

**COGNITIVE MECHANISM OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN
POLITICAL COMMUNICATION DURING THE LAST PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN IN THE USA**

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ABSTRACT

In order to understand the connection between language and thought, we must look at the cognitive phenomena of the human mind. One of the disciplines that studies the mental functioning of an individual is cognitive linguistics. The subject of this paper is to analyse the phenomenon of metaphor as a means of experiencing and understanding abstract experiences. Therefore, the subject of this research project is to explore the metaphor not as a figure of speech but as a cognitive mechanism. Cognitive linguistics has been dealing with conceptual metaphor since 1980, with the publication of the works of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. The data for this study is a corpus of several different conceptual metaphors excerpted from the speeches of two American political candidates in the 2024 presidential election. After the theoretical view of the cognitive-linguistic approach to metaphor, the author deals with the examination of all the categories found in the speeches of the two candidates. The aim of the study is to describe and classify, and then interpret and explain the types of metaphors and their representation in political discourse. Special attention was focused on the balance between the two models of corpus analysis: qualitative and quantitative. The corpus analysis resulted in nine basic categories that are deeply expanded and illustrated with the relevant examples. After the corpus has been analysed and the results compared, it can be concluded that the political discourse abounds in various metaphorical-linguistic expressions. Furthermore, it was concluded that the source domains of journey, war and building are the most productive categories. This proves the key role of structural metaphor, through which the understanding of an abstract concept is structured using a more concrete one.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, abstract domain, concrete domain, structural metaphor.