

The MA thesis “The Special Relationship: A discourse on British-American relations in the British press” focuses on a discourse analysis of the “special relationship” in 2001-2010. The thesis is based on a sample of 25 commentaries published in leading British newspapers over this period and describes the characteristic features that appeared in the discourse on the United Kingdom’s most important bilateral partnership. The identified elements pertain to national identity, national interest, historical narratives, diplomatic rituals, assessment of the Prime Minister’s personal role and the perception of the UK’s junior status within the relationship. The thesis uses a Foreign Policy Analysis model that takes into account the role of the media in the formation of foreign policy. Methodologically, selected discourse analysis methods are used, particularly thematic analysis and analysis of metaphors. The characteristic features of the dominant discourse are identified through excerpts from relevant secondary literature on the history of the “special relationship” after WWII and subsequently compared with the results of the newspaper sample analysis. The thesis pays special attention to the repertoires of arguments used by the commentators and places them in the context of an intensive public debate on the UK’s military involvement in the invasion of Iraq in 2003.