

“We provide the cash, you rise to the challenge”:  
Economic concepts as political actors in Labour prime ministers’  
Leader’s speeches from 1946 to 2009

Tiia Kokko  
Pro Gradu Thesis  
English Philology  
Faculty of Humanities  
University of Oulu  
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## Table of Contents

1 Introduction.....	1
2 Research material.....	4
2.1. Brief history of the British Labour Party.....	4
2.2. Labour prime ministers.....	7
3 Theoretical framework & methodology.....	9
3.1. Method of study.....	12
4 Economic concepts as grammatical and metaphorical elements .....	16
4.1. Positioning an economic concept .....	17
4.2. Economic concepts in figures.....	19
5 Economic concepts as political actors .....	28
5.1. Administration of economic issues .....	28
5.2. Humanisation of economic issues .....	36
5.3. Commercialisation of the Labour leaders' political language.....	39
5.4. Political context and conceptual change.....	50
6 Conclusion .....	60
References.....	63

## Appendices

## 1 Introduction

Today, politics can be understood in two ways. At first, politics can be understood through sectors, which means that politics is regarded as forming an individual sector of action, separate from other sectors such as sports, religion, family, media, or economy. This is reflected in everyday speech and sayings, such as in the phrase “be in politics”; politics is a sector to which people from other sectors can enter. Furthermore, politics affects other sectors, that is to say, political decisions, or policies, are executed in other sectors; for example, taxation is executed in workplaces; laws on education are executed in schools and universities; or a Marriage Act is executed in families. Similarly, politics can be divided into separate executive bodies, such as ministries of foreign affairs, culture, or finance. According to this perception of politics, all sectors would seem to remain separate from one another, each of them pursuing their own task in society. However, it is not often that this vision holds true. The interests of different individuals cannot be distinctly restricted to particular sectors; they may overlap, or contradict each other. In addition, understanding politics only as a set of acts carried out by official politicians is not worthwhile. "All people are political thinkers", as Heywood (2012) phrases it. Yet not everybody acknowledges this feature in themselves.

The understanding of politics should be extended from a narrow idea of sectorial actions to a broader perception of power relations. In the broadest sense possible, wherever power relations between two or more agents can be observed, there is also politics involved, and vice versa; whenever political agents encounter each other, power relations are necessarily involved. If anything, politics should be understood through power relations rather than individual sectors. Developing a more profound understanding of the complex structures of power within society is a step towards emancipation of narrow mind-sets, to quote Fairclough (1994). Observing fundamental and often hidden power relations instead of, or better yet, in conjunction with apparent political actions is both intriguing and useful. The focus of attention is given not to the interplay between separate sectors but to the power relations intertwined with social interaction in all areas of life. In short, politics is everywhere.

It is rather rare that an individual actively aspires to observe and reveal existing power relations. Yet power relations occupy people’s daily lives without them taking much notice of it, or questioning the existence of these relations. A parent uses power over a child; the teacher uses

power over pupils; a guard uses power over prisoners, and so forth. These are examples of established hierarchical situations where the both parties generally are executing their roles in which they have been internalised in.

Power relations are communicative structures created and maintained by human beings. Their existence requires communication and social intercourse; completely separate from other people, a person cannot influence others. Power relations exist in social institutions, such as workplaces or administrative organisations, as well as in relationships and families. Power relations are an inextricable part of human life and social intercourse, and they cannot and should not be removed. These relations not only dominate but also enable social organisation. However, acknowledging the existence of power relations does not necessarily mean that they should be taken for granted, or accepted as they stand. Power relations should rather be critically observed, and actively questioned. A critical observer could be thought as a recalcitrant teenager whereas power relations represent the old-fashioned parents whose established views should be questioned in order to broaden one's own perception of reality.

Power is often expressed by not what is said but rather by what is left unsaid. Orders and rules are distinct forms of power exercise; the person giving an order is exercising power over the person at whom the order is directed. In some cases, this kind of power exercise is structured within a systematic hierarchy; the army and the bureaucratic machinery in a state provide examples of extending the ability to exercise power increasingly as the career advances. Advancement is marked by a greater power over subordinates in the hierarchical system.

The exercise of power is generally more influential and serves the furthering of an individual's ends when power relations remain hidden, when they are not noticed. The objects of power exercise therefore do not even notice that they are put to this position. Foucault (2014) has studied this phenomenon by using schools and prisons as examples of power and hierarchies; these two institutions seem to function according to very similar principles (pp. 213-221). In both cases, there is limited space with usually one authority who is instinctively obeyed by others. In a classroom, the exercise of power is often fulfilled so well that I as a student of English philology usually stay silent and refrain from intentionally distracting the lecturer; rather than a deliberate choice, this type of behaviour is instinctive. Power structures are fed to people from their childhood by various institutions in society, such as family or school. The adoption of power structures can be regarded as part of socialisation and growing up to become a member of society.

Hague *et al.* (1998) have suggested that apart from the exercise of power over individuals, politics can be understood as reconciliation of differences through discussion and persuasion (pp. 3-4). Political activity cannot exist without the use of language. Politics is therefore ineradicably linked with communication and language, which makes it a boundless field for linguistic study. The aim of this study is to raise critical awareness of language used by political leaders. The *use* of language in itself implies awareness of power intertwined with language; that is, political actors and speakers acknowledge the existence of power related to language, and the importance of the language they use. This study attempts to increase understanding of the language's contribution to certain individuals' political domination over others. Critical awareness of the multiple dimensions of political language, and the exercise of power related to the use of language is a relevant area of knowledge for anyone engaging within democracy.

## 2 Research material

The material for this study has been gathered from an online archive of British political speeches created as a result of the research project 'How the Leader Speaks' led by Alan Finlayson and Judi Atkins from the University of Wales.<sup>1</sup> The research material consists of a range of Leader's Speeches given annually in party conferences by the party leader to the members and supporters of the party. As a result, a total of 30 speeches are examined in order to locate and study the concepts of economy appearing in them. Leader's speeches from the first post-war Labour prime minister in 1946 to the latest Labour prime minister in 2009 are included in the data. Annual speeches are included in the research material according to the following criteria: the speechmaker must simultaneously be the leader of his or her party, and the prime minister of Britain. This means that Labour speeches held during the time periods of 1952–1963 and 1979–1996 are excluded from the research material.

Labour leader's speeches thus form the data for this paper. Leaders of parties must convince their own people, the supporters of their own party, before gaining major political power as leaders of the whole country. This paper will not focus on prime ministers' attempts to affect all voters in Britain. Writing this in autumn 2014, 69 years has passed since the end of the Second World War in 1945. In total, during nearly seven decades, Labour has governed the country for 30 years in total, whereas the Conservatives have been in rule for 38 years. The history of the Labour Party and Labour party leaders are discussed in the following two sections.

### 2.1. Brief history of the British Labour Party

The roots of the British Labour Party are in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which was largely characterised by rapid industrialisation, and reforms in the governing bodies of European countries. Developing industry created a massive working class in the industrial Europe where Britain soon gained the leading position due to the rapid harnessing of industrial innovations to productive use. The industrial workforce soon began to feel a need to organise themselves in order to improve their

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/about.htm>

working and living conditions; this need prefaced the birth of socialism, an ideology aiming essentially at social equality in all levels of society. At the same time, the number of trade unions grew, and early parliamentary party activity was formed, which marked the establishment of the first labour representative organisations, as well as political parties relying on labour support. Founded 1900 in Britain, the Labour Representation Committee, later known as the Labour Party, was one of the first European parties founded by industrial workforce. Today it is one of the most long-standing parties in Europe.

By mid-nineteenth century, Britain had attained the position of a leading industrial country in Europe. According to MacKenzie (1967) the foundations of modern industry were firmly laid in the country whereas in the continental Europe, the industry and the labour movement had only recently began to develop. By that time, the proletariat had already established itself in Britain. The roots of British socialism can be traced back to early nineteenth century when several radical writers started to take a stand on the poor conditions amidst working class; this took place decades before the well-known German socialist theories were published. These writers expressed their dislike of exploitation, life of ignorance, and ill-health. Mackenzie (1967) argues that perhaps the most influential among the radical British writers was Robert Owen who, already at the beginning of the nineteenth century, argued that working class people were entitled to education, wages and proper working conditions, and that the workers should unite and work together in order to attain mutual interests and to eliminate private ownership. Owen's ideas spread to trade unions around Britain. In fact, the concept of socialism was first introduced in Owen's writings. (pp. 30-34).

In Britain, the strengthening of the trade unions' position instead of labour movements demanding social reform was a key turn which influenced a different kind of development of socialism in comparison to the continental Europe. According to MacKenzie (1967), trade unionism dominated the labour movement in Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century (p. 82). At the time, trade unions did not seek rebellious or radical change; they rather believed in conflict minimisation, negotiation, regulation of the supply of workforce, and centralised authority (pp. 82-83). The leaders, as well as the rank and file members of the trade unions advocated Liberal values, instead of classical Marxism which influenced many of the continental countries.

This distinguished form of socialism in Britain is visible in the formation of the British Labour Party as well as in the policies the party pursued in its early years. From start, the form adopted by the labour movement was more reminiscent to moderate social democracy, rather than marxist

socialism. According to Heywood (2012), in the mid-twentieth century, socialist parties became representatives of a political "stance" instead of a political ideology (p. 140). This stance is known as social democracy which primarily aimed at a balance between the market economy and state intervention. According to Heywood (2012), originally the term social democracy was used to distinguish political democracy and radical collectivisation of productive wealth; the first Marxist parties founded in the end of the nineteenth century adopted the term and began to call themselves 'social democrats' (pp. 139-140). In the beginning of the twentieth century, many of those parties supported a peaceful transition to socialism, which marked the creation of democratic socialism. Democratic socialism was then understood as an opposite to radical, revolutionary socialism which was supported by the Russian Bolsheviks, for instance.

Since the establishment of the British Labour Party, the party has been leaning more towards liberal thinking, instead of anti-capitalist socialist ideology. The party adopted social democratic stance decades before the final shift from socialism to social democracy took place in Europe. Until modern day, social democrats have supported "liberal-democratic principles" and regarded capitalism as "the only reliable means of generating wealth", even though capitalism is still associated with structural poverty and inequality in societies (p. 140). In social democracy, state intervention is a means of amending the structural flaws of capitalism, which means that the state is capable of regulating both social and economic life. However, social democrats renounce the socialist ideas of common ownership and community, as well as general opposition towards market economy and its moral defects. In short, social democrats believe that a nation-state has to cope with the effects of capitalism instead of drastically reforming the system.

It should be acknowledged that party politics have faced a change as the structure of society has changed over the past century. Today, voters cannot be categorised in the same way as in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when party politics were established in large parts of Europe. The British Labour Party has continued to exist since the rise and evolving of party politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, despite the fact that their voters cannot be categorised in the same way as over a century ago, or not even in the post-war period seven decades ago. Today, the socio-economic background of British voters is rather different to what it was earlier. In spite of fundamental changes in the British society and in the voters' socio-economic positions, the Labour Party has managed to appeal to the voters until present day. Therefore, it is sensible to study if the traditional political ideology is still visible in the language used by the party leaders, or whether ideology has been replaced by other principles guiding the party's policies. Today, over a hundred years later, the British Labour Party operates in



a democratic constitutional monarchy which is still based on capitalist market economy. In the official website, the party defines itself as a “democratic, socialist party”<sup>2</sup>; the comma between the two adjectives stresses the fact that the British Labour Party today regards itself both democratic and, intriguingly, socialist. Currently, the Labour Party is the opposition party while Britain is ruled by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government. The next parliamentary election will take place in 2015.

## 2.2. Labour prime ministers

Since the end of the Second World War, there have been altogether five Labour prime ministers in Britain. The first of them was Clement Attlee (1883 - 1967) who was the leader of the Labour Party from 1935 to 1955, and served Britain from 1945 to 1951 as the first prime minister in the post-war country. His term of office was marked by an urgent need to reconstruct the country which had been in war for five years. Various reforms in society and economy were executed during his term. Attlee is remembered for improving social services and the public sector in Britain by creating the National Health Service and by nationalising major utilities and large parts of industry. In fact, under Attlee’s Labour government one fifth of the British economy was nationalised.<sup>3</sup>

The second period of Labour government in post-war Britain dates back to 1964–69, Harold Wilson (1916 - 1995) being the prime minister of the country. This term was marked by a series of Sterling crises which were a result of £400 million balance of payments deficit.<sup>4</sup> In addition to dealing with the series of financial crises, Wilson is remembered for enacting social reforms tackling a variety of fields: education, health, housing, gender equality, price controls, pensions, provisions for disabled people, and child poverty.<sup>5</sup> Wilson can be regarded as an advocate of modernisation; as a prime minister he believed that the country's prosperity would only be enabled by the "white heat of the technological revolution”.<sup>6</sup> For Wilson it was necessary that Britain should join scientific and technological development in order to keep up with the economic competition abroad. Wilson’s prime ministerial term extends from the 1960s to the 1970s; he was appointed the prime minister for

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.labour.org.uk/pages/how-we-work>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/clement-attlee>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/harold-wilson>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/harold-wilson>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/science/political-science/2013/sep/19/harold-wilson-white-heat-technology-speech>

the second time in 1974. However, his term ended in resignation after only two years of governing the country.

In 1976, Wilson was succeeded by James Callaghan (1912 - 2005). During Callaghan's term of office, Britain's economy performed rather poorly, and his government struggled to reduce inflation. The winter of 1978 to 1979 became known as the Winter of Discontent due to a wave of strikes which resulted from restrictions to the public sector workers' wages.<sup>7</sup> After being severely undermined by the events of the Winter of Discontent, a motion of 'no confidence' against the Callaghan government was called by opposition Members of Parliament in March 1979.<sup>8</sup> The following general election in May 1979 was then won by the Conservative party led by Margaret Thatcher.

After losing the elections in 1979, it took nearly two decades for the Labour Party to return to power. The Conservative Party held office until 1997 when the Labour Party won the parliamentary election and Tony Blair was nominated the prime minister. Tony Blair (born 1953) is known as the longest serving Labour prime minister, holding the office for a total of ten years from 1997 to 2007. Blair resigned in 2007 after a large Labour rebellion against him due to his reluctance to criticise Israel during the Israel-Lebanon war.<sup>9</sup> Blair was succeeded by Gordon Brown (born 1951) who, during his term, was faced with a major global financial crisis which began in the United States as a result of the bankruptcy of the major financial company Lehman Brothers in September 2008.<sup>10</sup> Today, many of the European as well as the British economy are yet to recover from the recession caused by this crisis.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/james-callaghan>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/james-callaghan>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/tony-blair>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.economist.com/news/schoolsbrief/21584534-effects-financial-crisis-are-still-being-felt-five-years-article>

### 3 Theoretical framework & methodology

Multiple theories and studies on language and politics have been produced since the age of Aristotle. As for power relations, the study of language and power has appeared in linguistic and social studies fairly recently (Fairclough 1994). However, the latter forms a field of study that has been notably examined by Fairclough (1992; 1994), Chomsky (1986; 2000; 2002), and Foucault (2014). Studies on language in its social context have been made earlier in the field of linguistics and sociolinguistics. According to Fairclough (1994), these studies have often concentrated on the use of language in a particular environment; research has been done on dialects, conversation, or prestige, to name a few (pp. 1-7). However, some of these studies have been carried out without connecting the language use to complex and unequal power relations between the parties of conversation. Struggle for power through the use of language is a subject for study which has perhaps not been examined enough. More critical studies of language and the interrelated power relations is needed in order to understand how structures of power and domination are created and maintained. This study is a humble attempt to contribute to the research of the above-mentioned eminent linguists and social scientists.

In addition to the origin and use of language, Chomsky (2000) has studied the foundations of power in the society. According to Chomsky, the use of power is always closely related to ideologies and to the right of superior forces (p. 37). He bases this idea on the idea first presented by the seventeenth century social philosopher David Hume who thought that the power use must always result from the fact that the governed give their consent to be governed (p. 37). According to this view, the ability to exercise power over people is primarily based on managing opinions since numerically the governed always beat the government. This principle is true in every democracy: those who wield the power are necessarily outnumbered by those subject to that power. In a democracy, parliamentary institutions act as representatives of people from different socio-economic backgrounds. The number of the represented and the governed is always multiple to the number of people working in the governing bodies of a democracy.

Furthermore, Chomsky distinguishes political and economic arenas from each other as institutions for exercising power. According to Chomsky (2000) the political arena is constructed in a way in which the only right of the governed is to give their consent to be governed (p. 38). The only actual

contact with democracy the governed have is during the occasional selections of the representatives of real power, that is to say, the elections. Excluding these brief moments, the governed are simply passive masses who do not, even cannot, participate in political decision-making; they are set to an audience's position. This is Chomsky's vision of modern day political arena. Chomsky further argues that the majority of decisions concerning the governing of the society are made not in the political arena but in the economic arena, from which the masses, the voters, are completely excluded (p. 38). This is a relatively bleak notion: on the political arena the people are but bystanders, and on the actual arena of decision-making they are completely non-existent (pp. 38-39). This is Chomsky's conception of prevailing democracy. Chomsky's ideas form an excellent starting point for critical analysis of language. Despite the fact that critical study may not provide means of direct participation in decision-making in either of the arenas, at least it can deepen the understanding of power structures in government-level and in decision-making bodies in a democracy. A critical audience is able to observe the arenas from which they are excluded.

Aristotle's theories on speech have, up to modern day, formed the framework for rhetorical analysis of several linguists, such as Charteris-Black (2005), Chilton (2004), and Beard (2000). Charteris-Black (2005) argues that

charismatic leadership is communicated through linguistic behavior and it is by critical analysis of language that we are able to identify underlying ideologies and expose the nature of value systems on which they are based. (p. 198)

He suggests that ideologies that influence the fundamental structures and power relations in a society are not necessarily easily observable. These ideologies are hidden within the complex structures of language usage; it is only through a critical examination of language that their existence becomes visible. There is no agreed definition of the term ideology. According to Heywood (2012), depending on the context, an ideology can mean a set of political, or religious ideas, or it can be used as a reference to world views (pp. 4-5).

The definition given to the connection between language and ideologies by Charteris-Black (2005) applies to the study of Labour leader's speeches, too. In fact, it could be even more fruitful to observe power exercise over an audience who already support their leader speaking to them. The speaker has gained confidence from his audience. His vision is tentatively supported, which means that it is likely not to receive much criticism from the audience. The gained confidence among audience may increase the intensity of exercised power over them. This provides an opportunity for

the researcher to step in. An outsider can critically study the underlying arguments that are presented to the audience. Furthermore, an outsider can study whether the content of a particular speech is conformed to arguments presented by other speakers. Both aspects are connected to the essential question: does the speaker exercise power over his audience, and if so, how?

According to Charteris-Black (2005), the use of a combination of rhetorical strategies in political speech helps creating a more convincing and persuasive message. He argues that the use of multiple rhetorical strategies creates "uncritical followers", which enables the speaker to legitimise themselves most effectively (p. 30). He continues that

-- when strategies occur in combination with each other, the audience is more likely to give itself over to the speaker because the focus of attention is on processing the message itself rather than how it is communicated. (p. 30)

He thus suggests that the audience at whom political speeches are targeted is often unconscious of the ways in which a message is delivered. Distance is needed in order to do a more accurate examination of the rhetoric and linguistic structures appearing in the speech. Often it is impossible for the audience, especially a confident audience who already supports the speaker, to distance themselves from the situation so that they could notice and critically evaluate the content of the speech. The audience is concentrated on the distinct messages, such as political measures or goals, and not on the manner the message is built up for them.

Presumably the most straightforward way to observe power exercise through language is studying imperative forms. In many cases, though, power relations often remain obscure and unnoticeable. A speaker or a writer may proficiently masquerade the exercise of power to linguistic expressions, or leave significant issues unsaid. Or, the speaker or writer may not even notice the power relations they are creating. The close intertwining of language and power exercise means that power relations are easily hidden. For a researcher, this is an excellent starting point; a researcher is able to make critical observations which require distancing oneself from the used language.

This study attempts to examine the roles given to economic concepts in the political language of the Labour leaders. This study attempts to explore to what extent abstract economic concepts are presented as passive objects of human action, on one hand, and active, independent actors on the other. This study attempts to raise a question of whether economic issues are always in the hands of their creators, or whether they are treated as if they would have a will of their own. This study

attempts to explore whether any changes can be perceived in the models of arranging economy, and whether these changes are reflected in political language. This brings us to a chicken and egg situation where it is difficult to estimate if changes in mind-sets transform political language, or if the language usage gradually transforms existing mind-sets and perceptions of necessary policies.

As this study concentrates on detecting concepts of economy in political speeches, the concept requires a further definition. Originally, the term economy was derived to English language from the Greek *oikonomia* meaning household management. In the modern time, the term can be understood in a much broader way since economy is not restricted to households, as the ancient sense of the term suggests. Nor is it restricted to workplaces, industries, or production sites, or enterprises. Economy could be rather regarded as a multilevel combination of all these aspects, influencing continuously all areas of life locally, nationally and globally. In the narrowest possible sense, economy could be essentially regarded as a system of buying and selling, acting according to the laws of supply and demand. However, economy might still be something more multidimensional; no unambiguous definition for the concepts derived from the field of economy can be given.

### 3.1. Method of study

Whenever an economic concept is discussed, it should be noted that economy as a concept is essentially abstract. Economy cannot be explored with fingers or traced to a particular location; it does not have brains, instincts or senses allowing it to think by itself, or make independent decisions in the manner human beings do. Therefore, economy is essentially an abstract, inanimate concept created and maintained by human beings. Evidently, economy and economic concepts would not exist - whether at enterprises, stock exchange, politics, in the media, or at home - without people. To some extent, this view has been challenged by, for example, market fundamentalists who support the view that economy should be left to run its own course, and that economy is capable of directing itself without human intervention. Nevertheless, as a product of human thought, economy should be considered as fully directed and controlled by human action. However, at times, economic issues seem to be treated as living creatures. Instead of seeing economy as subject to human agency, it is sometimes seen as an equal participant in interaction to humans. In spite of the

perceptions of market fundamentalists, economy lacks essential features of a rational, living being. Of course, economy can and must be regarded as an existing entity as it exists in abstract level, in people's minds, in their mutual communication and social intercourse. This, however, does not justify drawing parallels between economy and human beings.

Both Fairclough (1994) and Charteris-Black (2005) represent researchers from the field of critical language study. Fairclough (1994) has studied language and texts through a method called critical language study, CLS (pp. 36-43). The method of CLS concentrates on analysing vocabulary, grammar and textual structures, and attempts to explain findings from these three key elements by connecting them to prevailing social or political circumstances (pp. 110-112). Fairclough's critical language study (CLS) has acted as a model for analysing grammatical elements and vocabulary, whereas the critical metaphor analysis of Charteris-Black provides a framework for locating and examining metaphors in political language. This study concentrates on particular concepts of economy appearing in metaphors in Labour political speech. This study follows the paths of both Fairclough and Charteris-Black, and therefore represents a critical study of language.

On one hand, attention is paid on studying when a new economic concept is introduced in Leader's speeches; on the other hand, this paper studies when a particular concept disappears. As this paper explores political speeches, it is of interest to pay attention to the appearing of ideological concepts as well. Therefore, this paper examines references to political isms which have been relevant to British parliamentary politics since the establishment of party politics: socialism, conservatism, liberalism, capitalism or communism. As mentioned earlier, today the British Labour Party describes itself as a democratic – comma – socialist party. Therefore, it is of particular interest to follow how the concept of socialism appears in Leader's speeches from post-war Britain to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This study attempts to examine whether human-like activities and decision-making are attached to economic concepts in political speech. This is carried out by studying two aspects: the grammatical position of an economic concept in a sentence, and the appearance of economic concepts in metaphors. Therefore, concepts of economy are studied as sentence elements and metaphorical elements in political speech. Furthermore, the possible independent nature of abstract economic concepts forms a key question in this study. This study aims at exploring whether the leaders' stance on economic issues remains the same from 1946 to 2009, or whether economic issues are increasingly presented as independent actors when Leader's speeches from the 1940s and the 21<sup>st</sup>

century are compared to each other. The second aspect of the study, metaphors, are figures of speech which are known to be used in fiction and poetry where they are used to give life to inanimate and often abstract concepts. This study concentrates on exploring whether metaphors are used to animate economic concepts and thus make them seem like independent political actors. In short, this paper attempts to search cases where an economic concept is treated as an independent actor personified by the speaker through grammatical positioning, and the use of metaphors. It should be noted that interaction between the linguistic choice and the context forms an essential part of explaining the treating of economic concepts as either independent actors or objects of action. Economic concepts are thus studied with an intention to interpret the objectives of the speaker in the prevailing political context. Furthermore, in the analysis sections 4 and 5, observations and interpretations are illustrated with extracts taken from the research material.

When the grammatical position of economic concepts is discussed, the concepts are referred to by their position as sentence elements. There are altogether three sentence elements which are studied in this paper: the object position; the subject position; and the position of agent in a passive clause. When both the grammatical and metaphorical positions are further interpreted, economic concepts are referred to as independent *actors*, and passive *objects of action*. The title *actor* was originally created for the use of sociological studies where it is used for describing a variety of agents in social contexts. To avoid confusion with the grammatical positions sentence subject and agent in passive clause, *actor* is used in this study to refer to the independent status of an economic concept. The title *actor* implies active nature, and ability to independently take action. As a title it seems most suitable for the purposes of this study as this paper attempts to discover the possible treating of an economic concept as an actor amidst political actors.

The material for study is approached through a critical language analysis which combines quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. This study is critical as it attempts to cover and raise awareness of linguistic strategies and choices related to power exercise in political language. To a lesser degree, this study draws from the conventions of rhetorical analysis. As stated above, the method of study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis. All findings related to quantitative analysis are presented in figures in order to illustrate how economic concepts are treated in Leader's speeches, and how they are positioned grammatically in sentences. The figures indicate possible peaks and occasional variations in the appearance of economic concepts. For example, possible peaks and annual variation represent changes which are later on attempted to explain by connecting the findings to prevailing political circumstances.



Employment and unemployment as well as housing are regarded as concepts of a separate administrative organ of social policy, and therefore are not studied as concepts of economy. The verb 'to be' indicating merely existence or description is not taken into account when grammatical positions are detected and calculated. The verb 'to be' is understood as a descriptive verb which is too neutral for drawing conclusions of the independent nature of an economic concept. For example, the phrase "economy is strong" does not imply any action which would influence other actors in society and thus involve power relations. It is merely a descriptive sentence which does not reveal anything of the concept's active or passive role in the political language used by the speaker.

This work is not based on any conventional study of economics usually carried out by economists who are experts in their field. This study combines the knowledge from two wide fields of study, humanities and social science. It is rather an attempt to understand the effects of economy on language and the use of language.

## 4 Economic concepts as grammatical and metaphorical elements

This section discusses the variety of positions where a concept of economy can be found within Labour Leader's speeches. This has been studied by locating the grammatical position of the concept explored, and by observing the use of economic concepts in metaphors. The first section presents the ways in which economic concepts are positioned within sentences.

Quantitative findings related to the exploring of grammatical positions are introduced in figures in the second section presenting findings. It should be noted, though, that in the speeches, not all economic concepts can be strictly divided into active and passive categories because the grammatical position in a sentence in some cases remains vague. For example, a concept of economy can mark a state of things, the surroundings, or the environment in which people live. This applies whether the speaker refers to the circumstances in the whole wide world, in particular states, or in citizen's home environments. Therefore, it is not a subject, or an independent actor, nor is it an object of people's action. For instance, the sentence "I do not care what economic system we live in" by Callaghan in 1976 contains an economic concept 'economic system' which is presented plainly as an environment for other actors. The example does not include any particular grammatical function. No action by people is directed at it, and the concept itself is not performing any action.

Therefore, in addition to active and passive functions in political language, more functions for economic concepts can be found for study. In this study, their existence of this kind of position is acknowledged but not examined further. This paper attempts to study only concepts which distinctly belong to some of the three grammatical positions indicating purely either passive or active nature of a concept. In addition, this paper studies the metaphorical use of economic concepts as further sustaining their active role in Labour political speech.

However, there remains yet another key subject for study which is the use of economic concepts in a variety of metaphors. Metaphors are figures of speech, typically found in prose and poetry, which can be used to illustrate something or to make the language more eloquent. As this study examines economic concepts as independent actors, it is sensible to also examine their use in metaphors. This study examines whether economic concepts appear in metaphors, and if so, what type of disposition

they are given through these metaphors: whether they become independent political actors or perhaps even a human-like entities.

#### 4.1. Positioning an economic concept

As stated earlier, politics is essentially decision-making between varied actors with differing interests. Once decisions have been made, they are executed, or put to practice in different areas of life. Therefore it would seem natural to understand economy as a part of political decision-making; this perception would set economy under the direction of political actors. In this sense, economy would be controlled by human beings since dealing with economic matters would position economy as being dependent on human action. Therefore, economic concepts are firstly treated as objects of people's action and measures. Take the word 'inflation', for example. It is often placed in the grammatical position of an object of action in a sentence, as in Callaghan's speech dating from 1976.

Extract 1. Callaghan 1976:

The willingness of industry to invest in new plant and machinery requires, of course, that **we overcome inflation** --

In the extract, "we" referring to politicians, and other actors for example in the industry marks the sentence subject whereas "inflation" is the object of their action. It is regarded as a problem which needs to be solved, or an obstacle which needs to be abolished. In this sentence, inflation is something over which people can have power; it is an object against which political measures are taken by both politicians and voters.

Secondly, a concept of economy can be found in sentence subject's position. If the grammatical positions of the extract 1 were turned over, the economic concept would become the sentence subject. This grammatical position is marked with an action, a verb, attached to it. If the verb expresses an action which influences other political actors, the verb itself transforms the abstract concept to a more tangible, human-like actor. An extract from Wilson's speech in 1975 provides an example.

Extract 2. Wilson 1975:

It is inflation which **has stopped** us re-expanding the economy --

Here, inflation is presented as an independent actor capable of taking action towards ‘us’, that is, human beings. This would suggest that an economic concept is capable of acting the way human beings do, and use power over them. An economic concept in the position of a sentence subject could therefore be regarded as an equal political actor in relation to human beings.

A similar conclusion can be drawn in cases where an economic concept is in the position of an agent in a passive clause, for example in Callaghan’s speech from 1978.

Extract 3. Callaghan 1978:

Today's serious unemployment problems are **caused** by world recession, **by inflation** and by competition from newly developed industries.

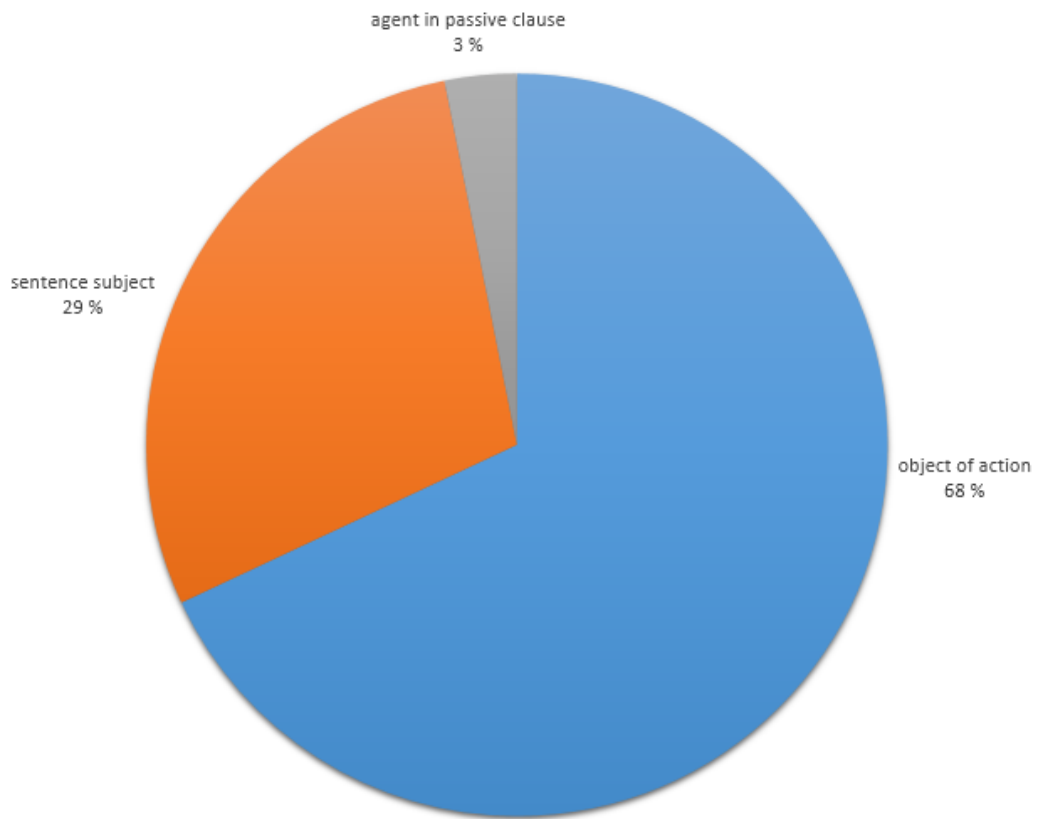
In extract 3, inflation, among world recession and competition, is mentioned in the position of an agent in a passive clause. Inflation is actively “causing serious problems”, which has severe effects on people’s working life. The economic concept of inflation can be here regarded as independent actor capable of causing something, which indicates that this economic phenomenon has power over people.

This study examines three sentence elements: the object position, the subject position, and the agent position in a passive clause. The number of economic concepts used in each of these three positions is manually calculated. These calculations are represented in figures, from which findings have been made and interpreted later. The first part of the analysis is focused on the quantitative approach to data, while the second part is focused on the qualitative approach, the interpretation and explanation of the findings. The second part of the analysis examines the use of economic concepts in metaphors more closely. In addition, the second part of the analysis also studies the use of individual concepts, their appearance, and disappearance from Labour political language. By calculating the cases and connecting them to the prevailing political contexts of their time this study aims at exposing the phenomena stemming from the use of economic concepts in political rhetoric. These phenomena are referred to as *processes*.

#### 4.2. Economic concepts in figures

In the research material, there is a total of 669 cases where an economic concept can be distinctly categorized into one of the three sentence element positions: firstly, the position of object; secondly, the position of sentence subject; and thirdly, the position of an agent in passive clause. The grammatical positions of economic concepts and the proportional division of the three sentence elements are illustrated with figures. The figures are used to depict possible changes and development in the grammatical positions of economic concepts in Labour's political language. An attempt to interpret the findings is further made in section 5, the latter part of the analysis.

Figure 1 illustrates the division of the grammatical positions of economic concepts during the whole period of time under study, from 1946 to 2009. This period of time includes the terms of office of five Labour prime ministers: Clement Attlee, Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, Tony Blair, and Gordon Brown. Figure 1 is an overview of the positions given to economic concepts in Leader's speeches.



**Figure 1** Overview of the proportional division of three grammatical positions of economic concepts during 1946-2009

Figure 1 shows that in majority of cases, an economic concept is treated as an object of human action, which means that a particular concept can be an object of political measures. To a lesser degree, in 29 per cent of cases, an economic concept is placed in the sentence subject's position, which would, to some extent, imply the independent nature of an economic concept. In only three per cent of cases, an economic concept can be found in the agent's position in a passive clause. Combined with the number of cases when sentence subject, in a little over one-third of cases an economic concept is treated as an independent actor.

It should be noted that in figures 1 and 2, the portion of agent position is illustrated separately from the sentence subjects' portion in order to clarify more accurately the exact proportional division of three different sentence elements. However, in this study, the function of both sentence elements is understood as remaining the same. The grammatical positions of both the sentence subject and the agent in passive clause are understood as means of representing an abstract economic concept as an independent actor. Both positions deliver the message of the economic concept being an independent actor with capability to either express demands or have power over human beings, and political structures.

Extract 4. Brown 2009:

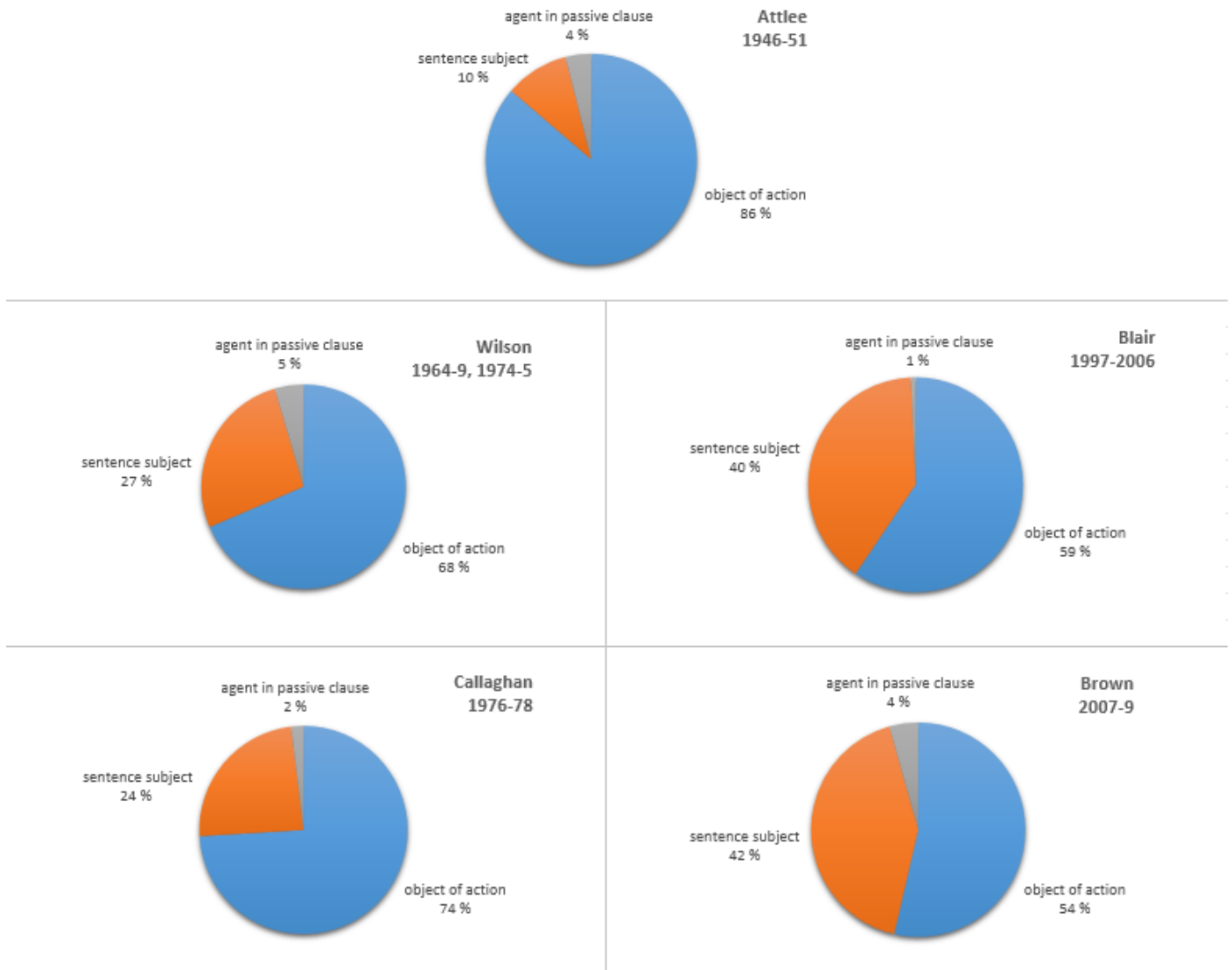
What failed was the Conservative idea that **markets always self-correct but never self-destruct.**

Extract 5. Brown 2008:

In the week the banks were collapsing the man who wants to run our economy not only said: this is not a problem **caused by the financial markets --**

The two extracts from Brown's speeches show that there is no need to make a distinction between active and passive actors in a sentence. In both cases, an economic concept is regarded as an independent actor; in extract 4, markets is seen as an actor capable of self-correction and self-destruction whereas in extract 5, markets is seen as capable of causing problems. What matters in these extracts is the fact that the original actor has been mentioned in the sentence, and that this actor seems to have independently taken action which has had notable impact on people. Therefore, an economic concept is no longer under human control but rather seems to be able to actively control and guide itself and its action, despite its abstract inanimate nature.

Figure 2 illustrates more accurately the proportional division of economic concepts as sentence elements.



**Figure 2** Proportional division of economic concepts' three grammatical positions in different terms of office



In comparison to figure 1 giving an overview of the positioning during the whole period of time, individual figures according to terms of office are rather varied. Furthermore, the overall proportional division does not remain the same when speeches of each prime minister are studied separate from each other. Towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century, major proportional changes in Labour prime ministers' terms of office can be detected in figures.

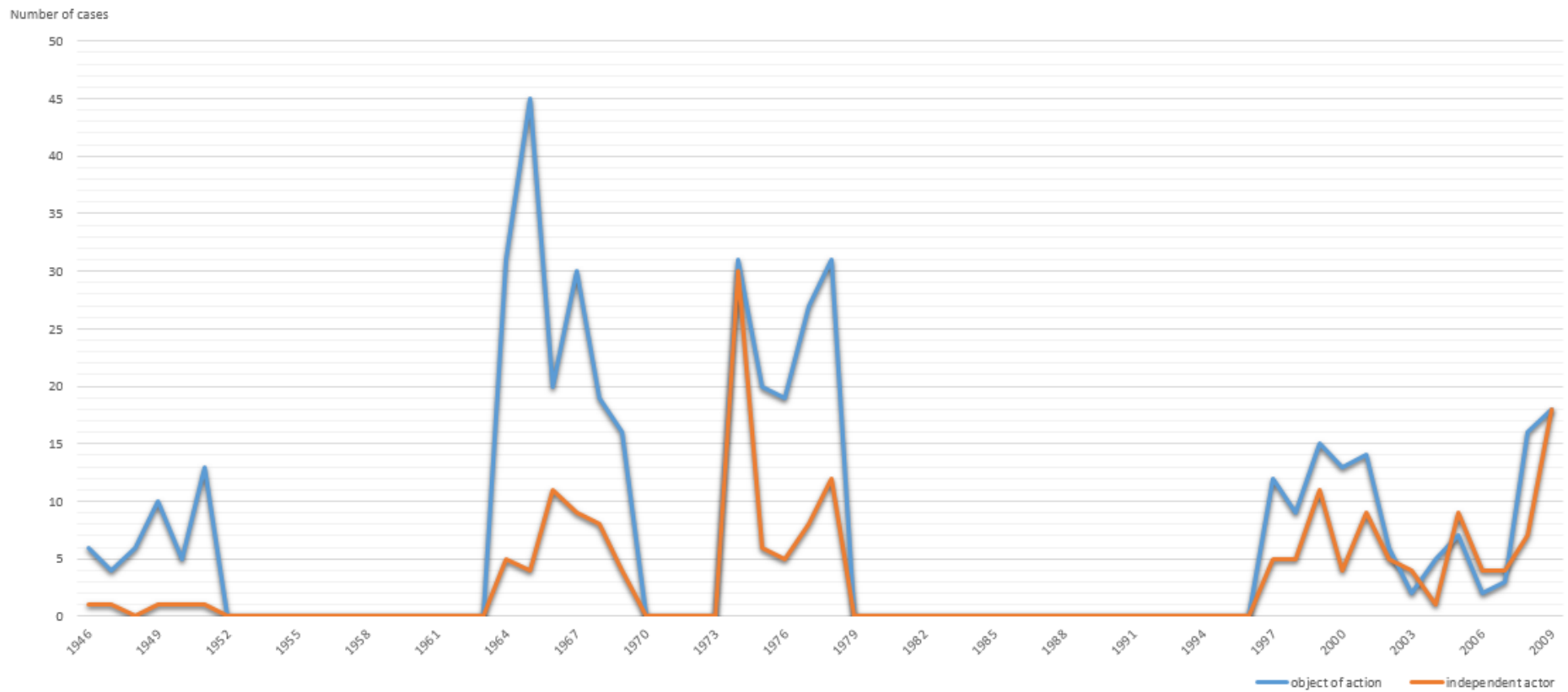
Attlee treats economic concepts as objects of action the most often in comparison to other Labour prime ministers. In Attlee's speeches, an economic concept is treated as an independent actor 14 per cent of cases. Under Wilson's term of office the next decade, an economic concept is treated as an independent actor already in one-third of cases. During Callaghan's term in the mid-1970s, a slight decrease in this trend can be perceived; Callaghan treats economic concepts as objects of action more often than Wilson.

The election of Blair's Labour government in 1997 again transforms the trend; in Blair's speeches, an economic concept is presented as an independent actor in 41 per cent of cases. This tendency continues in Brown's term. By the 21<sup>st</sup> century, nearly a half of cases present an economic concept as an independent actor. Brown treats economic issues as independent actors most often in relation to other prime ministers. In his Leader's speeches, economic concepts occur as sentence subjects in 42 per cent of the cases; combined with the proportion of their position as agents in passive, nearly half of the economic issues appearing in Brown's speeches are treated as independent actors. However, even in Brown's term, economic issues are still more often seen as objects towards which people can take measures. Primarily, economic issues remain subordinate to human action. A question remains whether this trend is a continuing or ascending. Observing the speeches in the 2010s could reveal whether the proportion of sentence subjects and agents in a passive clause at some point exceeds that of objects of action.

In comparison to Attlee, all other Labour prime ministers increasingly treat economic concepts as independent actors while the proportion of economic concepts as objects of human action decreases towards the new millennium. In language used by the New Labour, a reformed party introduced by Tony Blair, economic concepts appear in an independent actor's position more often than in the language used by Attlee, Wilson and Callaghan, the so-called Old Labour leaders. Simultaneously, the portion of cases where an economic concept is placed in the object position decreases. From Attlee's period in the 1940s to Callaghan's three-year term as prime minister, economic concepts are more often presented as objects of action than in Blair and Brown's terms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Further comparison between different Labour prime ministers can be made by exploring pairs. For example, the terms of office of Wilson and Blair were nearly equally long; Wilson served as prime minister for ten years whereas Blair's term lasted for nine years. In Wilson's speeches, an economic concept is treated as an independent actor, that is to say, positioned as either sentence subject or agent in a passive clause, in 32 per cent of cases; in Blair's speeches, the proportion is 41 per cent. This marks a tendency to understand economic issues increasingly as independent political actors among politician, voters, and other people involved in parliamentary politics. A similar comparison can be made between Callaghan and Brown, both of whom served as prime minister for three years. In Callaghan's speeches, an economic concept is treated as an independent actor in 26 per cent of cases whereas in Brown's speeches, the proportion is already 46 per cent of cases. It can be concluded that the proportion of economic concepts as either sentence subjects or agents in a passive clause has nearly doubled in Brown's term. The proportion of sentence subjects and agents in passive clauses in Brown's speeches is larger than in the speeches of Blair, his predecessor. This would indicate a trend where economic issues are increasingly understood as independent political actors with human-like characteristics. However, further conclusions could be made by studying the speeches of the Labour Party leaders in the ongoing decade.

Cases where an economic concept is positioned as one of the three grammatical elements in a sentence can be studied according to an annual division. Figure 3 illustrates the development of the use of economic concepts in Labour prime ministers' speeches. Figure 3 no longer illustrates the proportional division of grammatical positions but shows economic concepts in two roles: as independent actors, and as objects of human and political action. For this purpose, the positions of sentence subject and agent in a passive clause have been combined since they both reflect the active independent nature when an economic concept is explored.



**Figure 3 Economic concept as object of action and independent actor in Labour Leader's speeches 1946–2009**

Figure 3 illustrates the use of economic concepts as objects of action and as independent actors. In figure 3 the sentence subject position and the agent position in a passive clause have been combined. In this combination, these two grammatical positions are referred to as independent actors. The blue graph depicts passive object of human action whereas the orange graph marks an economic concept's status as an independent actor. Figure 3 examines the role given to an economic concept in Leader's speeches. An economic concept is studied either in the more active role of an independently acting element, or in the passive role of an object which is subordinate to human action. It should be noted that during the time periods of 1952–63, 1970–73, and 1979–1996, the Labour Party was the opposition party, and the Prime Minister of Britain came from the Conservative Party. This explains the gaps between graphs; Leader's Speeches dating back to those time periods are not part of the research material for this study.

Figure 3 shows that a great deal of annual variation can be found. The ascending graph depicting the economic concepts as independent actors in 2009 seems to suggest a rather linear increase; however, no conclusion can be made as the research material ends in that year. Leader's speeches from 2009 onwards should be studied for further conclusions of trends related to economic concepts. Apart from the ascending graph from 2009 onwards, no linear trends can be detected in figure 3. There is a peak in the number of objects of action in 1965; however, in the following years the number decreases drastically, and then continues to fluctuate. Another peak can be found when the number of economic concepts as independent actors is studied. In Wilson's speech from 1974, the number of independent actors and objects of action was nearly the same; there were 33 cases when an economic concept was treated as an object of action whereas in 30 cases, an economic concept was treated as an independent object (see Appendix 2).

The changes and variation in the numbers of both independent actor and objects of action are rather sharp at times. The only quite steady development can be found in the period of 1946–51; the number of economic concepts as independent actors is not drastically increased or decreased. Figure 3 does not show a distinct increasing trend in treating economic concepts as independent actors. However, figure 3 indicates a decrease in the number of objects of action. Peaks in this phenomenon occur in 1965, 1974 and 1978, that is, during the terms of Wilson and Callaghan. From 1997 onwards, the number of objects of action no longer ascends to the same level, which indicates a decrease. Economic issues are less frequently treated as objects of human action.

Figure 3 shows that economic concepts are treated more often as objects of action. This observation agrees with the findings made in examining figures 1 and 2 which as well show that in majority of cases, an economic concept remains in the object position. A peak in the position of objects of action can be perceived in 1965, a year after the beginning of the series of Sterling crises. The number of cases when an economic concept is treated as an object extensively exceeds the number of economic concepts as independent actors.

During a crisis the state's economic balance is shaken. Overcoming a crisis often requires political measures which normalise the economic situation and restore economic growth. As a result, accurate, corrective political measures are often introduced for the public in order to tackle the problems resulted from the crisis. The need for corrective measures is reflected in the political language by peaks in the appearance of economic concepts, such as in Wilson's speech dating back to 1964. In this speech, concepts related to prices and wage settlements appeared several times. Furthermore, political programs and acts designed to conquer economic problems resulting from the Sterling crises were introduced. This explains the peak; the more critical the prevailing economic circumstances are the more economic problems as well as measures to deal with them are discussed in speeches by political leaders. Therefore, an increase in the number of cases where an economic concept is treated as an object of human and political action.

Unfortunately, in figure 3, the graphs remain incomplete in the beginning of periods of opposition. It cannot be concluded whether the graph depicting object position would have continued to steadily ascend in Attlee's speeches from 1952 onwards. In future study, figure 3 could be completed by exploring the three grammatical positions of economic concepts in all Labour Leader's speeches, and not only in the prime ministers' speeches. Currently, figure 3 primarily provides a chance for observations on peaks and internal changes in the terms of office of each prime minister. This would enable a comprehensive study of graphs with no gaps.

## 5 Economic concepts as political actors

This section is the second part of the analysis, which focuses on interpreting economic concepts in greater detail. In this section, three distinct thematic processes emerging from the use of economic concepts in the political language of Labour prime ministers are introduced. In the first two subsections, economic concepts are examined in the positions of object and independent actor; an economic issue is depicted as an issue that can be controlled by people, either politician and voters. However, at times an economic issue is detached from its conventional position as an object of action, and brought closer to human beings by attaching humane features to it. Therefore, the ways in which either of the position is sustained is studied. The first subsection discusses the administration of economic issues whereas the second one concentrates on the humanisation of economic issues in Labour prime ministers' speeches. The two latter processes can be connected to a larger phenomenon appearing in Labour's political language: the commercialisation of political language. Each process is examined in more detail in respective subsections. Finally, in the last subsection, possible explanations for the changing roles of economic concepts in political language are surveyed. The final subsection thus connects findings to a broader political context. In addition, the connection between ideological and economic concepts is examined.

### 5.1. Administration of economic issues

The first emerging thematic process is related to the social democratic principle of regulating and controlling the economy. Economy is seen primarily as a political field controlled by people. In this study, this phenomenon is named administration, describing a process in which people have power over economic matters. This study suggests that two categories of economic concepts could be distinguished in Labour political speeches. One of these categories is more closely related to the process of administration.

The first category involves concepts whose origins are not in the government's financial administration but rather in the free and private markets that are not completely restricted under the control of a particular government, or nation. The first category is here regarded as more private in its nature, and the second one more public. There are more individual and private actors in market

economy in comparison to national governments. These are actors who do not necessarily represent any political stance or participate in political decision-making in government level. Moreover, their interests lie mainly in private enterprise and trading. They are actors representing different fields of finance, such as businesses, enterprise, or banking, for instance. All these actors can thus be seen as closely connected with trade; their existence is based on producing, selling, and purchasing goods and services. A mutual interest of all these actors would seem to be the desire to get value for their money. In this paper, one of the focal points is to explore how the concepts of private market economy are introduced in Labour prime ministers' political speech.

The second category includes the concepts of conventional administration of the state's finances, such as concepts related to taxation, to the Budget, to inflation, and to political programs acting as measures designed to improve the economic position of the country. In this study, concepts belonging to this category are understood as administrative concepts since they are essentially connected to political decision-making and political acts in government-level. The above mentioned measures of economic policy can be regarded as rather permanent elements in political decision-making since they are related to the planning and maintaining of the state economy as a whole. Therefore, it is natural to attach the process of administration to these elements; for example taxation and Budget are always subordinate to governmental decision-making. From the basis of this study, it cannot be concluded whether any prime minister's term of office involves a more frequent appearance of established administrative economic concepts. Since annual Leader's speeches partly review the past year in government all prime ministers refer to the measures of economic policy, such as taxation, Budget, and political program. Therefore, the process of administration is present in each speech studied. However, the proportion of administration in comparison to economic concepts as independent actors has decreased toward the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Figures 1 and 2 studied earlier indicate that the concepts of economy in Labour prime ministers' Leader's speeches are primarily treated as objects of human action. It was stated earlier that figure 3 indicates, in concordance with figure 2, that a change has taken place in the object position of economic concepts. From 1997 onwards, economic concepts in object positions appear less frequently in Leader's speeches than in the speeches given by the preceding Labour prime ministers. Administration of economic concepts seems to be a decreasing phenomenon in Labour Leaders' political language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, one can examine with which economic concepts the process of administration is especially connected.

It was stated earlier that since the establishment of the British Labour Party, the party has been more about social democratic stance than about following the strict socialist doctrine resisting all kinds of forms of capitalism. Heywood (2012) defines social democracy as

a moderate or reformist brand of socialism that favours a balance between the market and the state, rather than the abolition of capitalism. (p. 99)

Social democrats thus pursue a balance between the market and the state in order to create a welfare state. Heywood continues that both socialist and social democratic ideologies emphasize state's role in controlling and regulating markets. However, a difference in the outlook on organising state intervention can be distinguished; socialists favour public ownership whereas social democrats support moderate state regulation, and do not completely reject the existence of market (p. 108). The fact that the supporters of social democracy favour government intervention might be reflected in Leader's speeches held by three Labour prime ministers from the 1940s to 1970s. For a social democrat prime minister, it is natural to advocate values and doctrines which support government and human action over political and social issues. It could be concluded that these prime ministers treat economic issues as objects of action because to them government intervention and control over the economy are necessary and desirable aims. Furthermore, these are basic questions in building a welfare state. A moderate economic growth is a prerequisite for the existence of a welfare state where wealth is redistributed through progressive taxation. However, this would not be possible without a strong, regulating, and equalising state.

This is further proved by the spectrum of economic terms appearing in the speeches. Leader's Speeches from the post-war period to Callaghan and Wilson's terms in 1970s contain mainly concepts that are related to the government's financial administration, such as inflation, taxation, or budgets. These are accurate items of financial administration which were, supposedly, under government's control, and nobody else's. These concepts do not thus refer to, or come from, private market economy in particular. A shift towards increasingly borrowing terms and concepts from the market and business organisations, that is to say, fields outside government and the state's financial administration institutions, can be perceived taking place in Blair's term of office from 1997 onwards.



There is a peak in the appearing of economic concepts as sentence subjects during Harold Wilson's second term as Prime Minister in 1974; in one speech, economic concepts were treated as sentence subjects in 30 cases. Even though Brown's usage of the economic concepts seems to indicate an increase in the cases when these concepts are independent actors, Wilson's speech from 1974 exceeds Brown's speech in terms of economic concepts being sentence subjects. However, qualitative comparison can also be made between the verbs, or the action, attached to an economic concept in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and sixty years back from now.

The spectrum of economic concepts as independent actors is not necessarily more diverse than that of Wilson's; both tend to repeat certain concepts several times. For instance, Wilson uses repeatedly concepts such as "prices", "wages" and "wage settlements", whereas in Brown's speech from 2009, "markets", "recession", and "economy" appear several times. One can already perceive a distinction between the usages of economic concepts; Wilson tends to concentrate on micro-level economics, that is to say, the economic concepts that Wilson treats as independent subjects are more minor than the concepts which Brown presents as sentence subjects. Prices and wages can be regarded as more tangible an issue, closer to people's day-to-day life in comparison to Brown's references to whole markets, to the whole economy, or to the world-wide recession which began after the collapse of Lehman Brothers in the United States in September 2008<sup>11</sup>.

From figure 2 one can perceive that the first post-war Prime Minister in Britain, Clement Attlee, does not treat economic concepts as independent actors. However, despite not treating economic concepts as independent actors, Attlee treats ideological concepts in that manner.

Extract 6. Attlee 1952:

**Socialism demands** a higher standard of civic virtue **than capitalism. It demands** a conscious and active participation in public affairs.

Here, two ideologies, two isms, are presented as an individual actors with ability to demand something for themselves. This pattern does not occur in any of the rest of the Labour Leader's Speeches. There can be found references to socialism through the use of the concept 'socialist' which is used either as an adjective (in a sentence "our socialist principles", for example), or as a reference to people as political actors, as socialists; this trend continues until the beginning of Blair's term in 1997.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.economist.com/news/schoolsbrief/21584534-effects-financial-crisis-are-still-being-felt-five-years-article>

In fact, Blair pays less attention to discuss socialism and socialist principles in his annual Leader's Speeches. As his predecessors have referred to socialism several times during one speech, Blair mentions socialism, or socialists, in his speeches only three times out of nine annual speeches. As a curiosity, all these references to socialism are gathered in the following extracts 4, 5 and 6.

Extract 7. Blair 1999:

For the 21st century will not be about the **battle between capitalism and socialism** but between the forces of progress and the forces of conservatism.

Extract 8. Blair 2001:

Our economic and social policy today owes as much to the liberal social democratic tradition of Lloyd George, Keynes and Beveridge as to the **socialist principles of the 1945 Government**.

Extract 9. Blair 2003:

I don't want the middle class fighting to get out of the state system. I want them fighting to get into it but on equal terms with working class patients and children. That's what the **founders of socialism** dreamt of.

The three above-listed extracts from Blair's Leader's Speeches show that Blair connects the concept of socialism with the past. In his speeches, socialism is connected to the last century which was heavily marked by the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union; a battle between ideologies as well as socialist and capitalist values. Furthermore, Blair refers to a well-known political program set by the Labour government of that time; socialism in this extract is more linked with policies of the past than with today's politics in Britain. Finally, socialism is mentioned together with a reference to its founders; here, Blair goes back in time even more. His Leader's Speeches seem to suggest that Blair is not an advocate of socialism in a party that claims to be socialist. This trend continues in Brown's Leader's Speeches, too; socialism, or socialists, are not mentioned at all in his speeches. In summary, the ideological concepts related to socialism are absent in Leader's Speeches from 2004 onwards. The fact creates an intriguing contradiction between the fact that the British Labour Party today claims to be a democratic, socialist party, and the fact that two of their leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one of them even of long standing, seem to have abandoned the use of the concept in their speeches directed at their supporters.

It could be argued that the prevailing political ideology has a role in directing the use of economic concepts in political speeches. Attlee, Wilson, and Callaghan refer to the concepts of socialism and socialist several times in every speech. Through the use of these concepts they all seem to act as

advocates of socialism, or social democracy in Britain. At some point, this phenomenon disappears from Labour's political language as Blair and Brown emphasise neither socialism nor social democracy, or any other ideology for that matter, as the guide for the party's policies. The use of ideological concepts of socialism and social democracy disappear.

In addition to grammatical elements and ideological concepts discussed above the research material was partly examined through the study of metaphors; the appearance of economic concepts in metaphors form a key question in observing how abstract concepts are brought to life in political speech and how they are treated as human-like political actors. All metaphors containing economic concepts are thematised to a table (see Appendix 3). Numerically, the largest group of metaphors including economic concepts are the conflict metaphors; secondly, metaphors related to physique; and the third largest group is formed by metaphors depicting journeys. Charteris-Black (2005) divides metaphors in two categories: personifying metaphors and depersonifying metaphors (p. 204). The process of personification presented by Charteris-Black is further explored in the following subsection. However, the above definition of metaphors in political language could be further broadened by surveying whether the metaphors imply any process of humanisation; this question is further studied in the following subsection as well.

Yet another group of metaphors involving economic concepts can be perceived in the research material; they could be named purely illustrative metaphors. Of course, the purpose of all metaphors is to illustrate a strange topic or issue, and make it more comprehensible to the audience. However, purely illustrative metaphors are metaphors that do not seem to have any other function. They are not part of personification, depersonification, or humanisation. Features of human mind and body are not attached to these metaphors; however, they are designed to bring obscure issues closer to people's day-to-day life, and thus make it more understandable. This is done by connecting an abstract concept to familiar incidents, either to routines of everyday life or to natural phenomena.

Purely illustrative metaphors include a range of descriptions of traditions, habits, cultural myths, as well as depictions of weather and climate. The use of purely illustrative metaphors maintains the abstract economic concept as abstract as before. The weather, the sea, or a journey are not themselves living creatures, or human-like actors who could think independently; therefore, their use does not attach any human features to the economic concept involved. Yet they are of help in illustrating a strange, abstract concept. Callaghan's speech from 1978 provides an example of the various purely illustrative metaphors in Labour prime ministers' speeches.

Extract 10. Callaghan 1978:

Let us start with prices, because keeping prices down is what Government intervention in pay policy is about. **The Government continues its attack on rising prices on three fronts.**

In this extract, rising prices are the object of human action; the activities of the Government is described as an attack. This extract draws heavily from myths in war. Rising prices are regarded as the enemy whereas concrete political measures are depicted as military fronts.

In addition to objects of action in metaphors, economy and economic concepts are often discussed in terms of managing and management in Labour Leader's speeches. Discussion of economic management, and the use of the term management appear in Leader's speeches in Wilson's term of office, in 1964. From 1964 onwards, management appears frequently when both economy and industry are discussed. In Attlee's speeches in 1946–51, the use of the term management or managing is absent. Attlee, however, emphasizes human power over economic problems and matters by positioning economic concepts mainly as objects of action in his speeches. This would reflect the desire and attempt to control the economy of the Labour government of that time. In Attlee's speeches, an economic concept is seldom treated as an independent actor.

In this sense, social democratic ideals are far different from the nineteenth-century Marxist model of socialism. According to social democrats, capitalism should be harnessed to serve the welfare of all classes and all groups of people. From the social democratic perspective, capitalism no longer needs to be completely abolished but rather reformed and curbed. Moreover, the reforming of capitalist ideology to fit in with the humanitarian principles and values of social democracy means that dividing people to different social classes in the basis of ownership and wealth no longer applies. Heywood (2012) suggests that as a result of this kind of view a new class of managers has superseded the old capitalist class, and the new governing class is formed by people who possess technical and administrative skills (p. 131). Today, salaried managers often control businesses owned by other people, such as stakeholders. The ownership of wealth and the control of wealth have thus been separated from each other.

The concept of management remains in Labour prime ministers' speeches from the 1960s to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Extracts from both periods of time provide an example of the term's use.

Extract 11. Wilson 1975:

... trade unions and management will become more involved in the fight against inflation and the wider **management of our economy**.

Extract 12. Blair 2002:

Ten years ago, they asked if we were fit **to manage the economy**.

Both Wilson and Blair emphasise economy as an entity which needs to be directed from above. In Blair's speech from 2002, he refers to "we", presumably the Labour government or the Labour Party, as the managers of the economy whereas Wilson brings forth the role of trade unions and management staff as participants in managing the whole country's economy. In this sense, economic issues are regarded as subordinate to human action and decision-making. In Wilson's speech, multiple groups of people are included in the process of administration of economic issues. Blair's rather blurry "we" implying the managers of the economy does not indicate the variety of actors taking measures against the economic issues; supposedly, he refers to the government, the party, and perhaps even to the voters. Both prime ministers seem to suggest that managing is essential for economic policies. However, a further examination of Leader's speeches indicates that there is a slight difference in the execution of economic management when speeches by Wilson are compared to the speeches held by Blair. This difference is further studied in the third subsection discussing the commercialisation of Labour's political language.

The treating of economic issues as objects of action is related to the idea of managerialism favoured and practiced by social democrats. The transition to this new way of executing social democratic principles took place after the Second World War (Heywood 2012). This arrangement was named managerialism and it was marked by three key objectives aspired by the social democrats. The first objective was the mixed economy, a combination of public and private ownership. Mixed economy was actively pursued by Attlee's Labour government in 1945–51 by nationalizing major utilities, such as electricity, gas, coal, and the railways, but simultaneously leaving most of the industry in Britain in private ownership. Secondly, social democrats supported economic management, which was executed by regulating capitalism to ensure sustainable growth. The final aim of social democrats was to create a welfare state which sustained through the redistribution of wealth, which is controlled by the state and financed by progressive taxation. A welfare state would then act as a mechanism of "humanising capitalism" as phrased by Heywood (2012). The process of humanisation is further discussed next. (pp. 130-131).

## 5.2. Humanisation of economic issues

Figure 2 shows that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, economic concepts are decreasingly treated as objects of human action and increasingly as independent actors by Labour prime ministers. Simultaneously, economic concepts are decreasingly treated as objects of economic policy, which would imply that the need to control and regulate economy is therefore smaller than in the industrial Britain from the 1940s to the 1970s.

Figure 2 shows an increasing shift from treating economic concepts as objects of human action to a tendency where these inanimate concepts are more often given an independent role as actors. The latter tendency indicates that abstract economic matters are increasingly regarded equals to beings who are capable of thinking rationally and making decisions. However, all figures show that in majority of speeches and, economic issues are still treated as objects. It is not until Brown's last Leader's speech as prime minister that the number of evident cases where economic concept is treated as an independent actor reaches the number of cases where economic concept is an object. A change in the proportional distribution of the two grammatical position is yet perceivable, as stated in the figures illustrating the treating of economic concepts by the prime ministers.

As stated earlier, Charteris-Black divides metaphors appearing in political language to personifying and depersonifying metaphors (p. 205-206). His understanding of personification deviates from the conventional view of animating inanimate items or abstract entities, or attaching human features to animals, for example by personifying metaphors he refers to attaching humane features to abstract political issues. He uses the term depersonification as an opposite to this; to him, depersonifying metaphors mean attaching inhumane features to either abstract political issues, or political actors (p. 205). These are features expressing animal behaviour, parasites, or evil. For example, comparing a politician representing opposite political views to an animal, or to an evil creature is understood as depersonification. In this process, humane features are taken away from a human being and replaced with hateful or repulsive attributes.

Humanisation is closely related to the process of animating inanimate objects or items, which is better known as personification. Personification is conventionally understood as an eloquent literary technique which is often used in poetry and fiction. For example, in fables and fairy tales animals are often given human characteristics; an owl can be wise, or a fox can be cunning. Personification

is a figure of speech which is used to attach human features to inanimate objects, or animals. However, personification can be used in other linguistic contexts in addition to fictional literature and poems. Personification in political language is an area studied by Charteris-Black (2005). He defines personification as a means of providing

a concrete and accessible framework for the evaluation of abstract political ideologies. (p. 204)

Charteris-Black understands metaphors as means of simplifying political issues. This approach could be connected to the discussion of economic issues as well; abstract economic concepts are explained by linking them to pre-existent oppositions and myths. Personifying as a rhetorical means brings the issue discussed closer to day-to-day life, and simultaneously provides eloquence in the political language.

This phenomenon would therefore be observable in metaphors related to, and ascending from, military conflicts and attacks, as well as illnesses. A military conflict as a phenomenon always involves people. There is the defending side, and then there is the enemy. According to Charteris-Black, using conflict metaphors is effective since they create sets of oppositions “within a very familiar mental mode”; by this he refers to survival. In order to survive, the enemy must be beaten. Conflict metaphors are thus emotionally charged. Two kinds of conflict metaphors can be detected in Labour prime ministers’ speeches prior to the long Conservative rule: firstly, metaphors describing attacks which were discussed in the previous section; and secondly, metaphors describing battle. Wilson uses a great number of conflict metaphors in his speeches.

Extract 13. Wilson 1964:

This is the mood of Britain today, the determination, the readiness, the eagerness for change which swept Labour to power, and which will now **sweep our country to victory in the economic field.**

Extract 14. Wilson 1968:

For three of these four years we were engaged in **the battle to defend the pound.** It was right to **fight that battle,** and for a great part of that fight our rapidly diminishing deficit suggested that **it could be won.**

The closeness of the Second World War may have partly affected the choice of conflict metaphors; they are familiar to vast groups of people who have lived through a long period of war. This even further reasserts the emotionally charged nature of conflict metaphors. The use of them in political speech encourages people to reunite, and to create imaginary and abstract battlefields where British

politician and voters defend their nation and national property from an abstract enemy. Economy as a whole is not the enemy; it is rather regarded as the ground for battle.

As mentioned above, Charteris-Black (2005) concentrates on separating personifying and depersonifying metaphors from each other. However, his definition could be broadened by studying humanising metaphors in which features of human nature, or human physique are attached to an abstract political concept. For example, connecting the ability to ponder moral questions and ethics to abstract economic issues is a means of humanising them; ethics and morals are a unique feature in human beings which cannot be extended to other animals, not to mention abstract products of human mind. Furthermore, attaching bodily features, such the ill condition of the body, to an abstract economic concept could be also regarded as part of humanisation. In both cases, an abstract concept is given either a body or a mind, despite the fact that the concept actually exists in people's minds only.

An imaginary body is given to an economic issue in Wilson's speech from 1964, for example. In Labour Leader's speeches, several cases appear where remedies and prescriptions are mentioned, which further indicates an economic issue's imaginary need for medical attention.

Extract 15. Wilson 1964:

From the start we treated the economic problem as one of the highest priority. We had to act quickly and relevantly **to stop the bleeding**.

In the extract from Wilson's speech, the economic problem is seen to be hurt and ill. The metaphor implies a lethal weakness in physique as bleeding indicates severe damage, and it has a connotation of approaching death to it. Death is a final point; no corrective measures can be taken afterwards, which means that action by people is needed right away. By paralleling an abstract economic issue to illness, and connecting it to health care, an illusion of this issue being animate and vulnerable is created. Here the economic issue is again treated as the object of human as politicians are presented as the healers. The economic issue presented in this extract is paralleled with life-rescuing, which further sustains existence of the process of humanisation political speeches. However, referring to bleeding indicates that economy is seen as animate being, equal to human beings who in reality are the ones receiving medical care.



As stated in the figures, features conventionally related to human beings are increasingly attached to economic matters in Labour Leader's speeches. An extract from Brown's speech provides an example:

Extract 16. Brown 2009:

**Markets need** what **they cannot generate** themselves; **they need** what the British people can bring to them, I say to you today, **markets need morals**.

In this extract, 'markets' is the active subject with actions of regenerating and needing attached to it. However, what is notable in this extract is the way Brown introduces a moral dimension to the concept of markets. He creates a link between a uniquely human feature and the inhuman markets by his statement "markets need morals". Morals is essentially a human feature; no other animal is capable of moral thinking, that is, separating right and wrong from each other.

Here, Brown does not indicate that people working at the markets need to have morals but quite the contrary. He stresses the fact that the abstract market is the one that, or rather who, needs them; as if the market would be capable of judging and weighing its own actions, and taking human beings' feelings and sense of justice into account. The need has been extended from human beings to the field of economy. This raises a question of whether Brown is intentionally trying to shift the responsibility of human beings to an abstract agent that includes, among people, various anonymous institutions, enterprises, businesses, investments, and other actors. Furthermore, Brown connects abstract markets with needs, thus humanizing both the nature of the market and the actions taking place in the field of market. The structure of this extract is similar to the radical liberal demands of the markets' self-direction and self-correction. Both statements suggest that markets can be treated as independent agents which can be paralleled with human beings. Human abilities to think morally and express needs and feelings are vested to the process of humanizing an inhuman and abstract economic entity which is essentially is a product of human action and social intercourse.

### 5.3. Commercialisation of the Labour leaders' political language

An aspect related to the process of commercialisation is consumerism. Consumerism and the representation of consumers can be perceived in the speeches by four prime ministers;

Consumerism as a phenomenon can be perceived in the speeches by Wilson, Callaghan and Blair. Attlee is the only prime minister who does not mention consumers in any of his Leader's speeches. However, consumers are perceived in a different way by the three speakers. Prior to Blair, consumers are seen as part of economy, and their capability to purchase commodities is an issue; a lack of purchasing power affects both the well-being of individual households and the national economy. The consumers' power over policies is not discussed Labour leader's speeches from the 1940s to 1970s. They are not regarded as activists, or participants in politics but merely represented by the prime ministers as particular groups of citizens; they are treated as objects of governmental action whose purchasing power needs to be protected. During that period of time, the consumers' demands and needs are not taken into consideration while planning services provided by the government.

Wilson and Callaghan seem to be concerned with the impact of rising prices and inflation to consumers; for example, Callaghan stresses the need to protect consumers from economic difficulties, and from impoverishment resulting from rising prices and inflation. Consumerism as a phenomenon and as a naturalisation process is particularly perceivable in Blair's speeches from 1997 onwards. Blair takes a rather different approach to consumers and consumerism in his speeches. Unlike any other Labour prime minister, Blair extends consumerism to the government-level. Blair does not seem to consider consumers as activists seeking to express their morals through aware consuming. He rather extends the question of consumerism to state-level governing by turning citizens and voters into consumers, primarily. His speeches reflect an attempt to transform public services, especially health care and education, provided by the government to a more or shop-like services where a consumer has a greater role in deciding what needs to be provided to them. The laws of supply and demand are extended to public services which earlier have been regarded as part of an established social security system provided by the government through taxation. In Blair's speeches, citizens are increasingly regarded as consumers, which is reflected in the demands for rearranging public services. According to Blair, the policy of "one size fits for all" does no longer work as consumers demand services that are more efficient, tailored to individual needs, and of good quality. Therefore, public services and governmental institutions must response to the demand by creating the supply desired.

Consumerism as a phenomenon or an ideology can be defined in various ways. Consumerism may encourage the acquisition of commodities and services, or it can be understood as a means of adapting a critical stance towards the consumption of commodities. Hilton (2003) argues that

consumerism has been studied separately from politics for too long. He gives two definitions for consumerism. On one hand, consumerism

invokes the doctrine of continually increasing rates of consumption as the basis for a sound economy, which in turn triggers a series of cultural effects, principal among these being the absorption of social life into the world of commodities. (p. 4)

By this, he means that today's economy is regarded as dependent of consuming and people's ability and desire to consume. He continues that there are two ideas with which this view is often equated: either with full participation in modern society or with excessive materialism. In the first case, consumers are regarded as having a vital part in constructing and maintaining society. Their consumption choices affect social life, traditions and ways of defining one's background, social status, or interests. Cross (2000) argues that during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, consumerism redefined concepts of the past and future and thus changed the rhythm of life (p. 2). For example, rather than a spiritual celebration, Christmas is now often considered as a shopping season starting weeks, even months before the actual date for celebration and holidays. Furthermore, the first definition suggests that an individual's identity is constructed by purchasing goods and products, that is, by making individual choices while consuming. Commodities are regarded as definitive features in an individual. However, this kind of mind-set has received criticism for its tendency to encourage materialism which means consuming unsustainably in ever-greater amounts.

Another way of defining consumerism responds to the critique of materialism. In this definition, consumerism can be seen as an attempt to express self-empowerment by consumer activists (Hilton 2003). Consuming could be thus compared to voting; if the consumers are not interested in buying a commodity, this commodity will disappear since there is no demand for it. This view can be utilized in advancing consumers' interests as well as the interests of wider groups of people. Consumers may organize root-level political movements which are connected to conventional party politics; yet they have power over political decision-making. For example, several movements representing human rights, or environmental protection have been established in recent decades. The Fair Trade movement aspiring decent wages and working environment for people in Third World countries provides an example of this sort of consumerism. Consumers are able to advance ethical values by choosing commodities which are produced according to ethical principles.

When introducing issues in health care and education in Britain, Blair seems to consider citizens primarily as consumers. This is shown in extract 17 from Blair's speech in 2005.

Extract 17. Blair 2005:

We only got big falls in waiting times after **introducing competition for routine surgery**. Fact. That is why the NHS reforms, to break down the old monolith, bring in new providers, **allow patients choice**, must continue. Money alone won't work; money and reform will - -

This is an approach to consumerism which cannot be detected in Leader's speeches held by the previous Labour prime ministers. In health care and education, for instance, citizens are not regarded as consumers until the beginning of Blair's term. Extending the concept of consumers to public services provided by the government appears in Leader's speeches after the long Conservative rule has ended in 1997. It could thus be argued that the Conservative political agenda has, to some extent, affected both the Labour's political agenda and the public opinion. During their term of office, the Conservative Party actively advanced privatization in Britain by preferring private ownership over public and supporting a supply of services which would be tailored for users' individual needs and which would be subject to a charge. In this vision, a paying customer would be allowed to choose the best possible choice which is in accordance with the customer's needs and timetable.

In a way, this kind of reform shifts responsibility from government to consumers and to institutions providing services; the government no longer secures institutions providing services which do not have a demand, or which are do not benefit consumers according to their needs. In summary, the government no longer secures services for services' sake. This can be seen in extract 18.

Extract 18. Blair 2000:

Alan Milburn and I sat down with people in the NHS and said it's a deal: **we provide the cash, you rise to the challenge** of modernising the NHS. They responded magnificently.

This extract shows a new composition between the government and public services. Here, the government is presented as an investor, the provider of the "cash". Investing contains a prerequisite of modernising the National Health Care, an institution providing public health care in Britain. However, another prerequisite of the investor is to profit from the investment; the investors always want, or at least wish to profit in exchange for investing. The NHS therefore needs to be modernised in order to respond to the supposed demands of its users as well as to profit the investor, the government or the state.

Reorganisation of an institution, or “modernisation” as named here, often demands measures for improving efficiency in order to be more profitable. Often one of the first-hand measures is decreasing expenditure to increase profit. In Blair’s speeches, government investment on public services seems a token expenditure. In a way, by making itself an investor in stock-market, the government releases itself from taking the measures which are needed to make the public services more efficient and suitable for their users. The government does not need to decrease government expenditure on health care; it leaves the decisions about cuts to individual hospitals and health centres. Transforming a government-funded health care institution into an investment means more liberties given to the institution which is being transformed. This extract suggests that people working in NHS management are given the liberties to modernise the institution; it is less under the control of the government and more under the control of the workers. Along with increased liberties, responsibility is shifted from the government to the units providing services.

Blair’s language seems more simplified in comparison to for example Wilson’s speeches where he discusses investing in industry. Blair’s phrases “it’s a deal” and “we provide the cash” popularize the complex structures of investment, thus making his topic easily comprehensible to people who do not necessarily understand finance or investments. Furthermore, this popularization makes the whole process of transforming public services towards business-like organisations seem rather easy. A simple causal relation is presented: the government gives money to the people working for National Health Service who then modernize the institution. At the same time, there is always the unspoken prerequisite of profiting from these investments, and the spoken prerequisites of modernization and reorganization. This seems to apply not only to public services, such as health care, but also to education and schools as well as citizens receiving state subsidies.

Extract 19 shows the prerequisite set by the speaker for people receiving state subsidies.

Extract 19. Blair 2001:

But **we refuse to pay benefit to those who refuse to work**. Why? Because the welfare that works is welfare that helps people to help themselves.

This extract indicates that benefits and other state subsidies are no longer regarded as a basic right for every taxpayer, or a proof of the social security network. Unemployment benefits are paralleled to wages and salaries; in order to have them, one must do the work allocated to them. State subsidies are also seen as investment as investing in unemployed enables them to employ themselves, to find paths to working life. However, in exchange for investment, the government

requires higher performance and contribution from those who, from the government's perspective, are able to work but cannot find work. If a citizen receiving unemployment benefit refuses to go to work when offered one, their benefit is suspended. A favour in return is requested from taxpayers living on benefit, despite the fact that many of them have already financed their benefit in advance through taxation when they have been employees. In the same extract, Blair uses the phrase "help people help themselves" which is reminiscent to Thatcher's rhetoric. Blair seems to understand the role of the government as an enabling institution which can help individuals to a good start but does not support them along the way.

Consumerism is closely linked to the discussion of investment introduced by Blair. In this phenomenon, ordinary people are often referred to as consumers instead of citizens or voters. In Blair's speeches, it is supposed that the consumers are willing to use the public services, and choose between them, according to their individual needs. Public services thus need to adapt to the consumers' demands. As consumers, they are able and willing to redefine public services so that the institutions that provide universal service would work according to the consumers' needs. Consumers are regarded as having power over state institutions, and they are presented as active participants in social policy.

Public services are increasingly seen as wealth-producing units instead of an altruistic safety net provided and maintained by the government through taxpayers. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it appears that public services are no longer controlled by the state, which is the owner, but by salaried administrative or technical experts whose task is to ensure the direction of profits to the owner. These experts are employed to manage the units providing health care or education, for example. The charge for productivity within individual units of universal services is shifted from the owner to managers, technocrats, and state officials. Several cases indicate that that this reform is presented increasingly when the future of education and health care in Britain are discussed in Blair's speeches. Blair especially has made his mark in extending investment outside enterprises.

Investment as a concept cannot be regarded as belonging essentially to the principles of any political ideology. Investment in itself cannot be regarded as an eligible value in the sense freedom, solidarity, or equality. Investment is a means of practicing business where money is shifted from one economic actor to another in order to sustain profit and economic growth. The origins of the concept investment must be in financing and trading, in arranging production pursuing profit. It is not a concept created by a particular political ideology. Blair's vision of reorganizing public

services according to the demands of consumers could be seen as going hand in hand with managerialism. Blair repeatedly points out the government's attempts to manage a variety of sectors in society. The discussion of investment can be regarded as the embodiment of both managerialism and commercialization in Labour's political language in the new millennium. Discussion of investment reflects social democrat managerialism by separating ownership and control of wealth from each other; the state remains the owner of public services but outsources, to some extent, the responsibility of controlling and increasing wealth.

Blair does not explain whether the reorganization of public services towards a more private-like and business-like operations model is actually demanded by citizens. He does not give any evidence of this demand; there are no straw poll results or statistics which would prove that citizens actually demand change in health care or education, for example. He only provides examples from results after reorganization: summaries of Blair's encounters with citizens in health care or in estates or suburbs, places that have been reformed by the government, or that are investments of the government. These encounters are emotionally charged stories of ordinary British people who have benefited from the reforms made by the Labour government. Evidently, encounters which would express the possible failures of Labour government's reforms in public services remain absent from the speeches; either there are not any, or they are intentionally excluded as harmful for the purpose of instilling confidence in the speaker.

Yet Blair refers to the desire of the "users of universal services" as an argument for justifying the reorganization of public services, as extract 20 shows.

Extract 20. Blair 2003:

What's fair when the users of universal services want to be treated not as grateful welfare recipients but **demanding 21st century consumers**.

In the speech, citizens are turned into "demanding 21<sup>st</sup> century consumers"; it is the consumers who want to be treated differently in public services. Blair seems to be placing several roles to the citizens and to the audience: firstly, they are demanding; secondly, they are modern; finally, they are consumers capable of deciding how to spend their own money. Intriguingly, the users of public services do not, and often cannot, vote with their money. They do not need to since public services are essentially free of charge for them. Yet the idea of the users as consumers with money to spend is worked into the speech. Cleverly, Blair does not address his audience straight; instead of "you" he refers to users of universal services in general. He avoids dictating his audience their desires and

needs and rather expresses dictation in another form. Presumably, the group referred to includes at least a part of the speaker's audience – an audience consisting of possible Labour supporters who need to be convinced of the party's competence to lead them. It appears that Blair attempts to lead his audience to believe that the things that other users of public services want is what the people in the audience actually want.

He justifies the attempt to reorganize the functions of public services education by referring to his own needs. In Blair's speeches, it is often "I" who is speaking; he clearly presents himself as the one who aspires reforms in public services. This could be seen either as rhetorical device expressing that Blair regards himself being on the same level with ordinary citizens and voters; what he wants represents what the public want. On the other hand, his repeated use of "I" has an echo of autocracy to it; his desires need to be fulfilled by the government, citizens, and consumers. Hennessy (2001) points out that the for example Thatcher has described Blair bossy due to his rhetoric and style as a politician (p. 10).

The processes of administration of economy and the commercialisation of political language overlap each other in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Labour Leader's speeches in way that cannot be observed in the speeches prior to the long Conservative rule. Blair's interest in introducing dogma of business administration to governmental administration could be seen as a shift to new managerialism. The introduction of new managerialism is reflected in Blair's discussion of education in 1998, the year following Labour's election victory after nearly two decades of being in opposition.

Extract 21. Blair 1998:

The minute you meet the head, you know if it is a good school. If a head teacher rises to the challenge of turning round a failing school, why should they not earn £60,000 or £70,000 a year? Equally, **if they cannot run the school properly, they should not be running the school at all**. When, alongside the money, we insist that schools that fail are shut down and reopened with a new head --

In this extract, Blair introduces a reward system for head teachers in charge of schools. An attempt to increase head teachers' motivation to produce improved results and higher performance is made by a suggestion of greater salaries. The benefit gained for the owner, that is, the state, is rewarded with increases in wages. At the same time, Blair introduces competition to schools the same way he introduces competition to surgery in the NHS; this is further discussed in the subsection 5.3. The administrative skills of head teachers are measured by the results gained in schools. If the results are not satisfying enough from the owner's perspective, the head teacher acting as the manager of the



school unit is to blame. The idea is reminiscent of used in enterprises where the management is in charge of producing profit; if they succeed in benefiting the owner of the enterprise, they are often rewarded with money, bonuses, or options. If they fail, they can be dismissed. In this extract, schools can be perceived as enterprise-like units where the head teacher as the manager of the unit is responsible for producing profits. Profits in schools are supposedly better learning results, trained skills and talent which on may be useful for the state and employers later on.

Fairclough (1994) has, in his critical study of language, used the concepts of naturalisation to describe a process where a dominant discourse loses its connection with particular ideologies, and becomes the common-sense practice of an institution (p. 107). The process of naturalisation can be seen to apply to the shift from government control over economic matters to a more business-like way of dealing with these matters on the government level. This shift is prominent when the concept of investment is studied. Wilson uses the concept of investing when he discusses measures that should be taken in order to increase production and profits, and to overcome inflation; in his speeches, investment is connected to industry, for example to machinery, or plants. Investment is seen as a political measure enabling reforms that are very practical in essence. Investment can be understood as pure cash given by the government to cover production costs in order to increase and improve industrial production and sustain employment in the country. Industry remains Wilson's priority in terms of economic action. Furthermore, Wilson seems to be concerned about practical issues in administrating state finances, that is, balancing national expenditure and income and thus improving Britain's economic position and profits.

A difference in the nuance of this concept can be sensed when Wilson and Blair's speeches are compared. Wilson's view of investing could be seen rather conventional; in stock exchange, investors direct investments at inanimate businesses and companies that are usually closely connected to the field of trade. Wilson invests in the materials in order to make them profitable to people; Blair, on the contrary, invests either in people or in services run by people to make them profitable. In both cases, the government is seen as having an investor's role in stock market, but the objects of investing are different. The concept of investment in Blair's speeches has a very different echo; Blair invests in people. In Blair's speeches, the conventional perception of investing into often private enterprise used mainly by Wilson in the 1960s and 1970s as well as Callaghan in the 1970s, is extended to public services and governmental institutions. Blair extends the concept of investment from enterprises and businesses to services provided and maintained by the government.

He introduces a demand for efficiency to three fields of public services: education, health care, and social security.

Extract 22. Blair 2002:

I visited the Beswick estate in East Manchester on Saturday with John Prescott. Three years ago going down. Now on the way up. **Massive investment**. The primary school results dramatically improved.

Extract 22 illustrates a series of events related to the Beswick estate which, apparently, has received monetary support from the government; the Labour government has “invested” in this estate where circumstances have not been very good a couple years back. The investment from the government enables an improvement in primary school results. Primary school results are thus a positive consequence of investing into the estate, and they could be regarded as a profit aspired by the investor, the government. The concept of investment here replaces the concepts of funding, or financing; the government seems to have given up on funding estates and education arranged in those estates. The use of the concept investment, a term borrowed from the stock market language contains a prerequisite for profitable results. The terms funding and financing do not in essence include such a prerequisite. Nothing in particular is expected in exchange for financing a person, a school, or a sports team, for instance. Financing and funding seems to be more about giving support than expecting benefit.

The process of replacing the conventional concepts of funding and financing with investment seems to fit to Fairclough’s (1994) idea of naturalisation. He names this process “rewording” by which he means that

an existing, dominant, and naturalized, wording is being systematically replaced by another one in conscious opposition to it. (p. 113)

For example funding could be regarded as the existing, dominant, and naturalised wording which is being replaced by the new wording investment. Accepting the new wording, and the process of naturalisation preceding it, into political language will necessarily change some power structures. Along the new wording, or new concept, comes the acceptance of an idea that the government is not essentially a servant to the citizens, that the government is not their supporter. The government as an investor demands something in exchange for supporting people, areas, or institutions; and this view becomes natural in people’s mind-sets in the course of time.

The introduction of investment to public services by Blair seems to some extent reminiscent of Newspeak in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In the novel, Newspeak is an altered form of English, an artificial language created by the governing party in the story. Gleason *et al.* (2005) define Newspeak's task as follows,

Newspeak diminishes the range of thought by cutting the choice of words to a minimum. -- Then, through the substitution of new words for old concepts, all conceptual analysis came to be meaningless and therefore stopped -- (p.132)

Newspeak is controlled and restricted by the party by reducing meanings and the number of words used in the language. Its main aim is to make it impossible to express dissident opinions by removing concepts which can express politically unorthodox opinions.

Now, it would be exaggeration to claim that Blair removes the concepts of funding and financing from the discussion of public services. Blair's references to investment do not indicate the Orwellian dystopia of suppressing dissidence; however, the rewording he exercises influences the mind-sets and perceptions of his audience. The language used by the speaker, the prime minister in this case, affects the way in which the audience perceive the roles of government and economy in the whole society. This influence may be either unconscious or intentional; nevertheless, the effect on the audience remains the same. In the long term, an uncritical audience may not observe the introduction of a new concept, or the disappearing of the previously used, established concept. A systematic repetition of a new concept naturalizes its existence in language. In this sense, Blair could be regarded to exercise power over his audience, even to control the audience's mind, to some extent. Political language may gradually be used to change the perception of the government's role as the provider of public services, for example. This can result not only in transformation of governmental structures but also in transforming power structures in society. It remains questionable which of the actors in reality have power over deciding about public services: voters, managers, the owner, or an external actor from the economic field.

If the government continues to be seen as an investors, if citizens and people continue to be seen as investments, people will lose some of their status in which they are treated as human beings by politicians as well as actors in the market economy. Of course, history shows that human beings have always been used as instruments for making profits, so it is actually an ancient phenomenon. In the industrial society, people were profitable because of their ability to manufacture products

which, after being sold, profited them. In essence, the workforce or the work done by people have been an instrument of producing profitable goods.

Investment in Blair's speeches can be summarized to two principles. At first, one needs to produce results in exchange for receiving money from the investor, or the government; otherwise, implications, even punishments will result. This applies to both salaried staff managing schools and health care unit and to the unemployed receiving monetary benefit from the government. Secondly, there is an echo of the government encouraging people to help themselves, a phrase used by both Blair in the the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and Thatcher in the 1980s. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century Leader's speeches, the government is regarded as an enabling institution instead of interfering; the government does not provide unconditioned security in the citizens' everyday life to the same extent as in Attlee and Wilson's terms of office. Blair seems to favour a government which emphasises the uniqueness of individuals, be it either their needs or skills. In return, individuals are encouraged to take more responsibility of both their working and private life. This indicates a desire to reduce the state's role in private life, which again is reminiscent to Thatcher's liberal ideas. In this sense, it remains a question whether there is actually much difference between the policies of Blair representing the Labour Party, and the late Conservative prime minister Margaret Thatcher.

#### 5.4. Political context and conceptual change

As stated earlier, the increase in treating economic issues as independent actors and the decrease in discussing them as objects of human action do not necessarily explain each other's existence. This change can be explained by a variety of factors. The prevailing political context is always unique and influenced by diverse factors. Possible explanations for the change can be found from three levels: firstly, within the party; secondly, in the political circumstances in Britain; and thirdly, in global political dynamics.

The first level is related to the party's internal dynamics and to the political agenda set out for it. The party defines its own political goals, which influences the party leaders' language, the content of their speeches, and the concepts used in these speeches. Attlee was relatively brief in his speeches, he stressed the importance of ideological values as governing factors of human action. Wilson, on the other hand, held industry close to his heart, which influenced his way of presenting

the problems and questions of economy in its own way. As for Blair's term, the dominant theme is commercialisation; political government is modelled after business management. These are all related to the second level, the national political and social context. The time period under examination is fairly long, and during it the societal structures of Britain changed thoroughly. It is no longer possible to talk of two major competing ideologies, as it was in Attlee's speeches. Similarly, the industrial society of Wilson's time is a thing of the past. The prevailing societal context inevitably dictates the topics of political interaction, as well as the problems that need to be overcome.

At first, explanations can be surveyed by studying the dynamics of a small unit: the party's internal changes. In terms of the party's internal dynamics, it could be argued that two different Labour parties can be detected through the speeches; these could be named the Old Labour, and the New Labour. Since the beginning of Blair's term in 1997, the structure and the rhetoric of the speeches differ from the speeches held by Attlee, Wilson, and Callaghan. The first three post-war Labour prime ministers represent social democracy supporting regulation and state control in order to sustain economic growth, a prerequisite for welfare state. During their terms of office public ownership extended to a wider variety of areas than in the ruling term of the New Labour. Attlee's Labour government was keen on nationalising major utilities in Britain. Under the Thatcher's rule, many of these utilities were privatised. Upon returning to power, New Labour did not restore them to government ownership. Nationalisation is no longer a principle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Labour Party. The rhetoric of the New Labour's, mainly Blair's, speeches is even reminiscent to Thatcher's rhetoric of "helping people to help themselves".<sup>12</sup>

The Conservative rule which took place in Britain for nearly two decades disconnects a certain continuity in Labour Leader's speeches; speeches held by Labour prime ministers after a long break from being the leaders of the governing party are quite different in their structure, their rhetoric, as well as their content in comparison to Leader's speeches given by Labour prime ministers from the 1940s to the 1970s. Labour Leader's speeches could be studied according to whether the speeches were held before or after the long term of Conservative rule which lasted from 1979 to 1997. This was a long break from governing the country for the Labour Party; the Conservative rule covered the whole of the 1980s and more than a half the following decade. Therefore, short periods of opposition in the 1950s and 1960s cannot be seen as drastically forging the features of Leader's

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/margaret-thatcher/9979362/Margaret-Thatcher-the-economic-achievements-and-legacy-of-Thatcherism.html>

speeches. In fact, the structure and the content, that is, the political agenda and objectives, remain largely the same from the 1940s to the 1970s. There is a continuity of dedicating separate sections for discussing different sectors of policy, such as foreign policy, social policy, or finances. The state's finances do not seem to mix with other major political sectors, apart from employment issues.

The structure of Blair's speeches is very exceptional when compared to the speeches given by his predecessors; there are no longer fixed sectors for discussing the variety of political sectors in separation from each other.

Extract 23. Blair 2002:

- (1) I believe we're at our best when at our boldest.
- (2) So far, we've made a good start but we've not been bold enough.
- (3) Interdependence is obliterating the distinction between foreign and domestic policy.
- (4) It was **the British economy** that felt the aftermath of 11 September.
- (5) Our cities who take in refugees from the 13 million now streaming across the world from famine, disease or conflict.
- (6) Our young people who die from heroin imported from Afghanistan.
- (7) It is our climate that is changing.

Extract 23 contains seven sentences in a row. In the two first sentences, Blair first starts with describing what attitude works best for his party as well as how the party has succeeded in leading the country. Then, in sentence number 3, he mentions the way foreign and domestic policy are not as distinct from each other as before. In the next three sentences, Blair describes the prevailing social and political conditions by dropping three example-like clauses which present the threat of terrorism, Britain's economic picture, the need to prepare for helping refugees, and the huge problems in the world outside Britain. Here, Blair manages to compact a variety of issues into six clauses ending to a metaphor describing a change that is taking place in Britain, in society, in politics, and in the economy. Shifts from mentioning the 9/11 terrorist attack to world famine and to dying from heroin seem rather sudden since Blair manages to combine a variety of sectors of politics without dealing with them in their own sections. In this sense, his style is new. In a way, Blair's style reminds a stream of consciousness; he keeps dropping separate ideas and thoughts which may not include detectable transitions from one statement to another.

To a certain extent, the difference in the rhetoric and political agenda between Old and New Labour may be explained by their long break in power resulting from the long rule of the right-wing Conservative Party. The influence of Thatcherism on Labour's political language deserves closer

examination. Undoubtedly, the long Conservative rule reformed the structures of British economy and society. When elected in 1997, the Labour Party inherited the government of a wholly different society from the days of Wilson and Callaghan, not to mention Attlee. Social democratic aspirations of government-controlled economy and regulation had been largely banished during the Conservatives who supported the principles of liberal economy: low levels of taxation, free markets and trade, competition and, most notably, the decrease of the state's role in interfering with the above-mentioned principles. The fundamental influence of Thatcher's liberal policy is reflected by the very fact that her policy is an ism; she is, in fact, the only prime minister in Britain who has had an ism, or an ideology, named after them. Thatcher's influence over the basic structures of British society and economy were so fundamental that it has necessarily shaped Labour Party's political agenda in the 1990s and 21<sup>st</sup> century; the society in 1997 was wholly different from the society last ruled by the Labour in 1974. The Old Labour and New Labour could even be regarded as two parties before and after Thatcherism, pre-Thatcher and post-Thatcher Labour Party.

The changes in the structure and rhetoric of Labour Leader's speeches could also be explained by the party's internal willingness to reform itself. In fact, in his speeches, Blair makes a distinction between the Old and New Labour parties by calling his party "New Labour". In his speech from 1997, Blair argues that the values of the party remain the same by claiming that "there are no Old Labour or New Labour values". The New Labour seems to have abandoned the idea of ideology directing the party's policies. In the speech from 1998, Blair introduces political idealism to replace outdated ideological doctrines; this he names the "third way".

Extract 24. Blair 1999:

**The Third Way** is not a new way between progressive and conservative politics. It is progressive politics distinguishing itself from conservatism of left or right.

The abandoning of political ideology, or socialist ideology, can be connected to the end of the Cold War which in total lasted over four decades. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, socialism and communism are seen as being defeated by capitalism, which marked the global adaption of liberal capitalist values. The defeat of socialism could be reflected in the political language of the New Labour in the post- Cold War Britain. In Blair's speeches, socialism is regarded as a relic of the past. The idea of an ideological doctrine directing the party policies is regarded as outdated, and it is replaced by more loose ideals which cannot be exclusively connected to particular political ideology. The third way introduced by Blair no longer follows ideological doctrines; it is progressive in a sense that it can adapt itself to changing and globalising world.

In terms of domestic political and social situation, the structures of British society could be examined as an explanatory factor for changes in the appearance of economic issues in Labour prime ministers' Leader's speeches. Under Conservative rule in 1979–97, the structures of British society gradually changed; the industry as the basis of society, economy and employment was abandoned, even run down by privatizing large parts of industry and by shifting domestic production abroad. Gradually, heavy industry disappeared from the country. A new basis needed to be created for the employment and economy. In the New Labour term, knowledge and talent formed this new basis.

Leader's speeches reflect the fundamental change in social structures in Britain. From post-war Labour government to the 1970s, industry forms a key topic in the Labour Party's political agenda. Among all Labour prime ministers, Wilson seems to be keen on issues concerning British industry, which reflects the structure of the society of that time; Britain is essentially an industrial society. A major vision of Wilson's Labour government was to maintain British industry in competition. Industry is closely linked to employment issues and to full employment, a goal aimed by the party from Attlee's term onwards. Employment is dependent on the government's ability to maintain and support British industry in order to provide work for citizens.

Extract 25. Brown 2007:

- (1) As we set out on the next stage of our journey this is our vision:
- (2) Britain **leading the global economy** - by our skills and creativity, by our enterprise and flexibility, by our investment in transport and infrastructure –
- (3) **a world leader** in science;
- (4) **a world leader** in financial and business services;
- (5) **a world leader** in energy and the environment from nuclear to renewables;
- (6) **a world leader** in the creative industries; and yes - modern manufacturing too - drawing on the talents of all to create British jobs for British workers.

Brown's speech shows that the Labour Party's vision of Britain is rather different from that of Wilson. Brown's government aims at positioning Britain to a leading position in several sectors, and primarily in global economy. Intriguingly, all these areas are, to some extent, related to profit-gaining. Abstract ideals of welfare and happiness are absent from this listing; placing the country in the boss's role among all countries seems to matter more to Brown than the well-being of individuals. It cannot be claimed that this indicates an increasing trend towards productisation of human beings. Nevertheless, as an element it can be detected in at least one of Labour's 21<sup>st</sup> century



speeches. Productisation of human beings decreases their individuality and humanity whereas humanizing economic concepts and issues brings them closer to humanity.

In his speech, Brown extends the conception of leadership to new areas, such as energy and environment. Manufacturing industry is regarded as a small part of the whole scenario; its significance as the basis of Britain's leadership and wealth has immensely decreased. The significance of industry as the basis of the whole society seems to have waned towards the new millennium; in fact, the British industry itself waned from the 1970s onwards, during the Conservative rule from 1979 to 1997. Large parts of British industry were privatized, which led to the transition of industry out of Britain to countries where production could be arranged at less costs. As the industry faded away, a new basis for society, economy, and employment was needed. In Blair and Brown's terms, the basis for British society is knowledge. In Labour Leader's speeches of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Britain appears as a society increasingly based on knowledge. Blair and Brown emphasise the intellectual features of a person as prerequisites for the country's economic competence; they often refer to "knowledge", "talent" and "skills" which are seen as elements that need to be harnessed to serve the country and its economy. The country's economic prospects are regarded to base on utilizing knowledge. Knowledge marks both power and financial profit. Profit and economic growth is created by utilizing people's intellectual capacity. In his speech from 2003, Blair refers to "human capital".

In terms of education, citizens seem to be placed in trainee's position in schools and universities. Their intellectual capacity needs to be trained. Government invests in schools so that schools would provide more of this "human capital" which is useful for the state. Again, managerialism is reflected here; the managers of schools and universities are in charge of providing talented people to serve the renewing society as well as economy and economic growth. In Wilson's term of office in the 1960s, it was British industry which needed to respond to economic competition coming from cheaper countries, such as China; in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, British education needs to respond to competition coming from the same countries. Economic competition and rivalry have not disappeared from British politics and political language but they have been extended from industry to education. Today, the instruments of economic competition are no longer material commodities but people and their intellectual capacity. This perception is reflected in Blair's speech from 2006.

Extract 26. Blair 2006.

Last year China and India **produced more graduates** than all of Europe put together.

In this extract, Blair implies that China and India are more efficient than Britain since they have produced more university graduates than the whole of Europe. China and India seem to form threat to Britain in global markets because they have more intellectual capacity to utilize. Britain needs to respond to the threat and competition set by the two Asian countries by investing more in education, presumably. Intriguingly, Blair extends the concept of production from material goods to human beings; graduates, or students, are seen as products in this extract.

In addition to investing in human beings, Blair connects production to human beings as well. In the speeches of the three preceding Labour prime ministers, production is rather strictly connected to manufactured goods produced by the variety of industries, such as shipbuilding industry. Profits, both to the state and to private businesses, were gained from selling the manufactured goods. During the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century British society has, among other Western world countries, gone through a transition from industrial to one that operates on the basis of human knowledge and skills, not on the basis of manufactured production and items. The latter has increasingly been moving to the developing countries, some of which are mentioned in Leader's speeches as well. China and India provide an example of new industrial countries which are seen as competitors to Britain from the 1960s until 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Today, in an information society, people are no longer instruments for production. They have the skills and especially knowledge within them. Their skills and talent need to be trained; schools and universities are rewarded for a "higher performance", as Blair puts it in his speech in 1998. Quite harshly, it could be argued that the priority of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain is to produce as much skilled, educated workforce as possible in order to keep up with the competition from countries which now dominate the industrial production. Because of the knowledge and talent needed in the market economy of the present day, human beings seem to in fact be increasingly turned into products.

In his term of office, Brown continues to build the vision of human capital introduced by Blair. In speeches held in 2007 and 2009, Brown repeatedly mentions the whole country's need to "unlock all talent" by which he may refer to two principles: either taking advantage of the spectrum of people's talents, or enabling an opportunity for all to train and advance their intellectual capacity. The latter option would reflect an Aristotelian ideal of *eudaemon*, an individual's opportunity to pursue their natural talent and reason, thus actualizing human substance. According to Aristotle, an ideal society would enable the existence of *eudaemon*, the pursuit of reason. On one hand, this ideal

may well lie behind the political agenda of the modern Labour Party, in the values and principles concerning freedom and equality within society. However, on the other hand, the party's tendency to set different nationalities in competition with each other, and the introduction of productisation of human talent and knowledge may slightly erode the idealism in the Labour Party's policies.

In addition to fundamental changes in the society's structures, varied crises can be regarded as factors that explain the processes emerging with the use of economic concepts in political language. Britain was faced with economic crises during the governments before and after the rule Conservative rule. Despite the fact that Brown's term took place in the midst of a global and national economic crisis, he continues to treat economic issues increasingly as independent actors. Comparing this to the speeches of Callaghan who also struggled amidst financial crisis known as the Winter of Discontent in 1978–79, the difference in rhetoric becomes obvious. In Callaghan's term, the proportion of economic concepts as independent actors decreases in comparison to his predecessor's term. Callaghan repeatedly discusses measures that should be taken against inflation; the inflation should be "kept down". Callaghan seems to represent the Old Labour in his thinking that the state should interfere with economic matters, especially during a time of financial crisis. He regards economic problems as objects of control and regulation.

This perception is not found in Brown's speeches to the same extent, despite the similar difficulties in national economy both prime ministers were facing. Brown is not concerned with government control or regulation to the same degree; he rather demands reforms in the world's financial system, and emphasizes the responsibility of bankers. Accurate measures towards handling the crisis are not presented to the audience in the speeches as the discussion is more focused on abstract, global-level economic issues. To certain extent, the different stances of Callaghan and Brown could be explained by the global nature of the later financial crisis; since the crisis was not taking place exclusively in Britain, the political measures taken against the crisis in Britain were not enough to solve the crisis. Brown's rhetoric regarding the decision-making about political measures towards a global crisis seems to suggest that the responsibility lies in multiple arenas outside Britain: in other states, in global or supranational political institutions, and in private actors in the market, such as banks or enterprises.

In addition to the national and party's internal level, possible explanations can be found from the global level. In a globalising and integrating world, national politics and political language is influenced by international factors. Political decision-making is no longer restricted within national

borders; similarly, economic life has long ago sprawled outside individual nations and even continents. When examining politics and economic questions it is necessary to also note their global nature, which on one hand complicates the understanding of the context, and on the other hand increases the number of possible explanations for the phenomena which occur within them. Therefore, a form of butterfly effect can be observed: in political decision-making, everything influences everything.

One could start looking for explanatory factors from the broadest possible level, in global politics outside the borders of Britain. For example, Britain's membership in the European Union may partly explain why economic issues are decreasingly treated as objects of action in political speech. In 1969, Britain joined the European Community (EC), which would later become the European Union. According to Nugent (2003) Britain could no longer be regarded as a leading world power at the time of its petition for EC membership in the 1960s (p. 26). The country was at first shaken by the Suez crisis in 1956, and then by a series of Sterling crises in Wilson's term which lasted throughout the 1960s. Nugent (2003) argues that by the early 1960s, "the member states of the EC were outperforming the UK" (p. 26). Therefore, to keep up with the economic competition, Britain needed cooperation with other countries.

Nugent (2003) argues that the Second World War marked a turning point in the state system of Western Europe (p. 11). Only a few years after the war European countries entered into collaboration with one another, and began pursuing integration in a manner which would have been rather inconceivable before the war. The ending of the Second World War in 1945 brought about a new power balance in international relations. The Second World War was followed by the Cold War, a battle not only between two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union and the battle but also between two competing ideologies, capitalism and socialism. The new political context raised fears of Europe becoming a battleground between East and West. This also meant that cooperation in terms of defence became relevant in post-war Europe and Britain.

Under the Conservative rule, Britain's attitude towards European cooperation was reluctant. According to Nugent (2003), to Thatcher and Major the intergovernmental collaboration was agreeable as long as it was useful for Britain (p. 26). The Conservative government was primarily concerned with creating an integrated European market which would be largely deregulated. The Conservative government of 1979–97 resisted any loss of national sovereignty. However, a change in Britain's stance towards the union was transformed after the election of a Labour government in

1997. Since the beginning of Blair's term of office, Britain has been more cooperative towards the European Union, which was shown by Blair's government's willingness to "incorporate extensions to supranational decision-making" in the European Union treaties (p. 27). Decision-making has thus been increasingly shifting from Britain to the supranational institutions of the European Union, which may partly explain the decrease in discussing economic issues as objects of action in Labour speeches. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century Labour's term, economic issues are in lesser degree objects of domestic political decision-making.

However, the European Union alone does not necessarily explain why economic concepts are increasingly treated as independent actors comparable to human beings. The decrease of the economic concepts' position as objects of action and the increase of their position as independent actors can be perceived as two separate phenomena appearing simultaneously in Labour political language. Multiple factors can play a part in these two phenomena, the membership of the European Union being one of them. Nevertheless, globalisation does not alone explain the content of Labour prime ministers' speeches, or the appearance of economic concepts in them as some incidents do occur inside Britain's borders. The domestic political and social situation may greatly influence the political agenda of the governing party.

## 6 Conclusion

This study has explored concepts of economy in Leader's Speeches given by five British Labour prime ministers during 1946–2009. This study has focused on examining the active and passive roles given to economic concepts in the political language of Labour leaders. The aim was to explore to what extent abstract economic concepts are treated as independent actors. In order to achieve this, grammatical positioning as well as metaphors were closely examined. The attempt of this paper was to locate the concepts of economy in the speeches and to define their grammatical and metaphorical positions. The material was approached by at first manually calculating cases when an economic concept is placed in one of the following positions in a sentence: object position; subject position; or the position of an agent in a passive clause. Furthermore, the paper analysed how these concepts were discussed through the means of metaphors. The processes emerging in those cases were then further interpreted and explained by making a connection with prevailing political circumstances.

This study has shown that the proportion of economic concepts used in the grammatical subject position has increased when approaching the 21<sup>st</sup> century. At the same time, the proportion as grammatical objects of action has decreased. The question whether this is a continuing trend remains unclear; further research could be conducted on the Leader's speeches in the 2010s to answer it. In addition, the research questions set in this study could be extended to all Labour Leader's speeches as this study has only focused on Leader's speeches given by Labour prime ministers; all Leader's speeches held by party leaders in political opposition were excluded from the research material. In addition, speeches held by the leaders of the Conservative Party could be studied in order to explore if similar phenomena of administration, humanisation, and commercialisation emerge in them. Furthermore, the comparison of the speeches by leaders of both parties would show if economy and economic concepts have different functions in the Conservative leaders' language.

The results of this study indicate that three simultaneous processes can be found from the speeches: administration, humanisation, and commercialisation. All these processes occur simultaneously; every speech examined appears to contain elements of all these processes. However, it would seem that the administration process has been gradually decreasing during and after the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup>

century while the humanisation of economic concepts has increased. The third process discovered is related to the political language as a whole, as used by Labour leaders. Political language has been commercialised which is shown by the fact that conventional political measures are increasingly dictated by consumeristic stipulations. The model of business managerialism is introduced in Labour policies. This could be called new managerialism, a model where the government is first and foremost understood as an investor and where government-owned institutions are directed by external managers whose mission is to generate profit to the owners. Financing is extended from the world of private businesses to government-run public services.

In this work, the appearance of individual concepts in political rhetoric, as well as their disappearance from use was explored. Specifically, the focus was on ideological concepts related to political isms, such as socialism, or capitalism. The analysis indicates that Labour leaders are increasingly renouncing ideological doctrines as a basis for political decision-making. Socialism as a concept is mentioned for the last time in 2003, and even then it is treated as a relic of the past. After this, all the way to the end of the Labour government in 2010, the concepts of socialism or social democracy no longer appear in the Leader's speeches. This tendency could be further followed by examining newer speeches given in the 2010s by the leaders of the Labour Party.

This research has observed how the Labour became divided into two historical parties in the beginning of Blair's term as the prime minister. Blair makes a clear distinction between his party and so-called old Labour by calling his party "New Labour", and its policies the "Third Way". At the same time, he renounces political doctrine as the basis of the party. This change in Labour party's political agenda calls for further research, as do the reasons for the division of Old and New Labour. In addition, it would no doubt be interesting to try to explain why the party still insists on calling itself a socialist, democratic party, despite the fact that Blair's and Brown's rhetoric so clearly dissociate Labour from socialist ideology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The findings of this study justify the division of Labour into two separate parties, Labour before and after Thatcher, the so called Old Labour and New Labour. There would seem to be plenty of similarities in the rhetoric of Blair and Thatcher, despite that fact that these two prime ministers and party leaders represent, at least nominally, political opponents and adversaries. Indeed, another interesting future research topic could be the comparison of Blair's and Thatcher's speeches and the similarities found from them. Thatcher's policy of privatising and enforcing free markets is not the only possible reason for the divide between Old Labour and New Labour examined in this study.

Possible explanations can be found from three levels: from Britain's national political and social context, from the global politics outside Britain, and from the party's internal desire for structural change.

During Labour's long stay in the opposition, the British society went through fundamental changes. Post-war Labour governed a society which, up until the 1970s, was still very much based on heavy industry under government control. Wilson in particular stressed the importance of funding industry to create jobs and ensure economic growth. He also emphasized the connection between technological development and production output. However, Thatcher's campaign of privatisation gradually drove British industrial production overseas, to countries where production costs were smaller than in Britain. Industrial society was slowly crumbling. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, industry has only a very small role in political rhetoric, the new emphasis being in knowledge, skills and competences of individuals. According to Labour prime ministers, the British society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will have to be based on knowledge and "human capital". The economy, employment, and indeed the entire social structure will be grounded primarily in intellectual capacity.

Furthermore, global reasons for the division of Old Labour and New Labour may be reflected in the end of an ideological battle, the Cold War, in the early 1990s when free market capitalism triumphed over socialism with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Economic crises as well as different conflicts also had a national and global influence in Britain's politics. Crises may have been purely national or they may have had global influences, despite not actually taking place inside British borders. Moreover, Britain's membership in the European Union, and the subsequent transfer of political decision-making to supranational organisations outside Britain can also be considered a quintessential factor influencing British politics.

Power relations in language acted as the starting point for this study. Detecting power relation can be practiced as a useful and even fun hobby in everyday life; it is not restricted to academic research only. Observing power relation occurring in language and social intercourse helps detecting means in sustaining authoritative position. Moreover, a critical inspection of language helps observing humaneness in the language user who is, after all, only a human being whose views and opinions can be challenged. And because they can be challenged, they should be challenged. In the end, anyone is capable of observing, questioning and revealing prevailing power relations all the way from family level to the government. One only needs to acknowledge this talent in themselves.



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## Appendices

Appendix 1. Links to websites.

<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2010/may/12/british-prime-ministers-listed-spreadsheet>

<http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/>

<http://www.labour.org.uk/pages/how-we-work>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/clement-attlee>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/harold-wilson>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/james-callaghan>

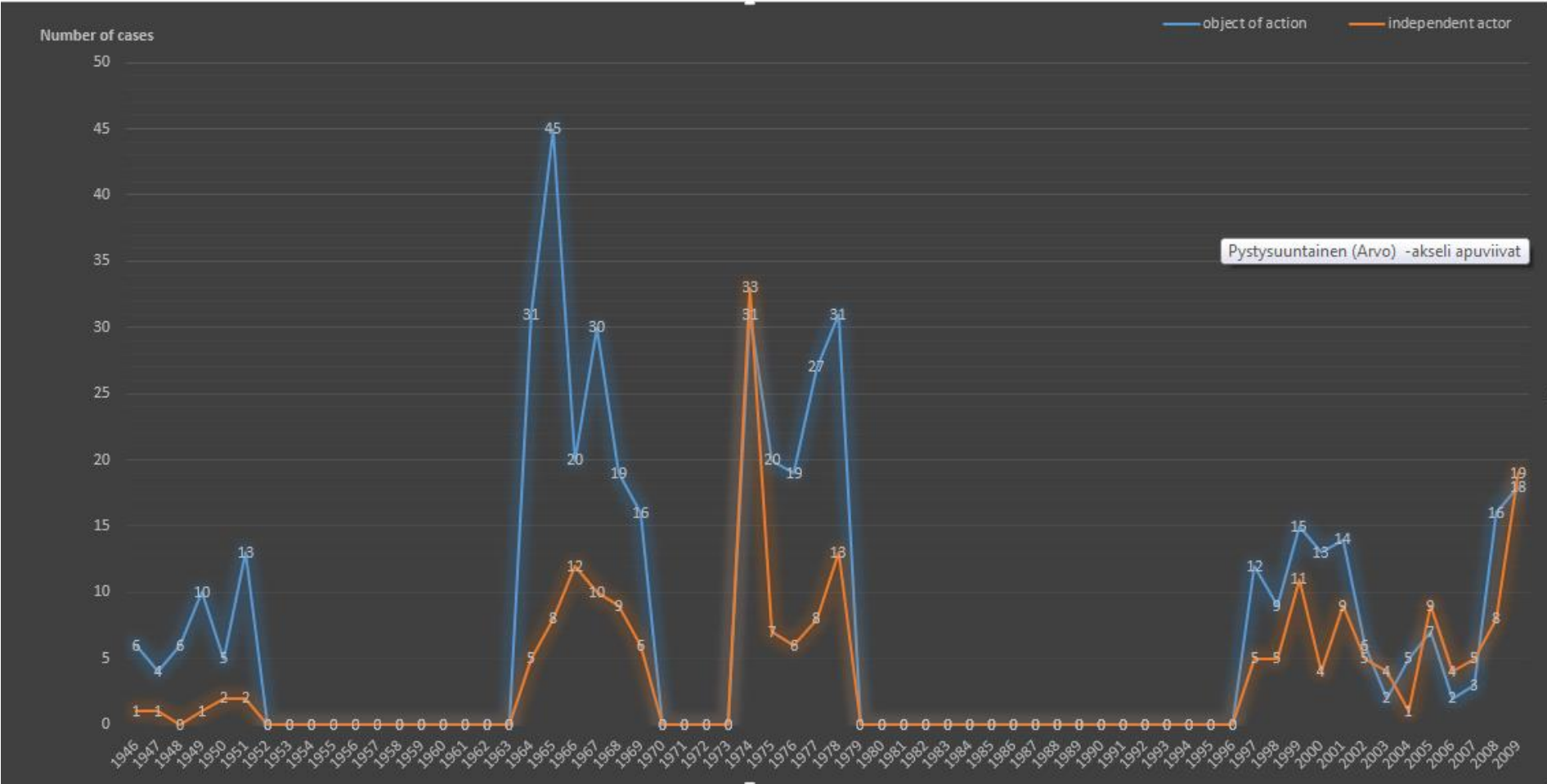
<https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/tony-blair>

<http://www.theguardian.com/science/political-science/2013/sep/19/harold-wilson-white-heat-technology-speech>

<http://www.economist.com/news/schoolsbrief/21584534-effects-financial-crisis-are-still-being-felt-five-years-article>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/margaret-thatcher/9979362/Margaret-Thatcher-the-economic-achievements-and-legacy-of-Thatcherism.html>

Appendix 2. Detailed figure of economic concepts as objects of action and independent actors in Labour prime ministers' Leader's speeches 1946–2009.



## Appendix 3. Metaphors including economic concepts

<b>Category of metaphor</b>	<b>Attlee 1945-51</b>	<b>Wilson 1964-69, 1974-75</b>	<b>Callaghan 1976-79</b>	<b>Blair 1997- 2007</b>	<b>Brown 2007-09</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>conflict</i>	0	43	9	8	0	60
<i>physique</i>	0	8	8	9	0	25
<i>journeys</i>	0	3	5	8	2	18
<i>payments &amp; trade</i>	0	6	3	4	2	15
<i>weather</i>	0	3	2	0	1	6
<i>plants</i>	0	4	0	0	0	4
<i>light</i>	0	1	2	0	0	3
<i>servant</i>	1	0	0	0	2	3
<i>mystery &amp; secrecy</i>	0	1	0	2	0	3
<i>space &amp; astronomy</i>	0	1	0	1	0	2
<i>destruction</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1
<i>spiritual</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1
<i>sea</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1
<i>marriage</i>	0	0	1	0	0	1
<i>obstacle</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1
<i>courage</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1
<i>other</i>	2	20	11	21	7	61
<b>Total</b>	3	91	41	56	15	206