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Function of Pragmatic Markers in Newspaper Articles The Guardian and The Independent. Based on Pragmatic Research.

Funkce pragmatických markerů v novinových článcích The Guardian a The Independent. Pragmatický výzkum.

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this diploma thesis titled "Function of Pragmatic Markers in Newspaper Articles the Guardian and the Independent. Based on Pragmatic Research." and the research to which it refers, are the result of my own work and that all used sources are quoted in the enclosed bibliography.

Abstract

The thesis is focused on occurrence, frequency and mainly on functions of pragmatic markers in the genre of newspaper articles. For the pragmatic research 40 newspaper articles were chosen from the British newspapers The Guardian and The Independent, pragmatic markers were examined in direct as well as indirect speech. In the first chapter the terminology is introduced, which is important for understanding the thesis. In the theoretical part the attention is paid to the description of pragmatic marker, its definitions and functions. Then the thesis deals with description of newspaper style, its environment - the attention is drawn to spoken and written discourse and its differences. In the practical part of the thesis, pragmatic markers are analysed from the quantitative as well as qualitative approach in direct and indirect speech. The results of the analysis are summarised in the last chapter.

Anotace

Diplomová práce se zaměřuje na výskyt, frekvenci a především funkce pragmatických markerů v žánru novinových článků. Pro pragmatický výzkum bylo vybráno 40 novinových článků z britských novin The Guardian a The Independent, pragmatické markery byly zkoumány jak v přímé, tak i nepřímé řeči. V první kapitole je představena terminologie, která je důležitá pro pochopení celé studie. V teoretické části je pozornost věnována popisu pragmatického markeru, jeho definicím a funkcím. Dále se práce zabývá popisem novinářského stylu, jeho prostředím - pozornost je zaměřena na mluvený a psaný diskurs a jeho odlišnosti. V praktické části jsou pragmatické markery podrobeny analýze jak z kvantitativního tak z kvalitativního hlediska v přímé i nepřímé řeči. Výsledky výzkumu jsou shrnuty v poslední kapitole.

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LDCE Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

1 Introduction

This diploma thesis focuses on functions of pragmatic markers in 40 newspaper articles being published in the British newspapers The Guardian and The Independent. They were collected in between February and December 2008. The analysis is based on pragmatic research.

Concerning the corpus of this thesis, as I was collecting the material, it became clear that one condition set at the beginning of this thesis, namely that all analysed articles must be printed on the front page, will not be possible to fulfil. Nowadays, articles being published on the front page are very short, or there are various pictures, photos or "catchy" headlines preferred to be printed instead. Therefore, after selecting from more than 1.500 articles, I have decided to examine only 40 articles, where pragmatic markers are included. Some articles were printed on the front page; the others were published in the main section of the newspaper. Though, they share a unifying feature, namely the topic – UK politics.

The topic of the thesis itself has been chosen after dealing with discourse analysis at a Pragmatics Course at the University of South Bohemia. Further study of Sociolinguistics and Language and Gender continued during an exchange year at University Augsburg, Germany. My experience while living abroad (the United Kingdom and Germany) has been a great motivation to analyse spoken language not only in face-to-face conversations, but also in a written form of books, tabloids or serious newspapers.

Since many years of studying English and British culture in general, I have become aware of the fact that newspapers play a very important role in a society. Having the chance to live in the United Kingdom for nine months, I have become interested in how serious newspapers like the Guardian or the Independent reflect the language of British people. Furthermore, I have become keen on analysing of how much gets communicated in "newspaper language" in comparison with real political debates or interviews.

Surely, it would be interesting to deal with how the articles and their message influence the readership and its opinions. However, this analysis pays attention to pragmatic markers only (being used in direct speech as well as in indirect speech - journalist´s utterance) and their functions. In a newspaper article, as in any other written text where it is not possible to confront the writer with questions concerning the message of his article, it can lead to misunderstandings on the side of readers.

I assume that the role of the journalists is vital here. Their personal experience, believes, political views and background knowledge are, without any doubt, reflected in the text. Moreover, they decide what interviews will be published, what is important to mention and what can be missed out in their article.

In conclusion, the following are the main aims of the thesis as well as the structure.

Main aims of the thesis:

1, the function of pragmatic markers in all articles

a, the function of pragmatic markers in direct speech

b, the function of pragmatic markers in indirect speech(journalist´s utterance)

2, the results will be compared

Structure of the thesis

1. Chapter 2 presents the basic terminology which is important for understanding the analysis which follows, a typical characteristic of newspaper articles is described
2. Chapter 3 examines the term "pragmatic marker", approaches by different linguists are examined
3. Chapter 4 introduces basic information about the Guardian and the Independent, the corpus of this thesis is introduced

4. In Chapters 5 and 6 pragmatic markers and their functions are analysed
5. Chapter 7 summarizes the results of the pragmatic research

2 Discourse

In Chapter 2 I am going to outline the relevant terminology, which will serve as basic information for the following Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

2.1 Pragmatics

While dealing with discourse, it is necessary to mention the basic term of pragmatics. According to the entry in LDCE (2000:1105) "pragmatics is a study of how words and phrases are used with special meanings in particular context". This description is supported by Yule (1996:3), who states that "pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning, of how more gets communicated than said, of the expression of relative distance". In his view, it is pragmatics that allows humans into the analysis.

On one hand, it can be appealing because it is about how people make sense of each other linguistically. But on the other hand, it can be a frustrating area of study because it requires us to make sense of people and what they have in mind. Moreover, Yule (1996) claims that analysing a human concept in a consistent and objective way is extremely difficult. Furthermore, it is even more complicated to analyse written language while intonation, body language and face-to-face contact are missing. Last but not least, Fairclough (1993:10) argues that "pragmatics often appears to describe discourse as it might be in a better world, rather than discourse as it is".

2.2 Discourse

Discourse is described as a type of communication, which can be written or spoken. Fairclough asserts that (1995:56) "a discourse is the language used in representing a given social practice from a particular point of view." Bell (1998: 2) shares a similar opinion while mentioning that "discourse is considered primarily in relation to social contexts of language use".

According to Yule (1996: 83) discourse analysis covers an extremely wide range of subjects. Yule´s opinion is shared by Fasold (1990:65) who states that

"the study of discourse is the study of any aspect of language use". As there are many types of communication, there are also many types of discourse. Without further consideration, every day teachers experience classroom discourse, reporters or editors deal with media discourse in the newspapers, TV reporters participate in political discourse. Media discourse, the discourse to be analysed here, is a very general term. Therefore it can be divided into subclasses, such as radio debates, newspaper reporting, a political interview, etc.

2.3 Media discourse

Living in the 21.century, one cannot imagine the society without the media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television or the Internet. There is no doubt that those media influence our lives – not just how we spend our free time, but also the way we think and, especially, what we think. Since the newspapers are not the only possibility to get informed about what is happening in the world, the invention of television and, moreover, the Internet has been crucial for the development of society.

As the number of people using mass media has increased in the recent years, the interest in media discourse has followed. Bell (1998:3,4) gives four reasons for this phenomenon. Firstly, he says that media are a rich source of readily accessible data for research and teaching. Secondly, media usage influences and represents people´s use of and attitudes towards language in a speech community. Thirdly, media use can tell us a great deal about social meanings and stereotypes projected through language and communication. And fourthly, the media reflect and influence the formation and expression of culture, politics and social life.

Media have, without any doubt, power over the society. On one hand, it can be a great source for getting new information. People save time while finding required data online instead of going e.g. to a library. The Internet offers a 24-hours access to information from nearly every possible field of life, science, medicine, news etc. included. On the other hand, as far as I´m concerned, people believe too much in what media communicate and, unfortunately, lose their own judgement.

In my opinion, one should ask himself whether information we receive through the media are valid and reliable. The question is how people are influence by what they read in newspapers, watch on TV or hear on the radio. Norman Fairclough, one of the founders of critical discourse analysis (which I will deal with later in the thesis), has been always concerned with language and its power in society and media.

From my point of view, the influence of media on society can be seen from two different perspectives. Firstly, as stated by Bell above, media can influence society as it not only informs, but also entertains. Secondly, media can influence e.g. children, teenagers and uneducated people the most in a psychological way. As we can witness every day, TV provides young generation with films full of violence. Although the Internet is seen as a modern and fast source of information, it also provides information of a dangerous source. In the last couple of years, there have been many attempts of young people to kill their classmates by making their own bombs. All the instructions were provided on the Internet. The question is whether our society influences the media or whether the media possess all the power themselves.

The analysed articles have all been presented in the oldest type of media, namely newspapers. The articles are possible to find online – nearly all newspapers have their webpage nowadays. UK politics is the topic which all articles have in common. The purpose of the articles is to provide information.

2.4 Critical Discourse Analysis

Having the majority of the research produced during the 1980s and 1990s, Norman Fairclough - the British discourse analyst – is understood to be its leading contributor. In *Media Discourse* (1995:54) he describes language as "a socially and historically situated mode of action...it is socially shaped, but is also socially shaping – or socially constitutive". The tension between these two sides of language use is what critical discourse analysis examines. Furthermore, Fairclough (1995b) describes critical discourse analysis as an approach which focuses on ways of social and political domination presented in a text or talk. In his opinion, language and power are linked.

Bell and Garrett (1998:6) add that it is the media that "are a particular subject of CDA analysis because of their pivotal role as discourse-bearing institutions".

Though, as this thesis focuses on discourse analysis of pragmatic markers in the newspaper, CDA cannot be applied here as analysing social and political domination is beyond the scope of this thesis.

2.5 Newspapers

The thesis presents a discourse analysis of pragmatic markers in newspaper articles; one should devote a particular attention to newspapers and their audience. Reah (1998:unit three) describes newspapers "as not simply vehicles to deliver information to their readers, they present them often in a way that intend to guide the ideological stance of the reader".

She also argues that newspapers do market research to be aware of the profile of their readership. Moreover, it is used by the newspaper to create a system of shared values, i.e. newspapers identify and address their readers by reporting stories in a way that evoke particular response and establish a set of shared values. They are usually in opposition to another group who shares different sets of values. Furthermore, this process is used in the area of party politics as we can experience at readers of the Guardian and the Independent.

In addition, Sally Johnson (2007:3) gives a very controversial opinion on newspapers and media in general. She argues that "a lot of what media has to say about is either trivial or simply wrong". In her opinion, the general public has no role, they are passive and uncritical to information that has been previously selected, and as she mentions "potentially distorted".

2.5.1 Newspaper Article

Newspaper article is an article published in a print form in newspapers, magazines or academic journals; nowadays articles published online are popular at readers. They can include photographs, statistics, graphs, interviews, debates, etc. To attract a large number of readers, a "catchy" headline is usually included.

In general, articles can be divided into two main categories: news and features. News deal with the fact that current news is timeless and immediate, while features discuss news connected with topics, which are human oriented. Usually, they are written for a longer period of time, and based on a background material or a research.

While writing a newspaper article, it requires a different style of writing form than when writing a story. The newspaper article has all the most important information in the first, opening paragraph. It includes facts considering a person being present, what happened where and when, why and how it happened. The reason is logical, not everybody reads articles to the very end. Therefore, it is important to include all important facts in the first paragraph.

A newspaper article is an interesting item for discourse analysis. Whereas while analysing a political interview on TV, the analysis is different – both the interviewer and the interviewee can be seen, the intonation of their discussion can be analysed as well as their gestures and their way of speaking. From my point of view, the question of power and dominance can be derived from the way the moderators and, for example, politicians behave when they ask and answer questions, their turn-taking or over-lapping can be analysed, etc.

On the contrary, when newspaper articles are examined, where the main topic is politics (can include political interviews, discussions etc.), all features mentioned above are missing. Readers are left to fully depend on journalists in terms of punctuation, the most important information of the message and the attitude toward the situation itself.

In my opinion, a political interview published in newspapers is very different from interviews being transmitted on TV or radio. Firstly, it is a written discourse which takes place before the actual article is written. Questions are written in advance; answers can be noted down in hand or recorded by a dictation tape recorder. Nowadays, questions can be sent by interviewers per email to make the process of creating an article faster. Not only are the paralinguistic features missing, but also the intonation is absent. Secondly, the politicians can decide which questions they wish to answer, they very often avoid sticking to the point.

Furthermore, journalists choose only some parts of the interview; they comment the situation from their own perspective.

Nowadays three different types of newspapers can be found: the broadsheet, the tabloid and the Berliner. The broadsheet has always been judged as an intellectual newspaper. On the contrary, tabloids are seen as less formal, but popular for their less serious topics. The Berliner differs from the broadsheet and the tabloid in its size and content. Last but not least, online newspapers should be mentioned. Online web pages are kept updated so that readers get the latest updated information as soon as they are available.

These are just some of many differences while analysing political interviews on TV and in newspaper articles. As stated above, a newspaper article has its typical features. It is a written discourse; sometimes a part of an interview or opinions on different subjects are included (a re-written spoken discourse). For more information dealing with newspapers (see Aitchison and Lewis 2003, Cornbleet and Carter 2001, Fowler 1998, Johnson 2007).

2.5.2 Language of Newspaper Reporting

In practical part of this thesis, newspaper articles are going to be examined. As each type of discourse has its own specifications, I am going to attempt to underline the most typical characteristics for newspaper reporting, based on Crystal and Davy´s view.

First of all, I would like to determine the function of newspaper reporting. As it has been already stated above in the thesis, the function of a newspaper article is to inform. This is also supported by Crystal and Davy (1969:173-174) who add that the aim of newspapers is to "present a certain number of facts in as interesting a manner as possible to audiences". For this purpose, "a graphitic highlighting of the headline" (1969:174) is used to draw attention of potential readers.

Concerning the graphical features, it is not only the headlines, but also the paragraphing, which belongs to obvious visual features of newspaper reporting. It helps readers to be better informed where the discourse is. As we will experience

in the practical part, the role of punctuation, especially in analysing newspaper discourse, is vital. Crystal and Davy dedicate their attention to punctuation quite in detail. They stress that "commas are absent from many places, where they would be expected" (1969:178).

In addition, Crystal and Davy devote their attention to usage of quotation as well as using dashes. All these features appear in the corpus of this thesis. Firstly, they state that "the use of quotation gives a strong impression of verisimilitude and immediacy of the articles" (1969:1979). Moreover, it adds extra interest and variety. Secondly, the role of dashes in articles is discussed. According to Crystal and Davy (1969:179), the use of dashes is to mark parenthesis. They state that dashes are often used instead of commas to give the parenthetic phrase a greater independence. In their view, "´informal´ use of the dash is to link expansions of thought or afterthoughts with the main part of the sentence" (1969:179). Finally, it is stressed that dashes replace almost any punctuation mark, especially in informal letter-writing. By Crystal and Davy (1969:179-180) is such a usage considered as a common feature in writing "which tries to give a general impression of informality and chattiness to a piece of written utterance".

Concerning this thesis, I would like to focus on one more aspect being discussed by the above mentioned linguists – namely adverbials. Crystal and Davy suggest that they are very frequent in newspaper reporting. Though, "when an adverbial whose normal position is post-verbal is brought forward from this position, and put anywhere near the beginning of the clause, then it fulfils a strongly emphatic function"(1969:182).

Of course, there are other aspects of newspaper reporting such as grammar and vocabulary that is analysed by Crystal and Davy in *Investigating English Style.* Though, as these features are not the main focus of this thesis, I am not going to analyse them in detail here.

2.6 Spoken and Written Discourse in Newspaper Articles

This thesis analyses 40 articles - 20 articles from The Guardian and 20 articles from The Independent. They were collected in the time period from February to December 2008. Even though it is a written discourse, there are items of spoken language included. This spoken language represents opinions of the interviewees.

All analysed articles include direct as well as indirect speech. As the articles were written by four different journalists, the occurrence and their functions vary. Moreover, the number of interviewees differs. Interviewees are mostly politicians, MPS, spokesmen etc. In general, they are people who are trained and experienced in giving speeches and expressing themselves clearly. Their language is supposed to be formal and well-organised.

2.6.1 Spoken discourse

Based on studying theoretical literature (Cornbleet and Carter 2001; Reah 1998, Carter and McCarthy 2006a), speaking can be described as following – it takes place in real time, it is interactional and conducted face-to-face. Pauses, hesitation, false starts and fillers are consequences of the conversation, which is spontaneous. Hence, grammar is affected as one uses simple clauses, ellipsis, contractions or straightforward word order etc. Moreover, lexis of the speech becomes simple, general and vague.

In my view, the intonation plays a very important role when we have a desire to understand what is being communicated – if the interlocutor is angry, stressed or happy and calm. Moreover, from the speaker´s voice we can distinguish his or her sex, approximate age, educational status and possibly even personality. However, speakers can suffer from disadvantages while exposing their own feelings. They have to speak clearly and respond immediately to whichever their interlocutors react.

This point is also supported by Vachek (1976:121) who claims that "spoken language is a system of signs that can be manifested acoustically and

whose function is to respond to a given stimulus (which, as a rule is urgent) in a dynamic way, i.e. the response should be quick, ready, and stressing the emotional as well as the intellectual side of the facts concerned."

From my point of view, it is also the body language, which influences perception of the hearer and the speaker. Urbanová in (2003:20) works with the term "paralinguistic features". As this study concentrates on written language, precisely on newspaper articles including parts of interviews, analysis of paralinguistic features is not possible.

2.6.2 Written discourse

Written language, on one hand, as Brown and Yule mention (1991:4), "is, in general, used for primarily transactional purpose", this means to inform. On the other hand, they also argue that written language can be used to maintain social relationships while writing "thank you" letters etc. According to Goody (1977: 17) written language has storage function which enables communication over time and space. He also claims that it shifts language from oral to the visual domain, the words and sentences are examined out of their original context.

In addition, Vachek (1976:121) describes written language as "a system of signs which can be manifested graphically and whose function is to respond to a given stimulus (which, as a rule is not urgent) in a static way, i.e. the response should be permanent (i.e.preservable)".

As Goody (1977) assumes written language has its advantages. For readers, it is possible to read articles again and again. The most important information is mentioned in the first paragraph, the sentences are complete. However, there are several things which might make our analysis complicated.

When a newspaper article is written, the writer expects it to be read by others. However objective the article is, the perception and interpretation of each text is essentially subjective. This is stressed by Brown and Yule (1991:11) when they say that "different individuals pay attention to different aspects of texts."

A newspaper article is a written discourse. Even though there are parts of interviews included (a re-written spoken discourse), it is the decision of editors what is going to be published. Editors have the power, not only over what will be written in articles, but also over what parts of interviews will be published. Bell (1996) shares the same opinion while stating that written texts traditionally imply a remote reader, who is unable to influence the flow of discourse. Unlike speakers, there is a possibility to pause between each word with no fear of being interrupted by interlocutors.

Writers have time to choose particular words; they can look phrases up in a dictionary or surf the Internet to get required data, reorder what has been written or change their minds about what they wish to express. As it can be seen, writers are not under time pressure as much as speakers are. In the past, writers used to have no access to readers´ feedback. Thanks to web pages and articles being published online, there are blogs to each article where readers can leave their comments.

Readers have to rely on writers completely. Editors are also responsible for the re-writing of answers. Therefore, punctuation plays a vital role in such cases. Unfortunately, as we will see later in the analysis, not all writers pay a sufficient attention to graphic signs. Consequently, it can lead to confusion of readers and misunderstandings of what is being communicated.

As I have stated above, a newspaper article consists of direct and indirect speech. As Brown and Yule discuss (1991:preface) the writer is at the centre of the process of communication – he communicates and interprets. According to Coulmas (1986:1-3) "the purpose of speech reporting is to convey what another speaker said". He points out that the reporter lends his / her voice to the original speaker and conveys what he /she said while adopting his point of view, as it was. Moreover, he claims that "it is not the reporter´s speech, but remains the reported speech whose role is played by the reporter".

In indirect speech, firstly, Coulmas states (1986:3) that the reporter "comes to the fore". He relates a speech as he would relate any other event: from his point of view". This might lead to potential ambiguities in reported speech. Secondly,

he argues that (1986:10) "the writing itself influences the way how speech reporting is carried and understood". Brown and Yule add (1991) that punctuation, capitalisation, paraphrasing should be performed in written language.

While reading newspaper articles, one cannot oversee the fact that apart from direct and indirect speech, there are also journalists´ opinions, views and facts concerning the topic included. For this analysis, "journalist´s utterance" will be used to unite two aspects of a newspaper article – namely the indirect speech (Mr Brown said that….) and the reporters´ gathered facts and their own "hidden" opinions and attitudes.

2.6.3 Concluding Remarks

There are numerous factors where spoken and written discourse differs. Firstly, speech is supposed to be only transitory, whereas writing is designed to be permanent. This is the reason why articles deal with many more details than we are used to transmit in a spoken conversation. Generally, people don´t remember details correctly. This aspect of communication is obviously what written language is designed for.

Secondly, as stated above, speaking takes place in real time and is spontaneous. Writing, on the other hand, can take place over a longer period of time. Writers take their own time in the construction; it can be rewritten several times. The sentences are complete; the lexis is rich and well-organised.

Thirdly, while speaking with somebody, it is necessary to pay attention to what the other person says and be able to react to possible questions immediately. In the case of reading, Goody stresses (1977:124) that " the fact that it takes a visual form means that one can escape from the problem of the succession of events in time, by backtracking, skipping, looking to see who-done-it before we know what they did. "

Last but not least, unlike writers, speakers can understand their interlocutors better than writers their readers. During a conversation it is possible to understand the circumstances better not only because of the intonation, but also

because of the body language – it means facial expressions, postural and gestural features.

3 Pragmatic markers

In Chapter 3 I am going to focus on pragmatic markers from the linguistic point of view. As I was collecting theoretical literature concerning the topic of pragmatic markers, I have surprisingly come across many papers of linguists who contribute in the field of pragmatic markers. Though, as there are many linguists who deal with pragmatic markers, logically there are many opinions on their classification as well as definitions.

During the analysis, I often considered the following questions – is there any list of pragmatic markers to follow? Do they carry any meaning? What are their functions? What do they refer to? How do we detect them in a discourse? What is the difference between pragmatic markers in spoken and written discourse?

With the help of several linguists, I am going to answer some of the questions raised above:

1. Research has not yielded a definitive list of pragmatic markers in English or any other language (Jucker 1998).
2. Pragmatic markers are considered to have little or no propositional meaning (Brinton 1996).
3. Pragmatic markers are examples of non-truth-conditional meaning (Blakemore 2004).
4. The key function of pragmatic markers is that they signal to the receiver, independently of content, what is happening, where the discourse is, where it is going, whether it has finished, whether utterances follow smoothly from what has been uttered before or whether some kind of disjunction is occurring: they are therefore a system of management of what is said or written (McCarthy 1993).
5. Pragmatic markers refer to a syntactically heterogeneous class of expressions which are distinguished by their function in discourse and the kind of meaning they encode (Blakemore 2004).
6. Pragmatic markers are optional (Brown and Yule 1983).

7. Pragmatic markers mark the beginning of a turn and the end of it (Carter 2001).
8. Pragmatic markers are a feature of oral rather than written discourse and are associated with informality (Brinton 1996).

Concerning the markers and their terminology, there have been different various labels used by different linguists. In this thesis, I have decided to label them pragmatic markers, as this label is used by Fraser (1988, 1990), but also by Schiffrin (1987). According to Fraser (1999), the term has different meanings for different groups of researchers f.e. cue phrases (defined by Knott and Dale), discourse connectives (defined by Blakemore), discourse operators (defined by Redeker), discourse particles (defined by Schorup), discourse signalling connectives (defined by Van Dijk and Stubbs), pragmatic expressions (defined by Erman) etc.

As there are different opinions on what terminology to use and what functions pragmatic markers actually have, I am going to provide different views of linguists, who devote their attention to examining pragmatic markers.

3.1 Fraser´s view

Fraser defines pragmatic markers (1999:931)"as a class of lexical expressions drawn primarily from the syntactic classes of conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases." According to Fraser (1999:931), they function to "signal a relationship between the interpretation of the segment they introduce, S2, and their prior segment, S1". In other words, Fraser suggests that they function like a two-place relation.

When it comes to examination of the occurrence of pragmatic markers, Fraser suggests that they can occur in initial position (most frequent), but they can also appear in medial as well as final position. From the syntactical point of view, the markers are syntactically conjunctions, whereas the previous independent clause needs to be present.

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According to Fraser, the following expressions cannot be examined as pragmatic (discourse) markers:

- " focus particles – *even, only, just*
- Pause markers – *Hum....Well...oh*
- Vocatives and interjections" (1999:942)

Concerning the meaning of pragmatic markers, Fraser claims that every individual DM has "a core meaning which is procedural, not conceptual, and their more specific interpretation is 'negotiated' by the context."(1999:950)

3.2 Redeker´s view

Besides Fraser, Redeker is another linguist, who criticizes Schiffrin. As it has been outlined above, Redeker uses a term "discourse operators". According to Redeker, a discourse operator can be defined as "a word or phrase...that is uttered with the primary function of bringing to the listener's attention a particular kind of linkage of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse context. An utterance in this definition is an intonationally and structurally bounded, usually clausal unit."(1991:1168 in Fraser, 1999:935)

Concerning the criticism, Redeker is not satisfied with Schiffrin´s definition of discourse markers, therefore she demands "a clearer definition of the component of discourse coherence and a broader framework that embraces all connective expressions and is not restricted to an arbitrary selected subset."(1991:1167 in Fraser, 1999:935).

Redeker does not consider the following examples as pragmatic (discourse) markers:

- "Clausal indicators of discourse structure – *let me tell you a story, as I said before etc.*
- Deictic expressions as far as they are not used anaphorically – *now, here, today*
- Anaphoric pronouns and noun phrases

- Any expressions whose scope does not exhaust the utterance"(1991:1168 in Fraser, 1999:935)

3.3 Zwicky´s view

Zwicky uses the term "discourse markers". He states that DMs must be separated from other function words - they are prosodically independent, whereas pauses or intonation breaks help them to separate them in a context. This statement is closely connected with the position of markers, as Zwicky understands (1999: 932) that "they frequently occur at the beginning of sentences to continue the conversation"

Concerning the function, he claims that: "Discourse markers ALL have the latter, pragmatic functions [e.g. the role of relating the current utterance with a larger discourse] rather than the former, narrowly semantic, ones"(Zwicky, 1985:303 in Fraser,1999:933 capital in original). Furthermore, he suggests that "on the ground of distribution, prosody, and meaning, discourse markers can be seen to form a class. But like the 'particles' discussed … they are independent words rather than clitics…" (Zwicky, 1985:303 in Fraser, 1999:933 single quotation mark in original)

Next, pragmatic markers in spoken and written discourse will be examined. Therefore, I have decided to work with theories on pragmatic markers by two linguists – firstly, it is Deborah Schiffrin and her analysis of spoken pragmatic markers. Secondly, while analysing written discourse and its typical pragmatic markers, I am going to base my analysis on works of Michael McCarthy and Felicity O´Dell. Though, other linguists and their views will be taken into consideration.

In Schiffrin´s view, each pragmatic marker has a 'core meaning'. She understands that pragmatic markers are "sequentially-dependent units of discourse" (1987).

In my view, one of the biggest obstacles, when detecting markers in any discourse, is to be able to identify them. Schiffrin, however, mentions (1987:314) the following factors that might help by identifying markers in a discourse. She describes a pragmatic marker as following:

1. It has to be syntactically detachable from a sentence.
2. It has to be commonly used in initial position of an utterance.
3. It has to have a range of prosodic contours, e.g. tonic stress.
4. It has to be able to operate at both local and global levels of discourse.
5. It has to be able to operate in different planes of discourse.

Concerning the functions of pragmatic markers, Carter and McCarthy devote them creditable attention (2006a). They suggest the following:

1. Pragmatic markers not only organise the discourse but can indicate degrees of formality and people´s feelings towards the interaction.
2. Pragmatic markers often indicate power relationships in the ways they are used to structure and control the discourse.
3. Pragmatic markers are to signal coherent links between one part of a topic and the next part.
4. In spoken language, pragmatic markers are to mark topic boundaries, indicating the beginning or the end of a topic or a transition from one topic or bit of business to another.

Last point by McCarthy is supported by Aijmer and Stenström (2004) who claim that pragmatic markers, concerning marking the boundaries, can be described as hedges, fillers and emphasizers.

3.4 Pragmatic Markers Analysed in the Thesis

As I started to inquire for pragmatic markers present in spoken as well as written discourse, there were two conditions I wanted the analysed pragmatic markers to fulfil. Firstly, I was looking for pragmatic markers that all linguists, whose views on pragmatic markers I have studied, would share. Secondly, it was the frequency of the individual markers as there were several pragmatic markers,

which are considered as typical pragmatic marker for spoken discourse, e.g. now , of course, but they occurred only once in the whole corpus, or they appeared without context. Therefore, the analysis of such functions would be complicated.

These are the pragmatic markers being chosen for the analysis. In spoken discourse, following pragmatic markers are going to be examined: ***and, because, but, or, so, well*** and ***you know***. They are all treated as pragmatic markers by Aijmer and Stenström (2004), Brinton(1996) and Schiffrin(1987).

The second part of the analysis will observe written discourse. As I have tried to detect typical pragmatic markers for written discourse, analysed by McCarthy and O´Dell (2006b), to my great surprise – there were only a few written pragmatic markers found. McCarthy and O´Dell (2006b:58) divide pragmatic markers according to their functions in a text. Firstly, it is suggested that written pragmatic markers can organise a text, e.g. firstly, finally, in summary, in conclusion. Secondly, they argue that, in a text, markers can be analysed which help to explain, exemplify or rephrase, e.g. in other words, for example, so to speak.

In the analysed articles and their indirect speech (journalist´s utterance), several written pragmatic markers were examined, they occurred usually once in the corpus. On the contrary, typical pragmatic markers for spoken discourse appear there. Furthermore, it supports McCarthy´s suggestion in (1993:180) as he claims that "spoken pragmatic markers present in a text play a major role in our judgement of the degree of spokenness present in the text".

From my point of view, pragmatic markers and their functions can vary depending on individuals. Therefore, their analysis can become subjective as each individual has its own perception of what is being said. Though, I will attempt to follow the above stated definitions on pragmatic markers and base my examination on them. As for the analysis, I have set up goals I would like to focus on during the analysis.

1. **Quantitative Approach**
    a. Which marker is the most frequent in spoken discourse?

b. Which marker is the most frequent in written discourse?

2. Qualitative Approach

a. What are the functions of pragmatic markers in spoken discourse?

b. What are the functions of pragmatic markers in written discourse?

3. Approach to all Journalists

a. Who is the most frequent user of pragmatic markers?

4. Approach to Newspapers

a. Which newspaper use pragmatic markers more frequently?

5. Approach to Genre

a. When and why are pragmatic markers used in spoken discourse?

b. When and why are pragmatic markers used in written discourse?

4 Corpus Description

4.1 Article Description

As for the analysis, finding a suitable data was not an easy task. Firstly, my aim was to analyse articles printed on the front page of newspapers, which seemed to cause any major problems at the beginning. When I was searching for the required data, I faced a serious obstacle for writing the thesis. As newspapers try to attract their readership using large photos, "catchy" headlines etc. on their front pages, they shorten their articles as much as possible. Of course, the less text is available for the analysis, the less pragmatic markers occur. Therefore I have come to a conclusion not to focus only on articles printed on cover pages, but to analyse also articles printed in the main section.

After a long consideration, I have decided to analyse 40 articles – 20 articles from the Guardian and 20 articles from the Independent (see Appendix I, II). To make the analysis valid, it was necessary that all editors share a common ground. As all of them worked at the time of collecting the articles for The Guardian or The Independent, four journalists have been chosen. The articles have more in common:

1. All articles are newspaper articles.

2. They were all published in The Guardian or The Independent:

   A, all 40 articles were published in the main section of the newspapers

   B, they were published from February to December 2008

   C, both The Guardian and The Independent are newspapers published in the United Kingdom; the variety of English is British English

3. The articles were chosen so that they share the same topic – namely UK politics. In this analysis, The Guardian is represented by Patrick Wintour

and Nicolas Watt. On the contrary, The Independent´s journalists are Andrew Grice and Michael Savage

4. The articles were published within eleven months. The articles in the Guardian were published from 13th March 2008 to 9th December 2008. The articles being published in the Independent were published from 28th February to 31st December 2008.

5. All articles can be found online on the web pages www.guardian.co.uk and www.theindependent.co.uk.

6. Each article is of a different length. The length of an article is usually determined by topic as well as placement in the newspaper. Recent trends in newspapers prefer pictures, "catchy" headlines etc. to newspaper articles. Therefore, I have decided to analyse also articles from the main section to be able to examine more valid data. For example, front pages of the Independent are covered with pictures, cartoons etc. – the articles about politics, written in Andrew Grice, were the only which appeared as a text.

4.2 Journalists

As far as I am concerned, the role of journalists plays a vital role while writing articles as well as representing a particular political opinion. The journalists being chosen for this analysis come from the United Kingdom. While doing a research to seek as much background information as possible about the individual journalists, I have come to a conclusion that in comparison with politicians – there are not many sources of information about them. Mostly, it is only the web page of the newspaper, where a reader can find out more if interested.

From my point of view, the following aspects concerning journalists can be considered important as for how a newspaper article is written.

1. Political views
2. Age
3. Career and experience
4. Education

I assume that newspapers and their political views influence also the information they present. Therefore I am going to deal with the history and attitudes of the newspapers towards the political spectrum.

4.3 Newspapers´ Description

4.4 The Guardian

The Guardian is published from Monday to Saturday - since September 2005 in the Berliner format. It is said that thanks to the size, the paper is easier to read on public transport.

Originally, it was founded by textile traders and merchants; therefore it had a reputation as "an organ of the middle class"[1]. Generally, articles in The Guardian are to the left of the political spectrum. This reflects the newspaper´s readership – according to a survey in June 2000 there were 80% of Guardian readers the voters of the Labour Party. Later study in 2004 showed that 44% of Guardian readers were Labour voters, 37% Liberal Democrat voters.

Nowadays it is possible to read all news online. The web page www.guardian.co.uk is the second most popular UK newspaper site with more than 18.5 million users a month.

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1 - < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Guardian>

4.5 The Independent

Launched in 1986, The Independent is one of the youngest UK national daily newspapers. Originally a broadsheet, The Independent was created at a time of tension in British journalism. Since September 2003, it has been published in a tabloid format. At the beginning of 2008, an online edition www.theindependent.co.uk was relaunched.

As stated above, The Independent was established in 1986 and its founders intended "that the political stance would reflect the centre of the British political spectrum"[2]. Their aim was to win the attention of readers from The Times and The Daily Telegraph. Though, at the moment, The Independent is a competitor to The Guardian – it focuses on the left – wing views. According to a survey from 2004, 39% of readers voted for Liberal Democrats while 36% supported the Labour Party.

After its switching in format, the Independent has become "known for its unorthodox and campaigning front pages, which frequently relied on images, graphics or lists rather than traditional headlines and written news content"[3].

Moreover, in 2007Alan Rusbridger, editor of the Guardian, reported on the front pages: "The emphasis on views, not news, means that the reporting is rather thin, and it loses impact on the front page the more you do that"[4]. The idea of images was also criticised by Tony Blair who described The Independent as a *"viewpaper"*[5], not a newspaper.

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2 - < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Independent>

3 - < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Independent>

4 - < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Independent >

5 - < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Independent>

4.6 Concluding Remarks

As there is a lot of online information being published about politicians, famous people etc., the Internet sources concerning the journalists are limited. Though, they share a common ground:

1. All of them work for the British newspapers.
2. All of them are experienced journalists.
3. All of them worked at the time of collecting the data for The Guardian or The Independent

The utterances made by a variety of interviewees are included mostly at the end of the articles. The articles include a headline, their length as well as occurrence and functions of pragmatic markers, typical for spoken and written discourse, vary, as we are going to examine in the following chapters.

The articles:

1. All were printed in the British newspapers.
2. All were collected in between February and December 2008.
3. All share a common ground – namely UK politics.
4. All include pragmatic markers in direct as well as indirect speech.

5 Analysis of Pragmatic Markers

In Chapter 6 I am going to deal with numbers as well as a detailed examination of functions concerning pragmatic markers in direct speech as well as indirect speech. Firstly, I am going to pay attention to total numbers. Secondly, functions of pragmatic markers will be examined in detail – a quantitative as well as a qualitative approach will be applied.

5.1 Quantitative Approach

In this part of the thesis I am going to focus on numbers in direct as well as indirect speech – the total number of expressions, the total number of pragmatic markers and their frequency, depending on the journalist, will be examined (see Table 1).

NEWSPAPER	Expressions	Pragmatic Markers	Frequency of marker
The Guardian			
Patrick Wintour	7.463	65	115
Nick Watt	9.246	86	108
The Independent			
Andrew Grice	6.551	78	84
Michael Savage	7.524	58	129
Total	**30.784**	**287**	

Table 1: Total number of expressions, total number of pragmatic markers and the frequency of pragmatic markers, depending on each journalist

For this thesis, I have chosen 40 articles by 4 different journalists. There are 10 articles by each journalist to be analysed. As each article varies in number of pragmatic markers used, it also differs in its length. Another problem, which I detected during my analysis, are two different types of speech – namely direct and indirect speech as for each type, different pragmatic markers are typical.

Therefore, in order to come to any valid conclusion, I have taken the total number of expressions and divided them by the total number of pragmatic markers found in direct as well as indirect speech. The result represents the average frequency of the marker in a 'spoken' and 'written' utterance.

Concerning the results presented in Table 1, it is in the articles by Andrew Grice from the Independent where a pragmatic marker is detected most frequently. Every 84th word has been analysed as a pragmatic marker, in direct as well as indirect speech. Andrew Grice is followed by Nick Watt (The Guardian), Partick Wintour (The Guardian) and Michael Savage (The Independent).

NEWSPAPER	Expressions in IS	Expressions in DS	Total
The Guardian			
Patrick Wintour	5.618	1.845	7.463
Nick Watt	6.510	2.736	9.246
The Independent			
Andrew Grice	4.071	2.480	6.551
Michael Savage	5.975	1.549	7.524
Total	**22.174**	**8.610**	**30.784**

Table 2: Total number of expressions in indirect and direct speech, depending on each journalist

For the analysis, in 40 articles I have analysed more than 30.000 expressions, nearly one third was detected as a re-written direct speech of different interviewees. According to Brinton (1996), pragmatic markers appear with high frequency. Hence, one would assume that occurrence of pragmatic markers in direct speech to be analysed here would be higher. Though, as direct speech in newspapers, which represents statements and utterances of interviewees being re-written, is influenced by journalists – the number of pragmatic markers is limited in comparison with e.g. re-written political interviews from TV or the radio.

From my point of view, one could assume that the more expressions there are to be analysed, the more pragmatic markers will be detected and afterwards examined. First of all, let us have a look at Figure 1, which shows the difference

between the number of expression in direct and indirect speech used by individual journalists. It is in the articles of Michael Savage where the number of expressions in direct speech is far lower than the number of expressions in indirect speech.

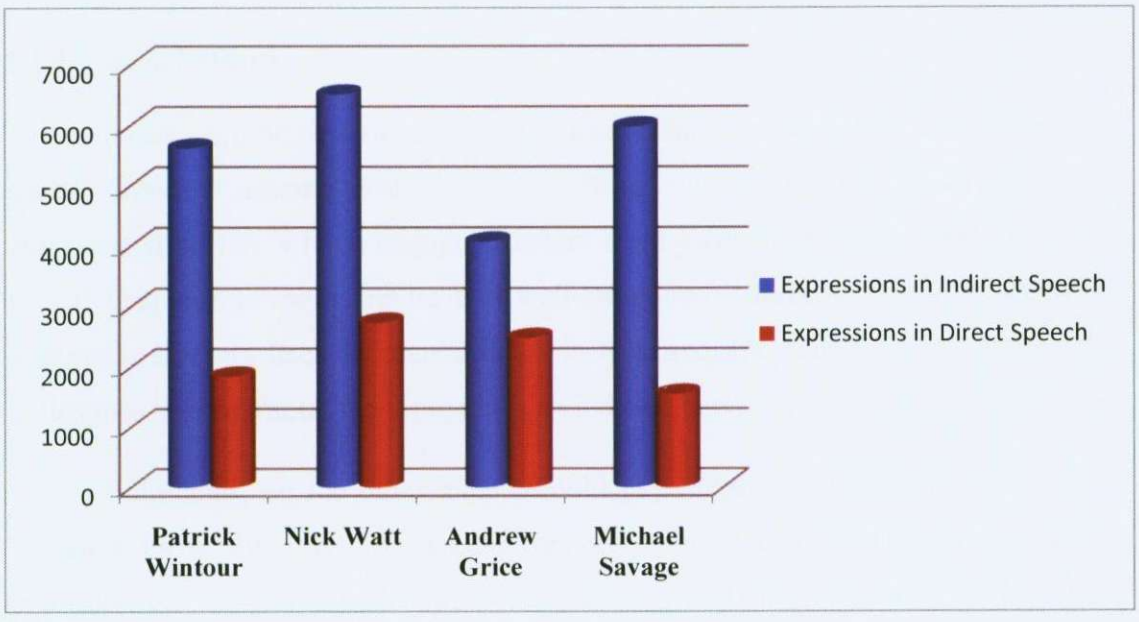


Figure 1: Number of expressions in direct and indirect speech, depending on the journalist

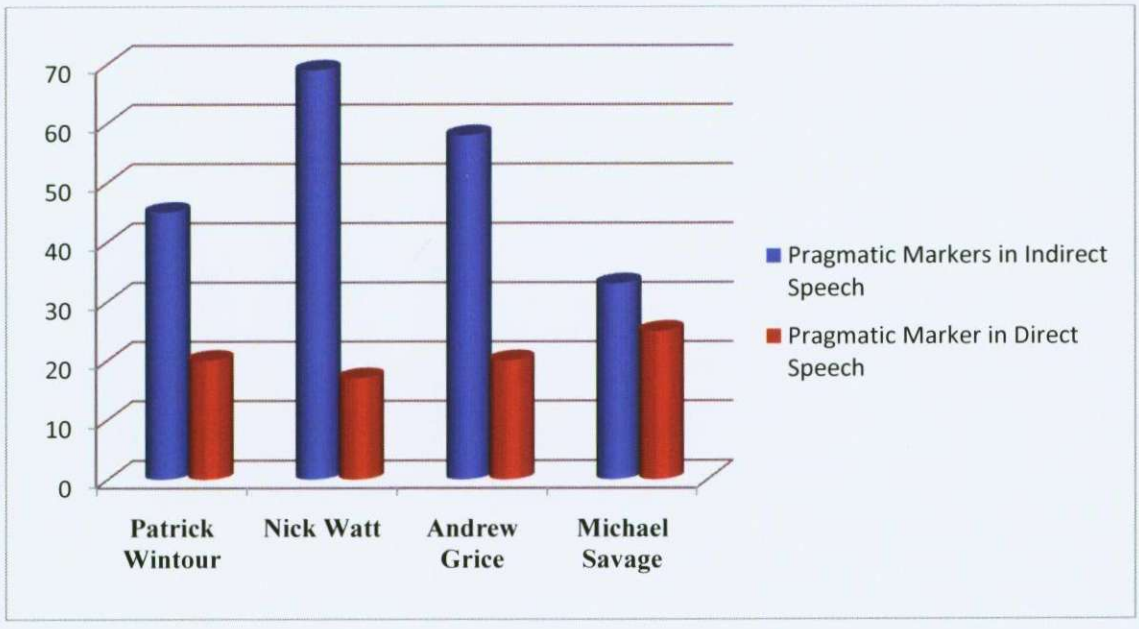


Figure 2: Number of pragmatic markers in direct and indirect speech, depending on the journalist

Though, it is also in the articles of Michael Savage (see Figure 2), where the journalist uses approximately the same number of pragmatic markers in direct as well as indirect speech. As it is also seen, Nick Watt from the Guardian uses far more pragmatic markers in direct speech than in indirect speech.

5.1.1 Social Status

In my opinion, use of pragmatic markers can vary according to speakers' social status. I assume that journalists being chosen for this analysis are experienced editors whose language differs from journalists "beginners". Their use of language is more precise and well-structured. Moreover, the number of pragmatic markers used in their articles is less frequent than by their younger colleagues. Furthermore, the topic plays a vital role here.

Politicians, on the other hand, should pay more attention to their use of language. Generally, it is expected that they will express their opinions clearly and precisely. As we can experience nowadays, such a quality is hard to be found during political debates or interviews. Though, as we will experience further in the study, such qualities appear at interviewees in newspapers.

5.2 DIRECT SPEECH

5.2.1 Quantitative Approach

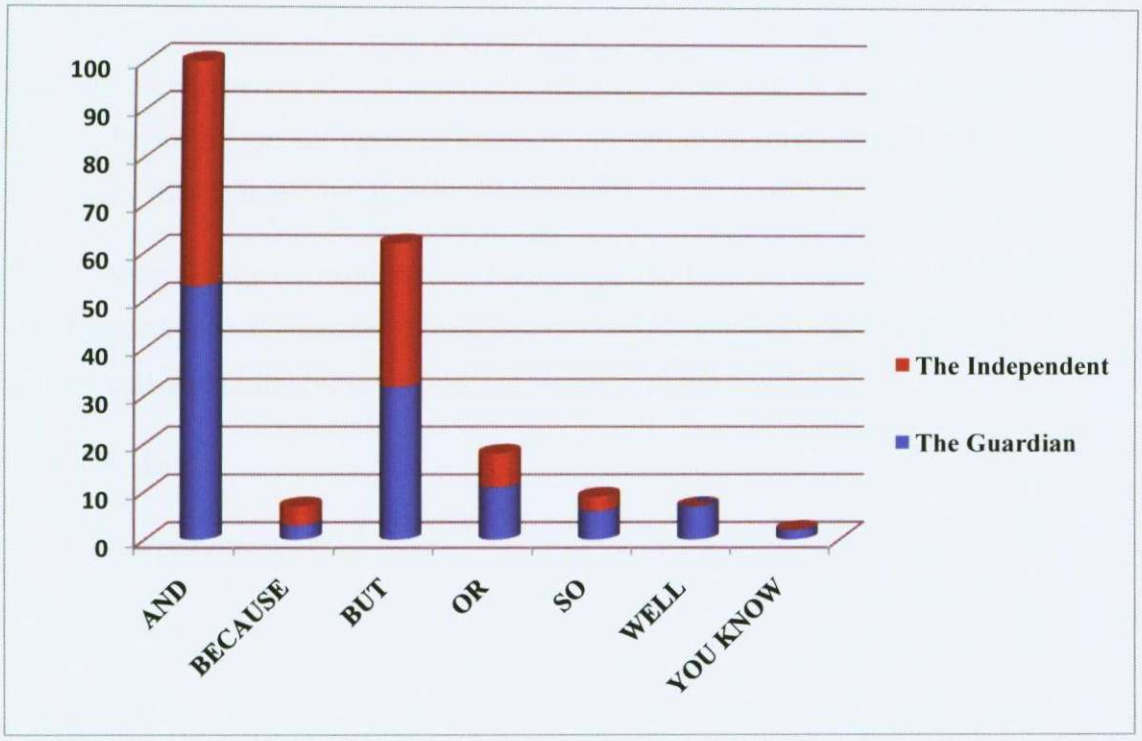


Figure 3: Occurrence of All Pragmatic Markers in Direct Speech

NEWSPAPER	AND	BECAUSE	BUT	OR	SO	WELL	YOU KNOW	Total
The Guardian	53	3	32	11	6	7	2	**114**
The Independent	47	4	30	7	3	0	0	**91**
Total	**100**	**7**	**62**	**18**	**9**	**7**	**2**	**205**

Table 3: Total number of pragmatic markers in direct speech, depending on the newspapers

In direct speech, 8.610 expressions have been analysed, whereas 205 pragmatic markers have been detected. Figure 3 shows the most frequent marker in direct speech is the pragmatic marker ***and***, followed by ***but*** and ***or***.

Table 3 demonstrates that there were more pragmatic markers occurring in the articles from the Guardian. In the articles from the Guardian, 114 pragmatic

markers will be analysed, followed by the analysis of 91 pragmatic markers appearing in the articles of the Independent.

5.2.2 Qualitative Approach

On the contrary to the quantitative approach, which examines figures – the qualitative approach analyses pragmatic markers according to their function. As the number of pragmatic markers found in the corpus in direct speech is limited, the variety of pragmatic markers is not very rich.

After a longer consideration, I have decided to analyse pragmatic markers which appeared in the corpus at least twice. Pragmatic markers and their functions will be analysed in the following order according to the alphabet:

1, And

2, Because

3, But

4, Or

5, So

6, Well

7, You know

5.2.3 AND

Schiffrin (1987) describes ***and*** as a pragmatic marker, which has two roles in talk. Firstly, it coordinates idea units. Secondly, it continues a speaker´s action. She argues that ***and*** has both roles simultaneously.

And is not just the first pragmatic marker to be analysed in this thesis, but also the most frequent. It supports Schiffrin´s opinion, as she mentions (1987:128) that ***and*** is "the most frequently used mode of connection at a local level of idea structure".

In the articles of the Guardian, ***and*** is used in 53 utterances in direct speech. In the Independent, ***and*** occurs in 47 utterances. As each article includes direct speech representing opinions and views of different interviewees, it is impossible to analyse what interviewee is the most frequent user of the marker.

Schiffrin examines ***and*** together with ***but*** and ***or***, as she calls them discourse connectives. According to Schiffrin (1994:141-150), ***and*** can be described as:

1. a discourse coordinator, which marks different kinds of units at different levels of discourse structure
2. a marker of speaker´s continuation, often displays an upcoming utterance as part of a not yet completed interactional unit, when speakers want to convey that they have more to say, possible to use to link questions in a question agenda
3. a marker
    - which marks the speaker´s continuation as a preferred option
    - which is used when speakers share a turn space to add ideas
    - which can connect reasons in an explanation, or pieces of support in an argument

Concerning position of ***and*** in an utterance, McCarthy (1993:176) argues that ***and*** "frequently occurs sentence-initially, just as it often occurs turn- and utterance-initially in spoken data".

Before the analysis, I am going to examine the meanings of ***and*** described in LDCE (2000:42). As Longman Dictionary is focused on contemporary English, spoken as well as written English is included.

1. You use ***and*** to join words or sentences.
2. You use ***and*** to mean "then, afterwards".
3. You use ***and*** to say that something is caused by something else.
4. You use ***and*** to introduce a sentence, comment, question (spoken).
5. You use ***and*** between repeated words to emphasize what you are saying.

6. You use ***and*** when you want someone to add something to what they have just said (spoken).

Contextual Analysis

In contextual analysis, pragmatic markers are examined in the context – the preceding as well as following utterances are analysed. As direct speech is incomplete, the questions asked by journalists are presented indirectly and there is little attention paid to punctuation, the analysis becomes more complicated as more functions of one pragmatic marker can be detected.

In addition, as being stressed in the previous chapters, journalists do not only influence what is going to be published, they also re-write the answers of interviewees. In this connection, I am going to demonstrate in the following examples – utterances of interviewees can differ depending on the journalist and the newspaper.

In example (1), written by Patrick Wintour from the Guardian, the situation of a press conference in London is described. Mr Miliband, Gordon Brown´s ally and a member of the Labour party, is being asked whether Mr Brown is the person to lead the Labour government "through the current economic turbulence". Patrick Wintour publishes Mr Miliband´s answer as following:

(1) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 2, 85-87**

> He asked rhetorically: "Can Gordon lead us into the next election and win? **Yes, absolutely.** We have got a leader, we have got a good leader, we have got a leader who has good values and I think he can lead a very strong team."

In the following example (2), written by Andrew Grice from the Independent, the same conference as well as the answer of Mr Miliband is noted.

(2) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. 5, 235-239**

> Furious Brownites said Mr Miliband failed to quell such speculation at a press conference yesterday, although the Foreign Secretary said Mr Brown has the "values and the vision" to run the country successfully. "Can Gordon lead us into the next election and win? ***Yes, I'm absolutely certain about that,"*** he added.

In the examples (1, 2), the answer and also the attitude towards the whole problem of Mr Brown´s leadership of the Labour party from Mr Miliband´s point of view is introduced differently to readers. What is the real answer of Mr Miliband concerning the problem? Both journalists decided to interpret Mr Miliband´s answer in two different ways – each decided to pick up different points in Mr Miliband´s interview that they found, maybe, more interesting depending on their political opinion, or the political attitude of the newspapers they work for.

To sum up, the analysis works with spoken discourse being re-written as written discourse. As we cannot prove, what was really said, we have to fully depend on the interpretation of the journalists. Direct speech, which is quoted in quotation marks, does not always have to represent what was uttered or whether it was said in the order presented in the articles. This opinion is supported by Goody (1977:118), who claims that "reproduction of oral sequences is rarely if ever verbatim". Punctuation is another obstacle, which this analysis has to take into consideration.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

CONNECTION OF REASONS

The pragmatic marker ***and*** helps to connect the reasons of Mr Darling to call for general elections as he expresses his opinion concerning the topic.

(3) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 1, 54-56**

> The Conservative leader, David Cameron, urged Brown to call a general election. "I think we need change in this country, ***and*** that's how change should come about," he said.

In example (4), Mr Lewis comments the situation in the Labour Party with Mr Brown as the leader. He describes the Labour Party as being divided. This he sees as a possible problem at the elections. Moreover, he gives a reason for the Labour Party not to stay back, but to fight. In this example, ***and*** is followed by *therefore* which signifies connection of reasons.

(4) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 5, 278-283**

> He added: "When you're the underdog, you have a choice – you can either lie down and die, or you can come out fighting with a passion and a purpose, which stirs your friends and shakes the confidence of your opponents. We have to recognise that New Labour has a problem now with definition. Old Labour doesn't have answers, ***and*** therefore the only way forward right now is bold Labour.

CONNECTION OF EVENTS

George Osborne describes the weakness of Mr Brown´s plan to fight the recession. As he talks about the problem the Labour party has to deal with, he uses ***and*** to connect events. In the case of the second ***and***, he creates a contrast between the two utterances. Firstly, he talks about a situation of families. All of a sudden, he mentions financial figures being published on that day. In my opinion, the function of ***and*** in the second example is to make a contrast.

(5) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 3, 159-165**

> The shadow chancellor, George Osborne, said: "This is a short-term survival plan for the prime minister, not a long-term recovery plan for the economy. They've had months to prepare, ***and*** on the day it's launched, they can't even tell us how much it costs, or where the money's coming from. Most families will not be helped ***and*** the micro measures announced are overshadowed by today's gloomy news that the OECD is predicting a recession in Britain in the second half of this year - the only country that it makes that prediction about."

CHANGE OF SUBJECT

Prior to this ***and***, David Miliband describes his previous experience with elections. Suddenly, he turns his attention to audience (to journalists in this case as he was interviewed at a press conference) with a possible attempt to blame them for not believing in his actions in the past. As far as I am concerned, he changes the topic of his utterance.

(6) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 2, 82-85**

> Asked directly to rule himself out for the leadership Miliband said: "It is a never ending game," adding: "I went through this for two or three years before last year's election ***and*** none of you believed a word I said then, and actually it turned out to be true."

In example (7), Mrs Harman uses the pragmatic marker ***and*** to change the subject of her utterance. Firstly, she comments what people ask her concerning the elections. Even though she admits that the predictions are not really positive, she does not want to discourage possible voters. In my view, she changes the subject on purpose to be optimistic at last.

(7) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 4, 236-238**

> Clearly expecting Brown to secure a big emotional endorsement at the conference, she said: "People ask me whether we are going to lose the next election; well, the predictions can all be wrong. They were in 1992 , ***and*** we can win the next election."

ADDITION

Mr Cameron expresses his anger with the Labour government. After addressing the British nation, he adds what makes the Labour government possibly "the worst" in history. In my view, he uses the pragmatic marker ***and*** not only to add more information, but also to emphasize what is going to follow. It can be assumed that he would like to attract hearers´ attention, as there is another pragmatic marker following – namely now.

(8) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 11, 627-631**

> But Cameron added: "I don't think that would be fair. This country shouldn't be in any doubt of the source of the difficulties Britain is now in. The chancellor was put in a hole by the prime minister, and they've both kept digging. ***And*** now, after all this - the highest taxes in history, the highest deficit in western Europe, the highest interest rates in the G7 - they ask us to trust them to get the country out of this mess."

In the following example (9), a member of Mr Brown´s cabinet comments his return as a head of the party. In my opinion, it is not obvious whether Mr Brown´s first name is mentioned because the commenting person wanted to emphasize his role, or whether the person simply didn´t forget about the prime minister. As there is intonation missing, it is difficult to examine the pragmatic marker ***and*** in more detail. In my view, the person might make a pause as there is a hyphen used.

(9) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 17, 1138-1144**

> Gordon Brown, who spent six months resisting the inevitable nationalisation of Northern Rock because he was so fearful of heralding a return to Labour's past as the champion of nationalisation, has been handed a lifeline. A few weeks after members of the cabinet were considering triggering his downfall, he has secured his position in the medium term by virtue of being at the centre of a financial storm.
>
> "This has given the Labour party - ***and*** Gordon - a chance to recover and we should grab it," one senior member of the cabinet told the Guardian.

ASSURANCE

And in the following utterance signifies an attempt of Mr Darling to ensure the audience that Mr Brown will connect with his voters, even though he has not been able to do so far.

(10) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 14, 1007-1009**

> Asked why Brown has not done so, Darling falters as he says: "Er, well. Well, it's always difficult, you know ... But Gordon in September, up to party conference, has got the opportunity to do that. ***And*** he will do that. It's absolutely imperative."

And in the middle position is used by Lord West to emphasize the fact that the need will come – he wants to ensure the listeners that it will happen. The second ***and***, used in the initial position, is uttered by Lord West to add information, moreover, consequences to what happens when legislation is done too quickly.

(11) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 18, 1214-1220**

> Lord West, the home office minister, warned peers of the dangers of voting against the plan. "If we get it wrong we could all live to regret it. When the need for more than 28 days arrives — ***and*** it will — we can either have a well considered and debated back-pocket measure in place ready to make available to prosecutors, or we will be forced to release terrorists on to the streets unless some hurried legislation is passed. ***And*** we all know hurried legislation in a period of emergency is bad legislation. Whoever is in power will find it a very uncomfortable moment."

CONTRAST

Here, economical situation in the UK is being compared by Vince Cable, the economic spokesman for the Liberals. Firstly, he criticises Mr Darling for being too optimistic concerning the situation. Secondly, he expresses his opinion. As both views differ, the pragmatic marker ***and*** is used to make a contrast.

(12) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 10, 592-597**

> Vince Cable, the Liberal Democrat economic spokesman, said: "The Conservatives appear to be making policy on the hoof. They are worried about a reversal of roles whereby they are seen to be arguing against tax cuts and we and Labour are calling for them. The real worry is that we will not have an orderly bounce back in 2010-11 as Darling and Mervyn King, the governor of the Bank of England, claim, ***and*** instead we will bounce along the bottom."

INTRODUCTION OF A QUESTION

In my view, the pragmatic marker ***and*** in example (13) does not only introduce a question, but also expresses the person´s anger concerning the problem as he/she tries to draw attention to Lord Mandelson in the second question. The person (a Cameron aide) is, for sure, not happy about the investigation being called by Mr Brown.

(13) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 9, 491-501**

> Allies of Mr Osborne said Mr Brown's call for an inquiry had backfired because it was now clear there was nothing to investigate. A Cameron aide said: "Why is Gordon Brown's office not able to say what sort of investigation he wants and by whom? ***And*** why isn't he calling an investigation into Lord Mandelson's relationship with Mr Deripaska as well?"

SUPPORT

In my opinion, this example of ***and*** emphasises the qualities of Gordon Brown being a good leader of the Labour party as David Miliband expresses his support for Mr Brown to be the head of the party.

(14) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 2, 79-81**

> He asked rhetorically: "Can Gordon lead us into the next election and win? Yes, absolutely. We have got a leader, we have got a good leader, we have got a leader who has good values ***and*** I think he can lead a very strong team."

In example (15), a very similar situation is described. ***And*** does not only help the speaker (Mr Miliband) to continue in his utterance, but the pragmatic marker can be examined as a signal of support as well.

(15) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 5, 253-256**

> Speaking alongside six other cabinet ministers at the ninth annual Progress rally held at party conference, Miliband, who received the loudest applause of the evening, said: "New Labour is not a faction within the party, it is a coalition within the party, ***and*** I believe it is the heart of the party."

REPETITION

Mr Lewis, the Health minister, talks about his reasons for joining the Labour Party. The first ***and*** connects the repeated phrase "I wanted". The second ***and*** supports Mr Lewis´ intentions previously mentioned. In my view, he wants to ensure his listeners about his noble motives and values.

(16) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 5, 263-268**

> Mr Lewis added: "We are not here to be a bunch of technocrats. I joined the Labour Party, like most of my colleagues, because I wanted to make a difference, **and** I wanted to change the world for the better. ***And*** obviously I wanted to do that in a way that was consistent with progressive values. How many people out there really believe any more that that's what people like me are about? That's what we need to turn around."

As it is common before elections, politicians from different parties blame the others for wrong decisions or no decisions etc. In example (17), Mr Cameron accuses Gordon Brown of causing the biggest deficit the UK has ever experienced. In my opinion, Mr Cameron uses the repeated pragmatic marker ***and*** more times to stress how much money Mr Brown actually borrowed.

(17) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 7, 389-393**

> "The Chancellor who prided himself on prudence came to believe that he, uniquely in the history of economics, had ended the trade cycle and abolished boom and bust. So he thought the good days would never end, ***and*** borrowed ***and*** borrowed ***and*** racked up the biggest government deficit in the developed world."

TIME TO THINK

In my view, in the following example ***and*** has the meaning of hesitation. Alistair Darling talks about an upcoming financial crisis and he gives consequences of the situation. Suddenly, he pauses (Patrick Wintour even uses graphic signs to show his readers Mr Darling´s hesitation) before he continues.

(18) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 3, 138-143**

> Darling insisted that he remained optimistic, but continued to echo his assessment, given in a Guardian interview at the weekend, that Britain faced "arguably the worst" economic conditions in 60 years. "We are facing difficult times - we are in a situation where you are facing the combination of the credit crunch with high oil and food prices ***and*** ... this is unique, the IMF has said we haven't seen this since the 1930s," he said.

In the last example (19), the pragmatic marker ***and*** is used to give the speaker, Mr Hague, more time to think about his following utterance. Not only does he use the pragmatic marker, which is then followed by comma, but he also uses a phrase *I think* to prolong the time.

(19) **Michael Savage, App.II, Art. 15, 890-894**

> William Hague, the shadow Foreign Secretary, said: "We ***and***, I think, the whole country do want to know transparently about the meetings that have happened and what was discussed at them and whether they ever discussed aluminium tariffs and so on. He added: "If Peter Mandelson could put the record straight on that then I think the media could move on."

5.2.3.1 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The pragmatic marker ***and*** is not only the first pragmatic marker examined in this thesis, but the occurrence of the marker is the most frequent (there are 100 pragmatic markers of ***and*** examined in direct speech). Table 4 shows the total number of ***and***, depending on the newspaper. Concerning the qualitative analysis of the marker (see Figure 4), the most frequent function of ***and*** in this corpus is addition, followed by connection of events and continuation.

FUNCTIONS	The Guardian	The Independent	Total
Connection of reasons	3	5	**8**
Connection of events	6	8	**14**
Change of subject	6	2	**8**
Addition	12	8	**20**
Assurance	3	6	**9**
Continuation	6	4	**10**
Contrast	6	2	**8**
Introduction of question	0	1	**1**
Support	7	1	**8**
Repetition	0	6	**6**
Time to think	4	4	**8**
Total	**53**	**47**	**100**

Table 4: Functions of pragmatic marker *And*, depending on the newspaper

JOURNALIST	Patrick Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
Connection of reasons	1	2	3	2	**8**
Connection of events	4	2	4	4	**14**
Change of subject	4	2	2	0	**8**
Addition	2	10	5	3	**20**
Assurance	0	3	5	1	**9**
Continuation	2	4	3	1	**10**
Contrast	2	4	2	0	**8**
Introduction of question	0	0	1	0	**1**
Support	4	3	1	0	**8**
Repetition	0	0	4	2	**6**
Time to think	2	2	3	1	**8**
Total	**21**	**32**	**33**	**14**	**100**

Table 5: Functions of pragmatic marker *And*, depending on the journalist

The pragmatic marker ***and*** occurs most frequently in the articles of Andrew Grice (The Independent), he is followed by Nick Watt and Patrick Wintour (both from The Guardian). In the articles of Michael Savage, the pragmatic marker ***and*** occurs only 14 times (see Table 5).

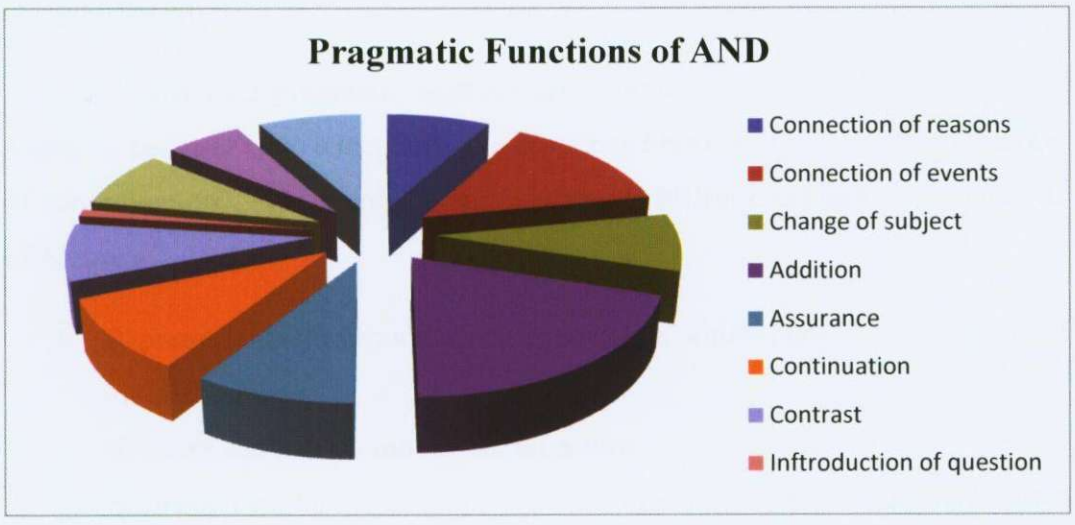


Figure 4: Pragmatic functions of And in direct speech

5.2.4 BECAUSE

Because is the second pragmatic marker being analysed in this thesis. Unlike the frequency of the previous examined pragmatic marker *and*, ***because*** occurs in six articles in the corpus – there are seven pragmatic markers ***because*** being analysed.

As all analysed pragmatic markers are examined by Schiffrin in *Discourse Markers*, ***because*** is no exception. She describes ***because*** (1987:191) as "a marker of subordination". There are several functions Schiffrin examines in her analysis of ***because***:

1. ***Because*** tends to introduce sentence topics which play a subordinate role in the discourse.
2. ***Because*** can mark a motive for an action.
3. ***Because*** can be used to preface information when the status of that information as shared background knowledge is uncertain and when that information is important for understanding adjacent talk.
4. ***Because*** conveys a meaning of "cause".

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

MEANING OF CAUSE

Again, the elections are being discussed. This time it is James Purnell who comments the political situation of the Labour party. He discusses the reason why the party has changed. In my view, the pragmatic marker ***because*** conveys a meaning of cause.

(20) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 5, 264-270**

> The comments at last night's Progress event echoed those made by work and pensions minister James Purnell earlier in the day when he issued a stark warning of what would happen if Labour lost the next election: "Our history is littered with rather more defeats than victories," he said. "That's why we changed. ***Because*** we were tired of being the conscience of a Conservative country ... If we don't learn the lessons of our past we will be in this hall one September, in years to come, passing pointless resolutions again."

TIME TO THINK

I suppose that ***because*** in (21) is used to give Mr Darling more time to think about his reply for his question. As the pragmatic marker is followed by a comma, the punctuation indicates that Mr Darling pauses before he continues in his utterance.

(21) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. XII, 708 – 710**

> *"We really have to make our minds up; are we ready to try and persuade this country to support us for another term?* ***Because****, the next 12 months are critical. It's still there to play for."*

RESULT

In my view, the pragmatic marker in (22) means a result of Mr Smith, the home secretary, as he speaks at the parliament. Addressing Mr Speaker, he gives evidence why he is not ready to be passive concerning the national security.

(22) **Nick Watt, App I, Art. XV, 856 – 859**

> "I do not believe, as some Hon Members clearly do, that it is enough to simply cross our fingers and hope for the best," Smith told parliament. "Mr Speaker, that is not good enough. ***Because*** when it comes to national security, there are certain risks I'm not prepared to take.

MOTIVE FOR AN ACTION

In my opinion, in (23) Mr Lewis describes his motives while joining the Labour Party. Not only did he want to make a difference, but his wish was to change the world for the better.

(23) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. IV, 238 – 243**

> Mr Lewis added: "We are not here to be a bunch of technocrats. I joined the Labour Party, like most of my colleagues, ***because*** I wanted to make a difference, and I wanted to change the world for the better. And obviously I wanted to do that in a way that was consistent with progressive values. How many people out there really believe any more that that's what people like me are about? That's what we need to turn around."

As there are only seven examples of the pragmatic marker ***because*** to be analysed in direct speech, the variety of functions is not very rich. Table 6 shows that the most frequent function of ***because*** in direct speech is the function of

result. The highest number of the pragmatic marker ***because*** occurs in the articles by Michael Savage (The Independent).

Funtions of Because	Patrick Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
Meaning of 'cause'	1	0	0	0	**1**
Time to think	0	1	0	0	**1**
Result	0	1	0	3	**4**
Motive for an action	0	0	1	0	**1**
Total	**1**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**7**

Table 6: Functions of pragmatic marker *Because*, depending on the journalist

5.2.5 BUT

But is characterised by Schiffrin (1987) as a discourse coordinator. In the thesis, it is the second most frequent pragmatic marker to be analysed in direct speech in all articles. Moreover, it will be examined in indirect speech together with the pragmatic marker ***and*** and ***so*** (from the list of pragmatic markers analysed in direct speech) later in the study.

The pragmatic marker ***but*** has been studied by many different linguists (Schiffrin:1994, Blakemore:2004, McCarthy:1993). Its function as well as position in an utterance has been examined.

Firstly, let us have a look at the entry from LDCE (2000:173), where the meanings of ***but*** are described as following:

1. You use ***but*** to mean in spite of something, or not as you would expect.
2. You use ***but*** to add another statement to one that you have already made, to say that both things are true.
3. You use ***but*** like however, to explain why something did not happen, why you did not do something.
4. You use ***but*** after negative to emphasize that the second part of the sentence is true.
5. You use ***but*** to express strong feelings such anger, surprise etc.
6. You use ***but*** to emphasize a word or statement.
7. You use ***but*** to change the subject of conversation.

Concerning the occurrence of ***but*** in an utterance, the pragmatic marker is very frequent in spoken English, where it often occurs at the beginning of a sentence. Though, it is also used in writing. According to the entry in LDCE (2000:173), ***but*** does not usually occur at the beginning of a sentence. As we are going to analyse the indirect speech (journalist´s utterance) later in the study, we will come to the opposite conclusion.

As it has been stated above, ***but*** is one of the most studied pragmatic markers in discourse analysis. What makes ***but*** such a popular pragmatic marker to be examined? One possible answer can be given by Blakemore

(2004:228) who argues that "native speakers of English find it more difficult to pin down what ***but*** or ***well*** mean than to say how they are used". This can be a great motivation for those, who desire to understand the meaning of ***but*** in different occurrences in discourse.

Concerning the analysis of ***but*** by Schiffrin (1987:152-177):

1. ***But*** marks an upcoming unit as a contrasting action.
2. ***But*** can be interpreted as speaker´s effort to return to the prior concern.
3. ***But*** is interchangeable with anyway and however.
4. ***But*** can preface disagreements – whether they are disagreements which challenge, defend, or both.
5. ***But*** marks an upcoming unit as a contrast.
6. ***But*** marks speaker´s return to a point.

Taking into consideration Blakemore´s opinion on ***but*** (2004:224-225), she argues that "but encodes a conceptual representation of a relation of contrasting".

The pragmatic marker ***but*** occurs more frequently in the articles of the Guardian as there are 32 pragmatic markers of ***but*** to be analysed. In the Independent, the pragmatic marker ***but*** occurs 30 times. ***But*** occurs most frequently in the articles by Nick Watt from The Guardian (see Table 7).

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

ADDITION

In the following example, ***but*** adds more information about what needs to be changed according to Mr Brown in terms of his decisions made on the field of British politics.

(24) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 7, 414-415**

> Explaining the new body, Brown said: *"Quite simply, we do not need just to change policies* ***but*** *the way we make decisions and the way we govern."*

In example (25), Mrs Harman, the Labour party deputy, expresses her opinions on different problematic topics concerning the British nation. Here, she discusses a difficult job situation. The pragmatic marker but is used to add more information about what risks people have to take nowadays.

(25) **Patrick Wintour, App. I, Art. 4, 202-204**

> She said it was "quite wrong that salaries are structured so that traders are incentivised to take unwarranted risks. This is about the incentivisation of risk, ***but*** also about a fair and equal society."

CHANGE OF SUBJECT

In (26), Mr Darling describes his story while he was confronted by a British citizen at a petrol station. He paraphrases what the man asked him. Here, ***but*** changes the subject of the man´s utterance. On one hand, the man discusses the oil prices. On the other hand, he suddenly changes the topic of his utterance and confronts Mr Darling with a question.

(26) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 14, 983-987**

> Darling admits that he was recently challenged at a petrol station by a motorist struggling with the rising cost of petrol. *"I was at a filling station recently and a chap said: 'I know it's to do with oil prices - **but** what are you going to do about it?' People think, well surely you can do something, you are responsible - so of course it reflects on me."*

CONTRAST

From my point of view, the pragmatic marker ***but*** not only introduces a question, it also helps to the speaker (in this situation a senior Tory expresses his opinion) to make a contrast between the first utterance and the question. Firstly, he talks about nice, interesting feelings and suddenly he changes the topic and asks whether people (I suppose he addresses voters) are ready to gain such an experience.

(27) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 12, 791-795**

> "There will be a feeling, this could be interesting, it seemed a good idea, ***but*** are we ready for this? Boris will be his own man. How will he relate to the Labour government? ... This is a double-edged sword. A victory would say the

Conservatives are coming back. But there is also the element that you can't control Boris. If he screws it up that will rub off on us."

CHANGE OF SUBJECT, DISBELIEF, SUMMARY

In example (28), three different meanings of ***but*** occur. Firstly, the pragmatic marker ***but*** means a change of subject. Mr Darling is not believed to be ready to become the next prime minister. He gives evidence of historical situation in 1979. Possibly, he does not like talking about the subject. ***But***, in the second utterance, expresses disbelief by Yvette Cooper as she gives her opinion on Mr Cameron´s speech. Mrs Cooper expresses her view as she asks a question being connected with what she missed in the speech. The meaning of the last pragmatic marker ***but*** is Mrs Coopers´ summary of the whole speech made by Mr Cameron.

(28) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. 6, 336-346**

Mr Cameron invoked the memory of Margaret Thatcher to counter Labour's claims that he was not ready to lead the country. "In 1979, James Callaghan had been home secretary, foreign secretary and chancellor and then prime minister. ***But*** thank God, we changed him for Margaret Thatcher. If we listened to this argument about experience, we would never change a government ever. We'd have Gordon Brown as Prime Minister forever."Last night, a Labour minister said the party was happy to compete with Mr Cameron on questions of character and judgement. Yvette Cooper, the Chief Treasury Secretary, said: "David Cameron always makes a smooth and polished speech, ***but*** where was the substance? Cameron says he is a man with a plan. ***But*** all we got was warm words and easy populism."

EMPHASIS

I suppose that ***but*** in (29) signifies an emphasis. Miliband´s ally asks a rhetorical question which he immediately answers. ***But*** is preceded by a negative reply. From my point of view, the interviewee has an intention to emphasize what might happen when no action will be taken.

(29) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 6, 335-341**

Downing Street will be encouraged by the poll in the Sun. But ministers said confusion over the reshuffle showed that Brown would struggle to build on the success of the speech. Some ministers, who had been prepared to leave Manchester rallying behind a rejuvenated Brown, were believed to be wrestling with their consciences. One Miliband ally outlined the dilemma: "Would it look good to have no one on the bridge of the ship as it heads for the rocks? Probably

not, ***but*** the danger is that if we do nothing we are heading for opposition for a long time."

REFUSAL

In the following example, Mr Cameron discusses why Britain ended up in a bad financial situation – he blames Mr Brown, again, for being the responsible person. As far as I am concerned, it seems as he tries to laugh at him. The pragmatic marker ***but*** is used here as an expression of Mr Cameron as he refuses to forget about this fact.

(30) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. 7, 355-361**

> Denying that he was "talking Britain down", Mr Cameron said: "I will never pull my punches in explaining how this Government has brought Britain down. Gordon Brown is hoping that his whirlwind of summitry will mean we will forget what has come before ... ***But*** I won't forget, and the British people won't forget. He cannot hide from his mistakes. He cannot hide from the truth. The truth is that over the past 10 years, Britain has built up more personal debt than any other major economy in history."

SUMMARY

Here, the pragmatic marker can be analysed as a marker preceding summary. Mr Lewis, the Health minister, explains what the Labour party will have to face in the next election. In his last statement, he sums up what might happen, when the party will be divided.

(31) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. 5, 269-274**

> If Labour failed to do so, "the seductive, 'it's time for a change' message will work for Mr Cameron. We need to be the change... more of the same won't do." Asked if his fellow ministers were loyal to Mr Brown, he replied: "The test of any political party, any cause, is in the bad time and not the good time. We now face the ultimate test. People have a decision to make. ***But*** there's one thing that's absolutely clear, it's that the public don't vote for divided parties."

TIME TO THINK

The last pragmatic marker ***but***, being analysed in this thesis in direct speech, gives the speaker (Hazel Blears, the Communities Secretary) some extra time to think about how to continue in her utterance. As it can be seen earlier, her utterance was

re-written by Andrew Grice with commas. It can suggest that talking about the topic might be unpleasant for the speaker, or the person was asked a question she was not prepared to answer.

(32) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. 1, 46-48**

> "It is entirely understandable that people are concerned about their ... homes, utility bills, cost of living. ***But*** ... the test for any government is when you are in difficult times, how do you perform – do you stand firm?"

5.2.5.1 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In direct speech, 62 examples of the pragmatic marker ***but*** have been detected and analysed. There were 32 pragmatic markers of ***but*** examined in the articles from the Guardian, in the Independent appeared 30 pragmatic markers of ***but*** in direct speech (see Table 7). The most frequent function of this marker in both newspapers was change of subject, followed by addition, contrast and summary.

Functions of But	The Guardian	The Independent	Total
Addition	8	2	**10**
Change of subject	6	5	**11**
Contrast	5	5	**10**
Disbelief	1	2	**3**
Emphasis	3	3	**6**
Only	0	1	**1**
Refusal	4	3	**7**
Summary	3	7	**10**
Time to think	2	2	**4**
Total	**32**	**30**	**62**

Table 7: Functions of pragmatic marker *But*, depending on the newspaper

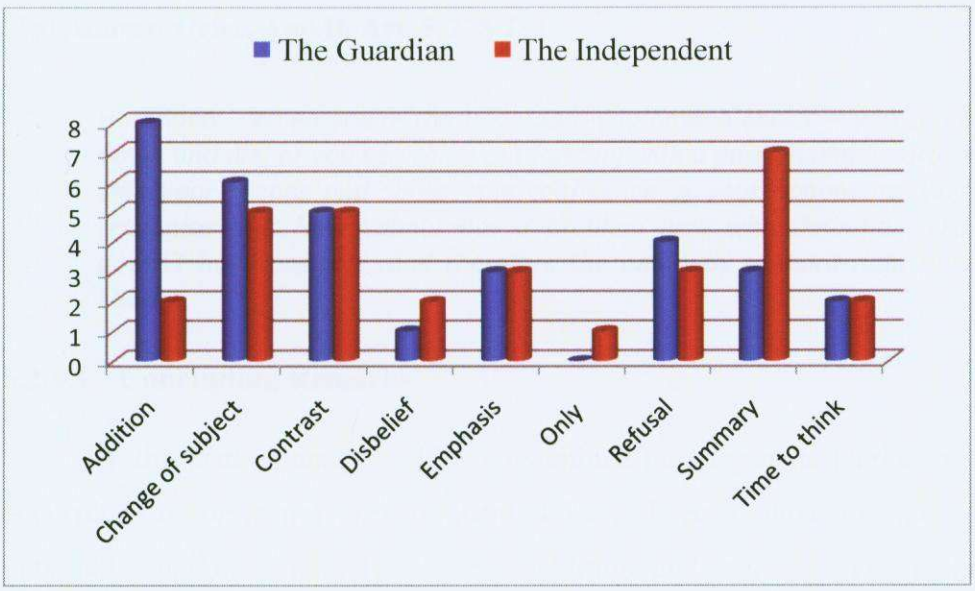


Figure 5: Pragmatic functions of *But* in direct speech, depending on the newspaper

Figure 5 shows the pragmatic functions of ***but*** in direct speech. In the Guardian, the most frequent function of the pragmatic marker ***but*** was addition. On the contrary, the function of summary was the most frequent function of ***but*** in the articles from the Independent. The pragmatic marker ***but*** occurs most frequently in the articles by Nick Watt (The Guardian).

Functions of But	Patrick Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
Addition	5	3	1	1	**10**
Change of subject	1	5	1	4	**11**
Contrast	2	3	3	2	**10**
Disbelief	0	1	1	1	**3**
Emphasis	1	2	1	2	**6**
Only	0	0	1	0	**1**
Refusal	1	3	3	0	**7**
Summary	1	2	3	4	**10**
Time to think	0	2	1	1	**4**
Total	**11**	**21**	**15**	**15**	**62**

Table 8: Functions of pragmatic marker *But*, depending on the journalist

(35) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 5, 278-283**

> He added: *"When you're the underdog, you have a choice – you can either lie down and die,* ***or*** *you can come out fighting with a passion and a purpose, which stirs your friends and shakes the confidence of your opponents. We have to recognise that New Labour has a problem now with definition. Old Labour doesn't have answers, and therefore the only way forward right now is bold Labour.*

5.2.6.1 Concluding Remarks

In this part of analysis, I have examined the pragmatic marker ***or***. As the occurrence of ***or*** is not very frequent, I have detected three meanings of this pragmatic marker – namely contrast, addition and warning. The meaning of addition is the most frequent. In Table 9, meanings of ***or*** depending on the journalists are shown.

Functions of Or	**Michael Wintour**	**Nick Watt**	**Andrew Grice**	**Michael Savage**	**Total**
Addition	1	3	2	3	**9**
Contrast	5	1	2	0	**8**
Warning	1	0	0	0	**1**
Total	**7**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**18**

Table 9: Functions of pragmatic marker *Or*, depending on the journalist

5.2.7 SO

Next, I am going to analyse the pragmatic marker ***so***. It occurs nine times in the corpus – there are six pragmatic markers of ***so*** to be analysed in the articles of the Guardian, only three examples of ***so*** have been detected in the articles of the Independent.

By Schiffrin(1994:191) the pragmatic marker ***so*** is described as following:

1. ***So*** is a complementary marker of main idea units.
2. ***So*** is a marker of main units by focusing on two discourse units.
3. ***So*** conveys a meaning of "result".
4. ***So*** can be used to preface information whose understanding is supplemented by information which has just become shared background.
5. ***So*** can mark an action which has just been motivated: request and account, compliance and justification, claim and grounds.
6. ***So*** marks speaker-continuation as an alternative to participant change in potential transition locations in talk.

McCarthy (1993) adds that ***so*** often occurs as a signal of closure of the text or as a point where topic may change. According to the entry from LDCE (2000:1363), the pragmatic marker ***so*** is much more common in spoken English. Though, this pragmatic marker will be examined in indirect speech as well.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

ASKING A QUESTION

The following situation takes place in the parliament. Mr Cameron gives reasons why the economical situation is in such a bad position thanks to the Tories. When he addresses another problem during his speech, one MP (Mr Balls) shouts at him, using the pragmatic marker ***so***.

(36) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 11, 632-637**

> Cameron was taunted during his response by Balls. When Cameron claimed in his response to the budget that Britain had the "highest tax burden in our history", Balls shouted "***so what?***", according to the Tory leader - a government

spokesman claimed Balls actually said "so weak". Cameron said to Balls: "I know he wants to be chancellor so badly it hurts. I have to tell him: another budget like the one we've heard and he won't have to wait long."

TIME TO THINK

In the following example (37), Mr Darling describes unpleasant situations while being exposed to British citizens in public places. He tells a story of being asked by a stranger at a petrol station. Firstly, he communicates what questions he was asked. Secondly, he adds his own view on the problem. ***So*** in example (37) is used by Mr Darling to gain time to think. The pragmatic marker ***so*** is followed by another pragmatic marker, namely ***of course***. Concerning the punctuation, ***so*** is preceded by a hyphen, which might suggest that the speaker, Mr Darling, might not know what to say at the current moment.

(37) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 14, 983-987**

Darling admits that he was recently challenged at a petrol station by a motorist struggling with the rising cost of petrol. "I was at a filling station recently and a chap said: *'I know it's to do with oil prices - but what are you going to do about it?' People think, well surely you can do something, you are responsible - **so** of course it reflects on me."*

MEANING OF RESULT

In my view, the following pragmatic marker ***so*** (38) conveys a meaning of result. Mrs Harman points out why it is not possible to speak about wearing veils and domestic violence in the Commons as there are 97% men. She suggests a solution and comes to the result of changing the topics for discussion.

(38) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 9, 530-536**

Harman said: "It is not just about how can people think we are a fair, open and representative democracy if we just do not look like that, but also the fact that we cannot have sensible debates on policy. We cannot sensibly discuss the veil (in the Commons) when there is no Muslim woman MP; it was impossible to discuss domestic violence when there was 97% men in the Commons.

"***So*** this is about changing the agenda for debate, as well as changing public perception of the Commons."

RETURN TO THE PREVIOUS TOPIC

Firstly, Mrs Harman comments the polls and the position of the Tories. Secondly, she admits being a bit worried. The pragmatic marker ***so*** expresses Mrs. Harman´s wish to return to the previous topic. At the end, she stresses how the Tories need to act in the future.

(39) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 4, 223-227**

> Speaking on the day a poll showed the Tories just over 50% for the first time, she admitted: "Of course, Labour people are concerned by Labour's standing in the opinion polls but they also know it mirrors exactly the situation in the economy, so when the economy is on a downturn, people are holding the government to account, and fair enough, ***so*** we have to act decisively, and we have."

PREFACE A CONCLUSION

In my view, the last pragmatic marker ***so*** being analysed here prefaces a conclusion of Ms Jowell, who describes (I suppose to voters), what will happen if Boris Johnson becomes the Mayor of London.

(40) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 2, 72-79**

> "London needs a serious candidate for a serious job. The dividing line is between a serious candidate who gets things done for London and the very risky choice is someone who is amiable but incompetent."
>
> Although Mr Paddick is refusing to tell his backers how to cast their second vote, Ms Jowell said: "Brian Paddick is not going to win. ***So*** anyone who votes Liberal has to imagine what it would mean to wake up and find Boris Johnson as Mayor. Imagine Johnson being in charge of a £39bn transport budget and the £16bn Crossrail project."

To sum up, I have examined nine pragmatic markers ***so*** being detected in direct speech. Table 10 shows numbers as well as functions in detail, depending on the journalist. The most frequent function of the pragmatic marker so in direct speech was the meaning of result.

Functions of So	P.Wintour	N.Watt	A.Grice	M.Savage	Total
Preface a conclusion	1	0	1	0	**2**
Meaning of result	1	1	1	1	**4**
Asking a question	0	1	0	0	**1**
Return to a previous topic	1	0	0	0	**1**
Time to think	0	1	0	0	**1**
Total	**3**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**9**

Table 10: Functions of pragmatic marker *So*, depending on the journalist

5.2.8 WELL

Well is the next pragmatic marker where occurrence is not frequent. In the analysis, ***well*** appears seven times in the articles of Patrick Wintour (Art.N. 4,5,9) and Nick Watt(Art. N. 14, 17).

As McCarthy (1993:176) states," well often occurs near the beginning of the text, anticipating or offering a response to a predictable reaction of the reader". ***Well*** is also examined by Schiffrin(1987:103), who defines well as a "marker of response".

Next, I would like to take into consideration the entry from LDCE (2000:1625), where ***well*** is described as following:

1. You use ***well*** before a statement or question to emphasize it.
2. You use ***well*** pause or give yourself time to think before saying something.
3. You use ***well*** to show that you accept a situation even though you feel disappointed or annoyed by it.
4. You use ***well*** to express surprise or amusement.
5. You use ***well*** to express anger or disapproval.
6. You use ***well*** to show that you are about to finish speaking or stop doing an activity.
7. You use ***well*** to express doubt or the fact that you are not sure about something.
8. You use ***well*** to connect two parts of a story that you are telling people especially in order to make it seem more interesting.
9. You use ***well*** to demand an explanation or answer when you are angry with someone.

Based on the entry of LDCE, ***well*** is more common in spoken English than in written English. In the case of our thesis, several explanations of ***well*** have been chosen to be applied on the examples which follow.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

EMPHASIS

Harriet Harman, the Labour deputy leader, discusses what the Labour party needs to do in the financial crises. She gives opinions on what topics should be addressed at the upcoming conference. Finally, she expresses her opinion on the possibilities of the Labour party to win the elections. In my opinion, she uses well to emphasize what she is going to say next. The pragmatic marker can be understood as a request for evaluation. As the intonation is missing, it is hard to examine the pragmatic function of ***well*** in this example, as it can be an emphasis, as well as a request for evaluation.

(41) **Patrick Wintour, App.I., Art.4, 236-238**

> Clearly expecting Brown to secure a big emotional endorsement at the conference, she said: "People ask me whether we are going to lose the next election; ***well,*** the predictions can all be wrong. They were in 1992 , and we can win the next election."

From my point of view, the second example of ***well*** expresses an emphasis again. The person, who gives her opinion about the attitude of Westminster, is Harriet Harman again. By using a pragmatic marker ***well*** she wants to point out that the parliament is capable of a change like Mr Obama.

(42) **Patrick Wintour, App.I., Art.9, 510-512**

> Harman told the Guardian: "Obama said famously 'yes we can'. ***Well,*** this is Westminster saying 'yes we can'. If parliament votes for this, it is voting to change itself and to recognise that parliament has a problem."

ANSWER TO A QUESTION

The following utterance had been recorded during a show on TV; afterwards some utterances of Mr Brown were used in an article by Patrick Wintour. In my opinion, the pragmatic marker ***well*** can be examined as following here - it can be analysed as a pragmatic marker which is preceded by a question, possibly asked by a presenter. Mr Brown takes time to think about his response. As he repeats the same answer for three times, the question took him possibly by surprise.

(43) **Patrick Wintour, App.I., Art.5, 282-284**

> The prime minister told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show: "***Well,*** I want to do better, obviously. I always want to do better. I mean my whole sort of ethos in life, my school motto was 'I will try my utmost'. I want to do better always."

TIME TO THINK

In example (44), Darling tells a story of being addressed by an unknown citizen at a petrol station. First of all, he reports what the man asked him about, and then he comments on what people might think about him. In my opinion, ***well*** is used to give Mr Darling time to think about what people´s opinion might be on him. He is an important person in politics, it is time before the elections and therefore correct usage of words, especially when talking to people ("the possible voters") has to be thought about carefully.

(44) **Nick Watt, App.II., Art.14, 983-987**

> Darling admits that he was recently challenged at a petrol station by a motorist struggling with the rising cost of petrol. "I was at a filling station recently and a chap said: 'I know it's to do with oil prices - but what are you going to do about it?' People think, ***well surely*** you can do something, you are responsible - so of course it reflects on me."

SURPISE

Darling, the chancellor and an old friend of Mr. Brown, is, without any doubt, very surprised by the question of a journalist. Not only does he use the interjection "er" at the beginning of his utterance. It is difficult for him to think about what to say next; therefore he uses well again to get some more time to think. Moreover, he uses another pragmatic marker, namely ***you know***, to gain even more time for his reply.

(45) **Nick Watt, App.II., Art.14, 1007-1009**

> Asked why Brown has not done so, Darling falters as he says: "***Er, well. Well,*** it's always difficult, you know ... But Gordon in September, up to party conference, has got the opportunity to do that. And he will do that. It's absolutely imperative."

ACCEPTANCE

In my view, the following pragmatic marker has a function of acceptance of a situation. In my opinion, Mr Galloway expresses his opinion about the situation as well as atmosphere in politics. From my point of view, he seems to be disappointed by the whole problem; therefore he asks questions at the end.

(46) **Nick Watt, App.II., Art.17, 1172-1176**

> George Galloway, the Respect MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, added: "***Well,*** the Liberals sound like Labour and the Conservatives like Communists - the kaleidoscope has definitely been shaken. But while the pieces are in flux, why don't we reorder this world? What's so wrong about the taxpayer having a seat in the boardroom?"

5.2.9 YOU KNOW

Pragmatic marker ***You know*** is the last pragmatic marker to be analysed in this thesis. It occurs only two times in Article N.14 by Nick Watt from the Guardian.

While I have dealt with discourse analysis focused on politics for a long time, ***you know*** is usually among pragmatic markers frequently uttered by politicians. Moreover, it is typical for spoken discourse; therefore one would expect the pragmatic marker to occur more often, as the corpus deals with more than 8.000 expressions in direct speech.

Based on the entry in LDCE (2000:781), ***you know*** has the following meanings.

1. You use ***you know*** to emphasize a statement (spoken).
2. You use ***you know*** when you need to keep someone´s attention, but cannot think of what to say next (spoken).
3. You use ***you know*** when you are explaining or describing something and want to give more information (spoken).

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

TIME TO THINK

Concerning the two examples of ***you know*** in the corpus, they correspond with the meanings mentioned above. In (47), Alistair Darling is taken by surprise while he was asked why Mr Brown cannot communicate Labour´s mission to voters. This is the first and only example in the corpus, where a politician is exposed to immediate response. Moreover, his reaction is noted down and transmitted with all his hesitation and uncertainty to the readers. His reply starts with an interjection "er", followed by the pragmatic marker well (it appears twice in sequence), and finally he uses the pragmatic marker ***you know***, which is afterwards followed by a pause. As it can be seen from the occurrence as well as frequency of different pragmatic markers, Mr Darling does not know how to answer the journalist´s question. The pragmatic marker ***you know*** helps him to gain even more time to think about his reply for the question. In my opinion, he is

unsuccessful in doing so as the answer does not really answer what the journalist asked about. From my point of view, the following pragmatic marker ***you know*** could be analysed as a signal of the speaker (Mr Darling) to relinquish the floor. As it can be seen from the previous utterance, he finds answering the question difficult or even unpleasant to talk about. Unfortunately, the intonation is missing here and therefore it is difficult to analyse the real function of this pragmatic marker.

(47) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art.14, 1007-1009**

> Asked why Brown has not done so, Darling falters as he says: *"Er, well. Well, it's always difficult,* ***you know*** *... But Gordon in September, up to party conference, has got the opportunity to do that. And he will do that. It's absolutely imperative."*

EMPHASIS

In the second example, the pragmatic marker ***you know*** is used when Mr Darling tries to describe why he does not like personal interviews. He connects this fact with the reason why he thinks of himself as not "a great politician". From my point of view, he uses ***you know*** to emphasize the statement. Possibly, he might draw the attention of hearers (the journalists in this case) as well.

(48) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 14, 1010-1013**

> Darling even describes himself as "not a great politician". Saying how he usually avoids personal interviews and photographs, he says maybe *"that's why I'm not a great politician.* ***You know,*** *I'm not very good at looking at pictures and subjecting them to the equivalent of textual analysis".*

5.3 Concluding Remarks

5.3.1 Quantitative Approach

In this part of the thesis, I have attempted to analyse pragmatic markers in direct speech. Firstly, the quantitative approach was applied. In direct speech, I have examined 8.610 expressions, whereas 205 pragmatic markers were detected. Table 12 shows the total number of expressions in direct speech, the total number of expressions depending on each journalist. Last but not least, the frequency of pragmatic markers examined in direct speech was counted depending on the lengths as well as total number of pragmatic markers concerning individual journalists.

Pragmatic Markers	Michael Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
And	21	32	33	14	**100**
Because	1	2	4	0	**7**
But	10	22	15	15	**62**
Or	7	4	4	3	**18**
So	3	3	2	1	**9**
Well	3	4	0	0	**7**
You know	0	2	0	0	**2**
Total	**45**	**69**	**58**	**33**	**205**

Table 11: Total number of pragmatic markers in direct speech, depending on the journalist

NEWSPAPER	Expressions	Number of PM	Frequency
The Guardian			
Patrick Wintour	1.845	45	**41**
Nick Watt	2.736	69	**40**
The Independent			
Andrew Grice	2.480	58	**43**
Michael Savage	1.549	33	**47**
Total	**8.610**	**205**	

Table 12: Total number of expressions, total number of pragmatic markers and the frequency of pragmatic markers in direct speech, depending on each journalist

Conclusion:

1, The most frequent pragmatic marker in direct speech is ***and***, followed by ***but*** and ***or***.

2, The least frequent pragmatic marker in direct speech is ***you know***.

2, The highest number of expressions in direct speech appear in the articles by Nick Watt. Moreover, the highest number of pragmatic markers occurs in the articles by Nick Watt.

3, The most frequent users of pragmatic markers in direct speech are the interviewees in the articles by Nick Watt.

4, The highest number of pragmatic markers in direct speech occur in the article by Nick Watt (The Guardian – Art.15)

5.3.2 Qualitative Approach

During the analysis, different pragmatic markers were subjected to the analysis. The most frequent pragmatic marker in all articles was the pragmatic marker ***and***. The most frequent function of ***and*** was addition of information, followed by connection of events and continuation.

The second most frequent pragmatic marker in direct speech was the pragmatic marker ***but***. The most frequent function of this pragmatic marker was change of the subject, followed by addition, contrast and summary.

The other pragmatic markers being analysed in this thesis – ***because, or, so, well, you know*** – did not occur frequently in the corpus. Though, their functions were analysed in detail.

To my surprise, typical spoken pragmatic markers like ***so, well*** and ***you know*** occurred very rarely. In political debates and discussions of politicians on TV or radio these pragmatic markers are used very frequently. In my opinion, in this analysis they were used on purpose by journalists to show weakness of their interviewees (hesitation to answer questions, surprise or emphasising the need to

gain time to think). Firstly, it can be assumed that the journalists wanted to ridicule their interviewees in front of their readers (see Art.14 by Nick Watt). Secondly, the gender of the interviewees might have played an important role (see Art.4,5 by Patrick Wintour).

Last but not least, pragmatic markers analysed in direct speech do not include all pragmatic markers in the corpus. The following pragmatic markers have been detected in the utterance, though for their low frequency or insufficient utterances in the context, they have not been analysed – ***I think, of course, if, I mean, now*** etc.

6 INDIRECT SPEECH

In the following part of the thesis I am going to attempt to examine pragmatic markers typical for indirect speech in the articles (journalist´s utterance). Firstly, I would like to pay attention to differences I have detected while I was analysing the two types of discourse. Secondly, I will focus on pragmatic markers in indirect speech in detail.

Before the analysis of written pragmatic markers, I had examined the spoken discourse first. Personally, I consider spoken discourse more interesting to examine as spoken language gives evidence about many different aspects of everyday life. When people speak, e.g. on the street, it is easier to elicit from their utterances how old they are, what they possibly do for a living, their place of origin or their immediate mood. On the contrary, when reading a newspaper article, as it is the case of this analysis, to answer the above mentioned questions, I presume, would be highly impossible.

As Chapter 5 dealt with spoken discourse being re-written as written discourse, I have examined only a limited number of pragmatic markers and their functions typical for this type of discourse. Moreover, the number of pragmatic markers in indirect speech (journalist´s utterance) being analysed in this thesis is less frequent than in direct speech.

From my point of view, the occurrence of pragmatic markers in "journalist´s utterance" being analysed in the articles of the Guardian and the Independent is not very frequent. On one hand, as I have stressed in Chapter 2, journalists are independent in terms of time and language tools while they write articles. Therefore, they can examine them in detail – they are given power to publish what they find important. Though, I would assume that they will try to show their readers where the discourse is. According to McCarthy (1993:172), this is the key function of pragmatic markers. He claims that pragmatic markers are a "system of management of what is said and written". To my surprise, such indicators appear rarely in the chosen corpus.

When one deals with relevant literature focused on spoken pragmatic markers, there are many linguists who work in the field of pragmatics and discourse analysis, e.g. Schiffrin, Aijmer, Brinton, Urbanová. On the contrary, there are not many linguists who treat written pragmatic markers with sufficient attention. Firstly, there are several linguists who mention written pragmatic markers in their works (Aijmer and Stenström 2004, Biber 1988). However, such attention as Schiffrin (1987) devoted to analyse spoken pragmatic markers and their functions cannot be found in the field of analysis of written pragmatic markers. Secondly, as there are no references to written pragmatic markers – neither a list of written pragmatic markers, nor a list of their functions can be studied as by Schiffrin. Though, there has been one linguist who has dedicated more attention to written pragmatic markers (or spoken pragmatic markers in written texts) than any other, namely Michael McCarthy (1993, Carter and McCarthy 2006a, McCarthy and O´Dell 2006b).

6.1 Quantitative Approach

In comparison with the corpus of transmitted "spoken discourse" in the previous section, which consisted of 8.610 expressions, the following section is going to deal with more than 22.171 expressions. In direct speech, a number of 205 pragmatic markers were analysed. One would expect that the more expressions there are to be analysed, the more pragmatic markers will be detected. Unfortunately, during my analysis, only 82 pragmatic markers were chosen for the analysis of pragmatic markers occurring in indirect speech.

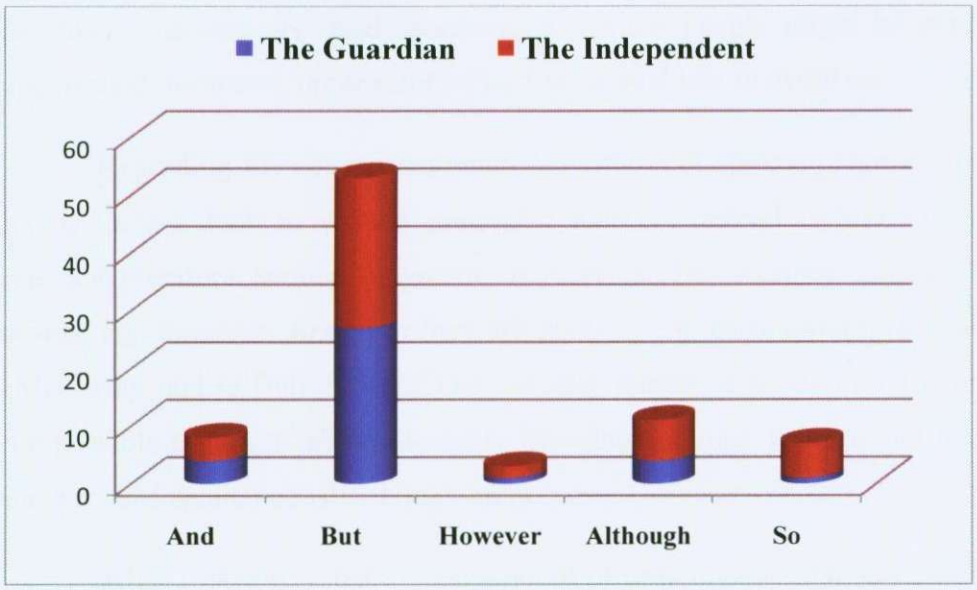


Figure 6: Occurrence of All Pragmatic Markers in Indirect Speech

Newspaper	AND	BUT	HOWEVER	ALTHOUGH	SO	Total
The Guardian	4	27	1	4	1	**37**
The Independent	4	26	2	7	6	**45**
Total	**8**	**53**	**3**	**11**	**7**	**82**

Table 13:Total number of pragmatic markers in indirect speech, depending on the newspapers

The most frequent pragmatic marker in indirect speech is the pragmatic marker ***but***, followed by ***although*** and the pragmatic marker ***and*** (see Figure 6, Table 13).

6.2 Qualitative Approach

Next, I am going to examine written pragmatic markers in detail, analysing them in context. As the analysis of written pragmatic markers will follow, what is the difference between spoken and written pragmatic markers apart from what discourse they occur in? Firstly, spoken pragmatic markers are usually short, monosyllabic words like ***and, but, well*** or two-word expressions like of ***you know, of course*** etc. Secondly, they can appear in any position within a sentence – front, middle or final position. Thirdly, they do not have to be divided within sentences by commas to be detected as pragmatic markers. Fourthly, spoken

pragmatic markers are used spontaneously while people might be exposed to unexpected questions, unpleasant topics they would like to avoid etc.

Regarding the above mentioned description of spoken pragmatic markers, let us have a look at written pragmatic markers instead. While studying the relevant literature, written pragmatic markers can be described as more syllabic words, e.g. ***however, firstly***, or they are phrases, e.g. ***in summary, in conclusion*** (McCarthy and O´Dell 2006b). They usually appear sentence-initially, and they are possible to detect within discourse by using commas. Last but not least, they are not used spontaneously, though on purpose.

After I have devoted a great amount of time to examination of the articles from the corpus, I decided to analyse the following pragmatic markers in "journalist´s utterance".

6.2.1 Spoken Pragmatic Markers

While analysing the indirect speech ("journalist´s utterance"), I have come across three interesting occurrences of discourse markers typical for spoken discourse. As they were described in detail in the previous section, I am going to focus only on some examples.

AND

Firstly, I am going to focus on the pragmatic marker ***and***, which has been already treated in the previous chapter. Schiffrin (1987) suggests that the pragmatic marker ***and*** is a discourse connective. In indirect speech, the pragmatic marker ***and*** appears in eight utterances of the journalists. Table 14 shows detailed analysis of its functions, depending on the journalist.

ADDITION

In example (49), Nick Watt uses the pragmatic marker ***and*** at the beginning of a paragraph. The pragmatic marker is followed by comma. In my view, he does not only desire to add some more information about Mr Johnson, but he also wants to

attract his reader's attention to focus more on what is coming next. Possibly, he might wish to emphasise the following message.

(49) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 12, 861-865**

> Asked how he felt about the BNP advising its supporters to give him their second-preference votes, he reached for Virgil: "Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis tempus eget" (Not such aid nor such defenders does the time require).
>
> ***And***, before mooching off to Oxfam to browse the secondhand books, he had a confession to make about his highly motivated PR people: "They scare me, too."

EMPHASIS

In the following example (50), the pragmatic marker and is used by Nick Watt to emphasise the anger of MPs towards the Speaker. The pragmatic marker is preceded by a comma. Again, the attention of readers is graphically drawn to the upcoming message.

(50) **Nick Watt, App.I, Art. 20, 1321-1324**

> Martin, who was kept fully informed about the arrest, singled out Jill Pay, the new serjeant at arms, for failing to consult the clerk of the house, Dr Malcolm Jack.
>
> MPs from across the house maintained the attack on the Speaker yesterday for failing to show greater command of his staff - ***and*** for blaming a subordinate.

Functions of And	Patrick Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
Addition	1	1	0	1	**3**
Connections of events	0	0	0	1	**1**
Change of the subject	0	0	0	2	**2**
Emphasis	0	2	0	0	**2**
Total	**1**	**3**	**0**	**4**	**8**

Table 14: Functions of pragmatic marker And, depending on the journalist

BUT

To my surprise, the most frequent pragmatic marker in indirect speech (journalist's utterance) has been ***but***. As I was examining ***but*** as a spoken pragmatic marker, the entry from LDCE (2000:173) describes ***but*** together with

however. Moreover, Schiffrin (1987) argues that ***but*** and ***however*** are interchangeable, the entry supports Schiffrin's opinion as it says that "however is used especially in more formal writing, often with commas before and after it in the middle of a sentence".

While analysing the indirect speech, I have observed the fact that in many articles by all journalists, new paragraphs begin with ***but*** at the beginning. This is a contrast to the entry in LDCE (2000) as it mentions that ***but*** does not usually appear in the front position.

Instead of organising a formal text by using, e.g. ***next, firstly, finally, in sum*** etc. paragraphs and, moreover, contrasts between different information presented in the articles are preceded by the pragmatic marker ***but***.

Table 15 presents the results of examining the pragmatic marker but in indirect speech. The highest number of the pragmatic marker ***but*** appears in the articles by Patrick Wintour (The Guardian). The most common function of ***but*** in indirect speech is introduction of contrast, followed by addition of information.

CRITICAL DISAGREEMENT

Concerning the context of the pragmatic marker but (51), such an answer would be expected in spoken discourse. Here, Andrew Grice uses the pragmatic marker to show critical disagreement between what was expected from Mr Brown and his actual reaction.

(51) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 3, 104-111**

> The Prime Minister is normally at pains to avoid being compared with other figures but his guard dropped in an interview with New Statesman, published today, in which the interviewer, Gloria De Piero, suggested to Mr Brown that many women viewed him as a Heathcliff-like figure.
>
> Given that the character is famed for his vindictive side, the Prime Minister might have been expected to recoil in horror at such a comparison. ***But no***. "Absolutely correct," he replied, before adding: "Well, maybe an older Heathcliff, a wiser Heathcliff."

CONTRAST

Andrew Grice uses the pragmatic marker ***but*** to introduce a contrast between two statements. Firstly, a situation when Mr Cameron speaks about the values in the UK is mentioned. As Andrew Grice wants to change the topic, he uses that pragmatic marker to draw attention of his readers that a change in Mr Cameron´s speech is about to come.

(52) **Andrew Grice, App.II, Art. 6, 272-280**

> Mr Cameron said: "You can't prove you're ready to be prime minister – and it would be arrogant to pretend you can." He admitted that experience was important in the global financial crisis but argued that "character and judgement" mattered more.
>
> Turning Mr Brown's argument on its head, Mr Cameron said "the risk" was in not making the change needed to rebuild the economy and repair Britain's "broken society". He delighted the Tory faithful by playing traditional tunes about responsibility, a smaller state and marriage. ***But***, at the same time he told delegates the causes of crime had to be tackled and prepared them for some tough economic medicine.

Functions of But	Patrick Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
Addition	3	6	4	6	**19**
Contrast	8	5	4	8	**25**
Change of the subject	0	1	1	0	**2**
Critical disagreement	0	0	1	0	**1**
Emphasis	4	0	2	0	**6**
Total	**15**	**12**	**12**	**14**	**53**

Table 15: Functions of pragmatic marker *But*, depending on the journalist

SO

The pragmatic marker so and its functions have been already addressed in the previous chapter. As the expression appears only in seven utterances in indirect speech, I am going to outline their function, depending on the journalist, in Table 16.

Functions of So	Patrick Wintour	Michael Savage	Total
Preface to a conclusion	0	2	**2**
Meaning of result	1	2	**3**
Asking a question	0	2	**3**

Total	1	6	7

Table 16: Functions of pragmatic marker *So*, depending on the journalist

6.2.2 Written Pragmatic Markers

HOWEVER

To the pragmatic marker however the attention has been paid in connection with but. As Schiffrin states, the pragmatic marker ***but*** and ***however*** are interchangeable. Therefore, their functions in the corpus are similar. Though, as there are only three occurrences of the pragmatic marker ***however*** in indirect speech, there has been only one function detected – namely contrast.

CONTRAST

I suppose that ***however*** in (53) signifies an upcoming contrast between the information. Patrick Wintour might want to catch reader´s attention, while positioning the pragmatic marker into the front position.

(53) **Patrick Wintour, App.I, Art. 7, 349-353**

> Brown made his dramatic act of reconciliation to the arch-Blairite as a Guardian/ICM poll showed that the Conservatives had secured a post-conference fillip, boosting their lead over Labour by three points to 12 points.
>
> ***However***, 55% of voters think the prime minister has handled the economic situation well, against only 39% who say he has performed badly.

ALTHOUGH

The last pragmatic marker analysed in this thesis is the pragmatic marker ***although***. Its occurrence is more typical for written discourse. Concerning the entry from LDCE (2000), another meanings of although are ***but*** or ***however***.

As there are only three journalists, who used the pragmatic marker although in their "journalist´s utterance", the variety of functions is limited. The most frequent function of the pragmatic marker although is to introduce a contrast.

TIME TO THINK

In my opinion, the pragmatic marker although is used by Andre Grice to express his doubts concerning the message he will deliver. As far as I am concerned, he gives his readers evidence that he needs time to think about what to write actually.

(54) **Andrew Grice, App. II, Art. 6, 237-245**

> Mr Lewis believes that Mr Brown has been too cautious. "If we as a government are going to be given permission to talk to people about the other issues that matter, we have got to reassure people – through actions not words – that we are on their side," he said. Insisting that Mr Brown could still lead Labour to an election victory, he said the party would lose unless it helped people through the economic storm and showed "a new idealism, purpose and passion". He said the fightback should be based on fairness, opportunity and community. ***Although***.... he opposed punitive tax rises out of "dogma or ideology", he called for tax changes to protect "the quality of life" of people on low and middle incomes during the economic squeeze.

Other functions of the pragmatic marker although are as following:

Patrick Wintour – contrast, addition

Nick Watt – change of the subject, contrast

Andrew Grice – contrast, time to think

6.3 Concluding Remarks

In the indirect speech, more than 22.000 expressions have been analysed. Though, only 82 pragmatic markers were detected. The examined pragmatic markers here are as following: typical spoken pragmatic markers *and, but* and *so*, and pragmatic markers *however* and *although*. Unfortunately, typical written pragmatic markers could not be analysed in this thesis as their occurrence and frequency was limited. Most of them occurred only once in the corpus – e.g. Patrick Wintour (meanwhile, at this point), Nick Watt (firstly, secondly), Andrew Grice (overall, significantly, shortly, privately), Michael Savage (in fact, in other words, in short, as a result, in principle).

From the quantitative point of view, the most common expression in indirect speech was the pragmatic marker *but*, followed by *and* (see Table 18). As in the direct speech, the most common function of the above mentioned pragmatic markers is addition of information, or introduction of a contrast.

Table 17 represents the results of the total number of expressions in indirect speech, the total number of expressions depending on each journalist. Last but not least, the frequency of pragmatic markers examined in indirect speech was counted depending on the lengths as well as total number of pragmatic markers concerning individual journalists. As the results of Table 14 show, the most frequent user of pragmatic markers in indirect speech is Andrew Grice (The Independent), who is followed by Michael Savage (The Independent). In conclusion, the journalists from The Independent are more frequent users of pragmatic markers in indirect speech.

NEWSPAPER	Expressions	Number of PM	Frequency
The Guardian			
Patrick Wintour	5.618	20	281
Nick Watt	6.510	17	383
The Independent			
Andrew Grice	4.071	20	204
Michael Savage	5.975	25	239
Total	**22.174**	**82**	

Table 17: Total number of expressions, total number of pragmatic markers and the frequency of pragmatic markers in direct speech, depending on each journalist

Pragmatic Markers	Patrick Wintour	Nick Watt	Andrew Grice	Michael Savage	Total
And	1	3	0	4	**8**
But	15	12	12	14	**53**
However	1	0	1	1	**3**
Although	2	2	7	0	**11**
So	1	0	0	6	**7**
Total	**20**	**17**	**20**	**25**	**82**

Table 18: Total number of pragmatic markers in indirect speech, depending on the journalist

7 Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to analyse pragmatic markers in newspaper articles. Forty articles were subjected to an analysis – 20 articles from The Guardian and 20 articles from The Independent. The research was applied in direct as well as indirect speech.

At the beginning of the thesis, a condition was set – the corpus should have included only articles, which were published on the front page of the above mentioned newspapers. During my research for the required data, it became evident that such condition will not be possible to fulfil. Nowadays, front pages of newspapers present pictures, graphs, "catchy" headlines to attract their readers´ attention. Therefore, to choose suitable data for the analysis was not an easy task.

Though, after selecting from more than 1.500 articles, I have decided to examine only 40 articles, where pragmatic markers occur. Furthermore, they share the following unifying features. Firstly, they were published in the British newspapers. Secondly, they were written by white male journalists – there are ten articles to be examined by each journalist. Thirdly, they were published between February and December 2008. Fourthly, they share a common topic – namely the UK politics. Last but not least, they were published either on the front page, or in the main section of the newspapers.

Before the analysis itself, I paid attention to the relevant terminology connected with discourse. Media discourse as well as newspaper discourse was introduced. Moreover, I focused on differences between spoken and written discourse, typical features of language of newspaper reporting were observed and described in detail. Next, the term "pragmatic marker" was examined from different linguistic views. Furthermore, I attempt to define the corpus of this thesis.

In Chapter 5 pragmatic markers typical for spoken discourse were analysed. For this analysis, six pragmatic markers were chosen – namely *and, because, but, or, so, well* and *you know*. In addition, there were two conditions I required them to fulfil. Firstly, the chosen pragmatic marker has to be treated as a

pragmatic marker not only by Schiffrin, but also by Aijmer and Brinton. Secondly, the pragmatic marker occurs at least two times in the corpus.

At first, a quantitative approach was applied while analysing spoken pragmatic markers. The total number of markers in direct speech was counted (see Table 3), as there appeared 205 pragmatic markers being analysed in spoken discourse. Furthermore, the highest number of pragmatic markers occurs in the articles by Nick Watt (The Guardian). In addition, he is the most frequent user of pragmatic markers in direct speech – every 40th word in the utterances of his interviewees is a pragmatic marker.

Secondly, pragmatic markers were observed from a qualitative point of view. Table 11 shows that the most common expression in direct speech, was the pragmatic marker *and*. The second most frequently used pragmatic marker became the marker *but*, followed by *or*. Primarily, their most common function in direct speech was to add information, change the subject of the discussion, or introduce contrast. The following pragmatic markers *because, so, well* and *you know*, occurred rarely.

Concerning the occurrence as well as frequency of the pragmatic markers *so, well* and *you know*, which frequently occur in spoken discourse, the analysis confirmed that language of interviewees in newspaper articles is different from the language they use in political debates or interviews on TV or radio. Utterances being included in newspaper articles are re-written by the journalists. As it is obvious in this thesis, typical spoken pragmatic markers like *so, well* and *you know* occurred only in a few utterances. Mostly, they were used and observed in utterances, where the topic was unknown or unpleasant for the interviewees to talk about. Moreover, they were used by the journalists on purpose to show hesitation or inability of interviewees to respond immediately to the given subject. Furthermore, it can be stated that journalist attempt to ridicule these interviewees in front of their readers in comparison with others.

While analysing pragmatic markers in direct speech, I have experienced several obstacles that made the analysis complicated. Firstly, the

journalists paid insufficient attention to punctuation. In addition, I pointed out in the thesis that, e.g. one statement can be noted differently by two different journalists. Secondly, the frequency of the pragmatic markers being detected in direct speech was not very high. As spoken discourse is re-written by journalists, they can modify not only facts according to their political beliefs, but also utterances of their interviewees.

This conclusion shows that occurrence of pragmatic markers depends on individual journalists. When they decide to omit them, readers have to power to influence the flow of a discourse. Regarding this fact, I did not examine pragmatic markers according to their position in the sentence. In my view, one can never be sure whether the word order is the word order used by interviewees or not. Last but not least, it is not easy to analyse a discourse, where some parts of spoken discourse are missing. Therefore, analysing functions of spoken pragmatic markers is not always clear and easy.

On the contrary, Chapter 6 focuses on the analysis of typical written discourse markers. As there were not many spoken discourse markers to be analysed in the thesis, the occurrence of typical written discourse is even more limited. Surprisingly, journalists do not use pragmatic markers to show their readers how the discourse develops. Mostly, they just state facts – the most important information is presented in the first paragraph, direct speech can be detected usually at the second half of the articles. This leads to a conclusion that articles are not always coherent as readers are not shown where the discourse is.

In indirect speech (journalist´s utterance), the following pragmatic markers were examined – typical spoken pragmatic markers *and, but* and *so*, and pragmatic markers *however* and *although*. Unfortunately, typical written pragmatic markers could not be analysed in this thesis as their occurrence and frequency was limited. Most of them occurred only once in the corpus – e.g. firstly, in short, as a result etc. In indirect speech, the most common expression was the pragmatic marker *but*, followed by *and* (see Table 18). As these pragmatic markers were analysed in direct speech, their functions in indirect speech are similar – they are used while journalists add information, or introduce

a contrast. Compared to direct speech, in indirect speech the most frequent user of pragmatic marker is Andrew Grice from The Independent (see Table 17). Though, the highest number of pragmatic markers occurred in the articles by Michael Savage.

Finally, occurrence of all analysed pragmatic markers, depending on individual journalists, was examined. Table 1 presents that the most frequent user of pragmatic markers, depending on their occurrence in direct as well as indirect speech, has been Andrew Grice from The Independent; the second comes Nick Watt from The Guardian. Patrick Wintour is the third most frequent user of pragmatic markers (The Guardian). However, Andrew Grice and his interviewees are considered to be the most frequent users of pragmatic markers in direct and indirect ("journalist´s utterance) speech, the highest number of pragmatic markers occurred in the articles by Nick Watt (The Guardian).

In conclusion, pragmatic markers could not be analysed in detail in this thesis, as discourse studies many different aspects of language. Moreover, such analysis would be out of scope of this thesis. From my point of view, the limited number of pragmatic markers detected in the corpus can be explained as following – firstly, the common topic is the UK politics. Secondly, the articles were published in serious British newspapers. Thirdly, the articles are an example of formal written discourse, which includes re-written spoken discourse. In my view, it would be exciting to analyse spoken discourse before it was re-written by the journalists. Comparison of former utterances of interviewees with what was then published in the articles would be an interesting research of other specific issues of pragmatic markers.

Resumé

Cílem diplomové práce bylo analyzovat pragmatické markery v novinových článcích. Analýze bylo podrobeno 40 článků – 20 článků z novin The Guardian a 20 článků z novin The Independent. Výzkum byl aplikován v přímé i nepřímé řeči.

Na samém začátku práce byla stanovena podmínka, kdy měl zkoumaný korpus obsahovat pouze články, které byly otisknuty na přední stránce výše uvedených novin. Při hledání požadovaných článků bylo ale jasné, že tato podmínka nebude moci být splněna. V současné době obsahují přední stránky novin fotky, grafy, „přitažlivé" nadpisy za účelem přitáhnout pozornost svých čtenářů. Z tohoto důvodu nebyl výběr požadovaných dat jednoduchým úkolem.

Za účelem vhodného výběru dat jsem prošla více 1500 článků. Nakonec bylo vybráno 40 článků, kde se pragmatické markery vyskytují. Podařilo se mi shromáždit články, které nesou následující společné rysy – byly publikovány v britských novinách na titulní straně či v hlavní části v časovém rozmezí od února do prosince 2008, jejich společným tématem je politika ve Spojeném království. V neposlední řadě jsou napsány žurnalisty mužského pohlaví bílé pleti – od každého žurnalisty je v práci analyzováno 10 článků.

Před samotnou analýzou jsem se zaměřila na vysvětlení relevantní terminologie, která je spojena s diskursem. Nejprve byl představen mediální diskurs, tak jako diskurs novinový. Dále byla pozornost věnována rozdílům mezi mluveným a psaným diskursem, dále pak typickým znakům jazyka novinových reportáží. Posléze byl představen korpus této práce.

V kapitole 5 byly analyzovány pragmatické markery typické pro mluvený diskurs. Pro tuto analýzu bylo vybráno 6 pragmatických markerů – konkrétně *and, because, but, or, so, well* a *you know*. Důležitým faktorem pro výběr markerů byla jejich frekvence v rámci korpusu – analyzovány byly všechny markery, které se alespoň dvakrát objevily v přímé řeči. Druhá podmínka se týkala jejich uznání mezi lingvisty – pokud byl marker považován za „pragmatický marker" nejen u Schiffrin, ale také u Brinton a Aijmer, byl analyzován.

Nejprve byly analyzovány pragmatické markery v mluveném diskursu z kvantitativního hlediska. Celkový počet pragmatických markerů byl spočítán (viz. Tabulka 3), kdy bylo v mluveném diskursu analyzováno 205 pragmatických markerů. Největší počet markerů se objevil v článcích Nicka Watta (The Guardian). S tím souvisí i fakt, že byl také vyhodnocen jako nejfrekventovanější uživatel pragmatických markerů v přímé řeči – každé 40cáté slovo v promluvách dotazovaných osob je pragmatický marker.

Posléze byly pragmatické markery posuzovány z kvalitativního hlediska. Tabulka 11 prezentuje následující výsledky – nejčastějším výrazem v přímé řeči byl pragmatický marker *and*, druhým nejfrekventovanějším pragmatickým markerem se stal *but*, následován *or*. Jejich hlavní funkcí v přímé řeči bylo: přidat informaci či změnit předmět diskuze nebo představit kontrast. Následující pragmatické markery *because, so, well* a *you know* se objevily pouze zřídka.

Co se týče výskytu a frekvence pragmatických markerů *so, well* a *you know,* které se často objevují v mluveném diskursu, analýza potvrdila, že jazyk dotazovaných v novinových článcích se liší od jejich jazyka v politických debatách či rozhovorech v televizi či v rádiu. Výroky použité v této práci jsou jazykem zaznamenaným právě žurnalisty. Jak je z této práce zřejmé, objevily se tyto typické pragmatické markery *so, well* a *you know* v mluveném diskursu jen v několika výrocích. Většinou byly pozorovány ve výrocích, kde bylo téma pro dotazované neznámé nebo nepříjemné, tak aby o něm hovořili. Navíc byly tyto výrazy použity žurnalisty záměrně, aby ukázali ostych či neschopnost dotazovaného reagovat ihned na daný podmět. Z tohoto může být odvozeno, že se žurnalisté pokusili zesměšnit tyto dotazované před čtenáři v porovnání s ostatními.

Při analýze pragmatických markerů v mluveném diskursu jsem narazila na několik překážek, které samotnou analýzu zkomplikovaly. Pro rozbor v této práci bylo těžké spolehnout se na interpunkci, jelikož jí žurnalisté obecně nevěnují

dostatečnou pozornost. Jak již bylo uvedeno, stejný výrok může být dvěma žurnalisty zaznamenán úplně jinak. Jelikož mluvený diskurs je v tomto případě diskurs zaznamenaný žurnalisty, ti mohou nejen upravovat fakta dle svého politického předsvědčení, ale také výroky dotazovaných.

Tento závěr ukazuje, že výskyt i frekvence pragmatických markerů záleží individuálně na žurnalistech. Když se žurnalisté rozhodnout pragmatické markery vynechat, čtenáři nemají žádnou možnost ovlivnit tok diskursu. Z tohoto důvodu nebyly analyzovány pragmatické markery v návaznosti na jejich umístění v rámci promluvy, jelikož nebylo možné ověřit, zda pořadí odpovídá skutečnosti, nebo zdali nebylo účelově zvoleno žurnalistou. Dalším problémem byl fakt, že promluvy mluvčích jsou zaznamenány jen z části. Nebylo tedy vždy jasné, jakou funkci pragmatický marker plní.

Kapitola 6 se zaměřuje na typické pragmatické markery v nepřímé řeči, jejich výskyt je ještě nižší než v případě přímé řeči. Překvapivě, žurnalisté nemají potřebu používat pragmatické markery, aby naznačili svým čtenářům, kde se právě diskurs nachází. Ti pouze konstatují fakta – všechny důležité informace jsou shrnuty v prvním odstavci, přímou řeč je možné nalézt až v druhé polovině článků. Následně tak může dojít k tomu, že články jsou pro čtenáře nelogické.

V nepřímé řeči (promluva žurnalisty) byly zkoumány následující pragmatické markery – typické pragmatické markery mluveného diskursu *and, but* a *so*, dále pak pragmatické markery *however* a *although*. Typické pragmatické markery pro nepřímou řeč nemohly být bohužel v práci zkoumány, jelikož jejich výskyt a frekvence byly opravdu nízké. Většina z nich se objevila v korpusu pouze jednou jako např. firstly, in short, as a result atd. Nejčastějším výrazem v nepřímé řeči byl pragmatický marker *but*, následován *and* (viz Tabulka 18). Tyto pragmatické markery byly analyzovány v přímé řeči, jejich funkce v nepřímé řeči jsou podobné – jsou použity, když chtějí žurnalisté doplnit informaci či představit kontrast.

Nakonec byl zkoumán výskyt všech analyzovaných pragmatických markerů v návaznosti na individuální žurnalisty. Tabulka 1 představuje následující výsledky – nejvíce frekventovaným uživatelem pragmatických markerů v přímé i nepřímé řeči je Andrew Grice (The Independent), následuje Nick Watt z The Guardian, Patrick Wintour se umístil na třetím místě (The Guardian). Ačkoliv jsou Andrew Grice a jeho dotazovaní vyhodnoceni jako nejfrekventovanější uživatelé pragmatických markerů v přímé i nepřímé řeči („promluva žurnalisty"), nejvyšší počet pragmatických markerů bylo analyzováno v článcích Nicka Watta (The Guardian).

Jelikož diskurs analyzuje nejrůznější aspekty jazyka, nebylo možné analyzovat všechny pragmatické markery detailně – taková analýza by byla mimo rozsah této práce. Dle mého názoru je možné tvrdit, že nízká frekvence pragmatických markerů v korpusu může být vysvětlena takto. Nejprve, všechny články sdílí společné a zároveň limitující téma – politika Spojeného království. Zadruhé, články byly publikovány v seriózních britských novinách. V neposlední řadě jsou tyto články ukázkou psaného diskursu obsahující přepsaný mluvený diskurs. Domnívám se, že by bylo zajímavé analyzovat tento mluvený diskurs ještě před tím, než je přepsán samotnými žurnalisty. Srovnání původních promluv dotazovaných s tím, co bylo posléze publikováno v článcích, by byl jistě zajímavý výzkum dalších specifických témat týkající se pragmatických markerů.

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Appendix

In the thesis, 40 articles have been examined. In Appendix I, 20 articles from The Guardian are presented. Appendix II includes 20 articles from The Independent. The full text of all articles is presented here as they were published in the above mentioned newspapers.

All articles share the following unifying features. Firstly, they were published in the main section of the British newspapers. Secondly, they were written by male journalists. Thirdly, they were published between February and December 2008. Last but not least, their unifying topic is UK politics.

The articles are as followed:

Appendix I (Article 1 – Article 20)

Appendix II (Article 1 – Article 20)

Appendix I

THE GUARDIAN

Article 1

Senior ministers urged: tell battered PM it's time to go

· Cabinet members talk of 'orderly resignation'
· Call for Straw and Hoon to act after Glasgow loss
· Cameron calls for general election now

By Patrick Wintour (26th July 2008)

Discussions are underway at cabinet level on whether to seek an orderly resignation by Gordon Brown as prime minister, in the wake of the disastrous Labour defeat at the hands of a resurgent SNP in the Glasgow East byelection.

Talks between cabinet ministers took place on the phone yesterday to coordinate a response to the defeat, with renewed pressure being placed on the chief whip, Geoff Hoon, and the justice secretary, Jack Straw, to urge Brown to stand aside. One source said: "The onus is now on Brown to prove that he should stay."

Insiders suggest Brown has until the autumn to prove to a sceptical party he has a strategy to fight the next election that will not leave Labour out of power for a generation. But concerns are expressed at senior cabinet level at failings of the Downing St machine, possible divisions within No 10, and an anxiety the party has been neglected, with some calling for a full-time chairman to restore morale.

Labour's defeat in Glasgow was Brown's third byelection loss in nine weeks, but by far the most humiliating. The SNP overturned a 13,500 Labour majority to clinch the seat by 365 votes, a 22% swing that if replicated at a general election would see only 20 Labour MPs survive.

It is understood Straw is deeply concerned by the defeat in Glasgow, nominally Labour's 25th safest seat and its third strongest in Scotland. The justice secretary, next ranking figure in the cabinet, is not thought to favour a rapid dethronement, since it is possible a party leadership election could leave Labour weakened further, and require the party to stage a general election next year it cannot financially afford. But friends say his primary concern is the welfare of the party, the implication being he might not support Brown indefinitely. Some Blairite MPs spoke of a move against Brown in the autumn, after a period of reflection, but hope the move will come from the cabinet.

A low-key Brown told the national policy forum meeting in Warwick he was fully focused on the job, urging the party to "have confidence" in policies which he said would "persuade" voters to back the party at the next general election. He won the

support of his most likely successor, David Miliband, who called on the party to pul together a clear route map to deal with the issues that concern voters - jobs, housing and antisocial behaviour.

But in a sign of a diccpline breakdown, and a weakening of Brown's authority, Paul Kenny, the GMB leader, called for Labour MPs to stage a confidence ballot in the autumn to clear the air. Kenny told MPs: "It is put up or shut up time. They either support Gordon Brown through to the next election, or they actually get rid of him. That is the reality of life. The MPs have got to make a strong decision as to whether they want to go into an election with Gordon Brown or have a [leadership] contest. Labour must change or we are finished."

The call provoked an angry response from John Hutton, the business secretary, asking: "Who are the unions to say this today?"

The union leaders also stepped up the pressure on Brown at the forum to press for a big shift in the government agenda on tax rises, windfall taxes on energy company profits, and a rolling back of the free market in public services.

Ministerial sources claimed they had thought earlier in the week a concordat with the unions had been reached on public services, but overnight, in the wake of the Glasgow defeat, agreements were taken off the table.

With MPs now dispersed for the long summer recess and no single challenger for the Labour crown, Brown has temporary breathing space. In his sombre speech, he sought to lift the battered morale of his party by holding out the threat of a Tory victory in 24 months that would see tax cuts worth £12bn paid for by closing Sure Start centres and ending the school building programme.

He urged his party to "have confidence that not only do we have the right policies, but that when the time comes we will be able to persuade the British people".

The Conservative leader, David Cameron, urged Brown to call a general election. "I think we need change in this country, and that's how change should come about," he said.

Universities secretary John Denham said that changing leader would not solve the concerns that led voters to turn against Labour. "What I think would not help us at the moment is to have that sort of debate. I don't think chopping and changing leaders addresses those concerns. I think it is a bit of illusion."

Article 2

Miliband accused of disloyalty to Brown

By Patrick Wintour (31st July 2008)

Gordon Brown's allies yesterday accused David Miliband of self-serving disloyalty and weakening the prime minister's authority after the foreign secretary provoked a firestorm of speculation over his leadership ambitions with an article in the Guardian calling on Labour to find a new forward vision to defeat the Tories.

No 10 aides said they had to take at face value Miliband's protestations to Downing Street that his intervention was not personal positioning, but was instead an effort to persuade people that Labour can still offer "continued big change in this country".

But Brown, on holiday in Suffolk, had not been given prior warning of Miliband's piece, and some of his closest allies at Westminster accused the foreign secretary of immaturity and even treachery. George Mudie, the former minister and close Brown ally, insisted: "He's testing the waters, he's flying a lovely kite."

At a press conference in London yesterday with the Italian foreign secretary Franco Frattini, Miliband was inundated with questions demanding whether he would rule himself out of standing for the party leadership. He repeatedly sidestepped the question, saying he was not interested in debating personalities, and arguing the only campaign in which he was interested was for a successful Labour government. He declined to say that Brown was the only person who could lead the government through the current economic turbulence.

He asked rhetorically: "Can Gordon lead us into the next election and win? Yes, absolutely. We have got a leader, we have got a good leader, we have got a leader who has good values and I think he can lead a very strong team."

Asked directly to rule himself out for the leadership Miliband said: "It is a never ending game," adding: "I went through this for two or three years before last year's election and none of you believed a word I said then, and actually it turned out to be true."

No 10 said it had been given assurances by Miliband that he would dampen down the leadership speculation at the press conference, but some Brownite MPs angrily complained the foreign secretary had failed to go far enough to give Brown's leadership unconditional backing. One Brown ally refused to accept that Miliband's article had been over-interpreted, saying: "This is about personal ambition."

Meanwhile, Denis MacShane, a former Foreign Office minister, denounced the briefings against Miliband as "reminiscent of the worst kind of student politics".

Miliband says he wrote the article that appeared in the Guardian after he became frustrated by the mood of fatalism gripping the party. But its timing also served the purpose of reminding the party he has a direct style and analysis that might revive Labour's fortunes if Brown stood down under pressure this autumn.

Miliband wrote: "The question is our competition with the Tories and not the competition amongst ourselves. I believe the challenge in my article today is a challenge to David Cameron rather than Gordon Brown." He said: "We have to blast through the media's permanent obsession with personality cult and actually say there are people that don't want the emptiness of the Tories and do want a real Labour offer of continued big change in this country."

In an implicit criticism of Labour's current lack of narrative Miliband argued: "Getting on with the job is a starting point, defending the record is an important part of it, but establishing a clear vision of the future is essential. We are a party that has not run out of steam. We are not legislating for a cone hotline like John Major's was in its dog days. We are a government that is daily addressing controversial issues".

Miliband has been stung by accusations that he lacked the political courage to stand against Brown last year, and his allies insist he was sending a clear signal that if Brown did quit No 10, he was determined this time to offer his services. He will not directly challenge Brown for the leadership, and cannot know if Brown can recover his political poise in the coming months.

Brown now faces a dilemma as he plans his autumn reshuffle, including whether to bring in some of his old critics on the backbenches such as Alan Milburn.

There are also calls to shift Alistair Darling from the Treasury and replace him with Miliband, but this week's episode may make such a move less likely. It is expected that Brown wants to bring his close ally Lady Vadera closer to him by giving her a job in the Cabinet Office, but others are urging him to widen his circle.

Article 3

Recession alert piles misery on Brown

Stamp duty move undermined by OECD warning over weak economy

By Patrick Wintour and Ashley Seager (3rd September 2008)

Gordon Brown's drive to save the housing market from collapse was undermined yesterday when the gamble to axe stamp duty for almost half of all property sales was quickly followed by dire predictions that the UK would be the only major economy to slip into recession this year.

The prime minister's economic fight-back plan, the start of a month-long battle to save his premiership, began with the surprise announcement of a year-long stamp duty holiday on any house sale under £175,000, starting today. But the scheme - which the Treasury claimed will cost an estimated £600m - was dismissed as a sticking plaster by the housing industry.

Within hours, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) predicted recession for Britain, while the other G7 countries will all see modest growth or a standstill.

The British economy will contract in this quarter and the next, it said, striking at Brown's repeated claim that Britain is well placed to withstand the world downturn, described by the chancellor, Alistair Darling, yesterday as one of the worst since the 1930s.

In the gloomiest official forecast so far, the OECD said the UK economy will shrink 0.3% in the third quarter, and 0.4% in the fourth. It believes the UK economy will grow by 1.2% for the whole of 2008, well down on the 1.8% forecast in June.

Darling insisted that he remained optimistic, but continued to echo his assessment, given in a Guardian interview at the weekend, that Britain faced "arguably the worst" economic conditions in 60 years. "We are facing difficult times - we are in a situation where you are facing the combination of the credit crunch with high oil and food prices and ... this is unique, the IMF has said we haven't seen this since the 1930s," he said.

Darling announced the stamp duty holiday yesterday morning as part of a housing package designed to help 10,000 first-time buyers, prevent 16,000 repossessions of the homes of mortgage defaulters, and keep the house-building industry afloat by accelerating the construction of an extra 5,000 social homes over the next 18 months.

The holiday lifts the threshold at which a 1% stamp duty is imposed, from £125,000 to £175,000. The Treasury said it would cost £600m, but the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Rics) said this presumed an unrealistic 340,000 sales over the next year in the £125,000 to £175,000 band. Rics, and separately the Conservatives, predicted - based on figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders - that there might only be 50,000 transactions, putting the cost closer to £170m.

"The government appears to have seriously over-estimated the number of transactions that will take place in the band," a Rics spokesman said. Neither No 10 nor the Treasury was able to say yesterday how many extra transactions would be triggered, or whether the cost would be met by extra taxes, cuts in other programmes, or extra public borrowing.

The shadow chancellor, George Osborne, said: "This is a short-term survival plan for the prime minister, not a long-term recovery plan for the economy. They've had months to prepare, and on the day it's launched, they can't even tell us how much it costs, or where the money's coming from. Most families will not be helped and the micro measures announced are overshadowed by today's gloomy news that the OECD is predicting a recession in Britain in the second half of this year - the only country that it makes that prediction about."

Darling had planned to announce the axing of stamp duty as part of the pre-budget report in October, but brought the announcement forward yesterday in the face of estate agents' warnings that the government had already blighted the current property market with hints of a stamp duty holiday.

Darling admitted in the Guardian at the weekend that he had been irritated by the briefings about his plans, insisting they had not come from the Treasury.

He supported the principle of the holiday, but No 10, under intense political pressure, wanted the announcement as quickly as possible, and details were leaked to the Sun.

Brown yesterday said: "Home-owners need to know that we will do everything we can to keep the housing market moving forward." Measures to help with spiralling energy bills are due next week.

The remaining £1bn cost of the housing package announced yesterday, including an extra £400m to prevent repossessions, will be funded by bringing forward spending already allocated to the Department of Communities and Local Government for next year and 2010.

The package was broadly welcomed by the housing industry, but some Labour MPs insisted it would continue to slide without reassurance for lenders. They want some government-initiated form of reinsurance to protect lenders against people defaulting on loans. No 10 said a report on the mortgage market, commissioned from the banker Sir James Crosby, will be completed this month.

With a 71% fall in mortgage approvals in the last year, Downing Street did not pretend the measures would revive the market, or prevent a further fall in prices, but said that the government was acting to protect people suffering from the downturn.

Economist David Page, of Investec, predicted that any savings for home-buyers would be wiped out in less than a month by falling property values

Article 4

Harman lays into excessive City bonuses

· No one needs so much money, says deputy leader
· Level of rewards 'led to mad house prices'

By Patrick Wintour (19th September 2008)

The Labour deputy leader, Harriet Harman, yesterday claimed the public were outraged at the level of city bonuses, which had brought "mad house prices" to London and sent ripples across the country.

In an interview setting the tone for Gordon Brown's vital party conference, starting tomorrow, she made the most caustic remarks yet from a senior Labour politician on the causes of the financial crisis, insisting no one needed the wealth City traders have accumulated.

"I think there is a level of outrage. Complaints have been building up because the huge bonuses in the City have meant mad house prices in the centre of London, which has had a ripple effect outside. It's not just a question of people saying 'nobody needs this amount of money, what is this about?'"

She said it was "quite wrong that salaries are structured so that traders are incentivised to take unwarranted risks. This is about the incentivisation of risk, but also about a fair and equal society."

Harman also dismissed the idea of a leadership challenge against Brown. She said the public would simply not understand if Labour held an internal election at a time of "economic apprehension".

She denied Brown would be held accountable for permitting an unsustainable credit bubble to build during his chancellorship, and said the public would turn to the most experienced man to produce the right international solutions.

"People are seeking reassurance and there is no one they are more likely to respect on the economy than Gordon Brown ... We need to respond in two ways. The first issue is about financial services - have we got the right balance with taking risks that are justifiable and being averse to risks that are not? The second issue is the gap between rich and poor in society and how equal a society we want to be and how inequality begets more inequality - the gap delivers an ever wider gap."

She said the government had taken steps on transparency so bonuses were made public and shareholders got a vote on directors' pay. She pointed out the Conservatives' paper on economic competitiveness had come up with the "baffling" recommendation that "we see no need to continue to regulate the provision of housing finance, as it is the lending institutions rather than the clients taking the risk".

Speaking on the day a poll showed the Tories just over 50% for the first time, she admitted: "Of course, Labour people are concerned by Labour's standing in the opinion polls but they also know it mirrors exactly the situation in the economy, so when the economy is on a downturn, people are holding the government to account, and fair enough, so we have to act decisively, and we have."

She was confident delegates would not be interested in issues of the leadership. She described Brown's internal critics as misguided and insisted she did not foresee a plot within cabinet to unseat him. "I take people at their word, you have seen what people have said on this issue."

Harman also sketched some of "the next frontiers" that had to be addressed by the party, including better rights for those looking after elderly relatives, better childcare affordability and a cross-government review on progress towards securing greater equality in society.

Clearly expecting Brown to secure a big emotional endorsement at the conference, she said: "People ask me whether we are going to lose the next election; well, the predictions can all be wrong. They were in 1992 , and we can win the next election."

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...n (22nd September 2008)

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...r last night he slapped down the party's left, saying that
...s the "heart of the party" in a speech that was at times
...d over the past 11 years. The foreign secretary said he and
...isters would not "step back" from the challenge posed by the
... He said: "Our responsibility - those of us in positions of
... the party now - is to make sure that we never say that we have
...d and now we're willing to step back. The point of working so hard to
... is not to let go."

...king alongside six other cabinet ministers at the ninth annual Progress rally held
... party conference, Miliband, who received the loudest applause of the evening,
said: "New Labour is not a faction within the party, it is a coalition within the party,
and I believe it is the heart of the party."

His self-criticism was at odds with the insistence by Gordon Brown in an earlier interview that Labour was dealing with "challenges" in the right way.

Speaking at the same event, Hazel Blears appeared to criticise the government when she told the audience that Labour would not win the next election by "simply citing lists of achievements". The communities minister has become increasingly outspoken in recent days, reportedly disagreeing with the prime minister at a recent cabinet meeting about his diagnosis of the problems faced by the Labour party.

The comments at last night's Progress event echoed those made by work and pensions minister James Purnell earlier in the day when he issued a stark warning of what would happen if Labour lost the next election: "Our history is littered with rather more defeats than victories," he said. "That's why we changed. Because we were tired of being the conscience of a Conservative country ... If we don't learn the lessons of our past we will be in this hall one September, in years to come, passing pointless resolutions again."

Brown loyalists, led by the former deputy leader John Prescott, rounded on the prime minister's critics, dismissing them as bitter people who were selling Labour short.

Most dissidents have resolved to keep quiet at the conference, in face of the financial crisis. But few of them, including a large minority in the cabinet, believe it will be possible to win the next election with Brown, a view that has been borne out by a large poll conducted by Politics Home showing Labour heading for a crushing defeat.

Brown himself asked for more time and admitted he had made a mistake with the abolition of the 10p tax rate. He also implied the gloomy polls might not lift until much nearer to the election, since voters treated polls as referendums on the government until an election arrived.

The prime minister told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show: "Well, I want to do better, obviously. I always want to do better. I mean my whole sort of ethos in life, my school motto was 'I will try my utmost'. I want to do better always."

Asked if he feared leading Labour into electoral disaster, and the break-up of the union, he said: "I'm a pretty ordinary guy that managed through an ordinary school to get to university and then I was in a position to do the things that I've been able to do, and my whole commitment is to public service. I mean I only wanted to be in politics to do public service. If I couldn't do that, I wouldn't want to be in politics."

Asked if he would still be prime minister at Christmas, Brown responded with a firm: "Yes, of course."

But from some quarters, attacks continued. Charles Clarke, the former home secretary, continued his attack, saying the party was in danger of walking into an electoral wall. Clarke rounded on John Prescott after the latter accused him of personal bitterness.

Article 6

Kelly's exit reignites Labour's civil war

By Patrick Wintour and Nick Watt (25th September 2008)

Gordon Brown was struggling to keep the lid on a smouldering civil war in the Labour party last night as the leak of Ruth Kelly's intention to resign from the cabinet prompted bitter recriminations.

While the prime minister flew to the UN in New York, senior party critics accused Downing Street of deliberately leaking news of Kelly's resignation, to undermine a potential rebel.

"We have given Gordon a lot of space this week to make his speech claiming to be the big man to fix the economy," one cabinet level source said. "But they are so small-minded and paranoid that they ruin their own day by briefing this stuff."

Downing Street said no senior figure had leaked news of Kelly's resignation plan. But one source said a junior No 10 official may have been indiscreet in the bars of the Labour conference.

Kelly, who told the prime minister in May that she wanted to step down to spend more time with her young children, made clear her irritation that her plans had leaked. Asked on Radio 4's The World At One about what had happened, she said: "I have absolutely no idea. I wasn't expecting this at all. I was as shocked as anyone else when I heard the news."

The news of Kelly's resignation dominated the final day of the Labour conference and overshadowed favourable coverage of Brown's speech which was regarded by friend and foe as one of the best of his career. Senior ministers, who had been prepared to give Brown the benefit of the doubt after a successful conference, appeared to have hardened their views against him overnight.

"Let's face it, the speech was boring," one senior ministerial figure said. Another was more generous, describing it as one of Brown's finest. But he added: "The overnight events mean that he is now back to square one. He will be toast by Christmas."

In a further sign of the unease at the highest levels of government, as the prime minister prepares to carry out his long-awaited reshuffle, cabinet ministers took to the airwaves to signal their determination to remain in office. David Miliband, the foreign secretary, said: "To represent your country is a fantastic thing to do and I am happy doing that." Alan Johnson, the health secretary, said: "I am a man looking to be deeply entrenched in my department."

Brown receives a boost today with a poll which shows he has received a post-conference bounce. The YouGov poll for the Sun shows Labour has cut the Tories' 20 point lead in half.

The poll puts the Conservatives on 41%, Labour on 31% and the Liberal Democrats on 16%, a Tory lead of 10 points. YouGov interviewed 1,500 people after Brown's speech on Tuesday night and on Wednesday morning. In the last YouGov poll, for the Sunday Telegraph on 18 September, the Conservatives were on 44%, Labour on 24% and the Lib Dems on 20%, a 20-point Tory lead.

Downing Street will be encouraged by the poll in the Sun. But ministers said confusion over the reshuffle showed that Brown would struggle to build on the success of the speech. Some ministers, who had been prepared to leave Manchester rallying behind a rejuvenated Brown, were believed to be wrestling with their consciences. One Miliband ally outlined the dilemma: "Would it look good to have no one on the bridge of the ship as it heads for the rocks? Probably not, but the danger is that if we do nothing we are heading for opposition for a long time."

Miliband is aware that a leadership battle could be bloody. Miliband will have been angered by Brown's apparent dismissal of him in his speech as a "novice" and the Brown team's attempt to humiliate him after his conference speech.

Article 7

Third time lucky: Mandelson brought into Brown's economic war cabinet

By Patrick Wintour (4th October 2008)

Gordon Brown yesterday sought to bring fresh purpose to his premiership and tackle the global economic crisis by bringing Peter Mandelson into the government for the third time, and unveiling an economic war cabinet of businessmen and politicians at the heart of Whitehall.

Brown made his dramatic act of reconciliation to the arch-Blairite as a Guardian/ICM poll showed that the Conservatives had secured a post-conference fillip, boosting their lead over Labour by three points to 12 points.

However, 55% of voters think the prime minister has handled the economic situation well, against only 39% who say he has performed badly.

Brown hopes Mandelson's return, part of a limited but bold reshuffle, can mark a turning point in his leadership, and will be seen as confirmation of a truce between Brownites and Blairites after months of debilitating infighting.

Other key developments in the reshuffle included:

• establishment of a 19-strong national economic council, chaired by Brown, meeting twice weekly to coordinate government action to tackle the banking crisis;

• creation of a Department of Energy and Climate Change under Ed Miliband;

• moving Stephen Carter, director of strategy in Downing Street, to a ministerial role within the new economic "war cabinet".

But it was Mandelson's surprise return from his job as EU trade commissioner that startled Westminster. Apart from his business brief, Mandelson will provide much-needed political strategic advice to Brown in the run-up to the next election, including trying to give him greater political definition. He will also try to tighten the Downing Street operation.

At a press briefing, Brown admitted he had had his ups and downs with Mandelson, but said "serious times need serious people doing serious jobs".

He added: "If you have got someone with unrivalled experience in international business issues, someone who is respected by business for what he has done and who has built a reputation over these last few years as someone who can get things done, then if the British government can benefit from that, it's the right decision."

Evidently astonished by the offer, Mandelson, who was only asked to return to the cabinet on Thursday, said he hoped to make it "third time lucky". He added that the serious economic crisis required "all hands to the pump".

Although he has been a divisive figure throughout his career, cabinet ministers recognise that Mandelson's appointment may pay off. One said: "It is a bold masterstroke politically and might even work electorally."

The Conservatives condemned Mandelson's withdrawal from Europe, saying it marked a return of the architect of spin and was a sure sign of Brown's political weakness.

Some Labour leftwingers were apoplectic. "The vast majority of Labour MPs will think, what was Gordon Brown thinking of? He is the most divisive figure in the Labour party," said John McDonnell, the leftwing MP for Hayes and Harlington.

The reshuffle also sees a restructuring of the much criticised Downing Street operation, with Carter leaving to become communications minister inside the economic war cabinet. He has become a peer. Damian McBride, Brown's tough but effective political spin doctor, steps back from five years' frontline briefing to work on strategic policy inside No 10. He will work closely with two Cabinet Office ministers, Tom Watson and Liam Byrne.

In a move welcomed by environmentalists, Brown has also reconfigured Whitehall so that environment and energy are married into a new department headed by Ed Miliband.

Two ministers join the cabinet for the first time: Jim Murphy is appointed Scottish secretary and Lady Royall is leader of the House of Lords.

Nick Brown, a Brown ally, becomes chief whip, replacing Geoff Hoon, who becomes transport secretary, replacing Ruth Kelly, who is standing down from politics at the next election. John Hutton, the Blairite secretary of state for business, shifts to defence, replacing Des Browne, who is leaving the government and so also relinquishes the Scottish secretaryship, his other cabinet post.

Browne was offered a variety of posts including a joint one of Northern Ireland and Scotland, but he insisted he wanted to leave frontline politics.

The Guardian understands that Jon Cruddas was offered the housing post at a meeting with Brown yesterday but turned it down after he was told he could not start a big council house building programme. Downing Street denies he was offered the job.

Mandelson's departure from his EU post has led Brown to send the leader of the Lords, Lady Ashton, to Europe at least until next November. Her appointment avoids a difficult byelection.

At his press conference, Brown also announced the new economic council, saying that Mandelson and 18 other ministers would meet twice a week through out the current global crisis.

Explaining the new body, Brown said: "Quite simply, we do not need just to change policies but the way we make decisions and the way we govern."

He has asked Paul Myners, chairman of the Guardian Media Group, to become City spokesman, and Margaret Beckett, the former foreign secretary, to be housing spokeswoman, on the new economic council.

Article 8

Osborne at bay over charge he sought cash from Russian

Shadow chancellor admits he discussed donation but says he did not seek it

By Patrick Wintour and Nick Watt (22nd October 2008)

George Osborne's candour and judgment were called into question last night after it was alleged he was personally involved in discussions to channel a £50,000 donation from Russia's richest oligarch to the Conservative party.

Facing a barrage of questions yesterday, the Tory shadow chancellor was made to offer a detailed account of what happened when he met the tycoon Oleg Deripaska four times in a single weekend during his summer holiday in Corfu.

Osborne, who was backed last night by his leader, David Cameron, was forced to admit he had been involved in a conversation at the villa of financier Nat Rothschild about the way a donation could be secured from Deripaska.

On a day of extreme political danger for Osborne, Rothschild, a regular fundraiser for the Conservatives, revealed he was willing to go to court to prove his claim that Osborne had not only wanted to secure a donation from the Russian, but had been party to discussions as to how this could be made legal.

Rothschild claimed Osborne had been present when the party's chief executive and fundraiser, Andrew Feldman, had suggested the money could be channelled through LDV, a British firm owned by Deripaska. It is not illegal to accept a donation from a registered UK company, but could be in breach of section 61 of the 2000 political parties law to enter into or "act in furtherance of" an arrangement which disguised an overseas donation.

In his detailed statement last night, Osborne insisted that at no point did he or Feldman "suggest ways of channelling a donation".

Rothschild, an old and close friend of Osborne, has gone public after he became enraged at the way in which the shadow chancellor had abused his hospitality. He was furious that Osborne breached confidences about his conversations with Lord

Mandelson, the business secretary, while the politicians were private guests at Rothschild's luxury Corfu villa in August.

Osborne has been seen as the source of malicious newspaper stories that Mandelson had poured poison about Gordon Brown in private conversations, and also that Mandelson held potentially controversial meetings with Deripaska on his £18m yacht, moored near the villa of Rothschild, a friend and business partner of Deripaska.

On a day when some of the biggest political reputations at Westminster were at stake, it became clear that Rothschild, the son of the merchant banker, was so infuriated by Osborne's discourtesy that he was prepared to wreck their friendship. This prompted Tory claims that Mandelson, bent on revenge, must have manipulated Rothschild into causing Osborne such a political embarrassment. At lunchtime yesterday, Osborne issued a limited denial of Rothschild's claims by saying he had not solicited money from Deripaska, and no money had been taken. "We did not ask for any money, we did not receive any," he said.

Sources close to Rothschild immediately insisted this limited denial obscured the fact Osborne and Feldman had enthusiastically discussed the possibility of securing the donation from Deripaska. Rothschild accepts there was no direct conversation with the Russian, but says the Conservatives had discussed the issue with him.

By mid-afternoon, Osborne issued a fuller statement admitting he had met Deripaska four times in one weekend in Corfu, and that in the presence of Rothschild, Feldman and two other witnesses had indeed discussed a donation from Deripaska. But he portrayed Rothschild as the initiator of the discussion.

Osborne said that in the discussion on the terrace of the villa: "Rothschild suggested to Feldman that his friend Mr Deripaska could be interested in making a donation." Osborne in his account said: "Feldman at this point made clear there are very strict rules on donations to political parties in the UK. Feldman explained a political donation is only lawful if you appear as an individual on the UK electoral roll, or if the donation comes from a legitimate UK trading company."

At this point, according to Osborne's account, "Rothschild said that Mr Deripaska owned UK trading companies including Leyland Daf", a Midlands-based vehicle firm. He insisted "there was no discussion about how a donation could be concealed or channelled".

If a donation had come from the Leyland Daf board, ordered by Deripaska, it would have been highly arguable whether it was lawful since the company might have been acting as an agent for a foreign donor.

After the discussion at the villa, Rothschild arranged for Osborne and Feldman to go aboard Deripaska's yacht in his company, but Osborne insists no discussion of a donation occurred at this one-hour meeting, even though Feldman, the party's chief fundraiser and an old school friend of Cameron, was present.

Allies of Rothschild appeared last night to corroborate this account. Osborne insists he had no further conversations on a donation, but he says Rothschild suggested in a phone call on September 18 with Feldman that Leyland Daf was interested in making a donation.

According to the Tory account, Feldman at this point considered whether such a donation would be appropriate and after discussion with party officials decided it would not be, so ending the possibilty.

Article 9

A narrow elite? MPs to take a close look at themselves

By Patrick Wintour (12th November 2008)

MPs are planning a year-long investigation into the complexion of the Commons amid worries that its members are seen as a narrow, self-serving elite who bear no relation to the population as a whole.

Harriet Harman, leader of the Commons, told the Guardian the house would lose legitimacy if people saw it as populated by MPs who did not relate to others' lives. Figures show the Commons is too white and too male to reflect the population it serves.

Harman was paving the way for what it is expected to be a potentially historic decision by MPs today to set up a Speaker's conference looking at how to make the Commons more representative of the population.

The conference could prompt legislation including a requirement for political parties to maintain all-women and all-black shortlists for parliamentary candidates.

Harman, who is also secretary of state for equalities, said: "If people see the Commons as a narrow and self-serving elite ... then the Commons has no legitimacy."

MPs will to be asked, via a free vote, to set up a cross-party Speaker's conference under the chairmanship of the Speaker, Michael Martin, to rectify the disparity between those in the Commons and the population at large, looking at gender, race, disabilities and sexual orientation. It will be the first such conference since 1977 and only the sixth since the 19th century.

Harman told the Guardian: "Obama said famously 'yes we can'. Well, this is Westminster saying 'yes we can'. If parliament votes for this, it is voting to change itself and to recognise that parliament has a problem."

The conference could debate such issues as voting systems, parties' selection of candidates, Commons working hours, disabled access to parliament, and the culture of parliament. It will be run like a select committee and consist of 17 MPs from across the parties.

Harman said: "Nothing is off-limits. It is potentially a very radical, historic decision - it moves the issue right up the agenda, and puts something that used to be dismissed as political correctness right to the centre of the political agenda. If the Commons is not representative, it is nothing. This is about parliament saying 'we are not OK to go on as we are'."

Women make up only 19.4% of MPs in the Commons, compared with 46.7% in the Welsh assembly and 34.1% in the Scottish parliament.

To reflect society, the house would need more than twice as many white female MPs as now, more than twice as many black and ethnic minority male MPs, and more than 10 times the present number of black and ethnic minority female MPs.

The conference was planned before Trevor Phillips, the Equality and Human Rights Commission chair, made his claim that political parties in Britain were institutionally racist and black man could not become prime minister.

Harman said: "It is not just about how can people think we are a fair, open and representative democracy if we just do not look like that, but also the fact that we cannot have sensible debates on policy. We cannot sensibly discuss the veil (in the Commons) when there is no Muslim woman MP; it was impossible to discuss domestic violence when there was 97% men in the Commons.

"So this is about changing the agenda for debate, as well as changing public perception of the Commons."

To address under-representation in the Commons and in public life, the government is already altering the law to allow political parties to use all-women shortlists for another five general elections, until 2030. It will also allow employers and public authorities to take positive action through the equality bill.

Article 10

Cameron drops spending pledge

Tories end commitment to match Labour expenditure

By Patrick Wintour (19th November 2008)

David Cameron yesterday abandoned his commitment to match Labour spending plans from 2010, warning the government's "reckless" programme of excessive borrowing would end in higher interest rates, a tax bombshell costing £4,000 a family and a plummeting exchange rate.

The Tory move is based on the risky judgment that the public will recognise that a more cautious approach to boosting the economy is the only way to avert massive tax rises, and will not be swayed by Labour claims that the Tories have reverted to a rightwing agenda of spending cuts.

The Tories had backed Labour spending pledges up until 2010-11 to counter Labour attacks that they would slash public services.

But Cameron, trying to sharpen the political dividing lines, now judges he needs to get himself off the hook of Labour spending plans, partly to underline his view that Labour borrowing is out of control. He also wants to be seen to be ahead of Labour if, as he suspects, the chancellor, Alistair Darling, lowers spending plans for 2010-11 in Monday's pre-budget report.

Cameron and his shadow chancellor, George Osborne, have been repeatedly accused of trailing behind the government during the economic crisis, but he was praised yesterday by the former chancellor Lord Lawson for "being bold and brave by getting off this hook".

Cameron said it was necessary to reduce the growth rate of spending in 2010-11, the first full year of any likely Tory government, as the figures projected by the chancellor were unsustainably high. He said the Labour projections were based "on heroic and outdated assumptions about the economic recovery and the receipts they will generate. Public spending is due to grow by 2.3% in 2010-11 with GDP growth projected at 2.5%."

Yesterday's move - signalled in Osborne's interview in the Guardian in September - will help assuage the Tory right, even though the front bench is not giving a commitment that lower government spending from 2010 onwards will lead to lower taxes. Cameron did not say what level public spending should be in 2010-11.

He said he would remain committed to overall government spending for 2009-10 - even though ministers had predicted in this year's budget that public spending would grow by 2% on the basis that economic growth would be around 2.7%, far higher than the current predictions of most economic forecasters.

Although Cameron insisted he remained committed to opposing unfunded fiscal stimulus in the pre-budget report due to the ballooning deficit, he refused to commit himself to voting against unfunded tax cuts or fiscal stimulus. He said his party needed to look at the details of the government's proposals in the pre-budget report.

He said: "Of course Labour will tell their lies about Tory cuts. But they do not understand what has changed. No one believes them any more. No one listens to that lie any more. No one is interested in the old politics any more. People are not fools. They can see that reducing the increase in government spending is not a cut, but what it says it is: less of an increase.

"Gordon Brown can bring back [Alastair] Campbell and [Lord] Mandelson from the political dead, but he cannot breathe life into the old politics." But he admitted what he was saying about the need to forgo an unfunded giveaway was "not immediately popular. It means arguing for things that are difficult for prudence and not giveaways. The right thing to do for the long term is not always the easiest thing to do in the short term."

Faced by charges of a belated U-turn, Cameron argued politicians should not cling to beliefs if circumstances render them obsolete. "I am a practical man, not an ideologue," he said.

Vince Cable, the Liberal Democrat economic spokesman, said: "The Conservatives appear to be making policy on the hoof. They are worried about a reversal of roles whereby they are seen to be arguing against tax cuts and we and Labour are calling for them. The real worry is that we will not have an orderly bounce back in 2010-11 as Darling and Mervyn King, the governor of the Bank of England, claim, and instead we will bounce along the bottom."

Yvette Cooper, chief secretary to the Treasury, yesterday gave the cabinet what a source described as an "interim report" on attempts to find savings in the public sector, building on the 2004 Gershon review which identified efficiencies.

The government has been criticised for the way in which it has presented its efforts to meet Gershon. A report by the National Audit Office in 2007 showed the independent watchdog was only certain of a quarter of the savings claimed by the government.

Article 11

Cameron accuses Labour of failing to prepare for an economic downturn and says Britain now has the highest deficit in western Europe

By Nicholas Watt (13th March 2008)

David Cameron accused Gordon Brown yesterday of creating a "dreadful predicament" for the British economy by failing to prepare for the economic downturn. This had left Alistair Darling with "no room for manoeuvre" across a range of fronts, including interest rates, taxes and the deficit.

In a lively response to the budget, in which he accused the children's secretary, Ed Balls, of behaving like a child, the Tory leader warned that Britain now faced the highest tax burden in its history, the highest deficit in western Europe and the highest interest rates in the G7.

Cameron told MPs: "This government and this prime minister took all the credit when the global economy was growing. But now there are difficulties they won't take any of the blame. In the years of plenty they put nothing aside. They didn't fix the roof when the sun was shining."

The Tory leader claimed that Britain now had no room for manoeuvre, unlike the US, which cut taxes by 1% of national income, and Sweden, which has a 2% budget surplus.

"In Britain we've got nothing," he said. "And as a result, the chancellor is doing nothing. He's got no room for manoeuvre on the deficit. No room for manoeuvre on interest rates. And no room for manoeuvre on taxes."

The Tory leader, who criticised the government for putting up borrowing by the "truly dreadful" figure of £20bn over the next four years, said he was tempted to blame Darling, who has had "the most disastrous start of any chancellor in modern history".

But Cameron added: "I don't think that would be fair. This country shouldn't be in any doubt of the source of the difficulties Britain is now in. The chancellor was put in a hole by the prime minister, and they've both kept digging. And now, after all this - the highest taxes in history, the highest deficit in western Europe, the highest interest rates in the G7 - they ask us to trust them to get the country out of this mess."

Cameron was taunted during his response by Balls. When Cameron claimed in his response to the budget that Britain had the "highest tax burden in our history", Balls shouted "so what?", according to the Tory leader - a government spokesman claimed Balls actually said "so weak". Cameron said to Balls: "I know he wants to be chancellor so badly it hurts. I have to tell him: another budget like the one we've heard and he won't have to wait long."

Nick Clegg, the leader of the Liberal Democrats, said the budget failed to help the environment or tackle child poverty.

Clegg told MPs: "The chancellor is the prime minister's creature, struggling to clear up the mess left by his boss under instructions from Number 10."

"What we have seen today is an act of political ventriloquism," Clegg added. "I would like to compliment the prime minister. I watched him very closely - his lips barely moved all the while the chancellor was speaking."

The Liberal Democrat leader said the budget did little for the poor: "This is a meagre tinkering budget, which gives precious little help to the poor but maintains special treatment to the rich; a budget designed to fill a black hole masquerading as good for the environment; a budget which will not make Britain fairer; a budget that is a green cop-out."

Article 12

Jester Boris eyes Ken's crown, with the help of some powerful friends

Even if he does not win, a strong showing would prove the modernised Tory party is reaching beyond its comfort zone

By Nicholas Watt and Sam Jones (25th April 2008)

With endless supplies of Pol Roger champagne, the Spectator's annual parliamentary awards ceremony at Claridge's tends to be a lively event for Britain's political elite.

Last November's lunch proved no exception. As immaculately dressed waiters served up roast lamb in the hotel's chandeliered ballroom, one of the prime movers in London politics gave vent to months of frustration. "Boris, you've got to pull your finger out," the Evening Standard editor, Veronica Wadley, told the Tory candidate for London mayor.

An Eton scholar who does not take kindly to being rebuked, Johnson mumbled incoherently as other guests took the opportunity to air their own concerns about his lacklustre campaign. But the blunt assessment hit home. By the turn of the year, his campaign had sharpened up and now Johnson could be close to the biggest political breakthrough by the Conservatives since John Major's surprise general election victory in 1992.

"Boris looked very sheepish as Veronica told him he had to pull his finger out," one of the guests said. "A lightbulb came on - by January he was really energised and now he may be on the verge of an extraordinary upset."

David Cameron, who faced criticism last year for throwing his weight behind such a maverick, now believes he may soon be vindicated. One senior Tory explained Cameron's thinking. "Ken Livingstone is one of the most skilled campaigners in British politics. And yet Boris is now slugging it out with Ken and setting the policy agenda of the campaign by focusing everyone on crime and transport. Even if Ken pulls it off - and Boris is within striking distance - that would still be a pretty stunning result for us."

A strong Johnson showing would provide the first electoral evidence that the modernised Tory party is reaching far beyond its usual comfort zones. "London is totemic and will grab the headlines on May 1," said one member of the shadow frontbench.

"This is the most multiracial and multicultural city in the country. If we can do well there that will really capture people's imagination."

If Johnson wins, the debt he will owe to Associated Newspapers, and Wadley in particular, will be huge. For the first time, the capital will have a mayor in tune with

the Standard's concerns on crime, the congestion charge and the costs of the Olympics.

There is another factor: in two years' time, Associated's multimillion-pound contract to supply tube stations with the free Metro newspaper will expire. The renewal of the contract is a decision for Transport for London, whose chairman the mayor appoints.

A nod of thanks will also be due to Rupert Murdoch, whose Sun came out for Johnson this week, hailing him "a new and fresh champion for London".

But he was by no means an automatic choice for the Tories. And he needed to be persuaded to stand. Wadley played an important role in championing him last summer, and it is her newspaper that has provided him with unswerving support ever since.

"Veronica told anyone who would listen in senior positions in the party that there was only one guy who could win this: Boris," one senior Tory said. "That had a profound effect on David Cameron and George Osborne."

Johnson had flirted with the idea of standing for London mayor for some time, but it took a light-hearted intervention from a former boss - and a pillar of the Tory establishment - to make up his mind. A friend sent an email last year to Charles Moore, the former editor of Daily Telegraph, where Johnson first made his name as a journalist. It read simply: "Boris for mayor?"

The mischievous Moore fired back a reply: "Boris for mayor of Henley" - the affluent Oxfordshire constituency he represents in parliament. "Boris was so outraged by what Charles wrote that he was spurred into action," said a friend.

The sight of a rejuvenated Johnson at the end of the year came as a relief to the Tory leadership. Last autumn, they were seriously worried at the faltering start to his campaign after he was overwhelmingly selected as the Tory candidate on September 27.

Osborne, the shadow chancellor, passed on his concerns to Johnson at about the same time as the Wadley ticking off at the Spectator lunch. Johnson listened carefully to the man who will coordinate the Tories' next general election campaign; he has learnt to respect Osborne, who was made the Spectator's politician of the year at the Claridge's lunch.

The Osborne intervention - and the pressing need to get their candidate back in the race - led the Tory high command to seek out someone who could both discipline Johnson and identify and exploit the issues that concerned Londoners.

Their search led them to Lynton Crosby, the Australian strategist who delivered a string of election victories for the former Australian prime minister John Howard.

Despite Crosby's failure to secure a win for the former Conservative leader Michael Howard in the 2005 general election, Osborne, Cameron and the chair of the Tory party, Caroline Spelman, decided he was the one to break in their candidate.

Since Crosby took charge in January, Johnson has learned to talk seriously about issues such as crime, public transport and housing - and toned down the buffoonery. Crosby's decision to focus on outer London boroughs such as Enfield and Bexley, normally neglected by mayoral candidates, and to pinpoint wards where the Tories should concentrate their efforts, have also won him praise.

One senior figure said: "Lynton has worked out the outer London strategy. He has got armies of people out to tube stations. A lot of themes that he used for our 2005 campaign are now being used. But this time we have the right messenger in Boris and David Cameron has made it possible for the party to talk about these things."

The Crosby campaign has appointed an outside press team - iNHouse PR - run by the former Tory press officer Katie Perrior. Ed Staite, a popular Conservative press officer who is expected to move to City Hall with Johnson if he wins, is also on hand. In a sign of the Australian-style approach to the campaign, Perrior is on a commission - the better Johnson performs the more her company will be paid.

Whenever Johnson takes to the streets, be it Soho for the Chinese new year or Edmonton for his campaign launch with David Cameron, his PR minders are never more than an arm's length away, appearing to act as much as bodyguards as gaffe-guards. They often round on journalists who fail to portray Johnson in a flattering light - even those who work for "friendly" publications such as the Evening Standard.

Crosby himself also favours the hands-on approach. At both the unveiling of Johnson's crime manifesto at Millbank in February and the Edmonton launch, he looked on mutely from the sidelines as if trying to transmit telepathic messages to his protege. And while he will exchange a few words with journalists, his gaze never seems to leave his potentially unruly charge.

Some believe that Crosby has not so much banished Johnson's outer clown as coaxed out the old Etonian's inner self.

Lloyd Evans, the Spectator's theatre critic, who has known Johnson since they were at Oxford, said his friend - now "a bit plumper" than at university - was finally coming across as "the fully rounded Boris".

Johnson still enjoys the support of a number of Oxonians - including a few members of the Bullingdon club, the dandyish dining society to which both he and Cameron belonged. A handful of former Bullingdon members attended a fundraising dinner hosted by Johnson at the beginning of this month.

But despite the overhaul, support and some intensive cramming - he has asked more than 100 parliamentary questions about London in the past few months - Johnson is often still visibly struggling to master his brief.

At a KPMG business hustings at the end of March, he dithered over whether or not to shut down the mayor of London's overseas offices, saying he needed to consult the business community. When it was pointed out to him that he was addressing the business community, and that most of its members favoured the "embassies" and their trade benefits, he dithered a little more. Last week he went back on his original

pledge to close them. Similar indecision over the cost of his plans to replace the bendy buses he loathes with a new generation of eco-friendly Routemasters has been one of the most salient and embarrassing features of his campaign.

After initially admitting that he did not know how much the buses would cost, he alighted on a figure of £8m.

The low figure was immediately questioned by independent transport experts, who suggested he was out by around £100m. Nonetheless, Johnson stuck to the £8m figure until last week, when he was caught on a mobile phone camera telling a Labour supporter that he believed the scheme would cost around £100m.

To muddy the waters still further, he appeared on a BBC debate a day later claiming that the new buses would cost no more than £8m. He now estimates the cost to be around the £100m mark.

His ability to weather this series of policy fumbles is proof of the goodwill his personality seems to evoke from the public and certain sections of the press: had Livingstone shown such a hazy knowledge of his key policies, he would have been torn to shreds - particularly by the Evening Standard.

The success of the past three months has left the Tory high command pondering what Mayor Johnson could mean for the party nationally. Would he rally young non-committed voters with his Woosterish japes, or would he allow Labour to paint the Cameron Conservatives as unreliable and unsuited to office?

Opinions are divided among Tories, though most believe the Johnson gamble was worth taking. One senior figure spelled out the thinking of those who have yet to be convinced.

"One of the reasons why Boris was encouraged to go for it is that he is a semi-detached member of the Conservative party. He is of the Conservative party but not with the Conservative party. His relationship with the Conservative party is a bit like London's relationship with the rest of the country. That is why he is such a good call.

"But I do not think we have got our heads round what a Boris win will mean. Boris has this manner that makes it like entertainment rather than serious campaigning. Conservatives will be as unprepared as London if Boris wins.

"There will be a feeling, this could be interesting, it seemed a good idea, but are we ready for this? Boris will be his own man. How will he relate to the Labour government? ... This is a double-edged sword. A victory would say the Conservatives are coming back. But there is also the element that you can't control Boris. If he screws it up that will rub off on us."

Johnson's screw-ups - or gaffes as they are more charitably known - are legendary. In the course of his career, he has referred to black children as "piccaninnies" in an attempt to mock Tony Blair's globe-trotting, and the people of Papua New Guinea as cannibals. He even sympathised with parents who did not like Jamie Oliver's campaign to make school meals healthier.

He eventually apologised to the black community and acknowledged that some of the things he had written had been offensive, but many black people remain wary of Johnson. Among them is Doreen Lawrence, the mother of the murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence, who told the Guardian last year that Johnson was "not an appropriate person to run a multicultural city like London". He was initially booed at a debate earlier this month organised by London Citizens, an umbrella group for scores of religious and ethnic minority groups. Although he went on to charm most of the crowd, when a black woman approached him after the event to berate him for some of the things he had written, he was swiftly surrounded by aides and whisked away.

Johnson thinks the charges of insensitivity about race are unfair. He likes to point out that his great-grandfather was Turkish and his wife, Marina, is half Indian.

While old articles have come back to haunt Johnson, his way with words, when properly focused, has served him well, propelling him on to the leader writers' desk of the Telegraph at the age of 23, and into the editor's chair of the Spectator 12 years later. He has also written a handful of books, including a novel, and presented a TV series about one of his passions, the Roman empire.

Another senior Tory was enthusiastic about Johnson's chances, pointing to his intellectual rigour and determination.

"We are all surprised to find ourselves in the position where Boris is the frontrunner. Ken Livingstone has held the London franchise for a generation. We all thought it was a long shot to win it. I always thought that to win it we needed a candidate who was a big personality. I have always thought that Boris is a serious figure. He is very hungry and he is driven."

The prospect of a Johnson victory has led senior figures in the party to make military-style preparations for a new high-flying City Hall team. Nick Boles, the founding director of the modernising Policy Exchange thinktank, is vetting candidates for up to 12 posts such as chief of staff to a Mayor Johnson. Boles, whose main job is to prepare members of the shadow cabinet for life as government ministers, would have been the Tory candidate for mayor had he not fallen ill a few years ago. He is now fully recovered.

One frontbencher said: "Nick is working out what responsibilities each person would have at City Hall. He is working out whether you need to re-engineer the posts held under Livingstone by [former race adviser] Lee Jasper and [chief of staff] Simon Fletcher. The mayor has a lot of personal appointments." Johnson used a mayoral debate last week to announce that Bob Diamond, president of Barclays Capital, would advise him on encouraging City firms to invest in community projects. Diamond is the highest paid FTSE 100 boss, earning £36m last year. On Monday, Johnson revealed that other advisers to the Mayor's Fund for London would include the former Labour donor Sir Trevor Chinn and his mayoral campaign fundraiser, Lord Marland. Steve Norris, the Tories' previous candidate, expressed an interest in running the London Development Agency but added that nothing had been agreed.

The leadership and Johnson are determined to keep a lid on the people they have lined up for City Hall because they have other jobs which they may need to hold on to if the Tories lose. But if Livingstone overtakes Johnson in the closing days of the campaign, the Tories may release more names to show he is capable of attracting talent to his team.

Johnson's critics are keen to point out that the Conservative challenger has never represented anywhere bigger than the safe Tory seat of Henley, which has little in common with London but the Thames. His constituents, though, seem pleased with his performance and he enjoys a majority of almost 13,000.

As he stood on the steps of Henley town hall three weeks ago, waiting to begin his constituency surgery, a stream of locals stopped for a chat or honked their horns as they drove past. He shook hands with one enthusiastic constituent who wanted to wish him luck in London.

"Thank you very much," he said. "But it's going to be very close."

Looking out over his parliamentary fiefdom, he seemed relaxed and more like the Johnson of old. He shrugged his shoulders over the news of Livingstone's "secret" children, insisting it would be irrelevant to Londoners, but complained grumpily that the mayor seemed set on stealing his policies.

Asked how he felt about the BNP advising its supporters to give him their second-preference votes, he reached for Virgil: "Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis tempus eget" (Not such aid nor such defenders does the time require).

And, before mooching off to Oxfam to browse the secondhand books, he had a confession to make about his highly motivated PR people: "They scare me, too."

Article 13

Tory shock turns to anger over one man´s 42-day crusade

Worries in shadow cabinet that byelection may become a 'pantomime'

By Nicholas Watt, Patrick Wintour and Martin Wainwright (13th June 2008)

It was over a late-night plate of fish and chips at his home in west London on Wednesday night that David Cameron found himself dealing with one of the most bizarre episodes of his leadership.

As the glasses were being cleared away after a drinks reception in his garden for 60 of the Tory party's top donors, Cameron made a final half-hearted attempt over the phone shortly before 10pm to persuade David Davis to reverse his decision to trigger a byelection.

Cameron, who is privately irritated that Davis's decision has taken the spotlight off Gordon Brown at a delicate time in his premiership, knew that his former rival for

the Tory leadership was unlikely to change his mind. The two men had talked briefly earlier in the evening, and Davis had delivered the bombshell: he would resign as MP for Haltemprice and Howden, and provoke a byelection to be fought on the sole issue of his opposition to the government's 42-day detention plan.

"It is a very odd decision," one senior Tory said. "I can't explain it. How will this play out if Labour does not stand?"

Cameron maintained his cool during the drinks reception on Wednesday night, and did not let on, even to some of his closest colleagues, what was about to unfold. The secrecy practised by Davis, a cloak and dagger operator of the Westminster old school, irritated his colleagues, who found out more than 12 hours after Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat leader.

As part of his preparations, Davis held a meeting with Clegg shortly after the votes on the 42-day plan on Wednesday evening. Davis successfully floated the idea that the Lib Dems might like to consider not fielding a candidate in the byelection because they agree on the 42-day issue. He also consulted Shami Chakrabarti, the director of Liberty, who warned him that resigning would be a dangerous gamble.

Members of the shadow cabinet were furious that the party was "bounced" by Davis. There was virtually no support from senior figures for what was branded a one-man crusade. Although none of the front bench were prepared to go public, a number used the cloak of anonymity to express their exasperation.

"If Labour does not put up a candidate this will be a one-man crusade by David Davis against the Monster Raving Loony Party, Ukip and the BNP," one shadow cabinet member said. "There is a slight hint of self-indulgence and a slight element of tragedy. David cannot come back in a bigger position. He can only come back as even more self-righteous, but will he be more morally pure with a majority of 1,500 over the Monster Raving Loony Party? He has walked the plank and this risks looking like a pantomime."

Another member of the shadow cabinet said: "I am surprised that, as a former whip, he broken the key rule of the whips' office: there should never be any surprises."

"Does he think this byelection will be his Midlothian campaign?" another shadow minister asked, referring to the comeback campaign by William Gladstone in the winter of 1879-80 which focused on foreign policy.

Friends of Davis insisted he had acted in a principled way. He had been thinking about standing down since the weekend as he worked through the consequences of a government victory in the 42-day vote. Davis made up his mind on Wednesday afternoon when he watched Gordon Brown "buy" the vote. Policy differences with Cameron appeared not to have played a role in his decision. Some members of the shadow cabinet who take a hard line on terrorism, notably George Osborne and Michael Gove, had to be persuaded to support Davis's strong anti-42-day line. But the policy will remain, a position made clear by the promotion of Dominic Grieve, who is more of a libertarian than Davis.

Cameron made clear that the Tories would maintain their opposition to 42 days, as the counter-terrorism bill continues its journey through parliament. "We remain fully committed to our opposition to 42 days, and Dominic Grieve will step up our efforts to fight against it in parliament."

Only a handful of senior Tories voiced support for Davis. One of his most loyal supporters said: "David is more Cavalier than Roundhead. He feels passionately about this issue and was bored with sitting in his observation post turning his sights on the enemy. He has decided to saddle up and take a scalp. David will come back, and he can come back as shadow home secretary. Grieve is an admirable figure. But is he a long-term bet as home secretary?"

The decision by Davis has left Cameron with a challenge. He does not want the focus on Brown to be disrupted by a "pantomime" byelection. But he knew that if he cut Davis adrift, the headlines would be even more damaging to the party.

In discussions with aides overnight, the Tories decided on a simple strategy: depict Davis's decision as personal, let him stand as an official Conservative candidate but make clear that he cannot expect funds to be lavished on his byelection campaign.

In a terse statement appointing Grieve, Cameron said: "This is a personal decision for David Davis. He is a friend and colleague and I will be happy to campaign for him in his constituency. I pay tribute to the campaign he has been waging on behalf of the party on 42 days. But we cannot put home affairs on pause and it is my job to ensure that we have a team that's ready for government."

In Davis's rural Yorkshire constituency by the Humber estuary, the debate on civil liberties began immediately. "It's a strange decision he's made," said Dale Evans, who runs a hydraulics company on the edge of Howden, the market town at the centre of the area's villages and farms. "I think the 42 days is right. They should be kept in that long. It's a personal decision, I guess, but it will cost him some support."

Tory councillor Caroline Fox said local Tories would be loyal to Davis. Discussing the news with a group of students in the square, she said: "He's such a good MP and deservedly popular. This principled decision will increase that respect."

Susan Bowden, who was having an afternoon drink with her husband, Peter, in Howden's Wellington pub, disagreed. "I'll always vote for him because he's a man I respect," she said. "But I think you've got to give the police a long time to question some of these people. The threat we face is so serious and it takes a long time for them to puzzle everything out."

Article 14

Economy at 60-year low, says Darling. And it will get worse

Chancellor says Labour failing to communicate with voters

By Nick Watt (30th August 2008)

Britain is facing "arguably the worst" economic downturn in 60 years which will be "more profound and long-lasting" than people had expected, Alistair Darling, the chancellor, tells the Guardian today.

In the government's gravest assessment of the economy, which follows a warning from a Bank of England policymaker that 2 million people could be out of work by Christmas, Darling admits he had no idea how serious the credit crunch would become.

His blunt remarks lay bare the unease in the highest ranks of the cabinet that the downturn is making it all but impossible for Gordon Brown to recover momentum after a series of setbacks.

His language is much starker than the tone adopted by the prime minister, who aims to revive his premiership this autumn by explaining how he will help struggling families through the downturn.

The chancellor, who says that Labour faces its toughest challenge in a generation, admits that Brown and the cabinet are partly to blame for Labour's woes because they have "patently" failed to explain the party's central mission to the country, leaving voters "pissed off".

In a candid interview in today's Guardian Weekend magazine, Darling warns that the economic times faced by Britain and the rest of the world "are arguably the worst they've been in 60 years". To deepen the sense of gloom, he adds: "And I think it's going to be more profound and long-lasting than people thought."

The economic backdrop presents Labour with its toughest challenge since the 1980s. "We've got our work cut out. This coming 12 months will be the most difficult 12 months the Labour party has had in a generation," he says. But Labour has been lacklustre. "We've got to rediscover that zeal which won three elections, and that is a huge problem for us at the moment. People are pissed off with us.

"We really have to make our minds up; are we ready to try and persuade this country to support us for another term? Because, the next 12 months are critical. It's still there to play for."

Darling was given a personal taste of the austere climate when ticked off by a waiter for ordering a second bottle of wine during a meal with his wife, Maggie, and another couple. "The waiter came over and said 'too much wine' in a loud voice. So we stuck to one bottle for the entire meal."

Darling admits that he was recently challenged at a petrol station by a motorist struggling with the rising cost of petrol. "I was at a filling station recently and a chap said: 'I know it's to do with oil prices - but what are you going to do about it?' People think, well surely you can do something, you are responsible - so of course it reflects on me."

But he has some words of comfort for Brown when he predicts there will be no leadership challenge against the prime minister. He also reveals that Brown has no plans to carry out an imminent cabinet reshuffle as he delivers a defiant put-down to critics who have said that he could be replaced as chancellor.

"You can't be chopping and changing people that often," he says. "I mean, undoubtedly before the end of the parliament he will want to do a reshuffle, but I'm not expecting one imminently. I do not think there will be a reshuffle."

Darling does not name names, but says some people want his job and have been trying to undermine him. Many in the Treasury believe that Ed Balls, the schools secretary, has been less than supportive. "There's lots of people who'd like to do my job. And no doubt," he adds, half under his breath, "actively trying to do it."

The chancellor's remarks about the economy - in an interview conducted over two days at his family croft on the Isle of Lewis - highlight the nerves at the top of the government after the loss of Labour's 25th safest seat in Britain in the Glasgow East byelection in July. The Tories are comfortably ahead in polls as leaders return on Monday after the holiday.

Darling, who speaks about how the prime minister is one of his oldest friends in politics, admits Brown has struggled to connect with voters. Asked whether Brown can communicate Labour's mission, he says: "Yes, I do think he can."

Asked why Brown has not done so, Darling falters as he says: "Er, well. Well, it's always difficult, you know ... But Gordon in September, up to party conference, has got the opportunity to do that. And he will do that. It's absolutely imperative."

Darling even describes himself as "not a great politician". Saying how he usually avoids personal interviews and photographs, he says maybe "that's why I'm not a great politician. You know, I'm not very good at looking at pictures and subjecting them to the equivalent of textual analysis".

Today's interview was designed to show the chancellor in a more personal light after a year in which he faced criticism over Northern Rock and the loss of discs with details of half the population. He says nothing of tensions with No 10 after he was reportedly rebuffed by Brown when he pointed out the dangers of abolishing the 10p tax rate.

His press adviser tells Darling, whose relations with Downing Street have been tense over the past year, to speak his mind in the interview. "Now Alistair," the adviser tells the chancellor as Decca Aitkenhead begins the interview. "Tell her everything. Make sure you tell her everything."

Article 15

Crime Warning raises pressure on Brown

Home office says slump will bring rise in racism, extremism and theft

By Nick Watt (1st September 2008)

An autumn offensive by Gordon Brown to revive his premiership with a package of economic measures risks being overshadowed by the leak of a Home Office document which spells out how the downturn will lead to an increase in crime and greater support for extremist political parties.

Days after Alistair Darling warned in Saturday's Guardian that the economic conditions are "arguably the worst" in 60 years, the Home Office paper gives an insight into the government's detailed preparations for the downturn.

The document, a draft of a letter from Jacqui Smith, the home secretary, to Downing Street, warns that a downturn may lead to:

· An increase in support for "far right extremism and racism";

· a possible increase in the support for radical Islamist groups from people who experience racism and possible unemployment;

· an "upward pressure on acquisitive crime", property crime, which increases during a downturn;

· an increase in public hostility to migrants as the job market tightens;

· a fall in the use of cocaine and less drunken disorder in town centres unless drinks companies respond to the downturn by aggressive price cutting.

The leak of the document, which shows the government acknowledges there will be serious social consequences from a downturn, will irritate Downing Street after a difficult weekend.

Darling was forced to record an unscheduled television interview on Saturday to calm the atmosphere after his Guardian interview prompted speculation of a rift between the two most senior members of the cabinet. His frank remarks about the state of the economy, contrasting with the prime minister's mild language, prompted Tory claims that the government was "dysfunctional".

Downing Street and the Treasury insisted there was no tension between Brown and Darling, claiming they were focused on measures to help people struggling with the downturn.

The first initiative will be announced tomorrow when the government unveils plans to help millions of less well-off people gain - or at least not lose - a place on the

housing ladder. This is likely to include a "shared equity" plan in which local authorities and housing associations help borrowers in return for a stake in their homes. Next week ministers will unveil plans to help people with rising fuel bills when the first cabinet of the new season will be held in Birmingham. This is expected to include measures to improve energy efficiency.

In a speech to the CBI on Thursday Brown will underline the depth of the global economic problems which demand a global response. "The credit crunch has shown that while we now have a global economy that is more integrated than ever before, from which no national economy is insulated, we do not have adequate means of managing it other than as nations or regional entities," he will say.

But Brown will say that Britain is well-placed to weather the downturn: "In the next 20 years the world economy will double in its size and wealth and we have a great opportunity to win new business, new jobs and prosperity for Britain."

The Tories are likely to maintain the pressure on the government after the leak of the Home Office document which shows there could be a twin threat from the far right and radical Islamists. It says: "There is a risk of a downturn increasing the appeal of far right extremism and racism which presents a threat as there is evidence that grievance based on experiencing racism is one of the factors that can lead to people becoming terrorists ... The relationship to radicalisation is complex ... but there is a possibility that [a downturn] will increase the pool of those susceptible to radicalisation." But many Labour MPs are saying that Brown will have a clear run until parliament returns in October.

Article 16

Tories aim to cut spending as Labour unveils battle plan

By Nicholas Watt and Patrick Wintour (9th September 2008)

David Cameron is prepared to fight the next general election on a pledge to spend less money on public services than Labour, senior Tories indicated last night.

The disclosure comes amid Labour plans to attack the Conservatives as an unreconstructed, dangerous rightwing party that is only masking its true instincts behind slick positioning.

Clarifying a claim in yesterday's Guardian by George Osborne that the poor state of the public finances would place him in a "straitjacket", Tory sources made clear that the party is prepared to resist what is likely to be Labour's central challenge at the next election: a call to match Labour's commitment in the next spending round that will run until 2013.

The Tories are committed to matching Labour's current spending plans until 2011, but have made no commitment after that date, a policy confirmed by Osborne in his Guardian interview. "I'm now going to wait and see what they [Labour] propose [for the next round]," Osborne told the Guardian. "There's no kind of blank cheque to

match them regardless. If they do sensible things, we're happy to support them. If they don't, then we're not. So we just have to wait and see."

The shadow chancellor also made clear in his interview that the "economic mess" meant he would have to take "tough decisions". The large budget deficit "is the straitjacket on British politics at the moment," he said.

Tory sources clarified Osborne's remarks last night and said this could mean the party would refuse to match Labour's pre-election spending commitments. One senior source said: "The deterioration in the public finances means that we will need to look at a new budget framework. We are not changing our existing policy - to match Labour until 2011 - but people should not assume that we are going to match them after that."

Meanwhile, a 16-page briefing paper, to be presented to Labour MPs and the party's staff at Westminster today by the work and pensions secretary, James Purnell, claims the Tories have tried to "hijack Labour's central core traditional value of fairness". It adds: "Unlike the Tories, we really believe in it as an end, and unlike them we don't just pay lip service to it."

The briefings are the resolution of an internal Labour debate on how to attack the Tory leader. A party official acknowledged yesterday that much of the public likes Cameron and many do believe the Tories have changed. But officials insist the party must hammer home their claim that the Tories remain rightwing and opposed to strong, active government.

Slides prepared for the private briefings by ministers to activists before Labour's conference and passed to the Guardian admit: "With their warm words and slick positioning, it is hard to convince people of the argument that the Tories have not changed, but the evidence is there. Our job is to hold the Tories relentlessly accountable and expose the reality."

Labour claims the Tories are already committed to use charities to deliver public services, and dismantle tax credits.

The briefing asserts: "Occasionally the mask slips and we see the dangerous, old-fashioned Tory rightwing instincts underneath. They believe in unfettered free markets, cuts in public services to fund tax cuts for the richest, and a smaller, less effective government."

The briefings, also undertaken by some key aides such as Tom Watson and Nick Brown are also aimed at shoring up party support for Gordon Brown. Party officials stress they are primarily directed at party activists, and the message will develop by the time of the election.

Article 17

Financial storm turns party ideologies upside down

By Nicholas Watt (9th October 2008)

The exchanges in the Commons yesterday vividly illustrated how the world has changed completely for all the political parties after the government's unprecedented £500bn bank rescue plan.

The chancellor, Alistair Darling, found himself in the curious position of lecturing the Conservative party on the dangers of too much state intervention and rebuffing a call from his Tory counterpart, George Osborne, for the government to block bonuses to reckless bank executives. "We have to make sure that we [do] not get ourselves into a position where we think we can sit in a boardroom and take all the decisions for everyone," said Darling.

Vince Cable, the Liberal Democrats Treasury spokesman, savoured the moment. "I have been stunned by the sudden conversion of the champions of the bonus culture to advocates of 1970s style incomes policy," he said.

All three leaders are suddenly working in a very different political landscape.

Gordon Brown, who spent six months resisting the inevitable nationalisation of Northern Rock because he was so fearful of heralding a return to Labour's past as the champion of nationalisation, has been handed a lifeline. A few weeks after members of the cabinet were considering triggering his downfall, he has secured his position in the medium term by virtue of being at the centre of a financial storm.

"This has given the Labour party - and Gordon - a chance to recover and we should grab it," one senior member of the cabinet told the Guardian.

The extent and enduring nature of the crisis has led Brown to overcome fears that state intervention would mark a return to the 1970s. Ministers can now preside over the semi-nationalisation of big banks without fear of being mocked.

The Conservatives are also having to come to terms with dramatically different circumstances. David Cameron faces deep challenges on two levels. Firstly, he faces the same questions being posed to all centre-right parties across the world - and which appear to be inflicting such damage on John McCain's presidential ambitions. The Tories and the US Republicans are being asked what the champions of light regulation have to say after the spectacular failure of this approach.

That is why the Tories called for curbs to executive pay yesterday, although they argue this is entirely in keeping with their record in protecting taxpayers' money.

Secondly, the Tories will have to examine their own tactics. Cabinet ministers believe Cameron tore up political convention by taking part in a briefing on privy council terms last week, in which the government explained its plans in private. The

Tory leader is then alleged to have demanded the introduction of these plans over the weekend on television so that he could claim credit.

"The Tories have behaved outrageously and resorting to students' union tactics. They need to grow up," one cabinet minister said. The Conservatives dismiss this and say Cameron's thoughts over the weekend were being widely discussed.

MPs on all sides of the Commons expressed astonishment at the changed landscape. The Liberal Democrat leader, Nick Clegg, said: "There can be no doubt today marks a fundamental shift in the way we view banks and, in turn, the obligations banks have to the public must change for good: they must serve the public interest as well as their own commercial interests."

Colin Burgon, the Labour MP for Elmet, saw it a different way. "What I see is the invisible hand of the market putting its hand into the pocket of the taxpayer and taking £50bn away and maybe putting two fingers up as well."

George Galloway, the Respect MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, added: "Well, the Liberals sound like Labour and the Conservatives like Communists - the kaleidoscope has definitely been shaken. But while the pieces are in flux, why don't we reorder this world? What's so wrong about the taxpayer having a seat in the boardroom?"

Article 18

Brown abandons 42-day detention after Lords defeat

By Nick Watt (13th October 2008)

Gordon Brown last night abandoned his parliamentary battle to allow police to detain terror suspects without charge for up to 42 days, after the Lords overwhelmingly rejected the proposal by 191 votes. In an emergency statement to MPs tonight, Jacqui Smith, the home secretary, said that the counter-terrorism bill would continue its journey through parliament without the 42 day measure.

But in a face saving gesture, the government will publish a bill containing the 42 day plan; this bill will be held in reserve to be introduced should there be a terrorist emergency. Ministers said they had decided to follow this course because the introduction of the counter-terrorism bill would have been delayed by a year if the government had embarked on a lengthy battle with the Lords.

"I do not believe, as some Hon Members clearly do, that it is enough to simply cross our fingers and hope for the best," Smith told parliament. "Mr Speaker, that is not good enough. Because when it comes to national security, there are certain risks I'm not prepared to take.

Smith's announcement came after the former lord chancellor, Lord Falconer, dismissed the government's arguments as "fanciful". His comments came in a lengthy debate which ended in peers rejecting the 42 day plan by 309 to 118.

Government sources said Brown's hand was forced because whips in the Commons told Downing Street that they would struggle to muster a majority in favour of the proposal. The 42 day plan was only passed by MPs in June by nine votes after the prime minister won the support of the nine Democratic Unionist MPs.

If ministers had insisted on keeping the 42 day plan in the counter terrorism bill, Brown would have to have held a series of votes in the commons to overturn the Lords' rejection. The overwhelming opposition in the lords would have resulted in a game of parliamentary "ping pong" in which the bill would have been passed from chamber to chamber. Brown would then have had to use the parliament act to force the bill through next year.

The announcement by the government came after Falconer told peers how he had changed his mind after supporting Tony Blair's plan to detain terror suspects without charge for 90 days in 2005.

He had done so because police could now detain terror suspects by using the so-called "threshold test", an option under which they can charge a suspect on a lower threshold if they have a reasonable suspicion that evidence will be compiled in a reasonable time.

"It has changed in practice the basis upon which it operates," Falconer said. "The idea that extending [the detention period] from 28 days to 42 days is going to make a difference is utterly fanciful."

Lord West, the home office minister, warned peers of the dangers of voting against the plan. "If we get it wrong we could all live to regret it. When the need for more than 28 days arrives — and it will — we can either have a well considered and debated back-pocket measure in place ready to make available to prosecutors, or we will be forced to release terrorists on to the streets unless some hurried legislation is passed. And we all know hurried legislation in a period of emergency is bad legislation. Whoever is in power will find it a very uncomfortable moment."

Shami Chakrabarti, director of Liberty, welcomed the government's climb- down. "Liberty has been overwhelmed by public and parliamentary support for our campaign against the extension. Rest assured that if any government tries again we will be ready," she said.

Article 19

Battle of the tax cuts: parties vie to offer plan

• Brown outlines scheme for £5bn fiscal stimulus
• We will not stand aside on jobless, says Cameron

By Nicholas Watt and Patrick Wintour (11th November 2008)

Limited personal and business tax cuts are likely to be included in the pre-budget report next week as part of a wider economic stimulus package, including higher government borrowing and capital spending, Downing Street signalled yesterday.

Gordon Brown's strongest hint yet on tax cuts came as David Cameron, the Tory leader, tried to outmanoeuvre the government by coming forward with his own tax cuts today designed to prevent businesses reducing their workforce during the recession.

In a speech to the Lord Mayor's banquet last night, Brown put his plan for limited tax cuts - expected to amount to less than £5bn - in the context of his call for an internationally coordinated package to boost the impact of interest rate cuts and bank recapitalisation. "This is no time for the old approach of short-term spending cuts in a downturn that would hurt families and businesses today and damage the long- term productivity of the economy," the prime minister said.

He said there was "a growing international consensus that, especially for those countries with low debt like the UK, maintaining public investment is the right approach while allowing a temporary and affordable increase in borrowing to support economic growth".

The Treasury regards any increase in borrowing over its projections in the spring budget as representing a fiscal stimulus. The government planned to cut borrowing by £7.5bn between 2008-09 and 2010-11. Analysts say subsequent tax cuts this year, including in income tax allowances, delayed rises in petrol duty and reduced stamp duty, have added another £3.5bn to the fiscal tightening in 2008-09. The government is likely to increase borrowing by a combination of bringing forward capital spending, maintaining increased tax allowances introduced this summer, and by allowing borrowing to rise due to lower than forecast tax receipts.

Asked about possible tax cuts yesterday Brown said petrol duty had been frozen and some taxpayers were already getting £120 back in their income tax. "What I'm determined to do is get all countries around the world trying to get their economies moving again," he told GMTV. "And one way you can do that is by putting more money into the economy by tax cuts or public spending rises. But that's something we have got to look at in the next few weeks." It was reported last night that part of the plan may be to delay the introduction of increased vehicle excise duty for cars bought between 2001 and 2006, according to the Daily Telegraph. The paper said the Alistair Darling would delay the charge for at least one year.

The Conservative leader will propose a two-pronged plan today to encourage firms to hire workers and to cut the number of people on benefit. He is expected to announce that businesses would be given incentives to hire workers who had been on benefit. These could include exempting firms from having to pay national insurance for employees who had been on benefits during the recession.The Tories believe their plan is a sensible response to the downturn which will stimulate business while helping to reduce welfare bills.

Cameron will add that his plan would not lead to a reduction in the overall tax burden, because it will be paid for from savings in the benefits budget. The Tories believe that greater savings could be made through reducing the number of people on benefit by introducing a tougher system to encourage people into work.

Brown is expected to suggest at a Downing Street press conference today that the Tory proposal does not amount to a true fiscal stimulus, since it would be self-funding, reflecting greater Tory concern at public borrowing levels.

Cameron said yesterday: "We will be making a very clear announcement about some tax changes that will help to encourage businesses to take on workers and to keep workers."

The Tory leader, who was addressing his party's women's conference, said mass unemployment was not inevitable in a recession. "There's a certain approach to this which says that ... large-scale unemployment is an unavoidable consequence of recession," he said. "In fact, I wholly disagree. Today I want to say the Conservative party will not stand aside and allow unemployment to claim livelihoods and ruin lives on a massive scale." He said businesses may possibly allow more people to work part-time. "No one wants to see people have to work less hours or have to take time out of the office or out of their workplace," he said. "But actually sometimes it's better for many people ... if the alternative to that is losing your job ..."

Article 20

Tories and Lib Dems to boycott inquiry into Commons raid

- **Move to lift restrictions defeated by four votes**
- **Widespread concern about Speaker, says ex-minister**

By Nicholas Watt (9th December 2008)

An attempt by the Commons Speaker, Michael Martin, to establish a cross-party committee of senior MPs to examine the police raid of Damian Green's parliamentary office collapsed amid acrimony on the floor of the house last night.

David Cameron and Nick Clegg vowed to boycott the committee in protest at what they regard as an attempt by the government to limit its work, after MPs narrowly rejected a call for the inquiry to start immediately.

The failure to get cross-party support for the committee is a fresh blow for Martin, and came as a former Labour home secretary, Charles Clarke, warned of "widespread concern" about the Speaker's performance, after the Commons authorities allowed the police to search Green's parliamentary office without a warrant.

The Tories and Liberal Democrats are angry at the government's insistence that the committee should have a Labour majority and that it should not hold any hearings until the police investigation into the leaks to Green and a possible criminal trial have run their course.

The two main opposition parties formally announced their boycott last night after a cross-party amendment, which would have lifted restrictions on the committee's work, was defeated in the Commons by just four votes after 29 Labour MPs voted with the opposition parties.

Theresa May, the shadow leader of the house, told the Speaker why the Tories would boycott the committee: "Both [David Cameron] and I feel not able to recommend to members of our party that they should serve on this committee, which we believe so blatantly flies in the face of the desire you had about the nature of the committee, the fact it should not be party-political and that it should meet now and conduct its inquiries now."

Simon Hughes, the Lib Dem spokesman on the Commons, had a similar message for Martin: "We do not feel we can recommend to our colleagues that they serve on a committee that will be a nonsense, that sits to choose a chairman and then can sit no more. I hope you will understand if we don't recommend participation in this process."

The opposition's anger was directed at the government for limiting the work of the Speaker's proposed committee.

But the Tory and the Lib Dem boycott is a setback for Martin, who had hoped that his offer to set up a cross-party committee to examine the search of Green's parliamentary office would demonstrate that he is taking the matter seriously.

The Speaker prompted gasps of "shame" in the Commons last week when he announced that police searched Green's office without a warrant.

Martin, who was kept fully informed about the arrest, singled out Jill Pay, the new serjeant at arms, for failing to consult the clerk of the house, Dr Malcolm Jack.

MPs from across the house maintained the attack on the Speaker yesterday for failing to show greater command of his staff - and for blaming a subordinate.

Charles Clarke told Radio 4's The World at One: "[The Speaker] has to decide his own position, based on whether he feels he has the confidence of the house ... I think there is widespread concern about whether he does have confidence [of MPs] at the moment, and I think the statement last week certainly didn't help in any way. I don't think he should have criticised the serjeant at arms as he did."

Clarke indicated that Martin, who became Speaker in 2000, should think of standing down by the next election: "It is the case that he has already served a substantial period of time and I'm sure people would take this into account."

Cameron said: "I want to have confidence in our Speaker, in the individual in the office.

"But you have to accept that big mistakes were made and we need to see the mistakes corrected, we need to see those mistakes acknowledged."

Clegg told BBC Radio 5 Live: "Of course I am not going to give a categoric statement of unambiguous support because a monumental mistake was made, which he himself admitted was an error, which brings into question not only his judgment but the organisation or the people working for him."

Appendix II

THE INDEPENDENT

Article 1

Darling embarrassed as Northern Rock fails to pass on rate cut

By Andrew Grice (15th April 2008)

Gordon Brown sought yesterday to convince voters he is not out of touch and that he understands their anxiety about the gathering economic gloom.

As some Labour MPs expressed fears that the Government looks to be "in denial" about the pressures facing ordinary people, Mr Brown insisted that he was listening to the "concerns and aspirations" of the British people.

Today, the Prime Minister will discuss the global credit crunch at a breakfast meeting in Downing Street with leading figures from the City. His spokesman denied it was a crisis session. The meeting takes place amid what a report by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors says is the steepest decline in house prices since records began 30 years ago.

Next week, the Chancellor, Alistair Darling, will meet the Council of Mortgage Lenders and urge it to pass on interest rate cuts to homebuyers, do more to avoid repossessions by giving people better advice when they fall behind with their payments and help more people get a foot on the housing ladder.

Caroline Flint, the Housing minister, said: "We want to ensure there continues to be stability ... in the housing market, and that support is in place for consumers who might need it right now."

Northern Rock, the recently nationalised bank, threatened to further embarrass ministers by declining to pass on to its borrowers last week's cut in rates by the Bank of England. The bank said yesterday that its standard variable rate (SVR) "remained under review". So far, only a handful of lenders have said they will reduce their SVR.

Promising that ministers would bring forward measures over the next few months to address the "insecurities" people feel as a result of the global economic turbulence, Mr Brown assured voters yesterday he shared their concerns. "Every effort of mine ... is about keeping this economy moving forward, keeping stability ... and keeping growth," he said.

But the Prime Minister's new tone failed to stem the criticism from Labour MPs as more of them called on him to show the country a clearer direction. Graham Stringer, a former minister, said people were "disappointed" that Mr Brown had not done

ere is no doubt that expectations were extremely high when Gordon
ne Minister, and I think that it is those high expectations not being
is disappointed people," he said.

oson, MP for Norwich North, said: "He's a bit like a scared rabbit in the adlines and he should not be. Give us five pledges which he can believe in. That would give the Government clear direction."

The Tories added to the pressure when George Osborne, the shadow Chancellor, said: "The pillars of the Prime Minister's economic strategy – stability, prudence and competitiveness – have collapsed in a heap of rubble. His economic reputation is in tatters." Mr Osborne also told the Policy Exchange think-tank that the housing bubble had burst.

Ministers adopted a more sympathetic tone as some admitted privately the Government had been slow to acknowledge people's concerns. Hazel Blears, the Communities Secretary, said: "[These are] difficult times for the Government... [and] for the country.

"It is entirely understandable that people are concerned about their ... homes, utility bills, cost of living. But ... the test for any government is when you are in difficult times, how do you perform – do you stand firm?"

Last night there were fresh questions over Mr Brown's grip on his government after a report claimed the Trade minister Lord Jones was "frustrated" and preparing to leave office before the next election.

Article 2

Labour launches offensive to stop 'high-risk' Boris becoming Mayor

By Andrew Grice (26th April 2008)

Labour is portraying Boris Johnson as "high risk" and "a joke" as it launches a last-ditch blitz aimed at preventing him becoming Mayor of London next week.

With a knife-edge vote in prospect as Ken Livingstone tries to see off the biggest threat of his political life, Labour will flood the capital with 4.2 million "risk card" postcards highlighting the danger of electing the popular Tory MP and television celebrity. One says: "Don't vote for a joke. Vote for London." The common theme across the cards is that "suddenly he's not so funny".

In a back-handed compliment to Mr Johnson, Labour will call him "Boris" in its campaign literature, despite an edict that ministers should not refer to him by his first name alone in case it reinforces his appeal.

Labour will also appeal to supporters of Brian Paddick, the Liberal Democrat candidate, to use their second preference votes to support Mr Livingstone to "keep Boris out" in next Thursday's contest.

In an interview with The Independent, Tessa Jowell, the minister for London who heads Labour's campaign, said: "The risk of Johnson is going to be the focus of the campaign in the last week.

"Our job is to remind people just how much this election matters, and that Mayor of London is a big, complex and difficult job. This is not a job for somebody who is regarded as a clown. If he is Mayor next Friday, suddenly he is not so funny. People shouldn't risk that, they should vote Ken.

"London needs a serious candidate for a serious job. The dividing line is between a serious candidate who gets things done for London and the very risky choice is someone who is amiable but incompetent."

Although Mr Paddick is refusing to tell his backers how to cast their second vote, Ms Jowell said: "Brian Paddick is not going to win. So anyone who votes Liberal has to imagine what it would mean to wake up and find Boris Johnson as Mayor. Imagine Johnson being in charge of a £39bn transport budget and the £16bn Crossrail project."

She said Liberal Democrats should not make the Green Party's Sian Berry their second choice, arguing that would be a "wasted vote". If no candidate wins more than 50 per cent of the first preference votes, the top two – almost certainly Mr Livingstone and Mr Johnson – go into a run-off and the "second choice" votes they receive are added to their score. These are expected to prove crucial.

Ms Jowell said: "The Liberals and Labour have much in common in terms of their ambitions for London and Londoners – more public transport, greener public transport, a commitment to the environment, personally, city-wide and globally.

"It is about more than experience. It is about competence, vision, understanding London's challenges and responding to them. Ken is a big figure all around the world. People should remember that if they vote Ken out, they are getting rid of somebody pretty special who cares passionately about London."

Some Liberal Democrats have backed Mr Livingstone as their second choice. Alexis Rowell, a Camden councillor, said: "When you look at Johnson's shameful record and his appalling views, I really think Lib Dems have a duty to hold their noses and put Ken second on the ballot behind Brian Paddick."

But Vince Cable, the Liberal Democrats' deputy leader and MP for Twickenham, has rejected a plea by the Labour-affiliated Fabian Society for him to urge his party's supporters to make Mr Livingstone their second choice. He told the society: "I think you are mistaken in believing that I, or other MPs, can deliver Lib Dem votes to Ken Livingstone. I don't think our voters see themselves as a vote bank which can be steered in that way."

Article 3

'I'm like Brontë's Heathcliff': Gordon Brown reveals his passionate side

By Andrew Grice (10th July 2008)

Gordon Brown has likened himself to Heathcliff, the brooding, intense character in Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights.

The Prime Minister is normally at pains to avoid being compared with other figures but his guard dropped in an interview with New Statesman, published today, in which the interviewer, Gloria De Piero, suggested to Mr Brown that many women viewed him as a Heathcliff-like figure.

Given that the character is famed for his vindictive side, the Prime Minister might have been expected to recoil in horror at such a comparison. But no. "Absolutely correct," he replied, before adding: "Well, maybe an older Heathcliff, a wiser Heathcliff."

Perhaps it is the character's passion that Mr Brown associates with. But, keen to correct any impression that he may be a tortured soul, he added: "I've tried to stop biting my nails. They're pretty good." Then, as he glanced down at his hands, he laughed and added: "OK, they're not."

Mr Brown used the interview as an opportunity to scotch rumours that the number of hours' sleep he is getting is declining in proportion to his opinion-poll ratings. He told the magazine that his sleep patterns varied, but that he got more than the four needed by Margaret Thatcher.

The Prime Minister also dismissed rumours that (like Heathcliff) he has a short fuse. "When you've got difficult decisions to make, you've got to be calm and considered," he said. "'I don't generally lose my temper." He also insisted that he would not be driven out of Downing Street before the next general election. "I'm here to do a job and I'll leave when I finish. I'm not here for the sake of being here."

Speculation is mounting that senior cabinet ministers will tell him this autumn to resign in order to give the party a chance of winning the next election. His survival prospects will fall if the party loses the Glasgow East by-election on 24 July. Describing being Prime Minister as "the best job in the world", he said: "You've got to be sure you're doing the right thing. You can't be deterred by people criticising you... If you believe in something strongly enough, you get on with it."

Mr Brown confirmed his frustration about the "theatre" of the weekly Prime Minister's Questions, as The Independent disclosed earlier this year. "The question is: does it help solve problems and illuminate the big issues...? There are big challenges ahead. You've got climate change, oil prices, terrorism and security and these rarely come up."

He also played down the latest gloomy predictions for the British economy. "I think the first thing people want us to be able to do is to see ourselves through this difficult challenge," he said. But he added that his ambitions extend far beyond that. "I want to build a Britain where every child has the opportunity to realise their potential. If you don't have young people whose talents are recognised and developed to the full, you're not going to have a successful society or a successful economy."

Article 4

Tories ready to rule, say voters

By Andrew Grice (28th July 2008)

The public believe David Cameron and the Conservative Party are ready to govern the country but are still not sure what they stand for, according to a poll carried out by ComRes for The Independent.

A majority of people (53 per cent) think the Tories are ready to govern after the next election, while 37 per cent disagree. Almost one in four Labour voters (23 per cent) agrees. The findings increase the pressure on Gordon Brown as he tries to head off moves by his own party to force him to stand down.

Although senior Labour figures rallied behind the beleaguered Prime Minister yesterday, his critics warned that they would move against him in early September in an attempt to deny him the chance to fight back at the party's annual conference starting on 20 September.

One said: "This poll reinforces what a lot of Labour MPs think – that Tory support is soft and we could fight back and win under another leader.

"Gordon does not have the public's permission to expose the Tories on policy because people have given up on him."

ComRes found that 46 per cent of people agree that "David Cameron is ready to be Prime Minister", while 42 per cent disagree. But 49 per cent agree with the statement "I don't really know what David Cameron stands for", with 44 per cent disagreeing.

By 56 per cent to 37 per cent, people reject the idea that the Tories lack the necessary experience to be trusted to run the country. But 48 per cent of people (and 25 per cent of Tory supporters) agree that they "don't have enough clear policies for me to understand what they stand for", with 44 per cent disagreeing.

Almost a quarter of Labour voters (22 per cent) and 44 per cent of Liberal Democrat supporters believe Mr Cameron would make a better prime minister than Mr Brown. Overall, 52 per cent of the public agree, while 34 per cent disagree. Scotland is the only part of Britain which prefers Mr Brown.

Only 36 per cent of people regard Mr Cameron as "just a slick salesman", as Mr Brown has dubbed him, while 52 per cent disagree. Surprisingly, one in five Tory

supporters holds that view, while four in 10 Labour backers do not. People no longer regard the Tories as the "nasty party" – by 53 per cent to 36 per cent.

Significantly, more than half of Labour supporters (51 per cent) agree the Tories are no longer "nasty", as do 57 per cent of Liberal Democrat voters. But 34 per cent of those who intend to support the Tories think the party is still "nasty".

The poll findings will fuel Labour's intense debate following its crushing defeat in last Thursday's Glasgow East by-election. Mr Brown's critics believe they tell the same story as this year's elections and by-elections – that the Tories' 20-point poll lead reflects an anti-Labour protest rather than positive support for Mr Cameron. "He hasn't yet won people over; a new Labour leader could claw it back," one former minister said.

The manoeuvring against him may persuade Mr Brown to pre-empt his critics after his Suffolk holiday by bringing forward a snap reshuffle of the Cabinet and unveiling measures to help hard-pressed families cope with the economic downturn.

John Prescott, the former deputy prime minister, led the attempts to save Mr Brown's premiership. In a statement to Labour members, he warned that the public would not forgive MPs who provoked a leadership election. Referring to the Cabinet, Mr Prescott said: "Not one of them has the national and international experience to be able to deal with the sort of problems we've got today more so than Gordon Brown."

David Blunkett, the former home secretary, told the MPs challenging Mr Brown's leadership to "grow up".

He said: "The issues that affect people are not ones which divide the party or Gordon Brown from any potential successor."

Jack Straw, the Cabinet's elder statesman and a possible "caretaker" leader, issued a statement of support after speculation that he might ask Mr Brown to quit.

He said: "I am absolutely convinced that Gordon Brown is the right man to be leading the Labour Party. The result in Glasgow East was obviously disappointing but it would be a big mistake for the Labour Party to now turn in on itself and indulge in a summer of introspection."

Article 5

Minister attacks 'too timid' Brown

By Andrew Grice (31st July 2008)

A Government minister has warned Gordon Brown that he must stop being timid and show stronger leadership if he is to revive his faltering premiership.

In the first direct criticism of Mr Brown by a minister since last week's Glasgow East by-election, the Health minister Ivan Lewis told *The Independent*: "The only way

forward now is bold Labour. What we want to see is the Gordon Brown of Bank of England independence, SureStart and Make Poverty History. I think that his responsibility is to provide the bold and decisive leadership that we now need." He added that it was then the responsibility of the Labour Party as a whole to be "loyal and disciplined".

In the interview, Mr Lewis said that Labour's defeat in Glasgow "confirmed my view that timidity and incremental change will not deal with the way people feel right now." He urged Mr Brown to raise taxes for high earners so that they could in turn be cut for hard-pressed low- and middle-income groups struggling in the economic downturn. He also wants the Government to consider a windfall tax on energy companies, with the money raised used to tackle fuel poverty.

His remarkably candid assessment of Labour's problems will increase the pressure on Mr Brown to produce a wide-ranging package of measures to help people cope with rising fuel, food and housing costs when he launches his attempted fightback in September.

Last night the crisis engulfing Mr Brown deepened as his allies hit back at David Miliband, the Foreign Secretary, over a newspaper article yesterday that was widely seen a prelude to a possible Labour leadership election.

Furious Brownites said Mr Miliband failed to quell such speculation at a press conference yesterday, although the Foreign Secretary said Mr Brown has the "values and the vision" to run the country successfully. "Can Gordon lead us into the next election and win? Yes, I'm absolutely certain about that," he added. Asked if he was planning a leadership bid, Mr Miliband said: "No, I'm not campaigning for anything other than a successful Labour government. The truth is we had a very bad result in the Glasgow by-election. I was frustrated by the sense of fatalism that had imbued in parts of the media and the Labour Party... Gordon will lead us forward and the rest of us have a contribution to make.

One Labour MP close to Mr Brown said: "David Miliband is letting his ego and his ambition cloud his judgement. If his intention was to focus on the Tories and get away from internal squabbling, he has succeeded in doing the exact opposite."

Mr Lewis's call to "be bold" echoes Mr Brown's criticism of Tony Blair when he was Prime Minister. At the 2003 Labour conference, Mr Brown declared: "This Labour Party [is] best when we are boldest, best when we are united, best when we are Labour."

Mr Lewis believes that Mr Brown has been too cautious. "If we as a government are going to be given permission to talk to people about the other issues that matter, we have got to reassure people – through actions not words – that we are on their side," he said. Insisting that Mr Brown could still lead Labour to an election victory, he said the party would lose unless it helped people through the economic storm and showed "a new idealism, purpose and passion". He said the fightback should be based on fairness, opportunity and community. Although he opposed punitive tax rises out of "dogma or ideology", he called for tax changes to protect "the quality of life" of people on low and middle incomes during the economic squeeze.

Mr Lewis added: "We are not here to be a bunch of technocrats. I joined the Labour Party, like most of my colleagues, because I wanted to make a difference, and I wanted to change the world for the better. And obviously I wanted to do that in a way that was consistent with progressive values. How many people out there really believe any more that that's what people like me are about? That's what we need to turn around."

If Labour failed to do so, "the seductive, 'it's time for a change' message will work for Mr Cameron. We need to be the change... more of the same won't do." Asked if his fellow ministers were loyal to Mr Brown, he replied: "The test of any political party, any cause, is in the bad time and not the good time. We now face the ultimate test. People have a decision to make. But there's one thing that's absolutely clear, it's that the public don't vote for divided parties."

On whether Mr Brown would lead Labour into the election, Mr Lewis said: "I expect that will be the case, and we've got to believe – if we don't believe that we can still win, how do we expect the electorate to believe that?"

He added: "When you're the underdog, you have a choice – you can either lie down and die, or you can come out fighting with a passion and a purpose, which stirs your friends and shakes the confidence of your opponents. We have to recognise that New Labour has a problem now with definition. Old Labour doesn't have answers, and therefore the only way forward right now is bold Labour.

Article 6

Cameron: You can bank on me

I've got character and judgement to lead UK out of crisis, says Tory leader, but he warns economic problems may lead to lower spending and tax increases

By Andrew Grice (2nd October 2008)

David Cameron insisted yesterday he had the character and judgement to lead Britain out of its economic crisis but warned that spending cuts and tax rises could be needed to clear up any "mess" he might inherit. "I'm a man with a plan, not a miracle cure," the Conservative leader told his party's conference in Birmingham in a sober speech designed to tackle head-on Gordon Brown's charges that he is a "novice" and "all style, no substance".

Mr Cameron said: "You can't prove you're ready to be prime minister – and it would be arrogant to pretend you can." He admitted that experience was important in the global financial crisis but argued that "character and judgement" mattered more.

Turning Mr Brown's argument on its head, Mr Cameron said "the risk" was in not making the change needed to rebuild the economy and repair Britain's "broken society". He delighted the Tory faithful by playing traditional tunes about responsibility, a smaller state and marriage. But, at the same time he told delegates

the causes of crime had to be tackled and prepared them for some tough economic medicine.

Although he believes in low taxes, he warned that the tax cuts favoured by many Tories would have to wait. "We do not believe in tax cuts paid for by reckless borrowing," he said, deliberately leaving open the door to tax rises. Privately, some Tory sources say the party may need to "do a Geoffrey Howe" – a reference to the 1981 tax increases introduced by the then chancellor. They say any tax rises would be implemented quickly – blaming that on the inheritance from Labour.

Mr Cameron also suggested that unpopular cuts in public spending might be needed to balance the nation's books. He announced that all shadow ministers would review every government spending programme in their area to see whether it was justified "in these new circumstances". He warned: "If we win we will inherit a huge deficit and an economy in a mess. We will need to do difficult and unpopular things for the long-term good of the country. I know that. I'm ready for that.

He added: "The test of whether we're ready for government is not whether we can come up with exciting shadow budgets. It is whether we have the grit and determination to impose discipline on government spending, keep our nerve and say 'no' – even in the teeth of hostility and protest."

The Tory leader argued that, having had the courage to change his party, he was now ready to change Britain. He avoided direct personal attacks on Mr Brown, which would have jarred with his offer to co-operate on measures to tackle the economic crisis. But he foreshadowed the election battle between the two men by saying: "These times need leadership, yes. These times need character and judgement. The leadership to unite your party and build a strong team. The character to stick to your guns and not bottle it when times get tough. The judgement to understand the mistakes that have been made and to offer the country change."

Despite the economic gloom, Mr Cameron sought to avoid criticism for being too pessimistic. "I know we are living in difficult times but I am still optimistic," he said. "We can and will come through. We always do. Not because of our government. But because of the people of Britain."

Echoing Tony Blair's mantra about the need to be "tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime", he warned that longer jail terms and more prison places were not the only answer to tackling offending. "Let us recognise once and for all that such an approach only really deals with symptoms, picks up the pieces of failure that has gone before," he said.

Mr Cameron invoked the memory of Margaret Thatcher to counter Labour's claims that he was not ready to lead the country. "In 1979, James Callaghan had been home secretary, foreign secretary and chancellor and then prime minister. But thank God, we changed him for Margaret Thatcher. If we listened to this argument about experience, we would never change a government ever. We'd have Gordon Brown as Prime Minister forever."Last night, a Labour minister said the party was happy to compete with Mr Cameron on questions of character and judgement. Yvette Cooper, the Chief Treasury Secretary, said: "David Cameron always makes a smooth and

polished speech, but where was the substance? Cameron says he is a man with a plan. But all we got was warm words and easy populism."

She added: "[He] made judgement the test today but, on the major issues in these challenging economic times, he has called it wrong – Northern Rock, Bradford & Bingley and voting against emergency powers to save banks."

Article 7

Credit crisis truce over as Cameron attacks

Tory leader is accused of 'juvenile political games' after blaming PM for crisis

By Andrew Grice (18th October 2008)

David Cameron came under fire after he ended the political truce on the economy by branding Gordon Brown's policies a "complete and utter failure". In a hard-hitting speech to a City audience, Mr Cameron accused the Prime Minister of using the financial crisis to close down debate about its causes and "hide the truth" about his failures.

Denying that he was "talking Britain down", Mr Cameron said: "I will never pull my punches in explaining how this Government has brought Britain down. Gordon Brown is hoping that his whirlwind of summitry will mean we will forget what has come before … But I won't forget, and the British people won't forget. He cannot hide from his mistakes. He cannot hide from the truth. The truth is that over the past 10 years, Britain has built up more personal debt than any other major economy in history."

Mr Cameron insisted his support for the deal to rescue ailing British banks did not mean the Tories subscribed to Labour's entire economic policy.

Yvette Cooper, the Treasury Chief Secretary, accused Mr Cameron of playing "juvenile political games", saying his bi-partisan approach had been exposed as a "short-term gimmick".

Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat leader, described Mr Cameron's speech as "the worst kind of politics". He added: "People want practical help at a time of recession not Westminster political point-scoring."

Arguing that the country needed a change of government to repair its "broken economy", Mr Cameron promised a range of proposals to help the British people survive the downturn. He said: "The failure to regulate US sub-prime mortgages was an American failure. And the failure to regulate public and private debt in Britain was a British failure."

Ridiculing Mr Brown's claim to be a "rock of stability", he said a Prime Minister who recently spoke of a "golden age" for the City was now talking about "an age of irresponsibility". Although Tories called for light-touch City regulation until recently, Mr Cameron denied the meltdown suited centre-left rather than centre-right parties. He had always based strategy on "responsibility", not "freedom".

"We have had irresponsible capitalism presided over by irresponsible government. Instead, what we need is responsible free enterprise, regulated and supported by responsible government."

Mr Cameron said Britain was paying the price for Mr Brown's decision as Chancellor to ride a "wave of debt-fuelled growth" to pay for Labour's public spending promises. "The result was a combination of irresponsible capitalism and irresponsible government that has brought us to instability and our present crisis," he said.

"The Chancellor who prided himself on prudence came to believe that he, uniquely in the history of economics, had ended the trade cycle and abolished boom and bust. So he thought the good days would never end, and borrowed and borrowed and racked up the biggest government deficit in the developed world."

Writing in today's Daily Telegraph, Mr Brown suggested there would be changes, saying developments around the world were raising "fundamental questions" about the relationship between government and markets. "The first financial crisis of the global age has laid bare the weaknesses of unbridled free markets," he said.

Article 8

Exclusive: Osborne fights for political life

Shadow Chancellor admits he met Russian oligarch five times but did not ask for political donations

By Andrew Grice and Cahal Milmo (22nd October 2008)

The crisis engulfing George Osborne deepened last night when new evidence emerged challenging his denial that he solicited a £50,000 donation to the Conservative Party from a Russian billionaire.

The shadow Chancellor's fight to keep his job was undermined when a new witness emerged who appeared to back claims by the banking dynasty scion Nathaniel Rothschild that Mr Osborne sought money from the aluminium magnate Oleg Deripaska on his yacht in Corfu in August.

Mr Osborne denies claims that he and Andrew Feldman, the Tories' chief executive and fund-raiser, sought money. They insist that Mr Rothschild, a long-time friend of Mr Osborne, initiated the discussion about a donation.

The witness is James Goodwin, a US businessman who attended a drinks party on the Queen K yacht. Mr Goodwin is a New York-based fund manager who served as special adviser to Bill Clinton's chief of staff. He is a long-standing friend of Mr Rothschild.

He also has links to Mr Deripaska, who has a fortune of £17bn and is Russia's richest man. Earlier this month Mr Goodwin was proposed as a new director of Norilsk Nickel, a Russian mining giant in which the billionaire has a 25 per cent share. When contacted at his Manhattan home, the financier confirmed he was present during the encounter on Mr Deripaska's yacht, but declined to comment on the allegations. However, a close friend said: "He was party to several conversations that night. He was not taking notes and sometimes there were simultaneous conversations going on but he heard what was being said in the group including Mr Osborne and Mr Deripaska." When asked whether Mr Osborne found the opportunity of meeting with Mr Deripaska so good that he invited Mr Feldman to accompany him on to Mr Deripaska's boat to solicit a donation, the friend replied: "You have good instincts."

Shortly after *The Independent* established the identity of Mr Goodwin and contacted him, Mr Rothschild issued a statement which explicitly said the matter of a donation had been raised aboard Mr Deripaska's yacht.

The statement said: "Mr Goodwin recalls that the subject of a donation by Mr Deripaska's UK company also arose briefly while we were on the boat, but the conversation gained no traction. At dinner at my house later that evening, the subject again came up in conversation, and Mr Osborne was interested in whether and how such a donation could be secured."

Mr Osborne's statement, issued yesterday, appears to make no mention of the meeting that evening.

Although David Cameron is standing by Mr Osborne, Tory MPs admitted the affair raised serious questions about his judgement. The shadow Chancellor was accused of changing his tune after initially denying Mr Rothschild's allegations as "completely untrue". Last night, he admitted he had met the Russian businessman five times and was present at the Rothschilds' villa in Corfu "when Mr Rothschild suggested to Mr Feldman that his friend Mr Deripaska could be interested in making a party donation".

But last night, a source close to Mr Deripaska said: "He has never donated anything to a UK political party and has no intention of doing so."

The Tories insist Mr Osborne has done nothing wrong, because at no time did he or Mr Feldman solicit a donation. Mr Feldman later turned down the offer. Tory sources claimed Mr Rothschild was an "unreliable witness" because he had changed his original claims about the affair in a letter to a newspaper. They blamed the Rothschild intervention on Lord Mandelson, the Business Secretary, who was also in Corfu and is a friend of Mr Deripaska.

The Tories accused Lord Mandelson of seeking revenge after details of a private conversation between him and Mr Osborne in Corfu surfaced in a newspaper. They

challenged the Business Secretary to disclose all the contacts he had had with Mr Deripaska. "This has the hand of Mandelson all over it," said a Tory source. But friends of Mr Rothschild denied Lord Mandelson played any role in his decision to go public. They said he felt Mr Osborne was "wrong and hypocritical" to use information gleaned while he was his guest to damage another guest – Lord Mandelson.

Mr Cameron said: "It was the right judgement for the Conservative Party not to take any money, and it was the right judgement today to... explain very clearly all the meetings that took place."

Article 9

'It leaves a nasty taste': Tory party turns fire on Osborne

Shadow Chancellor's judgement questioned over meetings with Russian oligarch as

Prime Minister calls for inquiry

By Andrew Grice(23nd October 2008)

Pressure was mounting on George Osborne yesterday to answer allegations that he solicited an illegal £50,000 donation from a Russian oligarch. The Prime Minister also demanded a formal investigation into the claims.

Although the shadow Chancellor is confident he will survive the storm, senior Tories questioned his judgement in meeting Oleg Deripaska in Corfu this summer.

One frontbencher said: "It leaves a nasty taste. And it doesn't help us in the current economic climate to look like a party of the rich." Lord Tebbit, a former Tory chairman, said: "George Osborne should remember that those who sleep with dogs will get fleas. Personally, I would not be comfortable in the company of Russian oligarchs."

Gordon Brown surprised MPs at Prime Minister's Questions by describing the allegations against Mr Osborne as "a very serious matter indeed", adding: "I hope that it is investigated by the authorities."

Despite his intervention, there was little sign that the shadow Chancellor will face such an inquiry. The Electoral Commission said it had no intention of starting an investigation because soliciting a donation that was not eventually made could not constitute a breach of the law. "No one has presented any evidence to the commission that an offence has been committed," it said.

Labour MPs challenged that ruling, saying it could be an offence to try to disguise a donation. They pointed to a discussion in Corfu while Mr Osborne was present over whether money could be given by UK companies owned by Mr Deripaska. Denis MacShane, the MP for Rotherham, said he would seek an inquiry by the commission

unless Mr Osborne cleared up the unanswered questions about his role in the affair. He told the shadow Chancellor in a letter: "It is likely there will be issues for the Electoral Commission or other authorities to investigate."

The Tories dismissed the letter, saying Mr Osborne had already answered all the points in it. They accused Mr Brown and Mr MacShane of "a desperate attempt to keep this story going". They also called on Lord Mandelson, the Business Secretary, who was staying on Mr Deripaska's yacht at the time, to set out a detailed account of all his dealings with the Russian tycoon.

Tony Wright, the Labour chairman of the Public Administration Select Committee, said: "We are not talking about corruption. We are not talking about law-breaking. What there is... is a twerp and a massive misjudgement, I'm not sure which authorities Gordon thought he was talking about."

Allies of Mr Osborne said Mr Brown's call for an inquiry had backfired because it was now clear there was nothing to investigate. A Cameron aide said: "Why is Gordon Brown's office not able to say what sort of investigation he wants and by whom? And why isn't he calling an investigation into Lord Mandelson's relationship with Mr Deripaska as well?"

Liam Fox, the shadow Defence Secretary, said Mr Brown was demanding an inquiry to distract attention from the economic problems. "This attention being given to what is little more than Westminster tittle-tattle is really quite confusing to people worrying about whether their homes are going to be repossessed and whether they will keep their jobs," he said.

Tim Montgomerie, the editor of the Conservativehome website for activists, said: "I don't like George Osborne's choice of holiday companion – nor briefing against Peter Mandelson after a private dinner – but Conservatives should not be under any illusions that Labour hates George Osborne and would love to bring down our master strategist."

Article 10

Cameron pledges to punish bankers

Tories head off class card with call for 'irresponsible' City workers to be banned

By Andrew Grice (16th December 2008)

David Cameron tried to distance the Tories from "irresponsible" City bankers yesterday, saying they should be banned from operating and face prosecution. He moved to head off a new attempt by Labour to play the "class card" against the Tories by associating them with the bankers blamed for sparking the financial crisis.

Although Labour's "class war" campaign in May's Crewe and Nantwich by-election backfired, some senior Labour figures believe portraying the Tories as the "party of the rich" could pay dividends after the financial meltdown. Privately, some Tories

feel they are vulnerable to such attacks, especially as many voters believe the banks are to blame.

Mr Cameron called for a full-scale inquiry into the causes of the crisis, saying the authorities in Britain were less active than their counterparts in the United States, where large financial institutions are being investigated. He said there was a lack of will in Britain "at the highest level" to see justice done. He accused Gordon Brown of "a failure of moral leadership" and also blamed the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

"We all know there was poor decision-making and some reckless activity in the City of London," he said. "But we do not know if there was wrongdoing and the nature of any wrongdoing, because we haven't examined the issue thoroughly the way the Americans are doing."

The Tory leader said in a speech at Canary Wharf that there could not be "one law for the rich and another for everyone else." He added: "If we are going to build a strong and fair society, individuals must carry the consequences of their own actions, regardless of who they are, where they come from, and what their background is."

He said that more than a million people who work in the financial services industry had had their names blackened by the crisis. "It's in their interests too that we make sure we root out any wrongdoing that may have happened, whoever is involved, however high or well-connected they may be," he added.

Seeking to bury the Tories' image as the party of unbridled capitalism, he said: "Justice is effective only when it is seen to be done, for the thug locked up for mugging people on the streets to the highest executive in the biggest firm who's been swindling the books. Doctors who behave irresponsibly get struck off. Bankers who behave irresponsibly should face professional consequences. And for sure, if anyone is found to have behaved criminally they must be prosecuted. Of course, this requires clear evidence of wrongdoing. But that doesn't mean we should sit on our hands and say it's all a failure of regulation."

Mr Cameron said it was vital for investigations to be pursued vigorously to send a message that the crisis could not happen again, and restore the reputation of the City of London. Rejecting Mr Brown's claim that the Tories would "do nothing" to help people through the recession, Mr Cameron called again for a £50bn loan guarantee scheme for business. He said voters faced a choice not between "action and inaction" but between "the wrong sort of action and the right sort of action".

Downing Street said anyone with evidence of inappropriate or criminal behaviour should bring it to the authorities. Ian Pearson, a Treasury minister, said: "The Government takes all forms of crime seriously, including financial crime. This is building on a framework which the Tories opposed, and which gave the FSA legal powers to tackle financial crime and investment fraud, insider dealing and market abuse."

Article 11

Should cabinet minutes be released, and what difference would it make?

By Michael Savage (28th February 2008)

Why are we asking this now?

Because the Government has been ordered to release the minutes of two key cabinet meetings held in the run up to the Iraq invasion in 2003. The Information Commissioner, Richard Thomas, has ordered the Government to hand over the minutes after it initially turned down a request for them made under the Freedom of Information Act.

The meetings, both held in the first half of March of that year, were significant: it was then that the Cabinet supposedly considered legal advice from the then attorney general, Lord Goldsmith, on the legality of the Iraq war. The Government has 35 days to appeal the decision. It is currently considering its position.

Campaigners against the Iraq war and advocates of the freedom of information legislation have championed the commissioner's decision as a breakthrough for transparency. But though the Information Commissioner said the order would not necessarily set a precedent in respect to the release of other government minutes, there are those who believe that it has set a dangerous trend and could undermine the running of cabinet government.

Is this a significant decision?

Yes. Indeed it is unprecedented. It is the first time that the Government has been told to hand over documents relating to cabinet minutes in such a way. In fact it was the former Lord Chancellor Lord Falconer's belief that the Government should never be forced to hand over cabinet minutes.

The Information Commissioner decided to instruct the Government to release the minutes based on the "gravity and controversial nature of the subject matter". In other words, the public interest in the decision to go to war is so great that it outweighs the arguments against releasing the minutes in this particular case.

Will the minutes reveal anything new?

If you're looking for a smoking gun on the decision to go to war in Iraq, you will be disappointed. Cabinet minutes may sound like the secret record of the Government's top table, but in reality the minutes are very brief and only really record decisions

that the Cabinet has agreed upon. If it's the minutiae of what each minister said during each meeting that you want, you are much better off trying to get your hands on the notebook kept by Sir Andrew Turnbull, the then Cabinet Office secretary. It is in that notebook that much more detail on the discussions can be found, with views attributed to individual ministers.

And the legal advice given by Lord Goldsmith on the Iraq invasion won't come as a surprise, either – most of the advice he gave was leaked during the 2005 election campaign. In short, he said that the war could be justified, but advised that securing a second UN resolution would be the safest legal guarantee.

Have we seen similar minutes before?

It is standard practice to release Cabinet minutes 30 years after they have been taken – the so-called "30-year rule" that covers many Government documents. They are released at the start of each year, and nearly always contain some newsworthy revelations. Now, even the Cabinet secretary's notebooks from over the years are being released to the public. But anyone wanting to see the notebook from 2003 is in for a long wait. The hand-written notes have to be checked for sensitive security information and transcribed, so they are only released very slowly. The most up-to-date one released covers meetings in 1953 and those in the opening months of 1954.

So why should they be released now?

It is seen as a special case. Some hope that revealing the minutes now might help us to understand more about how the controversial decision to invade Iraq was made. During those two meetings in March, cabinet ministers were presented with the attorney general's legal opinion on the waging of war. Shortly after, troops were heading for Baghdad. That has made what went on in the Cabinet Room at that time of great public interest.

Releasing the minutes might shed light on what the contemporary historian Peter Hennessy has called the "greatest single failure of cabinet government at least since the Suez crisis of 1956". Supporters of the Freedom of Information Act also see it as a victory for the legislation, by creating greater transparency in the Government's most important decision-making process. Freedom of Information campaigner Heather Brooke said the decision should help pull Parliament "kicking and screaming in to the 21st century".

So why is it opposed?

Some say it would inhibit the running of cabinet government, which back in 1867 the essayist Walter Bagehot described as the crucial "buckle" that kept Britain's complicated parliamentary system of government ticking over. In principle, it allows the prime minister's team to argue the toss without having to worry that any controversial statements will be heard by the public.

The fear is that by allowing the minutes to be released now, ministers will be much less willing to express frank views in Cabinet in the future. With some believing that the Cabinet already holds far less sway than in the past, it could cause a further

erosion of its power. The really juicy discussions could end up happening outside the Cabinet, during informal and un-minuted meetings. If that happens, we will have ended up with less transparency rather than more.

Five years is a long enough wait isn't it?

Government minutes are usually released after 30 years anyway, by which time it is likely that all the people featured in them will have finished their stint in office. If these minutes are released just five years after the event, there is the added worry that the minister could be in the same job or at least still in the Cabinet. That could put them in a difficult position. But Freedom of Information Act advocates say that the secretive decision-making process for the war as well as recent revelations about MPs' allowances are precisely why we need greater transparency.

Is there any point in seeing the minutes?

It will add another small piece in the jigsaw showing how the decision was made to go to war in Iraq, but some prominent critics of that decision argue that the Cabinet Room is not the place to look. Clare Short, who opposed the Iraq invasion and was in the Cabinet at the time of the two meetings, has said that the Cabinet was hardly given a chance to discuss the decision to go to war. To get to the bottom of the decision, she argues that a full inquiry is needed, which would tell the whole story once and for all. Maybe.

Should the minutes be published?

Yes...

* The Cabinet is working for us, so we should be given a full picture of exactly what it is they get up to

* Politicians should learn to live with such transparency, rather than fighting against it

* The decision to go to war was hugely controversial and unpopular, and the public need to know how it was made

No...

* Ministers need to know that they can express a frank opinion in Cabinet that won't be released

* We already know what the legal advice from Lord Goldsmith was and that the Cabinet did not have a big say in the decision

* It could make politicians hold informal, un-minuted meetings elsewhere, resulting in less transparency rather than more

Article 12

Why are public finances in such bad shape, and how can they be rescued?

By Michael Savage (12th March 2008)

Why are we asking this now?

Because as the Chancellor, Alistair Darling, prepares to announce his first Budget, he doesn't have much room for manoeuvre – public finances are in a sorry state. According to some analysts, he would have to raise as much as an extra £9bn to sort out the country's debt problems. Over the next few years, he is also in danger of breaking the two fiscal rules that Gordon Brown put in place for the Treasury. The rules state that Government debt should not exceed 40 per cent of GDP, while borrowing could only be used to finance investment projects, such as the building of schools and hospitals.

So what's the current situation?

Public debt has been rising steadily since 2001. By the end of the month, the Treasury predicts it will hit £542bn – around 38 per cent of GDP. It looks like the Government will need to borrow £40bn more each year until the end of the decade to meet its current obligations. And while the Treasury confidently predicts that debt will stay under the 40 per cent of GDP barrier over the next few years, others aren't so sure. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) expects public debt to breach the mark by 2009, and also thinks that the Government may have to break Gordon Brown's other golden rule as well.

The situation became worse when the Office for National Statistics decided to add the debt of the nationalised mortgage lender Northern Rock to the Government's blotted balance sheet, a move that could add as much as £100bn to public-sector debt. The burden is only temporary though – it will only stay on the public books until a private buyer is found for the lender's mortgage book. As a result, the Chancellor will only temporarily break the self-imposed debt target.

Is it really that bad?

It could actually be worse. Among all the speculation about the Budget, one thing that can be predicted with some certainty is that Alistair Darling will not be spelling out the real state of public finances today. Sometimes it can be hard to tell exactly how bad the picture is, because some of the Government's biggest liabilities do not even appear on the public books. The most obvious ones are the many Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes, the vehicles used to finance expensive projects such as the building of schools or hospitals. One of the key reasons that the Government has been so keen on PFI is that it doesn't need to borrow the capital to build the projects in the first place. Its mammoth public-sector pension deficit is also kept off its books.

What is causing the problem?

Tough economic conditions have played a role. A tightening of credit has impacted on consumer spending, slowing the economy. The most recent dip in public finances was notably caused by declining VAT and corporation tax receipts – both directly hit by falls in economic growth and consumer spending.

Some political decisions had an effect, though. When the world economy was on a surer footing and the Treasury had a surplus, revenue was used for investment in public services – most notably the NHS. But that policy has had an effect now. As Martin Weale, director of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR), put it: "Fiscal policy should be about saving up for a rainy day; now we have a rainy day – but no savings."

Are other countries in trouble too?

Global economic conditions have been unkind to many countries. The UK has an almost identical level of debt as a percentage of GDP as France, and less public debt than Germany and the US. Levels of public debt in the UK are also below the average for both Eurozone and OECD countries. It's not surprising then that many have seen poor old Alistair Darling as one of the unluckiest chancellors in recent times, taking the helm at the Treasury at a time when the world hit choppy waters. However, 16 out of 21 comparable industrial countries have been reducing their debts by more than the UK since Labour came to power.

What should he do?

According to two prominent think-tanks, Mr Darling will need to raise taxes in order to meet the challenges raised by the state of public finances. The IFS has said that the Chancellor will have to raise an extra £8bn in tax in order to keep public-sector debt below the 40 per cent mark and bring public finances back into line with the Treasury's future expectations. The NIESR puts the amount needed to plug the hole even higher, at £9bn. Others advise the opposite approach – to ignore artificial debt limits and inject the economy with more cash, either by offering bigger spending plans or cutting taxes.

What will he do?

Raising taxes to such a degree at a time when many people are feeling the pinch of higher bills would not be popular. A significant tightening of fiscal policy is unlikely. Mr Darling may well argue that the deterioration in public finances is just a temporary blip, and that fiscal policy should not contradict the Bank of England's attempts to ease the burden on the economy by holding interest rates. However, the IFS argues that the Chancellor could afford a modest fiscal belt-tightening if the Bank of England offset the move with a cut in interest rates. It's at times like this that the chancellor might be wishing he still held the monetary policy reigns, too. A bout of deficit spending might also be seen as too politically dangerous, allowing Labour's opponents to accuse it of abandoning good economic stewardship in favour of short-term gain.

What is the Treasury proposing to do?

The Treasury has a five-year plan. It says it will deal with public sector debt by increasing the Government's share of the "proceeds of growth" (the extra money generated by a growing economy) to 48 per cent, from the current 45 per cent level. All that is fine as long as tax revenues grow at the rate the Government is predicting. But some, including the influential IFS, are doubtful. The effects of the credit crunch are not over and are likely to depress corporation tax revenues, while Stamp Duty takings could also be hit by a misfiring housing market.

Any promising signs?

There are plenty of things working against Mr Darling at the moment. Though unemployment is down, this also lowers the potential for greater growth and consequent higher tax yields. Taking a tough stance on immigration blocks off another potential avenue of growth. And on Monday, a group of MPs warned the cost of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq would double to £3.297bn this year. But there is some good news. High oil prices boost Government coffers via corporate taxes. And though growth is likely to be around 2 per cent for 2008, predictions for 2009 are higher.

Should the Chancellor raise taxes to reduce government debt?

Yes...

* Some predict that the Treasury needs to raise an extra £9bn, so something should be done.

* We need to prepare for the worst – the effects of the credit crunch could still hit the economy.

* Without raising more in tax, the Treasury's self-imposed rules on forming a sound fiscal policy will be broken.

No...

* The public purse will be refilled when global economic conditions improve, so tax increases are unnecessary.

* Utility bills and food prices are up. The worst thing Alistair Darling could do would be to increase taxes.

* The Chancellor shouldn't raise taxes. He should lower them and kick-start the economy with some good old deficit spending.

Article 13

I'm a practical moderniser, says Cameron

The needs of society must come first, Tory leader tells Woodstock Literary Festival

By Michael Savage (11th October 2008)

He described the return of Peter Mandelson to government as "extraordinary", rejected any comparisons with Barack Obama, and repeated his belief that British society was "broken". But when it came to the banking crisis, David Cameron could not bring himself to say the "n" word – nationalisation.

In a wide-ranging interview at the Woodstock Literary Festival, in which he discussed his relationship with his wife and the reasons he started jogging, the Conservative leader came close to repeating Tony Blair's assertion that he was a "pretty straight kind of guy".

When asked why he had chosen to release his book, Cameron On Cameron, in which he discusses his everyday life and beliefs outside of politics, Mr Cameron said: "Politicians do political interviews all the time. The point about this book was to talk about life and what makes you tick. People want to know a little bit about me and I think that's fair.

"I'm a very straightforward person."

When the comparison with Mr Blair's assertion in 1997 was pointed out to him later, Mr Cameron said he had meant to say he was "easy to read".

He paid tribute to his wife, Samantha, during the public interview, who he said had played a role in his political thinking. "She is a brilliant artist and designer, and a great mum, and I'm incredibly proud of her," he said.

"We talk a lot about politics. On green issues, she was a member of Greenpeace long before it was fashionable."

As for the return of Peter Mandelson to the Cabinet as Business Secretary, Mr Cameron told a packed audience at Blenheim Palace: "I think it is pretty extraordinary. Someone who has resigned from the Government twice coming back – I don't really get it."

Mr Cameron agreed with the Government's £50bn banking bailout, but admitted it was strange for a Conservative to support a part-nationalisation of banks. "It is an odd thing for a Conservative to say, but it is the right thing to do," he said. "If the banking system is going to fail, you have to take all necessary action to save it."

He conceded his party had been too wedded to free market dogma, describing himself as a "practical moderniser".

"I think we became the 'economics party' – the party that believed in the primacy of freeing up the economy as the answer to everything," he said. "I want to put a strong society first."

Mr Cameron denied he had only adopted modernising views since becoming leader, though he revealed he had changed his mind on the issue of how to encourage people from ethnic minorities to join the Conservatives.

"My approach was meritocratic – to allow talent to rise and new people through the door," he said. "But the more I thought about it, the more I thought just opening the door wasn't enough. If you're a young black Briton and instinctively a Conservative, it's no good if you open the door and there's just a bunch of white people around the table."

Article 14

£2bn owed by absent parents 'uncollectable'

By Michael Savage (25th October 2008)

Nearly £2bn owed by absent parents should be written off as uncollectable, according the organisation that will replace the Child Support Agency.

Unpaid debts have reached £3.8bn since the failed body was established in 1993. But the Child Maintenance and Equality Commission (CMEC), which will take over from the agency on Monday, believes that about half of that figure is not obtainable as the absent parents – mostly fathers – have proved impossible to track down.

Janet Paraskeva, the chair of the new commission, said the Government should allow it to write off £1.9bn of debt. "It's a question of resources," she said. "How much time and money do you put into finding someone who has disappeared? If you spend your money in that way, chasing one person, there will be lots of other people who you cannot help."

The Government has no plans to write off any of the debt but should it do so in the future, it would prove controversial with families still owed thousands of pounds in back payments.

Jenny Willott, the Liberal Democrat spokeswoman for work and pensions, said: "I have sympathy with the idea that they [CMEC] want a fresh start, but any decision to write off debt must ensure that families are not punished for the past errors of the CSA."

"We need a proper assessment of the money owed to families to ensure that writing off these debts will not lead to real hardship."

Article 15

Tell truth about oligarch links, Mandelson told

By Michael Savage (27th October 2008)

Lord Mandelson's relationship with the Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska came under fresh scrutiny yesterday after it was claimed the billionaire helped him enter Russia despite not having the correct paperwork.

The revelations prompted the Conservative Party to again ask the Business Secretary to give a full explanation of his dealings with Mr Deripaska. He also faced criticism over his relationship with a business lobby group while the EU's trade commissioner.

According to a report in The Mail on Sunday, Lord Mandelson arrived in Russia with Nat Rothschild, an adviser to Mr Deripaska, in the Russian businessman's private jet.

It is alleged that after Mr Mandelson realised he did not have the right paperwork to enter Russia, which has strict visa rules, Mr Deripaksa's company was contacted to assist Lord Mandelson's passage into the country.

Lord Mandelson said yesterday: "All I would say about that is that he has never asked for any favours, I have never given him any favours and that is what the European Commission in their examination of the issue has very firmly put on record."

A spokesman for Lord Mandelson would not respond to the suggestion that he had arrived in Russia without a visa, or whether Mr Deripaska intervened to gain him access. But he did deny that the oligarch had secured Lord Mandelson a visa.

A spokesman for Mr Deripaska, who has remained silent about his relationship with Lord Mandelson, said: "As he has demonstrated throughout this, Mr Deripaksa has no intention of commenting on private meetings and private conversations."

A source close to the Russian oligarch, who made his fortune through the aluminium industry, added: "He is not going to give a line-by-line account of these reports. He has always said he has no intention of getting involved with British politics."

The Independent has learnt that the new allegations have angered Lord Mandelson so much that he has written to the Press Complaints Commission to complain about the story.

Lord Mandelson has already had to admit that he first met the businessman in 2004, two years earlier than his spokesman in Brussels had previously suggested. The European Commission defended the former commissioner over the weekend, saying Lord Mandelson had not intervened in any decisions over EU import duties, which were eased in a way that benefited Mr Deripaska. It said all decisions had been taken in "full transparency".

The Conservatives made a fresh call for Lord Mandelson to give a clear outline of his relationship with the Russian billionaire.

William Hague, the shadow Foreign Secretary, said: "We and, I think, the whole country do want to know transparently about the meetings that have happened and what was discussed at them and whether they ever discussed aluminium tariffs and so on. He added: "If Peter Mandelson could put the record straight on that then I think the media could move on."

A Brussels pressure group has also accused Lord Mandelson of being too close to the Europe-wide lobby group BusinessEurope. The Corporate Europe Observatory has written to the Commission's president, Jose Manuel Barroso, claiming Lord Mandelson gave the group "privileged access" during his term as EU trade commissioner.

But one of Lord Mandelson's key European aides dismissed the claims as "ludicrous" last night. "Saying that Lord Mandelson should not talk to BusinessEurope is like saying as Business Secretary, he should not speak to the CBI," the source said. But the Conservatives also faced embarrassing questions about party funding, after it emerged the party was handed a loan of more than £1m by a company, owned by Lady Victoria de Rothschild, that was set up purely for the purpose of protecting Lady Rothschild's anonymity.

The company, Ironmade Ltd, gave the Conservatives a loan of £1,014,000 in June 2005, before loans from anonymous donors and non-trading companies had been outlawed. The rules were altered in 2006.

The Labour MP Denis McShane said the Conservative leader, David Cameron, was displaying a "contempt for British democracy's rules on party financing" by not operating under the current lending rules. He called on the Conservatives to repay the money.

Lord Bell, a spokesman for Lady de Rothschild, said: "At the time she made the loan, it was absolutely proper and legal for her to do so."

A Tory Party spokesman said: "This loan was taken out prior to the 2006 Electoral Administration Act which has since set out new rules governing the way political parties can borrow.

"The loan is fully declared to the Electoral Commission and entirely permissible under the rules as they stood at the time."

In private, the Conservatives concede that mistakes have been made over the handling of party donations.

Article 16

Mandelson has his revenge as Osborne admits 'mistake'

By Michael Savage (28th October 2008)

George Osborne has tried to move on from the donations row by admitting that he made a mistake by becoming involved in discussions over a donation from the Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska.

The shadow Chancellor has always denied that he asked for or received any money from the aluminium magnate but he admitted that his presence on the Russian's yacht when a £50,000 donation was discussed did not look good. His admission has been calculated to help him draw a line under the incident that has damaged his ability to tackle the Government over its handling of the economy.

Mr Osborne came out fighting when the news of his meeting with the Russian billionaire was first made public by his old Oxford University friend, Nat Rothschild. But he has since faced criticism from senior figures in the Conservative Party for his actions. He admitted to friends over the weekend that he felt he had made a mistake during his now infamous holiday in Corfu, and was preparing to say as much. Mr Osborne himself sparked off the row when he is said to have spoken to a Sunday newspaper about what Mr Mandelson had said to him in a private conversation.

"It's not what you say or do but how it looks," Mr Osborne said. "To be honest, this didn't look very good and that's something I regret. I have changed the way I am going to operate when it comes to fundraising and I will not discuss individual donations with individual donors."

But his admission has not satisfied his critics among Labour's benches, who believe he has still not explained the exact nature of his discussions with Mr Deripaska. The Labour MP Denis MacShane, who has led calls for Mr Osborne to reveal the full extent of his contact with the billionaire, said: "George Osborne is still refusing to come clean with the public about the nature of the conversations he had in which donations to the Conservative Party were discussed. He has now confessed that he made an error of judgement but, for the sake of clean politics, he now needs to answer the questions he refused to answer last week."

Senior figures in the Government used Mr Osborne's admission to repeat their claim that he is too inexperienced to be trusted with the task of looking after the country's economy. Geoff Hoon, the Transport Secretary, said: "His mistakes just go to show why this is no time for a novice."

Senior Tory advisers also believe Mr Osborne's admission will help the party ratchet up the pressure on Lord Mandelson. They are still asking the Business Secretary to make a full disclosure of his dealings with Mr Deripaska. "George's candid approach will increase the pressure for the Business Secretary to give a full and frank explanation of his relationship with Deripaska," said a source close to the shadow Chancellor.

His relationship with Mr Deripaska has come under scrutiny after it emerged that changes made to aluminium tariffs by Lord Mandelson during his time as the EU's commissioner for trade were beneficial to the Russian. Lord Mandelson has already been forced to admit that he met Mr Deripaska in 2004, two years before previously stated by his officials in Europe. The oligarch's name was also removed from the guest list of a drinks reception at the British embassy taking place this week though organisers said it had nothing to do with the row.

Pressure was mounting on the Business Secretary yesterday as he again refused to make a total denial to claims that he was assisted by Mr Deripaska's company in entering Russia while on a trip with Nat Rothschild to Moscow.

But, despite his determination not to allow the controversy to interrupt his current four-day trip to Russia, the allegations have affected Lord Mandelson. His concerns led him to hold secret talks with the Press Complaints Commission over the weekend prior to the appearance of the allegations in a Sunday newspaper but neither his spokesman nor the PPC would divulge the nature of the talks. A spokesman for the PCC said: "I can confirm we held discussions with Lord Mandelson but no formal complaint has been received."

No wonder he's so happy

Lord Mandelson continued his four-day trip to Russia yesterday amid renewed pressure to reveal the extent of his links with the Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska.

The Business Secretary, currently on a tour designed to bolster trade relations between Britain and Russia, has already had to admit that he met the Russian billionaire in 2004 as EU Commissioner for Trade, two years before previously stated by his Brussels officials.

Answering questions outside the British Embassy in Moscow, Lord Mandelson described the suggestion that he should resign from the Government for the third time over his connection to Mr Deripaska as a "fantasy".

"I know what my job is and I am going to continue doing it on behalf of my country and my government," he said.

Lord Mandelson said over the weekend that he never asked for or had given any favours to Mr Deripaska during his time with the European Commission.

Article 17

I'll find a minister for healthy eating, says Jamie Olive

By Michael Savage (6th November 2008)

Britain needs a dedicated minister for food to prevent an obesity "horror show" from enveloping the country, Jamie Oliver has warned MPs.

While he would be "touched" to be offered the job, the celebrity chef said, he would not take it but would act as a headhunter for the Government.

The star of the hit television shows Jamie's School Dinners and Ministry of Food shared a bleak view of Britain's eating habits during his 90-minute grilling by the Commons Health Select Committee, describing the rise in obesity as a "bloody emergency".

He said that a new food minister would need a budget of about £6.5bn, 10 times the £650m spread over six years that was handed to the chef's school dinners campaign.

"I want someone to be accountable," he said. "I would like to see someone from the private sector with real savvy, who could inspire and motivate local authorities. I think I'm best off on the outside – so I wouldn't take the job. But I would be happy to find someone."

The obesity problem in Britain could be fixed if action was taken now. "The health crisis that we are in and what we choose to do in the next 10 years is so incredibly profound. There is a new poverty that I have never seen before. This isn't about fresh trainers or mobile phones or Sky dishes or plasma TV screens – they've got all that. It is a poverty of being able to nourish their family, in any class."

Oliver warned that the recession could show up the country's lack of cooking skills, as many people no longer had the culinary know-how to help them eat well for less.

His project to bring healthy meals to schools was on track but the training of dinner ladies was a "bloody disgrace". Only about 5,000 of 125,000 dinner ladies had been trained.

Other ideas on his list were plans to ask supermarkets to "adopt" a school by providing ingredients for classes, and copying Californian legislation that capped the number of fast-food restaurants in vulnerable areas.

He also attacked the EU for introducing a confusing labelling system. "I wish it never existed," he told the MPs. "I've got nothing nice to say about the EU at all."

Article 18

Government spending: £3bn to be lavished on schools and transport

By Michael Savage, Richard Garner, Nigel Morris and Michael McCarthy

(25th November 2008)

A £3bn capital spending programme will aim to improve Britain's road network, refurbish schools, build thousands of new social homes and bettering domestic energy efficiency.

The infrastructure projects, brought forward by two years, are also intended to provide a lifeline to Britain's beleaguered construction industry.

The Chancellor Alistair Darling announced that a £700m pot would be handed to the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of the £3bn infrastructure spending plan.

The bulk of the money will be spent on improvements to the nation's road network, including motorways and local traffic management schemes. The DfT was still drawing up details last night. It promised details "very soon".

The rest of the transport money will be spent on adding more carriages to the rail network. The procurement of 200 extra carriages has been brought forward to this financial year. The Treasury said British companies were being used to build the carriages to provide a boost to the country's engineering sector. It is an acceleration of an existing Government commitment to add 1,300 carriages to the rail network by 2014.

In education, roughly £800m of the £3bn increase in capital spending will go on an early facelift for hundreds of state schools. All 150 local authorities in England are to be asked to draw up lists, before Christmas, of modernisation projects which could be brought forward by at least a year.

In addition to increasing the number of primary and secondary schools in line for refurbishment, part of the cash will also be used to provide new pupil places in schools – helping popular and oversubscribed schools to expand.

Some of the money could also be used to build facilities for delivering the Government's flagship diploma programme or adapting schools so they can take in disabled students.

Thousands more social homes will be modernised or renovated in a drive to cut waiting lists for council houses and provide building jobs. Mr Darling announced an extra £775m earmarked over the next two years to boost Britain's stock of affordable houses and regenerate run-down areas.

It comes as doubt grows over the credibility of a government target to construct three million more houses by the year 2020. The cash injection comes on top of a £700m programme announced two months ago to build social rented homes.

But the National Housing Federation warned that government rules that require housing associations to raise 60 per cent of a property's cost privately had to be reformed.

Its chief executive, David Orr, said: "The situation is so serious that associations won't be able to build new social homes next year. It would be a catastrophe for the millions of people on waiting lists for affordable housing – and would compound the housing crisis."

An extra £100m of funding was promised for Warm Front, the Government initiative to improve insulation and heating for vulnerable and low-income households, with a further £50m to be spent a year sooner than planned. The Warm Front grant provides a package of insulation and heating improvements up to the value of £2,700. The scheme has helped 1.8 million households, saving them an average of £300 a year on energy bills.

The Chancellor also announced the extension of the Renewables Obligation, the main financial support scheme for large-scale generators of renewable electricity, from its end date of 2027 to at least 2037.

Brown on Brown

I'm not happy about having to pay more NI

Andy Brown, 39, and his wife Susan, 37, are both teachers in Northern Ireland. They have a 10-year-old daughter, Leah, and a six-year-old son, Timothy. Their joint income is roughly £60,000.

"As teachers, I guess Susan and I have the luxury of set salaries and relative job security compared to many of our friends. But we see the consequences of the current economic situation in our own social circle and in the schools where we teach. In the past couple of weeks, there have been two children in my daughter's class who were suddenly taken out because their parents had lost their jobs and were moving to look for work.

"But while we might have slightly more job security, like everyone else the rising cost of living is more than noticeable. The weekly food shop has become more and more expensive whilst petrol has been exorbitant all year – although thankfully it's coming down a bit in recent weeks.

"I doubt the VAT reduction will make a huge amount of difference to our everyday spending but it's certainly one of the most concerted gestures I've seen in a budget in a long time. Ultimately anything that makes a little difference to people's lives is welcome. I'm not very happy about having to pay more National Insurance contributions in a few years' time – Ialready feel like we get rather bad value for money with NICs.

"Obviously tax credits for our children will be welcome and I'm pleased to hear that the Government wants to make sure fuel companies pass on price reductions quickly."

Article 19

Pound to be left to its fate

Treasury says protecting the currency is 'not a first-order issue' as Euro

readies to overtake sterling in markets for the first time.

By Michael Savage (15th December 2008)

The plummeting pound will not be propped up by government intervention, ministers declared yesterday, as it emerged that they will simply hope Britain's beleaguered currency stabilises as broader measures to stimulate the economy begin to take effect.

Sterling has fallen to a series of record lows against the euro in recent days, and looks set to reach parity with the single European currency for the first time. Its fall has hit holidaymakers as well as the thousands of Britons living on the Continent, who have seen the value of pensions and savings plummet.

But ministers have made it clear no help will be forthcoming to stabilise sterling. The Europe minister, Caroline Flint, confirmed the value of the pound was not a "first-order issue" and Yvette Cooper, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said bolstering the currency had never been the Government's aim.

Senior government figures are wary of mistakes made in the lead-up to Black Wednesday in 1992, when attempts by John Major's government to prop up the pound failed and led to a bill thought to be more than £3bn.

The growing possibility of deflation, now discussed as a possibility by the Treasury, is seen as a greater threat to the economy. Official figures published this week are expected to show that inflation dramatically slumped last month to under 4 per cent, compared with 4.5 per cent in October.

So ministers must cross their fingers as the Government's £20bn fiscal stimulus package, which includes a temporary 2 per cent cut in the rate of VAT, kicks in. "We have never had a policy of targeting the pound. Our policy has been to target inflation," Ms Cooper said yesterday. "Previous attempts to target exchange rates caused all kinds of problems." She said the fall in the pound had been caused by "uncertainty in the world economy" and that the Government was "plotting a course" to help Britain emerge from the economic crisis intact.

Ms Flint said international co-operation, together with reviving bank lending, were the best methods of breathing life into the economy, which would in turn restore faith in the pound. "The exchange rate obviously is affected by what's happening at the

moment, but we have got to get those first-order issues right in order to have a better look at issues around the exchange rate," she said.

She said she was optimistic that the pound would begin to stabilise again "if we get those other factors right". Critics of the Government said the apparent flight from the pound had been caused by the Government's unaffordable spending package, coupled with rising national debt.

A 2.5 percentage point cut in interest rates in just two months by the Bank of England has also sent Britain's bank rate below that in the eurozone.

Serious concerns about the value of the pound developed over the weekend after it emerged that holidaymakers at airports and on Britain's high streets were already being offered an exchange rate very close to parity.

While the Treasury has faith that its fiscal package, announced by Chancellor Alistair Darling last month, will ease the recession and stabilise the pound, the Conservatives blamed the spending package for sterling's woes.

"The Government says it will not step in as the pound slides to parity with the euro, but it is this Government's reckless intervention which has caused the pound's weakness," said the shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Philip Hammond. "Gordon Brown's huge borrowing programme has now been firmly rejected by the markets."

Others inside the party hinted that Labour would have to rethink its apparent abandonment of the pound once its effects began to be felt more generally. "However much Labour says a weak currency can be a good thing, we will all suffer from this in the long term," a senior Tory source said last night.

The man at the helm during Black Wednesday, Sir John Major, also said the Government was wrong to put its trust in a fiscal stimulus deal. "What the Government is doing now is ensuring that our recession is longer and deeper than everyone else's," he said.

John Varley, group chief executive of Barclays, also predicted the economic gloom would worsen. The UK was only halfway through the slump and house prices would fall a further 10 to 15 per cent before the end of next year, he said. On top of that, unemployment could hit 7.5 per cent within the next 12 months, he told Sky News.

Some in the City said they could already foresee a time when the pound, worth €1.40 just a year ago, would dip below €1. Analysts have also begun to discuss the possibility of Britain adopting the euro, or pegging the value of the pound, to prevent it falling any further.

"The euro is becoming the darling of the currency market and there's no confidence in the pound, said Martin Slaney, of GFT Global Markets. "I wouldn't be surprised if it hit parity with the euro and even fell below that."

The Government still believes that an EU-wide stimulus deal agreed last week will insulate it from accusations of recklessness.

Article 20

'Mr Loophole' performs U-turn on driving laws

By Michael Savage (31st December 2008)

His talent for using every quirk of the law to help the rich and famous avoid driving bans and points on their licences earned him the nickname "Mr Loophole", as well as making him the scourge of road safety campaigners.

But the celebrity lawyer Nick Freeman, who has successfully defended the likes of David Beckham, Jeremy Clarkson and Sir Alex Ferguson after driving indiscretions, now promises to perform a U-turn that could stop his clients from getting off the hook in future.

In an interview with *The Independent*, the 53-year-old solicitor has offered to work with the Government to help iron out the legal kinks that have made him so successful. In what will come as a surprise to his many critics, he admitted that some defences he used appeared to be unfair to the public.

"There are so many things that could be done to remove the sort of defences that people run and succeed on that, from the point of view of a layman, shouldn't really make any difference," Mr Freeman said.

"I wouldn't say I know the law better than the Government but I would be very happy to offer whatever help I can to try to make our roads safer."

Mr Freeman came to prominence when he successfully defended David Beckham against a speeding charge in 1999, arguing that the England midfielder had been frightened by a paparazzi photographer while driving in Cheshire. He managed to have a case against the cricketer Andrew Flintoff, who was charged with driving at 87mph in a 50mph zone, thrown out after 41 seconds by showing the notice for prosecution had been sent late.

He also successfully protected a person accused of driving a Porsche Turbo at 176mph by arguing the prosecution could not prove who was driving the car. "There have been massive moves to tighten these areas up, but nevertheless, many still exist," he said.

In particular, Mr Freeman said that drivers accused of drinking before climbing behind the wheel are handed too many rights – putting the safety of the law-abiding public at risk. He also, despite his status as the bête noire of the road safety lobby, came out as an unlikely supporter of calls to lower the drink-driving limit.

JIHOČESKÉ UNIVERZITY AKADEMICKÁ KNIHOVNA V ČESKÝCH BUDĚJOVICÍCH

The Government has been cautious about backing a reduction in the limit from 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood to the European standard of 50mg, suggesting that proper enforcement of the current limit is its priority.

Mr Freeman argued: "We have the highest drink driving limit in Europe. It's utter hypocrisy to allow that level to continue. It should be reduced substantially. I really cannot understand why the Government isn't doing that.

"What is frightening is the subjective element, and how tolerance varies from person to person. One person can be under the limit but still totally unfit to drive. The public don't realise that." He added: "I wouldn't reduce it to zero, but I think it should be substantially reduced. The general European level of 50mg is more than enough."

He said the law should be altered to prevent those accused of drink driving from needing a lawyer present when giving a sample – a tactic used in the past in an attempt to avoid giving a sample over the legal limit.

"There are measures put in place that civil liberty lawyers would applaud, that make sure people are fairly represented. But you might argue that in relation to drink-driving, the rights should relate to the safety of the public," he said. "That should be prioritised at all costs."