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Maha Majeed Anber

College of Education for Humanities, University
of Anbar, Ramadi, Iraq

* Corresponding author: E-mail :
maha_anber@uoanbar.edu.iq

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E-mail t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq

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Metaphor in Political Discourse

A B S T R A C T

This study aims to reveal the role of metaphors in political discourse, and the impact of metaphors on political discourse. To achieve the aims of the study, the following topics have been reviewed and analyzed: the notion of understanding how metaphors shape political discourse, analyzing the impact of metaphors on political decision-making, examining the cultural and historical context of political metaphors, identifying potential biases in political discourse, types of metaphors in discourse, politicians use of metaphors in political discourse, and reviewing previous studies conducted on metaphors in political discourse. The findings revealed that in political and presidential discourse, metaphors play a significant role in shaping public perception and opinion. Metaphors have the power to frame issues and shape narratives, influencing how people interpret and respond to political messages. Political leaders often use metaphors to communicate complex ideas and evoke emotional responses from their audiences. In addition, there are three important purposes for using metaphors in political contexts: (1) To simplify complex ideas. (2) To create emotional impact. (3) To enhance persuasive power.

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الاستعارة في الخطاب السياسي

مها مجيد عنبر / كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية، جامعة الأنبار

الخلاصة:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن دور الاستعارات في الخطاب السياسي، وأثر الاستعارات في الخطاب السياسي. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تمت مراجعة وتحليل المواضيع التالية: فكرة فهم كيفية تشكيل الاستعارات للخطاب السياسي، وتحليل تأثير الاستعارات على صنع القرار السياسي، ودراسة السياق الثقافي والتاريخي للاستعارات السياسية، وتحديد إمكاناتها. كذلك التحيزات في الخطاب السياسي، أنواع الاستعارات في الخطاب، استخدام السياسيين للاستعارات في الخطاب السياسي، مراجعة دراسات سابقة أجريت على الاستعارات في الخطاب السياسي. وأظهرت النتائج أن الاستعارات في الخطاب السياسي

والرئاسي تلعب دورا هاما في تشكيل التصور والرأي العام. تتمتع الاستعارات بالقدرة على تأطير القضايا وتشكيل الروايات، والتأثير على كيفية تفسير الناس للرسائل السياسية والاستجابة لها. غالبًا ما يستخدم القادة السياسيون الاستعارات لتوصيل أفكار معقدة وإثارة استجابات عاطفية من جمهورهم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، هناك ثلاثة أغراض مهمة لاستخدام الاستعارات في السياقات السياسية: (1) تبسيط الأفكار المعقدة. (2) لخلق تأثير عاطفي. (3) تعزيز قوة الإقناع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعارات، الخطاب السياسي، الخطاب الرئاسي.

Introduction

Metaphor plays a crucial role in political discourse, with scholars in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis examining politicians' use of metaphorical concepts in everyday language to justify policies and define events. These metaphors, often based on analogies from the physical to the abstract, often become idioms and pass unnoticed. However, political discourse also uses new metaphors or existing metaphors to encapsulate a particular perspective and shape public policy. The vividness of these metaphors does not guarantee acceptance and may become problematic if challenged (Neuman, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

Metaphors are frequently used in political discourse to convey complex ideas in a concise and persuasive manner. However, their systematic study is limited, and their impact on public opinion and policy outcomes remains unclear. This gap in research highlights the need for a comprehensive analysis of how language shapes political discourse and decision-making, as well as the impact of metaphors on public opinion and policy outcomes. (Glucksberg (2020); Neuman (2020); Smith (2023); Zeng & Liu (2023)). Therefore, there is a need for more systematic and rigorous research that can help us better understand the role of metaphors in political discourse and their impact on decision-making processes.

1.2 The Aims

The aims of the study are to reveal the following:

- 1- The significant and important role of metaphors in political discourse
- 2- The impact and the direct effect of metaphors in political discourse.

1.3 The Questions

To achieve the aims of the study, the following questions have been set:

- 1- To what extend do metaphors play role in political discourse?
- 2- What is the effect of metaphors in political discourse?

1.4 The Purpose

The purpose of this study is to show the effect of implementing metaphors in political discourse which may due to the following:

- 1- Understanding how metaphors shape political discourse
- 2- Analyzing the effect of metaphors on political decision-making.
- 3- Investigating the cultural and historical context of political discourse
- 4- Evaluating the effectiveness of metaphors in political communication.

2.Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Metaphors

Metaphor enriches communication with diverse imagery and is a common linguistic device. It arises through systematic associations between concepts, transferring knowledge and inferences between domains. (Glucksberg, 2020).

Metaphor is a figure of speech where a word or phrase denoting one object or idea is used to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. It goes beyond rational comparison and fuses two objects, creating a new entity with both characteristics. Metaphor is the fundamental language of poetry and is common across all levels and languages. Many common words, such as "daisy" and "time flies," were originally vivid images but have lost their original aptness. Examples include the daisy's ray-like appearance and the bird's identification with time (Lakoff, 2020).

2.2 Definition of Metaphors in Discourse

A discourse metaphor is a stable metaphorical projection that serves as a key framing device within a discourse over time. It describes an object or action in a way that isn't literally true but helps explain an idea or make a comparison. Metaphors are different from similes, which compare two things using words like "like" or "as". (Bortoluzzi & Giora, 2022).

In discourse, a metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable, in order to suggest a similarity or analogy between the two (Steen & Musolff, 2023).

The English word metaphor originates from the 16th-century Old French word *métaphore*, derived from the Latin *metaphora*, Greek *μεταφορά* (*metaphorá*), and *μετά* (*meta*), meaning "behind". (Zinken, 2023).

2.3 Types of Metaphor

Metaphors are speech figures that describe one thing in relation to another, aiming to enhance understanding or appreciation. There are various types of metaphors, each with distinct characteristics and nuances.

Standard metaphor: Standard metaphors are clear and direct comparisons between two entities, making them clear and concise. They are common and often used to express the similarity between two contrasting ideas. (Gibbs & Cienki, 2021).

Implied metaphor: Implied metaphors compare two unrelated things without directly mentioning one, inferring a comparison with something else without explicitly stating it. (Kövecses, 2022)

Visual metaphor: Visual metaphors are images that represent something else, forming a nexus of imagery used by artists to communicate information without words. They can be obvious, subtle, funny, or scathing, and are memorable, making it more likely for the target audience to remember your brand due to their uniqueness and creativity (Martin, 2021).

Extended metaphor: A metaphor is a literary device that compares and equates two things that are not alike. An extended metaphor, also known as a sustained metaphor, is a single metaphor or analogy used over multiple lines, paragraphs, or stanzas in prose or poetry. It differs from mere metaphors in its length and multiple points of contact between the object and comparison. (O'Brien, 2022).

Dead metaphor: it is a figure of speech that has lost its original meaning due to extensive usage, obsolete technology, or forgotten customs. These metaphors are a result of semantic shifts in language evolution, known as literalization. There are two types: those whose origins are unknown to most people, like "to kick the bucket," and those whose source is widely known or easily understood but not often considered (Steen, 2021).

2.4 Types of Metaphors in Political Discourse

Metaphor is a crucial tool in politics for expressing political issues, conveying ideas and ideologies, and imposing moral or ethical values. It is a fundamentally persuasive discourse act, allowing politicians to highlight aspects and ignore others. Conceptual metaphors in media discourse form cognitive models that organize thought and action. However, politicians can manipulate metaphors to reveal absurd images, mocking their rivals. In essence, metaphor allows politicians to present themselves positively, degrade their opponents, justify their actions, and assert specific political issues. In politics, power is a key concern, and language has the power to influence public opinion. (Yu, 2023). Here are some of the most important types of metaphors in political discourse:

War metaphors: War metaphors are a common literary and rhetorical technique used in politics to address societal issues, often replacing individual or state enemies. However, philosopher James Childress warns that using war metaphors can lead to a dilemma, as it often overlooks the moral reality of war. (Smith, 2022).

Family metaphors: Politicians employ family metaphors like "American family" or "family of nations" to foster community and unity, implying that individuals belong to a larger group with shared values and goals. (Gonzalez, 2021).

Journey metaphors: A journey serves as a metaphor for life, highlighting that our destination isn't our sole goal, with both straight and winding paths. (Lee, 2019).

2.5 Politicians Use of Metaphors in Political Discourse

Politicians frequently employ metaphors in their discourse to effectively convey complex ideas and emotions, making abstract concepts tangible and evoking powerful emotional responses from listeners (Cienki, 2022).

Metaphors can evoke urgency or importance in a specific issue, like a politician using a "ticking time bomb" metaphor to describe a national security threat, emphasizing immediate action to prevent a catastrophic event. (Musolff, 2018).

2.6 Metaphors used in Political and Presidential Discourse During Covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted politics and presidential discourse, posing unique challenges for the use of metaphors. The unprecedented scale and complexity of the crisis make it difficult to find appropriate metaphors to describe it, as shared experiences are not common. The pandemic has exposed deep societal fault lines, making it difficult for politicians to find metaphors that resonate with all segments of the population. For instance, some politicians have used metaphors of war or natural disasters to describe the fight against the virus, but these may not resonate with people with different political or cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the politicized nature of the crisis has led to politicians using metaphors to advance their agenda, leading to confusion and mistrust among the public. In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed unique challenges for the use of metaphors in political and presidential discourse.

3.Results

3.1 Answer of the First Question

To answer the first question, "To what extent do metaphors play role in political discourse?", the researcher found that Metaphors are figures of speech used by politicians, commentators, and media to shape public perception and understanding of political issues by comparing seemingly unrelated things, allowing for complex ideas and emotions.

Metaphors in political discourse can be problematic as they can oversimplify complex issues, manipulate public opinion, and exclude certain perspectives or groups. Therefore, it's crucial to critically evaluate the use of metaphors and their potential effects on different groups.

3.2 Answer of the Second Question

To answer the second question " What is the effect of metaphors in political discourse?", based on the literature and previous studies that tackled this topic, the researcher found that "metaphors can have a significant impact on political discourse by shaping the way people perceive and understand complex issues. Metaphors are linguistic devices that help us understand abstract concepts by linking them to more concrete, familiar ideas. In the context of

politics, metaphors can be used to frame issues in a way that resonates with the audience and reinforces certain beliefs or values".

4.Conclusion

Politicians often use metaphors to convey complex ideas and emotions, making abstract concepts tangible and evoking powerful emotional responses. Metaphors can evoke urgency or importance in specific issues, like a "ticking time bomb" metaphor for a national security threat. In political and presidential discourse, metaphors shape public perception and opinion by framing issues and shaping narratives. They help people understand abstract concepts by linking them to concrete, familiar ideas. In politics, metaphors can resonate with the audience and reinforce certain beliefs or values, making them a crucial tool in conveying complex ideas.

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