

## METAPHORS OF VICTORY AND DEFEAT IN SPORTS HEADLINES IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

 Sara Quintero Ramírez

Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico

**Abstract:** *Metaphor is one of the most frequently used resources in the specialized language of sports (cf. Segrave, 2000; Herráez Pindado, 2004; Segura Soto, 2009; Medina Montero, 2015). The focus of this study is on how victory and defeat are expressed through metaphors in sports headlines. The data collection consists of 100 sports headlines in English and 100 in Spanish. Based on our findings, we argue that there is a diversity of metaphors that take advantage of mutual semantic fields to present victory and defeat in the two corpora, the semantic fields that were identified in the study are: a) war, b) laws, c) cleaning, d) royalty, e) life and death, f) space and g) pain. Finally, when a team's nickname is an animal-related name, journalists map the properties of the animal onto the team (Silaški, 2009) to make the headline more attractive for the audience.*

**Keywords:** *sports headlines, metaphors, victory, defeat, semantic fields.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Sports discourse is a specialized language that has precise and specific characteristics that differ from those of other specialized discourses such as in politics, religion and advertising (Groppaldi, 2009:107). Sports discourse is characterized, among other traits, by the recurrent use of rhetorical devices such as metaphors, metonymies, hyperboles and similes (cf. Nomdedeu Rull, 2004; Saiz Noeda, 2010a; Corado Valenzuela, 2011; Suárez Ramírez & Suarez Muñoz, 2016; Quintero Ramírez & Álvarez Amaral, 2016; etc.).

A large number of studies have focused on the use of metaphor in sports discourse (cf. Segrave, 2000; Herráez Pindado, 2004; Silaški, 2009; Segura Soto, 2009; Medina Montero, 2007, 2009, 2015). However, there are few studies that have centred on victory and defeat metaphors (for example, Silaški, 2009). Moreover, we have found no research focusing specifically on the metaphors of victory and defeat in sports discourse from a contrastive perspective between English and Spanish.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to determine the main linguistic characteristics of victory and defeat metaphors used in sports headlines in different newspapers published on the Web in English and Spanish. More specifically, we intend to identify similarities and differences between the metaphors used in both languages. We believe that even if each language has a particular way of presenting victory and defeat in its sports' headlines, both languages also have some common traits. In fact, according to previous studies (Segura Soto, 2009; Saiz Noeda, 2010a; Mapelli, 2010; Medina Cano, 2010; Quintero Ramírez, Valenzuela Indart & Castañeda Hernández, 2015), one shared trait consists of considering sports events as a battle, a war, and a fight.

The results of this study characterize sports discourse. In order to reach the stated objective of the research, this paper is organized as follows. First, a literature review section is presented. In this section, three significant topics are examined, media headlines, sports discourse and metaphors in sports discourse. Next, there is a methodology section in which two main themes are explained, a) how the corpus of the study was set up, and b) the procedure that was followed in order to analyze the corpus. Then, both corpora are examined and classified into headlines that refer to a) victory and b) to defeat. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

**To cite this article:** Quintero Ramírez, S. (2019). "Metaphors of victory and defeat in sports headlines in English and Spanish". *Revista de Lingüística y Lenguas Aplicadas*, 14, 141-151. <https://doi.org/10.4995/rlyla.2019.9564>

**Correspondence author:** [qsara@hotmail.com](mailto:qsara@hotmail.com)



## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Media headlines

Headlines are considered as brief texts that summarize the content of the article they precede. Runjić-Stoilova & Galić (2013:275) assert that “headlines are specific types of texts in which one or more words announce the following text. The headline takes the central place in the text: it is graphically separated from the text body and often classified in the group of *small texts*”. Furthermore, for Pou Américo (2001:145), print and online headlines constitute the first contact between the reader and the news; therefore, Dor (2003:696) defines headlines as ‘negotiators’.

Ifantidou (2004:699) emphasises that headlines have two main purposes: a) to summarize the information presented below them and b) to attract the reader’s attention so that he/ she feels interested in reading the entire article. Salaverría (2005:80) states that online headlines have another function, which is a hypertextual one, since very often the headline is at the same time the hyperlink on which the readers can click in order to gain access to the whole article.

Despite these three functions, there are many readers that feel satisfied with the information they read in the headlines (Dor, 2003:695). Moreover, there are also readers that claim not to have enough time to read the full-texts in the media and prefer to only read headlines to be informed. Nevertheless, Ifantidou (2004) warns us that one of the negative consequences of simply reading a headline is the misinterpretation of the text:

Reading headlines as self-contained texts can have a twofold pragmatic effect. Firstly, headlines may receive ‘distorted’ interpretations, because unless the full-story is also read, there is always the risk of retrieving a ‘wrong’ interpretation. Secondly, headlines may not be strictly read for their newsworthiness, but for a rough approximation to information, because unless the accompanying news report is consulted, accurate newsworthy information cannot be safely obtained (Ifantidou, 2004:702).

In spite of Ifantidou’s warning, nowadays, there are more headline readers than full-text readers (Nadal Palazón: 2011:20). Consequently, in this study, we have decided to analyze newspaper headlines due to the current relevant status of this text genre and for the reason that “[n]ewspaper headlines are an interesting field to research, given the specific kind of linguistic phenomena that can be observed in this particular register” (Bucaria, 2004:280). Furthermore, our main interest does not focus on newspaper headlines in general, but on sports headlines found in the electronic version of the newspapers, in particular, those headlines that present a sports event in terms of victory or defeat through metaphorical terms.

Even though online headlines do not have the same restrictions of space as print headlines, they continue to be written in a very concise way in order to attract the reader’s attention (cf. Quintero Ramírez, 2013). However, the main difference between print and online headlines is context, a print headline is surrounded by photos and outlines that help the reader understand the setting; whereas in the online version, the headline is somewhat distant from the context because very often the reader sees the headline on a search results page or in a social media post (Lieb, 2016).

### 2.2. Sports discourse

Sport is a cultural manifestation that possesses its own rituals (Galindo Cáceres, 2010:53). These sport rituals are closely linked to the process of communication established by the participants in the sports practices, i.e., athletes, trainers, journalists, fans, etc. Doing sport generates different communication situations such as a training session, a conversation among the players of a team, a narration of a competition, etc. The different participants in these situations develop specific terminology and expressions (Kowalikowa, 2009:64).

In sports discourse, analysts study, among other aspects, how sports events are presented by specialized journalists and how these events are understood by an audience that is interested in obtaining that kind of information. For sports fans, this kind of discourse is easy to understand. However, for a person who is not familiar with the expressions and the jargon used by the journalists, sports discourse is difficult to comprehend and sometimes even mysterious (Alasalmi, 2014:7).

Since the last century, but particularly in the last few decades, the media focuses on sports events. Society as a whole is informed about worldwide sports events through the media. Marín Montín (2000:241) claims that there is no other human activity that generates more expectancy in society than sport does. This fact means that the sports journalist is considered a link between the audience and the sports events.

Sports discourse in the media has been studied from different linguistic angles, since this specialized discourse displays a very precise way of narrating and describing sports events. According to Alvar Ezquerro (2009:159), it

is interesting to study the lexicon employed in sports discourse, since journalists must have a variety of linguistic skills when producing their texts in order to attract, entertain and interest their audience in what they have to say (Curvadic García & Vargas Castro, 2010:218).

Mapelli (2004:171) asserts that there are a lot of rhetorical figures that are usually produced in sports discourse. Furthermore, these figures are not static because the sports journalists conceive new rhetorical expressions in order to create more creative texts. Indeed, the language of sports journalism is filled with metaphors, metonymies, hyperboles and similes (Quintero Ramírez, *et al.*, 2015; Quintero Ramírez & Álvarez Amaral, 2016). As mentioned above, this study focuses on those metaphors that are used to express victory or defeat in a sports event in newspaper headlines in English and Spanish.

### 2.3. Metaphors in sports discourse

“In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphor is defined as one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain” (Kövecses, 2002:4). Corado Valenzuela (2011:28) states that a metaphor has two main parts: the tenor and the vehicle. The tenor is the referent to which features are attributed. The vehicle is the object whose features are borrowed. Lakoff & Johnson (1995:39) assert that metaphors are not exclusive to literary language, but they are very frequently used in common life situations. Actually, some examples of metaphors in the current discourse are: a) an argument is war, b) love is a journey, c) theories are buildings, d) ideas are food, etc. (Kövecses, 2002:5). Moreover, for Segrave (2000:48), life itself is seen as a sport.

Sports discourse is filled with metaphors. Certainly, these rhetorical figures are considered as a necessary linguistic tool for describing, narrating and commenting on sports because there is a strong association between sports and a diversity of semantic fields. This association permits a rich production of metaphors by sports journalists. In order to present the different situations that occur in sports events, metaphors associated with war (Kövecses, 2002), transportation, religion (Lewis, 2013), love, literature, etc., are employed (cf. Medina Montero, 2009; Segura Soto, 2009; Saiz Noeda, 2010a; Mapelli, 2010; Medina Cano, 2010; Quintero Ramírez *et al.*, 2015).

Furthermore, Kövecses (2002: 18) claims that specialized linguistic terms produced in sports are very frequently used to explain abstract concepts. Indeed, according to Lakoff (1992), for some time, people have understood war more clearly in terms of sports, i.e., as a competitive game, since in war there must be a winner, a loser, a beginning and an end, as happens in sports events. Moreover, “[t]his metaphor is taken very seriously. There is a long tradition in the West of training military officers in team sports and chess. The military is trained to win” (Lakoff, 1992:472).

As stated before, in this study we focus on victory and defeat metaphors produced in sports newspaper headlines. According to Silaški (2009:62), sports headline authors consider the communicative situation in order to produce the metaphors for victory or defeat according to “certain (defining) properties of the characters” involved in the body of the article. Headline authors play with the nicknames of the teams to produce very creative sports headlines and make them attractive and interesting for their audience.

In her study about topic-triggered metaphors in Serbian newspaper headlines, Silaški (2009) observes that there is a strong link between sports and war, because of the main goal of many sports events which consists of “defeating the opponent”. Indeed, in some examples of her corpus *victory* is conceived as *eating*, *fragmenting*, *taming*, *trapping* and even *killing* the adversary (Silaški, 2009:63-64). These metaphors stress “the confrontational character of sport competition” (Silaški, 2009:64).

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Corpus formation

The corpus of this study consists of 100 English-language sports headlines and 100 Spanish-language sports headlines found on different newspapers in their online versions. The headlines were published from June to August 2017. The criterion we followed to select the headlines was that the headline refers to a sports event in terms of victory or defeat. We have selected the 200 headlines randomly. This means that we did not look for the most popular or the most read newspaper. In other words, the selection was arbitrary, based only on the above-mentioned criterion.

We constructed the corpus in English from the following newspapers: *The Independent*, *Newham Recorder* and *The Guardian* from Great Britain; *Chicago Tribune*, *The Register Guard*, *Houma Courier*, *Minot Daily News*, *The Washington Post* and *New York Post* from U.S.A.; *The Australian* and *The West Australian* from Australia; *Hindustan Times* and *The Tribune* from India; *Toronto Sun* from Canada; and *New Zealand Herald* from New Zealand.

The newspapers that were considered to build the corpus in Spanish are: *La República* and *El Universo* from Ecuador; *Medio tiempo*, *Excelsior*, *El Diario de Coahuila*, *Esto* and *Récord* from Mexico; *Clarín*, *Diario Hoy* and *Olé* from Argentina; *La Nación* from Chile, *El Nuevo Herald* from U.S.A; and *Marca*, *El Español* and *El Confidencial* from Spain.

We decided to constitute our corpora from the online version of newspapers, since nowadays in digital journalism it is very important to attract and keep the reader's attention so that he/ she feels the necessity to continue reading the body of the article. Therefore, "the digital headline should be sufficiently attractive" (Suárez Ramírez & Suárez Muñoz, 2016:83) and the headline author should exploit all the creative linguistic tools at his/ her disposal.

Moreover, we built our two corpora from newspapers from different countries because our intention is to show how metaphors are used in different parts of the world in order to express victory and defeat in sports events. Therefore, we expect our results to be wide-ranging regarding the phenomenon of the metaphors used in sports headlines.

### 3.2. Analysis procedure

For the analysis, we considered the ideas presented in the theoretical framework and the previous research on metaphors in sports discourse, in general (Lakoff, 1992; Segrave, 2000; Kövecses, 2002; Medina Montero, 2009; Mapelli, 2010; Medina Cano, 2010; Lewis, 2013; Quintero Ramírez *et al.*, 2015), and in sports headlines, in particular (Silaški, 2009; Quintero Ramírez, 2013; Suárez Ramírez & Suárez Muñoz, 2016).

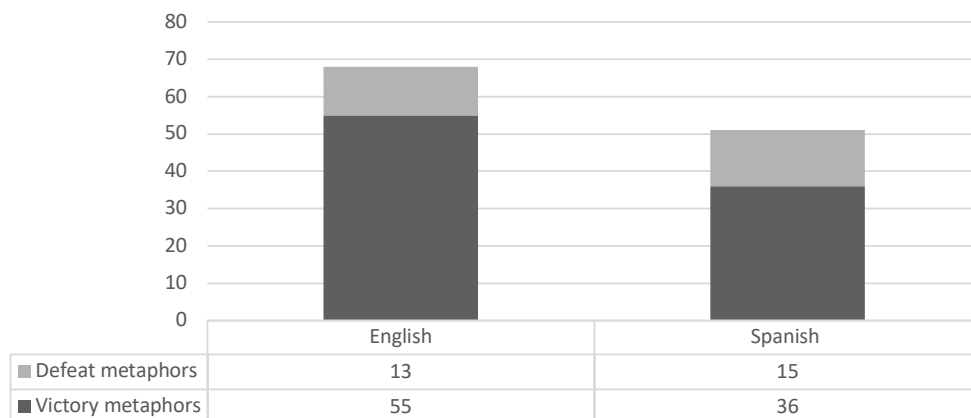
Once the two corpora were constituted, the sports headlines of each language were examined in detail. The sports headlines from both corpora were classified into headlines that refer to a) victory and b) to defeat.

First of all, victory headlines were analyzed in order to identify the metaphors used in both languages. Once we listed the metaphors of victory in each language, we detected the characteristics that are common to both languages and those characteristics that belong only to one language.

Furthermore, defeat headlines were studied in the same way. Based on these results, we established similarities and differences between the victory and defeat metaphors used by sports journalists in newspaper headlines in English and Spanish. Finally, our results are discussed in terms of current theoretical inquiry.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the headlines in English, there are 68 metaphors; whereas in Spanish, there are 51. The rest of the headlines present victory and defeat in no metaphorical terms. In our both corpora, the metaphors related to victory are more abundant than those related to defeat. Indeed, in English, we register 55 victory metaphors and only 13 defeat metaphors; whereas in Spanish, we find 36 victory metaphors and 15 defeat metaphors. Graphic 1 shows the frequencies of victory and defeat metaphors in our materials in English and Spanish.



Graphic 1. Frequencies of victory and defeat metaphors in both corpora.

#### 4.1. Common characteristics in English-language and Spanish-language corpora

##### 4.1.1. Victory metaphors

As it has been mentioned above, in both corpora, headlines tend to present sports news more in terms of victory than defeat. This is, to a certain point, logical, since the central character of the news is very often the winning team or athlete. As in previous studies, in our corpora, sports headlines present victory in a variety of metaphorical terms and through different linguistic forms, however most times victory is announced through a verb<sup>1</sup> in English and Spanish.

Lakoff (1992:472) says that war is understood in terms of sports. In our corpora, the contrary is true. On the one hand, we find 26/68 (38.24%) metaphors that belong to the semantic field of war in English. On the other hand, we register 14/51 (27.45%) in Spanish. When the headline focuses on a clear victory, verbs that refer to war are used by headline writers in both languages (Alin & Tochon, 2004:43; Gómez Torrego, 2010:152).

Examples (1-6) display the verbs *crush*, the Spanish-language equivalent *aplastar*, *overwhelm*, the Spanish equivalent *masacrar*, *humble* and the Spanish equivalent *humillar* respectively to present the superiority of one protagonist over another. These metaphors can be considered cases of hyperbole too because of the exaggeration expressed through them (Gómez Torrego, 2010:157).

- (1) Penguins *crush* Predators 6-0 to take 3-2 lead in Stanley Cup Final [Chicago Tribune, 08/06/2017]
- (2) Francia *aplastó* a Holanda y la dejó muy complicada [Clarín, 31/08/2017]
- (3) Rafael Nadal *overwhelms* Dominic Thiem to reach French Open final [The Guardian, 09/06/2017]
- (4) Yasiel Puig *masacra* a Miami con su poder y los Marlins inician mal la segunda mitad [El Nuevo Herald, 14/07/2017]
- (5) New Zealand *humble* USA to win 35th America's Cup [The Australian, 16/06/2017]
- (6) Brasil 'B' *humilla* a Australia en partido amistoso [Récord, 13/06/2017]

Furthermore, examples (7) and (8) show the verbs *sink* and the Spanish-language equivalent *hundir* correspondingly and compare a football game and a swimming competition with a fleet. These metaphors not only compare sports events to war, but more especially to a nautical battle (Mapelli, 2010:167).

- (7) Football: Arsenal *sink* Chelsea in FA Cup final [New Zealand Herald, 28/05/2017]
- (8) El ruso Chupkov *hunde* la flota japonesa en los 200 braza [Marca, 28/07/2017]

Furthermore, in examples (9) and (10) headlines display the verbs *punish* and the Spanish-language equivalent *castigar* to present how a team defeated the other team in a resounding way. These metaphors belong to the use of legal language (Gómez Torrego, 2010:156). We only identify 2/68 (2.94%) victory metaphors belonging to this semantic field in our materials in English and 1/51 (1.96%) metaphor in Spanish.

- (9) India *punish* England to win by 35 runs in Women's World Cup encounter [The Independent, 24/06/2017]
- (10) Valencia Basket empata la final de la ACB y *castiga* a un pobre Madrid en el segundo partido [El Español, 11/06/2017]

Moreover, from the semantic field of cleaning and maintenance, in some sports such as football (11), baseball (12) and tennis (13-14) the verb *sweep* in English and the Spanish-language equivalent *barrer*<sup>2</sup> are used to express that in a series of certain number of games (two, three or more) one team or athlete triumphs over the other one showing a huge superiority and winning the series without letting the contender(s) do anything (Saiz Noeda, 2010b:230). In English, there are 5/68 (7.35%) metaphors that belong to this semantic field; whereas in Spanish, we register 6/51 (11.76%).

- (11) Mexico looks to *sweep* Americans [The Register Guard, 16/06/2017]
- (12) Max Scherzer, Ryan Zimmerman lead Nationals to *sweep* of Giants [The Washington Post, 01/06/2017]

<sup>1</sup> Although other lexical categories such as nouns and participles are not at all excluded, as is seen in some examples below.

<sup>2</sup> In example (13), the verb *barrer* is followed by the preposition *a*; whereas in example (14) the verb is followed by the preposition *con*.

(13) Final de campeonos en Roland Garros: Nadal *barrió* a Thiem y Wawrinka frenó a Murray [Clarín, 09/06/2017]

(14) Nadal *barre* con Wawrinka y se corona campeón en Roland Garros [La Nación, 11/06/2017]

Sometimes, a specific victory means to win a championship or a tournament title. This victory is often described in terms related to royalty, so that the attainment of the title is seen as a *crowning* (Quintero Ramírez, 2013:178). 4/68 (5.88%) metaphors in our materials in English and 4/51 (7.84%) metaphors in our corpus in Spanish are related to royalty.

In (15) the participle *crowned* is employed to explain that Golden State Warriors obtained the NBA championship title. In (16) the verb *coronarse* is used to indicate that a Venezuelan baseball player won a title in a specific competition: The Home Run Derby. In (17) the significant actions of a player are presented through the verb *lifts*<sup>3</sup>; moreover, the team's attainment of the championship title is stated through the noun *crown*.

(15) GSW *crowned* NBA champions [New Zealand Herald, 13/06/2017]

(16) El venezolano Frank Díaz *se corona* en el Home Run Derby 2017 [Marca, 17/06/2017]

(17) Cristiano Ronaldo *lifts* Real Madrid to second successive Champions League *crown* [Hindustan Times, 04/06/2017]

As mentioned above, Segrave (2000:48) asserts that life is considered as a sport. In our study, the contrary is true, i.e., victory is conceived in terms of life. Indeed, sports journalists take their metaphors from the semantic field of life and death (Mapelli, 2010:169). Hence, the fact that a team or an athlete wins means also that this team or athlete is *still alive*, as in example (18) or *sale vivo* in a tournament, as in example (19). In English, we register 3/68 (4.41%) metaphors related to the semantic field of life and death; whereas in Spanish, we only identify 1/51 (1.96%).

(18) Egge *still alive* in state tennis consolation bracket [Minot Daily News, 02/06/2017]

(19) El Barça B *sale vivo* de Cartagonova y da un paso de gigante en la eliminatoria [Marca, 04/06/2017]

Furthermore, when a sports club's nickname is an animal-related name, then the properties of the animal are mapped onto the team and these characteristics influence the headline author to present victory or defeat of the club in very creative terms (Silaški, 2009:62). On the one hand, there are 9/68 (13.24%) animal-related metaphors in the materials in English. On the other hand, there are 3/51 (5.88%) animal metaphors in Spanish.

In the examples below (20-23), verbs such as *fly*, *volar*, *rugir* and *cantar* are used by the headlines authors because they associate the characteristics of animals used as nicknames of the respective teams to announce victory of that specific team. In other terms, these are metonymy-based metaphors triggered by animal-related and bird-related nicknames of sports clubs (Silaški, 2009).

(20) Cardinals *fly* past Eagles, 48-34 [Houma Courier, 08/06/2017]

(21) Águilas FCA *vuelan* con campeonato [El Diario, 03/06/2017]

(22) *Rugieron* las Panteras [Olé, 06/06/2017]

(23) ¡*Canta el Gallo!* Querétaro se lleva la SuperCopa MX [Esto, 16/07/2017]

Additionally, the characteristics of the animal-related name of the team influences also the characteristics attributed to the athletes that play for that team. Therefore, a player can *find his wings* if he plays well for a team whose nickname is *Eagles*, as in example (24). The association presented in this headline is based on the metaphor *victory is flying* (Silaški, 2009:64).

(24) Lewis Jetta finally *finds his wings* as Eagles beat Geelong at home [The West Australian, 15/06/2017]

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with conventional orientational metaphors *up is good* (Alin & Tochon, 2004: 43; Silaški, 2009: 64).

#### 4.1.2. Defeat metaphors

As stated before, the headlines from our corpora present the sports events focusing more on victory than defeat. Nonetheless, our sports headlines present defeat in different metaphorical terms and varied lexical categories. Certainly, when the headline focuses on the defeat of a team or an athlete, there are two common verbs in both corpora: *fall / caer* (25-29) and *suffer / sufrir* (31-31). There are 6/68 (8.82%) headlines with the verb *fall* and 2/68 (2.94%) with the verb *suffer* in English; whereas there are 3/51 (5.88%) headlines with the verb *caer* and only 1/51 (1.96%) with the verb *sufrir* in Spanish.

Concerning the verbs *fall / caer*, “[n]egatively evaluated concepts [...] are most frequently spatially oriented downward and are conceptualised as DOWN” (Silaški. 2009:65). Indeed, downward movement produces a negative idea such as sadness, unhappiness, sorrow, and, in our specific examples, defeat (Alin & Tochon, 2004:43). Consequently, the notion conveyed in headlines (25-29) is based on the metaphor *defeat is a fall*.

Moreover, in example (27) the metaphor alluded to is preceded by another one: Kerber *loses her wings*. In this specific case, the metaphor does not refer just to the defeat of a team whose nickname is a bird-related name, but also to an athlete’s defeat, more particularly, to the best tennis woman player according to the Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) rankings. Thus, the concept of *going down* and *falling* is elaborated through the metaphor of *losing one’s wings* to express the idea of an important athlete’s defeat.

- (25) Hockey: Black Sticks *fall* to Belgium [New Zealand Herald, 26/06/2017]
- (26) Wallabies *fall* to defeat as spirited Scotland gain degree of revenge [The Guardian, 17/06/2017]
- (27) Kerber *loses her wings, falls* in first round again [The Tribune, 28/05/2017]
- (28) El Athletic *cae* ante el Valladolid [Marca, 22/07/2017]
- (29) España *cae* ante Inglaterra y deja en el aire su clasificación para cuartos [Marca, 23/07/2017]

Regarding the verbs *suffer/ sufrir*, they both display a negative meaning, since *suffering* refers to feel pain or undergo a punishment. This negative meaning is reinforced by the noun phrase that follows the verbs. In both examples the noun phrase represents a metaphor to refer defeat: in (30) *capital punishment* and in (31) *descalabro*.

- (30) Tottenham *suffer capital punishment* as West Ham dethrone ‘kings of London’ [The Guardian, 06/05/2017]
- (31) Chile *sufre descalabro* ante Rumania previo a Confederaciones [Excélsior, 13/06/2017]

Furthermore, in both languages, in order to present defeat, headline authors use the past participles of the verbs that they employ to present victory. Indeed, we observed 5/68 (7.35%) past participles in our headlines in English, and 7/51 (13.73%) in Spanish. In examples (32-36) the past participles of the verbs *sweep, sink, knock out, golear, humillar, aplastar* and *noquear* are used to show a clear defeat. In English, the first two participles, *swept* and *sunk*, are preceded by the verb *get* and *be* respectively to emphasize the passive voice; whereas in Spanish the participles are preceded by noun phrases.

In example (36), the writer not only uses the past participle of the verb *aplastar*, but also that of the verb *noquear* which is a verb employed in the discipline of boxing to indicate that a boxer has knocked out his/ her adversary. Moreover, the writer adds a metaphor that belongs to the bullfighting discipline, *una cornada de varias trayectorias*, to emphasize the idea of the defeat suffered by Barcelona.

- (32) Giants *get swept*, team bus breaks down, and Madison Bumgarner isn’t there to fix any of it [The Washington Post, 08/05/2017]
- (33) West Ham *are sunk* by dramatic late penalty at Southampton [Newham Recorder, 19/08/2017]
- (34) US Open live: Konta *knocked out* by Krunić on day one [The Guardian, 28/08/2017]
- (35) Chivas, *goleado* y ‘*humillado*’ por Santos en amistoso [Medio tiempo, 02/07/2017]
- (36) Un Barcelona *aplastado, noqueado* y con *una cornada de varias trayectorias* [El Confidencial, 17/08/2017]

## 4.2. Differences between English-language and Spanish-language corpora

### 4.2.1. Victory metaphors

Besides characteristics that coincide in both languages, there are a few features that are slightly different between the two corpora. The main difference we observe is that in Spanish, there is a more varied list of verbs that is used to express the victory of one team or one athlete over the adversary, such as *desarbolar* (37), *frenar* (38) and *asustar* (39). We did not find any verbs with similar meanings in the corpus in English.

(37) El City de Guardiola *desarbola* a un Madrid indolente en defensa [La República, 17/07/2017]

(38) El casi cuarentón Tommy Haas *frena* el retorno de Federer en Stuttgart [Marca, 14/06/2017]

(39) La nueva generación alemana '*asusta*' a los ilustres campeones del mundo [Medio tiempo, 30/06/2017]

Moreover, in English, related to the semantic field of the jewelry, journalists use the verb *shine* to describe a solid performance of a team whose nickname is *Diamonds* (40). As Silaški (2009:62), explains, in this particular case, the properties of the diamond are mapped onto the team to convey its performance in metaphorical terms. Furthermore, once again from the semantic field of the war, the home run of a baseball player is described in terms of an *explosion* (41). Since the explosion of a missile, a rocket or a projectile is considered lethal for the adversary, the writer uses the adjective *dangerous* to describe how the explosion of the alluded player makes his team lethal for its adversaries.

(40) Geelong thump GWS, Pies give Dees finals scare, Diamonds *shine* and more: sportwatch [The Guardian, 26/08/2017]

(41) Gary Sanchez *explosion* makes Yankees all the more dangerous [New York Post, 02/06/2017]

In our corpus in English, there are 6/68 (8.82%) victory metaphors that do not coincide with those in Spanish. Moreover, in our materials in Spanish, we register 7/51 (13.73%) victory metaphors that do not have a similar meaning in our headlines in English.

### 4.2.2. Defeat metaphors

In Spanish, as a victory is often considered in terms of a *crowning* to express the attainment of a title or a championship, a defeat that means the fact of losing a title is also considered in terms related to royalty. In examples (42-43), the fact that tennis players Djokovic and Murray are overtaken by other players is expressed through the metaphor *perder su/ la corona*<sup>4</sup>.

(42) Djokovic *pierde su corona* ante Thiem y cae al tercer puesto del ranking mundial [Marca, 07/06/2017]

(43) Murray *pierde la corona* de Queen's ante el australiano Thompson [Marca, 20/06/2017]

Furthermore, in Spanish, verbs such as *hundir* are preceded by the personal pronoun *se* to illustrate the defeat of the subject presented in first position of the headline, as in examples (44-45). The alluded verb highlights the negative idea of defeat, since it refers to a downward movement which is negatively evaluated (Silaški. 2009:65; Alin & Tochon, 2004:43).

(44) Santos y Chivas *se hunden* en el fondo de la general [Esto, 23/08/2017]

(45) Uruguay *se hunde* ante Italia en Niza y sufre su quinta derrota seguida [Marca, 07/06/2017]

As it can be seen, in our corpus in Spanish, we only identify 4/51 (7.84%) defeat metaphors that do not coincide with our defeat metaphors registered in English.

Finally, we offer a synthesis of quantitative data. Certainly, Table 1 shows the frequency of all the metaphors related to victory or defeat that we registered in both corpora. As it can be seen, the metaphors related to war are the most frequent ones in both corpora. Moreover, in English the animal-related metaphor is the second most common one; whereas in Spanish the variety of metaphorical verbs constitute the second most frequent strategy.

<sup>4</sup> Even if we have not seen any similar example in our corpus of English, we are aware that this metaphor is not exclusive of the Spanish-language, since we have seen this metaphor in English-language in other materials.



Table 1. Frequency of metaphors in both corpora.

Type of metaphor	English		Spanish	
War	26/68	38.24%	14/51	27.45%
Laws	2/68	2.94	1/51	1.96%
Cleaning	5/68	7.35%	6/51	11.76%
Royalty	4/68	5.88%	4/51	7.84%
Life	3/68	4.41%	1/51	1.96%
Animal-related	9/68	13.24%	3/51	5.88%
Spatial verb	6/68	8.82%	3/51	5.88%
Negative-meaning verb	2/68	2.94%	1/51	1.96%
Past participles	5/68	7.35%	7/51	13.73%
Others	6/68	8.82%	11/51	21.57%

### 4.3. Discussion

In the corpora of our study, victory seems to be a protagonist of the sports news, and headline authors show their creativity when they write about the triumphs of the different teams and athletes in a numerous variety of metaphorical terms, especially through the lexical category of verbs, as has been described in the above paragraphs. However, even if defeat is not usually the central character of the sports news published in the different newspapers in English and Spanish, headline authors present it in a diversity of metaphorical terms, in particular through past participles and verb phrases, as has been argued.

Although some differences between the two corpora are illustrated in the above paragraphs, the differences are minimal, since sports journalists in English and Spanish operate under the same semantic principles to express metaphors in their headlines. Indeed, many terms that refer to war are commonly used in headlines from both languages to present victory and defeat (Alin & Tochon, 2004:43; Gómez Torrego, 2010:152). Other semantic fields that are exploited by sports journalists in their headlines are: laws, cleaning and maintenance, royalty, life and death. Based on our findings, we argue that there is a diversity of metaphors that take advantage of mutual semantic fields in the two languages.

Furthermore, orientational metaphors (Alin & Tochon, 2004:43; Silaški, 2009:65) play an important role when headlines refer to defeat, since the verbs that imply a downward movement are used. Additionally, sports reporters take advantage of the teams' nicknames. When a team's nickname is an animal or an object-related name, journalists map the properties of the animal or the object onto the team and the headline is presented alluding these characteristics (Silaški, 2009:62). Finally, there are also similar terms that are used in the two languages to describe equivalent sports realities such as victory and defeat.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of this study was to identify how victory and defeat are expressed through metaphors in sports headlines in English and Spanish. After having studied the corpora, we have detected some relevant features that can be summarized in the following aspects. In both corpora, victory is presented in a variety of metaphorical terms and mostly through a verb such as *crush* / *aplstar*, *punish* / *castigar*, *humble* / *humillar*, *sink* / *hundir*, *overwhelm* / *masacrar*, etc. Most of the verbs belong to the semantic field of the war.

Moreover, victory metaphors expressed through verbs such as *fly*, *volar*, *cantar* and *rugir* are used when a sports club's nickname is an animal-related name. The headline author maps the properties of the animal to express the team's victory, as in Silaški's (2009) study. Furthermore, when victory means to win a championship, metaphor based on royalty, i.e., *crowning*, is observed in both languages. Finally, in some sports, victory is considered in terms of *giving life* to a team or an athlete.

In the case of defeat, in both corpora, there are two frequent verbs that are used to express defeat: *fall* and *suffer*. On the one hand, the verbs *fall* / *caer* are based on the spatial conception of *down is bad*; therefore, *defeat is a fall*. On the other hand, the verbs *suffer* / *sufrir* denote a negative meaning which is emphasized by noun phrases that denote defeat. In both corpora, some defeats are expressed through the past participles of some of the verbs that are employed to present victory such as *sunk*, *knocked out*, *noqueado*, *aplstarado*, *humillado*, etc.

Although there are previous studies that focus on metaphors of sports discourse, those studies concentrate more particularly on football discourse (cf. Segura Soto, 2009; Saiz Noeda, 2010a; Medina Montero, 2007, 2009; among others). Moreover, the few studies that analyze the use of metaphors in sports discourse from a contrastive perspective compare Spanish and Italian (cf. Gómez Torrego, 2010; Mapelli, 2010; Medina Montero, 2015) or French and Vietnamese (cf. Xuân Thu, 2011). Therefore, the originality of this study lies in the contrastive perspective of analyzing victory and defeat newspaper headlines in English and Spanish.

Finally, the findings of this research present a broad overview of the victory and defeat metaphors that sports headlines display on different newspapers published in English and Spanish languages. We are conscious that our results are not categorical nor conclusive. Therefore, further research should be carried out to examine other rhetorical figures of sports headlines in printed and online media in English, Spanish and other languages.

## REFERENCES

- Alasalmi, T. (2014). *Problems of translating the laws of Rugby Union from English into Finnish*. M. A. Thesis. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Alin, C. & Tochon, F. (2004). "La construction identitaire de l'enseignant: le rôle des métaphores". *Recherche & Formation*, 47: 41-54. <https://doi.org/10.3406/refor.2004.1926>
- Alvar Ezquerro, M. (2009). El deporte y los términos deportivos. In Hernán Gómez-Prieto, B. (Ed.) *Il linguaggio dello sport, la comunicazione e la scuola*. 149-166. Milan: Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia Diritto.
- Bucaria, C. (2004). "Lexical and syntactic ambiguity as a source of humor: The case of newspaper". *International Journal of Humor Research*, 17/3: 279-309. <https://doi.org/10.1515/humr.2004.013>
- Corado Valenzuela, H. (2011). *Análisis retórico de los signos sonoros y lingüísticos de la narración radiofónica de fútbol en emisoras de frecuencia modulada*. Tesis. Guatemala: Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala.
- Cuvardic García, D. & Vargas Castro, E. (2010). Recursos lingüísticos en la titulación periodística costarricense: el caso de La Nación y el Diario La Extra. *Filología y Lingüística*, 36/1: 207-232. <https://doi.org/10.15517/rfl.v36i1.1132>
- Dor, D. (2003). "On newspaper headlines as relevance optimizers". *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35: 695-721. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(02\)00134-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(02)00134-0)
- Galindo Cáceres, J. (2010). Comunicología, comunicometodología y deporte. Crítica epistemológica de las Ciencias y las ingenierías del deporte. In Martínez, S. (Coord.). *Fútbol-espectáculo, Cultura y Sociedad*. 53-67. Mexico City: Afínita.
- Gómez Torrego, L. (2010). "Aspectos semánticos del lenguaje del fútbol en España". *Monográficos MarcoELE: Lenguas de Especialidad y su Enseñanza*, 11: 150-158.
- Groppaldi, A. (2009). Il lessico degli appassionati di pallavolo: lingua speciale e gergo per tifosi. In Hernán Gómez-Prieto, B. (Ed.) *Il linguaggio dello sport, la comunicazione e la scuola*. 107-120. Milan: Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia Diritto.
- Herráez Pindado, A. J. (2004). "La metáfora en la formación del vocabulario del ciclismo en francés". *Ibérica*, 7: 107-123.
- Ifantidou, E. (2009). "Newspaper headlines and relevance: Ad hoc concepts in ad hoc contexts". *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41/4: 699-720. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2008.10.016>
- Kowalikowa, J. (2009). "Language of sport in the context of communication and culture". *Studies in physical culture and tourism*, 16/1: 63-67.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor. A practical introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lakoff, G. (1992). Metaphor and war: The metaphor system used to justify war in the Gulf. In Pütz, M. (Ed.) *Thirty Years of Linguistic Evolution*, Philadelphia/ Amsterdam: John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/z.61.36lak>
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1995). *Metáforas de la vida cotidiana*. Colección Teorema. Madrid: Cátedra.
- Lewis, T. V. (2013). "Religious Rhetoric in Southern College Football: New Uses for Religious Metaphors". *Southern Communication Journal*, 78/3: 202-204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2013.770064>
- Lieb, T. (2016). *Editing for the Digital Age*. Towson: Towson University.
- Mapelli, G. (2004). Locuciones del lenguaje del fútbol. In *Atti del XXI Congresso dell' AISPI, Letteratura della memoria. La memoria delle lingue: la didattica e lo studio delle lingue della penisola iberica in Italia*. 171-181. Messina: Lippolis.
- Mapelli, G. (2010). "Ámbitos semánticos del lenguaje del fútbol en Italia". *Monográficos MarcoELE: Lenguas de Especialidad y su Enseñanza*, 11: 159-172.
- Marín Montín, J. M. (2000). "La crónica deportiva: José A. Sánchez Araujo". *Ámbitos*, 5/1: 241-257. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-4265-6\\_20](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-4265-6_20)

- Medina Cano, F. (2010). Los narradores deportivos y sus epopeyas cotidianas. In Martínez, S. (Coord.), *Fútbol-espectáculo, cultura y sociedad*. 157-207. Mexico City: Afinita.
- Medina Montero, J. F. (2007). La metáfora en el léxico futbolístico: el caso de los participantes en español, y sus posibles equivalentes en italiano. In Luque Toro, L. (Coord.). *Léxico español actual: Actas del I Congreso internacional de léxico español actual*. 197-240. Venice: Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia.
- Medina Montero, J. F. (2009). La metáfora en el léxico futbolístico el caso de la actividad deportiva en español, y algunas propuestas de traducción al italiano. In L. Luque Toro (Coord.), *Léxico español actual II*. (pp. 155-202). Venice: Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia.
- Medina Montero, J. F. (2015). "La metáfora en el lenguaje futbolístico: el caso del tiempo, el lugar y los útiles deportivos en español, y propuestas de traducción al italiano". *Rivista Internazionale di Tecnica della Traduzione*, 17: 137-155.
- Nadal Palazón, J. G. (2011). *El Discurso ajeno en los titulares periodísticos*. PhD thesis. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca.
- Nomdedeu Rull, A. (2004). *Terminología del fútbol y los diccionarios: elaboración de un diccionario de especialidad para el gran público*. Tesis doctoral. Barcelona: Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.
- Pou Américo, M. J. (2001). "Los titulares de prensa y los nuevos servicios de información por correo electrónico y teléfono móvil". *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 7/1): 145-157.
- Quintero Ramírez, S. (2013). "Análisis sintáctico de titulares deportivos en la versión electrónica de seis periódicos mexicanos". *Lengua y Habla*, 17: 165-182.
- Quintero Ramírez, S., Valenzuela Indart, N. & Castañeda Hernández, R. C. (2015). "Figuras retóricas en crónicas futbolísticas y beisboleras". *RAEL, Revista Electrónica de Lingüística Aplicada*, 14/1: 118-130.
- Quintero Ramírez, S. & Álvarez Amaral, D. (2016). "Figuras retóricas en notas periodísticas deportivas". *Verbum et Lingua*, 8: 75-91.
- Runjić-Stoilova, A. & Galić, J. (2013). The representation and reception of paraphrase in newspaper headlines. In Kišiček, G. & Žagar, I. Ž. (Eds.) *What do we know about the world? Rhetorical and Argumentative Perspectives*. 459-482. Ljubljana: Educational Research Institute/ Digital Library.
- Saiz Noeda, B. (2010a). "Notas sobre la retórica del lenguaje futbolístico". *Monográficos MarcoELE: Lenguas de Especialidad y su Enseñanza*, 11: 196-227.
- Saiz Noeda, B. (2010b). "Expresiones con valor retórico. Glosario". *Monográficos MarcoELE: Lenguas de Especialidad y su Enseñanza*, 11: 228-236.
- Salaverría, R. (2005). *Redacción periodística en Internet*. Pamplona: EUNSA.
- Schirato, T. (2013). *Sports discourse*. London/ New Delhi/ New York/ Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Segrave, J. O. (2000). The sports metaphor in American cultural discourse. *Culture, Sport, Society*, 3/1: 48-60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14610980008721862>
- Segura Soto, G. A. (2009). "Prepara, apunta, dispara... fusila al portero, la metáfora bélica en el fútbol". *Káñina, Revista de Artes y Letras*, 33: 67-74.
- Silaški, N. (2009). Topic-triggered metaphors in newspaper headlines. *Professional communication and translation studies*, 2/1-2: 59-66.
- Smith, A. (2015). "Figuras literarias en los titulares de la prensa costarricense". *Revista de Lenguas Modernas*, 22: 35-42. <https://doi.org/10.15517/rlm.v0i22.19664>
- Suárez-Ramírez, S. & Suárez-Muñoz, A. (2016). "La retórica del titular deportivo en la prensa española". *Documentación de las Ciencias de la Información*, 39: 83-118. <https://doi.org/10.5209/DCIN.54410>
- Xuân Thu, Phạm Thị. (2011). *Étude contrastive de l'utilisation de la métaphore et de la métonymie dans le langage du sport en français et en Vietnamien*. Mémoire de Master. Da Nang: École de Langues Étrangères, Université de Danang.