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Resistance to metaphor in parliamentary debates

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Resistance to metaphor in parliamentary debates

This dissertation aims to contribute to the study of political discourse by examining how politicians turn parliamentary debates into their favour by using metaphors in arguing, and how opposing parties resist these metaphors in an attempt at turning the debate into their own favour. Combining insights from the three-dimensional model of metaphor and the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation, it presents a novel theoretical perspective to investigate the argumentative roles and functions that metaphors and the resistance to metaphors fulfil at specific discussion stages, uncovering the advantages that politicians attempt to attain by employing metaphors in those stages.

The author first examines how politicians use metaphors to express starting points and the different ways in which opponents resist these metaphors to achieve diverging outcomes in the opening stage of a discussion. Then, she studies the argumentative role of metaphors in parliamentary debates by focusing on cases of figurative analogy arguments in the argumentation stage of the discussion, and on how figurative analogy arguments are countered. Finally, she investigates how metaphors with a clarificatory function and the resistance to such metaphors feature in parliamentary debates to establish a shared understanding of the issue under discussion between politicians in the confrontation and argumentation stages. Together, the studies presented in this dissertation demonstrate that metaphors are important argumentative strategies in parliamentary debates, and that resisting them seems to be a pertinent skill for politicians.

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Resistance to metaphor in parliamentary debates

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To my father, Diederik

To my mother, Yvonne

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When I decided to write my premaster thesis about metaphor, I never imagined that this decision would eventually lead me to be part of a research project about metaphor as a PhD-researcher. But here we are, seven years after that initial decision, and I am about to finish my dissertation. Over the course of the years, many people have supported me and cheered me on, for which I am very grateful.

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Kiki

Rotterdam, April 2021

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Author contributions

Chapter 1

This chapter has not been submitted for publication elsewhere.

Kiki Y. Renardel de Lavalette

Renardel de Lavalette wrote the first version of the text. Andone and Burgers acted as supervisors, providing valuable feedback on earlier versions of the text. Based on this feedback, Renardel de Lavalette rewrote and revised the text into its final form.

Chapter 2

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Renardel de Lavalette was the principal investigator of this study. Renardel de Lavalette wrote the first version of the text. Andone and Steen acted as supervisors, providing valuable feedback on earlier versions of the manuscript. Based on this feedback, Renardel de Lavalette rewrote and revised the manuscript in its final, published form.

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Chapter 6

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