a figurative analogy justifying the adequacy of the means employed to carry out a recommendation

The second case of a figurative analogy advanced in support of a pragmatic argument has been selected from a PBC debate on the Education Bill on March 15, 2011. The discussion concerns an amendment tabled by the Opposition that would give the review panel the power to insist on the reinstatement of children that are wrongfully expelled from school. The Opposition argues that a review panel without the power to require reinstatement of wrongfully expelled children is ineffective, and accuses the Government of allowing the responsible body in a school to decide to act unreasonably. The Government, on the contrary, argues that the power to insist on the reinstatement of wrongfully expelled children would have an undermining effect on the authorities in the schools concerned, and that the review panel should therefore only have the power to impose a financial penalty. When challenged to defend its argumentation against the amendment, the Minister responsible for the bill, Nick Gibb, repeats the pragmatic argument that the review panel has the power to act when a school takes an unreasonable decision, without undermining the school's authority, by imposing a fine, and defends this measure by comparing the review panel to a criminal court:

(3) Nick Gibb:

The review panel will take action where there has been unreasonable activity. What it cannot do is reinstate. It is no different from any court that imposes a fine or a punishment for the behaviour of an individual. The fact that it does not require the person to put back the television set they took from the house does not mean that it is condoning the taking of the television set from the house. It is imposing a different penalty. All we are saying is that it can do all these different things, but it cannot insist on reinstatement.

Gibb defends the prescriptive standpoint, which remains implicit in this particular fragment, but can be reconstructed as 'the review panel should have the power to impose a financial penalty, but not to require reinstatement, when a child is wrongfully expelled from school' by the pragmatic argument that this enables the review panel to take action when a school acts unreasonably without undermining a school's authority. The government subsequently defends the acceptability of the pragmatic argument by arguing that a court also imposes a fine or punishment for the illegal behaviour of an individual, but does not require a person to put back the

television set they took from the house. The comparison is an instance of figurative analogy argument: Gibb speaks about the review panel taking action against a school when it wrongfully expels a child in terms of a court taking action against a person stealing a television set. In doing so, the concept of a head master wrongfully expelling a child is mapped onto the concept of a thief stealing a television set, and the review panel imposing a financial punishment for wrongfully expelling a student onto a court imposing a fine for stealing a television set.

Following MIPVU, all words from “any court” to “television set from the house” are identified as metaphor-related words (cf. Steen et al., 2010). Like the metaphor in the previous section, this metaphor is a direct metaphor: Gibb directly compares the review panel imposing a financial punishment on a school for the wrongful expulsion of a child to a court imposing a fine or punishment on a person for stealing a television set. He explicitly introduces the comparison by stating “[i]t is no different from any court”. The metaphor could be regarded as a linguistic instantiation of the conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE OBJECTS, since in the metaphor wrongfully expelled children are equated with stolen television sets. Accordingly, the metaphor would be an original linguistic expression of a conventional conceptual metaphor. Like the metaphor used to express the figurative analogy discussed in the previous section, this metaphor is also deliberate, because a direct comparison is made between the review panel imposing a fine on a school for the wrongful expulsion of a child and a court imposing a financial penalty or punishment on a person for illegal behaviour. As such, the source domain of the metaphor is part of the referential meaning of the utterance and available as a distinct proposition in the argumentation. Committee members must make an online comparison between the two domains to derive its point.

Gibb’s argumentation can be reconstructed as in Figure 3.2. As the reconstruction shows, the argumentation structure developing in this case is coordinative. The figurative analogy argument is advanced in addition to the pragmatic argument, and together they support the standpoint. The analogy is raised in anticipation of the critical question testing the causal component of the pragmatic argument, by justifying the feasibility of the measure. As Ihnen Jory (2012) explains, any recommendation to perform an action entails that the action is feasible, which means that a pragmatic argument fails to offer support to a standpoint if the recommended action cannot be carried out. An action is unfeasible if it is incompatible with factual limitations, i.e. ‘an unworkable action’, or when it is incompatible with institutional rules or moral principles, i.e. ‘a non-permissible action’ (Ihnen Jory, 2012, p. 31). In the case at hand, Gibb defends the

feasibility of the measure by highlighting that it complies with institutional rules. Specifically, the figurative analogy predicates the appropriateness of the proposal to impose a financial penalty on a school in response to the wrongful expulsion of a child on the fact that a similar practice is accepted in the case of a court imposing a fine or punishment on a person for illegal behaviour. Like the figurative analogy discussed in Section 3.3.1, this analogy might be potentially effective because it refers to the generally accepted practice that within the UK, a criminal court imposes a fine or punishment on people for stealing, but does not require a person to give back the item they stole.

- 1. The review panel should have the power to impose a financial penalty, but not to require reinstatement, when a child is wrongfully expelled from school
 - 1.1a This way, it can take action when a school behaves unreasonable without undermining a school's authority
 - 1.1b The same happens when a court imposes a fine or punishment for the behaviour of an individual, but does not require the person to put back the television set they took from the house
 - 1.1a-1.1b' If imposing a financial penalty when a child is wrongfully expelled allows for a review panel to take action without undermining a school's authority, and a review panel reviewing a school's decision to expel a child is comparable to a court judging an individual's behaviour, then the measure should be carried out

Figure 3.2 Gibb's argumentation in defence of the standpoint that review panels should impose a financial penalty when a child is wrongfully expelled from school

By advancing a figurative analogy in combination with pragmatic argumentation, an additional layer of critical questions is added on top of the critical questions relating to pragmatic argumentation. In this particular debate, opposition member Mark Hendrick criticises the figurative analogy by pointing at differences between the two compared concepts: whereas a child who is wrongfully expelled suffers the indignity and loss of esteem from the expulsion, as well as possible harm to his or her future education, that is not the case for a stolen television set. He even states that he thinks the analogy is "ridiculous". As the argumentation structure is coordinative, Hendrick's refutation of the figurative analogy argument weakens Gibb's argumentation in defence of the standpoint that review panels should only

have the power to impose a financial penalty, but not to require the reinstatement of wrongfully expelled children. On its own, the pragmatic argument only offers some justification to the acceptability of Gibb's standpoint.

This example of a figurative analogy demonstrates that this type of analogy argumentation can be advanced in support of the evaluative component of a pragmatic argument, as well as in support of the causal component. While figurative analogies are hence used in anticipation of or in reaction to critical questions relating to pragmatic argumentation, they give rise to new critical questions, providing opponents with various options for attacking an arguer's argumentation in support of a standpoint: they can refute the pragmatic argument, or they can challenge the figurative analogy.

3.4 Conclusion

We have examined the argumentative role of metaphors in British parliamentary debates by focusing on figurative analogies used in combination with pragmatic arguments. First, we explained that pragmatic argumentation is the only appropriate type of argumentation in support of the type of standpoint debated in British PBC debates, Second, we showed how figurative analogies can be instrumental in justifying pragmatic argumentation to increase the acceptability of the legislative proposal under discussion. Then, we presented detailed analyses of two cases of this way of arguing to demonstrate how such argumentation manifests itself in practice.

The institutional characteristics of British PBC debates impose the use of figurative analogy argumentation in combination with pragmatic argumentation. In this type of debate, the acceptability of the details of a bill are discussed by highlighting the positive consequences. Specifically, this means that committee members advance a prescriptive standpoint that can only be properly defended by pragmatic argumentation. In anticipation of argumentative criticisms, figurative analogies can be advanced to defend the acceptability of pragmatic arguments. They are an appropriate type of argument to advance in support of a pragmatic argument, because they typically draw upon established values and judgements within a particular culture, suggesting particular conclusions about appropriate action.

A close examination of two cases of figurative analogy combined with pragmatic argumentation demonstrated that figurative analogy arguments are used to defend the evaluative, as well as the causal component of a pragmatic argument. The first example illustrated that figurative analogy arguments can be used in anticipation of critical questions pertaining to the desirability of the result

mentioned in the pragmatic argument, in which case a coordinative argumentation structure develops. The second example showed that figurative analogy arguments can be used in anticipation of critical questions testing if the means to carry out the proposed measure are adequate, also giving rise to a coordinative argumentation structure.

The analyses of the metaphorical properties of the metaphors employed in figurative analogy arguments suggest that this type of analogy argumentation involves the use of deliberate metaphors in which a direct analogical cross-domain mapping is made to support a standpoint. This means that the source domain of the metaphor is available as an explicit proposition in the argumentation. These findings are in line with previous research investigating figurative analogies in parliamentary debates (Renardel de Lavalette et al., 2019), and can be explained by the fact that metaphors expressing figurative analogy arguments communicatively function as metaphors, aimed at changing one's opinion on the issue under discussion. As distinct argumentative devices, metaphors expressing figurative analogies can also be resisted by means of argumentative criticisms. This is clearly illustrated in the second example in which the figurative analogy is criticised by pointing at the differences between the compared concepts.

These results raise at least three concerns for future investigation. The first concern is to expand the observations here on British PBC debates to parliamentary debates in general: more qualitative and quantitative research is needed to study a representative number of examples in which figurative analogies are used in combination with pragmatic arguments to argue for a course of action. Secondly, although we focused on figurative analogies used in support of an arguer's standpoint, they can also be used to attack an opponent's standpoint. It would be interesting to examine how they are used as such. The third concern is to examine the way in which figurative analogies are resisted in parliamentary debates. As we have shown, figurative analogies are advanced in order to defend pragmatic arguments from – anticipated – critical reactions. Whereas they may be used to answer some critical questions relating to pragmatic argumentation, they leave other questions unanswered. Figurative analogies also bring with them an additional layer of critical questions, on top of the critical questions applying to pragmatic argumentation. This provides opponents with various options to refute an arguer's argumentation. In this paper we have shown one way in which a figurative analogy can be resisted, but more research into the various ways figurative analogies are criticised in parliamentary debates is needed.

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