

## A Cognitive Analysis of Argument and Conflict Idioms in English News Headlines

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### ABSTRACT

This paper presents a cognitive analysis of Argument and Conflict-related idioms in English from the perspective of conceptual metaphor theory. Traditionally, idioms were viewed as arbitrary chunks, while cognitive linguistics provides a new perspective for idiom comprehension and claims that idioms are not arbitrary. Instead, they are motivated by conceptual metaphors, and their meanings can be derived from the associations between the source and the target domains.

The study aims at applying conceptual metaphors to argument and conflict idioms found in news headlines. The data is collected from three news websites, namely, *The Guardian*, *BBC News*, and *The Daily Telegraph*. Firstly, the argument and conflict idioms are identified in the thematic index of the Oxford Dictionary of Idioms (2004), and these idioms are searched in the news headlines of these three sites, so 48 news headlines containing the argument and conflict idioms are found by using the search engine tool of the websites. The analysis of the study reveals 11 conceptual metaphors that exist in argument and conflict idioms, which can be used for understanding this type of idiom, and recognizes that most of the constituent words of the idioms help to activate their actual meaning based on our conceptual knowledge, as fighting or war tools like dagger, hatchet, sword, etc.

## **1.Introduction**

Idioms are the treasures of language, and English language is rich in idioms. Learners of the English language can master grammar, vocabulary, and the skills of language, but mastering idiomatic expressions is not that easy. Traditionally, the meaning of idioms was regarded as arbitrary and had to be learned by heart, while cognitive linguistics presents a new view for idiom comprehension. For instance, Kövecses (2010, p.233) regards idioms as products of human conceptual system and not simply a matter of language (i.e., a matter of the lexicon). An idiom, on the other hand, is not simply a word whose meaning is peculiar to the meaning of its component parts; rather, it is derived from our general understanding of the world as represented by our conceptual system. Cognitive linguists such as Lakoff & Johnson (1980), Gibbs (1992), Gibbs & Steen (1999), and Kövecses (2010) put forward that the nature of idioms is not arbitrary but motivated by conceptual metaphors as they form part of the link between the constituents of an idiom and its figurative meaning.

This paper aims to analyze the argument and conflict-related idioms from the perspective of conceptual metaphors, including structural, orientational, and ontological metaphors. The significance of the study lies in the thematic selection of one type of idiom that relates to argument and conflict idioms in news headlines, and we all know that with the development of technology and the advent of smartphones, people prefer reading online news to get the news easily and quickly; moreover, learners of English language use online news to develop their language. Furthermore, many studies are conducted from the standpoint of conceptual metaphor theory, but either they are comparative or pedagogical studies of idioms; for instance, a study conducted by Shaffer (2005) on 'Teaching Idioms with Conceptual Metaphors and Visual Representations' and another one by Bataineh & Al-Shaikhli (2020) on 'A Cognitive Study of Arabic and English Body Parts Idioms'. The reason behind choosing argument and conflict-related idioms is because there is no study on them and also to provide a list for English language learners since they are frequently used in daily arguments, debate lectures, news headlines, TV discussion programs, and politics. In addition to that, the analyzed idioms are grouped under the same conceptual

metaphor to give a clear picture of idiom understanding and will settle in the learner's mind in a way that is not going to be forgotten easily.

### **1.1 Data Collection and Procedure**

The data for this study is collected from the following online news websites: The Guardian ([www.theguardian.co](http://www.theguardian.co)), BBC News ([www.bbc.com/news](http://www.bbc.com/news)), and The Daily Telegraph ([www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)). Firstly, the argument and conflict-related idioms are identified in the thematic index of the Oxford Dictionary of Idioms (2004), which is a total of 32 idioms. By using the search engine of each website, the data is easily collected; each idiom is searched separately during the years 2015 and 2023, and the search tool displays all the headlines containing the idiom, so 25 idioms are found within the mentioned periods, and they are taken to be used as the research data of this study. All in all, 48 news headlines are collected and analyzed qualitatively through the application of conceptual metaphors.

### **1.2 The aims of the study**

1. To achieve an understanding of argument and conflict- related idioms in the online news headlines through the conceptual metaphors.
2. To show the role of our conceptual knowledge and conventional image in interpreting the meaning of idioms.

### **1.3 Research questions**

1. How are argument and conflict idioms conceptualized in English news headlines?
2. What are the conceptual metaphors of argument and conflict idioms in English Language?

## **2. Theoretical Basis**

### **2.1 Origin and Definitions of idiom**

The word 'idiom' dates back to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and originated from French *idiome*, or via late Latin from Greek *idiōma*, meaning 'private property, peculiar phraseology', from *idiousthai* 'make one's own', and from *idios* 'own, private' (Oxford

Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). Idioms have always attracted linguists, and that's why there are various definitions of idioms.

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms defines an idiom as 'a set phrase of two or more words that means something different from the literal meaning of the individual words. For instance, the phrase to *change one's tune* has nothing to do with music but means "*to alter one's attitude.*" (Ammer, 1997, para.3).

Palmer (1981, p. 36) defines an idiom as a string of words whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of its parts. According to Cruse (2006, p. 36), idioms are non-compositional and are syntactically frozen. Furthermore, Michael and Felicity (2001, p. 158) describe idioms as "fixed expressions with meanings that are usually not clear and obvious." Traditionally idioms were viewed as dead metaphors, while Lakoff (1987), Gibbs (1992), and Gibbs (1994) claim that idioms are not dead metaphors and their meanings are not completely arbitrary. Evans (2009, p. 87) describes idioms as "symbolic units." Moreover, Kövecses and Szabo (1996, p. 326) define idioms as expressions whose meanings cannot be completely derived from the constituent parts, but there is a systematic conceptual motivation for most idioms.

## **2.2 Properties of Idioms**

1-Frozenness and flexibility refer to the degree to which idioms can tolerate morphological and syntactic changes. Some idioms do not allow any changes, while others can tolerate some changes. For example, when we say "the bucket was kicked by John," it is syntactically correct, but passivization destroys its meaning. On the other hand, inserting an auxiliary in the phrase "he has kicked the bucket" is possible (Flores D'Arcais, 1993, p.80) .

2- Transparency and opacity are important characteristics of idioms in which the meaning of some idioms is transparent, like spill the beans, while the literal meaning is not available in opaque idioms such as kick the bucket (Flores D'Arcais, 1993, p.80) .

3- The meaning of idioms cannot be totally constructed from the meaning of lexical items and their specific combinations, which are inferred from the syntactic structures in which they occur (Glucksberg, 1993, p.5).

4-Some idioms are culture-specific; for example, ‘carrying coal to Newcastle’. The relation of coals to Newcastle, a city in England, is a historical fact, as it is a centre of coal mining, so carrying coals to a place that has coals is useless. That's why the idiom denotes an act done uselessly (Glucksberg, 1993, p.4).

### **3. The difference between Idiom and Metaphor**

Idioms are fixed expressions, while metaphors are more flexible in interpreting their meanings. Metaphors are perceived for their compositional association with untruth but pragmatically can be reinterpreted as truth, whereas the same interpretation is impossible in idioms. For example, ‘*a small fish in a big pond*’ is assigned to the set of metaphors’, while ‘*a red herring*’ is an idiom.

Metaphors can be undone in order to decipher their meanings, as in ‘He’s gone off rails’ means ‘he’s no longer on the rails’ or ‘not moving forward in a controlled way’ but we cannot apply this to idioms like ‘he is not swinging the lead, but his general practitioner sent him here’ or we may at least need non-linguistic historical knowledge as in ‘a red herring’ (Grant & Bauer, 2004, p.51).

### **4. Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT)**

It is one of the most important theories in cognitive linguistics. In 1980, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson proposed an approach to metaphor in their book ‘Metaphors We Live by’, in which metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain. They also hold that “our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (1980, p. 3).

Kövecses (2010, p. 4) clarifies “the conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain is called the source domain, while the conceptual domain that is understood this way, is the target domain”. The former is usually a familiar physical domain while the latter is a less familiar, abstract one. The source domain usually helps to comprehend the target one. In other words, a systematic correspondence is detected between the source

and the target domain since constituent element of *b* corresponds to the constituent elements of *a* and this correspondence is called as mappings (Kövecses 2010, p. 7). For instance, the ARGUMENT IS WAR conceptual metaphor is the one that Lakoff and Johnson (1980) start the discussion of their work with, so it means we can understand arguments in terms of war (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4). Capital letters are used in writing the conceptual metaphors in order to indicate the concept, not the words (Kövecses, 2010, p. 4). Conceptual metaphors have three types, namely structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors.

## **4.1 Types of Conceptual Metaphors**

### **1- Structural Metaphors**

Lakoff & Johnson (1980, p. 14) define structural metaphors as “cases where one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another.” In this type of metaphor, the source domain *B* plays a great role in understanding the target domain *A* through the cognitive function of these metaphors, and this occurs through the conceptual mappings between elements of *A* and elements of *B* (Kövecses, 2010, p. 37).

For instance, in the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor, we all know that arguments and wars are different kinds of things and the actions we perform for each are different, but ARGUMENT is partially structured and understood in terms of WAR, so the concept, the activity, and the language are metaphorically structured. That is to say, the source domain (war) tracks onto the target domain (argument) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). In the following examples, we recognize war-related terms as (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4).

- (1) Your claims are indefensible
- (2) He *attacked* every weak point in my argument.
- (3) I have never *won* an argument with him.
- (4) He *shot down* all of my arguments.

The war vocabularies as *indefensible*, *attack*, *win*, and *shot down* are mapped onto the concept ARGUMENT, in this way, they form a systematic way of talking about argument; in other words, the metaphorical expressions in our language are linked to metaphorical concepts in a systematic way (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 7).

## **2- Orientational metaphors**

The second type of metaphor is called orientational metaphors since the majority of them have to do with spatial orientation, such as up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, and central-peripheral. These spatial orientations originate from the reality of our bodies and the way they function in our physical environment (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14).

Kövecses (2010, p. 40) prefers to call this type of metaphor "coherence metaphor," and by "coherence," he wants to clarify that certain target concepts are conceptualized in a systematic way. For example, there is an upward orientation in all the following concepts, whereas their opposites get a downward orientation.

HAVING CONTROL IS UP

(1) I have control over her.

(2) I am on top of the situation.

BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL IS DOWN

(1) He is under my control.

(2) His power is on the decline.

## **3- Ontological Metaphors**

Ontological metaphors go beyond orientational metaphors because they tell us about the experience we have with physical objects and substances, which lay the foundation for understanding concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 25).

Kövecses (2010, p. 38) puts forward that "we conceive of our experiences in terms of objects, substances, and containers, in general, without specifying exactly what kind of object, substance, or container is meant." Ontological metaphors are used to understand events, actions, activities, and states. For instance, events and actions are metaphorically seen as objects, activities as substances, and states as containers (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 30). The most typical kind of ontological metaphor is the container metaphor. Containers can be seen as defining a limited space that has a bounding surface, a center, and a periphery. For example, ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER metaphor is applied to the following examples (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 92).

- (1) Your argument doesn't have much *content*.
- (2) That argument has *holes in it*.

Another important metaphor is ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY metaphor, which describes the goal, direction or progress of an argument as in:

- (1) We have set out to prove that bats are birds.
- (2) When we get to the next point, we shall see that philosophy is dead.

Moreover, what is known about journeys is that JOURNEYS DEFINE A PATH as in: He *strayed from* the path. And when we link ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY and JOURNEYS DEFINES A PATH, we get AN ARGUMENT DEFINES A PATH, as in He *strayed from the line* of argument.

### **3.2 Traditional vs. Cognitive View of Idioms**

The relationship between idioms and the human conceptual system is negated by traditional semantics, while cognitive semantics fills the gap and draws attention to the production of meaning, which is based on the human brain's perception of things (Zhao, 2003, p. 488, as cited in Huo & Song, 2020).

Traditionally, idioms were described as dead metaphors that once had metaphorical origins but have lost their metaphoricity over time, and now they are viewed as fixed expressions (Cacciari, 1993, p. 32). However, many cognitive linguists have challenged this view, and they believe that a large number of idioms are motivated by conventional metaphors. Idioms are not simply a matter of lexicon but in fact reflect a coherent system of metaphorical concepts. For example, the anger idioms like *blow your stack*, *flip your lid*, *hit the ceiling*, *get hot under the collar*, *lose your cool*, and *get steamed up* are all motivated by ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER (Gibbs, 1993. p.66).

Lakoff (1987, p. 447) conducted a survey on the idiom *to keep someone at arm's length* and asked hundreds of people for the image associated with the idiom. They all predicted the same image, as the idiom *at arm's length* has nothing to do with the position of the arm but talks about the distance. So, the figurative meaning of idioms is motivated by the conventional knowledge people possess, as Lakoff (1987) called imageable idioms. For example, the idiom *to keep someone at arm's length* has a non-

physical meaning; it means you don't want to become intimate with someone in order to prevent social or psychological harm. That is to say, the idiom is motivated by the conventional image and the conceptual metaphors (INTIMACY IS PHYSICAL CLOSENESS, SOCIAL (or PSYCHOLOGICAL) HARM IS PHYSICAL HARM), so they both provide the link between the idiom and its idiomatic meaning (Lakoff, 1987, p. 448). On top of that, idiom motivation is defined as the idea that the meaning of many idioms seems natural or transparent to us because conceptual metaphors link the literal meaning to the idiomatic meaning (Kövecses, 2010, p. 324).

#### **4. Data Analysis and Discussion**

In this section, the news headlines containing the argument and conflict idioms are analyzed via the application of CMT and categorized under the same conceptual metaphor. The conceptual metaphors are scanned electronically in the metaphor list compiled by (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991), in *the Metaphor: a practical introduction* book by (Kövecses, 2010) and in the *Metaphors We Live By* (Lakoff & Johnson 1980), then the related ones are identified and applied to the idioms of this study.

- at each other's throats

##### **1-Why are Boko Haram and ISWAP at each other's throats? (BBC News, 6 January 2023)**

The idiom 'at each other's throats' evokes an image of quarreling; thus, we can say that Boko Haram and ISWAP (the Islamic State of West Africa) are in a state of hostility and conflict. So, depending on the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5), we get the source domain (war) that maps onto the target domain (argument).

- at loggerheads

##### **2-Covid UK: scientists at loggerheads over approach to new restrictions (Guardian 22, Sep 2020)**

##### **3-The 5G fight: why US phone firms are at loggerheads with FAA over airline safety (The Guardian, Jan 5, 2022)**

#### **4-Changes to HSC curriculum put academics at loggerheads (The Telegraph, 21 February 2017)**

'Loggerhead' is a tool that was used as a weapon in the 17th century (Seifring, 2004, p. 176), so the weapon signifies the source domain (war), which maps onto the target domain (argument). In the headline (2), '*scientists at loggerheads*' means they argue about new Covid restrictions. The same interpretation can be applied to the headlines (3) and (4) as there is an argument and a disagreement between *US phone firms* and *FAA* (Federal Aviation Administration) over airline safety, and between principals and academics over the curriculum changes of *HSC* (Higher School Certificate).

- **be at daggers drawn or daggers drawn**

#### **5-Defiant Greece at daggers drawn with EU creditors (The Telegraph, 09 March 2015)**

#### **6-Campaign catchup: daggers drawn over federal police NBN raid (BBC news, 20 May 2016)**

From the constituents of the idiom 'at daggers drawn' we get the source domain (war) because we know that 'daggers' is a short knife that can be used as a weapon that maps onto the target domain (argument), so seeing daggers as a war tool leads us to analyze the headlines easily, as the headline (5) depicts the argument between *Greece* and *EU creditors* and the headline (6) points to the breaking of an argument over police raid.

-**Lock horns**

#### **7-France and Belgium lock horns over who invented 'French' fries' (The Telegraph, 2 August 2018)**

#### **8-Iran warns Israeli bases are within reach as pair lock horns over Syria (The Guardian, 20 April 2018)**

#### **9-No hiding place: US and Europe lock horns for epic Ryder Cup battle (The Guardian, 23 September 2021)**

The idiom 'lock horns' denotes animal fight and originally the idiom refers to horned animals like bulls fighting head-to-head with their horns (Seifring, 2004, p.176). So, from this literal interpretation, we get the source domain 'war' and when we apply it to the headlines, we understand that there is an argument or a conflict between *France* and *Belgium* about which country invented 'French fries', the same argument between *Iran* and *Israel* over *Syria*, and between *the US* and *Europe* on Ryder cup (which is a golf tournament). Even 'lock horns' gives a sense of the start of an argument, so we can even feel the ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY metaphor.

#### **-Cross swords**

**10-Presi prof, students cross swords (The Telegraph, 23 February 2017)**

**11-Welfare and election 2015: Crossing swords over welfare reform? (BBC news, 13 April 2015)**

The image of two swords crossed conjure up a fight, so we can grasp the source domain 'war' and when we analyze the headlines, it is seen that there is not a physical, but a verbal fight between *professors* and *students* on academic issues, and between *political parties* and *people* on the welfare reforms that supposed to be done, so from this interpretation we get the target domain 'argument'.

#### **-Take up the cudgels**

**12 -Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard take up the cudgels again in ABC documentary (The Guardian, 2 June 2015)**

According to our general knowledge of the world, when someone takes a cudgel (a short, thick stick), he or she is going to fight or hit someone, so from this interpretation, we identify the source domain (war), as in the headline (12), *Kevin Rudd* and *Julia Gillard* are taking up the cudgels in the documentary program, which means they argue since they have opposite views, so this image maps onto the target domain (argument).

### **-Cut and Thrust**

#### **13-Dominic Raab on 'factcheck UK': 'No-one gives a toss about social media cut and thrust' (BBC news, 20 November 2019)**

The constituent words of the idiom 'cut and thrust' contribute to the metaphorical meaning because, according to our conventional knowledge, we know that cutting and thrusting are used in swordplay, which creates an exciting atmosphere. So, in the headline, *Dominic Raab*, who is a British Conservative Party politician, talked in a debate program about the renaming of their Twitter account to '*factcheck UK*', which causes arguments and criticisms on social media, but he said no one cares about the arguments and discussions done. So, we perceive cut and thrust as taking place in war (the source domain) that maps onto argument (the target domain).

### **-a running battle**

#### **14-'Keeping the momentum': the Hong Kongers fighting a running battle for justice (The Guardian, 10 July 2020)**

#### **15-Pete Doherty on Kate Moss: 'our relationship became a running battle: highs and then crushing, violent lows (The Guardian, 11 June 2022)**

#### **16-Yasmin Le Bon: My daily running battle with depression. (The Telegraph, 26 May 2015)**

The idiom 'running battles' describes a prolonged confrontation, so the word 'battle' refers to the source domain (war), which maps onto the target domain (argument). In the headline (14), 'the Hong Kongers' are in an ongoing fight for justice. In the headline (15), we encounter the idiom 'a running battle' in a relationship that signifies a continuous or persistent disagreement between the partners. In the headline (16), there is a continuous struggle of Yasmin le Bon with herself, which is depression, and she may suffer from it constantly for long periods in her life.

**The structural conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR is identified in the idioms (at each other's throat, at loggerheads, at daggers drawn, lock horns, cross swords and take up the cudgels, cut and thrust and a running battle). So, in all these idioms an abstract conceptual domain is presented in terms of a more concrete one.**

Table 1: Cross mapping system of ARGUMENT IS WAR

Source domain (WAR)	Target domain (ARGUMENT)
At each other's throat (figuratively strangling each other's throats)	fierce argument
At loggerheads (war tool)	Argument and disagreement
at daggers drawn (war tool)	Argument and disagreement
Lock horns(fight)	To argue or engage in an argument
Cross swords (war image)	To argue or fierce argument
Take up the cudgels (war tool)	Verbal fight and defense
Cut and Thrust (swordplay)	exciting argument
A running battle	Persistent conflict

## - Add fuel to fire

**17-Ukraine war: Russia says US 'adding fuel to fire' by sending longer-range rockets (BBC News, 1 June 2022)**

**18-Adding fuel to the fire: customers at the forecourt react to Sunak's statement (The Guardian, 24 March, 2022)**

In these headlines, it is clear that there is a container metaphor since containers can hold a substance, and based on our conventional knowledge, we know that adding fuel to fire is dangerous and makes the situation worse, so in the headline (17), the *US* makes the argument worse by *sending longer-range rockets in the Ukraine war*, and in the headline (18), *Sunak's statement* worsens an existing bad situation for the customers *at the forecourt*. So, the bad state in which Ukraine and the customers are in, refers to a container, depending on the ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.92)

## - Pour oil on troubled waters

**19-Don't expect the market to pour any oil on troubled waters in 2019 (The Telegraph, 1 January 2019)**

The word 'pour' gives the image of a container as a liquid flowing out of it, which is the source domain maps onto the target domain 'argument', and based on the

etymology of the idiom, in ancient times people poured oil on ocean waves to decrease their violence; even there was an Irish monk who gave holy oil to a priest in order to pour on the sea during the storm (Farlex Dictionary of Idioms, n.d.). This interpretation allows us to apply the ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER metaphor. As we see in the headline (19), the idiom is used in a negative sentence, so that means the market is not going to decrease prices in 2019, so there will not be a period of tranquility. Furthermore, the idiom ‘pour oil on the troubled waters’ is the antonym of ‘add fuel to fire’.

**The ontological conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER is identified in the idioms ‘add fuel to fire’ and ‘pour oil on troubled waters’. An abstract conceptual domain is represented as something concrete like a container.**

Table 2: Cross domain mapping system of ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER

Source domain (CONTAINER)	Target domain (ARGUMENT)
<b>Add</b> in add fuel to fire	make an argument worse
<b>Pour</b> in pour oil on troubled waters	To soothe a situation or a person

**- bury the hatchet**

**20-Kushner and Bannon agree to 'bury the hatchet' after White House peace talks (The Guardian, 9 Apr 2017)**

**21-'I love him': Malaysian PM and former rival publicly bury hatchet after 20 years (The Guardian, Oct 9, 2018)**

**22-Samsung and LG agree to bury the legal hatchet (BBC News, 31 March 2015)**

The literal meaning of the idiom ‘bury the hatchet’ maps onto the figurative meaning, as we know that a hatchet is a tool that can be used in a fight, so burying the hatchet means putting away weapons, which denotes the end of past conflicts, which in turn describes a metaphorical journey since the process of challenges, reconciling, and finally reaching a resolution or peace can be linked to the conceptual metaphor RECONCILIATION IS A JOURNEY (Kövecses, 2010, p. 301). In the headlines, we conceive of ending conflicts between *Kushner* and *Bannon*, *Malaysian PM* and *former rival*, and *Samsung* and *LG*, since they decide to bury the hatchet, which refers to putting an

end to hostilities. It signifies the end of a metaphorical journey because in journeys too, we have progress, challenges, and finally reaching a destination.

**The structural conceptual metaphor RECONCILIATION IS A JOURNEY is found in the idiom ‘bury the hatchet’.**

Table 3: Cross domain mapping system of RECONCILIATION IS A JOURNEY

Source domain (JOURNEY)	Target domain (RECONCILIATION)
Bury the hatchet	Ending a past conflict

**-Agree to differ**

**23- 2+2 talks: How India and US agreed to differ on Ukraine war (BBC NEWS, 12 April 2022)**

A journey has a long path, so there are times that people agree and times when they disagree, until both parties reach a point where they decide to accept different opinions. From the constituent words of the idiom 'agree to differ', it is obvious that *India* and *the US* will accept different views on the Ukraine war, which leads them to stop arguing about it, depending on the ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY metaphor (Lakoff& Johnson, 1980, p.90).

**-Be at cross purposes**

**24-British and EU Brexit teams at cross-purposes as clock ticks on (The Guardian, 7 Mar 2019)**

**25-Mark Carney: Government working at cross-purposes with Bank (BBC news, 29 September 2022)**

The word ‘purposes’ in ‘be at cross purposes’ reminds us of the conceptual metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, which refers to the journey metaphor since journeys have destinations. We can link it with the ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY metaphor. In this way, in the headline (24), we detect the different views and aims that exist between *British* and *EU Brexit*, which cause arguments until they reach a point. The word Brexit means the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, in which

‘Bre’ stands for Britain and ‘Exit’ means leaving (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, n.d.). In the headline (25), we can see the same controversy or conflict between the *Government* and the *Bank*.

### **-Go to the mat**

**26-Zuckerberg: I'll 'go to the mat' and fight' Warren over plan to break up Facebook (The Guardian, 1 Oct 2019)**

Based on our conceptual system, ‘go to the mat’ reflects a path (source domain), and as we grasp from the headline that *Zuckerbeg* is going to have a fierce argument (target domain) with *Warren* over plan for terminating facebook, we can easily get the conceptual metaphors entailments AN ARGUMENT DEFINES A PATH and THE PATH OF AN ARGUMENT IS A SURFACE (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.90).

When we go back to the origin of the term, it serves a crystal-clear image because the term comes from wrestling, and the mat refers to the thick mat in a gym on which wrestling is practiced (Sieftring, 2004, p. 185).

### **-On the warpath**

**27-Millennials beware - Generation Z is on the warpath (The Guardian, 21 June 2020)**

**28- On the warpath: AI's role in the defense industry (BBC News, 24 August 2023)**

**29-Kangana Ranaut: The star on a warpath with Bollywood (BBC News, 29 September 2004)**

The idiom ‘on the warpath’ literally tells us that there is a path to war, so we can apply the conceptual metaphor entailment AN ARGUMENT DEFINES A PATH from AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.90), as it is clear from the headline that generation Z are in a state of aggression or ready for arguing with the millennials, which are also called generation Y. There is a conflict between them because Generation Z refers to a group of people born between the late 1990s and early 2010s who are regarded as being very familiar with the internet and Generation Y refers to a group born between roughly 1981 and 1994) (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, n.d.).

In the headline (28), scientists are angry and ready for a fight over the use of AI (artificial intelligence) in the military because they know that automatic systems are capable of making mistakes in detecting targets. So, from the word ‘warpath’, we can identify the source domain(path) that maps onto the target domain(argument). The same can be grasped from the headline (29) as the star, Kangana Ranaut, is angry and ready for confrontation with her colleagues in Bollywood, which according to (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, n.d.), is a blend of the words Bombay and Hollywood.

**From the analysis of the idioms ‘agree to differ, at cross purposes, go to the mat and on the warpath) the ontological conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY is identified.**

Table 4: Cross domain mapping system of ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY.

Source domain (JOURNEY)	Target domain (ARGUMENT)
Agree to differ	Stop arguing
At cross purposes	Having argument on different views and goals
Go to the mat	to have a fierce argument
On the warpath	Angry and ready for confrontations

### **-Battle of the Giants**

**30-Battle of the giants means it’s game on for US toy industry (The Telegraph,31 December 2018)**

**31-Vardy leads charge as Leicester rout Southampton in battle of fallen giants (The Guardian, 15 Sep 2023)**

From the word ‘battle’ in the ‘battle of the giants’, we get the source domain (war) that maps onto the target domain (competition), depending on the COMPETITION IS WAR metaphor (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991, p. 66). When two opponents are competing for something, a warlike situation can be felt between them, so it is clear from the headline (30) that there is fierce competition between the companies in the *US toy industry*. In the headline (31), the contest between *Leicester* and *Southampton* describes a metaphorical war.

### **-Battle of wills**

**32-The Big Blue: strutting alpha clubs in battle of wills as much as football (The Guardian, 6 Nov 2016)**

**33-Battle of wills between Thatcher and the Queen (The Guardian, 11 Sep 2019)**

As in the 'battle of giants', the idiom 'battle of wills' describes a metaphorical war from which we get the source domain (war) that maps onto the target domain (competition). So, the conceptual metaphor COMPETITION IS WAR (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991, p. 66) is applied to the headlines. In the headline (32), 'the battle of wills' denotes a competition or struggle between the football players in alpha clubs. In addition to that, in the headline (35), the battle of wills describes a competition between two women for defeat.

**The structural conceptual metaphor COMPETITION IS WAR is recognized in the idioms 'battle of giants' and 'battle of wills'.**

Table 5: Cross domain mapping system of COMPETITION IS WAR

Source domain (WAR)	Target domain (COMPETITION)
<b>Battle</b> in Battle of the Giants	Competition between two parties
<b>Battle</b> in Battle of wills	A competition or struggle to win

### **-Fight like cat and dog**

**34- Fighting like cats and dogs (BBC News, 6 May 2019)**

The idiom 'Fight like cat and dog' appears as the name of a radio program that is (Fighting like cats and dogs) so from the fight of animals and their behavior, we get the source domain 'animal' that maps onto the target domain 'people', which is motivated by the conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991, p.56), that is to say the guests in the program are usually in conflict and having arguments on the daily topics that are discussed.

**-Fight tooth and nail**

**35-Unions vow to fight ‘tooth and nail’ to save Vauxhall jobs at Ellesmere Port**  
**(The Telegraph, 29 July 2019)**

**36-Caring for older parents: 'We have had to fight tooth and nail for the help we get'** (The Guardian, 3 Feb 2016)

**37-West Brom 0-1 Norwich: We will fight tooth and nail to stay up – Neil** (BBC news, 19 March 2016)

The idiom ‘fight tooth and nail’ depicts animals fight since they use their teeth and nail in their fights for getting something so this feature maps onto humans fight via the conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991, p.56). In the headline (35), unions fight to save *Vauxhall* is just like an animal fight, which is the source domain that maps onto the target domain as human beings fight in order to get something. In the headline (36), there is a sense of fierce fight or struggle for funding the elderly and social care, so the editor uses the idiom ‘fight tooth and nail’ to show the degree of their seriousness in order to get what they want. Moreover, in the headline (37), Neil, the Norwich manager, uses the idiom ‘fight tooth and nail’ to declare how his team is eager to struggle or work harder to remain in the league after their victory over West Brom.

**PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS refers to the ontological metaphor which is found in the idioms ‘fight like cat and dog’ and ‘fight tooth and nail’.**

Table 6: Cross mapping system of PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS

Source domain (ANIMALS)	Target domain (PEOPLE)
Fight like cat and dog	Arguing continuously with each other
Fight tooth and nail	Fierce fight and struggle

### **-Sparks Fly**

**38-Wiley v Stormzy: sparks fly in grime's generation game (The Guardian, 8 January 2020)**

**39-Sparks fly as truck racers row after Ohio crash (The Guardian, 5 July 2021)**

The idiom 'sparks fly' in the above headlines, describes the conflict between *Wiley v Stormzy* and the *truck racers*, as it is motivated by the conceptual metaphor CONFLICT IS FIRE (Kövecses, 2010, p.145). The word 'sparks' helps to get the concrete source domain (fire), which maps onto an abstract target domain (conflict).

Table 7: Cross mapping system of CONFLICT IS FIRE

Source domain (FIRE)	Target domain (CONFLICT)
Sparks in sparks fly	Heated argument

### **-War of Nerves**

**40-A war of nerves between Pakistan's military and Sharif (BBC News, 28 May 2018)**

**41-Ukraine: a war of nerves (BBC News, 15 October 2022)**

The literal meaning of the idiom 'war of nerves' maps onto the idiomatic meaning as the headlines (40) and (41) depicts a psychological war between Pakistan's *military* and *Sharif* and also the psychological aspect of the war in *Ukraine*. The conceptual metaphor PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM IS PHYSICAL HARM (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991, p.131) can be applied to this idiom, the metaphorical source domain (war of nerves) can be viewed as something physical since war is a physical force that affect us which is used to understand a more abstract one which is the target domain (psychological harm).

**PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM IS PHYSICAL HARM is identified in the idiom 'war of nerves' which refers to structural metaphors.**

Table 8: Cross mapping system of PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM IS PHYSICAL HARM.

Source domain (PHYSICAL HARM)	Target domain (PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM)
War of Nerves (metaphorical as if someone harms the nerves)	psychological harm

#### **-Divide and rule**

**42-Divide and rule tactics could leave UK without deal, say EU politicians** (The Guardian, 20 February 2017)

**43-China's aggressive strategy of divide and rule is a historic miscalculation** (The Telegraph, 29 March 2021)

The constituents of the idiom 'divide and rule' give us a sense of power or control over something. In the headline (42), 'divide and rule' is used as a tactic by UK to cause disagreement and trouble between European countries, and in the headline (43), it's used as a strategy by China. So, from both headlines, we recognize that when you can use tactics, strategies and divisions to maintain power, it means you are above others, depending on the CONTROL IS UP metaphor (Kövecses, 2010, p. 40), we get the source domain (up) that maps onto the target domain (control).

**The orientational conceptual metaphor CONTROL IS UP is identified in the idiom 'divide and rule'.**

Table 9: Cross mapping system of CONTROL IS UP

Source domain (UP)	Target domain (CONTROL)
Divide and rule	Having power and control

#### **- devil's advocate**

**44-Ask Molly Ringwald: my partner is a compulsive devil's advocate.** (The Guardian, 17 Jul 2015)

The idiom 'devil's advocate' is embodied in our conceptual system as a person who takes the side of the devil depending on the intention of the person, so it is motivated by the conceptual metaphor EVIL IS A FORCE (Kövecses, 2010, p.69). In the headline (44), someone talks about her partner who takes the side of the devil, which means

he usually supports the opposite view just for the sake of debate, which causes controversy in their relationship. The source domain ‘force’ refers to the powerful person who is capable of influencing others and challenging ideas in a critical manner, which maps onto the target domain (evil) or (doing evil).

**The ontological conceptual metaphor EVIL IS A FORCE is identified in the idiom ‘devil’s advocate’.**

Table 10: Cross mapping system of EVIL IS A FORCE

Source domain (FORCE)	Target domain (EVIL)
devil’s advocate (have a powerful character or intelligence)	Provoke discussion

**- Have a bone to pick with someone**

**45-Researchers have a bone to pick with the myth that Anglo-Saxon royalty were major meat munchers (The Telegraph, 21 April 2022)**

**46-Prince William's hot mic moment: Why I've got a bone to pick with Star Wars (The Telegraph, 19 February 2018)**

The conceptual metaphor PROBLEM IS AN OBJECT HARM (Lakoff, Espenson & Schwartz, 1991, p.195) can account for the idiom ‘have a bone to pick with someone’. Based on our conventional knowledge, we know that bones cause problems and disagreement among dogs, so the same thing can account for human beings. As it is obvious from the headline (45), *researchers* reject the view that *Anglo-Saxon royalty* were carnivorous, which describes a problem (like a bone among dogs), so it means they were herbivorous. In the headline (46), Prince William has got a reason to argue, in other words, a bone to pick with the Star Wars (a film on space opera) editors. So, the word ‘bone’ helps to get the source domain, which maps onto the target domain (problem).

### **-Bone of contention**

**47-Did dinosaurs really roar? It's a bone of contention (The Telegraph, 17 February 2021)**

**48-Bone of contention over Kennel Club plans to register popular designer dogs (The Telegraph, 29 November 2015)**

As in the idiom 'have a bone to pick with someone', the 'bone' in the 'bone of contention' describes a problem for arguing. In the headline (47) the issue of whether dinosaurs were really roaring or not becomes a bone of contention among researchers, who argue the noises dinosaurs make. So, it is motivated by the conceptual metaphor PROBLEM IS AN OBJECT. The same can be applied to the headline (48), as there is a bone of contention, namely a problem for arguing, which is about the registration of the designer dogs, that is to say hybrid dogs.

**The conceptual metaphor PROBLEM IS AN OBJECT is recognized in the idioms 'have a bone to pick with someone' and 'bone of contention' which is a type of structural metaphor.**

Table 11: Cross mapping system of PROBLEM IS AN OBJECT

Source domain (OBJECT)	Target domain (PROBLEM)
Have a bone to pick with someone	Having a problem or a subject to discuss or complain about
Bone of contention	The bone is the main issue of dispute

## **5.Conclusion:**

The study has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The study has identified 11 conceptual metaphors found in argument and conflict idioms as ARGUMENT IS WAR, ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER, RECONCILIATION IS A JOURNEY, ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY, COMPETITION IS WAR, PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS, CONFLICT IS FIRE, PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM IS PHYSICAL HARM, CONTROL IS UP, EVIL IS A FORCE, and PROBLEM IS AN OBJECT.

2. Argument and conflict idioms are consistent with the source and target domains of the conceptual metaphors used in the study.
3. The three types of conceptual metaphors, namely structural, orientational, and ontological metaphors, are found in argument and conflict idioms.
4. Most of the constituent words of argument and conflict idioms help to activate their actual meaning based on our conceptual knowledge, as fighting or war tools like *dagger hatchet, sword, etc.*

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## شیکارییه کی هۆشه کی له زاراو ه کانی مشتومرو ململانی له سه رڊیره کانی هه والی ئینگلیزدا

### پوخته:

ئهم توێژینهوهیه شیکردنهوهیهکی هۆشه کی له زاراو ه کانی په یوه نیدیارد به مشتومر و ململانی له زمانی ئینگلیزی له پوانگهی بیردۆزی میتافۆری چه مکه وه پێشکەش دهکات. به شیوهیهکی نه ریتی زاراو ه کان وهک پارچهیهکی هه په مه کی سهیر ده کران، له کاتیکدا زمانه وانی هۆشه کی پوانگهییهکی نوێ بۆ تیگه یشتن له زاراو ه کان دابین دهکات و ده لێت که زاراو ه کان هه په مه کی نین. له بری ئه وه، ئه وان هانده درێن له لایه ن میتافۆره چه مکیه کانه وه، و مانا کانیان ده توانرێت له په یوه ندییه کانی نیوان بواره کانی سه رچاوه و ئامانجه وه وه ربگرێت.

ئامانجی لیکۆلینه وه که بریتی یه له جیه جی کردنی میتافۆره چه مکیه کان بو سه ر زاراو ه کانی مشتومر و ململانی که له سه رڊیره کانی هه وال ه کاند دۆزرا ونه ته وه. داتای لیکۆلینه وه که له سێ ماله پری هه وال کۆکرا وه ته وه به ناوی: The Daily Telegraph BBC News, The Guardian. یه که م جار زاراو ه کانی مشتومر و ململانی له پێرستی بابته فهره نگی ئۆکسفۆرډی زاراو ه کان (2004) دیارده کرین و ئهم زاراو ه یانه له سه رڊیری هه وال ه کانی ئهم سێ ماله په ردا گه رانیان بۆ ده کریت، وه 48 سه رڊیری هه وال که زاراو ه کانی مشتومر و نا کۆکی تیدایه به به کاره یانی ئامیری بزۆینه ری گه رانی ماله په ر ه کان ده دۆز رینه وه. شیکردنه وه ی لیکۆلینه وه که 11 میتافۆریکی چه مکی ده خاته روو که له زاراو ه کانی مشتومر و نا کۆکیدا بوونیان هه یه، که ده توانرێت به کاره ی نریت بۆ تیگه یشتن له م جۆره

زاراوهيه و پيکهينه ره کانی زاراوه کان يارمه تيدهرن بۆ چالا ککردنی مانا راسته قينه کهيان له سه ر بنه ماي زانيارى بيروکه مان وه کو ئامرازه کانی شه ر کردن يان جهنگ وهک خه نجه ر و ته ور و شمشير و هتد..

## تحليل ادراكي لتعابير الحجج والصراع في عناوين الأخبار الإنجليزية

### الملخص:

تقدم هذه الورقة التحليل ادراكي للحجج والتعابير المتعلقة بالصراع في اللغة الإنجليزية من منظور نظرية الاستعارة المفاهيمية. تقليدياً، كان يُنظر إلى التعابير الاصطلاحية على أنها أجزاء عشوائية، في حين توفر اللغويات المعرفية منظوراً جديداً لفهم التعابير الاصطلاحية وتدعي أن التعابير ليست اعتباطية. وبدلاً من ذلك، فهي مدفوعة بالاستعارات المفاهيمية، ويمكن استخلاص معانيها من الارتباطات بين المجالين المصدر والهدف. تهدف الدراسة إلى تطبيق الاستعارات المفاهيمية على تعابير الحجج والصراع الموجودة في عناوين الأخبار. يتم جمع بيانات الدراسة من ثلاثة مواقع إخبارية، وهي The Guardian و BBC News و The Daily Telegraph. أولاً، يتم تحديد تعابير الحجة والصراع في الفهرس المواضيعي لقاموس أكسفورد للتعابير (2004)، وتم البحث عن هذه التعابير في عناوين الأخبار لهذه المواقع الثلاثة، لذلك تم العثور على 48 عنواناً إخبارياً يحتوي على تعابير الحجج والصراع باستخدام أداة محرك البحث للمواقع. يكشف تحليل الدراسة عن 11 الاستعارات المفاهيمية الموجودة في تعابير الحجة والصراع، والتي يمكن استخدامها لفهم هذا النوع من المصطلح، ويدرك أن معظم الكلمات المكوّنة لاصطلاحات تساعد على تفعيل معناها الفعلي بناءً على معرفتنا المفهومية، كأدوات القتال أو الحرب مثل الخنجر والفأس والسيف وغيرها.