

# Metaphor Analysis in Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Address

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## Abstract

In our daily life, language is often constructed in metaphorical ways, and it plays an important role in helping us understand things that are difficult to understand. This paper will analyze the metaphorical elements in Chinese President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's address. By analyzing the types of metaphors in the congratulatory address, this paper explores how the sentences are abstracted into concrete, thus arousing wide resonance among the masses. And at the same time, it provides some enlightenment for the future metaphor analysis and political discourse analysis.

## Keywords

Metaphor; New Year's address; Xi Jinping; political discourse.

## 1. Introduction

Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a New Year speech on December 31, 2022 via the China Media Group and the Internet. Political discourse analysis is an important content and direction of discourse research, and metaphor, as a cognitive way of thinking and behavior, has been widely used in political discourse (Lakoff, 1980). In the field of political discourse, leaders' speeches are one of the main topics. The use of metaphors in political discourse is conducive to deepening people's understanding of national political life, strengthening their sense of identity with the Chinese nation and culture, and laying a solid mass foundation for the realization of the great Chinese Dream (Wu, 2018).

In their New Year's speech, the leaders of contemporary China comprehensively reviewed the growth trajectory of the Party, the country and the people in the past year, and projected the development path, opportunities and challenges in the coming year, which gathered the consensus of the whole Party and the people of all ethnic groups in China. In his New Year's speech, President Xi Jinping based on people's society situation, life and cultural experience, using many Chinese metaphors close to people's life. It helps promote Chinese political culture to "go global", and has important practical significance. Based on the relevant concepts of metaphor theory and discourse analysis method, this paper takes President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Speech as the research corpus to analyze the types, characteristics and utterings of metaphors in the discourse. I hope this paper can provide some reference for the study of cognitive metaphor and political discourse.

## 2. Literature review

In the 1980s, the theory of conceptual metaphor was first proposed By Lakoff & Johnson in the book *Metaphors We Live By*, which laid the theoretical foundation for the in-depth study of metaphor. They define metaphor as "a mapping between two similar or experientially related concepts". They believe that conceptual metaphor is common in our daily life, which not only constructs the language communication between people, but also constructs the thought and action of people. They point out that the cognitive mechanism of conceptual metaphor is to map the schema structure of the source domain to the target domain, and construct and understand the target domain through the structure of the source domain (Lakoff G. & Johnson M., 1980). In

other words, the essence of metaphor is to use one kind of things to understand and experience another kind of things (Shu, 2000).

In recent years, it is not uncommon for domestic scholars to study metaphor in political discourse, especially in the speeches of national leaders. For example, Huo Ying and Liu Wei explain the conceptual metaphor and its formation mechanism in political speeches from three dimensions (Huo & Liu, 2008). Zhao Xiufeng and Feng Dezheng analyzed the construction of China's image by multimodal implicit metonymy in political discourse (Zhao & Feng, 2017); from a cognitive perspective, Wang Yuanyuan classified the conceptual metaphors of eight Chinese New Year messages published by President Xi Jinping from 2014 to 2021, and analyzed the translation strategies adopted in the official English version of Chinese New Year messages and the factors influencing the selection of translation strategies under the current background of promoting the international communication capacity of political discourse and building China's discourse power. With the arrival of the Year of the Tiger, this year's New Year's speech also has high research value. This paper will analyze and study President Xi Jinping's New Year's speech in 2022, and explore the types and functions of metaphors used in it.

### 3. Metaphor analysis

#### 3.1. Body metaphor

Table 1 Body metaphors in President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Speech

number	Example models	Carrier words
1	a resilient and thriving China	resilient
2	There is a succession of business	succession
3	unforgettable Chinese voice	voice
4	write a new chapter in building a community with a shared future for mankind	community with a shared future
5	The New Year's bell is about to ring	ring
6	"One country, two systems" can achieve stability and sustainable	stability and sustainable
7	whether it is the "mother river" of the Yellow River or the Yangtze River	mother river
8	Our overseas compatriots are still ploughing and weeding hard	ploughing and weeding

As can be seen from Table 1, President Xi Jinping used many metaphors of the human body in his New Year's speech in 2022. For example, in the first example, "China" is an abstract concept, while the word "resilient" is often used to describe people's character and toughness. Here, the word is used to describe the whole China, indicating that China has shown such characteristics under the concerted efforts of the Chinese people. Here, metaphorical expressions are easier to be understood and more in line with the daily expressions of the people, which are closer to the hearts of the people in the New Year's address.

In Example 3, the metaphor of human body also appears. "Voice" is made by human beings, while China is a whole. The "Voice of China" here refers to the common aspiration, expression and cry of all Chinese people. In China, we people are the masters of the country. Being the masters of the country shows that the decisions of the country are made in accordance with the will of the people. Therefore, using the word "The Voice of China" can include the voice of the people and show our will to follow the Party as one. China is committed to building a community with a shared future for mankind. While pursuing its own interests, China accommodates the legitimate concerns of other countries, and promotes common development of all countries while pursuing its own development, in keeping with the trend of globalization. This reflects

China's great power style and responsibility as one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. This metaphor highlights China's importance and determination to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind (Zhong, 2021).

### 3.2. River Metaphor

Table 2 River metaphors in President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Speech

number	Example models	Carrier words
1	The two centenary goals converge in history	converge
2	"Heaven" roams the stars	roams
3	together into the new era of China's high-spirited flood	flood
4	Clear love, only for China	clear
5	All countries in the same boat, wind or rain	in the same boat, wind or rain

The "converge" in Example 1 is the carrier word in this metaphorical sentence. As we all know, rivers often have mainstream and tributaries, and only when multiple tributaries finally converge into rivers and oceans. By talking about the convergence of China's two centenary Goals, rather than saying that we are at a critical stage of the realization of the first centenary Goal and the beginning of the second centenary Goal. It is a clearer indication of the particularity and criticality of the times we are living in. If the old and the new meet well, our country will become more prosperous and powerful, just as a river flows into the sea, it will become even more powerful. President Xi Jinping used this metaphor to fully affirm China's great achievements on the road of development.

In example 3, "flood" is powerful and unstoppable, implying that China is moving forward in a new era with firm and powerful steps. No matter what hegemonic power may come, it cannot stop us from moving forward courageously. Example 4 is a phrase familiar to The Chinese public in 2021, written in the diary of Chen Xiangrong, a young frontier soldier who died heroically. "Clear" we often used to describe the water, like a stream on the bottom, to describe nothing to hide, clean and pure, metaphor here all of the youth and blood to the soldier unreservedly dedicated to the motherland, has no self, to express patriotic to the deep, and each and every one of us Chinese people should have such awareness, to quickly build our beautiful China.

In the example 5, "in the same boat, wind or rain" originally has the meaning that "We are all in the same boat". We're all in the same boat, we will all fall into the water if something goes wrong. In a deeper sense, it also means that people in the same situation, facing the same difficulties or dangers, will have the same fate. The earth is the common home of mankind, and the actions of each country have an impact on the earth to some extent. Therefore, all of our countries are like people in the same boat. The metaphor here is very appropriate, and the expression here is also very close to the people's life.

### 3.3. Architectural Metaphor

Table 3 Architectural metaphors in President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Speech

number	Example models	Carrier words
1	a milestone event	milestone
2	The grand atmosphere of the century-old Grand Party has been achieved	grand
3	Saihanba Forest Farm's "green map"	map
4	A new chapter in building a community with a shared future for mankind	build

Architectural metaphor is also a common type of metaphor in New Year's address. In example 1, we can see that this "great event" is of great significance. The metaphor of this important meaning here is "milestone", which shows the significance of the significance. Monuments are usually indestructible and timeless to show the historical impact of the event.

In Example 3, Saihanba Forest Farm is full of trees and has a high vegetation coverage rate. Here, the land full of green is metaphorically referred to as a green map, which not only subtly shows the high greening rate of this land, but also makes the expression concise and vivid.

Example 4 uses the metaphor of "building a community with a shared future for mankind", which shows that mankind is making continuous progress towards the grand goal of "building a community with a shared future for mankind", and also expresses the important role of concerted efforts of all countries in the world. Moreover, the most important thing for a building is its reliability. Only with a solid foundation and stable building materials can a building stand tall. This shows that countries around the world must establish solid cooperative relations in their exchanges and tolerate no laxity.

### 3.4. Journey Metaphor

Table 4 Travel metaphors in President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Speech

number	Example models	Carrier words
1	a new journey to comprehensively build a modern socialist country	new journey
2	is marching in the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on the road	marching
3	The historical journey was turbulent	journey
4	We can't rest on our laurels. There's still a long way to go.	a long way

The metaphorical journey of the New Year's speech refers to the journey of national and social development. The content is mostly reform, building a moderately prosperous society, and the progress is a new and important progress and so on. This metaphor compares national development to a journey from different angles, which has a positive associative meaning. For example, we should reveal the direction of the country's development, emphasize the importance of national policies and principles, encourage people to overcome difficulties bravely on the road ahead, and emphasize the steady development of the country.

For example, in Example 1, the metaphor of "the new journey of building a modern socialist country in an all-round way" is "the new journey", indicating that China is steadily advancing to this goal. Just like a journey, our development is also on the way and will soon arrive at a new place. The journey can bring people happiness and happiness, and the progress of a country can bring people hope and well-being.

The same is true in Example 3, but example 3 uses "journey" as a metaphor for the history we have already experienced. Whether going forward or looking back, the course of history is like a journey, experienced things are like the road passed, and the things did not happen is like a journey unexplored. To realize the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese people requires constant efforts and struggle, just as we still have a long way to go before reaching our destination on a journey.

### 3.5. War metaphor

Table 5 War metaphors in President Xi Jinping's 2022 New Year's Speech

number	Example models	Carrier words
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1	through thousands of difficulties and perseverance, through thousands of risks and unswerving	through thousands of difficulties and risks
2	We should always be forward-looking, alert to danger in times of peace, and maintain strategic focus and patience.	strategic focus
3	All countries in the same boat, wind or rain.	in the same boat, wind or rain
4	They have repeatedly praised China's fight against the epidemic and its contribution to global epidemic prevention and control.	epidemic prevention and control

The metaphors of war in New Year's addresses mostly refer to the fact that national development is war, highlighting the country's perseverance in overcoming difficulties (Shao, 2018).

In example 1, "through thousands of difficulties and risks" is a metaphor for the hardships we have come along. China's development has not always been plain sailing. In the course of overcoming difficulties, we have encountered many obstacles in confronting international hegemonism and power politics. The use of this metaphor more vividly highlights the country's perseverance in overcoming difficulties.

The words "against" and "prevention and control" used in example 4 are also often used in wars. The use of "fight" and "control" in this case highlights the severity of COVID-19 and the courage and determination with which we face it.

#### 4. Impact and Significance

President Xi's New Year's speech is intuitive, concise and profound, showing the unique style of Chinese leaders (Wu, Hu, 2014). The use of metaphors by national leaders in New Year's day speeches can be largely in line with the experience of the people. Moreover, metaphor makes macro abstract national politics more familiar to daily life, which makes sentences easier to understand and close to people's cognition and understanding. What's more, the use of metaphor can also reveal the characteristics of The Times, propaganda, society and ideology, and make speech become a bridge connecting the government and the public psychology, so as to stimulate the public emotion, enhance cohesion, and then play a very effective role in helping understanding and persuasion.

Through analysis, it found that critical metaphor analysis can well explain the real meaning behind the discourse and can be applied to the analysis of political discourse (Wu, Gong, 2020). Conceptual metaphor plays an important role in political discourse. What is more, conceptual metaphor not only helps people understand some abstract and complex political concepts, but also can deduce the ideology and ruling idea of Chinese leaders through conceptual metaphor. Headed by xi jinning, chairman of a new generation of central collective consciously use based on the experience of the people's production and life practice language to express the ruling principle, converts the imperceptible to perceived, unknown to the known, to abstract the political concepts, policies and regulations, such as injection of life "learning style" has become the new collective leadership a focal point of the political discourse. It not only reflects General Secretary Xi Jinping's personal style, but also implies the governing philosophy and ideology of the new leadership.

Leaders speech in the language of the people, pay attention to their political demands and values, and empathize with and sympathize with the people in their feelings, thinking and work style. This can strengthen the cohesion of the people. At the same time, it is also conducive to obtaining a series of major theoretical and practical problems for the development of the party



and the country's cause under the new situation. Moreover, under the new historical conditions, the CPC's program of action for governing the country will be recognized and accepted by the people, and the people will be encouraged to actively participate in the socialist modernization drive to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. (Ji, 2018).

## 5. Conclusion

This paper has some research significance. First of all, it can help readers better understand the metaphorical structure and the underlying concepts in President Xi Jinping's New Year's address in 2022, so that readers can have a more three-dimensional impression of the review of the past year and the prospect of the New Year. Secondly, it provides some reference for the communication of Chinese image and the use of language reported by media. Thirdly, while analyzing the metaphorical components in congratulatory speech, we can have a more specific understanding of discourse analysis and conceptual metaphor. Of course, due to the limited cognitive level of the author, there will inevitably be some omissions and mistakes in the analysis process, the author will continue to improve myself, and welcome you to give some criticism, I hope that the New Year everyone can live a happy life, and our country will more prosperous and strong.

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