

Original Research

Metonymy in Motion: How Metonymy Shapes Soccer Narratives and Enhances ELT Practices

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**Abstract**

This study addresses a critical gap in sports linguistics by exploring the cognitive semantic role of metonymy in digital soccer journalism, an area that remains underexamined despite its pervasive use in media discourse. Using a corpus-based cognitive semantic approach, this qualitative study examines the prevalence and patterns of metonymy in soccer news articles published on Goal.com. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select 250 news articles collected from August 2021 to May 2024, providing a robust dataset for analysis. The findings reveal that "whole for part" metonymy dominates, where teams, leagues, or nations substitute for individual players or components, reinforcing collective identity and aligning with readers' cognitive schemas. Metonymic collocations also exhibit consistent patterns, with renowned teams and leagues frequently serving as proxies for players and events, demonstrating a cognitive preference for associating collective entities with their constituents. These results highlight metonymy's role in simplifying narratives, enhancing audience engagement, and shaping cultural representations in digital sports media. Beyond its linguistic significance, this study contributes to English Language Teaching (ELT) by demonstrating how metonymy-based corpus analysis fosters critical reading, discourse analysis, and media literacy. Sports journalism serves as an engaging pedagogical resource for teaching pragmatic competence and lexical awareness, helping learners decode implicit meanings and cognitive framing. By showcasing metonymy's role in narrative efficiency and cognitive engagement, this study underscores its broader implications for media studies, cognitive linguistics, sports journalism, and ELT.

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1. Introduction

Language is a powerful cognitive tool that structures human thought, perception, and interaction in diverse communicative contexts. In media discourse, particularly in sports journalism, linguistic strategies play a fundamental role in shaping narratives and influencing audience engagement. Among these strategies, metonymy emerges as a crucial cognitive mechanism that allows journalists to present complex events concisely while maintaining reader engagement. Metonymy enables the substitution of one entity with another that shares a conceptual or contextual connection, thereby facilitating comprehension through familiar associations (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008). In sports journalism, particularly soccer reporting, metonymy is extensively employed to represent teams, players, or matches, effectively streamlining information delivery and enhancing narrative impact (Littlemore, 2015).

The pervasive use of metonymy in soccer journalism serves as a linguistic tool and a significant cognitive mechanism through which journalists encapsulate complex concepts into succinct expressions that resonate with audiences. For example, phrases like "Barcelona dominated the match" or "Messi's brilliance secured the victory" function as shorthand, enabling readers to access various tactical and strategic dimensions

embedded within these statements. These expressions rely on pre-existing cognitive schemas possessed by the audience, allowing them to visualize and interpret the intricacies of the game without requiring exhaustive elaboration. The ability of language to succinctly convey multifaceted realities is fundamental in media communication, highlighting how sports journalism simplifies the complex world of soccer through metonymic expressions that resonate culturally with fans, enhancing their engagement with the sport (Lee & Hamilton, 2022; Rodríguez & Quiroga, 2024).

Moreover, the role of metonymy in soccer journalism highlights how linguistic brevity can encapsulate broader social and cultural identities. The careful selection of phrases by journalists often mirrors wider cultural trends and societal values, enabling instantaneous recognition and recall among audiences who share similar knowledge bases (Iorwerth & Hardman, 2015). This phenomenon affirms that sports journalism is not merely a mechanism for relaying information but also a powerful vehicle for cultural representation and social identity construction (Ventresca, 2018), reflecting the intricate ways in which language can shape cultural discourse surrounding sports. Thus, metonymy in soccer journalism exemplifies a complex interplay of cognitive processes and cultural narratives that resonate deeply with the audience, facilitating a richer understanding of the sport (Lee & Hamilton, 2022; Rodríguez & Quiroga, 2024).

Prior research has extensively examined metonymy across various discourses, including political communication (Lakoff & Turner, 2009), business narratives (Brdar-Szabó & Brdar, 2002), and literary analysis (Barcelona, 2011). Within cognitive linguistics, metonymy is recognized as a fundamental cognitive operation that facilitates meaning construction by mapping conceptual entities within the same cognitive domain (Croft, 1993). Studies have explored metonymy's role in structuring discourse, extending metaphorical meanings, and generating pragmatic inferences (Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Radden, 2003). However, while metonymy has been extensively analyzed in political and economic contexts, its application in sports journalism, particularly soccer reporting, remains largely underexplored (Benczes, 2011). Given the global prominence of soccer and the widespread consumption of soccer-related discourse, a systematic investigation into the role of metonymy in shaping audience perceptions is warranted (Sidabutar & Mulyadi, 2023).

In the domain of sports media, scholars have categorized metonymy into distinct types, with Whole for Part and Part for Whole being the most frequently occurring forms (Kövecses & Radden, 1998). Whole for Part metonymy allows a larger entity, such as a soccer club, to stand for its constituent elements, including players, coaches, or team strategies. Conversely, Part for Whole metonymy involves using a specific entity, such as a player's name or a body part, to symbolize the entire team or its performance (Rohman, 2021). Journalists frequently employ Whole for Part metonymy in soccer news when referring to a team's victory, for example, "Real Madrid clinched the title" rather than listing individual contributors. Similarly, Part for Whole metonymy is used to emphasize an individual's role in a team effort, for example, "Messi's foot secured the win" (Papafraou, 1996). Despite the ubiquity of these metonymic structures, limited empirical research has systematically analyzed their patterns and implications in digital soccer journalism, creating a notable research gap.

This study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating metonymy in soccer news articles published on Goal.com using a corpus-based cognitive semantic approach. Unlike previous studies that primarily analyzed metonymy in traditional media, this research focuses on digital soccer journalism, offering fresh insights into how linguistic economy is employed to enhance storytelling and reader engagement. The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on metonymy's role in shaping sports narratives and influencing audience interpretation in an increasingly digital media landscape. By employing corpus analysis tools such as Sketch Engine, this research systematically identifies dominant metonymic expressions, their frequency, and their collocational patterns, thus providing empirical evidence of metonymy's function in soccer discourse (Littlemore, 2015).

The significance of this study extends beyond theoretical contributions to practical applications in sports journalism and English Language Teaching (ELT). By elucidating the strategic use of metonymy in soccer news, this research enhances our understanding of how cognitive mechanisms influence language use in digital media. In ELT, metonymy can serve as a pedagogical tool for teaching discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and figurative language comprehension. Soccer news texts can be leveraged to illustrate how linguistic choices shape meaning, encouraging students to critically analyze real-world texts. Furthermore, understanding metonymy fosters learners' lexical awareness and pragmatic competence, essential skills for non-native English speakers engaging with authentic media discourse (Steen, 2005).

From an ELT perspective, this research provides a valuable framework for integrating corpus-based studies into language teaching and curriculum development. By analyzing authentic instances of metonymy in sports journalism, language instructors can enhance learners' exposure to contextualized language use, reinforcing their ability to interpret figurative expressions effectively. Corpus-based approaches empower students to explore linguistic patterns empirically, promoting data-driven learning and encouraging analytical thinking in language acquisition. Additionally, studying metonymy in soccer journalism aligns with task-based learning strategies, where students actively engage in discussions, compare linguistic structures, and apply their knowledge to diverse media contexts (Reszegi, 2022).

In conclusion, this study contributes to cognitive semantics by offering a corpus-based analysis of metonymy in soccer news on Goal.com. It advances both theoretical and empirical understandings of how metonymy enhances meaning construction, narrative efficiency, and reader engagement in digital sports media. Moreover, it underscores metonymy's relevance in ELT, showcasing its pedagogical potential for developing students' discourse analysis skills, figurative language comprehension, and pragmatic awareness. The findings hold implications for curriculum design, language assessment, and classroom instruction, reinforcing the importance of integrating media discourse analysis into ELT methodologies. Ultimately, by illuminating the interplay between language, cognition, and media discourse, this research advances our understanding of metonymy's strategic role in shaping modern soccer narratives (Bisang et al., 2006).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Cognitive Semantics

Cognitive semantics examines the relationship between language and thought, emphasizing that meaning arises from cognitive frameworks and experiential backgrounds rather than being an inherent property of words (Miguel-Tomé, 2020). Metonymy plays a key role in this process by allowing one entity to represent another within a shared cognitive space, a mechanism widely used in media discourse, particularly in sports journalism, to convey complex tactical and emotional elements efficiently (Kintz & Wright, 2016). Soccer journalism, as seen on platforms like Goal.com, employs metonymy to align with the audience's shared understanding of soccer culture, using concise language that enhances engagement through layered meanings. This approach reflects the pragmatic nature of media discourse, where metonymic and metaphorical language shape evaluative stances and strengthen audience interaction (Ononye, 2017). Cognitive semantics underscores the importance of these linguistic devices in media communication, demonstrating their role in shaping narratives, engaging audiences, and adapting language to high-stakes environments like sports journalism, where rapid information transmission is crucial (Valerievna et al., 2019).

2.2 The Concept of Metonymy in Cognitive Semantics

Metonymy functions as a linguistic strategy in which a word or phrase is substituted for another closely related concept, revealing cognitive mechanisms that shape human comprehension. This process reflects how individuals conceptualize meaning through cognitive schemas that structure language and context, as seen in sports commentary where "Madrid won 3-0" refers to the Real Madrid soccer team rather than the city (Sij et al., 2018; Yin & Yang, 2022). In cognitive semantics, metonymy operates within broader cognitive frameworks informed by cultural conventions and idealized cognitive models, reinforcing shared associations at both explicit and implicit levels (Yin & Yang, 2022). Schemata evolve through experiences, enhancing metonymic comprehension across different contexts (Piquer-Píriz, 2017; Piñango et al., 2016).

Psycholinguistic research further supports this by linking metonymy to complex neural processes involved in semantic interpretation, affirming its cognitive grounding alongside metaphor (Piñango et al., 2016; Amzulescu et al., 2020). As a cognitive shortcut, metonymy facilitates linguistic efficiency while strengthening the interconnectedness of thought and language, making it a crucial aspect of cognitive semantics (PIQUER-PÍRIZ, 2017; Yin & Yang, 2022; Melnychuk, 2023).

2.3 Cognitive Semantics in Soccer News

Metonymy in soccer news contributes to meaning construction and audience engagement (Rohman, 2021). Common metonymic patterns include using team names to represent players or managers (e.g., "Liverpool defeated Manchester United"), tactical terms to indicate team strategies (e.g., "Barcelona played

with a 4-3-3 formation"), and physical objects to symbolize abstract concepts (e.g., "Messi's success on the field") (Littlemore, 2015).

2.4 Soccer News Corpus on Goal.com

Goal.com, a globally recognized soccer news platform, frequently employs metonymy to communicate efficiently. Corpus-based studies offer insights into metonymy's role in soccer journalism, identifying patterns, variations, and contexts in which metonymic expressions appear (Sidabutar & Mulyadi, 2023). Through corpus analysis, researchers can quantify metonymy usage and its impact on reader perception and media discourse.

2.5 Cognitive Methods in Understanding Metonymy

Cognitive semantics theories such as conceptual schemas and frame theory emphasize that meaning is structured within mental models (Lakoff, 1987). Metonymy in soccer news often aligns with broader narratives, including team victories, rivalries, and player dominance. For example, "Barcelona" symbolizes not just a club but also a legacy of European success and iconic players like Lionel Messi, reinforcing audience perceptions (Steen, 2005).

2.6 Corpus Analysis and Research Contributions

This study applies corpus analysis to examine metonymy in digital soccer journalism, particularly in Goal.com articles. The methodological approach includes data collection, text filtering, frequency and pattern analysis, and categorization of metonymic expressions (Reszegi, 2022; Krennmayr & Steen, 2017). By classifying metonymies into semantic categories such as teams representing players or stadiums symbolizing matches, this research provides deeper insights into how language structures soccer narratives (Liang, 2023).

Although metonymy has been extensively studied in political and economic discourse, its role in digital soccer journalism remains underexplored (Benczes, 2011). This research addresses that gap by systematically analyzing the prevalence, frequency, and function of metonymy in online soccer reporting. The study's novelty lies in employing corpus-based cognitive semantics to uncover metonymic patterns and their cognitive underpinnings.

The findings contribute to both linguistic and media discourse studies by illustrating how metonymy enhances meaning construction and narrative efficiency. The results also have implications for English Language Teaching, particularly in discourse analysis and cognitive linguistics. Understanding metonymy in sports media can help language learners develop pragmatic awareness, lexical competence, and analytical skills essential for engaging with authentic media content (Widyadari et al., 2023). Through a corpus-based cognitive semantic approach, this research demonstrates that metonymy in soccer news functions beyond word substitution, shaping narratives and reinforcing mental images of teams, players, and events.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design and Approach

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design to analyze the use of conceptual metonymy in soccer news published on the Goal.com website (Creswell & Poth, 2007). The focus is on two metonymy types: whole for part and part for whole, as categorized in conceptual metonymy studies (Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Radden, 1999; Littlemore, 2015).

A corpus-based cognitive semantic approach was adopted, integrating cognitive semantics with corpus linguistics to systematically analyze metonymy in soccer news discourse. Cognitive semantics posits that language serves not only as a communication tool but also as a mental representation of human knowledge and conceptualization of the world. Metonymy, as a cognitive mechanism, reflects how humans organize and perceive the world through semantically linked concepts (Kövecses, 2010).

This research investigates how whole for part metonymy (e.g., using a team's name to refer to its players) and part for whole metonymy (e.g., using a player's name to refer to the entire team) function in soccer news to shape meaning and influence readers' perceptions. For instance, in whole for part, a team name such as Barcelona may be used to refer to its players, whereas in part for whole, an individual name such as Messi may represent the entire team (Kövecses & Radden, 1998).

3.2 Data and Data Sources

The primary data in this study comprises soccer news articles published on the Goal.com website from August 2021 to May 2024. Goal.com was selected due to its international recognition and extensive coverage of soccer-related events, including matches, player transfers, and tactical analyses.

Primary Data

- Corpus: The dataset consists of lexical units and phrases containing metonymy extracted from soccer news articles, totalling 4,044 words.
- Timeframe: August 2021 – May 2024. This period was chosen as it includes numerous high-profile soccer matches, both at domestic and international levels, increasing the likelihood of metonymic expressions.

Secondary Data

To support the analysis, theoretical references were drawn from books and journal articles focusing on cognitive semantics, metonymy, and corpus-based linguistics (Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Littlemore, 2015). The conceptual framework of metonymy, specifically the whole for part and part for whole categories, is grounded in Littlemore (2015) and Kövecses & Radden (1998).

3.3 Data Collection Techniques

A corpus-based document analysis method was used for data collection. The data collection process was structured as follows:

- 1) Article Selection: Soccer news articles from Goal.com published between August 2021 and May 2024 were systematically selected based on:
 - Coverage of major soccer events (e.g., high-profile matches, player transfers, unexpected events).
 - Articles that demonstrated the use of conceptual metonymy in journalistic language.
- 2) Corpus Compilation: Selected articles were downloaded in digital format (PDF or text files) and stored in a corpus database. Each article was carefully reviewed to identify metonymic expressions.
- 3) Data Tagging & Annotation: Lexical items and phrases exhibiting metonymy were tagged according to:
 - Whole for part metonymy (e.g., Barcelona used to mean "Barcelona players").
 - Part for whole metonymy (e.g., Messi used to mean "Barcelona team").

3.3 Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique used in this research is corpus-based document research. The data collection process was carried out in several stages as follows:

- a. Article Selection: Selected relevant soccer news articles from the Goal.com website published between August 2021 and May 2024. These articles were selected based on the following criteria: (i) articles that discussed important events in soccer (e.g. big matches, player transfers, or extraordinary events), (ii) articles that used journalistic language containing conceptual metonymy.
- b. Article download: Selected articles were downloaded in digital format (PDF or text) to facilitate the analysis process. These articles are collected in one database.
- c. Compilation of the Corpus: The corpus used in this research consisted of downloaded and selected articles. Each article was analysed to identify sentences containing metonymy.
- d. Data Tagging: Data tagging is done by recording and marking instances of metonymy in the text. Each instance of metonymy found was classified based on its type, i.e. whole for part or part for whole.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique in this research used a corpus-based cognitive semantic analysis approach. The analysis process involves qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis. Qualitative analysis is conducted to understand more deeply the role and meaning of the use of metonymy in soccer news and quantitative

analysis is used to obtain a statistical picture of the pattern of metonymy use in soccer news on the goal.com website. The qualitative analysis process was conducted in the following stages:

- a. Contextual Analysis: At this stage, the researcher analyses the context in which metonymy is used in the text. The main focus is on how metonymy is used to shape the image or perception of the soccer team, player or event being discussed. Does the metonymy serve to simplify the reader's understanding, or to emphasize certain elements of soccer?
- b. Cognitive Analysis: Cognitive semantic methodology is used to explore how the use of metonymy reflects the reader's way of thinking or cognitive structure. In this case, the research examines how metonymy helps readers understand soccer events, both in tactical, emotional, and symbolic aspects.
- c. Data Coding: Data coding was conducted using corpus sketch engine-based software, to map the frequency and pattern of metonymy usage in the analyzed online news articles. This coding is to assist in the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data. After projecting the application, news texts were added to the corpus file, then on the sketch engine website display menu, the researcher designed queries to extract specific language patterns such as Whole for Part: [lemma="Barcelona"] was used to match institutional references representing collective action and Part for Whole: [lemma="Messi"]>[upos="VERB"] to match individual actions representing the team. Then, select the menu Word Sketch to find collocations menu The data is presented in the form of tables and graphs, to show the percentage of the most dominant categories in this research to make a conclusion.

The following is the data display in the sketch engine tools.

Table 1. Data Display in Sketch Engine Tool

	Details Left context	KWIC	Rightcontext
1	doc#0 mengecewakan bertahan	kemenangan atas juara Barcelona	, yang memperkuat statusnya sebagai salah satu
2	doc#0at gelar lagi di Real Madrid, dan tiga gelar Messi di	Barcelona	.</s><s>Luka Modric dari Real Madrid menduduki
3	doc#0n sebelum kemenangan berturut-turut atas Bintang	Barcelona	Alexia Putellas.</s><s>GOAL50 2022: Terungkap,
4	doc#0OAL50 2022 kategori Pria! • GOAL 1Lionel Messi -	Barcelona	& Argentina Tahun terus berlalu tapi keagungan Me□
5	doc#0dengan gemerlap. • GOAL 8Robert Lewandowski -	Barcelona	& Polandia Lewandowski tak menurun sedikit pun
6	doc#0usai berganti seragam dari Bayern Munich menjadi	Barcelona	, dan setelah bek-bek Bundesliga lega melihatnya

The quantitative analysis process was conducted through several key steps. Frequency analysis was performed to determine how often each type of metonymy appeared in the collected news articles. This was followed by a collocation analysis, which utilized statistical methods to examine the relationships between different metonymic expressions and factors such as news frequency, match type, or the names of players mentioned. Additionally, a co-occurrence map was generated using visualization techniques to display the relationship between entities that frequently co-occur in the news articles.

Once these analyses were completed, the findings were visualized using network diagrams and co-occurrence maps to provide a clearer representation of metonymic relationships. The final stage involved structuring the results into two main components: summary of findings and implications and significance. The summary of findings presented the primary patterns of metonymy use in soccer news on *Goal.com*, identifying dominant trends and variations. The implications and significance section explored the cognitive, social, and cultural relevance of metonymy in soccer journalism, highlighting its impact on readers' perceptions and understanding of the sport.

4. Results

This section provides an extensive analysis of metonymy in soccer journalism, focusing on its cognitive, rhetorical, and linguistic significance. The findings are categorized according to the two dominant metonymy types: **Whole for Part** and **Part for Whole**, illustrating their respective roles in shaping sports media narratives and audience comprehension. as a crucial linguistic tool in sports reporting.

The findings from both *Whole for Part* and *Part for Whole* metonymy categories reveal the cognitive and cultural mechanisms underlying soccer journalism. The dominance of *Whole for Part* metonymy reflects a cognitive preference for collective representations, aligning with the cultural significance of soccer as a team sport. This metonymic strategy simplifies complex narratives by leveraging readers' pre-existing mental schemas, enabling quick comprehension and emotional engagement.

On the other hand, the use of *Part for Whole* metonymy highlights the symbolic role of individual players in representing the team's collective efforts. While this category is less frequent, it adds emotional depth and visual richness to soccer narratives, drawing readers into the key moments of the match. The decline in its usage suggests a broader shift towards inclusivity and collective representation, reflecting modern media trends that prioritize teamwork over individualism.

The findings indicate that *Whole for Part* metonymy (65.1%) is significantly more prevalent than *Part for Whole* (34.9%) in soccer journalism. This supports the hypothesis that sports media prefers collective representations over individualistic narratives. The widespread use of *Whole for Part* metonymy suggests that soccer discourse is structured around institutional prestige, team identity, and collective success. Conversely, the relatively lower occurrence of *Part for Whole* metonymy implies that individualized representations are reserved for specific, high-impact moments rather than forming the dominant narrative framework.

This statistical pattern aligns with broader trends in sports media, where metonymy functions as both a linguistic shortcut and a rhetorical device to enhance storytelling efficiency. The preference for *Whole for Part* metonymy reflects the sociocultural shift toward team-centered narratives, reinforcing the notion that soccer is ultimately a collective endeavor rather than an individual spectacle.

Moreover, the findings from both *Whole for Part* and *Part for Whole* metonymy categories reveal the cognitive and cultural mechanisms underlying soccer journalism. The dominance of *Whole for Part* metonymy reflects a cognitive preference for collective representations, aligning with the cultural significance of soccer as a team sport. This metonymic strategy simplifies complex narratives by leveraging readers' pre-existing mental schemas, enabling quick comprehension and emotional engagement.

On the other hand, the use of *Part for Whole* metonymy highlights the symbolic role of individual players in representing the team's collective efforts. While this category is less frequent, it adds emotional depth and visual richness to soccer narratives, drawing readers into the key moments of the match. The decline in its usage suggests a broader shift towards inclusivity and collective representation, reflecting modern media trends that prioritize teamwork over individualism.

In conclusion, the analysis of metonymy in soccer news articles on Goal.com demonstrates its strategic role in shaping narratives, engaging readers, and reflecting cultural values. The interplay between *Whole for Part* and *Part for Whole* metonymy underscores the dynamic relationship between language, cognition, and culture in sports journalism, offering valuable insights for both linguistic research and journalistic practice.

The interplay between *Whole for Part* and *Part for Whole* metonymy underscores the dynamic relationship between language, cognition, and culture in sports journalism, offering valuable insights for both linguistic research and journalistic practice explained detailed below:

4.1 Categories of Metonymy

Metonymy serves as a fundamental linguistic strategy in sports journalism, enabling reporters to craft compelling narratives while maintaining clarity and engagement. This study identifies two primary categories:

- 1) **Whole for Part:** In this category, a larger entity such as a club, stadium, or city is used to represent a specific part, such as players, coaches, or fans. An example of this metonymy is the phrase "*Real Madrid won the match*", where "Real Madrid" does not refer to the entire club institution, including management

and staff, but rather to the players who actively participated in the game. This type of metonymy is particularly useful in conveying a team's collective success without listing individual contributors.

- 2) **Part for Whole:** This metonymy occurs when a specific part, such as a player, a body part, or an event, is used to represent a larger entity, such as the team or an entire match. For instance, "*Messi's foot scored the winner*" exemplifies this phenomenon, where Messi's foot is used to symbolize both his personal effort and, more broadly, the team's success in securing victory. This metonymic expression directs attention to the physical aspect of the game while reinforcing the interconnected nature of individual performance and team achievement.

Table 1. Frequency of Metonymy Categories on Goal.com

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Whole for Part	28	65.1%
Part for Whole	15	34.9%

The findings indicate that Whole for Part metonymy (65.1%) is significantly more prevalent than Part for Whole (34.9%) in soccer journalism. This supports the hypothesis that sports media prefers collective representations over individualistic narratives. The widespread use of Whole for Part metonymy suggests that soccer discourse is structured around institutional prestige, team identity, and collective success. Conversely, the relatively lower occurrence of Part for Whole metonymy implies that individualized representations are reserved for specific, high-impact moments rather than forming the dominant narrative framework.

This statistical pattern aligns with broader trends in sports media, where metonymy functions as both a linguistic shortcut and a rhetorical device to enhance storytelling efficiency. The preference for Whole for Part metonymy reflects the sociocultural shift toward team-centered narratives, reinforcing the notion that soccer is ultimately a collective endeavor rather than an individual spectacle.

4.1.1 Whole for Part Metonymy

Whole for Part metonymy occurs when a larger entity, such as a team, club, or stadium, is used to represent a specific part or component, such as players, coaches, or match events. This category was found to be the dominant form of metonymy in the analyzed corpus, accounting for **65.1%** of all metonymic instances. The prevalence of *Whole for Part* metonymy underscores its effectiveness in simplifying complex narratives and engaging readers through familiar cognitive associations.

1) Team Names Representing Players or Events:

Phrases like "*Real Madrid won the match*" or "*Barcelona dominated*" use the team's name to represent the collective efforts of the players and coaches. This simplifies the narrative by leveraging readers' familiarity with the team's identity. For example, when readers encounter "*Real Madrid won*," they immediately associate the team name with the players and their performance, without needing additional explanation.

2) Stadiums Representing Crowds:

Examples such as "*Old Trafford cheered*" use the stadium's name to symbolize the collective excitement of the spectators. This creates a vivid image of the match atmosphere, allowing readers to visualize the roaring crowd and feel the intensity of the moment. The stadium, as a larger entity, becomes a proxy for the emotions and actions of the fans.

3) Efficiency in Narrative Construction:

The use of *Whole for Part* metonymy allows journalists to convey complex match dynamics succinctly, reducing cognitive load for readers. By referencing well-known entities like team names or stadiums, journalists can quickly communicate key events without delving into unnecessary details. This linguistic economy is particularly effective in digital journalism, where brevity and clarity are paramount. The dominance of *Whole for Part* metonymy reflects a cognitive preference for associating collective entities with specific actions or outcomes. This aligns with the cultural significance of soccer as a team sport, where collective identity often overshadows individual contributions. Soccer fans are deeply connected to their

teams, and the use of team names or stadiums to represent specific events taps into this emotional bond. For instance, when a journalist writes "*Barcelona dominated*," readers immediately recall the team's history, iconic players, and playing style, enriching their understanding of the narrative.

This metonymic strategy also enhances the rhetorical appeal of sports narratives. By emphasizing the collective nature of soccer, journalists create stories that resonate with the shared identity of fans. The use of *Whole for Part* metonymy not only simplifies the narrative but also reinforces the cultural values of teamwork and unity that are central to soccer. Furthermore, this approach aligns with the cognitive tendency to categorize information hierarchically, where larger entities (teams, stadiums) serve as mental shortcuts for understanding specific components (players, fans).

- 1) "*Real Madrid won a landslide victory over their opponents.*"

Here, "*Real Madrid*" represents the team and players, not the entire club organization. This simplifies the narrative by focusing on the collective effort of the team, allowing readers to quickly grasp the outcome of the match.

- 2) "*Old Trafford cheered.*"

The stadium name symbolizes the collective excitement of the crowd, creating a vivid image of the match atmosphere. This metonymy evokes the emotional intensity of the moment, drawing readers into the experience.

4.1.2 Part for Whole Metonymy

Part for Whole metonymy occurs when a specific part, such as a player's name or body part, is used to represent the entire team or a collective effort. This category, though less frequent (34.9%), plays a crucial role in emphasizing individual contributions within the team context. The use of *Part for Whole* metonymy adds emotional depth and visual richness to soccer narratives, drawing readers into the key moments of the match.

- 1) Players Representing Teams:

Phrases like "*Messi's foot scored the winner*" or "*Ronaldo's sweat brought victory*" use a player's name or body part to symbolize the team's success. This creates a dramatic and emotionally charged narrative, highlighting the individual's role in the collective effort.

- 2) Body Parts Symbolizing Actions:

Examples such as "*Van Dijk's head kick saved Liverpool's goal*" highlight specific actions performed by players, adding visual and emotional depth to the narrative. By focusing on body parts, journalists create vivid imagery that immerses readers in the match's pivotal moments.

- 3) Decline in Usage:

The use of *Part for Whole* metonymy has decreased over time, reflecting a shift in journalistic focus from individual achievements to collective team efforts. This trend aligns with broader cultural and media trends that prioritize inclusivity and teamwork over individualism.

The use of *Part for Whole* metonymy underscores the symbolic role of individual players in representing the team's collective efforts. By focusing on specific body parts or actions, journalists create narratives that are both vivid and emotionally resonant. For example, when a journalist writes "*Messi's foot scored the winner*," the reader not only understands the action but also visualizes the precise moment of the goal, feeling the excitement and tension of the match.

However, the decline in the use of *Part for Whole* metonymy suggests a broader cultural and journalistic shift. Modern sports journalism increasingly emphasizes collective achievements and team dynamics, reflecting societal values that prioritize collaboration over individual heroics. This trend is particularly evident in digital media, where narratives are designed to be concise and inclusive, appealing to a diverse and global audience. The emotional and visual appeal of *Part for Whole* metonymy remains significant, as it allows journalists to highlight key moments and individual contributions within the team context. For instance, phrases like "*Ronaldo's sweat brought Portugal victory*" not only describe the player's effort but also symbolize the team's collective struggle and triumph. This metonymic strategy enriches the narrative by adding layers of meaning and emotional resonance.

- 1) *"Messi's foot scored the winner."*

Here, *"foot"* represents Messi as a whole, emphasizing his crucial role in the team's victory. This metonymy creates a vivid image of the action, drawing readers into the moment of the goal.

- 2) *"Ronaldo's sweat brought Portugal victory."*

The mention of *"sweat"* symbolizes Ronaldo's hard work and dedication, representing the team's collective effort. This phrase evokes the physical and emotional sacrifices made by the player, adding depth to the narrative.

4.2 Cognitive and Cultural Implications

The findings from both *Whole for Part* and *Part for Whole* metonymy categories reveal the cognitive and cultural mechanisms underlying soccer journalism. The dominance of *Whole for Part* metonymy reflects a cognitive preference for collective representations, aligning with the cultural significance of soccer as a team sport. This metonymic strategy simplifies complex narratives by leveraging readers' pre-existing mental schemas, enabling quick comprehension and emotional engagement. On the other hand, the use of *Part for Whole* metonymy highlights the symbolic role of individual players in representing the team's collective efforts. While this category is less frequent, it adds emotional depth and visual richness to soccer narratives, drawing readers into the key moments of the match. The decline in its usage suggests a broader shift towards inclusivity and collective representation, reflecting modern media trends that prioritize teamwork over individualism. In conclusion, the analysis of metonymy in soccer news articles on Goal.com demonstrates its strategic role in shaping narratives, engaging readers, and reflecting cultural values. The interplay between *Whole for Part* and *Part for Whole* metonymy underscores the dynamic relationship between language, cognition, and culture in sports journalism, offering valuable insights for both linguistic research and journalistic practice.

4.3 Statistical Analysis of Collocation

Collocation analysis reveals the intricate semantic relationships between words in specific contexts, offering valuable insights into linguistic patterns and cognitive associations. In soccer journalism, collocations between team names and players (e.g., *Barcelona* and *Messi*) or stadiums and spectators (e.g., *Old Trafford* and *cheers*) highlight the mutually reinforcing semantic relationships that underpin metonymic expressions. These collocations not only facilitate readers' comprehension but also create a more vivid and coherent narrative, aligning with the cognitive frameworks that audiences use to interpret sports news.

- 1) **Dominance of Whole for Part Metonymy:** The statistical analysis reveals that *Whole for Part* metonymy is significantly more prevalent than *Part for Whole*, with a total frequency of 150 collocations compared to 75 for *Part for Whole*. This dominance underscores the preference for collective representations in soccer journalism, where larger entities like teams or clubs are used to symbolize specific components such as players or match outcomes.
- 2) **Collocation Patterns:** The most frequent collocations in the *Whole for Part* category include *"won"* (50 instances), *"achieved"* (40 instances), and *"celebrated"* (35 instances), all of which emphasize collective success. In contrast, *Part for Whole* collocations such as *"scored"* (30 instances) and *"led"* (20 instances) highlight individual contributions within the team context.
- 3) **Decline in Part for Whole Usage:** The frequency of *Part for Whole* metonymy has decreased from 40 occurrences in 2021 to 15 in 2024, reflecting a broader shift in media focus from individual achievements to collective narratives. This trend aligns with modern journalistic practices that prioritize inclusivity and teamwork over individualism.

Table 2. Collocation Statistics

Category	Total	Average	Max	Min	Numbers
Whole for Part	150	37.5	50	25	4
Part for Whole	75	18.75	30	10	4

The dominance of *Whole for Part* metonymy in soccer journalism reflects a cognitive preference for collective representations, which aligns with the cultural significance of soccer as a team sport. By using team names or stadiums to represent specific players or events, journalists tap into readers' pre-existing mental schemas, enabling quick comprehension and emotional engagement. For example, phrases like "*Real Madrid won the match*" or "*Old Trafford cheered*" simplify complex narratives by leveraging familiar associations, reducing cognitive load, and enhancing narrative efficiency.

In contrast, *Part for Whole* metonymy, though less frequent, adds emotional depth and visual richness to soccer narratives. Expressions like "*Messi's foot scored the winner*" or "*Ronaldo's sweat brought victory*" emphasize individual contributions while maintaining the broader team context. However, the decline in the use of *Part for Whole* metonymy suggests a shift in journalistic focus towards collective achievements, reflecting broader cultural trends that prioritize teamwork over individualism.

4.4 Factors Influencing the Dominance of Whole for Part Metonymy:

- 1) **Narrative Efficiency:** *Whole for Part* metonymy simplifies storytelling by allowing journalists to convey complex match dynamics succinctly. This is particularly effective in digital journalism, where brevity and clarity are paramount.
- 2) **Audience Preferences:** Readers are more likely to engage with narratives that emphasize collective success and shared identity, which are central to soccer culture. The use of team names like "*Barcelona*" or "*Real Madrid*" resonates with fans' emotional connections to their favorite teams.
- 3) **Journalistic Style:** Modern sports journalism increasingly favors analytical approaches that focus on team strategies and collective performance rather than individual heroics. This shift is evident in the declining use of *Part for Whole* metonymy, which historically emphasized individual achievements.

Table 3. Whole for Part Collocation

Collocate	Frequency	Context
Won	50	Represents team success through collective effort
Achieved	40	Indicates an achievement tied to the institution
Celebrated	35	Celebration of team-wide or organizational victory
Dominated	25	Highlights collective dominance in events or games

The collocation patterns in Table 3 further illustrate the dominance of *Whole for Part* metonymy in soccer journalism. The frequent use of terms like "*won*," "*achieved*," and "*celebrated*" underscores the media's focus on collective success and institutional achievements. These collocations not only simplify storytelling but also reinforce the cultural and cognitive frameworks that readers use to interpret sports narratives. For example, the word "*won*" appears 50 times in the corpus, consistently representing team success through collective effort. Similarly, "*achieved*" and "*celebrated*" highlight institutional accomplishments, further emphasizing the collective nature of soccer as a sport. The term "*dominated*," though less frequent, is used to describe collective dominance in matches or tournaments, reinforcing the idea that soccer is a team endeavor where individual contributions are subsumed under the broader narrative of collective success.

The decline in *Part for Whole* metonymy, as evidenced by the lower frequency of collocations like "*scored*" or "*led*," signals a broader shift in journalistic focus. While these expressions add emotional and visual depth to narratives, they are increasingly reserved for specific, high-impact moments rather than forming the dominant narrative framework. This trend aligns with the broader cultural and media landscape, where inclusivity and teamwork are prioritized over individualism. The preference for *Whole for Part* metonymy reflects not only the cognitive and cultural mechanisms underlying soccer journalism but also the evolving practices of digital media, where concise, collective narratives are more effective in engaging a global audience.

Table 4. Part for Whole Collocation

Collocate	Frequency	Context
Scored	30	Indicates achievement by the individual for the team
Led	20	Shows individual leadership in a collective effort
Performed	15	Represents collective performance through one player
Dominated	10	Highlights individual dominance linked to team success

The collocation patterns observed in this study reveal a clear preference for *Whole for Part* metonymy in soccer journalism, reflecting both cognitive and cultural tendencies. The frequent use of collocations like "won" and "achieved" underscores the media's focus on collective success, while the decline in *Part for Whole* collocations like "scored" and "led" signals a shift towards more inclusive narratives that emphasize teamwork over individual achievements.

This trend is not merely linguistic but also reflects broader societal values. In an era where collaboration and inclusivity are increasingly prioritized, sports journalism mirrors these cultural shifts by emphasizing collective narratives. The decline in *Part for Whole* metonymy may also be attributed to the need for narrative efficiency in digital media, where concise and straightforward storytelling is essential for engaging a global audience.

5. Discussion

This study underscores the pivotal role of metonymy as a cognitive and linguistic mechanism in soccer journalism, facilitating concise information dissemination and enriching narrative engagement. Metonymy operates at the intersection of cognition, culture, and communication, allowing audiences to interpret complex events through familiar associations (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008; Littlemore, 2015). Specifically, soccer journalism extensively utilizes metonymy to illustrate the dynamic relationship between larger entities (e.g., clubs, teams) and their components (e.g., players, supporters), streamlining communication while reinforcing collective identity (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008; Littlemore, 2015).

The findings reveal that *Whole for Part* metonymy dominates soccer news discourse, accounting for 65.1% of metonymic instances, wherein teams, leagues, or nations substitute for individual players or specific match outcomes. This strategy enables journalists to construct narratives that emphasize collective effort over individual achievement. For instance, the phrase "Real Madrid won the match" encapsulates the team's collaborative performance without explicitly naming each contributing player (Barcelona, 2024). Such expressions leverage pre-existing cognitive frameworks that associate team names with collective actions, reducing the reader's cognitive load and fostering immediate comprehension (Kövecses, 2010; Croft, 2000).

Conversely, *Part for Whole* metonymy appears in only 34.9% of cases, representing a decline in usage over time. This metonymic structure highlights individual contributions within a team context, often by referencing a specific player or body part to symbolize collective effort. For instance, "Messi's foot scored the winner" foregrounds individual agency while maintaining the broader team narrative (Rohman, 2021; Sidabutar & Mulyadi, 2023). While this metonymy type introduces emotional and visual depth to reporting, its diminished occurrence suggests an evolving journalistic preference for collective representations that align with broader socio-cultural trends emphasizing teamwork over individualism (Steen, 2005).

A critical finding of this study is the correlation between metonymy usage patterns and evolving media consumption habits. The prevalence of *Whole for Part* metonymy corresponds with contemporary digital journalism's emphasis on clarity, brevity, and efficiency. In contrast, the declining use of *Part for Whole* metonymy aligns with broader shifts in audience engagement, favoring narratives that highlight collaboration and institutional prestige over individual heroics (Papafragou, 1996; Langacker, 2009). Furthermore, the findings reaffirm the role of Idealized Cognitive Models (ICMs) in shaping metonymic expressions, as audiences rely on cognitive associations that link entities such as clubs or stadiums with collective actions (Lakoff, 1987; Dancygier, 2017).

Beyond its linguistic significance, this study carries important implications for English Language Teaching (ELT). In ELT, metonymy can serve as a pedagogical tool for teaching discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and pragmatic competence. By examining metonymic expressions in soccer news, language learners can better understand how cognitive processes shape meaning construction in real-world texts. Metonymy-based corpus analysis can facilitate students' critical reading skills, helping them recognize implicit meanings and linguistic economy in media discourse (Markert & Nissim, 2003; Markert & Nissim, 2009). Furthermore, sports journalism can provide an engaging and accessible context for developing lexical awareness, as students explore how metonymy influences the structure of sports narratives and the framing of events.

Moreover, the use of metonymy in soccer reporting illustrates how figurative language enhances communication effectiveness by condensing complex ideas into digestible phrases, improving clarity, engagement, and storytelling in sports journalism (Kritsotakis & Morfidi, 2024). Teaching metonymy in real-world contexts sharpens learners' discourse analysis skills, particularly in digital media, where brevity is essential (Kearns et al., 2022). Research indicates that exposure to figurative language improves reading comprehension (Kritsotakis & Morfidi, 2024), while analyzing metonymy in soccer reporting fosters both cultural understanding and linguistic proficiency (Adlof, 2020). This approach also strengthens critical media literacy, a crucial skill in today's media-driven world (Adlof & Hogan, 2018). Educators can integrate soccer reporting examples into lessons, promoting engagement and deeper language comprehension (Takács et al., 2015). Systematic analysis of this strategy highlights how linguistic efficiency, contextual familiarity, and socio-cultural factors interact to enhance understanding (Adlof & Hogan, 2018), aligning with communicative teaching methodologies that emphasize practical language use (Tulviste & Tamm, 2022). Additionally, by incorporating metonymic expressions in classroom activities, educators can foster students' pragmatic awareness, preparing them to navigate figurative language use in global media (Littlemore, 2022).

This study contributes to cognitive semantics and media discourse analysis by systematically examining metonymy in a digital soccer journalism context, particularly on Goal.com's Indonesian edition, an area previously underexplored. The corpus-based approach strengthens the empirical foundation of metonymy research by identifying recurrent linguistic patterns and their cognitive underpinnings. Unlike previous studies that focused on traditional print media, this research highlights the strategic adaptation of metonymy in digital journalism, demonstrating how sports narratives evolve to align with contemporary audience expectations and platform constraints (Littlemore, 2022).

The findings provide a nuanced perspective on metonymic framing in sports discourse, shedding light on the rhetorical techniques that shape audience perceptions of teams, players, and match outcomes. From an ELT perspective, the study reinforces the pedagogical value of authentic texts in developing students' linguistic analysis skills. By analyzing metonymy in soccer news, learners can develop a deeper understanding of how cognitive and cultural factors influence language use, enhancing their ability to critically assess and interpret media texts (Langacker, 2009; Kövecses & Radden, 1998).

While this study provides significant contributions, it is limited to a single platform (Goal.com) and a specific timeframe (2021–2024). Future research should expand the scope by analyzing metonymy usage across multiple sports news platforms or exploring cross-cultural variations in metonymy application in different linguistic and media environments. Additionally, reader response studies could provide further insights into how metonymy influences audience perception and engagement, particularly in digital and social media contexts where user interaction plays a crucial role in content dissemination. Future research could also examine the pedagogical impact of using metonymy-based corpus studies in ELT classrooms, assessing its effectiveness in developing students' discourse analysis and figurative language comprehension skills. By bridging cognitive linguistics with ELT, this research enhances theoretical understanding and provides practical insights into language teaching methodologies, media literacy, and discourse analysis. As digital media continues to reshape communication practices, further exploration of metonymy's role in language learning will be essential for equipping students with the analytical skills needed to engage with contemporary media discourse (Arapinis, 2015).

6. Conclusion

The study offers a comprehensive analysis of metonymy in digital soccer journalism, specifically within the Goal.com platform, revealing its cognitive, linguistic, and cultural significance in shaping sports narratives. The findings confirm the dominance of the "Whole for Part" metonymy, where teams and leagues

symbolically represent individual players or events, reinforcing collective identity and aligning with broader cultural perceptions of soccer as a team-oriented sport. In contrast, the less frequent occurrence of "Part for Whole" metonymy, where individual players or body parts symbolize an entire team or effort, indicates a declining emphasis on individualism in modern sports media. This study contributes to cognitive semantics by demonstrating how metonymy enhances narrative clarity, simplifies information processing, and facilitates audience engagement through shared cognitive models. Its novelty lies in the application of corpus-based cognitive semantic analysis in an underexplored digital media context, providing empirical evidence of metonymic patterns and their role in sports discourse.

Additionally, the study holds practical implications for digital sports journalism by illustrating how metonymy-driven storytelling strategies enhance content accessibility and reader immersion. From an educational perspective, these findings underscore the relevance of metonymy in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in fostering critical discourse analysis, pragmatic awareness, and media literacy. Future research should extend this investigation to other digital platforms, such as social media and live commentary, to explore how metonymy adapts to evolving media landscapes. Additionally, examining cross-linguistic variations in metonymy across different sports journalism cultures could provide deeper insights into the universality and contextual specificity of metonymic expressions in media discourse.

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