Justifying *Operation Iraqi Freedom*

- A Study of Moral Metaphors in Political Statements

C-essay
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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the way George W. Bush used moral metaphors to intensify the language in his statements on Operation Iraqi Freedom. Three moral metaphors are presented within two different models that are applied on the data.

The collected material for the metaphors is constituted of cognitive linguistic books from prominent linguists, such as George Lakoff, Alan Cruse and William Croft, and the data is collected from the official White House website. The scientific method used in this study has been qualitative text analysis where the hermeneutic approach has been an essential part of it.

The main question: In what way did George W. Bush use moral metaphors in his statements to justify Operation Iraqi Freedom?, resulted in use of moral metaphors that sermons people’s moral values, depict Saddam Hussein’s characteristics as immoral, activate people’s moral priorities to help the Iraqi people, and addresses both conservatives and liberals in America.

The conclusion of my study is that President Bush deliberately intensified the language in his statements through moral metaphors to justify Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Keywords: Cognitive Linguistics, Metaphor, Figurative Language, Operation Iraqi Freedom, War on Terror, George W. Bush, Saddam Hussein, USA, Iraq, Qualitative Text Analysis, Hermeneutics.
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1. Introduction

Prototypical figurative language will be characterized […] as language use where, from
the speaker’s point of view, conventional constraints are deliberately infringed in the
service of communication, and from the hearer’s point of view, a satisfactory (i.e.
relevant) interpretation can only be achieved if conventional constraints on interpretation
are overridden by contextual constraints.

(Croft & Cruse 2004:193)

In a study of figurative use of language the scientist must elucidate the reasons for the use of
language. Are literary texts and common speech simply not enough to achieve the intended
results? In politics, the answer to this is no. In diplomatic manners politicians often debate and
try to convince other politicians, as well as the people, to do things and to believe things they
otherwise would not believe. This phenomenon is called the power of persuasion (Boulding
1990:55). Thus every politician has a motive in his rhetoric for using figurative language,
whether the issues are taxes, abortion, or war, because it can draw more attention to a problem
and bring up a new image or perspective that would not have been noticed otherwise. The
purpose of such use of language is to intensify the force of it. To exemplify: “Perhaps one
way will be, if we use military force, in the post-Saddam Iraq the U.N. will definitely need to
have a role. And that way it can begin to get its legs, legs of responsibility back” (March 16,
2003).¹ In March 2003, the President of the United States of America, George W. Bush, gave
the order for a military attack on Iraq. The attack, called Operation Iraqi Freedom, claimed
thousands of lives and left a whole country in disarray. To go to war with another country is a
difficult thing to do, and to justify it is perhaps even more difficult. President Bush claimed to
have had many allies in the war on terror, from Great Britain to Uzbekistan. In statement after
statement George W. Bush emphasized the importance of this attack, prior to it as well as
after it was carried out. Saddam Hussein was accused of having weapons of mass destruction,
being a brutal dictator and a threat to America and the world. In retrospect, there were no
weapons of mass destruction found, but Saddam Hussein was removed from power. Whether
these allegations are true or not is not the essential part of this thesis. This study has its focus
on how George W. Bush managed to rally support from the American people for this attack.
The allegations against Saddam Hussein and Iraq were quite harsh which made the selection
of words and use of language extremely important on his part.

¹ The text within the brackets refers to the date of the presidential statement. These references will be used
continuously throughout the thesis.
2. Problematizing the Case

Every research process on a scientific level starts with an observation of a problem. I will in this section state my research objectives, i.e. problem, purpose and main question.

2.1 The Problem

With the given situation in the previous section there is a field of problematizing around this issue. The Bush administration started a war against Iraq overriding U.N. policies and decision on this matter. In his statements President Bush used strong language and accused Iraq and Saddam Hussein of terrible things. This paper investigates what kind of language George W. Bush used in his statements in an attempt to convince people to trust him. A pilot study indicated that intensified language was used and after consulting George Lakoff’s metaphors dealing with morality, I found a field to problematize around.

2.2 Purpose and Main Question

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the way George W. Bush used moral metaphors to intensify the language in his statements on Operation Iraqi Freedom. My main question is:

- In what way did George W. Bush use moral metaphors in his statements to justify Operation Iraqi Freedom?

This question will guide me throughout my research and will hopefully lead to interesting and satisfying results.

2.4 Plan of Study

My thesis is divided into two major parts. The first part is research and includes an elaboration of the purpose and the main question. Moreover, it is vital to present relevant metaphors and to select proper methods and material. The second part of this thesis accounts for the data, the application of metaphors on the data, and finally the results. To simplify the understanding of my metaphors I will first define essential concepts that are used in the thesis. Secondly, I will present my metaphors and then account for the methods and material. Finally, I will apply the metaphors to the data, which will hopefully lead me to satisfying results.
3. Theoretical Framework

This section presents my metaphors. They are originally George Lakoff’s and are parts of different models. To simplify the understanding of the metaphors I will first describe the models and then present the respective metaphors. I have chosen to present two models, one that is conservative in nature, and one that is moderately liberal. Model A will represent the conservative view whereas Model B will represent liberal values. The models are well known within the field of cognitive linguistics and the metaphors are commonly applied to political statements. One prominent study is Alan Cienki’s *Metaphor in the “Strict Father” and “Nurturant Parent” cognitive models: Theoretical issues raised in an empirical study* (Cienki 2005).2 To be able to carry out a qualitative study with a theoretical focus I have chosen to limit myself to three metaphors. The selection of these metaphors has been made from their relevance in the performed pilot study. Additionally, I believe that a small quantity of metaphors will lead to a more in-depth analysis, which in my opinion is preferable in this thesis.

3.1 Metaphor

A metaphor is one of the components in the concept of figurative language. The speaker chooses to use metaphors when he fears that the literal use of language will not have the intended effect, or perhaps any effect at all. A figurative use draws more attention to the issue at stake and is sometimes an unnecessary exaggeration. The audience then believes that the metaphorical language is necessary as there is no equally accessible literal construal (Croft & Cruse 2004:193). It is sometimes hard to make a precise definition of a metaphor as it occurs in several scientific fields and can be interpreted in many ways. One definition that I find to be comprehensible is:

In language, a metaphor is a rhetorical trope defined as a direct comparison between two seemingly unrelated subjects. In a metaphor, a first object is described as being a second object. Through this description it is inferred that the first object has some of the qualities of the second. In this way, the first object can be economically described because implicit and explicit attributes from the second object can be used to fill in the description of the first.

(Wikipedia)

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2 The metaphors in the study are applied to the three USA presidential debates between Al Gore and George W. Bush.
According to this description there is a relation between two conceptual domains – a source domain and a target domain. The source domain is the literal meaning of the language use whereas the target domain is the actual domain the sentence is about (Croft & Cruse 2004:195). This definition implies that the target is abstract in nature whereas the source is the more concrete conceptual domain. As the use of conceptual metaphors tends to go from a concrete source to an abstract target a greater challenge is put on the scientist to interpret the metaphorical use.

A problem that arises when it comes to highlighting metaphors in figurative language is the presence of metonymies. Metaphors occasionally contain a metonymy in the figurative use of words. To exemplify:

- The White House has responsibilities towards its citizens.

In the sentence above, the White House refers to President Bush and his administration and thus is a metonymy (Paradis 2004:245). However, according to George Lakoff the White House could be a metaphor where the White House is a nurturing parent taking responsibility for its children – the citizens (Lakoff 2002:109). In the context of the sentence the metonymy is a moral metaphor. I will in this study focus on the whole metaphorical use of language and not on single words. The study focuses on the structure of sentences and encompasses the entire text. The discussion deals with the text on a sentence level and the word in its context, and not on a level of single and individual words. I am aware of the fact that metaphors may contain metonymies, but since I am interested in the metaphorical figurative language, I will not attempt to bring metonymies into the discussion.

3.2 Model (A) - Strict Father Morality

The Strict Father Morality model discusses the ideal family in a dangerous world where life is very difficult. It presupposes a traditional family where the father needs to support and protect the rest of the family. He also has the right to set family policies. By setting strict rules for the children he teaches them right from wrong and punishes them moderately when they have misbehaved. The father further gains the children’s cooperation by loving them and appreciating them when they follow the rules. However, they are not to be pampered, or even worse spoiled, because they would then not learn proper values and morals and instead become dependent for life. Parents’ love and nurturance are important factors for the
solidarity of the family, but they should never outweigh parental authority, which is a form of love itself (Lakoff 2002:66).

As George Lakoff puts it:

The mature children of the Strict Father have to sink or swim by themselves. They are on their own and have to prove their responsibility and self-reliance. They have attained, through discipline, authority over themselves. They have to, and are competent to, make their own decisions. They have to protect themselves and their families.

(Lakoff 2002:66)

The Strict Father Morality model is based on simple behaviouristic values of human nature: “People, left to their own devices, tend simply to satisfy their desires. But, people will make themselves do things they don’t want to do in order to get rewards; they will refrain from doing things they do want to do in order to avoid punishment” (Lakoff 2002:67).

George Lakoff has chosen to call this folk behaviourism. This is one of the pillars in the Strict Father Morality model; violation of moral rules is punished and obedience of those rules is eulogized. Furthermore, the model presupposes that it is moral to exercise authority; it is moral to punish disobedient children and praise the obedient ones. The purpose of these actions is to teach the children to survive in a competing world where life is a constant struggle (Lakoff 2002:67f.).

In order to exercise authority, the father (or those who have risen to the top and are now exercising their legitimate authority), must take responsibility for a number of things to benefit those under their authority. The Strict Father must:

- Maintain order; sustain and defend the system of authority itself.
- Use the authority to protect those under his authority.
- Work for the benefit of those under his authority, especially help them to become the right kind of people.
- Exercise his authority to create more self-disciplined people (the right kind of people) for their own benefit, the benefit of others, and because it is the right thing to do.

(Lakoff 2002:70)
This model implies some moral priorities, many of which are indeed metaphorical. The metaphorical priorities in our conceptual systems contain moral priorities that, together with the rules of what to do and what not to do, constitute the Strict Father Morality model.

### 3.2.2 Moral Strength Metaphor

The metaphor of Moral Strength is essential in the Strict Father Morality model and also somewhat complex with many parts. Lakoff begins with:

- Being good is being upright. (He’s an *upstanding* citizen. He’s on the *up and up*).
- Being bad is being low. (That was a *low* thing to do. He’s a *snake* in the grass).

By doing evil you are moving from morality (uprightness) to immorality (being low). Consequently:

- Doing evil is falling. (The *fall* from grace).

The greatest component of the metaphor is the conception of immorality, or evil. Furthermore, evil is seen as an internal or external force that makes you commit immoral acts, i.e. fall.

- Evil is a force (internal or external).

To be able to remain upright, one must have the moral strength to stand up to evil. One must have the moral strength that is built through self-discipline.

- Morality is strength.

  (Lakoff 2002:71)\(^3\)

The pillars of the metaphor of Moral Strength believe that the world is divided into good and evil, and in order to stand up to evil one must be morally strong. Accordingly, the metaphor implies that the world is divided into an us-versus-them partition where evil is to be fought by moral strength. There is a war between good and evil and the moral behaviour is justified in the name of the good fight. As George Lakoff puts it: “Evil must be fought. You do not empathize

\(^3\) The reference applies to all the text under the heading 3.2.2 Moral Strength Metaphor
with evil, nor do you accord evil some truth of its own. You just fight it” (Lakoff 2002:74). The metaphorical part of the Moral Strength metaphor is quite tangible. It does not literally mean that: to be good you are upright, to become immoral is to fall, evil is not a force that can make an upright person fall, morality is not the physical strength one has to stand up to evil. The metaphor takes words such as upright, stand up to, backbone, fall etc. from the physical domain and applies it to morality.

3.2.3 Moral Essence Metaphor

One of the most important concepts in the Strict Father Morality model is character, an essence born and developed in childhood and lasting a lifetime. The conception of the Moral Essence metaphor is that physical objects are made of substances and that we sometimes think of people in a metaphorical way as if they were objects made of substances. Physical objects behave in different ways, depending on what they are made of; e.g. wood burns and stone does not. Thus, objects made out of wood will burn and objects made out of stone will not. Sometimes we see people in a metaphorical way as physical objects made of substances that determine how they behave. We then picture people having an essence or a collection of essences that determines their behaviour (Lakoff 2002:87). Hence:

- A person is an object.
- His essence is the substance the object is made of.

(Lakoff 2002:87)

If we for example imagine someone to be naturally aggressive we assign a property that determines how this person will act in certain situations, and if the property is a moral feature it becomes the Moral Essence metaphor (Lakoff 2002:88). People in early life develop certain moral properties, virtues if they are moral and vices if they are immoral. These proprieties form a person’s character as his moral qualities bring forth moral or immoral behaviour. Sentences like “She has a heart of gold”, or “He’s rotten to the core”, are examples of the Moral Essence metaphor. When we attribute these essences to people we automatically judge their morality. The virtues and vices can never be objective as they are parts of moral schemes that one gives priority to.
The pillars of the Moral Essence metaphor are:

- If you know how a person has acted, you know what his character is.
- If you know what a person’s character is, you know how he will act.
- A person’s basic character is formed by adulthood (or perhaps somewhat earlier).

(Lakoff 2002:89)

I think that the best example of this is the American “three strikes and you’re out” phenomenon that is moderately popular in the United States. Repeated violations in the felons past points to a character flaw that makes him inclined to commit future crimes. Additionally, since his character is formed by adulthood he can never change, it is better to protect the public from him; thus imprison him for life.

3.3 Model (B) – Nurturant Parent Morality

The mainstay of the second model is the ideal family: a Nurturant Parent family. The ideal family consists of two parents sharing the household responsibilities. The goal is to live as happily as possible, having the desire for love met, and to obtain meaning from interaction and care. The children thrive best on healthy relations to others, contribution to the community, realization of their potential and joy in life. The ideal children are self-disciplined and responsible, which is achieved through their caring for others and through their parents’ respecting, supporting and protecting them (Lakoff 2002:108). The parents will then receive obedience from the children because the children love and respect their parents, not because they fear to be punished. They should in fact question their parents because it is the best way to learn why parents behave in a certain way. The children are also to participate in family decisions but the responsible parents will have to make the ultimate decision in an act of love and protection. A nurturant parent’s duty is to protect the innocent and helpless children from harm in a world full of evils such as crime, drugs, war etc. (Lakoff 2002:109). These qualities are the keystones in the Morality As Nurturance metaphor below which is one of the most important metaphors in the Nurturant Parent Morality Model.

3.3.1 Morality As Nurturance Metaphor

The Morality As Nurturance metaphor presupposes that the child is helpless. Since it can not care for itself there is a great need for parents’ empathy. The parent is to find out what the child needs and put those needs before his own. He will need to make some sacrifices for the child. According to this metaphor and this way of thinking the child has a right to nurturance and the
parent has a responsibility to provide it. Furthermore, it is immoral for a parent to fail in nurturing his children because he is metaphorically taking away from them what they are entitled to (Lakoff 2002:117). It is important to clarify that the concept of this metaphor of nurturance is dealing with society in general, not only families. Lakoff spells out the metaphor as follows:

- The community is a family.
- Moral agents are nurturing parents.
- People needing help are children needing nurturance.
- Moral action is nurturance.

(Lakoff 2002:117)

Just as the Strict Father has duties towards his children, as described above, so does the Nurturant Parent. They are however somewhat different from the Strict Father duties and based on the amount of knowledge the parent has about nurturing children:

- To nurture children, one must have absolute and regular empathy with them.
- To act morally toward people needing help to survive, one must have absolute and regular empathy with them.
- Nurturance may require making sacrifices to care for children.
- Moral action may require making sacrifices to help truly needy people.
- Family members have a responsibility to see that children in their family are nurtured.
- Community members have a responsibility to see that people needing help in their community are helped.

(Lakoff 2002:117)

In times of disaster or war the American people are eager to help their community members showing great empathy for the ones in need. However, this empathy can sometimes be limited due to the notion of who is considered to be a community member. People feel empathy with the ones in need, but in some cases that empathy can be egocentric, i.e. they empathize only with people sharing their values, and they do not care about people in need who have different values. They are instead metaphorically outside the family and the community which feels no responsibility for helping them (Lakoff 2002:118).
4. Methods and Material

The choice of proper method is essential in scientific studies and the method itself should have its base in the problem as well as in the purpose of the thesis. Having considered several possibilities, I have come to the conclusion that in order to find the metaphors which intensify the language and additionally justify *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, the qualitative approach would be more useful than the quantitative, and hermeneutics would be preferable over positivism.

4.1 Hermeneutics

In the process of writing this thesis, my main focus will be put in the use of the hermeneutic method and the reason for this lies in the fact that I am not seeking to establish a definitive answer to the question I am posing. My choice of method will rather be the basis upon which I will aspire to understand, interpret and search for possible, rather than definitive, answers to reality (Lundquist 1993:42). I will be applying the relevance as well as the explicability of the metaphors to the data, and by conducting an analysis of them I will be explaining my view of reality. This way I can make it easier for the reader to understand my mode of procedure in the attempt to establish my conclusions.

The problem that arises when using hermeneutic methods is the demand for intersubjectivity. The purpose of intersubjectivity is to test or strengthen the reliability of a study (Bjereld 2002:111), but my opinion is that an objective reality does not exist. Should another scientist perform the same study, there exists a great possibility that his results would differ from mine. I believe that the important thing is that the reader is able to understand the procedure used to attain my results, so that he later can construe my interpretations and determine the level of credibility of my study.

4.2 Qualitative Text Analysis

Since the aim of this study is to find and interpret the use of figurative language through hermeneutic methods, I find it irrelevant to use a quantitative approach. I am seeking to interpret and understand why certain phenomena are constituted the way they are, and in this search the collecting of quantitative data and other numerous unities becomes less important. The purpose is to find reliable answers and my interpretation of the material will lead me to fulfil that purpose in the most effective way. I do not believe that the most appropriate way to conduct this is through equally dealing with a great amount of analysis unities, but rather
through illuminating essential parts of the text. I believe that the best way to do that is by carefully reading the text in its entirety at the same time as one is grasping the context of it (Esaiasson 2003:233). Another advantage with using this method is that the substance of the study sometimes can be latent and can thus only be recognized by thorough reading.

4.3 Pre-Comprehension

As mentioned above, I am of the opinion that an objective reality does not exist. One of the reasons for believing this lies in my conviction that every scientist holds a particular pre-comprehension which will guide him to the construction of the problem that he wants to investigate. My own pre-comprehension has its base in many years of studying politics and political agendas, which in turn has resulted in a Bachelor of Arts degree in the field of Political Science. I have previously written a Bachelor’s thesis dealing with the U.S. military presence in Iraq since the Gulf War. Having read various statements on the “war on terror” and having noticed the language used to justify it, my interest in performing a scientific study on this issue was awoken.

4.4 The Material

Literature, in the form of books and different Internet sources, constitute the material which I have used for this thesis. The books as well as the information retrieved on the Internet, almost without exception come from secondary sources, as it is highly inconceivable to obtain material from primary sources, since the primary source in this case would be President George W. Bush. A determining factor for performing a credible and reliable study is to make sure that the sources are providing the correct information which in turn would lead me to tenable and valid conclusions. The main source of my work is the collection of presidential statements which deal with the “war on terror” during March 2003.

5. Data

The empirical data that I will analyze and apply my ideas to derives from different presidential statements made in March 2003. I have chosen to narrow down my data to the month of March 2003, the month when Operation Iraqi Freedom commenced, due to time and space limits of this level. Below I will present an excerpt from one of the statements to pose as an example of the language used by President Bush in order to justify Operation Iraqi Freedom.
According to the official webpage of the White House there are 18 different statements made about this issue during this month. I have no space in this thesis to present all 18 statements in full text. Instead, I have chosen to exemplify with one excerpt which will hopefully provide a satisfactory image of the rest of the statements. The excerpt discussed will be *President Submits Wartime Budget, March 25, 2003*. To avoid repetition I have chosen to place the excerpt as an appendix, and the analysis of it in the next section.

The statements made by President Bush in March 2003 are radio addresses, official White House statements, national press conference statements, press availabilitys with other world leaders etc. They address foremost the American people but also the international community where they accuse Saddam Hussein of different things, talk about the growing dangers, e.g. weapons of mass destruction and “war on terror”, and what action needs to be taken. This is done throughout all the 18 statements dealing with this issue. The quantity of the texts and the quantity that I have analyzed is somewhat 33 000 words.

6. Analysis

In this section I will analyze the empirical data and apply the ideas presented in section 3. The purpose is to find a satisfactory answer to my main question: In what way did George W. Bush use moral metaphors in his statements to justify *Operation Iraqi Freedom*? As I will be using a hermeneutical approach to come to a plausible conclusion some of the metaphors will be manifested and thus obvious, whereas I will need to explain the more latent ones more thoroughly. I believe that the obvious metaphors do not need a deep discussion since the aim instead is to bring up latent moral metaphors to discussion that are perhaps hidden in the text and are not recognized as single word metaphors. Therefore, the analysis will be on a sentence level where the words will be discussed in their context.

6.1 President Submits Wartime Budget, March 25, 2003 (an Analysis)

In the text below I have chosen to present the different metaphors as different types. The Moral Strength metaphor will be in bold type, the Moral Essence metaphor in italics, and the Nurturant Parent metaphor will be underlined.

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4 For full text statements, visit: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/
5 These examples are taken from the statement made on March 1, 2003 and pose as examples of the language in the rest of the texts as well.
We're fighting an enemy that knows no rules of law, that will wear civilian uniforms, that is willing to kill in order to continue the reign of fear of Saddam Hussein. But we're fighting with bravery and courage. We cannot know the duration of this war. Yet we know its outcome; we will prevail. The Iraqi regime will be disarmed. The Iraqi regime will be ended. The Iraqi people will be free. And our world will be more secure and peaceful. The people of our military and their families are showing great courage, and some have suffered great loss. America is grateful to all those who have sacrificed in our cause. Our coalition is strong. It's bound together by the principle of protecting not only this nation, but all nations from a brutal regime that is armed with weapons that could kill thousands of innocent people. America has more than 200,000 men and women engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our troops also continue to fight bravely in other fronts of this war on terror. In Afghanistan last week, coalition forces launched Operation Valiant Strike against terrorists and their allies in the southern mountains of Afghanistan. Of course, we have troops standing watch in other parts of the world to protect and maintain the peace. All the members of the military, abroad, at home, or here in this important building, are bound together by a great cause, to defend the American people and advance the universal hope of freedom. America has accepted this responsibility. We also accept the cost of supporting our military and the missions we give it. Today, I'm sending the Congress a wartime supplemental appropriations request of $74.7 billion, to fund needs directly arising from the Iraqi conflict and our global war against terror. My request to Congress will pay for the massive task of transporting a fully-equipped military force, both active duty and reserve, to a region halfway around the world. This money will cover the current cost of fueling our ships and aircraft and tanks, and of airlifting tons of supplies into the theater of operations. The supplemental will also allow us to replace the high-tech munitions we are now directing against Saddam Hussein's regime. My request includes funds for relief and reconstruction in a free Iraq. This nation and our coalition partners are committed to making sure that the Iraqi citizens who have suffered under a brutal tyrant have got the food and medicine needed as soon as possible. Tommy Franks briefed us this morning about coalition efforts to demine the harbors -- the harbor -- to make sure that our humanitarian relief can be delivered safely to the Iraqi people. Coalition forces are working hard to make sure that when the food and medicine begins to move, it does so in a safe way. And soon, the Iraqi people will see the great compassion of not only the United States, but other nations around the world who care deeply about the human condition inside that country […] We continue to fight the war on terror by protecting our homeland. At the federal level, I'm requesting more resources for the Departments of Justice
and Homeland Security, to deal with this period of uncertainty. We'll provide resources for patrolling and safeguarding our borders; funds to help the FBI investigate domestic threats in this time of war; additional funding for the Coast Guard for port security in the United States and in the Middle East. In this time of heightened security, we are expecting states and communities to take on greater responsibilities to protect critical infrastructure. And so I'm seeking additional resources to help states and cities make these preparations for the protection of our citizens.

This excerpt contains many moral metaphors. Already within the first three sentences there are words which are main fragments of the Strict Father Morality model and the Moral Strength metaphor. The words fight, courage and brave are central Strict Father Morality model words. To be courageous, brave and willing to fight against evil are essential virtues in this conservative model. According to the Moral Strength metaphor, if one does not have courage and bravery one can not be strong enough to fight evil and will therefore succumb to evil oneself. American soldiers and coalition forces are here the children who need to be brave and strong in their fight against evil, whereas the Strict Father is the Bush administration teaching the children moral values with a firm and disciplined hand. The evil is obviously Saddam Hussein, i.e. the Iraqi regime, and his companions. The words courage, brave, and fight are not only used several times in this excerpt, they are also frequently used throughout Bush’s statements in March 2003.

Another set of words that is occurring in almost every statement is the war on terror. This state is in its source domain impossible since “war” is a nation-state problem. One can not declare war against terror, it is impossible as war can only be declared against other countries, states or nations. However, due to the conceptual framings in our minds, war on terror is a possible target domain as we figuratively imagine the meaning of the set of words used. My point here is that conservatives know this and that they deliberately use this type of language to intensify the meaning of words. “Terror” is a strong word that invokes fear in people. Fear furthermore activates the Strict Father model which is the purpose of the use. The words are not used to help one overcome one’s fear, but to make one afraid. There is a sentence in the excerpt that perfectly exemplifies this, as well as the Strict Father Morality model: “We continue to fight the war on terror by protecting our homeland.” The metaphorical meaning here is that America is being morally strong in its fight against evil and helping the children overcome their fear by protecting them from it.
Saddam Hussein is described in most detestable ways. President Bush’s descriptions are sometimes *infra dignitatem* and excessive. In this excerpt however he is only described twice, once as a “brutal regime” and the other time as a “brutal tyrant”. The excerpt however does not do justice to the words used by President Bush in other statements. On March 6, 2003 he called Saddam Hussein a torturer and murderer:

> I believe that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the American people. I believe he’s a threat to the neighbourhood in which he lives. And I’ve got good evidence to believe that. He has weapons of mass destruction, and he has used weapons of mass destruction, in his neighbourhood and on his own people. He’s invaded countries in his neighbourhood. He tortures his own people. He’s a murderer.

(March 6, 2003)

Further on in the same statement he calls Saddam Hussein “a cancer inside of Iraq” that will be replaced (March 6, 2003). These descriptions of his character together with descriptions of his past actions compose the Moral Essence metaphor in this thesis. The metaphor implies that Saddam Hussein is an object with certain essential substances that determine his future behaviour. President Bush believes that these substances are brutality, reckless aggression, capability of any crime etc. (March 1, 6, 16, 2003). As described in the theory section; physical objects behave in certain ways depending on what they are made of. Saddam Hussein is a physical object with the substances above forming his character since he has displayed them in the past. Now that we know his character, we know how he will act in future situations. On March 1, 2003 President Bush said that: “Saddam Hussein has a long history of brutal crimes, especially in time of war – even against his own citizens” (March 1, 2003). Another example: “We know from recent history that Saddam Hussein is a reckless dictator who has twice invaded his neighbors without provocation – wars that led to death and suffering on a massive scale” (March 15, 2003).

These characteristics are described in many of President Bush’s statements made in March 2003. He eventually strikes home as he claims on March 6, 2003 that:

> […] the American people know that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction. By the way, he declared he didn’t have any – 1441 insisted that he have a complete declaration of his weapons; he said he didn’t have any weapons. Secondly, he’s used these weapons before. I mean, this is – we’re not speculating about the nature of man. We know the nature of man.

(March 6, 2003)
George W. Bush is persistent in trying to convince people that this is Saddam Hussein’s character and that he is a threat that needs to be dealt with. By portraying the former Iraqi regime with essential substances that in our minds are framed as conceptual immoral characteristics or vices, he has succeeded in intensifying the language used to portray him and thus reached his goals in turning Saddam Hussein into a despicable creature.

Up to this point I have only dealt with moral metaphors that are conservative in nature. The Moral Strength metaphor is teaching us to be strong in the fight against evil, and the Moral Essence metaphor evinces moral virtues and vices. The third and final of my presented metaphors is the Morality As Nurturance metaphor which is predominately liberal. This metaphor derives from a model, the Nurturant Parent Morality model, which is somewhat similar to the Strict Father Morality in the sense that both models include parental guidance with adherent duties. This is noticeable in the excerpt in the form of the word protect is both bold and underlined. The word is central in both conservative and liberal minds. Nonetheless, there are differences. Protect in the text describes protection of the American citizens – the Strict Father protecting the children: “We continue to fight the war on terror by protecting our homeland.” However, when protect refers to protection of the American citizens and the Iraqi people or the world, the liberal concept of this word is invoked. The Nurturant Parent teaches the children not to only take care of themselves, but of others too, and the metaphor implies that nurturance is moral action, and that moral action needs sacrifices in order to help people in need. As President Bush puts it: “It’s bound together by the principle of protecting not only this nation, but all nations from a brutal regime that is armed with weapons that could kill thousands of innocent people.” The Nurturant Parent here is the Bush administration and the children are the American citizens who need to help the community, i.e. the Iraqi people and the world. It is important to protect oneself, as well as innocent people in need, against the dangers of the world. Other examples of Bush emphasizing central words of the Morality As Nurturance metaphor are when he says that the Iraqi people “will soon see the compassion of the United States”, that “America has accepted this kind of responsibility”, and that “America is grateful to all those who have sacrificed in our cause”. Since America is not merely conservative, but also liberal, President Bush needed to convince two camps. Therefore it is not surprising to find indications of the Nurturance As Morality metaphor throughout his statements. So as the Strict Father Morality model teaches the children to fight with bravery and courage, the Nurturant Parent Model teaches them to care for and protect innocent lives, as well as nurtures the children and the community.
7. Results

This section presents my interpretation of the analysis. The question I presented in section 2 will be answered, which will contribute to a conclusion propounded in the following section.

At the beginning of this thesis I presented a research question that was of a theoretical kind:

- In what way did George W. Bush use moral metaphors in his statements to justify Operation Iraqi Freedom?

Based on the analyses of my data I have found a plausible answer. After analyzing the data in accordance with the metaphors, I believe that my study indicates that George W. Bush used moral metaphors in such way that they:

- Portray the U.S. government as a strict father who guides his children, i.e. the American people, with a firm hand in how to act morally correct. By first invoking fear in the citizens of America, President Bush then persuades them to fight and to be brave, courageous and strong enough to stand up against evil. Since the concept of war does not fit into this debate these metaphors intensify the meaning of language.

- Portray the former Iraqi regime, i.e. Saddam Hussein, in abominable ways. These metaphors firstly describe the essential substances that constitute Saddam Hussein’s character. Secondly, they convince the American people that these characteristics will not change. Finally, the intensified language persuades people that this characteristic behaviour will repeat itself.

- Put the focus on the American people to help people in need. The Iraqi people are portrayed as innocent and helpless, and the Americans need to act morally and help them. As the figurative language frames the community in a certain way there is a great pressure on people’s conceptual systems to activate their moral priorities and act. It simply becomes immoral to ignore the situation.

- Address both conservatives and liberals.
8. Conclusions

As I mentioned in section 4, due to the shaping of pre-comprehension and hermeneutic skills, the results of the same study performed numerous times can vary. I have analyzed the concordance of my metaphors with the data and thus reached the results presented in the previous section. After having performed the study I have concluded that President Bush has intensified the language in his statements on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* through figurative use of metaphors. This is done deliberately to obtain countenance in order to justify the military attack. The Bush administration had a goal and needed to rally support in order to reach it. By inaugurating figurative language in his statements it became easier to convince people. He put his entire repertoire on display when he expounded the danger and threat that needed to be met. Saddam Hussein was found to be a peril not only to the American people but the entire world as well. This was all elucidated through figurative language. The concept of war did not fit and therefore there was a frantic search for metaphors. It resulted in moral metaphors that allude to moral priorities in our conceptual systems, and not being aware of it, the people got a sermon on morality. I believe that the Bush administration realized this in a very lucrative way after careful consideration of how to intensify the language through metaphors.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, there is a great field of problematizing around this issue. Further studies could include additional moral metaphors, evidentiality, and foremost metonymies. The period of time of the statements in this study could be prolonged in a study that e.g. grasps changes in the statements over a more extensive period of time. I believe that the figurative use of language in politics needs further studies and needs to be made noticeable among people.
Appendix

President Submits Wartime Budget, March 25, 2003 (an excerpt)

We're fighting an enemy that knows no rules of law, that will wear civilian uniforms, that is willing to kill in order to continue the reign of fear of Saddam Hussein. But we're fighting with bravery and courage. We cannot know the duration of this war. Yet we know its outcome; we will prevail. The Iraqi regime will be disarmed. The Iraqi regime will be ended. The Iraqi people will be free. And our world will be more secure and peaceful. The people of our military and their families are showing great courage, and some have suffered great loss. America is grateful to all those who have sacrificed in our cause. Our coalition is strong. It's bound together by the principle of protecting not only this nation, but all nations from a brutal regime that is armed with weapons that could kill thousands of innocent people. America has more than 200,000 men and women engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our troops also continue to fight bravely in other fronts of this war on terror. In Afghanistan last week, coalition forces launched Operation Valiant Strike against terrorists and their allies in the southern mountains of Afghanistan. Of course, we have troops standing watch in other parts of the world to protect and maintain the peace. All the members of the military, abroad, at home, or here in this important building, are bound together by a great cause, to defend the American people and advance the universal hope of freedom. America has accepted this responsibility. We also accept the cost of supporting our military and the missions we give it. Today, I'm sending the Congress a wartime supplemental appropriations request of $74.7 billion, to fund needs directly arising from the Iraqi conflict and our global war against terror. My request to Congress will pay for the massive task of transporting a fully-equipped military force, both active duty and reserve, to a region halfway around the world. This money will cover the current cost of fueling our ships and aircraft and tanks, and of airlifting tons of supplies into the theater of operations. The supplemental will also allow us to replace the high-tech munitions we are now directing against Saddam Hussein's regime. My request includes funds for relief and reconstruction in a free Iraq. This nation and our coalition partners are committed to making sure that the Iraqi citizens who have suffered under a brutal tyrant have got the food and medicine needed as soon as possible. Tommy Franks briefed us this morning about coalition efforts to demine the harbors -- the harbor -- to make sure that our humanitarian relief can be delivered safely to the Iraqi people. Coalition forces are
working hard to make sure that when the food and medicine begins to move, it does so in a safe way. And soon, the Iraqi people will see the great compassion of not only the United States, but other nations around the world who care deeply about the human condition inside that country […] We continue to fight the war on terror by protecting our homeland. At the federal level, I'm requesting more resources for the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, to deal with this period of uncertainty. We'll provide resources for patrolling and safeguarding our borders; funds to help the FBI investigate domestic threats in this time of war; additional funding for the Coast Guard for port security in the United States and in the Middle East. In this time of heightened security, we are expecting states and communities to take on greater responsibilities to protect critical infrastructure. And so I'm seeking additional resources to help states and cities make these preparations for the protection of our citizens.
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