

Current Discourse Space in Sino-American Economic News on “The Belt and Road”

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Abstract

To unveil the covert relation between cognitive perceptions and language use, and to probe into the cognitive mechanism revealed by news discourses, the authors set out to analyze the economic news semantically and textually, in an attempt to grasp a preliminary picture of different cognitive patterns of the Chinese and Americans on “The Belt and Road” (B&R), drawing insights on how people from different cultural backgrounds interpret B&R and its promotion, based on the current discourse space (CDS) analysis. The findings show that the variation of CDS frame applied in both Chinese and American news reports exists in dynamic linguistic representations, which sheds light on the substantial roles that mass media plays in affecting news readers’ perceiving manners or cognitive patterns. The authors emphatically claim that the promotion of B&R still has a long way to go until it reaches the highland of positive and objective social cognitive perceptions embedded in people from various backgrounds. This research provides evidences to identify interdependencies between particular CDS models that allow inferences about the CDS frames of a certain situation evoked by the news agencies and their discourse writers from different cultural backgrounds and from different political stances.

Key words: CDS frame; cognitive pattern; Current discourse space; Sino-American economic news reports; The Belt and Road

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INTRODUCTION

The Belt and Road (B&R) was firstly proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to Central and Southeast Asia, and then officially announced on March 28 2015 with a formally outlined framework by China National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce. Ever since its debut on the global stage, B&R has triggered hot discussions within China, sparking fierce and various interpretations outside the nation. Similarly, the former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced the “New Silk Road” in 2011 which overlaps with the initiative of B&R and demands further discussion and cooperation from both China and the US on the overlapping regions. The complicated relation between China and the US has long been the key issue in balancing the world. Any changes proposed by either China or the US will impose great influences on both themselves and other countries, which presents diverse perceptions in their public propaganda discourses.

To unveil the covert relation between cognitive perceptions and language use, and to probe into the cognitive mechanism revealed by news discourses, the authors set out to analyze the economic news semantically and textually, in an attempt to grasp a preliminary picture of different cognitive patterns of the Chinese and Americans, so as to illustrate how people from different

cultural backgrounds interpret B&R and its promotion in medias, based on the current discourse space (CDS) analysis. The focused attention on cognitive linguistics rests on its core epistemological idea of experientialism, highlighting the bodily and spatial experience in the course of human social activities under certain cultural settings, which provides fruitful anchor points for the combination of cognitive linguistics and cross-cultural media studies.

1. NEWS DISCOURSE AND COGNITIVE CDS

1.1 News Discourse Studies

Being a practical genre of media discourse, news discourse has attracted great attention and discussion from scholars internationally, who have promoted various definitions over news discourse. Applegate (2011, p.47), from the point of journalism, claims that "news is usually defined as information that is timely, relevant to the concerns of its audience, and presented in a form that is easy to grasp", while van Dijk (1998), defining it from the perspective of social context, illustrates that news discourse is the main source of human knowledge, attitudes and ideologies. Sharing with the similar concept, Fowler (1991) describes news discourse as a social practice and product that discourse reporters produce based on the news topics they choose to reflect their newsworthiness criteria.

Current news discourses analysis is mainly conducted from sociolinguistic perspectives, such as content analysis, systemic functional linguistics (SFL), and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Defined by Kerlinger (1986), content analysis is a systematic, objective, and quantitative method in the course of message analysis. Its direct concentration on communication by means of texts and transcripts enables the researchers to get a grasp on central aspects of social interaction, hence, providing valuable cultural or social insights. Therefore, the word "content" goes beyond the box of text itself, but also covers the meanings inferred by the different cultural and social factors. Echoing with the concept, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) categorize content analysis into two groups: behaviorist tradition and humanist tradition. The former, focusing on potential future effects caused by the content, is usually adopted by social scientists, while the latter, residing in the social and cultural environments which breed the content, is generally utilized by humanists. As the emergence of computer technology pushes content analysis to a higher place, more linguists prefer adopting computer-aided content analysis method to conduct research on semantics and syntax, which produces multiple combinations of content analysis with discourse studies, multimodal transcription, and multimodal discourse research. This research orientation is employed

to unearth the fields of mental models and their linguistic, cognitive, cultural and social importance, playing an indispensable role in lubricating the process of artificial intelligence advancement.

Under the frame of SFL, the essence of news discourse analysis functions in two aspects: to explain the discourse and to evaluate the discourse. The former explains how and why discourse could express its meaning to readers, while the latter one emphasizes whether or not the discourse reaches its aim. Guided by the above doctrine, SFL discourse analysis usually works in the following three steps: analyzing the lexical words and grammar; evaluating their features under certain situational or cultural contexts, and further analyzing the whole discourse combined with other social considerations, such as Huang (2001, 2002). As another popular approach to news discourse study is CDA which comes from critical linguistics during the 1970s. The leading figures, Fowler, et al. (1979), reveal that CDA concentrates on the inequality in society and the ways in which texts are organized to incarnate power and other ideologies. In CDA, it focuses on the relations of language with its social and historical considerations. Its goal is to denaturalize ideologies and to analyze "opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" (Wodak, 1995, p.204). According to Van Dijk (2008), ever since its debut in 1979, the popularity of CDA has engulfed the areas of linguistics and social science with numerous research fruits. Scholars of CDA are committed in investigating how social relations are built up and realized through news discourse. Also, they argue that when discourse tries to construct social realities, it is individuals' minds that exert effects on people and then shapes their actions (Liu, 2012). Nevertheless, the vacancy in both CDA and SFL covering the hottest business and economic issues leaves the two research orientations with a limitation of incomprehensiveness, which demands a holistic view of researchers when choosing the appropriate research angle, as well as acute insight into the hidden ideology or cognition behind the language.

1.2 Cognitive Linguistic Studies

Many cognitive linguists have set foot on the exploitation and advancement of cognitive linguistics all over the world, among which Lakoff & Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1987), Johnson (1987), Langacker (1987), and Talmy (1988) are named as the "fathers of cognitive linguistics", who have laid a solid foundation for related cognitive linguistics studies, followed by Croft and Cruse (2004) who have actively participated in the noble cause of blazing new areas for further studies on cognitive linguistics. In the midst of fruitful studies, a brand new cognitive linguistics diagram appears, that is, cognitive contrastive linguistics, or contrastive research on cognitive linguistics. In essence, it centers on the

comparative or contrastive discussions about varied languages from the perspective of cognition. Based on the differed research emphases and methods, the authors can classify current cognitive study into two linguistics levels: semantic and textual. Some linguists devoted to semantic research within the field of cognitive contrastive linguistics focus on the metaphorical and metonymical comparisons between different language systems, while other linguists are engaged in textual analysis of cognitive linguistics, who touch upon the discursal issues, such as the discourse coherence mechanism. Among the studies, conceptualization, one of the tenets in cognitive linguistics, gets embodied in semantic research into the connection between language signifiers and their denotations. Metaphor and metonymy, as the inter-linkages associating lexical notions with virtual sense units, become the eye-catchers among cognitive academia and top the related exploring works. Contrastive studies from the perspectives of metaphor and metonymy probe into the generality and disparity of social cognition revealed by languages and cultures, offering insightful perceptions about the cognitive map built inside human brains, coupled with close bond with linguistics. Observing the epistemological concept of experientialism, bodily and spatial experience interacting with the outside world, social men are inclined to employ the device of metaphor to assist their processes of perceiving the world. Metaphor functions as it maps different entities with different cognitive domains flagged by words, phrases and symbols in languages, then helping people comprehend new phenomena or objects based on known information.

The semantic studies on cognitive contrastive linguistics (Dirven et al., 2012; Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Mashak et al., 2012) have obtained great achievements concerning metaphorical and metonymical analyses, yet still there are gaps to be bridged. Firstly, most scholars are excessively concerned about the semantic explanations of words or phrases instead of their cognitive conceptual representations, which deviates the dynamic mapping principle of metaphor and metonymy. Secondly, most contrastive research within the field fails to touch upon the epistemological or ideological reasons behind the semantic similarity and disparity. Therefore, the authors delve into the complicated social cognitive perceptions by means of comparing the animated representations of cognitive map during the process of interpreting social issues among the Chinese and Americans on commonality and disparity of social cognitive perceptions at a somewhat new cognitive theoretical level: current discourse space.

1.3 Current Discourse Space

Proposed by Langacker (2001), current discourse space (CDS) revolves around discourse from the standpoint of cognitive grammar with dynamic analytical patterns. According to him, there is an inner and close bond between discourse and linguistic structures (also named as

CDS instruction), where a linguistic unit is abstracted out from “usage event”. Each instruction involves attention focusing within a viewing frame. A discourse consists of a succession of frames each representing the scene being viewed and acted upon by the speaker and hearer at a given instant. Langacker (2001) divides CDS frames into three: *minus frame*, *zero frame or focus frame*, and *plus frame*. Each corresponds with the information stored or processed in our minds during our interaction and communication. The minus frame is clarified as the information unknown and unshared by both speakers and hearers. The information in the minus frame is the starting point of a discourse. The heavy lined frame is the focus frame, or zero frame, which is the frame currently being acted on. Information in this frame is under machining and renewing, with the help of our cognitive minds, social experience, physical interactions, and cultural knowledge. The last frame in this sequence is the plus frame, where the previously unknown information has been transformed into the known information acknowledged by both discourse participants. Then the information in the plus frame would be stored in our cognitive perceptions, having much influence on our way of perceiving the world around.

The updating of CDS frames is based on every clause, which is chosen as the typical unit of a viewing frame. With the progressing of discourses, language would continuously update CDS. During the updating, each clause provides certain unknown information, which facilitates the process of constructing and integrating a more complete cognitive world. Therefore, we could not purely rely on identifying the formal connection between words in discourses, but should emphasize the employment of basic cognitive methods, such as cognitive world, salience and relevance, to dynamically analyze the interactive modes between the mind and discourse.

“CDS comprised everything presumed to be shared by the speaker and hearer as the basis for communication at a given moment. Part of the CDS, of course, was the current discourse itself, including both previous usage event and any that might be anticipated. Also part of the CDS was other mutually evident aspects of the transient context, as well as any stable knowledge required for their apprehension or otherwise invoked. All of these may figure in an expression’s full contextual understanding and in those portions that constitute its linguistic meaning (Langacker, 2008, p.457)”

A key factor of establishing the linguistic meaning in CDS frame is the communication between the speaker and hearer, both of whom actively evaluate the others’ knowledge and intentions. Since the hearer interprets the meaning conveyed to him/her by the speaking entity, the proper understanding of a linguistic expression requires the hearer to actively participate in the ongoing discourse as well as to put mental efforts in perceiving the actual meaning of this expression. As a result, the information involved in the message conveyed to him/

her by the speaker must be confronted with his/her vast repository of encyclopedic knowledge (Langacker, 2008). Simultaneously, context in all dimensions as well as discourse context (previous usage event and anticipation related) helps to construct the conceptualization arising in the speakers’ mind, eventually enabling the hearer to grasp the meaning of related expressions.

Nevertheless, limited academic effort has been spared to the area of CDS, among which most studies center on introducing this theory into discourse analysis or embarking on the feasibility of CDS integrated with other linguistics theories, such as He (2009) who articulates the theory of CDS with in-depth identification to unfold the rolls of CDS contributed by Langacker (2001), equipping discourse learners and researchers with a cognitive stance. Other linguists have shifted their academic attention to the novel incorporation of CDS and other linguistics or cognitive linguistics theories, envisioning to adding vitality and freshness into the cognitive discourse studies. Patent combination has been found between CDS and the theory of frame by Gao (2009) who incorporates the static analysis of frame and dynamic analysis of CDS to display the activation process of information salience and successive usage events updates. The framing mechanism based on linear words foregrounding, and the cognitive grammatical principle in discourse coherence on the strength of hierarchical clauses or viewing frames circulation, testifies the feasibility of discourse in building up a unified cognitive model on mind. The feasible analysis on CDS is also combined with blending theory and conceptual integration theory proposed by Augustyn (2013), who takes a closer look into the noun-verb alterations, upholding that novel expressions coded and in accord with human cognitive experience in the outside world. The novel expressions’ meanings arise after the conceptual blending of meaning potentials are contained by linguistic utterances during speaker-hearer interaction, which relies on the encyclopedic knowledge involving the cognizing entities’ subjective experience under certain contexts, especially the information under machining and renewing in the focus frame or CDS.

2. DATA AND RESEARCH METHOD

The data to be processed and analyzed in this research is retrieved from the authentic news database of LexisNexis Academic and Dow Jones Factiva, and is obtained with the multiple advanced searches, by scouring key words, such as: the belt and road, B&R, silk road, economic belt, together with the screening items-economic or business news and time restriction - dated from March 13, 2015 to May 15, 2017. Among all the news, the authors randomly choose 30 pieces of news respectively from Sino-American newspapers listed in Table 1 (detailed news items see appendix). The reason why the authors collect news reported during that time range is that the time span

covers the course of its being proposed and implemented, including the emerging and flourishing points, marked by the international summit forum on B&R in Beijing on May 15, 2017, and witnesses the various evolving processes of the B&R Initiative, both trivial and huge progress.

Table 1
Data From Chinese and American News Reports

Country	Publication	Number of article
China	China Daily	12
	People’s Daily	10
	Global Times	8
	Total	30
The US	The New York Times	9
	The Wall Street Journal	9
	Los Angeles Times	5
	The Washington Times	4
	Barron’s	3
	Total	30

The data includes areas of finance, business, legislation, medical science and politics from public news agencies. Sixty pieces of English news reports concerning the topic of B&R are obtained from Sino-American newspapers. Chinese data is sourced from English newspapers in China: China Daily, People’s Daily, and Global Times, three influential state English media in China, while the resource of American economic news on the issue were selected from five major newspapers in the US: The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Times and Barron’s.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are applied in this study. Having identified the linguistic realizations in the CDS frame, the authors initially conduct quantitative analysis with an aim of observing phenomena through mathematical, statistical or computational variables (Given, 2008), which is conducted to answer the questions of “how much”, “how many”, “to what extent”, “how often” and so on. Measurement of frequency or percentage helps the authors to identify the similarities and differences existed in the two varied cultures of the Chinese and Americans. Then, qualitative analysis is employed on the purpose of examining the questions of why and how in a phenomenon or a decision making process, which offers an insightful perception of social behaviors and provides an in-depth interpretation of the cognitive behaviors, thoughts, and perceptions of social members from a holistic perspective. It, therefore, supplies not only a description of what has happened, but also an observation of various phenomena based on social and cultural contexts, which throws light on its significance in cross-cultural and social cognitive studies.

As for the analytical procedure, the authors classify the news into several categories based on three different perspectives: attitudes, foci and aspects, which are

analyzed under the framework of CDS. During the analysis of each category, the cognitive perceptions hidden behind the news discourses will be analyzed and interpreted.

3. THE CDS FRAME IN SINO-AMERICAN ECONOMIC NEWS ON B&R

Having examined the overt language and covert cognitive perceptions presented in the Sino-American economic news on B&R, the authors analyze the process of minus

frame, focus frame, to plus frame, which together compose the procedures of human cognitive perceptions.

3.1 CDS Analysis on Chinese B&R Economic News

From the economic, political, and global visions, the authors classify the Chinese B&R economic news discourses into three main categories: construing a community of shared interests, of shared responsibility, and of shared destiny, which echoes with the tenet of three themes: shared interests, shared responsibility and shared destiny as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
CDS Categories in Chinese Data

Vision	Economic	Political	Global
	Shared interests	Shared responsibility	Shared destiny
Occurrence	14	10	6
Percentage	46.7%	33.3%	20%

(a) A Community of Shared Interests

Projects of infrastructure and transport cooperation proposed in B&R underscore its core concepts of openness and inclusiveness, which point to sharing economic growth, that is, to build up a community of

shared interests. Here are two examples (Example 1 and 2) of Chinese news on B&R, revealed China's call for community of shared interests, illustrating specific CDS frames.

Example 1

Belt and Road' initiative points to brighter globalization

First of all, the markets of Asia, Europe and Africa will be integrated into a community of common interest thanks to the initiative.

As the marginal effect generated from globalization has lessened, the world economy has come to need a new growth engine. The connectivity created by the initiative will present Asia with new growth opportunities.

By helping with the infrastructure projects of countries along the "Belt and Road" route, China will further open itself to the world and accelerate its development as well. What's more, China has been making efforts to internationalize the RMB and transform its economic growth towards a focus on higher quality and more inclusiveness.

As all countries live on the same planet, none can survive like an isolated Robinson Crusoe. China-Europe cooperation will bring the latter economic growth and job opportunities, while Europe, Asia and Africa will turn into a community of shared interests.

(Source: People's Daily, October 25, 2016)

Beginning with an assertion of integrating Asia, Europe and Africa into a common community of interests on the basis of B&R, this news discourse evolves from stating the necessity of construing the infrastructure connectivity under the call for a new growth engine, to reiterating China's openness and inclusiveness contained

in the initiative, and eventually to reinforce the concept of establishing a community of shared interests given the interrelated connection among all living entities. The dynamic progression of each discursive clause or usage event could be sketched as Figure 1.

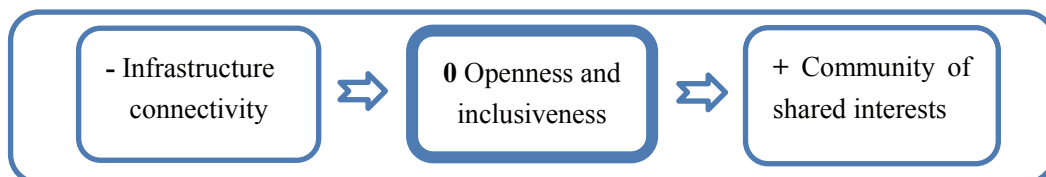


Figure 1
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 1

Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame)

Example 2

China signs over 130 transport pacts with Belt and Road countries

China has signed more than 130 bilateral and regional transport agreements with countries involved in the Belt and Road, the Ministry of Transport said Thursday.....

“Transportation connectivity is the founding priority of the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative,” Wu said.

China plans cooperation in transport planning and standards, construction of land and sea routes, and improved international transport conditions, the spokesman said.

Proposed by China in 2013, the Belt and Road is a transnational network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa, promoting common development among all countries involved.

(Source: People’s Daily, April 21, 2017)

In Example 2, news discursational frames update from the disclosure of a fact that China has signed plentiful bilateral and regional transport agreements with countries alongside the routes, which manifests the essential role of transportation connectivity in executing B&R, to the proposal of China’s cooperative attitude and stance in infrastructure construction policies, and to the promotion

of the core idea of mutual and common development, which presupposes the notion of shared interests. Considering the cognitive declaration, especially grounded on cognitive grammar, that the cognitive process maps onto the discourse progressions, the authors schematize the discursational proceedings into Figure 2.

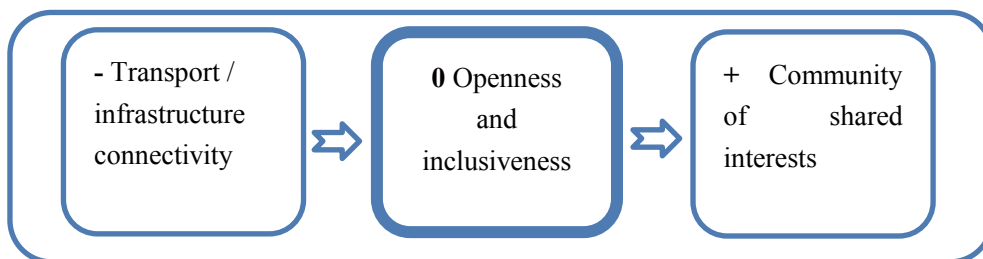


Figure 2
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 2
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

(b) A Community of Shared Responsibility

Connectivity of trade, infrastructure, finance, and people-to-people in B&R indicates China’s devotion to peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, and mutual benefit, who bears crucial roles in B&R promotion

and implementation. The underlying and covert cognitive perception in driving those perceptions rests on China’s endeavor of B&R economic promotion, shouldering of the international responsibility, and constructing a community of shared responsibility as well.

Example 3

Belt and Road Initiative seeks world economic rebalancing, inclusive globalization

Industrial capacity cooperation has become a significant part of the Belt and Road Initiative and will serve as a crucial element of the global economic rebalancing as well as the extension of globalization towards its “land subsidence.”

However, such criticism is a total neglect of the “double circulation,” a trend of the world economy brought up by Chinese scholars, namely, the “developed economies-China” circulation and “the China-developing economies” circulation.

The complementation between the two sides, creating new demand by enhancing effective supply, is certainly contributing to rebalancing the world economy..... Most of the Belt and Road countries have been stuck in the “land subsidence” of globalization deep within the Eurasia continent, left forgotten and far behind in the course of economic globalization which has been flourishing along the ocean lanes across the world. Nevertheless, things are about to change now. Economic ties between China and developing countries are growing increasingly stronger and closer, which is beneficial to the further development of economic globalization..... It is clear that by pushing forward the Belt and Road Initiative, China is seeking rebalance of the global economy, underlining “inclusive globalization” instead of “fragmented globalization” that used to prevail.

(Source: China Daily, December 20, 2016)

In Example 3, the starting point of this discourse resides in the claim of the significant position that the industrial capacity cooperation has taken place in B&R, referring to the trade connections and consociation. The eye-catching and highlighted CDS frame embedded on the clarification toward the accusation that B&R is formed on China's dumping its own redundant industrial capacity to countries alongside the road, through the notion of "double circulation", concerning the mutual exchange from "developed economies to China" and "China to developing economies", in short, the conception of mutual benefit. The anticipated frame based on the previous two

events lies in the prospect of engaged countries, especially those being neglected and left behind in terms of economic globalization, to jointly participate in economic activities and help to build the blueprint of contribution to the rebalancing of the global economy, which implies the international responsibility shouldered by China and its endeavor in building up a community of shared responsibility. The grand expectation of constructing a shared responsibility community is then stored in readers' cognition, exerting much influence on the ways that we perceive the outside world. Its cognitive frame of CDS is shown in Figure 3.

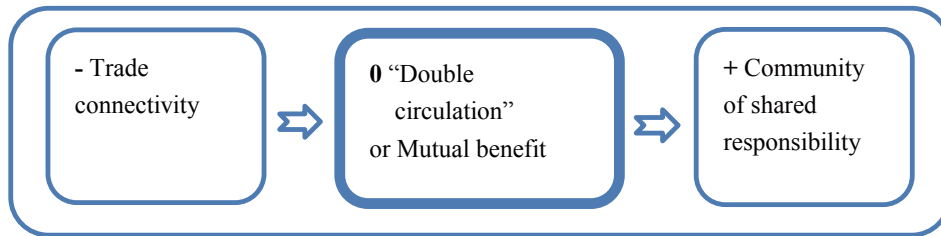


Figure 3
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 3
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame)

Example 4

China, Switzerland agree to boost ties, oppose protectionism

Xi extended appreciation to the Swiss side over its participation in the founding of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and its support for the Belt and Road Initiative, which is aimed at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes....The president proposed that the two countries enhance cooperation and exchanges in a wide range of areas, including politics, trade, finance, digitalization, intelligent manufacturing, industrial capacity, culture and education.

China and Switzerland hold the same or similar position on opposing trade protectionism and settling international disputes in a peaceful manner, according to the leaders of both countries.

Leuthard echoed Xi's remarks by saying that the Swiss side is willing to make joint efforts with China to maintain world peace and stability, safeguard an open global trade, and oppose protectionism in trade and investment.

(Source: People's Daily, January 17, 2017)

The succession of viewing frames in this news discourse moves from the proposed trade and infrastructure connectivity in the B&R initiative and Swiss president's acknowledgement of politics, trade, finance, technology, culture and education cooperation in B&R, to the gripping issue of protectionism and the joint force between China and Switzerland on tackling the problem in a peaceful manner, and to the great undertaking of China

and B&R's contribution to opposing trade and investment protectionism, with a more ambitious attempt to maintain global peace and stability. That is, the discursal frames flagging the cognitive perception evolve from infrastructure, trade, finance and culture or people-to-people connectivity, to the spirit of peace and cooperation, and to opposing protectionism and sharing national and international obligation, represented in Figure 4.

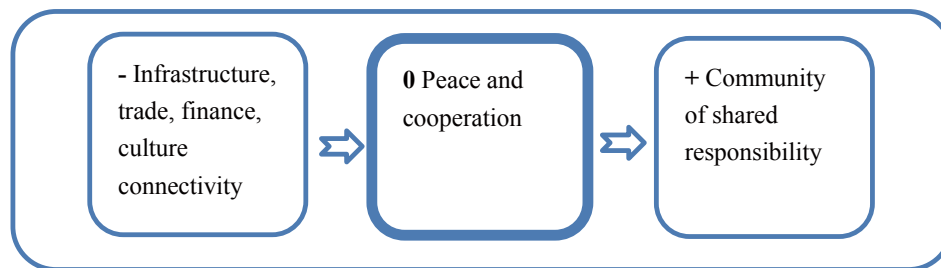


Figure 4
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 4
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

(c)A Community of Shared Destiny

China’s efforts in trade, finance, and infrastructure collaboration with countries engaged in B&R, especially those attempts in promoting renewable energy, bridging the gap between regional development, and maintaining

peaceful world order reiterate the Silk Road Spirit: openness and mutual benefit, which are rooted in and simultaneously presupposed in the cognitive perceptions of a shared destiny. Example 5 and 6, in detail, activate and represent the cognitive frames embedded in Chinese news of shared destiny.

Example 5

Belt and Road initiative boosts green energy along New Silk Road

The CEO of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber and the chairman of the green energy company Masdar told Xinhua the WFES congress and exhibition China’s Belt and Road policy “is one of the main pillars in the development for future energies. They said the initiative closes gaps by building bridges between regions, which is essential to spur international cooperation to increase the use of renewable energy like wind, solar or hydro energy.”

The initiative is focused on financing new infrastructure projects along the New Silk Road and the global shift towards clean energy offers tremendous transnational opportunities for both large or medium and small firms.

Wang Zhongying, the director of China National Renewable Energy Center in Beijing, presented the ongoing construction of solar and water power projects between China and Pakistan in line with the China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

(Source: China Daily, January 18, 2017)

The layout and flow of news discourse entailing cognitive viewing frames in Example 5, progress from the appreciative account of B&R by highly praising the finance, trade and infrastructure projects advocated in B&R, especially its bridging function in regional development, to the international cooperation in promoting and popularizing the utilization of renewable energy on the ground of mutual and sustainable growth, which intertwines and presupposes the concept of shared destiny. The tremendous opportunities offered by B&R

to various scaled companies proclaim and resonate with the Silk Road Spirit: openness, inclusiveness, and mutual benefits. In news composition and edition, the notion of shared destiny community is written within the last part, following the known fact of China’s efforts on finance, infrastructure and trade cooperation with countries along the Road, and its prominence on the spirit of mutual benefit, which sheds light on the cognitive significance of establishing the common destiny community (see the updating process in Figure 5).

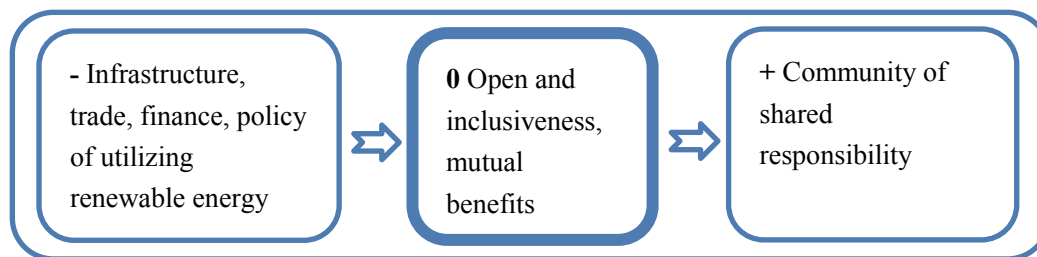


Figure 5
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 5
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

Example 6

New plan demonstrates China’s pursuit of peaceful development

China has promised to promote the “Belt and Road” initiative through cooperation with countries and regions along the route, and participate in global industrial and equipment manufacturing cooperation in the next five years.

Moreover, it has vowed to improve the international economic order, offer more aid to other developing countries and deal with global challenges, ranging from climate change and counter-terrorism to peace-keeping and poverty reduction.

China sees itself as a member of the global community of common destiny and what it has been doing all point to improving the conditions of this community.

(Source: People’s Daily, November 4, 2015)

The future plan of B&R about its dedication to cooperative trade activities along the route is given prior attention as the starting point in this piece of news (Example 6), followed by the declaration of its commitment in improving and maintaining the world order, assisting

under-developed countries to fight against economic challenges, and addressing the issues of climate change, counter-terrorism, peace preserving, and poverty reduction, which together give salience to the substance of peace and cooperation, mutual learning, and mutual benefits.

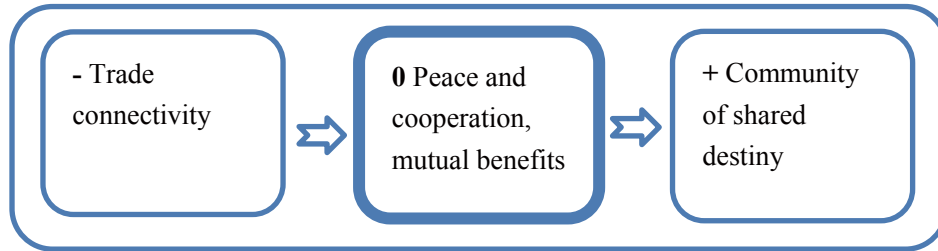


Figure 6
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 6
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

The concluding frame, that is, the cognitively influenced frame, rests on the grand goal of B&R in jointly constructing a community of shared destiny. The dynamic demonstration of the evolving procedure is drafted in Figure 6.

3.2 CDS Analysis on American B&R Economic News

Following the same analytical pattern employed in decoding Chinese news samples, the authors categorize American B&R economic news discourses into four kinds from the perspectives of both political and economic visions, internal and external levels, shown in Table 3.

Table 3
CDS Categories in American Data

		Political		Economic		
		Diplomatic pursuit, Counter-balancing American power, Internal reconstruction and Economic boom				
Internal	Diplomatic pursuit	Token	Percentage	Internal reconstruction	Token	Percentage
		9	30%		4	13.3%
External	Counter-balancing American power	Token	Percentage	Economic boom	Token	Percentage
		6	20%		11	36.7%

The CDS analysis in this part concentrates on China’s attempts of diplomatic pursuit, counter-balancing American power, internal economic reconstruction, and to economic boom.

(a) Diplomatic Pursuit in Disguise of Economic Strategy

Economic policies initiated in B&R, subsuming

the infrastructure and finance plans, are viewed with a geopolitical cover in the sight of American news producers. Such perceptions referred in the news, therefore, are inclined to map aggressiveness onto the initiative of B&R, positioning B&R as a disguise of China’s involvement in dominating geopolitics, shown in Example 7.

Example 7

China to unveil massive Pakistan spending --- Beijing moves to redraw the geopolitical map with infrastructure to create new Asia trade routes

Chinese President Xi Jinping is set to unveil a \$46 billion infrastructure spending plan in Pakistan that is a centerpiece of Beijing’s ambitions to open new trade and transport routes across Asia and challenge the U.S. as the dominant regional power.

China sees a historic opportunity to redraw the geopolitical map, building critical infrastructure that could kick-start economic growth and open new trade routes between China and Central and South Asia.

The plan has gained political momentum -- and new funding sources -- since Mr. Xi outlined his vision to build modern-day equivalents of the ancient Silk Road between East and West.....

(Source: The Wall Street Journal, April 17, 2015)

The unveiling of an enormous investment of \$46 billion in infrastructure construction project in Pakistan sponsored by China under the initiative of B&R tops the news discourse in the account of American media, eliciting the focused discussion on China’s manipulation of its economic strategy for the aim of redrawing the geopolitical map, which indicates its political intention behind or in the disguise of driving the economic

growth between China with Central and South Asia. The transition to the cognitive perception of China’s political momentum or its aggressive stance in geopolitics and international political influence is displayed in the ending section in this discourse, laying impact on news discourse consumers’ ultimate perceptions toward B&R and China. The processing of this news goes as illustrated in Figure 7.

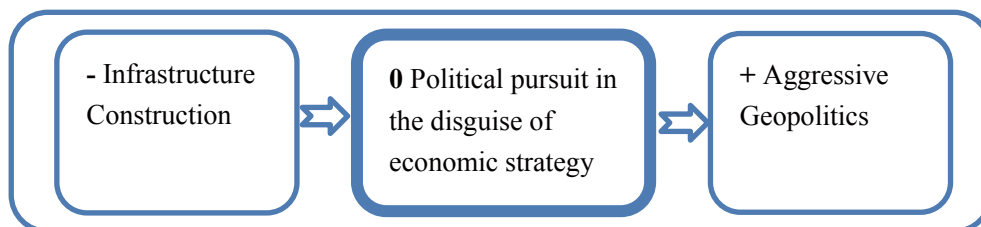


Figure 7
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 7
Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

(b) Counter-Balancing American Power

European economies’ continuous participation in the Asian Investment Bank within the framework of B&R is regarded as a vigorous challenge to the dominance of

the US by most American news media, which is prone to breed the cognitive notion over B&R as a competing rival to American power.

Example 8

3 European powers say they will join China-led bank

Ignoring direct pleas from the Obama administration, Europe’s biggest economies have declared their desire to become founding members of a new Chinese-led Asian Investment Bank that the United States views as a rival to the World Bank and other institutions set up at the height of American power after World War II.

China has worked for years to break what it regards as an unfair grip by the United States on global political and financial institutions and to set up rival structures more responsive to Chinese demands for a voice in international affairs commensurate with its status as the world’s second-biggest economy.

China, she said, is offering a “whole economic and political package that provides an alternative to the creaking international structures shaped by the U.S. in the postwar period.” “China is very good at lobbying them and promising them things.”.....But China has voiced annoyance at what it derides as “Cold War thinking” that divides the world into fixed camps, promoting its efforts to win friends and also contracts in formerly Communist Eastern Europe and elsewhere as part of a “win-win strategy” beneficial to all.

(Source: The New York Times, March 18, 2015)

Information in this news excerpt flows from the denouncement of the Obama Administration on its allies’ engagement in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) which is shepherded by China, and is the financial foundation for B&R Initiative. The AIIB is viewed as a competing rival to the World Bank and the economic agreement of trans-pacific partnership (TPP) which used to be predominated by American power, and is seen as connected to China’s “strenuous efforts” on breaking the

economic and political structure set by the US for the sake of better satisfying its own demands, in other words, challenging the dominance of the US. Furthermore, such a perception is related to China’s acts of lobbying and making unrealistic promises to other countries with the “Cold War Thinking” during the postwar period, which, to some extent, implies news readers to its resemblance of the “Marshall Plan”. Figure 8 represents such processing of the news.

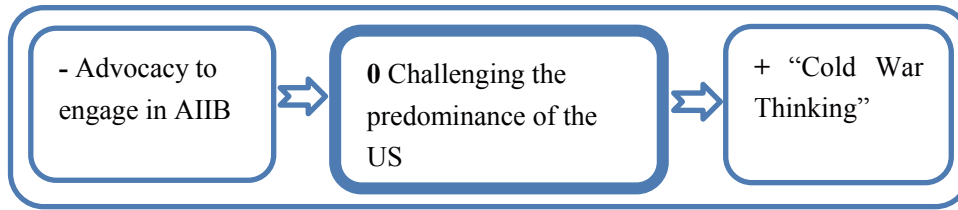


Figure 8
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 8
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

(c) Internal Economic Reconstruction

The peaceful merit of B&R in combating terrorism in the Middle East and Central Asia resides in job creation, which is proposed by China and helps to stabilize civil

turbulence. However, a far more self-serving motive behind B&R in terms of readjusting economic structure is proclaimed in American news, reproduced in Example 9.

Example 9

Beijing touts “Silk Road” as force to fight terror

China has long tried to get the West to acknowledge that the Muslim extremist violence that rages from North Africa through the Middle East and onward to Central Asia ultimately ends up on China’s western doorstep.

The Silk Road Economic Belt represents the most significant economic proposal any country has put forward to help stabilize chaotic parts of the world. Moreover, it’s backed by hard cash: China is putting its \$3.5 trillion of foreign-exchange reserves behind the effort to kick-start growth and create jobs in Muslim areas.

The project is twinned with an equally sweeping concept, the Maritime Silk Road, that’s meant to have a similarly transformative economic impact along sea routes from China to Europe via Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Some critics dismiss the “One Belt, One Road” idea as self-serving -- a way to offload China’s vast industrial surpluses of steel and heavy machinery.

(Source: The Wall Street Journal, December 2, 2015)

The news frames, or the embedded cognitive frames, circulate from the previous usage event of China’s continuous work in achieving the consent on fighting against Muslim extremist violence with the western countries and their cooperation in combating terrorism which ends up on China’s western doorstep, to the focused frame of the proposal put forward by China in the form of an economic initiative B&R in resisting the

chaos through creating employment and providing more economic opportunities in Muslim areas. Consequently, the anticipation and commitment of China in B&R as a kind of self-serving economic transformation offload the pressure of industrial surplus of steel and heavy machinery. The representative information and cognitive processing is demonstrated in Figure 9.

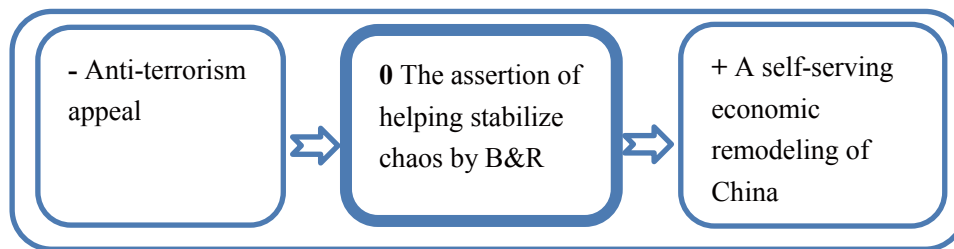


Figure 9
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 9
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

(d) Economic Boom

Bearing the vision of tackling the slow growth in under-developed countries, China, within the framework of B&R, sets out to establish a multinational bank as the financial commentators observe it. Perceived by American

news, B&R is an economic tool exploited by China to frame its own sphere by means of offering economic boom, which has much influence on American perceptions of B&R.

Example 10

Beijing’s rival to World Bank moves forward without U.S

As top leaders met at a lush Bali resort in October 2015, President Xi Jinping of China described his vision for a new multinational, multibillion-dollar bank to finance roads, rails and power grids across Asia. Under Chinese stewardship, the bank would tackle the slow development in poor countries that was holding the region back from becoming the wealth center of the world.

The United States worries that China will use the bank to set the global economic agenda on its own terms.....China, with its vast wealth and resources, now rivals the United States at the global economic table.....Countries are finding they must increasingly operate in China’s orbit. And backing the new bank would bring financial advantages, as well as curry favor with Beijing.

The new bank “is an instrument for China to lend legitimacy to its international forays and to extend its sphere of economic and political influence even while changing the rules of the game,” said Eswar Prasad, former head of the China division at the International Monetary Fund and a professor at Cornell University.

(Source: The New York Times, December 5, 2015)

In news Example 10, the discursive succession commences on the presentation of China’s vision for “a new multinational, multibillion-dollar bank to finance roads, rails and power grids across Asia” in the wish to resolve the sluggish development problems in those less-developed countries by setting up the financial foundation so as to provide impetus to B&R initiative. Regarding the economic orbit taken and shared by involving countries presented in American news, China wishes to reach its

economic boom by establishing its own economic rules and bringing financial advantages back to itself. The CDS in this example gradually proceeds to the final frame of assimilating the bank under the framework of B&R to an instrument solely manipulated by China to expand its economic and political impact, and even to change the international rules. The dynamic process of news discourse in this excerpt runs is shown in Figure 10.

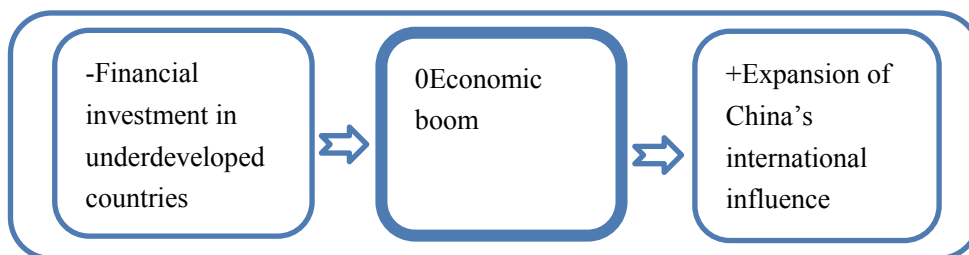


Figure 10
The Updating of CDS Frame on Example 10
 Note: - = minus frame, 0 = zero frame or focus frame, + = plus frame

3.3 Contrastive Discussion of CDS in Sino-American News on B&R

The analyses of the data present different themes in Sino-American B&R news reports as a result of their varied contents and foci. Chinese economic news reports prefer framing a community of shared interests, shared responsibility, and shared destiny, whilst American economic news reports are apt to position China’s attempts of diplomatic ambition as disguising economic strategies, advocacy to engage in AIIB, internal economic remodeling intention, and international clout built on offering economic prosperity. The result also reveals the

cognitive perception patterns which have been disclosed by information flow, news clauses or political stances that contribute to thought-provoking insights, in terms of commonality and disparity existed in Sino-American economic news on B&R.

The representative cognitive patterns are displayed in different news categories classified by the authors on the Sino-American economic news from the theoretical standpoint of CDS, which are summarized in Figure 11 and 12, showcasing the cognitive frames reflected in the news clauses.

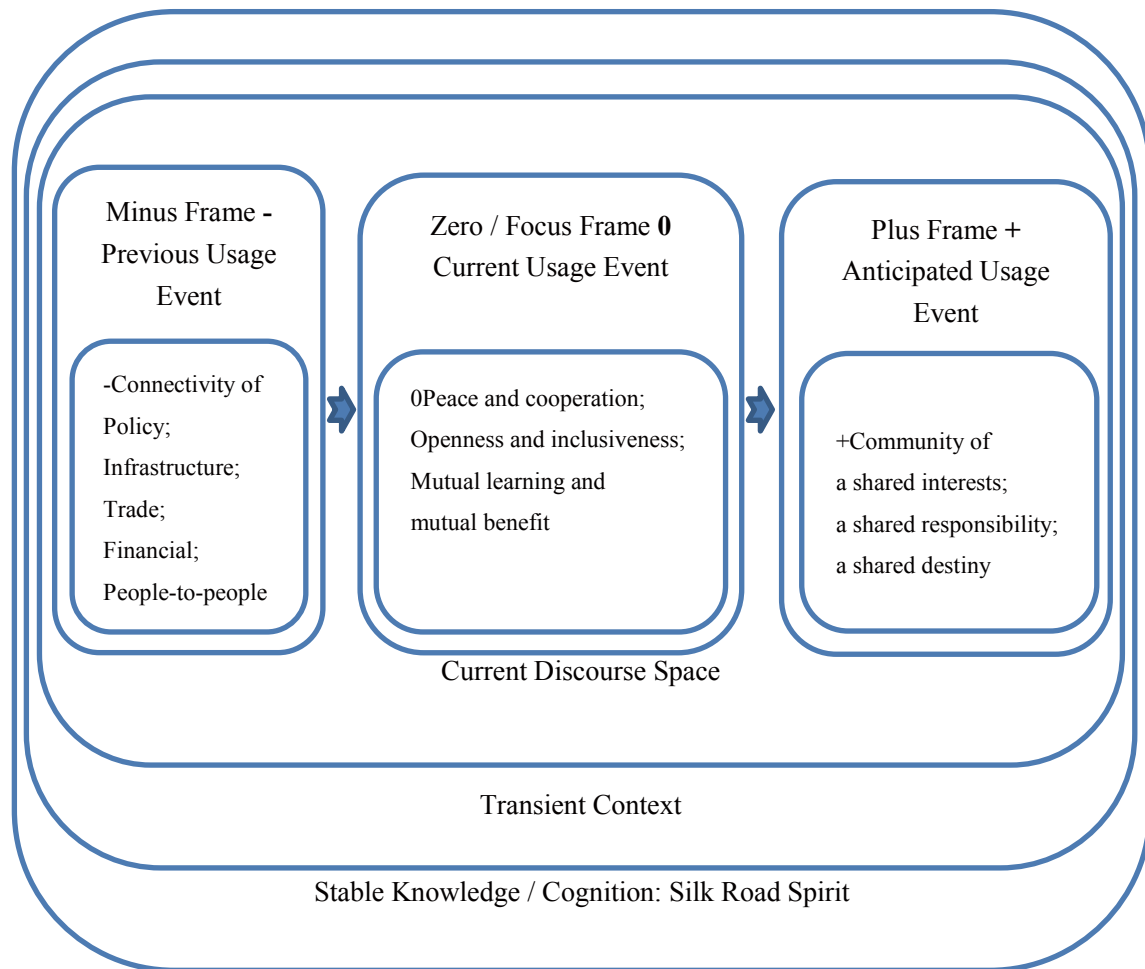


Figure 11
Processing of Discursal Frame in Chinese B&R Economic News

It is noticeable and noteworthy that the notion of “Wu Tong San Ti”, referring to “Wu Tong - Connectivity of policy, infrastructure, trade, finance, and people-to-people” and “San Ti - Community of shared interests,

responsibility, and destiny”, is related to the Silk Road Spirit of subsuming “peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, and mutual learning and mutual benefit”, which stands out in the progression of discursal frames.

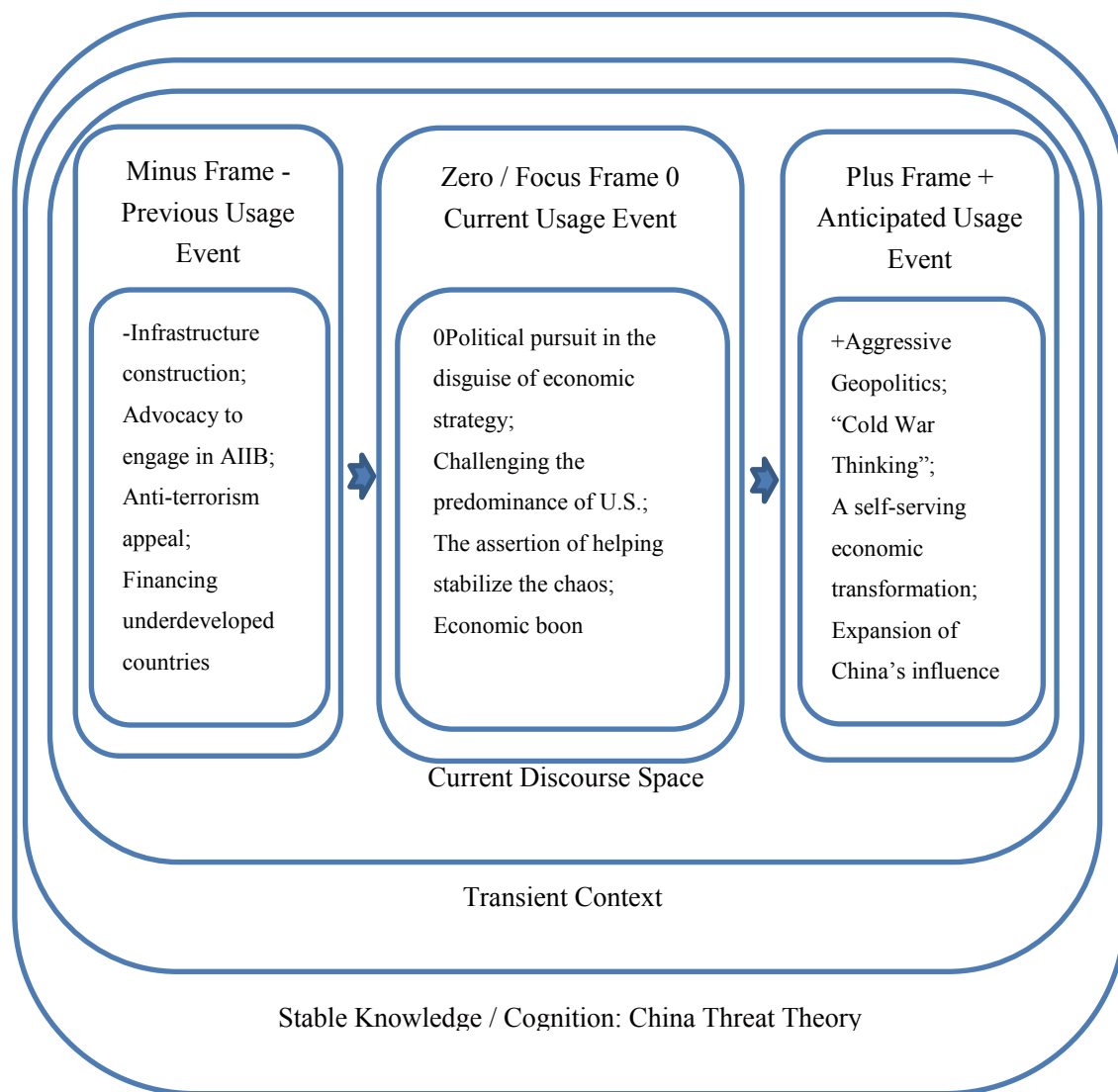


Figure 12
Processing of Discoursal Frame in American B&R Economic News

The frame demonstrates the roles the publicity plays in the formation of social cognitive perceptions, considering the large coverage propagandizing these core concepts of B&R in Chinese news discourses, with the hope of influencing the news readers’ cognition on the Chinese initiative of B&R.

By contrast, American counterparts in composing news texts on B&R would inject their inimical mentality into the news frames processing. Their news discourses mainly evolve around the CDS of describing China’s B&R initiative as a political pursuit in the disguise of an economic scheme, a challenge to the US’ geopolitical dominance, a “peaceful mediator” in antagonizing chaos, and an economic flourish favoring under-developed countries. It transits to the stabilized perception frame on B&R as an aggressive geopolitical tool, a national instrument propelled and motivated by “Cold War Thinking”, a self-serving economic reconstruction plan, and the expansion of its international impact, which

together generates and consolidates the theory of China Threat. The dynamic discursal succession of American economic news on B&R displays the cognitive and cultural discrepancy between Chinese and Americans, with China being a longtime advocate of common economic growth, and the US being a deeply worried “front runner” in the fear of being challenged and surpassed.

The huge gap existed in the two cognitive perceptions settles in the information asymmetry about B&R, which verifies the deficiency in Chinese efforts to promote B&R as a peaceful supporter of mutual growth with accurate wording and with a down to earth attitude, instead of deliberately maximizing its grand contributions so as to win extensive recognition and appreciation from the world. It is evident that extra work be done to ensure the bilateral dialogue and public diplomacy among China and the US on the issue of B&R, especially for the smooth promotion and implementation of B&R internationally.

4. DISCUSSION

The epistemological tenet of CDS presides in its dynamic representations and cognitive simulations in form of discourse clauses on information flow, which entail the progression of social cognitive perceptions over political, military and economic issues. Thinking of the substantial roles of discourse clauses, the authors activate and reproduce the updating successions of cognitive perception frames from the perspective of Cognitive Grammar, particularly grounded on the discourse cohesion and coherence, in order to unwind the arcane roll of cognition construction and language applications.

Similarity arises in the way news information proceeds from the truth statement, the so called concrete level, to stance-oriented discussion, the ideology-revealing stage, and then to cognitive perceptions over certain issues from the level of cognitive perception formation. The heavy lined CDS frame embedded in the stance-oriented interpretation and discussion on B&R, which stems from different cultural and political factors and contexts, as well as gives rise to the varied cognitive perceptions over B&R, or even on a state, is the focus of this cognitive study of the process of deciphering news reports.

Unfolding the dynamic picture of thought processing and cognitive perception forming, this paper probes into the cognitive simulation based on news samples from the standpoint of CDS, and draws some enlightening remarks on the contrastive analysis. Great discrepancy shows up in the ideological interpretation or discussion of the issues related to B&R in the frame of focus, or the current usage event, with Chinese economic news centering on B&R as the embodiment of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, which resonates with the Silk Road Spirit advocated by China, whereas American news reports revolve around equating B&R with Chinese political pursuit in the form of economic strategy, challenging the dominative situation led by the US, the ulterior act of stabilizing global chaos and aggressive attempts in the name of economic boom.

The CDS being focused on the news information flow reveals different attitudes and stances towards the same topic of B&R, drawing forth the underlying variations contained in cognitive perceptions. The deriving cognitive perception on the strength of CDS in Chinese media lies in the core concept of “Wu Tong San Ti”, i.e. the representations of Silk Road Spirit, which falls in stark contrast to the cognitive perceptions activated and generated by American news reports on B&R as a kind of aggressive geopolitics, an instrument brought by the “Cold War Thinking”, a self-serving economic reconstructing plan, and a touting means for Chinese international clout.

The variation existed in the dynamic representations of Sino-American economic news reports on B&R based on the cognitive theory of CDS not only sheds light on the substantial roles that mass media plays in

exerting impact on the perceiving manner or cognitive pattern of news readers considering the interrelated and intertwined connection between cognitive perceptions and language, but also points out emphatically that the promotion of B&R still has a long way to go until it reaches the highland of positive and objective social cognitive perceptions entrenched in people from various backgrounds.

Taking a closer glimpse into the cognitive variations exposed in the update of CDS frames, the authors identify the cultural differences hidden behind the historical and political factors. China has long upheld the concept of peace and development since ancient times, which breeds the prototype of Silk Road Spirit, the momentum of B&R. The moderate, peaceful and pragmatic image of China as a nation is passed down to the current generations, which is projected in the initiative of B&R. While considering the rapid tempo in its national and international growth, the US has always been welcomed with warmest applause and highest recognition, which explains why it keeps the mentality of a front runner, and is afraid of being challenged and surpassed. The consciousness of being a long-term hero and leader endows the nation of the US with a tendency to hold a hostile attitude toward competing rivals, here referring to the initiative of B&R launched by China. The cultural discrepancies among the two countries, and different attitudes toward economic growth speed and national development prospects, distinguish them from each other in terms of cognitive perceptions. The common feature of the updating perception frames coexists in both Chinese and American news, accounting for the shared characteristics in human cognitive pattern. However, the divergences in CDS discursal analysis pertain to the detailed processing based on the frame circulations.

CONCLUSION

The analyses of this research demonstrate how CDS and its concepts interact to account language for a situation as it might be conceived of by both news writers and readers who present different models of cognitive frame in accordance with their political and economical communicative purposes. The different CDS models also offer useful extensions to both discourse and the cognitive frame studies raised by Yang et al. (2017) on news discourses, which has proven linguistic selections for cognitive constructions of empirical findings of this study on situation as a factor influencing language applications, presenting diverse news discursal stances. In the case of understanding linguistic functions and particular cognitive linguistic selections, this research provides evidences to identify interdependencies between particular CDS models that allow inferences about the cognitive frame construction on certain issues or situations, such as the

reports on Chinese B&R, evoked by the news agencies and their discourse writers from different cultural backgrounds and from different political stances, serving for different social motivations and political purposes. The media cognitive process is an important source for discourse participants to navigate human's mental spaces that may be required during discourse.

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APPENDICES

Chinese Data

1. A shared vision for Belt and Road Initiative (2016/11/10, China Daily)
 2. B&R can open opportunities for China-US cooperation (2017/05/15, People's Daily)
 3. 0“Belt and Road” initiative points to brighter globalization (2016/10/25, People's Daily)
 4. Belt and Road Initiative to change landscape of economic cooperation in South Asia (2016/10/14, China Daily)
 5. Belt and Road Initiative boosts green energy along New Silk Road (2017/01/18, China Daily)
 6. Belt and Road Initiative seeks world economic rebalancing, inclusive globalization (2016/12/20, China Daily)
 7. Belt and Road Initiative to spur Africa's growth, reshape global order: experts (2016/12/13, China Daily)
 8. Belt and Road M&A deals hit \$494b (2017/02/16, China Daily)
 9. Belt and Road, a promising initiative aimed at common prosperity (2016/10/08, China Daily)
 10. Belt & Road a boom to Central, Eastern Europe (2016/06/20, Global Times)
 11. BRICS to link Beijing's Belt, Road and New Delhi's act east (2016/10/14, Global Times)
 12. Can we equate Marshall Plan with Belt and Road Initiative (2017/05/13, Global Times)
 13. China boosts cartoon, game cooperation along Belt and Road (2017/02/27, People's Daily)
 14. China can inspire developing nations on environmental sustainability: UNEP chief (2016/11/26, People's Daily)
 15. China ship harbors in Egypt in voyage to promote “belt and road” initiative (2015/12/12, People's Daily)
 16. China signs over 130 transport pacts with Belt and Road countries (2017/04/21, People's Daily)
 17. China to build modern international road transport system by 2020 (2017/12/07, China Daily)
 18. China welcomes Nepal to join Belt and Road initiative (2015/03/29, Global Times)
 19. China, Singapore vow more “Belt and Road” cooperation (2017/02/28, People's Daily)
 20. China, Switzerland agree to boost ties, oppose protectionism (2017/01/17, People's Daily)
 21. China's decisions influence world (2017/03/04, China Daily)
 22. China's “Road and Belt” initiatives to bring new momentum to world growth (2015/04/14, Global Times)
 23. China's Belt and Road Initiative promotes connectivity, development along ancient route (2017/01/02, China Daily)
 24. Complementary industries boost Sino-Italian ties (2017/02/23, China Daily)
 25. Deepening global ties (2016/11/17, China Daily)
 26. Nation to benefit from “One Belt, One Road” initiative (2015/05/07, Global Times)
 27. New plan demonstrates China's pursuit of peaceful development (2015/11/04, People's Daily)
 28. “One Belt, One Road” to encourage investments (2015/04/28, Global Times)
 29. Silk Road Fund sustainable, 100 billion RMB funding not aimed at buying influence(2017/05/15, People's Daily)
 30. Xi launches Belt and Road forum to map out new global vision (2017/05/14, Global Times)
- ### American Data
1. 3 European powers say they will join China-led bank (2015/3/18, The New York Times)
 2. A desolate city built on sand shows folly of China's debt binge (2016/05/30, The Washington Post)
 3. An expert on the world's second-largest economy predicts another volatile year (2015/12/23, Los Angeles Times)
 4. An infrastructure deal sits on shaky ground (2016/11/21, Barron's)
 5. An upside-down economy (2015/3/12, The New York Times)
 6. As interest grows in Great Walls, an ancient Chinese fortress beckons (2016/ 12 / 30, The New York Times)
 7. As Obama plays China card on trade, Chinese pursue their own deals (2015/5/13, The New York Times)
 8. Beijing revives Silk Road to Skirt Sea perils (2015/3/4, The Wall Street Journal)
 9. Beijing touts “Silk Road” as force to fight terror (2015/12/2, The Wall Street Journal)
 10. Beijing's rival to World Bank moves forward without U.S (2015/12/5, The New York Times)
 11. China and Iran agree to 10-year trade deal (2016/1/4, The Washington Post)
 12. China crafts a blueprint for overhauls --- Party gathering will test Beijing's current appetite for bold economic changes (2015/10/26, The Wall Street Journal)
 13. China faces a more awkward relationship with Myanmar (2015/11/13, The New York Times)
 14. China finds its global ambitions humbled in its own backyard (2016/5/19, The New York Times)
 15. China invokes trade history with “New Silk Road” plans; Rail links to Europe and beyond could open new markets and expand influence (2016/5/1, Los Angeles Times)
 16. China is capitalizing on the West's retreat (2016/7/6, The Wall Street Journal)
 17. China to unveil massive Pakistan spending --- Beijing moves to redraw geopolitical map with infrastructure to create new Asia trade routes (2015/4/17, The Wall Street Journal)
 18. Chinese president heads to Pakistan, baring gifts (2015/4/20, The New York Times)

19. Egypt China backs \$45 billion capital project --- Alliance with Egyptian authorities is part of Beijing's efforts to boost foreign business (2016/5/4, The Wall Street Journal)
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27. The TPP deal won't stop China (2016 / 8 / 23, The New York Time)
28. Tug of war in Central Asia (2015/12/28, The Washington Post)
29. What's next for Asia (2016/10/3, Barron's)
30. Xi Jinping's travels make a statement about China's growing foreign ambitions (2015/12/26, Los Angeles Times)