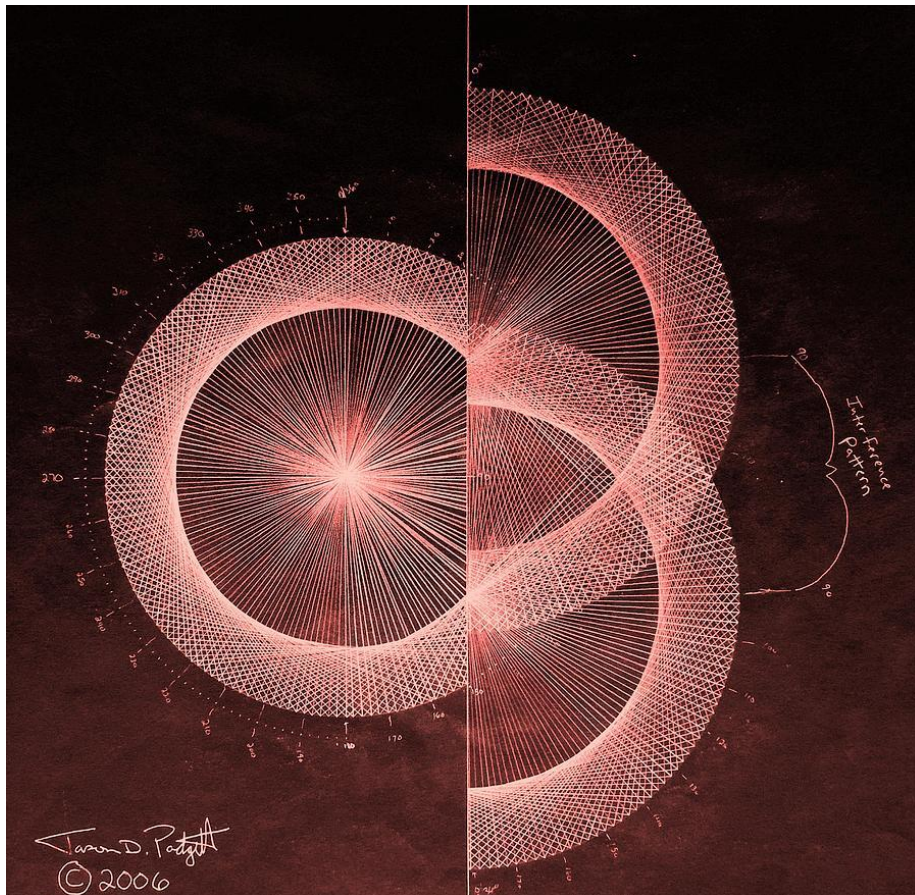


Océane Smith-Médion

Sous la direction d'Andrew McMichael (Maître de conférences)
et Nathalie Vincent-Arnaud (Professeur)

WAR ON, A PECULIAR CONSTRUCTION A LINGUISTIC STUDY

Mémoire de Master 2



Département Etudes du Monde Anglophone

2018-2019

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INTRODUCTION

The research presented in this dissertation results from my masters' research, part of the Master *Etudes Anglophones*. Throughout the first year, the work mainly focused on the War on Terror and was presented in a dissertation in 2015 entitled "War on Terror: Metaphors, Frames, and Constructions".

The first-year long essay began as a reaction to an article claiming that the War on Terror was only a metaphorical war as a literal war could not be waged against a feeling – terror:

Literal not metaphorical wars are conducted against armies of other nations. They end when the armies are defeated militarily and a peace treaty is signed. Terror is an emotional state. It is in us. It is not an army. And you can't sign a peace treaty with it. (Lakoff and Frisch, 2006)

The authors intended thus to demonstrate that the aforesaid 'War on Terror' was a metaphorical conflict and that therefore it could not really exist as a proper war. The name, in their opinion, was just a political tool used by the Bush Administration to enforce some controversial policies. From this starting point, the intention was to prove, using George Lakoff's own Metaphor Theory, that this conflict was not metaphorical even if its name was ambiguous at its core. Different linguistic theories helped us to do so, theories that will be explained again in this work. As a conclusion, it was stated that the War on Terror was indeed a literal conflict waged on different territories, but its name could induce otherwise, especially in a larger linguistic context.

The ambiguity of the name pushed me to rethink the angle of this research. Instead of focusing on the 'War on Terror', the point of view was broadened and the 'war on' part of the phrase became the new point of interest. This led to this present work and to the following new question:

How could we define a WAR ON construction?

Needless to say, this question is based on countless interrogations:

- Is there a WAR ON construction?
- Then, what would the best research tool be to identify our construction; should we carry out a diachronic research to identify its historical origins, intuition, or a synchronic research using corpora and the frequency of occurrences?

If the WAR ON construction exists, then we can ask further questions:

- Would the WAR ON construction be inherently metaphorical?

- What is the history of the WAR ON construction? Was there an evolution of its usage?
- And finally, how could we identify its prototype? Is there only one prototype to the WAR ON construction? Is the ‘War on Terror’ prototypical or an ‘anomaly’ in the WAR ON construction?

What is central to all these questions is of course the WAR ON construction, and our goal is to understand this construction better, how it is used, and to try to identify a pattern of use as well as a prototypical use. To do so, we will draw upon the theoretical frame of Cognitive Linguistics that will be useful to isolate the construction under study. These theories will be particularly useful coupled with corpora, tools that will allow us to highlight patterns of usage. Finally, we will focus on some expressions based on the WAR ON construction: the ‘War on Poverty’, the ‘War on Drugs’, and last but not least, the ‘War on Terror’.

But before starting on the construction itself, we need to define what exactly a construction is, and how it could be identified.

I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I.1 – CONSTRUCTION GRAMMAR

The question of what is called Construction Grammar participates in the ontological debate on how to divide language. The main criterion of division is meaning, and linguists define different units of meaning¹: from morphemes to texts, passing by words, phrases, sentences, etc. By convention, words are used as the smaller unit that means something on its own. To illustrate this, how we learn a second language could be taken as example: it is common to give vocabulary lists and basic grammar rules to the student so that they learn them.² That would correspond to a lexicographer's view on language: to learn/understand the words is to learn/understand the language. Theoretically then, learning a dictionary by heart should suffice to be able to speak its language. Theoretically again, word-for-word translation would be possible.

However, some words require more knowledge than their limited definitions: to learn the meaning of *prevent* does not mean to know how to use it. It is necessary to learn the whole 'compound' that is *prevent someone from doing something* (or *prevent something from happening*) to use it correctly. It is a fixed phrase, and if it was used differently, the sentence would probably be agrammatical. This 'compound' is specific to English, and its translation would require more than a word-for-word equivalence. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines these 'compounds', called *idioms*, as following: "a form of expression, grammatical construction, phrase, etc., used in a distinctive way in a particular language, dialect, or language variety". An idiom is also defined by "a meaning not deducible from the meanings of the individual words" that form the whole. Some considered this lack of transparency as central to their definition. In Geoffrey Nunberg's opinion:

Their meaning or use can't be predicted, or at least entirely predicted, on the basis of a knowledge of the independent conventions that determine the use of their constituents when they appear in isolation from one another (Nunberg et al., 1994: 492).

¹ "A unit is a structure that a speaker has mastered quite thoroughly, to the extent that he can employ it in largely automatic fashion, without having to focus his attention specifically on its individual parts or their arrangement. Despite its internal complexity, a unit constitutes for the speaker a "prepackaged" assembly; because he has no need to reflect on how to put it together, he can manipulate it with ease as a unitary entity. It is effectively simple, since it does not demand the constructive effort required for the creation of novel structures. Psychologists would speak of a "habit", or say that "automatization" has occurred." (Langacker, 1987 : 57).

² By that, I mean that, in English for example, to form a sentence 'basic grammar' would be a subject-verb-complement organization. And word lists would be sufficient as prefixes and suffixes have a meaning, but, not as an independent whole. Therefore, it is unusual to have lists of prefixes to learn when trying to master a foreign language; it is more common to learn vocabulary lists.

In our example, to know the definition of the term *prevent* is enough to understand the idiom. Nonetheless, some idioms have a less obvious meaning. In Charles Fillmore's opinion (1988), this difference calls for the creation of two categories: encoding and decoding idioms. On the one hand, the encoding idioms, like *prevent someone from doing something*, have a meaning that can be deduced from the knowledge of the individual words. On the other hand, decoding idioms does not make sense if you only add the individual meaning of the words.

One of the classic examples of decoding idiom used in Construction Grammar is *kick the bucket*. Separately, the verb 'to kick' and the substantive 'bucket', here defined by the deictic article 'the', have obvious definitions. But as a whole, their meaning changes and the compound means *to die*, a sense abstruse to anyone who does not know the idiom. Here are some examples to underline our issue:

- a. He kicked a bucket.
- b. He kicked the bucket.

In sentence (a), the result is that afterwards the subject might have had a painful foot. On the other hand, in sentence (b), the result is that the subject is dead. These examples show us that the idiom is indivisible, to change one part, here the article, is to change the meaning of the whole.

To learn how the language is built is thus essential for a good understanding and usage of it. The usual grammar and vocabulary lists are not enough to internalize it. Even if in the case of the word *prevent* definitions were enough to understand it, to truly use it correctly the idiom needs to be learnt as a whole. That is where Construction Grammar begins. In our example, changing the article changes the meaning, however, the meaning is not modified whether you take examples (c), or (d).

- c. He kicks the bucket.
- d. We all kick the bucket in the end!³

It is interesting to notice that the 'bucket' is still singular in (d), even if the subject is plural: the bucket that is life and that is kicked when someone dies is the same for everyone. The only modification between the two examples is the person who is dead, or to die. The verb changes according to the subject that experiences the action. The idiom is thus not a form as fixed as first thought. It changes according to certain grammatical rules. Adele Goldberg, the first theorist of what is known as Construction Grammar, defines constructions as something close to an idiom: "constructions themselves carry meaning, independently of the

³ From the lyrics of 'Kick the Bucket' by Charlie Winston, released in 2009.

words in the sentence” (1995: 221). And indeed, the meaning of the idiom *kick the bucket* is independent from the individual meanings of its words. As an independent unit of meaning of its own, it has its own definition. And as “free-standing entities”, constructions are “stored within the lexicon” (ibid), meaning that they have their own entry in our mental dictionary. The phrase could thus be represented as following: X KICK THE BUCKET. The verb ‘kick’ is under the form of its lemma⁴, a part that is declinable into all forms of the verb. It is thus the part that can be changed of what we now can call a construction.

Idioms are not the only parts of language that are constructions. Indeed, the theory is that constructions can be lexical but grammatical as well. Goldberg offers the following example (29):

- a. Sam sneezed.
- b. Sam sneezed the napkin off the table.

Example (a) is a typical intransitive use of the verb *to sneeze*. On the other hand, example (b) is rather unusual – Microsoft Word’s spellchecker even offers to correct it as it detects it as a verb confusion – but possible. The meaning of (b) is still understandable and deductible as *Sam causes the napkin to move*. The meaning therefore cannot be derived from *sneeze* but rather from the syntactic ‘caused motion construction’ of X CAUSE Y TO MOVE Z.

One of the goals of this research is thus to prove that the locution ‘war on’ can be described as a construction, deserving an entry of its own in our mental lexicon.

I.2 – WAR ON, A CONSTRUCTION?

The fact that ‘war on’ could be a construction on its own can be questioned. Indeed, are not the definitions of the verb ‘war’ associated with the definition of the preposition ‘on’ enough to understand the whole? And yet, we are arguing that the phrase ‘war on’ has a meaning independent from the words ‘war’ and ‘on’ on their own.

The first observation is the peculiar collocation that is the phrase ‘war on’. When the preposition ‘on’ is compared to other collocates preceding it in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) – a tool that will be more thoroughly explained in chapter II – this is what is obtained:

⁴ Lemma: “A lexical item as it is presented, usually in a standardized form, in a dictionary entry; a definiendum.” OED.

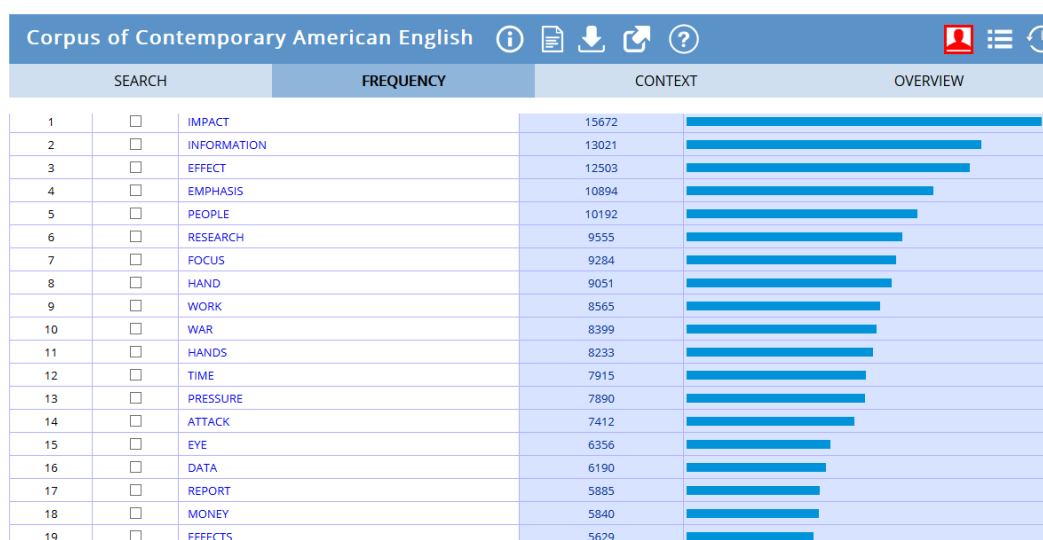


fig.1 – COCA: one collocate before + ‘on’

With ‘impact’, ‘effect’, ‘emphasis’, ‘focus’, ‘hand’, ‘pressure’, ‘eye’, ‘influence’, ‘light’, etc., the meaning of ‘on’ is almost physical, close to the core definition of the preposition: “Into the position of being supported by the upper surface of something” (OED), inducing some sort of surface contact. On the other hand, collocated to ‘information’, ‘research’, ‘work’, ‘data’, ‘report’, etc., the meaning of ‘on’ is equivalent to the preposition ‘about’. ‘Time’, and ‘money’ cannot be put in either of these groups. However, when the co-text is looked at more closely, most of the occurrences of the preposition are the consequences of the use of the verb ‘spend’ preceding the collocation. The preposition could then belong more to the verb ‘spend’ than to the substantive, as in a X [SPEND] Y ON Z construction. ‘Ban’ is a little bit trickier. Indeed, ‘ban against’ is possible, and means the same thing as ‘ban on’, even if it is not very used: there are only 96 occurrences of ‘ban against’ out of the 560M words of the corpus, while ‘ban on’ has almost 4000 occurrences. However, ‘ban on’ does not involve any aggression on the prepositional object following ‘on’, it just forbids it. With a closer look, it can be noticed that, when it is a verb, ‘ban’ has a direct object, like in example (a).

- (a) The Parliament is debating about whether to ban fox hunting.
- (b) Trump’s ban on traveling visa was a controversial decision.
- (c) The USA put a ban on travellers coming from Muslim countries.

In example (b) and (c), when it is a substantive, ‘ban’ requires a preposition, ‘on’. This preposition could be linked to the conjugated verb ‘put’, and in that case, ‘on’ reflects its prototypical physical definition. Here what we can see is that the only case in which the preposition ‘on’ can be synonymous of ‘against’ is when it is a collocate of ‘war’, making it quite unique in this list. Thus the association of the words ‘war’ and ‘on’ brings a meaning

that is not there in the other cases. The compound of ‘war on’ then induces a different meaning of ‘on’, a meaning not found in its most used collocates. Even ‘attack’, which belongs to the semantic field of *war*, is not to be understood as ‘against’. Indeed, an ‘attack on’ is always physically situated on what follows the preposition while a ‘war on’ can be led on different fronts: an attack on Germany is physically led in Germany while the war on Germany was fought in France for example.⁵

It could be argued that the ‘on’ part suffices on its own to induce a construction that could be something like [AGGRESSION] ON X. However, this does not work in most cases. If this particular meaning of ‘on’, linked to a verb or noun belonging to the warfare semantic field, were enough to induce a metaphorical interpretation, “campaigning on a sort of idealized return to the 1950s, where family dinners are the norm and neighbors watch out for one another”, an example taken from the COCA, would be interpreted as someone being against this “return to the 1950s”, while here it is simply a campaign based on an idealization of this era.

‘War’ and ‘campaign’, as verbs or substantives, are different things. But both belong to the semantic field of *warfare*; ‘war’ is “the employment of armed forces against a foreign power, or against an opposing party in the state”, and ‘campaign’ can be “a series of military operations (...) involving a specified type of fighting” (OED). The question now is to see, as both can be used to mean a fight against an enemy, if both can be used with the prepositions ‘against’ and ‘on’.

Corpus of Contemporary American English

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

SEE CONTEXT: CLICK ON WORD (ALL SECTIONS), NUMBER (ONE SECTION), OR [CONTEXT] (SELECT) [HELP...]

iWeb

CAMPAIGN

ON

	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONTEXT	ALL <input type="checkbox"/>	SPOKEN <input type="checkbox"/>	FICTION <input type="checkbox"/>	MAGAZINE <input type="checkbox"/>	NEWSPAPER <input type="checkbox"/>	ACADEMIC <input type="checkbox"/>	1990-1994 <input type="checkbox"/>	1995-1999 <input type="checkbox"/>	2000-2004 <input type="checkbox"/>	2005-2009 <input type="checkbox"/>	2010-2014 <input type="checkbox"/>	2015-2017 <input type="checkbox"/>
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	CAMPAIGN ON	706	331	11	120	177	67	138	115	124	107	116	106

1.271 seconds

	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONTEXT	ALL <input type="checkbox"/>	SPOKEN <input type="checkbox"/>	FICTION <input type="checkbox"/>	MAGAZINE <input type="checkbox"/>	NEWSPAPER <input type="checkbox"/>	ACADEMIC <input type="checkbox"/>	1990-1994 <input type="checkbox"/>	1995-1999 <input type="checkbox"/>	2000-2004 <input type="checkbox"/>	2005-2009 <input type="checkbox"/>	2010-2014 <input type="checkbox"/>	2015-2017 <input type="checkbox"/>
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	CAMPAIGN AGAINST	2033	517	62	450	610	394	414	339	465	294	304	217

1.424 seconds

fig.2 – COCA: ‘campaign’ + preposition ‘on’ or ‘against’

⁵ The example ‘war on Germany’ was used here and throughout this research only because it is the most frequent occurrence of a WAR ON construction followed by the name of a country.









Corpus of Contemporary American English					    				  	
SEARCH			FREQUENCY		CONTEXT				OVERVIEW	
5	2017	SPOK	Fox: On The Record: Baier	A B C	that we have ongoing wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, although the president ran a campaign on the fact that wars would end in Iraq and Afghanistan					
6	2017	SPOK	CNN: Anderson Cooper	A B C	because there is a need to understand the effect of this kind of fake news campaign on the election and whether anyone in the Trump camp					
7	2017	SPOK	CNN: Anderson Cooper	A B C	campaign officials, including Manafort and Russian officials. Manafort was fired by the Trump campaign on August 19th. That was the same					
8	2017	SPOK	ABC: This Week	A B C	's got that laser focus on the market or now on the, over the campaign on the voters, what do they want to hear? That's who he					
9	2017	FIC	BklnHeritBones	A B C	breathing down my neck every step of the way. Terence Bellington had run his campaign on a sort of idealized return to the 1950s, where fa					
10	2017	MAG	Mother Jones	A B C	there. " Shortly after being fired over the tweet, McHugh launched a crowdfunding campaign on WeSearchr, where she has raised \$7,167 to					
11	2017	MAG	Slate Magazine	A B C	Gillespie may have put physical distance between himself and Trump, who never came to campaign on his behalf, but rhetorically he wasn't					
12	2017	MAG	Mother Jones	A B C	to a fact sheet shared with reporters. The caucus launched a related social media campaign on Tuesday, and will continue the promotion Wi					
13	2017	MAG	Salon	A B C	Trumpism was never a legitimate vehicle for that outrage. # Donald Trump built his campaign on lies and pseudo-issues, and even when the					
14	2017	MAG	Business Insider	A B C	need to get from A to B cheaply don't have unions or lawyers to campaign on their behalf.) # A change in politics can happen in any city					
15	2017	MAG	Slate Magazine	A B C	transgender bathrooms," slamming Gillespie as a "cuckservative," and centering his campaign on an aggressive defense of the state's Coni					
16	2017	MAG	Mother Jones	A B C	Agents Registration Act, Manafort and Gates hired Washington lobbying firms to conduct an influence campaign on behalf of then-Ukrainiar					
17	2017	MAG	Slate Magazine	A B C	been deported from illegally reentering the country. " # O'Reilly built his successful persuasion campaign on a highly misleading factual clai					
18	2017	NEWS	Washington Times	A B C	, say, transgender rights than on science and math standards? # Did Clinton campaign on overturning those policies -- or advancing the sam					
19	2017	NEWS	OregonLive.com	A B C	practice or whether the 27-year-old could be available to play when Portland opens its playoff campaign on Oct. 30 or 31. # " I was told he w					
20	2017	NEWS	Colorado Springs Gazette	A B C	or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidat					
21	2017	NEWS	The Detroit News	A B C	and state Sen. Patrick Colbeck of Canton Township is scheduled to " launch " his campaign on Saturday after filing paperwork on May 31. # \					
22	2017	NEWS	The Boston Globe	A B C	Staff/file # George H.W. Bush met with Boston Globe editors in Kennebunkport during his presidential campaign on July 11, 1988.					

fig.3 – COCA: ‘campaign on’ – context – 2017

In some cases, the ‘on’ belongs to another construction (ON ONE’S SIDE, ON [DAY], etc.); those utterances are irrelevant to our point. But what can be seen here is that the phrase ‘campaign on’ is followed by a subject of (political) campaign, not an enemy. It appears to mean it is about the subject that follows, not against it. It is then part of one of the other two meanings of the preposition ‘on’ spotted earlier. For example, in “a vigorous public education campaign on water conservation”, it seems dubious to affirm that the campaign is against “water conservation”. On the other hand, it seems like in all the cases, the phrase ‘campaign against’ targets the entity following it. The only exception could be “on the question of who's doing a better job of handling the campaign on terror, Bush has gone from 52 percent to 55 percent” but is it really an exception when in the co-text you understand it is a political campaign, and it is more about terror than against it.⁶ Then, the preposition ‘on’ does not trigger the warlike meaning of the word ‘campaign. It is not the ON [ENEMY] alone which induces a struggle against the aforesaid enemy but the whole WAR ON [ENEMY] construction.

The preposition ‘on’ alone is therefore not the only bearer of meaning. But does this justify a WAR ON construction? Indeed, a ‘war’ followed by another preposition could also be a construction worth studying, or, in other words, what is the interest of a WAR ON construction? Could a construction of the type WAR X ENEMY, without necessarily ‘on’ as a preposition, be enough to induce violence against the aforesaid enemy?

⁶ Or it could be argued that the ‘War on Terror’ is so entrenched in the language that a ‘campaign on terror’ would be understood as a political extension of the said ‘war’.

	CONTEXT	ALL	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1	IN	4685	26	43	72	74	70	186	90	116	111	139	268	224	325	525	385	569	411	315	282	454
2	WITH	4253	38	105	178	258	244	259	174	174	251	298	288	265	246	316	234	173	157	229	157	209
3	OF	3711	9	97	187	173	167	268	185	260	245	219	285	201	190	249	169	156	180	178	127	166
4	AGAINST	2252	14	50	73	76	82	145	64	74	67	82	125	91	104	268	171	139	122	173	102	230
5	ON	2248	10	10	34	38	43	73	46	65	86	66	178	132	142	249	130	151	123	153	169	350
6	BETWEEN	1216	3	29	26	53	25	64	40	51	57	84	89	72	91	96	76	79	77	94	49	61
7	FOR	1185	5	13	20	34	34	84	45	51	76	60	99	96	74	134	62	66	78	62	40	52
8	TO	921	9	10	19	34	29	62	37	29	44	36	92	58	54	122	55	57	62	41	35	36
9	BY	722	4	4	19	9	13	44	21	23	21	38	74	51	57	93	48	68	52	34	25	24
10	UPON	607	5	26	40	69	37	76	46	49	41	34	70	32	15	27	15	12	6	4		3
11	AS	572	1	4	10	6	9	27	3	25	19	27	56	69	45	65	38	47	39	34	15	33
12	AT	382	2	11	6	9	11	28	21	14	15	14	27	23	29	54	22	15	24	26	12	19
13	FROM	287	4	3	2	7	4	24	11	9	14	10	20	25	18	40	13	17	23	17	9	17
14	WITHOUT	242	2	2	3	7	5	15	4	6	5	10	25	17	19	34	24	11	16	12	11	14
15	INTO	193		5	10	5	12	11	14	15	8	10	11	8	10	20	9	14	9	10	6	6
16	OVER	162				1	1	1	1	5	4	8	11	10	8	20	9	23	14	18	12	16
17	UNDER	111		2	1	4	1	9	2	3	2	6	14	12	10	9	4	8	8	9	2	5

fig.4 – COHA: ‘war’ + collocate (part of speech: preposition)

The most used prepositions as immediate collocates of war are listed in figure 4. The number of utterances of each of these seventeen prepositions peaked in the 1860s, the 1910s, and the 1940s, the decades during which occurred the three main wars in which the United States was involved. This could be explained by the fact that the number of occurrences of the word ‘war’ surged, of course, and therefore, its collocates were used more frequently as well.

After analysis, some prepositions from this list were rejected. Indeed, the subject here is the prepositions that could fit a WAR X ENEMY construction that implies someone being at war with, or being against, an enemy. Therefore, prepositions like ‘of’, ‘for’, ‘by’, ‘from’, ‘as’, and ‘into’ do not correspond to the present research as they cannot be used in that sense. The collocation ‘war over’ is followed by the prize of the war, its goal, not its enemy, as it is used in some occurrences like “England and our country would go to war over Venezuela”. In this utterance, Venezuela clearly appears as the thing to win, rather than the enemy targeted by the war. It can also be followed by the reason why the war is fought. In ‘war to’, the preposition is called by the verb placed before the verb or an infinitive following it. In ‘war between’, the preposition does not imply a violence against one enemy but a mutual violence. The noun phrase following the preposition then is not one of the enemies, but the two belligerents. It then looks like the speaker is more neutral, exterior to the conflict. A ‘war at’ is followed by the place where the battle takes place, a pattern that can be found in the set phrase ‘war in’. Indeed, both can be followed by the name of a country but in no case does this necessarily mean that the war is against the country. In utterances like “the damaged of the war in Belgium”, the war was not fought against the country but on its territory. That is what

differentiates it from the phrase ‘war on Germany’ as in this case, the war is not necessarily fought *in* Germany but it necessarily is *against* Germany.⁷

Therefore, in this list, only three prepositions were kept as relevant: ‘against’, ‘with’, and of course ‘on’. All of them are used in this pattern of WAR X ENEMY. ‘War with’ sometimes is triggered by another construction that has nothing to do with our point, like “will look back on war with as much amazement” (1826). However, in most cases, it is followed by an enemy, usually a country or a person. Some metaphorical occurrences can be found like “such a spirit is unquestionably at war with the best interests of the country” (1825) or “war with Nature”. The locution ‘war against’ is used in the same way: followed by a country or a person. It is also used in some metaphorical utterances, like “he wages a perpetual war against the happiness of mankind” (1826). By definition, both prepositions can mean “near or close to, alongside” (OED). Historically, the meaning of ‘with’ is even close to the meaning of ‘against’, indeed “the prevailing senses of this preposition in the earliest periods are those of opposition (‘against’) (...) which are now current only in certain traditional collocations or specific applications” (OED). Both then have this core meaning of opposition. Therefore, the only case in which the meaning of the preposition depends on its collocation with ‘war’ is, once again, ‘on’. There is thus a particularity in the WAR ON construction, exceeding an eventual WAR X ENEMY construction.

I.3 – METAPHORS AND SCENARIOS

One of the interesting sides of the WAR ON construction is when it is used metaphorically. Indeed, a war on Germany is equivalent to a literal war against Germany.⁸ However, the “war on the energy problem”, studied later in this chapter, could hardly be found in the form of ‘war against the energy problem’⁹. Or at least, it was not used, meaning that the WAR ON construction brings a particular meaning absent from the locution ‘war against’. We briefly analyzed the idiom *to kick the bucket*, which obviously is not used literally. What about the

⁷ What differentiates a *war on* and a *war in* could be a question of subjectivity. A war *on* the South and a war *in* the South implies a different point of view from the speaker. This could be also true when comparing “a war between the United States and Iraq” or “Our war on Iraq”.

⁸ On the question of the difference between a word used ‘literally’ or ‘figuratively’, I have to agree with Stéphanie Bonnefille’s opinion: there is only an “artificial and convenient boundary” between the two (2001: 147), and Raymond W. Gibbs Jr. would add “the mind is not inherently literal” (1994: 16). This imaginative “clear cut” separating literal and figurative meaning will however be used here to underline the different usages of the WAR ON construction and for the purpose of discussing the different levels of reading of a speech. Indeed, even the fact that the war on Germany is said to be literal could be discussed.

⁹ Found in COCA: two occurrences, “war against US energy independence” 2013 and “war against energy abuse”. The utterance thus exists, but it is very uncommon.

WAR ON construction? Is it used metaphorically or literally? In what cases is it used one way or another? And so, before to ask ourselves these questions, we need to define what could be a metaphor and what is the use of this linguistic tool.

I.3.1 – METAPHOR THEORY

For William Croft, the meaning of a word is “encyclopaedic”. According to him, a dictionary definition cannot grasp the full meaning of a word: “everything you know about the concept is part of its meaning”. (Croft, 2006: 270). Thus, *restaurant* is not just “a place where people pay to sit and eat meals that are cooked and served on the premises” (OED). It is also all of what could be considered common knowledge about the very concept of *restaurant*, what you would expect to find in a place like this: waiters, kitchens, menus, etc. Someone says “I am going to a restaurant today, I heard the cook was an ace”. The definite article “the” is a reference to something already identified in a text or a conversation, i.e. it is used when the noun already have been mentioned. In our example, the word “cook” was never mentioned before. But it appears logical to have a cook in a restaurant. The determination itself proves that “cook” is inferred when talking about a restaurant, even if it is the first occurrence of “cook” in the dialogue. It is admittedly implied in the definition, since the meals are “cooked”. However, additional common knowledge is comprised in the *restaurant* word. In Europe, a *restaurant* is expected to have cutlery, while in Asia, chopsticks are the norm. Even the interactions within a restaurant are normed by culture: a waiter in the USA expects to be tipped when it is up to the client whether he does it or not in Europe; cutlery and service are included in the price in most European countries while in Italy it is not. The *restaurant* domain comprises all knowledge necessary to understand the concept, and more than a list of words, language would thus be an “encyclopaedic” network of domains.

But the question here is about when words are not used in their literal meaning. They do not refer to their own domain, but lend some of their features to another domain, creating a metaphor. Aristotle offers the following definition of the linguistic tool that is a metaphor: “Metaphor is giving the thing a name that belongs to something else.” When one of Shakespeare’s characters claimed that “all the world’s a stage”¹⁰ (1599), a metaphor he extended throughout his declamation, he gave the world a name that belongs to the semantic field of *theatre*. He created a relation between “world” and “stage” but also between the ideas

¹⁰ “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances.” *As You Like It*, William Shakespeare, written circa 1599.

that are linked to both words. Thus, two concepts are involved in a single utterance, features of the first one being used to understand and describe the second one. Here, the metaphor is used as a poetic device that creates a double-fold impression: reality is just an act, but it also suggests that what is happening in the play is closer to reality than first thought. However, this interpretation belongs to the viewer/reader, and the metaphor, effective or not, belongs in that case to the literary discourse. Metaphors are therefore commonly considered as surface operations that do not have consequences on our conceptualization of the world: it is hardly convincing to say that Jacques's declamation changed how people perceived the world, or made them even question its reality.

On the other hand, cognitive linguists believe that the metaphorical process is anchored more deeply in our mind; it helps us to understand and organize abstract notions. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's theory is that a metaphor is a complex cognitive process on which depends how we perceive concepts. According to them, these concepts would even be understood only through metaphors, shaped by them, and expressed in our everyday language thanks to them.

For example, *time* is an abstract notion. It is defined as following: "the indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future, regarded as a whole" (OED). Thus, *time* would be a process, defined as a "whole". And yet, we conceive it as separable, since some people have more time than others. Lakoff and Johnson explain that phenomenon:

Metaphors pervade our normal conceptual system. Because so many of the concepts that are important to us are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (...), we need to get a grasp on them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms. (1980: 115)

Thus, our conceptualization of the world depends on a combination of concepts: one abstract which understanding is supported by a less abstract one. This getting "a grasp on" a concept by using another one is conceptualized as a mapping across conceptual domains; a metaphor thus is a "set of ontological correspondences by mapping knowledge about [the source domain] onto knowledge about [the target domain]" (Lakoff, 1993: 207). It can be simplified into the paradigm TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN.

In our example, *time* is defined by its lack of delineation and boundaries: it is "indefinite". To understand it, to "get a grasp" on the concept, we use, between others, a concept that is clearer in our mind: *money*.

<i>source domain: MONEY</i>	<i>target domain: TIME</i>
spend	pass time
borrow	ask someone to dedicate his time to us
invest in something /waste	dedicate time to someone /without any result
cost/worth	time as precious
own	have time to do something

fig.5 – TIME IS MONEY

In this table, the concept of *money* and the verbs expected to be found in its domain are on one side and on the other can be seen the *time* domain and what the verbs of *money* means when they are used in a time-related context. Thus, we have the ‘features’ of the *time* domain, related back to the *money* domain. To ask someone to dedicate time to you, you ask if you can ‘borrow’ their time. A professor helping a student for many hours can be said to ‘have invested’ time in this student, in his success. Thus *time* can be spent, wasted, or lost, a dimension its definition did not give. According to Lakoff and Johnson’s paradigm, *time* (target domain) would be mapped on *money* (source domain), and we would thus have a TIME IS MONEY metaphor. A link that can be underlined by the fact that both can be used in a X SPEND Y ON Z construction.

Metaphor Theory changed through time and theorists offered new ideas to conceptualize metaphors. For example, Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner theorized the existence of a third space that would be a blend of the two domains involved in the process of a metaphor (target and source), “two input spaces with different organizing frames, one of which is projected to organize the blend” (2008: 126). However seducing this theory is, it will not be developed further here.

Lakoff and Johnson’s theory mainly focuses on these “pervading” metaphors, those that influence language deeply. However, these metaphors are not created by a conscious process: if we do not think about it, the TIME IS MONEY metaphor is not used intentionally. Yet, Gerard Steen, among others, argued that some metaphors are deliberate: they can be “a relatively conscious discourse strategy that aims to elicit particular rhetorical effects”, “expressly meant to change the addressee’s perspective on the referent or topic” (2008: 222-3). Andreas Musolff adds that, on average, when one uses a metaphor, it is not unconsciously and one does not “automatically adopts entrenched concepts or frames” but rather “makes

communicative choices and is aware of their contextual implications and their wider and sociopolitical and practical effects” (2016: 92). Therefore, not only do metaphors influence our way of conceptualizing the world, but they can also be tools deliberately used to influence the audience and its perception.

I.3.2 – POLITICAL USE OF METAPHORS

Without talking of Sapir and Whorf’s hypothesis on language¹¹, choosing a word over another is rarely innocent. In March 2017, month of the *Francophonie* in Ireland, the embassy and Maynooth University organized an exhibition and received the linguist Bernard Cerquiglini, the *recteur honoraire de l’Agence universitaire de la Francophonie*, and an academician, and Dr. Vilmos Bárdosi, a lexicographer at the university Eötvös Loránd of Budapest, who joined their voices in a presentation: ‘*Le français, une langue de dictionnaires*’. During the conference, the two lexicographers presented this idea and explained how even dictionary making, an activity that does not look subjective as such, is a question of choices and these choices never are completely objective. For example, in an edition of 1910 of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the entry for ‘King Leopold II’ of Belgium ignored the negative sides of his reign, manipulating the perception one can have of this person through the definition following his name: the entry “talked about the wonderful things he did, how he built up the country and so on” and only mention, at the end, that “he sometimes treated his people harshly”—yes, such as murdering ten million people” (Chomsky, 2013:13). Each choice in the creation of an entry in a dictionary is thus a stance of the lexicographer.

Therefore, using a word rather than another, an image rather than another to illustrate a discourse, have consequences on how a speech is perceived. In the case of political speech, this is utterly important as the speech is made to be understood by the mass, to be spread, and above all, to be convincing. Words need to be catchy; ideas need to be unambiguous, if only in appearance. In order to be the clearer possible, speeches often are peppered with images and metaphors, linguistic devices used to underline, highlight, and illustrate one’s remarks.

However, we just demonstrated that metaphors are not just mere illustrations, or powerful images used to illustrate rather than to prove a point. Among these deliberate metaphors, Musolff intends to make a distinction between metaphors as poetic devices, and political

¹¹ Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf are the main figures of what was later known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: according to them, mental representations depend on linguistic categories, different languages would then be the reflection of different visions of the world and would even influence these visions of the world.

metaphors. He does not denigrate one or the other. In his opinion, metaphors in poetry are there to be interpreted freely by the reader who is expected to have an artistic interpretation of it:

The meaning of poetic metaphors in whatever genre is no mere cross-domain mapping of concepts for the purposes of informing the readers/hearers about facts or influencing their beliefs and attitudes. Poetic metaphor aims first and foremost to achieve artistic effects and this requires sustained and sophisticated interpretative work. (2016: 136)

In that sense, poetic metaphors do not follow Lakoff and Johnson's Metaphor Theory pattern. They are not the result of a mapping between domains to support an argument but art.

On the other hand, political metaphors are used as argumentative devices, to prove a point or to underline an idea. In Musolff's opinion, poetic discourse and political discourse are different in their purposes. Therefore, metaphors used in one differ from the metaphors used in the other:

Political discourse (...) is characterized by competitive debate and dispute because its participants aim to gain a power advantage over each other, through offering their audiences new nuances of meaning and interpretations, which promise to lead to new initiatives in the political process. Its dominant functional type is not poetic but polemical and interactional: influencing others' beliefs and attitudes and suggesting new courses of action. Political metaphor thus serves primarily as a means to change meanings, and hence, to change social and political attitudes. (ibid)

The fact that the aim of each discourse is different thus influences the significance, weight, and use of metaphors. Metaphors offer "new nuances", they "convey a 'surplus' of meaning that cannot be paraphrased in literal formulations" and furthermore, "the added communicative value of metaphor takes on special significance because all political utterances and their interpretations are continually contested and renegotiated" (135).

It is in this "surplus" of meaning that lies the political manipulation. Many believe that how a speech is phrased, and built with metaphors, influences how it is perceived but also how the reality described by the discourse is perceived: the speech writer selects facts, highlighting some and shadowing others (Entman, 1993; 2003; Musolff, 2016). The perception of the situation described in the speech will be determined, framed, by the metaphors used by the speaker (Johnson, 2014: 2). These tools therefore "affect" how the audience "reason on these issues" (Boeynaems, 2017). As Musolff phrases it, political discourse aims at gaining power and influencing. Robert Entman adds that, to be successful, "political communication requires the framing of events, issues and actors in ways that promote perceptions and interpretations that benefit one side while hindering the other"

(2003: 414). This was notably observed during World War II: Jewish people were politically framed as vermin, rats, metaphors that eased the idea of necessary extermination. During a talk on BBC, Stephen Fry exposed this idea (2011). According to him, during the early years of Nazi Germany, language was used “again, and again, and again, to dehumanize the person that had to be killed.” The idea was to frame the Jews as “subhuman”, or as a “virus”, “anything but a human being”. And after a media hype for weeks, “it becomes possible to do things to them”. For him, “the moment we begin to use special language for special people,” it gives the ability to “ordinary people” to kill.

With a metaphor, a politician links two ideas, mapping across two different domains and thus framing an event in a beneficial way for them. During the energy crisis of 1979, on July 15th, 1979 exactly, President Carter compared the situation to “the moral equivalent of war”¹²:

Ten days ago I had planned to speak to you again about a very important *subject*—energy. For the fifth time I *would have described* the urgency of the problem and laid out a series of legislative recommendations to the Congress. (...)

I invited to Camp David people from almost every segment of our society—business and labor, teachers and preachers, Governors, mayors, and private citizens. (...) First of all, I got a lot of personal advice. Let me quote a few of the typical comments that I wrote down. (...) This kind of summarized a lot of other statements: "Mr. President, we are confronted with a moral and a spiritual *crisis*." (...) And this one from a labor leader got to the heart of it: "The real issue is freedom. **We must deal with the energy problem on a war footing.**" And the last that I'll read: "When **we enter the moral equivalent of war**, Mr. President, don't issue us *BB guns*."

In the first paragraph, Carter exposes what he *would have* said in a ‘normal’ situation, what *would have* been his strategy: a group of laws proposed to be passed, exposed through a simple rhetoric of urgency and seriousness. But he then implied that, in a moment of what he first described as a “crisis”, it was not enough. His speech soon escalated to a WAR metaphor, intertwining moral and war vocabulary. His speech literally put the energy crisis and war on the same level, on the same “footing,” creating an equivalence that enabled the WAR metaphor. After a long sermon on the national loss of faith and the shattering of American confidence, Carter added that the American people and himself

are the generation that will **win the war on the energy problem** and in that process rebuild the unity and confidence of America. (...) We can take the first steps down that path as we begin *to solve* our energy *problem*. Energy will be the immediate test of our ability to unite this Nation, and it can also be the *standard* around which *we rally*. **On the battlefield of energy** we can win for our Nation a new confidence, and we can seize control again of our common destiny. (...) This intolerable dependence on

¹² All emphases (bold or italic) on the transcriptions of any presidential speech or quote were added by me.

foreign oil *threatens* our economic independence and the very security of our Nation. The energy crisis is real. It is worldwide. It is a clear and present *danger* to our Nation. (...) To give us *energy security*, I am asking for the most massive peacetime commitment of funds and resources in our Nation's history to develop America's own alternative sources of fuel—from coal, from oil shale, from plant products for gasohol, from unconventional gas, from the Sun. (...) *Just as a similar synthetic rubber corporation helped us win World War II, so will we mobilize American determination and ability to win the energy war.* (...) To make absolutely certain that nothing stands in the way of achieving these goals, I will urge Congress to create an energy mobilization board which, *like the War Production Board in World War II*, will have the responsibility and authority to cut through the red tape, the delays, and the endless roadblocks to completing key energy projects. (...) Every act of energy conservation like this is more than just common sense—I tell you it is *an act of patriotism*. (...) I firmly believe that we have the national will *to win this war*. (...) I do not promise you that *this struggle for freedom* will be easy. (...) What I do promise you is that *I will lead our fight*.

Carter alternated between a *war* semantic field with verbs such as “win”, “defeat”, “fight”, and the *problem* semantic field using “solve”, “crisis”, etc¹³. He intertwined the crisis with a WAR metaphor allowing him to use expressions such as “the battlefield of energy”.

With those words, he did not declare a war against an enemy, but he inferred that energy was something worth waging a figurative war for, building with his rhetoric a DEFENDING ENERGY INTERESTS IS WAR metaphor.

<i>source domain: war</i>	<i>Target domain: defending energy interests</i>
strategy	economic measures
fight	struggle for an energy secure nation
American interests (territory/defense)	energy
war measures	special presidential measures
target/goal	energy independence
enemy	loss of faith/lack of trust in the government
peace	energy security
patriotism = join or support the troops	energy conservation
general/leader	President

fig.6 – DEFENDING ENERGY INTERESTS IS WAR

¹³ When Musolff explains his point on what is part of the *war* domain and what is only vaguely related to it, he considers that ‘win’ is not in it; however, here a problem cannot be won, and a war cannot be solved, but the opposite is true.

The idea of *war* triggers all the knowledge and feelings linked to the *war* domain like patriotism and the defense of the country's best interests. Even if only economic measures were taken, without any intervention of the army, the so-called 'Carter Doctrine' was built on this DEFENDING ENERGY INTERESTS IS WAR rhetoric and inferred retaliation to whoever would threaten American oil interests. According to Lakoff and Johnson, the consequences were that the "war metaphor highlighted certain realities and hid others" (1980: 156). The metaphor thus becomes a political tool to manipulate the audience, a "license for policy change, and political and economic action" (ibid).

In Carter's speech, the WAR metaphor is also based on a comparison with the Second World War, used twice. He linked the national feelings during WWII, and the urgency of the special measures, to the 'energy crisis'. According to Entman, "those frames that employ more culturally resonant terms have the greatest potential for influence" (2003: 417). Thanks to the comparison, Carter framed the crisis in a way that 'resonated' strongly with his audience. The theory of Musolff's book, *Political Metaphor Analysis* (2016), is that those political speeches are not only full of metaphors, but that these metaphors are not isolated or chosen by chance. His idea is that political discourse is based on a continuity of 'scenarios' that influence the audience's perception of the situation. In his opinion, Metaphor Theory is "too broad and at the same time too rigid to provide a sufficient grounding for metaphors" (37), and needs to be revised. His analysis of political metaphor usage led him to consider metaphors as "both the product of and a means to shape thought, emotion and social perception" (137), adding this last fold to Lakoff and Johnson's Metaphor Theory.

I.3.3 – SCENARIOS

To illustrate the idea of a scenario, we could mention as example the phrase 'a city upon a hill' which was often a metaphor of American exceptionalism, first used in that sense by John Winthrop before the colonization of what would become the United States. The expression evolved but is still echoing American history and it was used again and again in famous speeches¹⁴, creating a scenario where the United States needs to lead and be an example for the world. This UNITED STATES AS A WORLD EXAMPLE scenario pops in the mind of the audience when the A CITY UPON A HILL IS THE UNITED STATES metaphor is used.

¹⁴ It can be found in various speeches, independently of the political side of the fence of the speaker. Among others, it was used by J. F. Kennedy, Barack Obama, Ronald Reagan, Mitt Romney, etc.

In Musolff's opinion, in political discourse, we deliberately choose metaphorical elements from a scenario:

Scenarios in themselves are not metaphor-specific or grounded in a particular source domain, but should rather be seen as conceptual patterns that emerge in discourse and are made narratively and argumentatively coherent by specific metaphors, which in turn makes them prime candidates for 'self-fulfilling prophecies'. (2016: 87)

Thus, he underlines the idea of a script, of a "narrative and argumentative bias" due to a scenario (30). He uses the example of a political disagreement that opposed the United Kingdom to the European Union, a disagreement that was recounted in the press as a POLITICAL CONFLICT IS WAR metaphor. His conclusions are that "this scenario is more than a random selection of conceptual elements from the general *war* domain, but rather a particular set of presuppositions that are chosen for specific argumentative purposes (...)" (ibid). In his opinion, the audience, and sometimes even the speaker, does not have a full awareness of the precedent of the scenario but still has awareness of the discourse historical status (70). The audience might not be aware the whole historicity of the A CITY UPON A HILL IS THE UNITED STATES metaphor, but they still perceive its historical weight. Musolff even argues that metaphors only have a political effect when integrated "into seemingly plausible scenarios with a minimal narrative structure" (112), the scenario thus becomes necessary to the effectiveness of the metaphor. Thus, the UNITED STATES AS A WORLD EXAMPLE scenario is not based on any source domain but creates a rhetorical pattern that comes up throughout some of the US most famous speeches. This pattern is made coherent thanks to "specific metaphors" like the A CITY UPON A HILL IS THE UNITED STATES metaphor.

If we take Carter's speech again, we notice that several metaphors are entangled and extended throughout the text. The WAR metaphor, used directly or indirectly through words of the semantic field of *war*, answers perfectly to what Musolff identifies as a "successful metaphor scenario": a scenario that "reassures its users of participating in the crucial public debates of their community" but also allows "for new, meaning-changing applications that make the metaphor seem convincing" (138). Carter framed the energy crisis in a WAR metaphor scenario and offered the solutions that corresponded.

I.4 – CONCLUSION

In this first part was demonstrated that the locution ‘war on’ can indeed be considered as a construction. Plus, in some cases thus, the ‘war’ part of the WAR ON construction is metaphorical and can be used in a WAR scenario to influence audiences, but it can also be argued that the preposition as well has a metaphorical dimension. Indeed, we demonstrated that, used as a collocate of ‘war’, ‘on’ has a unique meaning close to the meaning of ‘against’. And it would be difficult to find it a meaning related to surface contact in that context. Indeed, when associated with the verb ‘war’ and followed by an enemy, ‘on’ cannot be said to be used literally. A ‘war on sea’ is literally waged at sea, *on* water; the same is true for a ‘war on land’. However, the ‘war on Germany’ does not necessarily have to be waged *in* Germany, on German territory, but is in any case a war against the aforesaid State.

William Croft and Alan D. Cruse (2004: 195) analyzed the preposition in the sentence ‘He is in danger’. In this sentence, ‘in’ “has a basic locative meaning” and its use is “a metaphorical extension of this”: “a state (danger) is conceived as a container that one can be inside of or outside of”. It creates a EMOTIONAL STATES ARE CONTAINERS metaphor, allowing speakers to be *in* those states. It could then be argued that in the case of a ‘war on Germany’, ‘on’ is used in its “basic locative meaning” and creates a metaphor of the type ENEMIES ARE TERRITORIES. However, territories are conquered, not defeated; therefore the metaphor could not function as an enemy could never be well described or correctly understood through the concept of *territory*.

Plus, following Lakoff and Johnson’s Metaphor Theory, a mapping between two domains is necessary to obtain a metaphor, like between the source domain *money* and the target domain *time*. However, Germany can be an enemy, but it also is a territory; the source domain and target domain would therefore be identical. So, first of all, in ‘war on Germany’, the preposition part does not follow the same pattern than the preposition ‘in’ in Croft and Cruse’s example: the own meaning of the preposition ‘on’ changes and takes on a metaphorical dimension, but not necessarily what follows. Second of all, when used in a WAR ON construction, Germany is not defined as a territory since the war is not necessarily fought on the German territory. The name *Germany* acts here as a sort of metonymy of the German nation. Contrary to a metaphor, a metonymy is a mapping within a single domain. However, in the case of nations, and states, it is very difficult to find what their names stand for. Indeed, Croft and Cruse (220) raises this very question, offering the following examples:

- a. Britain declares war on Iraq.

- b. The government have decided to restrict immigration.
- c. *Britain declare war on Iraq.

Ignoring the presence of the WAR ON construction in their example, it is still “hard to specify exactly what *Britain* refers to on a pure metonymic construal” in example (a), or at least to “pinpoint the facet involved”. According to them, it cannot refer to the government as, in British English, sentence (b) is possible while example (c) is not. There is therefore a “fusion” of “country, government, final decision-taker, monarch (perhaps), and so on (...) by a process that is neither pure metaphor nor pure metonymy” in example (a), the word *Britain* embodying all these concepts. Musolff offered a PLACE FOR INSTITUTIONS metaphor, like when one uses Brussels to mean the governing institutions of the European Union (2016: 8). However, Brussels belongs to the *European Union* domain; once again, the mapping is internal to a single domain, Brussels embodying the whole domain while being only one of its facets. The word ‘Germany’ can represent state, government, head of state, territory, and so on, i.e. any facet of the *Germany* domain. But in the expression ‘war on Germany’, it might be more a representation of its government; indeed, if a revolution would take place in the country targeted by the war, it is doubtful that the belligerent would continue a war against the new government. An occurrence of the WAR ON construction found in the COHA states that “One makes war on governments, not on nations” but what is the difference? Maybe a government is representing a country while a nation is a group of people.¹⁵ And yet, when words equivalent or synonymous of *country* used with a WAR ON construction are looked for in the COCA, the very few occurrences are ‘War on People’, ‘War on Citizens’, while the same research done for *state* gives ‘War on Land’ part of a title, ‘War on Government’, and ‘War on Public’.¹⁶ In any case, a mapping inside a domain, inferring a metonymy, takes place when the WAR ON construction is followed by the name of a country. This initial mapping might be what resulted in a greater leap, between two domains rather than just one, the metonymical use of the WAR ON construction.

The construction under study was briefly glimpsed in Carter’s speech, but it seems difficult to draw conclusions on the use and significance of the construction from one speech only, or even from mere intuition.

¹⁵ The question that interests us today is purely linguistic, it is however interesting to ask ourselves indeed against who or what war are waged. What is indeed the enemy? What does lie behind the metonymy that is the name of a State: its population, its government, its territory? This is a philosophical issue that cannot be solved here.

¹⁶ Searches: war on [=country]; war on [=state].

II. CORPORA RESEARCH

II.1 – THE THEORY

In linguistics, research is often based on intuition and on the linguist's inner perception of a word or a construction. In Lakoff and Johnson's (1980), as in many other researches, the examples and deductions come from the linguists' own experience of language. Thus, they create powerful images to illustrate their remarks, examples that underline their sentiments but at no point do they offer 'real' pieces of language, 'genuine' utterances.

In the preceding part, I could have used the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor to illustrate Lakoff and Johnson's point on TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN. This is indeed a very evocative example of a pervading metaphor used by the authors themselves. In their opinion, an ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor pervades our perception of arguments and how we carry them out. When two people debate and one wins, one actually defeats the other (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 63): argument is experienced as warfare, but it goes further, it is war. However, this example is also vividly criticized. For Musolff, Lakoff and Johnson's examples in general are somewhat arbitrary and we have to be careful to what belongs to the *war* domain and what is only vaguely related to it (attack, strategy, winning) (2016: 13). Malgorzata Fabiszak challenges the way they chose their examples, only through "introspection", and their lack of analysis (2007: 195).

One of the options to overcome this issue is to use a corpus. Indeed, Construction Grammar intends to highlight some constructions as more important than the words themselves. Corpora are useful tools to bring light on this. In Fabiszak's opinion, corpora research is a way for linguists to do "informed introspection" (197): an idea emerges of the linguist's intuition but is supported by data, or, the other way around, data raises questions and interrogations in the researcher. This is opposed to isolated introspections that lead to statements such as an ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor. The examples used to support such a statement were at no point samples of genuine utterances.

One of the solutions to avoid this is to use corpora. Indeed, as huge amount of data, corpora can be considered as a representative piece of language. This is of course up to discussion. However, it is true that, as substantial conglomerate of references, corpora contain significant samples of our language. Thus, they underline and highlight certain patterns in the language: collocations, idioms, fixed forms, etc. According to Musolff, corpora are the "basis for analyzing the emergence of coherent frames through highly frequent and systematic

usage” (22). According to Fabiszak, “the knowledge of these frequencies can facilitate the process of categorizing, identification and labeling of metaphors” (197), corpora are thus a useful basis for reflection.

Two corpora were used to analyze what was presumed to be a WAR ON construction. Both tools allow you to look for a word, an expression, a lemma, etc. Both of them are based on American sources, and, when we look for some word or expression, we find real utterances and situations in which the word or expression was used. The settings allow you to underline one tendency or another, to show “coherent collocation patterns” (Musolff: 22). The Corpus of Historical American (COHA) is a corpus of 400 million words which sources stretch from 1810 to 2009. The Corpus of Contemporary American (COCA) is a corpus of 560 million words, from 1990 to 2017, and as the last date show, it is regularly updated. Overall, the two corpora should include well over 900 million words, but as the two corpora’s timelines overlap, some pieces of data are identical. As both corpora focus on the American language, the sources only go back to the 1810s. The COCA is cut into five kind of sources (spoken, magazines, newspapers, academics, and fiction), expanding the kind of data to all type of language and register. Plus, a balance is created between all the different kinds of data, unlike in most corpora: each section is composed of roughly 110 million words. On the other hand, on the COHA, it is easy to see the chronological increasing or decreasing of the use of a word.

Corpora are thus very useful tools for usage-based research. In a corpus, a researcher can look for frequency of occurrences: the more the collocation appears, the surer the linguist is of its use and entrenchment in language. However, the limitations of these tools reveal their inadequacy for proper statistical analysis. They will then be used in the present work as basis of an “informed introspection”, and they will supply us with “a corpus-based evidence of real-world metaphor data” (Musolff: 14).

Plus, corpora are also used to find and highlight prototypes of a domain; indeed, “all sorts of prototype-theoretical analyses may use frequency as an indication of prototypicality and usage tendencies” (Tummers et al., 2005: 240). Gaëtanelle Gilquin and Andrew McMichael added that “if a member of a category is encountered in language more frequently than the other members, we can assume that it is somehow central to the category and more highly entrenched in language users’ mental representations” (2018: 49). The idea is then that within a domain all concepts are ranked according to their “Goodness-Of-Exemplar” (Croft & Cruse, 2004: 78) and the best example is the most central to the domain. Within the domain of *seat*, a chair is a better example than an ottoman; they have different “degrees of membership” even

if the ottoman is a “fully-paid member” (ibid). One of the ways to determinate the centrality of a word within a domain, or on the contrary, the prototype of a domain, is therefore to use corpus-based research as frequency is one of the first criterion used to highlight this phenomenon.

II.2 – THE FIRST APPROACH

Applied to our analysis of the WAR ON construction, the corpus-based research seems promising. The first intention was to make a chronology of the use of the construction. To do that, the shifting point of the construction, the moment when it started to be used metaphorically needed to be found. It meant to understand at what moment the “declared war on Germany” started to be possibly used in expressions such as “war on clean coal”, an expression used in President Donald Trump’s State of the Union Address,¹⁷ where the war and the enemy are clearly metaphorical. At what moment the literal war against actual enemies shifted into a metaphorical war on metonymic or even metaphorical enemies. The first assumption was that the expression followed a chronological pattern that could be traced back to an original point of the metaphorical use of the WAR ON construction. A corpora research could have given access to this, drawing this chronology.

Croft and Cruse identify several steps to an integration of a “durable metaphor”, as the metaphorical use of the WAR ON construction could be, into language (2004: 204-5 – including all the following quotes). When the metaphor is uttered for the first time, it is only interpretable by present speakers, in context, and is submitted to “a wide range of contextual and communicative constraints”. It is defined as a “tool metaphor”, a concept that underlines the usefulness of this type of metaphor. But this metaphor can then integrate the lexicon, “take hold”, and be repeated often enough by a linguistic community to change. Here are these steps:

First, its meaning becomes circumscribed relative to the freshly coined metaphor, becoming more determinate; second, it begins to be laid down as an item in the mental lexicon; so that in time, it can be retrieved in the same way as a literal expression; third, it begins a process of semantic drift, which can weaken or obscure its metaphorical origins. At the beginning of its life, even if it is being laid down as an item in the lexicon, speakers are very conscious of its status as a metaphor, and they can recreate easily the metaphorical path of its derivation. As time passes, however, the sense of the expression’s metaphorical nature fades and eventually disappears (...). (205)

¹⁷ “We have ended the war on American Energy -- and we have ended the war on clean coal.” A statement that could be questioned as some asked what could be ‘clean’ coal and what a ‘war’ on it could be.

They add that “at some point along this path of change, the expression acquires a capability to act as a literal basis for further metaphorical extensions, which is not possible for a fresh metaphor” (206). Therefore, once entrenched in language, the “expression” can be used to create new metaphors. To underline this idea, Croft and Cruse use the example of *branch*, part of a SOCIAL ORGANIZATION ARE PLANTS metaphor that “has developed a completely independent set of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations that have nothing to do with the source domain”. Thus, according to their steps and to the following figure, “branch” was first used as a tool metaphor, punctually. It then was used often enough to “take hold” in language independently of the original SOCIAL ORGANIZATION ARE PLANTS metaphor, even if the interlocutors were conscious of the historicity of “branch”, i.e., “branch” was repeated enough to have its own entry in our lexicon, independent from the metaphor that was its basis. And finally, a “semantic drift” allowed it to be the basis of new metaphors, while shadowing its origins.

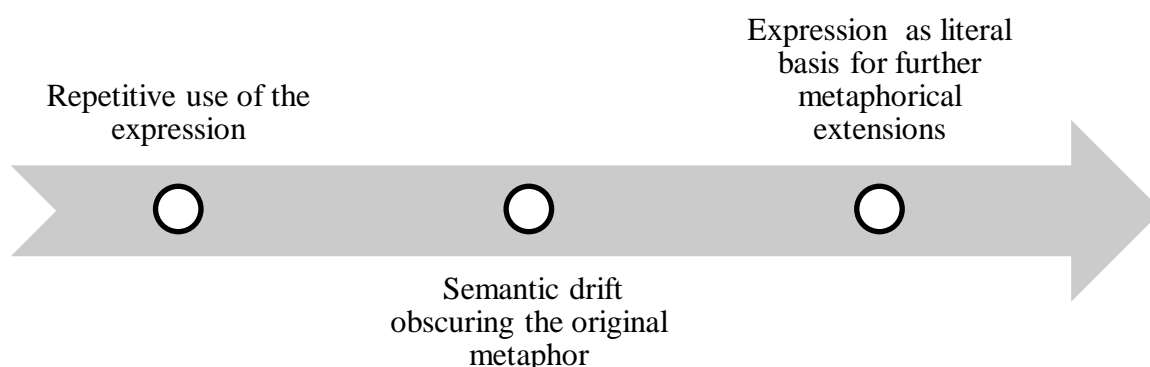


fig.7 – Integration of a novel metaphor: Croft and Cruse’s model

Nowadays, we frequently see the WAR ON construction, especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the beginning of what we know as the ‘War on Terror’. Since, the expression has been largely used by the press and in numerous speeches. The main question would have been when has the enemy targeted by the ‘on’ been replaced by abstract concepts such as *drug*, *terrorism*, or *poverty*? And then, has the metaphor itself evolved into a basis for new metaphors such as the phrase ‘war on coal’? Croft and Cruse’s theory was the first basis of the research and marked the steps that should have been findable in the evolution of the WAR ON construction.

Those are the results that were first expected, a chronology where WAR ON construction is little by little integrated into language, in a logical way:



Fig.8 – Results expected of a WAR ON construction integration based on Croft and Cruse’s model

Figure 8 schematizes what was expected: a construction first used literally, as an actual war against a concrete enemy (a country for example) then metaphorically once, with a verb, as a freshly coined expression. And only then would the use of the construction become generalized, “taking hold” in the language and we would then find independent occurrences such as the ‘War on Poverty’, a metaphorical war waged against a concept. Here, the construction would take its independence from the preceding verb, and be lexicalized. We would then have a construction of its own, made of the substantive ‘war’, followed by the preposition ‘on’. From there, the construction would be a basis for numerous other possible metaphors, like the ‘war on Christmas’, or the ‘war on coal’.

Thanks to the COHA, the research should also have highlighted the first uses of the construction, believed to be relevant prototypical candidate: “The prototype of a polysemous item is claimed to be its historically earliest sense (...). The prototypical sense is argued to subsist through time, whereas more peripheral meanings do not usually survive for very long” (Gilquin, 2018: 54).

II.3 – THE LIMITS AND THEIR REALITY

But the reality of the data revealed an unexpected complexity. The first occurrences of a metaphorical use of the WAR ON construction go back to the 1840s with for example “the war upon small bills” or “a war on its labor and industry”. Thus, the WAR ON construction has a different chronology than the one we intended to find. Its integration to language was more complex than expected.

The limits of the work are partly due to the tools. A researcher is subjected to what is available in the corpora. They could be a non-representative sample of the studied language, especially when it comes to the historical corpus. For example, when ‘War on Communism’ is looked for on Google, a given number of occurrences appear. However, in both corpora, only one to three occurrences can be found. Consequently, it cannot be claimed that the results obtained for the analysis of the WAR ON construction are valid for the whole American language.

Plus, before the press and audio recordings existed, the only accessible sources, traces of the language spoken at those times, are published books. However, books printed at that time are far less numerous than the data we have today thanks to the media and internet. The less data, the less accurate the results could be. As the sources are mainly novels and historical memoirs, the style of the writing might differ from the way of speaking at those times. It is especially difficult to find the origin of an expression, or construction: if it has been written, it means it has been used orally for a while, indeed, speech is “assumed to better reflect conceptual structures” (Gilquin, 2018: 50). As a consequence, the data found and used might not be reflecting the exact usage of that time. And it is also arguable that the data I extracted from the COHA are less reliable than the one from COCA as spoken sources are not, and obviously cannot be, included in the COHA.

Other limits are impediment to an objective result: when a research for collocations or even occurrences of a given set of words is done all the occurrences that do not correspond exactly to the research are missed. Therefore, the data is shaped according to what is looked for. If the enquiry is for the locution ‘war on’ preceded by an article, all the “the great war on” are absent of the results, if ‘war on’ followed by a substantive is looked for, “the war on the” occurrences are missing as well. For example “war of the Government on the long-established monetary system” is an interesting occurrence of the WAR ON construction that was only found by chance because its co-text had an occurrence of the WAR ON construction that corresponded to the exact enquiry.

A lot of irrelevant occurrences also appeared in the results because the preposition ‘on’ belonged to another fixed construction. The term *war* can indeed be followed by constructions such as ON BEHALF OF X, ON THE PART OF X, ON X’S SIDE, ON A LARGER SCALE, in which cases the preposition depends on the construction rather than part of the meaning of the substantive. There are also verbs that necessarily call for the preposition ‘on’, such as *pour*, *impose*, *force*, and *blame*, where the substantive ‘war’ is inserted between the verb and the preposition but these the two still depend on each other. And other constructions, independent from ‘war on’ need to be mentioned: EFFECT OF X ON, TRACE X ON, or ‘war’ followed by ‘on’ and a date, or even locutions such as “there is a war on”. All these added to the difficulty to obtain quantifiable data as they all appeared in the results of the researches.

Another idea would have been to do a frequency matrix that would have put in comparison literal uses of the WAR ON construction, such as “War on Germany”, and the actual war waged by the United States (US) at the moment of utterance. It would have highlighted patterns of use of the construction, with surges in times of conflict. It is indeed possible to see peaks of use of “War on Germany” during the two World Wars and their immediate aftermath:

CONTEXT	ALL	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
WAR ON GERMANY	60								2			17	5	6	20	4		1	1	2	2

fig.9 – COHA: ‘war on Germany’: a chronology

In the same way, some occurrences of the WAR ON construction were used during or linked to the Civil War, with utterances such as “a war upon States rights” in 1862.¹⁸ Such a matrix would have highlighted the literal uses of the WAR ON construction, in a context of an American war. However, even if the US were officially in only a dozen major wars, when we add all the conflicts to which the US have been connected so far, only about 26 years have been spent in peace. In other words, during only 11% of their 243 years of existence were the US not at war or involved in an armed conflict.¹⁹ Therefore, such a matrix would have been irrelevant.

¹⁸ It was decided not to make any difference between the prepositions ‘on’ and ‘upon’ as the former is a derivative from the latter.

¹⁹ See Annex 1.

The reality of the data had then to be taken into account. And as we have seen, the first occurrences of a metaphorical WAR ON construction go back to the 1840s. It means that the construction has a different chronology than the linear one we first expected.

	CONTEXT	ALL	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1	WAR ON	2355	11	10	34	38	44	74	46	65	86	67	181	133	146	275	140	164	140	163	178	360

4.875 seconds

fig.10 – COHA: ‘war on’: a chronology

We still can notice that there have been changes through time. First, in figure 10, it is obvious that the number of occurrences increased. When closely analyzed, the data show that the number of utterances preceded by a verb grew as well, but not as much as the whole, or not as much as one can expect seeing how much the number of sources surged. This might suggest an increasing independence of the WAR ON construction from the verb. Plus, when the immediate contexts and meanings are analyzed, one can notice that the metaphorical WAR ON [CONCEPT] construction, this concept that can be *drugs*, *crime*, or *poverty*, existed but was only sporadically used. It has however clearly been increasing in the last few decades:

Corpus of Historical American English

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

ACCOUNT

	<div><div>CONTEXT</div></div>	ALL	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1	<div><div></div>POVERTY</div>	107											2	1		2		51	16	8	20	7
2	<div><div></div>TERRORISM</div>	97																		1	3	93
3	<div><div></div>TERROR</div>	90																			4	86
4	<div><div></div>DRUGS</div>	73																		21	37	15
5	<div><div></div>CRIME</div>	30													6	1		2	7	2	4	8
6	<div><div></div>CANCER</div>	15																		1	2	11
7	<div><div></div>LAND</div>	12			1	1	1	1		1	1	1	2			3				1	2	
8	<div><div></div>WOMEN</div>	11							1	1	1			1			1			3	1	2
9	<div><div></div>INFLATION</div>	10															2	2	4	2		
10	<div><div></div>HAND</div>	5					1				1	1		1							1	
11	<div><div></div>TERMS</div>	5													1	1				2	1	
12	<div><div></div>WAR</div>	5										1	1			1		1	1			
13	<div><div></div>CHILDREN</div>	4														3						1
14	<div><div></div>PRINCIPLE</div>	4				1								1				1				1
15	<div><div></div>SOCIETY</div>	4				1					1				1	1						
16	<div><div></div>ISLAM</div>	3																		2		1
17	<div><div></div>IGNORANCE</div>	3													1	1		1				

fig.11 – COHA: ‘war on’ + one collocate (part of speech: noun)

The ‘War on Poverty’ marks a shift as, before the 1960s, the WAR ON construction followed by a noun seemed to be used only sporadically. Plus, the construction was used sometimes metaphorically but against negative enemies (ignorance, inflation, etc.). After ‘War on Poverty’, the construction seems to be used to signify a (systematic) violence against what could possibly be positive ‘enemies’, such as Christmas, or women, as it appears in more recent sources:

Corpus of Contemporary American English

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

	<div><div></div><div>CONTEXT</div></div>	ALL	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	ACADEMIC	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2017
1	<div><div></div><div>TERROR</div></div>	2420	1343	33	333	367	344			833	1120	349	118
2	<div><div></div><div>TERRORISM</div></div>	1454	663	4	173	317	297	3	9	1070	303	55	14
3	<div><div></div><div>DRUGS</div></div>	923	289	14	222	243	155	249	159	162	147	109	97
4	<div><div></div><div>POVERTY</div></div>	299	100	1	81	57	60	92	55	27	33	72	20
5	<div><div></div><div>WOMEN</div></div>	294	209	4	31	41	9	2	3	4	4	237	44
6	<div><div></div><div>CANCER</div></div>	86	35		35	14	2	15	13	17	22	16	3
7	<div><div></div><div>CRIME</div></div>	65	22	10	16	12	5	13	31	8	5	2	6
8	<div><div></div><div>CHRISTMAS</div></div>	38	16	1	5	8	8				20	9	9
9	<div><div></div><div>ISLAM</div></div>	25	12		2	6	5	1		11	3	8	2
10	<div><div></div><div>COAL</div></div>	21	11		5	5						10	11
11	<div><div></div><div>SCIENCE</div></div>	15			4	7	4			2	7	3	3
12	<div><div></div><div>DRUG</div></div>	13	3		2	6	2	3	3	2	4	1	
13	<div><div></div><div>CHILDREN</div></div>	11	6	1	2		2		6	2	2	1	
14	<div><div></div><div>TELEVISION</div></div>	11	3	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	1
15	<div><div></div><div>INDECENCY</div></div>	10					10				10		
16	<div><div></div><div>NARCOTICS</div></div>	10				1	9		1		1		8
17	<div><div></div><div>RELIGION</div></div>	10	4		1	3	2				3	7	

fig.12 – COCA: ‘war on’ + one collocate (POS: noun)

In figures 11 and 12, a clear increase of use of the WAR ON construction followed by a noun is represented. In the COHA, some occurrences appear: ‘war on crimes’ peaked in the 1930s, maybe as a result of the prohibition policy at those times; ‘war on women’ was used sporadically. However, only with the surge of the occurrences of the expression ‘War on Poverty’ did the WAR ON construction followed by a noun seem to be entrenched in language and be used repeatedly. That is why in the COHA, ‘war on cancer’ is listed as 6th most used noun as collocate to the WAR ON construction with 15 occurrences while it only appeared in the four last decades of the nineteen-decade-long corpus. And there is a growth of occurrences in the last two decades covered by the COCA in figure 12.

II.4 – CONCLUSION

Corpora are thus ideal tools to have a reliable survey of language. However, a researcher needs to be conscious of their limits. These limits forced a reevaluation of the work that could be done here: instead of a chronological analysis from literality to metaphorality, the following part will focus on when the construction started to “take hold” on language, as Croft and Cruse say, and on identifying its prototype.

III. WAR ON, IN USE

We thus have a complex construction that can be used both literally and metaphorically. Conscious of the limits of this work, the research will be reduced in order to be able to grasp what WAR ON construction we can define and understand.

III.1 – WAR ON [ENEMY]

We will therefore restrict our research to the phrase ‘war on’ followed by a noun, supposed to represent the enemy. We will leave aside all irrelevant utterances, i.e., all utterances that do not correspond to a WAR ON [ENEMY] construction. The different prepositions that could follow ‘war’ have already been analyzed in the previous part but different verbs and different articles can go with the construction.

The first step was then to analyze the verbs preceding the construction. Indeed, the construction under study might have originated in a X [VERB] WAR ON Y construction, the preposition triggered only because of the verb. After analysis, only the verbs ‘wage’, ‘make’, and ‘declare’ were kept. Indeed, of the 11 most used collocates of ‘war on’, 7 are different forms of these three verbs: past, progressive, present, infinitive. In total, they represent more than 90% of all the occurrences, while the other verbs (‘force’, ‘bring’, ‘conducting’, etc.) occur once each. The study of the context of each of the three chosen verb was meant to reveal a pattern of use of the WAR ON construction, or at least to try to grasp what kind of occurrences there could be.

After analysis, the data showed that there seemed to be three different kinds of possible use of the WAR ON construction. First, the locution is followed by a noun phrase that can be a person or a group of person. Second, it can be targeting a country, or a government. Finally, the WAR ON construction is used to express a certain violence against an abstract concept. We can then encounter occurrences such as “making war on the whites”, “declared war on England”, and “make war on his freedom”. The semantic pattern revealed seems to be the following:

- When the construction is preceded by the verb *declare*, it is mostly followed by a noun referring a country;
- When the construction is preceded by the verb *make*, it is mostly followed by a noun referring to a person or a group of people;

- When the construction is preceded by the verb *wage*, it seems more balanced between the two; it might be followed by a noun referring to a country or to a name.

But this is not a definitive pattern as both countries and people can linguistically be used as enemies with those three verbs, they only tend to be used that way. Plus, the boundaries between the concept of *country* and the concept of *person* are not as clear as they can appear at first sight. Indeed, in utterances such as “make war on the young, defenceless, orphan Queen of Hungary”, can we reasonably believe that the war is waged only against the Queen? She is there as an embodiment of her country, and the war was officially declared between two States. Plus, people are often reduced to their function or political affiliation. When a group of people is designated under the name “Democrats”, or “Communists”, is the war waged against the people, what they represent, or their ideas? The categories initially noticed may easily overlap and even the word ‘Democrats’ which obviously designates a group of people could be said to refer to the idea of what are ‘Democrats’, or what they believe in, and then a war on them would be a WAR ON [CONCEPT]. On the other hand, in the phrase “declare war on that aggressor”, the substantive refers to a country through a process called personification. The same process is used in cases such as “declare war on Uncle Sam”. Semantically, this example is built on the basis of X [VERB] WAR ON [PEOPLE]. However, Uncle Sam is a personification of the US with which he shares the initials. Therefore, should this example be classified as a X [VERB] WAR ON [COUNTRY]?

So the conclusions of this analysis could be biased by the fact that the researcher is the one that chooses the categories and puts words in one category or the other. Indeed, a ‘War on Women’ is technically waged against people, but logically we tend to see “Women” as an abstract concept, a ‘war’ waged on womanhood or equality rather than against women as a group of people. The pronouns are another issue. When there is a “war on them”, should the pronoun be considered as referring to people or to a country? In that case, the answer instinctively seems to be ‘on people’. However, countries are often personified through pronouns such as “she” or possessive adjectives such as “her”, a personification that can be found in the subject X or the prepositional object on [ENEMY]: “she has never declared war on anyone”, used in a context of WWII and referring to a country declaring war on another country.

What results from this analysis is that a lot of mapping between domains occurs. It seems that in most cases, the semantic drift is based on a personification of the concept or country. That is why there could be only one WAR ON construction, based on a WAR ON [PEOPLE], but it

is used in contexts as different as metaphorical and literal wars can be. This passing from making war on people to the linguistic possibility of waging a war on a concept can be exemplified by the following occurrence: “I do not make war on slave-holders, but on slavery”. The proximity between, and the move from, a group of person to a concept are here explicit.

To conclude, even if some categories may be questioned, a certain trend was highlighted: the wars tend to be declared on countries, made on people, and waged on both. The occurrences of the WAR ON construction preceded by a verb keep increasing today, as more and more sources are added to the contemporary corpus. However, this increase does not follow the surge of the number of sources, maybe because the expression is more and more independent from the verbs under study.

The first use of an independent WAR ON construction, usually preceded by the articles ‘the’ or ‘a’, goes back before the beginning of the sources of the COHA. At first, only few occurrences of the collocation correspond to the WAR ON construction, the others are part of another construction (ON BEHALF OF, ON ONE’S SIDE, ON [DAY], etc.). It is interesting to notice that, after the 1950s, fewer irrelevant occurrences can be found. And this is even more marked after the 1960s. On the following figure, we can see that now the occurrences of an independent ‘war on’ greatly outnumber the occurrences of the locution ‘war on’ preceded by a verb:

Corpus of Contemporary American English

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

SEE CONTEXT: CLICK ON WORD (ALL SECTIONS), NUMBER (ONE SECTION), OR [CONTEXT] (SELECT)

[HELP...]

IWeb

WAR

ON

	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> CONTEXT	ALL <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	SPOKEN <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	FICTION <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	MAGAZINE <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	NEWSPAPER <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	ACADEMIC <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	1990-1994 <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	1995-1999 <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	2000-2004 <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	2005-2009 <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	2010-2014 <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>	2015-2017 <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>
1	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> THE	4024	1965	76	695	714	574	329	218	1583	1197	476	221
2	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> A	606	287	67	88	106	58	69	55	151	103	170	58
3	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> NO	16	7	2	3	3	1	2	3	2	3	2	4
4	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> LANGUAGE	1			1								1
	TOTAL	4647	2259	145	787	823	633	400	276	1736	1303	648	284

1,233 seconds

1.233 seconds

Corpus of Contemporary American English

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

SEE CONTEXT: CLICK ON WORD (ALL SECTIONS), NUMBER (ONE SECTION), OR [CONTEXT] (SELECT) [HELP...]

CONTEXT

ALL

SPOKEN

FICTION

MAGAZINE

NEWSPAPER

ACADEMIC

1990-1994

1995-1999

2000-2004

2005-2009

2010-2014

2015-2017

1

DECLARED

344

88

32

95

81

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1

fig.13 – Comparison of one collocate (POS: article) + ‘war on’
and one collocate (POS: verb) + ‘war on’ on the COCA

On the one hand, there are 4647 occurrences of the construction used independently from a verb while on the other hand, less than half of utterances are found (1437). In the COHA, we find the opposite trend: 1636 of occurrences are preceded by a verb but less than a thousand of occurrences are preceded by an article, both enquiries including the locution ‘war upon’. It means the use of the locution ‘war on’ preceded by an article increased through time, at the expense of the use with a verb.

We will then focus on the independent use of the WAR ON construction. Here is what appears when collocates to the phrase ‘war on’ are looked for in the COCA:

Corpus of Contemporary American English									
SEARCH			FREQUENCY			CONTEXT		ACCOUNT	
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	TERROR	2437	17394	14.01	12.22			
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	TERRORISM	1466	18272	8.02	11.41			
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	DRUGS	925	46623	1.98	9.40			
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	POVERTY	301	21655	1.39	8.88			
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	WOMEN	294	286136	0.10	5.12			
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	CANCER	86	56593	0.15	5.69			
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRIME	66	50000	0.13	5.49			
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHRISTMAS	38	38694	0.10	5.06			
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ISLAM	25	12956	0.19	6.03			
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	COAL	21	11565	0.18	5.95			
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	AIDS	15	23157	0.06	4.46			
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	INDECENCY	10	343	2.92	9.95			
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	NARCOTICS	10	2152	0.46	7.30			
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	RELIGION	10	32002	0.03	3.41			
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	GANGS	9	4543	0.20	6.07			
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	COPS	8	12510	0.06	4.44			
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	TERRORISTS	8	13352	0.06	4.35			
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	WELFARE	7	23455	0.03	3.34			
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHRISTIANITY	6	8327	0.07	4.61			

fig.14 – COCA: ‘war on’ + two collocates (POS: noun)

The term ‘war’ is defined figuratively as “a sustained effort to deal with or end a particular unpleasant or undesirable situation or condition” (OED). In that case, no army is involved, there is no belligerent, and no enemy other than the situation. Under that entry, several examples are given, such as ‘war on drugs’, and ‘war on poverty’. Both are metaphorical uses of ‘war’ as they convey the meaning of an institutionalized struggle against drug cartels on the one hand, and against what might create poverty (lack of education for example) on the other hand. In both cases, no military campaign is waged and the enemy (drugs or poverty) is an abstract concept. Both would correspond to a use of the type WAR ON [CONCEPT] of the construction. One can notice that ‘drugs’ and ‘poverty’ are both listed in the COCA as fourth and fifth most frequent words following the locution ‘war on’, the figurative meaning of the concept *war* is thus frequently used. Out of the 20 most frequent collocates of ‘war on’, 10 are intangibles enemies and concepts (once again if you count ‘women’, because it is unlikely someone would literally wage a war on women), 8 are countries (or states, like ISIS). Two different use of the construction seem to be revealed here: WAR ON + [CONCEPTUAL ENEMY] and WAR ON [COUNTRY/NATION]. To broaden the scope of our results, here are the collocates to the phrase ‘war on’ in the COHA:

new

Corpus of Historical American English

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

		CONTEXT	ALL	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	ALL	%	MI
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	POVERTY	107											2	1		2		51	16	8	20	7	11566	0.93	9.64
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	TERRORISM	97																		1	3	93	1825	5.32	12.16
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	TERROR	90																			4	86	15810	0.57	8.94
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	DRUGS	73																		21	37	15	8477	0.86	9.53
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	GERMANY	60								2			17	5	6	20	4		1	1	2	2	35632	0.17	7.18
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRIME	30													6	1		2	7	2	4	8	24138	0.12	6.74
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	ENGLAND	23					2	2		1	9	1	1	1	1	1	1		2	1			76037	0.03	4.70
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	EACH	22				1	3	3	1			1		2	2	3	1	1		1		3	230044	0.01	3.04
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	RUSSIA	20											3	3	4	4	2	1	1	1	1		23374	0.09	6.20
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	JAPAN	17													4	6	2	1			1	3	17535	0.10	6.38
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	MEXICO	16					2	1		1		1	5	2		2						2	18924	0.08	6.19
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	CANCER	15																	1	2	1	11	9877	0.15	7.03
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	LAND	14			1	1	1	1		1	3	1	2			3							91655	0.02	3.72
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	FRANCE	13				1							4	2	1		3		2				49948	0.03	4.49
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	IRAQ	12																			1	11	5670	0.21	7.51
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHINA	11										3	1	1	2	2	2						28659	0.04	5.05
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	SERBIA	10											4	3	1					2			638	1.57	10.40

fig.15 – COHA: ‘war on’ + two collocates

Figure 15 differs from the figure 11 (on p.31) because on the research displayed in figure 11, only nouns were looked for, while here the enquiry was widened to any possible collocate of the locution ‘war on’. In this figure, new collocates appear such as States. Of the 17 most frequent collocates, 6 are intangibles, 9 are countries, and the others are irrelevant (‘land’ and

‘each’). Except in the cases of ‘terrorism’ and ‘terror’, both of which have appeared in the late 20th century, the WAR ON [CONCEPT] form seems to be referring to a metaphorical war, such as the ‘war on poverty’. On the other hand, the WAR ON [COUNTRY] form would refer to an actual war. Both forms induce different consequences: in a metaphor, the “‘war’ terminology signifies a high priority, a marshaling of substantial resources, and a sustained commitment to eradicate the threat” (Fitzpatrick, 2002: 346), it induces certain urgency and it is handled by law-enforcement institutions; in a literal war, the same feelings are activated but it is run by military forces.

The WAR ON construction seems thus to be based on a WAR ON [PEOPLE] form that was then declined thanks to metaphors and personifications. Two forms of the war on construction seem to have appeared in the most recent part of the sources: a WAR ON [CONCEPT] form that is metaphorical and a WAR ON [COUNTRY/NATION] form that is literal.

III.2 – WAR ON, A CONCRETE ANALYSIS

The exact origin of the metaphorical use of the construction is not findable with our tools, not today. We will then focus on the most used utterances of the WAR ON construction: ‘War on Poverty’, ‘War on Drugs’, and ‘War on Terror’. Frequency of use could indeed be a good indicator of the prototype of a construction. In Part II, the idea of a “Goodness of Exemplar” (Croft & Cruse, 2004: 78) was explained: the best example of a domain might be considered as a prototypical member of the category. According to Croft and Cruse, “not all members of a category have the same status within the category” (77), and each member have a different “degree of membership” (78). Indeed, the ostrich is a “fully-paid member” of the category *bird* but it has a low Goodness-of-Exemplar rate compared to *pigeon*. In the theory of prototypes, the concept is represented “in terms of a list of attributes” that “are not required to be necessary and sufficient” (81). In the *bird* category are listed the following features: feathers, beak, wings, two legs, capacity to fly, etc. An item does not need to have all the features to be a member of the category, but “[its] centrality in the category depends on how many of the relevant set of features it possesses: the more it possesses, the better an example of the category it will be” (ibid). The pigeon possesses more features of the *bird* category, therefore it is more central to its domain, and it is a better example of the *bird* concept than an ostrich. Thanks to corpus-based research that highlights the most used occurrences of the construction and to this idea of Goodness of Exemplar, this study intends to underline how a

WAR ON construction can be entrenched and used, and to find out if these early traces of ‘entrenched’ WO are an adequate prototype.

All three of the studied expressions were selected for their frequency but also for their high impact. Indeed, not all the wars on something were launched or declared by Presidents. These three were.

III.2.1 – WAR ON POVERTY: THE 1960S

On the chronology represented in figure 16, it can be noticed that ‘War on Poverty’ preceded the surge of occurrences of the 60s, showing that, even if nowadays an occurrence of the expression ‘War on Poverty’ usually refers to the policies the Johnson Administration implemented in the 1960s, the construction made possible to utter ‘War on Poverty’ before that.

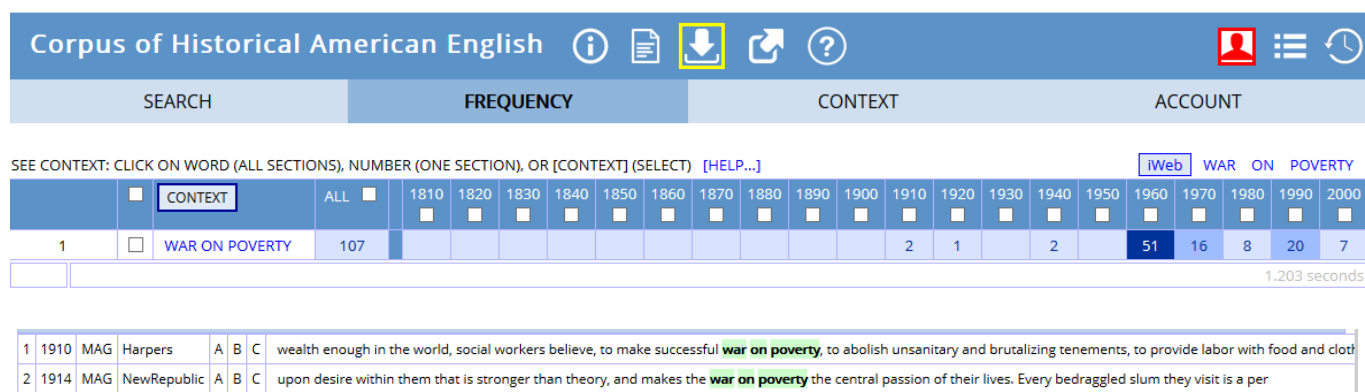


fig.16 – COHA: ‘war on poverty’ a chronology and its context in the 1910s

Apart from the two occurrences of the 1910s, the context of which are displayed in figure 16, some occurrences are worth to be noted. For example, in the 1920s, the expression can be found in contexts such as the following: “When Lloyd George submitted his budget of 1909 in his ‘war on poverty’ it was defended by Winston Churchill with a fresh argument.” This seems to refer to a question of tax collection. On the other hand, in 1945, the expression appeared in this context: “The likes of Shanker, Hechinger and Ravitch certainly defend the best ‘War on Poverty’ programs (such as Head Start) against demands that we should do much less, and that is to their credit.” Here the ‘War on Poverty’ seems to be a defense of the welfare state against liberalism. Prior to the 1960s, the expression could therefore refer to different policies, and was used to defend different point of views.

However, since the peak of use of the 1960s, it has seem to refer mainly to one policy, the one launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson. This ‘War on Poverty’ was declared by

Johnson in his 1964 State of the Union Address: “Let this session of Congress be known (...) as the session which declared all-out **war on human poverty and unemployment** in these United States” synthesized as an “unconditional **war on poverty**”, defined just afterwards as following:

It will not be a short or easy *struggle*, no **single weapon or strategy** will suffice, but we shall not rest until that **war is won**. *The richest nation on earth can afford to win it. We cannot afford to lose it.* One thousand dollars invested in salvaging an unemployable youth today can return \$40,000 or more in his lifetime.

Poverty is *a national problem*, requiring *improved national organization* and support. But this **attack**, to be effective, must also be organized at the state and the local level and must be supported and directed by state and local efforts.

For the **war against poverty** will not be **won** here in Washington. It must be **won in the field**, in every private home, in every public office, from the courthouse to the White House.

The *program* I shall propose will emphasize this cooperative approach to help that one-fifth of all American families with incomes too small to even meet their basic needs.

Words that belong to the semantic field of *war* can be noticed: win, struggle, weapon, strategy, attack. Not only they are part of this semantic field, but together, they build and extend the WAR metaphor. The two sentences with the concept of *afford* are ambiguous: in the first sentence, *afford* is linked to the ‘richest nation on earth’, it literally means that they have the money to implement these economic policies. But in the second sentence, it is used as a metaphor, the idea would be that they cannot lose this ‘war’. But at the end, the ‘war’ is just an economic “program”. Johnson used in his speech a ‘war’ rhetoric, requiring efforts from everyone, at all scales.

Our chief **weapons** in a more **pinpointed attack** will be better schools, and better health, and better homes, and better training, and better job opportunities to help more Americans, especially young Americans, escape from squalor and misery and unemployment rolls where other citizens help to carry them.

(...) Our aim is not only to *relieve the symptom* of poverty, but to *cure* it and, above all, to *prevent* it. No single piece of legislation, however, is going to suffice.

Then, we can notice that he continued to use the WAR metaphor, mixing it with a POVERTY IS A DISEASE metaphor, with words such as ‘symptom’, ‘cure’, and ‘prevent’. Both metaphors were used to induce a feeling of urgency and created a need to act, to defend the nation against an enemy and/or a disease. This speech, first landmark of the policies that followed, built an ECONOMIC PROGRAM IS WAR metaphor, represented in the following table:

<i>source domain: WAR</i>	<i>target domain: ECONOMIC PROGRAM</i>
enemy	poverty
gains (land, power)	money returning time 40 to the state
strategy	improvement of schools, health, homes, training, opportunities, investment, improved national organization
war effort – home front	the state and the local level
fronts	housing, teaching, youth, infrastructures, legislation, transportation, etc.
win (surrender of the enemy)	a richer population (absence of poverty)

fig.17 – ECONOMIC PROGRAM IS WAR

On Lakoff and Johnson’s paradigm, on one side there is the source domain *war*, and on the other side is the target domain *economic program*. In Johnson’s speech, this latter is described to the audience thanks to the *war* domain. This process was used to stress the seriousness of the problem. As a consequence, Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act, with the establishment of an Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) that managed locally the federal funds allocated to fight poverty.

A few years later, Hyman Bookbinder, the executive officer of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Task Force on Poverty in 1964, concluded on the ‘War on Poverty’:

These and other statistics have led careless observers to conclude that the **war on poverty** *failed*. No, it has *achieved* many good results. Society has *failed*. It tired of the **war** too soon, gave it *inadequate resources* and did not open up **new fronts** as required. (1989)

We can see that the extended WAR metaphor was still present; the extract implies that the policy was not implemented in enough places or “fronts”, or funded enough, “inadequate resources”. But that is where the metaphor stops. This ‘war’ was not winnable or losable. It was a success, not a victory. It added a new dimension to the ECONOMIC PROGRAM IS WAR metaphor: failure is to be defeated.

To conclude, the WAR ON construction offered the possibility to be used as a ‘War on Poverty’ from the start. And so, from time to time, it was used in situations as different as Geoge’s proposal of budget of 1909 and the 1940s’ programs such as “Head Start”. However, once coined in a speech as broadcasted, repeated and heard as the State of the Union Address, it seems like the ‘War on Poverty’ was entrenched in language as Johnson’s policy: in the

decades that follow, a certain number of occurrences of ‘War on Poverty’ are preceded by “Johnson’s”. Johnson’s speech created a striking enough precedent to which all the following ‘War on Poverty’ occurrences would refer.

III.2.2 – WAR ON DRUGS: THE 1980S

The chronology of the expression ‘War on Drugs’ is different from what one could have expected. In the COHA, the expression is first coined in 1981:

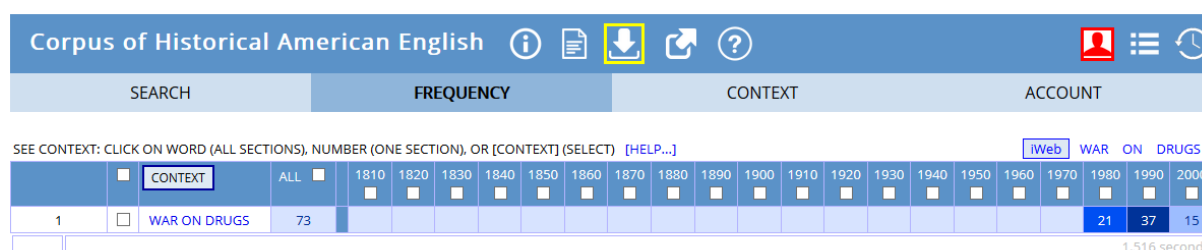


fig.18 – COHA: ‘war on drugs’

The co-text refers to past events, and the consequences of said War on Drugs. This implies that the ‘conflict’ pre-existed its coinage. On the other hand, there is no proof here that the expression was used before this date. It could be a result of a (heavy) war rhetoric followed by a series of policies that were later labeled the ‘War on Drugs’.²⁰

Some timelines dates the ‘War on Drugs’ back to President Richard Nixon. Indeed, in June 1971, Nixon declared drug abuse as the national “Enemy Public number one”. In a press conference, he exposed the threat and the means to fight it, promising a new “offensive”:

I began the meeting by making this statement, which I think needs to be made to the nation: America’s **Public Enemy Number One** in the US is Drug Abuse. In order to **fight** and **defeat** this **enemy**, it is necessary to **wage a new all out offensive**. I have asked the Congress to provide *the legislative authority and the funds* to fuel this kind of an **offensive**. This will be a **worldwide offensive dealing with the problems** of (...) suppliers as well as Americans who might be stationed abroad, wherever they are in the world. It will be government-wide (...). And it will be nation-wide in term of new educational program that we trust will result as from the discussion that we have had. With regard to this **offensive**, it is necessary first to have a new organization, (...) with Dr Jaffe [as] the man directly responsible who will report directly to me. (...) If we’re going to have a **successful offensive**, we need more money. (...)

²⁰ Many historical periods or events were labeled and referred to by historians a posteriori. We could take the name ‘Terror’ as example: the period following the French Revolution is known as the Terror, a name that was given during and afterwards by opponents to the Terror and largely reused in history books as to today. It is however a term now questioned by historians themselves and the term ‘Terror’ was mainly used during and after the period as a political tool to discredit the regime. However, the official institutions did not recognize that name at these times. In the same way, ‘War on Drugs’ could have been used a posteriori to designate the campaign launched by Nixon, even if the term was not used immediately during the ‘war declaration’.

The ‘war’ rhetoric is built through words like fight, defeat, and enemy. His new policy is compared to an offensive, this last word being repeated no less than six times during the press conference: in average, he used the word every 45 seconds. Throughout the four-and-a-half-minute-long interview, Nixon exposed the new policies and the new organization of government that he envisioned. And until the end, the war metaphor was extended:

(...) In order to **defeat this enemy**, which is causing such great concern (...) money will be provided to the extent that is necessary, and to the extent that it will be useful. And finally, in order for this *program* to be *effective*, it is necessary that it be conducted on a basis of which the American people all join in it. (...) It is a danger that will not pass with the passing of the war in Vietnam²¹. (...) This **offensive** *deals* with this *problem* there, in Europe, but will then go on to deal the problem throughout America. (...) That we will have not only the responsibility but the authority to see that we **wage this offensive** effectively and in a coordinated way.

Once again, drugs were the “enemy” to be defeated, and the US would wage a war that would be fought on all fronts: Vietnam, Europe, America, but also institutionally and nationally. Through this press conference, Nixon set up the basis of what was later known as the War on Drugs. Indeed, by using words from the semantic field of *war*, he framed the subject in a WAR scenario, creating a prism through which the situation should be dealt with. According to Lakoff and Johnson’s model, it created a SOCIAL POLICY IS WAR metaphor in which the semantic field of *war* is opposed to words such as “program”, and “to deal with the problem”.

<i>source domain: WAR</i>	<i>target domain: SOCIAL POLICY</i>
enemy	drug/ drug abuse
commander in chief	president
general	Dr Jaffe (later called ‘Drug Czar’)
war exceptional budget	new funds
main weapon	money
different fronts	Vietnam, Europe, throughout America, in different institutions
first offensive	re-organization of the government on this issue

fig.19 – SOCIAL POLICY IS WAR

²¹ It is interesting to notice that the war is not *on* Vietnam, but *in* Vietnam: the war is waged on Vietnamese territory but the ‘real’ enemy is the communist ideology, spreading through Asia.

Once again, in figure 19, source domain and target domain are put side by side. In this table are opposed notions belonging to the *war* domain, used rhetorically by President Nixon, and what were their concrete applications.

However, we can notice that the expression ‘War on Drugs’ is not uttered by Nixon. Even if the whole *war* rhetoric is present, the President did not use the construction. The earliest utterances of the ‘War on Drugs’ present in the COHA date back to 1981. In order to check this result, another tool was used. Google Books NGram Viewer is a tool that allows you to search for a word, or an expression, and to display how it is used in language in percentage and over time. Based on Google’s text corpora, it is huge but unreliable. It can however be used to underline a certain trend:

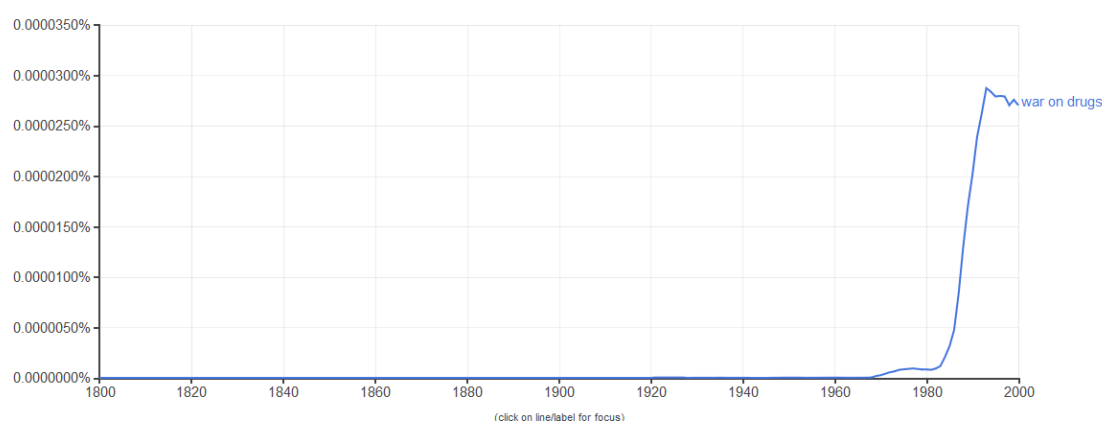


fig.20 – NGram: ‘war on drugs’

What appears in figure 20 is that War on Drugs was used previous to Nixon’s war declaration. Plus, it cannot be spotted on this screenshot, but the expression seems to start being used in the 1920s. However, the data shown here comprises the books published in the entire English speaking world. It is therefore not significant of the construction in the frame we gave ourselves. What seems obvious though is that the 1970s marked a shift in the chronology with a peak of use in this decade that stayed steady for 15 years before to surge in mid1980s. In many co-texts observable on both corpora though, the policy is referred to as “Nixon’s War on Drugs”, relating the expression, or at least the group of policies known as the first steps of the ‘War on Drugs’, to Nixon and his administration.

Thus, contrary to what we now refer to as the ‘War on Poverty’ that can be precisely traced back to Johnson’s speech, the ‘War on Drugs’ timeline seems less easy to define. However its use increases while the ‘War on Poverty’ occurrences decrease. Plus the general co-text of the ‘War on Poverty’ often includes references to Johnson: the new occurrences are not a new use of the construction for a new War on Poverty but a reference to the past policy:

Corpus of Contemporary American English										
SEARCH		FREQUENCY		CONTEXT		OVERVIEW				
1	2017	SPOK	PBS: PBS Newshour	A	B	C	student's daily needs. LISA-STARK# As part of President Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty . LYNDON-JOHNSON, -Fo# Children just must not go hungri			
2	2017	SPOK	Fox: Fox Hannity	A	B	C	great government, since the 1960s, the Civil Rights movement and the War on Poverty . These policies have done more to destroy not just the black			
3	2017	MAG	The Atlantic	A	B	C	50s. Not long after Buchanan's big book was published, the War on Poverty began and then the Great Society -- one lethal program after another. #			
4	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	Johnson to shore up black Americans' educational and employment prospects in the War on Poverty . However, as historian Elizabeth Hinton argued			
5	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	federal funding to local departments in urban areas marked the transition from the War on Poverty to the War on Crime. Federal funding went tow			
6	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	encourage higher rates in violent crime. # From state-enforced segregation to the War on Poverty , conservatives and liberals in power effectively pe			
7	2016	SPOK	CNN: Axe Files	A	B	C	just wrote about Detroit during the 60s, and he talked about the war on poverty speech the Present Johnson made at the University of Michigan. An			
8	2016	SPOK	PBS: PBS Newshour	A	B	C	From 1963 to 1976, that 13-year period during the years in the war on poverty and at the height of the post-civil rights era, we actually made tremen			
9	2016	SPOK	CBS: Face The Nation	A	B	C	chronic poverty. We have -- we're over 50 years in the war on poverty . We've had 80 new programs -- 80 programs created since then at the			
10	2016	ACAD	The Journal of Hip Hop Studies	A	B	C	# Societal increases in the number of poor single mothers coincided with the War on Poverty , which produced legislation that reduced federal supp			
11	2016	ACAD	The Journal of Hip Hop Studies	A	B	C	spun by former President Reagan during the 1980s gave steam to the 1990s War on Poverty , and its subtle condemnation of single Black mothers, h			
12	2015	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A	B	C	here, trash, along with Washington government for failing to win the war on poverty . Carson says he is not the only black person who feels this way.			
13	2015	SPOK	PBS: PBS Newshour	A	B	C	the summer of 1965, as one salvo in President Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty . The early education program for low-income children supported t			
14	2015	MAG	America	A	B	C	who tries to tamp down King's efforts lest they derail Johnson's war on poverty legislation. It's a strange performance. By all accounts, the real L.B.J.			
15	2015	MAG	MotherJones	A	B	C	level the educational playing field. In 1965, as part of the War on Poverty , the Johnson administration sent extra federal funding to low-income scho			
16	2015	MAG	USAToday	A	B	C	country, having begun in 1965 as part of Pres. Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty . In serves nearly 1,000,000 students for an annual cost of about \$1			
17	2015	MAG	USAToday	A	B	C	in reconsidering what has been tried, even though 50 years into the war on poverty the result is not pretty. While gains have been made, significant			
18	2015	NEWS	CSMonitor	A	B	C	together through the Community Action program, part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty . The zeal of Johnson's vision of a Great Societ			

fig.21 – COCA: current context of ‘War on Poverty’

On the other hand, ‘War on Drugs’ can refer to Nixon’s policy but is not limited to it.

Corpus of Contemporary American English										
SEARCH		FREQUENCY		CONTEXT		OVERVIEW				
15	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	conference during which he asked for more federal funds to wage a " war on drugs . " # Both events -- the systemic crackdown on the political activit			
16	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	the systemic crackdown on the political activities of black activists and the nascent war on drugs -- would have a profound effect on the life of Tupac			
17	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	communities ended up being the battlegrounds -- and killing fields -- for the war on drugs . The homicide rate for black males between the ages of 11			
18	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	promise to restore " law and order " in the form of the War on Drugs in 1971, justified, as the entrenchment of Jim Crow was, by an			
19	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	was, by an ostensible increase in black involvement in crime. The War on Drugs enhanced the presence of drug control agents and, most damagingl			
20	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	knew all along: that, again, like Jim Crow, the War on Drugs was executed to criminalize black life. Nixon and his allies saw themselves as having			
21	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	Ehrlichman said. " Of course we did. " # Nixon's War on Drugs spoke to the essential paradox of black American experience with the criminal justice			
22	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	incarceration of black Americans. Johnson's War on Crime, Nixon's War on Drugs and Reagan's " tough on crime stance, " and President Bill Clinton's			
23	2017	MAG	Slate Magazine	A	B	C	pot. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has promised to ramp up the " war on drugs " and opposes marijuana legalization, garnering the support of pros			
24	2017	MAG	Salon	A	B	C	might say, exists to put the " war " in the " War on Drugs . " The Defense Department appears to have taken a rather relaxed stance on the			
25	2017	NEWS	OCRegister	A	B	C	police shooting incidents involving pets are a direct result of the failed " war on drugs . " As pet ownership has continued to rise, so have the number			
26	2017	ACAD	Iowa Law Review	A	B	C	see also generally Mark W. Bennett, A Slow Motion Lynching? The War on Drugs , Mass Incarceration, Doing Kimbrough Justice, and a Response to Tv			
27	2017	ACAD	Stanford Law Review	A	B	C	as a contemporary system of racial control by targeting black men through the war on drugs and decimating communities of color, even as it forma			
28	2016	SPOK	PBS: PBS Newshour	A	B	C	n't be controlled in more legitimate ways. And we created this so-called war on drugs , and we targeted people of color, and we got everybody to buy			
29	2016	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A	B	C	vote, and we have this whole section of society because of the war on drugs that aren't able to freely participate in society here in the United States,			
30	2016	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A	B	C	therefore making it less affordable for people, therefore being effective in the war on drugs . Do I have that right? TOM-WAINWRIGHT# Well, that's tr			
31	2016	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A	B	C	TOM-WAINWRIGHT# Well, if you look at the way that we fight the war on drugs at the moment, all of the attention or the great majority of the attent			
32	2016	SPOK	CNN: Anderson Cooper	A	B	C	about criminal justice reform and how we expand the party by reforming our war on drugs . So we think it's a good night. MURRAY# (inaudible) I			
33	2016	SPOK	CBS: Face The Nation	A	B	C	We need a parole system. We need to end the so-called war on drugs , which has resulted in a disproportionate number of African-Americans being			

fig.22 – COCA: current context of ‘War on Drugs’

In this figure, many occurrences do refer to Nixon and his policies. However, some are mentioning the ‘War on Drugs’ as a more general lengthy campaign that continued through the years.

III.2.3 – CONCLUSIONS ON THE ‘WAR ON POVERTY’ AND ‘WAR ON DRUGS’

In both cases under study, the President placed himself as Commander-in-Chief, a position admittedly metaphorical, and yet, it gave him a special position to enforce special measures, justified by a *war* rhetoric. Thus, the WAR ON construction is more than just a metaphor made to induce urgency and seriousness; it is a real scenario of policies that induces a certain behavior. Using a WAR ON metaphor/scenario as a policy then has consequences. In the examples studied, it means for example a Congress agreement for funds. The so-called ‘war’, as a political tool, while underlying the urgency of the threat, hides certain aspects of the new policies, aspects that can appear questionable to its detractors. This is especially notable concerning the ‘War on Drugs’. Per Nixon’s words, the enemies are drugs and their abuse. In 1990, Bill Hicks, a musician but also a stand-up comedian, implied that the ‘War on Drugs’ targeted “people on drugs” and rather than dealing with drugs, it was a “war on personal freedom”²². And indeed, in Nixon’s time, the policies enforced targeted social groups bothering the government rather than real cartels. During an interview given in 1998, Noam Chomsky underlined the fact that a ‘War on Drugs’ knowingly targets lower classes without threatening upper classes:

When you call for a War on Drugs, you know exactly who you’re going to pick up: poor black people. You’re not going to pick up rich white people: you don’t go after them anyway. In the upper-middle class suburb where I live, if somebody goes home and sniffs cocaine, police don’t break into their house.

For him, the ‘War on Drugs’ is a “war against the poor, largely poor people of color”. John Ehrlichman²³ admitted to *Harper’s* writer Dan Baum (2016):

The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I’m saying? We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.

The metaphorical war declaration thus promised a certain path while serving personal political agenda, here, “getting rid of” the part of the population that bothers the government in place (Chomsky, 1998). The vagueness of the ‘enemy’ targeted by such a ‘war’ allows a government to use it to justify any policy passed at this moment. For Baum (2016), Nixon’s ‘War on Drugs’ was a “cynical” political tool, “but every president since — Democrat and Republican alike — has found it equally useful for one reason or another”. Therefore, the

²² See Annex. 2 for an extract from Hicks’s piece on the ‘War on Drugs’.

²³ J. Ehrlichman was Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs during the Nixon presidencies.

‘War on Drugs’ is a vague enough metaphor to be used by both political side to serve their own goals.

One of the arguments for the prototypicality of an item is its historicity and frequency. The ‘War on Poverty’ should therefore be a good prototype for the WAR ON construction. However, the fact that it seems to only refer to Johnson’s policies and the lack of frequent use in the last years call for reconsideration. Indeed, the “order of mention” (Croft & Cruse: 78) is another criterion for the centrality of a member of a category. When the WAR ON construction is mentioned, people tend to think of the ‘War on Drugs’ or the ‘War on Terror’, the ‘War on Poverty’ being too restricted to the 1960s. On the other hand, used and reused to justify and explain different policies, the ‘War on Drugs’ could then be a good prototype of the WAR ON construction, especially given its high frequency of use.

Musolff observed that WAR metaphors were used in two different ways, it “varied between background usage”, that is “brief mentioning of some source-lexical material without further elaboration” and “extended and intertextually productive scenario formulations that expressed strong evaluative bias, narrative structure and also had programmatic functions” (52). The three political speeches studied here fall into the second category. Carter, Johnson and Nixon biased the audience’s perspective on the situation thanks to an elaborated WAR scenario. Embedded in this scenario, the events offer only one possible outcome: a metaphorical ‘offensive’ with a popular enthusiasm.

In this work, different policies embedded within a WAR scenario were studied: the energy war of Carter, the ‘War on Poverty’ of Johnson, and the ‘War on Drugs’ of Nixon. However the most used collocate of the WAR ON construction is Terror. Is this *war* rhetoric similar to the other three? What is the centrality of the ‘War on Terror’ expression within the uses of the WAR ON construction?

III.3 – WAR ON TERROR, EXCEPTIONALISM OR PROTOTYPICALITY?

Our last, but not least, question is on the so-called ‘War on Terror’. It is the most uttered form of the WAR ON construction, together with ‘War on Terrorism’, which will be considered as referring to the same conflict.

In part III.1, we saw that the WAR ON construction seemed to be used in two forms: as a WAR ON + (COUNTRY), or as WAR ON + (CONCEPTUAL ENEMY). But “Terror” is nor a country or a person, it is an intangible enemy so it should be part of the WAR ON + (CONCEPTUAL ENEMY)

construction and its meaning should logically be metaphorical. However, it cannot be questioned that the ‘War on Terror’ is a literal conflict. The high frequency leads to the following question: should they be considered the prototypical form of the WAR ON construction?

The expression ‘War on Terror’ was first coined after 9/11 and seems to be mainly used in spoken discourses:

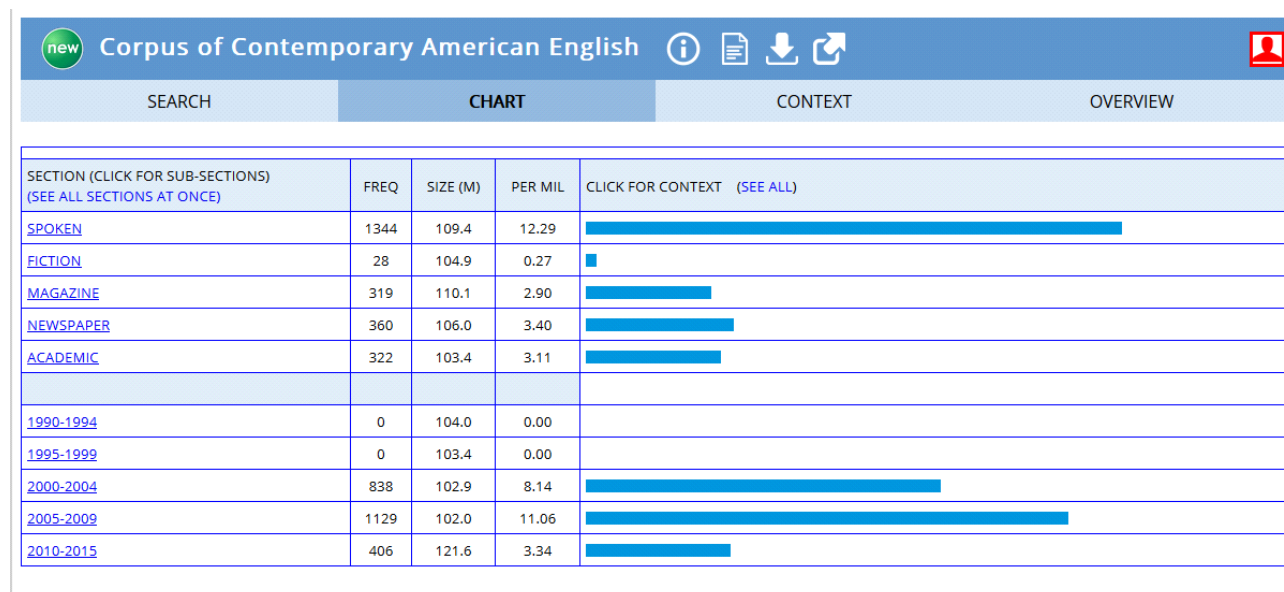


fig.23 – COCA: ‘war on terror’ (with sections)

Indeed, in this table, the proportion of spoken sources containing the expression ‘War on Terror’ largely exceeds the others. And of the 104.9 million words in the fiction section, only 28 occurrences can be found. Interestingly, Bush’s speeches only mention a ‘war *against* terrorism’, a war he declared on September 11th, 2001: “America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to **win the war against terrorism.**” It is only on September 20th that he officially coined the expression ‘War on Terror’ as the next campaign the US will lead:

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an **act of war** against our country. Americans have known wars -- but for the past 136 years, *they have been wars on foreign soil*, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known **the casualties of war** -- but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known **surprise attacks** -- but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day -- and night fell on a different world, *a world where freedom itself is under attack.*

Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who **attacked** our country? The *evidence* we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda. They are the same *murderers* indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya,

and responsible for bombing the USS Cole. (...) But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world -- and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere. (...)

This group and its leader -- a person named Osama bin Laden -- are linked to *many other organizations in different countries*, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. *There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries.* They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan, where they are trained in **the tactics of terror**. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction. (...) **Our enemy** is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them. (...) **Our war on terror** begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. *It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.*

The beginning of this speech framed 9/11 as an “act of war”, and the victims as “casualties of war”, a vocabulary that called for retaliation. Bush mixed terrorism and crime with attacks and war. He exposed a blurred threat, creating a license to attack anyone. Finally, he started the ‘War on Terror’ but without stating a reachable end.

Throughout this extract, we can notice a blend of crusade rhetoric, with a Good versus Evil opposition, they “plot evil and destruction”, and a Cold War rhetoric: two worlds facing each others, one looking to “remaking the world”. Both rhetorics are supported by the semantic field of *war*, creating a familiar scenario for an American audience. Bush continued:

We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. *We have seen their kind before.* They are *the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century.* By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions (...) they follow in the path of *fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism.* (...) Americans are asking: **How will we fight and win this war?** We will direct every resource at our command -- every *means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war* -- to the disruption and to the **defeat of the global terror network.** This war will not be like *the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion.* (...) Our response involves far more than **instant retaliation and isolated strikes.** Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. (...) We will starve **terrorists** of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue **nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.** From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as *a hostile regime.* (...) We will take *defensive measures* against terrorism to protect Americans. Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities affecting homeland security. These efforts must be *coordinated* at the highest level. So tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me -- the **Office of Homeland Security.**

He inscribed the conflict into an American historicity: “we have seen their kind before”, comparing this new situation to WWII and to the Gulf War. Bush defied the previous definition of what a war could be by creating a new kind of war, beyond expectations: it will not be like past wars. He also extended the idea of a bipartisan world, using a “us or them” rhetoric. Then, the creation of Homeland Security, a new national organization can be compared to Johnson’s and Nixon’s own reorganization of the government. This speech, by its rhetoric and construction, can indeed be paralleled to the previous political ‘wars’. Based on Lakoff and Johnson’s paradigm, Bush would have created a BRINGING TERRORIST TO JUSTICE IS WAR metaphor: the victims of a crime became framed as “casualties of war at the center of a peaceful city”.

<i>source domain: war</i>	<i>target domain: bring criminals to justice</i>
enemy	terrorist organization
allies (fighting alongside)	accomplice (harboring States)
commander in chief	Bush
general	Tom Ridge
act of war	terrorist attack
casualties	victims
weapons	diplomacy, intelligence, law enforcement, financial influence
fight war	bring justice

fig.24 – BRINGING TERRORIST TO JUSTICE IS WAR

However this metaphor is shaky: in listing the weapons that would be used, Bush mentioned explicitly “weapons of war”. And indeed, a few minutes later, President Bush bridged the space separating source domain and target domain, calling for the army and preventing a real metaphor to be created:

And tonight I also announce a distinguished American **to lead this effort**, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend -- Pennsylvania's **Tom Ridge**. He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism, and respond to any attacks that may come. These measures are *essential*. But the only way to **defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life** is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows. Many will be involved in this effort, from *FBI agents to intelligence operatives* to the **reservists** we have called to active duty. (...) And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for **our military: Be ready.** (...)

From this moment, he prevented any possibility for a metaphorical struggle. He then created a bipartisan representation of the world. This mirror of the rhetoric during the Cold War found echoes in most of the audience's feelings and called for a conflict larger than a simple US versus one enemy:

This is not, however, just America's **fight**. And what is *at stake is not just America's freedom*. This is **the world's fight**. This is civilization's fight. This is **the fight** of all who believe in *progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom*. We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, **the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems** around the world. (...) Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: **An attack on one is an attack on all**. The civilized world is rallying to America's side. They understand that if this terror goes **unpunished**, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. (...) Americans are asking: What is expected of us? (...) I know many citizens have *fears* tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even **in the face of a continuing threat**. I ask you to uphold the *values of America*, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a **fight for our principles**, and our first responsibility is to live by them. (...) I ask for your patience, with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security; and for your patience in what will be a **long struggle**. (...) Terrorists **attacked a symbol of American prosperity**. (...)

Tonight, we face *new and sudden national challenges*. We will come together *to improve air safety* (...). We will come together *to give law enforcement the additional tools* it needs to track down **terror here at home**. (Applause.) We will come together *to strengthen our intelligence capabilities* to know the plans of terrorists before they act, and find them before they strike. (...) We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger *we have found our mission and our moment*. **Freedom and fear are at war**.

I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. **I will not yield**; I will not rest; I will not relent *in waging this struggle for freedom and security* for the American people.

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. **Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war**, and we know that God is not neutral between them. (Applause.)

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient **justice** -- assured of *the rightness of our cause*, and confident of the **victories** to come.

Throughout this speech, Bush ambiguously mixed the idea of a fight, metaphorical and literal, with the semantic field of *justice*, leaving the question of how exactly they would retaliate unanswered: he asked help from banks and police force but also from the army. He embedded the event within a war without an end, a "lengthy conflict" against a continuing threat while moving between a JUSTICE IS WAR metaphor and the threat of a real war. And, to conclude, this speech justified all the new measures taken by the government, like the US PATRIOT Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act) and the exceptional presidential powers given to Bush.

The transition to a real war was yet to be made as on 9/11 he declared that the instance involved would be “intelligence and law enforcement communities” to bring the enemy to justice. He thus moved back and forth between a judiciary solution and an armed solution, preventing a real metaphor to be created but without giving a concrete military agenda.

III.3.1 – WAR FRAME / JUSTICE FRAME

In 2008, Gérard Chaliand declared that

les conséquences du 11 septembre sont connues. Elles vont déterminer l’expédition punitive en Afghanistan avec l’aval des Nations Unies et, par la suite, la guerre de choix que depuis une demi douzaine d’années les néo-conservateurs, Paul Wolowitz en tête, voulaient imposer. A cet égard, le 11 septembre constitue le choc qui permet de mobiliser à la fois la Présidence et l’opinion publique. (819)

According to this quote, the 9/11 attacks were used as a tool to declare a war. Lakoff and Frisch believed that the consequences to the attacks should not have been a war declaration and that this conflict only resulted from a misuse of the *war* frame (2006). They used the word ‘frame’ in Charles Filmore’s sense: “any system of concepts is related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits” (2006: 373). It is a similar concept to Croft’s domains seen in part I. Every single word an individual (and a community) uses comes with its frame: *restaurant* is based on a domain matrix, which constitutes the frame brought up whenever it is mentioned, represented in the following figure:

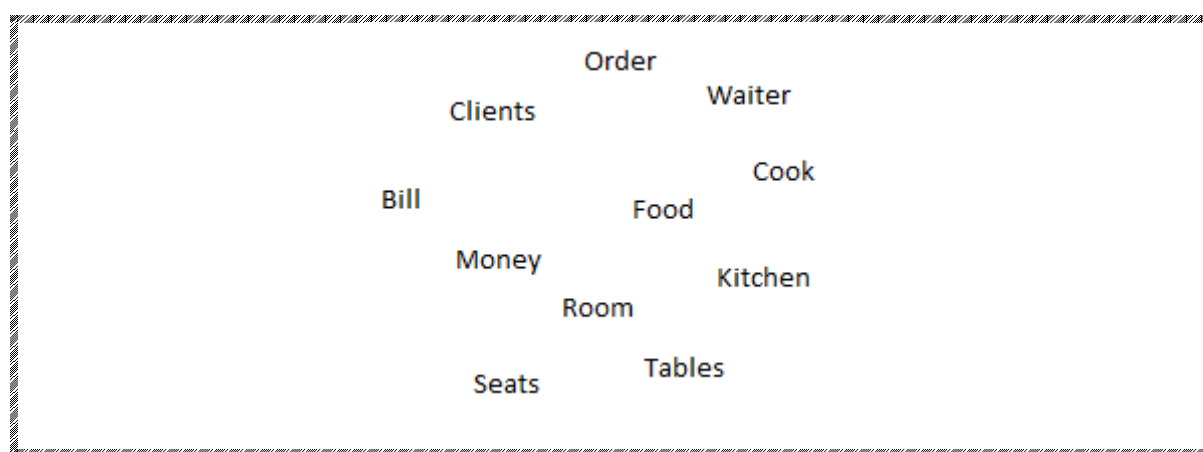


fig.25 – Restaurant Frame

A frame can be linked to the verb *to frame* that is used, in this work and in Musolff’s, in the sense of putting a situation within a frame through speech, limiting and influencing the audience’s reaction and perception of the situation.

On the same paradigm, *war* comes with its own particular frame. Talking about *war* involves campaigns, special measures and patriotism. In the case of 9/11, Lakoff and Frisch felt that the event had been first framed within the *justice* frame, and if it had not been put into the *war* frame then, the implications would have been different. To frame 9/11 within a *justice* frame would have had better consequences. It would have “involved international crime-fighting techniques” (2006). And on the contrary, as General R. B. Myers stated, “if you call it a war, then you think of people in uniform as the solution.”



fig.26 – War Frame

fig.27 – Justice Frame

In these two figures, the two frames are side by side. They involve different actors (lawyers and policeman/soldiers and the army) and a different implication of the United States. The places and the tools involved differ; both frames imply different outcomes.

Immediately after 9/11, Bush declared a war against terrorism, but the ambiguity between judiciary and military response remained. However, when searching the New York Times archives and the articles published in the immediate aftermath, we noticed that 9/11 was described as an “act of war”, an “attack”, and a military response was expected. From the very beginning, Bush announced that they would wage a lengthy war against terrorism.

Then, the question is: how did the press framed the event and how did it responded to the Administration’s framing? Was it really framed first in a *justice* frame to be then reframed in the *war* frame? The following quotes are all extracted from the New York Times archives, from articles published on the 12th and the 13th of September 2001. They represent a sample of the press review that was made on the question.

Most of the articles on the 12th were found in a special file entitled “A day of Terror”. Here is an extract from the first article under study:

(...) a flight full of commuters can be turned into a **missile of war** (...). We have nearly all had occasion to wonder how civilians who suddenly **found their country at war** and themselves under attack managed to frame some memory of life as it once was. *Now we know.*

(...) But it is just as important to consider the intensity of the hatred it took to bring it off. It is *a hatred that exceeds the convention of warfare, that knows no limits, abides by no agreements.*

(...) We suffer from **an act of war** without any **enemy nation** with which to do **battle**.

This Opinion paper fully supported Bush’s rhetoric and even uses his arguments: the audience should expect a war without precedent, with a faceless enemy that does not know agreements and conventions. Entitled “The War Against America; An Unfathomable Attack”, it did not leave space for a question: the US were under attack, the US were at war. This was confirmed by several articles, including this piece written by Alison Mitchell and Katharine Seelye:

With the president far from the capital for much of the day, those *lawmakers* left behind the nation’s public presence. They called the strikes on New York and Washington **acts of war** and vowed that the nation would *stand united and fight back*.

Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, said: “These **attacks** clearly constitute an **act of war**. I mean **unwarranted, unprovoked attacks** against innocent American citizens is **clearly an act of war**, and one that requires that kind of **national response and international response**.’

They reported without questioning them the words of several senators, both Democrat and Republican. All called for retaliation in what was clearly named an “act of war”. In an essay, William Safire added:

Along with the funerals, the grieving and *the intelligence shakeup* comes a grim recognition that America is **at war** and this time our land is one of the **battleground**. (...) what are we doing to protect our skies, (...) and **to carry the war to the enemy**?

This time, the author even addressed directly the authorities and called for security and war. Bill Keller, a correspondent, suggested that a military “reprisal” was inevitable and will be expensive for the US.

Perhaps our livelihood will now be touched by **constant costs of war**, as it has not been since at least the end of the **cold war**.

If we are smart, like Israel we may now start thinking more clearly about **the stateless enemy** as a **threat** to our **national security**. *Perhaps*, after the obligatory and symbolic **reprisals**, which will be *as ineffectual as Israel’s*, our president will spend more time talking about *real-world vigilance of intelligence and law enforcement* (...).

However, he also implied that once the inefficiency of such an attack would be demonstrated, the US should reconsider its strategy and focus on other actors: intelligence and law institutions. Others do not question the war itself but its form; Blaine Harden voiced the concerns of an ‘average’ American citizen, Kelly Bracco, a state employee in Harrisburg, Pa: “It’s the nature of the war that scares me. We’re not going against a country, but a group.”

Of course, some articles refused the *war* rhetoric bombarded by the Bush Administration. Anthony Lewis questioned the possible responses to 9/11 and doubted a war was the ‘clearer’ solution:

‘Since these were **acts of war**,’ a television broadcaster said during the day, ‘it is important to know where our **national command center** is.’ To the contrary it seemed irrelevant. What does a military command do about a **faceless enemy** that does devastating damage with no more than perhaps a dozen attackers?

If this was **war**, it was far from the best-remembered **attack** on America. Pearl Harbor was so clear. In school next day we gathered in the auditorium and listened to President Roosevelt. ‘Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy...’ **No one could doubt who the enemy was or how America had to respond.** Those are now the very doubts.

The comparison with Pearl Harbor is striking: on the one hand, the US knew an attack that began the US military involvement in the Second World War, first against Japan, then against its allies; on the other hand, they knew an attack from a vague enemy, and a lack of clear solution or response. Questioning the efficiency of a military command on the question, Lewis expressed his doubts about framing 9/11 within an armed conflict.

On the other hand, in James Risen and David Johnson’s article there is, for the first time, the mention of the *justice* frame.

Attorney General John Ashcroft said tonight that the *FBI* had established *crime scene inquiries* in NY, Washington, Boston, Newark and the site of the crash outside of Pittsburgh. Mr Ashcroft said *thousands of agents* were on *the case*, among them agents stationed in bureau offices abroad. He said those responsible would be *brought to justice*.

(...) A growing number of officials said **the magnitude of today’s attacks put them beyond the reach of law enforcement.** They said that *arrest and trial* of conspirators was an inadequate response to what amounted to **an assault** on the nation’s security that could be dealt with **only by military force.**

(...) The attacks left investigators with *few clues*.

All the actors involved belong to the judiciary processes. However, by the end of the article, they clearly stated that the *justice* frame would not be enough to answer such an “assault”. The inadequacy of one frame thus called for a new framing, within the *war* frame.²⁴

²⁴ It is interesting to notice that in none of these articles is the WAR ON construction is present. It confirms the idea that it was first coined by Bush in his speech on September 20th.

On the 13th, the tone changes and instead of talking about war and retaliation, the articles tended to speak about the people involved, people who clearly belong to the *justice* frame: investigators, police, law officers, law enforcement officers, team of forensic scientists, the FBI, etc. And all of them are collecting “evidence” on the “crime scene”, to bring people into “custody for questioning”. It means that the first reaction was a call for war, maybe conditioned by Bush’s rhetoric on 9/11. On the 12th, only Risen and Johnsons mentioned trials as a possible solution for the culprits. However, on the day that followed, the framing changed as journalists recounted who was really involved at those times. Thus, 9/11 was from the very beginning embedded within the *war* frame, in the Bush Administration speeches or in the press, contrary to what Lakoff and Johnson felt. It is nonetheless true that both vocabulary from the *justice* frame and the *war* frame were mixed, creating confusion on who was involved and what would be the government response.

However, Johnson did not involve the army in his ‘War on Poverty’, and when Nixon declared that drugs were now the Public Enemy Number One, no one expected the army to be in command.²⁵ The reactions were different from the immediate acceptance of the ‘War on Terror’ as a ‘real’ war. Framing an event through metaphors, like in the cases of the ‘War on Poverty’ or Carter’s war for energy, can “narrow the range of assumption that are usually associated with the topic, present a coherent interpretation and suggest a seemingly promising course of action” (Musolff, 2018: 11). Thus, the ‘drug crisis’ could not be perceived otherwise once it had been framed by a WAR metaphor by Nixon. It is even a WAR scenario as it offers a way of perceiving and thinking about the event:

Its dynamic scenario version includes a war declaration between two or more enemies, the start of hostilities and various battles up to a final outcome which is assessed as a victory or defeat/rout. (30)

Nixon declared war against the “Public Enemy Number One”, drugs, and offered different strategies to start the “hostilities”. As did Johnsons before him. But, according to Musolff,

this scenario is more than a random selection of conceptual elements from the general *war* domain, but rather a particular set of presuppositions that are chosen for specific argumentative purposes (...). The emphatic ‘framing’ effect that metaphors can achieve (...) is attained when a discourse community decides to settle on a particular scenario as their dominant (or even exclusive) perspective on reality.

And indeed, the two ‘wars on’ were embedded in WAR scenarios that dominated their decade. But this is the difference with the third ‘war on’ studied here: the ‘War on Terror’ is not a way on perceiving reality, it is a real war.

²⁵ This is a debatable point as the army has been more and more present in the ‘War on Drugs’ policies, especially abroad.

What is surprising is that, less than 24 hours prior 9/11, Rumsfeld declared his own ‘war on’, one that obviously could not be waged literally. Indeed, in a transcript of a CNN report, we can read:

Defense Secretary Declares **War on the Pentagon's Bureaucracy**, Aired September 10, 2001

The Defense secretary **declared war** today **on the Pentagon**. Donald Rumsfeld calls the bureaucracy an **adversary** which poses a **serious threat** to U.S. security.

Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defense: So today we declare **war on bureaucracy**, *not people but processes*. (...) I have no desire **to attack** the Pentagon. I want *to liberate* it. We need *to save* it from itself.

McIntyre (on camera): Rumsfeld's aides insist far from being frustrated he is energized by **battling** the bulging bureaucracy. In his speech, he laid down the marker: "If there is to be **struggle**," he said, "so be it."

Once again, the semantic field of *war* is present, and the WAR ON construction is repeated no less than three times. This ‘war’ is not well-known, probably because of the events of the following day. It was nonetheless declared by the same administration, with the same rhetoric than the ‘War on Terror’. However, a ‘War on Bureaucracy’ could hardly be waged with the army, and foremost, the context could not be more different. On the one hand, the population touched by the ‘War on Bureaucracy’ was small and specific.²⁶ On the other hand, the American population, the press, and the governing institutions called for a ‘real’ reaction, a concrete response to a situation without precedent. The difference with the other ‘wars on’ might be that the ‘War on Terror’ was declared as a reaction to a violent event, an event that scarred the American feeling of security. Indeed, Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green believe that

the context in which an utterance or usage event is situated is central to the cognitive explanation. This is particularly true for word meaning, which is **protean** by nature. This means that word meaning is rather changeable. While words bring with them a conventional meaning, the context in which a word is used has important effects on its meaning. (2006: 112)

The context of the 9/11 attacks then greatly influenced the perception of the ‘War on Terror’, distancing it from the preceding ‘wars on’.

The speeches Bush gave in the following months and years are far less ambiguous on the balance between *justice* or *war*. In his 2002 Address to the Nation, he used words like “our nation is at war”, “allies against terror”, “the might of the United States military”, “we are winning the war on terror”, “our cause”, “axis of evil”, “Our war on terror”, “this time of

²⁶ The expression started to be used again today under the Trump Administration.

war”, concluding with “we will see freedom's victory.”²⁷ And throughout the next speeches, he repeated the idea that the war against an “ongoing” threat had “just begun”.

To conclude, to “bring the terrorists to justice”, Bush declared a ‘War on Terror’. He first created an ambiguous situation in between the *war* frame and the *justice* frame but finally, the *war* frame prevailed. According to Joan Fitzpatrick, an international law scholar, the choice of one frame over the other, “the semantic move to an armed conflict paradigm and away from an international crime control approach” has created an unprecedented situation and “has undermined the effectiveness and clarity of human rights constraints on counter-terrorist strategies(...)” (2003: 263). Then, “peut-on évoquer raisonnablement une ‘guerre globale contre le terrorisme’?” asked Gérard Chaliand (2008: 823). For him, terrorism is a clandestine activity that above all necessitates intelligence and police actions. In that case, what does the expression ‘War on Terror’ mean? To what does the ‘terror’ part refer?

III.3.2 – TERRORISM AND METONYMIES

Terrorism is a difficult concept to grasp. Many definitions can be found. Paul Dumouchel offers the following: “le terrorisme serait la poursuite de la guerre par d’autres moyens” (in Courtois, 2003: 8). Terrorism would then be a strategy, an extension of war. Jacques Baud adds that terrorism is a “méthode de combat du faible au fort” and as such, “le terrorisme utilise la surprise et l’horreur comme facteurs multiplicateurs pour créer la ‘terreur’” (1999: i). He believes the legitimacy of such a fighting method is “variable”:

Le terrorisme n’est ni une idéologie, ni un objectif politique, ni une fatalité. C’est une méthode de combat. (...) Le terroriste est tantôt un simple criminel, un résistant ou un ‘combattant de la liberté’. L’analyse sémantique ne retient cependant pas la contradiction : le mot ‘terroriste’ contient implicitement la *méthode de combat* utilisée, alors que ‘combattant de la liberté’ désigne la *finalité de l’action*. Cette finalité est l’objet d’une appréciation subjective, la méthode, elle, peut être constatée de manière objective. (ibid)

A terrorist can be “a simple criminal, a resistant, or a ‘freedom fighter’”. In his opinion, the difference between a terrorist and a freedom fighter is that the first term focuses on the fighting method used, while the other focuses on the finality of the action. The method can be objectively observed while the finality is subjectively acknowledged. Therefore, terrorism is objectively a way of fighting but its legitimacy is subjective, depending on who perceives and recounts the events.

²⁷ See Annex. 3 – January 29, 2002 – President George W. Bush’s State of the Union Address.

In the OED, *terrorism* is defined as follows: “the unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims.” Someone fighting using such an “unauthorized” violence would then be a terrorist. The term *terrorist* is often opposed to the word *soldier*: “One who serves in an army for pay; one who takes part in military service or warfare”; *army* is defined as “an organized military force equipped for fighting on land” (OED). One can notice that a terrorist too could be part of what is defined by *army*, and so, be called *soldier*. Why are *terrorist* and *soldier* considered as two different things? If we take these (restrictive) definitions, they are similar. The difference then is subjective. It lies in who wins the conflict. A terrorist is “unauthorized” but if he wins the conflict, then he will be authorized in retrospect. Indeed, when IRA members are described as terrorists, the *guerilleros* who fought fascism in Spain are seen as soldiers, maybe because eventually Franco's regime was recognized as a dictatorship, as the “bad guy to fight”. Then, *terrorist* too is a subjective term as it depends on the side of the people who write the war. The name frame the way the referent is perceived.

Historically, terrorism was present at all eras. But according to Chaliand, it is only recently that cities came at the heart of the armed struggles: “ce cours nouveau, où les villes deviennent le centre de gravité de la lutte armée, apparaît au lendemain des échecs répétés des guérillas rurales des années 60” (803). Urban terrorism and cities as choice targets of terrorist acts is then a consequence, a ‘child’ of guerillas in the country. For him, from 1968, terrorism became the only technique for numerous movements and groups (817) to compensate their weakness. And it is only in recent times that appeared “trans-state terrorism”. However, 9/11 was not the first terrorist act against American citizens as, throughout the world, they are targets of trans-state terrorism: “bien que le territoire américain n’ait été frappé avant 1993, les intérêts et les ressortissants américains, à travers le monde, sont parmi les principales victimes du terrorisme transétatique” (811). Nowadays, the word *terrorism* is common in our everyday language, especially since 9/11, the events in the Bataclan, and other terrorist acts. It is however important to work on a precise definition of the *terrorism* concept. Legally, in the papers of the UN, *terrorism* is the following:

Tout acte qui vise à tuer ou à blesser grièvement des civils et des non-combattants et qui, du fait de sa nature ou du contexte dans lequel il est commis, doit avoir pour effet d’intimider une population ou de contraindre un gouvernement ou une organisation internationale à agir ou à renoncer à agir d’une façon quelconque. (in Chaliand: 825)

However, historically, ‘terror’ is mainly known for designating the period that followed the French Revolution and was in that case an instrument of the State. In Chaliand’s opinion,

tyrannies and totalitarian States ruled thanks to terror (799). This means that *terrorism* is not only a weapon of the weak, it also can be a strategy or even a policy. And indeed, in the legal definition, to “intimidate a population” is considered as a terrorist act. Chomsky underlined this paradox:

terror is the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to attain political or religious ideological goals through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear. But there’s a problem. (...) If you take a look at the definition of Low Intensity Warfare which is official US policy you find that it is a very close paraphrase of what I just read. In fact, Low Intensity Conflict is just another name for terrorism. (2001)

‘Terror’ can then be a weapon of the State, used by a democracy such as the US. Indeed, Chaliand believes that if we really want to speak about terrorism, “qui consiste à inspirer ou à répandre la terreur,” we need to mention the bombings of the United Kingdom and Germany during WWII and, “et enfin et surtout, [les] bombes nucléaires sur Hiroshima et Nagasaki” (801). We need then to balance the impact of an institutionalized State terrorism and terrorist groups: given the means dedicated to war, security, and control, that States have, their victims are much more numerous than those caused by terrorist groups. In a discussion with and recorded by André Vltchek, Chomsky questioned the very notion of terrorism as they talked about Western terrorism, a kind of terrorism largely ignored by the press.

The concept of *terrorism* is then subjective as the US could hardly be called (in the press) a ‘terrorist State’ especially as they are waging a war against those kinds of States. But how can the US wage a war on terrorism while its own strategies are very close to the very definition of terrorism? And furthermore, how can a war be waged on ‘terror’?

In Lakoff’s opinion, summarized in the article written with Frisch, the problem with the ‘War on Terror’ is that it is metaphorical as a literal war could not be waged against ‘terror’. If it was a metaphorical war, it would be the result of a mapping across domains, based on the TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN paradigm used repeatedly throughout this work. When the ‘War on Terror’ and its context are analyzed, the literal equivalent, or the concrete application would be a war against terrorist groups. The metaphor then would be WAR ON TERROR IS WAR AGAINST TERRORISM. However, it is obvious even in the formulation that there is no mapping: the target domain literally is the source domain: *war*. When the concrete campaigns launched by the US, like Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, are compared to the metaphors used in Bush and his administration speeches, like a war opposing Good and Evil, both are based on the *war* domain. The difference is that on the one hand there are concrete military applications and on the other hand, there are the rhetorical tools used to

justify them, and which represent the scenario in which the events were embedded. This war is not metaphorical and is literally waged in several place of the world.²⁸

It is however true that a war cannot be literally waged on ‘terror’, it needs to be fought against a human enemy or a group of humans for the least (like a state) to be considered literal. If the war is literal, then to what does ‘terror’ refer? As we saw, *terrorism* is a strategy that uses fear, threats and intimidation. ‘Terror’ is then one of their choice weapons and it is the feeling they induce through their acts. When the term *terrorism* was chosen to designate such warfare, the *terror* domain diverted from the *feeling* domain and was at the core of the creation of the *terrorism* domain matrix. Or, on Fillmore’s *Frame Semantics* paradigm, a new frame was created when the term *terrorism* appeared, connected to feelings but not dependent on it.



fig.28 – Proximity between the frames of *feeling* and *terrorism*

The movement from the feeling *terror* to *terrorism* or to the ‘terrorist groups’ that are the enemy fought in the ‘War on Terror’ then is not properly a mapping between two domains, necessary to a metaphor. There is however a mapping as one word is used to represent another. When a mapping takes place in only one domain, another phenomenon occurs: a metonymy. According to Dirk Geeraerts, while metaphor is based on “similarity”, metonymy is “said to be based on contiguity”, a “somewhat vague notion that could be clarified in terms of ‘actual proximity or association’” (2006: 13). In that sense, ‘terror’ designates all those

²⁸ Brendan Nyhan, a prolific non-partisan political scientist, criticized George Lakoff’s methods in an article entitled “George Lakoff: False Prophet” published on his website in 2005. In his opinion, Lakoff convinces people “with linguistic manipulation rather than better ideas”. According to Joshua Green, Lakoff “advocates couching the entire Democratic message in palatable—even deceptive—language in order to simplify large ideas and disguise them behind innocent but powerful-sounding phrases” (2005). Nyhan also quoted Kenneth Baer, who was director of communications in the Obama administration: “it seems that Lakoff is primarily concerned with using linguistics to make the case for his liberal-left politics”, concluding that “by reducing American politics to language, Lakoff ignores the context that gives meaning to those words.”

terrorist groups under another name which belongs to the same domain matrix, a contiguous concept: the ‘weapon’ that gave them their name, *terror*.

‘War on Terror’ is not metaphorical but a mapping occurs. Added to the historicity of the term *terrorism*, the historical connotation attached to it, and the current events, the name and the significance of this ‘war’ remain blurred.

III.3.3 – CONCRETE AND LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

Choosing how to call the military campaign or how to frame it rhetorically may seem trivial problems regarding the number of casualties that occurred during this war. Both, however, have legal consequences. As a crime, 9/11 would have had as a consequence an international pursuit led by intelligence agencies and the judiciary system. As a war, the army took the head of an intense international military campaign. Per Bush’s definition, the enemy can be anyone involved in terrorist activities and any State helping them. But in that case, “one must navigate the boundaries between humanitarian law and international crime law to locate the legal rules for this campaign” (Fitzpatrick, 2003: 249). Humanitarian law on the one hand, which regulates armed conflicts around the world, is opposed to international crime law which belongs to the *justice* frame on the other hand.

Without question, 9/11 impacted the Western (and probably the whole) world. It “prompted a massive shift of law enforcement resources toward combating terrorism, (...) launched an ‘anti-terrorist wildfire’ at the national level” (242-243). And terrorism, as a criminal act, was already under legal scrutiny as agents of Al Qaeda were under federal criminal prosecution before the attacks. And suspects “allegedly linked to Al Qaeda continue to be indicted in US courts” (244). The *justice* frame was thus active when the ‘War on Terror’ was mentioned. Indeed, in order to deal with terrorism, “domestic law enforcement and mutual criminal assistance remain the primary tools for states” (ibid). In the case of a metaphorical war, the army can be involved: “military involvement in law enforcement regarding to transnational crimes is not an innovation, and has been common with respect to the drug trade and migrant smuggling, as well as terrorism” (ibid). Fitzpatrick drew a parallel between the ‘War on Drugs’ and the ‘War on Terror’: in both cases, the enemy could be judiciary pursued with the army as the armed hand of justice. However, the ‘War on Terror’ moved from the *justice* frame to the *war* frame, a “rhetorical and conceptual move from a crime-control to an armed-conflict paradigm” (246). The new frame in which ‘War on Terror’ is then the *war* frame.

According to an opinion paper produced by the Red Cross (2008), *war* is an armed conflict and is defined as follows in the International conventions and agreements:

1. International armed conflicts exist whenever there is resort to armed force between two or more States.
2. Non-international armed conflicts are protracted armed confrontations occurring between governmental armed forces and the forces of one or more armed groups, or between such groups arising on the territory of a State [...].

Two (or more) belligerents, here defined as States, are needed to have an international armed conflict. Armed groups within a State fight, by definition, their own governmental army. Furthermore, wars begin with a declaration of war, an invasion or an attack, they are fought to achieve a goal and once the goal is achieved, the war is technically over.

World War II is a prototypical example of an international armed conflict. A series of events marked its beginning: France and the United Kingdom entered the conflict after the invasion of Poland. The belligerents were the Allies and the Axis. The simplified goals were either to invade and dominate Europe, or to defeat Hitler and his allies. In the case of the UK, war was declared by King George VI through a speech, a war that ended after the defeat of the Axis. As a prototype of *international armed conflict*, WWII presented all the features attributed to the concept of *war*. In the case of the ‘War on Terror’, it was declared by President Bush on September 11th, or 20th. However, in Bush’s terms, this war will know no clear end, no clear victory as the US will not stop until “freedom’s victory”. But as the US does not fight a State, the conflict does not properly fall into the laws of war, the “‘war against terrorism’ fits no accepted legal paradigm” (Fitzpatrick, 2003: 245):

No territory is contested; no peace talks are conceivable; progress is measured by the absence of attacks, and success in applying control measures (...). The duration of ‘hostilities’ is measured by the persistence of fear that the enemy retains the capacity to strike. Long periods without incident do not signify safety, because the enemy is known to operate ‘sleepers’. The enemy may be of any nationality, occupation or residence, and is perceived as all the more dangerous for his seeming ordinariness. The war will end when the coalition decides, on the basis of unknown criteria. (251-2)

In a few words, Fitzpatrick summed up Bush’s definition of the conflict: a long war against an unknown enemy.²⁹

The question of whether the expression ‘War on Terror’ is metaphorical or not is not just a linguistic debate. In Joan Fitzpatrick's opinion, the ‘War on Terror’ was not clearly framed: the “legal character of the post-September 11 ‘war’ was confused and changeable.

²⁹ Naomi Klein, economist, believes that this war even is a private war conceived from the very beginning to be without a time frame, a geographical frame, nor a clear target. But that is another debate.

(...) The Bush administration's legal characterization of the war remains remarkably ambiguous” (2002: 346). In both articles, Fitzpatrick tried to frame the ‘War on Terror’ within a legal category, a name that she always put between inverted commas as if she was questioning its legitimacy:

- First, she offered to see it as “a metaphorical 'war on terrorism” (2002: 345), which would involve “essentially a multinational police action against organized, politically motivated, transnational criminal syndicates of worldwide scope and indefinite duration.” Her definition would fit what was seen as the *justice* frame. But as we saw, the ‘War on Terror’ was not framed as a crime and an actual war was waged.

- Second, she offered what she called a “New Paradigm” of *war*: “an international armed conflict against Al Qaeda as a kind of quasi state, establishing a dramatic new paradigm in the law of armed conflict, with uncertain consequences.” (2003: 249)

Thus, the so-called ‘War on Terror’ deformed, transformed the very laws agreed upon by International Conventions. The War on Terror is considered a war but it is not a legal one and yet the USA are not answerable in front of the International Court of Justice as “neither ‘war’ nor ‘terrorism’ has a fixed meaning in contemporary international law” (2003: 249).³⁰ Fitzpatrick’s articles mainly focus on the Prisoners of War (POW): if the conflict is not clearly defined, which legal status would these POW have? If it is a crime, a metaphorical war, then they are not protected by the POW status, but as a war is waged, they should be. According to Fitzpatrick, the American government “exploit the ambiguities of humanitarian law and the rules on the use of force” (245) to serve their own ends:

The ‘war against terrorism’ eludes definition, largely because those prosecuting the campaign find ambiguity advantageous to avoid legal constraints and to shift policy objectives with minimal accountability. (248)

Therefore, the ‘War on Terror’ would create a new paradigm of *war*, one that has no rules for the moment. And this ambiguous situation would be used by those who desired this conflict.

Because of its lack of definition, the conflict could not be put within any legal frame, allowing POW to be called ‘enemy combatants’, depriving them of their international (and national) rights (Klein, 2014: 69). The different propagandas, names, and rhetoric created a blurred line between what is lived, how it is called and how it can be considered legally. Solmaz Sharif’s poetry underlines the difference of language between the people who wage a

³⁰ A multiplicity of other reasons makes the US unanswerable in front of International Court of Justice, first and foremost the fact that they refused to recognize the Court’s authority. See Annex 4. for more details.

war and the civilians who live it. In this extract of a poem published in 2016, she highlighted the dichotomy between official discourse and how the viewer lived the events:

According to most
definitions, I have never
been at war.
According to mine,
most of my life
spent there.

The inner perception then differs from what is official, and defined by an external authority. The poem ends with the following verses:

The war in Iraq, I read,
is over now.
The last wheels gathering
into themselves
as they lift off
the sad tarmac. I say
begin. I say *end*
and you are to believe
this is what happens.

In this excerpt, the focalization changes: while the rest of the poem is the recollection of an anonymous person, the last four lines seem to be addressing the reader and seem to be said by an authority figure. It conveys the feeling that the situations are not created or influenced by the events but by the decisions of an 'I'. Speech even has an incredible power as it is only when the word "end" is uttered by such an authority figure that the war ends.

III.3.4 – CONCLUSIONS ON THE 'WAR ON TERROR'

The 'War on Terror' does not follow the same pattern than the other two 'wars on' studied. In the three cases, an American president observed a situation that called for a reaction, and then declared a war against an intangible enemy. However, while in the 'War on Poverty' and the 'War on Drugs' the conflicts remained within the *justice* frame, the 'War on Terror' quickly moved into the *war* frame. But even once it was a 'proper' war, the 'War on Terror' escaped any legal framing. Fitzpatrick's questions and arguments must however be put in perspective. Indeed, both articles were written during the first years of the 'War on Terror', and she did not have any hindsight to do a proper analysis of the situation. Her point is still legitimate and it matches the linguistic ambiguity found in the very name of the conflict. And the importance of this name is not to be taken lightly as one of the ways used by the Obama

Administration to try to end the conflict was to forbid the use of the name ‘Global War on Terror on official papers.’³¹

III.4 – CONCLUSION

In 1968, Roger Kahn argued that

The language of American politics under Lyndon Johnson had become infested with the word ‘war.’ There was a war on poverty, war on inflation, war on ignorance. ‘But you don’t solve these problems,’ McCarthy cried, ‘with the techniques or the devices of war.’

Since, these ‘wars’ that cannot be solved with “the techniques or the devices of war” are numerous. We mentioned Rumsfeld’s ‘War on Bureaucracy’, but there also is a ‘War on Science’, found on the cover of the March 2015 issue of the National Geographic; a ‘War on Christmas’ supposedly waged by the Obama Administration against Christian traditions; a ‘War on Roe v. Wade’, metonymy of the metaphorical ‘War on Abortion’; a ‘war on the body’ of the women protesting in the streets of a Missourian city waged by the State; articles ask if we are fighting a ‘War on Homelessness’; Facebook groups believe there is a ‘War on our Future’; and numerous other occurrences.

In this part it was demonstrated that, if the WAR ON construction seems complex at first sight, it might be represented as a X [VERB] WAR ON Y construction in which Y stands for people or something standing for something else through the processes of personification, metaphor, and metonymy (a country, a state, a concept). Thanks to corpora, two forms of the construction were revealed: a WAR ON [COUNTRY] and a WAR ON [CONCEPT], one literal, and the other metaphorical. The most interesting occurrences of these forms were analyzed, first the first to be used repeatedly, the ‘War on Poverty’, second the one used in the most different contexts, the ‘War on Drugs’, and finally, the most frequent, the ‘War on Terror’.

To find the prototype of the WAR ON construction, these three features could be used: historicity, adaptability, and frequency. However, while the ‘War on Drugs’ and the ‘War on Poverty’ could be in competition to be the prototype of the WAR ON [CONCEPT] form, the ‘War on Terror’ could not. Indeed, it is not a metaphorical conflict and therefore, it does not present one of the central features of this form.

³¹ “A message sent recently to senior Pentagon staff explains that “this administration prefers to avoid using the term Long War or Global War On Terror (GWOT) ... please pass this on to your speechwriters”. Instead, they have been asked to use a bureaucratic phrase that could hardly be further from the fiery rhetoric of the months immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The global war on terror is dead; long live “overseas contingency operations”.” “Obama administration says goodbye to ‘war on terror’”, *The Guardian*, 25 March, 2009

However, the high frequency of its occurrences, especially if we add the utterances of ‘War on Terrorism’, could question the very centrality of the features of this form. Indeed, as it is used more frequently than the other locutions, is not it the first one to pop into mind when we think of the WAR ON construction? Naomi Klein gave a conference in Paris in November 2017 about the publication of her new book. She was able to count on the presence of several interpreters to translate her words and understand the questions on the audience. At one point, someone asked a question about the “lutte contre l’islamophobie”, and the “lutte contre la discrimination”. The French locution ‘lutte contre’ is one of the possible translations of the WAR ON construction. Indeed, the ‘War on Cancer’ would be the “lutte contre le cancer”. That is why the following question was asked to the interpreter: how had she translated the two ‘lutte contre’ phrases. She answered that in the rush she had said something like “fighting islamophobia and discrimination”, a totally acceptable translation. When asked why she did not use the WAR ON construction instead, she seemed surprised and wondered if the WAR ON construction did not connote too much the ‘War on Terror’. Thus, for her, an expression using the WAR ON construction would originate in the phrase ‘War on Terror’. This could be the result of a new entrenchment of the phrase. Based on Croft and Cruse’s paradigm, the ‘War on Terror’ might first have been circumscribed to the WAR ON construction, but then because of the very frequent use of the expression, and the media hype that surrounded the conflict, it took its independency from the construction and became the basis for other expressions. Evans and Green added that

linguistic units that are more frequently encountered become more **entrenched** (that is, established as a cognitive pattern or routine) in the language system. According to this view, the most entrenched linguistic units tend to shape the language system in terms of pattern of use, at the expense of less frequent and thus less well entrenched words or constructions. (2006: 114)

Then that is why the ‘War on Terror’ has more weight in language than the other examples of the WAR ON construction as it is used more frequently and is therefore more embedded in language.

The question of how it came to be that entrenched in language is another issue. The fact that the three ‘wars on’ studied in this work were noteworthy in the history of the WAR ON construction might come from the fact that they were declared by the President of the US. Once the most powerful man of the nation started a conflict, whether metaphorical or literal, the press played an important role in spreading the expressions and rhetoric used to justify such a policy or war. Propaganda and influence have their importance on the use and efficiency of an expression:

But it is Western propaganda that is capable of mobilizing the masses for whatever ends or goals anywhere in the world. For whatever reasons, it can trigger coups, conflicts, terrible violence and ‘strive for change’. It can call the most peaceful large country on earth the most violent; and it can call a bunch of western nations that have been, for centuries, terrorizing the world, the true upholders of peace and democracy, and almost everybody believes it. (...) [B]ecause Western propaganda is so perfect, so advanced. And China, Venezuela, Russia, Iran, Bolivia, Cuba, Zimbabwe, and Eritrea are not the only victims of this, naturally. Any country that stands in the way of Western interests becomes legitimate target. (Vltchek in Chomsky, 2013: 37)

Thus, Vltchek claimed that a good propaganda, and in his opinion Western countries have the best, can even legitimate a conflict. Then, power and propaganda shape History, and whoever has the best propaganda wins. When the American President said that a ‘War on Terror’ would be waged, an actual war started. The logical media hype that followed carried, spread, and anchored the expression in language. And indeed, Charlotte Linde has observed that “whether in national politics or in everyday interactions, people in power get to impose their metaphors” (in Lakoff & Johnson: 157).

In the preceding part, the question of the ‘War on Terror’ legal frame also has been raised. But the question of the legal frame of the concept of *war* may be questioned in itself. When Al Qaeda targeted the United States, they created an unprecedented situation. Apart from the attack on Pearl Harbor, which was a military base in the Pacific Ocean, the United States had never been attacked on their own soil. 9/11 had to be categorized. The Bush administration framed it in an existing category, *war*, so people could grasp what had happened. Indeed, when confronted to something unknown, the mind tries to put in an existing category. Malmberg believed that “la tâche du langage humain est de structurer notre expérience, de la catégoriser, hiérarchiser.” (1979:17) According to him, “toute perception et connaissance suppose structuration et classement” and thus “l’assimilation de nouveaux objets se fait dans des catégories déjà familières et pourvues de nom, on élargit notre connaissance du monde” (58). He gave the example of the concept of *squirrel* that his four-year-old daughter, when encountering one for the first time, tried to assimilate, first as *dog*, then as *bird* and who finally had to create a new category, *squirrel*. Then, when something new is encountered or invented, one can create a new word to name it: the word “television” was created at the same time as the object. Or, as Malmberg suggested, one can frame it in already existing and familiar categories: a computer is nowadays a machine but the first mechanical computer was called that way because of the mathematicians who specialized in calculus: *computer*, 1640s, “One who calculates” (OED). Computers, as we know them today, were first assimilated as fast calculators: they were categorized with them, framed as *computers*, a category that

changed with the fact that more and more computers, the object, reached our everyday life. Thus, confronted to an event without precedent, the Bush Administration categorized it, framed it, in an existing domain: *war*. But, the ‘War on Terror’ “is shaping new customary norms” (Fitzpatrick, 2003: 349). As framing machines in a *computer* frame extended the definition of the word *computer*, maybe categorizing 9/11 in a *war* frame extended the definition of the term. *War* is a concept that developed alongside technology and geopolitics. A World War, a sort of war that appeared in the 20th century, would not have been possible without new communication and transportation means (radio, planes, etc.). During the Cold War, the nations competed in an arms race. Nowadays, the new weapons are digitized and the arms races are computerized. It is common to talk about cyberwar, i.e. a computerized war. The consequences of a cyberwar could be as serious as the consequences of a nuclear war. Thus, the *war* frame changed, enemies can now be intangible data on computers or, in our case, stateless terrorists.

All this could call for a new definition of *war*, legally and lexically. And because it is a fairly recent expression, maybe ‘War on Terror’ is an evolution of the WAR ON [CONCEPT] form of the construction, like the *war* frame which changed with the evolution of technology. However, even today, it seems to be the only occurrence in which the construction is not metaphorical.

CONCLUSION

The initial aim of this paper was to identify a construction and make a chronology of its evolution in the American Language. In the introduction, we asked ourselves the following question: **How could we define the WAR ON construction?** This reflection was based on several other questions that helped to shape this work.

- Is there a WAR ON construction? How can we identify it?
- Would the WAR ON construction be inherently metaphorical?
- What is the best research tool to identify our construction: a diachronic research to identify its historical origins, intuition, or synchronic research using corpora and the frequency of occurrences?
- What is the history of the WAR ON construction? Was there an evolution of its usage?
- And finally, how could we identify its prototype? Is there only one prototype to the WAR ON construction? Is the ‘War on Terror’ prototypical or an ‘anomaly’ in the WAR ON construction? What could be the ‘concrete’ consequences of the use of a WAR ON construction?

In the first part, we thus saw that the locution ‘war on’ can indeed be assimilated to a construction in the framework of the Construction Grammar. Indeed, thanks to several analyses, ‘war on’ was isolated and identified as a linguistic subject of interest. Furthermore, what we now could call the WAR ON construction presented a frequent and interesting metaphorical use. Metaphor Theory and Scenario Theory then helped us to analyze the political range and use of the construction.

Corpora, and in particular the Corpus of Historical American and the Corpus of Contemporary American, were identified as the best tools to reveal patterns and to support the linguist’s intuitions. Thus, in the present work the best tools, both theoretical and of research, were found to analyze the WAR ON construction.

The next step was to become aware of the impossibility to do a proper chronology of this construction as its evolution seems more intricate and complex than first thought. Yet, the data analysis revealed some patterns of use: the construction seems to be less and less used with a verb while it is more and more used as an independent noun phrase. Plus, nowadays, it

is present in two forms, WAR ON [COUNTRY] that is to be understood in a literal way and WAR ON [CONCEPT] that is metaphorical, except in the case of the expression ‘War on Terror’.

Once the forms were identified, their prototypes were the new interest of this work. Several criteria can be used to find a prototype, the main one being frequency. In the case of the literal WAR ON [COUNTRY], the most frequent utterance is ‘War on Germany’, a phrase that encompasses the features of the construction and can therefore be considered central to the form. In the case of the non-literal WAR ON [CONCEPT], it was more complex. Chronology had to be excluded as the first occurrences go back further than our sources. However, it seemed that, during the presidency of Johnson, the WAR ON construction acquired a new political weight. The ‘War on Poverty’, the ‘War on Drugs’, and the ‘War on Terror’ were then studied. The first two are very good examples of the second form of the WAR ON construction: very frequently used, they are political tools rather than ‘real’ wars. They both use a WAR scenario to encourage a certain point of view on the situation. On the other hand, the most used expression of the WAR ON construction is the ‘War on Terror’. The phrase is the name of a lengthy military campaign, breaking with the pattern of use of the non-literal WAR ON [CONCEPT]. The question then was, is the ‘War on Terror’ an exception or, because of the frequency of use, the prototype of this form? It seems to be both: it is an exception to the usual use of the form, however, it could also be the basis, and so the prototype, of a new form of the WAR ON construction.

This work obviously cannot be said to be exhaustive. I believe more questions were raised than could possibly be answered within this format. Thorough answers would require more reading, more analysis, and more time. However, what we can really be sure of is that, not only does a WAR ON construction exist, but it can be found under different forms. The question of their classification, resonances, and consequences, is an issue yet to be fully solved. And we can even ask ourselves if what we call forms of the construction might not simply be two distinct constructions. I am under the impression that I merely scratched the surface of the enigma of the WAR ON construction.

Indeed, another point of research worth studying is its translation; it is translated differently whether it is literal or metaphorical. On the one hand, the form WAR ON [COUNTRY] would be translated into “*guerre contre*”: ‘war on Germany’ would become “*la guerre contre l’Allemagne*”. It could even be translated “*guerre à*” in the case of locutions such as ‘make war on’: “*faire la guerre à l’Italie*” for example. On the other hand, the form WAR ON [CONCEPT] tends to be translated into “*lutte contre*”: ‘War on Drugs’ would become “*la lutte*

contre les narco-trafiquants” or “*la lutte contre l'addiction*”, according to the context. And yet, the ‘War on Terror’ is translated “*la guerre contre la terreur*”. It could be argued that it is logical since it is a literal war. However, as part of the form WAR ON [CONCEPT] it should be “*lutte antiterroriste*”. And indeed, legally, it is under this name that the conflict is known in France. We can then ask: how was the expression translated in the aftermath of 9/11? Did that translation change, over time, influenced by American propaganda?

And, to conclude, even if it cannot be deduced from the present research, it is still interesting to notice that every two decades an American president declares a ‘war on’ something, using a WAR scenario as a façade. According to the detractors of these rhetorical wars, the Administrations might need them to launch the policies they really want to implement, or, as Paul Auster’s character says:

[G]overnments always need enemies, even when they're not at war. If you don't have a real enemy, you make one up and spread the word. It scares the population, and when the people are scared, they tend not to step out of line. (2009: 168).

ANNEXES

Annex 1.

A chronology of the American military operations

This timeline starts with the American Revolutionary War that led to the creation of the United States of America, and ends in 2019 with the ongoing military interventions in which the US is involved. This includes all operations in which the US took part, even if the event was not called a proper war: it can be a repressed rebellion in the early years of the country, or a single expedition approved by Congress. The method can of course be discussed as one operation in the year was enough to count it as a 'not peaceful' year. A closer analysis with the details (months, days) could be done to know exactly the time the United States was actually in peace, or at war, but it is not our point here.

18th century

- 1775–1783 American Revolutionary War
- 1776–1794 Cherokee–American wars
- 1783–1788 Second Pennamite War
- 1785–1795 Northwest Indian War
- 1786–1787 Shays' Rebellion
- 1791–1794 Whiskey Rebellion
- 1798–1800 Quasi-War

Conclusions:

➔ With the overlapping conflicts, only 2 years not involved in a conflict

19th century

- 1801-1805 First Barbary War
- 1806 Sabine expedition
- 1811 Tecumseh's War
- 1812–1815 War of 1812
- 1813–1814 Creek War
- 1815 Second Barbary War
- 1817–1818 First Seminole War
- 1820-1875 Texan-Indian Wars
- 1823 Arikara War
- 1825-1828 Aegean Sea Anti-Piracy Operations of the United States
- 1827 Winnebago War
- 1831 Nat Turner's Rebellion
- 1832 Black Hawk War

➔ Counting the conflicts with the Native nations, only 14 full years of peace

➔ And this is without counting some occupations or actions that might have been authorized by Presidents (example: action in the Gulf of Mexico between 1806 and 1810).

- 1835–1842 Second Seminole War
- 1835–1836 Toledo War (bloodless)
- 1835–1836 Texas Revolution
- 1838 Missouri Mormon War
- 1838–1839 Aroostook War
- 1839 Honey War (bloodless)
- 1841–1842 Dorr War
- 1842 Ivory Coast Expedition
- 1845 Milwaukee Bridge War
- 1846–1848 Mexican–American War
- 1847–1855 Cayuse War
- 1849–1886 Apache Wars
- 1854–1858 Bleeding Kansas
- 1854–1891 Sioux Wars
- 1855–1858 Third Seminole War
- 1856–1859 Opium War
- 1857–1858 Utah War
- 1856–1859 Navajo Wars
- 1859 Pig War
- 1860 Pyramid Lake War
- 1861–1865 American Civil War
- 1862 Dakota War of 1862
- 1863–1864 Shimonoseki War
- 1863–1865 Colorado War
- 1865–1866 Fenian Raids
- 1866–1868 Red Cloud's War
- 1867–1875 Comanche Campaign
- 1872–1873 Modoc War
- 1874–1875 Red River War
- 1876–1877 Black Hills War
- 1877 Nez Percé War
- 1878 Lincoln County War
- 1881 Gunfight at the O.K. Corral
- 1887–1894 Hatfield-McCoy Feud
- 1887–1895 Hawaiian Rebellions
- 1882 Pleasant Valley War
- 1890–1891 Ghost Dance War
- 1889–1893 Johnson County War

- 1891-1892 Coal Creek War
- 1891–1893 Garza Revolution
- 1892 Homestead Strike
- 1898 Spanish–American War
- 1898-1899 Second Samoan Civil War
- 1899-1901 Boxer Rebellion
- 1899–1902 Philippine–American War
- 1899–1913 Moro Rebellion

20th Century

- 1910–1919 Border War
- 1912 Negro Rebellion
- 1912-1933 Occupation of Nicaragua
- 1912 – 1921 West Virginia coal wars
- 1914-1915 Bluff War
- 1914–1918 World War I
- 1915-1934 Occupation of Haiti
- 1916- 1924 Occupation of the Dominican Republic
- 1918 Russian Civil War
- 1939 – 1945 World War II
- 1946-1954 First Indochina War
- 1950-1953 Korean War
- 1953 Operation Ajax
- 1953-1975 Laotian Civil War
- 1958 Lebanon Crisis
- 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion
- 1964-1965 Simba Rebellion
- 1965-1975 Vietnam War
- 1965-1983 Communism Insurgency in Thailand
- 1965 Dominican Civil War
- 1966-1969 Korean DMZ Conflict
- 1967-1975 Cambodian Civil War
- 1978 War in South Zaire
- 1979 Soviet-Afghan War
- 1980 Operation Eagle Claw
- 1982-1984 Lebanon Civil War
- 1983 Invasion of Grenada
- 1986 Action in the Gulf of Sidra

➔ Without including internal riots in which the army might have intervened, there were only 10 years without any conflict, operation, intervention, or war.

- 1986 Bombing of Libya
- 1989-1990 Invasion of Panama
- 1990-1991 Gulf War
- 1991-2003 Iraqi No-Fly Zone Enforcement Operations
- 1992-1995 First Interventions in the Somali Civil War
- 1992-1995 Bosnian War
- 1993 Waco siege
- 1994-1995 Intervention in Haiti
- 1998-1999 Kosovo War
- 1998 Operation Infinite Reach

21st century

- 2001–present War on Terror
- 2002-2006 Napalese Civil War
- 2001-present War in Afghanistan
- 2002-present Insurgency in the Maghreb
- 2002-present Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa
- 2003-2011 Iraq War
- 2004-present War in North-West Pakistan
- 2007 War in Somalia
- 2011 Intervention in Libya
- 2014-2017 Intervention in Iraq
- 2014-present Intervention in Syria
- 2015-present Yemeni Civil War
- 2015-present Intervention in Libya
- April 5, 2014 - May 2014 Bundy standoff

➔ As the Iraqi No-Fly Zone Enforcement Operations lasted until 2003, there is no year in the 21st century in which the US was not involved in an armed conflict.

Overall conclusion:

Of its 243 years of existence, the United States knew only 26 years that, from January to December, had no conflict or war. It means that 11% of its 243 years were peaceful, while 89% were spent in military operations.

Annex 2.

Bill Hicks, on the War on Drugs, 1990

George Bush says we are losing the War on Drugs. You know what that implies? There's a war being fought and people on drugs are winning it! [cackles] What does that tell you about drugs? Some smart, creative people on that side. They're winnin' a war and they're fucked up! (...) It's like, they fight the War on Drugs like the colonials fought the Indians, right? They're walking in a straight line in red coats. Drug users are like Indians, they're up in the trees going, '[puff puff puff puff] Are they fightin' us? We're not even in that fuckin' field! I guess we're winning by default! No combat, we're ahead!' Drug... you know, War on Drugs. Hey, I don't get it, because alcohol and cigarettes are drugs. So the war has definitely taken a cease-fire here, hasn't it? Yeah. Alcohol and cigarettes kills more people than crack, coke and heroin combined! (...) It's not a war on drugs, it's a war on personal freedom.

Annex 3.

January 29, 2002 – President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address

Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, fellow citizens:

As we gather tonight, **our nation is at war**; our economy is in recession; and **the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers**. Yet, the state of our Union has never been stronger.

We last met in an hour of shock and suffering. In four short months, our nation has comforted the *victims*, begun to rebuild New York and the Pentagon, rallied a great coalition, *captured, arrested, and rid the world of thousands of terrorists*, **destroyed** Afghanistan's terrorist training camps, saved a people from starvation, and freed a country from brutal oppression. The American flag flies again over our embassy in Kabul. Terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy *cells at Guantanamo Bay*. And terrorist leaders who urged followers to sacrifice their lives are running for their own.

America and Afghanistan are now **allies against terror**. (...) Our progress is a tribute to the spirit of the Afghan people, to the resolve of our coalition, and to **the might of the United States military**. When I called our **troops into action**, I did so with complete confidence in their courage and skill. And tonight, thanks to them, **we are winning the war on terror**. The men and women of **our armed forces** have delivered a message now clear to every enemy of the United States: Even 7,000 miles away, across oceans and continents, on mountaintops and in caves, *you will not escape the justice of this nation*. (...) **Our cause** is just, and it continues. (...)

What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, **our war against terror** is *only beginning*. (...) Thanks to the work of our *law enforcement officials* and coalition partners, hundreds of terrorists have been *arrested*. Yet, tens of thousands of trained terrorists are still at large. These enemies view **the entire world as a battlefield**, and we must pursue them wherever they are. (...) First, we will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and *bring terrorists to justice*. And second, we must prevent the terrorists and regimes who seek **chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons** from threatening the United States and the world. **Our military** has put the terror training camps of Afghanistan out of business, yet camps still exist in at least a dozen countries. (...) My hope is that all nations will heed our call and eliminate *the terrorist parasites* who threaten their countries and our own. Many nations are acting forcefully. (...) If they do not act, America will.

Our second goal is to prevent **regimes that sponsor terror** from threatening America or our friends and allies with **weapons** of mass destruction. Some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September 11, but we know their true nature.

States like these³² and their terrorist allies constitute an **axis of evil**, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking **weapons of mass destruction**, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. (...) We will work closely with our **coalition** to deny **terrorists and their state sponsors** the materials, technology, and expertise to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction. (...) And all nations should know: *America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security.* (...) **Our war on terror** is well begun, but it is only begun. *This campaign may not be finished on our watch*; yet, it must be and it will be **waged** on our watch. We can't stop short. If we stop now, leaving terror camps intact and terrorist states unchecked, our sense of security would be false and temporary. History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege **to fight freedom's fight**. (...) **We will win this war**; we will protect our homeland; and we will revive our economy. (...) It costs a lot to **fight this war**. (...) America is no longer protected by vast oceans. **We are protected from attack only by vigorous action abroad and increased vigilance at home.** (...)

Our enemies believed America was weak and materialistic, that we would splinter in fear and selfishness. They were *as wrong as they are evil*. (...) None of us would ever wish *the evil that was done on September 11*. Yet, after America was attacked, it was as if our entire country looked into a mirror and saw our better selves. (...) To sustain and extend the best that has emerged in America, I invite you to join the new **USA Freedom Corps**. (...) Through the gathering momentum of millions of acts of service and decency and kindness, I know we can *overcome evil with greater good*. And we have a great opportunity during **this time of war** to lead the world toward the values that will **bring lasting peace**. (...) America will lead by **defending** liberty and *justice* because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere. (...) We seek a just and peaceful world *beyond the war on terror*. (...)

Steadfast in our purpose, we now press on. We have known freedom's price. We have shown freedom's power. And **in this great conflict**, my fellow Americans, **we will see freedom's victory**.

Thank you all. May God bless.

³² Iran, Iraq and Korea.

Annex 4.

America's immunity regarding International Laws

Chomsky explained one of the first reasons why the US could not follow the *justice* frame path after the 9/11 attacks:

what are the policy options? (...) In the case of crime, you try to find the perpetrators, you bring them to justice, you try them. You don't kill innocent civilians. Like if somebody robs my house and I think the guy who did it is probably in the neighborhood across the street, I don't go out with an assault rifle and kill everyone in that neighborhood. (...) When the IRA set off bombs in London, (...) Britain['s solution] could have [been] (...) to destroy Boston which is the source of most of the financing. And of course to wipe out West Belfast. (...) But there are problems with that. One problem is that the United States does not recognize the jurisdiction of international institutions. So it can't go to them. It has rejected the jurisdiction of the World Court. It has refused to ratify the International Criminal Court. (2001)

Indeed, by refusing to sign the agreements, the US can hardly go to these institutions for help. In his conversation with André Vltchek, Chomsky added:

In fact the same happened, interestingly, at the trial where Yugoslavia brought a case against NATO for the bombing to the International Court of Justice, I think, and the United States excluded itself from the case and the Tribunal agreed because one of the charges mentioned was that it was a genocide, and when the United States signed the Genocide Convention after 40 years, it had a reservation saying it was "inapplicable to the United States", and so therefore the Court rightly excused the United States from prosecution. There are literally legal barriers established just in case anyone dares to try to bring some charge against the powerful. I am sure you recall when the Roe Treaty was signed, and the International Criminal Court was established, the US refused to participate... but then it was more than that. Congress passed legislation, which the Bush administration happily signed, which granted the White House authority to invade The Hague by force in case any American was brought there. (...) Well, that was passed enthusiastically, so the self-immunization is at many levels. (2013: 26)

The US passed the Hague Invasion Act, also known as the American Service-Members' Protection Act, was passed in 2002 by Congress and signed in August 2002 by President Bush. The country can therefore not be prosecuted, first because the conventions are "inapplicable to the US", and secondly because the US gave itself the right to invade the country harboring the International Court of Justice. The self-immunization goes further:

Take the invasion of Iraq – nothing can be potentially regarded as criminal. Forget about Nuremberg and the rest of modern international law. In fact there is a legal reason for that, which is not too well-known. The United States is self-immunized from any prosecution. When they joined the World Court in 1946, the US basically initiated the modern International Court of Justice, which it joined but with the reservation that the US cannot be tried on any international treaty – meaning the UN charter, the charter of the

Organization of the American States, the Geneva Convention. The US is self-immunized from any trial on those issues. And the Court has accepted that. (ibid)

Therefore, nor the US or an American citizen can be tried by the International Court of Justice or other international instance for war crimes³³ or other count of indictment.

³³ War crimes: “At the heart of the concept of war crimes is the idea that individuals can be held criminally responsible for the actions of a country or its soldiers. War crimes and crimes against humanity are among the gravest crimes in international law. They are considered so serious that there is no period of limitation for such crimes (...).Violations of the laws or customs of war, including: Atrocities or offences against persons or property, constituting violations of the laws or customs of war; murder or ill treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas; killing of hostages; torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments.” BBC ethics

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Cover image: Jason Padget, 2006

The cover image is an art piece created by Jason Padget, a man who, after a brain injury, started to see mathematical and physical patterns, and decided to make pieces of art from them. This particular work represents light going through two tiny holes and creating a wave pattern.