

Combining Critical Metaphor Analysis and Corpus Linguistics to Examine Construction Metaphors in the Weekly Televised Speeches “Returning Happiness to the People”

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Abstract

This study compares the construction metaphors and the three dominant conceptual metaphors employed in the weekly televised speeches in Thailand given by General Prayuth Chan-o-cha during his tenures as head of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) and as prime minister. Using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the study uses corpus linguistic software to search for metaphorically-used words relating to physical qualities of building and construction through concordance line analysis. This is carried out on the basis of a conceptualization of concrete ideas (source domain) and abstract ideas (target domain), relying on the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA). In this paper, the emerging three important conceptual metaphors of construction are: COUNTRY/NATION AS A CONSTRUCTION, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND ADMINISTRATION PRINCIPLES AS A CONSTRUCTION, and THE ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT-RELATED AFFAIRS AS A CONSTRUCTION. During the two periods of time, the selected metaphors reflect the underlying ideology of the country's future development in terms of citizen reconciliation and national stability. This might be interpreted as a legitimization strategy to highlight the positive self-image of the military junta to handle political unrest and to drive the country and economy forward.

Keywords: Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA), Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), corpus linguistics, construction metaphor, political discourse, Thai political crisis

Introduction

Ideology, and its interaction with conceptual metaphors, plays a crucial role in political discourse analysis (Lu & Ahrens, 2008). As the characteristics of a political speech often rely heavily on figurative language, this type of discourse is represented by many communicative means and purposes which represent social actions and practices (Wodak, 1995). Furthermore, it is undeniable that politicians have gained much success with their “attempts to persuade an audience of the validity of their views through the subtle use of elegant and persuasive language” (Thomas et al., 2004, p. 39).

In constructing messages to achieve specific communicative objectives, politicians tend to use persuasive language to convey their message. It can be clearly seen from previous literature that metaphor is one of the persuasive tropes used together with other rhetorical devices. It is a phenomenon aimed at communicating with specific communities and societies,

through vehicles, inter alia, such as speeches and manifestos (Charteris-Black, 2004; Ferrari, 2007; Hellín-García, 2013; Lu & Ahrens, 2008; McEntee-Atalianis, 2011; Rafoss, 2019), political cartoons (Silaški & Đurovic, 2019), broadsheet newspapers (Cammaert, 2012), and public statements (Meadows, 2007). Historically, metaphorical linguistic expressions have been minutely examined to reveal the hidden ideologies and political points of view of the communicator, and how this type of figurative language operates in political discourse and influences audiences.

Contemporaneously, and based on the more recent scientific studies of language, communications research has shifted to more multidisciplinary fields of studies and the wider implications on social and political issues. Fields such as political science, history, cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, psychology, educational studies, communication and media studies, and computer science have all come to the fore. In integrating such multidisciplinary fields of study, language metaphors have become widely investigated and selected to be the focal point of critical study in a wide range of discourse, particularly political discourse. For instance, Gavriely-Nuri (2008) combined gender theories with the discipline of political science to analyze the main concepts of metaphorical annihilation and war-normalizing metaphor in Israeli political discourse. McEntee-Atalianis (2013) emphasized the relationship between stance and metaphor in identity construction through an analysis of speeches delivered by consecutive secretary generals of an agency of the United Nations. In a further study, Silaški and Đurovic (2019) analyzed the journey metaphor in Brexit-related political cartoons within the theoretical framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) and multimodality. In a contemporaneous work, Zeng et al. (2021) focus on the topic of the free economy in Hong Kong from 1997 to 2017, analyzing how metaphorical frames of reference changed during that period.

Metaphor study provides a unique perspective to understanding human thought in connection with social and political issues. We can see from the findings of Charteris-Black's (2004) study of metaphor in British party-political manifestos, that both parties had a set of positive evaluation-related metaphors based on the conceptual metaphors of WORTHWHILE ACTIVITIES IS BUILDING and SOCIETY IS A BUILDING. In another study, Koller and Semino (2009) analyzed the metaphors employed in the interviews and speeches of both former and current chancellors of Germany, Gerhard Schröder and Angela Merkel. Some findings of this study suggested that Angela Merkel tended to use metaphorical expressions relating to femininity such as empathy and passion, representing a particular type of conservative politician. It should be noted that complicated and critical perspectives of metaphorical linguistic expressions in various types of discourse could specifically indicate that human thought and reasoning is fundamentally conceptual. Thus, a critical perspective of metaphor analysis plays a significant role and becomes an inevitable part of everyday discourse and society, hence their investigation in relation to political discourse.

While it can be seen that metaphors in political discourse have been the subject of investigation in different contexts, very little research has been conducted to address this concept within the Thai political context. Only three studies have utilized the metaphor concept to analyze political speeches in the Thai socio-political context (Chaiyasat & Sudajit-apa, 2017; Klinnamhom, 2008; Krutnate, 2004). Firstly, Chaiyasat and Sudajit-apa (2017) adopted a corpus-assisted approach to analyze General Prayuth Chan-o-cha's English subtitled weekly

addresses on politics and democracy-related issues in times of political turmoil through the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and CMA. However, this study is limited both in terms of corpus size and the way candidate metaphors were extracted from the raw data. This study focused only on the target terms *democracy* and *democratic* to investigate the candidate metaphors which collocated with these two target terms.

Secondly, based in Thailand, Klinnamhom (2008) examined conceptual metaphors in expressions used by Thai politicians in different types of political discourse. The findings of this polyglot study showed that conceptual metaphors play an important role in the ideologies that politicians conveyed through their speeches and points of view. There were nine key conceptual metaphors Thai politicians used as follows: fighting, journey, competition, family, medical treatment, performance, business, caring and maintaining, and game. Significantly building and construction metaphors were not included in this study.

Lastly, Krutnate (2004) examined linguistic devices used as indirect attack mechanisms on the government during censure debates. Focusing on the use of metaphors, it is clear that metaphorical linguistic expressions used appeared to be negative, highlighting negative representations of those politicians when they were administering the country. As the focus of this study was not metaphorical analysis, the overall picture of Thai politicians' usage of metaphors was not clearly seen. Based on the previous studies by Klinnamhom (2008) and Krutnate (2004), it is likely that the corpus of their studies, collected from a wide range of sources such as political campaign speeches, censure debates, media interviews, and transcription of radio talks were compiled during a period of political stability. This contrasts with the current study which focuses solely on the construction-based metaphor.

This study attempts to fill the research gap and comparatively examine building-based metaphors which emerged in selected English language speeches as Thailand faced continuing conflict between two opposing political factions ("Yellow shirt" and "Red shirt" supporters) leading to a strongly perceived risk of civil war. The use of building and construction metaphors was based on the following reasons:

First, building metaphors were described as a particular type of "productive source domain" (Lu & Ahren, 2008, p. 385) to be significantly related to the complexity of social and political issues. This statement echoes Kövecses's (2010) mappings of the conceptual metaphor COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE BUILDINGS and Goatly's (1997) identified conceptual metaphor of A SOCIETY IS A BUILDING.

Second, building metaphors, based on Charteris-Black's (2004) study, convey a strong positive evaluation and highlight "progress towards long-term social goals" (p. 71) which requires social cooperation and mutual understanding between government and people to handle such complicated social problems. This statement accords with Lu and Ahren's (2008) suggestion that building metaphors are employed to establish a president's credentials and that using this particular type of metaphor and its conceptual pairings of A COUNTRY IS A BUILDING and CITIZENS AND POLITICAL LEADERS ARE BUILDERS, they together show that "builders contribute great efforts to set up the building and citizens and political leaders contribute great effort to country development" (p. 386).

Looking closely at the Thai political context in which the speeches of this study (political discourse) were delivered is important. The current (2021) prime minister of Thailand, General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, led a military coup d'état which seized power on 22

May 2014, with the aim of ending and removing the existing government from power and controlling incidents of violent political turmoil, rooted in the political differences between the two main parties. Building from this political disconnect, building and construction related metaphors are worth examining to understand how the underlying political ideologies and hidden views of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, the head of the military-led government, are metaphorically presented in this situation.

In times of political uncertainty, it is common for people to feel extremely insecure, anxious, and uncertain about of their living conditions and safety. Therefore, it is necessary for political leaders to reassure the citizenry, as well as to provide solutions for the crisis. Lasswell (1949) asserted that metaphor research has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention when emotive and ornamental language is used. It is frequently employed in the form of social practices and representations that mold the events of political upheaval, which are consistent with the study of political crisis language, suggesting the “metaphor power in politicians’ and mass media discourse is elevated during severe political crises related to military interventions” (De Landtsheer, 2009, p. 72). To be more specific, the utilization of metaphors by politicians through public announcement and political speeches play a crucial role in conveying their underlying ideologies to the audience with the aim of raising the public’s awareness leading to an understanding of the hidden agenda in relation to social solidarity and cooperating with them to tackle the political crisis during periods which feature instability.

In order to raise international audience’s critical awareness of hidden ideologies, this present study aims to investigate the metaphors which were employed in English-subtitled political speeches aired on the weekly TV program “Returning Happiness to the People” during the 2014 Thai political crisis. These speeches were communicated by General Prayuth Chan-o-cha during his tenures as head of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) and subsequently as prime minister. This study employs Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) CMT and Charteris-Black’s (2004) CMA as the focal theoretical and methodological frameworks for the study. To synergize the qualitative and quantitative approaches, Scott’s (2021) WordSmith Tools corpus linguistic software (version 8) was also utilized in order to generate metaphorically-used words relating to physical qualities of building and construction through the lists of concordance lines which lead to expanded sentences to enhance data analysis and interpretation through the lens of CMA. The key research objectives are:

1. To identify construction metaphors in the weekly television program “Returning Happiness to The People” presented by the head of the NCPO and the prime minister
2. To compare the usage of construction metaphors between the two periods of broadcasting, i.e., when the presenter was head of the NCPO and prime minister
3. To interpret and to explain the metaphorical linguistic expressions and conceptual metaphors in the weekly television program “Returning Happiness to The People” during time of political crisis.

2014 Thai Political Crisis

As metaphor study heavily relies on context, it is important to thoroughly understand the Thai political context in which the political speeches of this study were delivered. According to Jotikut (2016), it should be suggested that the initial point of Thailand's protest politics began in 2001 when the Thai Rak Thai (TRT) party won the general election and became a new kind of populist government. However, on further investigation, it was suggested that the then prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, leader of the TRT party, together with his cabinet ministers, were guilty of corruption and manipulating the electoral process to gain more votes. As a consequence, Thaksin's regime was replaced by the Royal Thai Army in 2006. During this transition period of military administration, Thaksin's supporters, under the banner of the "red-shirt" movement, formed cadres with the purpose of political protesting.

The current prime minister of Thailand, General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, was the leader of a military coup d'état which seized power on 22 May 2014, with the aim of ending and removing the existing government from power and controlling incidents of violent political behavior which had its roots in political divisions and public demonstrations between "Yellow" and "Red" shirt activists. From the time of the coup d'état, it was decreed that "all protest movements were prohibited under military rule and the so-called reconciliation process continued to work to remove Thailand's protest politics" (Jotikut, 2016, p. 79).

To achieve its aims, one of the strategies of the military government has been to promote and communicate its ongoing campaign to the Thai public. The political speeches of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, aired on the weekly television program, were part of this charm offensive. Named "Returning Happiness to the People" or in Thai รายการคืนความสุขให้คนไทย, the weekly addresses were broadcast nationwide beginning on the 30 May 2014 at 9.30pm in Thai with English language subtitles and, subsequently, on a weekly basis, facilitating communication with international audiences, and both governmental and private sectors.

The weekly addresses were also designed to assist international audiences gain a better understanding of important domestic issues and to recognize how the political and social problems impacted on their involvement. In addition to their radio and television broadcasts, the weekly addresses were also publicized on the websites of the Thai government such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At that time, the weekly addresses might be considered as important information that international audiences such as ambassadors, diplomats, entrepreneurs, businesspersons, students, and tourists should pay particular attention to in order to appreciate the direction and policy that the Thai military government was moving toward during this time of political unrest.

It has been previously established that using the broadcast transcripts of these weekly communications might be considered as a legitimate form of political discourse analysis since they are the scripts prepared for a political addressor, General Prayuth Chan-o-cha (Carreon & Svetanant, 2017). Semantically, and to avoid ambiguity, the terms address, speech, and discourse are used synonymously throughout the study.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

The original work of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) *Metaphors We Live By* created a new research theme in cognitive linguistics, highlighting conceptual systems, language, and actions through metaphorical thought. They were the first to theorize the cognitive function of metaphors and coin the term "cognitive metaphors," which are more recently known as "conceptual metaphors." Based on their ideas, CMT has emerged and become used as a theoretical framework to investigate linguistics. In addition, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) defined metaphors as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5). This is a fundamental concept in the mapping of correspondences as metaphorical linguistic expressions between the source domain and the target domain, seen in the example of the construction metaphor (ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE BUILDINGS) which was proposed by Kövecses (2000a, 2000b, 2002). The term "mapping" is generally described as a process in which particular words are associated with meanings and with comparable attributes of the topic under investigation (Ritchie, 2013). This corroborates Knowles and Moon's (2006) idea of analyzing conceptual metaphors, indicating that the connections between concept areas in terms of correspondences and mappings between the source and target domains is the focal point in CMT. With regards to the two terms of *source domain* and *target domain*, Cardini (2014) provided a clear explanation of these two terms: the source domain is "some concrete, simple, well-delineated entity that can typically be apprehended by our sense" (p. 59); while at the same time, the target domain is described as "some relatively abstract, poorly-delineated area of experience" (p. 59).

Relying on Kövecses's (2010) mappings of constituents of the conceptual metaphor COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE BUILDINGS, it can be seen that basis, support, stability, and structure are all metaphorical in relation to abstract targets; as defined in Table 1.

Table 1: Mappings of Conceptual Metaphor of COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE BUILDINGS (adopted from Kövecses, 2010, p. 139)

Source Domain: Buildings	Target Domain: Complex Systems
Foundation	Basis that supports the entire system
Framework	Overall structure of the elements that make up the system
Additional elements to support the framework	Additional elements to support the structure of the system
Design	Logical structure of the system
Architect	Maker/builder of the system
Process of building	Process of constructing the system
Strength	Lastingness/stability of the system
Collapse	Failure of the system

It should be noted that metaphorical expressions can be described and understood far easier when the concrete concept of source domain comes into play with the abstract concept of the target domain. Hence, CMT, as a network of mappings, plays a vital role in the systematic mapping of correspondences between source and target domains.

Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA)

CMT has met several challenges and severe criticisms. Inter alia, most metaphors are elicited or invented by users rather than being naturally occurring and metaphors were considered to be isolated sentences, lacking the reflection of their real use in a socio-political context. In reality, it is difficult to conduct cross-domain mapping between source and target domains if the social context has not been considered as metaphors would become hardly comprehensible for analysis.

Based on the criticism of influential notions within CMT, Charteris-Black (2004) consolidated Critical Discourse Analysis CDA, with CMT, more pragmatic approaches and corpus methodology propelling the critical study of metaphor into a larger and more complicated context. Closely looking at CMT, Sinclair (1991) cautioned that intuitions and introspections about critical investigation of language can be unreliable and problematic when it comes to the point of natural language use.

Thus, the so-called CMA has been proposed as a new research field of critical analysis for language. With regards to the analytical framework of CMA, Charteris-Black (2004, 2014) deconstructs metaphors into three stages of identification, interpretation, and explanation, an idea adopted from Fairclough's (1989, 2010) three interrelated-dimensional framework of text, discursive practice, and socio-cultural practice.

Table 2: Comparison between Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 2010) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Charteris-Black's (2004, 2014) Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA)

Interrelated Stages of CDA and CMA	Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 2010) CDA	Charteris-Black's (2004, 2014) CMA
Description/ Identification	Text analysis: Written and spoken (generation of text genres, types or categories)	Analysis of words and phrases: what to count as a metaphor (a close reading of a sample of texts to determine candidate metaphors)
Interpretation	Interaction: Processing analysis and seeking meanings of the description, (processes of (re)production, distribution, consumption of text)	Deciding how metaphors are to be categorized and organized based on the relationship of source and target domains (and identifying feasible conceptual metaphors and conceptual keys and considering which metaphor choices account for constructing a representation of social reality)
Explanation	Socio cultural practice: Social analysis (socio cultural, economic, political, and environmental conditions of production and interpretation of text)	Considering the broader sociopolitical context to determine the purposes for speakers employing such metaphors in their texts; how the persuasive role of metaphor has impact on audience's opinions, ideas, and beliefs

The integration of CDA, corpus linguistics, pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics not only provides new insights into both CDA and CMT, but establishes a new theory in the investigation of linguistic features, namely CMA.

Methods

Data Collection

This research aims to investigate construction metaphors and conceptual metaphors of country/nation, economy and development-related affairs, and political institutions and administration principles over two time periods. The first dataset is 15 English-subtitled versions of the weekly addresses of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, while he was the head of NCPO between 30 May 2014 and 5 September 2014. The second dataset, of the same number of addresses, was when he was prime minister between 12 September 2014 and 19 December 2014. These two datasets are defined as NCPO and PM respectively. The total number of words spoken within the NCPO speeches is 95,581 and PM speeches is 75,217. Both datasets were electronically retrieved from www.thaigov.go.th.

The dataset of 30 speeches was employed as the corpus under investigation based upon the following reasons. First, the political situation at the time of the speeches were being delivered was extremely intense and negatively affected people's lives, national stability, and national economy. Second, many events affecting people's rights and freedoms of expression occurred under the military-led government such as the imposition of curfews, a limit to group gatherings for political discussion, and restrictions on the freedom of media channels. Third, in terms of text availability there are only 15 NCPO speeches available. Therefore, the decision was made to use this as the chronologically first dataset, and for reference and comparison take the next 15 speeches, made by the same individual in the same format, when he was appointed to the prime ministerial role.

Regarding any consent and ethical concerns, it must be clearly understood that General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, the physical communicator of the text embodied in the two datasets, was, at the time he was broadcasting, head of the NCPO and subsequently prime minister of Thailand. He was an important public figure, and his speeches were provided via the official website of the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs and were officially on open access to the public. Thus, it is not deemed necessary to obtain the personal consent from General Prayuth Chan-o-cha for their use.

Corpus-Assisted Metaphor Analysis Procedure

Dealing with a massive amount of data by manual identification creates unmanageable processes of data collection and metaphor extraction. Therefore, I adopted the WordSmith Tools version 8.0 to generate those linguistic features of possible candidate metaphors through a thorough examination of the concordance lines of the search-target words. Based on previous studies, such corpus linguistic tools have been shown to be very useful when dealing with large amounts of data and where applied to metaphor studies (Charteris-Black, 2004; Deignan, 1999, 2005; Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2006). Each of the 30 speech files were assigned a specific filename using the number, year, month, and date when it was published on the Thai government website. For instance, the first speech published on the Thai government website on 30th May 2014 was named NCPO01_30_05_2014.

Given the scope of this research, the concordance tool was solely used to examine the metaphorical linguistic expressions and the collocations of surrounding words. Metaphorical expressions were listed for each reference, for instance, words such as *build*, *lay*, *set up*, *restore*, *stabilize*, *solid*, *strong*, *long-lasting*, *long-standing*, *pillar*, *stability*, *foundation*, and *framework*

were aggregated into a “building and construction metaphor” based on the principles of CMT. The metaphorically-used words relating to physical qualities of building and construction are based on the previous studies of Charteris-Black (2004), Lu and Ahrens (2008), Kövecses (2010), Hellín-García (2013), and Gallagher (2021). After determining the metaphorically-conveyed lexical features, the concordance software, WordSmith Tools version 8, was utilized in this procedure in order to generate the selected search terms of the two datasets. This is displayed in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Screenshot of Scott’s (2021) WordSmith Tools (Version 8.0) Controller

To further illustrate this procedure, Figure 2 displays the screenshot of WordSmith Tools version 8.0 output for the search-target word *build* in Key Word in Context (KWIC) and the associated concordance lines. Concordances show the selected word(s) in the context of the sentences or utterances in which they were used.

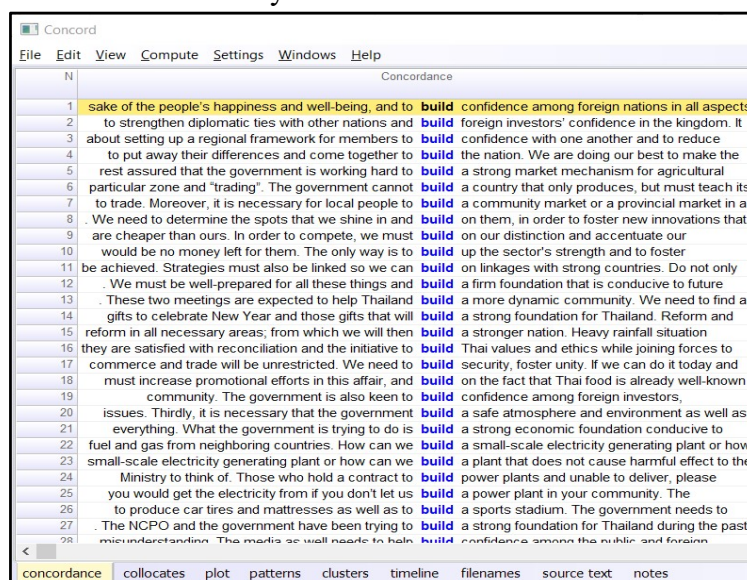


Figure 2: Screenshot of WordSmith Tools version 8.0 for the search-target word *build* in KWIC and concordance lines

Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP)

Metaphor identification procedure (MIP) is a method for identifying metaphoric expressions in discourse. Creed and McIlveen (2018) asserted that “the procedure supports a study of metaphor from a bottom-up approach while making no presumption of potentially metaphoric expressions nor proposing categorizations of underlying conceptual metaphors” (p. 31). As metaphor analysis is context dependent, it should be suggested that the concept of situated conceptualizations or situation-specific occurrences play a crucial role in identifying metaphorically-used words. It should be pointed out that “words that are commonly used with a metaphoric sense are then classified as metaphor keywords and it is possible to measure the presence of such keywords quantitatively in the corpus” (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 35).

Based on this, a group of scholars known as the Pragglejaz Group started MIP in 2007, elaborating on a detailed method of identifying metaphors. After extracting the entire concordance lines of a search-target word, I read and reread each sentence and full paragraph multiple times in order to determine which word appeared likely to be metaphorical based on the MIP methodology. The procedures, as described by Pragglejaz Group (2007), were as follows:

1. The entire corpus of a text was read for content understanding and familiarity of meaning.
2. The lexical units in the texts were dissected.
3. The contextual meanings of each lexical unit were determined and the basic meaning which is more concrete, related to bodily action, more precise and historically older were considered thoroughly.
4. In case the lexical unit has a more basic meaning, examine a relationship between the contextual meaning and the basic meaning.
5. If the lexical unit has a more basic meaning and there is a relationship between the contextual meaning and the basic meaning it may be considered as metaphorical.

In implementation of this procedure, all metaphorically-used words were both manually determined and conceptually mapped on a matrix of source domain and target domain based on Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) CMT and were analyzed through the lens of Charteris-Black’s (2004, 2014) CMA. After this preliminary procedure of metaphor identification, the concordance lines of search-target words such as *build* were expanded into full sentences. As can be seen in the following example, the entire bold font *build* serves as a common metaphorical source domain and could be employed as a theme of analysis (see Figure 3).

According to Kövecses (2010) and Lakoff and Johnson (1980), a number of building metaphors might be identified from previous studies such as THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS, SOCIETY IS A BUILDING, COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE BUILDINGS, and CAREERS ARE BUILDINGS. In this present study, it was observed that the word *build* is collocated with noun phrases such as *a stronger nation*, *a strong Thailand*, and *a strong foundation for Thailand* as displayed in Figure 3. Consequently, conceptual mappings of source and target domains of these three concordance lines are metaphorically conceptualized as the COUNTRY/NATION IS A BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION for interpretation and

explanation based on social and political contexts. Conceptual metaphors were denoted in small capital letters to distinguish them from linguistic metaphors.

o put away their differences and come together to build the nation. We are doing our best to make the peo
s to celebrate New Year and those gifts that will build a strong foundation for Thailand. Reform and deve
m in all necessary areas; from which we will then build a stronger nation. Heavy rainfall situation Regar
. The NCPO and the government have been trying to build a strong foundation for Thailand during the past

Figure 3: Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions of Concordance Lines of Search Target Word *Build* from Prime Minister Speeches

After extracting the entire concordance of the search-target word output for *build* from the prime minister's speeches, I then thoroughly examined the lexical unit of the word *build* and its collocations (co-text) which appears to be part of a metaphorical expression as can be seen in Figure 3. In this process, the concordance lines which did not convey metaphorical meanings based on Pragglejaz Group's (2007) definitions were excluded. As can be seen in the sample list of concordance lines for the word *build* in Figure 2, some entries were removed from the analysis because the word conveys solely a sense of literal meaning, and not metaphorical.

Inter-Coder Reliability Procedure of Metaphor Identification

Inter-coder reliability plays a crucial role in qualitative research, demonstrating how similarly two or more coders apply a set of codes to the same data. To indicate consistency in coding, it is necessary to calculate the amount of agreement between two (or more) coders. This is in line with Steen et al. (2010), indicating that reliability tests should be carried out to examine the extent of inter-coder agreement. Importantly, Steen et al. (2010) also suggested it is necessary to have at least 92% agreement before discussion of all cases. In this study, inter-coder reliability of metaphor identification was conducted to strengthen coding agreement, maintain objectivity, and avoid bias. This comparison was carried out by the researcher and one expert who specializes in a related field of discourse analysis and metaphor study.

The 125 metaphors from NCPO speeches and 121 metaphors from PM speeches were put into this procedure. I then had an experienced inter-coder (an American citizen and doctoral degree holder) who specializes in metaphor studies to code the selected metaphors and establish the percentage of agreement. Inter-coder reliability was 95.2% (119 out of 125 metaphors) for the NCPO speeches and 93.38% (113 out of 121 metaphors) for the PM speeches, which indicated a high level of agreement between researcher and inter-coder. Any disagreement was thoroughly discussed to establish consensus between the two coders.

Data Analysis

After identifying metaphors and conceptually mapping the target and source domains of each metaphor, I then undertook further interpretation and explanation based on the analytical framework of Charteris-Black's (2004, 2014) CMA and his three stages of identification, interpretation, and explanation. In this stage, I considered the broader social and political context to determine the purposes that General Prayut Chan-o-cha had in using

metaphors. Through the interpretation process, it is necessary to establish any relationship between used metaphors and the cognitive and pragmatic factors that determine them (Charteris-Black, 2004). Thus, the socially-important representation of metaphor choice plays a significant role at the stage of interpretation. The persuasive role of construction metaphors should not be overlooked as they play a significant role in arousing emotions, forming ideas, changing opinions, and consolidating beliefs toward issues such as national unity, citizen reconciliation, and economic development. Further, this persuasive role in political speeches had become evident in Charteris-Black's (2004) previous work, which revealed that construction metaphors are likely to "imply a positive evaluation of political policy" (p. 95). As the construction-based metaphor is likely to convey positive sentiments toward abstract and complicated events, this accords with Kövecses's (2010) previous observations of the source domain in the conceptualization of complex systems, which indicated construction metaphors appear to be associated with "the creation of a well-structured and stable or lasting complex system" (p. 159).

Further, Semino (2008) pointed out the ideological implications expressed through the use of metaphors. This is consistent with Deignan's (2005) claim that "conceptual metaphor theory holds that metaphor is potentially ideological" (p. 23). To understand the ideology behind or underlying metaphorical use in this study, I focused on the conceptual mapping of source and target domains, their co-text, and the involved socio-political contexts. This led to the discovery of certain aspects of ideology prevailing in the focused conceptual metaphors under investigation. Specifically, analysis of such ideological and persuasive aspects of metaphors in this study relied on the assumption that metaphors reflect the positive self-image of the junta's "good men" – principally General Prayut Chan-o-cha – during his various tenures.

Findings and Discussion

Overall Percentage Differences of Construction Metaphors between the Two Datasets

A closer look at the data revealed several metaphorically-used words relating to physical qualities of building and construction as the source domain in the two datasets. The total numbers of metaphorical statements in the two sets of data are quite similar but the numbers across each lexical item varied. Although this study does not aim at statistically comparing the two data sets, there are subtle differences between them. Clearly, the total occurrence of metaphors in the NCPO speeches appeared to be higher than that of the PM speeches (119 to 113) due to the fact that the NCPO corpus size is 11.93% larger than the PM corpus (95,581 versus 75,217). The overall details of metaphorical linguistic items relating to the physical qualities of building and construction (the lexical items of source domain) is the focus in the current study and is presented in Table 3.

As the table shows, the number of words used in construction metaphors of the NCPO speeches (119 words) slightly outnumbered those in the PM speeches (113 words). There is no salient difference in the incidence of words used in construction metaphors of speeches over both periods, signifying that construction metaphors played a significant role as a linguistics choice throughout the political crisis. In addition, the metaphorically-used words as *set up/setting up* (37 words, 31.09%) appeared to be mostly used in NCPO speeches, while *build*

(30 words, 26.54%) appeared to be predominantly employed in PM speeches. The top five metaphorically-used words in NCPO speeches included *set up/setting up* (37 words, 31.09%); *build* (18 words, 15.12%); *stability* (16 words, 13.44%); *framework* (12 words, 10.08%); and *strong* (11 words, 9.24%). By contrast, the top five metaphorically-used words in the PM speeches were *build* (30 words, 26.54%); *set up/setting up* (18 words, 15.92%); *foundation* (17 words, 15.04%); *stability* (13 words, 11.50%); and *lay down*, *restore*, and *framework* (7 words each, 6.19%). Further, the metaphorically-used word *lay* and its linguistic variants, *restore*, *stabilize*, *solid*, *long-lasting*, *long-standing*, and *pillar* were employed sporadically in both sets of data.

Table 3: Details of Construction Metaphors between the Two Datasets

Construction Metaphors (Source Domains)	Metaphors in NCPO		Metaphors in PM	
	Frequency (words)	%	Frequency (words)	%
build	18	15.12	30	26.54
set up/setting up	37	31.09	18	15.92
lay/laid	4	3.36	3	2.65
lay down	-	-	7	6.19
lay out	-	-	1	0.88
restore	4	3.36	7	6.19
stabilize	-	-	5	4.42
solid	2	1.68	3	2.65
strong	11	9.24	-	-
long-lasting	2	1.68	2	1.7
long-standing	3	2.52	-	-
foundation	7	5.88	17	15.04%
framework	12	10.08%	7	6.19%
pillar	3	2.52%	-	-
stability	16	13.44%	13	11.50%
Total	119	100%	113	100%

Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions and Conceptual Metaphors of Country/Nation, Economy and Development-Related Affairs, and Political Institutions and Administration Principles

In times of political uncertainty, politicians often utilize linguistic expressions as a means of expressing abstract concepts in more concrete forms to make them more easily understood by the public. In order to interpret and analyze the selected words of source domain of building and construction metaphor as reported in Table 3 within the specific context of the 2014 Thai political crisis, it is necessary to conceptualize those selected metaphorical linguistic items (source domain) with the abstract concepts of country/nation, economy and development-related affairs, and political institutions/administration principles (target domain). This analysis is based on the critical lens of CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2002, 2010) and CMA (Charteris-Black, 2004, 2014), as earlier discussed.

Table 4 illustrates the conceptual mapping of construction metaphors (source domain) and the abstract concepts (target domain) in the datasets. With respect to the original findings of this study, there are six major conceptual metaphors. However, due to space limitations, only the three most frequent metaphors of country/nation, economy and development-related affairs, and political institutions/administration principles were analyzed in the subsequent sections.

Table 4: Frequencies of Three Significant Conceptual Metaphors of Construction Derived from the Two Datasets

Conceptual Metaphors of Construction	Metaphor Tokens in NCPO	%	Metaphor Tokens in PM	%
UNDERSTANDING, TRUST, CONFIDENCE AMONG THAI AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC AS A CONSTRUCTION	13	10.92	6	5.30
COUNTRY/NATION AS A CONSTRUCTION	20	16.80	27	23.89
PEACE AS A CONSTRUCTION	5	4.20	8	7.07
POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND ADMINISTRATION PRINCIPLES AS A CONSTRUCTION	50	42.01	25	22.12
ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT- RELATED AFFAIRS AS A CONSTRUCTION	28	23.52	45	39.82
PROBLEMS AND SOCIAL ISSUES AS A CONSTRUCTION	3	2.5	2	1.76
Total	119	100	113	100

Country/Nation as a Construction

The interesting point of this conceptual metaphor is that it tends to be associated with the idea and the act of national building and construction. Linguistic features of such metaphors include metaphorical expressions such as: *build a strong nation*, *stability of the country*, *national stability*, *build a stronger nation*, *build the nation*, *build the country*, *build a strong Thailand*, *build a strong foundation for Thailand*, *lay down a strong foundation for the country*, *creating national stability*, *restore stability*, *lay a strong foundation for the country's future*, and so on. It can be seen from Table 4 that occurrences of this conceptual metaphor within the two datasets was nearly the same, accounting for 20 occurrences (16.80%) in NCPO speeches and 27 occurrences (23.89%) in PM speeches. These metaphorical linguistic expressions can be associated with the idea of forward-looking ways of building and laying the foundation of Thailand at a time of crisis and political protest. The following sentences exemplify this set of conceptual metaphors:

(1) “Regarding the prohibition of political gatherings of more than 5 people, this also is necessary. Because we are in the initial phase of our operation, the NCPO cannot allow any group to create untoward incidents that may affect the *stability of the country*”. (NCPO104)

(2) “I have said many times we need to take the country toward *sustainable stability* in the future, and *the country's foundations need to be laid*”. (PM106)

Another interesting point about the metaphorical expressions above is how the word *build* has been used concurrently with the adjective *strong* and the noun *foundation*. According to Longman (2000), the word *strong* can be defined in many interrelated aspects of physical strength, things, ability to deal with difficulty, power, healthy, feelings/opinions,

affect/influence, relationship, argument/ reason, and so on. This data suggests a closer look at the definition of the word *foundation*. Interestingly, the definition of *foundation* has many concepts including building, basic idea, organization, and establishment (Longman, 2000). These definitions of the word *foundation* seem to relate to the conceptualization of the concrete idea of source domain and the abstract idea of target domain. It also signifies the action of laying or providing a foundation for something.

Examining the definitions of the two words *strong* and *foundation*, we can see that in order to have a strong country or nation, it is necessary to strengthen its base or foundations. This implies that the country has become weakened due to the political turmoil and unrest of the citizenry. However, the country or nation is portrayed as having physical qualities of building or construction through the combination of metaphorical linguistic expressions such as *build*, *strong*, *foundation*, and *stability*. This is consistent with a study conducted by Johansen (2007), highlighting that “we see how logically the stability and building metaphors interact; it seems obvious that in order for us to build something, to make something grow, we need a stable base” (p. 52).

The conceptualization involved in metaphorically-used words in association with the concept of the country as a construction suggests Thailand needed to be re-founded with strong cornerstones and on stable ground. As the construction metaphors associated with national stability are critically assessed, it should be noted that this conceptual metaphor is conceptualized and framed in a prosperity/moving forward stance to develop and promote Thailand as a stable country among the Thai populace and foreign nations in terms of political, economic, and societal dimensions through the collaborative building between citizens and political leaders.

Political Institutions and Administration Principles as a Construction

Based on Table 4, the distribution of this conceptual metaphor in the two datasets was significantly different. The metaphor is more frequent than all others in the NCPO speeches, accounting for 50 occurrences (42.01%). In contrast, it accounted for only 25 occurrences (22.12%) in the PM speeches, but is common in both datasets.

Various types of words were metaphorically used to conceptualize the abstract idea of politics and administration-related issues. Those words are of three main types: verbs (*build*, *lay*, *set up*, *restore*); adjectives (*strong*, *long-lasting*); and nouns (*foundation*, *framework*, *pillar*). The words *build*, *set up*, *stable*, *pillar*, *strong*, *foundation*, and *framework* are frequently seen with the democracy-related concept through words such as *democracy* and *democratic*. These metaphorical linguistic expressions of construction co-occurring with the concept of democracy (6 occurrences) has been found more in the NCPO speeches, as can be seen in the following excerpts.

(3) “At present, Thailand is trying to ***build the foundations for a strong democracy***, which will lead to more sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships with the international community”. (NCPO74)

By contrast, the adjective *long-lasting* and the verb *restore* appear to be words that were conceptually associated more with the democracy concept. Use of the construction

metaphor in connection with the democracy concept has been found less in the PM speeches, emerging on only three occasions based on the concordance corpus, as can be seen in the following extracts:

(4) “I wonder how actions like those would help bring peace, happiness, economic growth, and *long-lasting democratic solution* to our country”. (PM75)

(5) “On this occasion, I informed him of the current situation and the government’s reform plans to *restore true and strong democracy in the kingdom*”. (PM60)

This difference in the use of the construction metaphor to conceptualize the democracy concept in the two-period speeches is interesting. It possibly reflects the different political context toward the crisis over the two periods over which the speeches were broadcast. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the military-led government represented itself as a resolver needed to solve the problem of the rise of the Yellow Shirts and Red Shirts, and intervened through the military coup d’état in 2014. While the aim of this military intervention was to prohibit protest movements, Jotikut (2016) pointed out that after the Royal Thai Army had carried out a coup d’état “the so-called reconciliation process continued to work to remove Thailand’s protest politics” (p. 79). Hence, the military government focused the public’s attention on the construction source domain to conceptualize the political actions.

In this section, construction metaphors are ideologically motivated by this conceptual metaphor. This is consistent with the study of Charteris-Black (2004), suggesting that “building metaphors are motivated by the conceptual metaphor, SOCIETY IS A BUILDING, and invariably convey a positive evaluation because a valued outcome requires social co-operation between government and the people” (p. 71). He also indicated that social goals can be conceptualized as needing patience and the joint effort of government and populace to tackle political problems such as protesting in which instant outcomes are difficult.

Based on the political situation outlined above, the implication is that Thai democratic principles appear to be problematic even though Thailand defines its democratic principles somewhat uniquely. Thai people’s political viewpoints are embroiled in a deep political polarization between the *Red Shirts*, Thaksin Shinawatra supporters, and *Yellow Shirt*, conservative/royalist demonstrators, lining up against the “Reds” (Funston, 2009). Behind the scenes of political conflict threatening the country’s democratic transition, construction metaphors are vital for a political leader to precisely conceptualize and communicate the abstract ideas of democracy and policies to the public.

The Economy and Development-Related Affairs as a Construction

To analyze this type of conceptual metaphor, the construction metaphors that occurred with words related to the economy/finance and development-related affairs were described as the target domain. This echoes Cardini’s (2014) study of metaphors within an economic crisis, which suggested that the words of the target domain, such as *economy*, *finance*, and *market* appeared to be related to the concept of economy. This is consistent with Gil’s (2019) study, which analyzed metaphor and ideology in British and Spanish economic reports. In this study, a list of common targets within the economic ambit seem to be in line with this present study,

for instance, the words *bank, company, economy, finance, investor, market, money, product, sector, and stock* were primarily selected for concordance software purposes. As development-related affairs and activities are considered as the driving force to stimulate and enhance a country's economic development, I then selected the words *economy* and *economic* and other words related to the development-related affairs and activities such as *agriculture, trade, investment, price, market mechanism, market, development, energy, sector, resource, and system* as the target domain of the conceptual metaphor ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT-RELATED AFFAIRS AS A CONSTRUCTION.

It can be seen from Table 4 that the distribution of this type of conceptual metaphor from the two datasets is significantly different in terms of percentage. This metaphor is far more frequent in the PM speeches, accounting for 45 occurrences (39.82%) compared to only 28 occurrences (23.52%) among the NCPO speeches. Based on this difference it might be inferred that the underlying ideology of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha toward building a stable economy was highlighted when the political crisis had become less severe and had been addressed after he was appointed prime minister. It might also be interpreted that he seemingly emphasized the development-related affairs to drive the national economy in order to gain popularity and confidence from the public, as can be seen in the following extracts:

(6) "What the government is trying to do is ***build a strong economic foundation*** conducive to growth and prosperity". (PM19)

(7) "The government will work hard to move the country forward, ***stabilize economy***, and develop society, so that we can have a fair election". (PM70)

When examining the NCPO speeches it appears that metaphorical linguistic expressions such as *build, stabilize, strong, fundamental, and foundation* were only sporadically employed and that messages had not been so heavily reliant on the packed construction metaphors conceptualizing the economy concept in comparison to the PM speeches, as can be seen in the following excerpts:

(8) "All parties in the meeting have agreed that SMEs are ***a fundamental and vital part of the domestic economic system***". (NCPO40)

(9) "Thailand is fortunate to have ***a good economic foundation*** and, with good and effective direction, we can become a key driver in the ASEAN as well as global economic community in the future". (NCPO82)

Further, the search terms *build, stabilize, foundation, and stability* appeared to be predominantly utilized in the PM speeches, while an analysis of corpus collocations reveal that all uses of the word *build* are in association with the abstract concepts of market, economy, development and agriculture related issues, as seen in the following extracts:

(10) "***Economic stability*** and social improvement must continue to grow without impasse". (PM108)

(11) “The government will work hard to move the country forward, *stabilize economy*, and develop society, so that we can have a fair election”. (PM70)

It appears the search terms *stability* and *stabilize* can be considered as common economic metaphors that play a crucial role in political discourse. This is in line with the study carried out by Johansen (2007) comparing the two terms *economic growth* and *economic stability* which he metaphorically uses to highlight physical entities. It is important; therefore, the government finds the way to maintain the economy in a stable and buoyant condition. It should be suggested that the political situation can be reflected in the use of conceptual metaphors used by the government, and that as the political situation changes, so do the mix and tone of metaphors used.

Based on the possibility of political upheaval, it is likely that the metaphorically-used words in the speeches of this period relied heavily on progressive development of the country. As can be seen in the excerpts discussed earlier, the metaphorical linguistic expressions in this specific period were used to emphasize economic development issues when the political turmoil and insurrection appeared to be controllable under the orders of the military government.

As metaphors are culturally bound and context dependent, it is useful to discuss the similarities and differences between construction metaphors in Thai political discourse and other contexts and cultures. The findings of this present study explain the function of construction metaphors in charting the progress of a country toward its future goal, which is consistent with the study of Lu and Ahrens (2008), indicating that a country’s development is understood based on conceptual mappings of the building metaphor.

This study provides further supporting evidence of the persuasive power of building and construction based metaphors in political discourse, which corroborates the findings in Charteris-Black’s (2004) work, based on British political discourse. This study also reinforces Chaiyasat and Sudajit-apa’s (2017) study of Thai politics and democracy-related issues in times of political turmoil, emphasizing the hope of forward-looking ways toward the restoration of democratic principles and laying down strong and solid foundations during times of political turmoil.

In a study by Hellín and García (2013), based on the political discourses of the former Spanish president José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, building metaphors were employed to serve as a legitimization strategy to highlight the solid ground of the government’s anti-terrorist initiative through various types of conceptual metaphors. The findings of this study seem to be consistent with the present study in terms of building and construction based metaphors employed to characterize a positive representation of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha’s military-led government.

With regard to the persuasive role of construction-based metaphors, some findings in McEntee and Atalianis’s (2011) study of the role of metaphor in constructing a common “imaging” of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) within the United Nations, suggested that the metaphorical expressions in certain phrases; for instance, “IMO...have *laid the foundation* for substantial and continued reductions in operational and accidental pollution from ships” and “IMO’s approach is to promote regional *capacity building* and the

development of *strong infrastructures...*”, were employed to highlight the importance and existence of the organization.

This part of their analysis is in line with the role of building- and construction-based metaphors in Prayuth Chan-o-cha’s weekly televised speeches namely “Returning Happiness to the People” which served as the linguistic strategy to legitimize the importance and existence of the coup and the administration team of the NCPO to restore order to Thailand and enact political reforms during a time of political crisis. They might argue that without these involved authorities, the ongoing political movement(s) would remain and the consequence of such would be continued violence from protests which might have negative effects on the country and its economy.

Additionally, the findings of this study corroborate some of findings of the more recent work of Zeng et al. (2021), which revealed that the persuasive role of building metaphors can be considered as one of the linguistic strategies to justify the Hong Kong government’s initiatives, placing an emphasis on economic growth and their commitment to the concept of a free economy throughout this period. This finding accords in part with this present study, which shows that the metaphorically-used words relied heavily on the politics and administration-related conceptual metaphor.

By contrast, the political turmoil and insurrection appeared to have abated and was more controllable by the time General Prayuth Chan-o-cha was officially appointed as prime minister. By this point the metaphorical linguistic expressions became more employed to emphasize the ideas of (future based) economic development. Based on the occurrences of the conceptual metaphors, it is clear that the underlying ideology of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha toward building political institutions and administration principles shifted when the political crisis subsided after his appointment as prime minister. He then increasingly emphasized economic issues and related- development affairs in order to gain popularity and confidence from the public.

Conclusion

Metaphors are of more significance in examining motivations and hidden ideologies of communicators during periods of political instability, and construction-based metaphors portray the underlying ideology of the country’s future development in terms of citizen reconciliation and national stability. Throughout the two periods of time when General Prayuth Chan-o-cha was head of the NCPO and subsequently prime minister, construction-based metaphors were employed as a legitimization strategy to highlight the positive self-image of the junta to handle political issues and to drive the country and economy moving forward.

The desire of the junta for public support and legitimization can be defined on a number of dimensions. Firstly, the junta is composed of senior military figures who the public might be wary of as to their ability to administer the country. The junta needs to reassure the public that they have that ability. Secondly, the junta’s coup d’état had been achieved by force, which is anathema to peaceful democratic election procedures. Thirdly, the junta is aware that little can be achieved without public support, hence their emphasis on collaboration strategies. Finally, as with all individuals, the junta, as individuals, wishes to be liked.

This is in line with Charteris-Black's (2004) idea, highlighting that social dimensions and sociopolitical contexts including ideology, culture, and history play a crucial role in the choices of metaphorical linguistic expressions in a particular discourse. As metaphors have been identified as one of the linguistic strategies political figures typically use to achieve their goal of political advantage, Antil and Verma (2020) pointed out that they "have also been considered as a manipulative tool in the hands of political leaders" (p. 223). It has been shown that the aim of employing construction metaphors in speeches within an unstable political context is to propagate the political ideology of national stability. Moreover, it also should be noted that such use of construction metaphors can be associated with the concept of promoting positive self-image which political figures tended to use in order to shed light on their personal representation.

This study employed corpus linguistics software to extract the target-search words of metaphorical linguistic expressions. In so doing, it helped the researcher deal with huge datasets more effectively for the preliminary process of metaphor extraction and identification. With regards to the studies limitations, this study solely examined the construction metaphors appearing in speeches during a political crisis. The findings from this present study are "a snapshot rather than video" and a replication over a longer time period might be useful. Other metaphor studies also need to thoroughly investigate different types of metaphors such as journey metaphor or machinery metaphor so that the findings would provide more insightful analysis and interpretation.

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