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METAPHORS IN WRITTEN SOCCER COMMENTARIES: EVIDENCE FROM GERMAN

1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest concerning the study of metaphors employed in the language of football. Some studies have focused on the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparisons between languages [Matulina and Ćoralić 2008; Nordin 2008; Lewandowski 2009; Bommert 2010]. For example, Matulina and Ćoralić [2008] have shown that the language of football in Croatian, Bosnian, German and Austrian newspapers is characterized by a considerable variety of idioms and metaphors. Nordin [2008] has found that, although the concepts of container and war used by the Swedish and German commentators are mostly the same, there exist significant differences in their frequency or individual variation. Other research has been concerned with the use of military metaphors in live football commentary [e.g. Chapanga 2004; Seddon 2004; Vierkant 2008]. For example, Vierkant [2008] has shown a successful application of the metaphor identification procedure in the German language and demonstrated that football language in live radio commentary is based on a previous knowledge of conflict. Chapanga's [2004] examination of war metaphors used in live Zimbabwean broadcasts of soccer matches, in turn, has confirmed that players' emotions, actions on the pitch, spectators' behaviour and the description of match results are translated into a war scenario as the result of a commentator's use of metaphor.

Thus far, however, there has been little discussion about the employment of metaphors in German soccer written commentary, to say nothing of their function in this specific context. In addition, there have been a small number of studies investigating structural metaphors and common source domains from which these metaphors are drawn. Until now none of these studies has been large-scale. Previous research has been limited

to spoken commentary. For this reason, the primary aim of this article is to examine what kinds of metaphors are used in German written commentary and what functions they tend to serve in this context.

2. Theoretical framework

The article rests on the framework of conceptual metaphor as defined by Lakoff and Johnson [1980] in their famous publication *Metaphors We Live By*. According to this approach, most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature, i.e., metaphors are fundamental to one's thinking and understanding. Metaphor is not merely perceived as a matter of language, but as a tool which structures our thoughts, actions and perceptions. A structural metaphor is defined as an understanding of the target domain in terms of the structure of the source domain [Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 14]. This understanding is based on a set of conceptual mappings or correspondences between elements of the two domains [Kövecses 2002, 33]. In contrast to conceptual metaphor, metaphorical linguistic expressions are lexical units or other linguistic expressions that are derived from the source domain: that is, "the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain" [Kövecses 2002, 4]. Lakoff and Johnson's classical example is "argument is war" [1980, 4], where linguistic expressions from the source domain *war* are used to describe and understand an argument.

It is noteworthy that several researchers have disproved the main assumption of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson's Conceptual Theory of Metaphor [1980] that language is a matter of cognition and conceptual structure rather than of language and then have proceeded to argue that metaphor needs to be best examined from a semiotic, psychological and socio-cultural viewpoint [cf. Gonzálvez-García, Peña-Cervel, and Pérez Hernández 2013]. Thus, what is actually proposed is that metaphor should be investigated by adopting a more dynamic, interdisciplinary approach and a functional-cognitive perspective in contrast to a purely cognitive one.

3. Data and method

The data to be analyzed have been extracted from the corpus of the language of soccer compiled for the purposes of this article. Corpora comprise different types of texts (such as official news, commentaries , biographies, written interviews with people linked to the sport, match reports and reviews, etc.) derived from two different online resources: google.com and uk.yahoo.com. All of the texts found on these websites were virtually written no later than five years ago, which means that the compiled vocabulary is up-to-date. The data were retrieved from the corpus by means of the software program MonoConc Pro.

In order to obtain the data from the corpus, a corpus-based approach to source domain vocabulary has been employed. This method consists in searching for a lexical item from the source domain and extracting a sample of its occurrences in the corpus. This approach has already been employed to search for individual lexical items from the source domain [cf. Hanks 2006] or whole sets of such items [cf. Partington 1997]. The selection of items can rest on *a priori* knowledge, it can be based on existing word-lists, or it can rely on a preceding keyword analysis of texts on target-domain topics. In this sample, we then identify the metaphorical mappings in which these lexical items occur.

4. Source domains

Given the total word count of 508, 832 words in the German corpus, the material turned out to contain a large amount of metaphorical vocabulary which could be classified as relating somehow to the conceptual domains of physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, animal and human behaviour, meeting and journey. The data confirms that football written commentary is extensively conceptualized in terms of ideas relating to the afore-mentioned domains. The vast majority of examples found in the corpus are metaphors that are commonly used in everyday speech and writing and these are specifically related to football or any match that is being reported on. In an attempt to exemplify the different domains, some examples from the most frequent sources will be provided as follows.

(1) PHYSICAL FIGHT
    a. Die Türkei *kränkt* Deutschland. (Turkey *hurts/wounds* Germany).
    b. Sakai *trifft* Pekhart *im Zweikampf* unglücklich *am Kopf*. (Sakai *hits* Pekhart unhappily *on the head in a one-on-one duel*).

(2) MILITARY CONFLICT
    a. [...], dass *die Truppe* sich nicht *wehrt*, wie am Samstag in Bremen. ([...] that *the troops* aren't *defending* themselves, as it was on Saturday in Bremen).
    b. Bayer Leverkusen *steht im Niemandsland* und […]. (Bayer Leverkusen *stands in no-man's land* and […]).

(3) GAMES AND SPORT
    a. Valencia *hält Kurs auf* die Champions League. (Valencia *holds a course for* the Champions League).
    b. VfB muss *Gas geben* für Europa. (VfB must *accelerate* towards Europe).

(4) HUMAN BEHAVIOUR
    a. Hannover 96 zeigt *Nerven*. (Hannover 96 shows *nerves*).
    b. Der VfB *stand unter Schock*. (VfB *is in a state of shock*).

(5) ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR
    a. Joker Mössner *sticht* gegen Schalke. (The joker Mössner *stings* against Schalke).
    b. Die Wölfe haben *gebissen*! (The Wolves *bit*!).

(6) MEETING/VISIT
    a. Schalke verlor die zurückliegenden drei *Begegnungen*. (Schalke lost its last three *encounters*).
    b. Hannover *empfängt* zeitgleich den VfL Wolfsburg. (Hannover *receives* VfL Wolfsburg at the same time).

(7) JOURNEY/CRUISE
  a. Van Gaal muss *die Koffer packen*. (Van Gaal must *pack his bags*).
  b. dass die zuletzt märchenhafte *Reise* der Borussia durch Europa weitergeht (that Borussia's last fairy-story *journey* through Europe goes on).

Each of the aforementioned source domains has contributed the vast majority of metaphors to the material of the current research. The metaphorical linguistic expressions that derive from these domains also constitute a significant part of the total collection, altogether approximately 70%. In particular, physical fight and military conflict provide roughly 40%, while games and sport, meeting, journey, as well as human and animal behaviour contribute about 30%.

Clearly, this is not a complete survey of domains that participate in conceptual metaphors as sources. Metaphors are in fact derived from a wide variety of sources, for instance religion, work, buildings and construction, good health and illness, plants, machines and tools, heat and cold, sleep, games and sort, movement and direction, light and darkness, and several others (see Appendix). However, none of these source domains appear to have contributed such a large number of metaphorical expressions as those mentioned earlier.

5. Structural metaphors

Thus far in this article we have been concerned with structural metaphors. In the examples of the source domains given earlier, we have already seen several instances of such concepts fundamental to an understanding of the domain of soccer. In these kinds of metaphor, the source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target concept of soccer. In other words, the cognitive function of these metaphors is to allow readers to understand soccer by means of the structure of physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, meeting, journey, human and animal behaviour, etc. Structural metaphors in the domain of soccer can be of several different kinds. By way of illustration, consider the most significant examples.

The domain of physical fight gives rise to a number of metaphorical expressions occurring in soccer. The metaphor FOOTBALL COMPETITION IS A DUEL also infers physical fight as its source domain. Since football is a competitive game in which participants directly or indirectly have physical contact with an opponent, one player may hit another player on the head in a one-on-one duel. Players *duel with* (*duellieren*) one another for possession of the ball or play *one-on-one* (*Mann gegen Mann*). In this context, not only players but teams might face each other (*gegenüber stehen*), issue a challenge (*herausfordern*), and duel with one another. The following examples in (1) are provided to illustrate this phenomenon.

(1) FOOTBALL COMPETITION IS A DUEL
  a. Wir spielen hinten *Mann gegen Mann*. (We play *one-on-one* at the back).
  b. Champions-League-Start: Deutsche Teams *duellieren* sich mit englischen Top-Clubs. (Champions-League-Start: German teams *duel* with English top clubs).

A military campaign is another source domain contributing metaphorical terms that enable one to understand more abstract concepts from the target domain of soccer. The entire football competition, footballers, their characteristic traits, their emotions, actions on the pitch and activities of spectators are conceptualized in terms of a military campaign. One can observe systematic correspondences between the target domain of soccer and the source domain of the military campaign: the events and actions in a soccer competition are the events and actions evident in and during a military campaign, the target of the match or the tournament is the target of the battle or the military campaign, the players are the soldiers, the teams are the armies, the soccer tactics and strategies are the military tactics and strategies, the match is the battle, the match formations are the battle formations, etc. Taking the number of analogies into account, one may argue that in many ways soccer can be perceived in terms of a military campaign. These analogies become more obvious if one considers two examples in (2). The sentence in (2b) is one of the corpus examples where the phrase derived from the terminology of a military campaign, in this case *verlieren Boden* 'lose ground', serves to describe football competition. Yet another example, the term *Schlacht*, is used figuratively to refer to the battle against Schalke 04.

> (2) FOOTBALL COMPETITION IS A MILITARY CAMPAIGN
>> a. Deutschland *verliert Boden.* (Germany *loses ground*).
>> b. FC Bayern: Van Gaal erwartet *Schlacht* gegen Schalke 04. (FC Bayern: Van Gaal expects a *battle* against Schalke 04).

The usage examples in (3a) and (3b) show that the domain of RACE may be used to understand football competition. Football teams are perceived as runners or race horses participating in a race which can be a long-distance running event (marathon) or a short sprint. The term *hurdle* (*die Hürde*) is used to refer to difficulties encountered by a team. Teams like runners prepare for a competition (*Auf die Plätze, fertig, los!*), come out of the starting blocks (*aus den Startblöcken kommen*), or commit a false start (*Fehlstart*), i.e., lose a match. Some sides may compete fiercely like horses running *neck and neck* (*Kopf-an-Kopf Rennen*). Other sides may attempt to catch or find a second wind (*einen neuen Anlauf nehmen*), particularly after suffering a few defeats. Finally, though they may be exhausted after a long race, teams enter the home stretch (*Zielgerade*) breathing deeply (*Durchatmen auf der Zielgeraden*) and reach the finishing line.

> (3) FOOTBALL COMPETITION IS A RACE
>> a. *Die Hürde* Borussia Dortmund erwies sich als zu hoch für die Mannschaft von Trainer Mircea Lucescu. (The *hurdle* Borussia Dortmund proved to be too high for coach Mircea Lucescu's team).
>> b. *Auf die Plätze, fertig, los!* Wird Bayern München durchmarschieren? (*On your marks, get set, go!*). Will Bayern München march through?

A football competition is also construed as a journey. This understanding involves a set of basic correspondences, or mappings between constituent elements of the source domain and those of the target: the teams are the travelers, the purpose of the soccer competition is the destination, the progress made in the soccer competition is the distance

covered, the difficulties encountered in the soccer competition are the obstacles along the way, and so on. As can be easily seen, in the forthcoming examples, the phrase *löst das Ticket* 'obtains the ticket' describes a situation in which the team wins its promotion to a competition in Berlin and Europe, whereas the expression *auf dem richtigen Weg* 'on the right way' is employed to refer to a situation in which the team is close to achieving its goal.

(4) FOOTBALL COMPETITION IS A JOURNEY
   a. Borussia ist lange nicht fertig, aber sie ist *auf dem richtigen Weg*. (Borussia hasn't been ready yet, but they are *on the right way*).
   b. Stuttgart *löst das Ticket* nach Berlin und Europa. (Stuttgart *obtains the ticket to* Berlin and Europe).

As follows from the data presented in (5), teams can be viewed as animals. The metaphor TEAMS ARE ANIMALS is used primarily to enrich our understanding of a team's behaviour by focusing on or highlighting some aspects of animal behaviour. The examples below demonstrate that a team may behave like an animal or a group of animals: the team can *lie in wait* (*lauern*), *scratch* and *bite* (*kratzen* and *beißen*), or *dig its claws into something* (*krallen*).

(5) TEAMS ARE ANIMALS
   a. Real hat *gekratzt* und *gebissen* und (…). (Real *scratched* and *bit* and (…)).
   b. Villarreal *lauerte* nur noch auf gelegentliche Konter, (…). (Villarreal only *lay in wait for* occasional counter-attacks, (…)).

Another potential metaphor for representing football teams is that of considering them as human beings. A team, like a human being, may be in a state of shock (*unter Schock stehen*), show nerves (*Nerven zeigen*), be afraid of an opposing team (*Angst vor jemandem haben*), etc. Some examples illustrating this analogy are presented in (6).

(6) TEAMS ARE HUMAN BEINGS
   a. Getafe *hält die Hoffnung aufrecht*. (Getafe *maintains its hopes*).
   b. Milan *setzt* Barca-Stars *unter Schock*. (Milan *shocks* Barca's stars).

In addition to the source domain of HUMAN BEINGS, teams are also perceived in terms of kings or royalty. A team that wins a sporting competition (such as the Champions League or the league championship) reigns, succeeds to the throne, ascends to the throne or sits on a throne. A team that loses is compared to a king that is dethroned. Some examples of this metaphor are provided in (7).

(7) TEAMS/PLAYERS ARE KINGS
   a. Die Königlichen *regieren* im Camp Nou! (The Royals *reign* in Camp Nou!).
   b. Barca-Star Iniesta will Real *entthronen*. (Barca's star Iniesta wants to *dethrone* Real).

The usage examples presented in (8) following seem to confirm that a team is viewed as a sailing boat, ship or yacht participating in a regatta or embarking on a long-distance voyage. A ship may sail to its destination or stop and stay in a *berth* (e.g., *Champions-League-Liegeplatz*). A player (a captain) and a coach may be regarded as a *skipper* (*der Kapitän*) who is *on board* (*an Bord*) with his crew (*Crew*) and *steers the ship* (*das Schiff*

steuern), or a helmsman who *takes the helm* for a team (*das Ruder übernehmen*). The helmsman or the skipper *keeps* his team *on course* to its destination (*auf Kurs halten*) and makes certain that the ship *sails* (*steuern*) safely. In other words, a coach wants his team to defeat all opponents and achieve a desirable goal (e.g., the team's promotion to Division One, winning the Champions League or the league Championship, avoiding relegation or earning qualification for the World Cup). Clearly, the voyage may also result in failure if a team encounters serious difficulties on the way to its final destination: the team may be defeated in a decisive match or a series of games, be relegated to the third division, or be eliminated from the finals. In those circumstances, the ship drifts, capsizes or *runs aground* (*läuft auf Grund*), while the helmsman *leaves the sinking ship* (*verlässt das gesunkene Schiff*).

> (8) A TEAM IS A SAILING SHIP
>> Frings *hält* Werder *auf* Champions-League-*Kurs*. (Frings *keeps* Werder *on course for* the Champions League).
>> a. Schuster *übernimmt das Ruder* in Malaga. (Schuster *takes the helm* in Malaga).

Examples such as those in (9a) and (9b) indicate the existence of the conceptual metaphor A FOOTBALL MATCH IS A BOXING BOUT. Football sides that enter the football pitch (or to use a boxing analogy, the *ring*) are perceived as boxers ready in their corners (e.g., *in der roten Ecke die favorisierten Bayern*) before the beginning of a boxing bout. Soccer teams are also compared to boxers (*Boxer*) from different weight classes. Upper weight classes apply to top teams (*Schwergewicht, Weltergewicht*), while lighter weights tend to be used disapprovingly (*Leichtgewicht, Bantagewicht*). It is noteworthy that one of the most frequent metaphorical terms is the word *blow* (*Schlag*), which often combines with adjectives (*doppelt* 'double', *entscheidend* 'decisive', *hart* 'hard/heavy'). This lexical item (occasionally, *Faustschlag* and *Punch* appear in similar contexts) is used metaphorically to refer to various turning points in a match such as a booking, a red card shown by the referee to a key player, a penalty, a goal or injury. An overwhelming or impressive victory is regarded as a knockout (*Knockout*/*K.o.*) or knockdown (*Knockdown*). An unfair manoeuvre used by a player or a team to gain advantage over an opponent is compared to a low blow (*Tiefschlag*) or a blow below the belt (*ein Schlag unter die Gürtellinie*). A team on the losing side is thought of as a defeated boxer leaning on the ropes (*in den Seilen hängen*).

> (9) A FOOTBALL MATCH IS A BOXING BOUT
>> a. Bayerns internationale Position als *Halbschwergewicht*. (Bayern's international position as *the light-heavyweight*).
>> b. United gegen Arsenal wie ein öder *Boxkampf*. (United against Arsenal like a tedious *boxing match*).

Additional two examples below show that a football match can be also understood in terms of a card game. An ace (*Trumpf*) denotes an outstanding player, while a joker (*Joker*) is usually a substitute player who is able to change the course of events on the pitch in a positive manner. A team who is in control of a situation on the field is considered to hold all the trump cards (*alle Trümpfe in der Hand haben*). A soccer side

who exposes its tactical plans and shows its intentions resembles a player who puts all his cards on the table (*mit offenen Karten spielen*). By contrast, a football team who keeps its intended actions secret is compared to a card player who plays with his cards close to his chest (*mit verdeckten Karten spielen*).

(10) A FOOTBALL MATCH IS A CARD GAME
      a. Joker Podolski sichert Arsenal-Sieg. (*Joker* Podolski ensures victory for Arsenal).
      b. Bayern *spielt mit offenen Karten*. (Bayern *puts its cards on the table*).

It is also worth noting that a football match is frequently perceived as a meeting or a visit. The data in (11) below serve as an illustration of this phenomenon. A home match is like a home visit that is organized by a home team at their home stadium. The home team is like a host (*Hausherr*) who *receives* (*empfängen*) or *plays host to* (*zu Gast haben*) an away team. The away team is like a visitor or a *guest* (*Gast*) who *visits* (*besuchen*) the home team at his home stadium to play an away match. The home team's stadium is like a host's home where the match takes place. The example in (11) shows that a match can be also regarded as a meeting. Two teams *meet together* (*aufeinandertreffen*) in order to play a *friendly* (*Freundschaftsspiel*) or an *encounter* (*Aufeinandertreffen, Begegnung*) in a competitive match, in the qualifying or final stages of major tournaments, or in preparation for a new season.

(11) A FOOTBALL MATCH IS A MEETING/VISIT
      a. FC Barcelona spielt dann um 20 Uhr und *hat* Getafe CF *zu Gast.* (Then FC Barcelona plays at 8 p.m. and *plays host to* Getafe CF).
      b. ManU und Chelsea *treffen* im Champions-League-Final aufeinander. (ManU and Chelsea *meet* in the Champions League final).

Yet additional examples in (12a) and (12b) illustrate that a football match can be conceptualized as a special event, e.g., a gala (*Gala*) or a festival (*Fest*), where a team celebrates (*feiern*) victory or a goal.

(12) A FOOTBALL MATCH/VICTORY IS A SPECIAL EVENT/ CELEBRATION
      a. Götze leitet die Lewandowski-*Gala* ein. (Götze starts Lewandowski's *gala*).
      b. Viertelfinale! BVB *feiert* das nächste *Fest.* (Quarter-final! BVB *celebrates* the next *festival*).

As examples (13a) and (13b) demonstrate, words and expressions in italics are the derivatives of two conceptual domains being connected: the SOCCER domain and the CHESS domain. A soccer match is comprehended in terms of a game of chess which employs a strategy and tactics. A situation in a game where neither team can win is compared to a stalemate (*Patt*). A team who keeps an opposing team in check (*in Schach halten*) is considered to control the course of events on the field. A coach is perceived as an experienced chess player who shifts his chess pieces (players) on the chessboard (soccer field) and checkmates an opponent (that is, defeats him completely).

(13) A FOOTBALL MATCH IS A GAME OF CHESS
     a. Serie A: *Patt* zwischen Juve und Milan. (Serie A: *Stalemate* between Juve and Milan).
     b. Schalke *hält* Milan *in Schach*. (Schalke *keeps* Milan *in check*).

6. Conclusion

The results of this investigation show that metaphorical linguistic expressions derive from a wide variety of source domains, although the domains of physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, animal and human behaviour, as well as meetings and journeys constitute the vast majority of metaphors. The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that the structural metaphors discussed earlier are employed to depict nearly all events on the field as well as the actions of teams and individual players.

One possible reason for this is that journalists aim to "sell" and "promote a media product" that generates interest and excitement among football fans, without creating unnecessary complexity or difficulty of comprehension. This aim may be achieved by evoking the simplicity and straightforwardness of physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, animal and human behaviour, as well as a meeting and a journey. This strategy is used to convert the actions of individual players and teams as well as the events on and around the field into something easier to understand: namely, physical activities and patterns of human and animal behaviour. This way of enhancing understanding is utilized by journalists, whether they are aware of it or not, in order to make the game easily comprehensible to the average reader, and in order to enhance its attractiveness by adding examples of metaphors that build and create action and suspense as well as provide power to the commentary. Consequently, the use of metaphors increases the value of written reporting as a media product. Curiously, this frequent evocation of the above-mentioned domains appears to have resulted in the situation in which concepts such as physical fight, a meeting or a race are hardly distinguishable from the concept of football in the minds of today's journalists and football supporters, confirming the impression that figurative vocabulary has in fact become an inevitable property of current football reporting as well as a necessary tool for journalists.

Another reason why such metaphors tend to occur so frequently in written football commentaries may be that journalists attempt to provide a more coherent account of activities on and around a soccer pitch by establishing metaphorical correspondences between the domain of football and the domains of physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, animal and human behaviour, a meeting and a journey. It seems clear that it would be impossible for a writer to report on all the events taking place on and around the pitch, without the use of those mappings. It is quite likely that journalists select what to write about and link these different aspects of the game together by means of conceptual metaphors. Figurative expressions, therefore, appear to be indispensable tools employed to establish connections between actions that would otherwise be difficult

to link. According to Lakoff and Johnson [1980, 156], metaphors "may be the only way to highlight and coherently organize exactly those aspects of our experience."

The present study confirms the successful application of cognitive metaphor theory to football language in media commentary, and it also supports the idea that the activities in and around the football pitch are conceptualized in terms of more concrete entities which we understand more readily, namely physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, and several others. The most important limitation of this study rests in the fact that the current investigation was only restricted to the description of metaphors found in German commentaries. An issue that was not addressed in this study was cross-cultural variation in the range of conceptual metaphors and in their particular elaborations. Future research should therefore concentrate on the comparison and contrast of metaphors found in English and their counterparts in German and Polish. Given the fact that the current study was restricted to written commentary, it is recommended that a comparative study of spoken and written commentaries be undertaken, in view of the possible existence of linguistic variation in these discourses.

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Appendix

(1) FINANCE
- a. Gegen Dortmund haben wir *eine Rechnung offen*. (We *opened an account* against Dortmund).
- b. Laut der Liga hat Ronaldo nun 38 Zähler *auf dem Konto*. (According to the league's ranking, Ronaldo has 38 goals *in his account* now).

(2) FOOD AND EATING
- a. BVB macht *Appetit* auf Ajax. (BVB whets the *appetite* for Ajax).
- b. Derby-Siege *schmecken* einfach besser. (Derby victories *taste* simply better).

(3) THEATRE
- a. Die besten Clubs Europas konkurrieren miteinander *auf der internationalen Bühne*. (The best clubs in Europe compete against each other *on the international stage*).
- b. Xavi gegen Pirlo: Der spanische *Regisseur* drückte dem Spiel seinen Stempel auf. (Xavi versus Pirlo: the Spanish *stage director* put his mark on the game).

(4) MUSIC
- a. Barcelona drohte ein weiteres Jahr die erste Geige in Europa zu spielen. (Barcelona threatened to play the first fiddle in Europe for another year).
- b. Deutschland war ein harmonisches *Orchester*, die Niederlande eine angetrunkene *Blaskapelle* ohne *Dirigenten*. (Germany was a harmonic *orchestra*, and Holland was a tipsy *brass band* without a *conductor*).

Summary

METAPHORS IN WRITTEN SOCCER COMMENTARIES: EVIDENCE FROM GERMAN

Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's theory of metaphor, the author attempts to establish the kind of source domains from which common metaphors are drawn, and to what degree structural metaphors are used. To this end, different types of texts (e.g., match reports and reviews, official news, interviews, etc.) have been derived from German internet websites, with the intention of analyzing metaphors found therein. Data indicates that a number of structural metaphors can be found in written football commentaries. They are drawn from a wide variety of source domains, although the domains of physical fight, military conflict, games and sport, animal and human behaviour, as well as meetings and journeys are particularly prominent. The primary function of metaphor in this context appears to be to interpret facts in a way that attracts the readers' attention.