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A COGNITIVE-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL SPEECHES OF HILLARY CLINTON:  
LAKOFF'S MODELS OF POLITICAL MORALITY

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this paper is providing a way for testing Lakoff's models of political morality. According to Lakoff's *Moral Politics* (1996), the notion of morality has different interpretations for different people who conceptualize it according to two sets of metaphors. The sets metaphorically express various aspects of morality, and they offer us a way for realizing why some people favor certain political ideology while others reject it. Why the two major American political parties are at odds over so many social unrelated issues like economy, health care, abortion and domestic programs. The disagreement is not a mere issues of political ideologies, rather it is a disagreement over radically different interpretation of morality that derive from ideal family meaning. This paper tries to analyse the political speeches of Hillary Clinton with reference to Lakoff's models of political morality.

KEY WORDS: Cognitive-Semantic Analysis – Hillary Clinton- Donald Trump- Political speeches- Rhetoric- Lakoff Model

*A Cognitive-Semantic Analysis* examines the emergence of morality in the Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton's electoral speeches. It attempts to uncover underlying discursive literal and metaphorical structures in her presidential campaign discourse. The researcher's goal is to verify whether or not Hillary Clinton introduces herself as a progressive leader who embraces all nurturant moral values that are assumed by Lakoff (2004). The abstract nature of values such as care, fairness, health care, education and the like necessitates the use of literality and metaphors which provide an incite for their conceptualization.

On the one hand, the investigation is based on a semantic point of view that relies on an application of Lakoff's (1996) Family based models of political morality which include the Nurturant Parent and the Strict Father models. On the other hand, the study derives from Lakoff's (2004) publication as he gives *values* a central position for the testing of his predicted models.

Moreover, the investigation tries to answer Lakoff's (2004) raised question of how different people make a link between morality and individual concepts of health, wellbeing, wealth, strength or more precisely *frame* such concepts according to their particular own understanding and definition of moral criteria. In other words, the study sheds light on how metaphors can *frame* a link between morality and the real world. According to this view, individuals who are sharing certain moral system will metaphorically *frame* issues by adopting the same way of thinking.

Indeed, as far as Conservatives and Democrats do not share the same set of moral criteria, thus they are expected to *frame* reality in two different ways. Therefore, differences in framing issues mean differences

in their policy and actions as manifested in their speeches. In other words, different framing leads to different 'facts' and consequently influence individuals' attitudes, behavior, and values. The analysis shows that the 30 selected speeches rely heavily on constructed frames, such as the family frame and the battle frame. Finally a discussion of the analytical findings concludes the thesis. According to our results, it might seem that Clinton's main purpose of her campaign discourses is to construct a narrative of herself as President of the United States of America, and additionally, she pushes the boundaries of the historical perception of the American presidency in regards to gender.

This is done through the use of a methodology based on a close readings and careful classification of the values according to their moral function. An eye of a critic is also involved in the analysis as it is shown through comments followed each turning point. The empirical approach and the specific aim of this research seek to identify literal instances of value implication and those metaphorical expression that hint to certain moral values. Moreover, lexical items of potential PVs and CVs are also included to present a comprehensive investigation of Hillary Clinton's political rhetoric.

The study provides a new effort to analyze election speeches on the basis of modern cognitive-semantic and critical approaches to moral values' interpretation. Furthermore, this study builds upon the findings of previous studies on Lakoff's family based models employed in other political discourses; it draws attention to the need for more study of moral values in American political discourse in general. The model speeches Hillary Clinton which are taken for the analysis ranges from January to November 2016. They are appended with clear cut division of "Date of Speech", "Literal Expression" and "Pv-Rcv literally evoked".

#### A Cognitive-Semantic Analysis of Combined Values in Literal Expressions:

Speech January 31, 2016	Literal expressions	Combined Pv-Rcv literally evoked
PAR 25	<b>They shame and blame women (Rcv1), rather than respect our right to make our own reproductive health decisions (Pv1). [...].</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral authority:</b> rejects the conservatives' view of dominating women. <b>Pv:</b> <b>1. Freedom:</b> women rights to abortion.

Speech February 17, 2016	Literal expressions	Pv-Rcv literally evoked
PAR 17	<b>Now, these inequities are wrong—but they're also immoral (Rcv1). And it'll be the mission of my presidency to bring them to an end (Pv1). [...]</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral order: hierarchy/</b> rejects the conservatives' view of placing people in a hierarchical categorization. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Responsibility:</b> commitment to end social inequalities.
PAR 39	<b>Up to 60 percent of prisoners who re-enter society face long-term unemployment (Rcv1). That's a recipe for hopelessness and repeat offending. My jobs plan would</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> the conservatives' lack of

	make <b>significant investments in re-entry programs for the formerly incarcerated (Pv1).</b>	nurturance. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Opportunity:</b> create chances for ex- prisoners.
<b>Speech</b> <b>March 5, 2016</b>	<b>Literal expressions</b>	<b>Pv-Rcv</b> <b>literally evoked</b>
PAR 7	[...]. <b>Instead of good paying jobs (Pv1), millions of Americans are stuck in low-wage work (Rcv1).</b> Now corporate profits and CEO pay keeps rising, but pay checks for working families have barely budged. <b>And instead of affordable college (Pv2),</b> we have skyrocketing tuition and millions of people weighed down by student debt.	<b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Fairness:</b> fair distribution of incomes. <b>2. Social rights:</b> education for all. <b>Rcv:</b> <b>1. Moral order:</b> rejects the distribution of wages. <b>2. Moral self-interest:</b> rejects the conservatives' over exaggerated view of self-reliance.
PAR 24	[...]. Like what Republicans in Congress did when <b>they cut off unemployment benefits for people laid off in the Great Recession who were still working, looking for work (Rcv1) or when candidates promise trillions of dollars in tax cuts that go mostly to the rich (Rcv2).</b> This needs to change. <b>Americans' interests have to come before special interests (Pv1).</b> And <b>the American worker and American jobs have to come first (Pv2).</b> And one area where we've gotten this balance wrong over the years is trade.	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> rejects the conservatives' lack of nurturance. <b>2. Moral order:</b> rejects the conservatives' distribution of wealth. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Fairness:</b> fair distribution of wealth/ fair taxation. <b>2. Care:</b> caring for American workers.

<b>Speech</b> <b>April 12 , 2016</b>	<b>Literal expressions</b>	<b>Pv-Rcv</b> <b>literally evoked</b>
PAR 5	The story Steve told you, I remember it like it was yesterday. I read an article which said that we had young people serving in our military whose families were eligible for stamps. I read it twice. How can that be? They're off fighting. They're risking their lives. <b>The families they left behind don't even have enough income to afford food (Rcv1)?</b> They go to food pantries? And I called Steve and I said, Steve, this is wrong. Let's find out what's going on. And we did. <b>Because it matters that we all look out for each other (Pv1).</b> The kind of campaign that the other side is running, <b>pitting Americans against one another (Rcv2),</b> is just not who we are. <b>We're going to keep</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> rejects the conservatives' lack of nurturance. <b>2. Moral order:</b> <b>hierarchy/</b> rejects the conservatives' view of placing people in a hierarchical categorization. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. We:</b> co-operation

	reaching out and helping people (Pv2) and giving folks the opportunity to get ahead and stay ahead. That's who we are.	between all Americans. <b>2. Care:</b> caring for those in need for help.
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Speech April 22, 2016	Literal expressions	Pv-Rcv literally evoked
PAR 28	We've got to get the costs down: the co pays, and the deductibles, and the prescription drug costs (Pv1). And I have a very clear idea about how we're going to do that. Now, the Republicans want to repeal it. They never tell you what they'll replace it with (Rcv1)—because they know we won't like it, because it's just going to go back to the way it was.	<b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. We:</b> work for the good of all. <b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> rejects the lack of nurturance.
PAR 30	a lot of what we've changed to actually give people a chance to get the insurance to take care of themselves (Pv1) would be wiped out. And my opponent wants to start all over again. And I can tell you, we do not need another big, contentious debate about health care. [...]	<b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Social rights:</b> health care for all. <b>Rcv:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> rejects the lack of nurturance.
PAR 36	I will never let the Republicans privatize Social Security or Medicare. And I will never let them privatize the VA (Rcv1). We have to improve it and provide the services our veterans deserve to have (Pv1). But we're not going to let the Koch brothers and the Republicans dismantle the VA. We also have to be committed to do more to try to find ways where we are talking with confidence and optimism about the future, and I think that means we have to protect people's rights (Pv2). We have to protect a woman's right to make her own health care decisions (Pv3).	<b>Rcv1:</b> <b>1. Moral self-interest: self reliance/</b> rejects the conservatives' view of capitalism/ Adam Smith's view. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Care:</b> caring for the military people. <b>2. Protection:</b> defend social rights. <b>3. Freedom:</b> defend women's right to abortion.

Speech August 3, 2016	Literal expressions	Pv-Rcv literally evoked
PAR 1	"It's great to be here with your governor. I am such a fan of Governor Hickenlooper for a lot of reasons, but one of the main reasons is because he does understand how we could create more jobs (Pv1). And he has used his own experience as a small businessman who grew a business and was successful not to turn his back on what it took but to try to help more people get the tools they need to start those businesses (Pv2), [to grow those businesses (Cm1) (Pv3). And what a stark contrast with Donald Trump who has spent his career stifling small	<b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Opportunity:</b> create chances of green gobs for all. <b>2. We:</b> work for the good of other people. <b>1. Cm</b> <b>3. Care:</b> support of the American economy. <b>Rcv:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> rejects

	businesses, refusing to pay his bills to small businesses (Rcv1).	the lack of nurturance.
PAR 3	[...]. Donald Trump would not pay people who did work. <b>What kind of man does business by hurting other people (Rcv1)?</b> I am just so, so determined that <b>we are not going to let him do to America what he has done to so many other people (Pv1).</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral strength:</b> rejects the lack of nurturance. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Protection:</b> protect the country against Trump's harmful policy.

Speech August 5, 2016	Literal expressions	Pv-Rcv literally evoked
PAR 15	[...], <b>if my agenda for jobs and growth is put into place, our economy would create at least 10.4 million jobs within four years (Pv1).</b> [...], the result of Trump's plans <b>would be a 'lengthy recession' with 3.4 million jobs lost (Rcv1).</b>	<b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Opportunity:</b> create chances for green jobs. <b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral order:</b> unregulated free market.

Speech November 3, 2016	Literal expressions	Pv-Rcv literally evoked
PAR 10	And then let's not forget, Trump spent years, years insisting that <b>President Obama was not born in the United States, even after the birth certificate was produced (Rcv1).</b> [...]. I know I'm reaching out to <b>Republicans and Independents as well as Democrats because I want to be the president for all Americans (Pv1).</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral order:</b> <b>hierarchy/</b> rejects the conservatives' view of placing people in a hierarchical categorization. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. We: unity/</b> social and national.
PAR 13	And when I think about what we now know about Donald Trump and what he's been doing for 30 years, <b>he sure has spent a lot of time demeaning, degrading, insulting, and assaulting women (Rcv1).</b> And, I've got to tell you, some of what we've learned -- some of this stuff is very upsetting. I would, frankly, rather be here talking about nearly anything else, like how we're going to create good jobs and <b>get the economy working for everybody, not just those at the top (Pv1).</b> How we're going to make <b>college affordable for every single family (Pv2) [...]</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral order:</b> <b>hierarchy/</b> rejects the conservatives' view of placing people in a hierarchical categorization. <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Opportunity:</b> create chances for green jobs. <b>2. Social rights:</b> education for all Americans.
PAR 31	[...]. Because Donald Trump's economic plan is <b>slashing taxes on the wealthy and big corporations (Rcv1).</b> I have said that I want the wealthy to <b>pay their fair share and I will not raise taxes on anybody making less than</b>	<b>Rcvs:</b> <b>1. Moral self-interest: self reliance/</b> rejects the conservatives' view of

	<b>\$250,000 a year (Pv1).</b> So there could not be, no matter what you care about, a bigger difference between me and Donald Trump, [...]	capitalism/ Adam Smith's view <b>Pvs:</b> <b>1. Fairness:</b> fair taxation for all.
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