# Worldviews: Spatial Ground for Political Reasoning in Dutch Election Manifestos

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### Abstract

*A discourse approach was developed to identify explicit perspectivisation afforded by conceptual and narrative structures in political texts. The hypothesis is that the ground perspective of political rationale is packaged in 'worldviews' that guide ideologically motivated attitudes. This pilot study focuses on finding the ground of such discursive rhetorical structures in spatial representation as a method to distinguish party profiles.*

*The cognitive motivation for a discursive worldview approach lies in theory of spatial cognition its relation to language and thought (Levinson 2003). Without claiming that language mirrors thought, we assume that discourse spaces suggest boundaries that give structure to the way we think and feel about the complex world we experience. In a narrative sense these spatial frames of reference make speculative assumptions about the future that sound 'right', as seen from a particular deictic point of view. These subjective worldviews suggest text-intrinsic causal relations by metaphorically mapping attitude on real time and space dimensions. This cross-over of real space and subjective mental space links attitude with the real time and space in which we share knowledge and experiences. The hypothesis is that the time and space in which worldviews are based is indicative of rational as well as affective characteristics of party positions.*

*A discourse space model (Chilton 2004) was developed for the annotation of time, space and modality markers in Dutch election manifestos to identify differences between the discourse space of politically motivated worldviews. Results were compared with a content analytic study for party positioning using the same data. The TSM model is being designed for meaning-based party positioning on political dimensions.*

**Keywords:** Worldview, narrative, metaphor, spatial cognition, political discourse analysis, Discourse Space Model

## 1. From Text to Political Positions: A Discourse Approach

This article discusses the development of a cognitive discourse model to analyse political texts for their ground perspective as an indicator of party positions. A pilot study involved finding discursive temporal and spatial frames in political texts assuming that this will lead to finding differences in perspectives that are indicative of ideologically motivated attitudes. The study is part of an interdisciplinary research project (From Text to Political Positions)[1] that seeks to enhance text analysis for content, as applied in

political science, with lexical-semantic and discourse analytic methods to position parties more accurately on political dimensions.

Text analysis in the political sciences focuses on salience and content relations, asking who does what to whom, when, where, and how. It often involves elaborate qualitative analysis of various types of texts and also quantitative methods of text analysis for party positioning particularly for Voting Advice Applications (VAAs). For example, Wordscores is used to identify parties by word frequency, which is then correlated with expert-survey party positioning (as developed by Laver, Benoit and Garry 2003). Linguistic text-analytic tools for distinguishing discourses focus on lexical-semantic features, syntactic structures, and stylistic features at the sentence level, such as word choice, discourse markers, deontic and epistemic modality. However, these methods do not address discursive constructions of meaning that frame politically and linguistically relevant elements. Party ideologies may well be distinguishable through content relations, lexical-semantic features and syntactic structures, but 'discourse worlds' bring these elements together in different, subjective ways: 'Discourse consists of coherent chains of propositions which establish a "discourse world", or "discourse ontology" – in effect the "reality" that is entertained by the speaker...' (Chilton 2004: 54). The differences in these 'coherent chains of propositions' are considered indicative of attitude and therefore also of political perspectives. Each 'chain' has its own rhetorical affordances depending on the context in which it occurs, so that: 'Once a basic argument is in place, further sets of speculative inferences can be made' (Garson 1991:106).

Critical discourse studies aims to filter out what is discursively implied and enforced by the contextual cohesion of discourse worlds. This may sound like an impossible academic quest that relies mainly on interpretive analysis, but we have tried to identify fundamental discursive constructions of meaning. First of all, a text would not be a text if it did not have structural characteristics of its own with rational and rhetorical affordances. But language is ambiguous and so, for a text to communicate ideas, the simplest solution is to avoid explicit elaboration and rely on assumptions. However, if a text communicates an opinion or attitude to persuade others, it is subjective by nature and requires a conceptual structure in which it makes sense. The cognitive paradox is that if attitude is explained elaborately, the elaboration may leave space for thinking beyond the reductionist frame and lead to inferences other than those intended. So, to avoid opening up too much deliberative space, implicitness and simplifications can function rhetorically to guide the other's mental navigation towards the intended position with the condition that it seems coherent. Therefore, discourse analysis can be applied to find meta-linguistic, discursive features of argumentational direction.

In this article we will focus on Time and Space (and modality) as anchors of coordinate systems that form a ground for ideologically motivated rationales, which we call 'worldviews'. To identify differences in worldviews the analysis is built around the primacy of spatial cognition in language and thought that functions both at the concrete (geographical) level of physical orientation, as well as on the abstract level of mental navigation. In order to account for subjective affordances of Time and Space location, we focus on metaphor, metonymy, 'empty signifiers' and narrative structure of the texts we analyse.

Metaphorically, opinions and attitudes can be packaged in objective, unambiguous contexts, for instance, when a subjective observation is posited as a factual proposition that is really a metaphor, e.g., 'Holland is full'. This simple claim triggers a set of possible scenarios around the spatial metaphor THE COUNTRY IS A CONTAINER, making it a quantifiable object. Depending on its further context, a stereotypical inference could be that a full container has reached its limit. 'Holland is full' can then imply a causal connection that action is required to make sure that the problem is contained. Although it does not actually quantify fullness or how much emptier would be acceptable, the simple claim suggests that some action is required and turns it into a political issue. The complexity of the issue that is raised is nowhere to be found in the proposition, but has potential entailments that fit in its broader discourse context.

Subjectivity can also be rationalised by framing issues in metonymic concepts. For example, Jan Peter could be anybody – until he is identified as a past Dutch PM representing eight years of government, with which people (especially Dutch ones) will have shared experiences in a wider set of connotations than an individual's name, 'Jan Peter', activates. In this case the metonymic personification of a government period reduces a temporal space to a personal space, and the object 'State' to a person of flesh and blood, thereby narrowing the focus down to a much smaller discourse space.

Another rhetorical device we encounter in political discourse are the topics around which policies and goals are given a sense of necessity and urgency, also known as 'empty signifiers' (Laclau 1996). The meaning of such generic but highly ambiguous concepts, such as 'equality', 'freedom', 'democracy' and 'security' is coloured in by the temporal and spatial context in which they are placed. Empty signifiers may appeal to the primitive desire for protection, or to accepting events as natural causality rather than human agency. The context in which these ambiguous concepts occur warrants political action on more specific issues because their experiential primacy triggers a sense of urgency and warrants quick solutions.

Narrative structure is another powerful rhetorical vehicle in discourse that adds a sense of temporality and direction. It guides the direction of causal inferences by providing a coherent structure around a basic script. Dutch election manifestos appear to be typically script based. Their introductory paragraphs outline the party's normative perspective on the current state of affairs ('us' in the 'here and now'), sometimes substantiated with historic events. This 'worldview' of how things have become constitutes a reference frame for attitudes on issues and the political will to maintain the status quo, or to take action for a better future. Worldview is the rhetorical ground of a political programme: it sets the scene for a story from which policies and goals unfold. Worldviews are scripts that 'can trigger verbal repertoires with only very limited expression: we "fill in the gaps"' (Herman 2003: 10), or, as Oakley and Coulson (2008) would say, we are inclined to 'connect the dots' following a given structure while using our intuitive knowledge and experience to recognise known objects in a new context. Party programmes fit around these worldviews in a rhetorically powerful play of 'world-to-word-to-world fit' (Searle and Vanderveken 1985: 53), shifting back and forth between 'real' and 'imagined', concrete and abstract, spaces. Such basic scripts shape the

narrative landscape by suggesting boundaries to deliberative mental space as well as a normative deictic centre. The narrative is based in a deictic centre in the present with excursions into the past and thus provides a dynamic rationale for predictions about the future and policy proposals to control change.

A close-reading analysis of election manifestos for the 2006 Dutch elections (EM2006) allowed spatial references to emerge from the texts themselves. These are stable 'like' texts, produced by all parties at the same time, around an election, so they are of the same genre and appear in the same social context. To get to the heart of worldviews, text segments were selected on 'like' function and led to a sub-corpus consisting of introductory paragraphs from EM2006, in which the scene is set to warrant urgency, political action and goals. The sub-corpus was annotated for time, space and modality. To check results on time and space coding, a detailed content analysis was done for two other sub-corpuses of text segments on Security and Immigration. Results were used to see whether the time-space frames of the introductory paragraphs would be consistent with time and space in which particular issues were framed. A further step was to see if and how time-space locations could be correlated with party positions on political dimensions of Left-Right and Progressive-Conservative.

A codebook was designed, on the basis of the close readings to identify and quantify temporal, spatial and modal expressions that construct worldviews around a deictic centre. The results have been brought together in a model, based on Chilton's Discourse Space Model (2004, 2007), and visualises worldviews on time and space axes, relative to a deictic centre. Time and Space are considered to be the primary ground for the coherent construction of frames of reference that characterise political rationale. We do not want to say that spatial frames are the only cohesive devices to be found in the corpus. However, we consider them to be the scaffolding around which worldviews are built to foreground issues and to justify the 'necessity' of political actions and urgency. Considering the primacy of the spatial nature of evaluative human thought and the cognitive affordances of spatial orientation in thought and language, worldviews seem a valid target to discover ideological differences by analysing their discursive constructions in relation to cognitively persuasive affordances.

## 2. *Spatial Cognition, Narrative and Metaphor*

Building on cognitive theories of the primacy of spatial orientation across cultures (e.g., Levinson 2003: 16-18), we can assume that subjective attitude manifests itself in conceptual frames with 'real' temporal and spatial boundaries that suggest real as well as symbolic boundaries to deliberative thought:

> We are indeed so good at thinking spatially that converting non-spatial problems into spatial ones seems to be one of the fundamental tricks of human cognition. (Levinson 2003: 16)

Gumperz and Levinson (1991) distinguish a complex interaction of language, culture, thought and worldview. Levinson (1996) finds that among Indo-European languages, German, English and Dutch in particular, are egocentrically oriented (as opposed to allocentric cultures) and are dominated by absolute and relative language use (Levinson 1996: 114, 127 ff.). His findings support a socio-cognitive approach to finding spatial deictic centres in Dutch political discourse.

Various cognitive linguistic theories highlight the communicative function of spatial cognition as a means to simplify complex matters in order to make sense out of them and to share them with others. In this sense, Levinson's cognitive approach to spatial thinking seems to have a parallel predecessor in Searle and Vanderveken's pragmatic theory of 'world-to-word-to-world fit' (1985: 52-54). In their view, speech acts have an illocutionary force of direction that starts out from an illocutionary point where words expressing ideas are chosen to 'fit' the real world in a coherent system that guides and delimits space for mental navigation. The underlying assumption is that when ideas are made to 'fit' in terms of absolutes (like North-East-South-West), abstract and normative ideas are framed in hard facts. Parallel to the theory of the primacy of spatial cognition, textually constructed 'fit' gives spatial representations rhetorical affordances of physical orientation and understanding, thereby blurring the distinction between relative evidence and absolute truth. Logical analysis can become secondary to intuitive deliberations (Smith 2000: 130) within the boundaries of a discourse world. In other words, discourse worlds provide a selectively bounded stage that limits the probability and acceptability of its actors' roles. The political stage, as presented in the introductory paragraphs of manifestos, is selective and functions to cut out a space that is considered the relevant nucleus of a coherent worldview.

Temporal framing and spatial framing are similar if we consider time as a dynamic space in which events evolve (NOW IS HERE, Grady 1997: 288). Time frames consist of selective references to past events that are connected to issues and attitudes in the present. In that sense, time adds a directional dimension to space by analogy with historic developments and patterns of causal relations that have occurred, or that may occur, on the spatial map. A time-path involves the reconstruction of past events to explain the present and support speculative predictions for the future by means of analogy (Heylighen 2000 calls this 'futurology'). Thus, scenarios that move from a perceived here and now into the unknown future provide structure to the complex world around us in order to make 'informed' predictions. Representations of past and present events can be described as experience-based shared knowledge, involving text-intrinsic assumptions of shared experience. It therefore makes sense to analyse texts for TIME separately, but always in relation to SPACE. These can be regarded as 'primary metaphors', as 'atomic' metaphorical parts of 'molecular' complex metaphors (Grady 1997, see Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 46). Primary metaphors of time and space anchor the construction of worldviews.

Political positions are regarded here as relative attitudes, expressed in spatial distance or proximity to a party-specific deictic centre. Attitudes that are 'close' to a deictic centre can be expressed metaphorically: relative distance

(space) is the source domain with an abstract, experiential, target domain, as in the metaphorical relation COMFORT IS CLOSENESS.  In the case of negative attitude to a close object (where the sentiment could be 'threat') the scenario easily unfolds in a simple pattern of causality: 'problem identification + political action = problem solved', captured in a temporal-dynamic metaphorical relation of TIME IS MOTION (Lakoff and Johnson 1999).  The source domain of the metaphor is universal (time and space) and conventional within a given culture. Their discursive function is to guide deliberation, the goal is to achieve agreement. But there is no particular target domain other than being a frame of reference, i.e., a mental chunk of the complex world. Like 'empty signifiers', these metaphoric relations are a powerful tool in that they simplify the context without being specific. Effectively, time and space settings are selective frames that simplify communication at the expense of considering the broader context that would require further substantiation. For example, the proposition 'Holland is full' (presupposing that 'we' all know this for a fact) was introduced by Pim Fortuyn in 2002 and was eagerly picked up by other parties as well as the media, creating momentum for a container metaphor. Its implication is the possibility of undesired 'fullness' of the country that would justify a negative attitude to the issue of Immigration. This simple example illustrates that real spatial concepts can be indicators of affective stance, particularly in politics where time and space are directly related to the real and affective boundaries of perceived security and threat. A metaphoric approach sheds light on conceptualisations of ideas that are not always what they seem, that is: not everyone interprets them in the same way, but rather, the worldview in which they are presented gives direction towards a preferred interpretation.

Levinson's work on spatial cognition and language forms the basis for the approach to discourse analysis proposed here, particularly the relation between spatial representation in language and spatial deliberation in thought (Levinson 2003). Cognitive evidence is now available to prove what has been assumed for a long time, that evaluative thought processes are based in spatial mental maps that function as frames of reference. This gives language a transformative power over thinking that should not be underestimated. In the political context of a democracy, language can open the mind to other perspectives and this can lead to shifts in attitude, worldview and voting behaviour.

## 3.  Discursive 'Worldviews'

Worldview stands for an organic perception of the world we live in. It is seated in individual as well as a culturally shared belief systems of knowledge and experience, including norms and values. Whorf described worldview as a social construct in which syntactic-semantic structure drives *Weltanschauung* (Whorf 1956) but he does not address the construction of worldview as a construct at the discourse level. Later definitions found in philosophy of science (cybernetics) and in religious studies address the complexity of levels and domains of meaning contained in worldviews. The definition of the Christian American Scientific Affiliation, for example, acknowledges social and cognitive aspects of diversity in subjectivity:

> A worldview is a theory of the world, used for living in the world. A worldview is a mental model of reality – a framework of ideas and attitudes about the world, ourselves, and life, a comprehensive system of beliefs – with answers for a wide range of [existential] questions. [...] A person's worldview is affected by many factors – their inherited characteristics, background experiences and life situations, the values, attitudes and habits they develop, and more – and these vary from one person to another. Therefore, even though some parts of a worldview are shared by many people in a community, other parts differ for individuals. ('What is a worldview?', American Scientific Affiliation, n.d.)

A non-religious definition of worldview is given by Leo Apostel (Aerts et al. 2007 [1994]), who describes worldviews as variable constructions in themselves, involving cognitive and socio-cultural aspects with symbolic representation.

> [...] a world view is a system of co-ordinates or a frame of reference in which everything presented to us by our diverse experiences can be placed. It is a symbolic system of representation that allows us to integrate everything we know about the world and ourselves into a global picture, one that illuminates reality as it is presented to us within a certain culture. (Aerts et al. 2007 [1994]: 9)

This theory gives a modern philosophical definition that supports discursive worldview analysis.

Cognitive evidence shows that spatial cognition is an innate faculty of our neural network that structures our perception of the world around us. Patterns of spatial cognition are shown to have an effect on the way we consolidate our thoughts and communicate them through language. In this view, innate spatial cognition is the drive for linguistic conceptual representation, to which Levinson adds that language is also culturally determined (Levinson 2003: 18-19).

Linguistic approaches to discourse address lexical-semantic and syntactic coherence and cohesion and other stylistic features. Some theories move towards a level of meaning construction beyond the sentence into meta-text or myth (Lyotard 1984 [1979]), Searle and Vanderveken's 'world-to-word-to-world fit' (1985), text and discourse worlds (Werth 1999; Chilton 2004: 54). These theories have in common that they acknowledge an innate human mental capacity for ordering complex information into structured networks that enable deliberative thought. In addition, they suggest that something is going on in texts, beyond linguistic constructions. However, the focus has been on linguistic elements, such as discourse markers, and not so much on constructions of meaning based on presuppositions that only begin to make sense as a text unfolds.

'Worldview' is sometimes used as synonymous to 'perspective' and there is plenty of literature about linguistic aspects of textual and conversational perspectivisation, particularly in studies of persuasive texts. It is assumed here that in discourse, worldview is more than a perspective in that it blends real perspective with affective attitude relative to a mental, moral and experiential deictic centre. Differences in the construction of worldviews in discourse should therefore be indicative of differences in attitude and thus also of political stance.

The spatial aspects of worldview constructions can be visualised in terms of geometric relations of time and space relative to a deictic centre of the 'self' in the 'here and now' (see Levinson 1996, 2003; Chilton 2005, 2007). They form anchors for orientation and this suggests that by identifying time-space relations, we can trace perspectival coordinate systems that emerge from a deictic centre that is politically motivated.

Worldviews are coherent frames of reference that function to make sense of the real world as we know and experience it. Their cognitive affordance lies in a need for coherence to make sense of the world around us:

> The main properties of a world view are "coherence" and "fidelity to experience". Because of the rational demand for coherence, a world view should be a consistent whole of concepts, axioms, theorems and metaphors which do not exclude each other but which can be thought together. (Aerts et al. 2007 [1994]: 9)

In order to identify the nucleus of worldviews and their alignment with images of an ideal future, we need to trace the spatial and temporal boundaries. In this way we hope to capture the rational and affective ground of political rationale across parties and ideologies.

## 4. Finding Worldviews: A Discourse Space Model

This section concerns the development and operationalisation of a time-space-modality model to find political worldviews in Dutch election manifestos. Political discourse is anchored in an ideological ground for political goals, and actions to achieve them. This is presented as an ideologically motivated worldview in which policies and goals seem to fit. A geometrical model of vectors, as developed in Chilton's Discourse Space Model (DSM; Chilton 2004, 2005, 2010), results in a graphic representation of discursive temporal and spatial coordinate systems (Figure 1) that vary per party.
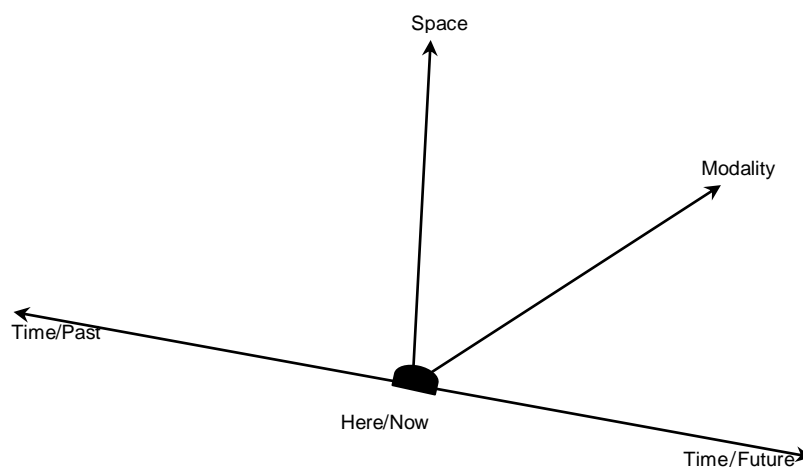


**Figure 1**. Chilton's Time, Space and Modality model
relative to a deictic centre (2004: 58)

Linguistic expressions of real and imagined time and space as well as modality are placed on three geometric axes at a relative distance from a deictic centre. The distances are real geographic distance to the centre, but they also represent attitude. By applying vectors we can distinguish degrees of direction and force making it possible to include modality in attitudes of urgency, desirability and direction (e.g., Figure 7 below). Chilton's model was developed as 'a modest, not all-inclusive, dimensionality to model lexical and grammatical phenomena' (Evans and Chilton 2010: 504). He applies it linguistically to analyse texts for deictic markers that refer to time and space and indicate distance from a deictic centre. In the adaptation for discursive analysis, we assume that these centres are politically motivated and have cohesive affordances that guide deliberations about what is true, desired or acceptable within the frame of a (subjective) worldview, resulting in Hypothesis 1:

> **Hypothesis 1:** Worldview is a discursive construction of Time-Space-Modality with a deictic centre in the here and now. Identifying the boundaries of the relevant deictic spaces makes worldviews explicit.

Deictic centres can be approached from two angles: either we start from the deictic centre that is presented in text segments that set the scene in the here and now, or, we can analyse other text segments, to trace temporal and spatial references back to an implicit woldview in the here and now. Or both, of course. The purpose is to distinguish worldviews, not only as static points of view, but also as an ideological ground for political reasoning. Worldviews are party specific and so we try to identify them in a way that can be correlated on political dimensions, particularly on the moral Progressive-Conservative dimension.

## 4.1 A Cognitive Discourse Model for Finding Worldview in Political Discourse

How do cognitive affordances of worldviews function in political discourse? Political parties need to communicate to achieve two things: first, they need to create an identity to hold a political community together; and second, they need to convince non-members that their programme makes more sense than other party programmes. The necessity or desirability of their political goals is expressed in ways of framing issues as problematic. That means, parties want to share a mental space (worldview) in which attitude 'makes sense' and consequently, taking action 'feels right'. Coherent constructions of worldviews, attitudes and solutions have a better chance of being effective.

With this pragmatic communicative function of political discourse in mind, Chilton's discourse-space model was adapted to analyse discursive patterns of relativisation and perspectivisation in terms of spatial frames of reference. The structure of a spatial frame of reference consists of a geometric relationship of time and space axes that meet in a deictic centre. Distance to the centre expresses attitude that seems to be coherent within the discourse space.

## 4.2 A Discourse Space Model for Election Manifestos

The data selection for the search for the nucleus of argument structures needs careful consideration. Texts need to have the same function and other characteristics that make them comparable. In most political discourse the complexity of argumentation is not simple at all. In debates, for instance, we find complex intertextuality with the media, contestation between parties and other influences of the immediate context (Chilton 2011). To find party-specific worldviews that are based on long-term ideological motives, we needed less messy texts and it was an important step in the research process to build a corpus of fairly stable official party documents, such as election manifestos.

The corpus for this pilot study consists of ten Dutch party manifestos for the 2006 national elections (EM2006), including government parties, parties in Parliament and those who were most likely to gain seats in the next Parliament, based on opinion polls. The genre of manifestos was chosen because of their shared communicative function. We distinguish five stable factors of election manifestos:

1. Specific genre characteristics that make manifestos 'like' texts for a reliable comparison: they are set in the same space and time frame (the nation in an election year), they have the same goals, and a similar text structure.

2. The genre functions to form an epistemic community around a political organisation (after Van Dijk 2008) to create a coherent party identity that can be effectively communicated to non-community members. They are socially cohesive and communicatively persuasive.

3. Manifestos have authority in that they have been carefully formulated, amended and approved in a general assembly, in dialogue with active party members.

4. Manifestos are the focal point for political communication during election time (Lamond 2010), and after elections they can be used to hold politicians accountable (e.g., in parliamentary debates or by the media).

5. They reflect a time-specific attitude of a party community in the same election year, for the same nation.

6. For more extensive studies, including diachronic analysis, manifestos are the only medium-term regularly produced documents by a community (Budge 1994) for the public.

The manifestos discussed in this study all have a basic story-like structure: An introduction to the document; introductory paragraphs expressing views of the world as it is; and paragraphs on issues and policies. Each party's worldview is framed in a metaphorical discourse world of time, space and attitude (modality), e.g., CLOSENESS IS URGENCY. However, not all parts of a discourse express worldview explicitly. In order to find worldviews, we

acknowledged the hierarchical structure of the parts of a discourse and identified a sub-corpus of text segments in which worldviews are actually framed explicitly. As in narratives, we found that introductory paragraphs of manifestos (EM2006) set the scene: they give a view of the world around us in the here and now, often formulated propositionally. Empirically, we found that Time and Space references in the selected text segments set the boundaries for a politically relevant space and that these spatial frames of reference vary between parties.

For the purpose of this article, results are given for three parties that were selected for their major role in the 2006 elections and particularly for their different positions on political dimensions, as established by the Dutch voting-advice application *KiesKompas* for the same election year, 2006 (Figure 2). The Green Left (GL) ranks on the far side of Left/Progressive axes, the Christian Democrats (CDA) ranks toward the centre of the political map, whereas the Party for Freedom (PVV) ranks on the far Right/Conservative side.
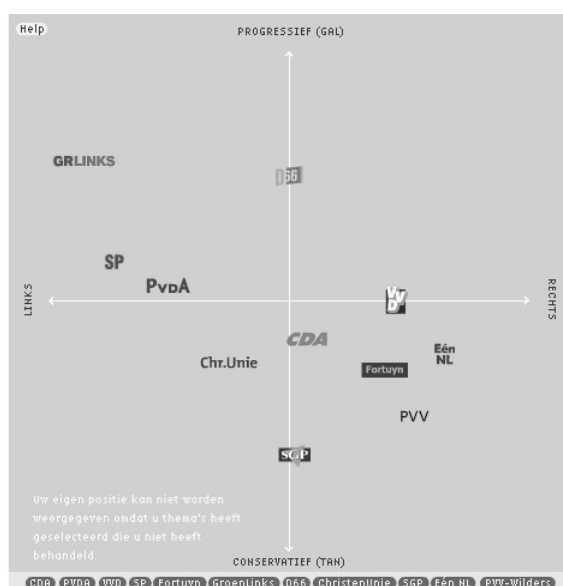


**Figure 2.** *KiesKompas* plotting of parties on
the Dutch political map (2006).

A codebook was developed to annotate Time and Space references as they emerged from these texts (cf. Cienki, Kaal and Maks 2010). It was expected that parties would all focus on the same space (The Netherlands) in the same period (the election year 2006) but that less salient references to space and time beyond the immediate and national space would give indications for differences in worldviews.
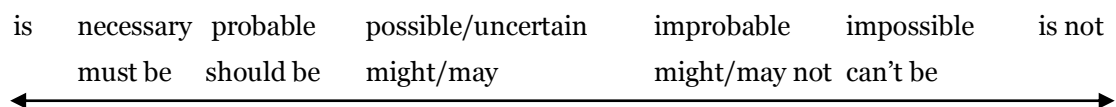
Another sub-corpus was analysed to check if the worldviews found in the introductions could be traced in subsequent issue-related paragraphs throughout the manifesto. In this second sub-corpus, the boundaries to each party's worldview were compared with quantitative content-analytic results focusing on 'Security', as a typically spatial valence issue (territorial).

Differences in spatial references on security would justify projecting results onto political dimensions (Left-Right and Progressive-Conservative). We leave open the possibility that other ideological dimensions may emerge from this empirical method, e.g., of religious or humanistic beliefs, radicalization and (in-)tolerance (see Figure 7 for an example). We hope that further results from the T2PP project will give insight into whether and how traditional political dimensions are challenged by post-ideological influences on party profiling.

## 4.3 A codebook for Time, Space and Modality (TSM)

The method involves annotating spatial, temporal, and modal expressions and clustering them in degrees of proximity to a deictic centre. Relative positions can be visualized on the TSM axes, showing differences in referring to space and time as elements of parties' worldviews. In this way we can show that each discourse world represents a subjective perspective on the political world (see Figures 5 – 8 below). The basic annotation principles are:

- *Time* is annotated quite straightforwardly for temporal references on a 5-point past-present-future scale.

- *Space* is annotated on geographical space mainly, but also imagined spaces, such as 'society', 'the government', 'parliament', that have a clear, often culturally determined relation to real space.

- *Modality* annotation is based on Chilton's (2005) English modality scale.

| is | necessary | probable | possible/uncertain | improbable | impossible | is not |
|----|-----------|----------|--------------------|------------|------------|--------|
|    | must be   | should be | might/may          | might/may not | can't be |        |

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**Figure 3.** Coding Modality for attitude on a deontic and epistemic scale (Chilton 2005: 89 [Werth 1999]). Dutch, equivalents were sought and complemented with equivalents emerging from the text.

Examples of the resulting Modality clusters are (starting from the deictic centre [left]:

- **Certain**: propositionally *zijn* (to be); *noodzakelijk* (necessary), *verplicht* (required)

- **Acceptable/Probable**: *aanvaardbaar* (acceptable), *wenselijk* (desirable)

- **Possible/uncertain**: *mogelijk* (possible), *misschien* (maybe)

- **Improbable**: *niet verlangen* (not expect), *onzeker* (uncertain)

- **Unacceptable/Impossible**: *onmogelijk* (impossible), *moet niet* (must not)

- **Certainly not**: propositionally *is niet* (is not)

Modality, or stance, was used to correct the time and space placement. Negative attitude to time and space references have been coded as time or space (negative) and were counted as their opposite, so Europe (negative) is coded as The Netherlands. Positive-neutral-negative attribution to time and space was annotated in addition to deontic and epistemic modality (as in *must not, is not)* to adjust frequencies of time and space references accordingly. So far the analysis has been done manually, but corpus linguistic tools like WordSmith (Scott 1996) or lexical-semantic means of analysing 'attitude' could be applied to reduce the interpretive task.

## 4.4 Projecting Time, Space and Modality on Axes

In Chilton's linguistic analysis it is possible to connect Time, Space and Modality on a three-dimensional projection, where modality is linked directly with Time and Space references (Chilton 2005, 2010). However, in adapting the model for discourse analysis we have lost the direct connection with modality dimension. Modality is a deictic modifier of Time/Space, but because we use clusters of referents we cannot make the direct link with modality. This is obviously a point that needs to be addressed in the development of the schema. However, a simple 2-dimensional projection seemed sufficient to give results that could be related to political dimensions, at least for now. The coded and clustered references resulted in an adapted Time-Space-Modality model for the type of discourse we found in election manifestos, as is shown in Figure 4. Time and space references were clustered in categories determined by the political context and placed in quantitative relevance to the deictic centre. The categories for modality were ranked to reflect the importance/relevance attributed to the Time and Space nodes they refer to, indicating stance on a scale of certainty, necessity and urgency (see Figure 4). As it concerns only a small dataset, modality could be linked with the relevant time and space clusters manually.
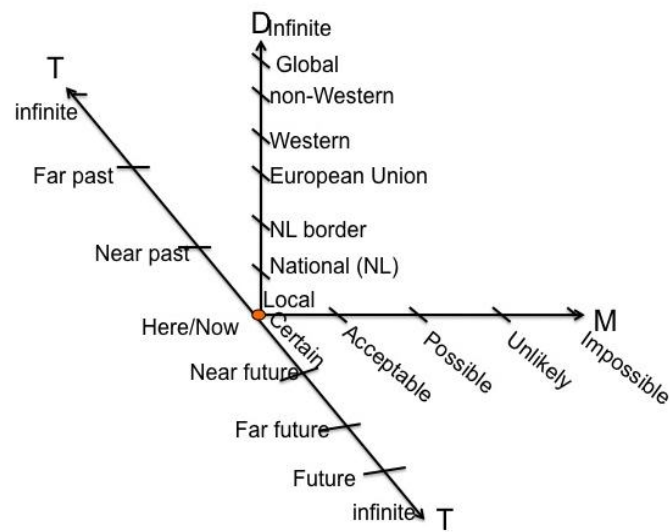
**Figure 4.** *Time, Space (distance) and Modality model (Chilton 2005)*
*adapted for manifesto analysis.*

Results of the time-space codebook annotation of manifesto introductions show differences in the scope of discourse worlds in Figures 6 (GL-Green Left), 7 (CDA-Christian Democrats), and 8 (PVV-Party for Freedom). NL indicates The Netherlands, including its borders. The dotted line indicates the scope of time and space beyond the borders that is mentioned as relevant either to national considerations or generically. The intermediate categories have been omitted here because we only want to illustrate the affordances of the model, rather than giving the full complex results.
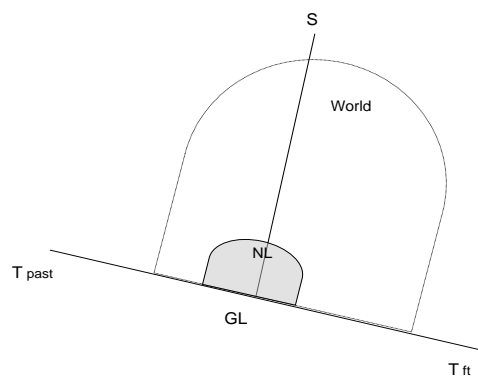


**Figure 5.** The Green Left party worldview in Time and Space
(EM 2006 Introductions).
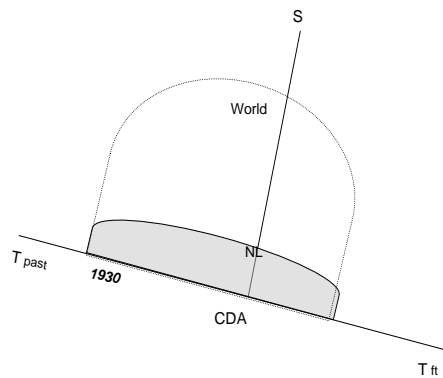
**Figure 6.** The Christian Democrat party worldview in Time and Space
(EM 2006 Introductions).
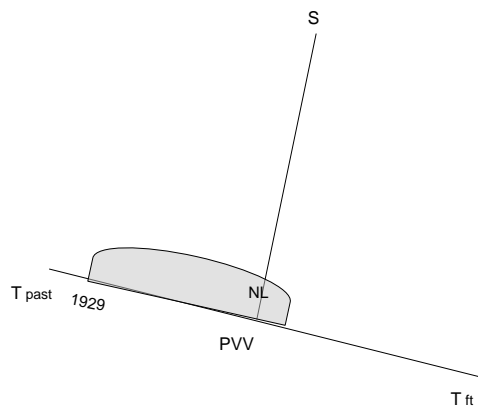


**Figure 7.** The Party for Freedom worldview in Time and Space
(EM 2006 Introductions).

These simplified projections of TSM results show a predictable focus, across parties, on the political territory of the Dutch Government, the nation itself in recent and foreseeable government periods. Distinguishing features of party worldviews can be found in the time frames beyond the dominant time frame. In the Past frame, the relevance of 1930 indicates a focus on economic issues and that makes sense, considering the focus on the emerging economic crisis in this election year. The question is how the differences in frames of reference relate to political dimensions when comparing these results to party positioning of *KiesKompas* (Figure 2). We follow Hypothesis 2 and 3 in our evaluation of results on spatial frames and political position:

**Hypothesis 2:** Time-Space worldviews correlate with traditional political dimensions (Progressive/Conservative and Left/Right);

**Hypothesis 3:** Left-wing parties have a broader (Progressive: libertarian, cosmopolitan) view of political space than center- and right-wing parties (Conservative: traditional, authoritarian, nationalistic).

The Green Left scores high on positive references to space outside the country. This is interpreted as a cosmopolitan, progressive worldview, including the entire world, as summarised in the example given above:

(1)
The Netherlands is part of a world that is becoming increasingly accessible and that gives scope – for everyone. (GL, EM 2006 Introduction)

Their discourse world can be qualified as cosmopolitan and libertarian because of its scope and also because they refer to issues that are not directly relevant to the nation and the quantification of Time and Space confirms this.

The Christian Democrats also score high on space outside the Dutch borders but with a neutral attitude and always in relation to the relevant time-space of the nation, indicating a more nationalistic worldview in which foreign affairs are viewed in the light of national interest, as in Example 2.

(2)
We are well-off in The Netherlands but we need to protect ourselves from influences, particularly coming from abroad. (CDA, EM 2006 Introduction)

The PVV sketches a very different worldview in that its focus is entirely on what goes on inside the country with only negative attitude to what goes on outside the borders (therefore Figure 7 does not includes a dotted line). Their worldview is limited to the interests of the nation itself and are considered at the far end of nationalism.

An interesting contrasting worldview is taken by the party representing the Dutch Reformed Church (SGP). Their worldview encompasses God's realm, which is infinite, both in Time and Space, whereas the politically relevant space remains within the Dutch borders, in eternal time. This projection (Figure 8) seems to suggest less political agency than is assumed by the other parties and is motivated religiously rather than politically.
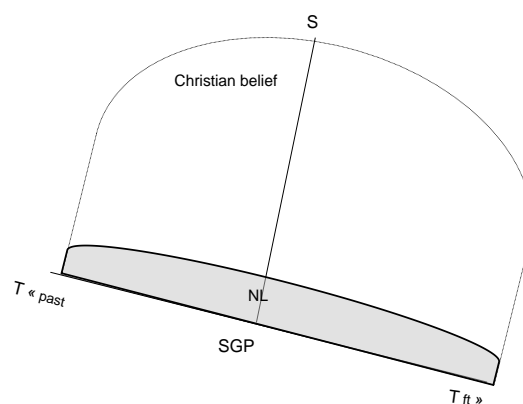


**Figure 8.** The Dutch Reformed party (SGP) worldview in Time and Space (EM 2006 Introductions).

## 4.5 Testing the Discourse Space Model

Two sub-corpuses were selected to check the relevance of attitudinal vectors in the TSM model and to check whether worldview frames found in the introductions would also be found in other parts of the manifestos, in a cohesive way. Text segments on Immigration were selected for the vector test and segments on Security were selected for the worldview-coherence test. These topics involved positive and negative spatial and temporal interaction between the Netherlands and the rest of the world. Finally, these two in-depth analyses served to find out if there are correlations between worldviews and political dimensions.

### 4.5.1  Immigration

To find out if vectors can visualize direction of action relative to the deictic centre, a sub-corpus was selected of sections of manifestos on Immigration. For Immigration, two telling examples at opposite ends of the political landscape are the Green Left and the Party for Freedom. The Party for Freedom scores high on the direction of 'out' where it concerns immigration and the possibility of immigrants 'in' is not mentioned. In contrast, the Green Left refers frequently to an interactive relationship between The Netherlands and the world, where immigration and emigration are regarded as being mutually beneficial, both ways (Figures 9). The arrows indicate direction of movement into and out of the country.
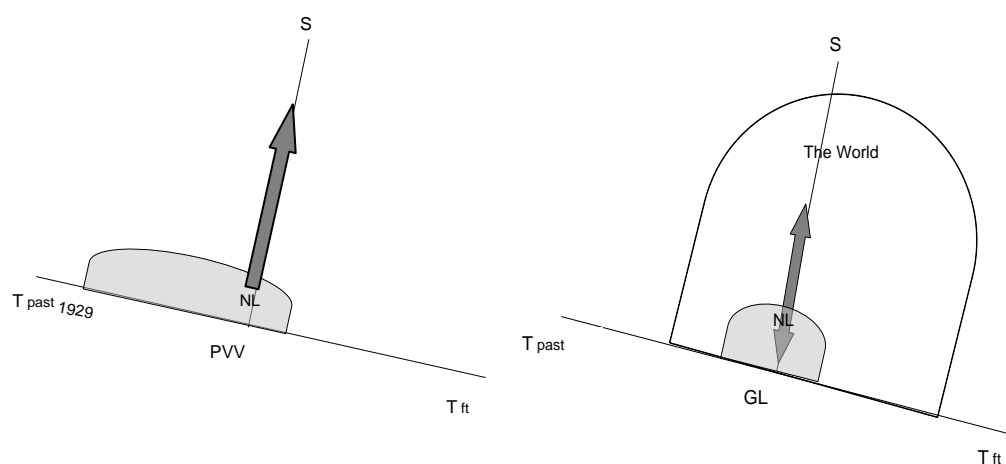


**Figure 9.** Direction of Immigration policies (EM 2006),
Party for Freedom and Green Left.

## 4.5.2 Security

Another pilot study was done on EM 2006 to check the validity of the correlation between time-space worldviews and content analytic results for positioning parties onto the traditional two political dimensions (Left-Right and Progressive-Conservative). Security was chosen because it can be considered a valence issue and a prime 'empty signifier' (Laclau 1996), that is constructed in relations with other issues. Security is such a wide-open term that its intended meaning would require a lot of explication, or keep it simple and embed the concept in a presupposed worldview that has been sketched in the introductory paragraphs.

Security was the most salient issue in the 2006 election campaign. It was used as an umbrella theme that often served to legitimise policies on more specific issues (e.g., immigration, education, health care, social and economic stability, crime prevention, fraud, etc.). Security has always been a legitimation factor for rather unpleasant, highly restrictive measures and is a concept in politics that needs to be handled with great care (Baldwin 1997). Security appeals to an instinctive human interest and is a highly competitive issue during elections. The paradox is that security for some usually means a threat to others. It is specifically associated with Time and Space orientation, relating to identity and making it a prime issue for Progressive-Conservative positioning (Hypothesis 3).

The content analysis consisted of tagging text segments referring to security issues as they emerged from the text. This allowed quantification of the percentage of text each manifesto devoted to security issues  (Table 1).
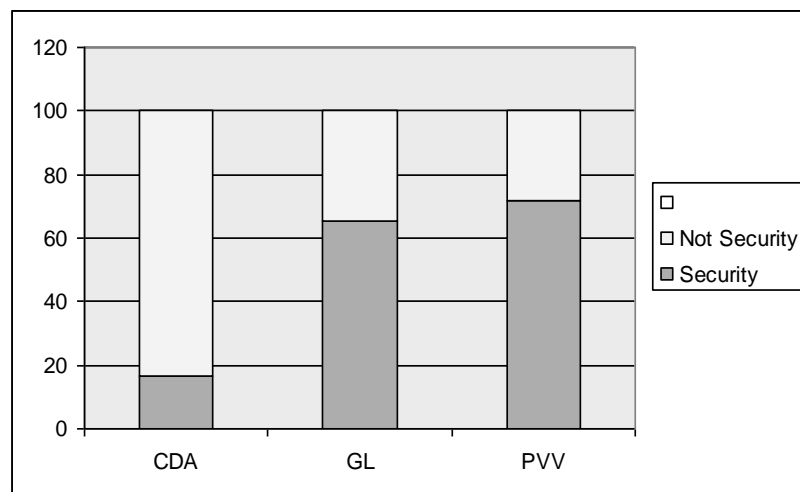


**Table 1.** 'Security' salience in Dutch Election Manifestos 2006
(% of words) (Kaal, Maks, Van Elfrinkhof 2009).

However, the results do not seem to correlate with our hypothesis that Progressive correlates with low scores on Security. The issue is almost as salient with the progressive Green Left as it is with the conservative PVV. But

taking a closer look at the salience of security in relation to sub-issues explains the importance of its context. The issue of Security was split up in five clusters that pertain to 'restrictive' and 'permissive' policies for social regulation (Table 2). The relation we find is that restrictive correlates with conservative, whereas permissive correlates with progressive.
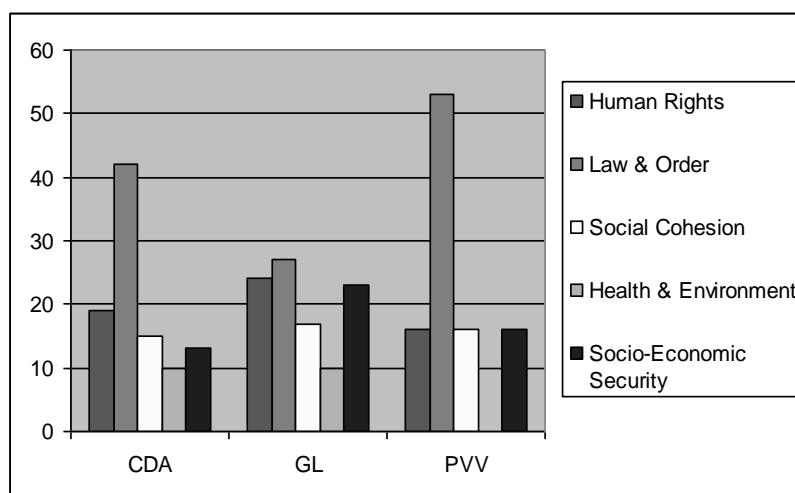


**Table 2.** Five clusters of sub-issues related to Security
in EM2006 (Kaal, Maks and Van Elfrinkhof 2009).

We see that the Party for Freedom and the Christian Democrats peak on security by restrictive law and order policies (social control), whereas the progressive Green Left scores more evenly across the five issue categories with higher scores on human rights and socio-economic security. As can be expected, more detailed contextualisation provides more meaningful results.

These two sub-corpus experiments show convincingly that worldview may be explicit in some parts of manifesto discourse, whereas other parts presuppose that worldview. It is also shown that one must be prepared to go down a level to get relevant results. The vectors are important to be able to take the direction and scope of frames of reference into the equation for party positioning.

## 5.  From Worldview to Political Positions

The discourse space model for discursive constructions defines worldviews as reference frames that make it possible to express degrees of attitude relative to a deictic centre. These geometric discursive structures are communicatively powerful in that they follow cognitive patterns of deliberation that are culturally determined (Levinson 2003). We need these structures to make sense of the complex world we live in by reducing the complexity through selection, organisation and simplification. Worldviews suggest boundaries to deliberative space that are borrowed from more absolute and universal categories of real time and space that affect our knowledge and experience of life. They guide our deliberations by providing a coherent frame to past-present event structures in which predictions for the future sound right. As

Apostel put it: 'Because of the rational demand for coherence, a world view should be a consistent whole' (Aerts et al. 2007 [1994]: 9). 'Empty signifiers', metaphor and narrative structure support each other to make political texts coherently presumptive. Their rationale relies on sharing presuppositions that are guided by worldviews.

The discourse space model was developed specifically to find worldviews in election manifestos. In this pilot study, it was applied to different discourse levels to check if worldviews were indeed the ground for policies and political goals. Introductory paragraphs typically express worldviews explicitly in temporal and spatial frames of reference. Text segments were analysed from the inside out to find the boundaries of that space, and from the outside in to find deictic centres and to check if the spatial reference frames are presupposed in other, more specific, text segments. The purpose was to distinguish worldviews, not only as a static point of view, but also as an ideologically motivated frame of reference that makes sense of change patterns. And finally, we have investigated how worldviews can be indicative of party positions on political dimensions.

The examples show that spatial and temporal framing in political discourse reflects political attitudes. For example, the Christian Democrats in the Netherlands claim that 'we' are well off, but there are threats from 'abroad' (Example 2). This observation typically reflects a nationalistic (conservative) point of view. The proposition is placed in the present 'are' (Time is now) in which 'we' and 'ourselves' refer to citizens of The Netherlands (Place is here). 'Protect from' suggests a possible threat from foreign 'influences' (from which politics should protect 'us') that are 'coming from abroad' (Time is present continuous). This non-specified threat is situated in the present and could justify a defensive (authoritarian) attitude particularly on foreign affairs. In contrast, the Green Left makes a cosmopolitan, libertarian (progressive) claim with a positive view of the future by placing the country in the global space for all to share (Example 1). This claim places the country in 'a world' with interactive opportunities for 'everyone', believing in 'scope' (open Space) for the future (open Time).

For progressive parties with a wide spatial scope the world is less threatening than it is for conservative parties with a narrow spatial scope. Projecting these results onto *KiesKompas* (Figure 2) party positioning we find that a wide positive worldview correlates with progressiveness, whereas a restricted positive worldview correlates with conservativism.


## 6. A Discourse Space Model for Party Positioning

The results from this study demonstrate that text analysis for discursive features can be operationalized for party positioning. It can contribute to enriching text analysis at a mezzo level, between macro political analysis and micro linguistic analysis, focussing on discursive cohesive features of argumentation that occurs in discourse. The challenge is to find ways to improve the reliability of time, space and modality annotation, to converge or layer methods of analysis, and to match results on political axes.

The discourse space model seems to work on a two-dimensional time-space level, but a structured link is needed to be able to connect real time and space clusters to modality markers that weaken or enforce spatial positions. Some work has been done in this direction, using an open-ended ontology for Dutch deontic (and epistemic) expressions in this corpus (Cienki, Kaal, Maks 2010) and an ontology for expressions of sentiment in Dutch is being developed for various text types by Maks and Vossen (2010). For political discourse, a likely next step is to add words of desirability, such as *need, wish, believe, unnecessary* and *unacceptable*. Another problem with the modality axis that needs to be solved is that it includes both deontic and epistemic modality, but is it possible to cluster them into equivalent categories so they canbe placed on the same axis.

Nevertheless, a discourse approach to analyse texts for worldview seems to add an additional source of textual evidence to distinguish party positions. Finding worldview as the ground of party rationale and ideological motivation gives insight into the discursive construction of political programmes. A fully developed discourse space approach can be applied across parties in one election year, across genres of party communications, as well as for historical analysis to see how parties and political dimensions change over time and to detect emerging post-ideological worldviews.

## *Notes*

[1]  This study is part of a larger research project (From Text to Political Positions: From sentiments and opinions to party positions, T2PP) at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (funded by the Center for Advance Media Research Amsterdam, CAMeRA). T2PP seeks to enhance text analysis for party positioning for voting aid applications (such as KiesKompas, the Electoral Compass) by converging political (Van Elfrinkhof), lexical-semantic (Maks) and discourse (Kaal) methods for rich text mining.

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