

This version of the book chapter has been accepted for publication, after peer review (when applicable) and is subject to Springer Nature's AM terms of use (<https://www.springernature.com/gp/open-research/policies/accepted-manuscript-terms>), but is not the Version of Record and does not reflect post-acceptance improvements, or any corrections. The Version of Record is available online at: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6680-4\\_2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6680-4_2).

# Metaphor Translation as Reframing: Chinese Versus Western Stance Mediation in COVID-19 News Reports

Yufeng Liu and Dechao Li

## Abstract

This study investigates the stance mediation of a Chinese and a British newspaper in (re)framing the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 with a focus on metaphor transfer in news headlines. The database includes 97 pairs of Chinese/English news headlines from *The Global Times Editorial* (GTE) and 77 pairs from *The Economist Global Business Review* (EGBR). Drawing on an analytical model that combines framing, corpus and Appraisal Theory, the study found that the conceptual metaphors, framing strategies and attitudinal graduation in GTE and EGBR differ significantly. Whereas GTE generally takes a pro-China and anti-US/West stance, EGBR adopts an anti-China and pro-West perspective. The study highlights stance mediation in non-political reports within news agencies that resort to self-translation and metaphor as a frame in stance mediation, a finding that may foster interdisciplinary collaborations between framing studies and journalistic and metaphor translation studies.

**Keywords** News translation · Metaphor translation · (re)framing · Framing strategies · Stance mediation · Coronavirus

## 2.1 Introduction

Recent decades have witnessed an increasing growth of literature in news translation research from both home (e.g., Liu 2017; Pan and Liao 2020; Qin and Zhang 2018; Wu and Zhang 2015; Zhang 2013) and abroad (e.g., McLaughlin 2015; Spiessens and Van Poucke 2016; Valdeón 2015a, b, 2016, 2020). In this growing body of research, news translation has been scrutinized through such theoretical lens as power relations, politics, imagology, and ideology (Bielsa and Bassnett 2008; Valdeón 2016), among which the framing model borrowed from Baker (2006, 2007) and Appraisal Theory

(AT) established by Martin and White (2005) are the two most frequently applied frameworks of analysis.

In contradistinction to the multiple theoretical vantage points from which news translation has been conducted, most existing metaphor translation research was conducted within Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Schäffner and Shuttleworth 2013; Sun 2017). In CMT, metaphors can be understood with the formula *A IS B*, where the target domain (*A*) is compared to a source domain (*B*). Hence, metaphor involves conceptual mapping (Kövecses 2020; Lakoff and Johnson 2008; Mannoni 2021), ideology (Boulanger 2016; O'Halloran 2010) and politics (Bazzi 2014). To date, there has been only a small amount of research that coalesces metaphor and journalistic translation (Bazzi 2014; Van Poucke and Belikova 2016), focusing on metaphor types (e.g., cultural *versus* ideological metaphors, Bazzi 2014), corresponding transfer methods (e.g., literal *versus* free translation, Van Poucke and Belikova 2016), etc. Given that metaphor is a frequently-used device for expressing attitudes, it is argued here that by investigating the translation of metaphors, the mediation of stance including attitudes can also be analysed. Metaphor translation in journalistic discourse has been analysed in our related study (see Liu and Li 2022a), albeit with a slightly different focus on the conflict between Chinese and American newspapers for the use of metaphors about the COVID-19 pandemic. The current study can provide further evidence of the reframing power of metaphor translation in news discourse by including new materials and drawing on Appraisal Theory in the analysis.

With its varied definitions, stance is "by no means a monolithic concept" (Englebretson 2007: 1). It usually includes basic components such as value judgments, assessments and attitudes. Englebretson (2007) advocated an inclusive definition of stance by developing a model "which recognizes the heterogeneous and multifaceted nature of stancetaking" (2). According to Zhang (2013), mediation is correlated with "manipulation" and "rewriting". Thus, she defined the concept as "the ways the translator intervenes, rewrites or manipulates in the [news] transediting process, with an effort to accommodate in the target text stances dissenting from those in the original text" (398). Zhang's definition is adopted in the current study since the study also uses news discourse where news transediting is common. The study also follows Entman (1991) who argued that metaphor is an important frame (7), and attempts to provide more evidence for the framing power of metaphor by investigating how news agencies in China and the West use metaphor transfer in news headlines to mediate their stance when reporting the COVID-19 pandemic.

In what follows, this study first introduces the general and political background of the COVID-19 pandemic before highlighting the significance of making this global challenge the object of analysis. The theoretical framework, analytical model, and data compilation are then elaborated in detail, followed by a discussion of the analysis results and their scholarly significance.

## 2.2 News Reports of COVID-19 in 2020

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus that has evolved into an ongoing pandemic with a wide-ranging impact. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic is an issue associated with politics and power relations, as different news media may take a different stance in their narratives (Dionne and Turkmen 2020). For instance, this global pandemic has been called the “China virus,” “Wuhan virus,” or “Kung flu” in numerous American mass media (Budhwani and Sun 2020). To counter Western media’s misinterpretations of China in the pandemic, *Global Times Editorial* (GTE) began to release COVID-19-related English news reports in March 2020. *Global Times* is a daily tabloid newspaper owned by *People’s Daily*, which is an official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party. It is regarded as China’s foreign propaganda machine (Brady 2015) and even a “foreign mission” (Ruwitch and Kelemen 2020). It is also claimed that *Global Times* spreads conspiracy theories and misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic (Molter and DiResta 2020).

*The Economist*, on the other hand, is an international newspaper covering political, economic, technological, cultural, and social topics, which has been censored and blocked in China since 2016 (Horwitz 2016). With a claim to equip the Chinese reader with an international perspective, *The Economist* released its English-Chinese bilingual digital version, *The Economist Global Business Review* (EGBR). In 2020, EGBR had a series of special reports on the COVID-19 pandemic, with the hashtag “新冠报道” (literally “COVID-19 Report”) in the Chinese version.

Indeed, the pandemic has produced rich metaphorical narratives, in which non-WAR metaphors on COVID-19 are especially discussed in the #reframecovid initiative (Olza, Pérez-Sobrino, and Koller 2020). Hence, it is vital to analyse how GTE and EGBR (re)frame the pandemic with metaphors, which may unveil their attitudes towards the pandemic and parties involved in it.

## 2.3 Analytical Framework

### 2.3.1 *The Framing Model and Appraisal Theory in News Translation Research*

Baker (2007) has introduced the framing model into Translation Studies from narrative theory, sociology and the study of social movements. A summary of this model can be found in Liu (2017), Pan and Liao (2020), Qin and Zhang (2018) and Valdeón (2008). In Baker’s (2007, 160) view, the manipulation of titles is “an important site of framing”, which is also the focus of the current study. According to Baker (2006), there are four types of framing strategies, namely, temporal and spatial framing, selective appropriation of textual material, labelling and repositioning participants.

Temporal and spatial framing and repositioning participants are non-textual strategies, involving the temporal and spatial context and the paratextual commentaries. Selective appropriation and labelling are more relevant to the present study because they highlight the shifts of narrative elements at the textual level. Selective appropriation is to “suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or aspects of the larger narrative(s) in which it is embedded” by omitting or adding textual materials (114). Labelling refers to “any discursive process that involves using a lexical item, term or phrase to identify a person, place, group, event or any other key element in a narrative” (122). The relation between metaphor and framing has also been investigated in a multimodal context (see Liu and Li 2022b) where framing is understood as selection and salience. The current study provides more insights in news discourse.

Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal Theory (AT) analyses positive or negative textual assessments and the intensity or directness of attitudinal utterances. Pan and Liao (2020), White (2015) and Zhang (2013) have reviewed AT in news translation research. There are three sub-systems in AT, namely attitude, graduation, and engagement. Among them, attitude and graduation are more relevant to the present study. Attitude refers to positive and negative assessments, whereas graduation refers to the speaker/writer/translator’s “personal investment in the propositions being advanced in the text” (White 2015: 4). Graduation can be analysed at two levels, i.e., *force* (to strengthen or mitigate the propositions) and *focus* (to blur or sharpen the boundaries of semantic categories).

### 2.3.2 *The Corpus Model in Metaphor Translation Research*

Compared with news translation research, metaphor studies applied less diverse models as most of these studies only aim at drawing up a relatively exhaustive list of metaphors in large corpora and exploring replicable procedures for identifying metaphors, during which processes corpora are often utilized to locate particular semantic prosody features or to search for concordance (Charteris-Black 2004; Deignan 1999, 2005; Mannoni 2021; Shuttleworth 2017; Stefanowitsch and Gries 2007). For instance, to identify the metaphoricity of the linguistic expressions, Pragglejaz Group’s (2007) MIP (Metaphor Identification Procedure) and Steen et al.’s (2010) MIPVU (Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit) use corpus-based dictionaries, such as Macmillian Dictionary ([www.macmillandictionary.com](http://www.macmillandictionary.com)). To verify the source domain of each metaphorical expression, Ahrens and Jiang (2020) developed the corpus-based Source Domain Verification Procedure (SDVP) that uses sources such as Suggested Upper Merged Ontology (SUMO, [www.ontologyportal.org](http://www.ontologyportal.org)), WordNet ([wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)) and Sketch Engine ([www.sketchengine.eu](http://www.sketchengine.eu)).

### 2.3.3 An Analytical Model for the Current Research

The current study combines the framing model in news translation research, the AT model and the corpus model in metaphor translation research to analyse how metaphor is translated in news discourse and how stance is mediated based on such metaphor translation.

To ensure the replicability of the study, MIPVU (Steen et al. 2010) is adopted to identify metaphors before using Ahrens and Jiang's (2020) SDVP to identify their corresponding source domains. Example (1) below is a detailed elaboration of how to identify a conceptual metaphor in a source text (ST) and a target text (TT).

(1).<sup>1</sup>

ST: 美国 和 中国, 究竟 谁 在 胁迫<sup>2</sup> 世界

měiguó hé zhōngguó, jiūjìng shuí zài xié pò shìjiè

US and China, exactly who be coerce world

TT: Who is **coercing** the world, China or US? (GTE, June 10, 2020)

The first step is to scrutinize both ST and TT on a word-by-word basis to establish a general understanding of the meaning. In this case, the Chinese writer is questioning the US for coercing the world.

The second step is to determine the lexical units. ICTCLAS-NLPIR system (Zhang 2014) is used here to segment Chinese lexical units, which are later manually checked for their accuracy. For the English texts, lexical units are the words that have a separate tag in the British National Corpus.

The third step is to establish the meaning of each lexical unit in context. For each lexical unit, we need to determine whether it has a more basic meaning than the one in the given context. In this case, the lexical units “美国” (US), “和” (and), “中国” (China), “究竟” (exactly), “谁” (who), “在” (is), “胁迫” (coerce) and “世界” (world) in ST and “who,” “be,” “coerce,” “the” and “world” in TT have been analysed by referring to the *Handian* online Chinese Dictionary (<https://www.zdic.net/>) and Macmillan Dictionary (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>).

The fourth is to decide whether there is distinct contrast between the contextual meaning and the basic meaning but the two meanings are related. If so, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical. If the contextual meaning and the basic meaning are the same, then we check whether the lexical unit is human-oriented, but used in a non-human context. If so, we also mark it as metaphorical since it is a possible personification. In this case, the contextual meaning and the basic meaning of “胁迫” in the ST and “coerce” in the TT are the same: “to make someone do something by using force or threats”. However, both “胁迫” and “coerce” are human-oriented words but are used to describe the countries in the example. Thus, both words are metaphorical.

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples listed in the current paper are glossed in accordance with the Leipzig Glossing Rules.

<sup>2</sup> Metaphorical lexical units in the examples are bolded throughout the paper.

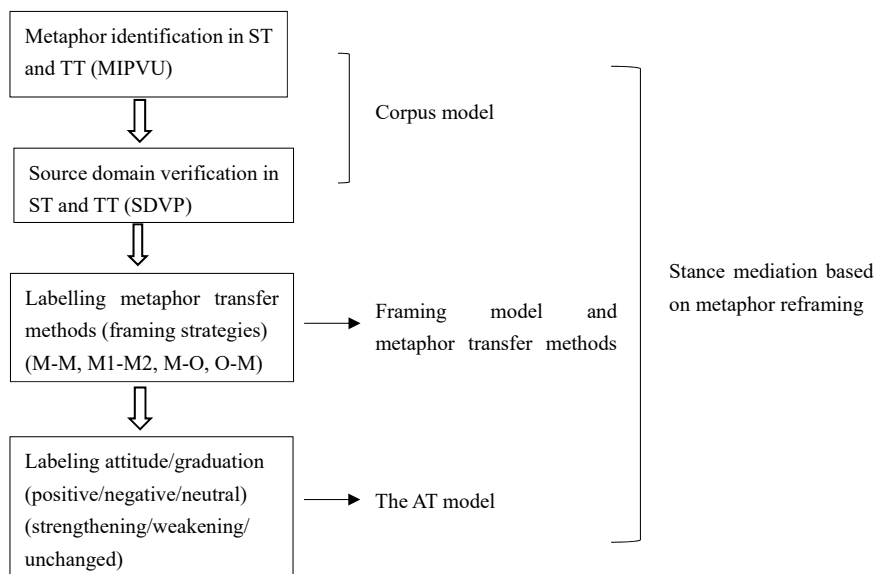
After all metaphorical lexical units have been marked, the next step is to identify the source domains with SDVP (Ahrens and Jiang 2020), a process which Suggested Upper Merged Ontology (SUMO, <https://www.ontologyportal.org/>), WordNet <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn>), *Handian* Dictionary (<https://www.zdic.net/>), and the Word Sketch function in Sketch Engine (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/>) are used. A final decision is made after going through all these four language resources. In this case, *Handian* Dictionary clarifies the origin of “胁迫” as “to compel a political power to step down with armed forces”. “胁迫” is described in Sketch Engine (via Chinese Web 2017 corpus) as an action usually conducted by an illegal political body. Thus, the source domain of “TERRORIST” can be summarized. The corresponding target domain can be determined based on the context: “THE US”. We can also work out a formula for the conceptual metaphor of this example: “THE US IS TERRORIST”.

The proposed metaphor translation strategies vary among scholars (e.g., Newmark 1988; Pedersen 2017; Sjørup 2013; Shuttleworth 2017; Toury 2012; van den Broeck 1981). Toury’s (2012) six-fold classification of metaphor transfer methods is more comprehensive than others, as it exhausts the following possibilities in metaphor translation, including retaining (M-M), substituting (M1-M2), paraphrasing (M-P), omitting (M-O), creating (O-M) and from non-metaphor to metaphor (P-M). Since the strategies of paraphrasing and translating non-metaphorical language to metaphorical language are seldom used in news headline translations, only four categorizations, i.e., M-M, M1-M2, M-O, O-M, are taken into consideration in this study. Metaphor is a special labelling in most cases as metaphorical expressions conceptualize abstract ideologies with concrete images. Moreover, selective appropriation corresponds to M-O, O-M, and M1-M2 strategies, depending on the situation. Thus, in the present study, the fourfold metaphor transfer strategies are more suitable than the twofold framing strategies.

Moreover, attitudinal transfer via metaphor is labelled in accordance with the AT model, which classifies attitude as positive, negative, or neutral. The propositions can be strengthened, weakened, or kept unchanged. See Fig. 2.1 for a flowchart of the analytical model.

## 2.4 Data Compilation

The current study compares the stance mediation of a Chinese and a British newspaper on COVID-19-related issues based on an in-depth analysis of metaphor transfer in news headlines between GTE and EGBR. All bilingual news reports on the pandemic on GTE and EGBR in 2020 are collected for analysis. Altogether 325 news reports on the topic were found on GTE’s official English website (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/opinion/editorial/>) in 2020. Among them, only 133 contain the keywords “COVID-19”, “COVID”, “pandemic”, “epidemic”, or “pneumonia” in either their titles or



**Fig. 2.1** Flowchart of the analytical model

content. Only 97 of them have corresponding Chinese versions on GTE’s official Chinese website (<https://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/>). On EGBR’s official mobile app, there are in total 437 Chinese-English bilingual news reports in 2020. Among them, only 77 have the keywords “COVID-19”, “COVID”, “pandemic”, “epidemic”, or “pneumonia” in either the titles or the content. GTE started to report the pandemic in both Chinese and English in March, whereas EGBR began to report COVID-19 in February. To balance the datasets, two EGBR reports in February are eliminated. Table 2.1 describes the size of the dataset.

The number of bilingual reports is relatively comparable between GTE and EGBR, but the number of tokens in headlines differs significantly. This is because GTE releases opinion articles written in more colloquial language, whereas EGBR is well-known for its concise style. Moreover, one Chinese word actually accounts for two tokens, making the Chinese texts longer than the English texts in tokens. The incomparability of tokens will not influence the current analysis as the focus is on metaphor transfer. More importantly, the datasets are comparable in the reported topic (i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic), ideological affinity (Valdeón and Calafat 2020)

**Table 2.1** Research data from GTE and EGBR’s bilingual reports in 2020

	The number of bilingual reports	Total word count of English headlines	Total word count of Chinese headlines
GTE	97	775	1,622
EGBR	75	242	381

to the government, and metaphorical richness. By metaphorical richness, we mean the significant number of metaphors used in the two newspapers' news headlines and the manipulation of the metaphors in translation, such as creating new metaphors in the TT.

## 2.5 Results

### 2.5.1 Conceptual Metaphors in GTE and EGBR

Based on the analytical model sketched above, two linguists were trained to identify all metaphors in GTE and EGBR datasets based on MIPVU and to utilize SDVP to verify their source domains. One linguist was responsible for coding the complete datasets, whereas another cross-checked the codes. A final agreement was reached after discussions. Table 2.2 summarizes the top ten source domains for the target domain "COVID-19" in ST and TT of the datasets. Rank is calculated by means of source domain frequency in ST. Table 2.3 displays the  $\chi^2$  test of independence with  $\alpha = 0.05$  as the criterion for significance.

The  $\chi^2$  test of independence ( $\chi^2 = 38.823$ ,  $df = 16$ ,  $\alpha < 0.005$ ) illustrates that there is a significant difference between GTE and EGBR in terms of the source domains for "COVID-19" with a strong effect size<sup>3</sup> ( $V = 0.750$ ,  $\alpha < 0.005$ ). Aside from the shared source domains, i.e., "WAR", "SEA WAVE" and "BAD WEATHER" which

**Table 2.2** Top ten source domains for COVID-19 based on frequency in GTE and EGBR

Rank	(GTE) COVID-19 IS__	ST (Chinese)	TT (English)	Rank	(EGBR) COVID-19 IS__	ST (English)	TT (Chinese)
1	War	20	19	1	War	10	8
2	Crime	3	2	2	Criminal	5	4
3	Marathon	2	0	3	Sea wave	4	4
4	Shock wave	1	1	4	Killer	3	6
5	Sea wave	1	0	5	Bad weather	3	3
6	Bomb explosion	1	0	6	Math problem	3	3
7	Flood	1	0	7	Danger	3	2
8	Test	1	0	8	Short break	3	2
9	Competition	1	0	9	Opportunity	2	2
10	Bad weather	0	1	10	War weapon	2	2

<sup>3</sup> Cramér's V is an effect size measurement for the chi-square test of independence. The effect size can be weak, moderate or strong when the value is smaller than 0.2, between 0.2 and 0.6 or larger than 0.6.



**Table 2.3** Chi-Square test of independence between source domain for “COVID-19” and new outlets

	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.823 <sup>a</sup>	16	0.001
Likelihood Ratio	51.748	16	0.000
Cramér's V	0.750		0.001
N of Valid Cases	69		

<sup>a</sup>32 cells (94.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.45  
The significance level is set at 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), which means that the study allows at most 5% chance of making the wrong decision when the null hypothesis is true. Hence, the results are significant when  $\alpha < 0.05$

compare the pandemic to natural disasters, GTE depicts COVID-19 as a “CRIME”, indicating the existence of a suspicious culprit, whereas EGBR regards the pandemic per se as the “CRIMINAL”. Moreover, COVID-19 in GTE is also a “COMPETITION”, a “TEST”, and a “MARATHON” in which China takes the lead. All these images are omitted in TT. On the contrary, EGBR depicts the pandemic as a “MATH PROBLEM”, a “SHORT BREAK”, and an “OPPORTUNITY”. For instance, in Example (2), “调查” in ST and “probe” in TT indicate that the US is a “SUSPECT” who commits the COVID-19 “CRIME”, whereas in Example (3), COVID-19 is the “CRIMINAL” who robs people’s saving box.

(2) (CM formula: COVID-19 IS CRIME / US IS SUSPECT)

ST: 中国不怕科学公正的调查, 美国怕  
zhōngguó bú pà kēxué gōngzhèng de diàochá, měiguó pà  
China no fear science justice AUX investigation, US fear  
TT: It’s US that fears **probe** on virus origin (GTE, May 18, 2020)

(3) (CM formula: COVID-19 IS CRIMINAL)

ST: **Raid** on the piggy banks (EGBR, June, 2020)  
TT: 抢砸储蓄罐  
qiǎng zá chǔxùguǎn  
rob break saving box

News headlines in GTE also contain various direct comments on different parties involved in the pandemic, especially China, the US, and the West. Table 2.4 summarizes their most oft-used metaphors. In GTE, China is a “HERO”, “CHAMPION”, “WINNER”, “SHARPSHOOTER”, “STEPPINGSTONE” for American politics and “EXCUSE” for the American government’s incompetence. In stark contrast, the US is a “TERRORIST”, “ACTOR”, “SINNER”, “LIAR”, “MANIAC”, “CRIMINAL”, “WAR MAKER” and “BURDEN”. Likewise, the West is a “WAR MAKER”, “HYPOCRITE”, “FACELESS MAN”, “IMMORAL MAN” or “WITCH”. However, TT

**Table 2.4** Top 10 source domains for “China”, “US” and “the West” based on frequency in GTE

Rank	China is__	ST	TT	Rank	US IS__	ST	TT	Rank	The west is__	ST	TT
1	Hero	2	2	1	Terrorist	5	4	1	War maker	1	0
2	Champion	1	0	2	Actor	4	1	2	Faceless man	1	0
3	Excuse for the US	1	0	3	Sinner	3	2	3	Immoral man	1	0
4	Stepping stone for the US	1	0	4	Burden	2	2	4	Witch	0	1
5	Humble man	1	0	5	Militant	2	1	5	Hypocrite	0	1
6	Sharpshooter	1	0	6	Liar	2	1	6	—	—	—
7	Suspect	1	0	7	Maniac	2	1	7	—	—	—
8	Tool for the US	0	1	8	Tricker	0	3	8	—	—	—
9	Winner	0	1	9	Criminal	1	1	9	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	10	War maker	2	0	10	—	—	—

sees less usage of these metaphors. On the contrary, EGBR seldom directly comments on any parties involved in the pandemic.

(4) (CM formula: CHINA IS STEPPINGSTONE / US IS TRICKER)

ST: 想踩着中国爬上连任, 白宫想错了

xiǎng cǎizhe zhōngguó pá shàng liánrèn, báigōng xiǎng cuò le

think tread China climb up reappointment, White House think wrong AUX

TT: Smearing China a lame **trick** to aid reelection for White House (GTE, April 19, 2020)

(5) (CM formula: US IS WAR MAKER / US IS HOOLIGAN)

ST: 华盛顿被迫改口, 但对华攻击不会松

Huáshèngdùn bèipò gǎi kǒu, dàn duì huá gōngjī búhuì song

Washington force-PASS change remarks, but towards China attack not loose

TT: US system fuels Trump team's political **hooliganism** (GTE, May 7, 2020)

## 2.5.2 *Framing Strategies of Metaphorical Expressions in GTE and EGBR*

The GTE and EGBR datasets were coded based on the fourfold framing strategies of M-M, M1-M2, M-O, and O-M. Analyses show that the two news agencies manipulate ST and TT metaphors in different measures (see Fig. 2.2). GTE uses the four framing strategies interchangeably, maintaining, replacing, omitting original metaphors or creating new ones to serve different purposes. However, EGBR usually keeps the original images (M-M) and seldom omits (M-O) or creates metaphors (O-M) in TT. The corresponding  $\chi^2$  test of independence demonstrates that the two news outlets differ moderately in this regard ( $\chi^2 = 31.505$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $\alpha < 0.001$ ;  $V = 0.374$ ,  $\alpha < 0.005$ ) (see Table 2.5).

(6) (M-M; M1-M2)

ST: 抗疫, 蓬佩奥们至少留下三大历史罪名

kàng yì, péngpèiào men zhìshǎo liú xià sān dà lìshǐ zuìming

fight virus, Pompeo PL at least leave AUX three big historical crimes

TT: Pompeo's three **sins** in global virus **fight** (GTE, March 26, 2020)

(7) (M-M)

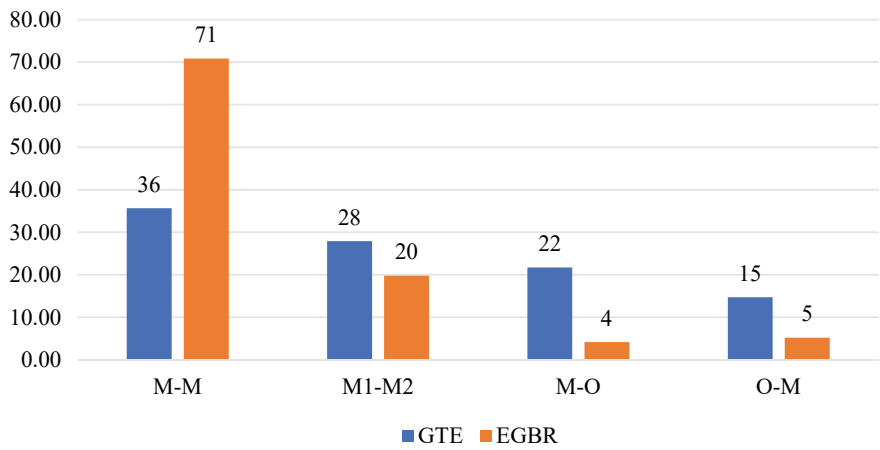
ST: Covid **carnage** (EGBR, March 2020)

TT: 病毒 大屠杀

bìngdú dàtúshā

virus massacre

Both Example (6) and (7) have used the M-M strategy (“抗疫”—“virus fight”; “carnage”—“大屠杀”) to depict COVID-19 as a “WAR”. In Example (6), GTE also transfers the CM “AMERICAN POLITICIANS ARE CRIMINALS” into “AMERICAN POLITICIANS ARE SINNERS”. Thus, GTE judges American politicians legally in ST but morally in TT.



**Fig. 2.2** Frequency count of framing strategies in GTE and EGBR (Unit: %)

**Table 2.5** Chi-Square test of independence between framing strategies and news outlets

	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.505 <sup>a</sup>	3	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	33.712	3	0.000
Cramér's V	0.374		0.001
N of Valid Cases	225		

<sup>a</sup>0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.24  
The significance level is set at 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), which means that the study allows at most 5% chance of making the wrong decision when the null hypothesis is true. Hence, the results are significant when  $\alpha < 0.05$

(8) (M-O; M1-M2; O-M)

ST: 全球抗疫马拉松, 中国跑得好瞒不住  
quánqiú kàng yì mǎlāsōng, zhōngguó pǎo dé hǎo mán bú zhù  
Globe fight virus marathon, China run AUX well hide no COMP  
TT: China’s achievement of COVID-19 **fight** obvious (GTE, May 10, 2020)

In Example (8), “甩锅” (literally “to throw a pot”) is a Chinese internet slang that means to shirk one’s responsibilities by finding a scapegoat. The conceptual metaphor “CHINA IS SCAPEGOAT” in ST is omitted in TT (M–O). In the same example, the original metaphor “US IS MANIAC” is replaced with “US IS LIAR” (M1-M2). In TT, a new metaphor is created (O-M) with the word “weather”, i.e., “COVID-19 IS BAD WEATHER”.

2.5.3 Evaluation of Attitude and Graduation in GTE and EGBR

As illustrated in the analytical model above, attitude in metaphorical expressions can be positive, neutral or negative; whereas propositions can be strengthened, weakened or unchanged. Table 2.6 presents the study’s analytical codes applied to analyse the evaluative attitude and graduation.

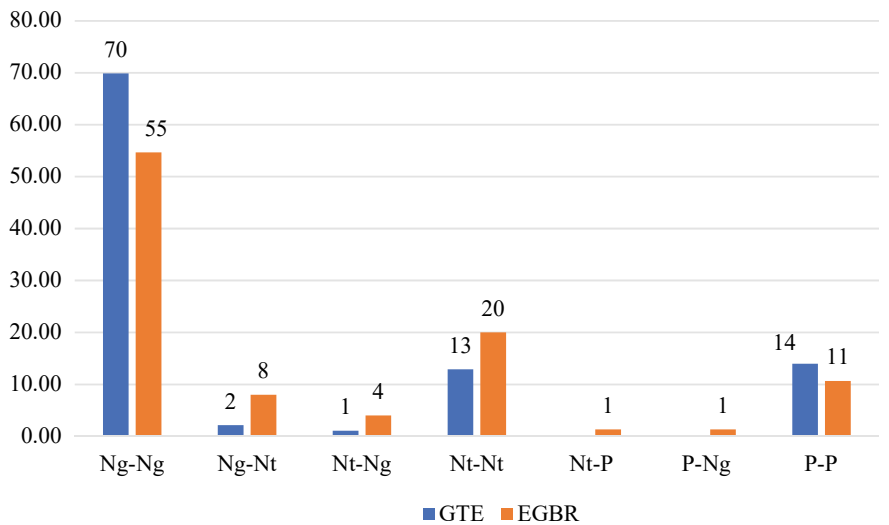
Figure 2.3 illustrates the evaluative attitudinal transfer in GTE and EGBR. In effect, most metaphors (70% and 55% for GTE and EGBR, respectively) in the news headlines are negative, which implies that overall, the two newspapers acknowledge the pandemic’s destructive influence. Besides, EGBR has a stronger tendency to remain a neutral stance than GTE (28% *versus* 15%). The two newspapers differ in positivity towards COVID-19-related issues. The datasets show that GTE is primarily optimistic about China’s achievements during the pandemic such as Example (9), while EGBR is more confident about the pandemic’s future trajectory such as Example (10). Nevertheless, the results of Chi-Square test of independence

Table 2.6 Analytical codes for evaluative attitude and graduation

Attitude	–	Negative (Ng)	Neutral (Nt)	Positive (P)
		Ng-Nt	Nt-Ng	P-Ng
		Ng-P	Nt-P	P-Nt
	–	Ng-Ng	Nt-Nt	P-P
Graduation	Strengthening (St)	Ng-St	Nt-St	P-St
	Weakening (Wk)	Ng-Wk	Nt-Wk	P-Wk
	Unchanged (Un)	Ng-Un	Nt-Un	P-Un

in Table 2.7 show that the two newspapers’ differences in attitudinal transfer are not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 10.146$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $V = 0.246$ ,  $\alpha > 0.05$ ).

- (9) (P-P towards China)
- ST: 全球 抗疫 马拉松, 中国 跑得好 瞒不住  
quánqiú kàng yì mǎlāsōng, zhōngguó pǎo dé hǎo mán bú zhù  
Globe fight virus marathon, China run AUX well hide no COMP
- TT: China’s achievement of COVID-19 **fight** obvious (GTE, May 10, 2020)



**Fig. 2.3** Frequency count of attitudinal transfer in GTE and EGBR (Unit: %)

**Table 2.7** Chi-Square test of independence between attitudinal transfer and new outlets

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.146 <sup>a</sup>	6	0.119
Likelihood Ratio	10.997	6	0.088
Cramé's V	0.246		0.119
N of Valid Cases	168		

<sup>a</sup>8 cells (57.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.45  
The significance level is set at 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), which means that the study allows at most 5% chance of making the wrong decision when the null hypothesis is true. Hence, the results are significant when  $\alpha < 0.05$

(10) (P-P towards the pandemic)

ST: Getting better (EGBR, November 2020)

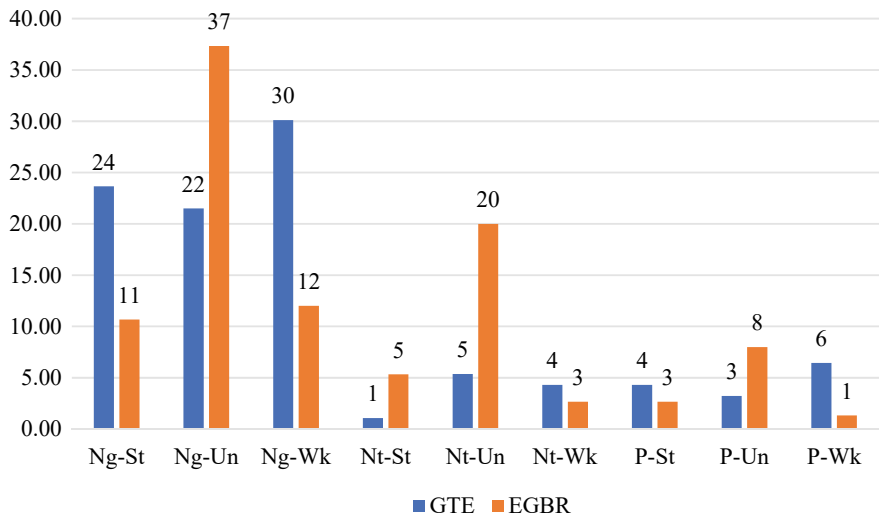
TT: 渐入佳境

jiàn rù jiā jìng

gradually enter good situation

Figure 2.4 shows the percentages of evaluative graduation in GTE and EGBR. In general, GTE displays a more mixed pattern regarding negative propositions, while EGBR attempts to keep its negativity unchanged. Moreover, EGBR strengthens or retains its neutral stance more often than GTE (25% versus 6%). These differences are statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 28.729$ ,  $df = 8$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ) with a moderate effect size ( $V = 0.414$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ) as shown in Table 2.8.

Most news headlines in the EGBR dataset are comments on the COVID-19 pandemic except Example (11) which mentions China. Nevertheless, GTE has direct comments on China and the US, and the corresponding frequency of evaluative graduation is plotted in Fig. 2.5. Overall, GTE holds a pro-China (18%) and anti-US stance (82%), and both stances have a strong propensity to be weakened in the TT (9% of P-Wk towards China and 33% of Ng-Wk towards the US). GTE’s evaluative graduation towards China and the US is diametrically opposite as shown in Table 2.9 ( $\chi^2 = 66.000$ ,  $df = 5$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ) with a strong effect size ( $V = 1.000$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ). Example (12), (13) and (14) illustrate GTE’s anti-US stance.



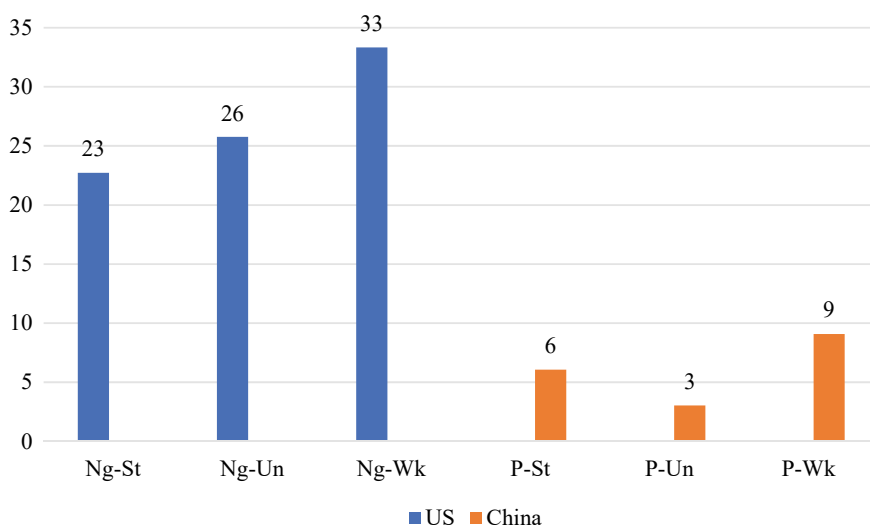
**Fig. 2.4** Frequency count of graduation in GTE and EGBR (Unit: %)

**Table 2.8** Chi-Square test of independence between evaluative graduation and new outlets

	Value	<i>df</i>	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.729 <sup>a</sup>	8	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	29.941	8	0.000
Cramér's V	0.414		0.000
N of Valid Cases	168		

<sup>a</sup>10 cells (55.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.23

The significance level is set at 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), which means that the study allows at most 5% chance of making the wrong decision when the null hypothesis is true. Hence, the results are significant when  $\alpha < 0.05$

**Fig. 2.5** Frequency count of evaluative graduation towards China and the US in GTE (Unit: %)**Table 2.9** Chi-Square test of independence between evaluative graduation and countries in GTE

	Value	<i>df</i>	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	66.000 <sup>a</sup>	5	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	62.586	5	0.000
Cramér's V	1.000		0.000
N of Valid Cases	66		

<sup>a</sup>9 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.36

The significance level is set at 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), which means that the study allows at most 5% chance of making the wrong decision when the null hypothesis is true. Hence, the results are significant when  $\alpha < 0.05$



(11) (Ng-Un towards China)

ST: Still **made** in China (EGBR, April 2020)

TT: 仍是中国制造

réng shì zhōngguó zhìzào

still is China manufacture

(12) (Ng-Wk towards the US)

ST: 甩锅第二集: 华盛顿撕咬世卫

shuǎi guō dì'èr jí: huáshèngdùn sīyǎo shìwèi

throw pot second episode: Washington worry WHO

TT: Washington makes WHO a **scapegoat** (GTE, April 8, 2020)

(13) (Ng-St towards the US)

ST: 新发现越来越多, 看华盛顿如何演下去

xīn fāxiàn yuèláiyuèduō, kàn huáshèngdùn rúhé yǎn xiàqù

new discovery more and more, look Washington how act down

TT: Washington's **plot** hard to sustain with new virus discoveries (GTE, May 7, 2020)

(14) (Ng-Un towards the US)

ST: 和平的中国和好斗的美国, 谁才像纳粹

héping de zhōngguó hé hǎodòu de měiguó, shuí cái xiàng nàcuì

peace AUX China and belligerence AUX US, who just like Nazi

TT: Who's like **Nazi** Germany: peace-loving China or **belligerent** US? (GTE, June 7, 2020)

## 2.6 Discussion

The previous analyses show that GTE and EGBR differ significantly in terms of the adopted source domains for the target domain “COVID-19”, framing strategies and the evaluative graduation towards the pandemic and the parties at stake. By and large, GTE reframes its pro-China and anti-US/West stance in a more considerable measure than EGBR's reframing of its anti-China stance. According to Wu (2018), factors in reframing may include institutional protocols, sociocultural values and beliefs, and linguistic differences. GTE and EGBR as institutions with competing ideologies need to reframe their stance in the target culture to cater for the readers' needs or

to conform to the target norms. Nevertheless, it is not the factors of reframing that the current study aims to highlight but the non-political context of stance mediation in news reports and the significance of metaphor as a frame for stance mediation investigation.

### ***2.6.1 Stance Mediation in News Translation Beyond Political Reports***

Stance mediation in political reports has been well documented in the contexts of South China Sea disputes (Wu and Zhang 2015), China-Japan disputes (Wu 2018), Tibet riots (Pan and Liao 2020), etc. These topics, which involve political and economic conflicts, usually provide a fertile ground for stance research, as such political and economic events take news outlets' contrasting ideologies to extremes. Nonetheless, such stance mediations can also find evidence in reports of non-political events as in this case.

To date, the ideological mediation in reports on healthcare matters has not received due attention, a situation which needs to be rectified. In the first place, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is a universal challenge that affects people's daily life on the globe. However, news media or agencies all over the world join the battle of blaming, giving new names to the virus, e.g., "China virus", "Wuhan virus" or "Kung flu" in the West (Budhwani and Sun 2020) and "American poisoning", or "United States biological weapon" in China ("COVID-19 misinformation" 2020). In the second place, translation plays a vital role in reframing the COVID-19-related narratives and the corresponding stance mediation. Invisible as it is, translation, *ipso facto*, is the major actor in the making of international politics, not only in translating political discourse (Zanettin 2016), but in translating news matters (Bielsa and Bassnett 2008). Such a reframing practice happens within the news outlets as GTE and EGBR practice self-translation for target readers, which corroborates Qin and Zhang's (2018) claim for more studies on the stance mediation of news agencies sharing the same ideology.

### ***2.6.2 Metaphor as a Frame in Stance Mediation***

The current study illustrates that metaphor can act as a frame in stancetaking and translation of such frames affects the way of understanding world events. In other words, the study associates news translation with framing. Admittedly, Liu (2015) proposed a *transframing* model to represent the close-knit relationship between framing and news translation studies. Although she analyses story tones, types, sensitivity and the corresponding transframing devices and strategies, metaphor is not a

focus of her study. In Pan and Huang's (2021) study on (re)framing and stance mediation in the translation, their findings are limited in terms of the text type (i.e., political speeches), methodology (i.e., case study), theoretical framework (i.e., Appraisal Theory) and metaphor types (i.e., linguistic metaphors). The current study can further enrich their research findings by including conceptual metaphors and non-political texts into the analysis.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This study has drawn upon the corpus model, framing model and the AT model to investigate how GTE and EGBR use metaphors to (re)frame the era of the COVID-19 pandemic for their Chinese and English readers. The source domains used to describe the target domain "COVID-19", framing strategies and evaluative graduation in GTE and EGBR are significantly different with a moderate to high effect size. Both news agencies have acknowledged the pandemic's destructive influence. Nevertheless, GTE portrays the US as a culprit, while EGBR presents China as a reprobate. Overall, GTE takes a pro-China and anti-US/West stance which is prone to be weakened in the target English text, whereas EGBR retains its anti-China stance in the target Chinese text. The current study highlights the existence of stance mediation in non-political reports within news agencies that practice self-translation of news reports. Most importantly, by exemplifying how metaphor can serve as a frame in stance establishment and mediation with a systematic analytical model, the current study contributes to framing studies, journalistic translation studies and metaphor translation studies.

## References

- Ahrens, K., and M. Jiang. 2020. Source domain verification using corpus-based tools. *Metaphor and Symbol* 35 (1): 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2020.1712783>.
- Baker, M. 2006. *Translation and conflict: A narrative account*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Baker, M. 2007. Reframing conflict in translation. *Social Semiotics* 17 (2): 151–169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330701311454>.
- Bazzi, S. 2014. Foreign metaphors and Arabic translation: An empirical study in journalistic translation practice. *Journal of Language and Politics* 13 (1): 120–151. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.13.1.06baz>.
- Bielsa, E., and S. Bassnett. 2008. *Translation in global news*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Boulanger, P.P. 2016. When the media translate the crisis: The metaphor used by the mainstream press during the subprimes crisis. *Meta* 61: 144–162.
- Brady, A.M. 2015. Authoritarianism goes global (II): China's foreign propaganda machine. *Journal of Democracy* 26 (4): 51–59. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2015.0056>.
- Budhwani, H., and R. Sun. 2020. Creating COVID-19 stigma by referencing the Novel Coronavirus as the "Chinese virus" on Twitter: Quantitative analysis of social media data. *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 22 (5): e19301. <https://doi.org/10.2196/19301>.

- Charteris-Black, J. 2004. *Corpus approaches to critical metaphor analysis*. New York: Springer.
- COVID-19 misinformation. 2020. *Wikipedia*. Last modified 23 May 2020. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19\\_misinformation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_misinformation).
- Deignan, A. 1999. Linguistic metaphors and collocation in nonliterary corpus data. *Metaphor and Symbol* 14 (1): 19–36. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327868ms1401\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327868ms1401_3).
- Deignan, A. 2005. *Metaphor and corpus linguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Dionne, K., and F.F. Turkmen. 2020. The politics of pandemic othering: Putting COVID-19 in global and historical context. *International Organization* 74 (S1): E213–E230. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818320000405>.
- Englebretson, R. 2007. Stancetaking in discourse: An introduction. In *Stancetaking in discourse: Subjectivity, evaluation, interaction*, ed. R. Englebretson, 1–26. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Entman, R. 1991. Framing US coverage of international news: Contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran Air incidents. *Journal of Communication* 41 (4): 6–27. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1991.tb02328.x>.
- Horwitz, J. 2016. The Economist’s website is now censored in China—and all it took was one satirical cover. *Quartz*, April 7. <https://qz.com/655995/the-economists-website-is-now-censored-in-china-and-all-it-took-was-one-satirical-cover/>. Accessed 12 Mar 2021.
- Kövecses, Z. 2020. *Extended conceptual metaphor theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G., and M. Johnson. 2008. *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Liu, N.X. 2015. *Transframing: A new paradigm of news framing through translation*. PhD diss.: University of Nottingham.
- Liu, N.X. 2017. Same perspective, different effect: Framing the economy through financial news translation. *Perspectives* 25 (3): 452–463. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2017.1287203>.
- Liu, Y., and D. Li. 2022a. The US-China battle over Coronavirus in the news media: Metaphor transfer as a representation of stance mediation. *Discourse & Society* 33 (4): 456–477. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265221088122>.
- Liu, Y., and D. Li. 2022b. Multimodal metaphor (re)framing: A critical analysis of the promotional image of China’s Hubei Province in the post-pandemic era on new media. *Social Semiotics*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2022.2094233>.
- Mannoni, M. 2021. A corpus-based approach to the translation of conceptual metaphors in legal language: Chinese Yuān (冤) and English ‘Injustice’, ‘Wrong’ and ‘Tort.’ *Perspectives* 29 (2): 199–216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2020.1797132>.
- Martin, J.R., and P.R. White. 2005. *The language of evaluation*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- McLaughlin, M.L. 2015. News translation past and present: Silent witness and invisible intruder. *Perspectives* 23 (4): 552–569. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2015.1015578>.
- Molter, V., and R. DiResta. 2020. Pandemics and propaganda: How Chinese state media creates and propagates CCP coronavirus narratives. *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review* 1 (3). <https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-025>.
- Newmark, P. 1988. *A textbook of translation*. Harlow: Longman.
- O’Halloran, K. 2010. Investigating metaphor and ideology in hard news stories. In *Introducing applied linguistics: Concepts and skills*, ed. S. Hunston and D. Oakey, 97–107. London and New York: Routledge.
- Olza, I., P. Pérez-Sobrino, and V. Koller. 2020. #ReframeCovid. <https://sites.google.com/view/reframecovid/initiative?authuser=0>.
- Pan, L., and C. Huang. 2021. Stance mediation in media translation of political speeches: An analytical model of appraisal and framing in news discourse. In *Advances in discourse analysis of translation and interpreting*, ed. B. Wang and J. Munday, 131–149. London and New York: Routledge.
- Pan, L., and S. Liao. 2020. News translation of reported conflicts: A corpus-based account of positioning. *Perspectives* 29 (5): 722–739. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2020.1792519>.
- Pedersen, J. 2017. How metaphors are rendered in subtitles. *Target* 29 (3): 416–439.

- Pragglejaz Group. 2007. MIP: A method for identifying metaphorically used words in discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol* 22 (1): 1–39.
- Qin, B., and M. Zhang. 2018. Reframing translated news for target readers: A narrative account of news translation in Snowden's discourses. *Perspectives* 26 (2): 261–276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2017.1377265>.
- Ruwitch, J., and M. Kelemen. 2020. Trump administration labels 4 more Chinese news outlets 'foreign missions'. *NPR*, 22 June. <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/22/881755421/trump-administration-labels-4-more-chinese-news-outlets-foreign-missions>. Accessed 12 Mar 2021.
- Schäffner, C., and M. Shuttleworth. 2013. Metaphor in translation: Possibilities for process research. *Target* 25 (1): 93–106. <https://doi.org/10.1075/target.25.1.08shu>.
- Shuttleworth, M. 2017. *Studying scientific metaphor in translation*. Oxford: Taylor and Francis.
- Sjørup, A. C. 2013. Cognitive effort in metaphor translation: An eye-tracking and key-logging study. PhD dissertation, LIMAC PhD School.
- Spiesens, A., and P. Van Poucke. 2016. Translating news discourse on the Crimean crisis: Patterns of reframing on the Russian website InoSMI. *The Translator* 22 (3): 319–339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2016.1180570>.
- Steen, G., A.G. Dorst, B. Herrmann, A.A. Kaal, T. Krennmayr, and T. Pasma. 2010. *A method for linguistic metaphor identification: From MIP to MIPVU*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Stefanowitsch, A., and S.T. Gries. 2007. *Corpus-based approaches to metaphor and metonymy*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Sun, Y. 2017. A tracing into metaphor translation studies abroad during the past four decades (1976–2015). *Foreign Language Learning Theory and Practice* 3: 80–90.
- Toury, G. 2012. *Descriptive translation studies and beyond*. Revised. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Valdeón, R.A. 2008. Anomalous news translation: Selective appropriation of themes and texts in the internet. *Babel* 54 (4): 299–326. <https://doi.org/10.1075/babel.54.4.01val>.
- Valdeón, R.A. 2015a. Fifteen years of journalistic translation research and more. *Perspectives* 23 (4): 634–662. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2015.1057187>.
- Valdeón, R.A. 2015b. (Un)stable sources, translation and news production. *Target* 27 (3): 440–453. <https://doi.org/10.1075/target.27.3.07val>.
- Valdeón, R.A. 2016. The construction of national images through news translation. In *Interconnecting translation studies and imagology*, ed. L. van Doorslaer, P. Flynn, and J. Leerssen, 219–237. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Valdeón, R.A. 2020. Journalistic translation research goes global: Theoretical and methodological considerations five years on. *Perspectives* 28 (3): 325–338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2020.1723273>.
- Valdeón, R. A., and C. Calafat. 2020. Introduction: The politics of translation and the translation of politics. *Translation and Interpreting* 12 (2): 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.12807/ti.11222.2020.a01>.
- van den Broeck, R. 1981. The limits of translatability exemplified by metaphor translation. *Poetics Today* 2 (4): 73–87.
- Van Poucke, P., and A. Belikova. 2016. Foreignization in news translation: Metaphors in Russian translation on the news translation website InoSMI. *Meta* 61 (2): 346–368. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1037763ar>.
- White, P.R. 2015. Appraisal theory. In *The international encyclopedia of language and social interaction*, ed. K. Tracy, 1–7. New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell.
- Wu, G., and H. Zhang. 2015. Translating political ideology: A case study of the Chinese translations of the English news headlines concerning South China Sea disputes on the website of www.ftchinese.com. *Babel* 61 (3): 394–410. <https://doi.org/10.1075/babel.61.3.05gua>.
- Wu, X. 2018. Framing, reframing and the transformation of stance in news translation: A case study of the translation of news on the China-Japan dispute. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 18 (2): 257–274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2017.1304951>.

- Zanettin, F. 2016. 'The deadliest error': Translation, international relations and the news media. *The Translator* 22 (3): 303–318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2016.1149754>.
- Zhang, H. 2014. ICTCLAS-NLPIR. V. 2.1. <http://ictclas.nlpir.org>.
- Zhang, M. 2013. Stance and mediation in transediting news headlines as paratexts. *Perspectives* 21 (3): 396–411. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2012.691101>.