

## Overdetermination of businesswomen in the British press: a corpus-based approach in critical discourse analysis

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis, social actor framework, metaphor identification procedure (MIP)

Within the strand of critical discourse analysis (CDA), research on media portrayal of individuals is prevalent, with the scope having been expanded beyond such subjects as refugees or asylum seekers, but also the breadth of research having been enhanced with larger datasets under the corpus-based approach. This study, utilizing both corpus-based quantitative analysis as well as qualitative analysis, focuses on the depiction of businesswomen in the British press. The corpus comprises business-related articles from *The Guardian* published in 2017 and 2018, gathered through website crawling. As for qualitative analysis, those articles are examined under the category of overdetermination Kress van Leeuwen's social actor framework (2008) combined with the metaphor identification procedure (MIP) by Pragglejaz Group (2007). The results show that businesswomen are represented in different social practices, such as maritime, fighting, racing, and climbing. Based on these results, the portrayal of businesswomen in the media is sketched and suggested with further implications.

### Introduction

Media discourse is becoming more prevalent in discourse studies because the media has been one of the influential factors in forming social practices. To understand how the media impacts public view, it is essential to analyze the discourse of the press (Lirola, 2016). What people have read or heard from media products informs modifications of their behavior, ideas, and beliefs, from which they navigate themselves into a particular social group (Bednarek & Caple, 2012).

Within media discourse, a key focus is on gender representation, possibly because gender equality is one of the sustainable development goals proposed by the United Nations for many countries. Investigation into media coverage of women and how they participate in various fields has been conducted in a multitude of studies, from which not only is women's portrayal

in the press better understood, but also some suggestions for better representation could be offered. This has motivated my research into how women are depicted in the media, particularly in business contexts, under the approach of critical discourse analysis.

## Literature review

### *Van Leeuwen's social actor framework*

In critical discourse analysis (CDA), language is treated as a social practice that conveys ideologies. Its critical aspect works as the basis to reveal and potentially transform social inequalities, providing a “better understanding of them and of the right thing to do” (Fairclough, 2015, p. 48) through examination of language. There are several frameworks within CDA, one of which is one is the socio-cognitive approach, which emphasizes “the mental representation of language users as individuals and as social members” (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 64), mediating the discourse and the society. Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional approach involves analyzing texts at three levels of text, the interaction between text production and interpretation process, and the broader social context of these interactions. Van Leeuwen views discourse as a “recontextualization of social practice” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 3), being cognition or knowledge socially constructed and specific to particular social contexts. During this recontextualization process, elements of social practice, such as participants or actions, are transformed. Therefore, his analysis framework extends beyond linguistic categories but leans towards sociology, for example, “nomination” instead of “nominalization.” The nature of the framework, however, is still based on linguistic resources (lexis, deictic, system of reference, morphological structure, metaphor, metonym) to help understand how elements of social practice are recontextualized and represented in the discourse.

Van Leeuwen's perspective of discourse underpins different frameworks for analyzing a social practice's participants, actions, time, and space. This study will focus on the participants, or actors, and employ the social actor framework (Figure 1) based on Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The reason for choosing this foundation, according to Van Leeuwen, is that CDA confined to linguistic categories may overlook discourse from a sociological perspective because the language “lacks bi-uniqueness” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 23), whereas SFL treated language as a social semiotic system carrying functions. This actor framework is accompanied by a social action one (Figure 2).

Figure 1

Van Leeuwen's social actor framework

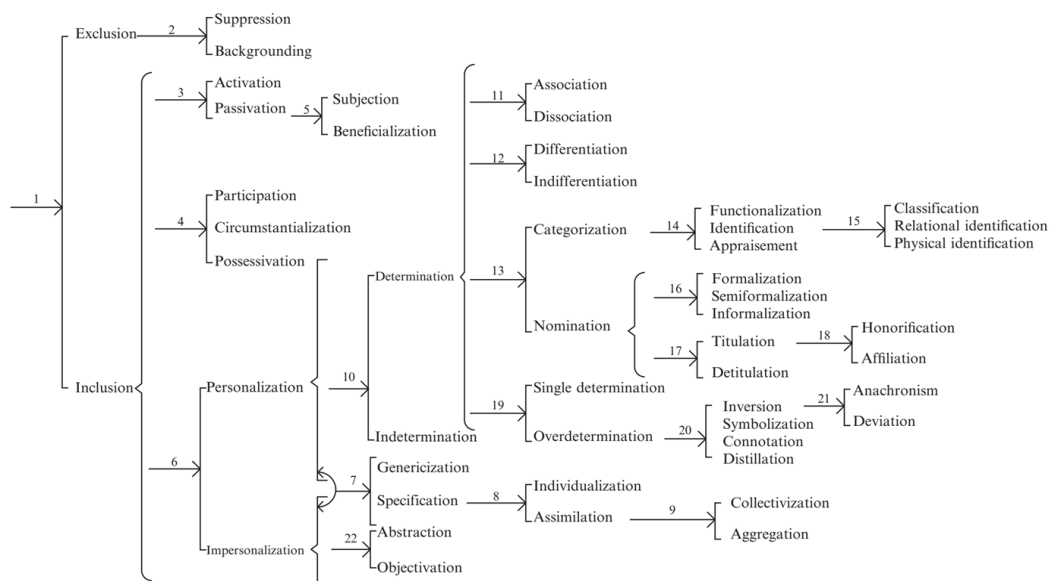


TABLE 2.4. Social Actor Network

Figure 2

Van Leeuwen's social action framework

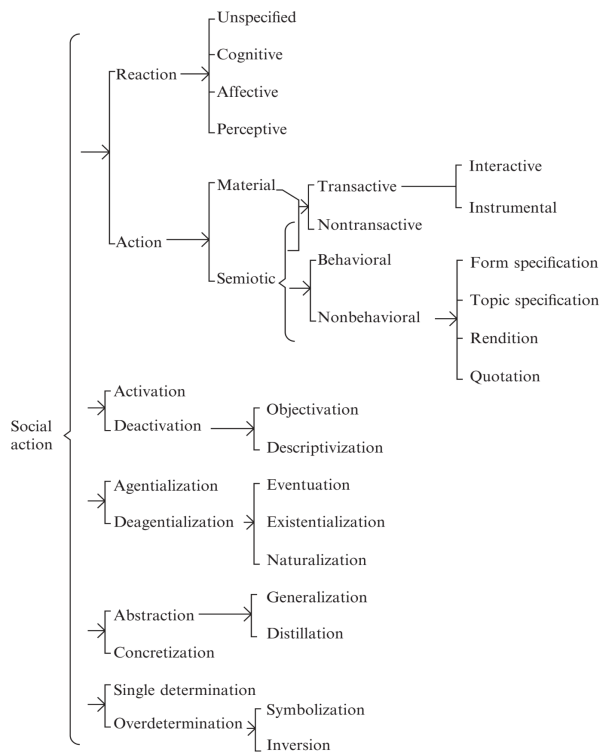


TABLE 3.2. Social Action Network

*Overdetermination* is chosen as the focus of this study among the categories in Van Leeuwen's framework. This "occurs when social actors are represented as participating, at the same time, in more than one social practice"(Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 47) or can be referred to as the symbolic representation of social actors. For example, schoolteachers are compared to "professionals who offer therapy" because they may have some features comparable to a therapist. In terms of linguistics, realizing overdetermination involves analyzing the metaphor of the social actors, by which the quality of the actors or their actions are highlighted through concrete images. This category is present in both the social actor and social action framework by Van Leeuwen, although their sub-categories are different. The social actor framework consists of four sub-categories: *inversion*, *symbolization*, *connotation*, and *distillation*, while social action consists of *symbolization* and *inversion*. As my research focuses on how social actors are represented, I will not focus on classifying types of overdetermination; instead, I will analyze the participants and their actions to realize the different social practices they are connected to. This analysis involves looking at metaphor, which is discussed below.

### *Metaphorical identification procedure (MIP)*

Metaphorical identification procedure, or MIP, is within the conceptual metaphor theory, first proposed in *Metaphors We Live by* Lakoff and Johnson. This book is considered a classic in changing many linguists' viewings about language, prompting a novel strand in linguistic research (Pham, 2023). In this theory, metaphor is not simply a linguistic device in rhetoric, but it is grounded in a conceptual system that governs people's thoughts, everyday actions, and also language. What people say, do, think and act is viewed to be a matter of metaphor, and it is "pervasive in everyday life" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 3) such as in media products whose producers aim at attracting their targeted customers (Nguyen, 2023). Analyzing everyday expressions to discover metaphors and the underlying ideologies, however, is affected by researchers' intuition. This necessitates an instructional framework that guides the analysis to identify metaphorical expressions based on their discourse context and mitigates the impact of intuition. A reliable one is the MIP by Praggeljaz Group (2007), which is simple to use and flexible for adaptation. The whole procedure consists of four main stages, which are as follows (Praggeljaz Group, 2007, p. 3):

1. Read the entire text—discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text—discourse
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.  
  
(b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be
  - More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.
  - Related to bodily action.
  - More precise (as opposed to vague)

—Historically older.

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

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

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical

### *Media representation of businesswomen*

Women breaking the “glass ceiling” in business have been explored in a number of studies, among which their minorities, their achievements and talents, and work-life balance are recurring topics.

One study compares how women in top business roles across the UK and the U.S. press (Sonbol, 2014). Major themes from these articles positively represent businesswomen with highlights for their character and success, and they also report positive views and appreciation for women on boards. A high proportion of articles focus on Sheryl Sandberg, a well-known businesswoman who is the COO of Facebook. Other stereotyped themes include work-life balance and mother roles. Lexical analysis, noticeably, yields some negative representations, sketching businesswomen's vulnerability as victims in their executive roles and mentioning their mother roles. Another content analysis of four business magazines, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, and *Entrepreneur*, discovered three main frames associated with businesswomen: their minor number at the senior level, their benefit to the organization, and the effects of work-life balance (Cooper, 2019). Media's gender-biased content highlighting the absence of male characteristics and mentioning being a widow is also found in another comparative study featuring Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, and Mary Barra, CEO of General Motors, which investigates articles from *The Economist* (Risbourg, 2018). In the same vein, an investigation into 308 articles over 15 years highlights the dilemma of choosing women in charge of family business (Bjursell & Bäckvall, 2011). Their depiction is positive in the mother role but arguable in the business executive role, suggesting a balance that ensures the business role does not overshadow the mother role. With regards to studies employing the social actor framework (Van Leeuwen, 2008), another work probes into the *Women Entrepreneur* section in the magazine *Entrepreneur* (Kropsu, 2019). The study concludes that the articles cast businesswomen as “passive, emotional, and insecure” (Kropsu, 2019, p. ii), and also include content related to gender disparities and questioning the feasibility of career-family balance. On a larger scale, the social actor framework was adopted to investigate women in *Forbes*, *Fortune*, and *Bloomberg BusinessWeek* between 2015 and 2017 (Power et al., 2019). The results indicate a favorable portrayal that foregrounds the businesswomen's jobs and professional achievements over their personal lives. While no work-life balance is found as opposed to the other research, this study nevertheless shows some under-representation in media coverage because women are less mentioned than male colleagues in business contexts.

## Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey was seeking to answer the following research questions:

1. What are metaphorical expressions used to represent businesswomen in British news articles?
2. What different social practices are associated with the businesswomen reflected through those metaphorical expressions?

## Methods

### Design of the Study

This study mainly employed qualitative methods, although corpus analysis methods were applied to the dataset. The goal was to extract concordances from keyword queries with the aid of the corpus analysis software *Antconc*. Qualitative discourse analysis was employed by adapting the metaphor identification procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) combined with category *overdetermination* in the social actor framework (Van Leeuwen, 2008).

### Data collection & analysis

Articles from *The Guardian* were selected because it is a famous press in the United Kingdom with high circulation. The collection of these articles was initially completed through website crawling, which enables the retrieval of the article text as well as their associated meta-data, such as URL, author, text, and title. To perform this, data engineers or coders use algorithms to crawl articles from their websites and then create a dataset that may be shared for research purposes and other purposes. In my study, I used the dataset named RealNews, which comprises articles collected from the Common Crawl web archive (Zellers et al., 2019). I also asked for help from a data engineer to extract and categorize the newspapers into sub-folders.

In the next step, 130 articles under the category "Business" in *The Guardian* in 2017 and 2018 were selected and processed by the software *Antconc*. This software was used to yield concordances of keywords that show the different roles of businesswomen at executive levels. The span of the queried keywords was 50 words to the left and 50 words to the right. After the first query, each concordance was manually checked to remove duplications or irrelevant content, subsequently resulting in 57 relevant articles.

From these articles, concordances of keywords related to businesswomen's roles were read thoroughly. They are first analyzed by adapting MIP, in which I focused more on words that show some constraints in meaning. Also, some lexical units comprising two words were paid attention to because the metaphorical meaning would be more complete if the whole phrase were investigated. Then, metaphorical expressions were grouped by topics. Then, these topics are further scrutinized to yield social practices in which businesswomen were represented, following the *overdetermination* category in van Leeuwen's social actor framework. Merriam-Webster and Oxford Learner's dictionaries are used to consult the word's different meanings and determine whether the lexical unit is metaphorical.

## Results/Findings and discussion

*Research question 1: What are metaphorical expressions used to represent businesswomen on the British news articles?*

The table below shows some calculations of metaphorical expressions obtained from the dataset. It is striking that there were only 36 expressions among 129 concordances of different keywords, accounting for approximately 27.9%. Some concordances that do not yield any metaphorical expressions are those of the keywords *manager*, *founder*, and *entrepreneur*. While the highest number of expressions are found in concordances of *executive*, at 22 (equivalent to roughly 61% for N=36), those of the others are marginally from 1 to 5 expressions. The number of concordances for *the executive* was the highest, which appears to be positively proportionate with the figure of its metaphorical expressions, but the same is not applied to the other keywords. A snapshot of these results is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1.

Number of metaphorical expressions

Queried keywords	First query	Second query (duplications & irrelevance filtered)	Number of metaphorical expressions
boss	27	6	2
CEO	23	10	4
entrepreneur	7	1	0
leader	17	5	2
director	68	26	5
founder	23	3	0
manager	22	5	0
the head	14	5	1
executive	209	68	22
<b>TOTAL (N=)</b>	410 (130 articles)	129 (57 articles)	36

Metaphorical expressions taken from the dataset are grouped under particular categories corresponding to their topic, in which expressions related to the nature of executive position are dominant. Table 1 below presents the frequency calculations of the categories, with the most frequent metaphor being about the executive position, at 61.1%. This is followed by metaphor about business management and gender-related issues, at 16.7% and 13.9%, respectively. The proportion of metaphors about career/career progression is 8.3%, which is also the lowest in the table.

Table 2.

## Topics of metaphorical expressions

Topics	Frequency	%
Executive position	22	61.1
Business management	6	16.7
Gender-related issues	5	13.9
Career/Career progression	3	8.3
<b>TOTAL (N=)</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

## Topic 1: EXECUTIVE POSITION (Table 3)

In this topic, EXECUTIVE POSITION IS A HIGHER LOCATION is noticeably represented by more metaphorical expressions than any others. This is realized through different phases of the prepositions “up” when mentioning promotion and “down” for resignation. The higher location is mapped onto, the greater responsibility and authority that a person in an executive position takes. This is further realized through some concepts denoting physical, measurable distance of height such as "scale," "rank," "scale," or through "mountain" and "ascent."

Besides, the metaphor EXECUTIVE POSITION IS A CLOSED SPACE is represented through prepositions “into” and “out of” normally associated with movement into a closed space. This is also realized through the use of “door” which was used twice in the dataset, and “open” referring to the status of a space. A space is often empty and available until it is filled with people or objects, but it can be confined to a particular size when it is surrounded by walls, at which point people or objects can only enter the space when there is an entrance open and the space is still enough. This is mapping to executive positions for women, likening their lack of promotion to higher roles in their organization to being discouraged from entering a closed space. When more opportunities are given to them, it is similar to the space’s door being opened, and the wider it is, the more opportunities women can take to fill in executive positions.

It is also notable that the metaphor CAREER PROGRESSION IS A CONSTRUCTION is represented by the word “pipeline” appearing three times from the investigated dataset. The physical “pipeline” allows the flow of water or liquid for an area to be mapped onto people in executive positions. The physical pipeline is an underground construction to ensure water provision, which is likened to the system of talents holding significant executive roles to ensure the operation of a business.

Finally, the metaphor EXECUTIVE POSITION IS NOBLE is realized through the use of “patrician” when referring to people of high social ranks, such as aristocrats. These people are considered the highest class in society, possessing some superior qualities and authority. These characteristics are mapped onto people holding executive positions who also possess working skills far better than the other employees and are given some power to manage and assign tasks to their lower levels.



Table 3.

## Metaphor about EXECUTIVE POSITION

Mapping	Metaphorical lexical unit	N	Example
EXECUTIVE POSITION IS A HIGHER LOCATION	Step down	4	Inga Beale, the first female chief executive of Lloyds of London, is to <b>step down</b> as the head of the insurance market next year.
	Going up ladder	1 1	It gets harder for everyone <b>going up the ladder</b> – men and women.
	Come up ranks	1 1	...too few women were <b>coming up through the ranks</b> into senior...
	Move up scale	1 1	What I've been hearing over and over again from women is the difficulty there seems to be in being able to <b>move up the scale</b> , in an area that suits you.
	Mountain ascent	1 1	It's a very difficult <b>ascent</b> of the patrician <b>mountain</b> , and corporations should be grooming their next tier of executives to include women.
EXECUTIVE POSITION IS A CLOSED SPACE	Step into	1	If they want to <b>step into</b> the business executive side or arenas that are not perceived as traditional roles for women, ...
	Move into	1	...so that at least one woman has a chance to <b>move into</b> that senior executive role.
	Door Wide open	2 1	Rebecca Allen, the managing director of Decca records, said: "I honestly believe that the <b>door</b> is <b>wide open</b> to women. Morrison followed a number of other high-profile women <b>out of the door</b>
EXECUTIVE POSITION IS A CONSTRUCTION	pipeline	3	Putting token women on their boards or photographs on their careers website won't make a difference to the executive <b>pipeline</b> .
EXECUTIVE POSITION IS NOBLE	patrician	1	It's a very difficult ascent of the <b>patrician</b> mountain,...

## Topic 2: BUSINESS/BUSINESSWOMEN (Table 4)

BUSINESS refers to the buying and selling activity of an enterprise, and the metaphor BUSINESS IS A BUILDING is depicted through the use of "barriers," "rising," and "pinnacles." Barriers are often physical obstacles that hinder people's movement or passage, rising refers to upward movement, while pinnacle denotes a pointed tower on top of a building. These meanings are likened to challenges in business and how the businesswoman overcomes those challenges to improve the business activity and maintain its growth until it reaches the highest level of achievement.

As for BUSINESSWOMAN, the first metaphor, BUSINESSWOMEN IS A VEHICLE

CONTROLLER, is depicted through the use of "steer" and "helm". "Steer" refers to the action of controlling a vehicle such as a ship or an automobile, while "helm" represents the wheel to control a ship's rudder. These two literal meanings are mapped onto the way a businesswoman runs the business. Besides, the metaphor BUSINESSWOMAN IS A FIGHTER is depicted by the word "grapple". The literal meaning of this word is to hold someone while fighting with them to win the fight, which is mapped onto the way the businesswoman struggles to solve the issue of attracting more women to work in the field.

Table 4.

## Metaphor about BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Mapping	Metaphorical lexical unit	N	Example
BUSINESS IS A BUILDING	pinnacle rising barriers	1 1 1	Still, her plan to turn around a difficult year for Facebook by hiring, er, the former deputy prime minister Sir Nick Clegg did at least show there are no insurmountable <b>barriers</b> to <b>rising</b> to the <b>pinnacle</b> of business.
MANAGING BUSINESS IS CONTROLLING A VEHICLE.	steer	1	Nooyi helped <b>steer</b> PepsiCo away from a dependence from sugary soft drinks and snacks such as Doritos and toward healthier but less profitable baked chips and water brands like Lifewtr and Bubly.
	helm	1	Moya Greene, one of the FTSE 100s few female bosses, is to step down from the <b>helm</b> of Royal Mail.
MANAGING BUSINESS IS FIGHTING.	grapple	1	The head of the UK's largest power station is <b>grappling</b> with the question of how to attract more women into the energy sector.

## Topic 3: GENDER-RELATED ISSUES (Table 5)

Metaphors about GENDER-RELATED ISSUES concern GENDER EQUALITY and GENDER DISCRIMINATION. The verb "boost", whose basic meaning is used to describe the action of increasing physical objects in quantity, is mapped onto efforts to improve gender equality in business executive positions. As for gender discrimination, the word "pervasive" predicates the argument "sexism" – or gender discrimination. This adjective is associated with entities that can exist and spread, which in this dataset depicts how common gender discrimination is in the financial sector. The most interesting comparison likens gender discrimination to "glass ceiling". This concept accentuates the invisible but confining nature of gender discrimination, which prevents women from being promoted to higher levels, hardly offering them opportunities to advance their positions, which is similar to being separated from the higher levels as a "ceiling." Still, this concept implies this sexism can be stopped as the glass material can be broken, or be "cracked".

Table 5.

## Metaphor about GENDER-RELATED ISSUES

Mapping	Metaphorical lexical unit	N	Example
GENDER EQUALITY IS AN OBJECT	boost	1	Gadhia, who designed the 10-point charter to <b>boost</b> gender equality in the financial sector, did not name the two banks but told MPs on the Treasury select committee...
GENDER DISCRIMINATION IS A SPREADING ENTITY	pervasive	1	sexism in financial sector is ' <b>pervasive</b> '
GENDER DISCRIMINATION IS A SURFACE	Glass ceiling crack	2 1	Stacey Cunninghams appointment as NYSE president raises hopes that the <b>glass ceiling</b> has finally <b>cracked</b> on Wall Street

## Topic 4: CAREER/CAREER PROGRESSION (Table 6)

CAREER PROGRESSION is represented by RACE, JOURNEY, and CONSTRUCTION. As for CAREER PROGRESSION IS A RACE, the competition between different competitors denoted by the words "rival" and "race" is mapped onto rivalry between female and male candidates in the world of work. The one winning the race is the one who possesses outstanding working skills to be selected for taking executive roles. CAREER PROGRESSION IS A JOURNEY, on the other hand, is represented through the use of "pathway". "Pathway," in its literal sense, describes the track for moving toward a physical destination. This is mapped onto people's career advancement, which also requires route planning to reach the destination of a particular higher position in their workplace or field. Finally, CAREER IS A VEHICLE is depicted by the use of "navigate," whose literal meaning denotes tracking the position to identify the direction of vehicle movements, such as ships or boats. This is mapped onto the way a famous businesswoman – Dynan – helps young people identify the direction for their careers.

Table 6.

## Metaphor about CAREER/CAREER PROGRESSION

Mapping	Metaphorical lexical unit	N	Example
CAREER PROGRESSION IS A RACE	Rival race	1 1	ITV is closing in on naming Carolyn McCall as its new chief executive after it emerged that the man many considered her main <b>rival</b> is out of the <b>race</b> .
CAREER PROGRESSION IS A JOURNEY	pathway	1	If they want to step into the business executive side or arenas that are not perceived as traditional roles for women, that's where the difficulty comes about, that <b>pathway</b> is not open to them
CAREER IS A SHIP	navigate	1	Dynan, too, has found herself on the other end of the equation – being a role model for younger female colleagues, helping them figure out their career goals and <b>navigate</b> their field.

*Research question 2: What different social practices are associated with the businesswomen reflected through those metaphorical expressions?*

The metaphorical expressions as obtained and presented in the outcomes for research question 1 also reflected the businesswomen participating in different social practices besides their usual business ones. These social practices portray businesswomen with different attributes that are demonstrated in their business practices and metaphorical practices.

The first social practice is CLIMBING, which is realized through the metaphor EXECUTIVE POSITION IS HIGHER LOCATION with the highest number of eight metaphorical lexical units. To get to a higher location, a person may adopt different way besides climbing such as jumping or flying, but the sense of climbing seems to be clearer with the use of some words such as “ladder”, “ranks”, “scale”, “mountain” and “ascent”. The businesswoman aiming for advancement to executive position is portrayed as a climber getting to a higher place on a ladder or the mountain, from which qualities of a climber such as endurance, patience, and strength are represented.

The second social practice is MARITIME. This is realized through metaphors CAREER IS A SHIP and BUSINESSWOMAN IS A VEHICLE CONTROLLER. Three lexical units which are “navigate”, “steer”, and “helm” help represent the roles of businesswomen as those working in maritime. Specifically, praised as the person helping other young females identify the direction for their career, the businesswoman Danya is depicted as the navigator helping these females “navigate their field”, in which sense the career is also perceived as the sea with indefinite horizon and high difficulty in deciding the right direction. Also, when the businesswomen in the article are described in terms of how they run the business, “steer” and “helm” are used to portray them as the captain steering and controlling the ship’s rudder for moving in a particular

direction. This also entails perceiving the business as the ship and the market with jitters and unexpected changes as the sea. This social practice seems to accentuate the businesswomen's qualities as those of sea captains who are often viewed to be stable, confident, brave, and adept at controlling skills.

The third social practice is RACING, which is represented by the metaphor CAREER PROGRESSION IS A RACE using two metaphorical lexical units "rival" and "race". In a race, the winner tries to move faster than the others to finish the track within the shortest time and stand on the highest podium to receive the trophy. The businesswomen's rivalry with their male colleagues also requires them to express working skills superior to the male rivals to take the executive position, which is higher than that of other non-executive employees in their workplace. In this portrayal, businesswoman's speed, excellent working skills and competitiveness are highlighted.

The fourth social practice is FIGHTING. This is realized through the metaphor BUSINESSWOMAN IS A FIGHTER, represented through the word "grapple with". The action of grappling denotes a boxer or wrestler trying to seize and knock out their opponents in a fight, which depicts the businesswoman as a fighter dealing with an issue in their executive role. Following this understanding, an issue in business is perceived as the opponent, while taking the executive role is perceived as stepping into the ring. In this social practice, the highlighted qualities of the businesswoman could be toughness, strength and problem-solving skills.

## Discussion

The findings reinforce one major theme of previous studies related to businesswomen which is their achievements and talents. This theme is supported by the representation of businesswomen's favorable qualities in holding executive positions, which can be interpreted from different social practices that they are involved in. Some noticeable and recurring qualities are working skills (in RACING, MARITIME, and FIGHTING), or endurance (in CLIMBING). This positive portrayal aligns with businesswomen's character and success, which were highlighted in the media in the previous work (Power et al., 2019; Sonbol, 2014). Considering the business context in the UK, this appreciation supports the claim that the UK is highly appreciated for their female entrepreneurship (Burt, 2015). This entrepreneurship is illustrated by an increase in female representation in FTSE 100 Boards during five years 2014-2018 thanks to UK government's attempts to support women with their business (Women's Business Council (WBC): Five Years on Report, 2018). Besides, semantic mapping of EXECUTIVE POSITION, GENDER-RELATED ISSUES, and CAREER PROGRESSION highlight the difficulties of businesswomen taking or aiming for executive roles, which are also identical to their minority of senior level portrayed by the media as mentioned in Cooper's (2019). This reflects that fact that, despite the UK government's efforts, the lack of gender diversity is existent in UK boardrooms possibly because women "typically have higher risk-awareness" compared to men and "less likely to believe they possess entrepreneurial skills" (Rose, 2018, p. 10).

The findings, however, challenge the results of some previous research. First, there is no

portrayal of businesswomen in terms of work-life balance although this topic is relatively common in findings of some previous research (Bjursell & Bäckvall, 2011; Cooper, 2019; Kropsu, 2019; Risbourg, 2018). Second, different social practices that are found from the dataset also suggest different qualities of women in executive roles, one of which lean towards male-stereotyped attribute which is strength (in CLIMBING and FIGHTING). This differs from Risbourg (2018), who found that media depicted businesswomen as lacking male characteristics. This highlight of male-stereotyped strength may be an attempt to prove that businesswomen possess entrepreneurial skills as good as their male colleagues to work at executive levels, but it may also be an indicator for the UK business context in reality where businesswomen need to make substantial efforts. This portrayal is possibly a call for more government support for the businesswomen, which has also been present in an official report by Burt MP, Government Ambassador for Women in Enterprise in the UK (Burt, 2015).

## Conclusion

This study yields some results of an investigation into how metaphorical lexical units in the dataset portraying conceptual metaphor related to businesswomen and sketch them as participants in different social practices. While the most frequent mapping is related to EXECUTIVE POSITION, other mappings of GENDER-RELATED ISSUES, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, CAREER/CAREER PROGRESSION are also remarkable. The outcomes also demonstrate five social practices in which possible qualities of businesswomen are portrayed, including MARITIME, FIGHTING, RACING, and CLIMBING. The representation in general shows article writers' appreciation for businesswomen's qualities.

This study is limited in terms of the number of articles investigated and the short time span. Therefore, further research may increase the number of articles, select them over a longer period, and adopt more categories of van Leeuwen's social actor framework for analysis to hopefully sketch a more comprehensive media of businesswomen and other subjects significant to the research in the field of CDA.

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### **Biodata**

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