

## Unearthing the Power of Metaphors: How German Campaigns Craft Catchy Trash Slogans

Lilis AFIFAH<sup>1</sup> , Pratomo WIDODO<sup>2</sup> , Erna ANDRIYANTI<sup>3</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>M.Ed., Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Department of Language Education Science, Indonesia / Universitas Negeri Malang, Faculty of Letters, Department of German Language Education, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Prof., Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Department of Language Education Science, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Prof., Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Department of Language Education Science, Indonesia

**Corresponding author:** Lilis Afifah

**E-mail:** lilisafifah.2023@student.uny.ac.id

### ABSTRACT

Discussions about using metaphors in public spaces are always intriguing and have been widely explored, especially in advertising. However, few scholars have examined metaphors and their relevance to the environment, even though it is closely linked to culture and society. To bridge this gap, this study employed critical discourse analysis (CDA) to investigate how metaphorical slogans in cleanliness campaigns reflect the ideologies of their creators, that is the Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR), particularly in the context of cleanliness campaigns. Combining the conceptual metaphor theory framework by Lakoff and CDA, the researcher conducted three phases, namely the Description Phase, Interpretation Phase, and Explanation Phase, to uncover the meanings of metaphors from 64 slogans displayed on trash bins located in various parts of the city of Berlin which represents Germany as a leader in environmental and sustainability issues. The research findings indicate that at least six ideologies are implied in the metaphorical expressions, including environmental conservation and sustainability, ecological awareness, community participation and ownership, quality of life, principles of diversity and Inclusiveness, and government and corporate responsibility. Future research could focus on the behavioral impact of cleanliness slogans, cross-cultural analyses, long-term effectiveness, and the roles of government and corporations in environmental protection campaigns.

**Keywords:** slogan, metaphor, campaign, trash, critical discourse analysis

**Submitted** : 04.12.2023  
**Revision Requested** : 16.04.2024  
**Last Revision Received** : 27.04.2024  
**Accepted** : 30.04.2024



This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)

## Introduction

Numerous studies have examined metaphors and their relationship with persuasive purposes for society (Hartati et al., 2021; Li et al., 2023; Musolff, 2016). Nevertheless, research on this topic remains captivating as the metaphors employed are highly dynamic and evolve with societal changes (Piccioni, 2023). The dynamism of metaphors is inseparable from language functions closely tied to culture (Xu, 2015), and understanding this relationship is essential when considering the need for a campaign in society. Since it reflects and shapes culture (Fairclough, 1995), campaigns often leverage language to communicate, persuade, and effect change in a given culture (Malabar, 2020; Bonikowski et al., 2022).

Campaigns must use language that resonates with the target audience's cultural values and norms to ensure their message is well-received and understood (Hymes, 2004; Balova, 2023). A campaign's choice of words, tone, and rhetorical strategies can significantly impact its success in convincing people to support a cause or take action (Xu, 2015). Thus, social campaigns often use metaphors to convey complex ideas, evoke emotions, and create memorable messages (Parsons, 2018). By linking a social issue to a relatable image or idea, metaphors can create a visceral response in the audience (Averbukh et al., 2007). For example, a campaign about climate change might use the metaphor of "the planet as a fragile ecosystem" to help people grasp the idea. In other words, metaphors provide a way to bridge the familiar with the unfamiliar, making it easier for the audience to relate to and understand the campaign's message.

Another example of using metaphors as slogans can be found on every orange-colored trash bin we encountered during our two-week stay in Berlin, Germany, in August 2023 (see Figure 1). Slogans like 'Kippendiener' (cigarette butts' servant), 'Krassere Öffnungszeiten als dein Späti' (Better opening times than your late-night shop), and 'Ich nehm auch Naturalien' (I also take natural things) are certainly not used merely for decoration. Behind them, the slogan creators have a specific mission to convey to the public. In general, it can be understood that these slogans transfer a message to the public to dispose of their trash in the designated place, which is the trash bins, and to consider environmental sustainability. In Berlin, waste management is entirely regulated by a service company, namely Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR), which is responsible for garbage collection, street cleaning, and waste treatment ("BSR Information", n.d).



**Figure 1: Trash bins with distinctive metaphorical slogans around the city of Berlin**

Since 2013, BSR has been actively focusing on urban cleanliness during the summer months through various campaigns with different emphases ("BSR startet", 2022). In 2017, BSR adopted the theme "The Battle Against Disposable Cups" (Geschäftsbericht, 2017) to address the harmful

greenhouse gas emissions from the widespread use of disposable cups. As a result, the slogans utilized metaphors such as ‘Becherbutler’ (Cup Butler) and ‘Geh den Mehrweg!’ (Go the reusable way). Later, in 2022, BSR shifted its focus to campaigns aimed at reducing waste from cigarette butts and dog waste (“BSR startet”, 2022). Examples of slogans on trash bins that represent this theme in sequence are ‘Kippendiener’ and ‘Das ist‘ doch Kacke!’ (That’s crap!). Based on our observations, the sight of these trash bins is striking not only because of their sheer number (for instance, in a park near the subway station at Wittenbergplatz, there are more than ten trash bins) but also because the displayed slogans vary. These slogans further piqued our curiosity about their meaning and the social context underpinning the creation of these slogans.

### Literature review

Advertising professionals often resort to rhetorical devices to create memorable and catchy slogans. Not only to improve the product’s recall among consumers, but slogans also set it apart from competitors in the market (Alnajjar & Toivonen, 2021). Furthermore, slogans serve as powerful components within advertisements, capturing the attention of potential consumers (Yu, 2009). A slogan is a concise and memorable phrase employed in advertising to distinguish a product or company (Ekoyono, 2019). For instance, a slogan of Apple, “Think different”, which appeared for the first time in 1997, showcased several individuals who were regarded as “mavericks” or “nonconformists” within their respective domains. This tagline aimed to motivate customers to challenge the established norms and engage in creative thinking (Thakor, 2023).

In many campaigns, slogans presented using metaphors were proven to be effective in catching public interest (Romano & Porto, 2018; Li et al., 2023; Malabar, 2020). Undoubtedly, this is intrinsically tied to the role of metaphor as a form of figurative language and its connection to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Metaphor and SFL theory, developed by Michael Halliday, are correlated. Both contribute to understanding how language functions in communication, particularly in conveying meaning, framing concepts, and expressing various shades of meaning. In SFL, language is viewed as a semiotic resource for meaning-making (Feng & Wu, 2022). Meanwhile, in the SFL framework, language has an ideational function that focuses on representing experiences and events (Catalano & Waugh, 2020). Its interpersonal function addresses social interaction and the expression of attitudes and stances, whereas its’ textual function relates to the organization and coherence of the text (Almurashi, 2016; Feng & Wu, 2022). SFL also includes the analysis of the register, which considers language use in different contexts or genres. Here, metaphors can be an essential part of the register of certain discourse types, such as political discourse, advertising, or scientific writing, by framing issues, conveying ideologies, and influencing how we perceive and interact with the world (Mayr, 2008; Hart, 2017).

There are some critical aspects of the relationship between metaphor and language function, such as (1) conceptual mapping, (2) rhetorical devices (Malabar, 2020), and (3) expressing emotions and imagery (Xu, 2015). Metaphors involve mapping concepts from one domain (the source domain) onto another domain (the target domain) (Guo, 2023). This process enables us to understand abstract or complex ideas by relating them to more concrete or familiar concepts. Using a slightly different narrative, it is said that as a communication medium, metaphorical expressions often arise from a set of vocabulary that can form a framework of understanding (Spangenberg & Spangenberg, 2013). For example, in the metaphor “time is money”, the concept of time as the target domain can be equated to or valued similarly to money as the source domain. Hence, this expression suggests that time,

like money, is a valuable and limited resource that should be spent wisely. From this example, it is more apparent that individuals have a cognitive mechanism, or a mental framework, in perceiving a metaphor to make sense of and classify their surroundings (Mayr, 2008; Yu, 2009).

George Lakoff, a prominent cognitive linguist, has proposed several metaphors based on his research. Lakoff's (1992) influential contribution to the field includes the theory of "conceptual metaphors". These implicit metaphors underlie our thinking and contribute to shaping our understanding of various concepts, as Huss (2019) highlighted. From this cognitive standpoint, metaphor involves the act of construal, wherein a particular frame is chosen to lend structure to another within a system of conceptual metaphors (Hart, 2017). That is why Van Leeuwen (as cited in Mayr, 2008) stated that the essence of metaphor is transfer, implying a movement from one domain to another due to associations with specific perceptions. Lakoff and Johnson distinguish between three types of cognitive metaphor, which build a coherent system, can be metaphorically extended, and can be expressed in language through corresponding metaphors. The structural metaphor frequently entails employing a concept from one domain to organize a concept from another. In contrast, the ontological metaphor embodies abstract notions like actions, feelings, or concepts, and the last type of metaphor called the orientational metaphor, constructs a system of concepts based on spatial orientation, including elements like up-down, in-out, and near-far (Kövecses, 2010; Navarro Ferrando, 2017).

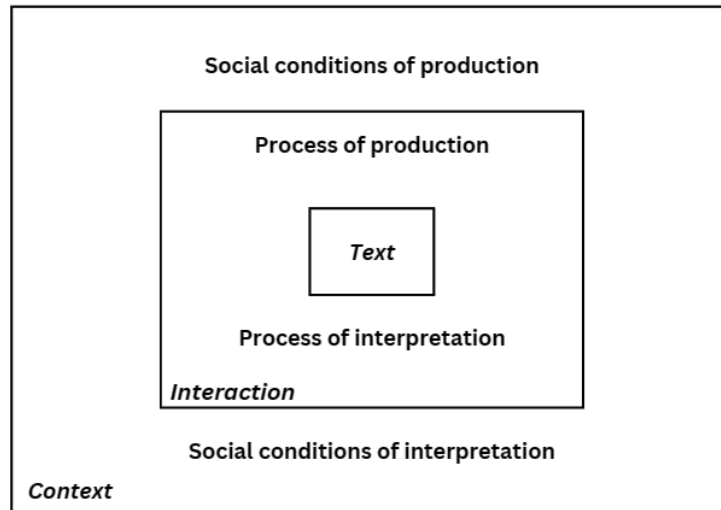
Considerable prior discourse has concentrated on the metaphors employed within advertising and campaigns. In the advertising area, Yu (2009), Dündar (2017), and Hartati et al. (2021) emphasized metaphors' leverage on distinctive issues. The research of Yu (2009) struggled with endeavors to examine and understand the conceptual and creative metaphors employed in slogans and to determine why specific source domains are associated with particular target domains. Meanwhile, Dündar (2017) focused on the media's function in the consumption process and its correlation to establishing an identity or social status. Furthermore, the research conducted by Hartati et al. (2021) uncovered disparities in the use of cultural attributes in car advertisements between Arab and Western contexts. Studies on the use of metaphors in political contexts seem to be delightful for many researchers, such as Esposito (2021), Haavik (2023), Kuchina (2023), Malabar (2020), and Xu (2015). However, within the extensive body of metaphor research, only a few scholars have investigated metaphors and their significance concerning the environment. However, it is also closely related to culture and society. In particular, research by Gjesdal & Andersen (2023) scrutinized a specialized discourse in which various discourse aspects are associated with distinct expressions, aligning with different perspectives on climate change. Previously, Atieno & Njoroge (2018) investigated the concept of ecotourism as a metaphor for environmentally friendly behavior, revealing its various forms as constructed by participants in the tourism industry in Kenya.

To fill this gap, this study applied the critical analysis discourse proposed to explore the ideologies embedded in metaphorical slogans and examine how they mirror the mental framing of the creators, the BSR, specifically in the context of cleanliness campaigns. An examination of ideologies in the use of language will always be fascinating because, in contemporary society, the exertion of power is progressively accomplished through ideology, specifically through the ideological mechanisms inherent in language (Fairclough, 2013). German society has a robust environmental consciousness (*Das Magazin der Berliner Stadtreinigung*, 2016), and metaphors are significant in framing discussions around waste management and sustainability. The metaphors used reveal a commitment to addressing the issue of trash from various angles, including resourcefulness,

prevention, responsibility, and cultural change. Therefore, we aim to unravel the intricacies of the language employed and raise awareness among our readers.

## Methods

Aligned with its goals, this study employed a method focused on critical thinking analysis. Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) places metaphor within the broader framework of understanding how language constructs and reflects power relations and ideology (Fairclough, 1995; Catalano & Waugh, 2020). Since Fairclough emphasizes the ideological and discursive nature of metaphors, his CDA seeks to uncover how metaphors are used to influence and control public discourse, as well as how they can be challenged and changed to promote social justice and critical awareness (Duszak & Okulska, 2011; Fairclough, 2013). Considering the three discourse-forming components, including text, interaction, and context, this research seeks to delve into the processes of production and interpretation that emerge from various social levels accompanying it (Fairclough, 2013), as illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Discourse as text, interaction, and context (Fairclough, 2013)**

In conducting this small-scale study, a systematic approach encompassing three distinct phases was carried out to yield comprehensive insights. Those phases or dimensions are description, interpretation, and explanation (Fairclough, 2013; Lakoff & Johnson, 2013).

## Description Phase

In the initial phase, gathering a diverse and representative dataset of photographs featuring trash cans adorned with metaphorical slogans is crucial. Regarding the multitude of slogans produced by BSR since the debut of the campaign in 1999 (Hünninghaus & Peters, 2015), the data for this study were limited to 19 photos of garbage containers acquired during our stay in Berlin and 45 images of waste bins on the BSR Instagram account posted from January to October 2023. To utilize photos from the second source, we acquired authorization by sending a request and receiving approval email from BSR. In our methodology, we allocated distinct codes to individual datasets based on their respective sources, employing “SC” to denote data captured directly and “IG” for

data sourced from the BSR Instagram account. Subsequently, each dataset was assigned a sequential numerical identifier to enhance traceability. For instance, the designation SC-03 signifies data with the third sequential order extracted from our personal photo collection. This dataset served as the foundation for the analysis, and alongside collecting visual data, transcribing the metaphorical slogans was conducted. Later, contextual information about the location, time, and any associated events or cultural contexts in which the photographs were taken was collected to provide valuable backgrounds for interpretation.

### **Interpretation Phase**

Moving into the interpretation phase, the focus shifted to comprehending the underlying dynamics of the metaphorical slogans and identifying source and target domains within the gathered slogans involved in interpreting how these domains are conceptually related. Here, the cognitive analysis delved into the cognitive processes engaged in creating connections between the source and target domains, considering the role of metaphors in shaping understanding or a “meaning potential”, as introduced by Halliday (Fairclough, 2013). In this research, ideological analysis uncovered the cultural and ideological connotations embedded within the metaphors, exploring the specific messages, values, and power dynamics conveyed as run by Budd et al. in their study (2019). During this phase, we exhaustively employed all accessible resources, including recollection of the photograph’s origin and exploration of literature discussing societal customs in Germany, encompassing governmental policies concerning environmental preservation.

### **Explanation Phase**

The essence of this final phase begins with three key elements: social determinants, ideology, and effects (Fairclough, 2013). As researchers, we acted as analysts in this study, examining the power relations at the situational, institutional, and societal levels that helped shape these discourses. The next question was what elements constitute the ideological characteristics. Following analysis, the provided metaphors can be categorized into distinct framing contexts, delineated by their thematic content and shared attributes. Finally, we explored how these discourses successfully bring about transformative effects on society. However, understanding the transformative effects of campaign activity is not easy. Therefore, comprehension of these effects relies heavily on the analyst’s ability as a member resource (MR) actively involved in the interpretation process (Fairclough, 2013). Henceforth, we embarked on a comprehensive examination of diverse literature sources delineating alterations in environmental dynamics and the societal landscape of Berlin.

### **Findings**

From the analysis carried out on 64 metaphorical slogans printed on the trash can, several ideologies were identified that BSR wanted to convey as the producer of this slogan. The distribution of the use of this ideology can be seen in the following table:

From the table above, the central ideology to be highlighted in the metaphorical slogan is related to Environmental Conservation and Sustainability. Germany is known as a leader in environmental and sustainability issues. The environmental cleanliness campaign in Germany may reflect a commitment to sustainability, prioritizing the use of natural resources and the preservation of ecosystems. A slogan like ‘Eimer kurz die Welt retten’ uses the concept of using the source domain ‘Eimer’ (a

**Table 1: The distribution of ideologies reflected through metaphorical slogans**

NO.	IDEOLOGIES	NUMBER OF SLOGANS
1	Environmental Conservation and Sustainability	19
2	Ecological Awareness	10
3	Community Participation and Ownership	12
4	Quality of Life	14
5	Principles of Diversity and Inclusivity	3
6	Government and Corporate Responsibility	6

bucket), which is typically for a short or limited time, to draw a comparison with the idea of 'die Welt retten' (saving the world) as the target domain (die Welt retten). This metaphor suggests that the action of "saving the world" is being portrayed as something that can be done briefly or temporarily, as if using a bucket for a short period. Another slogan also reflects the importance of maintaining a sustainable and vibrant environment: 'Das Ende ist erst der Anfang' (the end is only the beginning). The source domain 'das Ende' (the end) typically refers to the conclusion or final stage of something. In this context, it is used metaphorically to convey that the end of one phase, particularly the disposal of waste, marks the beginning of another phase: cleanliness and environmental preservation. Meanwhile, the target domain 'der Anfang' (the beginning) represents a fresh start, cleanliness, and initiating a new, environmentally responsible phase. So, through this metaphor, it is suggested that waste disposal is not the end but rather the beginning of a cleaner and more environmentally conscious phase.

The second ideology highlighted in the cleanliness campaign slogan is Ecological Awareness. This ideology emphasizes preserving nature and ecosystems and reducing negative environmental impacts. Related to this ideology, there are slogans such as 'Cream dich ein, bevor du orange wirst!' (Cream yourself before turning orange!). Moreover, 'Ich nehm auch Naturalien – Danke, dass Sie den Park sauber halten' (I also take natural things – Thank you for keeping the park clean). In the first metaphor, the source domain 'Cream dich ein' refers to applying cream or sunscreen to protect one's skin from the sun, typically associated with personal care and protection against sunburn. In this context, it is used to disclose the idea of taking preventive action to protect oneself and, in this case, the environment. Meanwhile, the target domain, 'du orange wirst' (you turn orange), serves as a creative and playful way to symbolize the consequence of not caring for or protecting the environment. The color "orange" metaphorically represents the negative outcome, such as environmental pollution or degradation, that can occur if one does not take action to keep the environment clean. So, in this cleanliness campaign, the source domain encourages people to take action to protect the environment just as they would protect their skin from the sun, and the metaphor highlights the importance of ecological or environmental protection and personal responsibility memorably and engagingly. The same message is also manifested in the second slogan, 'Ich nehm auch Naturalien – Danke, dass Sie den Park sauber halten'. The source domain 'Naturalien' typically denotes natural products or goods exchanged or taken in a trade or exchange system. In this framework, it is used metaphorically to convey that taking care of the environment, specifically by 'den Park sauber halten' (keeping the park clean), is like a transaction or exchange involving nature.

Furthermore, twelve slogans carry the ideology of Community Participation and Ownership. The playful personification of trash bins, as seen in ‘Becherbutler’ (cup butler), ‘Kippendiener’ (cigarette butts’ servant), and ‘Häufchenhelfer’ (little pile helper), reinforce the bins’ role in maintaining cleanliness and responsible waste disposal. The target domains, ‘Butler’, ‘Diener’, and ‘Helfer’, denote a person who serves and assists in various domestic tasks. Those words are chosen to emphasize the role of a servant or helper in dealing with trash. In this case, the source domains are ‘Becher’ (cups or disposable cups), ‘Kippen’ (cigarette butts), and ‘Häufchen’ (little pile). So, these metaphors illustrate that responsible disposal and management of cups is akin to having a helpful servant or butler who takes care of them, underlining the importance of proper waste management. Another slogan featuring the ideology of community participation is ‘Uuund Action!’. Through this metaphor, people are encouraged to take action with the enthusiasm and energy found in a thrilling movie. The source domain “Action” here refers to being proactive, involved, and taking steps to keep the environment clean and manage waste responsibly.

The following ideology expressed through slogans is improving the Quality of Life. Slogans like ‘Du bist voll in Ordnung’ (You are perfectly fine), ‘Kauf keinen Müll!’ (Buy no waste!), and ‘Krönender Abschluss’ (The crowning conclusion) bring the message of enhancing the quality of life using appraisal languages. In the slogan ‘Du bist voll in Ordnung’, the source domain ‘voll’ (full) implies the notion of being “in order” or “in a good state”, while the target domain ‘Ordnung’ suggests a state of order, cleanliness, or correctness. It means that when someone disposes of waste correctly, he/she is “in order” or “doing the right thing”. Along with this concept, the source domain ‘Kauf’ in the second metaphor relates to buying or purchasing goods, and it is used metaphorically to express the idea that people should refrain from buying or acquiring items that ultimately become waste (Müll) and make responsible purchasing decisions. In addition, in the phrase ‘Krönender Abschluss’, the idea of a “crowning” or something highlights the most significant part (source domain) to characterize “the conclusion” (target domain) as being exceptional, important, or significant. It implies that the conclusion is the crowning moment of a particular event or situation.

Germany is a multicultural and inclusive society. The environmental cleanliness campaign using slogans ‘Ich stehe für Mülltikulti’ and ‘Urbi et Korbi’ may reflect the principles of diversity and Inclusiveness. ‘Mülltikulti’ is a creative play on “Multikulti”, which refers to multiculturalism. In this context, ‘Müll’ (waste or garbage) represents the concept of a diverse mix of waste or garbage, and it suggests that the speaker or campaign stands (stehe) for or promotes a diverse and inclusive approach to dealing with waste and garbage, like how multiculturalism promotes diversity and inclusivity in society. A similar message is also displayed by reimagining a playful variation of the Latin phrase ‘Urbi et Orbi’ that accentuates the role of the bin in our urban and global environments.

The last Ideological representation of the slogans involves the responsibility of government and corporations in environmental protection some of them present associations between waste management and convenience and service. For instance, by comparing the opening times (Öffnungszeiten) of a waste disposal facility to a late-night shop (Späti), the BSR corporate uses the metaphor ‘Krassere Öffnungszeiten als dein Späti!’ (Better opening times than your late-night shop) to promote offers much more convenient or extended opening hours than a regular convenience store. Additionally, the slogan ‘Bin auf Arbeit’ (I am working) also shows the readiness of this corporation for litter disposal. Another implicative expression persuades people to prioritize cleanliness and perhaps recommit to cleanliness efforts by using the ‘Berlin wählt noch mal’ slogan. In this metaphor, by borrowing electoral terms, the action of ‘wählt’ (chooses or elects) as the source domain conveys



the idea that all part of Berlin City (including the citizen and the government) is making a choice again (noch mal). Therefore, through these metaphors, corporations and the government allude to their engagement and responsibility in environmental conservation.

## Discussion

Metaphors play a crucial role in shaping perceptions, beliefs, and ideologies. They are potent tools for framing issues influencing public opinion, policy decisions, and social norms. Based on the results of this research analysis, the existing metaphors used by their creator, Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR), are employed to convey ideologies that aim not only to influence the thoughts of the German public but also to change societal behavior in response to environmental conservation efforts. Concerning the environmental conservation ideology, the conceptual metaphor used is similar to the concept of the WAR frame proposed by Lakoff & Johnson (2013), wherein the term ‘retten’ (to save) implies that society is in a warlike situation, with something that must be “saved” from destruction (Hart, 2017; Li et al., 2023). In this case, the target domain is the world (die Welt). Such metaphors are undoubtedly linked to Germany’s role among the European Union countries, positioning itself as a leader in environmental and sustainability issues (Bischoff et al., 2018). Since 2002, the country has initiated significant, wide-ranging efforts concerning biodiversity, climate change, energy, and resource efficiency in its national strategy (OECD, n.d), which is constantly updated (Kern, 2022). Starting from such a context, the slogan ‘Eimer kurz die Welt retten’ is considered a form of structural metaphor that can create coherent metaphors, such as taking a point and defending a position (Huss, 2019).

In the subsequent discussion, BSR promotes the ideology of ecological awareness by drawing a parallel between the importance of protecting oneself and nature, just as humans need to protect themselves. Sunblock cream is commonplace and essential for people living in a country with a four-season climate, particularly for maintaining skin health. Therefore, the word “orange” in the metaphor ‘Cream dich ein, bevor du orange wirst!’ serves as an analogy for the damage that may occur when someone does not use sunblock cream. The color orange is often associated with the yellow or orange color on traffic lights, which, in practice, signals a zone with a moderate level of danger (Künzer, 2015). However, there are different perceptions of this color, indicating positive values such as enthusiasm, joy, and love (Riedel, 2019), and even from Roman history, orange is associated with fertility (Immoos, n.d). Furthermore, the metaphor ‘Ich nehm auch Naturalien—Danke, dass Sie den Park sauber halten’ connotatively involves the term ‘Naturalien’, referring to organic products that people may consume. Green consumption has been a long-standing trend in German society, leading to expressions like ‘Bio-Boom’ (“Grüne Produkte”, 2013). For the people of Berlin, such changes are part of the action program to create a green city by 2030 (Kalandides & Grésillon, 2021).

Interestingly, numerous metaphors are used as slogans, originating from various waste the public generates. From the data discovered, words like ‘Becher’ (cup), ‘Kippe’ (cigarette butt), ‘Gummi’ (rubber), and ‘Würstchen’ (sausage) represent everyday products commonly consumed by the public. However, the essences they evoke mostly have negative connotations. One of the most frequently used source domains for forming metaphors is cigarettes, both in their whole form (Zigarette) and as remnants of smoking (Kippe). This is evident from various slogans generated, such as ‘Kippendiener’, ‘Kippeneimer’, ‘Für die Zigarette danach’, and ‘Zigarettenstummel schäden der Umwelt’. Considering the substantial volume of waste from this type (almost two-thirds of it ending

up in green areas like parks and rivers), as well as the consideration of the various risks posed not only to the health of adults but also to children who might be exposed as passive smokers, in 2022, cigarettes became a significant theme in the cleanliness campaign (“BSR startet”, 2022). Previous research findings (Reimer et al., 2016) also underpinned the German Federal Assembly’s recommendation to the European Council to establish a separate law regulating the handling of electronic sour products (Aktuelle Studien, 2018).

Furthermore, the interpretation of a metaphor’s meaning by the recipient cannot be forced to always align with the speaker’s intention. Indeed, metaphors are crafted with the specific audience in mind (Feng & Wu, 2022). However, it is important to note that through metaphor, speakers merely invite their recipients to engage in metaphorical interpretation without being able to determine the consequences of such interpretation in any way (Hesse, 2023). In the context of this cleanliness campaign, the use of appraisal language, as seen in conversational metaphors like ‘Du bist voll in Ordnung and Kauf keinen Müll!’, represents the culmination (graduation) of a series of activities undertaken by the community and serves as an appreciation for the accuracy of interpretations reflected in the prior processes, namely attitude and engagement (Alba-Juez, 2018; Young & Harrison, 2004). Meanwhile, BSR conveys the highest acknowledgment to the audience through the slogan ‘Krönender Abschluss’ (the crowning conclusion). Another manifestation of appraisal language in amusing slogans is seemingly aimed at capturing the public’s attention through humor (Hünninghaus & Peters, 2015). Take note of the ontological metaphor in the slogan, ‘Yippi-ya-yeah, Hundekacke!’ It is undeniable that, in general, people view dog feces (Hundekacke) as a dirty and repulsive object. Ironically, this slogan combines this object with the cheerful chant ‘Yippi-ya-yeah’, giving the impression that the “repulsive object” is eagerly anticipated. This interactive process with a specific entity or substance (in this case, dog feces) is considered the essence of the creation of conceptual metaphors by Lakoff and Jakobson (Vu, 2015).

There is a profound meaning behind the wordplay of ‘Mülltikulti’ and ‘Urbi et Orbi’. The representation of Germany, which upholds the principles of Diversity and Inclusivity, is conveyed through an orientational metaphor by likening Germany to a “container” welcoming to immigrants. This slogan emerged in line with the country’s policy as one actively involved in integration politics (“Migration und Integration”, n.d.) by accepting foreign nationals, including asylum seekers from conflict-ridden countries, and running this, the foreign cultural policy has set the stage for fostering mutual understanding, which serves as a crucial foundation for policies dedicated to peacefully resolving conflicts (Bischoff et al., 2018). Moreover, it is known that the number of immigrants entering the country has been increasing from year to year, predominantly comprised of academic professionals (“83% der Personen”, 2023). Hence, it can be interpreted that this “container” establishes a fundamental inside-outside orientation where immigrants are perceived as outsiders desiring to enter the container (Musolff, 2016; Huss, 2019). On the other hand, by borrowing the blessings given by the Pope to the city of Rome (urbi) and the entire world (orbi) on Christmas and Easter, this orientational metaphor suggests that Berlin city is a part of the world’s container ready to be a blessing to the global community (“What is an”, 2020).

For almost five decades now, Germany has been implementing environmental management policies by activating various specialized institutions and supporting legal frameworks (Weidner, 1997). BSR, which originated as a private company and transitioned into a public institution in 1994 (Hünninghaus & Peters, 2015), is committed to providing the best services to the community. According to the performance report 2022, BSR has cleaned a total of 1.6 million kilometers of

roadways and sidewalks. This involved the collection of 41,500 tons of refuse and 40,000 tons of leaves/organic waste (“Saubere Stadt”, 2023). In addition to comparing BSR’s readiness to handle waste with convenience store services, placing trash bins with appropriate slogans also appears to be a considered aspect. From our observations, the trash bin with the slogan ‘Krassere Öffnungszeiten als dein Späti!’ is located near a food stall that operates until midnight. Another trash bin in the park or green area near Museum Island is embedded with the slogan ‘Ich nehm auch Naturalien’. This situation seems deliberately chosen by BSR to attract the attention of the surrounding community, encouraging them, with a wink from an eye (Augenzwinkern), to be more attentive to the environment and fellow citizens and, if necessary, to change their behavior (“Werbung für”, 2022). Indirectly, it can be interpreted that by presenting such a carefully visualized communication context, the community is invited to understand the designer’s intentions through metaphorical slogans (Parson, 2018).

Nevertheless, the efforts made by BSR to encourage community participation in achieving a clean environment have not been easy. As stated by C. Klöhn (personal communication, August 22, 2023): “. . . *seitder Kampagne ist der Zustand der Stadt Berlin viel besser als früher, viel sauberer. . .*” (Since the campaign, the condition of the city of Berlin has been much better than before, it is cleaner). That is through various innovations, it is evident that the campaign has yielded visible results in the increasing cleanliness and neatness of Berlin. In addition, through the propaganda created by BSR across various media, whether about the achieved sustainability effects or the readiness of BSR employees in all seasons, the public’s perception of “the trash servant” profession has also improved. This is reflected in the growing number of individuals applying for permanent positions and internships at BSR (Hünninghaus & Peters, 2015).

## Conclusion

The analysis of metaphorical slogans used in cleanliness campaigns uncovers several prominent ideologies. Foremost among these is the emphasis on (1) environmental conservation and sustainability, signifying Germany’s dedication to sustainable practices that preserve natural resources and ecosystems. Equally significant is the advocacy for (2) ecological awareness, urging the protection of nature and the environment. Through personified trash bin metaphors, (3) community participation and ownership are promoted, stressing the importance of responsible waste management and motivating individuals to contribute to environmental cleanliness actively. Moreover, the promotion of (4) the quality-of-life ideology is evident in numerous slogans, underscoring the enhancement of life quality through responsible waste management and consumer choices. (5) The principles of diversity and inclusivity are communicated to endorse comprehensive approaches to waste management. Finally, metaphors linking waste management with convenience and service underscore (6) the roles of government and corporations in environmental protection, implying an ongoing commitment to cleanliness initiatives.

Based on the findings of this research, several avenues for future research can be suggested. Firstly, a more extensive exploration of how metaphorical slogans impact public behavior and attitudes toward cleanliness and environmental conservation is warranted. Understanding the effectiveness of these slogans in shaping public consciousness and behavior could provide valuable insights for future campaigns and initiatives. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of metaphorical slogans in cleanliness campaigns from different countries or regions could shed light on cultural variations in environmental ideologies and messaging. Investigating how metaphors are adapted and interpreted

in various cultural contexts would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the global significance of these campaigns. Additionally, a longitudinal study could assess the long-term impact of metaphorical cleanliness slogans on environmental awareness and behavior. Monitoring changes in public perceptions and actions over time would provide valuable data on the sustainability of these campaigns. Lastly, research could delve deeper into the role of corporations and government entities in promoting environmental protection through metaphorical messaging. Exploring the strategies and initiatives employed by these entities in greater detail would offer valuable insights into their commitment to cleanliness efforts and their influence on public engagement.

### Acknowledgement

We extend our sincere gratitude to all parties who have provided support for this research. The first author of this article is an awardee of an educational scholarship for her doctoral program from the Ministry of Education, Culture of Indonesia in collaboration with the Assessment and Application of Technology Research Organization (BPPT) and the Educational Fund Management Institution (LPDP) Indonesia, including financial support for the research and the publication of this article (grant number 00669/BPPT/BPI.06/9/2023). We also acknowledge Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR) Germany for granting permission to use their work as a data source for this research.

---

**Acknowledgement:** The Assessment and Application of Technology Research Organization (BPPT) Indonesia, the Educational Fund Management Institution (LPDP) Indonesia, and the Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR) Germany.

**Peer Review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Author Contributions:** Conception/Design of Study- L.A., P.W.; Data Acquisition– L.A.; Data Analysis and Interpretation– L.A., P.W.; Drafting Manuscript- L.A., P.W.; Critical Revision of Manuscript- L.A., E.A.; Final Approval and Accountability- L.A., P.W., E.A.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

**Grant Support:** This research was financially supported by the Assessment and Application of Technology Research Organization (BPPT) and the Educational Fund Management Institution (LPDP) Indonesia.

---

### ORCID:

Lilis AFIFAH	0000-0002-1941-7450
Pratomo WIDODO	0000-0002-7902-136X
Erna ANDRIYANTI	0000-0002-1503-2377

### REFERENCES

- Aktuelle Studien zum Konsum von E-Zigaretten - Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse*, Pub. L. No. WD 9-3000 – 040/18, Wissenschaftliche Dienste. (2018).
- Alba-Juez, L. (2018). Emotion and appraisal processes in language: How are they related? In M. Á. González & J. L. Mackenzie, *The construction of discourse as verbal interaction*, (pp. 227–250). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Almurashi, W. A. (2016). An introduction to Halliday's systemic functional linguistics. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 4(1), 70. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jsel.v4i1.9423>.

- Alnajjar, K. & Toivonen, H. (2021). Computational generation of slogans. *Natural Language Engineering*, 27(5), 575–607. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1351324920000236>.
- Atieno, L. & Njoroge, J. M. (2018). The ecotourism metaphor and environmental sustainability in Kenya. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 18(1), 49-60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1467358415619671>.
- Averbukh, V., Bakhterev, M., Baydalın, A., Ismagilov, D. & Trushenkova, P. (2007). Interface and visualization metaphors. In J. A. Jacko (Eds.), *Human-Computer Interaction. Interaction Platforms and Techniques. HCI 2007. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, vol 4551. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-73107-8\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-73107-8_2).
- Balova, A. (2023, October 6). *Navigating cultural differences in global B2B marketing: Adapting marketing strategies to different cultures & regions*. Retrieved November 10, 2023 from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/navigating-cultural-differences-global-b2b-marketing-adapting-balova/>.
- Bischoff, M., Chauvistré, E., Kleis, C. & Wille, J. (2018). *Facts about Germany*. Frankfurt am Main: FAZIT Communication GmbH.
- Bonikowski, B., Luo, Y. & Stuhler, O. (2022). Politics as usual? Measuring populism, nationalism, and authoritarianism in U.S. presidential campaigns (1952–2020) with neural language models. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 51(4), 1721-1787. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00491241221122317>.
- BSR information in english*. (n.d). Berliner Stadtreinigung. Retrieved October 10, 2023, from <https://www.bsr.de/die-berliner-stadtreinigung-in-englischer-sprache-26142.php>.
- BSR startet Sauberheitskampagne 2022*. (2022, June 27). Berliner Stadtreinigung. Retrieved October 10, 2023, from <https://www.bsr.de/bsr-startet-sauberheitskampagne-2022-30764.php>.
- Budd, K., Kelsey, D., Mueller, F. & Whittle, A. (2019). Metaphor, morality and legitimacy: A critical discourse analysis of the media framing of the payday loan industry. *Organization*, 26(6), 802-829. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508418812569>.
- Catalano, T. & Waugh, L. R. (2020). *Critical discourse analysis, critical discourse studies and beyond*. Cham: Springer.
- Das Magazin der Berliner Stadtreinigung*. (2016). Berliner Stadtreinigung. 03.
- Dündar, F. N. (2017). Effects on the advertising transformation metaphor and target mass. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 22(9), 47–50. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2212094750>.
- Duszak, A. & Okulska, U. (2011). *Language, culture, and the dynamics of age*. Göttingen: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Ekoyono, R. D. (2019). *Analysis of figurative language used in English slogan of commercial beverage products* (Bachelor thesis). Retrieved October 26, 2023 from <http://repository.upstegal.ac.id/249/>.
- Esposito, E. (2021). *Politics, ethnicity and the postcolonial nation*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. London and New York: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Language and Power (Second Edition)*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Feng, D. & Wu, X. (2022). Coronavirus, demons, and war: Visual and multimodal metaphor in Chinese public service advertisements. *SAGE Open*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221078855>.
- Geschäftsbericht. (2017). Berliner Stadtreinigung. Retrieved October 21, 2023, from [https://www.bsr.de/assets/downloads/Geschaeftsbericht\\_2017.pdf](https://www.bsr.de/assets/downloads/Geschaeftsbericht_2017.pdf).
- Gjesdal, A. M. & Andersen, G. (2023). Changing concepts of greenhouse gas expressions: Discursive specialization in parliamentary discourses on climate change. *Discourse & Society*, 34(4), 429-444. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265221145394>.
- Grüne Produkte in Deutschland - Status Quo und Trends. (2013, April). Umwelt Bundeswelt. Retrieved October 10, 2023 from [https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/376/publikationen/gruene\\_produkte\\_in\\_deutschland\\_status\\_quo\\_und\\_trends\\_neulayout.pdf](https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/376/publikationen/gruene_produkte_in_deutschland_status_quo_und_trends_neulayout.pdf).
- Guo, Z. (2023). Conceptual metaphor and cognition: From the perspective of the philosophy of language. *Journal of*

- Innovation and Development*, 3(1), 73–75. <https://doi.org/10.54097/jid.v3i1.8424>.
- Haavik, T. K. (2023). Representations, metaphors and slogans: From organisational safety to societal resilience. In *SpringerBriefs in Applied Sciences and Technology: Vol. Part F1310* (pp. 41–50). Springer Science and Business Media Deutschland GmbH. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33786-4\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33786-4_5).
- Hart, C. (2008). Critical discourse analysis and metaphor: toward a theoretical framework. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 5(2), 91-106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405900801990058>.
- Hart, C. (2017). Metaphor and intertextuality in media framings of the (1984–1985) British Miners’ strike: A multimodal analysis. *Discourse & Communication*, 11(1), 3-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481316683291>.
- Hartati, R., Panah, E. & Matsom, H. (2021). A critical discourse analysis of the use of metaphor in online car advertisements. *SALTeL Journal (Southeast Asia Language Teaching and Learning)*, 4(2), 25–36. Retrieved October 10, 2023, from <https://doi.org/10.35307/saltel.v4i2.77>.
- Hesse, J. (2023). *Metapher, Kontext und Kognition*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter.
- Hünninghaus, A. & Peters, F. (2015, July 31). Mit Humor für mehr Stadtsauberkeit. *KOM Magazin für Kommunikation*. Retrieved October 26, 2023, from <https://www.kom.de/medien/mit-humor-fuer-mehr-stadtsauberkeit/>.
- Huss, T. J. (2019). *Ästhetik der Metapher*. Bielefeld: Transcript.
- Hymes, D. (2004). *Ethnography, linguistics, narrative inequality: Toward an understanding of voice*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Immoos, F. (n.d). *Farben - Wahrnehmung, Assoziation, Psychoenergetik*. Wilhelm Ostwald Schule. Retrieved October 26, 2023, from <https://gestaltung.wilhelm-ostwald-schule.de/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/bedeutung-der-farben.pdf>.
- Kalandides, A. & Grésillon, B. (2021). The ambiguities of “sustainable” Berlin. *Sustainability*, 13(4), 1666. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13041666>.
- Kern, V. (2022, April 8). *A compass to make the world a better place*. Detschland.de. Retrieved October 25, 2023, from <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/environment/germany-climate-action-national-sustainable-development-strategy>.
- Kövecses, Z. (2010). *Metaphor - A practical introduction - Second Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kuchina D. D. (2023). Metaphor as invective in the genre of internet commentary: A focus on German political discourse. *Professional Discourse & Communication*, 5(3), 61-75. (In Russ.) Retrieved October 26, 2023, from <https://doi.org/10.24833/2687-0126-2023-5-3-61-75>.
- Künzer, L. (2015). "Alarmstufe Rot!" oder "Alles im grünen Bereich!" - *Farben im Kontext von Gefahr und Sicherheit* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved November 04, 2023, from <https://epub.uni-regensburg.de/33832/>.
- Lakoff, G. (1992). *The contemporary theory of metaphor*. Retrieved October 10, 2023, from <https://terpconnect.umd.edu/~israel/lakoff-ConTheorMetaphor.pdf>.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (2013). *Metaphor we live by*. London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Li, R., Yu, Y. & Chan, T. F. (2023). Motivational discourse and campaign-style mobilisation: A positive discourse analysis of language poverty alleviation discourse in China. *PLoS ONE*, 18(10 October). Retrieved October 24, 2023, from <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0292834>.
- Malabar, F. (2020). Persuasive language in political campaign. *Jambura Journal of English Teaching and Literature*, 1(2), 76-88 . Retrieved October 15, 2023, from <https://doi.org/10.37905/jetl.v1i2.7284>.
- Mayr, A. (2008). *Language and power - An introduction to institutional discourse*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Migration und Integration*. (n.d). Tatsachen über Deutschland. Retrieved October 15, 2023, from <https://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/de/migration-und-integration>.
- Musolff, A. (2016). *Political metaphor analysis*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Navarro Ferrando, I. (2017). *Conceptual metaphor types in oncology: Cognitive and communicative functions*. *Ibérica*,

- (34), 163–186. Retrieved November 01, 2023, from <https://www.revistaiberica.org/index.php/iberica/article/view/149>.
- OECD. (n.d). *Green growth in action: Germany*. Retrieved October 20, 2023, from <https://www.oecd.org/greengrowth/greengrowthinactiongermany.htm>.
- Parsons, P. (2018). Conceptual metaphor theory as a foundation for communicative visualization design. *IEEE VIS Workshop on Visualization for Communication (VisComm)*. Retrieved October 10, 2023, from <https://par.nsf.gov/biblio/10087033>.
- Piccioni, S. (2023). Discourse-motivated variation in metaphor use in Spanish: The case of SPACE metaphors in popularised scientific discourse on breast cancer. *International Journal of Language Studies*, 17(4), 9–34. Retrieved October 06, 2023, from [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Htw1NscnyhYtj3rUL-mY\\_uPR0LuyrWPy/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Htw1NscnyhYtj3rUL-mY_uPR0LuyrWPy/view).
- Reimer, J., Kuhn, S. & Lehmann, K. (2016). Konsumgewohnheiten und Motive von E-Zigaretten-Konsumenten in Deutschland-Eine Querschnittsanalyse. *Abschlussbericht*. Hamburg: Universität Hamburg.
- Riedel, I. (2019). *Die Symbolik der Farben*. Lettland: Patmos Verlag.
- Romano, M. & Porto, M. D. (2018). ‘The tide, change, nobody can stop it’: Metaphor for social action. *Discourse & Society*, 29(6), 655–673. Retrieved October 07, 2023, from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926518802914>.
- Saubere Stadt - Lebensqualität aktiv mitgestalten*. (2023). Berliner Stadtreinigung. Retrieved October 20, 2023, from <https://geschaeftsbericht.bsr.de/2022/saubere-stadt.html>.
- Spangenberg, B. & Spangenberg, E. (2013). *Sprachbilder und Metaphern in der Mediation*. Frankfurt am Main: Wolfgang Metzner Verlag.
- Thakor, J. (2023, March 17). *Apple Slogan and Tagline 2023*. Retrieved October 06, 2023, from <https://sloganandtagline.com/apple-slogan-and-tagline/>.
- Vu, N. N. (2015). Structural, oriental, ontological conceptual metaphors and implications for language teaching. *Ho Chi Minh City Open University Journal of Science*, 5(1), 49–53. Retrieved October 15, 2023, from <https://journalofscience.ou.edu.vn/index.php/soci-en/article/download/325/254>.
- Weidner, H. (Ed.). (1997). *Performance and characteristics of German environmental policy. Overview and expert commentaries from 14 countries (Discussion Paper FS II 97 – 301)*, pp. 9–23. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung.
- Werbung für Sauberkeit. (2022, July). Das Magazin der Berliner Stadtreinigung. Retrieved October 15, 2023, from [https://www.bsr.de/assets/downloads/BSR\\_Das\\_Magazin\\_02\\_2022.pdf](https://www.bsr.de/assets/downloads/BSR_Das_Magazin_02_2022.pdf).
- What is an "Urbi et Orbi" blessing?* (2020, December 14). Opus Dei. Retrieved October 26, 2023, from <https://opusdei.org/en/article/what-is-urbi-et-orbi/>.
- Xu, L. (2015). Metaphor in action in political discourse. *International Conference on Economics, Social Science, Arts, Education and Management Engineering (ESSAEME 2015)*, 397–402. Atlantis Press.
- Young, L. & Harrison, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Systemic functional linguistics and critical analysis discourse*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Yu, C. (2009). *Metaphors in food advertising slogans* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved October 06, 2023, from <https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hkr:diva-5917>
- 83 % der Personen mit Blue Card leben nach fünf Jahren weiterhin in Deutschland. (2023, Juli 21). Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis). Retrieved October 20, 2023, from [https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2023/07/PD23\\_289\\_12.html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2023/07/PD23_289_12.html).

### How to cite this article

Afifah, L., Widodo, P. & Andriyanti, E. (2024). Unearthing the Power of Metaphors: How German Campaigns Craft Catchy Trash Slogans. *Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi - Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 51, 48–62. <https://doi.org/10.26650/sdsl2023-1399444>