UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

CHELSEA SINK BENEATH RISING MERSEY TIDE:

METAPHOR USE IN FOOTBALL MATCH REPORTS OF

*THE GUARDIAN* IN 1987 AND IN 2018

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Jalkapallo on maailman suosituin laji ja sen suosio on erityisen vahvaa sen syntyseuduilla Isossa-Britanniassa. Jalkapallojournalismi on samaan tapaan iso osa paikallista sekä globaalia uutisvirtaa. Jalkapallojournalismiin liittyvä akateeminen tutkimus on etenkin kielitutkimuksen osalta alkanut yleistyä vasta viimeisen vuosikymmenen aikana.

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus on selvittää, onko Ison-Britannian suurimpiin päivälehtiin lukeutuvan *The Guardianin* jalkapallosta tehtävien otteluraporttien metaforan käyttö muuttunut 1980-luvulta nykypäivään verrattuna. Erityisenä mielenkiintona on jalkapallokielessä laajalti esiintyvät sotametaforat.

Tutkimuksessa käytettiin hyödyksi Lakoffin ja Johnsonin tunnetuksi tekemää konseptuaalisen metaforan teoriaa sekä Pragglejaz Groupin metaforien tunnistusmenetelmää. Jälkimmäisen avulla metaforat otteluraporteissa tunnistettiin ja ensimmäistä hyödynnettiin jakamaan metaforat erilaisiin kategorioihin.

Saadut tulokset osoittavat, ettei sotametaforien käyttö ole muuttunut oleellisesti 1980-luvulta 2010-lukuun verrattuna. Osasyynä tälle on monien sotametaforien, kuten *hyökkäys* (*attack*) ja *puolustus* (*defence*) vakiintunut rooli jalkapallokielessä. Näille metaforille ei jalkapallosta löydy helppoja korvaavia termejä.

Muiden metaforakategorioiden tarkempi tutkiminen osoittaa, että jonkinlaista muutosta on kuitenkin havaittavissa. Siinä missä vuoden 1987 otteluraporteissa väkivaltaiset metaforat olivat suuremmassa roolissa, nousivat vuodelta 2018 paremmin puolestaan esiin taidemetaforat. Mahdollisena johtopäätöksenä tästä jalkapallojournalistit vuonna 2018 keskittyvät entistä enemmän jalkapallon esteettiseen puoleen sen ajoittain väkivaltaisen luonteen sijaan.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I am going to study the use of metaphors in association football-related newspaper articles. Association football (later football) is the sport known as soccer in North America and football in most of the English-speaking world. Ranking either by the number of people who play it or those who merely watch it, football is globally the most popular sport (Cleland 2015:1). Reasons for this include but are not limited to the fact that football being a ball game with relatively simple and straight-forward rules allows the participation of masses (Gerhard 2014:38) and that, apart from many other ball games, one does not need much more to play football than something to represent the ball, be it an actual ball or a bundle of socks wrapped up together. It is different from other sports derived from the same medieval game, such as American football and rugby football. The articles used as data in this study will be collected from *The Guardian*, from the English football season 2017-18 and from the one played in 1987-88, making this a comparative study between two different eras of football journalism. Other than the journalism, there have been some massive changes in English football during that time, as will be explained in more detail below. This thesis will take one particular point of view and try to see whether the changes in football journalism, if there are any at all, are at a similar scale.

The history of football journalism dates back all the way to 1875 and a young, energetic 15-year-old named Joseph Catton. Despite his father's wishes of him becoming a doctor, Catton got an apprenticeship at *Preston Herald* and began writing about Preston North End, one of the best teams in England back then and the winner of the first English league championship. The first match reports were subsequently also written by Catton. According to Heffernan (2015), Catton was well liked and respected not only among his peers but players and referees as well. Catton did more than his part in turning football journalism from nothing into the vast media entity it is today. Besides writing articles, he also worked as the editor of football publication *The Atlantic* for almost a quarter of a century. During his twilight years, he took to mentoring some young, aspiring journalists.

Nowadays, every major and minor newspaper in England has dedicated a significant portion of their sports pages both on paper and online to football. The television rights of the top level of English football alone are worth over a billion dollars per year. The internet is also filled with England-based websites focusing solely on football, including *goal.com, WhoScored?* and *In Bed With Maradona*. We regular football fans can also act as pundits now, with Twitter, Facebook and various different message boards providing the perfect platform for voicing our opinions.

Even though sports media have been around since at least the 1800s, as an academic field of study it is relatively new. The study of media and sports, in various different disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, gender studies and journalism, only started to develop in the 1980s and really gained flight in the 1990s (Bernstein & Blain 2003:3). I would estimate that especially the study of sports media as a phenomenon and its relationships to other popular subjects such as gender and race has gained much popularity in recent years. The linguistic aspects of sports media in general and football journalism in particular, however, have not been quite as extensively researched (Kytölä 2013:19). There are some instances of studies that combine linguistics and football journalism, some of which I will discuss more thoroughly below. This thesis aims to contribute to that field with the focus being in the metaphors used in match reports.

Language is evolving constantly in order to adapt to the needs, demands and possibilities of contemporary times. It would seem reasonable to assume that to also be the case regarding the language of football, too. But is that the case? That is what this study aims to find out, focusing on one particular aspect of language. In more specific terms, the aim of this study is to find out if the use of metaphors has changed in 30 years of football writing. Of particular focus is the use of war metaphors that have been a prominent part of football language throughout the history of the sport. The analysis will be conducted by using the tools of metaphor identification procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group 2007) and conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980).

The next chapter of this study will contain an introduction to the world of metaphors and also to that of football journalism. I will be explaining the core concepts of conceptual metaphor theory. Furthermore, the chapter will also include a summary

and discussion of previous studies about metaphors in football journalism. It has been a topic of rising popularity in recent years. There have not, however, been any major comparative studies between metaphor use in football journalism now and in the past. This study seeks to bridge, at least in part, that gap.

Third chapter will focus on the impact that football has had and continues to have to society. The aspects discussed here, such as the connection between football and violence and the globalization of football are relevant to this thesis in the sense that they also might affect the word choices that the football journalists make.

After the background, the fourth chapter will briefly introduce the aims of this study, as well as the research questions that serve as the basis of the research. Secondly, this chapter will also focus on the analytic methods used in this study. This chapter explains the metaphor identification procedure that I will be using in this study more thoroughly. I will also be discussing the strengths and weaknesses of said procedure. Thirdly, in this chapter I will also present the data of this study. I will be analysing football match reports from *The Guardian* from two different time periods. In this section I will also be explaining why I chose this particular data. In addition, I will try to explain the nature and characteristics of this kind of data in such a way that a reader will understand what this study is about regardless of his or her familiarity with football journalism. When the data consist of football match reports from only one newspaper in two points of its history, the findings cannot by any means be said to indicate generalizations about the language English football writers use as a whole. Different journalists and newspaper editors can have different preferences. The type of a newspaper, its political stance and other factors will certainly have an influence in the type of language used as well. Rather, this thesis aims to be a look into how the metaphor use in one major, widespread newspaper has evolved. Finally, there will be a brief discussion regarding the ethics of this study.

The fifth chapter will focus on the analysis of the data. This chapter will provide a systematic account of the different types of metaphors used in the match reports of *The Guardian*, as well as of the frequency with which they appear.

Then, in the sixth chapter I will examine those findings further and discuss their implications regarding the nature of football match reports, the language used in them and the possible changes that have happened in the three decades that have passed.

Chapter seven will summarize everything that has been discussed before it. Finally, the bibliography has all the sources that made this thesis possible.

## 2. APPROACHES TO METAPHOR

Metaphor is a figure of speech that has a history of at least more than two millennia. Many scholars attribute Aristotle's Poetics (c. 335 BC) as the first work that started to explain metaphors (e.g. Leezenberg 2001:15, Mitchell 2012:22, Raffel 2013:3), although they most likely had been in use long before that as well. Metaphor is an especially fruitful subject of study and one that is notably interdisciplinary, as will be discussed later. Below, I will introduce theories and studies of metaphors that are relevant for this present thesis. Many of the studies belong to the field of linguistics, but there are also studies from fields such as sport sciences, journalism, medicine and political science.

## 2.1. Metaphor theory

The most common definition for a metaphor, found in the *Merriam-Webster dictionary* and many other English dictionaries as well, is that it is a figure of speech that replaces a word or a phrase with another completely different one to suggest a similarity or analogy between the two. An example would be the phrase *time flies*, in which the physical and, at least in this instance, fast act of flying is used to describe the more abstract concept of the sometimes subtly swift progression of time. Time doesn't literally fly, whether it seems to progress fast or slow.

As the definition above suggests, metaphor is often viewed as a rhetorical device, something used in poetry or prose to make the text more vivid and imaginative. It is, however, much more than that. The importance of metaphor use, not only to human language but also to everyday life in general, was first established nearly four decades ago. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980:3), "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature". It is possible that there are instances of metaphorical thinking that never manifest

themselves in our language use (Cameron & Maslen 2010). Thus, the term 'linguistic metaphor' can be used to differentiate those metaphors that are found in language.

Furthermore, metaphors are not limited to our thinking and our language use. The process of analyzing spoken language data often first involves recording the discourse and then transcribing it into a readable form. As Cienki (in Cameron & Maslen 2010:195) points out, there are plenty of facial expressions and bodily gestures that are metaphorical in nature and usually understandable between people with similar cultural backgrounds. These gestures are, however, omitted when the discourse is transcribed, which at worst can make the transcription indecipherable. This study, however, is focused on written language produced by others, so those kinds of instances are excluded from the present analysis.

Conceptual metaphor theory is one of the more popular theories in the field of metaphors. In conceptual metaphor theory, one idea, the target domain, is discussed by using concepts from another, the source domain (Kövecses 2002:4). The first example that Lakoff and Johnson (1980:4) use in their seminal book on conceptual metaphor theory is ARGUMENT IS WAR. They include exemplary expressions from everyday language use that include "he *attacked every weak point* in my argument" and "his criticisms were *right on target*". Incidentally, war metaphors are also among the most widely used in sports language in general and football language in specific (Nordin 2008:119). Examples of the metaphor FOOTBALL IS WAR range from the most basic concepts such as attack and defence to terms mostly used in the communication between coaches and players themselves such as battle or fight. In cognitive linguistics, the conceptual metaphors are usually presented using small capital letters and the metaphorical expressions using italics. I will follow these conventions in this thesis as well.

It is important to explain the difference between a conceptual metaphor and a metaphorical linguistic expression. The aforementioned ARGUMENT IS WAR is a conceptual metaphor. It rarely appears in any text in that exact form but rather serves as the core concept from which all the relating metaphorical expressions are derived (Kövecses 2002:4). "To attack a weak point in argument" would be an example of a metaphorical linguistic expression that uses the language of the source domain *war* to express an idea of the target domain *argument*.

As was already stated above, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980:3), metaphors are inherently a part of not only our language, but our thought patterns as well. In their view, metaphors such as the above mentioned ARGUMENT IS WAR, are not only used in our language to illustrate a point but they constitute part of the way in which we think as well. In that example, *war* functions as the source domain and *argument* as the target domain of the metaphor, meaning that the language of war is implemented in language when discussing argument. These kinds of metaphors, where one concept is structured metaphorically using the terms of the other, are called structural metaphors. They do, however, present another concept of metaphors that they call orientational metaphors. Most of these metaphors have to do with spatial orientation. An example that they use is HAPPY IS UP, SAD IS DOWN.

One argument that would seem to support the idea of metaphors being part of human thought patterns is their universality. Kövecses (2002:165) gathered examples from a selection of languages from all over the world, many of them unrelated with each other, including English, Chinese, Hungarian, Japanese, Zulu, Polish, Wolof and Tahitian, that all included variations of the metaphor ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER. It is possible that this is a coincidence or that the languages have borrowed from one another, but the examples that Kövecses includes also suggest that it seems reasonable to assume that the reactions that a human body has for anger have provided motivation for such different languages to have somewhat similar metaphorical expressions. Trim (2012:217) noticed, however, that even when languages share conceptual metaphors the linguistic metaphors used showed a surprisingly large amount of variation and that leads to the need of non-contextual features in order to interpret the meaning.

Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory quickly became the most prominent and widely spread theory on metaphor use. More recently, however, there has been some critique pointing out inconsistencies or deficiencies within the theory. Grady (1999) discussed how most of the metaphors they used applied only partially. For example, the metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS was introduced, with links between the source and target domain including *foundations, design* and *solidity*. Grady argues that some of the most important features of buildings, such as doors and windows, however, do not appear in our understanding of the target domain of theories. Grady suggests that a more accurate metaphor by these standards would be

ABSTRACT ORGANIZAIONS ARE ERECT PHYSICAL STRUCTURES, which already defeats the original purpose of making metaphors easier to understand.

Furthermore, the conceptual metaphor theory is also seen as undermining the linguistic aspect of metaphors. One example of Lakoff and Johnson was HAPPY IS UP, SAD IS DOWN, with which they argue that this is not only shown in language but also in physical behavior such as a sad person's drooping posture or a happy child literally jumping up in the air. Goossens (1995) points out, however, that a happy child can just as well be sitting or even lying down, meaning that the physical aspect of the metaphor is not universal.

Even the very core of the conceptual metaphor theory, which is the two-domain approach that a metaphor always has a source domain and a target domain, has been contested. According to the blending theory of Fauconnier and Turner (as cited in Steen 2007) the human mind has fluid mental spaces instead of permanent domains. In this theory, depending on the context of the metaphor there can also be common ground between the source and target domains as well as a new, blended space that is derived from the context. For example, in *this surgeon is a butcher* it is implied that the surgeon in question is incompetent. For a surgeon it would certainly be bad for business to treat their patients as a butcher treats the carcasses of animals, but that doesn't mean that the butcher is bad at his profession as well. Thus, the incompetence of the target domain is not present in the source domain.

## 2.2. Metaphors and football

The linguistic study of sports journalism is a relatively new field (Rantamäki 2009). However, metaphor use in sports and more specifically football writing has been a topic of study with a growing interest in the past two decades. A case study by Bergh (2011) indicates that the metaphor FOOTBALL IS WAR was valid in football commentary as recently as in 2011. According to Bergh (2011:91), the commentators of football matches use them to build a war scenario that will add to the intensity and emotion of the match experience. Moreover, in his view this way the happenings on the football pitch transform into physical conflict, something that is inherently easier to understand. Of course, a football match always involves some level of physical

conflict between two sides as well, even if the degree is not as severe as in a war. Using war metaphors relate to the consumers on a more basic and emotional level.

After all, the similarities between a battlefield and a football pitch are difficult to ignore. Two groups of people try to use strategy as well as mental and physical strength to gain a victory over the other. More often than not, the side that is better prepared and works together more cohesively achieves a victory. Using quotes from British newspapers as examples, Bergh (2011:92) even goes so far that he suggests that the connection between war and football is so undeniable and unavoidable that our understanding of football might be depending on it. I would argue, however, that even though much of the basic terminology of football has originated as war metaphors, it occurred so far in history that understanding terms like *attack*, *defend* or *shot* in football context does not necessarily have anything to do with whether we understand war or not. This is to say that these kinds of terms are nowadays much more frequently attributed to football and perhaps other sports than to warfare.

In his study, Bergh (2011:85) analyzed seven minute-by-minute commentaries published on the website of *The Guardian* during the knockout stages of European championships of football during the summer of 2008. He notes that even though the reports are written, they are probably more oral in nature because they describe the events as they happen instead of aiming to form a cohesive summary of the games. Bergh also acknowledges a problem with terms that are not immediately recognizable as related to war. He notes that most of those terms have been included, meaning that his findings of war metaphors might be more abundant than those of some others.

In all, Bergh (2011:87) discovered 672 words that can be classified as war metaphors from the total of 21,101 words in the 2008 match commentaries, meaning that more than 3 percent of the words used were war metaphors. As his paper focused on them, no other categories of metaphors were separately identified. The number seems high, especially when lexical categories such as proper nouns, auxiliary verbs, pronouns etc. are of the type that cannot be considered war metaphors. The problem with this, however, is the aforementioned, somewhat arbitrary inclusion of the category. For example, words like *pressure, cruel* and *brave* are counted as war metaphors according to Bergh. No clear parallels can be drawn between the findings of Bergh and the possible findings of this thesis, as the personal choices of the writers of not

only these papers but also the source materials may vary, but they certainly make for a valid comparison.

Mangan (2003:2) even goes so far to suggest that in European history, the connection between war and sports (not only football) is so strong that to concentrate only on one without the other is to be guilty of painting an incomplete picture. If that is the case then it is no wonder that it would also reflect in the language used in sports in general and football in particular. According to Donoghue (2014:2), the purpose of a metaphor is to provide the reader with different, more dramatic connotations. When presenting football in terms of war metaphors, that certainly seems to be a true statement.

As to not only paint a picture of football language as using an aggressive, war-driven vocabulary, Lewandowski (2012) published a paper titled *Football is Not Only War*, which can almost be viewed as a direct response to Bergh's study, even if it isn't referred to in Lewandowski's work. In his paper, Lewandowski (2012:82-93) identifies multiple different source domains and provides plenty of examples for metaphors used in English and Polish football journalism that do not have such aggressive connotations as war metaphors do. Those source domains include, but are not limited to, THEATER, ART, JOURNEY, BUILDING, FOOD and SCHOOL TEST.

Palomäki (2001) explored the differences in metaphor use between Finland, Sweden, England and Spain. As was the case with Bergh, Palomäki (2001:57) also noted that a large portion of metaphors used in football writing can be categorized as war metaphors. Interestingly though, his findings show that this is the case especially in the sports journalism of Finland, Spain and England. War metaphors are not quite as prominent in the football articles of Swedish newspapers, even though they still appear there. As Palomäki (2001:28-29) explains, the last war that Sweden was directly involved in ended long before football as a sport became popular in the country. Finland, the United Kingdom and Spain have all experienced war in the 20th century and, at least in Finland's case, some young men that played in the Finnish national team were lost during the Winter War and the Continuation War (Eerola 2015:115). Palomäki (2001:97) suggests that there might be a correlation between those two things. In my opinion, the reality might not be as simple as that conclusion, and some more thorough investigation into the metaphor use in said languages in

general would help determine whether that is one of the main reasons or not. Still, it is a logical point and the long warless period of Sweden might very well be one of the contributing factors in Swedish media's relative lack of war metaphors in football journalism. Another contributing factor could be journalistic guidelines and conventions that may vary in different countries.

War metaphors in football writing are not, however, necessarily universal. For example, according to Krisnawati (2014), in Indonesian football journalism the games are viewed as hunting grounds rather than war battles. It should be noted, however, that one example used included a coach of a team who "*shoots at the victory*". There are obviously direct parallels between war and hunting as the source domain as both can involve using guns. To me, it seems that it may be left up to context and even individual interpretation to determine what the source domain is. But without any knowledge of any Indonesian languages, and a very limited knowledge in Indonesian football and culture in general, I cannot claim that the example above does not exclusively allude to hunting in that context.

Continuing in the world of Indonesian football writing, Prihantoro (2016) analyzes semantic prosody of metaphors used in football journalism. According to him, semantic prosody is a linguistic practice that is used to describe how words that are seemingly neutral can be viewed as having negative or positive associations if they occur frequently in certain contexts. The study investigated verb phrases that described a team's victory over another. The results show that there were 22 instances of metaphors that had negative semantic prosody and 24 that had neutral semantic prosody. Only four of the verbs had positive semantic prosody. The negative prosodies were found among most of the source domains, but war was certainly the most fruitful. Only one of the war metaphors found (*to maintain*) was seen as having positive semantic prosody.

Metaphors in football language have also been studied from the point of view of how football players use them. Toivonen and Pounds (2013) studied a girls' football team that were asked to describe their emotions before and after matches during their football season. During the season, the players used a total of 604 different metaphors, with 94 percent of them being unique and used only once (Toivonen & Pounds 2013:23). Although the metaphors were placed in categories such as food,

animals and abstract objects, this serves to illustrate how vast and diverse the world of metaphor use is, whether the user is a trained professional language user (e.g. the football reporters of previous examples) or not (14-18-year-old girls who play football of Toivonen & Pounds' thesis).

Many of the studies relating to metaphors and football seem to be focused on the complete opposite of this thesis, i.e. with football being the metaphor for subjects such as politics, teamwork and business. It has been studied (Semino & Masci, 1996) how people as powerful as Silvio Berlusconi, the media mogul and former prime minister of Italy, use football metaphors in his rhetoric in order to create a positive public image for himself and his party and to attract certain demographics as his voters. Of course, at the time of that study Berlusconi also had already been the owner of a famous football club, A.C. Milan for more than a decade which might be a factor contributing to his rhetoric.

Pennycook (2012:74-75) demonstrated football skills' (or lack thereof) ability to function as a metaphor for language skills as well. He describes a situation where, in a football match, he failed to pass the ball to his teammate, as he did not understand the teammate's Bavarian German request. His teammate attributes this failure to his selfish English playing style. Pennycook notes that if, with better football skills, he had been able to pass the ball to his teammate, in that situation he would also have passed as a fluent user of Bavarian German, even if it would not have been true at the moment.

Even scholars in countries such as the United States, one of the few countries in the world where (European) football is not among the most popular sports, have begun to take notice of football and its potential as a metaphor. According to Bokeno (2009), competitive sports metaphors that have been used in American management practice vocabulary have tended to reflect traditional American values such as individualistic success, zero-sum competition and error-correcting efficiency. These are, however, perhaps not the most effective ideals in the context of management and leadership. Bokeno argues that "soccer teamwork is nonlinear, holonic, emergent and engaged" and thus more suitable for teaching organizational teamwork as a collaborative and not just cooperative and coordinated activity.

It has even been suggested that football metaphors can be used to enhance mental health for those with therapeutic needs. Spandler et al. (2014) studied *It's a Goal!* - program that is designed to help men with mental health needs and are viewed as difficult to engage with and hard to reach. The program involves therapeutic group work, where the group and its members are referred to and treated as a football team and its players. The study found that the use of football metaphors helped the participants to rework their lives and situations and identify more effective and helpful ways to react to difficulties. Furthermore, as a result it also motivated them to try and change their lives for better. This, in my opinion, is an important study in the sense that it illustrates how the use of metaphors can be applied into trying (and succeeding) to inspire people to do something. Even though football match reports are probably not written in an effort to goad actions out of the readers, there is little doubt that at least some of the metaphors are used in order to get the readers to view the match, a particular event happening inside it or a certain team or a player in a certain way.

As established above, football is popular as both the source domain and the target domain of metaphors of various categories. In football writing, metaphors are used to depict occurrences in a more vivid manner and perhaps also to make the text more accessible using language from a more familiar context to presumed readers. This may vary culturally, as Swedish football articles do not use as much war metaphors as Finnish or English articles. In Indonesian, the more popular source domain might be hunting. As a source domain, football can be used in a variety of ways, ranging from a political figure trying to attract potential voters to mental health workers reaching out to people that are otherwise difficult to engage with. Continuing forward, for the purposes of this thesis football's role is limited as only the target domain as the attention will be turned towards more specific data of football match reports in *The Guardian*.

## 3. SOCIOLOGY OF FOOTBALL

Although the linguistics of football has not been a popular subject of study and has only recently gained some traction, there has been a lot of literature written on

football in the field of sociology (Kytölä 2013:81). In many ways, main aspects of this thesis can also be linked to those studies. As discussed above, the language of football is being used as a powerful tool in various ways, ranging from political speeches to improving mental health. It would be sensible to take a closer look at some of the ways in which this thesis can be linked to the wider field of sociology of football.

For all the entertainment and joy that football brings to a large number of people, its history has also been, unfortunately, riddled with violence in a way that no other sport has (Cleland 2015:24). It has been a massive problem especially in the United Kingdom and many parts of Central Europe, but a lesser one in Scandinavia and Finland (Kytölä 2013:79). Such has been the magnitude of this problem in England that is has earned the nickname "The English Disease" (Gannon & Pillai 2010:287). According to Horne and Malcolm (2016:303), the study of sociology of sport was uniquely shaped in the United Kingdom in the 1980s because football hooliganism was such a substantial cultural issue. Since the late 1980s football hooliganism, i.e. disorderly and violent behavior by football spectators, in Britain has decreased notably. This has been attributed to either improved behavior of the fans and the clubs' growing focus on the safety and security of fans, or the tightened legislation and stricter punishments for the transgressions (Cleland 2015:34). As outlined previously, war metaphors have always been a major part of the language of football. It is a point to be considered whether drawing from such a violent source has also been a contributing factor in the violence around the sport.

One problem surrounding the media coverage of not only football (Cleland 2015:76) but also sports in general is the underrepresentation of women (Roper 2013:49, Giulianotti 2016:102). According to the English Football Association, the average attendance of the FA Women's Super League in 2016 was 1128 whereas the average attendance of men's FA Premier League in 2016-17 was 35 838, so at least a part of the difference in media coverage can be attributed to the still wide gap between the popularity of the biggest English leagues of women and men. It seems that another reason for the difference, however, could be that the representatives of media view women's sports as "lesser" simply because men tend to be physically faster and stronger (Valkonen 2013:11). According to Markovits and Rensmann (2010:157), the recent invasion of women into the world of sports is mainly restricted to roles as

performers and producers. In terms of talking about sports, they are still largely underrepresented. Markovits and Rensmann (2010:157) suggest this is because "many men resent what they perceive as women's encroachment on what some men consider one of their last uncontested domains: sports". As of now, it is unclear to me how, if in any way, this might show in my data consisting of only match reports of men's matches, but it is something to keep in mind when analyzing the data. Further research could be done to compare match reports of women's and men's matches, although, the state of the sports media unfortunately still being what it is, with women's sports greatly underrepresented, it could prove a challenge to find enough coverage of women's matches.

Football also provides ample material for research in the framework of globalization. Since Kosovo and Gibraltar were accepted as members in 2016, the international governing body, FIFA, has 211 national association members. There are not many corners on Earth in which the sport is not played. Still, for decades semi-frequent events such as the FIFA World Cup (played every four years since 1930, with the exceptions of 1942 and 1946 because of World War II) provided viewers with the only proper chances to watch players from different nations. Rules regarding player transfers and foreign player limits used to be very strict and put the players at a disadvantage (Parrish 2003:223-226), meaning that foreign players in a given national league were something of a rarity. At least in the EU, that all changed in 1995, when Belgian footballer Jean-Marc Bosman successfully appealed in the European Court of Justice when his Belgian club RC Liège refused to let him join a French club US Dunkerque despite his contract having been expired. The decision, aptly dubbed the Bosman ruling, lead to major changes in both the transfers of players without contracts and the nationality restrictions in the UEFA (European football associations) membership nations also in the EU (Parrish 2003:226-242). The ruling was not groundbreaking only in terms of football, but in terms of sports law as well. As Ilešič (2010:477) notes, this was the first time that autonomous sports rules did not trump the general principles of law, in this case free movement of work force in the EU. The aftermath of the ruling was massive. According to CIES Football Observatory (2016), in the 1995-96 season, the amount of foreign players in European "big-5" leagues (England, Italy, Spain, France and Germany) was 18.6%. In 2000-01, the number had

nearly doubled to 35.6%. In 2015-16 the amount of foreign players had risen to 46.7%.

In recent decades globalization has increasingly started to affect national teams, i.e. teams that represent a certain country in international matches, as well, with people with different kinds of migrant backgrounds appearing more frequently in many of the national teams. At least in Finland, France and Germany this has led to online forum discussions about who can represent a national team and whether they do it out of pride towards their nationality or just to further their own careers (Kytölä 2017). Much of the discussion that Kytölä presented, however, seems to be ironic and only jocularly suggesting that those who do not sing the national anthem while tearing up should be banned from the national team. Indeed, Shefki Kuqi of Kosovo Albanian background, the first immigrant player in the Finnish men's national football team, recently mentioned in his biography that he remembers his years with the national team fondly especially because the fans always gave him their full support (Wickström 2017:105).

Much of the study regarding globalization and football has been aimed towards the big, global events, leagues and organizations, such as the World Cup, English Premier League and FIFA as an organization. There have been, however, some studies that have also investigated the sport as it is played on a small-scale grassroots level, all around the world. Rollason (2011) explained that despite otherwise being in many respects vastly different cultures, the game of football that he had played in England and with the Panapompom people of Papua New Guinea is remarkably similar. Foer (2004) has been exemplary in describing many of the interesting global phenomena around football, from the way Catalans feel and embody national pride through their biggest football club, F.C. Barcelona, to how women in Tehran disguise themselves as men because they want to watch football and are not allowed inside a stadium.

Regarding the English football media, perhaps the most notable change that has emerged from the increasing globalization of the sport is the arrival of players such as German Mesut Özil, Belgian Mousa Dembélé and Finnish Jussi Jääskeläinen in the English Premier League. With the keyboards of journalists not readily including non-Anglo-American letters or diacritics, it has in many cases led to bastardized versions of Ozil, Dembele and Jaaskelainen being published. To their credit, the object of

analysis in this thesis, *The Guardian*, has at least in recent years strived to put the right diacritics above right letters. Furthermore, when analyzing the metaphors used in the match reports, it will be interesting to see whether the nationalities of foreign players have led to linguistic decisions that draw from the stereotypes attributed to a particular nation.

*The Guardian* also has its share of writers covering other events in the footballing world than just English football or the biggest international events. Jonathan Wilson, in particular, has done some great work introducing the British (and Finnish, among others) public to some football cultures that have not had a big media exposure before, including Eastern Europe (Wilson 2006) and Argentina (Wilson 2016). Alhough the various global phenomena of football provide endless interesting opportunities for study, this thesis will have its focus squarely on football played in the highest division of England.

## 4. SET-UP OF THE PRESENT STUDY

In this section, I am going to present the aims and research questions of this study. I will also introduce the method of analysis, metaphor identification procedure (MIP) and explain its rules. MIP is a method developed by a team of researchers called the Pragglejaz Group and it seems to be the most suitable procedure for identifying the metaphors in the data. Besides MIP, I will also use conceptual metaphor theory to categorize the metaphors found in the data.

Furthermore, in this section I will also introduce the data that I have selected, which will include football match reports from The Guardian from December 1987 and May 2018. These two sets of data will be compared with each other to see how, if in any way, has the use of metaphors in football match reports evolved in the last three decades.

Finally, there is also a brief discussion regarding research ethics of this study. As the data is collected from digital editions of *The Guardian* from their digital archive and PressReader, there are no major copyright issues that would need to be considered when selecting the data.

## 4.1. Aims and research questions

The aim of this study is to find out if and how the metaphor use in football writing has evolved with time. My research questions are as follows:

- In what ways, if any, does the use of war metaphors differ in football writing in the 1980s and in the present day?

 - What other kinds of metaphors are being used in football writing in the 1980s and in the present day, and how do they compare with one another?

My assumption, based on my own experiences of consuming football-related material of any shape or form since I've been able to read, is that football writing has evolved towards a more politically correct type of writing. Specifically, I aim to find out if war metaphors are less used in the texts from the year 2018. Any other notable differences, if there are any, between the metaphors used in the two texts will also be analyzed and discussed further.

One way that the metaphors can be analyzed is to look at their semantic prosodies, i.e. if they are used in a way that evokes a negative or a positive connotation. Prihantoro (2016) used this technique and found that a vast majority of war metaphors in football writing had negative prosody. Although it is not one of the research questions, it is interesting to see whether there are any differences in the semantic prosody of metaphors used in 1987 and in 2018.

It should be noted, however, that many of the most basic terms related to the game of football are originally war metaphors that have become so rooted in the language that they can almost be viewed as dead metaphors, meaning they have lost their original imagery. Thus, war metaphors will be a prominent part of any discourse about football for the foreseeable future. That being said, it doesn't mean that there cannot be any change in the use of metaphors that are not as repetitive and popular. Furthermore, at least Müller (2009) has argued rather convincingly that dead metaphors might not be quite as dead as we tend to think. Thus, there is no reason to exclude those kinds of metaphors from the analysis.

## 4.2. Methods of analysis

The first proper discussion about creating a method for identifying metaphors in a text was established by Kittay (1990:40-96). Nowadays, one of the more widely used methods, thanks to its relative clarity and straightforwardness, is the metaphor identification procedure (henceforth MIP) introduced by Pragglejaz Group (2007). In this study, I am also going to use MIP to find the metaphors from the articles that I am using as my data. This procedure is a rather straightforward method for identifying the metaphors in the texts. MIP is more than suitable for the task of identifying metaphors, which is all it is required to do for the purposes of this thesis. I will explain the step-by-step process of using MIP below.

According to Pragglejaz Group, this method of metaphor identification is categorizing parts of language to the point where the method needs to be considered as a scientific measurement. This differs from the traditional view where metaphors are seen as linguistic devices that can be interpreted, not measured. Steen (2009:2) suggests that measuring metaphors does not differ greatly from measuring phenomena such as IQ, social and economic class or education.

The procedure MIP is a tool used to identify the words or, in a more technical term, lexical units from a certain text that are used in a metaphorical fashion. The basic step-by-step guide for the procedure is as follows:

1. Read the entire text/discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.

2. Determine the lexical units in the text/discourse.

3. a. For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, i.e. how it applies to an entity, relation or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.

   b. For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the on in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be:

- more concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell and taste;

- related to bodily action;

- more precise (as opposed to vague);

- historically older.

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

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

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

As the possible metaphorical terms in the text are analyzed in the sense that whether they have a more basic contemporary meaning or not, MIP does not recognize certain historical metaphors as metaphors. The examples used by Steen et al. are the words *fervent* and *ardent*, which used to refer to temperature as well as to emotions. In present day English, however, their original temperature sense has lost its meaning, as witnessed by contemporary dictionaries not including that meaning of the words. Thus, expressions that use *ardent* or *fervent* are not metaphorical according to MIP.

On the other hand, there are metaphors that have not yet become conventionalized in their newer, metaphorical sense. The example Steen uses is taken from Lakoff and Johnson (1980), where they suggest that when discussing argumentation, the phrase "If you use that strategy, he'll wipe you out" can be used. Even though the context of the linguistic form *wipe out* here is clear, meaning that he will easily and successfully argue against your points, it has not yet been added to contemporary English dictionaries. But as the term can easily be identified as a metaphor for the original sense of the phrase, which has to do with cleaning, there is no problem in including it in an analysis that utilizes MIP.

In short, metaphors that MIP recognizes are always relational terms that are metaphorical to a language user. For the purposes of MIP, a language user is a native

speaker of English language as it is represented in an English dictionary of a certain time period, with an intricate knowledge of the nuances of the language.

Even as it seems a straightforward and useful tool for metaphor identification, MIP is not completely without problems. As Pitcher (2013) points out, the results may vary depending on the dictionary used, as the dictionaries can often have small differences in their definitions, which might, in some cases, lead to a word being considered a metaphor and in other cases possibly not. However, when analyzing a certain text using MIP with a team of multiple analysts, the procedure also involves a discussion round, where any discrepancies between analysts should be decided one way or another. In my case, I do not unfortunately have that luxury.

Furthermore, when discussing MIPVU (metaphor identification procedure Vrije Universiteit), a further-developed version of MIP, Creed and McIlveen (2017) noted that the tool only helps to identify the metaphors in the text, which is useful in a quantitative analysis but any underlying conceptual mappings are not analyzed in any way other than to note that there is a relation between the source and the target domain. Thus, further analysis is often needed. In my opinion, the same is true of the MIP procedure.

Pragglejaz Group also provided a form for reporting and explaining decisions taken when analyzing a text using MIP (2007, table 1). For the sake of transparency, I will include this form before presenting my findings. As this is a relatively small-scale study completed by only one analyst, some parts of the form such as discussion between coders cannot be included. Still, I think it would be good practice to include the form in the analysis in order to show the work process that has been done.

It should be noted that MIP aims only to identify the linguistic forms of metaphors, not the conceptual structures beneath them. According to Pragglejaz Group, it is enough to find a more basic meaning for the term and trying to pinpoint the conceptual structure would even reduce the reliability of the study as it increases disagreements between analysts. For example, when a text refers to political opponents, it is clear that "opponents" is used metaphorically but more difficult to identify whether the metaphor's source domain is war or sports.

In this study, however, I am not only interested in the frequency of metaphors in football writing, but also in their nature. Whether the use of war or other aggressive metaphors, for example, has evolved over decades is a core part of my study. Thus, I cannot simply use MIP in this process. More thorough conceptual analysis is also needed.

After having read and pondered some of the critique towards conceptual metaphor theory, I still feel that it presents a suitable basis for analysis. After identifying all the metaphors in the texts, I will categorize them according to their source domains. As the data included in this study is not massive in length, it seems wise to keep the domains somewhat broad. Still, I am hesitant to include words such as *brave* or *cruel* under the source domain of *war*, as Bergh did, if the context does not clearly indicate them belonging there. As Pragglejaz Group noted, analyzing metaphors is not an exact science. Instead, individual choices regarding words will have to be made. Thus, comparing findings with some of the studies presented above is, in my opinion, more anecdotal than scientific.

When the classification is completed, I will then compare the findings from the articles of the two different eras and analyze any possible differences. Of course, some differences might just depend on the personal preferences of individual writers, but I find it possible that there is also some variance between the two eras.

## 4.3. Data selection and collection

In this study, I will be analyzing match reports of English top division football matches published on *The Guardian*. Since 1992 the top division has been known as Premier League, as the clubs of the First Division of English Football League wanted to form their own league in order to attract more money from media deals. Premier League still is a part of the English league system, with every season the three last teams relegated to the second-highest level, today known as Championship, and three teams being promoted in their stead. Premier League is by far the most popular league in terms of television audience and media coverage, both in England and internationally. According to Premier League's official website, last season the games

were broadcast to one billion homes in 188 different countries. Of course, as this study is done in English, it feels suitable to use the football of England as a source.

I have selected *The Guardian* as the newspaper from which the articles will be selected. From the point of view of football writing, *The Guardian* is certainly a justifiable choice. In the 2017 edition of Football Supporters' Federation's (FSF) annual awards, *The Guardian* was voted as the newspaper of the year for the fifth time in succession. According to FSF, almost a quarter-of-a-million votes were cast in this year's awards. Speaking in non-football terms, *The Guardian* is also well respected. It has been named as the Newspaper of the Year four times at the annual British Press Awards, with the most recent accolade coming in 2014.

Furthermore, *The Guardian* is also a national newspaper. Their average readership, according to their own website, is 1,027,000 readers. Relating to this study, it means that *The Guardian* provides match reports on all the most important matches played in Premier League, whereas many more regionally oriented newspapers only cover the matches of the teams more closely affiliated with the region.

*The Guardian*, self-labelled as "the world's leading liberal voice" is politically a liberal newspaper that aligns somewhere left from centre. As this study only focuses on editions of *The Guardian* from two different eras, it will remain unclear whether their political stance reflects their football articles. Further study could be done where the match reports from a liberal and a conservative newspaper were compared with each other. The possible differences in metaphor use between the different match reports can partly be attributed to the language choices made personally by the writers. At least in Finnish football commentary the personal choices of the commentators seem to make more of a difference than the television channel that they comment for (Veltman 2015:41).

It would be interesting to also study and compare match reports written of women's football matches to see if there are any notable differences between the match reports of men's and women's football matches. Unfortunately, even the matches of the highest division of women's football in England, the FA Women's Super League, do not seem to be regularly covered in the largest newspapers, including *The Guardian*. The situation seems to be a little better with Finnish football divisions and newspapers, so further study could be done using them as data. According to Ravel

and Gareau (2016), in sports journalism sportswomen are not only greatly underrepresented but also viewed more as feminine individuals than as athletes, as sportsmen are. Much more work is still to be done in order to reach gender equality in terms of sports coverage.

Match reports are news stories written after a given match. They often discuss in detail the most relevant and noteworthy events of said match. More extensive match reports also provide additional value such as history and context for the match. In my experience, as a piece of football writing a match report often utilizes a wide range of colorful language. Thus, I feel that it is appropriate for this type of study to look at match reports as they are apt to provide plenty of material for metaphor analysis.

It is quite possible that a tabloid newspaper such as *Daily Mail* would use more colourful or controversial language and therefore produce different findings but one big aim for those types of newspapers is to provoke. Therefore, they might more aptly reflect the language use in that type of newspaper rather than the language use in football writing in general. Palomäki (2001), however, found that the most elaborate metaphors were found in broadsheets such as *The Guardian*, whereas the tabloids were more focused on other literary techniques such as word play. He suggests that the difference reflects the readership demographics, as understanding the metaphors requires quite a bit of general knowledge as well as proficient knowledge of the language. This has been challenged by at least Littlemore (2001), whose tests regarding metaphor interpretation with second language learners indicated that there is virtually no correlation between proficiency in English and the ability to interpret metaphors. She suggests that, instead, students with holistic cognitive ability might be more apt in interpreting and producing metaphors than students with analytic cognitive ability. This could be because in conversation learners often do not have a lot of time to process the information given, meaning that the metaphors will also be needed to identify and process quickly.

In my opinion, 30 years is a time frame long enough for changes in the language used to appear, be it because of changes in attitudes and the way the journalists think, introduction and popularization of new terms in football lingo or something else. As outlined in the sociology of football section, 30 seasons especially at this particular point of history is certainly enough for massive changes to happen in English football.

After the Bosman ruling, the amount of foreign players in English Premier League has increased immensely. The game has also become much more of a business at the top level, with many of the clubs being owned by billionaires and the broadcasting rights of Premier League alone being worth over a billion pounds annually. Actually, the highest level of English league football was known as Football League First Division (First Division in short) until 1992, when the top-level teams formed the Premier League in order to obtain a more lucrative television rights deal.

As it happens, 30 years also comes quite close to my age as I am writing this. Thus, it also demonstrates the possible change in the language used in football writing during the lifetime of one linguist interested in football. As a result, I have decided to study football match reports published in *The Guardian* in December 1987 and May 2018. *The Guardian* has an online archive that has all their newspapers in digital form up until the year 2003. The newspapers of 1987 will be found there. The more recent editions of *The Guardian* will be found on PressReader. They are digital editions, but as far as I can tell, facsimile of the actual paper copy of the newspaper. As a fan of symmetry, I would have preferred to have the sets of data from the same month of the year. After collecting the data from 1987, however, I noticed that the newspaper collection in PressReader only goes back a couple of weeks before they are erased. In December the Premier League/First Division season is about halfway through whereas in May it is almost over. Still, after reading some of the data from both that doesn't seem to be a contributing factor towards any major differences between these two separate sets of data. In both cases, the match reports cover the most noteworthy events of the particular matches, but also the effects the matches had on the league table and the possible future movements of players and managers. Thus, in my opinion these two sets of data are comparable even though they are from different months of the year.

The analysis will include 13 match reports from December 1987 and 13 match reports from May 2018. In total, I will analyse 26 match reports. These reports vary in length from 282 words to 928 words. Most of them are at least 500 words long with many fitting in the 700-900 word range so there will be plenty of metaphors to analyse in the data.

One additional note should be made about the two different sets of data. In the decades after the match reports written in 1987, the internet has become the primary source of information for football fans as much as any other groups of people. As of now, it is unclear to me how, if in any way at all, this has affected the more traditional medium of articles written and published in newspapers. Still, I think it is a substantial aspect that deserves to be considered. It seems that all of the match reports that are published in the written edition of *The Guardian* are also published on their web page. In some cases they are more comprehensive as the page restrictions of the newspaper itself limit the maximum length of the match reports. Furthermore, the match reports found on the web page also significantly differ from those in the newspaper in that they may contain multiple hyperlinks. Those links usually lead to other news articles on *The Guardian*'s web page that are somehow connected to the match report in question. In the printed newspaper those sort of references are much more difficult to do. In this thesis the data consists only of match reports published in the printed edition of *The Guardian* so there is no need to consider those hyperlinks.

## 4.4. Research ethics

As the digital editions of *The Guardian* are publicly available to anyone in the digital archive section of their website, there were no major copyright issues that needed to be solved in order to use this particular data. All the individual writers as well as the newspaper will be credited for their work.

## 5. ANALYSIS

In this section, I will present my findings regarding the number of metaphors in the match reports as well as the most prominent categories of metaphors that appeared in the data. Later, I will discuss all of these in more detail. First, however, I will give a brief overview to the kind of metaphors found in the match reports.

As could be expected, war metaphors were among the most frequent metaphors in football match reports in both 1987 and 2018. These included metaphors such as

*attack, defence* and *shot* that could be regarded as dead metaphors as their position among football terms is so firmly established that there really aren't many other ways to convey the same meaning. In the place of *shot*, meaning a kick of the ball towards opponent's goal with the intention of scoring a goal, words such as *drive, bang* or even *thunderclap,* were used in the match reports as well. These are, however, more metaphorical, with *shot* being the most basic term. This can be proven by watching any English football match on television, with statistics such as "shots on goal" frequently displayed. Of course, there were also war metaphors such as *campaign, charge* and *troops* that have by no means lost their metaphorical sense in football language. All of these metaphors were included whether they seem to be "dead" or not.

Different from many previous studies regarding metaphors in football journalism presented above, however, I did not include metaphors such as *beat, hit* or *struck* in the category of war metaphors. When MIP is used as the procedure to identify the metaphors, it requires the analyst to find a dictionary definition for the word to help determine whether the word is being used metaphorically or not. As the most basic definition for words such as *beat* and *struck* did not mention warfare in any way, I don't think they can be classified as war metaphors. There is, however, no denying their aggressive or violent nature. Thus, I have included such metaphors as their own category.

After having compared the match reports found on the website and in the newspaper edition of *The Guardian*, my opinion is that they are quite similar in their contents. The reports on the website are sometimes more thorough and lengthy but not always. One notable difference between the reports should be accounted for. The match reports on the website sometimes refer to previous news articles or match reports on *The Guardian*'s website via hyperlinks. There is no clear, logistical way of doing that in newspaper reports without explaining it in some detail, so there aren't similar references in them. In any case, there were no online match reports in 1987 so this study will focus only on the match reports found in the newspaper editions of each year.

## 5.1 Findings

The data of this thesis consists of 13 football match reports in *The Guardian* in December 1987 and 13 football match reports in *The Guardian* in May 2018, bringing the total number of match reports analysed to 26. The length of these match reports seems to vary quite significantly even within the same year. The match reports from December 1987 range from 282 words to 573 words. The average length of the selected December 1987 match reports was approximately 409 words. The match reports written in May 2018, however, range from 363 words to as much as 928 words. The average number of words in a May 2018 match report was approximately 735 words. Thus, the length of the match reports seems to have increased significantly in the last three decades. I noticed that the 1987 newspapers seemed to write reports on lower division English football matches as well as some Scottish football matches, whereas the 2018 editions only focused on the highest level of English football. In football, the constituent countries of United Kingdom all have their own football associations that are separate from each other, which is why Scottish and English teams do not play in same divisions. The presence of Scottish match reports in 1987 could be one reason for the difference in report length if the space reserved for football journalism has remained roughly the same. Another reason could be that as the Premier League (established in 1992), as discussed previously, has grown immensely in popularity, *The Guardian* has also reacted accordingly, devoting more space for Premier League match coverage.

These match reports that were included in the analysis also differed quite a lot from each other in the number of metaphors they used even within the same year. The December 1987 match reports vary from 4.01% of the words being metaphors to as much as a 14.54% metaphor count. In all, 436 of the 5314 words in December 1987 match reports were metaphors, meaning a total of 8.21 percent. The match reports of May 2018, on the other hand, vary from 4.57% of the words being metaphors to 11.62 percent. In total, 754 of the 9549 words in the May 2018 match reports were identified as metaphors, bringing the total up to 7.90 percent. Thus, even as the number of words and metaphors that appear in the latter match reports is significantly greater in total, by average the distribution of metaphors seems to be quite similar between the two years. In a mainly quantitative study, a test for statistical significance

would need to be made. As this is mainly a qualitative study, I believe that these findings fill their purpose sufficiently. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that the individual match reports differed noticeably even within the same year, which could be because of the personal writing preferences of the writers as much as anything else.

I would like to make one additional note about the match reports in general before moving on to the specific categories of metaphors that appear in them. Regarding the gender inequality in sports journalism, some progress, even if just a little, has been made in *The Guardian*. All thirteen of the 1987 match reports were written by men, with six different journalists receiving credits for these match reports. In 2018, however, two of the thirteen match reports were written by women, with Eleanor Crooks and Louise Taylor being two of the ten different journalists responsible for the match reports. Therefore, at least in that sense *The Guardian* has made some advancements towards more equal reporting.

That being said, it is time to take a closer look at the different kinds of metaphors that featured prominently in either or both years of match reports in this data. All of the definitions for the words that are included are taken from the online version of Oxford English Dictionary (henceforth OED), which is an authority particularly in British English which is used in the data.

## 5.1.1 War metaphors

Of the 436 metaphors found in the match reports of December 1987, 63 (14,5 %) were classified as war metaphors.

As was to be expected, many of the war metaphors used are conventionalised in the football language to the point that it could be quite convincingly argued that they have lost all of their metaphorical sense. These include *defence, attack, shot, tactic* and *captain*. The first two are the primary phases of a football match, where the team that is in possession of the ball is usually seen as attacking and the team without the ball as defending. Similarly, in war terms *attack* is an aggressive military action and *defence* is the action of resisting such an action. The difference is that in war terms *attack*

seems to be defined as the more active one whereas in football a defence can also be the more active side, trying vehemently to take the ball away from the attacking team.

*Shot* in football is the most common term for an act of kicking the ball with the intention of scoring a goal. This is evidenced by the fact that any discussion about football statistics usually involves aspects like "shots" and "shots on goal" (eg. Moura et al. 2013:1885, da Silva & Dahmen 2014:56). In war terms, it is the act of shooting or "wounding or killing with a missile from a bow or a firearm".

Interestingly, OED does not even include a definition for *tactic* that has to do with football or other sports. Still, it is a widely used term for the way a football team's coach has instructed his or her players to play in a certain match. In war, the plural form tactics is more commonly used, meaning "the art or science of deploying military or naval forces".

*Captain*, in football, is a member of the team that is selected as a leader that has some duties such as representing the team in a coin-toss to decide which team gets to kick off the match, but is more of a symbolic title usually given to an especially authoritative player. In war terms, *captain* was first defined merely as a military leader, although in later uses the definition has been extended to "a subordinate officer". These definitions are not dissimilar, as a captain of a football team also has some authority over teammates, but is clearly a subordinate to the team's head coach or manager.

Of course, not all of the war metaphors appearing in the December 1987 match reports are conventionalised in football language in any major way. Some of the more clear examples of metaphorical terms were *battled, yielding, casualty, peacemaking* and *camp*.

In the match report "Chelsea sink beneath rising Mersey tide" by Stephen Bierley, the word *battled* was used to describe the good efforts of a Chelsea team against a much bigger and better team in Liverpool, which went on to win the championship that season without any matches lost. In war, to battle is simply "to engage in war". Perhaps in football terms, *battle* is seen as somewhat of a difficult task, so a pre-match favourite such as Liverpool in this example is not likely to *battle*.

*Yielding* was used in "Graham is right on three points" by Russell Thomas to describe that Arsenal manager George Graham was not willing to make changes to his team despite poor recent form, i.e. *yield* to pressure from fans. In war-related use, to yield means "to surrender military position or forces to enemy", which is clearly a more concrete use of the term.

In "Ardiles stars in TV's late show", Michael Henderson used *casualty* to describe two players that were returning from long term injuries, as in "Waddle, the other long term casualty returning to the side". In war language, casualty is used of "the losses sustained by a body of men in the field or on service, by death, desertion etc." This would seem to suggest that those are losses that cannot be recouped. Interestingly, Henderson used *casualty* of players that had already returned to the team after recovering from their injuries.

Russell Thomas used *peacemaking* in his match report "Invidious to Everton, but in video veritas" to describe the actions of Everton player Reid, who restrained his teammates as they protested a decision made by the referee that they disagreed on. This is quite similar to the OED definition of "the reconciliation of opponents". Although the referee in this case was probably not a willing participant to whatever it was that required *peacemaking*, so is the case many times with one of the participants in a war.

*Camp* is perhaps somewhat different as an example as, at least nowadays, it does not readily invoke images of war. But, with the application of the MIP rules the most basic meaning seems to be "the place where an army or body of troops is lodged in tents or other temporary means of shelter…". In any case, in Russell Thomas's "Liverpool move to higher gear" there is a statement issued from the Liverpool *camp*, which is the use of the term in this data. That would suggest a more organised, military-like structure rather than a "temporary quarters occupied by nomads, travellers gipsies…" for example.

One interesting metaphor found in "United's dry wit" by Martin Thorpe was *reserves*. In football language, *reserves* can either refer to first-team players that are not playing much or, as in this case, the secondary team of the same club from which players can be called up to the first team. This correlates with the military definition of "troops or parts of a military force which are withheld from action to serve as later

reinforcements". With the reserves by definition being away from media spotlight, it is a word one perhaps would not expect to appear in a First Division football match report.

As was the case with the match reports from December 1987, the May 2018 match reports also included plenty of examples of both conventionalised uses of previously metaphorical terms and more clearly metaphorical words. In all, I classified 114 of the 754 metaphors used as war metaphors for a total of approximately 15.1 percent, a slightly higher number than in 1987.

Most of the match reports in 2018 included those same conventionalised war metaphors, with *attack, defence, captain* and *shot* all appearing in multiple match reports. Compared to 1987, a new addition to this group is *squad* that was used in four different 2018 match reports. In football terminology, squad can mean either all the players in a team or, more specifically, the players that are selected from that team to be eligible to play in a certain match. Indeed, I found instances of both uses in the data. This, in my opinion, is comparable to the military definition where squad is "a small number of men, a subdivision or section of a company, formed for a drill or told off for some special purpose.

Other war metaphors found on the 2018 match reports include *campaign, guard of honour, rearguard, troops, fight* and *siege*. Possibly because of the latter match reports being somewhat lengthier, many of these appeared in multiple reports, whereas the examples reported earlier of the 1987 match reports were all single instances.

*Campaign* was a particularly popular term, with eight instances of it being used in six different match reports. According to OED, campaign is "the continuance and operations of an army 'in the field' for a season or other definite portion of time, or while engaged in one continuous series of military operations constituting the whole, or a distinct part, of a war." In football, *campaign* is used to refer to the football season, which is a period of time during which the points from matches played are calculated together. In England, a *campaign* usually lasts from August to May or early June.

On that note, it was not surprising that *guard of honour* featured quite prominently in May 2018 match reports, with four mentions in as many match reports. In football, *guard of honour* is formed when the teams are arriving on the pitch and some people involved stand on both sides of the entrance to pay their respects to the person or people arriving. Some examples of its use include the opposing team giving a *guard of honour* to a team that has already secured the championship of that season, or both teams paying their respects to a manager that is retiring after a lengthy career. Both of these instances were used in my data. These normally tend to only happen near or at the end of a season, which is a major reason why they appear in the May 2018 data but not in the December 1987 one. It's use is quite clearly derived from the military definition of "a body of soldiers appointed to receive a royal or other person of distinction and to attend at state ceremonials".

One interesting metaphor that appeared in two of the match reports was *rearguard*. Its basic definition is "a body of troops detached from the main force to bring up and protect the rear, esp. in the case of retreat". In football, *rearguard* is used as a collective noun to refer to the defensive players of a team. When the two football teams line up before kick-off, the defenders are behind the more attacking players from the point of view of the other team and in that sense the use is similar to the original meaning. During the gameplay, however, the positions of the players constantly mix and at least in modern football the teams attack and defend as a collective, so the term *rearguard* is perhaps a remnant of earlier times when player roles were more clearly divided between attack, midfield and defence.

The use of *troops* in Paul Doyle's "Carefree Huddersfield share Arsenal's party" (2018) show how other decisions made can lead to the use of such war metaphors seemingly out of context. The match report covers the last match of Arsène Wenger, who had been the manager of Arsenal for 22 years. Previously in the article, Doyle discussed how Wenger introduced many changes in players' diets and training, two sectors that had been lacking in English football. With that in mind, he calls Wenger "a French revolutionary" who "sent out his troops for the final time", with *revolutionary* acting as a bridge from Wenger's unusual methods to the rather warlike use of *troops* or, according to OED, "armed forces collectively".

*Fight* made four different appearances in these match reports, with one of them being the past tense verb form *fought*. It is clear from these uses that in football language it is used to demonstrate a player or a team that shows an especially large amount of will and determination to succeed. In military terms, *fight* is simply "to contend in battle or single combat". In all but one of the cases in the data, *fight* was used of the team that is seen as the inferior in terms of talent, which could suggest that the team with a lesser chance to win would more often have to resort to *fighting*.

Finally, *siege* was used by Andy Hunter in "Salah sets new goals record to secure Champions League spot for Liverpool" (2018). According to him, Liverpool "laid siege to Mathew Ryan's goal from the start", meaning that Liverpool got a lot of shots on goal against Brighton's goalkeeper Mathew Ryan. In war terms, *to lay siege* is "to sit down before (a town, castle, etc.) with armed forces in order to capture it". This definition seems a more passive one than the sense it is given in football language, where there is certainly no waiting or sitting down involved.

## 5.1.2 Other violent metaphors

There are quite a few metaphors in the data that are not quite war metaphors, but serve to describe the sometimes aggressive and combative nature of football nevertheless. In Bergh's (2011) study, among others, these kinds of metaphors were often categorised and counted among the war metaphors. In my opinion, however, when using MIP as the procedure, if the basic meaning for the word does not clearly relate to war, as per Oxford English Dictionary, it should not be categorised as a war metaphor. These metaphors are, however, connected with war metaphors in the sense that both types of metaphors are many times used to evoke ideas of something much more violent or aggressive than what is actually happening on the football pitch. Furthermore, as these kinds of metaphors occurred quite regularly they should be counted as their own category.

In the December 1987 match reports, I classified 33 of the 436 metaphors as other violent metaphors for a total of approximately 7.6 percent. All but one of the 13

match reports had at least one metaphor that I categorised in this particular section. Examples of these kinds of metaphors include *lynching, belter, crucified, beat/beaten/beating* and *larceny*.

Of all the metaphors in this category, *lynching* stood out as perhaps the most violent in nature. According to OED, to lynch is "to condemn and punish by lynch law. In early use, implying chiefly the infliction of punishment such as whipping, tarring and feathering, or the like; now only, to inflict sentence of death by lynch law." In Stephen Bierley's match report "Chelsea sink beneath rising Mersey tide", *lynching* is used to describe the atmosphere on the Anfield stadium as the referee George Courtney disallowed a goal by the home team. Hopefully, the crowd wasn't quite as hostile in truth.

The same match report also included *belter*, as the favourites Liverpool were losing at one point, promising that the rest of the match would be exciting, or a *belter*. OED defines *belter* as a heavy blow or a series of blows in British regional or colloquial language. The connection between these two uses, besides the word being especially British, seems unclear to me.

Another especially violent metaphor in the December 1987 data was *crucified*. In "Graham is right on three points" by Russell Thomas, it appeared in a comment by Arsenal manager George Graham, who felt that his team would be crucified if they played as passively as their opponents did. It should be noted here that in this sense *crucified* can be used to mean to severely criticize in many contexts and is not related to football language as such. The basic meaning of *to crucify*, of course, is "to put to death by nailing or otherwise fastening to a cross".

*Beat, beaten* and *beating*, appearing a total of five times in four different match reports, were all used in similar fashion as a synonym for one team defeating another. This seems to be quite common way to describe it in at least football language. In comparison, the basic meaning by OED is "to strike with blows of the hand or any weapon so as to give pain".

*Larceny* is perhaps somewhat of a borderline case in this category, as it is defined "the felonious taking and carrying away of the personal goods of another with the intent to convert them to the taker's use". As such, it does not necessarily involve

violence but, in my opinion, it is certainly an aggressive act so I have decided to include it in this category. In the data, Michael Henderson used *larceny* in "Ardiles stars in TV's late show" to describe how the win that the away team Tottenham Hotspur got was not merited in the opinion of the home crowd. As the winning of a football match is not personal goods belonging to anyone, or even anything concrete for that matter, *larceny* here is certainly metaphorically used.

In the May 2018 match reports, I classified 36 of the 754 metaphors used as other violent metaphors for a total of approximately 4.8 percent. Thus, the amount of violent metaphors not directly related to war has diminished somewhat in comparison to December 1987. Similarly to 1987, different forms of *beat* featured in many of the match reports. Other examples that I found include *sucker punch, demolition, vicious, mobbed, fray* and *violence*.

Of these examples, *sucker punch* is an especially interesting one. In "Howe gives Cook a break with England call-up in mind" by Eleanor Crooks, *sucker punch* refers to a goal scored by Bournemouth player Callum Wilson because of a mistake by Burnley player Kevin Long. According to OED, *sucker punch* is "a hit or punch delivered without warning". The connection is interesting because the act of punching is done using one's hands, whereas a goalkeeper is the only one allowed to use hands to control the ball inside a football field, certainly not Bournemouth forward Callum Wilson who is the actor here.

Continuing with the other examples, Louise Taylor used *demolition* in "St James' serenades Benítez but final bell tolls for Conte". She used it to refer to another match where Liverpool won Brighton 4-0. In the season 2017-18, there were about 2.7 goals scored per game in total in the English Premier League. In that regard, winning 4-0 could certainly be said to be a *demolition*, or "the action of physically demolishing or destroying something".

*Vicious* appeared in that same match report by Louise Taylor in "Shelvey's vicious long-range half-volley", in which half-volley means a kick of the ball just after it has bounced on the ground. As *vicious* means "full of malice or spite; malignantly bitter or severe", the use must be metaphorical as no shot can have malicious feelings towards anything. Thus, *vicious* here probably means a shot that was harder and faster

than usual. *Half-volley,* on the other hand, was categorized in war metaphors as *volley* means "a simultaneous discharge of a number of firearms or artillery".

*Mobbed* was an interesting example that appeared twice in the May 2018 match reports. According to OED, to mob means "to attack or surround in a mob; to crowd round and molest or harass". In both cases in this data, however, *mobbed* was used in a context where a player was surrounded by his rejoicing team-mates. Thus, the semantic prosody of *mobbed* was positive in both cases, even though the original meaning of the word seems to be negative.

Dominic Fifield used *fray* in "Giroud keeps Chelsea's top four aspirations alive". In the match between Liverpool and Chelsea, Liverpool's manager Jürgen Klopp had selected former Chelsea player Dominic Solanke in his squad or "into the fray". *Fray* originally means "a disturbance, especially one caused by fighting". In this context the connection between these two meanings seems unclear. Perhaps *fray* is used in the report to give emphasis to the intensity of a match between two teams that are among the best in Premier League.

Fittingly for this category, there was also one instance of *violence* used in these match reports. David Hytner used it in "Aubameyang offers perfect farewell gift" where Arsenal's young Greek defender Konstantinos Mavropanos is twice observed using "a Martin Keown-style violence". This is a reference to former Arsenal defender Martin Keown, who was known for his aggressive playing style. Still, as *violence* originally means "the unlawful exercise of physical force, intimidation by the exhibition of such force", it seems unlikely that Mavropanos actually used such force in the match. There would likely have been more severe repercussions in the form of an ejection at the very least if he had.

## 5.1.3 Nature metaphors

Third category of metaphors that appeared frequently in both sets of data was nature metaphors. In this category, I included words that relate to animals, plants, rocks, natural phenomena, naturally occurring chemical reactions and so on.

In the match reports from December 1987, I categorised 64 of the 436 metaphors as nature metaphors for a total of approximately 14.7 percent. Their amount is strikingly similar to the amount of war metaphors, with just one more nature metaphor than war metaphor. Examples of nature metaphors found in the December 1987 data include *season, effervescence, flank, bed-rock, limpet, storm* and *torrent*.

By far the most common metaphor was *season*, which appeared in many of the match reports for a total of 21 times. Like some of the war metaphors discussed above, *season* in the context of football is also conventionalised term that can be counted as a dead metaphor. In football, *season* means a certain period of time, the games played during which are counted as a whole. In England, a *season* usually runs from August to late May or early June. Thus, the football *season* actually spans multiple natural seasons.

*Effervescence* appeared in Martin Thorpe's "United's dry wit", in which the writer praised Manchester United's "wit, effervescence and solidity". In this context, effervescence can be inferred to mean an energetic display from the team. *Effervescence*, according to OED, means "(Without necessarily implying heat.) The action of bubbling up as if boiling". If anything in the act of being a football player can be described as effervescent, it is likely something very energetic.

*Flank* or *flanks* occurred three times in three different December 1987 match reports. The basic meaning of *flank* is "the fleshy or muscular part of the side of an animal or a man between the ribs and the hip". In football, only the side part of that definition remains, as flanks are the parts of the football pitch that are close to the sideline in both sides of the pitch.

The next three examples all appeared in "Sheffield steal, by Gillespie" written by Stephen Bierley. *Bed-rock* was used to describe Liverpool team's passing of the ball, that is "the bed-rock of their game", meaning that all of their success is based on their good ability to pass the ball. In this instance, however, it had begun "to fracture and crumble". The definition of *bed-rock* is "the solid rock underlying alluvial and other superficial formations". Thus, this is a fine example of a traditional metaphor where the symbolic meaning and literal meaning are in a connection that can be clearly interpreted.

Similarly, the use of *limpet* was such that the symbolic and literal meaning were also clearly connected. The basic definition of *limpet* is "a gasteropod mollusc of the genus *Patella*, having an open tent-shaped shell and found adhering tightly to the rock which it makes its resting-place" (italics in the original). In other words, it is a type of aquatic snail, but the more important part here is the fact that it adheres tightly to a rock. As Stephen Bierley put it, "Sterland a limpet on Barnes", meaning that Sterland man-marked Barnes extremely closely. In football man-marking is a defensive tactic where each defending player is assigned an attacking player who is their responsibility with or without the ball.

Afterwards, Stephen Bierley described the players of Sheffield Wednesday as "contented weathermen who had predicted the storm and seen it pass". *Storm* here is used to describe the Liverpool team who, in pre-match predictions, were seen as a much stronger team than their opponents, Sheffield Wednesday. They, however, did not perform as such in this particular game, so the *storm* passed from Sheffield Wednesday's point of view. The "violent disturbance of atmosphere", as storm is defined, is sometimes also used in football language in other, somewhat similar way. When one team is controlling the game and generating plenty of goal-scoring chances, football commentators might wonder if the defending team can "weather the storm", i.e. manage to prevent the other team from scoring. Overall, the stronger team is usually seen as *storm* and the other team as the one that has to survive it.

The last example from the December 1987 match reports, *torrent*, was found in "Liverpool move to higher gear" by Russell Thomas. In the report, Thomas observed a "torrent of Liverpool corners". This means a high amount of corner kicks for Liverpool in succession, which is evidenced by the fact that he continues to add that 14th of them finally saw Liverpool score a goal. According to *The Guardian* (2006), average number of corner kicks in a Premier League match from 1997 to 2005 was 11, and the number was similar further in the past. Thus, for one team alone to have 14 corner kicks is highly unusual. The definition of *torrent* as "a violent stream of liquid (such as water or lava)" does not quite readily translate into the football metaphor as liquids are not countable nouns in the same vein as corner kicks. Still, the quick pace in which the corner kicks seemingly came does give them a somewhat torrential sense.

Moving on to the May 2018 match reports, I classified 82 of the 754 metaphors as nature metaphors, for a total of approximately 10.9 percent. Their occurrence was somewhat less frequent than in the December 1987 match reports, where 14.7 percent of the metaphors were nature metaphors. *Season* was even more prominently featured than in December 1987, with 39 appearances for almost a half of the total of nature metaphors. This could be because the football season was nearing its end with some of the match reports covering the teams' last games of the season, meaning that the reports also served as a season recap of sorts. Other examples of nature metaphors in May 2018 match reports include *flurry, thunderous, storming, rot* and *oasis*.

*Flurry* appeared in "Giroud keeps Chelsea's top four hopes alive" by Dominic Fifield. In it, "a flurry of draws" that Chelsea team had in the turn of the year is pointed as one aspect of Chelsea's rather disappointing season that they might regret. The basic definition of *flurry* is "a gust of wind" but in the context of the match report it means something like "a large amount in succession". Interestingly, there was also *mini-flurry* in "Carrick provides a final flourish before saying goodbye" by Jamie Jackson, where "Watford had a mini-flurry in and around United's area". In the context it seems to mean that Watford had a substantial amount of goal-scoring chances in quick succession, though obviously not enough to represent an actual flurry, with the prefix 'mini-' diminishing it.

In Jacob Steinberg's "Lanzini double may not be enough to preserve Moyes" there was "a thunderous shot from long range". Clearly, *thunderous* is used here to put emphasis on the power and velocity of the goal-scoring attempt. There was a similar but perhaps more creative use of *thunder* in 1987's "Liverpool move to higher gear" by Russell Thomas where a powerful shot was described as a *thunderclap*.

*Storming* was used in "Spurs head home on a high after Kane has final say in nine-goal epic" by David Hytner. In it, Tottenham "trailed 3-1 before storming back to lead 4-3". In football, it is quite rare to turn a two-goal deficit into a lead so storming is used to give emphasis to Tottenham's feat. These examples of uses of powerful natural phenomena like *thunder* and *storm* show how natural metaphors can be used in these match reports to provide variety and avoid repetition. Moreover, they are familiar terms to most readers whereas a *limpet*, for example, might not be, making them also easier to interpret.

In "Local hero Hodgson gives Palace reasons to be cheerful" by Dominic Fifield, West Bromwich Albion's recently appointed interim manager Darren Moore describes the team as having "stopped the *rot* and offered hard work and endeavour". The team that had been losing for most of the season had played much better under the leadership of Moore and had only lost once during the last six weeks. According to OED, *rot* is a "decomposition from the action of bacteria or fungi". Thus, West Bromwich Albion's season had been decomposing which, according to Moore, they were finally able to stop.

*Oasis* was mentioned in "St James' serenades Benítez but final bell tolls for Conte" by Louise Thomas. In that match report, Newcastle United's manager Rafael Benítez is described as "*an oasis* of serenity" in comparison to Chelsea's manager Antonio Conte who "appeared in danger of physical implosion". In that situation, Newcastle United had just scored a goal but Benítez celebrated only by polishing his glasses. The basic definition of *oasis* is "a fertile or green area in an arid region (such as a desert", but it can also mean "something that provides refuge, relief or pleasant contrast", much like an actual oasis does in the middle of a desert. In the match report, this latter definition seems more close to what actually happened, but, according to the rules of MIP, it should still be considered as a nature metaphor.


## 5.1.4 Building metaphors

Another category of metaphors that merits its own section is building metaphors. In this category, I have classified metaphors that have their source as any kind of a man-made structure or construction and destruction work performed by humans.

The most frequent one appearing in both sets of match reports was *corner*, which, as is the case with many of the metaphors that appear frequently, is a well-established word in football terminology. Corner kick, many times shortened as 'corner', is a type of free kick that an attacking team gets from the corner of the field when a defending player sends the ball over his or her own goal line. There are no other terms in English for a corner kick, which is why it is liable to appear frequently in match reports. Regarding the category, there are of course also naturally occurring corners, but the definition "the meeting-place of converging sides or edges (e.g. of the walls of

a building, the sides of a box), forming an angular extremity or projection" seems to suggest that the most basic definition of corner is that of human origin.

There are other examples of building metaphors in both sets of match reports. In the match reports of December 1987, I categorised 35 of the 436 metaphors as building metaphors for a total of approximately 8 percent. Most of the match reports had at least one example of them with just a few exceptions. Examples of building metaphors in December 1987 match reports include *stonewalling, brick, roof, table* and *landmark*.

*Stonewalling* was used in "Graham is right on three points" by Russell Thomas. In that match report, Arsenal was "quick and constructive in the face of stonewalling opponents". In this context, *stonewalling* opponents means that the Sheffield Wednesday team that was playing against Arsenal was very defensive in their approach and their tight defensive formation was like a stonewall that Arsenal was trying to breach. In football language, *wall* can also be a defensive strategy where multiple defensive players line up side by side in front of a free kick to form an obstacle not unlike an actual wall.

In "United's dry wit" by Martin Thorpe, *brick* was used to describe defender Steve Bruce as "another brick in United's Championship foundations". At the time of the match report, Manchester United, referred to in the match report as United, were well behind Liverpool in the league table but their manager Alex Ferguson insisted that the championship is still within their reach. Thorpe himself seemed to feel otherwise but still took Ferguson's words at face value. Many times, teams have some important players that form a core that plays most of the matches when fit, and in that sense they certainly can be seen as *bricks* in the foundations of the team.

*Roof* appears already in the title of "Clough's triple raises the roof" by Cyril Chapman. That report covered a match where home team Nottingham Forest's Nigel Clough scored three goals on way to a clear 4-0 victory against visitors Queens Park Rangers. According to OED, to raise the roof is a colloquial term used in place of "to create an uproar, to make a resounding noise". That is certainly what happens many times in a football match when a home team performs that well. Of course, the term itself is already metaphorical as the roof of a building does not actually rise from the

noise. In this case, however, *roof* is also metaphorically used as Nottingham Forest's home stadium, City Ground, does not have any.

*Table* is a somewhat common occurrence in these football match reports. It refers to the league table, which in football is a list of the teams in a league that show their positions in relation to one another in a descending order. Points received is always the first classifier and, in the case of a tie in points, classifiers such as goal difference are used to determine the ranking. The use of *table* here can be compared to a table of contents, for example.

The final example from the December 1987 match reports is *landmark*, which was used by Russell Thomas in "Liverpool move to higher gear". According to Thomas, Liverpool posted a *landmark* of 20 games without a defeat to start the season. Landmark here is used to describe an achievement that the team had not previously reached in its history. According to OED, landmark is "an object set up to mark a boundary line". As was the case with corner, a landmark can also be a natural one, but "set up" here suggests human action.

Moving on to the May 2018 match reports, I classified 47 of the 754 metaphors as building metaphors for a total of approximately 6.2 percent. Thus, building metaphors were somewhat less frequent in these latter match reports. *Corner* and *table* predictably also made appearances here. Other examples from these match reports include *bridge, home, rebuild, cement* and *screw*.

*Bridge* was used in "Carrick provides a final flourish before saying goodbye" by Jamie Jackson. In it, Manchester United manager José Mourinho describes Michael Carrick, a player about to retire and become Mourinho's assistant coach, ideal for the job as he "makes the bridge between being a player to [an] assistant". Bridge, of course, is "a structure carrying a road over a river". It is not just football where it is used metaphorically to describe someone or something that brings two things that are apart closer together.

*Home* is a regular metaphor in football language. It is most frequently used to describe the team whose stadium a game is being played on. There were instances of this kind of use in both December 1987 and May 2018 match reports. The reason it is included here, though, is because there was another type of use of *home* in May 2018

in "Lanzini double may not be enough to preserve Moyes" by Jacob Steinberg. In that match report "Oumar Niasse bundled the ball home", with *home* referring to the goal Niasse's opponents were unsuccessfully trying to protect from him. *Home*, in that case, is rather abstract but the basic definition of the word still is "a person's house or abode".

Russell Thomas used *rebuild* in "Crouch confirms Swansea's fate as Carvalhal stays defiant to bitter end". In that match report, Swansea team, already confirmed to be relegated into the lower division, Championship, faces "a huge task of trying to rebuild" for the new division. Many times when a team is relegated from the Premier League, many of the players still find new employers from the higher division, leaving the team with a need of many new additions. Perhaps even the above-mentioned *bricks* that are the foundation of the team leave, giving the team a need of figurative *rebuild*.

*Cement* was used in "Salah sets new goals record to secure Champions League spot for Liverpool" by Andy Hunter. In that match report, Liverpool player Mohamed Salah has "helped cement" a belief in their team's potency. *Cement* is used in such a way also in contexts other than football to mean "to cause to cohere firmly". The basic definition is "to unite (solid bodies) with cement". To me, that term itself is a bit inaccurate as cement is only one of multiple ingredients used to create concrete and would not unite anything without water and aggregates such as sand and gravel.

Finally, in the examples from the building metaphor category, David Hytner used *screw* in "Aubameyang offers perfect farewell gift". In that match report, he established that "Arsenal turned the screw after the interval", meaning that the Arsenal team started to play with more intensity after the half-time break. According to OED, to turn the screw is "to apply moral or psychological pressure" but in the sense of this match report the pressure applied was a little more concrete. Both definitions, of course, have construction work as their source domain, as screws are often used to perform tasks such as fastening two pieces of furniture together.

## 5.1.5 Orientational metaphors

An orientational metaphor is a metaphor that involves spatial relationships, such as
UP-DOWN and FRONT-BACK. Most commonly when a concept is characterised by an
upward orientation, its opposite counterpart receives a downward orientation. An
example of this would be MORE IS UP, LESS IS DOWN ("Speak *up* please"; "Keep your
voice *down*").

The match reports that I analysed show that there are plenty of instances of
orientational metaphors used in football language as well. These often have to do with
either the league table or the football pitch itself. I'll introduce some of these
examples in this section.

In "Liverpool move to higher gear" (1987), Russell Thomas notes that Liverpool has
a "cushion of 10 points at the *top*", meaning that Liverpool leads the league by a
difference of 10 points to the team that is second. In similar vein, David Lacey
describes in "Miracles take a little longer…" (1987) that Tottenham Hotspur lost "to
the *bottom* team, Charlton Athletic". By the time of that match report, Charlton
Athletic were last in the league table. Of course, when looking at a league table, the
teams are ranked according to points in a way that it seems that the teams with more
points are on top of the teams with less points. In reality, however, no team is above
or below the others.

The football pitch is as flat a surface as the groundskeeper is able to make it. Still,
these kinds of orientational metaphors make appearances when the journalists are
describing the matches. In "Lanzini double may not be enough to preserve Moyes"
(2018), Jacob Steinberg observes that "Michael Keane had pushed *up*, leaving a huge
gap in the middle of Everton's defence". To go *up* in this sense means to go towards
the goal of the opposition. Conversely, to go *down* is to go towards own goal. An
example of this would be "*dropping* Eric Dier back to central defence" in "Spurs head
home on a high after Kane has final say in nine-goal epic" (2018) by David Hytner. In
that match, Eric Dier who had previously played in the midfield had now been
*dropped* to the defence, meaning he played closer to his own goal.

There are, however, exceptions in this UP-DOWN relationship as well. As Lakoff and
Johnson (1980:41) note, there seems to be an apparent metaphorical contradiction in
English in the ways in which we discuss future and past time. Future can be ahead of
us (In the weeks ahead of us) and past behind us (It's all behind us). Simultaneously,

it can also be the other way around, with future behind us (In the following weeks) and the past ahead of us (In the preceding weeks). Interestingly, there seems to be a somewhat similar contradiction when discussing movements on the football pitch. For example, in "Sheffield steal, by Gillespie" (1987), Stephen Bierley observes that "Johnston began to cut a jaunty dash *down* the right". In that, Johnston is going towards the goal of the opponent, which would usually be seen as going *up*. In this case, however, he is advancing *down* the right sideline.

## 5.1.6 Other metaphors

Lastly, there were also plenty of instances of metaphors that do not quite fit in any of the categories presented above. They were not, however, featured prominently enough to warrant their own section. Still, they provide some interesting insight into how metaphors are used in football language. These include source domains such as religion, sailing, education, health and art.

One somewhat frequent type of metaphor that appeared in both sets of data was a metaphor where non-human entities were attributed with humanlike qualities. Most of these metaphors included one of the teams in a match collectively being described as it is a person. For example, a team was reported in different articles to have *blue shoulders, face, dry wit* and *confidence*. In "Chelsea sink beneath rising Mersey tide" by Stephen Bierley the television cameras also *felt delight*. Another way in which these types of metaphors were used was to describe the sides and corners of the football field as either *right-hand* or *left-hand* side. These two also double as orientational metaphors, as a corner that is on the *right-hand* side from the point of view of one team is on the *left-hand* side from the point of view of the other.

As could be predicted in English football match reports, most of the religious metaphors had Christianity as their source domain. Religious metaphors were more common in 1987 than in 2018, with eight instances in the previous and only three instances in the latter. Examples of religious metaphors found are *turn water into wine, salvation, pray* and *mementos*. Most often, religious metaphors seemed to be associated with an unlikely feat, such as a smaller team managing to win a bigger team or a team coming from two goals behind to win the match.

In the category of sailing metaphors, I included all the metaphors that involved sailing, boats and maritime travel in general. There were six instances of sailing metaphors in the December 1987 match reports and three in the May 2018 match reports. As was the case with religious metaphors, even though the total number of metaphors found in 1987 was considerably smaller than in 2018, there were actually more of sailing metaphors. Interestingly, many of the sailing metaphors found were used to describe something negative that happened. For example, "Chelsea *sink* beneath rising Mersey tide", meaning that Chelsea lost its match against Liverpool team hailing from Merseyside. Also, one club had, according to their former manager, "a culture of *leaks*". Third example would be when "a Rashford pot-shot *sailed* over the bar", where *sailed* is not negative itself but in the context where Rashford's shot missed the goal it can be construed as such. Conversely, though, there was also Tottenham Hotspur goalkeeper Parks who managed to "keep the *ship afloat*", meaning that his saves kept Tottenham from losing the match.

There were four education metaphors in the data, all appearing in the May 2018 match reports. *Academy* was used twice, with it being in football language the youth system of the club where they develop young players, best of which will get a chance to represent the senior team. Linked to this was Liverpool player Dominic Solanke being called "the Chelsea *graduate*", meaning he had his football training in the Chelsea academy. More clearly metaphorical instance was when "Carvalhal had clearly done his *homework* before coming into the press conference room".

There were five health metaphors in both sets of data combined. Interestingly, four of these were in the same match report, "Charlton drawing new heart" by David Lacey in December 1987. In that report, the Charlton team rose from the bottom of the First Division "rather like a man rising from his *sick-bed* after a long *illness*". That same figurative man also had "a bout of *giddiness*". Later, Charlton's opponent Chelsea's situation was reportedly *healthy*. Of course, three of those metaphors stem from the same analogue comparing Charlton to a sick man. The one other health metaphor found was in Dominic Fifield's "Giroud keeps Chelsea's top four aspirations alive" in May 2018. In that match report, Chelsea displayed "some *feverish* defending". Even though fever is a weakening condition, in this case the term served to describe the energetic defending by Chelsea.

Art metaphors were, in 2018, somewhat regular category compared to some of the others that did not warrant their own section. In this category, I include metaphors that have music, theatre, painting etc. as their source domain. In the December 1987 match reports, there were two instances of art metaphors, *artistic* and *dance*. In the May 2018 match reports, however, there were as much as 12 art metaphors. Examples of these include *serenades, dancing, choreography, maestro* and *statuesque*.

One category that predictably only appeared in the December 1987 match reports was Christmas metaphors. There were instances of *Santa Claus, Father Christmas* and *Christmas presents* being mentioned, usually in the context of a player *gifting* his team with a goal. Of course, as the 2018 match reports are from May, they were not likely to include references to Christmas. There was one instance where a player "attempted to *gift-wrap*" a goal and another where a player offered "a perfect farewell *gift*", but these were likely gifts other than Christmas presents.

Above, I have presented metaphors found in the data organised according to their source domains. In the next section, I will discuss more thoroughly what these findings might mean in relation to the research questions of the present study.

## 6. DISCUSSION

In the previous section, I have presented my findings from the data I have analysed, using multiple examples of the different categories of metaphors that appeared in the match reports. In this section, I will analyse the findings more thoroughly and discuss how they relate to the research questions presented above. The section will also include discussion regarding previous studies that have analysed metaphor use in football. Direct comparisons between different studies might prove challenging as personal selections regarding the decisions made when categorising metaphors, for example, render the findings quite different.

## 6.1 War metaphors

The first research question of the study was as follows:

- In what ways, if any, does the use of war metaphors differ in football writing in the 1980s and in the present day?

As the findings above showed, there were no big differences in the number of war metaphors found in the match reports of December 1987 and in the match reports of May 2018. In December 1987, approximately 14.5 percent of the metaphors were war metaphors. Of the metaphors in the match reports of May 2018, I classified 15.1 percent as war metaphors, meaning that there was a slight increase in their use in the match reports.

It has been mentioned many times throughout this study that many of the more prominent war metaphors in football language, such as *attack, defence* and *shot*, are conventionalized in the language in such a way that there is no simple, widely used alternative for them. Indeed, most of the war metaphors in both sets of data were these kinds of metaphors.

The other war metaphors found did not reveal any major differences in how they were used in the two sets of data. In both, there were metaphors used to describe the teams using war terms, as was the case with *camp* in 1987 and *troops* in 2018. *Squad* was used in both.

Similarly, both sets of data used war metaphors to describe the action happening on the football field. In 1987, a team *battled* against a better team, another team was not *yielding* to pressure from fans and there was even a (former) *casualty* returning to a team. Multiple times in 2018 match reports, a smaller team was *fighting* against a bigger one and there was even one instance where a team laid *siege* against another team's defence.

There are no clear reasons for the prominent role of war metaphors in football language. The only common denominator is that there are different sides pitted against each other who are trying to achieve victory. In a football match, there are always two teams but in a war, there can be three or more different armed forces engaged in a conflict. Furthermore, there are clear rules to a football match and any acts of violence, for instance, are punished by a referee accordingly. One reason for the prominent use of war metaphors could be that when football terms were first established, a match situation was seen as resembling a war battle and the concepts

were named accordingly. Over time, many of them became conventionalized and there has been no cause or at least no initiative to start changing them. As many of the basic terms in football come from war language, it seems logical that journalists writing about football would use the same source domain for other terms when trying to describe the happenings of a match more vividly.

One caveat in this type of study is also the personal preferences of a journalist. In both sets of data, there were major differences in the use of war metaphors even between the match reports of the same year. For example, in 1987 there were only two war metaphors in "United's dry wit" by Martin Thorpe whereas there were ten instances of war metaphors used in "Invidious to Everton, but in video veritas" by Russell Thomas. Similarly, the number of war metaphors used in the match reports of 2018 ranged from five in "Local hero Hodgson gives Palace reasons to be cheerful" by Dominic Fifield to fourteen in "Coronation time for champions as Kompany lifts trophy" by Jamie Jackson.

It should be noted once more that there are some differences between this study and previous studies presented above regarding the classification of war metaphors. In many previous studies, terms such as *beat, hit* and *struck* were classified as war metaphors. According to the rules of MIP, however, the most basic definition of the word should be used when deciding whether it is a metaphor or not. Thus, I did not classify the abovementioned terms as war metaphors as there were no mentions of war in their definitions in Oxford English Dictionary. Thus, these different studies are not directly comparable with one another.

## 6.2 Other metaphors

The second research question of present study was as follows:

- What other kinds of metaphors are being used in football writing in the 1980s and in the present day, and how do they compare with one another?

The amount of war metaphors in the two sets of data was quite similar. Interestingly, though, the three other major categories of metaphors I found, other violent metaphors, nature metaphors and building metaphors were all less frequent in the

May 2018 match reports than they were in the December 1987 match reports. One reason for this seems to be that the 2018 match reports, which were lengthier on average than the 1987 match reports, also featured more direct quotes from the players and managers involved in the matches. The direct quotes, especially in 2018, did not have as much metaphor use as the text produced by the actual journalists, which contributes to the percentage of these metaphors being bigger in 1987 than in 2018. Terms such as *attack* and *defence* that are categorized as war metaphors do, however, feature in these quotes as well, which could explain why their number did not diminish. One reason for the apparent lack of metaphors in quotes when compared to the other parts of the text is because the interviewed have no interest in how readable the match report is, whereas the journalists themselves are striving to make the text more vivid and entertaining.

Furthermore, especially in the present day the media spotlight is so intense and constant that the players and managers learn quickly to regulate their speech in a way that they do not get involved in any scandals. There are, of course, exceptions and I am sure that the journalists will more often than not try to interview those that tend to give quotes that are more interesting. In 1987, however, some of the more unusual and colourful examples of metaphors came from direct quotes, including *a bath in acid* and *crucified*. The quotes in the 2018 match reports did not provide any such metaphors, which could be because of the professionals of the football world learning to control their output.

Regarding the category of other violent metaphors, there were some differences in how they were used in the two sets of data. As I already noted, these types of metaphors seemed to be more common in 1987, with around 7.6 percent of all metaphors being classified in this category, compared to around 4.8 percent in 2018. Apart from that, even though it can be difficult to determine the amount of violence portrayed by a certain term, it feels like some of the terms used in 1987 such as *crucified* and *lynching* are more violent in their implication than are the terms used in 2018, with *sucker punch* and *demolition* being among the more violent ones. Furthermore, in 2018 there were two interesting uses of *mobbed*. That metaphor differed from others in that in the context it clearly had a positive semantic prosody, in contrast with the negative semantic prosody of the basic definition of the term. There were no such contrasts with the other metaphors in this category.

When comparing the very slightly risen amount of war metaphors from 1987 to 2018 and the more clearly diminished number of other violent metaphors in the same time, it could be suggested that the language that the football journalists of *The Guardian* use in 2018 is less aggressive than in 1987. This is because whereas a large amount of the war metaphors used are conventionalized, there are not many such metaphors among other violent metaphors. *Penalty* (as in penalty kick) seems to be the only one, and even that could be more suited in a category such as law metaphors. The other metaphors in that category could have easily been replaced with other words with less violent connotations. These other violent metaphors are more indicative of the way in which the writers embrace the presumed connection between football and violence, including war. Thus, the writers in 2018 might be, either knowingly or subconsciously, avoiding making that connection as frequently as their 1987 colleagues did.

Moving on to the category of nature metaphors, the most clear difference between the two sets of data is their amount. In 1987, over 14 percent of all the metaphors were classified as nature metaphors, whereas in 2018 that number diminished to just under 11 percent. Both sets of data included quite a diverse range of metaphors, with only *season* making multiple appearances in both. Overall, nature metaphors seemed to regularly be used as descriptive words in an effort to make the texts more colourful. Examples of this include a shot being *thunderous*, a team being *effervescent* and a burden on one team's collective shoulders being *boulder-heavy*. Nature metaphors also ranged from animal-related metaphors such as *limpet* and *flank* to rock-related metaphors such as *bed-rock* to many different metaphors related to weather phenomena such as *storming* and *thunderous*.

Lewandowski (2012) found in his study many categories of metaphors used in football journalism in England and Poland. Interestingly, though, he did not include nature metaphors as one of these categories. In my data, however, they were among the most frequently used metaphors. Another prominent category, building metaphors, was also one of the categories that Lewandowski discovered.

Building metaphors were slightly more frequent in the December 1987 match reports with approximately eight percent of all metaphors than in the May 2018 match reports, where a little over six percent of all metaphors were building metaphors.

Otherwise, there were no notable differences in how they were used. Most often, building metaphors were used to describe some firm or sturdy work done by the players. Metaphors such as *corner, roof, table* and *home*, however, were only used as terms describing something in the match with a building term, with *corner* and league *table* being conventionalised terms in the football terminology. Metaphors about building were, interestingly, used in two very different senses when viewing their semantic prosody. There were instances where they were used to depict a team or a player being able to create something positive. Examples include *constructing, foundations* and *bridge*. They were also used in a more negative way when something did not go as planned, with examples such as *rut, dig* (a hole) and *destructed*. At least one metaphor, *stonewalling*, was used in a more ambiguous way. At first glance, it seemed that it is a negative thing for the attack to hit an opponent's *stonewalling* defence, but, as it is the other team that put up said *stonewalling* defence, for them it is certainly a positive.

From all the metaphors found in this study, art metaphors were the ones with the greatest difference between the two sets of data. In the December 1987 match reports, there were only two instances where art was used as the source domain. In the May 2018 match reports, however, there were twelve instances, meaning that they were six times more frequent in the more recent match reports. The sample size is small, but this still provides an interesting insight into the difference between the two sets of data. Art metaphors were much more frequent in 2018 than in 1987. Conversely, the category of other violent metaphors was somewhat more frequent in 1987 than in 2018. This could suggest that the football journalists of 2018 do not see football as much as a violent, savage battle between two sides who hate each other, but rather as a beautiful, artistic performance made for the enjoyment of millions if not billions of people.

## 6.3 Suggestions for further study

The study of metaphor use in football journalism is a relative newcomer in the field of metaphor study. There were some ventures earlier, but only in the last decade has it started to gain popularity. Many of the studies related to metaphor use in football

focus prominently or exclusively on war metaphors, which is understandable given their notable frequency in nearly any type of football text. Still, there are some other directions where the study of metaphors in football language could be taken.

As this study has shown, war metaphors are far from being the only prominent category of metaphors appearing in football language. Nature metaphors and building metaphors were especially notable in the data that I analysed. Further studies could be made that focus on these or other categories of metaphors found in football texts. Lewandowski (2012) did a good work of identifying other categories of metaphors in football language, but even his study made a mention of war already on its title, even if it was to exclude war metaphors from the study.

A comparative study could also be made between two different media sources that cover the same football league. In the United Kingdom, for example, there is a great difference in other content of newspapers such as The Guardian that covers important news events from the UK and around the world and the so-called tabloids that have a bigger focus on entertainment news. Many newspapers from both groups, however, dedicate much of their sports section to football news and match reports. Thus, research could be made whether the language used in the football writings differ in some substantial way.

All of the studies regarding metaphor use in football language that I found when researching for this thesis focused on men's football. Further studies should certainly be made with the focus on texts about women's football, either exclusively or in comparison to texts that discuss men's football. The problem regarding this has been the apparent reluctance of media to provide coverage for women's football. With the increasing professionalism in women's football, however, media exposure should also increase. In England, for example, the 2018-19 season was the first during which the players of FA Women's Super League were full-time professionals (BBC, 2018). This newly-established professionalism should inevitably lead to increased media coverage, which would provide more data for studies similar to those conducted on men's football.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This study has aimed to provide for the relatively new but increasing field of metaphor study in football language. First, I discussed the birth and evolvement of football journalism. As football is by far the most popular sport in the world and the amount of football-related content created daily is massive, it could be expected that academics would have also taken an interest in the sport. There have been a lot of football-related studies in the past, but combining football and metaphors has only started to gain popularity in the past decade.

Next, I explained conceptual metaphor theory, most famously written about by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and then adopted my many others, which was the theory I used to categorise the metaphors found in the data. I also introduced some previous studies regarding metaphor use when linked to football. Many of these, similarly to this present study, dealt with how metaphors are used in football journalism (e.g. Palomäki 2001, Bergh 2011, Lewandowski 2012). Others, however, conversely investigated how football is used as a metaphor in other fields (e.g. Semino & Masci 1996, Bokeno 2009, Pennycook 2012). Examples of these kinds of uses of football metaphors range from politics to language skills and from business management to mental health.

The next section of this study discussed the sociology of football. As the most popular sport in the world and one of the main sources of entertainment for millions of people around the world, football also has a huge influence on people and societies everywhere.

Firstly, I discussed fan violence, which has been a problem for football unlike any other sports (Cleland 2015). In recent decades, however, the governing bodies of football have started to fight the problem with substantial fines and bans for aggressors, which has improved the situation. With war metaphors and other violent metaphors being a major part of football language, it is not a huge surprise that the sport would also have this kind of an unwanted byproduct.

Secondly, I looked at the role of women in football, which is sadly still very much unequal. Media coverage, player salaries and fan attendance are nowhere near the level of those of male footballers. With little media coverage, it is also difficult to

make studies such as this one from the point of view of women's football. Only in recent years has the professionalism in women's football grown, so one can only hope that the media coverage will amplify as well.

Thirdly, I also wrote about the globalisation of football. After the Bosman ruling in 1995, professional football players have been able to change clubs much more easily than before. This has led to an unprecedented number of foreign players especially in European leagues, with the biggest teams that are able to pay the largest salaries buying all the best players regardless of their nationality. Regarding this study, as the two sets of data were written both sides of the Bosman ruling, the landscape of English football has changed massively in between. This did not, however, seem to affect the data much as there were no obvious instances where the nationality of players would have affected the way they were written about.

In the next section, I introduced the research questions for this present study. With the help of the two research questions, I wanted to see whether the use of metaphors in football match reports of *The Guardian* had evolved in three decades, regarding all metaphor use in general and the use of war metaphors in particular. I also explained my methods of analysis, mainly focusing on metaphor identification procedure (MIP), which was a useful tool in identifying metaphors in the text also used in many other previous studies that had somewhat similar subjects. I also singled out the reasons why I chose the particular data, with *The Guardian* being a widely read newspaper that is respected in the football community, as the Football Writers' Association has selected it as the newspaper of the year five times in succession.

Moving on to the analysis of the data, I presented the findings arranged to sections according to the categories of metaphors found in the data. I provided examples of the five most prominent categories, war metaphors, other violent metaphors, nature metaphors, building metaphors and orientational metaphors as well as examples of other categories that were not quite frequently on display.

The analysis showed that the use of war metaphors did not differ greatly between the 1987 and the 2018 match reports, although they were more frequent in the latter. One of the main reasons for this seems to be because many of the war metaphors used in football language are actually conventionalised terms, with little to none possible alternatives for their use.

Other violent metaphors, however, were somewhat more frequent in 1987 than in 2018. Conversely, the use of art metaphors, in an admittedly small sample size, greatly increased from 1987 to 2018. These two facts combined could suggest that perhaps the focus of football journalists has moved a little from the violent aspects of football to the more aesthetic ones.

At the end of that last section, I suggested some possible topics for further study that could complement this study. These include researching metaphors other than war metaphors, comparing otherwise very different types of newspapers and researching journalism that covers women's football. At least that last one is, hopefully, a topic that will gain popularity in the future as women's football leagues have already started to move towards an era of professionalism that men's football has enjoyed for decades.

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