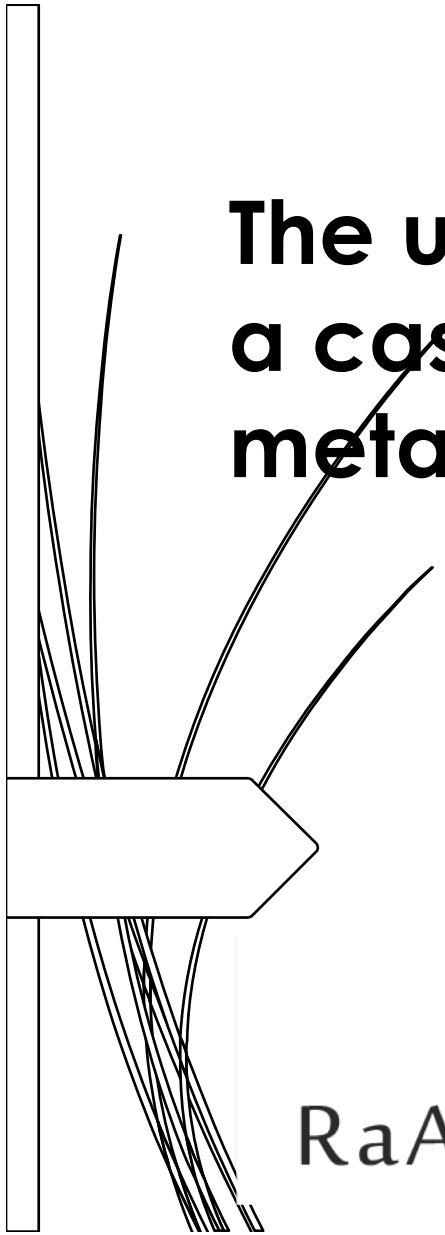
The use of metaphors in television debates: a case study of '(love) relationship' metaphors on Belgian federalism



RaAM | 12

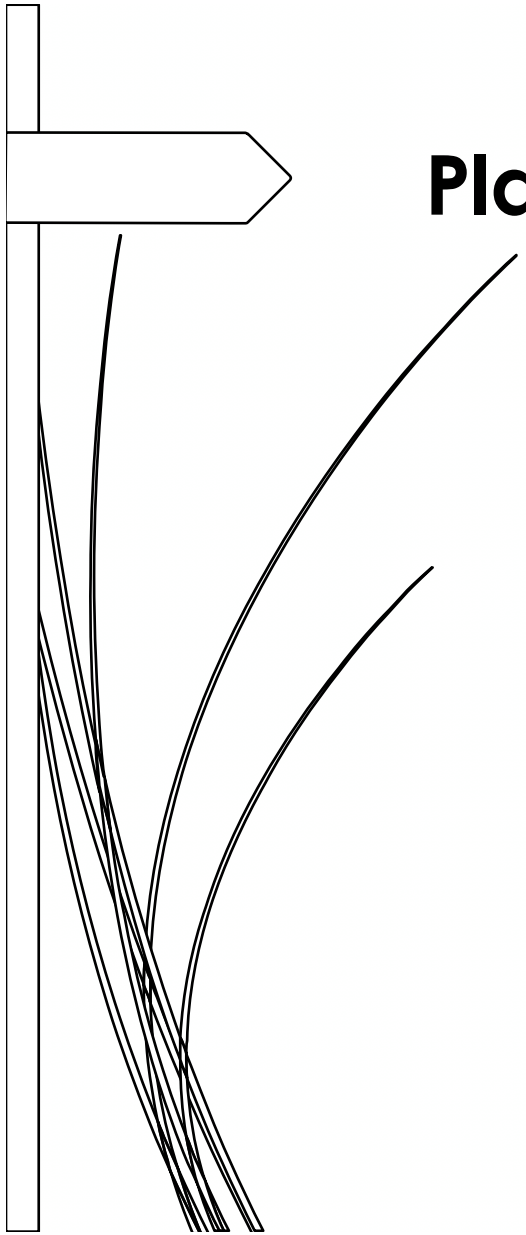
Metaphor Across Contexts and Domains:
From Description to Application
Hong Kong, 27-30 June 2018

François Randour (UCLouvain)

Julien Perrez (ULiège)

Min Reuchamps (UCLouvain)

Audrey Vandeleene (Lund University)



Plan of the presentation

1. Context of the project, theoretical background and objective of the paper
2. The corpus, identification of metaphors and method of analysis
3. Belgium and its political evolution in a few words
4. Preliminary findings on the use of ‘relationship’ metaphors in French speaking television debates
5. Conclusion

Context of the paper

ADAPOF (2014-2018): Research project on the study of metaphors in the context of Belgian federalism.
An interdisciplinary project bringing Linguistics and political science together

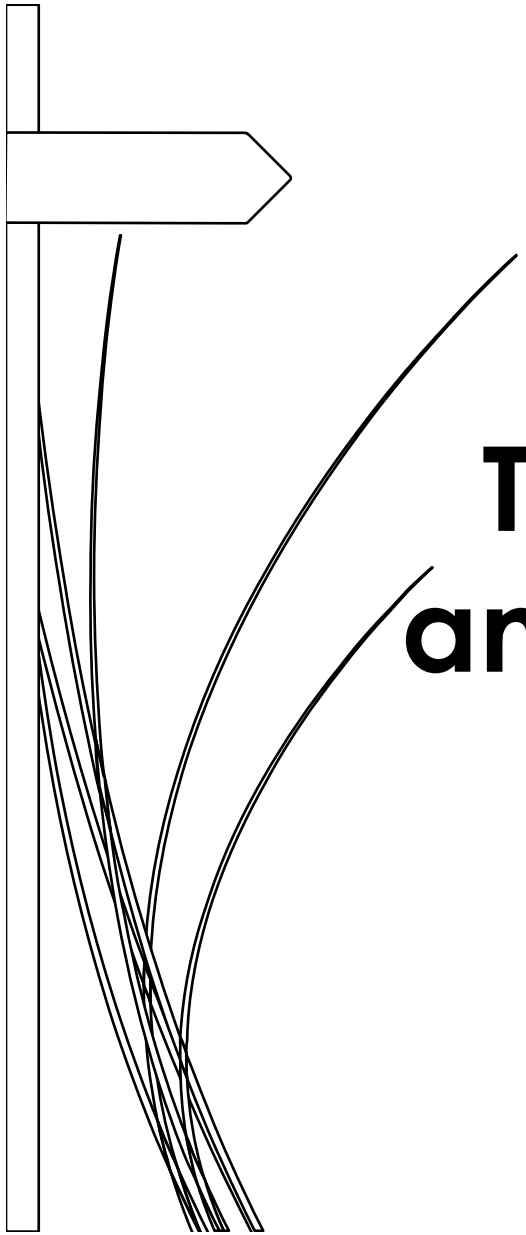
A focus on Production: Variation in metaphor use in various kinds of Belgian political discourses: *Who uses a metaphor, when and why?*

Parliamentary discourse
(cf. Heyvaert)

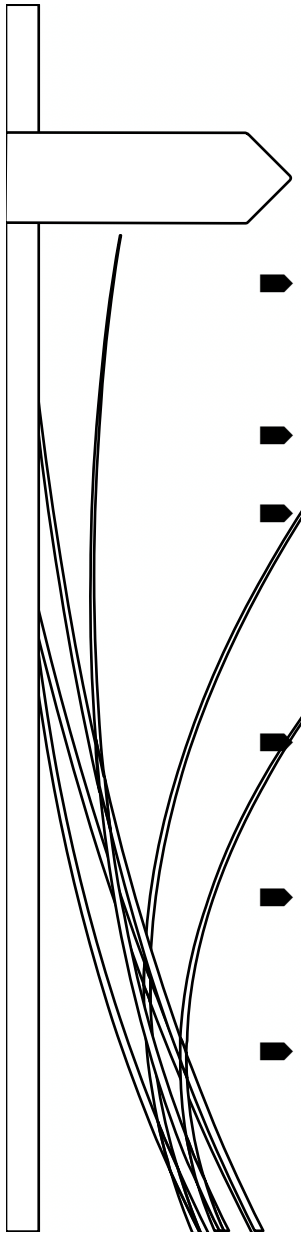
Citizen panels
(cf. Perrez & Reuchamps 2014, 2015)

Television debates
(cf. Randour *et al.*)

A focus on Reception: *How can a metaphor influence citizens'representation of Belgian federalism: the 'Tetris' Metaphor* (cf. Dodeigne *et al.* 2018)



Theoretical background and objective of the paper



Metaphors in political discourse

- **Lakoff (1996)** *Moral Politics*
  - Strict-father and nurturant parent models
- **Semino (2008)**
- **Musolff (2004, 2008, 2010, 2016, 2017)**
  - Metaphors in debates about of the European (de)construction
  - Metaphorical scenarios
- **Charteris-Black (2004, 2011)**
  - Persuasive power of metaphors in the speeches of major UK and US politicians
- **Goatly (2007)**
  - Ability of metaphors to carry ideologies
- Metaphors play a central role in our understanding of political concepts and processes (THE STATE IS A PERSON, POLITICS IS A JOURNEY, POLITICAL SYSTEMS ARE BUILDINGS…)

Metaphors in Belgian political discourse (1)

(Perrez & Reuchamps 2014, 2015)

Citizens do use metaphors when talking about federalism

BELGIAN FEDERALISM IS A MACHINE

« On a coupé le citoyen du fonctionnement d'une *espèce de mécanisme*, de *machine folle lancée sur elle-même*. » (PBF, B8, 839-840)

"The citizen has been cut from a sort of *mechanism*, of *cranky machine spinning around*"

BELGIAN FEDERALISM IS A CONSTRUCTION

Mais, ce que je voudrais, si on doit encore aménager cette fois ci le fédéralisme tel qu'il a été construit progressivement, c'est qu'à un moment donné, on se dise que ça s'arrête, c'est fini (PBF, D8, 3897-3898)

« if we have to *rearrange federalism* as it has progressively *been built up*,… »

BELGIAN FEDERALISM IS A COMPANY

« hoe werkt een staat, een beetje zoals een bedrijfsleider over zijn bedrijf ». (PBN, K4, 1232-1233)

how does a state work, *a bit like a ceo*…

BELGIAN FEDERALISM IS A LOVE RELATIONSHIP

"Si l'on compare avec un *ménage*, certains *ménages se marient avec contrat de mariage*, d'autres pas,» (PBF, B1, 188-190)

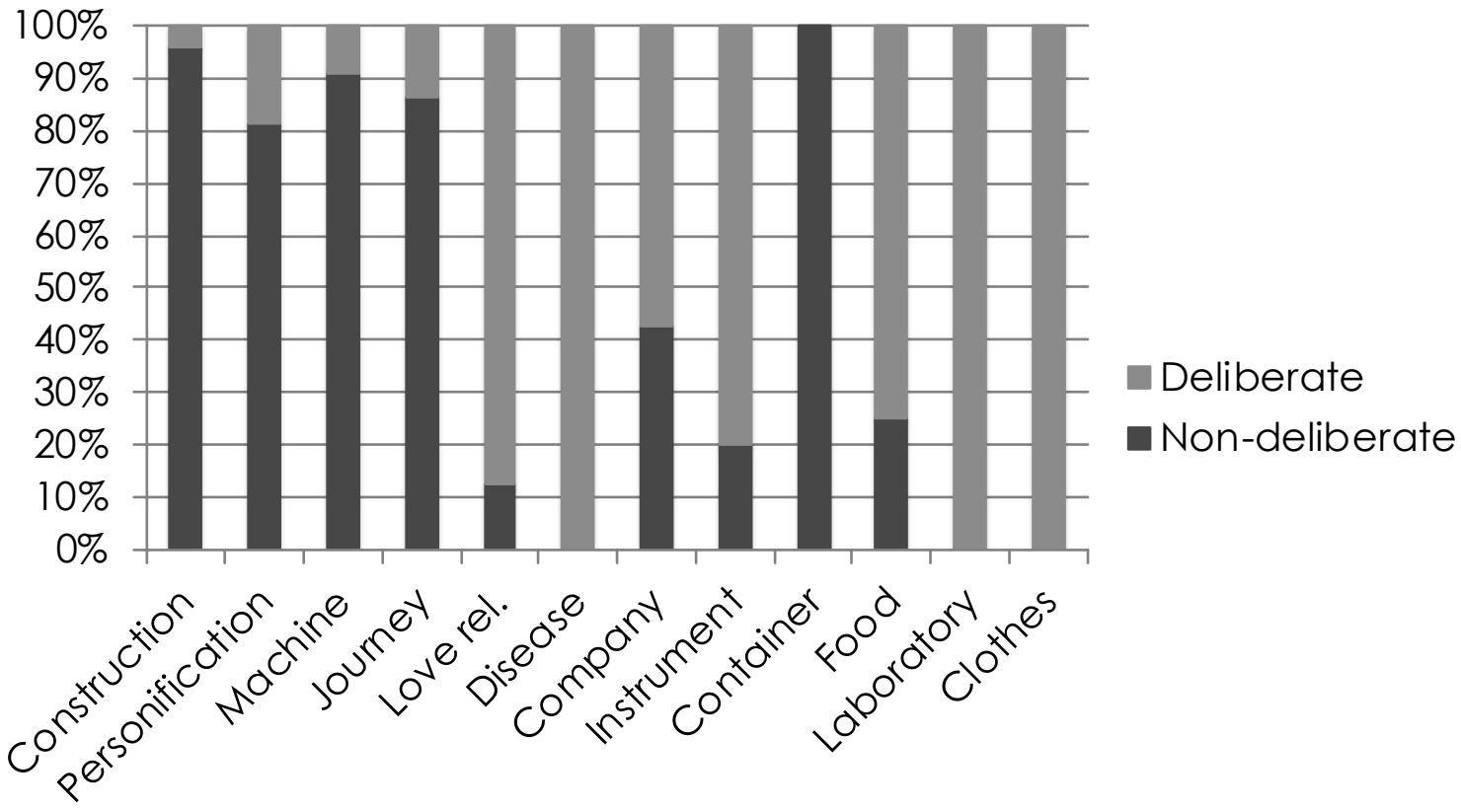
If we compare this to a *couple*, some *couples get married under a wedding contract*, others don't…

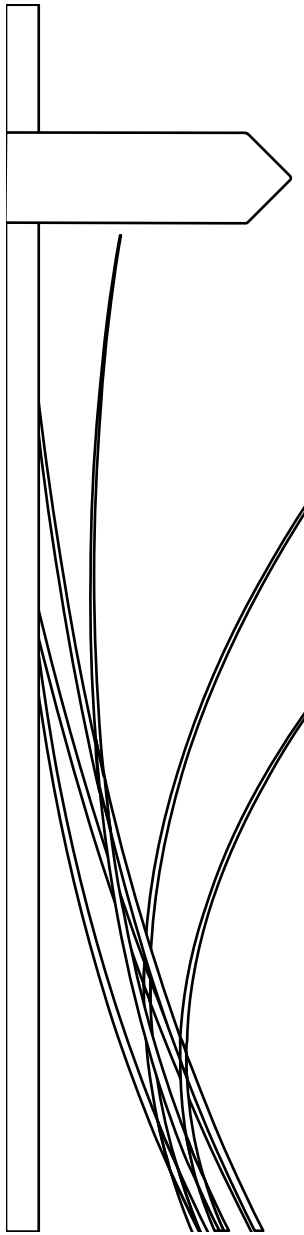
Metaphors in Belgian political discourse (2)

(Perrez & Reuchamps 2014, 2015)

Deliberate *vs.* **Non-deliberate** metaphors in citizen discourse

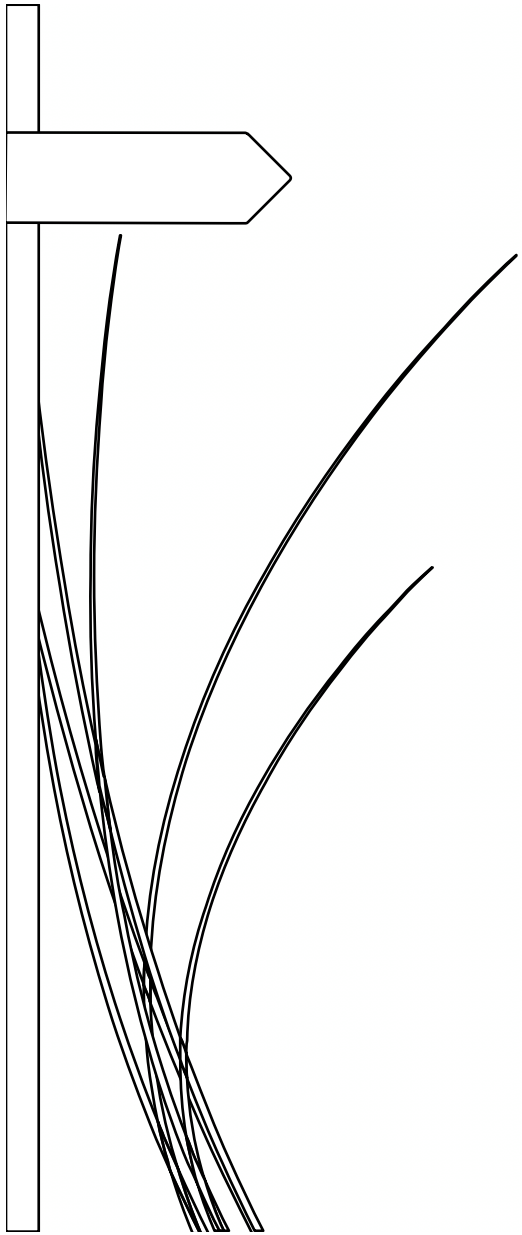
Purpose of political metaphor : "serve[s] primarily as a means to change meanings, and hence, to change social and political attitudes" (Musolff, 2016)



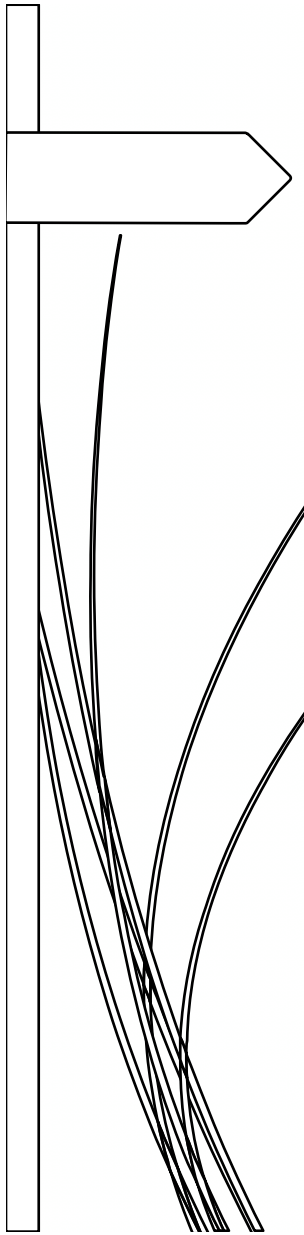


Objective of this paper

- Undertakes a systematic analysis of the use of metaphors by Belgian politicians during ***television debates*** from the 1980's until now.
- Analysing the progressive – albeit not without political tensions – **transformation of Belgium's political system** by analysing the use of metaphors in Belgian political discourse
- A contribution to two main research fields:
  - From a linguistic perspective: a better understanding on the use of metaphors in political discourse
  - From a political science perspective: a better understanding on the framing by political actors of the evolution of the Belgian State

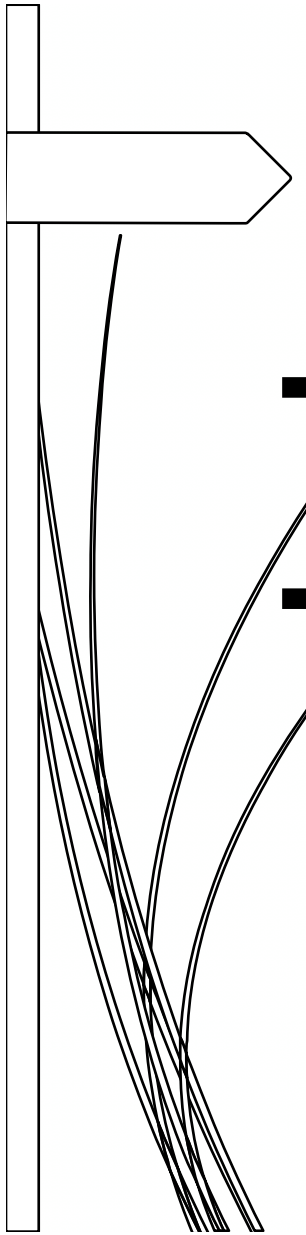


Corpus and method



The corpus in a few words

- Only television debates that deals specifically with questions on the development and ***evolution of Belgian federalism*** have been selected
- In ***numbers***, it gives:
  - 127 debates in total
  - 80 from French speaking television debates and 47 from Dutch speaking television
  - Representing more than 15 hours of television debates
  - Covering a period of almost 50 years: from 1967 until 2016
- **Actors analysed:** Belgian politicians from both communities (MPs, Ministers and officials from political parties).
- **Which discourse**? An oral (but retranscribed) and formal form of political discourse
- **Which audience**: the primary audience is the other political actors during the debates, the secondary audience is the citizen



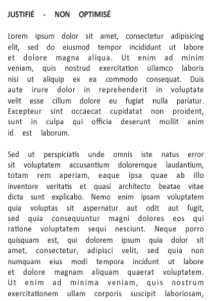
A corpus with an important potential for ..

- Primarily, it allows to determine ***which (deliberate) metaphors have been used*** *by the Belgian political elite* to describe Belgian political transformation
- It is also possible, in a case-specific way to analyse variation intra-corpus :
  - Assess to which extent this metaphor use ***evolved over time*** (time variation)
  - Assess to what extent the metaphor use varies ***between Belgian politicians*** (actors variation)
  - Assess to what extent the metaphor use is in relation with the ***political context*** (state's reforms)
  - Assess to what extent the metaphor use varies ***across the linguistic border*** (cultural variation)

Method

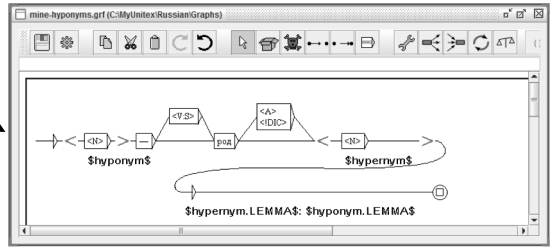
- Semi-automatic method for **metaphor identification**
  - Makes it possible to deal with large corpora





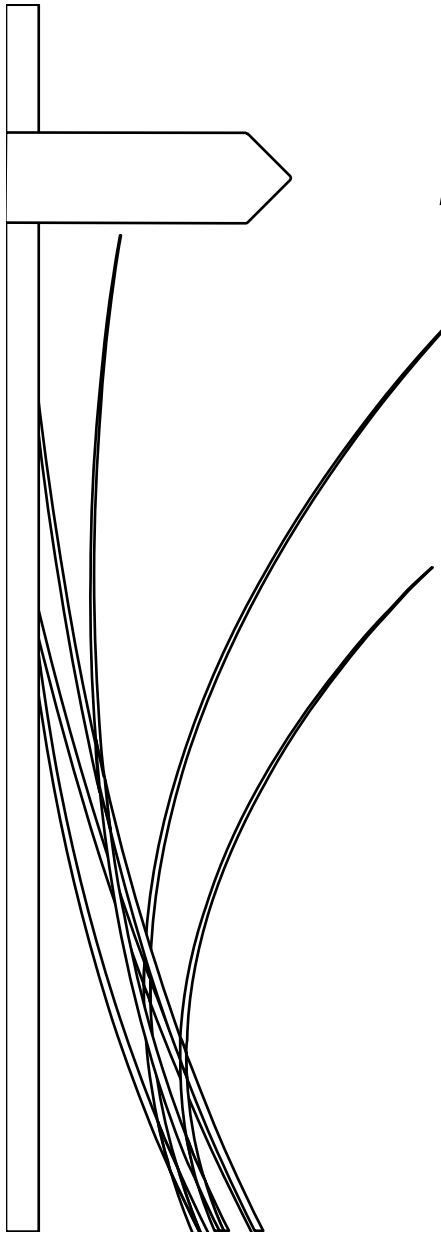


POS-tagging
Lemmatization



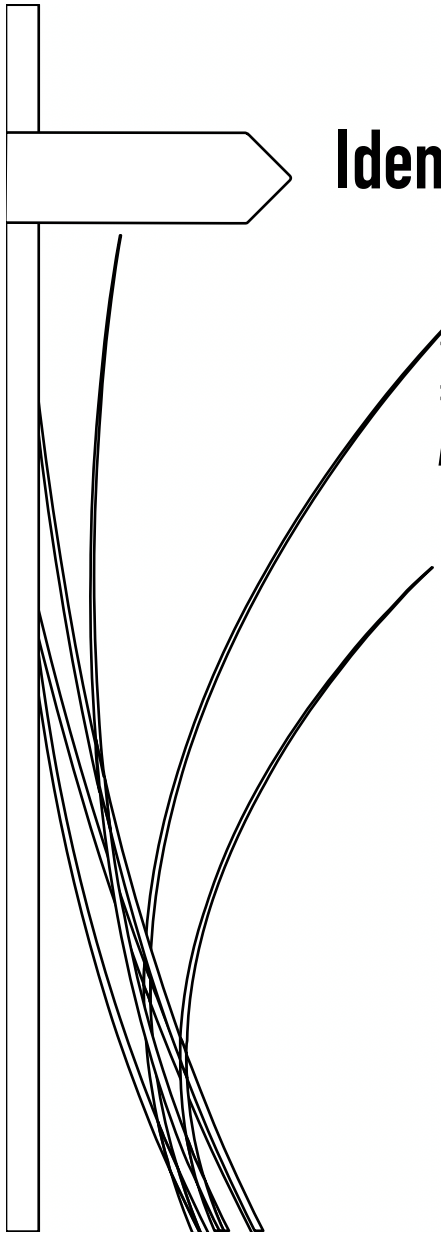
Onomasiological profiles
Marriage, divorce, couple,…

Potential metaphorical contexts



Method

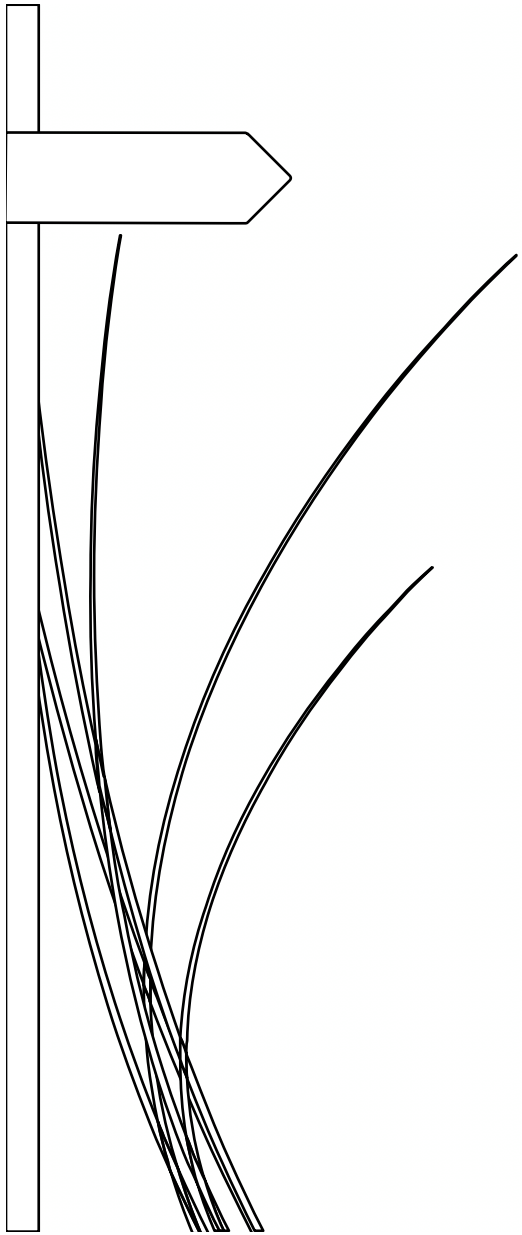
- **Potential metaphorical contexts**
  - Check the metaphorical status
  - Check the relevance of the target domain
- **Metaphor analysis**
  - MIPVU (Steen 2008, Steen *et al.* 2010)
    - Linguistic level (direct vs. Indirect)
    - Conceptuel level (novel vs. Conventional)
    - Communication level (deliberate vs. Non-deliberate)
  - External paramaters
    - (Political) actor
    - Gender
    - Date/Time
    - …



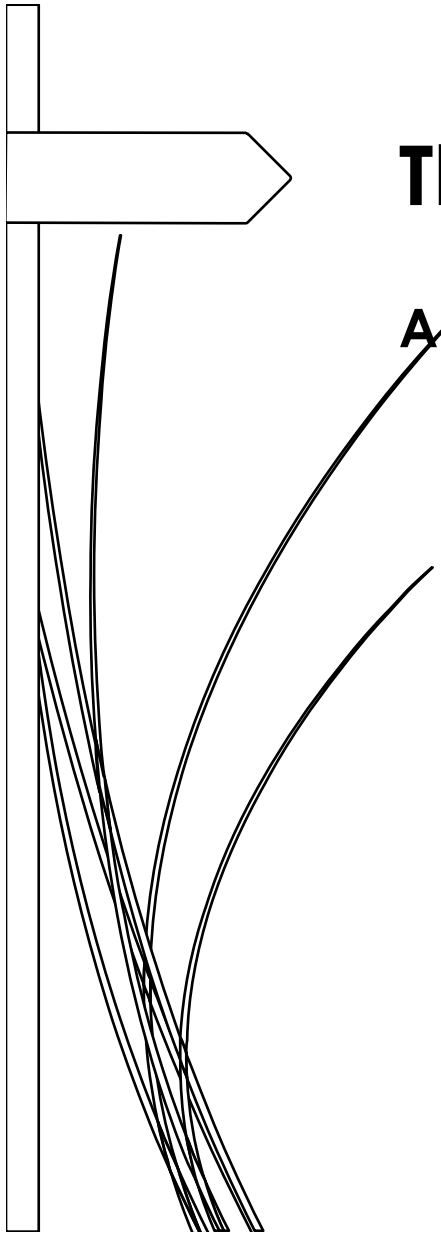
Identification of deliberate and non-deliberate metaphor

⟶ **Top-down approach** to Deliberate Metaphor Identification
= use of existing set of features to identify potentially deliberate metaphors

- ❑ Is the metaphorical unit ***signalled*** (e.g. by a simile or other signalling device)?
- ❑ Is the metaphorical unit in the ***form of A = B***?
- ❑ Is the metaphorical unit ***expressed directly***?
- ❑ Is the metaphorical unit ***novel***?
- ❑ Is the metaphorical unit ***surrounded by metaphorical expressions from compatible semantic fields***, which are somehow connected?
- ❑ Is the metaphorical sense of the unit particularly ***salient*** through, for example, alluding to the topic of the text?
- ❑ Does the metaphorical unit participate in ***word play***?
- ❑ Does the metaphorical unit ***elicit rhetorical effects*** such as, for example, persuasion or humor?



Belgian political transformation in a few words



The evolution of Belgian federal State

A never ending and ongoing political transformation

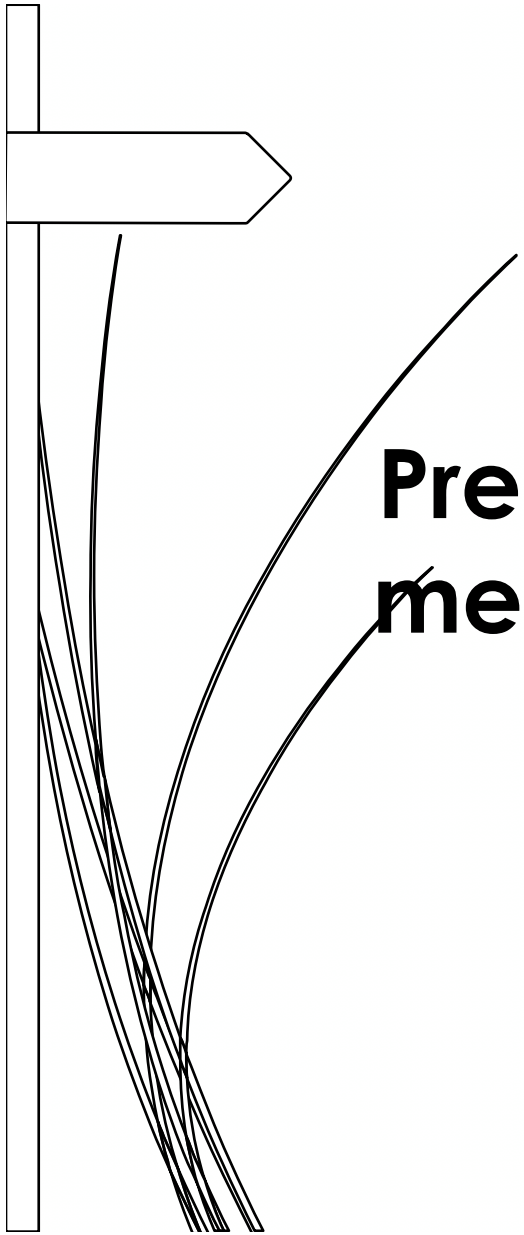
- **From a unitary country to a federal country**
  - Art 1 of the Constitution: '*Belgium is a federal state composed of communities and regions' (3 regions and 3 communities)*
- **A process of six States reforms: 1970, 1980, 1988-89, 1993, 2001, 2013**
- **Main cleavages**
  - In simple words, when Flemish political parties have homogeneous positions on the necessity to reform the Belgian state, this is less the case for French speaking parties (cultural vs. economical divides)
  - The question of financial transfer from Flanders to Wallonia and more economical autonomy for Flanders
  - The question of Brussels: which territory with what financial mechanisms

The love relationship in cartoon

The Flemish lion says: 'I warn you, in 2019, we do the accounting and in 2025, it's over'



The Walloon rooster says: ' Oh my… it starts all over again. I was starting to forget'



Preliminary finding of the use of metaphors by French-speaking politicians



Main findings in numbers

Search in the 906 937 words corpus of key words from the onomasiological register '(love) relationship'

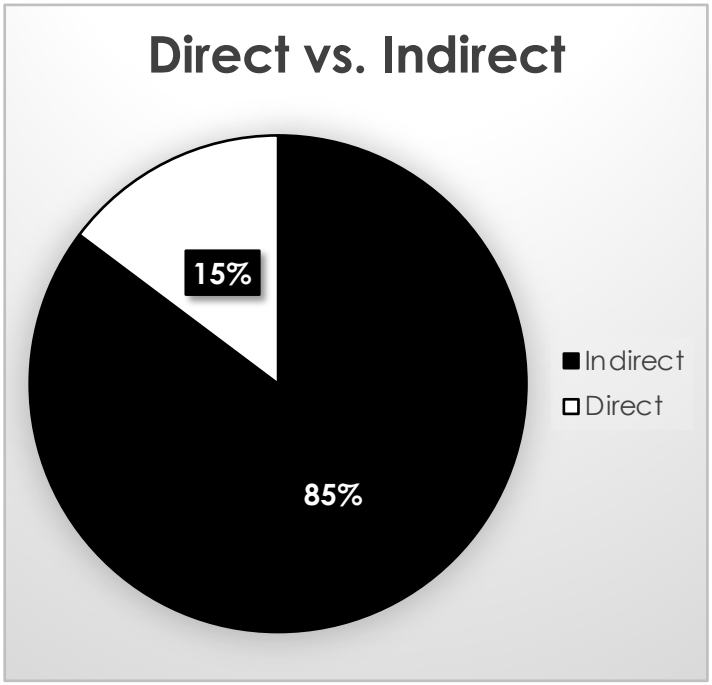
A total of 1096 hits

144 metaphors identified

61 metaphors on Belgian federalism

Findings: main results of MIPVU





All metaphors used by the participants in the debates are conventional, with a great share of indirect metaphors. Interestingly, on the theme of Belgian federalism, participants mobilise to a large extent deliberate metaphors.

Some examples of metaphors on Belgian federalism

- **A:** pour les citoyens tout ça a déjà quand même un goût de déjà vu, on est habitué à ces scènes de ménage au sein du couple Belgique.{S} On s'engueule, on passe un compromis et puis on continue la route ensemble.{S}
- **(A) The journalist**: For the citizens, all of this has a taste of 'déjà vu'. We are used to these 'household scenes' within the couple Belgium. We fight, then we are getting to a compromise and then we continue the road together

- **Pascal Smet:** Je voudrais clairement dire que là, il entre dans la logique de divorce conflictuel où l'enfant doit choisir un des deux adultes et moi, je ne veux pas que Bruxelles choisisse ni la Wallonie ni la Flandre.
- **Pascal Smet:** I would clearly like to say that here he enters the logic of conflictual divorce where the child must choose one of the two adults and I do not want Brussels to choose either Wallonia or Flanders.

- **A:** C'est comme si dans un mariage entre deux partenaires, l'un dit à l'autre : Bon je te trouve laide, je te trouve égoïste et je te trouve bornée mais de toute façon on veut rester ensemble. Alors je me demande : ça sera pas par amour, ça, c'est pourquoi, ça ? C'est pour l'argent ?
- **(A) The journalist:** It is as if in a marriage between two partners, one says to the other: Well I find you ugly, I find you selfish and I find you narrow but anyway we want to stay together. So I wonder: it will not be for love, that's why that? It's for the money?

Some examples of metaphors on Belgian federalism

- **JC L:** Un petit peu à l'image d'une mère, d'une mère qui ne pourrait pas être heureuse qu'un de ses enfants se porte mieux qu'un autre. Et bien la mère patrie qu'est la Belgique et le système fédéral doit réellement contribuer à ce que ses enfants grandissent positivement.
- **JC L:** A little like a mother, a mother who could not be happy that one of her children is better than another. Well, the mother country of Belgium and the federal system must really help her children grow up in a positive way.

- **A:** Verhaeren a dit "Flandre, Wallons sont nos prénoms, Belge est notre nom de famille"".{S} Geert Lambert, la Belgique s'évapore, c'est votre sentiment?
- **The journalist (A):** Verhaeren said "Flanders, Walloons are our first names, Belgian is our family name." "{S} Geert Lambert, Belgium is evaporating, is that your feeling?

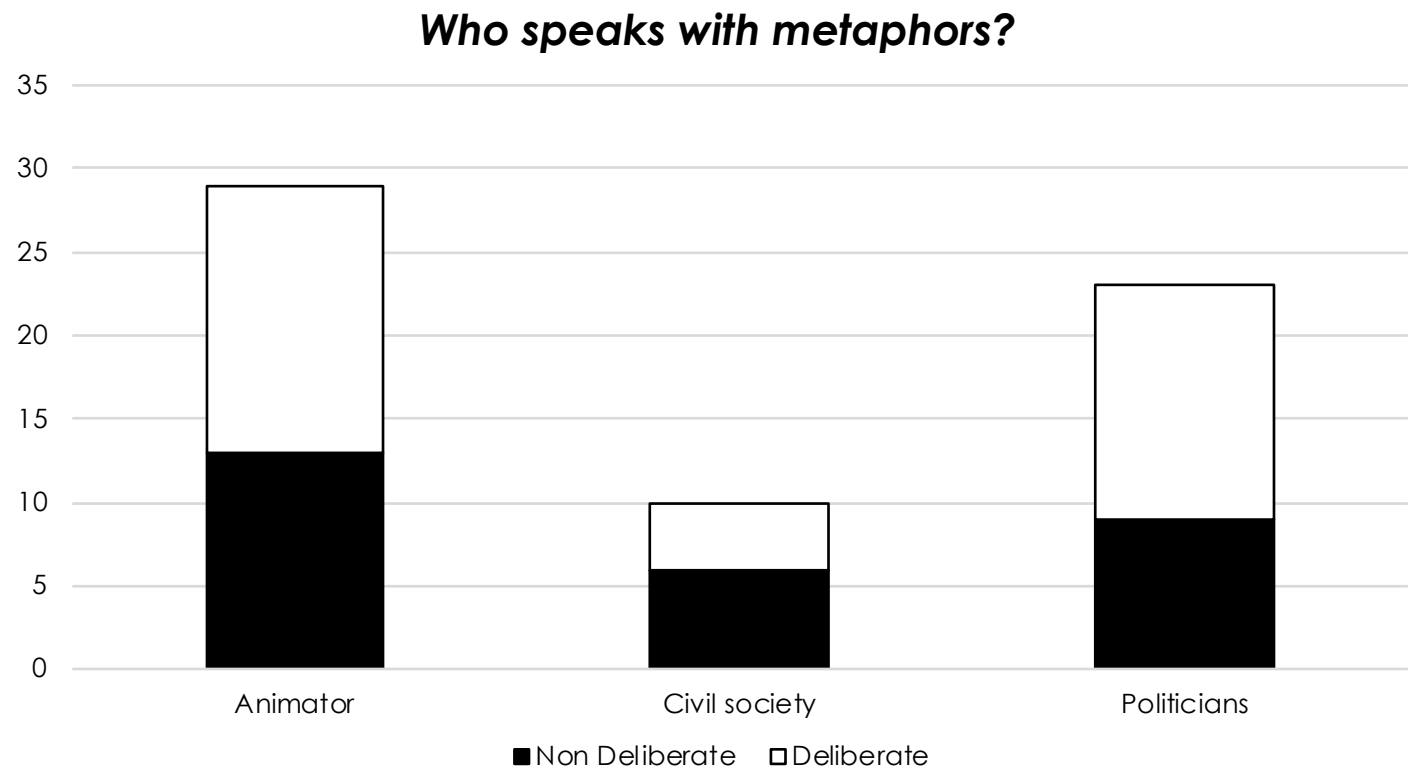
- **ACA:** Les thèses de la Flandre mère nourricière de la Wallonie sont de plus en plus contestées.
- **The journalist (A):** The theses of Flanders, the foster mother of Wallonia, are more and more disputed.

Findings: who speaks with what use of metaphors

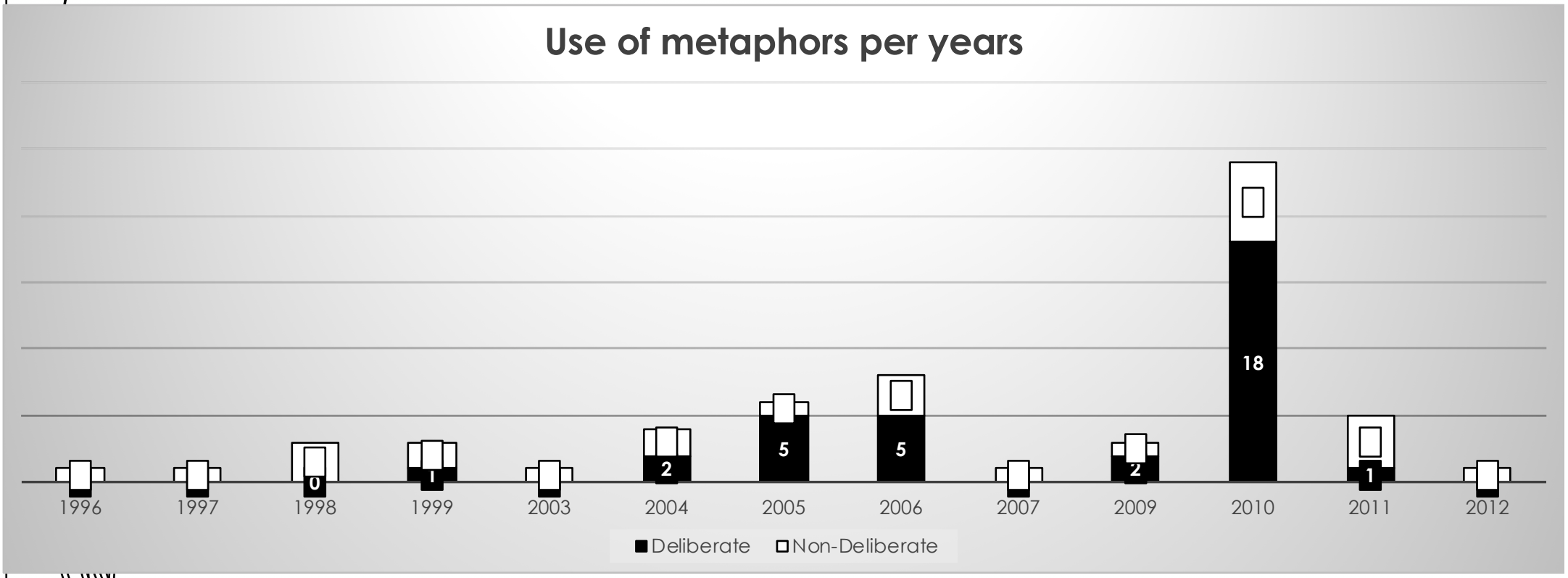
A major role for journalists and to a lesser extent civil society participants in the use of metaphors

- To launch the debate
- To give the floor to the different participants

An important use of deliberate metaphors by all actors.
→ Communicative function of metaphors vis-à-vis the citizens.



Findings: the use of metaphors through time



(a) 'Relationship' metaphors are used since 1996 in Belgian television political debates
(b) There is an increased use of metaphors when the political context is conflictive (2010)

Conclusion and next steps

- A corpus with an important potential to analyse the ***variation*** in the use of metaphors ***intra-corpus*** (time, actors, culture and political context).
- An additional corpus in the overall project ADAPOF to analyse the variation in the use of metaphors ***inter-corpus*** (parliamentary debates and citizens discourse).
- Most specifically, on this paper:
  - Confirmation of the ***importance of the 'relationship' metaphor*** in a new data-set (and through time)
  - ***Metaphor scenario*** (Musolff 2016): "enable us […] to go beyond mere categorization of metaphors based on domains by searching for recurring argumentative, narrative and stance-taking patterns in corpora of present-day metaphor use."
  - A major role of ***journalist and civil society*** participants in the use of (deliberate) metaphors
  - A more intense use of metaphors when the '***political context'*** is conflictive

Next steps:

- **T**he ADAPOF team will continue to dig in the French speaking corpus with other **onomasiological profiles** but also to analyse more systematically the use of metaphors in a specific political context (i.e. States reforms).
- Investigating and coding the Dutch speaking corpus to analyse the variation and compare the use of metaphors by Dutch and French speaking participants to televisions debates.



*The ADAPOF team is looking forward to welcome in Liège for the **2019 Method RaAm seminar***

Thank you for your attention

Any questions?

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