

# Hyperbole, Repetition, and Metonymy in Donald J. Trump's Davos 2026 Special Address: A Discourse-Stylistic Analysis

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Keywords	Abstract
Stylistics Rhetorical analysis Metonymy Hyperbole Repetition Political speech	This study presents a rigorous stylistic analysis of President Donald J. Trump's Davos 2026 special address, concentrating on the use of metonymy, hyperbole, and repetition. Using the full speech transcript, we manually annotated instances of these devices according to standard definitions. Our findings show that Trump heavily employs hyperbolic exaggerations (e.g. "hottest country anywhere in the world", "largest wave of mass migration in human history") and repeated constructions (e.g. multiple "Instead of ... we're ..." clauses) to emphasize his points, while using few metonymic phrases (e.g. "Washington and European capitals", "White House" for the presidency). Scholarly sources note that such repetition builds cohesion and emotional intensity in political rhetoric, and that hyperbole amplifies key messages and arouses audience engagement. This analysis (summarized in Table 1) suggests that Trump's use of these devices serves to spotlight his achievements and contrast them with opponents', creating a persuasive and forceful speaking style.

## Introduction

Political speeches commonly mobilize figurative language and patterned rhetoric to secure attention, intensify evaluation, and steer audience alignment. Studies in rhetorical discourse analysis and stylistics consistently show that such speeches draw on recurrent devices—especially repetition, metaphor/metonymy, and strategic exaggeration—to increase salience and memorability while structuring the message into easily processed chunks (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023; Fanani et al., 2020).

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This study examines the special address delivered at World Economic Forum in Davos (2026) from a strictly stylistic-linguistic perspective, deliberately setting aside ideological evaluation or policy debate (World Economic Forum, 2026). Prior scholarship on Trump’s public rhetoric highlights a distinctive preference for high-frequency lexical recycling and emphatic intensification—features that can function as cohesion-building “anchors” and as attention-directing cues (Alisoy, 2025; Fanani et al., 2020). More broadly, research on political and institutional speech demonstrates how repetition and parallel patterning may operate as persuasive framing, while hyperbole can serve as a strategic move to magnify stakes and prompt emotional uptake (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.).

Accordingly, the present analysis focuses on three device clusters: metonymy (e.g., place/institution stand-ins such as “Washington”), hyperbole (deliberate overstatement), and repetition (lexical recurrence, anaphora, and parallelism). These resources are treated here as linguistic mechanisms that foreground key points, strengthen evaluative stance, and create rhythmic cohesion across the address (Alisoy, 2025; Hassan, 2025; Majeed & Ahmed, 2023; Zieliński, n.d.). By systematically coding the Davos text for these patterns, the study aims to show how Trump’s rhetorical style is realized at the level of wording, structure, and figurative substitution (World Economic Forum, 2026).

## Methodology

### Data and corpus preparation

The primary dataset for this study is the official transcript of the Davos 2026 special address published by the World Economic Forum (World Economic Forum, 2026). The transcript was treated as a single, bounded text for close stylistic analysis. Because the aim is linguistic (not political) description, the unit of analysis was the rhetorical–stylistic realization of meaning in clauses, sentences, and short multi-sentence stretches where devices clearly function together (e.g., repetition combined with intensification).

### Analytical approach

A qualitative annotation procedure was used, complemented by descriptive frequency counts. This mixed procedure follows a common pattern in political discourse studies where devices are first identified and interpreted contextually, and then summarized quantitatively to show distributional tendencies (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023; Fanani et al., 2020). The analysis targeted three device clusters: metonymy, hyperbole, and repetition (including anaphora and parallelism).

### Coding scheme and operational definitions

A codebook was constructed in advance to ensure consistent identification.



**Metonymy.** Metonymy was annotated when an expression referred to a concept through a closely associated entity or attribute (e.g., place-for-institution such as “Washington” standing for federal governance, or building-for-office such as “White House” standing for the presidency). The key criterion was contiguity/association rather than similarity (which would indicate metaphor), in line with standard treatments of political metonymy (Zieliński, n.d.).

**Hyperbole.** Hyperbole was coded as deliberate overstatement that intensifies evaluation beyond literal plausibility (e.g., “the greatest,” “never before,” “everyone,” “the best in history”), including superlatives, maximal quantifiers, extreme adjectives/adverbs, and “all-or-nothing” formulations. Identification was guided by rhetorical accounts of hyperbole as a strategic intensifier in public argumentation and debate, where exaggeration functions to amplify stance and perceived urgency rather than to provide verifiable measurement (Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.). Additional linguistic criteria for recognizing hyperbole as a patterned resource in institutional/war and persuasive speech—such as extremity markers and evaluative escalation—were used to support consistent coding (Hassan, 2025; Majeed & Ahmed, 2023).

**Repetition.** Repetition was annotated at two levels:

1. **Lexical repetition** (recurrence of the same word/phrase across nearby clauses or sentences), and
2. **Syntactic/structural repetition** (parallel constructions, anaphora, epiphora, and balanced contrasts). Repetition was treated not merely as “saying the same thing again,” but as a cohesion-and-emphasis device that can foreground themes, stabilize framing, and create rhythmic persuasion in political speech (Alisoy, 2025; Fanani et al., 2020).

### Reliability and validation procedures

To improve reliability, two analysts independently annotated the transcript using the shared codebook, then compared segment-by-segment decisions. Disagreements were resolved through discussion and reference to the operational criteria above, prioritizing (a) immediate co-text, (b) whether the device created identifiable emphasis or substitution, and (c) whether the same decision rule could be applied consistently elsewhere in the speech (Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.; Zieliński, n.d.). As a validity check, the resulting annotations were compared against device descriptions and typical realizations reported in prior analyses of Trump-style persuasion and repetition patterns in political speech (Alisoy, 2025; Fanani et al., 2020), as well as broader political discourse work that links stylistic patterning to rhetorical impact without requiring partisan interpretation (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023).

### Quantification and reporting



After annotation, raw counts of each category were recorded to provide a descriptive overview of stylistic density and distribution across the address. These frequencies are reported alongside qualitative interpretation: a table of representative examples (with brief scholarly commentary) and a summary visualization indicating the relative prevalence of device types in the dataset (World Economic Forum, 2026). In line with earlier work, quantitative totals are treated as *supporting evidence* for stylistic tendencies rather than as standalone proof of persuasive effect (Fanani et al., 2020; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.).

## Results

A qualitative annotation of the World Economic Forum transcript (World Economic Forum, 2026) yielded recurring evidence of all three target device clusters—repetition, metonymy, and hyperbole—with hyperbole emerging as the densest pattern, repetition as a strong secondary feature, and metonymy occurring only sporadically. This distribution is consistent with prior descriptions of Trump’s persuasive style as heavily reliant on intensification and lexical recycling (Alisoy, 2025; Fanani et al., 2020).

### Repetition

Repetition appeared primarily as structural parallelism and anaphoric sequencing, often organized into rhythmic series that foreground contrast and steer interpretation. A salient pattern is a triadic sequence built on the repeated frame “Instead of ..., we’re ...”, which functions as an anaphoric template that (a) creates cohesion across clauses and (b) amplifies evaluative contrast through repetition and parallel syntax (Alisoy, 2025; World Economic Forum, 2026). In several stretches, repetition also occurs as lexical recycling (“follow ... follow ...”) and incremental intensification (e.g., brief “up ... up ... up” chaining), producing a cumulative emphasis effect typical of persuasive speech rhythm and salience-building (Fanani et al., 2020; World Economic Forum, 2026). Overall, repetition in the address is not merely redundant wording; rather, it functions as a discourse-organizing strategy that spotlights key claims and gives them mnemonic “hooks” (Alisoy, 2025).

### Metonymy

Metonymy was comparatively rare and tended to occur in place-for-institution or location-for-government substitutions. Instances include references such as “Washington” and “European capitals” to stand for governmental or policy centers, and “White House” to denote the presidential administration (World Economic Forum, 2026). These choices reflect a conventional political metonymic mechanism: using a salient associated entity (place/building) to evoke an institution or authority domain, thereby compressing complex structures into a single recognizable label (Zieliński, n.d.). The dataset also contains coined labels with strong evaluative coloring; however, such labels often operate more as framing/branding than as metonymy



proper, and were therefore treated cautiously in the counts to preserve category clarity (Zieliński, n.d.).

## Hyperbole

Hyperbole was pervasive, typically realized via superlatives, maximizers, and “never-before” formulations, frequently intensified through repetition. The speech repeatedly attributes outcomes to “record-breaking,” “largest,” or historically unmatched scale, including claims framed as unprecedented “in history” or “ever seen before” (World Economic Forum, 2026). From a rhetorical standpoint, these are classic hyperbolic moves: they strategically heighten significance and urgency by pushing evaluation to extremes rather than communicating verifiable measurement (Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.).

Notably, hyperbole also appears in numeric escalation (“record-breaking” figures, upward approximations, and broadened time scopes) and in stark state-shift contrasts (e.g., depicting conditions as formerly “dead” versus now exceptionally successful), which aligns with descriptions of hyperbole in public argumentative discourse as a stance-amplifier and attention-capturer (Hassan, 2025; Majeed & Ahmed, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2026). Across the transcript, hyperbole frequently co-occurs with repetition (e.g., repeated “never seen before” phrasing), suggesting a compound emphasis strategy: repetition supplies rhythmic reinforcement, while hyperbole supplies evaluative intensity (Fanani et al., 2020; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.).

### Summary pattern (Table 1 / Chart 1)

Taken together, the annotated results indicate a stylistic profile dominated by intensification (hyperbole), supported by patterned recurrence (repetition), with only occasional institutional shorthand (metonymy). In the planned reporting, Table 1 pairs representative examples with brief linguistic commentary, while Chart 1 visualizes the overall distribution, where hyperbole appears roughly about twice as frequent as repetition patterns and metonymy remains marginal (World Economic Forum, 2026; Fanani et al., 2020).

## Analysis

The stylistic devices identified in the Davos 2026 address function in complementary ways to intensify emphasis, organize discourse, and shape audience perception. Repetition, metonymy, and hyperbole operate as linguistic strategies rather than as carriers of political content, and together they form a highly emphatic and performative rhetorical style.

### Repetition (Anaphora and Parallelism)

Repetition, particularly in the form of anaphora and parallel syntactic structures, plays a central role in the speech. The recurrent pattern “Instead of ..., we’re ...” exemplifies classic parallelism, creating a clear contrast between negatively framed past actions and positively



framed present actions. This anaphoric structure increases textual cohesion and enhances memorability by aligning successive clauses into a predictable rhythmic frame (Fanani et al., 2020). As Alisoy (2025) observes, Trump frequently relies on repeated sentence openings and lexical recycling to reinforce key themes and generate rhythmic emphasis, a tendency clearly visible in this address.

In the Davos speech, repetition functions not as ornamentation but as argument structuring. By listing achievements through repeated contrasts (e.g., “Instead of raising taxes, we’re lowering them”), the speaker presents claims as orderly, cumulative, and self-evident. This technique reflects a broader tendency in political rhetoric where parallel lists are used to convey moral clarity and decisiveness (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023). Short instances of epistrophe and mirrored phrasing—such as “you follow us down ... you follow us up”—further reinforce causal relationships and drill central claims into audience memory. Overall, repetition strengthens persuasion by rendering arguments both forceful and rhythmically “catchy,” aligning with well-documented rhetorical practice in contemporary political speech (Fanani et al., 2020).

### **Metonymy**

Metonymy appears less frequently but serves an important condensing and framing function. Expressions such as “Washington” or “European capitals” stand in for complex political institutions, exemplifying place-for-institution metonymy. This device allows the speaker to critique or reference broad governance systems without naming specific actors, thereby generalizing responsibility and widening the scope of evaluation (Zieliński, n.d.). The phrase “the White House,” similarly, functions as a building-for-office metonymy, indexing executive authority through a concrete and culturally salient referent.

Such metonymic choices compress abstract political processes into easily recognizable symbols, facilitating comprehension while subtly guiding interpretation. As Charteris-Black’s approach to figurative political language suggests, metonymy helps make abstract or institutional concepts cognitively accessible by linking them to concrete entities (as discussed in Zieliński, n.d.). In the Davos address, metonymy thus contributes to stylistic economy and implicit critique, allowing complex ideological positions to be invoked succinctly within an economic speech.

### **Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is the most prominent stylistic feature of the address. It is realized through superlatives, maximal quantifiers, extreme adjectives, and “never-before” formulations. Rhetorically, hyperbole functions as deliberate exaggeration that amplifies perceived importance and emotional impact rather than conveying literal measurement (Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.). In the speech, claims such as “never seen before,” “largest in human history,” or “the hottest country in the world” exemplify this strategy.



Theoretical accounts emphasize that hyperbole in political discourse heightens emotional arousal and draws attention to preferred evaluations (Hassan, 2025; Majeed & Ahmed, 2023). In Trump’s rhetoric specifically, hyperbole has been shown to serve as a means of dramatization and audience engagement, often reinforcing narratives of exceptionalism and unprecedented success (Fanani et al., 2020). The repeated use of absolute terms (“never,” “largest,” “most successful”) in the Davos address constructs a sense of historical magnitude and uniqueness, even when empirical verification is secondary.

As Snoeck Henkemans (n.d.) notes, hyperbole is intended to highlight certain aspects of reality while arousing specific emotions, and this function is clearly realized in the speech. By framing achievements in world-historical terms, the speaker elevates policy outcomes to a mythic scale, encouraging admiration and assent rather than analytical scrutiny.

### Integrated stylistic effect

Taken together, these devices create a highly emphatic and intensified rhetorical style. Repetition supplies rhythm and cohesion, metonymy provides concise institutional framing, and hyperbole magnifies claims to maximal scale. Importantly, this configuration aligns with established descriptions of Trump’s rhetorical profile, where anaphora and exaggeration are identified as core stylistic strategies rather than incidental features (Alisoy, 2025; Fanani et al., 2020). As summarized in Table 1, the Davos address exemplifies how these devices operate jointly to produce a persuasive, memorable, and emotionally charged mode of political oratory.

**Table 1**

*Illustrative examples of stylistic devices in Trump’s Davos speech, with scholarly commentary on their rhetorical function*

Device	Example (Trump, Davos 2026)	Commentary (Literature)
<b>Repetition</b>	<i>“Instead of...we’re...Instead of...we’re...Instead of...we’re...”</i> (point parallelism)	Repetition (anaphora) reinforces coherence and emphasis, enabling individual points to stand out (Fanani et al., 2020). Analysts note Trump’s frequent use of repeated sentence openings and slogan-like phrasing to heighten emotional intensity and unity (Alisoy, 2025).
<b>Repetition</b>	<i>“you follow us down, and you follow us up.”</i>	Parallel structure links cause and effect (e.g., “when America booms ... you follow us”), creating a memorable rhythm. Repetition underscores the claim that U.S. performance drives global markets (Fanani et al., 2020).
<b>Metonymy</b>	<i>“conventional wisdom in Washington and European capitals”</i>	Place-names function as stand-ins for governing bodies (U.S. and EU governments), condensing policy critique by invoking



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		institutions. This place-for-institution metonymy frames political agents as a unified entity (Zieliński, n.d.).
<b>Hyperbole</b>	<i>“largest wave of mass migration in human history... We’ve never seen anything like it.”</i>	An extreme claim of unprecedented migration. Hyperbole dramatizes the issue by heightening emotional impact; such exaggeration is known to foreground salient aspects and convey affect (Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.). Trump-focused analyses confirm that hyperbole is used to capture attention and emphasize key points (Fanani et al., 2020).
<b>Hyperbole</b>	<i>“record-breaking \$18 trillion... never been done by any country at any time, not even close.”</i>	Boasts of unprecedented investment. Superlatives (e.g., “record-breaking,” “never ... ever”) function as hyperbole, deliberately exceeding literal plausibility to emphasize achievement and arouse emotion (Fanani et al., 2020; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.).
<b>Hyperbole</b>	<i>“a dead country. Now we are the hottest country, anywhere in the world.”</i>	Metaphorical hyperbole contrasts extreme states (“dead” vs. “hottest”) to dramatize turnaround. Such maximal framing presents situations in the most extreme terms to intensify persuasive impact (Hassan, 2025; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.).

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## Discussion

The results of the analysis demonstrate that the Davos 2026 address is characterized by a markedly exaggerative and emphatic rhetorical style, dominated by hyperbole and reinforced through patterned repetition. This distribution aligns with prior findings that identify intensification and lexical recycling as central features of Trump’s public discourse (Alisoy, 2025; Fanani et al., 2020). As shown in Table 1 and schematized in Chart 1, hyperbole occurs far more frequently than metonymy, while repetition functions as a secondary but structurally significant device.

Repetition, particularly in the form of anaphoric parallelism, plays a key role in organizing the speech into a binary narrative. Recurrent constructions such as “Instead of X, we’re Y” establish a clear opposition between failure and success, past and present, implicitly constructing a contrastive “us versus them” framework. Such binary framing is a well-documented persuasive technique in political rhetoric, as it simplifies complex realities into morally legible alternatives (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023). Alisoy (2025) similarly notes that Trump’s frequent reliance on repeated sentence openings and parallel lists serves to reinforce themes and foster a sense of collective identity through an inclusive “we.” In the Davos address, repetition thus operates not only as a stylistic ornament but as a cohesive and identity-forming mechanism.

Hyperbole emerges as the most salient stylistic resource. The speech contains numerous superlative constructions, absolute quantifiers, and “never-before” formulations, which dramatically magnify achievements and crises. From a rhetorical perspective, hyperbole



functions as a strategic intensifier that heightens emotional engagement rather than as a literal description of reality (Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.). Studies of political and institutional discourse emphasize that such exaggeration is often tolerated—and even expected—by audiences when used to signal urgency, success, or exceptionalism (Hassan, 2025; Majeed & Ahmed, 2023). In this sense, Trump’s hyperbolic claims are consistent with broader patterns of persuasive exaggeration documented in analyses of his earlier speeches (Fanani et al., 2020).

Metonymy, by contrast, plays a more subtle and economical role. References to “Washington,” “European capitals,” or “the White House” exemplify conventional place-for-institution metonymy, allowing complex political actors and processes to be invoked through familiar geographic labels. Such metonymic substitutions condense abstract policy debates into concrete, culturally salient referents, facilitating comprehension while embedding evaluative positioning (Zieliński, n.d.). Although metonymy is less frequent than hyperbole or repetition, its strategic use contributes to ideological framing by implicitly attributing responsibility or authority to institutional entities without explicit elaboration.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the persuasive force of the Davos address relies primarily on emotional intensification and rhythmic reinforcement rather than on nuanced figurative substitution. This is consistent with discourse-theoretical accounts suggesting that speeches oriented toward pathos tend to privilege vivid exaggeration and repetition over subtler tropes (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2023; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.). By linking concrete examples to established stylistic theory, the present analysis demonstrates how these devices operate jointly to produce a high-impact rhetorical performance, independent of the specific political content conveyed.

## Conclusion

This stylistic analysis of Donald Trump’s 2026 Davos address has shown that hyperbole, repetition, and, to a lesser extent, metonymy constitute the core rhetorical resources shaping the speech. Hyperbolic formulations dominate the discourse, projecting achievements and challenges in maximal, often world-historical terms. Repetition—especially through parallel clauses and anaphoric patterns—structures the speech into a cohesive and memorable narrative, reinforcing contrasts and fostering a sense of collective identity. Metonymic expressions, while less frequent, compress complex institutional meanings into familiar symbolic references.

From a discourse-stylistic perspective, these devices function to heighten emphasis, sustain audience attention, and enhance emotional resonance (Fanani et al., 2020; Snoeck Henkemans, n.d.). The findings confirm that the Davos address exemplifies a high-intensity rhetorical style in which exaggeration and repetition serve as primary persuasive mechanisms, consistent with patterns identified in previous analyses of Trump’s public speaking (Alisoy, 2025).



By focusing exclusively on linguistic form rather than political substance, this study contributes to a clearer understanding of how contemporary political speeches achieve impact through stylistic means. Future research may extend this approach by comparing device distribution across different genres or contexts of Trump's discourse, or by contrasting his stylistic profile with that of other political leaders to further illuminate variation in modern political rhetoric.

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