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COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC CORRELATES BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND MORAL EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM GERMAN

Abstract

Morality is commonly regarded in public consciousness as a construct shaped by religious, legal, philosophical, and social dimensions. Although explicit discussions of morality are relatively rare in everyday discourse, linguistic expressions often reveal underlying moral concepts. These concepts play a central role in shaping human decision-making across diverse domains of life, manifesting through both verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

Within the cognitive linguistic framework, language and thought are understood to be inextricably linked: while thought is articulated through language, language in turn influences the cognitive processes that underlie thinking. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) introduced the concept of thinking relativism to capture this dynamic, arguing that the use of different metaphors in language can give rise to distinct patterns of thought. From this perspective, it is pertinent to ask whether speakers of different languages – and by extension, members of different cultural communities – conceptualize morality in divergent ways, and how such differences are encoded linguistically. Furthermore, the question arises as to how culturally specific features of language impact the construction of moral concepts.

The present study addresses these questions by investigating metaphorical language expressions of morality in the German language and comparing them with the conceptual models established in English, particularly those described by Lakoff (1996, 2002) and Lakoff and Johnson (1999). While their framework primarily reflects American cultural patterns, certain aspects may be considered near-universal and thus offer valuable insights for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural analysis.

Our research focuses on identifying and analyzing metaphorical expressions related to morality in contemporary German, and on evaluating how these reflect or differ from the English-language conceptual models. While the German data do not fully reproduce the comprehensive metaphorical system proposed by Lakoff, they nonetheless highlight key similarities and differences in the moral conceptualizations embedded in the two languages.

Keywords: morality, moral education, cognitive paradigm, conceptualization, conceptual metaphor, metaphorical linguistic expressions.

Анотація

У суспільній свідомості мораль розглядається як багатовимірна категорія, що охоплює релігійний, правовий, філософський і соціальний аспекти. Незважаючи на те, що прямі розмови про мораль трапляються нечасто, мовні прояви відображають усталені уявлення про неї. Моральні концепти відіграють ключову роль в ухваленні рішень у різних сферах життя, знаходячи вираження як у вербальній, так і в невербальній поведінці.

Згідно з когнітивною парадигмою, між мовою та мисленням наявний тісний взаємозв’язок: мислення виявляється в мові, однак і сама мова впливає на когнітивні процеси. У межах вивчення взаємозалежності мови, мислення та культури Лакофф і Джонсон (1999) запропонували концепцію

мисленнєвого релятивізму, відповідно до якої різноманіття метафоричного вираження спричиняє відмінності в способах мислення. Це порушує питання про те, чи можуть представники різних мовних і культурних спільнот по-різному концептуалізувати мораль і яким чином такі відмінності репрезентуються в мовних структурах. У ширшому контексті постає також проблема про вплив культурно специфічних мовних особливостей на процес формування моральних понять.

Метою нашого дослідження є виявлення й аналіз таких впливів шляхом порівняння метафоричної репрезентації моралі в німецькій мові з відповідними концептуальними моделями, сформованими на основі англійського мовного матеріалу. Аналітичне підґрунтя становить концепція моралі, розроблена Лакоффом (1996, 2002) та Лакоффом і Джонсоном (1999), яка, хоч і зосереджена на американському культурному контексті, містить елементи, що можуть мати універсальний характер, а відтак застосовуватися в міжкультурних дослідженнях. У статті зосереджено увагу на аналізі метафоричних висловлювань у сучасній німецькій мові, які стосуються моральної сфери, та їх зіставленні з англійськомовними прикладами. Хоча зібрані мовні дані не утворюють повноцінної метафоричної системи, запропонованої в працях Лакоффа, окремі її елементи виразно ілюструють як подібності, так і відмінності в моральних уявленнях, що притаманні англійсько- й німецькомовному просторам.

Ключові слова: мораль, моральне виховання, когнітивна парадигма, концептуалізація, концептуальна метафора, метафоричний мовний вираз.

Introduction. The concept of morality is at the interface of several disciplines, including philosophy, theology, psychology and jurisprudence, among others, which have libraries of literature on the subject. Morality plays such a dominant role in the lives of peoples, small and large groups, communities and individuals that it would be difficult to find an area where its influence can be ignored.

Philosophers and (moral) psychologists have long debated whether morality depends on our intellectual abilities, our rational thinking, or whether our intuitions guide our moral judgments. The concept has had different meanings in different historical periods and there may be differences between cultures as to what is moral. One researcher on the topic is Jonathan Haidt (2001), a moral psychologist who approaches the concept of morality from the perspective of cognitive science. According to his social intuitionist theory, the question is whether our ability to decide whether something is moral is determined by rational abilities or by intuition, that is, based on some emotional reaction. He argues that our emotions dominate these judgments. He does not talk about emotions and reason, but about intuitions, which are themselves a cognitive process for him. According to Haidt (2001), there are five bases of morality:

- harm/care,
- impartiality/justice,
- group affiliation/loyalty,
- authority/respect,
- purity/holiness.

The social-intuitionist approach outlined above is in many ways consistent with the conceptions of morality constructed in cognitive linguistics research. Lakoff (1995, 1996, 2002) and Lakoff and Johnson (1999) dealt with this issue in depth in relation to American English. In their research, they investigated the cognitive processes involved in the conceptualization process of the concept. They systematized the conceptual metaphors of ‘morality’, from which they built the concept of morality, part of which we also rely on in this paper. In our research, we used a corpus-based systematic analysis to investigate one aspect of the concept of morality, namely the conceptual metaphors associated with family morals, as outlined by Lakoff (1996). The goal is to make the connections between language, thought, and culture more understandable, and thereby, supported by examples, to show the reader what values and ideas can be revealed behind the spoken and written words, and what values our certain linguistic expressions – albeit unconsciously – convey

to our interlocutors. Lakoff (ibid.) examines Western political morality and concludes that our concept of morality is based on two basic family models. People who emphasize conservative moral values are characterized by the STRICT FATHER model, while liberals are characterized by the NURTURANT PARENT model. Both models prioritise different concepts of morality and treat the concept of morality differently. It is assumed that the German language reflects the value system associated with the latter.

The structure of the paper is as follows: the first part of the paper provides the theoretical background of the research, focusing on conceptual metaphor theory and metaphorical conceptualisation. The second section introduces the family models with which our conception of morality can be associated. This is followed by a description of the research methodology and corpus analysis. The paper concludes with an interpretation of the results and a conclusion.

Analysis of recent research and publications. A concept only has meaning for us, it only carries information, if we have any experience related to it. Meaning is actually identical to conceptualization (Bańczerowski, 2000, p. 243). The conceptualization of a concept, i.e. the construction of its meaning in our minds, can be the result of various cognitive processes, such as categorization, conceptual framing, metaphor, metonymy, conceptual integration, shape-background arrangement, pictorial schema, etc., most of which can be traced back to our bodily experiences. Schemas play a central role in understanding metaphors as they provide the fundamental structures for metaphorical concepts (Kövecses, 2020; Vakhovska, 2021). We can create metonymic relationships between concepts within a frame and metaphoric relationships between concepts in different frames.

Metaphors are traditionally classified as poetic images and their interpretation is considered the task of literary scholars. The function of metaphors is thus to achieve some artistic or rhetorical effect. According to the followers of cognitive linguistics, however, the main task of the discipline is to describe the metaphorics of natural language, since conceptual metaphor is one of the fundamental tools of the conceptualization process (Bańczerowski, 1999).

The cognitive linguistic basis of 'conceptual metaphor theory' was developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their book *Metaphors We Live By*. In Kövecses' (2005, 2020) definition, a conceptual metaphor is, from a cognitive linguistics perspective, the understanding of one conceptual domain (target domain) in terms of another conceptual domain (source domain). He states that "metaphors are used by ordinary people without the slightest effort (without their being aware of it), it is not only the privilege of the exceptionally gifted" (Kövecses, 2005, p. 14). The linguistic manifestations of conceptual metaphors are metaphorical linguistic expressions. In our conceptualization system, however, metaphors exist not only at the linguistic but also at the conceptual level. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 5) put it, "the concept is metaphorically structured, the activity is metaphorically structured, and it follows that language is metaphorically structured". We often hear expressions from couples in everyday life such as 'our relationship is stuck', 'we have come to a crossroads', 'we have come a long way,' etc. These idiomatic expressions are based on the cognitive metaphor of LOVE IS A JOURNEY, which is structured by the following mappings (Kövecses, 2005, p. 23):

Source:	Target:
JOURNEY	LOVE
TRAVELERS	LOVERS
VEHICLE	LOVE RELATIONSHIP
DESTINATION	PURPOSE OF RELATIONSHIP
DISTANCE COVERED	PROGRESS MADE IN THE RELATIONSHIP
OBSTACLES ALONG THE WAY	DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN THE RELATIONSHIP

So our abstract concepts, including morality, are manifested in language in the form of metaphorical linguistic expressions. Thus, via identifying and analysing the conceptual metaphors behind them, we can find out which specific concepts are involved in the process of interpreting a concept, which of their elements have been projected onto which element of the target domain. In this way, concepts that seem elusive become more tangible to us.

Metaphors related to morality are as follows (Lakoff, 2002, pp. 64–114):

BEING GOOD IS BEING UPRIGHT
BEING BAD IS BEING IS BEING LOW
DOING EVIL IS FALLING
EVIL IS FORCE (EITHER INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL)
MORALITY IS STRENGTH
PEOPLE ARE OBJECTS
PEOPLE'S ESSENCE IS THE MATERIAL OF THE OBJECT
MORALITY IS THE DEFEAT OF EVIL FORCES
MORALITY IS WHOLENESS
IMMORALITY IS DAMAGE
MORALITY IS PURITY
IMMORALITY IS DIRT
MORALITY IS HEALTH
IMMORALITY IS DISEASE
MORALITY IS EMPATHY
MORAL ACTION IS NURTURANCE
MORAL AGENTS ARE NURTURING PARENTS
MORALITY IS PHYSICAL HEIGHT
MORAL DEVELOPMENT IS PHYSICAL GROWTH
MORAL STANDARDS ARE VERTICAL STANDARDS

The metaphors listed above are by no means exhaustive. The metaphors discussed here shape thinking, but they are not unique to Western culture. They are widespread in other parts of the world, as their source domains actually stem from the basic human experience of well-being. Whether these are truly universal has not yet been clearly demonstrated in further cross-cultural studies, but some of them certainly are.

Lakoff (1996), examining Western political morality, concludes that there are basically two family models, and thus two different moral conceptions. Conservatives are characterized by the STRICT FATHER model, while liberals are characterized by the NURTURANT PARENT model. Both models prioritise different concepts of morality and treat the concept of morality differently.

Lakoff's (1996) focus on family type when examining morality has two main reasons:

1) The child's moral sensitivity begins to develop in the family, and it is here that his or her understanding of morality is first formed.

2) Most of the moral education comes from the family. Of course, the child is also exposed to social influences, but these are passed on to the child through the family filter.

The STRICT FATHER family model

The father is the embodiment of authority and power in the family, and it is his responsibility to protect his children from the temptations of evil forces (the devil), since the world is a dangerous place where we are constantly tempted by evil forces that try to shake our moral stability. Temptation must be overcome by moral strength (courage, self-discipline, and self-restraint). The father's most important objective is to educate his children in morality, and for this he can use any means of discipline, including corporal

punishment. In order to achieve these goals, the mother is also involved, but her primary role is to take care of the family, raise the children and do the housework. The father's decision is sacred, the family members do not contradict it, they accept it unconditionally. When the children grow up, paternal control ceases, so self-control must be developed in the child from childhood, i.e. the child must be raised to be a disciplined adult, able to take care of himself and his family, and later to play the role of a strict father. Those who lack self-discipline and self-control cannot overcome the temptation of evil and may become immoral.

If we extend the family model to everyday life, we can see that there are also many dangers and evil forces lurking in society. In many cases, we witness temptation, which can only be overcome by moral strength and self-restraint. Otherwise, we will be punished. But who can punish? In the person of the punishing STRICT FATHER, it can be the literal strict father, the mother, conscience, society, and God (Lakoff, 1995).

The NURTURANT PARENT family model

The NURTURANT PARENT family model, on the other hand, can be described as follows. In a family, both parents take equal responsibility for establishing and maintaining the moral stability of their child. Family members are equal partners, recognising each other's choices and being responsible for each other. Each family member cares for him/herself and for the other family members. Trust, communication and empathy for each other play an important role in their relationship. The parent tries to empathise with the child, despite the fact that they may have different views and values on certain things. However, he or she still strives to make the child embrace his or her values.

It is clear from the above that there is no punishment or discipline in this model. Morality does not emerge from an ego based on self-discipline, but from responsibility based on empathy for one another.

The family models mentioned are idealized cases, in reality it is almost impossible to encounter such a family, but it is almost certain that we will experience some kind of mixture of these two models. The number of possible variations and blends is extremely high.

Nevertheless, we believe that these two family models are very important for human morality. To extend family morality to morality in a general sense, the metaphor of HUMANITY IS FAMILY is needed (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

The HUMANITY IS FAMILY metaphor is based on the following conceptual mappings:

FAMILY → HUMANITY
EACH CHILDREN → EACH HUMAN BEINGS
OTHER CHILDREN → OTHER HUMAN BEINGS
FAMILY MORAL RELATIONS → UNIVERSAL MORAL RELATIONS
FAMILY MORAL AUTHORITY → UNIVERSAL MORAL AUTHORITY
FAMILY MORALITY → UNIVERSAL MORALITY
FAMILY NURTURANCE → UNIVERSAL MORAL NURTURANCE

If the metaphor of family morality is projected onto the metaphor of universal morality, the moral obligation towards family members can be projected onto the moral obligation towards all living beings.

The metaphor of HUMANITY IS FAMILY is so general that it does not determine how we should behave; it only generates specific moral content if we fill family morality with the mappings of the appropriate family model. With this metaphor, we can step out of the scope of the family towards universal morality. The question is whether we conceptualize universal morality through the STRICT FATHER or the NURTURANT PARENT model. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), the role of parents in society can be fulfilled by God,

universal reasons (rational morality), universal feelings (intuitionistic morality), and social norms (laws).

Statement of the research aim and objectives. The aim of the research is to explore how conceptual metaphors related to morality are realized in the German language and what connections can be discovered between metaphorical linguistic examples and moral education. The study focuses on the conceptual metaphors and linguistic structures that convey moral values and norms in the German language and examines how these linguistic devices shape individuals' moral understanding and behaviour.

The objectives of the research are based on the following main points:

1. Exploring linguistic and cognitive elements, i.e. conceptual metaphors and their linguistic manifestations that convey moral values in the German language.

2. The relationship between linguistic expressions and moral education, i.e. analysing how linguistic forms shape attitudes towards moral norms, paying special attention to conservative and liberal values and norms prevalent in German culture.

3. Analysing examples and linguistic patterns, i.e. demonstrating the linguistic appearance of various moral and social concepts through German language examples that help to develop moral decision-making and social responsibility.

This research aims to contribute to the further development of the interdisciplinary field of cognitive linguistics and moral education, and to provide an example for a better understanding of the interplay between language use and moral education.

Research methods and methodology

The study corpus

The main focus of the study is the analysis of the collected material, for which the methodology of corpus linguistics was used, i.e. the "bottom-up" approach. The empirical research is divided into two major parts. First, a linguistic corpus was compiled from the German database. For this, the search term Moral was used with whole-sentence concordance. The German language examples are taken from the Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache (Digital Dictionary of the German Language), which has the advantage of allowing us to examine the occurrence of the concept in different periods through the settings. In this case, we worked with language examples from the period 2002–2018.

Procedure for analysis

The analysis was carried out in the following steps:

1) The keyword of the search is 'morality', or 'Moral', which can be considered as a central member of the category of 'morality'.

2) We followed the metaphor identification method (MIP) developed by Group (2007) and further developed (MIPVU) by Steen et al. (2010) to identify which linguistic terms are metaphorical. This multi-step procedure is used to rule out subjectivity and the researcher's linguistic intuition (Kövecses, 2010, p. 5):

a) Reading the entire text (full example sentences) to determine the general meaning.

b) Breaking the text (example sentence) into linguistic units, words.

c) Examining the meaning of the words, whether there are any words with multiple meanings among them.

d) Determining the primary meaning for all words in the text.

e) Considering the context: if the primary meaning and the meaning observed in the text differ, determining the fact of metaphor.

3) We grouped the figurative language expressions according to conceptual metaphors, and examined the identified mediating entities and source domains.

This paper presents the partial results of a more comprehensive research and analysis, focusing specifically on family mores (Lechner, 2023).

Presentation and discussion of the main research material. The STRICT FATHER and NURTURANT PARENT family models attributed to Lakoff (1996) are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary models. In reality, there are no families that "function" only on the basis of one or the other. In a given family, there may be shifts in emphasis towards the STRICT FATHER or NURTURANT PARENT models regarding the roles played by family members. Building on the family models, two basic moral models can be constructed.

The STRICT FATHER model based on German examples

In the German-language corpus, elements of family models appear both specifically in relation to families and in a political context through the metaphor SOCIETY IS FAMILY.

A central element of the STRICT FATHER model is the authoritative figure to whom the other family members are subordinated. He has the right to exercise power. He does this with the aim of educating the child in the family to observe moral boundaries and to develop moral behaviour.

According to the German examples, the embodiment of absolute authority in the conceptual system of German speakers may be the parent, specifically the father or God. In example (1), paternal authority is specifically represented, since we know from our knowledge of history and social science that the patriarchal social system endowed men with various privileges.

(1) Obgleich die Lebensführung und Ideologie verschiedener fundamentalistischer Gruppen Variationen aufweisen, propagieren sie alle ***patriarchalische Autorität und Moral****.* ('Although the lifestyle and ideology of different fundamentalist groups vary, they all propagate patriarchal authority and morality.')

According to conservative values, the child obeys the father unconditionally. However, it refers to liberal thinking that they rebel against the authoritative person, protest, and threaten his authority (examples (2), (3)). In the sense of the metaphor, they thereby become immoral, so IMMORAL IS DISOBEDIENT.

(2) Und als seine Mitschüler ***gegen die Moral der Eltern aufbegehrten****, […]* ('And when his classmates rebelled against the morality of their parents, […]')

(3) Jugendkultur ***bedroht*** *mal aggressiv, mal unterschwellig* ***die herrschende Moral.*** ('Youth culture threatens the prevailing morals, sometimes aggressively, sometimes subliminally.')

(4) […] die unpolitische Gesinnung der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft mit ihrem ***Fetisch der Moral*** *provozierte somit die Kritik* ('[…] the apolitical attitude of bourgeois society with its fetish of morality thus provoked criticism')

In example (4), God appears as an absolute authority, since people tend to raise idols to gods, to persons worshipped as gods, which also causes resistance among a certain stratum of society. In example (5), a secular leader, while in example (6), the law appears as the authoritative figure.

(5) ***Der Vater der Nation predigt*** *der spätkapitalistischen Gesellschaft* ***Moral und verlangt*** *anständige Arbeit für anständiges Geld.* ('The father of the nation preaches morality to late capitalist society and demands decent work for decent money.')

(6) ***Das Recht verbietet*** *die militärische Prävention, die* ***Moral*** *der US-Regierung aber gestattet sie nicht nur, sie verlangt nach ihr.* ('The law prohibits military prevention, but the morality of the US government does not only permit it, but demands it.')

The conceptualization of the metaphor MORAL AUTHORITY also involves the fact that we tend to obey unconditionally a person who is credible in our eyes, whom we trust entirely. Based on this, and based on examples (7) and (8), we assume that the conceptual metaphors MORAL IS CREDIBLE / IMMORAL IS FALSE exist.

(7) […] ***setz*** *einer* ***auf die Moral*** *in der Welt.* ('[…] one bets on morality in the world.')

(8) […] ***falsche Moral*** *[…]* (‘[…] false moral […]’)

There are situations in life when we need to exercise self-restraint and self-discipline in order not to rebel against authority. This is Lakoff and Johnson’s MORAL BOUNDS (1999), which is the condition for remaining moral (examples (9), (10)).

(9) […] ***seine sexuellen Wünsche zu erfüllen verbieten Gesetz und Moral*** *sowieso* (‘[…] to fulfill one’s sexual desires is prohibited by law and morality anyway’)

(10) Nun entdecken wir, daß ***keine Vernunft uns verbietet****, Menschen zu morden,* ***sondern nur die Moral****, daß wir aber leben im Zeitalter der Vernunft, verdammt zur Sprachlosigkeit, und daß die Moral längst entlarvt ist als gefügige Ideologie.* (‘Now we discover that no reason prohibits us from murdering people, only morality, but that we live in the age of reason, condemned to speechlessness, and that morality has long been exposed as a compliant ideology.’)

Internal restraint is needed to avoid crossing the boundaries and the inner strength of the ego to resist external/internal temptation. The stronger the ego is, the more capable of self-discipline is, the more moral the individual is (example sentences (11)–(13)).

(11) Eine ***eigene Moral*** *könnten Chinas Reiche nur* ***finden****, wenn sie wie er* ***Selbstbeschränkung übten****, meint Zhang.* (‘China’s empires can only find their own morality if they practice self-restraint like he does, says Zhang.’)

(12) Je mehr er ihre ***“Gier” und Maßlosigkeit geißelt****, desto* ***sicherer*** *fühlt er sich* ***in seiner Moral****.* (‘The more he condemns their “greed” and excess, the more confident he feels in his morality.’)

(13) […] mit einer ***Moral individueller Askese und Selbstkontrolle verbunden****.* (‘[…] associated with a morality of individual asceticism and self-control.’)

(14) Zurück zur Familie, zurück ins Nest, zurück in den Hafen der Ehe und natürlich: ***zurück zu Moral, Anstand, auf den Pfad der Tugend eben****.* (‘Back to the family, back to the nest, back to the harbor of marriage and of course: back to morality, decency, to the path of virtue.’)

In the metaphor MORAL ACTION IS RESTRICTED MOVEMENT, the metaphors MORAL BOUNDARIES and MORALITY IS STRENGTH are also present. The metaphorical linguistic expression in example (14) expresses that if we want to return to morality, we can do so by following a designated path, the path of virtue. The moral constraint helps us not to deviate from the path. The first half of the sentence lists conservative values that ensure morality and decency. The ones listed in example (15) are also labeled as conservative values.

(15) ***Moral, Religion, der Schutz der Familie und das Schulgebet*** *– ein ganzes Bündel* ***sozial konservativer Werte*** *und* ***Forderungen*** *treibt diese Bewegung.* (‘Morality, religion, the protection of the family and school prayer – a whole bundle of socially conservative values and demands drives this movement.’)

Therefore, the most important task in the family is to raise the child to be moral. This element of the model is realized in example (16).

(16) Um ihre Physis ***mache ich mir*** *jedenfalls keine* ***Sorgen****, eher schon* ***um ihre Moral****.* (‘I am not worried about her physical condition, but rather about her morale.’)

A critique of families operating on the basis of the STRICT FATHER model appears in the examples (17)–(19).

(17) Er ist eines der vielen ***desillusionierten Kinde****r, die uns die 68er Generation hinterlassen hat:* ***pappesatt von der triefenden Moral ihrer Eltern****, sich sträubend gegen die von frühester Jugend verordneten Werte des Lebens.* (‘He is one of the many disillusioned children that the 1968 generation left us: fed up with the dripping morality of their parents, rebelling against the values of life prescribed from early youth.’)

(18) Popkulturelle Bewegungen entstehen in der Regel ***aus dem Geist der Auflehnung:*** *gegen das Establishment,* ***gegen die Moral der Elterngeneration****, gegenvorangegangene Pop-Ästhetiken.* ('Pop cultural movements usually arise from the spirit of rebellion: against the establishment, against the morals of the parent generation, against previous pop aesthetics.')

(19) Vor allem engagierte Abiturienten und Studenten, denen das immer noch ***rigide Erziehungssystem keine Chance bietet, Kreativität und Moral zu vereinen****.* ('Above all, committed high school graduates and students, for whom the still rigid educational system offers no chance to combine creativity and morality.')

NURTURANT PARENT model based on German examples

As we have mentioned earlier, one of the central concepts of the model is empathy, which means that we sympathize with others, feeling both the joys and sorrows of our fellow human beings. If this is the case, then we feel their well-being, or their not-well-being. So if we want to feel good about ourselves, then we must support their well-being and strive to increase it.

In some cases, this also means taking care of our fellow human beings. This is illustrated in example (20), which states that a virtuous person is one who takes care of families from which the carer, the father, is unable to do so because of the need to protect the homeland.

(20) Wer US-Soldaten grundlos in den Krieg schicke, und ***nicht dafür sorge, dass ihre Familien ausreichend versorgt seien, der habe keine Moral****, klagte Barack Obama.* ('Anyone who sends US soldiers to war without reason and does not ensure that their families are adequately provided for has no morals, complained Barack Obama.')

The motivational basis of the conceptual metaphor MORALITY IS NURTURANCE is the childhood experience of how our parents took care of our well-being: feeding us, keeping us warm, washing us, etc. This has led us to realize that if we want to live morally, this includes empathy for our fellow human beings. We extend the metaphor to broader layers through the correspondence SOCIETY IS FAMILY.

Germany's immigration and refugee policy reflects this line of thinking. The basis of refugee policy is to take care of people who are in trouble, to embrace them, to ensure their well-being. To show empathy towards them, because this is what social morality demands.

(21) Angela Merkel und Barack Obama redeten über ***Moral*** *und Realismus* ***in der Flüchtlingspolitik****.* ('Angela Merkel and Barack Obama spoke about morality and realism regarding refugee policy.')

(22) Deutschland ***braucht die Zuwanderung – aus Moral und aus Interesse****.* ('Germany needs immigration – because of moral and interest reasons.')

The CONTAINER schema also appears in examples (21) and (22). In the former, the two leaders talk about what would be moral in relation to refugees and what is reality. However, the short passage does not reveal what kind of behavior is considered moral. In the latter, the word *because of* suggests that morality is the reason for immigration.

The metaphor discussed appears in other contexts besides politics in the German corpus as a fundamental form of behaviour towards others.

(23) Jeder Mensch hat ***eine Chance verdient, wenn es um Moral geht****.* ('Everyone deserves a chance when it comes to morality.')

(24) ***[…] zeigten/beweisen Moral*** ('[…] showed/prove morality')

As we have mentioned in the introduction, within SPORT ICM the word *Moral* means 'the willingness to stand up/fight for something; discipline, self-discipline, inner strength, self-confidence' (Kunkel-Razum, Scholze-Stubenrecht & Wermke, 2003, p. 1099).

(25) […] ein ***Spiel voller*** *Kampfgeist,* ***Moral*** *und Emotionen* ('[…] a game full of fighting spirit, morale and emotions')

When interpreting example (25), morality can also be seen as a component of good sportsmanship, and the metaphorical consequence of MORAL NURTURANCE is also realized, according to which the player feels responsible for their team, demonstrating behaviour that contributes to its success.

A central element of the NURTURANT PARENT family model is upbringing by example. In other words, parents set their own behaviour as an example for the child to follow, thereby educating him/her (examples (26)–(28)).

(26) Ich will ***die Kinder sicher durch den Alltag führen, ihnen Moral und Respekt beibringen****.* ('I want to guide the children safely through everyday life, teach them morals and respect.')

(27) ***Moral bedarf*** *entscheidend* ***der Erziehung, des Vorbilds und des Beispiels****, auch der Regeln und der Institutionen.* ('Morality requires education, role models and examples, as well as rules and institutions.')

(28) ***Moral*** *wollte er* ***durch Beispiele persönlichen Mutes gelehrt wissen****.* ('He wanted morality to be taught through examples of personal courage.')

Liberal education is manifested in example (29), according to which the order has been upset and it is not the parents who educate, but the children. This may be due to the fact that in the model all family members have the same rights, everyone is equal.

(29) […] ***nicht mehr die Eltern die Kinder, sondern die Kinder die Eltern zu mehr Moral und Arbeitsamkeit erziehen***. ('[…] no longer do the parents educate the children, but the children educate the parents to be more moral and industrious.')

Conclusions and prospects for further research. Summarizing the research results, we can conclude that the metaphor MORALITY IS NURTURANCE is significantly more developed in the German language. The aforementioned MORAL AUTHORITY metaphor is present in the German language, but disobedience, indignation, and protest against an authoritative figure are also manifested in the linguistic examples. In Lakoff's English examples, the authoritative person appears as God, political or religious leaders, or a parent. The metaphors THE MORAL AGENT IS A CHILD and MORALITY IS OBEDIENCE can also be detected. We did not encounter these in the German expressions.

According to Lakoff (1995, 1996, 2002) and Lakoff and Johnson (1999), our concept of morality can be traced back to the type of family we grew up in. The relationships between parent-child, father-mother, siblings, and the values represented by family members determine our later thinking, whether we live our lives according to conservative or liberal values. Through the conceptual metaphor SOCIETY IS FAMILY, these family experiences extend to the entire society. Just as there are no families based on a pure STRICT FATHER or NURTURANT PARENT model, societies cannot be characterized in such a uniform way. However, the dominance of one or the other can be demonstrated.

Although we could not support each element of the family models with examples based on the German-language corpus, based on the dominant elements we can state that liberal ideas dominate in the German-language corpus. We cannot clearly state the correctness of our hypothesis. Based on the linguistic examples we can see what values are hidden behind the words, what parents convey to their children through their linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour. Extending the idea to German society through the already mentioned SOCIETY IS FAMILY metaphor, the examples prove how it is possible to convey moral values and ideas to readers during written communication in a living language.

As a further research direction, it would be worthwhile to include moral metaphors from other languages (e.g. Ukrainian) in the cognitive linguistic analysis, in order to get a multilingual contrastive picture of the linguistic-cultural specificity of moral concepts. A deeper analysis of German examples may contribute to a comparative understanding of

European moral ways of thinking. Finally, the cultural significance of conceptual metaphors could be supported by empirical studies, e.g. corpus analysis or discourse-based research.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

No artificial intelligence tools or materials were used in the manuscript.

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