Summary in English

1. Introduction

This thesis addressed the role of metaphor in the trend of the conversationalization of Dutch public discourse. Several quantitative studies were conducted to determine the forms and frequencies of linguistic metaphors in the contemporary registers of Dutch conversation and news, and in two periods of Dutch news. They focused on the typical metaphorical forms of conversations and of news and aimed to determine whether current news had shifted towards conversations in its use of linguistic metaphors in comparison to historical news. In addition, qualitative studies were conducted that focused on specific patterns of metaphors communication personal intentions in historical and current news, metaphors that were deliberately used to draw attention to its topic.

2. Summary of the main findings

2.1 Main research questions

The conversationalization hypothesis proposed by Fairclough entails the modelling of public discourse upon conversational practices in a broad sense, where public discourse increasingly shows a trend of including features of conversations (Fairclough, 1994). Some of the main features of this trend, according to Fairclough, include the increasing use of linguistic elements such as colloquial vocabulary, personal pronouns, hedges, and several more, in the language of public discourse, and the changing roles and relations between participants, particularly visible in political speeches (Fairclough, 1994; Fairclough & Mauranen, 1997). Although Fairclough’s ideas are mainly based on intuitions and sporadic linguistic evidence, several corpus-based studies have shown that his claims are intuitively correct (Pearce, 2005; Steen, 2003). Pearce found that British political party manifestos have become more informal over the period of several decades, basing his analysis on the occurrence and frequencies of several linguistic features that can be marked as features of informal language use (such as first and second personal pronouns and stance adverbs (Pearce, 2002, 2005). Steen found that one particular type of news text, editorials in The Times, have also undergone the trend of conversationalization between 1950 and 2000; more recent editorials contained more features of involved language use and persuasive language such as first and second personal pronouns and modal auxiliaries. The result from these corpus-based studies thus confirmed the ideas of conversationalization of public discourse.

Several other corpus-based studies of diachronic variation in different varieties of language illustrated similar trends as the ones described above. Most
notable are Biber and Finegan’s (1989, 1992, 2001) studies based on Biber’s (1988) multi-feature/multi-dimensional approach to variation in speech and writing. Biber and Finegan (2001) found that the register of news reportage has followed a general drift towards more oral styles during the 19th and 20th century, and showed the strongest shift in the later period. Their conclusions are based on the fact that news reportage increasingly contains linguistic elements from dimensions that reflected involved production and situation-dependent reference, summarized by Biber and Finegan as reflecting oral styles (1989, 2001). Similar results were also found by Westin (2002; and Westin & Geisler, 2002) for editorials in particular, although the patterns for some dimensions were less clear than for other dimensions due to the variation in newspapers included in the study.

The studies above focused predominantly on linguistic features involved in the conversationalization and informalization of news discourse. A number of studies focused on textual and contextual issues in relation to trends of conversationalization, such as Hundt and Mair (1999) and Mair (2006), who stated that textual conventions such as the increasing use of direct quotes in news reportage contributed to what they call the colloquialization of news discourse. In addition, Holly (2008) commented on the change in visual features such as headlines, layout and photos that reflected an increasing resemblance to popular tabloids. In all, the different trends observed within different fields and based on different elements of discourse all seem to point to an ongoing change in the style of news language in the direction of conversational practices.

None of the studies above, however, have taken into account lexical semantic features such as subjective lexical markers, metaphorical language or irony, to name a few examples, as possible features involved in the conversationalization of news. With respect to metaphorical language, many discourse-based studies on metaphor in news have shown that metaphors can play an important role in how news is brought across, and may be employed to informalize and personalize the style of news in various ways. The excerpts in the introduction offered an illustration of these issues. In addition, metaphors seem to behave differently in different registers; some metaphor in conversations can be seen as characteristic for conversation, whereas some metaphors in news may be seen as characteristic for news. Based on the findings of the forms and functions of metaphors in various language varieties, it may be that this lexical semantic phenomenon may also play an important role in the conversationalization of news.

Based on the general findings for the conversationalization of news and the forms and functions of metaphor in different registers such as conversations and news, two main research questions were formulated.

1. In how far do the contemporary registers of conversations and news differ from each other on the frequencies, forms and functions of metaphorical language? If there are differences, can these be ascribed to the functional differences between the registers in general?
2. In how far do historical news language and current news language differ from each other on the occurrence and use of metaphorical expressions? If there are differences, do these contribute significantly to the processes of style shifts in news discourse, that is, can they be seen as part of the general trend of conversationalization?

In short, the question that will be answered is whether metaphors are linguistic elements that also contribute significantly to the processes of style shifts in news discourse, and how they this contribution then works.

In order to answer these questions, various facets of metaphorical language use in contemporary Dutch conversation, current news and historical news have been analysed in detail from a quantitative and qualitative perspective.

2.2 Metaphor in language, thought, and communication

The main element under review in this study is the lexical-semantic phenomenon of metaphor. There seem to be as many ideas about what constitutes metaphor as there are metaphors in a language. The view of metaphor adopted in this thesis is based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), a cognitive-linguistic theory of metaphor that has become influential since the publication of Lakoff and Johnson’s *Metaphors we live by* (1980). The notion of a conceptual metaphor is generally described as a cross-domain mapping: one conceptual domain, the target domain, is understood in terms of another conceptual domain, the source domain, with systematic sets of correspondences or mappings occurring across the conceptual domains. One of the main claims of CMT is that metaphor is not just a matter of language, but essentially a matter of thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). It emphasises the idea that we conventionally think and thus talk about abstract, complex or unfamiliar concepts or domains in terms of concrete, human-oriented, or spatial concepts. They mainly present linguistic examples to support their ideas, but at the same time stress that linguistic metaphors are possible because people have metaphors in their conceptual systems.

The main criticism towards CMT is focused on the fact that it does not take into account naturally observed language data; what is said about the way people use metaphors is not based on the way metaphors occur in real, naturally produced language. The Pragglejaz Group (2007: 1) sums up the main problem by suggestion that claims about the ubiquity and realistic understanding of metaphors ask for explorations of metaphor in the real world as speakers and writers produce it in varying contexts. In addition, the top-down approach taken by CMT, departing from pre-existing ideas of conceptual metaphor structures and presenting decontextualised linguistic evidence to underpin the ideas, has been criticised by various corpus-based studies. Cameron (2003) and Deignan (2005), for instance, suggests that a bottom-up approach to metaphor in discourse, where linguistic metaphors are identified first and possible systematic patterns of conceptual
structure are deduced from the data, may provide a more detailed picture of the forms and patterns of metaphors.

In order to find linguistic metaphors in a systematic and reliable manner, the Pragglejaz Group (2007) have developed MIP, a metaphor identification procedure. MIP is intended to be an explicit, reliable, and flexible method for finding metaphorically used words in naturally occurring discourse, and in doing so pulls apart the linguistic analysis from the conceptual analysis (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). The procedure is based on the notion that a metaphor is a cross-domain mapping between source and target domain, but also says that metaphor in language and metaphor in thought are two separate elements that can be found and viewed in separation from each other. It intends to identify the metaphorically used words, and not the complex underlying conceptual structures.

Corpus-based studies of metaphor have demonstrated that metaphor in discourse is often highly conventional, showing that many genres of discourse contain similar metaphorical expressions with similar underlying conceptual structures. In a number of cases, such highly conventional linguistic metaphors may be metaphorical in language, but may not be understood as such due to their conventional nature. Examples are the use of expressions from the domain of spatial movement to describe economic processes in news reports from the economy section. However, it is also suggested in some studies that, even when a metaphorical expression is conventional, it can still invoke a cross-domain mapping for which the addressee has to set up a comparison between the source and target domain. Many examples of such metaphors occur in genres such as political speeches or classroom talk, where metaphors are used deliberately to express a particular idea and communicate an intention on the part of the speaker or writer. There thus seem to be important differences between the functions and communicative intentions of different kinds of metaphors, even when they could be classified as conventional.

To distinguish between those kinds of metaphorical uses, Steen (2008) proposes to adopt a three-dimensional approach to metaphor, distinguishing not only between metaphor in language (the linguistic expression) and metaphor in thought (the conceptual structure), but also between metaphor in communication (the function). The latter takes into account deliberate metaphor as a form of metaphor that involves the intentional use of a source domain term to review a target domain (Steen, 2008). As Seen puts it, ‘when metaphor is studied as part of actual language use, or events of discourse, it does not only manifest a linguistic form and a conceptual structure, but also a communicative function’ (Steen, 2008: 221). Although this idea of communicative function may not apply clearly to every metaphor in authentic language use, it does seem to apply for a number of metaphors, novel as well as conventional.

The analysis of metaphor in the present study is then based on Steen’s three-dimensional model of metaphor, and focuses particularly on the forms and frequencies of metaphor in conversation and news (metaphor in language) and occurrences and functions of those metaphors used deliberately in news (metaphor
in communication), with the latter is also taken into account on the basis of the underlying conceptual structures (metaphor in thought).

2.3 Developing and applying a tool for linguistic metaphor identification in Dutch discourse

In order to find all the linguistic metaphors in natural discourse, the present study developed and applied an extensive, systematic and reliable method for linguistic metaphor identification, called MIPVU. The method is based on the original MIP procedure developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), but has been explicated and extended to also find direct metaphors and implicit metaphors. In addition, MIPVU was adjusted and expanded slightly to be applicable to Dutch discourse. The differences between MIP and MIPVU can be found in the clearer explication of how to deal with multi-word lexical units and different grammatical categories of one word form, but differences essentially entail the additional steps to identify direct metaphor, usually in the form of similes, implicit metaphor, and metaphor signals (such as like to signal a simile).

In order to use it for metaphor identification in Dutch discourse, a number of additional issues had to be explicated. The most important issue entailed the dictionary used to define contextual and basic senses of lexical units; the absence of a, preferred, corpus-based dictionary for Dutch forced us to use a historically based dictionary to assist us in determining different senses of lexical units. This caused a few operational problems which related to the basic foundations of the method; historically based dictionaries generally keep archaic senses of words in their list of definitions, which interfered with the basic contemporary perspective; and a number of nouns are generally defined by nominalisations of the related verb, which sometimes interfered with the tenet of separating different grammatical classes of one word form in the analysis of meaning. These issues were explained in the adjusted version of the manual for Dutch, and solutions were also given. In addition, a number of language-specific issues with respect to complex multi-word units arose; these were also described and resolved in the extended version.

The adjusted version of MIPVU for Dutch yielded equally reliable results for the identification of metaphor as MIPVU did for English in the English-language project. The reliability results demonstrated that the procedure works in a consistently reliable manner for Dutch contemporary language data and Dutch historical language data, similar to its reliability for English language data reported on in previous work (Steen, Dorst et al., 2010). Reliability is high, solid, and consistent across the five reliability tests. It is encouraging that this is the case for the Dutch data, consisting of different registers and different periods, and with a different dictionary and various language-specific issues. The fact that this study, in collaboration with the English language metaphor project, has yielded a systematic tool for linguistic metaphor identification that has given reliable results
over two different languages, four different register, and two different periods, is one of the main assets of the study.

2.4 Register variation: metaphor forms and frequencies in contemporary Dutch conversation and news

The quantitative analysis of linguistic metaphors in the registers of conversation and news showed that they differ greatly from each other on the level of frequencies and grammatical forms of metaphors. The two data sets were first compared on their general frequencies of eight main word classes to determine whether they show similar patterns of linguistic variation as found in Biber’s (1988) variation study, namely that news contained many nouns, prepositions and adjectives, and that conversation contained many pronouns, adverbs and verbs. A chi-square analysis showed that there was a significant interaction between register and words class. Conversations contained significantly more adverbs than news and also showed a higher frequency of the remainder category, which contained, among other features, the personal pronouns. News contained significantly more nouns and prepositions. The percentages of verbs in the two registers were comparable. On the whole, the patterns found in the Dutch conversations and news texts are in agreement with the patterns found in Biber’s (1988, 1989) studies of English discourse. The findings illustrate that Dutch conversational would score high on the ‘involvement’ pole of the Dimension 1 distinguishing spoken from written language, and that Dutch news would score high on the ‘informational’ pole of the same dimension.

With regard to grammatical forms of metaphor, it was expected that the two registers would differ from each other in the frequencies of the different grammatical forms, based on the overall differences of word class and on the assumption that different registers often require different metaphor forms for different purposes. A loglinear analysis showed a significant three-way interaction between register, word class and metaphor, which means that the way in which non-metaphor-related and metaphor-related words are divided over the registers is dependent on the word classes that appear in each register.

Two main patterns could be deduced from the results. Firstly, conversation and news showed a significantly different distribution of metaphor over the eight main word classes. In conversations, determiners (29.6%) and prepositions (29.3%) each account for nearly one third of the total number of metaphor-related words, and verbs (21.7%) are the third most frequent word class for metaphor-related words. In news, prepositions (47.8%) account for nearly half of all the metaphor-related word. Verbs (22.7%) and nouns (15.8%) are the second and third most frequent word classes for the metaphor-related words. These findings relate to the overall differences in word class per register mentioned above. In general, the differences between the two Dutch registers are in agreement with findings from previous corpus-based studies on the linguistic forms of metaphor in various
discourse varieties (cf. Cameron, 2003, 2008; Deignan, 2005; Steen, Dorst et al., 2010).

Secondly, the separate word classes behaved metaphorically in different ways in each of the registers. The most noteworthy differences occur for determiners, prepositions, verbs, and to some extent nouns. While 28.8% of the determiners in conversations have been coded as metaphor-related, only 6.5% of the determiners in news are metaphor-related. This is partly due to the different sub-classes within the word class of determiners. Particularly the demonstratives die ‘that’ and dat ‘that’ are frequently used metaphorically in conversations. The occurrence of metaphor-related demonstratives in conversation is predominantly due to the nature of this register; when interacting with each other, participants often refer back to (aspects of) previous utterances using demonstratives. News is more often descriptive in the sense that reports refer to concrete events and actions that occurred in specific places.

With respect to prepositions, they are often metaphor-related in general, but much more so in news (70.7% of the total number of prepositions) than in conversations (53.4% of the total number of prepositions). The high frequencies of metaphor-related prepositions in the two registers are partly due to the inherent characteristics of prepositions. The most frequent prepositions have basic meanings that denote spatial relations, but are also often used to denote temporal relationships or other abstract connections between entities (cf. Cuyckens, 1991; Lindstromberg, 1998; Tyler & Evans, 2003). The difference in metaphor portions between the two registers seems extensively due to the frequent occurrence of a few prepositions in news that are semantically complex, in particular the Dutch van ‘of/for’.

Relatively speaking, verbs occur nearly as often in conversation as in news (16.6% in conversation and 15.9% in news), but the proportion of non-metaphor-related and metaphor-related verbs is different in the two registers. Of all the verbs in conversations, 15.5% was coded as metaphor-related, while of all the verbs in news, 31.5% was coded as metaphor-related. This means that verbs are metaphor-related twice as often in news. The frequencies for verb lemmas in the metaphor-related show that the higher proportion of metaphor-related verbs in news is not caused by the frequencies for the ten most used verb lemmas. The list of most frequent metaphor-related verbs in the two registers and the type-token ratio for metaphor-related verb lemmas seems to suggest that particular verb lemmas that are frequent behave metaphorically in similar ways in conversation and news, but that news contains a much wider variety of verb lemmas and thus more options for verbs to be metaphorical. The main idea behind the variety is that the variation in topics and the notion that news language is used to refer to specific actions, events, people, places, and dates require news language to contain words that can describe and denote these affairs.

Lastly, the word class of nouns also shows different frequencies for metaphor-related words for conversations and news. In conversations, 7.2% was coded as metaphor-related, while in news 12.2% was coded as metaphor-related.
Nouns are thus not only more frequent in news than in conversation, but are also relatively more often metaphorically used in news. The overall frequency for nouns in news that are metaphor-related is not so much influenced by a few very frequent metaphorical nouns, but by many infrequent metaphorical nouns. This is also reflected by the higher type-token ratio for news in comparison to conversations. The patterns for metaphorical nouns in news are complex but can be explained partly by the inherent nature of news. News discourse typically reports on a large variety of topics, situations and events, and consequently needs a large variety of nouns to describe these issues. Many of those topics deal with abstract or complex situations which can be explained by using more concrete nouns that relate to human experience and behaviour. It seems that due to the variety in topics in news there is more demand for metaphorical nouns that can denote and describe the topics in concrete terms.

What the metaphor data in the two registers demonstrate most of all is the conventional nature of the majority of the linguistic metaphors in conversation as well as news. Many lemmas occur as a metaphor more than once in the various word classes, and many are used in conventional manners to refer to abstract entities within abstract domains. Within those conventional patterns, specific news and conversation patterns for a number of lemmas stand out. The detailed linguistic analysis of metaphors in two contemporary registers provides additional evidence for the general idea that metaphor is pervasive in everyday language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). At the same time, the high degree of conventionality of the linguistic data may suggest that metaphors are predominantly just that, and may not be pervasive in thought as well. Many examples from the different word classes in chapter 5 indicate that the possible underlying conceptual structures of the conventional expressions are abstract and at points skeletal, and that they thus may be metaphorical in language but not in thought (cf. Bowdle & Gentner, 2005; Cameron, 2003; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

2.5 Diachronic variation: metaphor and the personalization of news language

The quantitative analysis of linguistic metaphors in two periods of news showed that the periods only differed on some level of frequencies and grammatical forms of metaphors. The two data sets were first compared for their general frequencies of eight main word classes to determine whether current news texts showed similar stylistic shifts towards conversations as suggested and illustrated by the studies focusing the conversationalization of metaphor. A chi-square analysis showed that there is a significant interaction between the time periods for news and word class. The significant interaction is mainly due to the word classes of nouns and conjunctions; nouns are more frequent in current news, while conjunctions are more frequent in historical news. The patterns for word class frequencies in Dutch historical and current news are different from what was found by Biber and colleagues (cf. Biber & Finegan, 1989, 1992, 2001). Dutch current news texts
contain fewer determiners and fewer verbs, and significantly more nouns than Dutch historical news texts. With respect to adjectives, adverbs and prepositions, the differences in frequencies for the two news sets are minimal, and not significant. The contrary of what Biber and colleagues found seems to be true: current news texts contain more informational features such as nouns and fewer involved features such as determiners and verbs, and thus seem to have become even more informational and formal in comparison to historical news.

With regard to grammatical forms of metaphor, it was expected that the two periods would differ from each other in the frequencies of the different grammatical forms, based on the idea that metaphors may play a role in the overall conversationalization of news. A loglinear analysis showed a significant three-way interaction between news period, word class and metaphor, thus suggesting that the way in which non-metaphor-related and metaphor-related words are divided over the news periods is dependent on the word classes that appear in each period. When comparing the manner in which metaphors are distributed over the eight word classes in each of the period, it seems that their distributions overlap to a considerable degree. These frequency findings can be partly explained by the fact that the frequencies of word classes in the two periods were also relatively equal.

Despite the relatively equal distribution in the two periods, there are differences between the periods in the portion of metaphor-related words for some word classes. They may not be as clear as the differences between conversation and current news, but do contribute to the significant three-way interaction between word class, metaphor, and news period. In historical news, 73.7% of the total number of prepositions were coded as metaphor-related, while in current news, 70.7% of the total number of prepositions were coded as metaphor-related. The data for prepositions have shown that this word class occurs highly frequently as metaphors in both news periods, and often consist of complex metaphorical structures and mappings.

Of all the verbs in historical news, 26.6% were coded as metaphor-related, against 31.5% metaphor-related verbs in current news. So although verbs overall occur more frequently in historical news, they are used metaphorically more often in current news. The patterns of vinden in historical and current news make clear that current news texts seem to make more use of direct and indirect quotations from different kinds of sources. The instances of vinden in current news that were discussed above show that, although vinden is hardly ever used in combination with a personal opinion of the writer, it is frequently used in combination with the opinions of different news sources. A comparison with what happens in historical news also shows that this kind of use of opinions from other people is more frequent in the current news texts in relation to news reports from 1950. Consequently, the rise in metaphorical instances of vinden in news reports seems to be related to the rise of quotations from different sources and their opinions in the reports. Although these opinions are not formed by the writer, as in the case of conversations and speakers, they do enhance the idea that current news looks more like conversations and their structures than historical news.
The main patterns of metaphor-related uses of *krijgen*, *hebben*, and *gaan* illustrate a difference between the news periods and the contemporary registers. On the whole, the register of news showed a move towards the more abstract pattern of conversations in its use of metaphor-related verb patterns when historical and current news were compared. The various metaphorical as well as more abstract uses of the verbs under research occurred more frequently in current news, and main patterns of use were more prominent and more clearly linked to the verb uses in conversation. So although overall frequency patterns from the quantitative diachronic analysis do not show a distinct difference between the two periods, the distinction of the metaphor patterns discussed above may have increased the general metaphoricity of current news.

The patterns in chapter 7 illustrated a tendency for verbs in current news to become more abstract. This abstract uses of metaphor-related verbs resulted in a similarity between current news and conversations, which also demonstrated a high degree of abstractness regarding metaphor-related verbs. In this respect, the language of current news tends to take on some of the important characteristics of conversations when it comes to the use of verbs. In general, then, it can be said that the language of news has adopted a more conversational style when it comes to metaphorical patterns of delexicalised verbs. These finding may be interpreted as a trend of conversationalization of the language of news, similar to what previous studies on conversationalizations suggested (Biber & Finegan, 2001; Fairclough, 1994, 1995a, 1995b; Fairclough & Mauranen, 1997). However, the shift in delexicalised patterns that seemed to have occurred between news language from 1950 and 2002 focused on the abstraction of metaphorical language more so than on the more informal or personalised uses of metaphorical language. In that respect, the changes did not seem to affect the register of news as strongly as, for instance, Fairclough suggests in his hypothesis.

A more prominent difference between historical news and current news was found in metaphorical expressions that were intended as metaphors, that is the deliberate metaphors. As indicated in chapter 8, a change towards a more personalized and involved style of language for current news in the language of metaphors could be detected when focusing on deliberate metaphors that are consciously used to communicate a certain intention. These can be novel (but those hardly occurred in our data) or conventional, and distinguish themselves from non-deliberate metaphors in the fact that they are consciously employed to elicit particular rhetorical effects by drawing deliberate attention to the use of another domain as a source domain for re-viewing the target domain (Steen, 2008: 223). Deliberate metaphors in historical and current news were found by looking for signals, in particular the Dutch *als* ‘as/like’ and inverted commas.

With regard to similes, a general trend of making news language more personal and vivid seemed to surface. The overall number of similes were low in comparison to indirect metaphorical expressions, occurred 14 times in current news and only four times in historical news. Despite the relatively low numbers, interesting patterns could be detected nonetheless. The similes in current news
were generally more complex than the similes in historical news. The ones occurring in historical news produced a relatively straightforward comparison between target and source domains. The similes in current news showed a wider variety of structures; some focused explored possibilities of word play, and in others the comparison was completely fleshed out, included different source domain terms for the same referent.

The wider variety of similes found in the current news texts suggests that it has become more accepted to use metaphorical comparisons deliberately to describe people, situations or events. The metaphorical elements hence also seem to trigger the notion that current news texts are more vivid and contain more detailed images than historical news. In addition, the fact that some reports included a relatively large number of similes also suggests that journalists have, or take, the freedom to personalise reports when deemed effective, and can add a subjective note to their writing. In general, the frequencies of similes, the number of directly used words within one simile, and the different complexities lead to the overall conclusion that current news reports allow for a more personalised style of language in the form of deliberate similes. The fact that both news periods predominantly produced similes in newspaper sections that traditionally are seen as the softer news reporting also suggest for now, however, that not all parts of the news freely allow for a personal styles of writing.

With respect to metaphors signalled by inverted commas, some important differences between historical and current news occurred as well. Again, current news texts included more and clearer examples of deliberate metaphors signalled by inverted commas than historical news texts. The effect of these metaphorical expressions marked by inverted commas seemed to be that the reports in questions became more personalised, containing personal ideas and views on the topic they apply to (such as in the arts and sports sections), or level to the knowledge of the addressee, viewing a complex topic in everyday words (such as in science reports). With respect to the latter function, this is similar to how science and educational discourse generally seems to work (cf. Cameron, 2003; Cameron & Low, 2004; Darian, 2000; Low, 2005). The higher number of marked metaphors in current news increases the density of metaphorical expressions that are potentially understood as cross-domain mappings, and in doing so may increase the idea that current news is more involved and personalised with respect metaphorical language use. Although it is still difficult to determine the influence of signals and of context on the actual understanding processes of the words and phrases, the signals are likely to create more awareness, and the signalled metaphorical terms in current news can be picked up more easily as deliberate metaphors.

Current news texts also showed a number of interesting examples of metaphorical comparisons that were extended on different occasions in one text. Such extensions generally create a coherent metaphorical mapping that is given weight by the fact that they are built on throughout a text. One example in particular stood out in current news, while such extensions did not occur in the historical news data. These results also enhanced the idea that deliberate metaphors
are more often used in current news than in historical news, and are, moreover, much more personalised, complex and vivid than the rare cases found in historical news. On the whole, it can be concluded that current news indeed show a clear tendency of becoming more personalised and rhetorically more diverse through the use of deliberate metaphors.

In conclusion, then, we can say that there seems to be a trend of personalization, and to some extent a general trend of conversationalization, in the register of Dutch news with respect to metaphorical language. The main patterns add valuable information on lexical-semantic features to the previously suggested trends of conversationalization, informalization and personalization of news language that focused on lexico-grammatical features (Biber & Finegan, 1992, 2001; Fairclough, 1994; Fairclough & Mauranen, 1997; Pearce, 2005; Steen, 2003; Westin & Geisler, 2002). Detailed qualitative analyses of deliberate metaphorical expressions showed that current news seems to move towards conversations in their use of metaphorical delexicalised verbs and deliberate metaphors. Overall, the register of news shows a general trend of conversationalization in its use of verbs and a general trend of personalization in its employment of deliberate metaphors.

3. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research

During the analysis stage of the study, a number of decisions with respect to corpus material and metaphor identification were taken that inevitably influenced the outcome of the study. Firstly, we chose to include only typical spontaneous conversations in the conversation part of the corpus, seeing these as the most basic form of informal conversations and thus the most basic form of typical conversational language. However, it turned out during the metaphor analysis that because of their high degree of casualness, they did not provide very many metaphorical expressions apart from the highly conventional ones. This high abstract and conventional nature was seen as typical for spontaneous conversations and taken into account in the quantitative metaphor analysis, but it yielded little data to analyse from a qualitative perspective; the data did not show deliberate metaphors. In hindsight, a combination of various conversational settings may have provided a more diverse metaphor data set representing the diversity of conversational language in more detail.

As mentioned above, one of the main assets of the present study is the output of a reliable and systematic method for linguistic metaphor identification, MIPVU. This method includes a number of clear instruction and explications on how to deal with metaphor-related words. However, developing such a systematic method also includes making decisions that can consequently influence the data set and its analysis in a particular manner. One of the main decisions to find metaphors on the level of words, for instance, greatly influences the metaphor data set with which the analyses were conducted. Although we have our clear reasons for choosing the unit of words as our main unit of analysis, it is also possible and
defensible to choose, for instance, the level of phrases as the unit of analysis, although it is difficult to consistently demarcate one phrase form another. Such a decision will have its impact on the metaphor data, and this should be taken into account when comparing the results of this study to other studies’ results. In any case, it remains important for future researchers of metaphor in discourse to be specific about the decisions they have taken during metaphor identification to be able to compare their outcomes with other studies.

One of the main foci of this study is on the quantitative analysis of linguistic metaphors. Such a focus on the language of metaphors limits the analysis of metaphor on other levels, such as the conceptual structures as metaphor in thought. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the news section of the corpus and the abstract nature of the conversation part of the corpus, the possibilities to give useful and detailed suggestions about the conceptual structures in relation to conversationalization and personalization proved difficult to do. In addition, the ideas about deliberate metaphors are based on discourse analysis, due to which we can only guess what is intended and which effect is reached, but not say for certain because text does not give us results with respect to comprehension. This is something which future studies may pick up, as will also be suggested below.

Finally, only two periods in time were used for this study, which makes it more difficult to show a clear trend of change in the style of news over a period of time. It could just be the case that we are analysing two samples that reflect the language use in their respective periods of time, but that the differences in results are not related clearly. However, the fact that we have used a diverse data set for each period, including a wide range of newspapers, news sections, and texts spread over the period of one year each, thus representing news from a broad perspective, can give us a clear idea of the general conventions in the language of that period.

To conclude, there are number of options and recommendations for future research based on the findings and limitation of this study. First of all, it would be interesting to look at metaphor use in various periods of news in a more qualitative manner. As said before, due to heterogeneous nature of the news this study did not look at detailed mappings and conceptual comparisons between news periods, and thus did not incorporate ideas on possible changes in how people have describe similar news facts in the course of several decades, or even centuries. It would be interesting in the light of a possible personalization of news to approach metaphor from a diachronic angle by looking at a diachronic corpus of news texts on a particular topic that may recur over time. It may be, for instance, that economic texts did not include the same conventional metaphor patterns 200 years ago as they have done for the past decades. This can only be found when the focus of the metaphor analysis lies on one particular topic and on qualitative metaphor analysis.

In addition, the ideas proposed in the previous chapter about the increasing role of deliberate uses of metaphor in news language may be taken up from an experimental perspective. A discourse-analytic approach can give only a limited idea of how deliberate metaphors seem to word and seem to influence the rhetorical effect of a text; for one, it cannot give conclusive answers on how
deliberate metaphors are processed and understood, and whether they indeed were intended as deliberate and caused addressees to set up the cross-domain mapping of some kind. More experimental research can shed light on the processing and effects of deliberate metaphors, and whether they influence the proposed ideas of conversationalization, and most importantly, whether this idea is indeed picked up and experienced as such by the readers.

It becomes clear from the suggestions above that many issues remain with regard to studying metaphor from a diachronic perspective as well as a register perspective. The present study has intended to give some insights into the diverse linguistic forms and uses of metaphor in Dutch news as well as conversations from a synchronic and diachronic perspective, and with the latter perspective has introduced an approach to metaphor in language that has not been taken frequently yet. It is hoped that this thesis has given some interesting insights into the frequencies, forms and functions of metaphor, and that it forms a useful basis for future research into metaphor in different registers and from different periods.