

Bidenian and Harrisian Metaphors: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris' Political Discourse

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Received on: 29-10-2023

Accepted on: 1-5-2024

Abstract

This research analyzes some political leaders' discourse which aims to achieve the objective of persuading their audience to align with their respective viewpoints and policies. Applying the Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and guided by the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis by Fairclough (1995), this study examines a corpus of 40 speeches delivered by each of US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. The analysis uncovers a recurrent utilization of metaphors grounded in the domain of life, such as "LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD," "LIFE IS A JOURNEY," and "LIFE IS A GAME" by Biden. Similarly, Harris frequently employs "LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD," which conveys attributes of resilience and fortitude, reflecting her capacity as Vice President. Furthermore, the analysis identifies another prevailing conceptual metaphor, "AMERICA IS A PERSON," by Harris. These metaphorical expressions operate as persuasive tools, facilitating the transmission of their respective political ideologies.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphors, corpus analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, Joe Biden, Kamala Harris.

1. Introduction

Metaphors are often used to bridge gaps in a language. When communicating complicated political news to the public, the invention of new metaphors is also prevalent (Mooney and Evans 2019). Metaphors establish equivalency between two entities. Frequently, metaphors require an abstract concept in terms of a tangible one. Metaphor is fundamental to seeing and understanding the world (Partington and Taylor 2018). Metaphor is effective because its roots are implicit and not explicitly stated. This has two repercussions. First, different individuals may understand the same metaphor differently. Second, contesting or refuting the alleged likeness makes it more difficult (Mooney and Evans 2019). Metaphor influences our mental conceptions because it helps people comprehend the meaning of numerous abstract concepts, such as thoughts, emotions, plans, time, society, etc., which are only faintly defined by our experiences. Therefore, we continually attempt to understand these abstract ideas that we do not entirely

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* Doi: <https://doi.org/10.47012/jjml.16.3.5>

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grasp by comparing them to more explicit notions in our experience or intellect (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 115).

This research juxtaposes the speeches of these leaders in order to emphasize the manner in which they use metaphors to elucidate their perspectives and influence their listeners. This study offers a comprehensive understanding of metaphor in political communication, thanks to its extensive collection of metaphors and its emphasis on cognitive and socio-political dimensions. There is currently no study that directly compares the political rhetoric of US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. Several analysis compared and contrasted the speeches of President Biden and former President Donald Trump, with some specifically focusing on Biden or Harris. Therefore, our study aims to fill this gap in the existing body of comparative American rhetoric literature. Thus, this study is to answer the questions:

1. How do political leaders Joe Biden and Kamala Harris use conceptual metaphors to enhance their persuasive speech strategies?
2. How can Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis help analyze political speeches, especially in identifying repeated metaphors related to life, and how do these metaphors influence the communication of political ideologies?

1.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conducted an in-depth investigation and analysis of the conceptual metaphor in their seminal work titled *Metaphors We Live By* and outlined its key concepts. According to them, daily language is replete with commonplace analogies. These are very significant and form our brains. Conceptual metaphor accentuates the significance of concepts in shaping cognitive processes and discerning of the external environment. Cognitive linguistics primarily focuses on the study of ideas as a means to comprehend language.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) posits that figurative language plays a crucial role in human cognition and communication. The core principle of CMT is that metaphor is not a decorative or just enjoyable element of human expression and communication, but rather a reflection of how an abstract and conceptual subject (such as love, life, or war) is cognitively organized. Common phrases like "time is money" or "life is a journey" illustrate the relationship between a certain notion (such as time) and another concept (such as money). These mappings demonstrate the inherent connection between mental analogies and verbal phrases, enabling the coherent organization of human experience. CMT's novel concept asserts that human physically actively influences mental architecture, expanding the study of language beyond the usual bounds of classical linguistics. This item offers an overview of the history, key concepts, and critique of conceptual metaphor theory, providing a contextualized understanding of its intellectual development.

The researchers provided their first and renowned illustration of what they referred to as the metaphorical concept or the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, together with an extensive array of linguistic phrases developed from this metaphorical framework.

The concept of argument might be metaphorically seen as a kind of warfare.

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1. 'Your claims are indefensible'.
2. 'He attacked every weak point in my argument'.
3. 'His criticisms were right on target'.
4. 'I demolished his argument' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 4).

The analogy of *battle* is not only a rhetorical device when discussing arguments but also highlights the competitive nature of arguments, where victory or defeat is a possible outcome. Hence, the argument is influenced by many characteristics associated with war, as seen in the examples above. As a result of its categorization, the metaphorical concept links two semantic contexts or domains: ARGUMENT is the target domain (TD), and WAR is the source domain (SD). The source domain's specific traits and attributes are transferred to the target domain. The target domain is influenced by certain qualities and properties of the source domain via mapping. The use of uppercase letters will be employed to denote conceptual metaphors, as per the convention established by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and subsequent scholars who adopted their approach.

1.2. *Metaphors in political speeches*

Despite their cognitive impact, native speakers may not detect metaphors in speech or writing. These two traits give it the power to change people's minds and worldviews. Metaphors influence political beliefs since politics and ideology are closely related (Lesz 2011). Daily communication involves metaphors. Well-known for helping people understand complicated subjects, communicate effectively, and influence others. Metaphor helps us see a problem and develop a strategy for handling it. Thus, metaphor may influence not just the policy beliefs of individuals but also those of whole countries (Burkholder and Henry 2009, 110-111). As metaphor impacts how we think and, therefore, how we behave, its cognitive function is crucial to political discourse. Politics involves complicated topics that are sometimes difficult to comprehend. Metaphors are essential and commonly used figures of speech in political discourse because they facilitate comprehension of complicated ideas and serve as a persuasive device (Burkholder and Henry 2009, 100).

Metaphors may energise a message or increase the impact of a speech while also evoking an emotional response. One of the primary reasons political leaders use metaphors in their speeches is their ability to impact the audience's emotions. The more elevated the metaphors used in political speeches, the more followers they inspire. This is primarily due to the fact that these speeches evoke emotions related to the subject or rhetor while also conveying the necessary actions (Mio et al. 2005, 288). Thus, metaphor serves as an aid for comprehending politics by comparing complex political issues in focus to straightforward, more comprehensible topics in the frame. This approach can eliminate unnecessary information or reorganise it in a more accessible fashion so that just the message's substance is sent (Burkholder and Henry 2009, 100). According to Mio et al. (2005), charismatic American presidents employed twice as many metaphors in their inaugural speeches. Metaphors inspire because they are viewed as more motivating. The following section provides an overview of scholarly research conducted on the political language used by President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical framework

1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980): The notion of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), explains how abstract ideas are communicated via tangible and familiar examples. According to this hypothesis, metaphors influence cognition and language usage via cognitive and linguistic processes. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) helps you analyze, Identify, and classify metaphors in Biden and Harris' remarks. These might be LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, and others. Analyze the conceptual mapping between the concrete source and abstract goal domains. How can the term "LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD" apply wars to life or politics? Persuasive methods: Compare the analogies to the speakers' ideology, policies, and persuasive methods. Does this metaphor evoke the intended emotions and thoughts in the audience?
2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1995) demonstrates how language shapes power dynamics, social institutions, and ideologies. CDA lets you go beyond language analysis and reveal metaphorical phrases' socio-political implications: Explore how the metaphors reinforce or challenge power systems and ideologies. How do these metaphors reinforce or challenge hegemonic discourses? Frames and Political Agenda: Examine how metaphors frame political problems, programs, and ideologies. Does the metaphor emphasize specific characteristics while ignoring others? How do these framing methods match Biden and Harris' political goals? Consider how metaphors affect the audience's reception of the speech. Do metaphors appeal to the target audience? How do they influence public opinion of speakers and policies? Given Harris' historic status as the first female Vice President, explore how metaphors impact gender, identity, and leadership views. Do these analogies challenge or uphold gender norms?

We have evaluated metaphorical phrases linguistically and sociopolitically by integrating Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) with Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995). Your analysis should follow these steps:

Metaphors: Categorize metaphors from Biden and Harris's speeches by source and target domains. Analyze Mapping: Consider the cognitive implications and resonances of metaphors mapping ideas from the source domain to the destination domain. Assess how the metaphors match the speakers' ideology, policies, and political goals. Sociopolitical Implications: Use CDA to show how these metaphors reflect political discourse's power relations, social structures, and ideologies. Comparative Analysis: Compare Biden and Harris metaphors. Do they use metaphors to express their views, or differ in language?

2.2. *Previous Studies of Joe Biden*

Baby and Afzal (2020), Ricca and Johan (2021), and Sofian (2021) examined Joe Biden's first victory speech as president on November 7, 2020. Baby and Afzal (2020) said speech actions indicate a politician's philosophy. Their study used Austen and Searle's speech act theory to evaluate the pragmatic function of perlocutionary, locutionary, and illocutionary speech actions. The winning speech had various speech act evaluations; collectivization and conversationalization were emphasized to show political speeches' global significance. According to the research, Biden used more assertion and commitment than other speech actions to indicate his leadership, competency, and strategic growth. Politicians' speeches are motivated by excitement, attractiveness, involvement, hidden views, and aims. Speech actions combine their hidden meanings and goals. Sofian (2021) analyzed Biden's winning speech for speech actions. Searle's theory was used in qualitative descriptive research to examine language's role in political speech meaning. The study found 56% forceful, 19% expressive, 12% directive, 7% declarative, and 6% commissive speech behaviors. Using Miles and Huberman's premise in Sugiyono (2012), Ricca and Johan (2021) examined deixis in Biden's first victory speech. Pragmatics' deixis helps understand words and phrases indicating individuals, time, and place. In order to find deixis in Biden's speech, the research categorized person, geography, and time-related lexical elements and determine which was more prominent. Person deixis dominated Biden's discourse.

Amaireh and Rababah (2022) analyzed President Biden's national speech on Afghanistan's political dialogue. Biden's Afghan war arguments were assessed using Aristotle's rhetoric and van Dijk's "Ideological Square" methodology. According to the survey, Biden portrayed himself, his administration, and his nation well. He disparaged the Afghan government, people, and nation. The president utilized logic, ethics, and passion to persuade the audience of his values and government goals. Parallelism helped the speaker persuade the audience's reasoning, passion, and ethics. By highlighting his knowledge of Afghanistan, Biden cited his ethics. The speaker said his opinion is based on human experience, not privilege or authority. Historical and contemporary events justify his choice to stop fighting in that area. Biden successfully leveraged parallelism to demonstrate his intelligence, dependability, and skill. To promote the US and its achievements, notably in Afghanistan, the address regularly used 'we'. Formerly used to degrade Afghans. Biden used rhetorical questions to provoke emotional reactions to end the Afghan conflict. Since American lives had been sacrificed and the Afghan population lacked the incentives to fight, this method was used. According to the President, human capital, energy, and financial assets were wasted without benefiting the American people. President Biden stressed his points with parallelism and logic. Privately, the person praised himself, the government, and the US people. However, he hated Afghanistan, its people, and its government. The study results demonstrate that Biden's words incorporate background and cultural context.

Korner et al. (2022) and Johnson (2022) contrasted Trump and Biden's speeches. Biden and Trump employed distinct authority and language, according to Korner et al. (2022). They predicted Trump's authoritarianism and Biden's cooperation based on personal histories, news reports, and research. Multiple LIWC categories and the moral foundation's vocabulary were used to analyze 15,000 2020

election campaign tweets and 500 speeches. Trump spoke emotionally and cheerfully, whereas Biden spoke analytically and morally. Biden tweeted more cultural phrases for honesty, sincerity, and achievement than Trump. Twitter's spontaneity may have shown Trump's authoritarian leadership and Biden's holistic authority more than speeches, according to the same researchers.

Johnson (2022) found that political leaders' rhetoric can make people feel guarded, secure, and honored during downturns and instill distress, frustration, and indignation. The research said such wording implies gendered leadership. It used examples from various nations to illustrate its claims. However, it focused on the 2020 US presidential race as a battle between Trump's discriminatory, belligerent, hyper-masculinity and Biden's holistic, integrated, sympathetic, and gentler protective masculinity. Trump's failure to show protective masculinity during the COVID-19 pandemic may have cost him the election. Biden wanted Americans to feel safe and secure.

Amaireh (2023) studied President Biden's political speeches rhetorically. The research covered 40 Biden 2021–2022 speeches. Biden employed numerous rhetorical approaches to persuade the audience in this study. The Invention canon was evaluated using the Aristotelian rhetorical taxonomy. Biden's emotional, intellectual, and ethical appeals to the audience were examined in Invention. The research found that Biden used 'I' and 'us' to engage the audience morally. According to quantitative analysis, the corpus most often utilized the inclusive pronoun 'we' to engage the audience. The second most prevalent pronoun, 'I', shows the speaker's trustworthiness, knowledge, and integrity. The President emphasized the corpus' most prevalent emotions, compassion and pleasure. Biden used statistics, the Bible, and the logic of a situation to convince the audience.

2.3. Previous Studies of Kamala Harris

An article by Atkins et al. (2020) investigated Trump and Harris' immigration comparisons. They examined two opposing American immigration narratives: Trump's rally speech and Kamala Harris' first Senate statement. The research found that metaphors in political speech might divide opinions. Atkins et al. (2020) wondered whether their metaphors showed their views on immigration, especially those that varied considerably. They claimed that these analogies represent a divided political environment where confrontations endure because each side's beliefs are based on distinct principles. Metaphors show conflicting beliefs that divide the ego and danger. Polarisation may dehumanize opposing beliefs into clichés. This is critical in the immigration debate since both sides are public safety threats and victims. Harris and Trump instigate confrontation over perceived personal and public safety dangers by blaming or dehumanizing.

Moreover, Joseph et al. (2021) examined how women utilize language to maintain authority. Harris, the first woman of color in the Senate, dominated the 2020 vice-presidential election dialogue, so researchers examined her language. The researchers employed qualitative methods and discourse analysis to examine how language and environment shape social and cultural views. Harris employed intensifiers, hypercorrect language, hedging lexical phrases, sympathetic emphasis, and expressions of gratitude in the vice-presidential debates.

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Furthermore, Stojan and Mijić (2019) carried out a research investigation to determine whether there are disparities in the use of source domains of conceptual metaphors between Croatian politicians and their American and Italian counterparts. The study corpus comprised political newspaper articles and interviews sourced from Croatian, American, and Italian daily newspapers, namely *Jutarnji list*, *Večernji list*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Repubblica*, *ABC*, *USA Today*, and *The New York Times*. These sources were obtained via newspaper archives. It may be inferred that metaphorical phrases exhibit variation across different languages, while some metaphorical expressions are often found in all languages. The recurring expressions include triumph, assault, combat, racing, defense, splay, stage, and role. With the exception of two ontological metaphors found in Croatian instances, it can be concluded that there are no significant variations in the source domains of Croatian, American, and Italian political speech.

Linkevičiūtė (2019) conducted a research study which focuses on the analysis of conceptual metaphors used in Donald Trump's political rhetoric in 2018. The objective was to examine how these metaphors contribute to his self-presentation as a very positive and advantageous president, with the goal of "making America great again". In addition, he categorized his opponents, the Democrats and prior administrations, as adversaries who bear responsibility for all the issues and difficulties in the United States, both tacitly and overtly. Donald Trump often employs linguistic terms that reflect the conceptual metaphors of POLITICS IS WAR, POLITICS IS A JOURNEY, POLITICS IS A RACE, POLITICS IS A CRIME, POLITICS IS LOVE, and POLITICS IS FRIENDSHIP in his political rhetoric. Trump's political rhetoric includes many conceptual metaphors, including POLITICS IS A GAME, POLITICS IS WATER, and POLITICS IS SLEEP. The bulk of these conceptual analogies are grounded on the dichotomy between "I/we" and "they," with "I" representing President Trump, "we" representing members of the Republican Party, and "they" referring to the Democrats. Trump's political language utilizes conceptual metaphor to convey evaluative meaning. Assessments, grounded on the same conceptual metaphor, might vary and elicit both favorable and unfavorable associations.

Additionally, Olimat (2020) examined dysphemistic expressions used in Trump's discourse on Covid-19. A sample of dysphemistic examples adopted in Trump's daily speeches in a crucial week of 11th till 18th of March 2020 was analysed. The researcher relied on the Critical-political Discourse Analysis by Van Dijk (1997; 2001), Conceptual Metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and the concept of dysphemism by Allan and Burridge (2006). It has been found that Trump referred to strong language and war metaphors to defend himself and his point of view, to shape Americans' thoughts and views, or to attack other countries or institutions. Several conceptual metaphors, including Covid-19 is a) an invisible enemy, b) a foreign enemy, c) a dangerous threat, and d) a global battle, were commonly used. The data analysis shows that Trump has a linguistic mastery of eloquent and persuasive devices in political discourse which permitted him to make a shift in Americans' thoughts and opinions. For future research, the current paper suggests investigating Trump's paralinguistic features in speeches, such as body language, facial expressions, tone and pitch of voice, eye movements, and hand gestures.

Harris' 2020 vice presidential victory speech on rebuilding the US after COVID-19 was evaluated by Liani et al. (2021) for political ideology. Data was evaluated using Halliday's transitivity. Harris softly

promoted liberalism by emphasizing freedom and others via behavioral, material, mental, and social processes in her discourse. Harris sought to rebuild America by protecting personal freedom. Osei Fordjour (2021) examined Kamala Harris' first three months as Vice President's tweets for visionary themes and power depictions. Results showed that Harris' tweets portrayed her as a hardworking, great Vice President with consistent marital support. This strategy makes her seem trustworthy and a true leader. Harris exhibited symbolic power through her military service, formal meetings, and swearing-in ceremonies. Her tweets showed the Biden administration's dedication to gender and race equality.

Amaireh (2022) examined Harris' political language in 40 2020–2022 speeches. Harris's political language was examined for the "feminine style" highlighted by Campbell (1989), Dow and Tonn (1993), and Blankenship and Robson (1995) in their political speech studies. She did quantitative and qualitative analysis. The Antconc Software assessed the frequency of female vocabulary terms such as woman, women, female(s), girl(s), lady, ladies, mother(s), and I and we. The investigation found that the Vice President's political discourse is feminine, including constructing and building viewpoints based on experience, addressing women's political challenges, appreciating diversity, and knowing that leadership positions need genuine successes.

Tsani and Ratnadewi (2022) examined women and racism. Three lectures on women's concerns were evaluated using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive technique and Norman Fairclough's tridimensional critical discourse analysis. This study examined how women's concerns and biases are used and Kamala Harris' personal and impersonal remarks. This study found five racial concerns for women of color that Harris highlighted in her speeches: black women in the workplace, education, civic and society, judiciary, and medical care. Harris wanted to fight the oppression of women of color.

Harris's speech was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively by Piccion (2022) to examine language and politics. Harris' rhetorical arrangement in three political speeches from 2017 to 2021 was examined to understand how she employed language to affect the audience. Piccion examined Harris' pronouns, rhetoric, and assessment. Harris used first-person pronouns to personalize her remarks. She prefers collaborative views, as seen by her usage of 'we' in speeches to engage the audience. As part of charismatic leadership, inclusive language, shared ideas, and 'you' were recognized. Harris prioritized minority communities in her speeches to raise awareness. The research found that Kamala Harris self-identified through pronominal choice. She focused on proving her skills. She utilized personal pronouns to evoke emotion. The investigation of assessment judgments showed her political discourse's persuasive methods to attract professionals and non-experts while implying they supply political expertise and authority. Additionally, pleasant expressions of praise were used often. Harris' emotional and evaluative reactions showed that she frequently depicted herself as a fellow human with the same feelings as her audience.

No research has compared President Joe Biden with Vice President Kamala Harris' political rhetoric. Many analyses contrasted President Biden and ex-President Donald Trump's speech or focused on Biden or Harris. Thus, our research addresses this vacuum in comparative American rhetoric literature. Both speakers utilize too many metaphors, but no research has been done. Linguistic and rhetorical studies of

political speech metaphors (Atkins et al. 2020 and Mio et al. 2005) are extensive. So far, no literature has compared President Joe Biden with Vice President Kamala Harris metaphorically. They have individual discourse studies (Amaireh, 2023; Johnson, 2022), but no corpus-based metaphorical utterance studies were found. This study compares their speeches to highlight how these leaders employ metaphors to explain their views and affect their audiences. This research provides a full knowledge of metaphor in political communication due to its wide range of metaphors and focus on cognitive and socio-political aspects.

3. Methodology

The corpus-based research examines President Joe Biden's political speeches (120,028 tokens) from January 2021 to February 2022 and Kamala Harris's 40 talks (82,268) from October 2020 to May 2022. The talks are posted at <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/all-transcripts>. The two speakers' metaphorical language, which reflects their political views, is compared in the article. How we categorized conceptual metaphors served as the foundation for metaphor retrieval in our study. Some of these recognized conceptual metaphors have also been discovered in this research; however, most metaphorical expressions have been progressively uncovered when reading through the study's speeches. AntConc program analyzes the frequency of lexical elements connected to conceptual metaphors in the corpus. This study systematically analyzes President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' complicated political rhetoric. The corpus-based study analyzes several of the two leaders' statements. This study examines how they strategically use metaphors to express their politics.

Selecting the corpus carefully ensures the study's robustness. President Joe Biden's speeches from January 2021 to February 2022 were carefully selected to capture his rhetorical methods during a pivotal point in his term. This corpus contains 120,028 tokens on various themes and settings. Vice President Kamala Harris gave 40 talks between October 2020 and May 2022. This span covers 82,268 tokens from pre-election to vice president. These speeches are carefully chosen to reflect crucial occasions, policy revisions, and rhetorical modifications in her discourse.

3.1. Data collection

Textual data validity and believability are crucial in this investigation. The lectures are from <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/all-transcripts>, a reliable web source. This option ensures that the text data under review is accurate, loyal to the original speeches, and has a solid basis for analysis. The metaphor identification process: The conceptual metaphor classification gives a framework, yet this research acknowledges metaphorical language's fluidity. The talks are meticulously examined iteratively and comprehensively. This promotes the organic discovery of metaphorical terms outside established categories. By closely examining each utterance, the research discovers unique metaphorical language that enhances the discourse's metaphorical environment.

3.2. Data Analysis

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1995) underpin this study's analysis. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' metaphorical phrases were investigated by examining essential lexical elements' frequency and distribution. AntConc, a robust computational tool for discovering linguistic patterns, occurrences, and links in the vast corpus, was used for this study. AntConc improves analysis accuracy, efficiency, and dependability. The program helps identify patterns, metaphors, and subtleties that are hard to see manually. This supports the methodology's study of metaphors' linguistic, cognitive, and socio-political effects. The integration of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis emphasizes the importance of using AntConc to uncover surface-level linguistic trends and how metaphors shape political narratives and public perceptions.

1. Corpus Selection: The research compares metaphorical phrases in political speeches by President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris using a corpus-based methodology. Each speaker was given 40 balanced speeches from January 2021 to February 2022 for Biden and October 2020 to May 2022 for Harris. Reliable sites like <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/all-transcripts> provide speech transcripts.
2. Data Extraction and Categorization: Metaphorical phrases were retrieved from the corpus and categorized using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995). Expressions connected to the conceptual metaphors "LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD," "LIFE IS A JOURNEY," and "LIFE IS A GAME" were first recognized, noting their tangible and abstract connections. Additionally, "AMERICA IS A PERSON" analogies were noticed for their capacity to represent power relations and social identity.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Analysis of Biden and Harris' metaphorical language: Metaphorical language of Biden's Corpus

The study shows that President Biden employs various conceptual metaphors connected to the target domain of life, such as LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, and LIFE IS A GAME, to persuade the audience of his ideals and accomplishments as president. His metaphors also reflect his worldview.

4.1.1. LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD

Numerous lexical elements pertaining to the source area of conflict are used, including terms such as fight, guard, protecting, struggle, sacrifice, battle(s), forces, control, defend, confront(ing), to put a dagger, and to push (back) etc. The vocabulary term "fight" occurs 46 times within the corpus. During the Black History is American History address, President Biden pays tribute to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and acknowledges his significant contributions to American society.

And this **battle's** far from over. The door has not been closed. John Lewis Voting Rights Act will soon come up for a vote, named after our dear friend we still miss dearly but whose voice we hear every

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day in our hearts and our conscience. It's a law that helped lead the reauthorization, as I said, for 25 years that I served in the Senate Judiciary Committee expanding the Voting Rights Act, traditionally received bipartisan support. We have to keep up the **fight** and get it done. And I know the moment we're in. You know the moment we're in. I know **the stakes**. You know **the stakes**. This is far from over.

And finally, we're **confronting** the stains of what remains **the deep stain in the soul of the nation**, hate and white supremacy (21/10/2021). Biden draws a parallel between the endeavor to address racism and discrimination against black individuals in the United States and a metaphorical conflict that necessitates actively challenging and countering prejudiced attitudes towards this demographic. The term "beat" is often used as a lexical item to denote the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLE. A total of 20 instances of the lexical item "beat" are used metaphorically. In this instance, President Biden provides commentary on implementing a vaccine mandate. The successful containment of COVID-19 may be achieved via collaborative efforts. According to the statement made on July 10, 2021, it is evident that the most effective approach to combat the pandemic is by ensuring that a significant portion of the American population receives vaccination. President Biden draws a parallel between the COVID-19 pandemic and a formidable adversary that needs a concerted effort to overcome and triumph, like a genuine military confrontation. The term "defeat" is also used symbolically, particularly in combating the COVID-19 epidemic. As an example, President Biden declared at the COVID-19 conference that the United States intends to provide an additional 500 million doses of vaccines. This initiative aims to foster a collective effort to overcome the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The announcement was made on September 22, 2021.

4.1.2. Life is a battle is figuratively described by pushback and defence. Biden says at the University of Connecticut:

The United States will host a virtual summit, a summit of democracies, to bring together world leaders, to make concrete commitments, to **defend** democratic values and to **push back** against advancing authoritarianism. Not war, but important words. You can't return to a world where **might is right** and **strong nations abuse weak, or oppress individual rights to impunity** (18/10/2021).

Biden uses metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD, such as defending and pushing back, which reveal his ideological stance. He tries to convince the audience that his government supports democracy and freedom of speech and shuns despotism and tyranny. Biden marks January 6 US Capitol attack anniversary and uses some metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD:

So now let's step up, **write the next chapter in American history**. For January 6th marks not the end of democracy, but the beginning of a renaissance of liberty and fair play. I did not seek this **fight**, brought to this capital one year ago today, but I will not shrink from it either. I will stand in this breach. I will **defend** this nation and I will allow no one to **place a dagger to the throat of democracy** (6/1/2022). Biden marks the January 6, 2021 attacks on the US Capitol Building in Washington by the supporters of the ex-President Donald Trump following his defeat in the 2020 presidential election. He compares the

next period during his presidency to a new book's chapter. He also compares himself to a fighter who defends America and Americans and compares democracy to a person who is under threat of attackers who carry dangerous tools to kill it. Those metaphorical expressions reveal Biden's ideological political stance, as a defender of democracy and the nation.

Table 1: Metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD and their frequency

Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency
Fight	46
Beat	23
Defend(s)	22
Confront(ing)	9
Stakes	3
The next, following (chapter)	3
Push back	3
To place a dagger	1

4.1.3. LIFE IS A JOURNEY

Biden often uses the term LIFE IS A JOURNEY. The corpus uses trip, course, route, road, and destination metaphors for the source domain journey. Lexical item journeys recur 10 times in the corpus. For example, Biden nominates Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court:

Several black history month exhibits are below. One is the judicial oath of office taken and signed by Justice Thurgood Marshall, which will be administered again to a distinguished American who will help write the next chapter in America's history, a journey judge Jackson will take with her family (28/2/2022).

President Biden uses the metaphorical expressions of *journey* and *the next chapter* to reflect his political stance of rejecting discrimination and bias against black people, particularly. The lexical item *path* also refers to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURENY. It is used 11 times metaphorically. For example, Biden delivers a speech on the November Jobs Report NBC News:

It's two bills that together will create millions of jobs, grow the economy, invest in our nation and our people, lower costs for families and turn climate crisis in an opportunity and put us in a **path** not only to **compete**, but to win the economic competition for the 21st century against all comers. In passing these bills, we'll say clearly to the American people, "We hear your voices" (3/12/2021).

Course is also metaphorically used to indicate that LIFE IS A JOURNEY. The lexical item course is metaphorically used 7 times. In his comments at the University of Connecticut, Biden used the phrase LIFE IS A JOURNEY:

In all the years, since our founding, that idea has been our nation's steady North Star drawing us back on course, a constant struggle to live up to our highest domestic

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democratic principles to self-correct has made us a beacon of hope for the rest of the world (18/10/2021).

Biden compares life to a *path* on which people might be on or off that course. He also compares the values of reform to a guiding light that leads lost people to safe destinations. The metaphorical image of a *beacon of hope* reminds us of Martin Luther's speech "I have a dream" in 1963, Luther noted: Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as **a great beacon light of hope** to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. Another instance in which the metaphorical use of the lexical term "course" is employed may be seen at the Summit for Democracy, when President Biden acknowledges, "Democracies exhibit considerable variation and diversity." There exists a lack of unanimous consensus among the participants present at the current assembly, as we have divergent perspectives on many matters. However, it is my belief that the collective decisions we collectively arrive at will play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of our interconnected future for subsequent generations. The figurative use of the lexical term "the course" serves as a rhetorical device to incite the audience to mobilize collectively in order to attain a society characterized by democratic principles. The term "road" serves as a metaphorical word often used to denote the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. For example, President Biden gives a speech at the White House bill signing ceremony about providing benefits for first responders.

We're talking about programs like Violence Interrupters, who work as a complement to police in identifying those most likely to be involved in gun violence, stopping it from happening to begin and put those at risk, who put those people at risk and put them on a better **road to life**. So, we get them, we **divert** them before they **get into the bad stream** to begin with (18/11/2021).

Biden employs metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY such as *road to life*, *divert*, and *get into the bad stream*", etc., to highlight his administration's achievements regarding the reform plan to eliminate violence. Table 2 presents the metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY and the frequency of these metaphorical expressions.

Table 2: The metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY and their frequency of Biden's corpus.

Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency
Path	11
Journey	10
Course	7
Road	1

4.1.4. LIFE IS A GAME

Another conceptual metaphor frequently used by Biden related to the target domain of life is LIFE IS A GAME. For example, in the Black History is American History speech, the President notes:

In our time, it's about recognizing that for much too long. We've allowed a narrow and cramped view of the promise of America, a view that **America's a zero sum game**, particularly of the recent past. If you **succeed, I fail**. If you get **ahead, I fall behind**. And maybe worst of all, if I can **hold you down, I lift myself up**, instead of what it should be (21/10/2021).

Biden turns abstract ideas or concepts into physical ones to convince the audience of his viewpoints. He compares life to a game in which there are winners and losers. He uses the antonyms "succeed /fail", "get ahead/ fall behind", "hold down/lift up" to hammer home his viewpoints. He employs this conceptual metaphor to reveal his ideological stance of condemning bias and discrimination, especially against black people in America. He tries to persuade the audience that he makes radical changes as a President, attempting to eliminate prejudice and improve the well-being of black people. In addition, he supported his argument using statistics.

4.2. Metaphorical language of Harris' Corpus

Like President Biden, Harris employs conceptual metaphors related to the target domain LIFE. She uses the conceptual metaphors LIFE IS A BATTLE, and LIFE IS A PERSON.

4.2.1. LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD

Like Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris also uses metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD, such as *fight, guard, protect(ing), struggle, sacrifice, battle(s), (marshal the) forces, control, defend*, etc. She remarks:

Congressman John Lewis, before his passing, wrote, "Democracy is not a state. It is an act." What he meant was that America's democracy is not guaranteed. It is only as strong as our willingness to fight for it, to guard it and never take it for granted. Protecting our democracy takes struggle, it takes sacrifice. Now this campaign is over, what is the will of people? What is our mandate? I believe it's this: American have called upon us to **marshal the forces** of decency, the **forces** of fairness, to **marshal the forces** of science and **the forces** of hope in the great **battles** of our time, the **battle** to control the virus, the **battle** to build prosperity, the **battle** to secure your family's healthcare, the **battle** to achieve racial justice and root out systemic racism in this country. And the **battle** to save our planet by getting climate under control. The **battle** to restore decency, **defend** democracy, and give everybody in this country a fair shot (8/11/2020).

There are 12 instances of the metaphorical use of the lexical item *battle* in the corpus, repeated many times in the same speech to hammer home her viewpoints. Harris compares life to a battle in which we have to contend, combat, fray, and make challenges and sacrifices to achieve specific goals in life, such as

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fighting to safeguard our world by reining in climate change, struggling to preserve morality, protecting freedom, and constraining the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The lexical item *struggle* is also used metaphorically in the corpus to refer to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD. There are 12 tokens of the lexical item *struggle* in the corpus. For example, Harris gives remarks after visiting a community health centre in Washington D.C.:

I know it takes a lot out of you, but your story is sadly a common story, which is how families struggle, but also the strength that families show in the midst of that struggle that inspires so many others (10/8/2021).

Sacrifice is another lexical item used metaphorically to refer to the metaphorical concept LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD. Harris holds a campaign event in Luzerne County, PA, and notes “Joe has seen suffering. Joe has spent far too much time in a hospital with the people he loves. So Joe is somebody who borne out of awful **sacrifice** and commitment” (2/11/2020). Many lexical items related to fighting are used in Harris' corpus such as *fight* (*n, v*), *fighter*, *fights*, and *fighting*, frequently used metaphorically to refer to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD. Harris uses these lexical items metaphorically to support specific issues, such as fighting for women's rights, racial justice, voting rights, democracy, equality and eradicating corruption and discrimination. For example, there are 73 tokens of the lexical item *fight* in the corpus as a noun and a verb as exemplified below:

And so that's what we have in front of us. We have for the next 11 days Georgia, a fight for the soul of our nation. This is a fight that we are engaged in, because we believe in the ideals of our country. We believe in our democracy. We know that America's democracy will always be as strong as we the people are in our willingness to fight for those ideals. And so that's where we are today. In a fight for the ideals, in a fight for the dignity, in a fight for justice and equal justice under law (24/10/2020). We just, this year, lost the great John Lewis, a great American who shed his blood on the Edmund Pettus Bridge together with so many others. John Lewis, who was such a **fighter** for civil rights, he understood the ongoing **fight** for civil rights (28/10/2020).

Table 3: The frequency of the metaphorical expressions related to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD in the corpus of Harris' speeches.

Word	F
Fight (n, v.)	73
Fighting	35
Force(s)	19
Control	17
Fought	16
Battle(s)	13
Struggle	12
Defend	9
Sacrifice	6
Fighter	3
To marshal the forces	2
Fights	1

Harris prefers to use metaphorical language that conveys notions of authority and power, illustrated by the metaphorical use of the previously discussed terms such as *fight, guard, protecting, struggle, sacrifice, battle(s), forces, control, defend*, and others. Harris employs these expressions to demonstrate her ability to fulfil her role as Vice President and employ figurative rhetoric like that utilized by male political leaders, such as President Biden.

4.2.3. AMERICA IS A PERSON

Vice President Kamala Harris personifies America; she compares the United States of America to a person with a soul, womb, backbone, and work, run, mail, respond and be heard, vaccinated and ready. For example, "I sought this office to restore **the soul of America**, to rebuild **the backbone** of this nation" (8/11/2020). Harris also compares America to a lady. For example, she compares Atlanta to a mother who embraces and protects her baby in her womb; she notes:

I love Atlanta. Last time I was here, it was before the pandemic. I spoke on the stage here at Morehouse in March of last year. And come into [inaudible] especially if you are black and hold elected office in America, coming to Atlanta is like coming back to the womb (24/10/2020).

Harris Promotes Build Back Better During Tense Period of Negotiations and also compares America to a female, she remarks:

The president is about to go on a trip, a very important trip with the G20. I've been meeting with leaders of nations that are our partners and allies, and they look at us and they are asking, is America really fulfilling her potential and her promise? (22/10/2021).

4.3. Discussion

The figurative language used by President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris provides insight into their respective communication styles and political ideologies. This analysis explores the metaphorical selections made by the individuals, the shared themes and unique nuances, and the influence of metaphors on political communication. Biden and Harris use metaphors as a means of conveying their messages. Their frequent use of the idiom "LIFE IS A BATTLE" demonstrates their unwavering commitment to overcoming challenges. This metaphor elicits emotions and unites individuals in support of the idea that achieving goals requires persistence, dedication, and collaboration. They prioritize the concepts of "fight," "struggle," and "defend" in order to address social difficulties, protect democracy, and oppose injustice.

According to the research, Biden and Harris use metaphors that mirror their individual characteristics and professional roles, although with slight distinctions. Biden's use of metaphors emphasizes his role as a leader and his ability to wield power, presenting himself as a defender of democracy and justice. Harris' metaphors portray her as a protector and reconciler, depicting America as a compassionate society that values diversity and common principles. The use of metaphorical language

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brings together both leaders, despite their contrasting characteristics. The frequent use of the words "fight" and "guard" in their discourse communicates a strong sense of passion and unwavering commitment. This cohesion enhances their storytelling and dedication to tackling racial inequity, healthcare, and climate change.

Furthermore, metaphors serve as representations of leaders' political beliefs and visions. Biden's metaphors "LIFE IS A GAME" and "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" encapsulate his perspectives on development, rivalry, and transformation. Harris used personification to emphasize unity, empathy, and collective accountability by portraying America as a sentient being. Additionally, Biden and Harris use metaphors as a means of influencing their listeners. Metaphors promote an emotional connection between leaders and individuals by making abstract topics more comprehensible. Metaphors facilitate the comprehension of complex policy issues and resonate with shared values, so enhancing communication.

4.3.1. Further Implications

Metaphors in political speeches have more profound consequences, according to the research. Metaphorical phrases impact public perceptions, ideologies, and policy discussions. Political leaders may engage various audiences, develop emotional ties, and push their goals by using metaphors strategically. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' metaphorical language was analyzed using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995) to show their political communication methods. The integrated approach examined metaphorical terms' linguistic and socio-political consequences.

The study found that Biden and Harris shared key conceptual metaphors, indicating a coordinated narrative in their political rhetoric. Their talks emphasized perseverance, strife, and determination with the slogan "LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD". This supported the framework's focus on metaphor's cognitive function in framing complicated ideas via physical source domains. Both speakers used combat terminology to emphasize their political ambitions and problems. Although both speakers used the metaphor "LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD," their phrases and contextual use differed due to their ideological viewpoints. Using metaphors like "fight," "guard," "protecting," and "struggle," Harris showed her dedication to social justice and equality as Vice President. Biden used metaphors like "beat" and "defend" to emphasize overcoming adversities and protecting democracy, mirroring his leadership character as President. The use of the "AMERICA IS A PERSON" metaphor by Harris in her lectures aligns with the integrated framework's emphasis on socio-political consequences. This metaphor helped her personify the country, generating emotions and shared identity. This supports prior research (Johnson, 2022) on how metaphorical language may boost leadership charisma and connect with audiences. The present research integrates Conceptual Metaphor Theory's cognitive features with Critical Discourse Analysis' socio-political insights, advancing the theoretical framework. The framework analyzes how metaphors shape public discourse by examining its language aspects and political story-framing capabilities. The study found consistency with earlier research (Amaireh, 2022; Baby and Afzal, 2020) on political leaders' language approaches and how metaphors might reflect gender roles and societal dynamics. Common

metaphors across speeches confirmed political leadership's consistent communication methods (Korner et al., 2022).

5. Conclusion

This study has examined how President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris reveal their political stance through metaphorical expressions in a comparative corpus-based analysis. The corpus comprises 40 speeches delivered by Biden and 40 by Harris. The corpus analysis demonstrates that Biden frequently employs metaphorical expressions associated with the target domain of life, such as LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD, Life IS A JOURNEY, and LIFE IS A GAME. Integrating these conceptual metaphors into his political speeches reveals his political stance of fighting against discrimination and supporting equality of human rights, combating crises like Covid-19 and climate change. They are also employed to show that the United States will be a better nation during his Presidency.

Like Biden, Harris employs the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLEFIELD in her political discourse to influence the audience and reveal her political stance and ideology towards certain topics. She uses metaphorical expressions that show strength such as *fight, guard, protecting, struggle, sacrifice, battle(s), forces, control, defend*, etc. Harris uses them to show that she can fit in her position as a vice president and uses similar metaphorical expressions used by male political leaders, such as the ones used by President Biden. She also frequently employs figurative expressions related to the conceptual metaphor AMERICA IS A PERSON. These conceptual metaphors reflect the ideology of the speaker. As we finish our trip through President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' metaphorical political speech, we see how language impacts their communication techniques and political views. Metaphorical terms reveal recurrent patterns in our investigation. The phrase "LIFE IS A BATTLE" emphasizes resilience and drive to overcome obstacles in their talks. They use metaphors like "fight," "struggle," and "defend" to show their dedication to social causes and democracy.

We discover each leader's subtleties within these common analogies. Using metaphors like "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" and "LIFE IS A GAME," President Biden discusses growth and change. In contrast, Vice President Harris personifies America with language like "soul," "womb," and "backbone," stressing togetherness and compassion. The pace of their talk unites them despite their differences. The constant usage of "fight" and "guard" amplifies their meanings. This language convergence strengthens their communication and commitment to racial justice and climate change. Political communication uses analogies beyond language. They simplify complex issues to help leaders emotionally connect with audiences and communicate their views. Biden and Harris use metaphors to construct powerful tales that inspire collective action.

Nevertheless, there are constraints to our journey. Our research is restricted to the English language, hence we may fail to notice metaphorical nuances present in other languages. Moreover, the interpretation of metaphors might be subjective, which can influence the objectivity of our findings. Thus, it is advisable to use mixed methodologies study design techniques. Cross-cultural studies to grasp metaphors across languages and cultures are suggested. Metaphorical techniques may alter political agendas in

longitudinal investigations. Digging deeper, we may discover the complex relationship between language, politics, and public perception. In conclusion, Biden and Harris' metaphorical language unlocks political dialogue. A complex tapestry of shared themes, individual subtleties, and rhetorical unity creates their leadership styles and profoundly engages with audiences. This chapter concludes that metaphors are more than words—they connect leaders and people, transmitting ideals and building a common vision for a better future.

Acknowledgements

The publication of this research has been supported by the Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies at Philadelphia University, Jordan.

الاستعارات البايدينية والهاريسية: تحليل مبني على مجموعة نصوص لخطابات جو بايدن وكامالا هاريس السياسية

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الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة استخدام لغة القادة السياسيين استخداماً استراتيجياً بهدف تحقيق أهداف محددة، وعلى وجه الخصوص إقناع جمهورهم بالتوافق مع وجهات نظرهم وسياساتهم. باستخدام نظرية الاستعارة كما اقترحها لوكوف وجونسون (1980) ويتوجبه من مبادئ تحليل الخطاب النقدي المبنية من قبل فيركلوف (1995)، تقوم هذه الدراسة بتحليل دقيق لمجموعة من الخطب تضم أربعين خطبة قدمها الرئيس جو بايدن ونائبة الرئيس كامالا هاريس. يكتشف التحليل استخداماً متكرراً للتعبير المجازية المرتبطة بمفهوم الحياة، والتي تتضمن التعبيرات المجازية مثل "الحياة هي ساحة معركة"، "الحياة هي رحلة"، و "الحياة هي لعبة" من قبل الرئيس بايدن. وبالمثل، تستخدم نائبة الرئيس هاريس استخداماً متكرراً للمفهوم المجازي "الحياة هي ساحة معركة"، مستندة إلى استخدام استراتيجي لمصطلحات مثل: 'القتال'، 'الحراسة'، 'الحماية'، 'الصراع'، 'التضحية'، و'المعارك'، و'القوى'، و'السيطرة'، و'الدفاع'، وغيرها من التعبيرات ذات الصلة. تختار هذه الاستخدامات المستنيرة للتعبير المجازية لنقل صفات الصمود والقوة، مما يعكس قدرتها في دور نائبة الرئيس. وعلاوة على ذلك، يظهر التحليل تشبيهاً بلاغياً آخر شائعاً للغاية في الخطابات وهو "أمريكا هي شخص" تستعمله نائبة الرئيس هاريس، وتعمل هذه التعبيرات المجازية على أنها أدوات قائمة بذاتها تسهل نقل أيديولوجياتهما السياسية إلى جماهيرهما.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعبيرات المجازية المفهومية، تحليل النصوص المقارن، جو بايدن، كامالا هاريس.

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