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A Comparative Study of War and Sport Metaphors

in Political News Headlines

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Abstract

This paper examines conceptual metaphors based on war and sport that are used in political headlines in English and Spanish from a contrastive perspective. By dint of analysing news headlines, collected from more than seventy online newspapers, the study aims to reveal not only the analogies between both languages but also the connections between the target domain *politics* and the source domains *war* and *sports*. Following Lakoff and Johnson's theories (1980), the corpus of headlines used in this paper is examined through a detailed metaphor analysis which includes a descriptive, an interpretative and a comparative level. This analysis shows that the frequent use of metaphors in political headlines serves a two-fold purpose: first, to show the reader hidden issues and political views and second, to catch the readers' attention and shape our personal thinking about politics.

Keywords: metaphor, politics, war, sport, headlines, comparative study.

1. Introduction

In the last decades conceptual metaphors have been studied extensively, especially from the field of cognitive linguistics. Within this framework, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) defined them as the process of understanding one idea in terms of another, that is, metaphors are understood as a set of correspondences between two conceptual domains, which are known as the source and the target domain.

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) further asserted that our language is "fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff and Johnson: 4) and that cognitive metaphors are "shaped to a significant extent by the common nature of our bodies and the shared ways that we all function in the everyday world" (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 171). Given that this rhetorical tool is used in our everyday language, it is not surprising that metaphors frequently appear in journalistic language, especially, in news describing political events. Metaphors are also common in political speeches because "metaphors play a central role in public discourse, particularly in political discourse" (Francis, Rew and Miguda, 2016: 21).

The use of metaphors in the political press and discourse is not just to enhance the message but also to catch the attention of the reader. By developing powerful political issues and boosting stirring responses, the accurate use of metaphors is a priceless weapon in the arsenal of any political speech. Metaphors provide a connection between what is already known by people (culture, history, etc.) and the ideology of a political party or a politician. Therefore, their use helps us to understand how a community perceives the different aspects of politics.

Additionally, Charteris-Black (2011: 208) suggests that its use creates a particular effect of persuasion, "by drawing on deeply rooted cultural schemata, politicians are able

to represent their beliefs and their policies as heroic tasks and themselves as epic heroes." Likewise, political leaders can criticize their enemies and characterize opposing strategies as corrupt by using these rhetorical devices in their talks.

Headlines have been chosen since they give a gist of the story that follows. They are usually written using attractive and powerful language. Koller (2004) claims that the use of metaphors in headlines allows journalists (who in most cases capture a literal quote said by a politician) to define the main subject of an article, benefit the conceptualization and compel readers to read the whole news.

In order to carry out the present investigation, a corpus was collected with 63 headlines that exemplify metaphorical uses of language from real newspapers written in British English, American English and Spanish. After examining the sources, it was concluded that the most common metaphors found in the sources were related to the areas of war/conflict and sports. For this reason, it was decided to limit the present analysis to these two areas.

The analysis will cover 63 metaphors collected from 70 newspapers of different ideologies. Nonetheless, and even though the ideology of each newspaper is important, for the purpose of this study it will not take into consideration and this paper only focuses on the metaphor itself. We have chosen newspapers representing different ideologies such as "El País", "La Razón", "BBC News", "CNN News", "Daily Mail", "The Telegraph", "El Mundo" or "ABC", among others.

The main objective of this paper is to investigate how newswriters and politicians use language (i.e. conceptual metaphors) when interpreting a political event and talking about politics. A list of subcategories or source domains will be used to further classify the metaphorical uses of language. Moreover, this research study aims to analyse from a

contrastive point of view conflict and sport metaphors in order to find possible common points and differences between the way the speakers of both languages use them.

Just to conclude, this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 offers a literature review on the topic of metaphors in headlines about politics, uses and functions. Section 3 presents metaphors in relation to two large source domains: *war* and *sport* and then, each category is divided into subcategories in order to further analyse the metaphors found in the target domain *language to talk about politics*. Finally, there is a conclusion that summarises the main findings.

2. Metaphors in political headlines

The use of metaphors in political communication has been extensively studied since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) acknowledged the importance of these rhetorical devices in the area of political discourse. Several scholars, such as Thompson (1996: 1) among others, state that "politics without metaphor is like a fish without water." Also, this author believes that the use of metaphors helps make the main concepts of politics, such as influence, power, ideology, etc., more concrete (Thompson: 188). Probably one of the main reasons to account for the use of metaphors to describe political events and relations is related to the fact that politicians want to make politics less complex and more concrete for citizens or voters. According to Ditmer (1977: 567), choosing a word from our common language so as to use it in a metaphorical way gives the message a familiar meaning, thus allowing politicians and journalists to move from a more abstract level to a more concrete one. In the same vein, Schmitt (2005: 336) claims that metaphors make "perception more automatic and ease the energy required to understand." Nevertheless,

trying to make more accessible some incomprehensible political aspects is not the only important reason that accounts for the extensive use of metaphors in political discourse.

Metaphors, as already said, are not merely used to decorate the message. In most cases, "metaphors can be employed to serve political aims or interests" (Van Teeffelen, 1994: 384-386). When a politician uses a metaphor while communicating, there is always a reason behind which could be either to disseminate a point of view or to challenge or embarrass his political rivals.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980), within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics, consider metaphors to be more constitutive[1] rather than reflective. They argue that metaphors are important tools for the development of points of view, beliefs and judgements about the world, because they "create social reality and guide social action" (Lakoff and Johnson: 156). This is related to a Lacanian notion which suggests that metaphors could be "gifted sparks" that generate meaning and basically establish ideology (Lacan, 1997: 157). This is yet another reason to understand the widely use of metaphors both in the English and the Spanish press when talking about politics. They, generally, try to guide our understanding and interpretation about our political and social events.

From a psychological perspective, Mio (1997:130) claims that metaphors are powerful devices in political language because they "allow the general public to grasp the meanings of political discourse" and they "fit into the prevailing notions of information-processing models of public knowledge of politics." Grey (2000) agrees with this idea and further clarifies that "metaphors by and large are conceived and grasped with the

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[1] Constitutive metaphors: metaphors that enable epistemic access to various realities, i.e. they enable us to acquire knowledge of the nature of the world and what is in it.

same facility as our ordinary literal vocabulary. There is no problem in understanding metaphors: the problem is to explain *how* we understand them." Moreover, Balkin (1988:272), unlike Foucault[2], maintains that the main weight of metaphors comes from the cognitive/psychological system. Hence, the strength of metaphors lies mainly in their hidden nature and in their capacity to disclose our common sense.

From a critical point of view, the use of metaphors in politics can sometimes be perceived as to create "disputes", a conflict based on applying opposite features such as "marvelous" versus "malicious" or "fair" versus "unfair" to the different political positions. In an analysis of these rhetorical tools, Van Teeffelen (1994: 384-386) asserts that the power of metaphors in the field of politics lies in its prowess to stress certain details and connections while, at the same time, minimize others. Since metaphors arrange the insight of evidence and essence, cause and effect and particularly, acclaim and blame, they can be used to fulfill political interests. Along with this idea, Charteris-Black (2004: 1), claims that "when addressing the media, major participants in international affairs select figures of speech that present a way of thinking about events that serves their own interests." Hence, the clever use of metaphors in political communication represents an ingenious strategy which tries to control some beliefs and ideologies over the prejudice of others (Lakoff, 2008).

From the point of view of political communication, metaphors can be described as linguistic "guns" used in a conflict between two political opponents who, by using them, show their own believes and thinking. However, the role of metaphors in political

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[2] Foucauldian discourse: his genealogical work analyzes how the social world, expressed through language, is affected by various sources of power. The scholar tries to understand how our society is being shaped by language.

speeches is better understood following Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA)[3], which derives from the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)[4], "an approach to the study of text and talk" (Van Dijk, 1995: 17). It determines the way communication and language belong to an ideological system enclosed in history and education. Moreover, this analysis acknowledges political rhetoric as contributive to the creation of social status and relations. Then again, the CMA presented by Charteris-Black (2004), follows the main ideas of the CDA but also the cognitive criterion postulated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). As result, CMA links different aspects of CDA, allowing to combine several characteristics of metaphors such as the cognitive, the rational and the historical.

The corpus of metaphors for this piece of research will be analyzed from three different levels, following the perspectives mentioned above. First, metaphors will be presented, described and identified. Second, they will be analyzed from a motivational perspective in which the main intentions and objectives of political leaders and newswriters will be explained. Finally, a contrastive analysis will be carried out in order to observe and identify similarities and differences between the use of metaphors in the English and Spanish press.

3. War and sport metaphors

In this section, conceptual metaphors used in political discourse will be analyzed. Only those metaphors based on war and sports will be considered for the scope of this study. The corpus created for this paper consists of a list of metaphors collected from the

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[3] Critical metaphor analysis: it is concerned with integrating corpus linguistics, pragmatics and cognitive linguistics to explore implicit speaker intentions and covert power relations through the analysis of metaphoric expressions.
[4] Critical discourse analysis: it seeks to unveil the ideology carried by and hidden in discourse.

best known newspapers in Spanish and English (both American and British) such as "El Periódio", "La Vanguardia", "ABC", "La Razón", "The New York Times", "BBC News", "The Guardian", "The Telegraph", among many others. The procedure of collecting and analyzing the data has been a meticulous task based on three basic steps. Firstly, it was important to find newspapers in which there was news about politics and, therefore, headlines that could contain political metaphors, (more than 70 online newspapers have been consulted – for a complete list see appendix). The second step was to find either the Spanish or the English compatible version in order to establish similarities or differences between both languages. The last step was the analysis of each headline. In this analysis, headlines were classified according to their properties and afterwards, the results of the analysis in both languages were compared. At this point, it should be noted that no huge differences were found since both languages seem to use very similar concepts. Hence, English and Spanish metaphors are very similar except for one of the sport subcategories because of cultural reasons (see Section 3.2.4).

Once all the examples have been collected, they have been classified into two major subcategories depending on the source domain on which they are based. These two subgroups are the following ones:

1. Politics is a war: these are metaphors which compare politics to a war (with all that it implies). Hence, there will be metaphors that talk about politics as if it was an exchange of threats, a battle or a confrontation on a battlefield where politicians are regarded as soldiers who use military tactics.

2. Politics is a sport: this second group contains metaphors which compare politics to different sports. Therefore, there will be metaphors which describes politics as if it were boxing, basketball and football, a race, baseball and a horse race.

Finally, metaphors have been grouped according to their use, the similarities and differences observed between both languages and the characteristics that identify them as representatives of an "order of discourse[5]" (Fairclough 1992; Foucault 1981).

3.1. War metaphors

The first group consists of metaphors which only employ violent vocabulary and war terms to talk about politics. In fact, the field of war and conflict is used in a metaphorical way in every human dispute and confrontation. Following this idea, Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 4-5) argued that "argument is partially structured, understood, performed, and talked about in terms of war." Hence, war metaphors are present in our daily language and terms such as *fight*, *defeat*, *survive*, *attack*, *win* or *battle* are used by most politicians in their speeches and discourses. Nowadays, these warlike words are applied to non-confrontational circumstances, which has been somehow automatized, since political leaders and people are able to describe and understand some aspects of life explained through the use of war metaphors.

It is no coincidence that politicians take advantage of these terms while delivering their discourses because conflict metaphors are very helpful to make clearer political affairs and to express opinions and the internal strife of political leaders. In fact, as was shown in Sections 1 and 2 above, the conceptual metaphor theory proposes that people make use of these rhetorical devices to try to transform something unfamiliar or unusual into something common and well-known. In the same vein, Buurman (2005: 104), states that "with the aid of metaphors people make areas accessible to themselves which are unfamiliar, unaccustomed and incomprehensible to them."

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[5] Order of discourse: for Fairclough and Foucault, it is an analytic process which includes the implicit or explicit relations that a discourse has with other discourses.

Moreover, there are some aspects directly related to politicians themselves that influence the widely use of war metaphors in political discourse, such as, their uncertainty when deciding, the difficulties that some of them have to play by the rules, and the incomprehensible logic of politics (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 236; Chilton, 1987: 14-15). These are just some reasons that create a state of tension and stress between political rivals causing that 'the other' is constructed as an enemy, rather than as a legitimate adversary (Mouffe, 1999: 25).

Most of the metaphors collected in our corpus were used by politicians during the election period. Elections can be seen as a kind of war or battle between the different parties and opponents. For this reason, it is obvious that elections, with everything entailed (candidates, tactics, policies, strategies, statistics, etc.), are easier to understand using these war terms, given that people can easily establish analogies between these two domains (politics and war). On the one hand, politics is a complicated matter, complex and abstract. On the other hand, people are in contact with confrontations and disputes, both in their private lives and as observers of the lives of the others so talking about politics with this military/war terminology seems to be easier and more entertaining. All the other metaphors that were not part of the election period were used to face opponent policies, in moments of real conflict and during the Brexit period (in English).

As stated in the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, once the common field of conflict is introduced in a political situation, people inherently start to see similarities between the features of the target and the source domains. However, the comprehension of political headlines depends on the interpretation of each reader, since readers are influenced by the way metaphors use connotations and associations (Charteris-Black, 2005: 205). The analogies between these two domains can be seen in the subsequent sections.

3.1.1. Politics understood as an exchange of threats

It is not surprising to find discussions and confrontations, between members of opposite parties, in which political leaders threaten their adversaries. The use of threats is a steady strategy because by using them, politicians are not directly attacking their opponents but just alerting and warning them about their future acts and decisions. According to Buzan, Waever and Wilde (1998: 24), the situation in which this threat is employed, is not a dangerous one because there is not a real threat, it is just that "the issue is presented as a threat." All the press analyzed in this paper use this verb *to threat* to represent possible clashes between different countries or parties. The sentences below (1-7) exemplify this correspondence.

(1) *Rajoy **amenaza** con utilizar la Constitución contra la salida de Cataluña.* (El Financiero).
(2) *Ciudadanos **amenaza** a Sánchez con romper si negocia con Puigdemont el referéndum.* (La Razón).
(3) *Trump **threatens** "big problems" for Iran.* (BBC News)
(4) *Trump **threatens** Syria before allies are on board.* (The Daily Beast)
(5) *Isis **threatens** UK in latest propaganda video featuring Paris attackers' "final messages".* (The Independent).
(6) *David Cameron's Brexit **threat** to pensioners is a new low.* (The Spectator).
(7) *Rajoy **amenaza** con "responsabilidades" en los tribunales al presidente del Parlament.* (Público).

As shown above, none of the headlines use conflict metaphors during the election period. These examples were used in a real context of confrontation such as the conflict between the Arabian countries and the rest of the world (examples 3, 4 and 5), the recent conflict about the independence of Catalonia (examples 1, 2 and 7) and the Brexit process (example 6). Moreover, the exchange of threats is not just between political leaders but also, between political parties, see example (2) in which *Ciudadanos* threatens the government of Puigdemont, or between countries, see example (5), in which the Islamic State threatens the UK.

3.1.2. Politics seen as a battle and a confrontation on a battlefield

Many political concepts could be regarded as part of a war or an assault against the rivals. The process that every party carries to plan the different policies of an election and how to attack opponents could be compared to the process of planning a war. As Charteris-Black (2004: 3) claims, "in each case the use of the word "battle" is a metaphor from the domain of conflict to describe a different type of political situation." The following headlines (8-12) show this idea:

(8) *Puigdemont anuncia una **"guerra jurídica"** contra Rajoy hasta que acepte negociar.* (El Español).

(9) *Resultado de la **guerra diplomática**: Rajoy 1 - Puigdemont 0.* (El Periódico).

(10)   *PP y Cs usan el Parlamento como **campo de batalla** por el voto de centroderecha.* (El Periódico).

(11)   *David Cameron's **47-hour battle** with Brussels – then the cabinet.* (The telegraph)

(12)   *General election 2017: Lancashire a key **battleground**.* (BBC News)

Examples (8) and (9), which are in Spanish, use the word *guerra* but modified followed by an adjective, probably to make the expression less direct or intense because diplomatic or juridical battles have not the same weight as using only the word *battle,* which implies physical contact and damage. However, the *battlefield* concept is treated likewise in both languages, see examples (10) and (12). During the election period, politicians are like soldiers in the battleground who want to fight to obtain the domination of the nation. "In each case the metaphor *battle* describes different political actions. The basis for this association can be represented with a general statement that captures an underlying assumption on which they are based to yield a *conceptual* metaphor: POLITICS IS CONFLICT." (Charteris-Black, 2004: 3).

3.1.3. Politicians are fighters/soldiers

In relation to the previous point, if the confrontation between politicians was regarded as a battle in a battlefield, then politicians could be seen as soldiers. In fact, when they are involved in a dispute, they are fighting for their ideals, their objectives and their voters. For this reason, words such as *fight, survive, defeat* or *win* are commonly employed in the metaphorical language of politics, as can be seen in the following headlines (13-21):

(13) *Rajoy y la **lucha** por **resistir***. (Democresia).
(14) *Cifuentes dice que los "ataques" son el precio de **su lucha contra** la corrupción.* (La Vanguardia).
(15) *Biden: "I shouldn't have said" I would **fight** Trump.* (CNN).
(16) *Theresa May **under fire** over Brexit transition deal.* (The Guardian).
(17) *Obama **under fire** for his military campaigns.* (Financial Times).
(18) *EU referendum: David Cameron **suffers defeat** in parliament over "purdah" rules*. (The Guardian).
(19) *Barack Obama spills the beans on how he **survived** the white house years*. (News 18).
(20) *Rajoy **sobrevive** sin despeinarse a un fallido tres contra uno*. (Voz Populi).
(21) *Pablo Iglesias **derrota** a Íñigo Errejón por una mayoría aplastante en Vistalegre II*. (El Confidencial).

As shown in the examples above, there is a huge number of headlines which contain verbs related to the field of conflict. To begin with, the first two Spanish examples (13 and 14), present both politicians as soldiers who fight against each other, trying to resist and struggling to address corruption. These two examples could be compared to the example (15) because, in the sentence we have also a politician, Biden, that has intentions of facing Trump. There are also headlines in which politicians do not have to fight each other but to deal with the public opinion, this is the case of examples (16 and 17), where politicians are criticized and judged. Finally, there are the examples in which politicians, playing the role of a soldier, survive or defeat the encounter, (see examples 18, 19, 20 and 21). In conclusion, all the headlines seen in this subsection are "described with the

language of military combat – of victory and defeat – and so linguistic choices communicate that this leader places a positive value on competitiveness. This value system reflects a general view of human and social relations that informs the use of language." (Charteris-Black, 2004: 3).

3.1.4. Political tactics are military tactics

According to Greene (2003: 212), "in warfare, you need space to align your troops, room to maneuver. The more space you have, the more intricate your strategy can be. But sometimes it is better to overwhelm the enemy, giving them no time to think or react." This is indeed what politicians do when they have to duel with their adversaries, they need to have an ace under the sleeve to save face. Undoubtedly, political leaders sometimes adopt strategies that are very similar to war strategies in order to win the opposition. The next examples (22-26) illustrate this idea:

> (22) *El "lado oscuro": Esta es **la táctica** de Sánchez con Colau para después del 1-O.* (El Semanal Digital).
> (23) *Junqueras derrumba **la estrategia** de Puigdemont de ser president a distancia.* (El Plural).
> (24) *Iglesias desvela su **estrategia** para 2018 y advierte a Sánchez de que no le seguirá "esperando".* (Público)
> (25) *Theresa May's Brexit **strategy** risks fracturing the United Kingdom.* (Financial Times).
> (26) *Clinton's health defeat sways Obama's **tactics**.* (The New York Times).

These headlines show that each politician employs a method or a system against the opposite party and it works the same in any country. Moreover, there are no lexical differences between the two languages because the terms *strategy* and *tactic* work the same way. In all the fields in which they are applied, tactics lead dynamically to the achievement of strategy. Ergo, tactics change according to the plans advanced by the adversary. However, its permanent purpose is to take advantage of the least opportunity to take the initiative to hit the opponent.

3.1.5. Conclusions and correspondences

After analyzing and classifying all the 26 headlines about politics that contain war metaphors, it became evident that the source domain of war is commonly employed in the press currently. When people are asked to think and reflect about war, the first idea that comes to their minds is the image of two (or more) armed groups that are about to fight against each other to conquer or abandon a territory. Conceptually, the main objective of an attacking war is the destruction of the adversary. Hence, if one of the groups begins the offensive, the other will attack back. At the end of the conflict, one of them obtains the victory whilst the other one is defeated.

The same logic can be applied to the field of politics. Politics is not about a physical contact but a violent competition in which one of the parties wants to become victor. Political parties differ in their ideas and policies and when one of them attacks, the rational response from the other party would be a counterattack. Ergo, it is clear that both parts will fight for their interests and goals. Going back to the last example (26), when the moment of the election approaches, both politicians, Clinton and Trump, and their parties will be involved in a kind of confrontation in which they will use strategies and tactics. In this sense, this moment is the clearest comparison between politics and war because the process of the election is like a war between two military groups that want to win.

Table 1 below shows some correspondences found in the headlines analyzed in this paper between these two domains:

POLITICS IS WAR	
SOURCE DOMAIN (WAR)	**TARGET DOMAIN (POLITICS)**
1. Military groups	➔ Political parties
2. Fighters/soldiers	➔ Political leaders
3. Military combat	➔ Political encounters/political election
4. Triumph in the battle	➔ Victory over the rival party
5. Defeat in the battle	➔ Political loss
6. War procedure	➔ Political tactics/strategies

Table 1: mapping analogies between both domains.

These similarities and coincidences between the two domains can be useful to comprehend how the source domain *war* is introduced into the target domain *politics*. All the verbs and expressions that appear in the headlines such as *fight, battle, defeat, survive*, etc., create a metaphorical way that is very useful to talk about the different elements of politics. For example, winning or losing against your rival can be compared to winning or losing a war and, being in a conflict to obtain more votes can be seen as fighting for a land in a war. In addition, Lakoff and Johnson agree that our language is full of metaphorical expressions that are connected to abstract concepts and, thanks to them, these complex concepts can be more easily understood (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 7).

3.2. Sport metaphors

Along with war metaphors, it is not strange to find sport metaphors in political communication (Balbus, 1975: 26). If war metaphors depicted politics as an ongoing war,

sport metaphors refer to politics as a complicated game, as a situation undertaken by two or more adversaries that follows some rules (Howe, 1988: 89). The image of both teams fighting to win but, at the same time, working together, the race atmosphere and the perseverance, are just some of the elements that coincide with politics. Hence, the correspondence between these two domains, sport and politics, is very significant.

According to Gibbs (1994: 140), "many of the metaphors used in politics draw heavily and systematically on the languages of sport and warfare." The enormous use of these metaphors in political communication is because the readers and society have more points in common with sport than with politics. Besides, political leaders employ these metaphorical expressions as powerful devices capable of influencing the audience. Additionally, Kövecses (2010: 41) claims that "games and sport are characterized by certain properties that are commonly used for metaphorical purposes."

After having analyzed political headlines that contain sport metaphors, it can be noted that the choice of one sport over depends on the country since the popularity of many sports is not the same in every country. However, there are some sports that are used in the examples of both languages such as *boxing, basketball, football* and *racing*, (given that *baseball* and *horse racing* are sports that are not practiced in Spain). The analogies between these two domains will be exemplified in the following sections.

3.2.1. Politics is boxing

The field of politics, intentionally or not, is always involved in an atmosphere of conflict. For this reason, politics can be related to boxing because both areas share concepts that are linked to violence (in the case of boxing, physical violence, and in the case of politics, verbal violence). When a boxing metaphor is used in a political headline, it is because the government or the political party is thinking about taking new decisions

or planning political events, actions that could be compared to the movements and responses done in a boxing match. Moreover, according to Gibbs (1994: 141), "boxing metaphors are also used, primarily to convey the necessary image of toughness." The following headlines are just some examples (27-36) of the overuse of boxing metaphors in the English and Spanish press.

*(27)   Mitt Romney shows he's no expert on foreign policy, but seems to avoid **getting knocked out** by Obama.* (Daily News).
*(28)   Obama didn't **score knockout** but **landed more punches**.* (CNN News).
*(29)   For the president, **punch, punch, another punch**.* (The New York Times).
*(30)   The final presidential debate: **four punches** that **knocked out** Mitt Romney.* (Rolling Stone).
*(31)   Donald Trump vs Hillary Clinton: Democrat holds edge after **the first round**.* (Firstpost).
*(32)   Un **noqueado** Puigdemont se escuda en el Parlament y aplaza su respuesta a Rajoy.* (Es Diario).
*(33)   Susana Díaz **golpea** a Pedro Sánchez con 17 dimisiones en la Ejecutiva.* (El Diario).
*(34)   **El primer asalto** de cara a la investidura de Puigdemont.* (Deia)
*(35)   **Golpe bajo** de Aznar a Rajoy en un momento crítico: ni Podemos ha ido tan lejos.* (Es Diario).
*(36)   Sánchez pide respuesta de **envergadura** semejante a provocación independentista.* (El diario).

All the examples above contain some terminology that belongs to the field of boxing. Comparing both languages, it is quite clear that there are not remarkable differences between the Spanish and the English headlines. Both languages employ boxing vocabulary in the same way, they describe politics as if politicians were boxing fighters, facing each other so as to *knock down* their rival policies. When the boxing match is used as the source domain, some elements such us the ring, the fighters, the rounds, the coaches and the punches are connected to the target domain, which, in this case, is politics. This metaphorical relationship between politics and boxing comes from the fact that people usually understand politics as a confrontation between two rival political leaders, who collaborate in debates and each manages to take control over the political situation, likewise two boxers fight in order to win the game and show that they are

stronger than the other. Then, the spotlight of this metaphor in particular is the fighting moment that can be compared to the clash between two political opponents, featured in the target domain. The correspondences between these two domains can be seen clearer in the following table:

SOURCE DOMAIN (Boxing)	TARGET DOMAIN (Politics)
1. Starting the fight	➔ Beginning a political campaign
2. Preparation for the fight	➔ Tactics and strategies
3. Punches in the game	➔ Clashes between both politicians
4. Winning or losing the game/fight	➔ Winning or losing the debate
5. Politicians	➔ Boxers
6. Supporters/public	➔ Voters
7. Boxing ring	➔ Political arena

Table 2: correspondences between the source domain *boxing* and the target domain *politics*.

3.2.2 Politics is basketball and football

If the examples of boxing mentioned above could be compared to a violent confrontation between politicians (as was the case with war metaphors), the headlines that are going to be analyzed now, related to basketball and football metaphors, are completely unconnected to violence. In fact, it is completely the opposite. We find here some examples in which politicians do not want to fight, they act like cowards, like people who do not want to deal with their problems and who prefer literally to *pass the ball* to the adversary, "they are far more enamored with power, or ratings or their personal agendas." (Beck, 2012: xi). The following examples (37-43) clarify this idea:

(37)   *Romney **drops the ball** on Libya in last presidential debate.* (Red Alert Politics).
(38)   *Obama **dropped ball** on campaign reform.* (CNN).
(39)   *Republicans stonewalled Obama. Now **the ball is** in their court.* (NY Times).
(40)   *Theresa May to tell the EU: "**The ball's** in your court".* (The Independent).
(41)   *Rajoy **pasa la pelota** a Pedro Sánchez en el debate de investidura.* (El Confidencial Digital).
(42)   *Puigdemont **pasa la pelota** a Rajoy: declarará la independencia si inicia la vía 155.* (Voz Populi).
(43)   *De convocar elecciones a **pasar la pelota** al Parlament.* (El País).

As seen above, in all the examples, we have politicians who have exposed their policies and then, they managed to get out of the conflict by challenging their rivals. In football or basketball, players do not pass the ball to the opponent team, they do the contrary. Nevertheless, in the language of politics, *passing the ball* has another connotation. It is like passing the problem to the other so as to get this person into trouble. The Spanish headlines exemplify this idea and the English examples (39 and 40) too, but in these examples, it is like the challenge is already done and now the ball (the dilemma) is in their hands. With this idea in mind, the examples (37 and 38) represent the other side of the coin, that is to say, the party challenged which, in response to this, let this *ball* just fall, does not accept the provocation. It is like these politicians were supposed to act but they failed to perform it.

Another feature pf these two sports, not shared by boxing, is that both are team sports whereas boxing is individual. According to Miller and Johnson (2015: 225), sometimes, "the behavior of partisans resembles that of sports team members acting to preserve the status of their teams rather than thoughtful citizens participating in the political process for the broader good." This is an important point because boxers are just focused on reducing their opponents, they do not have to care about teammates; they are on their own. However, football and basketball players are not alone on the track, they have to work as a team to achieve their goals. This has much to do with politics, there is

always a team behind politicians. According to Gibbs (1994: 141), "Ronald Reagan frequently employed sports metaphors in his speeches, in particular emphasizing *team* aspects of political contests." Exemplifying this notion of team and teamwork, some headlines have also been found (44-47):

(44) *Rajoy y **su equipo** entran en el cuerpo a cuerpo con Aznar.* (El País)
(45) *"ABC" carga contra **el equipo** de campaña del PP.* (El Plural).
(46) *Theresa May's **team**: the PM's inner and outer circles.* (The Guardian)
(47) *Trump's **team** snooped on Obama officials. That's gutter politics.* (The Guardian).

Hence, these examples confirm the idea that politics is not an individual issue, behind every politician there is a group of people supporting him/her and making sure he/she *wins the match*, just like football and basketball players do.

Just to conclude this subsection, mention that it has been quite difficult to find secondary sources and authors who have already studied football or basketball as a source domain of politics so most of the ideas in it are the result of the present work. A summary of headlines using metaphors related to football and basketball (or any other sport played by a team with a ball) and the target domain *politics* is presented below (Table 3):

SOURCE DOMAIN (Football and basketball)	TARGET DOMAIN (Politics)
1. Players	➔ Politicians
2. Football or basketball team	➔ Political party
3. Ball	➔ Policy challenges
4. The match	➔ Political debates
5. Winning or losing the match	➔ Winning or losing the political strife

Table 3: analogies between the source domain *football/basketball* and the target domain *politics*.

3.2.3. Politics is a race

It is not unusual to compare the diverse political activities that each party conducts to a track event or a competition. It is like each party wants to fulfill its aims before its rival achieves its own. According to Cremer, De Donder and Gahvari (2005: 532), the political competition is based on "two parties car(ing) for the policies they propose as well as the probability of winning." Along with this idea, Boyne (1998: 62) claims that political parties join a race when they are "actually striving to win an election." For these reasons, political headlines employ also some vocabulary related to track events when talking about politics. The following examples (48-53) show this idea:

(48)   *Who is **running** for president? Obama, Mitt Romney and third-party* candidates **compete** in 2012. (Huff Post Politics).
(49)   *Obama on **marathon tour**; Romney **runs** across Ohio.* (Associated Press).
(50)   *The **competition** to be the worst PM ever.* (The Guardian).
(51)   *Albert Rivera, **carrera de fondo** contra Rajoy.* (El País).
(52)   *Aguirre y Rajoy **compiten** por "movilizar" contra el nuevo impuesto.* (Diario Córdoba).
(53)   *Pedro Sánchez, por libre en **la carrera** de las primarias: no abrirá una cuenta a través de Ferraz para financiar gastos.* (La Sexta Diario).

After examining some examples, it is obvious that both languages employ the source domain *race* to talk about the target domain *politics*. However, comparing both languages, it can be observed that English headlines use the term *marathon* to talk about a race between two parties whilst the Spanish headlines never do, although *marathon* could be considered as a synonym of *race*. Nevertheless, what is important is the extensive use of this source domain *race* to talk about politics. To sum up, this conceptualization of politics as a race or competition is probably rooted on the fact that they are actually competing to obtain "more votes of individual citizens", to control "the government following legislative elections in which no party wins an overall majority"

or to "compete between members of different legislative institutions, chambers and committees." (Laver, 2005: 264).

3.2.4. Politics is baseball and a horse race

In this section, some examples of politics compared to baseball or horse racing are presented. These two sports have been grouped together because they are the only ones that have not been found in Spanish. Although their terminology is similar to the terminology seen in *politics is a race* (Section 3.2.3), they use some terms that are only found in these two sports. Probably, the reason why there are not Spanish headlines using these sports metaphorically is simply due to the fact that in Spain these two sports are not very popular. The following table shows some of the examples (54-63) in which politics is compared to baseball and to a horse race.

Baseball	Horse Race
(54) *Bill Clinton hits a **home run**. (The Gazette)*	*(59) Clinton, Trump **neck-and-neck** in new Texas poll. (CNN)*
(55) *Obama hit a **home run** against Mitt Romney last night. (National Catholic Reporter)*	*(60) Joe Biden is the **front-runner**. (Politico)*
(56) *Trump at conclusion of first foreign trip: "I think we hit a **home run"**. (The Hill)*	*(61) Barack Obama given **"fast-track"** authority over trade deal negotiations. (The Guardian)*
(57) *Romney's one chance to hit a debate **home run**. (The Fiscal Times).*	*(62) **Neck and neck**, Romney and Obama enter **home stretch** in presidential **race.** (Bay News 9)*
*(58) Romney needs to hit a **home run** in Wednesday night's debate to win the presidency.* (Brooklyn Young Republican Club)	*(63) Mitt Romney, GOP **front-runner** but wouldn't beat Obama, says poll.* (The Christian Science Monitor)

Table 4: headlines containing baseball and horse racing metaphors.

In the case of the horse race, Miller and Johnson (2015: 227) claim that the competitive atmosphere of elections is heightened "by emphasizing *horserace* aspects of the contests." When the process of an election is about to take place, "voters are flooded

with advertising comparing the candidates and parties, and media incessantly report polls on the closeness of the races" (Miller and Johnson: 227). In fact, all the headlines containing horse racing metaphors are about different periods of elections, except for example (61), that is about trading policies.

Moreover, the analogies between horse racing terminology and politics are more logical than it might seem. For example, a *front-runner* is the horse which is winning the race. In politics, a *front-runner* is the politician who is leading in the polls, examples (60, 63). Also, in a horse race, a *fast track* is when the track of the racing arena gets wet from rain and it is very difficult for horses to run on it. In political terms, any activity or politician that seems to be moving fast and with difficulties is said to be on a *fast track*, example (61). At last, in some horse races, when two horses are running in the same speed, it is said that they are running *neck and neck* because their necks are so close that it is very difficult to guess who will win the race. In politics, when two candidates are both very close to win the election, they are compared to two horses that are running *neck and neck*, examples (59, 62).

In the case of baseball, all the examples use the same baseball metaphor using the term *home run*. To *hit a home run* in baseball is when a player hits the ball so far that it allows him to run the four bases and score a run. In politics, when a politician *hits a home run* means that he overtakes his adversary and he leads the clash, the election or the debate. In the corpus provided, only the example (56) does not refer to a political competition in which Trump overtakes another politician, it is about the positive results of his first foreign trip.

3.2.5. Conclusions and correspondences

After having analyzed all headlines that employ sport metaphors to refer to politics, it is clear now that all the sports mentioned act as source domains in all metaphorical expressions. Although Fetzer and Lauerbach (2007: 87) support the idea that "elections and sport do not seem to have much in common at first glance", it is proved that "the competitive nature of both elections and professional sport seems a sufficient basis for frequent metaphorisation of elections through sport" (Fetzer and Lauerbach: 87). Moreover, comparing the two source domains that have been studied in this paper, *war* and *sports*, Howe (1988: 95), notices that "in contrast to WAR metaphors, SPORT metaphors suggest *fair play* and the chance for "peaceful resolution."

The most frequent sport metaphor found in the corpus of headlines provided is boxing. The reason for its widely appearance could be that boxing is the sport that more looks like a war and, whether you like it or not, politics is in fact a constant clash between two political opponents. However, all the other sports acting as source domains are also widely used by the media because, "competitive sports metaphors place positive associations on winning and value the attributes that make winning more likely" (Charteris-Black, 2013: 188). Besides, *politics is sport* is an accepted conceptual metaphor because the repetition of its use allows us to identify it as such.

Finally, it is important also to mention that "sport metaphors differ substantially cross-culturally according to the types of sport most popular in each country." (Fetzer and Lauerbach, 2007: 87). In fact, in the data given, there is some evidence that confirms this idea, this is the case of baseball and horse racing metaphors. These two sports are not very popular in Spain so, it has been impossible to compare these metaphorical expressions between both languages because there are only English examples. The

popularity of each sport in America, England or Spain proves their meaningful engagement in developing the target domain *politics*. Hence, on account of cognitive linguistics, we can now clearly understand the reasonable relationship between sport and politics.

4. Conclusion

Generally speaking, metaphors help shape our thought and our view of the world. Likewise, metaphors used in political communication are but a reflection of how politics are conceived in our society, both ideologically and historically. Some authors like Gibbs (2017: 226), support the view that metaphors which are "widely associated with political positions shape one of the ways individuals think about politics." However, "this doesn't mean that people are enslaved by their metaphors or that the choice of metaphor is a matter of taste or indoctrination." (Gibbs: 148). Nevertheless, metaphors are able to shape political and media discourses without necessarily brainwashing citizens but allow us to portray a political reality in a particular way by building connections between we, the spectators and they, the speakers.

In order to conduct our analysis, we collected a corpus of metaphors used in politics news headlines. We have observed that each metaphor encloses both open and hidden meanings. These meanings have allowed us to understand the different strategies employed as a discursive exercise by politicians and journalists. Hence, when a metaphor appears in a political discourse, it can be transformed into an indirect critique against political elites (if it comes from journalists) or against a political adversary (if it comes from politicians).

We have also seen that once metaphors become common in the media and political discourse, their meaning can be tested, derided and even distorted (Mio, 1997: 129). In fact, the interpretation of each metaphor is very personal and individual. According to Radman (1997: 160), the interpretation cannot be literal because "such interpretation cannot help us and is therefore useless." Besides, and also according to this scholar, "the only way to understand a metaphor is to interpret it metaphorically" (Radman: 160). Thus, after analyzing the data collected for this research it became evident that metaphors used in political discourse mainly illustrate tensions. Metaphors referring to both internal and external disputes are overwhelmingly dominant over those in which politicians try to seek solutions and show a mutual agreement.

Therefore, we can conclude that war and sport metaphors help illustrate politics as it is really conceived in our culture: a competition, a clash, a race, etc., between two or more political parties that are fighting for the presidential position. Ergo, journalists use war and sport metaphorical expressions in headlines because they help them catch "the readers' attention" (Mussolf, 2016: 16) and also, make a particular political situation clearer for citizens. Along with this idea, Joseph (2016: 118), states that "if the party uses language in a way that prevents concrete mental pictures from being called up, people will not understand what is happening to them, and they cannot rebel against what they do not understand."

At this point, it has to be mentioned that one of the objectives set forth at the beginning of this study has proved not to be as fruitful as expected. After comparing the use of metaphors in both languages in source domains (Section 3.1 and Section 3.2), we realized that their use is extremely similar with the data available for the study. Also, and as future research, we would like to try to provide an in-depth explanation about the importance of intentionality and ideology of each newspaper based on the type of

metaphors they most commonly used. However, ideology is important because metaphors are linguistic tools used against one party or another depending on the newspaper editorial line but, this study has focused on the metaphors themselves and, for this reason, it focuses on the linguistic aspects of these rhetorical tools, not on the ideological ones.

Finally, just to conclude, mention that words and metaphors are valuable elements that have an impact in our daily life since they help us shape, process and understand events. The political purposes behind each metaphor have to be understood for what they are: psychological instruments that idealize politicians' particular views of society whilst deconstructing others. As stated by Lakoff (2008: 34), we, as citizens, have the responsibility to "make the cognitive unconscious as conscious as possible."

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Appendix

List of online newspapers consulted:

SPANISH	ENGLISH/AMERICAN
El Confidencial	BBC News
El Español	The Guardian
El Diario	Daily Mail
Público	The Telegraph
Voz Populi	Mirror
El Independiente	The Times
La Gaceta	The Economist
El Nacional	The Independent
El País	Manchester Evening News
La Razón	The Press and Journal
El Mundo	Birmingham Mail
ABC	Daily Record
La Vanguardia	First News
El Financiero	The Oxford Times
El Español	Daily Express
El Periódico	Financial Times
La Sexta Diario	The New York Times
Diario Córdoba	CNN
El Plural	Usa Today
Deia	Wall Street Journal

Democresia	New York Daily News
Es Diario	Washington Post
Region Digital	Mohave Daily
Ceuta Actualidad	The Daily Bee
Noticias Mallorca	St. Paul Pioneer Press
La Cerca	San Franciso Chronicle
La Voz de Lanzarote	The Gazette
Gazteiz Hoy	National Catholic Reporter
El Periòdic	The Hill
Ávila Red	Bay News 9
Vigo al Minuto	Brooklyn Young Republican Club
Zamora News	The Christian Science Monitor
Diario Siglo XXI	The Fiscal Times
Sevila Press	Red Alert Politics
Isabadell	Huff Post Politics
Mediterránero Digital	Associated Press