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THE IMAGE OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS IN MEDIA: A CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a conceptual metaphor analysis of the image of the climate crisis in media. Climate change has become one of the most pressing global challenges, and media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and attitudes towards this issue. Metaphors are powerful linguistic devices used in media discourse to convey complex concepts and evoke emotional responses. This study aims to examine the conceptual metaphors employed in media representations of the climate crisis and their implications for public understanding and engagement. Through a comprehensive analysis of media texts, including news articles, opinion pieces, and visual imagery, this study identifies and interprets the dominant metaphors used to depict the climate crisis. The findings shed light on the ways in which metaphors shape public discourse, influence policy debates, and ultimately impact collective action on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

KEYWORDS

Climate crisis, media, conceptual metaphor, metaphor analysis, public perception, communication, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation.

INTRODUCTION

The climate crisis has garnered significant attention in recent years due to its far-reaching consequences for the environment, society, and economy. As a complex and multi-faceted issue, the climate crisis relies heavily on effective communication to raise awareness, shape public understanding, and drive action. Media, as a powerful platform, plays a pivotal role in constructing and disseminating the image of the climate crisis. One significant aspect of media representation is the use of metaphors, which serve as rhetorical devices to simplify complex concepts, evoke emotions, and influence public perceptions. This article aims to conduct a conceptual metaphor analysis of the image of the climate crisis in media, with the objective of understanding the metaphors employed and their implications for public understanding and engagement.

METHOD

To achieve the objectives of this study, a comprehensive methodological approach is adopted, combining qualitative textual analysis and metaphor analysis. The following steps outline the methodological process:

Data Collection:

A diverse range of media sources is selected, including news articles, opinion pieces, and visual imagery, from various print and online platforms. These sources are chosen to represent a broad spectrum of media representations of the climate crisis.

Textual Analysis:

The selected media texts are carefully examined to identify metaphors related to the climate crisis. The analysis focuses on identifying linguistic expressions

that involve the transfer of meaning from a source domain (e.g., war, health, natural disasters) to the target domain of the climate crisis. These metaphors are identified and categorized based on their underlying conceptual mappings.

Metaphor Analysis:

The identified metaphors are analyzed in terms of their conceptual mappings, underlying conceptualizations, and rhetorical functions. This analysis aims to uncover the implicit meanings and associations conveyed by these metaphors and their potential effects on public understanding and engagement.

Interpretation and Discussion:

The findings of the metaphor analysis are interpreted and discussed in the context of media representations of the climate crisis. The implications of these metaphors for public discourse, policy debates, and collective action on climate change mitigation and adaptation are examined. The discussion also addresses the potential strengths and limitations of metaphorical framing in media communication of the climate crisis.

By employing a combination of textual analysis and metaphor analysis, this study provides valuable insights into the metaphors used to depict the climate crisis in media. The methodological approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic and conceptual aspects of these metaphors and their implications for public perception and engagement.

RESULTS

The analysis of media representations of the climate crisis through a conceptual metaphor lens reveals

several dominant metaphors used in shaping the image of the climate crisis. These metaphors include "climate change as war," "climate change as a health crisis," and "climate change as a natural disaster." Each metaphor carries specific conceptual mappings and rhetorical functions, highlighting different aspects of the climate crisis and evoking distinct emotional responses from the audience. The analysis also identifies variations in metaphor use across different types of media sources, indicating the influence of media genre and framing on the portrayal of the climate crisis.

DISCUSSION

The discussion revolves around the implications of these metaphors in media representations of the climate crisis. The "climate change as war" metaphor, for instance, emphasizes urgency, conflict, and the need for collective action. It frames the climate crisis as a battle that requires mobilization, sacrifice, and strategic approaches. The "climate change as a health crisis" metaphor focuses on the impacts of climate change on human well-being, drawing attention to the urgency of addressing the issue to safeguard public health. The "climate change as a natural disaster" metaphor highlights the destructive potential of climate change and underscores the need for preparedness, resilience, and adaptation.

The discussion also explores the potential effects of these metaphors on public understanding and engagement. Metaphorical framing can shape perceptions, emotions, and attitudes towards the climate crisis. It can enhance comprehension by making complex concepts more relatable and accessible to the general public. However, metaphors can also oversimplify or misrepresent certain aspects

of the climate crisis, potentially leading to misunderstandings or distorted views.

CONCLUSION

This study on the image of the climate crisis in media through a conceptual metaphor analysis highlights the significance of metaphors in shaping public discourse and understanding of climate change. The analysis reveals the prevalence of specific metaphors and their influence on how the climate crisis is perceived, felt, and responded to by the audience. The findings emphasize the need for media practitioners, policymakers, and climate communicators to be aware of the power of metaphors and the potential implications they carry.

A nuanced and balanced use of metaphors in media representations can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the climate crisis, facilitate public engagement, and promote effective climate change communication. It is important to critically evaluate the suitability and implications of metaphors in media discourse, ensuring they align with scientific evidence and do not perpetuate misinformation or misperceptions. By recognizing the role of metaphors in shaping public perceptions, media can play a vital role in fostering informed and constructive dialogue on the climate crisis, ultimately facilitating meaningful action towards climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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