An Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 Victory Speech

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Abstract

This study analyzes the use of Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory remark to focus on how these factors shape his rhetorical strategies and communicate his political vision. By examining the frequencies and functions of Ontological, Structural and Orientational Metaphors, the research reveals how he makes abstract political concepts more tangible and accessible to his audience. Ontological Metaphors (54%) dominate the speech to allow complex ideas such as national unity and progress to be conceptualized as physical entities to make his message more relatable and emotionally compelling. Structural Metaphors (33.5%) help to organize abstract ideas to provide clarity and a sense of order while Orientational Metaphors (12.5%) emphasize spatial direction and forward movement. The findings highlight the central role of Ontological Metaphors in simplifying complex political concepts to foster optimism and inspire confidence in the future. The study provides valuable insights for political communicators, educators, and researchers and offers a deeper understanding of how metaphor usage influences public perception and voter sentiment.

Keywords: victory speech, conceptual metaphors, structural metaphors, ontological metaphors, orientational metaphors

1. Introduction

Assassination attempts, criminal convictions, and a change in his political rival did not prevent Republican Donald Trump from winning the 2024 US election after capturing several important battleground states. He declared a resounding victory over Democratic candidate and Vice President Kamala Harris in the presidential race on the early morning of Wednesday, November 6th, 2024, at a victory celebration in Florida. He told his supporters that his election to a second term represented "*a magnificent victory for the American people*" and stated that his upcoming second term would usher in a "*Golden Age of America*". The language in Donald Trump's victory speech may have been "*nothing out of the ordinary*" (O'Donoghue, 2024), but the moment itself was undeniably remarkable. In his nearly 25-minute speech, Trump expressed amazement at the progress of his campaign, claimed a "*mandate*" for his agenda, and offered brief insights into individuals expected to play significant roles in his upcoming administration. At this pivotal moment, his speech aimed to affirm his leadership, unite the nation by reaching out to both supporters and opponents, boost public morale, express gratitude to his supporters and campaign team, outline the key priorities for his upcoming term, and project strength and stability as he prepared to take on the responsibilities of his renewed presidency. Through his victory speech, he intended to inspire citizens, boost morale, build public confidence, and secure widespread support. To achieve these objectives and leave a positive impression, Donald Trump carefully crafted the speech by utilizing various language techniques, including conceptual metaphors. As noted by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors are integral to daily life to shape not only language but also thought and actions. Their Conceptual Metaphor Theory suggests that one concept can be understood in terms of another to allow people to grasp abstract ideas through more tangible terms. Since politics is complex and often remote from everyday experience, metaphors help politicians present abstract political ideas in a more relatable way. Furthermore, Jeffery and Katz (1996) argue that metaphors provide potential solutions to political challenges to encourage the public to adopt the actions implied by these metaphorical expressions.

This research focuses on analyzing the Conceptual Metaphors found in Donald Trump's 2024 victory address to uncover how these metaphors shape his political messaging, reinforce his ideological perspectives, and engage his audience emotionally and cognitively. By identifying and categorizing these Conceptual Metaphors, the study seeks to illustrate

how he leverages metaphorical language to construct persuasive narratives, align himself with specific values, and project an image of leadership. This analysis contributes to a broader understanding of how Conceptual Metaphors function in political discourse, particularly in contexts of victory and leadership assertion.

Research Objectives

This study focuses on achieving the following objectives:

- To identify and categorize the Conceptual Metaphors found in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech

- To determine the frequencies of each type of Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory address

- To explore the rhetorical functions of the Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory remark

Research questions

This article aims to answer the following research questions:

- What types of Conceptual Metaphors are found in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech?

- What is the frequency of each type of Conceptual Metaphors identified in Donald Trump's 2024 victory address?

- What rhetorical functions do these Conceptual Metaphors serve in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech?

Research Significance

This study makes a significant contribution to political discourse analysis by examining Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech. It reveals how Conceptual Metaphors shape his communication style and audience connection, with insights into prevalent rhetorical themes. The research is also valuable for English teaching, especially in advanced and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) contexts to help students understand figurative language, critical analysis, and rhetorical strategies in political speeches. Finally, it enhances political metaphor studies to provide insights into how language shapes public opinion and supports ideological narratives.

2. Theoretical Background

Definition of Conceptual Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) define a Conceptual Metaphor as a way of understanding one conceptual domain through the lens of another. Besides, Metaphors are described by Lakoff (1992) as *"general mappings across conceptual domains"*. These mappings consist of a structured relationship involving a source domain, a target domain, and the connections between them.

i. Classification of Metaphors

- Structural Metaphors

Structural Metaphors, as explained by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), involve understanding and experiencing one concept through the lens of another. These metaphors enable the use of a well-defined and highly structured concept to shape another and play a crucial role in forming new metaphors and metaphorical ideas. They represent a system in which an abstract concept is understood through a more concrete one. In this type of metaphor, the source domain offers a detailed framework of knowledge that helps conceptualize the target domain. Essentially, Structural Metaphors allow individuals to comprehend the target concept (A) by utilizing the structure of the source concept (B).

Example: ARGUMENT IS WAR in the following two sentences:

Bill *attacked* my argument.

I have never *beaten* this guy in an argument.

- Ontological Metaphors

Ontological Metaphors represent another type of **Conceptual Metaphor,** differing from Structural Metaphors by being less explicitly mapped from the source domain to the target concept (Kövecses, 2002). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain that these metaphors emerge from our interactions with physical objects and substances, which serve as a foundation for comprehension. They assign a new ontological status to broad categories of abstract target concepts, transforming them into tangible entities. This type of metaphor represents abstract ideas, emotions, or activities as concrete forms, such as objects, substances, containers, or people.

For example, in the **ACTIVITY AS CONTAINER** metaphor:

"How did Paul get out of washing the windows?"

"I put a lot of energy into washing the windows."

The activity of washing windows is conceptualized as a container one can enter or exit.

- Orientational Metaphors

Orientational Metaphors, as defined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), assign a spatial orientation to a concept. These metaphors reflect the human capacity to structure systems of concepts based on spatial experiences accumulated over a lifetime. Kövecses (2002) notes that Orientational Metaphors offer even less conceptual structure for their target concepts compared to Ontological Metaphors.

The term "Orientational Metaphors" arises from their focus on human spatial orientations, with their primary cognitive function being to create coherence among a set of target concepts within our conceptual framework. An Orientational Metaphor assigns spatial dimensions such as up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, and central-peripheral to concepts. In this type of metaphor, specific target concepts are often consistently conceptualized in the same spatial direction. For instance, concepts associated with an "upward" orientation, such as health, contrast with their opposites, which are associated with a "downward" orientation, like sickness.

Examples include:

HEALTHY IS UP; SICK IS DOWN

"*Lazarus rose from the dead.* "

"*He fell ill.* "

ii. Metaphoric Mappings

There is a systematic relationship between the source domain and the target domain, where the conceptual elements of the source domain (B) align with those of the target domain (A). These systematic relationships are technically referred to as "*mappings*".
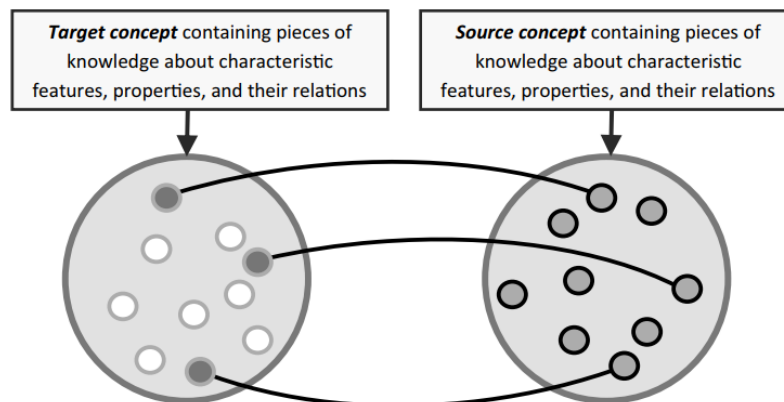

Figure 1. Graphical Depiction of a Conceptual Mapping

(Landau, Robinson & Meier, 2014, p. 6)

For example:

In the Conceptual Metaphor *LOVE IS A JOURNEY*, the sentence "*We aren't going anywhere.*" contains elements of a journey, such as travelers**,** the journey itself, and the destination. However, when understood in the appropriate context, it refers to love. In this case, **"*travelers*"** represent the lovers, the **"*journey*"** symbolizes the events in their relationship, and the **"*destination*"** represents the goal of their love.

Here are the mappings:

SOURCE: JOURNEY → TARGET: LOVE

Travelers → Lovers

Vehicle → The love relationship

Journey → Events in the relationship

Obstacles → Difficulties experienced

Decisions about the path → Choices in the relationship

Destination → Goal of the relationship

3. Review of Previous Studies

Conceptual Metaphors in political discourse have been widely studied as tools to convey ideological messages, shape public perceptions, and reinforce narratives of leadership and unity. In their study, Huijuan, Turiman & Chee (2024) examine the ideological use of metaphors in Xi Jinping's speech commemorating role models in China's fight against COVID-19. Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the study identifies 17 types of metaphors, including war, architectural, and personification metaphors. These metaphors underscore themes of nationalism, patriotism, and collectivism, framing the pandemic response as a testament to China's collective strength under socialism. The study highlights the role of metaphors in reinforcing ideological values during national crises, supporting the broader narrative of Chinese resilience and unity.

Similarly, Dragojević (2023) investigates metaphors in U.S. presidential inaugural addresses by Joe Biden, Donald Trump, and Barack Obama, focusing on metaphors like "POLITICS IS WAR" and "UNITY IS A TOOL.". Through CMT, this study demonstrates how these metaphors convey political ideologies, foster unity, and inspire public action, while also reflecting cultural influences on metaphorical language. This analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the strategic use of metaphors in shaping national narratives and aligning public sentiment with political values.

The study by Zeray (2023) analyzes Conceptual Metaphors in political speeches by African leaders, identifying Journey, Building, and War as common themes symbolizing progress and resilience. The analysis of gender differences reveals that female politicians prioritize inclusivity, while male politicians emphasize strength. The research underscores the significance of metaphors in political discourse and cultural contexts.

Woods (2022) offers a broader analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in U.S. presidential speeches from 1944 to 2021, exploring metaphors such as "POLITICS IS WAR", "POLITICS IS A JOURNEY", and "POLITICS IS LOVE" across party lines and speech types. The findings suggest a consistent genre of political speech, with no significant quantitative differences in metaphor use between Democratic and Republican presidents. However, qualitative patterns emerged, with journey metaphors frequently used inclusively in inaugural addresses while war metaphors were often used to frame elections and policy issues, to indicate metaphorical patterns in specific speech contexts.

In Vietnam, Doan (2022) examines the use of the metaphor *"Politics is War"* in the headlines and leads of two newspapers: *Nhan Dan Online* (Vietnam) and *The New York Times* (USA). Analyzing a corpus of 1,600 articles (800 from each source) published between 2014 and 2021, the study employs the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) to uncover how political events are framed using war-related language. Both newspapers exhibit a common use of this metaphor, indicating a shared view of politics as combative. However, cultural differences are evident, with Vietnamese articles featuring idiomatic expressions related to war while American articles make use of more direct metaphorical mappings. The research underscores the relationship between language, culture, and political discourse.

In studies focused on Donald Trump's speeches, Karatintseva (2019) examines his use of military, sports, and game metaphors in campaign speeches. By framing elections as a battle and political opponents as adversaries, these metaphors underscore Trump's combative approach and align with American cultural values of competition and individualism. Similarly, Pilyarchuk & Onysko (2018) analyze Trump's use of metaphors like *"warrior", "repairman"* and *"healer"* which frame political issues such as immigration and the economy in emotionally charged ways that resonate with nationalist and protectionist sentiments. Both studies highlight how Trump uses metaphors to strategically amplify themes of fear, nationalism, and decisiveness to reinforce his image as a strong protector and appeal to his electoral base.

Pasaribu (2016) analyzes the application of political metaphors in Joko Widodo's victory and inaugural speeches, focusing on their source domains and persuasive power. Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980, 1992), the study reveals that Widodo's speeches favor positive metaphors of "*unity*" over "*battle*" or "*competition*". Additionally, the Indonesian political landscape is framed as a "*journey*" and "*navigation*", evoking a sense of progress. Maritime Metaphors, which align with Widodo's vision of strengthening Indonesia's maritime sector, are particularly prevalent, highlighting the strategic use of metaphors to convey political goals and resonate with audiences.

In brief, these studies emphasize the powerful role of Conceptual Metaphors in political discourse. They reveal how leaders strategically use metaphorical language to communicate ideologies, shape public opinion, and reinforce national narratives, particularly during times of crisis or political change. By analyzing the use of metaphors across various contexts and leaders, these works contribute to a deeper understanding of how language functions as a persuasive tool for shaping public perceptions and reinforcing ideological frameworks in political communication.

Despite extensive research on Conceptual Metaphors in political discourse, including studies on news headlines and speeches by some leaders such as Xi Jinping, Joko Widodo, U.S. presidents, and African leaders, there is a noticeable gap in the focused analysis of Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech. Existing studies have explored Trump's metaphorical strategies in campaign speeches and earlier addresses, emphasizing themes like war, competition, and nationalism.

However, they do not examine how Conceptual Metaphors in his 2024 victory speech specifically function to reinforce his leadership, articulate his vision, and resonate with audiences in a politically unique context. Addressing this gap would provide valuable insights into the evolution of Trump's rhetorical strategies, their alignment with contemporary political dynamics, and their role in shaping public perception during his renewed presidency.

4. Methodology

Research Design

This study uses a mixed-methods approach to analyze Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory address by integrating descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative methodologies. The descriptive phase identifies and categorizes metaphors based on frameworks such as Lakoff and Johnson's theory (1980). Qualitative analysis explores the meanings and implications of these metaphors, focusing on their role in Trump's political strategies and messaging. Quantitative analysis examines the frequency and distribution of metaphor types to reveal patterns in their usage. The analysis involves systematic data collection from the speech transcript, applying metaphor identification procedures and categorization techniques, and presenting findings through triangulation for a comprehensive understanding of metaphor usage.

Research Subject

This research utilizes data from Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech, delivered on November 6th, 2024.

Data Sources

The data for this research consist of a YouTube video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaqggidyAVg) and its corresponding transcript, which is the primary data source obtained from the website (https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-victory-speech-full-transcript-1981234).

Data Collection

The data for this study were gathered from the transcript of Trump's 2024 victory address. The data collection process followed several steps: First, the speech video was accessed. Then, the video was viewed, and the transcript of the speech was obtained. The transcript was reviewed multiple times to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the content and to identify segments that potentially contained Conceptual Metaphors. Lastly, during the analysis, instances of Conceptual Metaphors in the speech were categorized and examined.

Data Analysis

The data analysis will be conducted in four phases. In Phase 1, conceptual metaphorical expressions in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech will be identified. In Phase 2, the identified Conceptual Metaphors will be classified into categories such as Structural, Ontological, and Orientational based on their conceptual domains. Phase 3 will involve analyzing the functions of these metaphors in reinforcing key themes, political ideologies, and persuasive strategies within the speech. Finally, in Phase 4, the frequency and distribution of the metaphors will be quantified, and the results will be presented visually through tables or graphs to highlight usage patterns.

5. Findings and Discussions

Based on the Conceptual Metaphor system outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), this analysis examines the conceptual metaphors— Structural, Ontological, and Orientational Metaphors —that Donald Trump employs in his 2024 victory speech. Using a combination of descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative methods, the study systematically documents, categorizes, and measures the frequencies of these metaphors. The findings are then presented and discussed to illustrate how Trump effectively employs these metaphors to shape his rhetoric and convey his message.

Structural Metaphors

In Donald Trump's 2024 Victory Speech, **Structural Metaphors** shape his narrative by framing complex political concepts and abstract ideas—**such as progress and leadership**—in relatable terms to enhance the audience's understanding of his vision for the future and the persuasiveness of his message.

Samples of Structural Metaphors

The following samples of **Structural Metaphors** from Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech highlight how he effectively utilizes figurative language to convey his vision and rally support.
Example 1: "*I'm going to stop wars, but this is also **a massive victory** for democracy and for freedom*." (S251, SM89).
This example demonstrates the Structural Metaphor of "*victory*" as achievement, representing the success of abstract ideals like democracy and freedom in a tangible and relatable way. "*Victory*" is drawn from the concrete domain of contests or battles, where outcomes are clear and success is measurable. By framing democracy and freedom as a contest with opposing forces, the metaphor emphasizes that these values are not merely abstract or passive but are significant goals that require effort to attain and defend. The use of "*victory*" implies that achieving these ideals involved overcoming

resistance, thus instilling a sense of urgency and highlighting the active pursuit of these principles. Additionally, the adjective *"massive"* underscores the importance and magnitude of this accomplishment to suggest far-reaching implications for society. This framing fosters a sense of collective effort, unity, and shared purpose, encouraging citizens to view the success of democratic values as both a shared triumph and a responsibility. Therefore, this Structural Metaphor effectively conveys the importance of these achievements in the political arena by making the abstract notions of democracy and freedom more accessible and emotionally resonant while elevating their significance as goals worth striving for and protecting.

Example 2: " *He's a **super genius**.*" (S154, SM55).

Example 2 illustrates that Donald Trump employs a Structural Metaphor to depict Elon Musk. This metaphor maps the abstract qualities of intelligence and innovation (target domain) onto the familiar concept of "genius" (source domain), culturally associated with exceptional intellectual capacity and groundbreaking achievements. The addition of "*super*" amplifies this notion to suggest unparalleled brilliance. By framing Musk's innovation, achievements, and problem-solving abilities in terms of "*genius*" the metaphor creates a clear and relatable framework for understanding his accomplishments as extraordinary and transformative. Furthermore, this metaphor leverages societal admiration for intellectual prowess to position Musk as a visionary leader and to evoke both admiration and trust. Within the context of Trump's speech, the metaphor elevates Musk's status to align him with themes of greatness and exceptionalism that underscore the broader message of achievement and progress. It reinforces Musk's role as an exemplar of American ingenuity and success to make his contributions tangible and emotionally resonant for the audience.

These examples of Structural Metaphors in this remark demonstrate Trump's adept use of figurative language to render abstract ideals such as democracy, freedom, and innovation more tangible and relatable, to effectively rally support and foster a sense of collective purpose among his audience.

The Frequencies of Structural Metaphors

The frequencies of Structural Metaphors in this address highlight his strategic use of metaphorical language to frame key themes and persuade his audience.

This following table categorizes Structural Metaphors to provide insight into how Trump uses metaphorical language to connect with his audience. *"Life/Progress as a Journey"* (10.40%) leads the categories, portraying life and achievements as purposeful movement toward a goal. *"Time as a Linear Distance/Resource"* (6.90%) highlights urgency and efficiency in solving problems, while *"Success/Achievement as Greatness"* (6.00%) frames ambition as reaching extraordinary heights. Metaphors like *"Conflict/Politics as Battle or War"* (5.20%) evoke resilience and competition while *"Actions as Physical Objects/Force"* (6.90%) underline the tangible impact of decisions. Smaller categories, such as "*Unity as Proximity or Strength*" (3.50%), emphasize solidarity, and *"Power/Leadership as Possession"* (4.30%) reinforces authority and responsibility.

Table 1 also explores less dominant metaphors, such as *"Safety as Shielding"* (1.70%) and *"Restoration as Healing"* (2.60%), which evoke protection and recovery. With a total of 155 Structural Metaphors, this analysis reveals Trump's rhetorical strategy of simplifying abstract political ideas through relatable, vivid imagery that fosters emotional connection and conveys a clear vision for the nation. Donald Trump extensively uses structural Conceptual Metaphors in his 2024 victory speech to simplify complex ideas, making them relatable and emotionally resonant. By mapping abstract concepts like democracy and leadership onto familiar domains such as journeys, battles, and objects, he emphasizes themes of action, achievement, and national pride. Dominant metaphors like *"Life/Progress as a Journey"* highlight purposeful movement toward goals, while lesser-used ones, such as *"Obstacles as Forces"* address secondary themes with less immediate impact. This strategic use of Structural Metaphors reinforces Trump's vision of strong leadership, triumph, and forward progress. The dominant themes of journey, time, and greatness illustrate a focus on progress and achievement that resonates with aspirations for a stronger and united America.

Table 1. The Frequencies of Structural Metaphors

No.	Category	Number of Occurrences	Percentage (%)	Features of Structural Metaphors
1	Other Categories	19	16.5 %	Importance as size, Destiny as potential, Uniqueness as rarity
2	Life/Progress as a Journey	12	10.4 %	Life as a journey, Campaigning as a journey, Future as a destination
3	Time as a Linear Distance/Resource	8	6.9 %	Time is a journey, Time is a resource, Time as a measurable scale
4	Actions as Physical Objects/Force	8	6.9 %	Actions are gifts, Actions produce emotions as products
5	Success/Achievement as Greatness	7	6 %	Success is greatness, Achievement exceeds normal expectations
6	Conflict/Politics as Battle or War	6	5.2 %	Politics as a race, Sports as a battle or war
7	Purpose/Mission as a Destination	6	5.2 %	Mission as a journey, Purpose as a destination
8	Change as Movement	5	4.3 %	Change is physical movement, Political change as realignment
9	Power/Leadership as Possession	5	4.3 %	Leadership is possession, Power is possession
10	Unity as Proximity or Strength	4	3.5 %	Proximity is unity, Unity is strength
11	Victory as Object or Event	4	3.5 %	Victory as a tangible object to be delivered, Victory as a competition or battle
12	Work as Creation/Construction	4	3.5 %	Work as a form of physical creation, Campaign as a building process
13	Deserving/Effort as Earning/Ownership	3	2.6 %	Deserving as earning, Hard work as physical labor
14	Excellence/Intellect as Superpower	3	2.6 %	Intellect is extraordinary power, Excellence as extraordinary quality
15	Restoration as Healing/Returning	3	2.6 %	Restoring America as returning to a previous state, Restoration as healing
16	Communication as Transfer/Sharing	3	2.6 %	Communication is transfer, Communication as a wiring system
17	Nation as a Vehicle	2	1.7 %	Nation is a vehicle
18	Integrity as Alignment	2	1.7 %	Integrity as alignment between words and actions
19	Safety as Shielding	2	1.7 %	Safety is shielding from harm
20	Obstacles as Forces	2	1.7 %	Obstacles as forces acting against movement
21	Recognition as Inclusion	2	1.7 %	Recognition is inclusion
	Total	**155**	**100%**	

Ontological Metaphors

Ontological Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 Victory Speech demonstrate how abstract notions, such as challenges and achievements, are depicted as concrete entities that reinforce his message and connect with his audience.

Samples of Ontological Metaphors

Samples of Ontological Metaphors provide insight into how abstract ideas are transformed into tangible entities clarify their role in structuring thought and communication.

Example 3: *"There's never been anything like this in this country, and maybe the, and now it's going **to reach a new level** of importance because we're going to help our country **heal**.".* (S7, ONM11).

To make abstract political concepts more tangible and emotionally impactful, Donald Trump uses Ontological Metaphors in his 2024 victory speech. The metaphor of the country "*heal*" presents the nation as a living entity in need of recovery, positioning him as the leader capable of guiding it through a process of restoration. This metaphor appeals to the audience's desire for national healing in the coming term. Additionally, the phrase "*to reach a new level*" conceptualizes the nation's progress as a measurable ascent, presenting importance as something attainable and reinforcing the idea of transformative change. These Ontological Metaphors work together to create an image of the nation as both a physical entity in need of care and a place poised for greater significance. They make abstract political goals—like national healing and progress— feel more immediate and achievable to align with the speaker's broader themes of recovery and a bright future for the country.

Example 4: *"And we love the **family**, and we're going to have **a great four years**, and we're gonna **turn our country around**"*. (S60, ONM57).

In example 4, Donald Trump employs Ontological Metaphors that make abstract concepts more tangible and emotionally resonant for his audience. The phrase "*we love the family*" evokes feelings of warmth, connection and loyalty to frame the nation as a family and suggest that citizens share a bond of unity and collective responsibility. This metaphor implies that, like family members, citizens should support and care for one another. The reference to having "*a great four years*" treats time as a measurable entity to suggest that the upcoming term will provide an opportunity for significant success and improvement to encourage optimism and expectation. Additionally, the phrase "*turn our country around*" uses spatial imagery to convey change and direction to imply that while the country faces challenges, it can be redirected toward a better path. This suggests that transformation be possible through collective action to emphasize the agency of citizens in influencing the nation's trajectory. Overall, these Ontological Metaphors effectively communicate themes of unity, hope, and agency to inspire Trump's audience to envision a brighter future and foster a sense of collective purpose and optimism among his supporters.

The Frequencies of Ontological Metaphors

The frequencies of Ontological Metaphors in this remark highlight how abstract concepts are presented as tangible entities to enhancing the clarity and persuasive impact of his communication.

Table 2. The Frequencies of Ontological Metaphors

Category	Number	Percentage (%)	Features of Ontological Metaphors
Other Metaphors	80	32 %	Includes metaphors for democracy, health, prosperity, jobs, and abstract concepts.
Life/Progress as a Journey	15	6 %	"Historical significance as a journey" and "Journey/action as movement"
Achievements as Objects	12	4.8 %	"Achievements are measurable objects." and "Victory as a possession"
Time as a Container	10	4 %	"Time is a container." and "Future as an object"
Nation as a Body/Entity	10	4 %	"Nation as a body" and "Country as an entity to be improved"
Emotions as Objects	10	4 %	"Emotions are visible entities" and "Love is appreciation."
Political Movements as Entities	8	3.2 %	"Organizations are objects." and "Movements are entities."
Problems as Physical Objects	8	3.2 %	"Problems are broken objects." and "Obstacles are physical barriers."
Power as Force/Energy	8	3.2 %	"Power as a force" and "Authority is power."
Strength as Physical Power	7	2.8 %	"Strength is physical power." and "Resilience as an inherent quality"
Events as Unique Objects	6	2.4%	"Rally as an event" and "The end of the campaign as a destination"
Importance as Size/Height	6	2.4%	"Importance is size." and "Prioritizing a nation is placing it at the top."
Honor as a Tangible Object	6	2.4%	"Honor is a valuable object." and "Deserved recognition as an object"
Supporters as Friends	5	2%	"Supporters are friends."
Trust as a Valuable Asset	5	2%	"Trust as a valuable asset" and "Loyalty as a debt"
Freedom as a Condition	5	2%	"Freedom is a condition of release or liberation."
Unity as Physical Closeness	5	2%	"Unity is physical closeness." and "Togetherness as a tool"
Destiny as an Object	4	1.6%	"Destiny as an object to be unlocked" and "Future as an object."
Total	**250**	**100%**	

Ontological Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory address transform abstract ideas into tangible entities to make them relatable and visually impactful for the audience. The most frequent category, *"Life/Progress as a Journey"* (6%), frames achievements and historical moments as milestones on a shared path to align with Trump's narrative of forward momentum and collective progress. Other notable categories, such as *"Achievements as Objects"* (4.8%) and *"Time as a*

Container" (4%), underscore success and temporal organization to help the audience perceive abstract accomplishments and opportunities concretely. Similarly, *"Nation as a Body/Entity"* (4%) and *"Emotions as Objects"* (4%) emphasize unity and emotional resonance by attributing physical characteristics to intangible concepts. Meanwhile, *"Political Movements as Entities"* (3.2%) and Strength as Physical Power (2.8%) convey agency and resilience. The least frequent, *"Destiny as an Object"* (1.6%), reflects its abstract and less immediate nature, making it less prominent in a speech focused on actionable achievements and rallying themes. These percentages demonstrate Trump's strategic use of metaphors to emphasize themes like unity, success, and progress to craft a persuasive vision that resonates emotionally and practically with his audience. Overall, Donald Trump's strategic use of Ontological Metaphors in his 2024 victory address vividly illustrates and unifies complex ideas to ultimately create a compelling narrative that inspires his audience to embrace a shared vision of progress and collective achievement.

Orientational Metaphors

Orientational Metaphors play a crucial role in shaping Donald Trump's rhetoric by using spatial concepts to evoke emotions, influence perceptions, and reinforce his overarching message.

Samples of Orientational Metaphors

The examples of Orientational Metaphors in this address demonstrate how spatial relationships convey abstract concepts and shape audience perception.

Example 5: "*America's future will be **bigger, better, bolder, richer, safer and stronger** than it has ever been before.* " (S251, ORM50).

Donald Trump employs Orientational Metaphors in the above example to frame abstract concepts like improvement and success in spatial and physical terms to create a sense of positive progression and superiority. The words "*Bigger, better, and bolder*" illustrate the metaphor "*Good is up*", associating growth, improvement, and confidence with upward or expansive movement, which are universally linked to progress and triumph. In addition, "*Richer, safer, and stronger*" relate to metaphors like *"Security/strength as stability"* and "Power as elevation" implying that America's strength and wealth will not only grow but also fortify become more secure to suggest resilience and permanence. These metaphors amplify a vision of an elevated future, resonating with optimism and ambition while inspiring confidence in Trump's audience. The repeated use of comparatives highlights continuous upward movement to align with his broader rhetorical strategy of associating success with progress and growth. By framing the future in this way, Trump appeals to the audience's aspirations for a better life to evoke feelings of possibility and ambition and invite citizens to participate in this journey toward an enhanced future. The application of Orientational Metaphors effectively conveys a vision of growth and improvement for America to inspire a sense of optimism and collective purpose as it suggests that the future holds greater potential and opportunities for everyone.

Example 6: "*Uniting citizens of all backgrounds around a common core of common sense.*" (S238, ORM40).

Donald Trump utilizes Orientational Metaphors in the above- mentioned example to effectively communicate themes of unity, inclusivity and shared values, which are essential in a political context. By employing the metaphor of "*uniting*", he emphasizes the importance of bringing together diverse groups, fostering a sense of collective strength and purpose. This approach resonates with his audience, as it implies that despite differences, there is a common goal that can unite them. The phrase "*common core*" reinforces this idea, suggesting a stable foundation upon which collaboration can be built. By framing this core as something vital and shared, Trump creates a sense of belonging among citizens, which is crucial for building a cohesive national identity. Additionally, referring to "*common sense*" positions this shared understanding as practical and accessible to appeal to the audience's desire for straightforward solutions to societal issues. Through these Orientational Metaphors, he not only articulates a vision of unity but also seeks evokes feelings of optimism and community among his supporters. Emphasizing collaboration around shared principles helps inspire collective action and reinforces the notion that together, citizens can work toward common goals to ultimately enhance his message of hope for the future. This rhetorical strategy effectively mobilizes his audience, enhances his political narrative and broadens his appeal. All in all, Trump's strategic use of these Orientational Metaphors effectively conveys his vision of a resilient and united America to appeal to the aspirations and hopes of his audience.

The Frequencies of Orientational Metaphors

The analysis of Orientational Metaphors in this remark reveals how spatial metaphorical concepts are employed to effectively frame his vision, goals, and perspectives as shown in the following table.

Table 3. The Frequencies of Orientational Metaphors

No.	Category	Number of Occurrences	Percentage (%)	Features of Orientational Metaphors
1	Good is Up	7	12.10%	"Success is up", "Greatness is up", and "Better as upward movement."
2	Importance is Size/Height	6	10.30%	"Importance is size", "Greatness is an upward direction", and "Victory as being upward"
3	Improvement is Upward Movement	6	10.30%	"Improvement is upward movement", and "Health as up or forward."
4	Down is Failure or Decline	5	8.60%	"Down is decline or failure" and "Disruption as a downward movement"
5	Status is Up	5	8.60%	"Status is up" and "Might and power as being 'up'"
6	Presence is Elevation	4	6.90%	"Presence as elevation" and "Resilience as staying upright"
7	Forward as Positive Progress	4	6.90%	"Forward as positive progress" and "Future as forward"
8	Importance is Location (Front is Important)	4	6.90%	"Coming after as pursuit or attack" and "Importance as spatial position"
9	Grounding is Stability	3	5.20%	"Hard work as being foundational" and "Core as central and foundational"
10	Victory is Upward or Monumental	3	5.20%	"Victory as being upward" and "Victory as up"
11	Inclusivity as Spatial Expansiveness	2	3.40%	"Inclusivity as spatial expansiveness" and "Alignment as spatial arrangement"
12	Failure is a Downward Movement	2	3.40%	"Failure is a downward movement" and "End of the campaign as a down position"
13	Movement is Access	2	3.40%	"Movement is access." and "Moving on to something more important"
14	Time as a Physical Space	2	3.40%	"The past is behind us." and "Future as forward"
15	Destiny is Up or Forward	1	1.70%	"Destiny is up or forward."
	Total	**58**	**100%**	

The table categorizes Orientational Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech to demonstrate how spatial orientation conveys abstract concepts such as success, importance, and failure. The most frequent metaphor, *"Good is Up"* (12.1%), encapsulates themes of triumph, growth, and optimism, reinforcing the speech's celebratory tone and depicting his leadership as monumental. Metaphors like *"Importance is Size/Height"* (10.3%) and *"Improvement is Upward Movement"* (10.3%) emphasize growth and significance, aligning with Trump's narrative of continued progress and achievements. Similarly, *"Down is Failure or Decline"* (8.6%) contrasts success with challenges to highlight resilience while "*Forward as Positive Progress*" (6.9%) projects a vision of collective advancement. In contrast, the least frequent metaphor, "*Destiny as Up or Forward"* (1.7%), reflects a reduced emphasis on inevitability and instead aligns with his action-oriented rhetoric that prioritizes effort, resilience, and tangible progress over passive acceptance of fate. The predominance of upward and forward metaphors underscores a focus on positivity, aspiration and progress that resonates with the audience's desire for improvement and triumph. By linking upward movement with success—a universally aspirational concept—he reinforces themes of progress and collective achievement. The scarcity of destiny metaphors allows him to emphasize active participation and proactive accomplishments and reveals a strategic approach centered on ambition, tangible outcomes and an inspiring vision for the future. This rhetorical strategy effectively connects with his audience by sustaining a message of optimism and dynamic leadership.

The Frequencies of Conceptual Metaphors

The table below presents the frequencies and percentages of different types of Conceptual Metaphors identified in this remark.

Table 4. The Frequencies of Conceptual Metaphors

Conceptual Metaphor Type	Number	Percentage (%)
Ontological Metaphors	250	54%
Structural Metaphors	155	33.50%
Orientational Metaphors	58	12.50%
Total	**463**	**100%**

The table above can be illustrated in the following figure presenting the proportional distribution of Conceptual Metaphors types—Ontological, Structural, and Orientational—in Donald Trump's 2024 Victory Address.
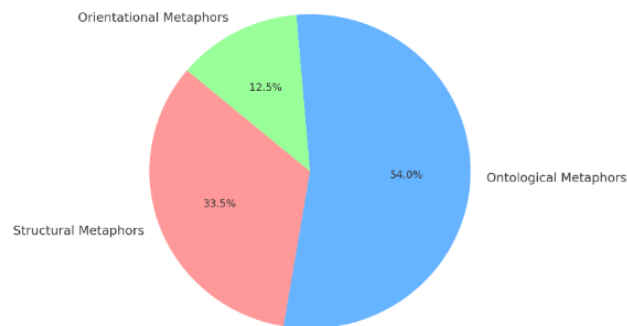
Figure 2. The frequencies of Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 Victory Speech

The frequencies of Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory address reveal his rhetorical strategies for effectively conveying his message. Ontological Metaphors dominate the speech, with 250 instances (54%), helping to present abstract political concepts as tangible entities. This approach makes complex ideas, such as national unity and progress, more relatable and actionable to allow Trump's vision for the future to feel concrete. These metaphors simplify concepts like the nation's challenges and successes providing a clear and emotionally compelling picture of what is possible. In contrast, Orientational Metaphors, which are less frequent at 58 instances (12.5%), emphasize spatial direction but lack the vividness of Ontological Metaphors. Structural Metaphors, comprising 155 instances (33.5%), organize abstract ideas by mapping one domain onto another to enhance clarity. Overall, while all metaphor types contribute to the speech's effectiveness, the prominence of Ontological Metaphors highlights Trump's focus on making abstract concepts tangible and reinforcing his overarching messages of unity, success, and national revival.

6. Conclusions

The analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech reveals how he skillfully utilizes metaphors to shape his rhetorical strategies and effectively communicate his vision. The dominant use of Ontological Metaphors (54%) underscores his effort to make abstract political concepts, such as national progress and unity, more tangible and accessible to his audience. By conceptualizing these abstract ideas as physical entities, Trump provides a clear, relatable, and emotionally compelling picture of a prosperous and unified future to make his message more persuasive. Structural Metaphors (33.5%) serve to organize and clarify complex ideas to add a sense of order to the narrative and help his audience follow his vision for the nation's future. In contrast, Orientational Metaphors (12.5%), while less frequent, provide spatial direction and emphasize forward movement, complementing the other metaphors without dominating the speech. All in all, the study demonstrates that Trump relies heavily on Ontological Metaphors to simplify complex ideas to make them more actionable and relatable to his audience. This rhetorical strategy is central to his attempt to inspire optimism, a sense of shared purpose, and confidence in the nation's future. This research can be applied in various fields, such as political communication, public speaking and discourse analysis, where metaphor usage is pivotal in shaping public perception and persuading audiences. Understanding the prevalence and function of metaphors in political speeches can help politicians, speechwriters, and communicators craft messages that resonate more effectively with the public. Additionally, this analysis provides valuable insights for educators and students in rhetoric, linguistics, and political science to highlight the role of metaphors in framing political issues and influencing voter sentiment. Future research can expand on this study by analyzing metaphor usage in speeches from other political leaders to compare the effectiveness of Conceptual Metaphors across different political contexts and cultural settings. Additionally, exploring the relationship between conceptual metaphor usage and audience reception, particularly through qualitative and quantitative methods such as surveys or focus groups, can provide deeper insights into how metaphors influence public opinion. Researchers can also investigate how metaphors evolve over the course of a political campaign or administration to shed light on how political discourse shifts in response to changing circumstances.

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Authors contributions

Nguyen Thi Bich Giang and Tran Xuan Hiep were responsible for study design. The manuscript was drafted by Nguyen Thi Bich Giang, and revised by Tran Xuan Hiep. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript. The authors contributed equally to the study.

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