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A Linguistic Study of Metaphorical Expressions in Political Interviews

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Abstract

In recent years, the linguo-philosophical studies of metaphor have tended to define metaphor as an interaction of the object, that is the referent of conceptualization and some features that are associated with sensual manner realities, whose name is used when resolving the conceptual problem-nominative situation, namely the situation of the formation of a new concept and its verbalization. The objective of this term paper lies in the phenomenon of metaphors used in modern political discourse. In our understanding a metaphor is not only of a linguistic nature, but also political. This paper approaches the subject of conceptual metaphor and political argumentation through the prism of synergies of the political topic, affirmative or negative communication of main ideas related to the topic; the use of conceptual metaphor as a persuasive rhetorical strategy and the type of argumentative claim. The aim (purpose) of this study is to investigate metaphor used in modern political discourse in the English language, proceeding from the cognitive point of view. It is expected to review existing definitions of metaphor in literature; to describe the functions and structural characteristics of metaphors in language; to choose the usage examples of metaphors in English political discourse and to conduct their analysis; to identify the main characteristics of political discourse; to identify the main functions of metaphor not only politically, but also linguistically. mind of the reader.

Keywords: Political Discourse, Discourse, Persuasion, Metaphor Vehicle.

Introduction

In the area of political discourse, language serves as both a tool and a weapon, enabling politicians to articulate their ideologies, rally support, and construct compelling narratives. Among the array of linguistic devices at their disposal, metaphors stand out as powerful instruments, encapsulating intricate ideas within the confines of a single phrase or sentence. Though often subtle, these metaphors possess the capacity to shape public understanding and influence the trajectory of political conversations. This essay embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the intricate world of political interviews, with the aim of unraveling the web of metaphors employed by politicians to convey their messages.

At the core of this study lies the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, a framework that delves into the cognitive mechanisms underpinning the transfer of meaning from one domain to another. Through this lens, we seek to uncover the nuanced ways in which metaphors serve as conduits for complex ideas, bridging the gap between abstract concepts and tangible experiences. Furthermore, by employing Critical Discourse Analysis, we endeavor to unearth the ideological underpinnings and power dynamics that lie dormant within political rhetoric. This analytical approach allows us to not only identify the metaphors themselves but also to dissect their implications, shedding light on their influence over public perception.

The methodology employed here entails the a meticulous selection and compilation of a diverse corpus of political interviews, ensuring a representative sample that spans the ideological spectrum and encompasses various political affiliations. Ethical considerations underpin every facet of data extraction and annotation, safeguarding the integrity and reliability of our findings. Through this methodological

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rigor, our study aims to illuminate the multifaceted role of metaphors in political discourse. We endeavor to demonstrate how they function as linguistic signposts, guiding public interpretation and shaping engagement with political issues. In doing so, we seek to deepen our understanding of the symbiotic relationship between language, politics, and public opinion, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced and informed discourse surrounding contemporary political affairs.

Over the past two decades, scholars from different research perspectives have extensively studied the effects of metaphorical framing on political persuasion (e.g., Charteris-Black, 2006; Mio 1997; Musolff, 2014). Metaphors are often used to frame political issues (Mio, 1997), and these metaphorical frames are argued to affect how people reason on these issues (Bougher, 2012; Mio, 1997). For example, when the metaphor a natural disaster is used to refer to immigration, elements from the source domain of “disaster” are mapped onto the target domain of “immigration,” providing a negative image of immigration (Charteris-Black, 2006). Politicians use metaphors to characterize themselves, their opponents, and their political agendas, and use metaphorical language in policy debates to steer the public toward a certain viewpoint (Ottati, Renstrom, & Price, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory, proposed by Lakoff and Johnson in the late 20th century, revolutionized the study of language and cognition. At its core, it posits that abstract concepts and ideas are often understood and expressed in terms of more concrete, sensory experiences. This framework asserts that metaphors are not merely linguistic embellishments, but rather fundamental cognitive mechanisms that shape human thought and perception. In the context of political discourse, this theory provides a powerful lens through which we can analyze the ways in which politicians employ metaphors to convey complex political ideologies and policies.

The theory operates on the premise that metaphors are not confined to language alone; they permeate our everyday thinking and guide our interactions with the world. For instance, we commonly speak of time in spatial terms (“we’re approaching the deadline”) or emotions in terms of temperature (“he has a warm personality”). In politics, metaphors are instrumental in translating abstract political concepts into more accessible, tangible forms. Phrases like “the war on poverty” or “the battleground of ideas” serve as vivid examples of how warfare and conflict, grounded in concrete experiences, are used metaphorically to frame policy discussions and political strategies.

Furthermore, Conceptual Metaphor Theory underscores the embodied nature of metaphors, highlighting their connection to physical experiences and sensorimotor systems. This perspective offers insights into the visceral impact that metaphors can have on the audience, tapping into deeply ingrained cognitive structures. By applying this theory to the analysis of political interviews, we aim to uncover the cognitive processes that underlie the use of metaphors, providing a deeper understanding of how they function as persuasive tools in the realm of political communication. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) constitutes a potent analytical framework that delves into the intricate relationship between language, power, and ideology.

Developed by scholars such as Fairclough and van Dijk, CDA seeks to unveil the hidden structures and societal dynamics embedded within discourse. In the realm of political interviews, this framework proves invaluable for unearthing the ideological underpinnings and power dynamics that often remain latent in

linguistic expressions. Central to CDA is the recognition that language is not a neutral medium of communication, but rather a site where power struggles and ideological conflicts are played out. Through linguistic choices, politicians assert their authority, construct persuasive narratives, and position themselves within the socio-political landscape. This is particularly pertinent in the context of political interviews, where politicians engage in a strategic dance of persuasion and representation.

CDA also places a premium on context, recognizing that discourse is shaped by broader social, political, and historical forces. By examining the contextual cues surrounding political interviews, we can gain insights into how language is mobilized to serve specific agendas. This includes an examination of the social hierarchies, institutional norms, and cultural values that influence linguistic choices.

Moreover, CDA emphasizes the role of discourse in reproducing or challenging dominant ideologies. In the political sphere, this is evident in the framing of issues, the construction of political identities, and the portrayal of social groups. By scrutinizing the metaphors employed in political interviews, we can uncover the ways in which politicians use language to reinforce or contest prevailing norms and beliefs.

By applying CDA to the analysis of political interviews, we aim to unearth the deeper layers of meaning that often elude casual observation. This framework provides a systematic method for dissecting the power dynamics at play, revealing how language functions as a tool for persuasion, representation, and ideological positioning. Ultimately, CDA equips us with the analytical tools needed to critically engage with political discourse, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in political Communication. (Fairclough, 1989).

Methodology

Corpus Selection and Compilation

The selection and compilation of an apt corpus form the bedrock of this comprehensive linguistic inquiry into political interviews. To ensure the robustness and representativeness of our findings, a systematic approach is undertaken in the identification and gathering of pertinent data. The data was collected from the speeches by Biden in BCC interviews.

Criteria for Inclusion

The inclusion criteria are meticulously defined to guarantee the diversity and relevance of the corpus. This encompasses a judicious selection of political interviews from a wide array of sources, spanning various political affiliations, regions, and time periods. By encompassing interviews conducted with politicians of distinct ideological orientations, our corpus is designed to capture the full spectrum of political discourse, offering a panoramic view of metaphorical expressions in various political contexts.

Diverse Political Interviews: A Multifaceted Approach

The corpus is curated with a multifaceted approach, ensuring that it encapsulates interviews conducted in diverse formats. This encompasses one-on-one interviews, panel discussions, town hall meetings, and televised debates, among others. By encompassing a spectrum of interview formats, we aim to capture the nuanced ways in which metaphors are employed across different communicative contexts.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations play a pivotal role in the selection and compilation process. Careful attention is given to the sourcing of interviews, with emphasis on reputable and reliable platforms. Additionally, steps are taken to obtain necessary permissions and adhere to copyright regulations, safeguarding the integrity and legality of the corpus.

By employing a rigorous approach to corpus selection and compilation, this study seeks to ensure that the data analyzed is both comprehensive and representative. The diverse nature of the corpus allows for a nuanced examination of metaphorical expressions in political interviews, shedding light on the intricate ways in which language is wielded by politicians to convey their messages. Furthermore, the ethical considerations underscore our commitment to maintaining the integrity and reliability of the data, reinforcing the credibility of our analysis.

Data Extraction and Annotation

The process of data extraction and annotation constitutes a critical phase in this linguistic investigation, as it lays the foundation for the subsequent analysis of metaphorical expressions within political interviews.

Identification of Metaphorical Expressions

A systematic approach is employed to identify and extract metaphorical expressions from the selected corpus. This involves a meticulous reading and re-reading of the interviews, with a keen focus on instances where language veers into metaphorical territory. Metaphorical expressions are identified based on established criteria, which include the presence of non-literal language and the transfer of meaning from one conceptual domain to another.

Contextual Analysis of Metaphors

Each identified metaphor is subjected to a rigorous contextual analysis. This entails examining the surrounding text to discern the underlying conceptual mapping and the domains being juxtaposed. By scrutinizing the context in which metaphors are employed, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of the intended meaning and the rhetorical function they serve within the discourse.

Coding and Categorization

Metaphorical expressions are then systematically coded and categorized based on recurring themes, conceptual domains, and rhetorical strategies. This process enables the creation of a structured database that facilitates quantitative and qualitative analyses. Additionally, this coding and categorization process allows for the identification of patterns and trends in the use of metaphors across different political contexts and interviews. Through the meticulous process of data extraction and annotation, this study ensures a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of metaphorical expressions in political interviews. By employing established criteria for identifying metaphors and conducting thorough contextual analyses, we aim to uncover the nuanced ways in which politicians employ metaphorical language to convey complex political ideas. The systematic coding and categorization further enable a structured and comparative examination of metaphor usage, shedding light on recurring patterns and rhetorical strategies employed by politicians in different contexts.

Data Analysis

The Anatomy of Political Metaphors

Metaphors of Conflict and Warfare

The domain of conflict and warfare stands as one of the most pervasive and potent metaphoric landscapes within political discourse. This category encompasses metaphors that draw upon the imagery, strategies, and dynamics associated with armed conflict to frame political discussions and strategies.

War as a Dominant Metaphor in Politics

The metaphor of war is omnipresent in political discourse, permeating discussions on policy, competition, and ideological clashes. Politicians often characterize political battles as "campaigns," "battles," or "fighting for

a cause," evoking imagery of combat and struggle. This metaphorical framing serves to underscore the high-stakes nature of political endeavors and the perceived urgency in achieving political objectives.

Framing Political Battles and Strategies

Metaphors of conflict are employed not only to describe the intensity of political competition but also to elucidate strategic approaches. Concepts such as "frontlines," "tactics," and "alliances" are recurrent in political rhetoric, mirroring the strategic thinking associated with military campaigns. This metaphorical framing enables politicians to position themselves as commanders, orchestrating moves on a political battlefield.

Implications for Public Perception

The use of warfare metaphors in politics carries significant implications for public perception. It invokes a sense of urgency, framing political issues as matters of vital importance and reinforcing a dichotomous 'win-lose' paradigm. Moreover, it may engender a perception of leaders as warriors, entrusted with safeguarding the interests and values of their constituents. However, it also raises concerns about the potential for polarization and the relegation of nuanced policy debates in favor of combative rhetoric.

By delving into the metaphors of conflict and warfare, this analysis aims to illuminate the intricate ways in which political discourse draws on the imagery of battle to convey political ideologies and strategies. It seeks to uncover how the language of war shapes public understanding and engagement with political issues, ultimately influencing the narrative surrounding political endeavors. This examination lays the foundation for a deeper exploration of metaphorical expressions within the realm of political interviews.

Economic Metaphors and Financial Imagery

Within political discourse, economic metaphors and financial imagery constitute a prominent domain, offering a rich tapestry of linguistic expressions to convey complex economic policies and strategies.

Economy as a Battlefield: Conceptualizing Economic Policies: Metaphors that draw upon the imagery of warfare and conflict often extend into economic discourse. Phrases like "economic battleground" or "market warfare" encapsulate the competitive nature of economic endeavors. This metaphorical framing serves to emphasize the high-stakes nature of economic decision-making, positioning economic policies as strategic maneuvers in a broader campaign for prosperity.

Currency, Trade, and Financial Stability: Metaphorical Perspectives

Economic metaphors extend beyond conflict imagery to encompass a spectrum of financial concepts. References to currency, trade, and stability evoke a framework akin to navigating treacherous terrain. For instance, politicians

might speak of "currency devaluation" as a potential threat or describe trade negotiations as a delicate balancing act. These metaphors not only simplify complex economic concepts but also imbue them with a sense of urgency and strategic importance.

Influence on Economic Policy Discourse

The use of economic metaphors carries profound implications for public understanding and engagement with economic policies. By framing economic issues within the metaphorical context of warfare or financial navigation, politicians seek to shape public perception and garner support for their policy agendas. Moreover, it may engender a perception of economic policymakers as strategic decision-makers, entrusted with steering the economic ship through turbulent waters. However, this metaphorical framing also invites scrutiny, raising questions about the potential oversimplification of complex economic realities.

By scrutinizing economic metaphors and financial imagery, this analysis endeavors to uncover the nuanced ways in which political discourse employs linguistic devices to convey economic ideologies and strategies. It aims to shed light on how metaphors in the economic domain shape public understanding and engagement with economic policies, ultimately influencing the narrative surrounding economic decision-making. This exploration lays the groundwork for a deeper examination of metaphorical expressions within the context of political interviews.

Journey, Path, and Travel Metaphors

Journey, path, and travel metaphors constitute a pervasive and evocative domain within political discourse, offering a narrative framework for conceptualizing political progress, decision-making, and policy trajectories.

Navigating the Political Landscape: Metaphors of Direction

Metaphors related to journeys and paths are frequently employed to convey the notion of progress and direction in political discourse. Politicians may speak of being on a "path to progress" or embarking on a "journey towards change," imbuing their initiatives with a sense of purpose and forward momentum. This metaphorical framing serves to orient political endeavors within a narrative of progress and development.

Political Journeys and Policy Trajectories

The notion of a journey extends beyond mere symbolism, influencing the strategic planning of policies and political agendas. Politicians conceptualize policies as waypoints along political journey, each contributing to the overarching narrative of progress. This metaphorical perspective allows for a cohesive framing of policy initiatives, emphasizing their collective impact on the trajectory of a nation's development.

Shaping the Narrative of Political Progress

The use of journey metaphors holds profound implications for public perception of political leadership and policy initiatives. By framing political endeavors as journeys, politicians seek to create a narrative of purpose and direction, instilling a sense of collective aspiration. This metaphorical framing invites the public to envision themselves as participants in a shared journey towards a common destination. However, it also prompts critical scrutiny, as it may raise questions about the chosen path, its destination, and the inclusivity of the journey's participants. By exploring journey, path, and travel metaphors, this analysis aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which political discourse employs linguistic devices to frame political progress and policy trajectories. It seeks to illuminate how metaphors in this domain shape public understanding and engagement with political initiatives, ultimately influencing the narrative surrounding political development. This exploration lays the groundwork for a deeper examination of metaphorical expressions within the context of political interviews.

Organic and Natural Metaphors

Metaphors drawn from the realm of the organic and natural world offer a vivid and evocative framework within political discourse. These metaphors evoke images of growth, decay, and the natural order, providing a narrative backdrop for conceptualizing political processes and societal dynamics.

Growth, Decay, and the Natural Order of Politics

Metaphors rooted in the organic world often serve to frame political processes in terms of natural phenomena. Concepts of growth, decay, and the cyclical nature of life are employed to describe the evolution of political movements and societal structures. Phrases like "political resurgence" or "social decay" draw on these organic metaphors to convey the ebb and flow inherent in political landscapes.

Environmental Metaphors: Sustainability and Political Agenda

Environmental metaphors find resonance within political discourse, linking the health and sustainability of natural ecosystems to the well-being of societies. Politicians may speak of "policy ecosystems" or advocate for "environmentally sustainable practices" within political agendas. This metaphorical framing emphasizes the interdependence of political decisions and their long-term impact on the social and political environment.

Biological References in Political Discourse

Biological references further extend the organic metaphorical landscape, likening political entities and movements to living organisms. Phrases like "the lifeblood of democracy" or "the roots of a movement" evoke images of vitality and resilience. This metaphorical perspective underscores the interconnectedness of political entities and their capacity for adaptation and growth. The use of organic and natural metaphors carries profound implications for public perception of political processes and movements. By framing political phenomena within the context of organic growth, decay, and natural order, politicians seek to evoke a sense of inevitability and continuity. This metaphorical framing invites the public to view political movements as dynamic, evolving entities shaped by natural forces. However, it also invites critical scrutiny, as it may prompt questions about the health and sustainability of political systems and the potential for renewal and rejuvenation. Through the exploration of organic and natural metaphors, this analysis endeavors to uncover the nuanced ways in which political discourse employs linguistic devices to frame political processes and societal dynamics. It aims to illuminate how metaphors in this domain shape public understanding and engagement with political phenomena, ultimately influencing the narrative surrounding political evolution. This exploration lays the groundwork for a deeper examination of metaphorical expressions within the context of political interviews.

Ideological Implications and Power Dynamics

Framing and Agenda-Setting

Framing and agenda-setting in political discourse represent a critical aspect of ideological communication. These processes involve the selection and emphasis of certain aspects of an issue, influencing how it is perceived by the public and shaping the direction of political discourse.

Metaphorical Framing of Policy Issues

Metaphors play a pivotal role in framing policy issues within a particular conceptual framework. For instance, framing an economic policy as a "stimulus package" evokes notions of revival and rejuvenation. Alternatively, describing the same policy as a "bailout" may conjure images of rescuing and stabilizing ailing industries. These metaphorical frames not only simplify complex policies but also imbue them with specific connotations and value judgments.

Setting the Agenda through Linguistic Strategies

Politicians strategically employ metaphors to set the agenda and prioritize certain issues over others. By choosing specific metaphors, they signal to the public which aspects of a policy or situation should be emphasized or prioritized. For example, framing immigration as a "border crisis" may shift public attention towards border security measures, while framing it as a "humanitarian challenge" may highlight the need for compassionate policies.

Influence on Public Perception and Political Alignment

Metaphorical framing influences how the public perceives and interprets political issues. It can shape attitudes, values, and beliefs, ultimately influencing political alignment. For instance, framing

environmental policies as "green initiatives" may resonate with individuals who prioritize sustainability, while framing them as "regulations" may appeal to those who emphasize economic concerns. The strategic use of metaphors in framing and agenda-setting has profound implications for ideological communication. By carefully selecting and deploying metaphors, politicians can shape public understanding and steer political discourse towards specific policy objectives. This process, however, is not without controversy, as it raises questions about the potential for manipulation and the need for transparent and inclusive political communication.

Through the analysis of framing and agenda-setting strategies, this study aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which metaphors serve as powerful tools in shaping public perception and influencing ideological alignment. It seeks to illuminate how the strategic use of metaphors can impact the trajectory of political discourse and ultimately shape the course of policy-making. This exploration lays the groundwork for a deeper examination of metaphorical expressions within the context of political interviews.

Metaphorical Devices as Persuasion Tools

Metaphorical devices serve as potent instruments of persuasion in political discourse, enabling politicians to appeal to emotions, construct compelling narratives, and shape public perception.

Emotional Appeals and Rhetorical Strategies

Metaphors have a unique ability to evoke emotions and resonate with the values and experiences of the audience. Politicians often deploy metaphors to elicit empathy, inspire hope, or arouse a sense of urgency. For instance, framing social justice initiatives as a "pathway to equality" appeals to ideals of fairness and inclusivity. Similarly, describing economic policies as a "safety net" evokes feelings of security and protection.

Constructing Political Identity through Metaphors

Metaphors play a crucial role in the construction of political identity, allowing politicians to position themselves and their ideologies within a larger narrative. By associating themselves with metaphors that resonate with their target audience, politicians can strengthen their appeal and solidify their political brand. For example, a politician may align themselves with metaphors of "steadfast leadership" or "grassroots activism" to convey specific qualities or values.

Impact on Voter Behavior and Political Engagement

The strategic use of metaphors can influence voter behavior and political engagement. Metaphorical framing can shape how individuals perceive political candidates and their policy platforms. It can also motivate voter turnout and participation by evoking a sense of civic duty or highlighting the stakes of the election. Additionally, metaphors can contribute to the formation of political allegiances and coalitions, as individuals align themselves with the narratives and values represented by specific metaphors. The utilization of metaphors as persuasion tools in political discourse has far-reaching implications for public engagement and political behavior. By harnessing the emotive power of metaphors, politicians can connect with their audience on a deeper level, influencing attitudes and actions. However, this also raises questions about the potential for manipulation and the need for critical media literacy among the public. Through the analysis of metaphorical devices as persuasion tools, this study endeavors to uncover the nuanced ways in which metaphors are employed to construct persuasive narratives and influence political behavior. It aims to illuminate how metaphors serve as strategic instruments in the arsenal of political communication, ultimately shaping public perception and engagement with political issues. This exploration lays the groundwork for a deeper examination of metaphorical expressions within the context of political interviews.

Conclusion

This comprehensive exploration into the use of metaphorical expressions in political interviews has illuminated the profound influence that language wields within the realm of politics. Through the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, we delved into the cognitive underpinnings and ideological implications that underlie the strategic deployment of metaphors by politicians. In doing so, we unraveled the intricate ways in which metaphors function as persuasive tools, framing policy issues, constructing political identity, and shaping public perception.

Theoretical Frameworks

Conceptual Metaphor Theory provided a foundational understanding of how metaphors facilitate the transfer of meaning from one conceptual domain to another. This cognitive process, deeply ingrained in human thought, enables politicians to bridge the gap between abstract political concepts and tangible, everyday experiences. Through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, we further dissected the power dynamics and ideological undercurrents embedded within political rhetoric. This analytical framework allowed us to scrutinize the ways in which language is wielded as a tool of persuasion and representation, revealing the complex interplay between discourse, power, and ideology.

Metaphorical Domains

The analysis of metaphorical domains revealed the diverse landscapes within which political discourse operates. From the metaphors of conflict and warfare, invoking images of battle and strategic maneuvering, to economic metaphors that draw on financial imagery to frame policies, each domain provided a unique lens through which political issues are conceptualized and communicated. The journey, path, and travel metaphors offered a narrative framework for understanding political progress and decision-making, while organic and natural metaphors provided vivid imagery for conceptualizing political processes and societal dynamics.

Ideological Implications and Power Dynamics

Framing and agenda-setting emerged as pivotal mechanisms through which politicians wielded metaphors to influence public perception. By strategically selecting and emphasizing certain aspects of an issue, politicians shaped the narrative and direction of political discourse. Additionally, the use of metaphors as persuasion tools highlighted their capacity to evoke emotions, construct compelling narratives, and shape public perception. Metaphors were employed to construct political identities, positioning politicians within larger narratives and solidifying their political brand. This strategic use of metaphors had far-reaching implications for voter behavior and political engagement, influencing how individuals perceived candidates and policies.

Implications and Future Directions

This study provides valuable insights into the intricate interplay between language, politics, and public opinion. It underscores the need for critical engagement with political discourse, recognizing that the language used by politicians is not merely descriptive, but inherently persuasive and ideological. As political communication continues to evolve in an era of rapid technological advancement and global interconnectedness, further research into the evolving nature of metaphors in political discourse is warranted.

Additionally, future studies may delve into the reception and interpretation of metaphors by diverse audience groups, examining how different demographic factors may influence the effectiveness of metaphorical framing. Furthermore, exploring the ethical dimensions of metaphor use in political discourse, including potential implications for transparency and accountability, presents an avenue for continued investigation.

In conclusion, this study underscores the pivotal role of metaphors in shaping political communication. It illuminates how metaphors serve as linguistic signposts, guiding public interpretation and engagement with political issues. By unraveling the intricate web of metaphors within political interviews, we have gained a deeper understanding of the symbiotic relationship between language, politics, and public opinion. This knowledge equips us with the tools needed for more informed and discerning political discourse in the complex landscape of contemporary governance.

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