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**Politics at Play:  
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In the last decade, increasing attention has been paid to metaphor as a discursive tool of conceptualization in politics. Furthermore, studies have revealed the multifunctionality of metaphor as it may fulfill several purposes within discourse. Metaphors are considered “as a means of understanding how professionals conceive politics” (Howe 1988: 88). Metaphors help to frame complex political arguments, to arouse emotions, to reinforce particular purposes, and to portray the opponent negatively in political communication (Wilson 1990: 104). Also, metaphors influence beliefs, attitudes, values, and the creation of leadership (Charteris-Black 2004, 2005), and they help build a connection between politicians and the general public. As Chilton (1996: 74) points out, metaphors can be employed to create a common ground with the public. Furthermore, metaphor studies have underscored the pervasiveness of specific conceptual domains (fight/war, medical, or journey) to frame particular targets in political discussions on topics such as terrorism, immigration, unemployment, and policy-making, among others. However, the notion of game within the political discourse of Spain needs further attention.

In this line, this study examines a specific conceptual domain, that is, *game*, and how metaphorical expressions pertaining to this domain—which I refer to as *game metaphors*—are employed as a tool of political communication in the discourse of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the former prime minister of Spain (2004–2011). In particular, this study looks at the specific functions that game metaphors perform within the main topics of discussion in which they occur (terrorism, economy, domestic affairs, foreign affairs, and society). I explore how the most frequent metaphorical aspects of game are used to achieve Zapatero’s intentions. I argue that game metaphors have a combined rhetorical effect to establish his goals. They serve as a means of conceptualization from three main angles: playing, gambling, and sports. I also claim that metaphors of playing establish the moral principles for acting in politics. Further, I argue that the intensive use of gambling metaphors underscores his call to take immediate political action and risks to solve the nation’s current problems. Finally, I also suggest that sports metaphors

serve as reinforcements to realize Zapatero's "bets" in the political arena as teamwork, encouragement, and skills are needed to win the game. The research questions are as follows: 1. What are the most frequent aspects of game metaphorized in Zapatero's discourse? 2. What are their discursive roles, and how do they contribute to achieving his political intentions?

This article's contribution lies in that the discursive role of game metaphors is relatively unexplored in the political discourse of Spain. Although some studies have provided evidence of their usage (e.g., Sánchez García 2009), there is a need to investigate in greater detail their discursive functions in reference to a more extensive corpus such as the one considered in this study. This article is structured as follows: It starts with some brief remarks on Zapatero's<sup>1</sup> presidency (Section 1). Next, it presents a review of the notion of game and relevant studies on game metaphors (Section 2). Then (Section 3), the methodological framework and corpus are explained, followed by an analysis of the results (Section 4). This section includes the overall quantitative findings and also the most salient qualitative remarks of game metaphors extracted from the data. Finally, Section 5 presents the conclusions and suggestions for future research.

## **1. Spain's Socio-Political Background During Zapatero's Presidency**

Zapatero had to face unsolved problems from the previous government led by José María Aznar<sup>2</sup> (PP) in addition to new challenges. He fought to end terrorism at the national and international levels. On one hand, the nationalist terrorist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), which had been active since the '60s, continued with their attacks. On the other hand, Zapatero had to face the new radical jihadist terrorism that perpetrated a deadly attack on March 11, 2004 in Madrid. After several attempts at negotiations, ETA finally announced a definite ceasefire in October 2011. Zapatero also started his presidency in the midst of an economic crisis that had begun in 2007. The rise of unemployment, inflation, the construction bubble, and the closure of many companies forced the government to undertake substantial economic reforms, including the labor market reform, deficit reduction measures, pension reform, and sustainable economy law (Field and Botti 2013: 110). In the area of foreign affairs, immediately after taking office, Zapatero withdrew the Spanish troops from Iraq, as he had promised during his first election campaign. He contributed to building better international relationships with Europe, assuming the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2010. Zapatero also managed domestic affairs by implementing important social reforms. He emphasized the extension of civil rights (Bosco and Morlino 2007), including passing a law to support homosexuals' right to marry and to adopt children (99). He also supported the gender identity law, which allows lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender individuals to receive legal recognition of their gender (Field 2011). On other general topics related to society, Zapatero always strongly supported and

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<sup>1</sup> Zapatero was affiliated with the leftist Spanish socialist workers' party called Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE).

<sup>2</sup> Aznar is affiliated with the rightist conservative Popular Party (PP).

recognized the importance of social, literary, cultural, educational, and research events that encourage the awakening of new knowledge and ideas. Yet despite his many new social reforms and policies that contributed to the welfare of the state, Zapatero did not succeed in keeping Spain afloat during the economic and financial crisis. His popularity gradually decreased, especially during his last year in office (2011). People lost confidence in him as unemployment continued to increase and the economy sank. He did not run for a third term in the November general elections in 2011.

## 2. Game and Game Metaphors

Game is a complex notion. The large variety of game types (in terms of their nature, objective, and approach) makes a clear-cut classification difficult to establish. Ching (1993: 45) states that “although games have a family resemblance, there are no necessary and sufficient conditions: The meanings of different games not only crisscross and network but also disappear in complex patterns.” A detailed classification of games was proposed by Caillous (1979), based on four main categories: *agôn*, *alea*, *mimicry*, and *ilinx*. Games of *agôn* require skill, competitiveness, discipline, training, and responsibility. This category includes sports such as football, tennis, fencing; and games such as chess, and checkers. Games of *alea* are related to risk, luck, destiny, or fortune, including gambling, lottery, and heads and tails. Games of *mimicry* refer to imitation, interpretation, and creation such as dressing up and acting out a scenario. Games of *ilinx* are associated with vertigo, lack of stability, high speed, and sudden movement, as in high-wire acrobatics, sliding, and car racing. For the purpose of this study, I will further refer to this classification in Section 4.

Game, along with the notion of playing, has evolved metaphorically in different realms of life, as we perceive social concepts in terms of good or bad players, winners and losers, competitiveness, and so forth. In American culture, the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS PLAYING A GAME<sup>3</sup> is pervasive as “it performs multiple speech acts in one condensed form” (Ching 1993: 43). Ching argues that life is envisioned as a game because it constitutes a continuous survival, risk, and struggle. In this regard, we may find that TO LIVE IS TO PLAY and LIFE IS PLAYING A GAME. Ching provides examples of games and play metaphor usage in different scenarios such as politics, health, or job hiring. He further adds that the game metaphors are also pervasive in politics and other areas of life such as in law, business, and academic institutions (44).

American political discourse is strongly imbued by sports metaphors. As Balbus (1975: 26) indicates, “the Nixon-Ford years in the United States have been marked by a strikingly frequent application of the sports metaphor to the realities of organized political life.” This use continues to increase in the political arena even today. Howe (1988) indicates that sports and warfare are a common source domain in American politics. He states that politics is typically conceived of as being a rule-bound contest (87). Sport metaphors have been employed to report on war (Bridgeman 2002; Charteris-Black 2005; Jansen and Sabo 1994; Lakoff 1991). For example, in reference

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<sup>3</sup> I will follow Lakoff's convention of expressing conceptual metaphors in capital letters.

to the Persian Gulf War, Jansen and Sabo (1994: 1) indicate that “sports and war metaphors were crucial rhetorical resources to mobilize the patriarchal values that construct, mediate, and maintain hegemonic forms of masculinity.” Football was the most commonly employed metaphor because it reinforced team imagery. They argue that team sports “are vehicles for cultivating and displaying community and national values and identities” (14). The use of such metaphors resulted in higher patriotic solidarity within the U.S. and the realization of the nation’s goals in the Middle East. Game metaphors have also been reported in peace talks to frame the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Bridgeman 2002). Bridgeman points out that the complexity of game metaphors as the mapping of elements between the source (game) and target domain (peace process) might not always be clear. Therefore, game metaphor in this case might not help in the understanding of that particular context. In the lines of war conflict, some American politicians such as George W. Bush have employed gambling metaphors to frame decisions on the “war on terror” (Charteris-Black 2005: 187). Charteris-Black indicates that Bush’s betting metaphors portrayed political decisions as “provisional calculated risks.” The rhetorical purpose was to convince other countries of the necessity of “risk-taking strategy of a pre-emptive strike against Iraq” (187). Other politicians, including Clinton, employed sports metaphors to present themselves as ordinary Americans who share common interests with the general public.

In Italian discourse, sport metaphors have also been reported as dominant in the discourse of prime minister Silvio Berlusconi (Semino and Masci 1997). Semino and Masci (1997) argue that Berlusconi used game metaphors to create a positive image of himself and his political party. Additionally, they indicate that game metaphors were employed to attract specific sections of the electorate. Their analysis shows that football (POLITICS IS FOOTBALL) was the most salient metaphor. Football became a political means to attract the mass audiences, and it also allowed Berlusconi to build a sense of national unity and identity.

Different usages of game metaphors have been reported in Chinese political discourse (Cheng 2009). In examining how the independence of Taiwan is framed in the media, Cheng indicates that games such as cards, board games, go, word games, children’s games, and gambling were employed. He explains that game and gambling metaphors were employed in a negative way to describe the government in Taiwan and the leaders who supported Taiwan’s independence. In regard to Spanish discourse, while some studies have investigated the role of metaphors in political debate (Hellín 2009, 2010, 2013), few have focused on game metaphors (Sánchez García 2009). This study aims to contribute to the understanding of how game metaphors are employed in Spanish to frame the political debate.

### **3. Methodology and Data**

The corpus includes all Zapatero’s speeches during his seven years in office (from 2004 to 2011), which is, 1200 speeches. Table 1 shows the number of speeches made in each year. Metaphorical expressions were identified manually. I will refer to these metaphors as *game metaphors*. They include references to actions such as winning,

losing, or competing; elements involved in a game (players, rules, cheating, or scoring); or specific types of games (sports, gambling, etc.).

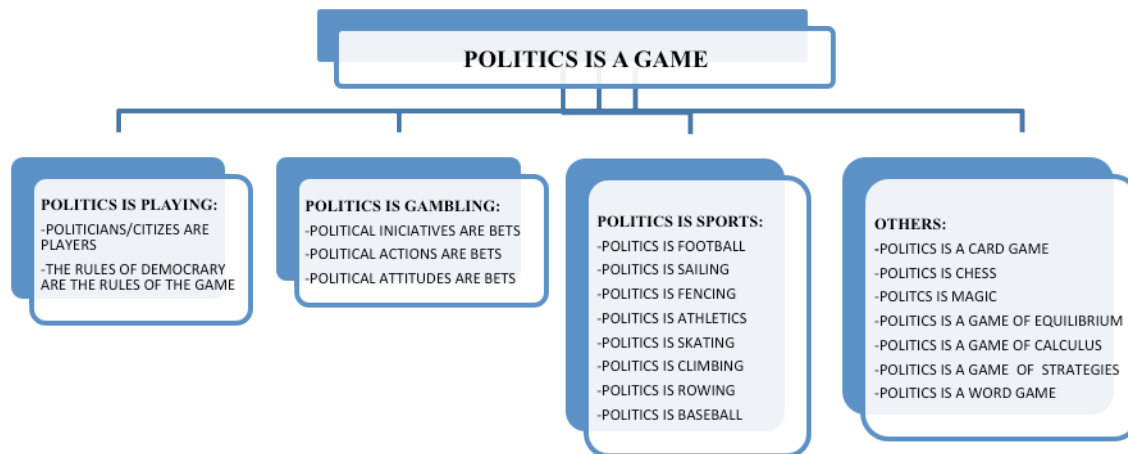
**Table 1: Number of Zapatero’s Speech by Year in Office**

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of speeches	116	185	161	160	144	156	174	104

This study considers metaphor as a cognitive and pragmatic phenomenon. The cognitive view of metaphor, based on the *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (Lakoff 1993; Lakoff and Johnson 1980) considers metaphor as “conceptual.” This perspective understands metaphor as a way to structure our conceptual system and, therefore, our understanding of the world. In this view, conceptual metaphors such as POLITICS IS GAMBLING help us perceive politics (target domain) in terms of gambling (source domain). This means that actions in politics are understood as actions in gambling in terms of taking risks, winning, or losing. Metaphors need to be analyzed and understood in context. As Gibbs (2009: 251) indicates, “metaphors are inseparable from context because there is no division between metaphor and discourse, given that metaphors are both products of discourse and creators of discourse.” For this reason, the pragmatic view of metaphor will also be analyzed based on *Critical Metaphor Analysis* (Charteris-Black 2004, 2005). This view understands metaphor as a social phenomenon in that the meaning of a metaphor is determined by the real context in which it occurs. This allows us to explore the identification, interpretation, and evaluation of the metaphor in its social setting. For the sake of the clarity, I will describe the identification process: First, I manually identified the metaphorical expression (called “candidate metaphor”), for example, *Nuestra posición nos permitirá realizar una triangulación constructiva* ‘Our position will allow us to realize a constructive triangulation [...]’ (Nov. 14, 2008). Second, I identified the word that is used metaphorically (called the “metaphor keyword”), which in this example is *triangulación*. Then, as the next step, I identified the conceptual metaphor, for example, POLITICAL STRATEGIES ARE FOOTBALL STRATEGIES, and ultimately, the conceptual key, which is a more general conceptual metaphor: POLITICS IS A GAME.

The identification process reveals that the main conceptual key is POLITICS IS A GAME. This conceptual key includes the notion of playing, which frames general aspects related to the act of playing (i.e., following the rules correctly, being actively involved, etc.). It also includes references to specific types of games. In particular, gambling and sports seem to be his preferred options as they are the most frequently metaphorized. Zapatero also evoked other types of games, whose frequencies—in comparison to gambling and sports—were quite low. I grouped these games under the

category “Others.” These games include cards, chess,<sup>4</sup> magic, games of calculus, games of equilibrium, and games of strategy. Therefore, candidate metaphors and metaphor keywords were grouped into the following four categories: 1. Playing, 2. Gambling, 3. Sports, and 4. Others. The identification process revealed that under the umbrella of POLITICS IS A GAME, there are three conceptual metaphors that serve as the central axis to structure Zapatero’s political vision: POLITICS IS PLAYING, POLITICS IS GAMBLING, and POLITICS IS SPORT.



POLITICS IS PLAYING portrays important insights into how Zapatero perceives and communicates politics through references to the act of “playing.” Metaphor keywords belonging to this category are as follows: *jugar* ‘to play’, *juego* ‘game’, *reglas del juego* ‘rules of the game’, *fuera de juego* ‘offside’, *jugador* ‘player’, *hacer trampas* ‘to cheat’, *ganar* ‘to win’, *perder* ‘to lose’, *derrota* ‘defeat’, *victoria* ‘victory’, *campeón* ‘champion’, *competición* ‘competition’, *competir* ‘to compete’, *competitivo* ‘competitive’, *puntuación* ‘scoring’, and *táctica/estrategia* ‘tactic/strategy’. POLITICS IS GAMBLING contains expressions related to gambling, such as *apostar* ‘to bet’, *apuesta* ‘(a) bet’, *acertar* ‘to guess correctly’, *acierto* ‘a right guess’, *jugarse* ‘to risk’, *haber/estar/poner en juego* ‘to be/to come in play’, and *pronóstico* ‘prediction’. Zapatero employs this game of chance to mostly emphasize taking risks, making predictions, and guessing them correctly. POLITICS IS SPORTS includes references to general aspects of sports such as *deporte* ‘sport’, *deportividad* ‘sportsmanship’, *deportivo* ‘sportive’, *defender* ‘to defend’, *empatar* ‘to even the score’, *batir record* ‘break records’, *tiempo récord* ‘record time’, *primera/segunda parte* ‘first/second part’, *equipo* ‘team’, and *sudar la camiseta* ‘to sweat the shirt’. It also includes references to specific types of sports such as football, sailing, athletics, rowing, skating, baseball, climbing, and fencing.

Metaphorical expressions were also categorized according to the contextual topic in which they occurred, which were: terrorism, economy, domestic affairs, foreign

<sup>4</sup> The category “Others” will be explained in greater detail later.

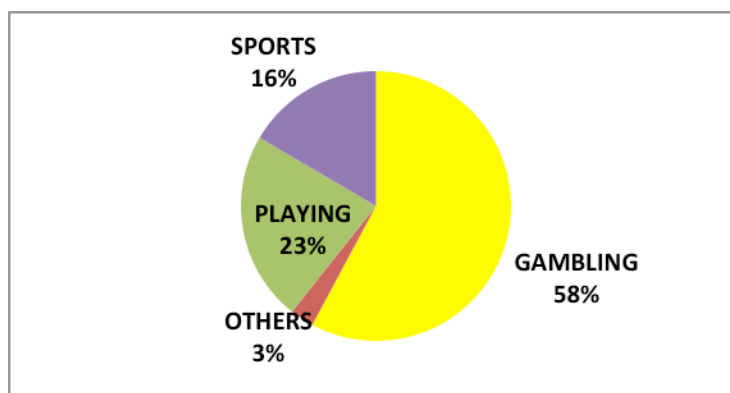
affairs, and society. The discussion on terrorism occurs at the national and international level. Economy covers issues on the economic crisis, recovery, and growth; unemployment, social security, and pensions; and energy, science, technology, and development. Domestic affairs include elections to the Senate or Parliament, discussion of the current state of the Autonomies, etc. Foreign affairs refer to international foreign relations. Society includes aspects related to social, cultural, research, or literary events or conferences.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Metaphor Usage and Overall Results

Results indicate that game metaphors are pervasive in Zapatero's discourse. A total of 1432 candidate metaphors and 101 metaphor keywords were identified. The conceptual key POLITICS IS A GAME is at the center of Zapatero's vision on politics, which is defined by three main metaphorical notions: playing (POLITICS IS PLAYING), gambling (POLITICS IS GAMBLING), and sports (POLITICS IS SPORT). The distribution of all metaphorical candidates is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Distribution of the Candidate Metaphors



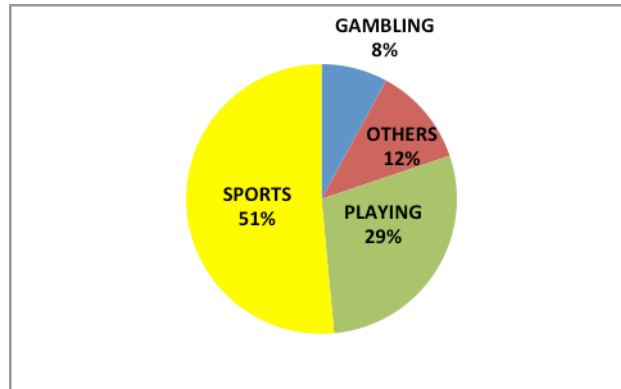
As Figure 1 indicates, metaphors of gambling (58%) constitute the highest percentage. This number even exceeds the percentage of the other three categories added together. The extensive usage of gambling contrasts with the almost one fourth of playing metaphors (23%), followed by sports (16%), and it also sharply differs with the lowest percentage, the category "Others" (3%). It is also worth noticing that metaphors referring to specific games (77%) prevail over the general notion of playing (23%). Further, it is interesting to notice that although sports plays an important role in Spanish society, and football is the most popular sport in Spain with millions of followers, it is not sports metaphors, but rather gambling metaphors, that lead Zapatero's discussion. This strongly contrasts with Berlusconi's discourse (Semino and Masci 1996), in which the most salient metaphor is football (POLITICS IS FOOTBALL).

The analysis also reveals an interesting aspect of metaphor in terms of candidate metaphor and metaphor keyword usage. The highest frequency in candidate metaphor



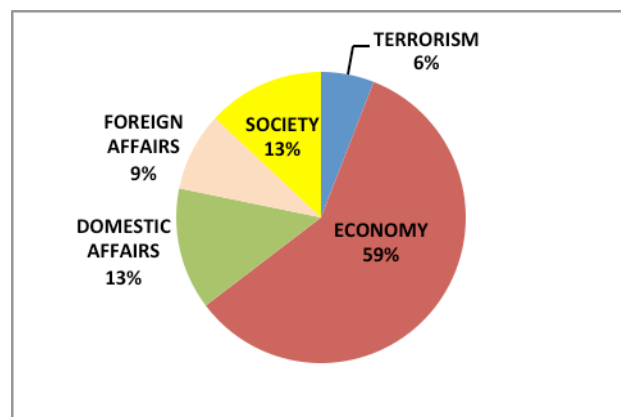
usage does not necessarily correspond to the highest variety of metaphor keywords. This is the case in gambling. Gambling has the highest frequency with 828 instances out of 1432; however, it also includes the lowest number of metaphor keywords, only 8. Figure 2 below shows the distribution of metaphor keywords in reference to their category.

**Figure 2: Distribution of Metaphor Keywords in Each Category**



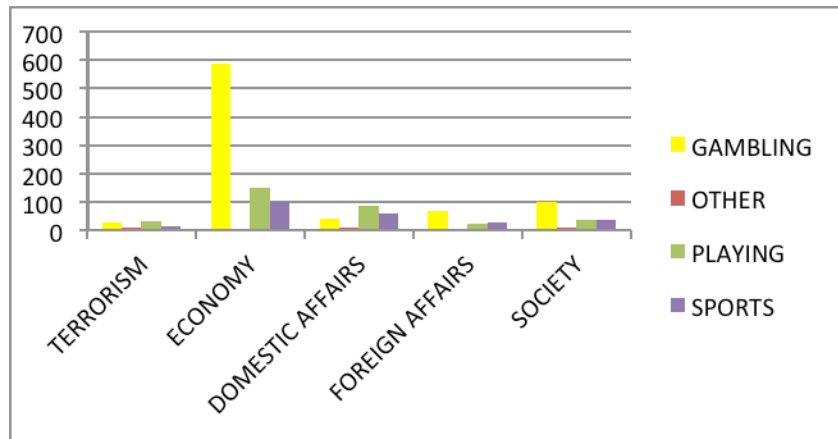
The distribution of the five major topics of discussion also reveals interesting insights regarding metaphor use. Economy is the topic most metaphorized (59%), whereas terrorism and foreign affairs are the two least. Interestingly, society and foreign affairs, which both cover discussions basically at the national level, have the same percentage usage. Furthermore, the use of game metaphors in economy even exceeds the sum of the other four topics. The distribution of topics in reference to metaphor use is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Distribution of Candidate Metaphors in Each Topic**



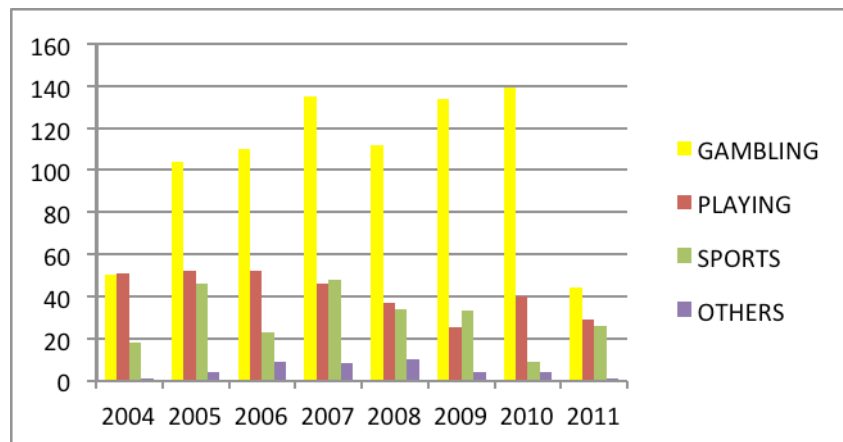
The results also indicate that the nature of metaphor is elastic and complex. The most frequent metaphors (gambling in this case) are not always the most frequent for each topic of discussion. For instance, while the tendency for framing economy, foreign affairs, and society is through gambling, this is not the case for terrorism and domestic affairs, for which the tendency is to use playing metaphors. Figure 4 shows the distribution of topics subcategorized by the four main metaphorical categories.

**Figure 4: Relation Between Topics and the Main Metaphorical Categories**



As a general observation, from the beginning to the end of each legislature, there is a general tendency to use gambling. From 2010 to 2011, there is a sharp decrease in the use of gambling metaphors, which corresponds to the end of Zapatero's candidacy. This can be observed below in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Distribution of the Main Four Metaphorical Categories per Year**



## 4.2 Playing Metaphors

Playing metaphors emphasize general notions about the act of playing and the players in a game. They serve several functions: One is to cast the ethical principles of how to play in the game, that is, in politics. They also help to define the players (the good

versus the bad player, their morals, and their competitiveness) and serve the expressive function of portraying emotions and tensions experienced in the political scenario. The main conceptual metaphors realized are: POLITICS IS PLAYING, POLITICIANS ARE PLAYERS, and THE RULES OF DEMOCRACY ARE THE RULES OF THE GAME. The three most prevailing aspects of playing are the importance of following the rules of the game, the need to keep playing, respecting the adversary, and competitiveness. The rules of the game are the most predominant aspects of playing. In Zapatero's vision, politics is a rule-bound game whose rules should be followed by everybody, and therefore, by the adversary. Thus, not breaking the rules but playing by them defines the basis of how to act in democracy.

1) [...] *el respeto al adversario, a las reglas y a los principios de juego limpio, y a los valores que debemos tener en cuenta* '[...] respect for the adversary, for the rules, for the principles of a clean game, and for the values that we have to take into account' (Mar. 14, 2005)

Playing metaphors also activate the emotions, tensions, expectations, and frustrations in the political scenario. Thus, playing can communicate encouragement to the general public for continuing to play in order to improve the political situation.

2) [...] *Gracias por no tirar la toalla* '[...] Thanks for not throwing in the towel' (Mar. 8, 2006)

Furthermore, it emphasizes the need for excelling in playing among the best. Thus, defining the goals of where Spain should play also defines the quality of playing and the players. For instance, Zapatero refers to playing in "First Division" or the "Champion League" when referring to improvements in the Spanish economic crisis.

3) [...] *La meta de España es estar en la primera división del mundo* '[...] Spain's goal is to be in the first division of the world' (Sept. 6, 2007)

Playing also serves as an evaluation to define the players and their adversaries. The socialist party defines itself as having a strong bench, not throwing in the towel:

4) [...] *el partido socialista, afortunadamente, tiene un banquillo fuerte* '[...] the socialist party, fortunately, has a strong bench' (Oct. 30, 2006)

In contrast, the Opposition (PP) is presented as lacking participation and ethics in the game. Playing highlights particularly what and how the opposition plays, as well as its wrong behavior or actions in politics. Conceptual metaphors such as POLITICAL POSITIONS ARE GAME POSITIONS, MAKING BAD POLITICS IS PLAYING BAD GAMES, and SUCCEEDING IN POLITICS IS BEING A CHAMPION characterize the Opposition as playing wrongly and badly. Positions in the game field such as offside (*fuera de juego*) are employed to indicate political positions when voting or deciding new political proposals:

5) *[...] no se queden fuera de juego, como se han quedado en la Ley Educativa, con el Estatuto de Autonomía por jugar al radicalismo, a la exageración y al extremismo, que es a lo que juegan todos los días* '[...] do not remain offside, as you did with the Education Law, with the Statue of Autonomy, for playing at radicalism, exaggeration, and extremism, which is what you play at every day' (Nov. 30, 2005)

Example (5) portrays PP as a player whose position in the game is offside. This position indicates PP's breaking of a regulation, in this case, supporting policies such as the new Education Law and the Statue of Autonomy in Catalonia. Offside also indicates that PP is not actively involved with the other players in the game. The type of games that PP has played in the field, such as radicalism and extremism, is what has caused them to remain in the offside position. Therefore, playing wrong games in politics bring those players out of the game. Interestingly, winning does not always have a positive connotation. Zapatero also uses game metaphors with a pinch of irony when presenting the PP as the champions of radicalism:

6) *[...] en esta Legislatura los que son campeones en la radicalización son ustedes, el Partido Popular* '[...] in this Legislature, the ones who are champions in radicalization, it is you, the Popular Party' (Sept. 12, 2007)

By doing this, the resulting effect on the audience is the opposite, as the PP is portrayed as losers, not as real champions. Apart from portraying the type of "winners" they are, playing also indicates the players' ethics. The perception of the Opposition as the bad player, lacking ethics in the game, is evidenced in the conceptual metaphor WAYS OF ACTING IN POLITICS ARE WAYS OF ACTING IN A GAME. The Opposition is presented as breaking the rules, such as making someone trip up (*poner zancadillas*), committing fouls (*cometer faltas*), or cheating (*hacer trampas*).

7) *[...] el Gobierno anterior hacía trampas* '[...] the previous government cheated' (Sept. 13, 2004)

8) *[...] a algunos les gusta más jugar poniendo zancadillas o haciendo faltas exageradas* '[...] Some people prefer to play by making someone trip up' (Jun. 9, 2006)

9) *[...] se ha jugado con mala fe (...) por parte del Partido Popular en la política antiterrorista* '[...] The Popular Party has played with bad intentions in anti-terrorist matters' (Mar. 6, 2008)

### 4.3 Gambling Metaphors

Besides metaphors of playing, the results indicate that game is a recursive strategy to portray political actions and attitudes through the conceptual metaphors POLITICAL

ACTIONS ARE GAMES and POLITICAL ATTITUDES ARE GAMES. In particular, Zapatero's vision is conceptualized through the specification of different types of games, such as gambling. Gambling metaphors (POLITICS IS GAMBLING) frame Zapatero's politics of calculated risks and optimism. They are the most frequent in his discourse (58%) with 828 candidate metaphors. As shown in Figure 4, gambling occurrences remain always the most frequent in each year, and they are used to frame all topics of discussion. Howe (1988: 88) points out that "the repeated and systematic use of particular types of metaphor may be taken to reveal the fundamental attitudes and concepts of such speakers." Thus, the frequency of gambling clearly shows a tendency of taking risks in his way of making politics. Gambling is expressed through only 8 different metaphor keywords: *apostar* 'to bet', *apuesta* '(a) bet', *acertar* 'to guess correctly', *acierto* 'the correct guess', *augurar* 'to predict', *pronóstico* 'prediction', *estar/haber/poner en juego* 'to risk', and *jugarse* 'to gamble/to risk'. Although gambling contains the least variety of metaphor keywords, surprisingly, *apuesta* and *apostar* are the two most frequent ones in the corpus.

Gambling metaphors serve several persuasive functions. First, they portray Zapatero's way of doing politics, that is, taking new actions and risks continuously to solve the country's concurrent problems. The constant emphasis on gambling, regardless of the topic of discussion, shows the need for new changes in policies and new initiatives (POLITICAL INITIATIVES/ACTIONS ARE BETS).

10) [...] *Apostemos, pues, por las energías renovables decididamente* [...] Let's bet then for renewable energies decisively' (May 4, 2010)

11) [...] *la apuesta por la libertad y la democracia en Libia* [...] the bet for freedom and democracy in Libya' (Jul. 25, 2011)

12) [...] *estaba convencido de que el proceso de paz en 2006 nos podría llevar al fin de la violencia y me la jugué* [...] I was convinced that the peace process in 2006 could take us to the end of violence, and I took the risk' (Jan. 24, 2011)

Considering the socio-political context, Spain faced, for the greater part of Zapatero's candidature, serious problems (terrorism, unemployment, etc.). Gambling provides an option, that is, the possibility of changing and winning. Unlike sports, Zapatero does not specify types of gambling, but the action in itself. Gambling metaphors serve as a persuasive strategy for a call for action and participating in risk-taking action. Therefore, for Zapatero, he who does not risk, breaks even. It should also be mentioned that although gambling is considered a game of chance, Zapatero's bets are not left to pure luck—They are calculated, strategic, and well thought out. His bets show his political attitude (POLITICAL ATTITUDES ARE BETS). This is achieved by the pragmatic force that defines gambling metaphors as sure, secure, firm, decisive, and clear among others: *apuesta ganadora* 'winning bet' (Feb. 12, 2009), *apuesta de convicción* 'a bet of conviction' (Jul. 14, 2006), *apuesta decidida* 'a determined bet' (Dec. 16, 2006), and *la apuesta más segura* 'the most secure bet' (Mar. 2, 2010). This

risk-taking political strategy communicates reassurance. It underscores Zapatero's politics of conviction to restore confidence and hope in the public.

Gambling metaphors also present Oneself and the Opposition. Gambling allowed Zapatero to portray himself as a confident, trust worthy, and innovative politician. With Spain's continuing deep economic crisis and serious national issues, including terrorism or self-independence, the public desperately desired someone they could trust.

13) [...] *el Partido Socialista siempre se la ha jugado por España* '[...] the Socialist Party has always taken the risk for Spain' (Dec. 30, 2010)

At the same time, gambling portrays the Opposition as lacking courage and security for betting for new political proposals.

14) [...] *tiene ante sí el reto de ser valiente y de apostar por la unión constitucional y mirar al mundo con más seguridad* '[...] you have in front of you the challenge of being brave and betting for the constitutional union and looking at the world with more security' (Nov. 20, 2006)

The act of taking risks with confidence also shows Zapatero's optimistic initiatives. This attitude serves to inspire confidence and trust in the public. It was particularly relevant in topics such as the economic crisis, where unemployment was continuously increasing, or terrorism, which persisted even after 40 years.

#### 4.4 Sports Metaphors

Zapatero's fondness for sports prevails in his discourse through the use of sports conceptual metaphors such as POLITICS IS SPORTS, POLITICS IS FOOTBALL, POLITICS IS SAILING, POLITICS IS ATHLETICS, POLITICS IS SKATING, POLITICS IS ROWING, POLITICS IS FENCING, POLITICS IS BASKETBALL, POLITICS IS A COMPETITIVE GAME, POLITICS IS A SKILLED GAME, and POLITICS IS A STRATEGIC GAME. As he states, *La política debería parecerse más al deporte [...] porque el deporte es, ante todo, un juego noble en el que se pone toda la pasión y toda la competitividad, pero hay unas reglas deportivas* 'Politics should be more similar to sports (...) because sports is, above all, a noble game in which one puts all passion and competitiveness, but there are some sport rules' (Jun. 9, 2006). Sport metaphors include the most variety of metaphor keywords (52). These keywords refer to both general and specific aspects of sports. General aspects of sports are frequently used to highlight the traits of a good player or good game, such as sportsmanship, competitiveness, skill, strategy, teamwork, passion, effort, or challenges. Sportsmanship is employed to accept constructive criticism from opponents:

15) [...] *aceptaré las críticas con toda deportividad* '[...] I will accept criticism with sportsmanship' (Apr. 12, 2008)

16) [...] *los mejores resultados se obtienen cuando se trabaja en equipo* '[...] the best results are obtained when working as a team' (Feb. 2, 2011)

Zapatero chooses specific types of sports (football, sailing, athletics, fencing, skating, rowing, climbing, and high jump) to frame the political debate. The data reveal that regardless of the topic of discussion, Zapatero tends to choose particular aspects from these sports. Some of these sports allusions are as follows: winning a race, reaching the bar in a high-jump event, taking over in a relay race in athletics (REACHING POLITICAL GOALS ARE WINNING A RACE/REACHING THE BAR IN A HIGH-JUMP EVENT, POLITICAL INITIATIVES ARE RELAY RUNNERS), rowing in the same direction (TO AGREE IN POLITICS IS TO ROW IN THE SAME DIRECTION), sailing with tailwind or headwind, overcoming thunders, and not sinking or running aground (POLITICAL MANEUVERS ARE SAILING MANEUVERS, OVERCOMING POLITICAL PROBLEMS IS OVERCOMING HOSTILE WEATHER CONDITIONS), fencing with offensive or defensive movements (POLITICAL ARGUMENT IS FENCING), skidding in skating (LACK OF ABILITY IN POLITICS IS LACK OF ABILITY IN PLAYING A (SPORTS) GAME), climbing (POLITICAL DIFFICULTY IS CLIMBING), refereeing a match fairly (CONDUCTING POLITICS IS REFEREEING A MATCH), and being in the finals (TO IMPROVE THE POLITICAL SITUATION IS TO BE IN THE FINALS). I cite below some interesting examples as evidence of references to the aspects aforementioned:

17) [...] *estamos lejos de la meta que todo el conjunto de la sociedad española quiere alcanzar. Apenas hemos recorrido una primera etapa en esta carrera* '[...] we are far away from the finish line that all Spanish society wants to reach. We hardly have reached the first stage in this race' (Jul. 11, 2006)

18) [...] *remando siempre en la misma dirección, sujetos a un compromiso firme y compartido* '[...] rowing always in the same direction, subject to a firm and shared commitment' (Apr. 1, 2009)

19) [...] *el barco no puede encallar y porque hemos decidido superar la tormenta juntos y seguir navegando* '[...] the ship cannot go aground and because we have decided to overcome the thunder together and keep sailing' (Jul. 27, 2011)

20) [...] *Van a cometer (...) el mismo patinazo* '[...] You are going to skid in the same way' (Jun. 30, 2004)

The most frequent sports conceptual metaphors come from football. Bringing the language of football into the political arena may be quite effective because it is the most popular sport in Spain, followed by a vast mass of audience. Although football metaphors are not as frequent in Zapatero's discourse as in Berlusconi's, their presence

is nonetheless important. As Semino and Masci (1993) point out, referring to Berlusconi in Italy, football brings a strong sense of national unity and identity in Spain. Unity becomes stronger when the political problem affects the whole nation. Thus, referring to football allows the speaker to bring in aspects of teamwork and cooperation as there is a need to associate and interact with others.

At the same time, the strong rivalry between two opposing teams in a football game serves as a frame to conceptualize the strong partisan divisions between the two major political parties (PSOE-PP). Expressions such *to score*, *to win matches*, *to sweat the shirt*, *to be in first division*, and *to play in the league* are pervasive in Zapatero's discourse. Thus, football serves as a multi-rhetorical strategy to depict politicians as players and, occasionally, as referees; regional or national elections as matches; and so forth.

International football leagues such as the *Champion League* or *First Division* are employed to define the clear winners and losers, the good position and continuous improvement, and competitiveness of the Spanish economy. This is evidenced by conceptual metaphors such as ECONOMY COMPETITION IS FOOTBALL COMPETITION and TO REALIZE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IS TO WIN MATCHES/TO SCORE GOALS.

21) [...] *la economía española ha entrado en esta legislatura en la "Champions League" de la economía mundial (...) en esta "Champions League" de las economías mundiales España es la que más partidos gana, la que más goles ha metido y la menos goleada.* '[...] The Spanish economy has entered the legislature of the Champion League of the World economy (...) in this Champion League of the World economies, Spain is the one that has won more games, the one that has scored the most, and the least being scored on' (Sept. 11, 2007)

In particular, the reference to the Champion League is a case of situationally triggered metaphor (Semino 2008). The choice of this metaphor is motivated by the current situation of the moment, which was the event of the European Champion Leagues for football that took place from September 2007 to May 2008. This metaphor is deliberately exploited to create a stronger bond with the public because football events are widely watched and followed in Spain. The economic crisis and high unemployment rate needed serious improvements, as they were affecting the vast majority of the population. The metaphor of the Champion Leagues served as a venue for encouragement and motivation to bring success again in the economy arena. Not only is football as politics a competitive sport, but players need to be skilled and acquire special techniques and tactics. Football strategies as the triangulation (*triangulación*) are used to define the government strategy. Evidence of POLITICAL STRATEGIES ARE FOOTBALL STRATEGIES can be observed as follows:

22) [...] *España va a jugar activamente. Entendemos que nuestra posición nos permitirá realizar una triangulación constructiva [...]* (Nov. 14, 2008) '[...] Spain is going



to play actively. We understand that our position will allow us to realize a constructive triangulation [...] (Nov. 14, 2008)

Competitiveness and skill are not developed alone without the emotion and passion that players bring to the field. Zapatero presents his team as having a strong bench, sweating the shirt, and breaking records.

#### 4.5 Other Games

Apart from gambling and sports, politics is framed through other games such as card games, chess, magic games, word games, games of equilibrium, games of calculus, and games of strategies. These games are used to emphasize particular political actions and attitudes. In some cases, the type of game is explicitly mentioned (*juegos de equilibrio* 'games of equilibrium', *juegos de palabras* 'word games', *juegos de estrategias* 'strategy games', *juegos de cálculo* 'calculus games', and *juegos de magia* 'magic games'). In other cases, the game is evoked through metaphor keywords that implicitly provide the reference. For instance, the metaphor keyword *jaque* evokes an image of chess, and *barajar* refers to a card game. Although their frequency is the lowest (3%), their presence contributes to the general understanding of game metaphors. Additionally, as it was observed with gambling and sports, these games are not limited to discussions on specific topics, but rather occur across the general debate.

Card games have been an important part of Spanish popular culture and tradition. Therefore, one would expect to find much evidence of them in the corpus. However, this is not the case. As Etienvre (1989: 95–96) indicates, metaphors of games such as cards and chess are no longer the most usual in politics; they have given way to metaphors of sport, which seem to be more commonly understood by the public. This is true to some extent. References to card games, in particular aspects such as *shuffling* and *winning the round*, are commonly employed to target specific political aspects. For instance, *winning the round* communicates confidence to the public in the context of terrorism. In this way, democracy and terrorism are depicted as players that win and lose a round, respectively.

23) *ETA sabe y debe saber que no dispone de dos bazas: violencia terrorista y diálogo* 'ETA knows and should know that (ETA) does not have two rounds: terrorist violence and dialogue' (Jan. 15, 2007)

24) *ETA sabe que hace tiempo le ha ganado la partida la democracia* 'ETA knows that democracy won the round a long time ago' (Feb. 11, 2008)

Examples (23) and (24) are evidence of TERRORISM/DEMOCRACY IS A PLAYER and TO WIN TERRORISM IS TO WIN A ROUND. Moreover, the metaphor of *shuffling* possibilities or situations is commonly employed to emphasize repositioning or reconsideration of a specific situation. Other games (e.g., chess) also emphasize reposition as well as strategic movements in the discussion on economy: ECONOMY IS A CHESS GAME and ACTIONS IN ECONOMY ARE CHECKMATE MOVEMENTS.

25) [...] *la fragilidad de ese sistema financiero, cómo la difusión, interesada o no, de un falso rumor puede poner en jaque las cotizaciones bursátiles* '[...] the fragility of the financial system, like the spread, intended or not, of a false rumor, can put the stock market prices in a checkmate' (May 12, 2010)

Checkmate movement is the most well-thought out and difficult position in chess. In this position, the adversary is being threatened and captured, which results in the end of the game. Example (25) indicates that taking the wrong actions can have strong negative consequences for the economy. Unstable situations in politics at the national or international level are portrayed as games of equilibrium, where balancing competing forces is the government's ultimate goal. While games of equilibrium emphasize the government's actions, games of strategies indicate the beneficial results for the citizens. If games of strategies are generally used positively to underscore the strategic action of politicians, games of magic are employed to evaluate the action of politicians negatively as creating a false illusion of reality. The metaphor of magic gives rise to conceptual metaphors such as POLITICAL ACTION IS MAGIC:

26) [...] *las iniciativas de este tipo era calificarlas como que alguien se sacaba un conejo de la chistera* '[...] the initiatives of this type was to classify them as if someone was pulling the rabbit out of the hat' (Jun. 2, 2004)

27) [...] *no podemos hacer de las previsiones una especie de magia* '[...] we cannot make from the predictions a sort of magic' (Jul. 2, 2009)

Games of magic and calculus games connote a negative meaning because they show the political interests of a particular political group. Thus, the metaphor of calculus games indicates the benefit to a particular group of individuals, not the whole society.

## 5. Conclusion

This analysis has confirmed that game metaphors are pervasive in Zapatero's discourse. The main conceptual metaphor underlying his vision is POLITICS IS A GAME. This study suggests that his political communication is constructed metaphorically with the notion of game, and more specifically, with gambling (a game of alea), sports (a game of agôn), and playing. This combination presents his vision on politics as a competitive, skilled, bound-rule game in which one should take well thought out risks in order to beat the odds and win. This study also suggests that game metaphors are multi-functional, as gambling, sports, and playing metaphors are exploited to fulfill particular objectives. The high frequency of gambling metaphors indicates his attitude for taking new initiatives to improve the Spanish welfare state (economic crisis, unemployment, terrorism, etc.). These actions, conceptualized as strategically calculated, sure bets, serve as persuasive strategies to urge the public to take risks. His political gambles to bet for new actions, such as negotiations with ETA to obtain peace or reforms on autonomies statutes, indicate that Spain is still evolving for improvement as a democratic country. In addition, sports metaphors serve as reinforcement for the realization of Zapatero's bets, as they emphasize teamwork and

collaboration. This is important given that Zapatero encountered strong opposition to some of his new measures from some political parties. Therefore, he used sport metaphors as a rhetorical strategy to emphasize the need for a common consensus and support for these new actions. In particular, football metaphors played an important role in that they built a special connection with the public as they sent a positive message of encouragement, hope, and trust. Playing metaphors also contribute to establish the moral principles of the game and the players. They emphasize the need for all members to be actively involved and follow the rules. This is particularly appealing when some political parties resist accepting and following the rules of the majority. By doing this, they help to portray the type of players involved in the game in terms of their ethics. This study also shows that game metaphors are employed across a wide range of topics (terrorism, economy, domestic affairs, foreign affairs, and society). It is worth noting the high frequency of gambling metaphors to communicate Zapatero's goals, especially in economy matters, as they conceptualize the need for an immediate call for action. This is interesting, as one might expect sports metaphors to be the most frequent ones in Spain, especially football, since it is quite popular. The metaphors of playing, gambling, and sports complement each other in framing how a politician may use game metaphors for political communication. They are not strict categories used for a specific topic of discussions, but their combination results in a powerful rhetorical strategy for the politician. The results of this study may open up other possibilities for future research on the discursive functions of game metaphors. One might further this line of enquiry by examining how game metaphors may be employed by politicians with different political ideologies to address a specific political topic.

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