

A Metaphor Analysis of the Report of the 19th CPC National Congress

Qing Liu^{1,a,*} and Honghong Zhou^{2,b}

¹ School of Languages and Communication, Beijing Jiaotong University, Beijing, China

² School of Languages and Communication, Beijing Jiaotong University, Beijing, China

^a 17121753@bjtu.edu.cn, ^b hhzhou@bjtu.edu.cn

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Conceptual metaphor, The report of the 19th CPC National Congress, Discourse space.

Abstract. The 19th CPC National Congress is an important meeting held in the critical period of China securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Its report provides up-to-date material to do linguistic studies. Therefore, this research conducts a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the conceptual metaphors used in the report. The results reveal that 17 structural metaphors have been used in the Report. BUILDING metaphor, JOURNEY metaphor, WAR metaphor are the three most frequently used metaphor types in the Report. All these metaphors are of vital importance in building the discourse space of the Report.

Introduction

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was held in Beijing between 18 and 24 October 2017, during which a new guiding ideology, labelled as Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, was written into the party's constitution. There is no doubt that the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China is an important meeting held in the critical period of China securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. For linguistic students, the Report of the 19th CPC National Congress provides a vivid and up-to-date corpus to do linguistic studies.

In light of cognitive linguistics, people understand abstract concepts in terms of embodied experience by the use of conceptual metaphors. Through the metaphorical projection or mapping, the target domain receives the similar attributes from the source domain and becomes vivid and easy to understand. In the genre of political discourse, the role of metaphor becomes more apparent due to the abstract and complex nature of political concepts. Under the perspective of cognitive linguistics, the choices of conceptual metaphors used in political discourse reveals the discourse space. Compared with critical discourse analysis, metaphor analysis approaches the discourse in a much deeper sense.

Therefore, this research takes the conceptual metaphors in the report of the 19th CPC National Congress as the research objects to conduct a qualitative and quantitative research in order to find what and how structural metaphors are used in the report.

Conceptual Metaphor and Political Discourse

Metaphor was first put forward by Aristotle. He defined metaphors to be implicit comparisons, based on the principles of analogy.[1] Later on, Lakoff and Johnson defined metaphor as understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another and put forward conceptual metaphor theory.[2]

In *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things* published in 1987, Lakoff explained the structure of metaphor in details. He thinks that each metaphor has a source domain, a target domain, and a source-to-target mapping.[3] For example, TIME IS MONEY is a commonly used metaphor in daily life. There are two domains in this conceptual metaphor, a well-structured and concrete source domain of MONEY and an unclear and abstract target domain of TIME. There are many similarities between source domain and target domain. In this example, time and money are both valuable commodities and people can never have the same time or money back once they are gone. Therefore,

through conceptual metaphor mapping, attributes of MONEY domain are projected into TIME domain. Thus, people understand and experience time as something like money, which can be spent and wasted. A series of phrase commonly used by people such as “running out of time”, “spent time”, and “worth your time” is perfect supporting evidences to TIME IS MONEY metaphor.

Since 1980, there has been an avalanche of studies that has been motivated by conceptual metaphor theory, enough so that this perspective currently represents the dominant theoretical framework in the academic study of metaphor.[4] For metaphor studies in political discourse, in 1996, Lakoff analyzed metaphorical models used by conservatives and liberals and put forward the famous “strict father” vs “natural parent” paradigm.[5] For studies within China, the pragmatic power of metaphor has been the focus. For example, Huang explored the metaphor types, its characteristics and its explaining role in New Year editorials in People’s Daily. [6] Wen revealed ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions of people metaphor in President Xi Jinping’s speech. She suggested that Chinese scholars should develop our own discourse space theory to expound Chinese new global outlook.[7]

Throughout the literature, it has been noted that quantitative analysis has been neglected. Few scholars were able to provide a full picture of how the metaphor attributes in the discourse. Without the data, it seems that their analyses were purely random or they chose metaphors they preferred to do the analysis, which makes the reader to question their validity. Therefore, this research attends to provide a full picture of what and how metaphor has been used in the Report of 19th CPC National Congress.

Metaphor Recognition in the Report

Metaphor recognition is the first and also the fundamental step in doing metaphor analysis. The primary difficulty in metaphor recognition is caused by the ambiguity in what constituted a metaphoric word or phrase. In order to solve this, this research applies metaphor identification procedure (MIP) which creates an explicit, reliable, and flexible method for identifying metaphorically used words in spoken and written language for English discourse.[8] This procedure uses the comparison between lexical meaning and contextual meaning to determine whether a lexical unit is metaphorically used or not.

Through MIP, 17 structural metaphors have been recognized in the Report of the 19th CPC National Congress. In order to determine the frequency of each metaphor, Charteris-Black put forward the concept of resonance. A simple statistical measure of resonance is that it is the sum of the tokens multiplied by the sum of the lexical representation of the metaphors that are from the same source domain.[9] See Table 1 for detailed information. Through calculation, BUILDING metaphor, JOURNEY metaphor, WAR metaphor, BODY metaphor, PLANT metaphor and MACHINE metaphor are the most productive metaphor in the Report of the CPC National Congress, which take up 95.5% of the whole metaphors. The figure below shows directly how conceptual metaphors are attributed in the report.

Table 1. The frequency of structural metaphors

Metaphor Type	Sum of Representations	Sum of Tokens	Resonance	Scale
WAR	17	135	2295	21.3%
JOURNEY	20	122	2440	22.6%
BUILDING	13	233	3029	28.1%
WEAPON	4	7	28	0.3%
MACHINE	9	52	468	4.3%
BODY	22	48	1056	9.9%
BANNER	1	8	8	0.08%
PLANT	13	61	793	7.3%
MUSIC	4	5	20	0.2%
COLOR	5	20	100	1%
CHESS	1	8	8	0.08%
FOOD	5	5	25	0.2%
HEALTH	6	21	126	1.1%
WEATHER	6	10	60	0.6%
ANIMAL	3	5	15	0.1%
FAMILY	4	18	72	0.7%
CURRENT	12	19	228	2.1%

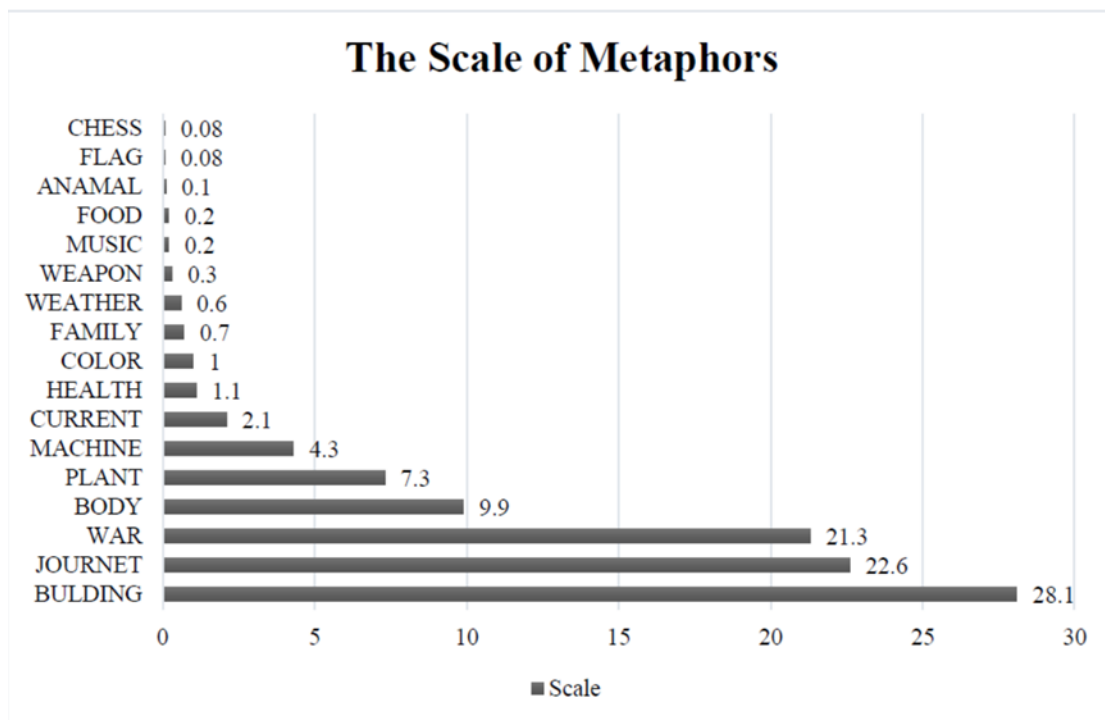


Fig. 1 The scale of structural metaphors in the report

Metaphor Explanation in the Report

In the last chapter, 17 structural metaphors have been recognized. Among them, BUILDING metaphor, JOURNEY metaphor, and WAR metaphor are the three dominate metaphors. Therefore, these three metaphor types will be explained in details.

BUILDING Metaphor

BUILDING metaphor is the most frequently used structural metaphor in the Report and it takes up nearly one third of all the total metaphors. In political discourse, RULING A COUNTRY IS BUILDING AN ARCHITECTURE is a commonly used metaphor both home and abroad, not only because building is something people are familiar with, but also because the similarities between construction and ruling a country.

Building is a process that people use concrete, wood, bricks and other material to make a space for them to live in. Three important elements are required in this process, blueprint, building material and

workers. Architecture cannot be built without each of these three elements. Besides, the process of building may take years. For workers, building means home and a sense of belonging. Therefore, the waiting is worthwhile. Ruling a country is similar to building architecture. China is a building that Chinese people want to perfect. The Communist Party of China draws the blueprint and gives the direction, while people from all walks of life are the builders of the grand architecture and make the blueprint come true. It will take a long time to finish but everyone will be benefited from the result.

Example 1: 国家安全是安邦定国的重要基石，维护国家安全是全国各族人民根本利益所在。

Example 1: The safety of a nation is its foundation. Therefore, protecting the national security conforms to the interest of all Chinese people.

“基石”，foundation or base is the lexical representation of BUILDING metaphor. As is known to all that all buildings must have a base. Without a solid base, the building will not stand long in some extreme weather. Therefore, a solid base is the prerequisite to a good building. The similar attributes of base are mapped into the concepts of ruling a country. For the Communist Party of China, the most important thing for China is not economy, or foreign affairs but national security. The history of China shows that a safe and peaceful country is essential for its people and the leaders of China are well aware of that. The use of “基石” highlights the importance of national security to China and constructs the Party as a responsible leader that will protect all its citizens.

JOURNEY Metaphor

JOURNEY metaphor is the second most frequently-used structural metaphor in the Report and it takes up 23.1% of total structural metaphor used. Like BUILDING metaphor, JOURNEY metaphor is also commonly found in political discourse home and abroad. With many lexical representations, JOURNEY metaphor highlights the importance of direction and leader and the difficulties that may occur in the process of China's development.

The structural metaphor “THE PROCESS OF A COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT IS A JOURNEY” is grounded in human experience. Journey means to go from one place to another with a purpose alongside a road. Three essential elements are entailed in the concept of JOURNEY, the guide, the road and the direction. People must follow the right direction and keep to the correct road in order to reach the destination. The process of a country's development is constructed by attributes in the concept of JOURNEY. There are also three important elements in the process of a country's development, the leader, policies and the goal. Leaders of China set up the goal and work out policies for future development. In order to achieve the rejuvenation of China, Chinese people must go the right direction and adopt suitable policies. However, just as all roads have ups and downs, the process of developing China may not be smooth. Problems and flaws may occur during the process. Through the analysis, it can be concluded that people understand the process of a country's development in terms of a journey.

Example 2: 无论是弱小还是强大，无论是顺境还是逆境，我们党都初心不改、矢志不渝，团结带领人民历经千难万险，付出巨大牺牲，敢于面对曲折。

Example 2: Whether in times of weakness or strength, whether in times of *adversity* or *smooth sailing*, our Party has never forgotten its founding mission, nor wavered in its pursuit. It has united the people and *led* them in *conquering countless challenges*, making enormous sacrifices, meeting setbacks squarely, and courageously righting wrongs.

JOURNEY metaphor in example 2 depicts the history of the Communist Party of China. There are four lexical representations in example 2. In combination of a series of metaphors, a vivid history of the development of the Communist Party of China is shown. Since its birth, the Communist Party of China has always been the representative of vast people's interest. A series of JOURNEY metaphor like “顺境逆境” and “曲折” highlights the difficulties that the Party has gone through. It also indicates that in the future, the Communist Party of China will still honor its past and keep its promise.

WAR Metaphor

WAR metaphor is the third most frequently-used structural metaphor in the Report. Together with BUILDING and JOURNEY metaphor, they take up one third of total structural metaphor used. By focusing on the difference between ours and enemy and the difficulties of wining, WAR metaphor has also been one of the favorite structural metaphor types in political discourse.

The structural metaphor A COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT IS LIKE A WAR has a strong persuasive power in political discourse. The concept WAR contains several key notions. Firstly, war involves two parties, the enemy and ourselves. Secondly, in the war, two parties both have great desire to win. Strategies will be made to sabotage each other. Thirdly, war is cruel. There will be treats, struggles, losses and painful moments during the war. However, the sacrifices are worth well if the war is won. These three important notions have correspondences in politics. The enemy may be the complicated domestic issues such as rural-urban gap, corruption. As the world become smaller, some International issues can also be the enemy for China's development. For example, unstable international financial market and economic crisis surly have a great influence on China. Therefore, in order to overcome challenges from home and abroad, China has set up goal and made plans. All Chinse people want to win the won and achieve the goal of rejuvenation.

Example 3: 坚持全民共治、源头防治，持续实施大气污染防治行动，打赢蓝天保卫战。

Example 3: We will get everyone involved in improving the environment and address environmental issues at the root. We will continue our campaign to prevent and control air pollution to make our skies blue again.

Example 3 contains one lexical representation of WAR metaphor. The reason the choose this example is because it shows that the Communist Party of China cares not only about China's economy but also cares about the wellbeing and the living environment of Chinese people. Air pollution is concerned with the wellbeing of every Chinses people. Heavy air pollution may cause serious infection of the upper respiratory tract or even lung cancer. The party and Chinese government has taken many approaches to solve the air pollution. In 2018, a clear blue sky appears 227 times in Beijing, marking part of the success. Therefore, in the Report, dealing with air pollution is metaphorically compared to a war against air pollution to win blue sky back. Just like President Xi remarked in the Sixth Group Learning on Protecting the Environment in 2013, economic development of China cannot be achieved at the expense of the environment, WAR metaphor used to depict air pollution enhance the determination that the Communist Party has to solve the problem.

Conclusion

As indicated by the title of an article written by Seth Thompson, politics without metaphors is like a fish without water, conceptual metaphors play a vital role in political discourse.[10] Following the same thought, this research admits the persuasive power of conceptual metaphors and draws a full picture of what and how metaphors are used in the Report of the 19th National Congress.

Among the 17 structural metaphors recognized in the Report of the 19th National Congress, three dominate metaphors have been selected and analyzed in details. Although the contextual meanings of each metaphor vary, it has been noted that the meaning of structural metaphors are closely related to the history and political system of China. Without any reference to the background knowledge, the contextual meanings of structural metaphor would remain unclear.

Moreover, structural metaphor has strong expressive power. The expressive power of structural metaphor lies in that it simplifies the dull political concepts and draws near the distance between the authority and citizens. Especially in the formal political genre like the Report of the 19th National Congress, structural metaphor softens the tones and increases the readability of the text. Through easy and vivid metaphors, the discourse space has constructed and The Communist Party of China and Chinese government has been constructed as a responsible leader that learns from history, cares about people and has strong determination to build a better future.

Acknowledgement

This research was financially supported by the Qualified Core Curriculum Construction Project for Postgraduate Students of Beijing Jiaotong University in 2018 (No. 134644522).

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