



# Prabowo's Metaphor in International Stage: Case Study of Conceptual Metaphor Function in the Propositional Structure

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## Abstract

This study aims to identify and analyze the functions of conceptual metaphors used in Prabowo's ASEAN summit's speech, particularly in how they concretize abstract political challenges, personify values, and motivate collective actions. The data conducted in this study is taken from President Prabowo speech at ASEAN summit 2025. Beside classifying the conceptual metaphors, the mapping proposition structure by agent, actor, and object are also used in this study. By examining the domain source and target based on Lakoff and Johnson theory of conceptual metaphor and also proposition by Lakoff and Johnson, the result shows that the most metaphorical expressions used in the speech is ontological metaphor. The findings highlight that the speech particularly demonstrates ontological metaphors to concretize abstract global political challenges while personifying values such as inclusivity, collaboration, and desire also create developmental, collaboration, and stability ideologies. Furthermore, the propositional mapping showed that the president as a leader or navigator collectively join in navigating and countering transboundary threats, thereby strengthening the persuasive function of the speech. Thus, this study provides an advance of the understanding of metaphors function in political communication and provides practical insights for improving rhetorical strategy and critical public discourse.

**Keywords:** *Conceptual metaphor; Proposition; Political discourse*

## Introduction

Metaphors are used in various aspects of human life. One area where metaphorical expressions are widely used is political discourse. Thus, politics and metaphors go hand in hand. Politicians use metaphors to express or convey ideas, providing persuasive power as a rhetorical tool when delivering messages to the

public (Charteris-Black, 2011). In line with Charteris-Black's view, metaphors can be used to enhance a speaker's emotional impact by making them sound authentic (Charteris-Black, 2011). Metaphors are more than rhetorical ornaments in political speeches; they are cognitive and discursive tools that powerfully shape how audiences conceptualize abstract issues and frame collective challenges. Political leaders rely on metaphorical language to influence public opinion, shape candidates' images, and even attack political opponents (Brugman, Burgers, & Vis, 2019; Hidayat, 2021). Furthermore, political issues are considered complex and intricate; therefore, effective politicians must be able to abstract political issues through metaphorical expressions in order to make them more easily understood by various segments of society.

Within society, metaphors have their own meanings depending on cultural context. This occurs because metaphors cognitively reflect what individuals feel and experience in their respective lives (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). In particular, creative metaphors can provide broader perspectives on experience and potentially generate new social practices and discourses, as argued by Hidalgo-Downing (2020, as cited in Pérez-Sobrino et al., 2022).

Metaphor is a concept that occurs within the human cognitive system, and its product is most often realized as a linguistic expression. Essentially, metaphor involves understanding one thing in terms of another. One of the earliest theories to establish a connection between metaphor in language and cognition was Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory. They argued that people conceptualize abstract ideas in terms of other, often more tangible, concepts. In this way, conceptual metaphors help individuals understand abstract concepts by relating them to notions that are more familiar and meaningful (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, as cited in Brugman et al., 2019). Conceptual metaphor refers to the cognitive view of metaphor as a process involving the transfer of meaning from a source domain to a target domain, such as in the metaphor POLITICS IS WAR. This process shapes how discourse recipients conceptualize particular ideas or experiences (Malah & Taiwo, 2020).

Conceptual metaphor can be defined as a cognitive process that allows humans to gain understanding through a source domain and apply it to a target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, as cited in Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021). Conceptual metaphors are categorized into three types based on their mappings: structural metaphors, ontological metaphors, and orientational metaphors (Kövecses, 2010). Structural metaphors allow a concept to be understood through the structure of another concept, such as ARGUMENT IS WAR, reflected in expressions like "I never win an argument with him," where the source domain of war structures the target domain of argument (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Orientational metaphors relate to spatial orientation, such as up-down or inside-outside, as seen in expressions like "happy is up" and "sad is down," which are grounded in physical and cultural experience. Ontological metaphors, meanwhile, assign concrete status to abstract

concepts by conceptualizing them as objects, substances, or persons, as in the expression “theory explains,” where “theory” is treated as an acting entity. One domain that contains many metaphorical expressions is political discourse; therefore, politics and metaphor are inseparable (Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021).

In political linguistics, drawing on Conceptual Metaphor Theory and recent studies, ontological and structural metaphors are positioned as central mechanisms for mapping concrete source domains onto abstract political concepts, enabling speakers to construct and communicate complex political ideas with clarity and persuasive force (Atmawijaya, 2025). Indonesian political discourse shape's public opinion by assigning concrete meanings to abstract concepts, consistent with Lakoff and Johnson's theoretical framework (Kusmanto, 2019). Ontological metaphors allow abstract themes such as unity or progress to be conceptualized as tangible entities that can perform actions, making these concepts more relatable to audiences (Nguyen, 2025).

Structural metaphors, meanwhile, impose narrative or spatial frameworks onto political processes, framing debates in familiar terms such as journeys, contests, or battles, which help organize argumentation and foster audience engagement (Meng, Li, & Sun, 2025). Crucially, these metaphors serve propositional functions that underpin assertive statements, frame agency, and shape political narratives (Atmawijaya, 2025). Recent studies demonstrate that metaphorical mappings facilitate comprehension while strategically constructing agents, actions, and objects in discourse, thereby guiding interpretations of political issues (Giang & Hiep, 2025; Meng et al., 2025).

Based on Lakoff and Johnson's theory, conceptual metaphors not only function as tools for understanding abstract concepts but also build propositional structures that define relationships between agents, acts, and objects in discourse. Structural metaphors allow concepts to function as agents performing actions on objects. For example, in the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, the speaker acts as the agent, “attack” or “defend” functions as the act, and the argument serves as the object (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Orientational metaphors organize emotional or psychological states as experiences enacted by agents within spatial frameworks. In ontological metaphors, abstract concepts such as “theory” are personified as agents capable of performing actions, as in “theory explains,” where theory performs the act of explaining toward ideas or information (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Thus, metaphorical mapping is crucial for framing actions, positions, and influence in political discourse by assigning clear roles and impacts to abstract entities.

Understanding metaphorical expressions in political discourse is therefore expected to provide insight into individuals' thought patterns in constructing ideas and responding to political issues (Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021). Political metaphors possess characteristics that distinguish them from metaphors in other domains. For example, the expression “body politic” presents the political community as a single organized body composed of interrelated members (Sari & Tawami, 2018). This

metaphor provides a strong visual illustration that is easily understood by the public while emphasizing unity, structure, and institutional order. In this context, metaphorical interpretation does not simply replace literal meaning but adds an additional layer of conceptual understanding.

In political discourse, metaphors function differently from those in other domains such as literature, where aesthetic purposes are more prominent. Political metaphors provide perspectives on how ideas are constructed and how attitudes toward issues are shaped (Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021). Metaphors not only map one domain onto another but also organize relationships between agents, actions, and objects (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). While structural mapping is often considered the dominant model for explaining metaphor, other interpretative mechanisms, such as object-attribute predicates, may also apply.

Bowdle and Gentner's career of metaphor hypothesis suggests that conventional metaphors tend to be processed through categorization, whereas novel metaphors are more likely interpreted through comparison (Wang, 2025). In political discourse, speakers may emphasize agents (government or citizens), acts (navigate, fight, rise), and objects (uncertainty, division, commitment) to construct persuasive narratives. Numerous studies confirm that metaphors are not merely linguistic embellishments but play distinct communicative and persuasive roles by anchoring values, highlighting agency, and guiding public perception.

For instance, in the metaphor *LOVE IS A JOURNEY*, the lovers function as agents conceptualized as travelers moving together along a shared path. The act involves traveling or progressing, representing ongoing processes and decisions within the relationship, while the object is the relationship itself, conceptualized as a journey or vehicle toward shared goals such as marriage or happiness (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

This approach opens space for systematically examining metaphorical functions. Analyzing political metaphors through agent, act, and object patterns reveals how figurative language structures narratives, defines roles, and mobilizes audiences to confront shared issues, thereby laying the foundation for deeper inquiry into metaphor functions in high-stakes political speech.

Recent research consistently shows that metaphors in political discourse serve crucial cognitive and persuasive functions by framing complex issues, constructing relations among agents, actions, and objects, and making abstract ideas more accessible to the public. Previous studies demonstrate that in Prabowo Subianto's *Shangri-La Dialogue 2024* speech, conceptual metaphors such as *IMPORTANT IS DEPTH* and *TRUST IS A FINANCIAL ASSET* function as persuasive devices that shape views on international conflict and cooperation (Ksatria, 2024). Other studies show that ontological and structural metaphors in the Jakarta gubernatorial debate strategically legitimize or delegitimize actors and reframe political issues (Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021), while analyses of Donald Trump's 2024 victory speech indicate that metaphors enhance emotional resonance and leadership

narratives emphasizing unity and progress (Giang & Hiep, 2025). Collectively, these studies highlight the vital role of metaphor in political communication and underscore the need for further research on metaphor functions.

Thus, this paper builds on previous studies by investigating the functions of conceptual metaphors in political discourse. This study advances political metaphor research by integrating conceptual metaphor analysis with propositional mapping to examine how metaphors function propositionally in constructing agency, action, and object relations. By doing so, it provides new insights into the ideological and persuasive roles of metaphors in shaping leadership narratives and collective action in political discourse.

In mapping these metaphorical strategies, this paper aims to identify and analyze the functions of conceptual metaphors used in Prabowo's speech at the ASEAN Summit 2025, particularly in how they construct abstract values related to uncertainty and motivate collective action. This study offers theoretical contributions by advancing understanding of metaphor functions in political communication and provides practical insights for improving rhetorical strategies and critical public discourse. Additionally, it highlights the distinctive characteristics of Indonesian political metaphors and their role in shaping leadership narratives and audience engagement.

## **Method**

This study employs a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach. The descriptive-analytical method aims to describe and explain phenomena in depth by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to derive meaning from the situation being investigated (Creswell, 2014). Through this approach, data are systematically organized and presented to produce a comprehensive understanding of the context of events, individuals, or groups under examination. In this study, the approach is used to identify patterns of metaphorical expressions in political discourse and to interpret their functions, structures, and conceptual meanings.

The data in this study consist of metaphorical expressions used by the President of Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto, in his speech delivered at the ASEAN Summit 2025. The data were obtained from a transcript of a YouTube video disseminated through the official YouTube channel of the Presidential Secretariat. As the speech is publicly accessible, it provides authentic data for examining how national leadership constructs agency, actions, and objects within cross-national political discourse.

Data collection was conducted through several stages. First, the speech was observed and transcribed from the official YouTube channel of the Presidential Secretariat. Second, the transcription was carefully read to identify expressions containing metaphorical language. An expression was identified as metaphorical when one concept was understood or expressed in terms of another, following the criteria proposed by Lakoff and Johnson. The identified metaphorical expressions

were then collected for further analysis.

Data analysis was carried out in four main steps. First, the collected metaphorical expressions were classified into three types of conceptual metaphors proposed by Lakoff and Johnson, namely structural metaphors, ontological metaphors, and orientational metaphors. Second, each metaphorical expression was mapped to its source domain and target domain to determine the conceptual relationships underlying the metaphor. Third, the metaphorical expressions were further analyzed using propositional mapping, in which each metaphor was examined in terms of agent, act, and object to identify who functions as the agent, what constitutes the action, and what serves as the object within the metaphorical construction. Fourth, the relationships among agents, actions, and objects were analyzed in relation to the political and ideological context of the speech in order to interpret the communicative and persuasive functions of the metaphors used.

To enhance analytical reliability, the identification and classification of metaphorical expressions were conducted through repeated readings of the data and were consistently grounded in the theoretical framework of Lakoff and Johnson. This procedure ensured that the analysis remained theoretically coherent and systematically applied throughout the study.

## Results

This section is the main part of the article the results of research and is usually the longest part of an article. The results of the research presented in this section are the result of a clean process of data analysis such as statistical calculations and testing process or other processes for the achievement of its research. State the findings of the research concisely. From the collected data, twelve metaphorical expressions were identified in the speech. The majority of these expressions employed is ontological metaphors. The following table presents the classification of the metaphorical expressions identified in the data.

Table 1. Frequency of Metaphor in Speech

| Type of Metaphor                    | Frequency |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Ontological metaphor                | 5         |
| Structural metaphor                 | 2         |
| Orientalional metaphor              | 2         |
| Ontological-Structural (combined)   | 2         |
| Structural-orientational (combined) | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>12</b> |

Table 1 shows that twelve metaphors were identified in the speech and classified into five ontological metaphors, two structural metaphors, two orientational metaphors, two combinations of ontological and structural and one combination of structural-orientational. This distribution indicates that ontological

and structural metaphor are the most metaphor that used in speech. As have been discovered by the previous study that ontological and structural metaphors are used more frequently because they cognitively help the speaker turn abstract and complex political issues into concrete, familiar entities and experiential structures, making it easier to influence listeners, legitimize positions, and simplify those issues so the audience can understand and evaluate them (Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021).

The ontological and structural metaphors found in this speech are preferred within the combination classifications because they effectively render abstract phenomena as concrete entities or systems, thereby clearly establishing agents, actions, and objects within persuasive political narrative. In line with Lakoff and Johnson's framework, this rhetorical strategy not only systematically frames major issues such as uncertainty, fragmentation, and collaboration within the discourse structure, but also creates space for the audience to actively and collectively interpret and respond to these challenges. On the other hand, orientational metaphors are used less frequently, as their main function is to reinforce emotional tone and direction of change rather than to construct complex agent, act, and object relations in the argumentative structure of the speech.

The description above will begin with combined metaphors, because ontological-structural metaphors represent the most conceptually complex patterns in the speech and simultaneously turning abstract political issues into concrete entities and organizing them within familiar experiential structures. Focusing first on the combined metaphors makes possible to show how the speech employs its strongest cognitive resources to frame uncertainty, fragmentation, and collaboration before moving on to discuss the relatively simpler contributions of purely ontological, structural, and orientational. The detailed of each metaphor will be discussed in the discussion section below. It should be noted that certain metaphorical expressions may simultaneously realize more than one metaphor type. Therefore, the same data may be discussed across different categories to highlight its multiple metaphorical functions.

## **Discussion**

The preference for ontological and structural metaphors in the speech reflects their cognitive effectiveness in rendering abstract political and economic issues into concrete, experience-based representations. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), ontological metaphors enable speakers to conceptualize abstract phenomena as entities, substances, or agents, while structural metaphors organize complex concepts through familiar experiential schemas such as journeys, struggles, or systems.

In political discourse, these metaphor types are particularly effective because they clarify agency, define action, and assign responsibility, thereby making complex issues more accessible and actionable for audiences (Charteris-Black, 2011). Consequently, the dominance of ontological and structural metaphors in the speech

indicates a strategic rhetorical effort to simplify complexity while maintaining persuasive force.

In discussion section, it should be noted that certain metaphorical expressions may simultaneously realize more than one metaphor type. Therefore, the same data may be discussed across different categories to highlight its multiple metaphorical functions.

### **1. Combination of Ontological-Structural**

The metaphorical expressions classified as ontological and structural indicate that these two types are preferred because they most effectively transform abstract political issues into concrete entities and organized systems, thereby clearly describe agents, actions, and object within persuasive political narrative. In line with Lakoff and Johnson's framework, this rhetorical strategy not only systematically frames key issues such as uncertainty, fragmentation, and collaboration in the overall discourse structure, but also creates space for the audience to interpret and respond to these challenges actively and collectively.

The following data, which simultaneously exemplify ontological and structural metaphors, demonstrate how combining these two functions allow abstract phenomena to be rendered as tangible, structured experiences that foreground specific agents, actions, and objects. Focusing on this combined ontological and structural explanation also aligns with the present study emphasis on the persuasive function of the speech. Since, it shows that the persuasive effect emerges precisely from the interplay of ontological concretization and structural organization while keeping the argumentation more concise.

#### **Data (1)**

*"This uncertainty may well be the new normal that we have to navigate."*

This metaphorical expression simultaneously realizes an ontological-structural metaphor that frames uncertainty as a field of navigation of journey. The source domain of navigation draws on concrete experiences of moving through space, setting a course, confronting obstacles, and choosing strategies to reach a destination, while the target domain of "uncertainty" is reconceptualized as a shared, passable space with boundaries and pathways rather than as a vague, anxiety condition. In this way, the expression resonates with research showing that JOURNEY metaphors in political discourse systematically render abstract political processes cognitively tangible by mapping them onto embodied SOURCE, PATH, and GOAL schemas (Ahrens & Zeng, 2022).

Through the propositional mapping, the audience is positioned as the agent who must act within a new situation the "new normal" construed as the object, and the act of "navigating" functions not merely as a suggestion but as an assertion of collective responsibility to steer through global uncertainty. This pattern is consistent with analyses of POLITIS IS A JOURNEY as a dominant conceptual



metaphor that represents politics as a collective journey which can be directed and navigated by leaders together with citizens (Woods, 2022).

Moreover, by construing the nation and key political issues as “moving forward” along a shared path, the metaphor reinforces an image of progress-oriented leadership and invites the audience to see themselves as co-travelers who actively participate in managing uncertainty rather than remaining passive observers (Hotaling, 2023).

### **Data (2)**

*“We are fighting corruption, fighting fraud and fighting the greed economies that are holding back real growth.”*

This expression is a particularly strong instance of an ontological-structural metaphor realized simultaneously, combining the source domain of “battle” with the target domains of economic and moral issues. In Lakoff and Johnson’s terms, it draws on the WAR schema as a concrete source domain that involves physically and mentally confronting an enemy, and maps it onto abstract social problems such as “corruption,” “fraud,” and “greed economies,” which are normally understood in legal normative terms rather than as tangible opponents (Charteris-Black, 2011). The phrase “greed economies that are holding back growth” further personifies the economic system as an active antagonist that obstructs “real growth.”

Within the propositional mapping, “we” functions as the agent representing the Indonesian government and, the audience while “fighting” encapsulates the act as a highly dynamic, confrontational, and intentional form of action. The objects in this metaphor are “corruption,” “fraud,” and “greed economies” are not treated as diffuse structural conditions but as concrete enemies that can be named, targeted, and defeated which aligns with corpus-based findings that contemporary political discourse frequently conceptualizes CORRUPTION IS WAR and related adversarial metaphors to sharpen moral evaluation and agency (Atmawijaya, 2025). The personification element in “greed economies” makes the economic system legible as a willful actor “holding back” growth. Thus, clarifying the agent, act, and object structure and foregrounding responsibility and blame in ways consistent with ontological metaphor’s role in providing entities and boundaries for otherwise abstract processes.

Through this war-based metaphor, the speech invites the audience to reconceptualize systemic problems from passive, seemingly intractable conditions into active enemies that must be confronted, a function that critical metaphor analyses of political discourse have also highlighted (Charteris-Black, 2011). Such conflict metaphors serve powerful persuasive and mobilizing functions, shifting listeners from a passive, observer role into that of engaged “fighters” within a collective struggle. By organizing the scenario around a clear agent, act, and object. The utterance constructs a political narrative of shared responsibility, solidarity, and urgency, reinforcing that idea very in line with Lakoff & Johnson notion of structural

metaphors that meaningful economic change will only occur if society as a whole participates in a collective “fight” against the identified sources of obstruction (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

## **2. Combination of Structural-Oriental**

In the economic speech’s segment, one of the most salient patterns is the deployment of war-based metaphors to frame systemic problems such as corruption, fraud, and predatory economic practices as concrete enemies that must be actively confronted. Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson’s theory about structural and ontological metaphor, this strategy transforms abstract, legally defined phenomena into embodied antagonists within a familiar BATTLE scheme, thereby making them more cognitively accessible and morally charged for the audience (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). In line with Lakoff and Johnson, the expressions of structural, ontological, and orientational could realize metaphorical functions simultaneously. They are strategically used to dramatize a problem, mark moral stance, and project a forward-moving collective trajectory at the same time (Abu Rumman et al., 2024).

### **Data (9)**

*“Empowering small business through digital and financial access is crucial to help integrate into a global value chain.”*

Data (9), which states that “empowering small business through digital and financial access is crucial to help integrate into a global value chain,” provides another illustration of structural metaphor. This phrase is based on the source domain of “networks and integration,” which is developed from actual experiences of interconnected systems like ecosystems, supply chains that flow smoothly, or technology networks (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). The status of small and medium-sized businesses and the “global value chain” as a closely interconnected worldwide production and distribution process is the target domain (Abu Rumman et al., 2024).

Small businesses are transformed from isolated, marginal entities into strategic parts of a mutually reinforcing global economic ecosystem by the underlying proposition, which uses “small business” as the agent, “integrate” as the act, and “global value chain” as the object. This represents the global economy as an open structure into which local actors can be linked et al.). When taken as a whole, these structural metaphors demonstrate how the speech methodically frames economic processes using well-known schemas of games, division, and networks to convey policy objectives and inspire local actors to embrace networking, adaptation, and active involvement in global growth (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

## **3. Ontological Metaphors**

The use of ontological metaphors in Prabowo’s Asean summit 2025 speech transforms abstract political and economic concepts into concrete entities that can be understood, evaluated, and acted upon by audience systematically. Recent studies on political metaphors show that personification and ontological metaphors are central to how contemporary leaders render complex issue cognitively accessible

and morally salient. Especially when they seek to mobilize collectively agency rather than present problems as distant or purely technical matters (Abu Rumman et al., 2024).

#### **In Data (4)**

*"Asia-Pacific must not accept division as its destiny."*

The source domain is "division" as real and threatening force and as something that can be resisted or altered. The target domain is the network of interrelation of state and geopolitical configurations in the Asia Pacific region which are framed as contingent rather than predetermined. Through the propositional mapping, "Asia Pacific" positioned as the agent that must take action to reject "division" as its destiny which plays as object in this expression. Reinforcing the message that the region's future is not governed by fatalistic necessity but by deliberate collective choice. This move echoes insights from conceptual metaphor studies showing that metaphors of destiny and choice in political and geopolitical discourse are used to stress agency and responsibility in shaping collective future.

#### **In data (5)**

*"Inclusivity should therefore guide us. Sustainability must also always be our guiding compass."*

The expression draws on the concrete source domain of navigation tools, specifically the "compass" as an instrument that orients movement and decision-making (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Here, the abstract values of "inclusivity" and "sustainability" are policymakers become the objects whose path is being steered. Ontologically, these values are treated as living, strategic subjects rather than abstract ideals, suggesting a movement from ideological declaration to concrete, driven action of value (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

In proposition, the statement uses "division as its destiny" as the object, "must not accept" as the act, and "Asia-Pacific" as the agent. By emphasizing the region as an active decision-maker capable of rejecting a fatalistic scenario of division rather than as a passive victim of geopolitical pressures, this arrangement reinforces agency and shared responsibility for forming the regional order (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

#### **In data (6)**

*"We cannot allow fragmentation to undermine the stability"*

A metaphorical mapping projects the experiential domain of destructive force onto the abstract notions of "fragmentation" and "stability" (Abu Rumman et al., 2024). Fragmentation is no longer a neutral label for social political division, but it is actualized as an active agent that "undermines" stability, which functions as the object under threat (Kamalu, Anasiudu, & Fakunle, 2023b). The proposition mapping result, fragmentation as agent, undermining as act, and stability as object render the threat more concrete and urgent, implying that fragmentation can erode a shared

foundation it left unchecked (Abu Rumman et al., 2024). Corpus-based studies of corruption and crisis metaphors similarly show that abstract problems are frequently cast as active destroyers such as “eroding trust” to highlight their agency and justify preventive, collective responses (Abu Rumman et al., 2024).

### **In data (7)**

*“It’s time to renew our commitment”*

Commitment is treated as if it were a physical object that can be renewed like a contract, document, or tool (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). The source domain is renewal processes in the material world repairing, updating, or extending the life of tangible items. While, the target domain is the abstract of political and social commitment’s notion (Abu Rumman et al., 2024). Through this mapping, commitment becomes a dynamic object that can be strengthened or weakened by human action with the audience cast as agents who kind of ontological metaphors accords with conceptualized as manipulate entities and enabling speakers to call for their reinforcement or restoration in times of perceived crisis.

### **In data (8)**

*“Division causes instability and instability will not be conducive to peace and prosperity.”*

The expression exemplifies an ontological metaphor that construct “division” and “instability” as if they were concrete forces that van actively damage a social system, so it exemplifies an abstract political condition which are treated as entities with causal powers. In this mapping, the source domain is a chain of physical or medical causation where a harmful agent produces a damaged condition that prevent the emergence of a healthy state while the target domain is the socio-political life of a nation, in which division functions as an agent, instability as a pathological condition, and peace and prosperity as desired end states.

In proposition structure, the metaphor positions political actor and citizens as agents who must “remove” division to “cure” instability and thereby make peace and prosperity possible, which ideologically naturalizes a pro-unity. Disagreement and fragmentation are framed not as legitimate democratic contestation but as threats that must be controlled for the sake of collective well-being.

Overall, the ontological metaphors in these excerpts demonstrate how abstractions are systematically converted into active entities within clear propositional relations of agent, act, and object (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). This transformation facilitates audience comprehension and engagement by framing issues like division, inclusivity, fragmentation, and commitment as humanly manageable phenomena rather than distant abstractions, a dynamic also observed in recent research on political and corruption metaphors as cited in (Abu Rumman et al., 2024). In persuasive terms, such ontological mappings support the speech’s broader strategy of encouraging collective ownership of regional and economic

challenges, reinforcing optimism that meaningful change is possible when citizens and leaders treat these abstract problems as a concrete target for coordinated action (Kamalu et al., 2023b).

#### **Data (9)**

*"Empowering small business through digital and financial access is crucial to help integrate into a global value chain."*

Data (9), which states that "empowering small business through digital and financial access is crucial to help integrate into a global value chain," provides another illustration of structural metaphor. This phrase is based on the source domain of "networks and integration," which is developed from actual experiences of interconnected systems like ecosystems, supply chains that flow smoothly, or technology networks (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). The status of small and medium-sized businesses and the "global value chain" as a closely interconnected worldwide production and distribution process is the target domain (Abu Rumman et al., 2024).

Small businesses are transformed from isolated, marginal entities into strategic parts of a mutually reinforcing global economic ecosystem by the underlying proposition, which uses "small business" as the agent, "integrate" as the act, and "global value chain" as the object. This represents the global economy as an open structure into which local actors can be linked (Kamalu et al., 2023b). When taken as a whole, these structural metaphors demonstrate how the speech methodically frames economic processes using well-known schemas of games, division, and networks to convey policy objectives and inspire local actors to embrace networking, adaptation, and active involvement in global growth (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

#### **4. Structural Metaphors**

Structural metaphors in this speech are used to map political, economic, and social systems onto familiar experiential frameworks so that abstract issues become easier for the audience to understand and internalize (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

#### **In data (9)**

*"Everyone competes on a level of playing field"*

The source domain is "playing field" regulated arena associated with fairness, balance, and order while the target domains "economic competition", a complex and often unclear process. At the propositional level, "everyone" acts as agent, "competes" acts as action, and "a level of playing field" acts as object, construing the economic system as transparent and just competitive space and foregrounding equality of opportunity as normative foundation of global economic interaction.

Another structural metaphor appears in **data (10)**,

*“Growth that excludes is growth that divides”*

The source domain is “separation”, a concrete process of creating boundaries or cutting something previously whole into parts. The target domain is “economic growth” that conceptualized not merely as numerical increase but as a social process that can either hold society together or break it apart. In propositional, “growth” as agent, “excludes” as the action, and the implied object is the people or social groups who are left out, so that growth is restructured as a potential producer of social division rather than an unqualified good, inviting the audience to view inclusive participation as integral to genuine development (Syahrizal, 2016).

### **5. Orientational Metaphors**

The orientational metaphors in this speech play a specific role in shaping the audience’s psychological and emotional dynamics by mapping inner states and external pressures onto spatial experiences such as up/ down, front/back, etc. (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

In **data (11)**

*“We must rise above suspicion, fear...”*

The source domain is “rising” a bodily experience of moving from a lower to higher position that across many cultures and associated with progress, moral elevation, and improved status. The target domain is a collection of unpleasant emotional states, such as “suspicion” and “fear,” that people and groups are encouraged to get past or transcend. In proportion, “we” serves as the agent (the audience as the active subject), “rise above” as the act (leaving a low, limited state), and “suspicion” and “fear” as the objects that stand in for collective psychological barriers that frequently prevent social transformation or cooperation.

By implying that overcoming fear and mistrust is the first step toward collective advancement, this orientational pattern constructs a comprehensive narrative of leadership and solidarity. It focuses transformation not on immediate structural change but on mentalities and motivation that can later cascade into concrete action.

Next, in **data (12)**

*“The challenges are facing us”*

The metaphor takes advantage of a spatial orientation of “facing” that comes from the actual experience of standing directly across from someone or an issue. This framing transforms difficulties in political communication from far-off, abstract entities into presences “right in front of” the listener, making them seem urgent and demanding of a response. While the target domain “challenges” typically refers to external barriers or distant topics of discussion recast here as actors actively

approaching "us," the source domain "facing" involves a real-life scenario where someone confronts an issue or opponent, which psychologically generates pressure to act. In propositional language, "us" is the object being faced, "are facing" encodes the act, and "challenges" occupies the agent role.

A sense of urgency and obligation to react is created by this arrangement, which puts the audience at the center of the situation as a collective that is being tested rather than as detached observers. By suggesting that they must be prepared to negotiate, confront, or cooperate with these challenges there is no room to back down the orientation of "facing" cognitively prepares the audience to feel accountable and engaged. This encourages mental preparedness, group strategy, and solidarity in addressing emerging obstacles.

Independently, each of these orientational metaphors locates shifts in emotion, psychology, and social relationships in geographical terms that the audience finds experientially real. When considered collectively, they offer not only literal meaning but also imbedded frames for motivation and action, allowing listeners to internalize a sense of unity, willingness to face obstacles, and awareness of the perils of societal disintegration.

## **Conclusion**

The results of the analysis show that President Prabowo's speech at the ASEAN Summit 2025 contains twelve metaphorical expressions, predominantly classified as ontological metaphors. These metaphors function to concretize abstract concepts, personify national values, and activate collective agency by mapping clear agent, act, and object relationships within political propositions. Through this process, metaphorical language enables complex political ideas to be framed as tangible, actionable, and socially shared concerns.

Overall, the metaphors construct a developmentalist, collectivist, and stability-oriented ideology that presents inclusive economic growth, regional integration, and anti-corruption efforts as shared imperatives rather than optional goals. By repeatedly positioning "we" as collective agents who must "navigate" uncertainty, "fight" corruption, "rise above" division, and prevent fragmentation, the speech legitimizes strong and guiding leadership in the service of unity, social cohesion, and collaborative resilience in the face of global challenges. This strategic use of metaphors not only clarifies complex ideas for the audience but also mobilizes collective action and strengthens the persuasive power of the political narrative conveyed throughout the speech.

Despite these contributions, this study is limited by its focus on a single political speech and its emphasis on cognitive-pragmatic functions. Future research may expand this analysis by explicitly linking recurrent metaphorical patterns to broader ideological frameworks using approaches such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) or Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), particularly in the context of Indonesian political discourse.

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