Kent Academic Repository

Wang, Dan (2022) *Conceptual Metaphors in the Chinese Housing Discourse (2010-2014): A corpus-based study of government rhetoric and its reception.* **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis, University of Kent,.**

Conceptual Metaphors in the Chinese Housing Discourse (2010-2014)

A corpus-based study of government rhetoric and its reception

DAN WANG

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF

PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

UNIVERSITY OF KENT

SEPTEMBER 2021

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine metaphors used by the state and the public in the discussion of the Chinese housing discourse (CHD) between 2010 and 2014. In particular, the focal point of the study concerns the diverging views held towards housing by the state and the public. The study considers how these views are manifested through metaphors in particular, conducting a corpus-based analysis of a series of articles published by the state's official newspaper, *People's Daily*, as well as their corresponding reader comments.

The thesis primarily draws upon Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This thesis also incorporates Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Charteris-Black's (2004a) Critical Metaphor Theory, and Shi Xu's (2005) Cultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CCDA) and, more specifically, what he labels as "Chinese Discourse Studies" (CNDS).

Six major categories of metaphor are found to be prevalent among the state-controlled discourse and the public discourse: DISEASE, JOURNEY, WAR, FOOD, FAMILY, and NATURE. The analysis of these metaphors shows that the state favors metaphors with latent power (i.e.: knowledge) and this is represented in their preference of metaphors with strong connotations of professional power (e.g.: "doctor", "driver", "general"), whereas the public prefer representations of power that come from Chinese culture, e.g.: the hierarchy in Confucianism in FAMILY metaphors. Furthermore, it is shown that the state-controlled discourse changes its metaphor use strategy depending on the state of the market (always orienting towards a positive self-portrayal and legitimization of power), while the public tends to adopt similar metaphor categories, albeit with the intention to subvert some of them for the purposes of counter-discourse. Finally, the culture-specificity of metaphor use is also highlighted in the findings, with emphasis on the impact of Confucianism, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Yin-Yang philosophy in the construction and manipulation of metaphorical language.

"If only I could get tens of thousands of mansions! I would house all the poor people who would then beam with smiles." --Ancient Chinese poet Du Fu.
(安得广厦千万间，大庇天下寒士俱欢颜。——杜甫）

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my dearest supervisor, Dr Eleni Kapogianni, who encouraged and supported me throughout this odyssey, always being a valuable companion and guide. I am also grateful for her patience and confidence in me, who comes from a non-linguistic background, to complete this project. I will always remember those summer days we spent long afternoons together when she taught me the most fundamental linguistic knowledge hand by hand and sitting together reading my writings word to word. How lucky I am to have a great supervisor like her, without whom this project cannot be possible.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my postgraduate supervisor, Dr Malcolm Macdonald, who inspired and brought me to the field of Critical Discourse Studies, and to my teachers at the University of Warwick who helped me during the academic transition from Journalism to Applied Linguistics: Dr Sophie Reissner-Roubicek, Dr Daniel Dauber, Dr Stephanie Schnurr and Prof. Helen Spencer-Oatey. I would also like to thank them (as well as all the staff at CAL) for providing a vibrant and intercultural learning atmosphere and for organizing the diverse cultural activities, which enriched my experience in the UK.

My work has benefited greatly from the discussions and feedback from the audience of various conferences and seminars where it was presented, and I am particularly grateful to Dr Majid KhosraviNik and Professor Jonathan Charteris-Black for their insightful discussion and advice on my work at the Chinese Discourse Studies Forum (Lanzhou, 2018) and the RaAM (Genova, 2019) and the CLIC-2021 (Budapest, due to the Covid-19 held virtually). I also want to thank fellows I met at these seminars and conferences, for their discussions on research and academic in general, and gladly, some of whom become close friends.

I am thankful for the additional research and travel grants and bursaries received by SECL at Kent, the summer school at Lancaster #LancsSS17 and the UEA workshop (Using Quantitative Methods in Pragmatics Research).

On a more personal level, I would like to thank my dear friends with whom I share this journey, especially girls from our postgraduate office, Silvia, Svenja, Muradiye, Sophie, Aina and Giulia. I am also grateful for friends I met virtually during the special period of Covid-19, with the support of whom I gradually found the fountain of my courage. I particularly want to thank Mengyao and Lili for contributing to a stronger and happier version of me during this PhD journey.

However, if it wasn't for the tremendous support, both financially and spiritually, of my family, I would have never had the opportunity to make it this far. How lucky I am to be the daughter of Shunyin and Sihai, the granddaughter of Chune and the little sister of Tengguang. I thank them for empowering me the freedom to follow my dream, and for their persistent love and support.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis in memory of my grandmother, Chune Huang (1938-2010), who taught me to approach this world with love and faith, in her most warm and benevolent way.

Table of Contents

List of tables and figures

Tables:

Figures:

List of abbreviations

BTL	Below the line
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
CCDA	Cultural approach to CDA
CCND	China Core Newspaper Database
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
cDA	critical Discourse Analysis
CHD	Chinese Housing Discourse
CMT	Cognitive Metaphor Theory
CNDS	Chinese Discourse Studies
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
DA	Discourse Analysis
DHA	Discourse-Historical Approach
FAI	Fixed Asset Investment
FFYP	First Five-Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCRS	Household Contract Responsibility System
IHP	Indemnificatory Housing Project
NBSC	National Bureau of Statistics of China
NPC	National People's Congress
PCC	Political Consultative Conference
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSC	Politburo Standing Committee
RC	Reference Corpus
RRSD	Right Remedy for Specific Diseases
SOE	State-owned Enterprises
SME	Socialist Market Economy
SWCC	Socialism with Chinese Characteristics
TCM	Traditional Chinese Medicine
TOHYG	Two One Hundred-Year Goals

Conventions

1. Presentations of metaphors:
  ☐ metaphor category (upper case, e.g.: JOURNEY),
  ☐ conceptual metaphors (upper case, e.g.: HOUSING REFORM IS A JOURNEY),
  ☐

2. Translation/gloss
  When referring to the state's policies, follow the format of this example:
  the State's Four Measures (国四条)

3. Presentation of analysed examples:
 ● Numbering: Chapter number + "N" if news article/ "C" if reader comment + example number
 ● Format:
 -Examples from the News corpus:
  Extract of article (ending with news article number and publish date) + English translation
 -Examples from the Comment corpus:
 Original comment (ending with corresponding news article number) + English translation
 ● Highlights: metaphor (keywords) underlined and in bold

 For example:
 -For examples from the News corpus:
 Example 5-25 建成房子，只是保障房"**<u>万里长征的第一步</u>**". (#N380, 2012/2/6)
     (Building a house is only **<u>the first step in the long march</u>** of the IHP.)
 -For examples from the Comment corpus:
 Example5-37 一脚**<u>刹车</u>**, 一脚**<u>油门</u>**, 中国这两**<u>经济大巴</u>**快开**<u>翻了</u>**!**<u>座车里</u>**的我们怎么办？！
 (#C240)
    (One foot on the **<u>brake</u>**, one foot on the **<u>accelerator</u>**, China, this **<u>economy bus</u>**, is
   about to **<u>overturn</u>**! What can we, the people **<u>sitting in the car</u>**, do?!)

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation and Research Questions

The housing issue is a crucial problem in China today and is of great concern to both the public and the government. The media has presented the housing market as "over-heated" for nearly two decades, during which time housing prices have consistently risen, making housing unaffordable to the majority of the population. According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, the average national housing price rose 150% from July 2004 to February 2014, and the situation is even more extreme in major cities. For instance, in China's tier-1 cities, i.e. the most developed cities in commerce, education, health care system and so forth within the country (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen are the ones commonly recognized as the main tier-1 cities), housing prices rose 374%, 346%, 505% and 420% respectively between 2006 and 2016 (Zhu, 2016). Being a driven force, even though as well as a byproduct, of the economic development, the housing market received little control from the state in the1990s and early 2000s. In some cities, various beneficial policies were launched so as to attract investment and consumption from property developers and house buyers.

Between 2004 and 2009, some attempts were made to cool down the housing market as concerns were raised. However, these attempts have been deemed unsuccessful (Ye and Wu, 2008). In October 2009, the *State's Four Measures* (*国四条*) was issued, which was the first-time that strict market supervision had been brought to the real estate sector. Housing regulation at this point focused on four parts, including increasing land supply, curbing housing speculation activities, strengthening housing supervision, and promoting the Indemnificatory Housing Project (henceforth IHP). Since then, a series of housing market regulations and measures of this kind (e.g., the *State's Ten Measures* (*国十条*), the *State's New Eight Measures* (*新国八条*) and the *State's Five Measures*(*国五条*)) were implemented. The success of these measures cannot be straightforwardly determined and is therefore a matter of interpretation and a topic of debate. This is where the role of rhetoric and Discourse becomes prominent: on the one hand, the state (and its supporters) presents these measures as a "success story" within the discourses over which it has some control. On the other hand, sources that are critical to the state create their own counter-discourses, placing blame on the state for mishandling the problem, for being self-contradictory in its actions, and for not serving the people, as its purported ideology dictates. These debates of rhetoric between parties of conflicting interests, within what generally constitutes the Chinese Housing Discourse (henceforth CHD) are the primary object of study for this research project.

A closer look at the CHD inevitably reveals a number of relevant social problems: 1) the fact that people's housing needs aren't met, 2) the state's lack of concern about the people's real needs, given its prioritization of other goals (financial metrics) and 3) the public's limited freedom to express their dissatisfaction with the state's policies (a result of continuous monitoring and censorship of public forums by the state).

The housing issue is a serious social problem, laying a heavy financial and phycological burden on the people (Ren, Folmer and van der Vlist, 2018), on the one hand, and widening social inequalities

(Wang et al, 2020), dividing society into the propertied and the non-propertied, on the other. At the same time, instead of focusing all their efforts on solving the housing issue according to the people's needs, the state's emphasis seems to primarily be on the overall "health" of the economy and its success on various metrics (Morrison, 2014). This disparity between the state's goals and the people's needs is also reflected in the treatment of the concept of "house". Interestingly, the media consistently represents "house" as "a place to live in" (房子是拿来住的), whereas for the Chinese people "house" is not merely a living space, but it is also associated with many other social factors, such as education, wealth, and marriage, in other words it represents quality of life (Fraser 2000; Read 2003). As a result, when the state reports on the progress of the housing issue, it tends to stick to numbers (e.g. quantity of newly-built houses), without any mention or concern for issues of quality (i.e. the quality of life that the particular structures could offer). Finally, the discrepancy between the state's goals and the people's needs is widened by the fact that the state is not willing to listen or allow criticism to be heard. This is the result of extensive censorship. Of course, an examination of the CHD doesn't just allow for the aforementioned social problems to be observed, but it also provides a wealth of evidence concerning the rhetorical "battles" that reflect those problems and the divisions that exist within China.

To my own understanding, as a Chinese citizen of a younger generation (a generation which is most exposed to the pressures of the housing issue), "house" should return to being perceived as a fundamental need, that is, a place to live in. Even though this is also what the state seems to proclaim, I clearly recognize a discrepancy between the state's rhetorical (propaganda) assertions and its actions. At the same time, I would consider the perception of "house" as a symbol of social status, especially when it is treated as an asset (for the purposes of profit-making), to be a problematic stance that can only deepen social problems and social inequalities. Any changes that happen in Chinese society need to, first and foremost, ensure that everyone has access to decent quality housing, everyone has a room of one's own.

As a researcher, I also carry with me in this project my academic background in journalism. This allows me a thorough insight of the propaganda and censorship practices in China. Using as its declared purpose the so-called *harmonisation* (Zhao, 2016 - to be further discussed in Chapter 3.3) the state enforces censorship and surveillance on people's public (and even private) discourse. Anything that contradicts the state's "lines" and propaganda tends to be suppressed, through the means of blocking access to certain websites and prints/documents, keyword filtering on contents to be published/delivered and so forth. Together with the censorship system is the surveillance system, which mostly assisted by all sorts of infrastructures, such as the Great Firewall and the Sky Eye (to be further discussed in Chapter 3.3). The stance of the present project is an anti-censorship one, while it aims to illuminate the subtler ways in which counter-discourses can develop and thrive even within a state of censorship. I will be investigating the counter-discourse as an attempt to reclaim power from a near-totalitarian state and a means of counter-acting a great power imbalance between the state and its citizens.

Recognizing the power struggles that take place within CHD, also entails recognizing the crucial weapon of metaphorical language. Metaphors are employed both within the state-controlled discourse and within the counter-discourse in order to serve specific purposes, advance ideologies, as well as subvert dominant perceptions. For this reason, metaphors are chosen as the main linguistic focus of this project.

This project therefore aims to illuminate the ideological power struggles, involved within the CHD, with a view to understanding their origins and the ways in which they are expressed. Ultimately, a better understanding of the CHD can lead to a better understanding of the housing issue as a social

problem in urgent need of intervention, and potentially could provide alternative ways for the powerless to regain power, i.e.: power of free speech. Therefore, it is worth asking the following two questions:

(1) How is the state's authority, agency, and accountability represented through metaphors within different camps (pro-government and anti-government) of the CHD?

(2) What are the rhetorical, argumentative, and ideological underpinnings of the changes in metaphor use within CHD per the housing market conditions?

These question can be answered with a thorough analysis of the CHD texts, both those representing the state-controlled discourse (articles published in the *People's Daily* – a state-owned newspaper) and the counter-discourse (online commentary on the newspaper articles – posted by the public).

1.2 Framework of analysis and data

As this thesis investigates one of the major social issues in Chinses society, the housing issue, by means of text analysis, the approach used needs to be able to dissect the relationship among language, discourse, and society. Being an interdisciplinary and multimethodological approach, *Critical Discourse Studies* (henceforth CDS), formerly known as *Critical Discourse Analysis* (henceforth CDA), whose objective is to uncover the ideological undertones of discourse and to reveal how discourses are manipulated by dominant powers in social events (Fairclough 1989; van Dijk 1995), is the tailored framework for this research. It is worth noting that the particular use of the more recent acronym CDS rather than the conventional CDA in this research is not for fashion reasons, but because CDS is more capable of explaining what this framework is. Many pioneer CDA/CDS scholars (e.g.: van Dijk, 2013; Wodak and Meyer, 2016) had argued that CDA is often misunderstood as a method of critical discourse analysis, which is not, and such a method does not exist. According to van Dijk (1993), being "critical" means "a state of mind, an attitude, a way of dissenting, and many more things". Also, given that CDA/CDS is interdisciplinary and multimethodological, which is an umbrella term for theories in various disciplines such as psychology, linguistics and social sciences, and methods such as interview, experiment and ethnography, the term CDS is more appropriate for demonstrating its inclusiveness (van Dijk, 1993).

Criticisms of CDS should be addressed in order for this analysis to be successful. In recent decades, CDS researchers have been accused of unsystematically and randomly selecting data to analyse (e.g.: Schegloff, 1997; Widdowson, 2004). As Widdowson (2004:97), critical discourse analysts are accused of "picking and choosing of whatever aspect of it seems useful for its purpose" (Widdowson, 2004: 97). To address this issue, this thesis complied two corpora of the CHD and adopted quantitative procedures to present an overview of the wider topics associated with the CHD as well as the metaphors employed within these topics of discussion and the related discourses. Accordingly, a combination of quantitative (corpus-based) and qualitative (CDS-driven) methods is adopted in this thesis.

Although there are many approaches to metaphor analysis, such as classical, pragmatic, and cognitive, the framework that has been most widely used in conjunction with CDS is Cognitive Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT). There is a distinct connection between metaphor and ideology, as they share a common function of persuasion (Charteris-Black, 2004a, 2011). According to Koller (2005), metaphorical expressions presented in texts are manipulated and motivated by different kinds of intentions. Moreover, combining metaphor analysis with CDS is by now widely used and developed, thanks to extensive research carried out on the subject in recent decades (Charteris-Black 2004a, 2011;

Koller 2005; Hart 2008, 2011; Musolff 2012, 2017). For a variety of research purposes, recent research on metaphor and CDS increasingly adopt the computer-mediated method, which is based on a large amount of data and assisted by software (Semino, 2017). Due to the characteristics of Chinese ways of communication and Chinese culture, analysing Chinese discourse requires special attention be given to the Chinese culture and context (Shi, 2005, 2012, 2014). Accordingly, a synergised model based on the aforementioned theories and approaches are proposed.

The texts CDS usually analyses represent the dominant discourse(s), such as newspaper articles, politician speeches, and governmental reports (Hart, 2011). Consequently, the results usually show how different levels and dimensions of linguistic practice, such as grammar, rhetoric, speech acts and pragmatic strategies, are used in the dominant (hegemonic) discourse. This thesis makes a point of collecting the reader comments as part of the research data, because doing CDS is not only about analysing how texts are produced, but also how texts are consumed by readers (Fairclough, 1989), especially social media users (McEnery, McGlashan and Love 2015; Brooke and Baker 2017;) with emphasis on the representation of their ideologies. Serving these purposes, the data in this thesis comes from two sources: news articles from *People's Daily* published online in between 2010-2014 (compiling the "News corpus" and), and the reader comments attached to these articles (compiling the "Comment corpus", which is also the reflection on how the dominant discourse, i.e.: the state-controlled discourse, is consumed). Regarding the selection of data sources, in order to match the requirements of this project, given its research questions, the selected data should be able to illustrate both the state-controlled discourse and the counter-discourse created by the public. With this in mind, People's Daily, the mouthpiece of the governing party in China, and the corresponding online reader comments have been considered as appropriate data sources. Regarding the investigated time period, (2010-2014), it was selected based on information about the frequency of relevant news reports during the most turbulent period in the housing market issue. A query to the China Core Newspaper Database (CCND) showed that news reports on the housing issue reached a peak between 2010 and 2014, following the launch of the *State's Four Measures* (issued in October 2009).

1.3 Goals

While addressing the general research questions (as these were set out in above section 1.1), this thesis will also accomplish a set of more specific goals:

(1) Creating two distinct corpora (the "News" corpus and the "Comment" corpus), using rigorous corpus methods, as well as the help of original scripting (a Python script, which can be reused and/or modified for the purposes of future research), to allow the extraction of large amounts of data.

(2) Identifying instances of metaphorical language in the two corpora, through a systematic and replicable procedure, that has been adapted from previous models (Demmen et al. 2015; Lederer 2016; Semino et al. 2017) to fit the purposes of this research project.

(3) Identifying the dominant metaphors in the two corpora, through a quantitative overview.

(4) Understanding the conceptual metaphors involved in CHD within their socio-economic and cultural context.

(5) Tracking the trajectory of metaphor use across different phases of the housing market and finding links between the state of the market and the direction of metaphor-assisted rhetoric.

Finally, a more general goal, in terms of impact, is to contribute to an awareness (not only within academic discussions but also on the part of the public and stakeholders) towards the intricacies of the

housing situation and the social, political, and ideological issues that underlie it.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

First, chapter 2 presents the proposed framework for analysing metaphors in CHD and its theoretical basis. The combination of CDS (with emphasis on CNDS) and CMT is justified and explained. In line with the requirements of CDS, chapter 3 presents the socio-political and economic context of the housing issue, including the economic context relating to the investigated CHD, the social and historical background of Chinese economy, the social actors involved in CHD and the main discourses in CHD. Chapter 4 then lays out the specific details of the methodology, justifying the data selection, corpus compilation and annotation processes, as well as identifying the set of (conceptual) metaphors for analysis. Chapter 5 is the core qualitative analysis chapter which discusses the prevalent conceptual metaphors in the corpora (i.e., DISEASE, JOURNEY, WAR, FOOD, FAMILY and NATURE). The analysis in each section starts with the contextualisation of each category of metaphor, including its generalised uses/effects and specific understanding in Chinese culture. Then, specific examples are analysed, aiming to shed light on the ideological and rhetorical aspects of different voices within the CHD. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the tensions between the state and the public and how these are reflected in the use of metaphors. First, the trajectory of metaphor use by the state is contextualised (6.2) and then the state' major arguments are analysed (6.3). Finally the discussion moves on to the counter-discourse, completing the picture of a battle of rhetoric within CHD (6.4).

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework: Critical Discourse Studies and Conceptual Metaphor Theory

This chapter aims to outline the theoretical framework of the current study. This study is primarily positioned within the tradition of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), using its methods and principles as a model of textual analysis, while at the same time being specifically focused on the phenomenon of metaphor, which is analysed through the perspective of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). In this chapter, the relationship of these two traditions will be critically discussed, in order to put in place all the necessary analytical and theoretical tools for the examination of the role of metaphors in the CHD. The first section (2.1) discusses CDS and its theoretical underpinnings, as well as the key criticisms and caveats. The second section (2.2) introduces the specific approach on which this study relies: the Dialectical-Relational approach. Given the scope of this research, special consideration is given to the reception of dominant discourses and the creation of counter-discourses, particularly in the context of online (computer-mediated) communication in a non-western context (China). The third section (2.3) introduces CMT as a framework for metaphor study, explaining how it differs from traditional approaches and its compatibility with CDS. The final section (2.4) examines the role of culture in CDS and metaphor studies. Together these sections create a complete picture of a model of analysis that is appropriate for researching metaphors in a culture-specific context within a CDS framework.

2.1 CDA/CDS and its underpinnings

In the era of rising social changes, it becomes an increasing trend that researchers working in a variety of disciplines turning their attention to language use so as to explain the wider social change (Fairclough 1992a). Because of its theoretical roots in multiple disciplines, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has become one of the most popular frameworks in the fields of social sciences and humanities. CDA is a synthesis of various linguistic branches (such as grammar, pragmatics, and discourse analysis) as well as theories in social sciences. Given that "there are so many conflicting and overlapping definitions formulated from various theoretical and disciplinary standpoints" (Fairclough 1992a: 3), it is difficult to give a precise definition of the term 'discourse'. Accordingly, this section will first attempt to give a brief account of the diverse understandings of 'discourse', and correspondingly the understandings of 'discourse analysis. It is worth noting that accounts presented in this section are by no means exhaustive, but with a focus on approaches that are in line with the interest of this research, i.e.: combining textual analysis with a social orientation to discourse.

As mentioned, 'discourse' is investigated by different disciplines, and in linguistics alone, there are at least three different understandings towards 'discourse'. In earlier studies, 'discourse' was understood as "extended examples of spoken dialogue" (Fairclough, 1992a: 3), where 'discourse' is in contrast to 'text', and 'discourse analysis' to 'text analysis'. In this sense 'discourse analysis' simply refers to analysing the properties of dialogue, such as "turn-taking, or structure of conversational openings and closings", which are the "higher-level organizational features" of language (Fairclough,

1992a:3). The term 'discourse', however, acquired a new dimension within studies which consider 'text' as a dimension of discourse. The latter view emphasizes on the interaction between the writer and the reader (or speaker and addressee in account of spoken texts), and therefore processes of producing and interpreting speech and writing, as well as the situational context of language use. The third type of understanding towards 'discourse' is considered to be less associated with its linguistic indication, which merely be regarded as a genre of text type or a description of social situations, such as media discourse, medical discourse, and political discourse[1].

Aside from linguistics, 'discourse' also attracts attention from social theories, particularly in the 1960s from the French philosophers. One of the most influential works on 'discourse' could be credited to *The archaeology of Knowledge* by Michel Foucault, who claims that:

> *Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word*
> *'discourse', I believe I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes*
> *as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group*
> *of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number*
> *of statements. (Foucault, 1972: 80)*

As can be seen from the quote, Foucault (1972) sees 'discourse' from three perspectives, i.e. discourse as utterances or texts with meaning, discourse as a label/category of a group of statements, and discourse as a form of social practice (Mills 1997). The first perspective ("the general domain of all statements") is more or less similar to the traditional linguistic view to discourse, which have meaning and may have "effects in the real world" (Mill, 1997:7). The second perspective ("an individualizable group of statements") is parallel to the aforementioned (the third type of) understanding towards 'discourse' in linguistics, which enables us to label different discourses, such as the current 'Chinese housing discourse' in this research. The third perspective ("a regulated practice which accounts for a number of statements") is somewhat the most characteristic part of Foucault's view to 'discourse'. This is because in this perspective, Foucault views 'discourse' beyond linguistics but considers wider social elements, such as "rules and structures which produce particular utterances and texts" (Mills, 1997: 7). Foucault's view on 'discourse' focuses more on "the way discourses are organised and, more specifically, on who gets to participate and contribute and who is excluded" (Stahl, 2004: 4330). In other words, Foucault sees "discourse" as a practice of power, or in his own words, "discourses as a form of violence" (Foucault 1981: 67). Such a Foucauldian view on 'discourse' establishes connections between the meanings of various statements (/utterances or texts) and their social contexts, and accordingly triggers notions such as 'power', 'culture', 'hegemony' and so forth, earning its popularity among social sciences. However, it is worth noting that although Foucault's view on 'discourse' is influential (and somehow controversial), his work was only one of the many definitions of 'discourse' across various disciplines. Still, the problem of lacking an agreed definition of the term 'discourse' is still an occurring problem faced by discourse analysts, and one of the reasons is that the term 'discourse' is commonly used with different connotations, (Bloor & Bloor, 2013).

In Discourse Studies, the understanding towards 'discourse' is different from Foucault. As Wodak (2008:5) writes, "discourse is not supposed to mean in Foucault's work - specifically, that it is neither defined thematically nor by a strict system of concepts, and that it is not an object but rather a set of relationships existing between discursive events". That is to say, discourse analysts see 'discourse' as "linguistic action", either oral, written or visual communication, and either verbal or nonverbal,

---

[1] In this dissertation, the naming of discourses led by different parties (the state and the public) is in line with this sort of understanding towards discourse, i.e.: the 'government discourse' and the 'counter discourse'.

"undertaken by social actors in a specific setting determined by social rules, norms and conventions" (Wodak 2008:5). To do a 'discourse analysis' means to explore "the relationship between language and the social cultural contexts in which it is used" (Paltridge 2006:2).

Gee (1999:17) claims that when using the term 'discourse', analysts should bear in mind the difference between the 'little d' discourse and 'big D' Discourse, where the former refers to "language-in-use or stretches of language (like conversations or stories)" and the latter includes not only language but also "other stuff", such as social practice, values and beliefs. Though this differentiation is made, when we use the term 'discourse' in this research, both the 'little d' discourse and the 'big D' Discourse are considered, just as what Jay Lemke (1995) explains in a more detailed way:

> *When I speak about discourse in general, I will usually mean the social activity of making meanings with language and other symbolic systems in some particular kind of situation or setting…On each occasion when the particular meaning characteristic of these discourses is being made, a specific text is produced. Discourse, as social actions more or less governed by social habits, produce texts that will in some ways be alike in their meanings…When we want to look at patterns, commonality, relationships that embrace different texts and occasions, we can speak of discourse. (Jay Lemke (1995: 7ff) as cited in Wodak (2008:6)*

In line with this view, 'discourse' in this research is also understood through different perspectives. When referring to the CHD in general, the 'big D' Discourse is considered, which includes not only different texts related to housing, but also various social practices, ideologies, and contexts are included. In CHD, there are texts produced by different agents, mainly the state-owned newspaper and the public. Accordingly, when referring to the patterns, relationships between specific discourse/metaphor and its context, 'government-led discourse' and 'public discourse' are used. Also, within the 'public discourse', 'counter-discourse' is also used referring to those comments that show explicit objection/attack towards the 'government-led' discourse. It should also be noted that what we call 'government-led discourse' in this research can also be viewed as 'party-led discourse', although due to the nature of its production and dissemination, it is simultaneously 'media-led discourse'. However, there are two reasons in naming such discourse 'government-led' and these are the nature of the media (*People's Daily* in this research) and the role of government. As *People's Daily* is the official newspaper of the CCP, being fully owned by the party and serving the interests of the party, it is regarded as a propaganda tool of the party (Wang et al. 2018). Accordingly, the 'media-led discourse' is a manifestation of the 'party-led discourse'. Moreover, the party and the government play different roles in China, where the government exercises and implements decisions made by the party, the government being the primary agent participating in all aspects of social activity. In this research, it is the government rather than the party that is most directly involved in making and implementing housing policies and in regulating the housing market. Accordingly, 'government-led discourse' is considered to be the most appropriate term when referring to such discourse produced by *People's Daily*.

As can be seen from the aforementioned definitions, 'discourse' commonly comes together with 'text'. van Dijk (1990:164) even put it in a more straightforward way that discourse is "text in context". While discourse analysis is often conducted through texts/language, this does not mean that to do discourse analysis is to do textual analysis. Compared to a text which is more of a semiotic sentence/statement built for communication, a discourse is more complicated. The key difference is

that 'discourse' is produced in context. For instance, here we have a text 'everyone need a house' and a discourse 'everyone needs a house'. The meaning of the text remains no matter how it is reprinted or redistributed, however, the meaning of the discourse can vary a lot and it is largely dependent on who produces it, where it is used, and how it is distributed. Accordingly, one can claim that it is 'context' that distinguishes 'discourse' from 'text'. Then, one shall ask, what is 'context?

'Context' is also a term associated with a wide range of disciplines, such as "text linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics and DA" (Wodak 2008:10). However, it is also considered as a "quasi-wastebasket consisting of unsystematic, unpredictable factors" (Chomsky 1965 as cited in Wodak 2008). Similar to the term 'discourse', 'context' is also defined by linguists from a broad points of view. For instance, Blommaert (2005：251) defines 'context' as "the totality of conditions under which discourse is being produced, circulated and interpreted". This definition gives an idea of what 'context' is, however, it does not expand out the key features or components of 'context'. Similar to this definition, Wodak (2014b: 328) further explains and summarizes the features of 'context' as follows:

1. *the immediate text of the communicative event in question (e.g. a particular detailed transcript of talk);*

2. *the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses (e.g. other conversations with the same participants in different settings);*

3. *the extralinguistic social (e.g. physical gestures, facial expressions, postures, etc.) and environmental (e.g. room size and layout) variables and institutional frames (e.g. latent or formal hierarchical structure, informal power relations in a friendship, cultural constraints and conventions, etc.) of a specific 'context of situation' (derived, for example, from observer notes and reflections on direct observations of the communicative event); and*

4. *the broader sociopolitical and historical context which discursive practices are embedded in and related to (e.g. knowledge derived from ethnographic study of the relationships, aspects of the broader social and cultural macro-environment that influence the talk and conversations).*

From Wodak's interpretation, we can see that the understanding of 'context' is also twofold. That on the one hand, 'context' refers to the micro linguistics level of situations or relations, such as the communicative, intertextual or interdiscursive aspects of the text; on the other hand, 'context' also refers to the macro level aspects, such as the sociopolitical/cultural/institutional situations. A similar definition is made by Widdowson (2000: 126), who summarizes 'context' as "aspects of the circumstance of actual language use which are taken as relevant to meaning".   In this research, when we use the term 'context', we mean both of those aspects that are relevant to the meaning of the metaphors used in the discourse. Accordingly, the broader sense of 'context' will be examined first in the socio-background chapter (Chapter 3) and the specific 'context' of how the discourse is construed will be analyzed in the analysis chapter (Chapter 5) respectively.

Having presented the understandings towards 'discourse' and differentiated it from 'text', we now come to the explanation of the core of this theoretical chapter, i.e.: 'Critical Discourse Studies', or formerly known as 'Critical Discourse Analysis'.   Since 'discourse analysis' already provides "a general framework for problem-oriented social research" (Wodak 2008:2), the question of why there is still a call for 'Critical Discourse Analysis' may arise. However, instead of rushing towards to giving an answer to this question, it is necessary to spread out the understandings of the term 'Critical Discourse Studies'.

Critical Discourse Studies, firstly known as 'Critical Discourse Analysis', originates in the 1970s at the University of East Anglia from Critical Linguistics (Hart, 2010). The emergence of CDS can be seen as a response to the call for attention to issues of social hierarchy and power in the Western society. In other words, the roots of CDA are found in big social changes. According to Toolan (2002), there are two interrelated motives that are closely related to the emergence of CDS, i.e.: the textualist turn and the waves of democracy since the late 1960s, since when all sectors of Western society have become increasingly interconnected because of the accumulation of the two industrial revolutions (Toolan, 2002). People on the one hand enjoy the fruit of technology advancement, on the other hand, they are in unprecedented increase demand for information and services. Researchers have shifted their attention from the conquest of nature to the conquest of consciousness and culture, from the real world to the virtual world which is constructed by symbols (Jamson, 1991). These changes also reflect the trajectory of the pursuit of meaning in the Western world, which shifts from ontological metaphysics to epistemology, and then to language analysis. This textual turn makes people's life filled with all kinds of texts and discourse, forming what Charles Newman (1985:10) called the "inflation of discourse". Onwards, the postmodern society became a world of languages, a world of texts and a world of symbols. However, influenced by the thoughts of postmodernism and the (post)structuralism, people are vigilant about grand narrative, metanarratives and the likes, thus putting such "inflation of discourse" into question (Toolan, 2002). These changes also consequently caused social movements globally, with deepening dissent against the status quo, fighting for civil rights and democracy. Huntington (1991:12) claims that the year 1962 saw the zenith of democratization after the World War II where 36 countries were governed democratically, and this process continued with the third wave of democracy in the late 20th century. Wider democratization also meant that people at the time began to doubt the validity of various texts and discourses instead of accepting them uncritically and blindly (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002).

The academic exploration relating to this social change mostly concerns the school of post-structuralism, represented by scholars such as Jacques Derrida. Using structuralism as a starting point, post-structuralism continues to consider signs to "derive their meanings not through their relations to reality but through internal relations within a network of signs" (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 10), however, it challenges structuralism's basic assumption –the existence of a fixed structure – placing emphasis instead on the context-dependence of meaning (Williams, 2005). Regarding the difference between structuralism and post-structuralism, Eagleton (2008:111) writes "If structuralism divided the sign from the referent, this kind of thinking - often known as 'post-structuralism' — goes a step further: it divides the signifier from the signified". For poststructuralism, "meaning can never be permanently fixed" (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 6). Derrida (1976:156) reconsiders Saussure's division between the signifier and the signified, and argues that "there is nothing outside the text" (*Il n'y a pas de hors-texte*) in his book *Of Grammatology*. This argument can be misunderstood as the lack of any textual meaning for us to process, however, its actual point is that text can be interpreted in multiple ways depending on the context. Deconstruction, a core term of Derrida, often perceives textual labour as a matter of double interpretation (Rasiński, 2011). The first reading stays at the dominant interpretation of the text, but the second reading goes beyond the text to "tracing its excluded, repressed and inferior interpretation that forms an undercurrent in the text" (Rasiński, 2011:11). It is the second reading that distinguishes deconstruction from other approaches. That is to say, Derrida's deconstruction is not content with the interpretation of text itself, but "seeks to account for the undecidable oscillation between the different textual strategies that the inscription of a metaphysical hierarchy must necessarily presuppose" (Torfing 1999: 66).

Such a tendency to investigate the undercurrents of text appears closer to the views of CDS scholars. Based on the understanding that language is used as a force of dominance and ideology, CDS is also not content with merely the interpretation of text (Habermas, 1972). In other words, CDS has a broader perspective that goes further than linguistic performance, e.g., socio-historical context of discourse, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, and interpretations of discourses. For Fairclough (2010), CDS is not an analysis of discourse in itself, but a transdisciplinary analysis of dialectical relations between discourse and other social practices. In his own words, discourse is "language viewed in a certain way, as a part of the social process (part of social life) which is related to other parts" (Fairclough, 2015:7). Wodak (2001:2) also positions CDS as the "opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language". van Dijk (2015) sees CDS as a type of discourse-analytical research which mainly studies "the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk, 2015:466).

Earlier in introducing the understandings towards 'discourse', we have seen that notions such as 'ideology', 'power' and 'society' appears frequently. From the above understandings towards 'CDS', we can also see that CDS pays particular interests to these terms. Thus, a more precise definition towards these terms from the perspective of CDS and how these terms are viewed in this research are needed. The basic tenet of CDS is that discourse is not neutral but ideological, and that every discourse carries a potentially conscious intention that reflects the relative social positions of the text producer and recipient (van Dijk, 1993). Accordingly, the first term to be discussed here is 'ideology'. CDS is particularly interested in how ideologies are mediated in various social institutions (Wodak 2007) and the discussion of 'ideology' in CDS is inseparable from 'discourse' or language. For instance, Thompson (1984:2) states that "to study ideology is, in some part and in some way, to study language in the social world". In discussing the relationship between ideology and language, Fairclough (1991:113) even coins it as 'language/ideology'.

Similar to many terms in social sciences and humanities, 'ideology' is also invariably complex and does not have a precise definition agreed by scholars. Although the concept of 'ideology' has long traditions and developments (see e.g.: van Dijk 1998a; Eagleton 2007), what is important here is to illustrate how 'ideology' is viewed within CDS. Kress and Hodge (1979: 6) define ideology as "a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view". In a similar way, van Dijk (1998: 8) regards 'ideology' as "the interface between social structure and social cognition … ideologies may be very succinctly defined as the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group". van Dijk (2006) further illustrates his definition of 'ideology' by sketching out its characteristics, which are summarized as following:

1. 'Ideology' is not "ideological practices or societal structures" but "ideas" or "belief systems";
2. 'Ideology' is not private but "socially shared by the members of a collectivity of social actors";
3. 'Ideology' is not any kind of social belief, but "more fundamental or axiomatic" which "control and organize other socially shared beliefs";
4. 'Ideology' is "relatively stable", and it is "gradually acquired and (sometimes) changed" (van Dijk 2006:116-117).

Aside from this, Wodak and Meyer (2016: 8) also note that not all types of ideologies are to the interests of CDS scholars but the ones that are "more hidden and latent inherent in everyday-beliefs". Accordingly, in this research, 'ideology' refers to the fundamental beliefs shared by different social groups in Chinese society, such as attitudes towards social class, attitudes towards housing, and

attitudes towards the role of the government/party (all of which will be further discussed in Chapter 3).

From the definitions of 'ideology' presented above, we can see that 'ideology' has the potential to unite members of society, and to coordinate their (inter)actions, and this potential is closely linked with another key term in CDS, i.e.: power. As van Dijk (1988) states:

> *In most (but not all) cases, ideologies are self-serving and a function of the material and symbolic interests of the group. Among these interests, power over other groups (or resistance against the domination by other groups) may have a central role and hence function as a major condition and purpose for the development of ideologies. (van Dijk 1998:8)*

van Dijk's explanation shows that there is always power struggle among different groups, either power over other groups or resistance against other groups. Draw on Foucault's notion of 'power', Weedon's (1987:113) explains 'power' as "a dynamic of control and lack of control between discourses and the subjects, constituted by discourses, who are their agents". Similar to van Dijk, Weedon (1987) also sees 'power' as within the power struggle between the control or lack of control among different social groups. This view to 'power' points out the relation between 'power' and 'discourse', where the former is exercised within the latter.

The power struggle, 'power over or resistance against other groups' in van Dijk and 'the dynamic of control and lack of control' in Weedon, is somehow close to the understanding of 'hegemony' in CDS. Draw on Gramsci's theory of power, Fairclough (2013) states that power is constituted by two components, 'domination' and 'hegemony'. For Fairclough (2013), 'domination' refers to practices (often involves coercion and enforcement) that are exercised publicly and explicitly so as to control over groups; whereas 'hegemony' exists in more private and implicit ways (Fairclough, 2013). Compared to 'domination', 'hegemony' aims at the 'intellectual and moral leadership' and often operates in less political sectors, such as education, culture and family (Forgacs, 1988: 235). Consistent with this view, one can argue that discourse is one of the domains that hegemony is exercised. For instance, Fairclough (2010:28) states that "orders of discourse are viewed as domains of hegemony and hegemonic (ideological) struggle…".

It should be noted that 'hegemony' is sometimes misunderstood as absolute, however, Eagleton (2007:47) argues that "no hegemony can thus ever be absolute", and thus challengeable and changeable. These challenges (and potential changes) to hegemony are due to the fact that in any historical period, there are aspects that cannot be accommodated or covered by the dominant culture (William 1973). Hegemony can be challenged and changed in two ways, either by seeking a new path other than the dominant one, or through enlightenment, and both of them can happen in both 'residual' or 'emergent' forms (William 1973). 'Residual', refers to "the cultural and social vestiges of a previous social formation" whereas 'emergent' means "the new meanings, values, practices, significances and experiences that are created" (William 1973 as cited in Vessey 2013:23). This interpretation of 'hegemony' and challenges (and changes) to 'hegemony' is particularly appropriate for the current research. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, there are various beliefs/attitudes/ideologies) in Chinese society towards housing, some being dominant, some being residual, some being dominant for a long time, some being emergent and newly formed. This diachronic perspective on ideologies that may gain or lose a hegemonic status constitutes the base of our view of housing ideologies in Chinese society.

In this account of 'ideology', another term being frequently discussed by CDS scholars also arises and that is 'culture'. The understanding of 'culture' in this research is grounded in social theory, which views 'culture' as "profoundly political, biased, and partial inscriptions" (Park 2005:12). This account

of 'cultural' being linked with 'ideology' is further explained by Ortner (1998:4) that "cultural constructions are always 'ideological,' always situated with respect to the forms and modes of power operating in a given time and space".   In other words, 'culture' is understood in relation to social positions and hierarchy and can be used to demarcate social groups with different interests.

Having explained the roots and development of CDS and its major tenets, we can now come to address an earlier question raised regarding CDS: the question of why there is still a need for CDS, the answer to which is found through exploring the differences between CDS and other discourse analysis approaches. The answer lies in the premodifier "critical". Wodak and Meyer (2016: 7) explain: "critical theories…want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection". This explanation points out the 'emancipative' nature of CDS, as Fairclough and Wodak explain (1997: 259), "CDA…intervenes on the side of the dominated and oppressed groups and against dominating groups, and…it openly declares the emancipatory interests that motivate it".

Grounded in the view that language is not simply a tool for communicating information but also a means of ordering social activities, CDS does not only analyse social issues critically, but also suggests better ways of representation and contributes to changing social reality through critique, as van Dijk (1993: 252) puts it:

> *"Their [critical discourse analysts'] hope, if occasionally illusionary, is*
> *change through critical understanding. Their perspective, if possible, that of*
> *those who suffer most from dominance and inequality ... on of the criteria of*
> *their work is solidarity with those who need it most." (van Dijk 1993: 252)*

Fairclough (2010: 8) also agrees that CDS has the potential to mitigate "social wrongs" through reproducing "interpretations and explanations of areas of social life". As texts are often "sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance" (Wodak, 2007:210), CDS takes particular interests in the manifestations and manipulations of power through linguistic form. Wodak (2007) further illustrates that power is exercised not only through texts, but also through the control of genres of or access to such texts. Accordingly, a specific CDA approach is helpful for this research to understand the social and political power struggle in Chinese society. A CDS research can therefore "help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation" (Fairclough (1989:1). By investigating the news articles and reader comments in the CHD, and their broader social and political contexts, power struggles, particularly between the ones who have the power to affect people's ownership of a house and those who do not own a house, can be reflected. However, reflecting power struggles in a society is just the preliminary goal of CDS, what CDS actually strives for is to promote social change. This is because "changes in language use are an important part of wider social and cultural changes" (Fairclough 1992a:5). This emancipatory agenda, embraced with interdisciplinary theories and methods, is something that distinguishes CDS from DA. Within the goals of this particular project, the emancipatory element has to do with recognising and giving power to the counter-discourse, which holds the government responsible for its actions and for the current state of the housing issue, thus demanding (and possibly eventually gaining) more say in the way housing policies are decided.

Based on the view that discourse and society are mutually influential (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999), CDS advocates interventionism in the social practices it critically investigates. This also sets requirements to discourse analysts. van Dijk (1993: 253) argues that "critical discourse scholars

should… be social and political scientists, as well as social critics and activists". Similarly, Fairclough (1989:234) also explains that "those who act as catalysts in the raising of consciousness…must be people who have the theocratical background to enable them to act in this way, as well as sharing the experience of the oppressed to a sufficient extent for them to be accepted as catalysts". Toolan (1997: 89) even opts for a prescriptive stance that CDS scholars should make proposals to offer a prescription of how things should be written about to "minimize inequity, hegemony and control".

Adherent to this agenda and principles discussed earlier, there are many different approaches within CDS, for instance, Fairclough's Dialectical-Relational Approach, van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach and Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), which are the most influential approaches in CDS. However, these approaches are continuously being modified to meet purposes set by new research questions or perspectives, for instance 'argumentation' being more and more emphasised by scholars adopting Fairclough's Dialectical-Relational Approach (e.g.: Caterina 2018; Sengul 2019), including Fairclough himself (Fairclough and Fairclough 2010; Fairclough and Fairclough 2011). Aside from these three notable approaches, there are many others such as van Leeuwen's Social Actor approach (1996), Kress and van Leeuwen's Multimodal Approach (2001), KhosraviNik's Social Media Approach (2017), and the 'cognitive turn' (to be further discussed in 2.3) led by Chilton (2005), O'Halloran (2005) and Hart (2010, 2011). It is therefore that the acronym CDA becomes CDS, highlighting its diversity of the theories and methods (van Dijk 2013).

Although all approaches in CDS share the commitment of social change and emancipation, each of them has their own set of research focus, epistemological underpinnings and theoretical emphasis. Accordingly, discourse analysts need to pay particular attention to their own needs so as to choose the appropriate approach for their research. For instance, the DHA approach, strongly influenced by Theodor Adorno and Jurgen Habermas, places particular emphasis on discourses of nationalism, racism, ethnicism, right-wing populism, and sexism in the Europe, thus being appropriate for research with a focus on the historic and strategic nature of discourse (Reisigl, 2017). The Socio-Cognitive Approach draws heavily on theories of socio-psychology and social representation (Wodak & Meyer, 2009), and it argues that there is a mental model which "define and control our everyday perception and interaction in general and the production and comprehension of discourse in particular" (Van Dijk 2014: 49). His approach focusses on how the relationship between the social structures and discourse structures via the mental model, thus appropriate for research with a focus on mental representations. Fairclough's Dialectical-Relational Approach draws heavily on the works of Michel Foucault and Michael Halliday (Wodak & Meyer, 2009), focusing on the dialectic interactions of discursive practice and other social practices, thus being appropriate for the current research. In the following section, I will further introduce this approach and explain why it is chosen as one of the analytical approaches and how it is used in this research.

2.2 The three-dimensional model

Among all the approaches to CDA, Fairclough's Dialectical-Relational approach is the one that "looks straight at power, hegemony and dialectic, and stares them down" (Fairclough 1997:85). It focus not just on the power manifested in discourse, but more importantly, the power behind discourse. In other words, it investigates not merely what happens in a specific discourse produced by people with power, but more importantly, it explores how this discourse is shaped and manipulated by those people with power, as well as the social order in general. The Dialectical-Relational approach is a three-dimensional framework for designing and analysing discourse which clarifies the relationship between text, discourse practice and social practice (presented in Figure 2-1). Hence, the analysis of texts "should not be artificially isolated from analysis of institutional and discoursal practices within texts are embedded" (Fairclough, 1995a:9).
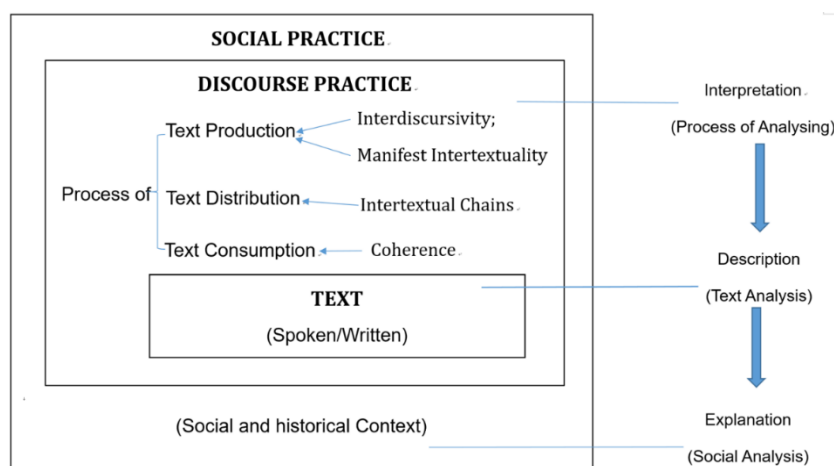
Figure2- 1 Fairclough's three-dimensional approach to CDA

As shown in Figure 2-1, the first dimension of the framework is textual analysis in which the linguistic features and organisation of detailed instances of discourse are examined. This provides a useful way to analyse a variety of discourses. Fairclough (1992b) later explained that the textual analysis comprises two complementary levels of analysis: "linguistic analysis" and "intertextual analysis" (Fairclough, 1992b:194). Linguistic analysis focuses on choices and patterns in vocabulary (e.g., wording and metaphor), grammar (e.g., transitivity and modality), as well as textual structure (or turn-taking, in the case of conversation) and cohesion (e.g., conjunction and schemata) (Fairclough, 1992b:194). Intertextual analysis is concerned with conventions of and relations between genres, styles and narratives, all of which are networked together in what he calls "orders of discourse" (Fairclough, 1992b:194).

The second dimension of the model treats discourse as discursive practice, that is, a process of text production, distribution, and consumption. It requires attention be paid to aspects such as speech acts, coherence, and intertextuality, which link text to its surrounding context. In this model, Fairclough (1992a, 2003) highlights that there are two aspects of intertextuality within discourse: manifest intertextuality, which can be analysed in terms of how quoted utterances are selected, changed, and (re)contextualized; and constitutive intertextuality, which can be analysed in terms of how texts are composed of heterogeneous elements such as generic conventions, discourse types, and style.

The third dimension of Fairclough's framework is "discourse-as-social-practice", which investigates the ideology and the effects of hegemony. Hegemony, as discussed in previous section, of course has to do with power, as Fairclough (1992a:93) puts it "the articulation and rearticulation of orders of discourse is correspondingly one stake in hegemonic struggle". In order words, the side that

controls the discourse is the side that has power and vice versa.

It is worth noting that the three dimensions in this framework are not separate from each other, but work together closely and dynamically, leading to the discussion of the key concept in Fairclough's model: the 'order of discourse'. Drawing on Michel Foucault's concept of interdiscursivity (1972), where orders of discourse are defined macroscopically (e.g., politics, law, and science), Fairclough develops his own approach by incorporating contemporary developments in social theory. According to Fairclough (1995b, 2001), social practices are networked in a particular way and this constitutes a social order. Thus, we can call the discourse/semiotic aspects of the social order the order of discourse. In other words, the 'order of discourse' is the way in which different genres, styles, and discourses are networked together, reflecting the network of social practices.

Fairclough (1995a) argues that texts circulate within orders of discourse are transformed within the process of distribution. In this process, media plays a mediating position between the public (politics, law, science, etc.) and private (the domain of reception) orders of discourse. When it comes to the order of discourse within the media, Fairclough (1995a) sketches out two core relations: the external relations between the order of discourse of the media and other neighbouring public and private orders of discourse; and the internal relations between its component genres and discourses. In this research project, *People's Daily* plays this mediating position, running between public housing policies and people's reception of such policies through the news articles it produced. The external relations in this regard refer to *People's Daily*'s relations with agents involved in housing events, such as the party, the government, the people and property developers; whereas the internal relations refer to relations within the text, that is how events/policies are arranged/realised through text.

He further proposes that both internal and external relations contain "choice" and "chain" (Fairclough, 1995a:64) relations. When referring to the choice relation, he notes that externally, the order of discourse of the media has the opportunity to choose what kinds of public sources can be represented and how they are placed; internally, it has the lexical choice (e.g., selecting metaphors) on describing the discursive practices which can be later applied in the intertextual analysis. As for the chain relation, there is both an internal and an external element to it. That is to say, a communicative event in the media is a chain of communicative events externally, and it has internal chain relations in terms of source and text production. For instance, a new policy on housing, which a news article reports, is normally a consequence of other events, thus being in an external chain relation; at the same time, this policy will then become a repeated point of reference within the news article itself and in future news articles, thus being in an internal chain relation. Fairclough (1995a) highlights that the chain relation can become apparent in the transformation of texts when moving along the previous chains. This is to say that chains reflect the intertextual aspect, where texts can be referenced, embedded and recontextualized in other texts which can, in turn, be embedded in further texts — and so on and so forth.

Following Fairclough's understanding of 'order of discourse', this current research will investigate the constitution of chains and relations through the external and internal articulation a discourse formation in the process of interdiscursivity. More specifically, when it comes to external relations, this project investigates the media order of discourse and use of conceptual metaphors between the government-led media and the related discourses (economic/market-discourse, "Chinese Dream" discourse, "China versus the West" discourse amongst others). This includes planned choices (Zeng et al 2022), a significant portion of which are state-mandated and the result of a particular political strategy (e.g., how to publicly handle and manage the news of newly applied economic measures) (Fairclough 1995a). At the same time, public-led discourse (i.e., the discourse that takes

place in the comment section of published news articles) has external relations to the same discourses that the media uses, as well as an external relation to the media itself (i.e., the media producers, the publication process, and the process of censorship). The choice element here has to do specifically with how counter-discourses are created and what government-led discourses they decide to challenge or subvert. By using the term 'challenge' and 'subvert', we follow the distinction made by Kosetzi and Polyzou (2009), where the former is simply to criticise the government-led discourse, while the latter not only criticises such government-led discourse but also shows explicit intentions to substitute it.

The chain element concerns all those interdiscursive relations that are formed in both the government-led and the public-led discourse. It is finally worth noting the "metadiscursive" nature (i.e. a discourse that comments on and shows awareness of a specific discourse) of the public-led discourse which will sometimes comment on the discursive and interdiscursive practices of the government-led discourse. This, for instance, can be seen when comments address the change and/or avoidance of prevalent themes and topics in the government-led discourse.

2.3 Towards a multi-dimensional model of metaphors in Chinese discourse

With its powerful role in exposing (and potentially deposing) power inequality in society, CDA has been widely applied to analyse social issues and events. Since its inception CDA has had to face new challenges, new developments and keep evolving in order to remain a relevant and powerful framework. Some important developments, which are crucial to the current study, include:

(a) With the advent of the internet and the boom of social media, public involvement and interaction in social issues has become a substantial topic that cannot be neglected. This unprecedented rise in the engagement of the public in the social sphere requires CDA researchers to examine not only the traditional dominant discourse(s) in society, but also public-led discourse. This turn can be shown through new CDA "groundwork" (e.g., Fairclough 2015; Wodak and Meyer 2016), where new perspectives and methodologies are introduced and incorporated within the older CDA traditions (e.g., Dialectical-Relational Approach, Discourse-Historical Approach).

(b) In CDA's attempt to better understand the ways in which power is exerted, specifically with the goal of manipulation, it quickly became clear that a turn towards more formal tools of argumentation was necessary. Therefore, the incorporation of frameworks appropriate for analysing argumentation was another important development in CDA (Blass 2005; Rigotti 2005). The most influential approach in this strand of research has been the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) to CDA (Reisigl 2014, 2017; Wodak and Meyer 2016). This understanding of argumentation requires employing argumentation schemata and their essential elements, such as "topoi" (defined as the "obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises" in an argumentation – Wodak, 2001b:74) and "warrant" (that which connects the argument(s) with the conclusion, also called "conclusion rule" – Kienpointner 1992, as cited in Wodak 2001b:74). This more formalised analysis of argumentation allows a better understanding of techniques of manipulation. When it comes to the study of metaphor functions in particular, it is important to consider both the micro-rhetorical linguistic aspects

and the macro-rhetorical purposes (Huckin et al., 2012). An analysis that is restricted to the micro-rhetorical level would be unable to view the bigger picture of how metaphors not only contribute to but also create discourses, by shaping and sustaining logical links between the premises and conclusions of the arguments that each discourse adopts (see Chapter 6 for a full introduction and discussion of this approach)

(c) With a focus on relations of discourse and other social practice, CDS is sometimes being accused of ignoring the importance of cognition as the cognitive underpinnings of discourse were rarely considered (Chilton 2005, 2011; Koller 2005). As Hart (2011:1) claims that "to fully account for any links between language, legitimisation and knowledge, CDS needs to address the cognitive process involved in text-production and text-interpretation". Especially when it comes to the understanding of metaphor, recent studies show the benefits of incorporating a cognitive perspective within CDA analysis (e.g., Koller 2004; Hart 2008, 2011, 2015; Musolff 2012). The "cognitive turn" in CDA, advocated by Paul Chilton and Teun van Dijk, has attracted increasingly attention from scholars in CDS and became one of the research focus of CDS (Polyzou, 2012).

(d) Culture is another territory that attracts CDA researchers' interests, and sees more and more contributions made by researchers from diverse cultural backgrounds (e.g., Widdowson 1995; Schegloff 1997; Stubbs 1997; Toolan 1997; Tyrwhitt-Drake 1999; Slembrouck 2001; Verschueren 2001; Blommaert 2005; Shi 2005, 2009, 2012, 2014).This development has allowed CDA to move away from its rather "Euro-centric" and Western origins, and to become more inclusive and reflective of non-western cultures and values (Chilton, 2005).

Accordingly, the following four aspects are all central to the current project:

(a) The methodological developments in analysing computer-mediated communication, social media discourse, and public-led online discourse are instrumental to the methodology and analysis of user comments that are posted as responses to online news articles (i.e., the two corpora of this study, the News corpus and the Comment corpus).

(b) The understanding of how metaphors are used deliberately and manipulatively in government-led discourse, as well as how that manipulation is detected and subverted within user-led counter-discourse, is greatly enhanced by a formalized approach to argumentation (see also Chapter 6).

(c) The cognitive turn in metaphor studies, which is the basis for CMT also forms the analytical tool for this project's main unit of analysis, i.e., metaphors.

(d) The cultural diversification of CDA allows the positioning of the current analysis within a cultural perspective that considers the particularities and uniqueness of the Chinese situation, as well as a comparative perspective that teases apart the global and the culture-specific elements of political and economic discourse.

The last two elements (i.e., metaphor within CMT and culture) need to be further discussed in order for this chapter to reach, in its conclusion, a "bespoke" model of analysis which is most appropriate for this project's goals.

2.3.1 CMT

This section aims to briefly explain how and why CDA can incorporate Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as it is the model of metaphor analysis that is most compatible to the goals of CDA. First, I will summarize the classical theories of metaphor and explain why they are inappropriate for CDA; I will then move on to introducing the cognitive approach to metaphor.

Ever since Aristotle, metaphor has been treated as an important element of human language. In the traditional and classical theories of metaphor, metaphor is merely seen as a semantic phenomenon, or "a matter of language not thought" (Lakoff, 1993: 202). In Aristotle's view, metaphor is giving one thing a name that belongs to other things, and it is a figure of speech appearing frequently in poetic works. This view of metaphor as meaning transfer based on similarity is further extended in subsequent theoretical approaches, such as "the comparison theory", which holds that metaphor is based on analogy or similarity between objects while characteristics/features that are irrelevant are deleted in the process (Dickins, 2005); and the "substitution theory", which views metaphor as a rhetorical phenomenon whose essence is to substitute the literal term by a figurative one (Black, 1962). The problem with the classical theories of metaphor is that they see the role of metaphor simply as ornamental, being restricted to a word-to-word level of analysis, and thus do not capture the interactions between metaphor and the social reality.

Against the traditional approach, cognitive linguists transformed metaphor from merely a rhetorical tool to a mode intrinsic to human thought. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson proposed the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), which developed the cognitive approach to metaphor into a robust model of analysis. The fundamental tenet of this model is that humans understand the world through their embodied experience. As a result, when they come across abstract or unfamiliar things they understand and conceptualize them through the concrete and familiar elements of their lived experience. Lakoff and Johnson posited that metaphors were part of the human conceptual system and were born through the use of language in everyday speech. They further highlighted that metaphors do not solely exist in poetic or literary texts, but they are also deeply rooted in people's daily experience. Accordingly, the greatest contribution of CMT is that it views metaphor not merely as an analogy/comparison/substitution on a semantic level, but rather, it sees metaphor as a set of mappings between a source domain (objects people are familiar with, often concrete) and a target domain (topics that people want to understand, often abstract and difficult to grasp) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Kövecses 2017). It is this notion of "mapping" that distinguishes CMT from other views of metaphor and provides the opportunity to further link the use of metaphor to social reality by exploring the interactive relation between the two (i.e., the ability of social reality to shape the use of metaphor and vice versa).

At this point it is worth some new trends and developments in CMT. First comes the issue of methodology. It has been argued in the past that CMT methodology has not been robust, consistent, or systematic enough, its main problem being an over-reliance on the researchers' own intuitions for deciding what counts as a metaphorical use (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). Selection bias is another potential concern, since CMT has relied on a small size of ("hand-picked") data rather than extensive corpus data which better reflect language use (e.g., Deignan 2005; O'Halloran 2007). However, such criticism on methodology has been dated as both of these criticisms have been addressed with adopting methods from corpus linguistics (e.g.: Deignan, 2015; Semino 2017; Semino et al., 2017), and this is something that this current project aims to contribute to (see Chapter 4).

Another trend in CMT is calling attention to taking the wider context of the metaphors used into

account (e.g.: Musolff 2012; Kövecses 2015; Leezenberg, 2021.) Highlighting the importance of incorporating CMT within CDA, Wodak (2006) argues that the framework's adhesion to cognitive issues and to the so-called 'cognitive unconscious' neglects various contextual factors, the understanding of which are necessary for interpreting the full impact of metaphor use. However, this deficiency can be addressed by using Fairclough's model, as explained previously (section 2.2), allowing a broader contextualisation both of the individual metaphors (within the text where they belong) and of the text itself (within the wider discourse practice and social practice).

In recent years, CMT also shows particular interest in investigating the role that culture plays in metaphor use (e.g.: Jing-Schmidt 2016; Kövecses 2005, 2010, 2015, 2017; Yu 2008, 2016, 2017). Despite the universally shared attributes of human cognition, which allow a shared perception of the physical world, it is undoubtable that culture has a powerful influence on human experience, thus resulting in considerable diversity in all domains of cultural production — metaphorical language being one of them. Thus, despite some largely shared tendencies in metaphorical links between concepts and domains of experience, the specifics of conceptual metaphor creation can vary across languages and cultures (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Kövecses 2005). This criticism has been gradually addressed by researchers from both cognitive linguistics and cultural studies, with a growing body of research situating the analysis metaphors within a specific cultural context (e.g., Pritzker 2007; Yu 2008; Kövecses 2010, 2015, 2017; Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013; Zibin and Altakhaineh 2018).

Given the aforementioned considerations, the benefits of the combination of CDA and CMT become clear (Charteris-Black 2004a; Koller 2005; Hart 2008, 2010, 2011; Musolff 2012, 2017). According to Charteris-Black (2004a:28), the basis for integrating CDA and CMT is their shared connection to persuasion: ideology is spread and formed through persuasive (linguistic) means, while metaphor functions as a powerful persuasive tool which shapes the perception of reality (for further discussion on how conceptual metaphors "construct and reproduce ideologies", see Goatly 2007:30). As such, metaphor can be used to serve all kinds of intentions (Koller, 2005), both by those who have power (and control the hegemonic discourses) and by the disempowered (who create counter-discourses). This is exactly the type of investigation that the current study aims to embark on — i.e., examining dominant discourses and their counter-discourses as these are shaped and reinforced by metaphor use — which is why a model of analysis that integrates CDA and CMT is most appropriate.

2.3.2 CCDA: Doing CDA in the Chinese context

In examining challenges and trends in CDA and CMT, it has been seen that both approaches call for special attention to culture, however their understanding and emphasis on the facets of culture differ. The relationship between CMT and culture has already been discussed: taking culture into consideration is a matter of broadening the reach and effectiveness of the model, acknowledging that aside from any universal tendencies there are culture-specific elements to metaphor use. For CDA, on the other hand, culture is understood in a more macroscopic perspective, which often comes along with power and within the discussion of social context. Although discourse is traditionally viewed as a representation of social reality and culture (e.g., Hall 1980; van Dijk 1998b), its function in constructing social reality/culture has gradually been noticed and highlighted. Taking media discourse as an example, "dominant social values and ideologies are often directly expressed and propagated in discourse" (Van Dijk, 1998b:27). The role of media in constructing social reality can be observed when we consider the power and influence of media outlets (controlled by corporations, media moguls, and the interests they serve) on shaping the public opinion, both overtly and covertly (e.g., D'Alessio and Allen 2000; Henry and Tator 2009; Druckmann and Parkin 2005; Saeed 2007). Accordingly, discourse

cannot just be regarded as a tool for representing social reality, but also as a tool for constructing it. Culture, in turn, is both the lens through which social reality is perceived (at an epistemological level) and the ground where social reality is rooted. The discourses that shape social reality can both influence and be influenced by existing cultural values/beliefs, thus (re)defining knowledge and affecting thoughts and actions (Foucault, 1972; Grace 1987). The inextricable and dynamic link between culture and social reality makes the consideration of the former necessary when analysing the latter.

The discourse-constitutes-culture point of view can also be found in the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday 1994; Halliday and Hasan 1989), which argues that discourse analysis is grounded in a view of language not only as a simple tool for communicating information but also as a means of arranging social activities. Halliday (1994:16) argues that discourse is the site where meanings are created and changed; in other words, it is a cluster of meaning deriving from the semiotic system which constitutes culture. This discourse-constitutes-culture viewpoint is further extended in CDA; for instance, Fairclough (1995b:45) proposes that the media order of discourse can also be examined as a territory of cultural power and hegemony as "there are cases of media moguls directly manipulating the media outlines they own in their own interests". Furthermore, Fairclough also holds the view from critical theory and (post)structuralism that media texts themselves also are cultural artefacts in their own right and operate through reflecting and contributing to shifting cultural values and identities[2]. In short, culture in CDA is not only an aggregate of ethic philosophies, but, more importantly, it is always armed with power as a tool or capital in governing.

It is therefore worth turning to a relatively recent approach which incorporates cultural considerations within CDA. This has been called the "cultural approach to CDA", CCDA for short (Shi 2005, 2012, 2014; Gavriely-Nuri 2010, 2012, 2017). The fundamental principle of CCDA is that "no text is independent of its cultural contexts" (Gavriely-Nuri, 2012:79). The main aim of this approach is to expose the how cultural codes are embedded in discourse and how these cultural codes contribute to the reproduction of power abuse. Compared to other approaches to CDA which view culture as part of the social context, CCDA takes culture as "a diversity of competing practices of meaning construction, or forms of life, of particular groups of people" (Shi, 2005:2), or as "compact packages of shared values, norms, ethos and social belief" (Gavriely-Nuri, 2012:78). The key to CCDA lies in identifying and decoding such cultural codes. Since the cultural codes of a specific cultural community are generally exclusive to its members (Hall 1980, 1993; Simons and Hyatt 1999) and are difficult for other cultural community members to access, decoding such cultural codes requires the discourse analysts to be familiar with the cultural traditions and beliefs of that cultural community. When it comes the Chinese context, Shi (2005, 2012, 2014) attempts to provide a CCDA approach that is specific to the Chinese cultural community, which he calls Chinese Discourse Studies (CNDS).

The CNDS approach is trying to advocate for the individual intellectual identity of Chinese scholarship (and by extension that of all other non-Western post-colonial cultures) in response to Western-dominated scholarship and methodologies. It places emphasis on the Western hegemony and argues that traditional CDA studies has been long dominated by Western scholars and their respective value systems, concepts and topics, resulting in discourses of non-Western cultures being represented as variations to the Western ones (which are treated as the "norm", see also Tian and Chilton, 2014). At the same time, Shi (2005) recognizes that the "discursive capital" (i.e., the set of cultural codes – Gavriely-Nuri, 2012) is not only merely owned by a specific community, but also the global

---

[2] Further discussion can be found in the "cultural hegemony" theory proposed by Antonio Gramsci, whose main argument rests on exposing how cultural institutions are employed by the ruling organization (the state) to maintain power within society.

community and, consequently, Western and non-Western communities should be considered as complementary to each other rather than one being the norm and the other being a deviation from the norm.

In terms of practice, the CNDS approach advocates that research within this framework should be carried out by scholars who are aware of Chinese history, and the concepts, values, and stances that exist in the Chinese community (hence "locally grounded" – Shi, 2014:58). At the same time, however, CNDS researchers should also take into consideration China's position in a globalized world, where many cultural aspects and practices (e.g., online communication) are globally shared/disseminated (hence "globally minded"). This becomes all the more necessary considering the opening up of the Chinese community and its participation in the global community as it moves away from a phase of self-containment and isolation. Thus, three main developments in the Chinese social reality can be considered in support of this "locally grounded"– "globally minded" principle of CNDS: the evolution of Chinese cultural tradition; the developmental condition of China, where new and old ideologies/voices mix; and, advances in global communication. In all, Shi (2014:108) summarizes the mission statement of CNDS as follows:

> *We require in CNDS that the researcher pays primary attention to the ways*
> *that culture and for that matter intercultural/local/global relations and practices*
> *are reproduced, maintained, utilized, appropriated or changed in and through*
> *linguistic communication and interaction.*

Shi (2014:61) exemplifies some types of cultural elements that a CNDS scholar would have to be familiar with, in order to understand both the historical trajectory of Chinese culture and any developments that influence the current social reality: 仁 (*benevolence*), 礼 (*rites*), 和 (*harmony*), 客气 (*politeness*), 含蓄 (*implicitness*), 面子 (*face*), 关系 (*relations*), 孝 (*filial piety*), 爱国 (*patriotism*).These values, albeit somehow having some overlap with the Western values such as *politeness* and *face,* are strongly with Chinese characteristics, as they are rooted from the Confucianism and serving the interest of maintaining social orders (Kim and Park 2000; Hill 2006). With its long traditions in Chinese culture, these values are still present in Chinese society, thus will also be investigated in the project (see Chapter 5). It is worth pointing out that, in the same book, Shi (2014) places some emphasis on the issue of language and rhetoric, the particularities of Chinese language, and the aesthetics of its rhetoric. This is relevant to the discussion of metaphor since the role and presence of metaphor as a trope can have a different degree of influence within a style and mode-of-expression that is oriented towards an aesthetic rather than strictly logical-argumentative result. This is certainly something that the current project needs to take into consideration when examining the presence of metaphors as a rhetorical device within different discourses (for further discussion see sections 5.5.2, 5.6.2, and 5.7.2).

If we were to criticize the CNDS framework (and CCDA in general), it could be argued that its main tenet, i.e., the need for culture specificity, is already subsumed under the goals of CDA (especially Fairclough's model), with the investigation of the cultural context is part of the investigation of the social context. However, it should be noted that the emphasis on culture can easily be missed within the general CDA framework, which is why CCDA's points should be kept at the very least as a methodological caveat. In his book, Shi (2014) provides a comprehensive and very systematic list of all the elements that constitute Chinese culture and this can be used as a researcher's "checklist" when discussing the culture-specific elements of discourse.

While adopting (elements of) the CNDS framework, it is finally worth considering the aspects

that it risks missing: by overemphasizing the socio-cultural aspects that unite the Chinese community (with the goal of strengthening its position in the global stage), it tends to underemphasize socio-economic issues (disparities, inequalities) within the Chinese community. There is therefore a danger of then brushing aside one of the crucial goals of CDA, which is to highlight the power inequalities created by neoliberalism. Even though it has not been officially recognised by the Chinese leaders, China's economic practice has been broadly considered neoliberal by global academics, especially in
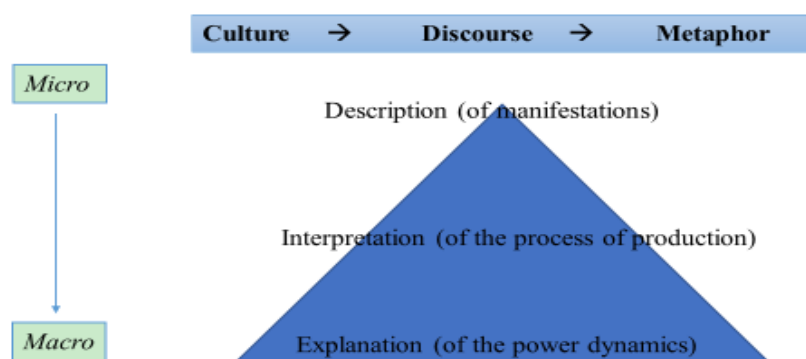
the time frame with which this study is concerned, i.e., 30 years after the reform and opening-up (1978) and then nearly 20 years of development under the economic system that is open to market economy (since 1992). While examining the relationship between neoliberalism and China's economy, Harvey (2007) points out that there are elements of neoliberalism in the state's policies and rhetoric.[3] For example, the state's fixation on a "comprehensive housing market system" which has the characteristics of free-market competition, as well as its tendency to dismiss economic inequalities as "side-effects" or "labour pains" of China's economic reform, are both akin to the essence of neoliberalism. In this progressively capitalist and neoliberal society, the link between social/socio-cultural parameters and the country's economy should be an integral part of any CDA (or CCDA-inspired) model.

2.4 Overview of the framework of analysis

Given the previously discussed theoretical and methodological considerations, we shall now proceed to outlining the framework of analysis to be used in the present research. The framework needs to be able to accommodate all three of the main pillars of this project: (a) the study of online discourse and counter-discourse, (b) the Chinese context (with its culture-specific as well as global characteristics), and (c) the use of conceptual metaphor as a rhetorical and persuasive device. The proposed framework (as presented in Figure 2-2) uses Fairclough's CDA as a starting point, while also adopting the CCDA (and CNDS) considerations regarding the importance of culture. At the same time, it incorporates the CMT perspective for the analysis of metaphors, while also acknowledging the importance of linking CMT analysis to rhetoric and argumentation (similar to what the DHA strand of CDA proposes – see

Figure2- 2 Metaphors in Chinese discourse: a model of analysis

section 2.3).

First of all, we have the three interconnected domains of analysis: culture, discourse, and

---

[3] This discussion appears in a chapter called "neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics" – a play of words on China's official status as "socialism with Chinese characteristics".

metaphor, which are approached at three levels, ranging from the microscopic perspective to the macroscopic. We start with the descriptive micro-level, which is concerned with the text as a cultural product and as the manifestation of specific discourse(s), which are in turn manifested through the linguistic/conceptual elements of metaphor use. Next three is the meso-level of interpretation, which is concerned with the examination of processes of production that give rise to the already discussed cultural products, discourses, and conceptual metaphors in particular. Finally, the macro-level of explanation concerns the dynamics of power (hegemony), ideology, and manipulation as these interact with the cultural and the discursive elements that relate to metaphor use.

This framework, which will be used as a model for metaphor analysis, is compatible with the previously discussed CDA and CMT perspectives. For instance, the Critical Metaphor Theory proposed by Charteris-Black (2004a, 2011), identifies three levels/stages for analysing metaphor:

(a) Identification: This takes place at the micro-level of analysis ("description" in the current framework), where the focus lies on the characteristics of linguistic expressions and the distinction between literal and metaphorical uses. Within our current model, metaphors are also distinguished in terms of conventionalisation versus novelty, but also, crucially, in terms of culture-specificity versus universality.

(b) Interpretation: This goes beyond the linguistic expression and takes the pragmatic and cognitive elements related to the metaphor into consideration. In this level, the choice of conceptual metaphors (and the selected links between source and target domains) are analysed. Within our current model, as previously mentioned, we also place emphasis on the discursive and cultural aspects of metaphor selection. Being rooted in CDA means that the proposed model also follows the three dimensions of interpretation identified in Fairclough's approach: metaphor *production*, *distribution* and *consumption* within a specific social context and involving identifiable social agents.

(c) Explanation: This concerns the underlying ideologies and motives behind metaphor selection. Within our current model, emphasis is placed on the goals and cultural resources of hegemonic discourses and the ways in which these can be subverted by counter-discourses.

Having outlined the theoretical roots of this model of analysis, what now remains to be discussed is the methods through which the appropriate data can be collected and annotated in order to serve the research purposes of this study.

Chapter 3 The Socio-political and Economic Context

As explained in Chapter 2, it is imperative for any CDS work to examine the background of the relevant discourses (see Fairclough's three-dimensional model as shown in Figure2-1), which includes investigation into the social and historical context ("social practice") and the text production process ("discourse practice"). Accordingly, the main goal of this chapter is to describe and assess the context and production process of the Chinese housing discourse (CHD). Additionally, what seems to be idiosyncratic and esoteric of the Chinese culture (or "Chinese characteristics") also needs to be addressed.

This chapter will be structured as follows. Section 3.1 will present a historical review of the development of the socio-economic system and the housing system. Following from this, section 3.2 will examine the situation in the 90s and 21st century, during which the housing issue was sowed and burst out. In section 3.3, the role of the primary social actors involved in CHD (i.e., the state, the news media and the public) and the dynamics between them will be discussed (3.3); and, finally, the main discourses that constitute the broader CHD and the ways in which these are associated with the shifting (political) ideologies and social values (especially values on housing) will be elaborated in 3.4.

3.1 The social and historical background of Chinese economy

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the Chinese economy has undergone many changes, as it evolved from one of the poorest economies to being the largest in the world (Anderlini and Hornby, 2014). The Reform and Opening-up in 1978 has been broadly recognised as the most significant milestone in the country's trajectory (Qian, 2000), marking its turn from a closed socialism economy to an open market economy, and the shift of its housing from a Maoist state-led system to Neo-liberal land-centred system (Li 2016; Wu 2016; Wang 2019). Using the Reform as a reference point, in this section China's developmental trajectory and housing system transition will be discussed in relation to political and social issues.

3.1.1 Pre-Reform stage

The pre-reform decades can be viewed as one of the largest economic policy experiments and development programs in modern history (Zhu, 2012). After the establishment of the PRC, a new generation of leaders embarked on an intensive program of industrial growth and social reform adapted from the Soviet economic model (Bernstein et al 2010). Despite some experimentation, the economic system did not undergo any significant structural transformations, remaining a (Soviet-type) "planned economy". This is to say a model where all major aspects of the economy are centralized and controlled by the government, in this case the Chinese Communist Party (CCP[4]), with the aim of setting and achieving rigid progress milestones.

---

[4] Although both CPC (Communist Party of China) and CCP (Chinese Communist Party) are commonly used to refer to the ruling party of China, the current researcher observed some differences in its usage. It is observed that the acronym CPC is mostly used within China, whereas CCP is commonly used outside of China (by Western media which hold a somehow sceptical or hostile attitude towards the party and/or China in particular). In CDA research, the ruling party in China is conventionally named CCP (e.g. Chilton, Tian and Wodak 2010; Cao, Tian and Chilton 2014). Accordingly, this project adopts the standard CDA terminology, as a mere matter of convention, while retaining a critical and conscious understanding of the nuances of both terms.

China's First Five-Year Plan[5] (1953–1957) (FFYP) was inspired by the achievements of the Soviet Union, which had started implementing five-year plans since the 1930s. These were a series of social and economic development initiatives, which set specific targets to be achieved by the national economy within a five-year time frame. During the course of the FFYP, intensive Soviet-assisted projects were set up and technical resources were transferred to China from the Soviet Union, significantly accelerating China's industrialization at that time (Rawski 1979; Naughton 2007).

The success of the FFYP was largely undone in the period that followed, which is known as "The Great Leap Forward" (大跃进) (1958–1962). The name "Great Leap Forward" originated as a slogan in the editorial of People's Daily, the official newspaper of CCP, and later became part of a campaign led by Chairman Mao Zedong. The campaign aimed to transform the country from an agrarian economy into a socialist society, through rapid industrialisation and collectivisation. However, the campaign did not meet its desired goals and, instead, had a negative economic and social outcome. As Perkins (2015:144) puts it "enormous amounts of investment produced only modest increases in production or none […] in short, the Great Leap was a very expensive disaster". The failure of agricultural policies, the movement of farmers from agricultural to industrial work, and adverse weather, led to millions of deaths from famine (Kung and Lin, 2003).

The short period that followed (1962–1966), tried to address and mitigate the failures of the Great Leap. The policies adopted in those years led to a new phase of growth, which was, however, not meant to last. From 1966 to 1976, nationwide social and economic turmoil was caused by the "Cultural Revolution" (文化大革命). This was the Maoist attempt to enforce China's communism by violently opposing certain aspects of tradition and purging any remnants of capitalism within the economy. Within this period of upheaval, the average growth rate of real per capita GDP was a modest 3.6% a year (NBSC, 2015).

3.1.2 Post-Reform stage

After the unsteady economic development of the previous decades, the CCP made some significant changes to economic policy at the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the CCP in December 1978. This was a phase of opening-up and development for the country (Liu and Feng, 2008) and became a crucial turning point.

The first significant action of the reform took place in the rural areas. It launched the "Household Contract Responsibility System" (家庭联产承包责任制) (HCRS) which allowed farmers to sell their agricultural products in local markets (Krusekopf, 2002). The HCRS also freed farmers from the collective farming system to the household responsibility system, which excited farmers' enthusiasm for production and stimulated the development of the rural economy.

The economic restructuring was then shifted from the rural areas to the cities. Qian and Wu (2000) argue that the industrial reform occurred in two stages. The first decade of reform stimulated the rise of local state/collective corporatism, while the second stage of reform accelerated the diversion of asset and profits from state enterprises into private enterprises (refer to Table 3-1). These strategies increased the market competition and economic dynamism (Rawski, 1994).

---

[5] The name was changed into Five-year Guidelines since the 11th five-year program in 2006, in order to reflect China's transition from a planned economy to a socialist market economy with more accuracy.

	1978	1980	1985	1990	1995	1998
State-Owned or Controlled	77.6	76.0	64.9	54.6	32.6	27.0
Collectives	22.4	23.5	32.1	35.6	35.6	36.3
Private	0.0	0.5	3.1	9.7	31.8	36.8

Note: State-owned means 100% state ownership, and state-controlled means the state has 51% or more shares in joint ventures or joint stock companies. Collectives refer to urban collective enterprises and rural township-village enterprises. Private enterprises refer to the rest, including foreign firms.

Table 3- 1 Ownership Composition in Industrial Output (%) (*Source: Qian and Wu, 2000*)

To boost the domestic economy, another initiative was to allow foreign capital to enter China. The Law on Chinese Foreign Equity Joint Ventures was introduced in 1979, and gradually implemented in the mid-1980s. This initiative directly boosted domestic GDP from an annual average of 6% prior to and 9.4% after the reform. It also accelerated the pace of urbanisation as rural dwellers migrated from the rural areas into cities with highly paid jobs (NBSC, 2015).

In 1992, the Chinese government formulated a policy to establish a Socialist Market Economy, which was a milestone in the economic reform, transforming a largely planned economy into a market system. The process of market liberalisation led China to become a major global exporter. The re-opening of the Shanghai Stock Exchange in 1990 marks the success of capital market operation in the socialist economy (Pistor and Xu 2005). The entry into the WTO in 2001 was portrayed in Chinese media as a golden opportunity as it largely boosts China's economy and opens China's market with more international investment and trades (Chow 2003; Agarwal and Wu 2004; Bloom et al., 2016). However, at the same time, this 'golden opportunity' is also considered as 'golden cage' which brings a series of social issues and problems such as economic inequality, bureaucratic corruption and bribes (Chow 2003; Hertel and Zhai 2006)

3.2 The economic context

In 2014, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced that China had surpassed the United States to become the world's largest economy[6] with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US$17.6 trillion, compared to $17.4 trillion for the US. Since the publication of this data the Chinese economy, its characteristics, and its future, have been a popular topic of discussion internationally, both in the media and in scholarly research. However, this was not the first time that Chinese economy drew global attention. When the financial crisis spread around the world in 2008, China was one of the few countries which resisted the crisis and grew its economy. As shown in Figure 3-1, the Chinese GDP kept growing steadily in 2008, despite the sudden slump in world economy. The view that China had the potential to lead the world economy out of the recession was widespread in both media and academic circles alike (e.g: Quah 2009; Yao and Chen 2009).

One of the major forces that protected China's economy from the global recession was the 4 trillion (US$586 billion) economic stimulus package announced by the State Council in late 2008

---

[6] Ben Carter, 2014. 'Is China's economy really the largest in the world?' BBC News. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-30483762 Last accessed: [12/19/2016]

(Naughton, 2009; Yu, 2011). With the aim of minimizing the impact from the global financial crisis and propelling domestic demand, this stimulus package mainly includes three interrelated components, which are "an investment plan, a set of funding mechanisms, and a series of industrial policies" (Naughton 2009:1). At the same time, however, China's economy suffered some unexpected side-effects from the application of this package (Zheng and Chen 2009; Chen, Ye and Huang 2018; Song et al. 2020). Since 2010, China's economy took a downturn, affecting a range of industries. This section will focus on explaining the different manifestations of this downturn on a macro-level.
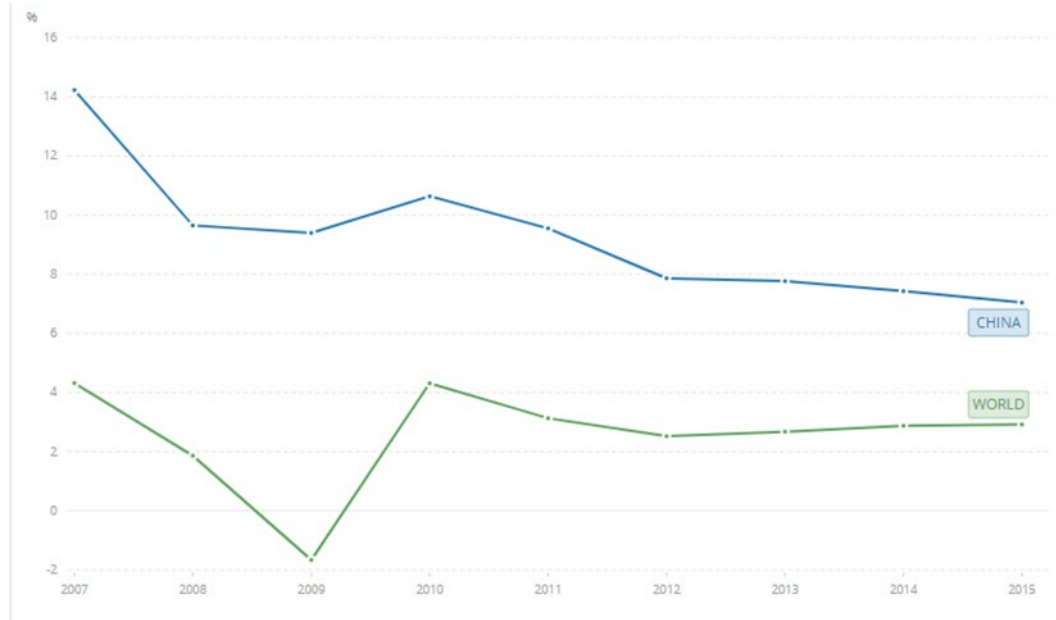
Figure 3- 1 Chinese GDP Growth from 2007 to 2015 (Source: World Bank)

3.2.1 Indicators of economic performance: evidence of a downturn

The economic downturn can be spotted directly from the key indicators of economic performance, such as GDP, Keqiang Index, and the growth rate of imports and exports. The GDP annual growth rate is the most significant among all these economic indicators, showing a country's economic health by measuring the speed (rate) of growth of the economy (Amadeo, 2021). However, from the viewpoint of a CDS researcher, the GDP metric cannot account for the wellbeing of a society, and this view is widely supported by researcher from economics (McNeill, 1999; Giannetti et al., 2015), sociology (Zagorski et al., 2014), and many others. This is because the GDP metric, as its name indicates, which considers the gross of domestic products, without mapping out the detailed contribution of different sectors, which in compare is more capable of representing the health of the economy. More importantly, this metric excludes many other significant factors that will directly affect individuals' quality of life and their life satisfaction, for instance, the quality of the environment, the availability of leisure time, the presence of social inequalities and so forth (McNeill, 1999; Zagorski et al, 2014). According to the data (see Figure3-2) released by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC), China's GDP annual growth rate has declined dramatically since 2010, dropping from over 10% in 2010 to under 7% in 2016, indicating the slowing economic growth.

Figure 3- 2 China GDP Annual Growth Rate (Source: NBSC)

Although the GDP annual growth rate appeared frequently in news articles and economic reports, the scepticism about the reliability of Chinese data was also widely spread in the fields of both academia and industry (Holz 2003, 2008; Nakamura et al. 2014; Fernald et al. 2014). Therefore, the Keqiang Index, brought out by the *Economist* (2010), was introduced to measure China's economic growth. The Keqiang Index is a combination of three indicators, i.e.: railway cargo volume, electricity consumption, and the loans disbursed by banks. Given that manufacturing drives China's economic engine, these three indicators can therefore directly reflect China's economic wealth. Also, as these indicators are transparently collected and calculated, the Keqiang Index is therefore considered as a more reliable economic index than the official GDP, and accordingly provides a much better picture of the economic trends and shines a more objective light on the nation's economy (Wang and Katik, 2015). As shown in Figure3-3, the Keqiang Index has generally shared a similar tendency with the GDP growth rate since 2010 (Wildau et al., 2016). Although minor uptrends were spotted, the overall trend was a decline, with two sharp downturns in 2012 and 2015 respectively, reaching its lowest in 2015.

Figure 3- 3 Keqiang Index of China (Source: Wildau et al., 2016)

As an important member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), China increasingly engaged in international trade organizations and treaties over this period. Being the largest trading nation in the world, China played a leading role in international trade (Monaghan, 2016). According to the data from World Bank (see Figure 3-4), trade constituted half of China's GDP. China's economic development was even described as trade-led growth (Li, 2013).
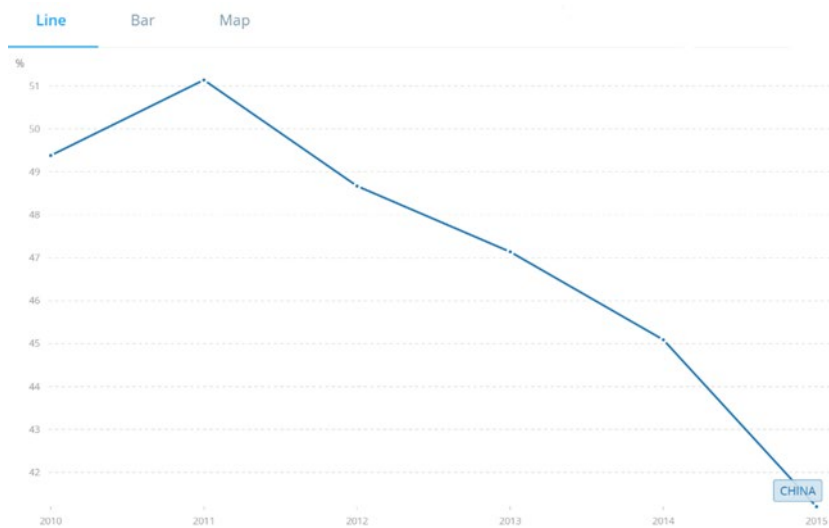
Figure 3- 4Percentage of Trade in GDP (Source: World Bank)

However, China's exports and imports were heavily influenced by the international financial crisis and the European debt crisis (Guo and Pu, 2012), with shrinking external demand increasing the pressure on exports. Data from the New Statistical Yearbook 2015 of the NBSC (as presented in Figure 3-5 and 3-6) showed that the total value of imports and exports was US$3,624 million in 2010, an increase of 26.40% over previous year; however, the total value turned in US$6,043 million in 2014 with a growth rate of 11.98%. According to the customs statistics, in 2012 the export growth rate fell to a record low since the end of 2009, when exports grew by 4.62%, a decline of 27.73 percentage points compared to 2010. Until 2014, the growth rate of both the imports and exports remained relatively low.

Year	Imports and Exports	Imports and Exports Growth Rate	Exports	Exports Growth Rate	Imports	Imports Growth rate
2010	3,624	26.40%	1,702	32.35%	1,922	21.57%
2011	4,191	15.65%	1,821	6.98%	2,370	23.31%
2012	4,706	12.29%	1,905	4.62%	2,801	18.18%
2013	5,396	14.67%	2,106	10.55%	3,291	17.48%
2014	6,043	11.98%	2,222	5.51%	3,821	16.12%

Figure 3- 5Total Value of Imports and Exports & Growth Rate (100 million USD) (Source: NBSC)
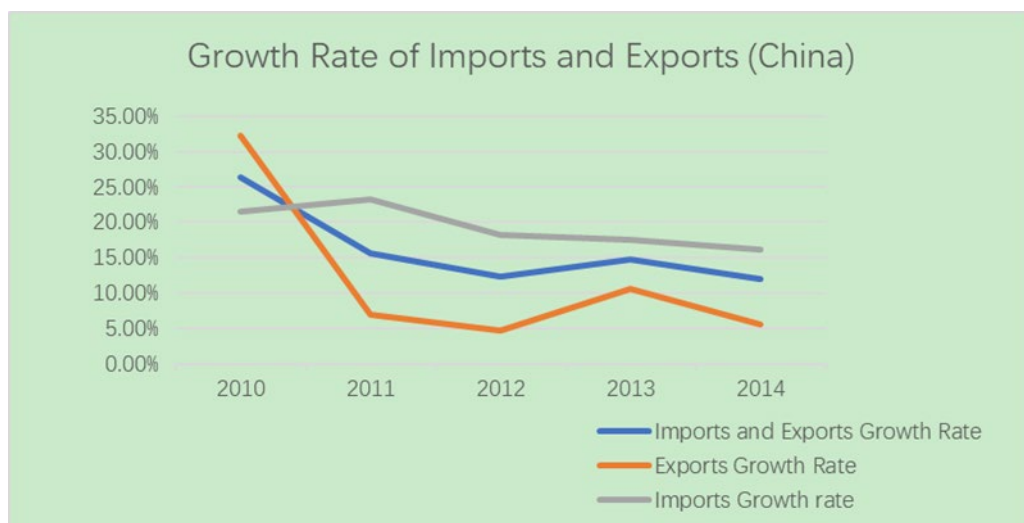
Figure 3- 6 Growth Rate of Imports and Exports (China)

A representative example is the export of electronic products affected by the shrinking of the international market demand. According to NBSC, China's electronic exports retained a low-growth rate in 2012, with a sales output value of ¥6.8657 trillion, an increase of 10.7% compared to previous year. From January to September, the industry revenue increased 8.8%, with a total value of ¥6.0429 trillion (equals to US$0.88 trillion) while the profits declined 6.5% with a total value of ¥195.2 billion yuan (equals to US$28.33 billion). Within these circumstances, almost a quarter (23%) of the electronic product enterprises were running at a loss. The revenue losses of loss-making enterprises increased by 36.8% year-on-year.

It was widely reported in the media that many private enterprises in China failed to make enough profit to repay their loans due to the depressed economic situation since 2009. As reported by the NBSC, the main business income margin in 2012 dropped to 5.46% from 6.04% the same period the previous year. The percentage of loss-incurring enterprises was fifteen percent, three percentage points higher than the same period the previous year. A considerable number of enterprises were under a very difficult position with profit decline. The Oil and Gas Exploration and Production industry fell by 3.2%; the chemical industry decreased by 14.3%; the ferrous metal smelting and rolling processing industry decreased by 60.3%; the general equipment manufacturing industry decreased by 0.6%; petroleum processing, coking and nuclear fuel processing industry saw a loss of ¥21.74 billion (equals to US$3.15 billion). Guo and Pu (2012) further claimed that enterprise labour and other production costs continued to increase, which made the industry development environment harder for the enterprise owners.

3.2.2 The Real Estate Bubble and its deflation

In contemporary Chinese society, housing prices become a common topic of discussion for both economic experts and laypeople, both because of the substantial contribution made by the real estate industry towards the country's GDP and the significant values placed on homeownership within Chinese society. With the rapid urbanization of China, the real estate industry became an important pillar in China's economic development (Leung, 2010). It is claimed that the contribution of real estate investment to China's GDP grew rapidly from four percent in 1997 to fifteen percent in 2014 (Chivakul et al., 2015). The real estate industry also has prominent links to other sectors of the economy, such as construction, financial industrial and banking business, with which it was vertically and horizontally integrated. It is believed that real estate fixed asset investment (FAI) accounted for around 25% of the economy's total FAI (on average, 2002 to 2010), and the total contribution, both direct and indirect, of the real estate industry to GDP was as high as 30% in early 2010s (Chan et al., 2016).

When it comes to market demand, "investment", "consumption" and "exports" (投资、消费、出口) are considered as the "troika"/ "three carriages" (三驾马车) stimulating China's economic growth (Zhao and Tang 2015; Li 2019). However, given that China's export had been declining since 2010, the two remaining "carriages" (investment and consumption) had become even more important for economic growth. That was when housing became an important outlet as it was not only a core element of investment, which mainly refers to investment in manufacturing of all varieties of infrastructure, such as road and rail construction, energy infrastructure, and house construction, but also a major target of consumption (Li, 2019). Meanwhile, housing was also the targeted area of the aforementioned ¥4 trillion stimulus package (both directly and indirectly), which mainly provided a funding stream for infrastructure and projects aimed at improving "people's livelihood" (民生) (e.g.,

education, affordable housing, healthcare) [7] (Huang and Wang, 2010). This was justified by the assumption that steady and healthy development of the real estate market is not only related to the industry growth, but also concerned with the national economy and people's welfare. The unexpected outcome of this stimulus package, however, was that real estate investment and housing prices rose rapidly, significantly higher than the growth rates of economy, resident income, and consumption.

It has been widely acknowledged that China's housing market is polarized across regions (Liu and Mao 2012; Sheperd 2015; Zhou 2016). On the one hand, sharp increases in housing prices, especially in the big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, had fueled fears of "overheating" (i.e., unsustainable market expansion) due to the inflow of population and capital, which caused the shortage of housing supply. Although the ¥4 trillion program did not target housing specifically, an extensive part of it was funnelled into the housing industry, for a number of reasons: the rising cost in infrastructure (due to the rising of steel price and other real economy factors), the push of local governments and (state) enterprises to invest in profitable infrastructure projects, accounting for the soaringly rising of housing prices (Zheng and Chen, 2009; Song et al. 2020). As reported by Xinhua news agency, the official press agency of China, housing prices in Shenzhen rose 41.4% in July 2016 and prices in Shanghai and Beijing rose 33.1% and 22.7% respectively on an annual basis [8]. On the other hand, housing prices in less-developed areas and smaller cities continued to fall, leaving huge inventories of unsold houses. The excessive supply in the third or fourth tier cities accounted for a massive oversupply of unmarketable houses. Furthermore, it also raised a crisis of overcapacity and falling profitability in related industries, such as the manufacturing of cement, steel, glass, and other building products. The disparity in the real estate industry also deepened the debt of local government as they did not have the same incentives for housing development as those in Beijing. During the time that the housing bubble was growing, local governments relied heavily on the land sector for income and regional development, as evident from the high ratio of 47.6% of land revenue of total fiscal income in 2015. Local governments, which were struggling with their fiscal situation for regional development, had no incentive to relocate the role of housing in the consumption-oriented economy model (Zhou, 2016).

Since the real estate industry was a core sector of China's national economy, it also laid the foundation for a broader crisis (Dreger and Zhang, 2016). For those who have been closely following the Chinese economy, it comes as no surprise that a slump in housing prices was more harmful than a crash in the stock market (Dreger and Zhang, 2016). It is claimed that the housing market's contribution to the Chinese economy had been falling in recent years, from 22% of China's GDP in 2013, to 19.8% in 2014 and 15.1% in 2015 (Zandi, 2016). A report from Standard Chartered also shows that China's revenue for real estate industry dropped 28% in 2014 and 2015 [9]. It further explained that half of the GDP slowdown in China since 2010 can be ascribed to the slump in the real estate industry as well as its related sectors. The deflation of the property bubble is seen as one of the primary causes for the deceleration of China's economic growth since 2013 (Dreger and Zhang, 2016).

---

[7] The term "民生" (the people's livelihood) has long been a core concept in Chinese society and politics, which can be dated back to the period of the Spring and Autumn Annals (Chunqiu 春秋) in the classical work, Zuo Zhuan (597 BC). In Zuo Zhuan, it written that "A good life hinges on diligence. With diligence, one does not have to fear about shortages" (民生在勤，勤则不匮). This quote frequently appears in the media as cited by Chinese leaders.

[8] Appeaered in a news reports titled "Polarized housing market creates policy dilemma". Available at: http://www.chinadailyasia.com/business/2016-08/18/content_15481428.html [Last accessed: 18 November 2016]

[9] This report is released by Standard Chartered (2015), titled "Asian housing: Ride the cycle". Available from: https://www.sc.com/BeyondBorders/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2015-11-XX-BeyondBorders-Report-Asian-housing-Ride-the-cycle-Final.pdf [Last accessed 13/11/2016].

Given the intricate relations among the real estate industry, the economy and people's "livelihood", it has become a tricky task for the state to balance and allocate recourses related to the regulation of the housing market. On the one hand, the growth rate of housing prices (or the "housing bubble" in general) needs to remain steady in order to maintain the GDP growth; on the other hand, people's livelihood and ability to afford a home needs to be secured. The achievement of this balance (either in real economy terms or at least in terms of appearances) is an important part of legitimizing the state's leadership and decision-making.

3.3 Social Actors

After sketching out the social-economic background of the CHD, this section moves onto explaining the social actors involved in the production process of the CHD, in this case the state, the news media and the public, and the intricate relations between them.

3.3.1 The state

The state includes collective actors, such as the CCP, the central government, local governments, as well as the president, the prime minister, and other government officials. In this section, I will focus on the state's role in controlling aspects of the economy, the media, and the public sphere.

When it comes to the economy, the state is the primary regulator. In 1992, following the reform and opening-up period, China introduced the concept of market economy and private property and established the Socialist Market Economy (SME) (社会主义市场经济). Since then, the economic functions of the Chinese government have gradually changed (Wu, 2004). In its contemporary form, the state manages public affairs and conducts its administrative role through the provision of public goods and services, acting as a macroeconomic regulator, and formulating and implementing macro-control policies to ensure the effective operation of the market mechanism (Sigley 2006; Ding 2009). Additionally, the state also acts as the owner of the state-owned assets, managing these assets and operating as a commercial corporate entity to conduct (overseas) investments[10] (Huang, 2012).

When it comes to the media and the public sphere, a crucial aspect of the state's role has to do with censorship and surveillance of discourse in the public sphere. It starts with the process known as "*harmonisation*": this is an old concept (with roots in the Qing dynasty – Zhao [2016], italic in original) referring to the processes of publicising the government's operations, which have to be conducted in ways that maintain a "harmonious mood" across all the involved parties (i.e., the government and its various sectors, the press, and the public). Nowadays, harmonisation is still used within journalistic practice and it requires the presentation of the government's activities in ways that will not cause (social) upheaval which could in turn threaten economic development (the protection of the path towards economic development being seen as the ultimate goal of harmonisation – Goodman 1990; Hu 2007; Zhang 2011). Evoking the concepts of "peace" and "harmony" can of course be seen as a euphemistic practice, intending to whitewash the state's propaganda practices, the most forceful form of state propaganda practices is the practice of censorship.

It is worth inspecting closer the Chinese word that corresponds to "censorship"; "审查" which means examination, inspection and screening of public-oriented discourse (including, nowadays, online discourse) and cultural production (art, literature etc) by authoritative institutions for the

---

[10] Further discussion on the state acting as a corporate see the analysis of a WAR metaphor (example 5-63) in 5.3.2.

purpose of achieving *social harmony*. In line with the concept of harmonisation, the term carries this positive connotation which is in contrast with the globally understood negative connotations of censorship (i.e., suppression of free speech, public communication, and information). Shi (2014) insists on the importance of acknowledging such nuances that may be lost in translation when discussing the Chinese concepts of censorship or propaganda. In the case of the latter, he explains that the word used for it, "宣传" (generally equated with and translated as propaganda), should be fully translated as "forms of communication guiding, regulating or informing the public as valued in China" (Shi 2014: 58), again a term that is more positively nuanced than its global (Western) counterparts. This rather unique conceptualisation of propaganda and censorship practices is the government's way of normalising them and avoiding strong/violent opposition.

Although the Chinese online censorship system has frequently been discussed (e.g., MacKinnon 2008; Mina 2014; DeLisle et al 2016; Lu and Zhao 2018), few have investigated how the censorship system works and what content is more likely to be censored. A major aspect of this is the lack of access to the electronic systems that enforce censorship, their settings/parameters and protocols. In a study conducted by King and his colleagues (King et al., 2013), a system was designed to allow researchers to locate, download and analyse social media posts before the government ("cyber police") can find, censor and remove them from the internet. This system is applicable to around 1,400 different social media services in China and is able to hold millions of posts originating from these services. With this, they were able to compare the content of all posts (including censored ones) to the content of those posts that have survived censorship in 85 topic areas. Contrary to expectations, it was found that censorship did not target all (sarcastic) criticism towards the state and its officials, but it rather specifically targeted comments that can either be seen as inciting collective action or as disclosing the state's true intentions (King, Pan and Roberts, 2013).

The propaganda and censorship systems implemented in China are more or less imported from the Soviet Union, where they were a typical characteristic of the Communist party state (Luqiu, 2017). These practices were then intensified under Xi's governance (Lams 2018; Qiang 2019). The government's control over and censorship within the public sphere has become part and parcel of the Chinese society. It takes scope over the channels through which people obtain information (*in*) and express opinions (*out*). Control over the *in* channel includes surveillance of news media (to be discussed in 3.3.2) and the employment of the notorious Great Firewall (防火墙), which prevents Chinese netizens from accessing a series of western Web sites (e.g., YouTube, Facebook and Twitter), search engines (Google in particular) or any media that is seen as reporting on China in a critical (i.e., negative) manner (Xu et al. 2011; Bamman et al. 2012; Xu 2014; Wang 2017; Qiang 2019). Control over the *out* channel mainly refers to the prohibition of discussions of a certain set of topics/keywords and the deletion of posts/messages containing such topics/keywords published by the public (Bamman et al. 2012; King et al. 2013, 2014, 2017; Ruan et al. 2016[11]). Given that online activity and communication is now a significant part of daily life (covering every aspect: work, education, socialization, information exchange, etc.) the presence of what is termed "digital authoritarianism" should not just be seen as an isolated issue that concerns "the digital sphere only" (emphasis in original), but a characteristic that pervades the socio-political sphere. A person's online identity is nowadays traceable and linkable to their off-line (real-life) identity, through nationwide Skynet (天眼) infrastructures and the Social Credit System (SCS) (Liang et al. 2018; Yu 2020). Assisted by big data

---

[11] Ruan et al. (2016) found a list of 174 keywords that would trigger censorship on Wechat, the most popular multi-purpose app (e.g: messanging; social; payment; local services; games etc.) in China. https://github.com/citizenlab/chat-censorship/blob/master/wechat/one_app_two_systems/wechat_blocked_keywords.csv (Last accessed 04/08/2021)

and algorithm, the SCS is considered as an 'Orwellian' system of social control (Creemers, 2018; Ding and Zhong, 2021). With the goal of "raising the sincerity consciousness and credit levels of the entire society", the SCS can "establish the idea of a sincerity culture, and promote honesty and traditional virtues" by suing "encouragement for trustworthiness and constraints against untrustworthiness as incentive mechanisms" (State Council, cited in Creemers 2018, p.2). Under the surveillance of the SCS, people's daily actions, such as online purchase, social media posts and connections, are monitored and scored. If their behaviour are considered as unlawful or immoral or unfaithful to the party, their social credit score will be rated considerably low and they will be labelled as "dishonest persons", which in return will negatively affect their daily lives, for instance, being difficult to get a job, being blocked from social welfare and commercial loans and mortgages, and being restricted regrading mobility or travel (Creemers 2018; Wong and Dobson, 2019). Being aware of these consequences, Chinese netizens are expected to plan and modify their online behaviour in ways that limit any unnecessary risks.

3.3.2 The news media as a political actor

The news media is regarded as having an enormous influence on the public sphere, and Chinese media is no exception. Before the reform and opening-up period in China, the press had a strong political role as it served as a tool for the governing party (Zhao, 2000). However, following Deng Xiaoping's southern tour in 1992, newspapers as well as other news media in China, have become increasingly driven by economic imperatives rather than ideological ones (Latham, 2000), where apart from political elements, commercial advertisements and sponsors can also have an impact on the content (and style) of newspapers. Party newspapers, often considered to be propaganda tools, have become less popular in China. For example, the circulation of *People's Daily* decreased by 66.13% compared to its peak in 1979 (Liang, 1996). Meanwhile, non-party newspapers (such as Evenings and Metros), which differ from party newspapers both in terms of content and style, increased their circulation over the same period. Even today, party newspapers are still largely funded by party and government agencies. In contrast, non-party newspapers are responsible for their own publishing, distribution, advertising and financial accounting, so their funding comes predominantly from advertising and their content is meant to be attractive to the readership.

Based on ownership, financial support and relationships with the government, Chinese media are categorized into three major types (Winfield and Peng, 2005). First there are the official mainstream media outlets, which are directly owned and operated by the government, such as Xinhua News Agency and *People's Daily*. These are regarded as the mouthpieces of the Party and the government and still play a dominant role in China. *People's Daily*, the source of the News corpus for this project, is the party newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and has been published all over China since its establishment in 1948 to this day. In addition, there are media units which were traditionally affiliated with central or local government institutions but not considered official state media, such as trade papers and various regional news sources, which are distributed to readers mostly through local administrative orders. Lastly, there are the fringe media, which are products of the market. These media strive to meet the interests of the masses for general information or entertainment and receive the least financial support and political pressure/control from the government. Many mainstream web portals, such as Tencent and Netease, also fall within this category and they are developing into a major alternative choice for the people, providing a platform for people to comment on reposted news articles from mainstream media. These two platforms are where the data for the Comment corpus have been collected.

With the aim of promoting a positive image of a stable and harmonious society within news media, some general news values can be downplayed in Chinese news media: such as, commitment to truth, frequency, amplitude, and negativity (Harrison 2005; Brighton and Foy 2007). In the process of gatekeeping, this phenomenon is considered distinctive in China's news industry as Zhao (2000:3) argued that the press orbiting the state is a significant form of press control in authoritarian China.

However, a number of studies indicate that China's media prospect has been drastically influenced by marketisation (Winfield and Pang 2005; Esarey 2005), and the growing online media has accelerated the process of shifting media organisations from being propaganda mouthpieces for the communist authorities to "business entities" (Winfield and Pang, 2005:260). It can be claimed that more independent contemporary media have the ability to keep the government in check, applying some degree of pressure and criticism, while also exposing corruption and other mishandlings (Chen, 2017).

3.3.3 The public

Being one of the major roles in the public spere, the public tend to show a decreasing trend of trust towards the government and the media, especially the Party-associated media (Liu and Bates 2009; Kim, 2016). The public can often be seen making judgments that directly contradict the state-controlled media's arguments (Zhou and Moy, 2007). This is particularly prominent in online discourse through which the public can exert pressure and impact subsequent media reports and government's actions. Despite this, the declining public trust in the government-controlled media and the growing awareness surrounding free speech rights, have motivated the public, younger generations in particular, to seek ways to circumvent these stringent censorship practices to express themselves online (Emmons, 2001; Wang, 2013).

Limited freedom of (online) speech is considered more or less a given for Chinese citizens, where online platforms and channels are under the state's regulation (within the systematic structure of aforementioned censorship and surveillance system) and self-censorship. Notably, it is self-censorship that has increasingly attracted scholars' attention, and it is found that censorship in China is not initiated by the government alone, but also largely by self-censorship from organizations such as service providers and platforms, and individual Internet users (e.g.: Pang, 2008; Robinson and Tannenberg, 2019). This argument is also supported by the findings of the current research project, where reader comments in the Comment corpus show strong indications of self-censorship, such as the frequently appeared "Don't ask, if ask then all is well", or "As a shitizen, all I can do is to speak kindly and politely". By turning to channels where reblogging/micro-blogging is still possible, netizens are able to comment on reproduced state-issued material while not being directly within the space of state-controlled media. The public comments discussed in this research circulate in the comment pools of Chinese major web portals (i.e., NetEase, Sina, Tencent and iFeng) where state-controlled news get reposted, rather than being part of the medium where this news is originally published. It should be acknowledged that an alternative way of selecting the public comments is to collect data from social media platform Sina Weibo, a Chinese version of Twitter. In Sina Weibo, *People's Daily* has its own social media account and also posts news articles there, which also attracts people to comment on it or to repost. Although the social media account may attract more traffic/users than the selected news portals and the interaction may somehow be more direct, this research project still choose the news portals as data source. This is due to the nature of Sina Weibo, being a social media where people share not only their views but more importantly, their daily lives/activities. By posting a comment publicly (for instance, comment on a post by *People's Daily*), one's profile can

easily be accessed by other users, which may potentially pose a threaten to their privacy. Without such concerns, news portals are considered as more appropriate for the current research project.

Looking at the language of anti-government discourse as this has developed within those "safer" online spaces, we can see a general trend to employ linguistic strategies of indirectness and non-literality (e.g., irony/sarcasm, satire, metaphor, as well homophone phrase substitution – Chu and Ruthrof 2017; Luqiu 2017; Wang 2018; Wei and Hua 2019). These comments with characteristic linguistic expressions are the survivors of the censorship filter, which is constituted by a list of banned words (Ruan et al., 2016), and the purpose of these means of linguistic expression is to make the contents pass through the censorship filter and to be discovered by other users (Baker and Jabarooty, 2017) (further discussion on Censorship see 6.4). It has to be noted that, methodologically, approaching the subtler side of anti-government discourse requires a thorough understanding of Chinese language and its socio-cultural underpinnings and references.

3.4 Main Discourse Topics in CHD

Continuing the exploration on the social and historical context of Chinese society, this section introduces the main discourse topics in CHD. The CHD referenced in this study is mainly comprised of three major discourse topics: the housing (and social class), the state's leadership, and the housing regulation. The following sections will illuminate these main discourse topics by introducing what they are and how they are connected to the present project.

3.4.1 Housing and social class

The housing market mainly refers to discourses on the housing market and economic system. As previously discussed (3.2), the housing system in contemporary China can be separated into two divisions, commercial housing and social welfare housing. Furthermore, the housing market discourse revolves around these two distinct types of housing. Although this discourse is one in which both the state and the public participate, there is a divide between these two groups since they each take different perspectives and have different goals. The most obvious manifestation of this divergence is the views and understandings of the concept of "house" (and, as a consequence, the understanding of the term "housing dream"). The state's perspective is to treat houses as simply a place for living (the prevalent conceptualisation in housing-related propaganda). The public's perspective includes a much richer conceptualisation, centred around the house as a home, linking it to the concept of family, marriage traditions (within which house-ownership is viewed as a condition for a successful marriage), general happiness/wellbeing, social and educational status, and wealth and financial growth (with the house as an investment). When talking about houses as places for living, the state addresses both the commercial and the social welfare houses with more emphasis on the latter; on the other hand, in the public's discourse more emphasis is placed on commercial housing (as discussed in Chapter 1). In order to understand the discourse surrounding housing and social class, we need to examine the evolution and current state of social stratification and its link to house ownership.

3.4.1.1 The evolution of social stratification

The rapid economic development of the post-reform years caused increased social mobility. During the pre-reform period, Chinese society had been defined by four rigid dichotomies (explained below) and it was rare for people to change their social positions (Bian, 2002). However, this is no longer the

case. Along with the reform and opening-up and the process of transforming into socialist market economy, China's social life underwent extensive and profound changes, especially observable during the late 1990s and the early 2000s. The diversification of socio-economic elements, forms of organisation, distribution of benefits and employment patterns further developed, which had major implications for the country's socio-political, economic, and cultural conditions (Lewis and Xue, 2003).

Despite the changes, people's understanding of modern social stratification and social mobility in China still rests on the understanding of the four traditional dichotomies that shaped Chinese society in the pre-reform years (Bian, 2002). The first dichotomy is the rural–urban divide in terms of residential status (Bian, 2002). According to the household registration system (户口), people were prescribed to live in their birthplace for the duration of their life (Cheng and Selden, 1994). The second dichotomy is the state–collective dualism of the economic structure. Due to their participation in collective farming, all rural dwellers were grouped as belonging to the rural collective sector. The urban labourers were assigned either a state or a collective sector job. This created an inequality between the privileged state workers and the collective workers, since only the former were provided with a lifelong job together with comprehensive welfare benefits (Walder 1986; Bian 2002). The third dichotomy is between cadre and worker status, which is an occupational classification (Bian, 2002). The state cadre (国家干部) were the prestigious minority positioned in either management-level or ordinary professions, employed by the state and under the general oversight of the CCP (preferably but not necessarily members of the party). Cadres had privileges, favourable treatment and better opportunities for training and promotion (Walder 1995; Zhou 2001). The workers were the majority group and they were rarely promoted to the cadre level. The last dichotomy concerns the 'revolution–anti revolution' split in the political sphere (Bian, 2002). The revolutionary class were the supporters and the force of the Leninist party, while the anti-revolutionary class were the enemy of the party. An upsurge of this political labelling culture took place during the Culture Revolution period (1966–1976). It is worth noting that despite the fact that the idea of a "classless society", where all members are equally valued and contributing to the common good, is present in the Communist (and Maoist) ideology, neither the traditional stratification, nor the political/party-related stratification have ever allowed for such a change, with class hierarchy remaining prevalent throughout the history of China under the CCP.

The "peasant class" was the recipient of significant social transformation following the reforms. By 1983, the rural peasants were thoroughly free from collective farming. They had the right to sell their agricultural products and to shift to a non-agricultural job. Through the 1980s and especially after 1992, peasants mass-migrated to cities seeking high-income jobs and better living conditions (Ma 2001). The NBSC (2015) reported that the share of the labour force in agriculture dropped sharply from 75% in 1977 to 33% in 2012, while urban labour increased, being split into various categories (wage labour in the private or state sector, "layoff" job-seeking labour etc. – Bian 2002). Many migrants and urban workers started to run their own (mostly small) businesses, while a minority managed to gain substantial wealth, some even becoming tycoons. The National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC, 1998) stated that there were over 2 million registered private enterprises nationwide, providing 12 million jobs.

The diversification of employment patterns and resource distribution led to more complex interests and social dynamics as well as having a significant impact on social stratification. Aside from workers, farmers, intellectuals, cadres and other "traditional" social classes, new social strata have emerged, including: entrepreneurs and technical personnel employed by non-public scientific and technological enterprises, managerial and technical staff employed by overseas-funded enterprises,

the self-employed, private entrepreneurs, intermediaries, and free-lance professionals among others (Davis 2000; Bian et al. 2005; Anagnost 2008).

There is some question of whether some of the above descriptors can be classified within a Western-style "middle class" and this has been the object of heated debates among sociologists and political scientists (Whyte 1999; Davis 2000). If this larger category were to be recognised, it would be comprised of the cadres, i.e., managers and professionals from the pre-reform decades, as well as the newly emerging private entrepreneurs. However, a variety of studies show that the Chinese middle class does not share the same properties as its (Western) capitalist counterpart (Qin 1999). For one, there are no rigid or stable markers of what constitutes middle-class in China (neither in terms of income benchmarks nor in terms of job types) which consequently leads to house ownership becoming one of the few (if not the main) indicators of middle-class belonging.

When it comes to social mobility, Lu (2004) divides what he suggests are ten distinct social classes into three categories[12]: the first includes managerial-level state jobs and business owners, the second includes state clerks and other professionals, and the third includes workers, farmers, and the unemployed. He argues that the first and the third category are quite rigid as since the 1990s they do not commonly allow much to and from mobility. This is to say, no downwards mobility from the top level and no upwards mobility towards it either; no downwards mobility to the bottom level nor upwards mobility from it. Whereas the greatest amount of mobility is shown within the middle level, so between different (private sector) professions and state jobs.

The issue of social mobility is inextricably linked to the question of education, both in a person's lifetime (i.e. achieving education qualifications that will allow a person to socially ascend) and inter-generationally (i.e. parents being able to provide their children a good education that will allow them to become socially mobile). A common belief in Chinese society has been that "education changes fate", alongside the saying "a good scholar will make a (state) officer". In practice, however, family background still works as a barrier to social mobility, since family connections play an important role in the acquisition of higher-level positions. This difficulty is recognized by families who try to secure their children's future by relocating to areas where their children will be able to receive better education. This is where the factor of housing also plays a role: Chinese families will seek housing in areas where good schooling is available, creating "hot pockets" of very competitive housing market where prices are permanently much higher than the average, even for houses the quality of which is lower than the average. This, of course, creates a cycle where good schooling is available to families who can afford a good school area, thus limiting the possibilities of education contributing to social mobility.

3.4.1.2 The history of the housing system

The changes in the socio-economic system are accompanied by (and to a certain degree account for) the process of privatisation of housing after the reform and opening-up. In the pre-reform stage, the housing system was a highly centralised planning system (Wang et al., 2015). After the foundation of the PRC, house confiscations took place at a large scale across the country (1949–1950). After that, the country experienced a long period of nationalization of housing (until 1978). One of the major characteristics of the housing system in this period is that it primarily tailored for "work units" (单位),

---

[12] Lu Xueyi (陆学艺) and his colleagues, researchers at the Institute of Sociology at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), based their 10-class division using occupation, economic resources and cultural resources as categorization criteria (Lu 2002). In a hierarchical order, these classes are: state and social administrators, managers, private entrepreneurs, professionals, clerks, individual businessmen, business service employees, industrial workers, agricultural labors, and finally the unemployed, jobless and laid-off. In his later work Lu and his colleagues also maintains this classification, arguing that it is an accurate representation of 21st century China (Ru et al. 2010).

i.e. the places where public sector employees worked and lived. However, due to the low standards of economy and lack of investment, this socialist welfare housing system showed various problems, such as shortage and overcrowding (three square metres floor space per person), inefficient use of land, poor neighborhood conditions and unequal distribution between the cadres and workers (Wang 2014, 2019). Notably, the historical impact of this phase is so strong that contemporary discourse surrounding the social affordable housing project discussed in the present research still includes references to those disparities, sometimes vaguely alluded to as "historical issues", others metaphorically conceptualized as "persistent ailment" (痼疾) by the state (see section 5.1 for further discussion).

With the reform and opening-up in the economic sector, there was also a corresponding reform in the housing section, which was mostly concerned with the privatisation of housing: changing housing from a welfare service to a commodity; from public rental to private ownership; and from state investment alone to shared costs by state, employers, and (more importantly) individual households. This kind of transition had three stages (notably, this approach to planning is similar to what we will see in the period that this project investigates – see section 5.5). First came the local experiments ("trial") in some selected cities between 1981 and 1991, then the reform saw a comprehensive implementation in all urban areas from 1991 to 1998. In 1998, a new provision system was proposed. In this system the "urban housing market" (i.e., privately commercialised housing in urban areas) was established and the socialist housing welfare system was abolished (the proportion of different housing categories under this system are presented in Figure 3-7) (Wang and Murie, 2011).
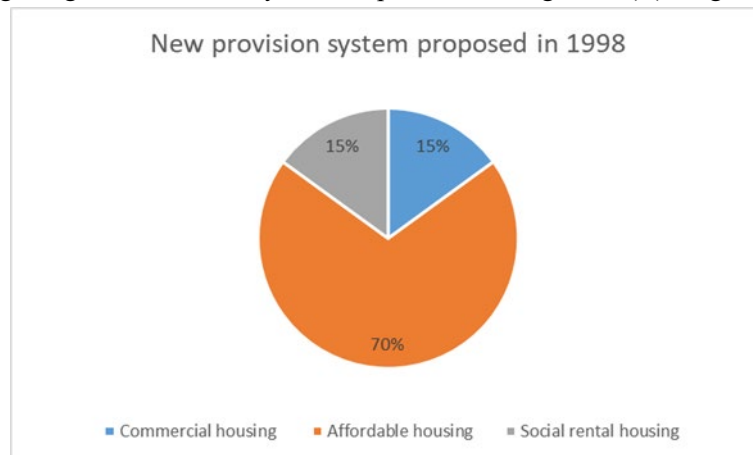
Figure 3- 7 New provision system proposed in 1998

As seen in the Figure 3-7, the provision system that was proposed in 1998 is dominated by affordable housing, taking up 70% to commercial housing's 15%. The long-term results of these changes are mixed. On the one hand, the young generation in the cities cannot enjoy the welfare housing that their parents' generation benefited from. On the other hand, for the rural–urban migrants having a house in the big city means having access to social services and benefits, such as high-quality education for their children and advanced medical services for themselves and their family. With the rapid urbanisation process after the reform and opening-up, many rural dwellers flooded into big cities, which inevitably poses an increasing housing demand in the big cities.

With ongoing changes in the economic system, housing policies shifted to supporting home ownership. Commercial property developers emerged as the main housing providers in cities and towns after the Asian Financial Crisis (1997). Soon after 1998, housing policies focused on providing support for home ownership for middle and high-income families through different financial arrangements. Houses were delinked from employment (the aforementioned "work unit") and the

nascent commercial housing market became a norm of living for urban citizens with houses becoming a purchasable commodity. Accordingly, the house then also became a representation of people's socio-economic status, i.e., the more expensive their houses, the high economic/social class they are, and vice versa.

3.4.1.3 Attitudes towards housing consumption and property

The economic reforms pursued in China since the late 1970s have been striking in many respects, and social scientists have given substantial attention to their political and social consequences. With the processes of market transition and urbanisation in China, housing is no longer carries only practical value but symbolic also. The intricacy and velocity of the housing consumption in China also seems unlike any other society.

In the Chinese language, the word "*jia*"(家) *(*House/Home*)* has two meanings. The first one refers to dwellings like apartments or flats (房子), something exchangeable and non-personal; the other means (family) home, to which people had an emotional attachment, and a place where one feels free and at ease. Fraser (2000) stated that housing is "the material symbol of having a family and has always been viewed as the source of safety and happiness in Chinese life" (Fraser, 2000:29). Nowadays, housing has become a valuable private space (privacy being a relatively newfound value in Chinese culture), and a product which meets people's needs, regardless of social position. In the reform period, the public's attention was gradually transferred from the collective life to a personal one, and therefore the importance attributed to housing residence is not surprising (Read, 2003). In addition, through choosing their own apartments people made this private sphere a place where they can live and express individuality and freedom.

In the era of market transition, a revolutionary culture of consumption began sweeping across urban China (Davis, 2000). From housing to luxury products, the overall consumption pattern of Chinese citizens, especially those in large cities, has transformed in a dramatic way (Yusuf and Brooks, 2010). Fleischer (2007) claims that, unlike in western countries where class stratification is clearly determined by various socio-economic factors and material possessions are merely a "marker" of social class rather than its determining factor, in China house ownership (and the quality/luxury of private houses) is a major determiner of class belonging. Thus, consumption ability, and house-ownership in particular, has become a way of constructing one's socioeconomic status and financial well-being.

3.4.2 Leadership: CCP's ideology and its development

For the Chinese government (or any authoritarian power), building the public's confidence in its administration is considered a political agenda with top priority, especially during an age of frequent and rapid social transitions, which could potentially pose uncertainties and threats to its authority (Shen and Guo, 2013). Accordingly, the CCP's discourse has focused on highlighting the party's commitment to social stability and harmony, in order to justify and legitimise its actions and decisions (see for example the previous discussion on censorship 3.3.1). This rhetoric of stability often takes either of two forms: highlighting successes of the past that can sustain a long-term vision (building faith in the party's ability to achieve its set goals) and presenting a bleak alternative future that would be the result of a hypothetical absence of the CCP (Sandby-Thomas, 2008). Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis will more thoroughly examine aspects of the state's leadership discourse, especially focusing on its reliance on Chinese philosophy and culture, as well as its attempts at (re)defining key concepts relating to the CHD through metaphor usage. In preparation for this discussion it is important to

examine the ideological profile of the CCP, and the evolution and underpinnings of such ideological profile.

The discussion of political ideology in contemporary China, as it is represented by the CCP, normally concerns the mainstream ideology of "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (SWCC) which is based on the core propositions and viewpoints of Marxist theory, combined with China's actual socioeconomic conditions (Yao and Gao, 2014). In the course of over 70 years of social construction and development, Chinese mainstream political ideology has taken on multiple forms according to different governing ideologies and the different institutional and theoretical systems that were prevalent in different historical stages (Wu 2013).

This subsection briefly reviews the transitions in political ideology since the CCP came to power from 1949. It is split into two parts: the ideologies before Hu and Xi's leadership and the contemporary ideologies of Hu and Xi, which relate immediately to the current study.

3.4.2.1 Political ideologies before Hu and Xi

The CCP's political ideologies before Hu and Xi can be further split into the Mao era (from the founding of the PRC in 1949 to the end of the Cultural Revolution in1976) and the post-Mao era (1976–2003). During the Mao era, the CCP's main focus was on socialist construction, aiming at leading China to socialism (Brown, 2012); its dominant political ideology relied on Marxism–Leninism and Mao Zedong's Thought – the latter being a version of Marxism–Leninism that places emphasis on agriculture as the main revolutionary engine (Knight, 1983). In this period, the mainstream political ideology in China was also determined "by exclusion", through its campaigning against all opposing (anti-Marxist) ideologies. Between 1949 and 1957, under the leadership of Mao, the party actively sought to improve the people's perception of socialism and establish the dominance of Maoist ideology (Lu, 1999). However, the end of the Cultural Revolution found the party struggling to control the damage done to its leading ideology after the socioeconomic failure of the measures implemented during the preceding period (Great Leap Forward, 1958–1962 – see Womack [1986]).

After Mao's death in 1976, the CCP started to rethink its political guidelines. Attention was shifted onto the process of socialist modernisation under the guidance of Deng Xiaoping. It can be argued that this is the embryonic state of the SWCC ideology: the Deng Xiaoping Theory is influenced by the Mao Zedong Thought (which was already a "hybrid", integrating Marxism with the particularities of the agricultural profile of Chinese society and economy) but this time the emphasis is on China's economic reconstruction through reform and opening up (Liu 2006). This shift in political ideology can be credited with the rapid development of China's economy (Zhang 1996; Naughton 2007; Hwang and Schneider 2011). The step-by-step reform in this period, guided by the Deng Xiaoping Theory, is also commonly viewed as a key factor of success in avoiding the negative consequences of Russia's reform (Li 1994; Ralston et al. 1997).

Impacted by the lessons of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the CCP was determined to take measures to strengthen the party's position (Lin and Feng, 2016). Amidst international developments such as the global economic crisis and the acceleration of globalization, the Communist ideology that offered the original moral foundation of the CCP's one-party rule was fading away. Under such circumstances, the leader Jiang Zemin (1993–2003) established the "Three Represents" Theory ("三个代表"理论) which defined the CCP's role and its leading position in the market economy. According to this theory, the CCP must always represent: the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people of China. These three requirements reveal the value system of the SWCC and provide a clear mission statement for the CCP amid the nation's rapid progress towards

a market economy. They essentially mark the CCP's endorsement of the private sector, especially with moves such as opening party membership to private entrepreneurs (Dickons 2003; Fewsmith 2003; Jia 2004).

3.4.2.2 Hu and Xi: Scientific development and the Chinese dream

With the rapid growth of the Chinese economy, a series of social and environmental problems emerged. The great economic growth widened the wealth disparity between the Chinese rich and poor. The media, both domestic and international, were reporting that China's economic growth was at a cost to the environment. Furthermore, corruption within the CCP became a severe concern, which posed a threat to the party's ruling position (Chen and Zhang, 2016). Hence, the CCP started to take measures in order to maintain its authority (Deng, 2018).

Compared to previous leaders, Hu Jintao was more concerned with the content than the form of the ideology (Lam 2005; Delury 2008). During his administration (2003–2013), he brought out the slogan of building a "Harmonious Society" (和谐社会), aided by the "Scientific Development Concept" (科学发展观), which sought to resolve domestic conflicts relating to resources and the environment, while pursuing sustainable development of the national economy (Zheng and Tok, 2007). Harmony is a highly valued virtue in traditional Chinese philosophies, especially in Confucianism, and it is at the core of Chinese traditional culture. It concerns the harmonious relations among nature, society and humanity. In 2005, President Hu promoted the idea that a harmonious society is a society which is "democratic and ruled by law, fair and just, trustworthy and fraternal, full of vitality, stable and orderly, and maintains harmony between man and nature" (Hu, 2005, p.3). Therefore, according to him, a harmonious society would give full scope to people's talent and creativity, while at the same time it would enable all the people to share the social wealth brought by reform and development, forging an ever-closer relationship between the people and government. The Scientific Development doctrine was then written into the Communist Party and State Constitutions in 2007 and 2008, respectively.

After Hu, Xi Jinping assumed leadership of the party and became the president. Like Hu's "Scientific Development Concept", President Xi formally put forward the term of "Chinese Dream" on November 29, 2012, which was regarded as his governing idea and guiding ideology. Xi defined the "Chinese Dream" as "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, which is the greatest dream of the Chinese nation in modern times" and said that the dream "must be realized". The core goal of the "Chinese Dream" could also be summed up as the "two one hundred-year goals", that is, that by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China in 2021 and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in 2049, China would be an "affluent, strong, civilized and harmonious socialist modern country", and the dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation would be accomplished (Xinhua, 2016).

A survey conducted by the Pew Research Centre showed that corruption, pollution and the income gap were the main concerns of the Chinese people (Wike and Parker, 2015). In order to achieve the "Chinese Dream", Xi and his Politburo Standing Committee (PSC) took steps to solve these issues. One of the biggest measures was the nationwide campaign against corruption, which was the largest organised anti-corruption effort in the history of the CCP. Xi vowed to crack down on the "tigers and flies", which refers to corrupt high-level officials and local civil servants (Branigan, 2013). Since the anti-corruption campaign launched in 2012, many officials had been investigated and imprisoned. Among all the investigated officials, the former PSC member Zhou Yongkang and former military

leaders Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong were the most notable.[13] These investigations also garnered massive attention and discussion, both domestically and internationally.

Looking at the rhetoric of the modern CCP, we can still see that it relies on the concepts of "harmony" and "people' s livelihood", placing them within the context of the "Chinese Dream", and the "two one hundred-year goals". The CCP's claimed mission is to "serve the people wholeheartedly and unwaveringly" whilst keeping pace with national and international developments. This rhetoric is not considered persuasive enough, as noted by scholars and critics, since it is often transparent that it is primarily geared towards protecting the party's power (Brady 2009; Holbig 2013; Schneider and Hwang 2014; Wang and Groot 2018). Yet, the rhetorical strategies of the CCP's ideological discourse can be understood in the context of the party's attempts at gaining people's trust and confidence (Sandby-Thomas 2014; Schneider and Hwang 2014; Noesselt 2015).

3.4.3 Housing regulations

At the intersection of all of the above discourses lies the discourse on the regulatory policies and measures taken by the state regarding the housing market (i.e., housing regulation). The timeline of this discourse is clearly defined and determined by the release of five major regulations concerning housing: (a) the State's Eleven Measures in January 2010, (b) the State's New Ten Measures in April 2010, (c) the New Measures of the 29th of September 2010 ("9.29"), (d) the State's New Eight Measures in January 2011, and (e) the State's Five Measures in 2013.

The housing regulation discourse, which has a part that is state-controlled and a part where the public also becomes an agent, concerns perceptions and evaluations of specific measures and towards all parties involved in the housing situation (e.g., property developers, home buyers, local governments, and the central government). The CCP's proclaimed goal in this is to "solve people's housing problem", which can be seen as relatively vague, as it is known that the needs of the rural and urban areas are quite distinct (and would therefore not be solved by a catch-all policy). This rhetoric's surface-level approach to Chinese society can be attributed to its adherence to the traditional Communist ideal of "classless society", attempting to gloss over the real class divisions that exist in modern China. It therefore tends to underplay the impact of the "*hukou*" system, which is the system that creates rigid geographical and social divisions by limiting the people's ability to make a permanent move (including selling/buying houses) from rural areas to urban ones and vice versa. Whenever the party refers to the "*hukou*" system it associates it with the goal of "social harmony" (Han 2008; Li and Chui 2011; Wallace 2014), dissociating it with its links to social inequality.[14] This distancing from issues of class and class struggle is noted by Xing (2009), who argues that the modern Chinese political ideology (as represented by the CCP) has boiled socialism down to abstract values, independent of and autonomous from its social and economic base (as in that the base support for Communism comes from a particular class).

Finally, another prominent element of the housing regulation discourse is the constant negotiation

---

[13] Some scholars (e.g., Chow 2015; Fabre 2017; Wedeman 2017) argue that the nationwide anti-corruption campaign led by Xi Jinping is more of a factional purge rather than a virtuous campaign for improving people's livelihood and boosting people's confidence in the party.

[14] Historically, a registered residence, either urban (or "non-agricultural") hukou or rural (or "agricultural") hukou, with the local government authority was compulsory for every household. Rural hukou holders were allocated a certain amount of land, which allowed them to build their own dwellings, and conduct agricultural and related businesses (Tang and Coulson 2016). At the same time the urban citizens were assigned with a dwelling by their "work units" for free or at an extremely low price, accompanied with a range of economic and social rights (Yang and Chen 2014)

of roles and responsibilities between central and local government. This is present both in state-controlled discourse and the public discourse. To illustrate this tension, it is worth considering the social housing goal that was set for the 12th Five Year Plan (2011–2015), where the aim was for 36 million social and affordable housing units to be built by 2015. This target was divided and allocated to local governments and the completion of this target was seen as a political criteria in evaluating local officials' performance (Man 2011; Zou 2014). The target was reached in terms of quantity but not in terms of quality and as a result the state's rhetoric was built around taking credit for the achievement of the numerical goal, and attributing blame for the quality issues to the local government and developments. This type of practice can be observed within the state-controlled rhetoric regarding the housing regulations throughout the duration of the housing market crisis, as will be later shown (Chapters 5 and 6).

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the socio-political and economic context of Chinese housing. It has been presented that Chinese society has gone through great changes, such as its economic prowess, its social stratification and corresponding housing system. Moreover, it has been evidenced that one of the causes of the housing issue in Chinese society can be attributed to the disparity between the state and the people under the censorship and surveillance system. On the one hand, the state treats the housing discourse as a way of legitimizing its power, and on the other hand, the public treat discourse, counter-discourse in particular, as a way of challenging and subverting the hegemonic discourse, and correspondingly the power in status quo. Within this chapter, the censorship and surveillance system has also been explored and it can be concluded that it plays a largely dominant role in the hegemonic discourse, and this censorship and surveillance system is largely assisted by the China's prowess in economy and correspondingly infrastructures (*Sky Eye*) and technologies. It is within the presence of such rigid censorship and surveillance system that metaphor becomes recognized as a crucial weapon within the counter-discourse. It has also been evident that there are certain discourse topics that are interdiscursively linked to the Chinese housing discourse and indicate the dispute ideologies among Chinese society. This has included (but is not limited to) topics concerning housing and social class in Chinese society, the CCP's leadership, and housing regulations. In sum, this chapter has demonstrated the context of Chinese housing discourse, within which power struggles take place. At the same time, this chapter also further instructs the collection and interpretation of data that will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter4

The corpora: News Corpus and Comment corpus

Having outlined the theoretical framework and the social background of this study, this chapter focuses on the methodology for researching the CHD, more specifically the compilation, annotation (metaphor identification) and overview of two corpora: the News corpus and the Comment corpus. This research project employs a mixed methods approach, using some descriptive quantitative measures alongside qualitative analysis.

The first purpose of using this mixed methods approach is to address methodological concerns towards CMT and CDA regarding the use of small data sets, which have been criticised for "cherry picking", i.e., intentionally selecting data to meet researcher assumptions (Widdowson 2000, 2004; Baker and Levon 2015). Preventing this potential issue through the collection of a considerable amount of data is crucial for this project in particular, due to the fact that the Chinese society and housing system are currently in a phase of transition, leading to a large diversity of ideologies and attitudes within CHD, which needs to be reflected in the analysis. A number of methods and procedures that belong to Corpus Linguistics (CL) have been adopted, e.g. the use of a reference corpus for comparison, collocates and keyword analysis (Baker and Levon 2015; Mautner 2016, see also Orpin 2005; Baker et al., 2008; Salama 2011; Baker 2012),to ensure that all instances of metaphor use are counted and annotated appropriately for further qualitative analysis.

The second purpose of this methodological approach is to satisfy the research goal of comparing and contrasting two different sources of CHD, the state-controlled one (found in the News corpus) and the one that is led by the public and includes a range of attitudes towards the state's measures (positive, negative, and neutral – found in the Comment corpus). The two corpora differ in a number of ways that need to be accounted for and analysed. Not only is the state-controlled News corpus one where the use of language is carefully planned, more formal and deliberate, but it is also stylistically akin to older media (i.e., traditional printed newspapers). The Comment corpus on the other hand is a reflection of modern social media discourse, with the added particularity of the Chinese lived reality, where media is monitored and censored and media users modify their behaviour accordingly (as discussed in section 3.3.2 and 3.3.3).

At the same time, this chapter focuses on the specifics of the procedure for metaphor identification within the two corpora. This is a rigorous procedure aimed at "catching" all and only instances of metaphorical language, whilst distinguishing between the two categories of conventionalised and novel. This approach is necessary to achieve the aforementioned goal of basing the analysis on the largest possible dataset, given the scope of this research. It is also necessary for ensuring that the object of analysis – i.e., instances of metaphorical language – is as clearly defined as possible.

The first section (4.1) explains the procedure of corpus compilation and annotation, including the principles involved in data selection and the software that was used in collecting and processing the data. Then, the chapter moves on to present a general (descriptive quantitative) overview of the compiled corpora, explaining the procedure for metaphor identification as well as the selection criteria regarding those metaphor categories that are considered most prominent (4.2-4.3 respectively), with the aim of laying the ground for the qualitative analysis that will be carried out later in the thesis (chapters 5 and 6).

4.1 Corpus Compilation: Data selection principles and process

This section presents the procedures of data collection and corpus compilation. At the very beginning of the research process it was determined: (1) which newspapers and comments should constitute the data for this study; (2) the timeframe of the studied period, where the collected data should belong (i.e. time of publication as a selection criterion for the data).

As previously discussed (section 3.3.2), a key role of Chinese state-owned newspapers is to act as mouthpieces of the CCP. *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of the CCP, is perhaps the most representative example. Ever since its founding in June 1948, *People's Daily* has been under the control of the CCP. The newspaper has been considered representative of the "highest voices" of the CCP and holds hegemonic power which allows it to shape the public opinion on all domestic and international matters (Wu, 1994; Shi and Lou, 2010; Ernst et al., 2022). It is worth noting that, although *People's Daily* also maintains multilingual online editions (e.g., Arabic, English, French and Russian), the current project singles out the Chinese version as its data source. Notably, each different edition, despite reporting on the same issues, uses different texts which are not translations of the original Chinese, so there is no one-to-one equivalence when it comes to the articles appearing in different language editions. The overseas editions are considered as having less in-depth discussion of Chinese domestic affairs and policies compared to the Chinese edition (Scollon, 2000).

Choosing the online edition of the newspaper as a data source means that the studied news articles have a wide audience reach, including the younger generations. Younger readers are the ones who will be most affected by the housing market issues and therefore most likely to actively participate in CHD. The newspaper itself does not provide the option to add comments, so instead readers repost news articles through web portals which include a comment section (called BTL – "below the line"). In this way, readers resort to web portals as a primary source of information as well as an outlet for expressing their opinion (Wang et al., 2014). Reader comment data for this research was collected from the BTL comments of four major web portals in China: NetEase, Sina, Tencent and iFeng. As web portals have autonomy in picking the news articles that they repost, not all of them reposted the selected news articles. Moreover, not all of the news articles attract comments. This means that the News corpus consists of a larger number of articles than the articles that correspond to the comments in the Comment corpus. For this reason, the analysis of the two corpora is done separately in the following sections, being tailored to the particularities of each corpus. Nevertheless, it should be noted that with the presence of the censorship and surveillance system (discussed in Chapter 3), all online comments made underneath the news articles are censored and monitored, thus being partial of the public discourse. Also, with the rising digital divide in China, particularly between urban and rural China (Fong, 2009; Song, Wang and Bergmann, 2020), these collected comments can only reflect the voices of those with access to the internet and the interest in expressing themselves, who are at the same time mostly affected by the housing issue. Accordingly, even though the collected comments cannot fully represent the whole public discourses on housing, they can still be considered as appropriate for the current research project.

Moving on to selecting a particular time period, even though the Chinese real estate issue has been a hot topic within China as well as internationally throughout the last couple of decades, the selected data needed to be representative of a particularly crucial period of the housing market economy that would include multiple phases in terms of economic metrics and corresponding actions (regulations) taken by the state. For the purpose of selecting the most representative time period, the policies issued by the Chinese government to deal with the overheated real estate issue were studied.

It was found that the State's Four Measures issued in October 2009 was widely considered to be the first time that the Chinese government brought strict market supervision to the real estate sector. Since then, a series of housing market regulations and measures were implemented. At the same time, a search through the China Core Newspaper Database (CCND) revealed that news reports on real estate reached a peak between 2010 and 2014. These years include events such as the consecutive restriction policies on purchasing and loans, the reform in Housing Accumulation Fund system, and the subsequent governmental assistance programs towards the destocking of houses (in tier-2 and tier-3 cities in particular). Therefore, real estate news articles produced by *People's Daily* between January 2010 and December 2014 were studied, using the search terms 调控* (regulation), 房地产* (real estate market), 楼市*(housing property), 房价*(housing prices), 住房* (housing) in CCND. The querying generated a list of news articles (including news title, author and publication date). In order to get the full texts, a Python script was created, which mined the appropriate data (all news articles containing the relevant search terms). Next, any irrelevant news articles were manually removed from the News corpus. After the compilation of the News corpus, BTL comments corresponding to the selected news articles were collected and complied as the Comment corpus, also with the help of a Python script (see Appendix for both scripts, which can be used as templates by other researchers in the future when mining similar data sources).

The corpus-based analysis was primarily carried out through the corpus analysis toolkit Antconc, which allows the calculation of word frequencies, keywords, as well as viewing concordance lines and sorting collocates (Anthony, 2014). After having collected the full texts of each article/comment, each text was assigned a code reflecting the corpus source, year and number of the article/comment. As there is no space between Chinese characters, and corpus software cannot recognise Chinese words automatically, a process of word segmentation was required. The Pynlpir package in Python was used to segment the original news texts and comments into words. Afterwards, the segmented texts were encoded into UTF-8 through Notepad++. A numerical summary of the corpora is presented in Table 4-1.

	Articles N	Length (word tokens)	Comments N	Length (word tokens)
2010	123	113,309	2,080	55,799
2011	231	191,167	3,390	61,618
2012	101	90,066	469	13,087
2013	107	97,057	328	7,514
2014	53	58,535	63	969
Sub-total	615	550,136	6,330	138,987

Table4- 1 Summary of Corpus Size

4.2 Overview of the corpus (quantitative description)

In CL, keyword refers to a word which appears more frequently in the studied corpus compared to another (general) corpus, called "reference corpus" (RC) (Scott, 1999; Baker, 2004). "Keyness" is computed on the basis of log-likelihood or Chi-square statistics, and it is defined as a statistically significant deviation from the frequency in the general corpus (this can be significantly higher, or lower, called positive or negative Keyness respectively).

In order to carry out Keyword analysis for the corpora in this research, the following stepswere followed:

i. The *People's Daily Corpus* was selected as the RC. Though most corpus linguists argue

that the RC should be larger enough to make the comparison, Goh (2011) evidenced through a quantitative study that, genre and diachrony are the most important factors when choosing a reference corpus. Therefore, the *People' Daily Corpus* released by the Institute of Computational Linguistics at Peking University, which contains one month's data from *People's Daily* (January 1998), was regarded as an appropriate RC for the corpora in this research.

ii. Before generating the keyword list, an initial (first-stage) wordlist was generated for each corpus. This includes functional words (e.g.: "是 is", "的 's"), which would skew the results and had to be removed. The removal of such words is done through the creation of a "stoplist".

iii. As the two corpora contain varieties of word types (17,150 and 10,912 respectively), a considerably large number of keywords was derived.

The following Table 4-2 shows the top 20 keywords in the News corpus with reference to the keywords' positions in the Comment corpus. Table 4-3 lists the top 20 keywords in the comment corpus with reference to the keywords' positions in the News corpus. Keywords shared by both corpora are highlighted in blue.

News			Key word	Translation	Comments		
Rank	Freque ncy	Keyness			Rank	Freque ncy	Keyn ess
1	7494	26908.88	住房	Living property	5 7	153	458.9 2
2	5601	21836.80	房	House (n, generic term)	2	905	6024. 16
3	5547	20643.42	保障	Security	20	271	1335. 94
4	2911	10971.38	房地产	Real estate	17	258	1485. 80
5	2358	9339.32	房价	Housing prices	1	1264	8822. 26
6	2252	8064.97	调控	regulation	6	431	2461. 36
7	3304	7154.166	建设	construction	7 945	63	1.396
8	3058	6621.78	市场	Market	6 10	114	57.68
9	2411	6584.82	政策	Policy	7 7	164	366.7 5
1 0	2141	6473.97	城市	City	2 9	260	976.0 7
1 1	1666	5503.46	土地	Land	3 3	176	751.7 7
1 2	2064	4231.41	政府	Government	2 7	405	1087. 17

Rank	Frequency	Keyness	Keyword	Translation	Rank	Frequency	Keyness
13	1026	3898.96	购房	House purchase	76	65	367.18
14	1242	3888.97	需求	demand	362	44	95.01
15	971	3864.42	楼市	Real estate market	55	67	469.87
16	1313	3858.75	家庭	family	637	39	55.66
17	1021	3728.21	上涨	Go up	28	179	1046.21
18	937	3555.77	租赁	lease	1384	8	25.10
19	1168	3482.67	住	live	12	342	1650.42
20	1023	3351.48	平方米	Square meter	612	27	57.50

Table4- 2 Top 20 keywords in the News corpus

Comments					News		
Rank	Frequency	Keyness	Keyword	Translation	Rank	Frequency	Keyness
1	1264	8822.262	**房价**	housing prices	5	2358	9339.321
2	905	6024.162	**房**	house (n, generic term)	2	905	6024.162
3	770	5285.005	涨	*Rise (v)*	101	286	1047.370
4	830	4756.155	买	*buy*	NA	NA	NA
5	624	4087.426	房子	House (n, referential)	38	672	2389.187
6	431	2461.358	调控	regulation	6	431	2461.358
7	329	2247.460	限	restrict	40	590	2282.744
8	376	2117.933	卖	*sell*	*497*	138	238.280
9	484	1959.801	钱	*money*	*664*	262	167.759
10	551	1869.925	高	*high*	*NA*	NA	NA
11	284	1743.756	购	Purchase	35	682	2405.920
1	287	1555.	真	*really*	*1*	73	35.272

13		855					793
14	272	1543.871	楼	*House*	447	166	252.933
15	222	1525.189	房产	Housing property	28	706	2771.865
16	229	1517.324	炒	*fry*	305	143	374.200
17	258	1485.797	房地产	Real estate	4	2911	10971.380
18	215	1432.836	买房	Buy house (v)	67	400	1508.082
19	202	1385.493	开发商	Developers	46	530	2073.131
20	271	1335.944	保障	security	3	5547	20643.421

Table4- 3 Top 20 keywords in the Comment corpus

As seen from Table 4-2 and 4-3, top 20 keywords shared by the two corpora are 房 (house, n, generic term), 保障(security), 房地产(real estate), 房价(housing prices), 调控(regulation) and 住 (live). These keywords all fit within the general theme of housing, such as: houses, house as security (or IHP), housing market, housing prices, housing regulation, and the function of house (i.e., to live). They can also be viewed as themes that most concern the state and the public. As expected, "house" and "market" and "policy" are the most common keywords. However, a surprising finding is that 保障 (security) also ranks high in both corpora. A reason for such high frequency is that the word can function as a verb or noun, i.e., that housing can be "the security of" or that housing "secures" people's livelihood (and happiniess), while it can also be read as an adjective which often comes with "houses", i.e., 保障房 (indemnification housing)[15]. However, in Chinese, 保障房(indemnification housing) is normally understood as one word (/vocabulary item), but it is segmented as two vocabulary items by Pynlpir[16].

The tables also show that top-ranked keywords in the News corpus and Comment corpus concern different themes, where the former emphasises more the macro-economic elements, such as 建设 (construction), 需求 (demand), and 市场 (market), which are less interesting to the public. However, it is interesting to see that the top-ranked keyword 租赁 (lease) in the News corpus, which is also closely related to housing, is far less significant in the Comment corpus. This could be caused by people's attitudes towards houses as discussed in 3.4.1.3，where housing mostly means the ownership of a house. Also, although the concept of 家庭 (family) is important for Chinese people, ranked 16th in the News corpus, it is still less significant in people's discussion of housing, ranking only 637th in the Comment corpus (this links to the importance of FAMILY metaphors, as discussed extensively in chapters 5 and 6). As for keywords that are particularly significant in the Comment corpus (as emphasied in italic), most of them are related to price/money, such as 涨 (rise), 买 (buy), 高 (high) and the modifier (adverb) 真 ("really" – or when used as an adjective "true").

---

[15] The term "保障" can be translated either as security or indemnification, depending on the context.

[16] This difference can potentially be explained by the development of the term 保障房(indemnification housing) and Pynlpir. The segmentation function of Pynlpir is based on the ICTCLAS (Institute of Computing Technology, Chinese Lexical Analysis System) launched in 2000, however, it was not until 2011 that the term 保障房(indemnification housing) frequently appeared in the media and became familiar to the public.

Aside from the variation of keywords used in the corpora, there is considerable amount of variation in the choice of terms. For instance, the terms used to refer to houses. As can be seen from these two tables, words meaning "house" (房 the generic term) ranked second in both keyword lists. However, in Chinese, there are other terms which also mean "house" aside from 房 (the generic term), i.e., 房, 房子 and 住房. The distribution of these house terms is presented in Figure 4-1 and as would be expected from the data in Table4-2 and 4-3, the News corpus used the generic term 房 and 住房 (living property) more frequently, while keyness of the referential term 房子 (a diminutive of "house" – so, something like "housie" in English) in the Comment corpus is much higher than in News corpus.
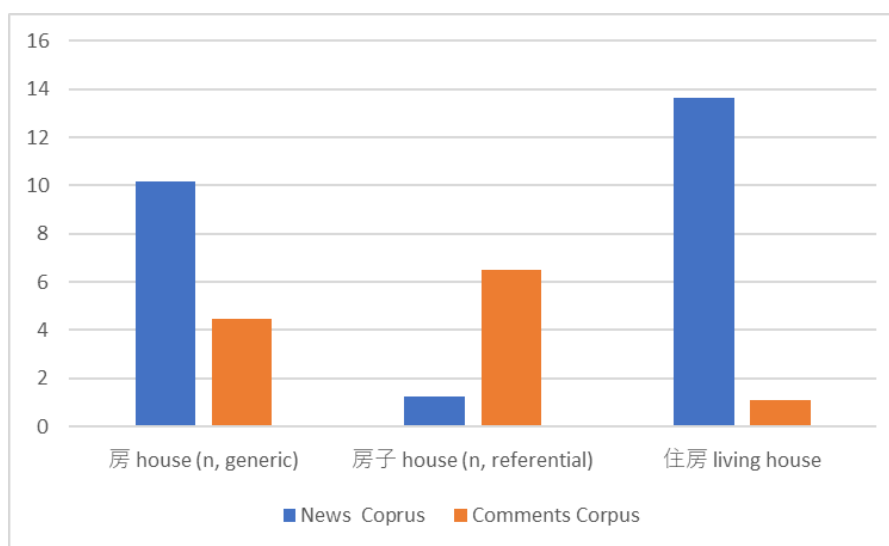
Figure4- 1Frequency of house terms in the corpora (per 1000 words)

In all, these two tables provide a first glimpse of a basic observation of the current study, which is that the focus of the state and the public in CHD differs: while the former focuses more on macroeconomic regulations and policies, the latter pays more attention the importance of houses in people's daily lives and livelihoods.

4.3 Overview of metaphors in the corpus

4.3.1 Metaphor identification

4.3.1.1 Methodological approaches in metaphor research

Researchers usually identify metaphor patterns manually through topic-specific corpora (Charteris-Black 2004, 2011; Lederer 2016). For example, in order to ascertain how frequently a particular source domain occurs within the European Union political discourse, Mussolf (2006) generated his own political corpus from news media sources, and manually searched for metaphorical tokens. Although his manual approach provides a high accuracy in metaphor identification, it requires researchers to read and code the data line by line in the corpus, and therefore can be comparatively time-consuming. Especially in recent years, researchers increasingly work with larger-size corpora which generally consist of millions of tokens (L'Hote, 2014), which makes a purely manual approach impractical, and therefore an approach which preserves (most of) the accuracy of the manual approach but is labour-light is needed.

The turn to automated approaches is common in more recent research (e.g, Charteris-Black 2004a;

Koller et al. 2008; Semino et al. 2017). Charteris-Black (2004a) proposed a two-step procedure which involves qualitative and quantitative analysis. The qualitative analysis in his approach comprises three parts. The first part is to identify candidate metaphors in a small sample corpus. After identifying the candidate metaphors, the most commonly used words are then categorised as a "metaphor keyword" (Charteris-Black, 2004a:35) to be used for further quantitative investigation in the corpus. The second step in the qualitative analysis is called "metaphor explanation" (Charteris-Black, 2004a:35), which looks into the context to determine whether the metaphor keywords are used metaphorically. The last step of the qualitative analysis is "metaphor explanation", in which the relationships between metaphors and the wider social contexts are explained – this is makes this approach "critical" and allows for its adoption by CDA researchers (Charteris-Black 2004a; Koller 2004; Chiang and Duann 2007). After the qualitative analysis, the "metaphor keywords" are studied quantitatively to measure their frequencies and concordances. Compared to the traditional (manual) approach, Charteris-Black's critical approach is much less labour-intensive, as it incorporates the manual sample corpus analysis with computer-mediated procedures. It has to be noted that one possible drawback of this approach (which should be mitigated in future research) is that it is very likely that the sample corpus does not contain all the metaphors of the full corpus (Stefanowitsch, 2005).

Similar to Chateris-Black's approach, Semino and her colleagues propose identifying the source domains manually in a sample corpus as starting point (Demmen et al. 2015; Semino et al. 2017). Unlike previous work, however, they do not suggest heading directly to the concordances after getting the source domains. Rather, they suggest grouping these source domains according to the USAS semantic taggers[17] (Rayson et al., 2004) in Wmatrix (Rayson, 2008). With the semantic fields, potential metaphorical tokens that do not appear in the sample corpus can, therefore, be identified. Afterwards, the identified semantic domains can manually be categorised as metaphorically or non-metaphorically used through concordance lines. For instance, in their research on the use of metaphor in a medical context (Semino et al., 2017), they first manually analysed a 15,000-word sample so as to identify metaphorical expressions according to the MIP procedure, and to "allocate each expression to a 'semantic field' corresponding to its literal meaning (eg, 'veteran' in 'a chemo veteran' was identified as a metaphor and allocated to the semantic field 'War')" (ibid, 61). After the manual analysis, a list of linguistic expressions and semantic fields was generated, which was then to be investigated in the corpus through the online corpus software Wmatrix.

In line with Semino and her colleagues' method, Lederer (2016) proposed a new technique of quantitative evaluation towards metaphorical occurrence in her research on economic discourse. In her research, she established three categories to classify the source domain triggers identified in her study corpus, which are "significant trigger lexeme", "super trigger lexeme" and "insignificant trigger lexeme" respectively according to their keyness (Lederer, 2016:537-538). The term "trigger lexeme" refers to a lexeme which is used to structure the target domain of the metaphor, while its (in)significance is defined by the percentage of the metaphorical use of that trigger lexeme in the study corpus, which she labels "keyness"[18] and is calculated through the following equation:

$$\text{Keyness (term)} = \frac{F_{special} \div N_{special}}{F_{general} \div N_{general}}$$

However, unlike Semino and her colleagues (Semino et al., 207) who's approach focusses on the semantic filed of the source domain triggers, Lederer's (2016) approach focus more on the collocation patterns of the source domain triggers. In her approach, the first step is to identify the potential source domain triggers for the chosen metaphors (ECONOMY IS A SHIP and ECONOMY IS A WEATHER EVENT) in a baseline corpus, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Davies 2008-, Davies 2009) in her case. Then, these source domain triggers are labelled according to their potency (or 'keyness' in her term). For instance, for metaphor ECONOMY IS A WEATHER EVENT, source domain triggers such as "vagaries", "cloudy", "forecast", "freeze" and so forth are labelled as "super triggers", while triggers such as "stormy", "wind" and "climate" are labelled as "insignificant triggers". For "inclement", "snow" and "tornados" which are common collocates of WEATHER, but are literally used in Lederer's study corpus, thus are labelled as "not triggers".

Following these research lines, this project incorporates quantitative and qualitative analysis, with a focus on querying source domain triggers. The detailed procedure of metaphor identification applied in this research is illustrated in the following section.

4.3.1.2 Proposed method for metaphor identification

The proposed method for metaphor identification in this research is mostly in line with previous corpus-based approaches, but it builds a further step, which is considered essential, and that is to examine the collocates of collocates of metaphor keywords. Figure 4-2 presents the full procedure:
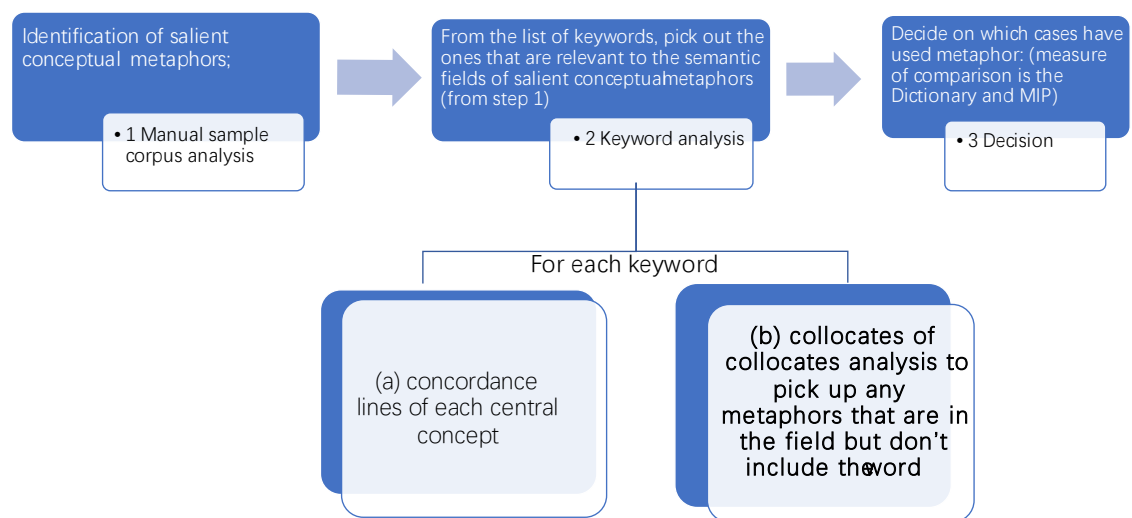
Figure4- 2 Proposed method for identifying metaphors in corpus

The process starts by manually identifying the salient metaphors in the sample corpus, which is compiled of the titles of articles in the News corpus. The salient metaphors detected in the sample corpus are roughly consistent with previous studies (e.g.: ORGANISM, WAR, DISEASE, NATURAL DISASTER, CONSTRUCTION, GAME and PLANT), as these are the most common ways people understand the abstract notion of economy (Kovecses 2010; Porto and Romano 2013; Wang et al 2013; Joris et al 2014; Arrese 2015). As discussed in 4.2, a list of keywords of each corpus was generated (as presented in Table 4-2 and Table 4-3). Accordingly, at this stage, keywords that are relevant to the semantic fields of these salient metaphors were picked out from the list of keywords, which is labelled here "metaphor keywords" (in line with Charteris-Black). For each collected metaphor keyword, its

concordance lines and the concordance lines of its collocates are examined in Antconc (5L:5R[19]; MI>3[20]). By checking the concordance lines of both metaphor keywords and their collocates, metaphors that are in these semantic fields but do not include the word can, therefore, be dug out.

Given that Chinese characters contains lots of compound words and that all the text in the data have been segmented for analysis, if we were to only apply the findings from the sample corpus, it would inevitably omit many metaphorical expressions. To minimize errors caused by technical issues, an asterisk symbol is added before (or/and after) the search term to generate a broader list of results –
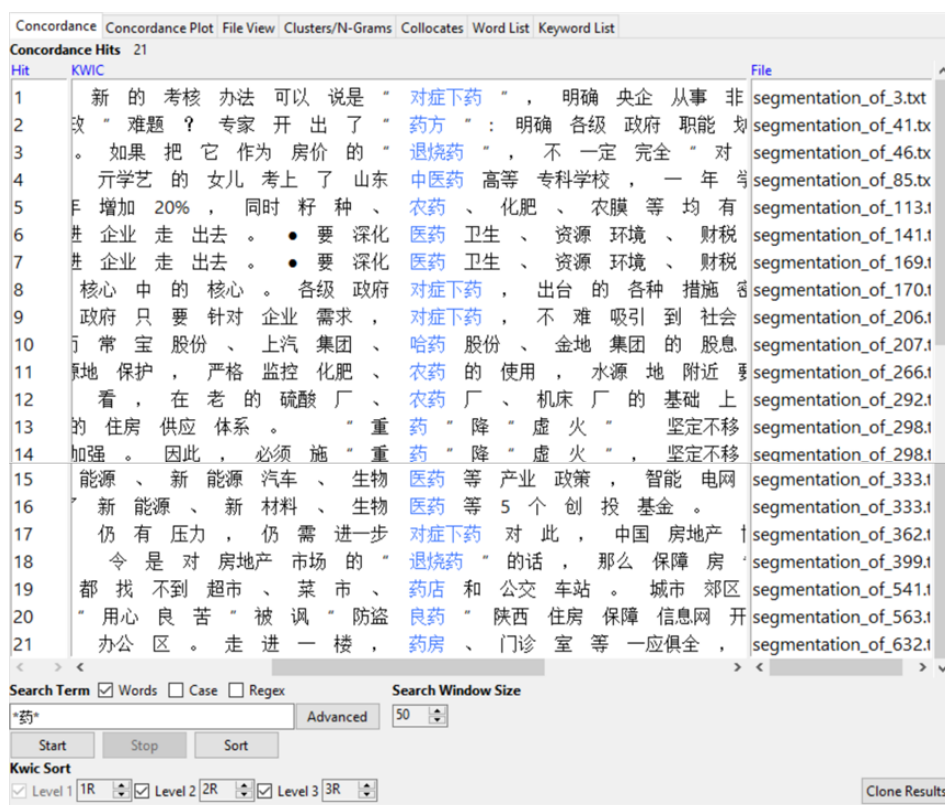
Figure4- 3 Concordance lines of *药* (*medicine*) in News Corpus

rather than the singe item identified in the sample test. For instance, *药* (*medicine*) rather than 药(medicine) are put in the searching area. A screenshot of concordance lines of *药*(*medicine*) in Antconc is presented in Figure 4-3[21], and it is translated and summarized in Table 4-4. Terms that are metaphorically used in Table 4-4 will then be regarded as source domain triggers (e.g., "对症下药" "focus disease to prescribe medicine"; "药方" "prescription"; "退烧药" "febrifuge"; "重药" "large amount of medicine" and "良药" "good medicine"). That is, starting with searching "topic domains" (such as "war", "horse" and "medicine") with the asterisk symbol (*) and get the concordance lines, marking down all the words that are metaphorically used (named "theme trigger").

Word	Literal	Translation	Frequ	Metaphorical?
对症下药	Focus disease to prescribe	Prescribe the right remedy for an illness	4	Y (convectional)

---

[19] In order to get enough information and avoid the statistical noise, the window span is set as 5L:5R (Desagulier, 2014; Brezina et al., 2015).

[20] Mutual Information (MI) score was used to measure the significance, and an MI score of or higher than 3.0 evidences that two items are collocates (Xiao and Hu, 2015).

[21] As it is searching in the context, the "Search Window Size" was set as 120 to include enough related words.

药方	Medicine	Prescription	1	Y
退烧药	Bring down a fever medicine	A medicine used to reduce fever (febrifuge)	2	Y
中医	Chinese	Chinese medicine	1	N
农药	Agricultural medicine	Agricultural chemical	3	N
医药	Medical	Medicine	4	N
哈药	Harbin pharmaceutical	Harbin pharmaceutical (proper noun)	1	N
重药	Heavy	Large amount of	2	Y
药店	Medicine store	Pharmacy	1	N
良药	Good medicine	Good medicine	1	Y(conventional)
药房	Medicine	Pharmacy	1	N

Table4- 4 Words start and end with "药" and their frequencies in News corpus

Having identified all the "theme triggers" in the corpus, what comes next is searching the collocates of the metaphorically used collocates, and this is where the novelty of this proposed method for identifying metaphors in corpus lies. By querying the collocates of collocates, it can be made sure that all the potential metaphors are included. Taking "野马" ("wild horse") as an example, its collocates (generated by Antconc) are presented in Figure 4-4.

Figure4- 4 Collocates of "野马" "wild horse" in News corpus

The metaphorically used collocates of 野马 (wild horse) as presented in Figure 4-4 are: 狂奔 (running madly), 缰 (rein), 脱 (run away, out of control), 疯 (crazy) and 套 (sheathed). However, if we re-search the collocates of each item above, we can get the following additional collocates: 理

性 (rational), 缰绳 (rein)[22]，低下(lower), 高昂(hold high) and 头(head). It is surprising to see that only by querying the collocates there is the risk of excluding nearly half of the collocates that are metaphorically used in the corpus. Accordingly, this additional step of querying collocates of collocates has proved to be important if not essential. After gathering all the metaphorically used collocates of the "theme triggers", the concordance lines of each metaphorically used collocate (and collocates of this collocate) are generated.

Further manual investigation of concordance lines was required to make the final categorisation of metaphorical usages, splitting them into novel and conventionalized. This distinction was based on the Contemporary Chinese Dictionary ("现代汉语词典") (2012). If the dictionary shows that the lexeme/fixed phrase in question is "also conventionally used to mean…", then it cannot be viewed as a novel metaphor. Unlike Charteris-Black (2004a), the current project primarily focuses on novel metaphors, recognising that conventional metaphors are lexicalized and can therefore be comprehended directly as fixed meanings, therefore having a lesser rhetorical as well as cognitive impact (Giora 1999; Eviatar and Just 2006). However, it should be noted that although the dictionary is a useful tool, it is not sufficient in deciding whether an expression is metaphorically used or not. This is because as a researcher, I have no prior knowledge of telling whether the expression I consider metaphorical is actually metaphorical. Accordingly, what is important here is to "identify metaphorical expressions and determine what the conceptual nature of the metaphorical expression in question is" (Steen, 1999, p. 59). Also, it should be noted that some metaphors are not expressed by a single word, thus, in the manual identification process, this is particularly checked and these words are counted as one metaphor instance as they contribute to the same metaphor at the time.

4.3.2 Selection of metaphors for analysis

In order to identify the dominant metaphors in the state-controlled discourse, we need to consider metaphor keyword and frequency within the News corpus. The Comment corpus is not included here, since it concerns the responses to those dominant metaphors – more detailed quantitative information
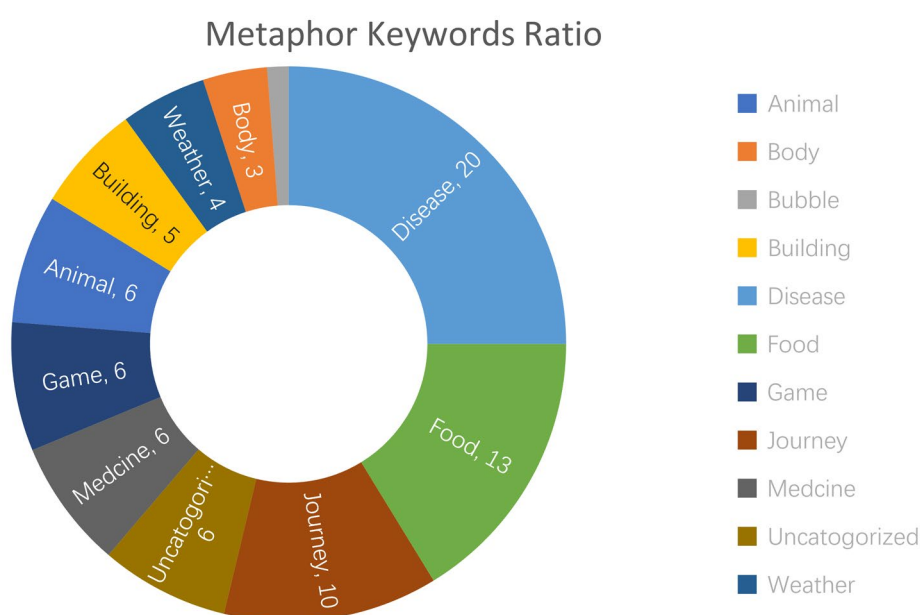
Figure4- 5 Distribution of Metaphor Keywords in News Corpus

---

[22]   Both 缰 and 缰绳 mean "rein". The former emphasises more on "rein" being an object of an action, such as "put on" or "take off", whereas the later refers to the generic naming of "rein".

on the Comment corpus are provided in chapters 5 and 6). Through the list of keywords, 80 metaphor keywords (with 1,148 occurrences) were identified in the News corpus. According to the semantic field of these metaphor keywords[23], they were classified into ten metaphor categories. Figure 4-5 presents the distribution of metaphor keywords and the number of metaphor keyword types. Figure 4-6 shows the frequency for the total use of conceptual metaphor categories, as well as for their distribution in the News corpus.

Metaphor Occurrences
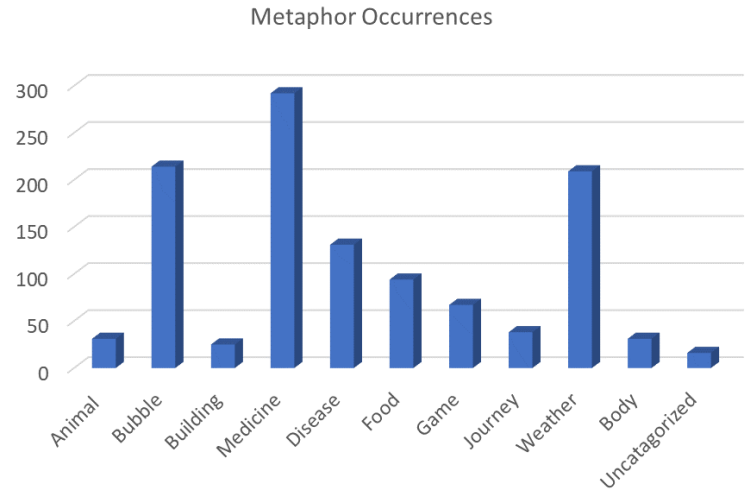
Figure4- 6 Conceptual Metaphor Categories and Distribution

As shown in Figure 4-5, most of the metaphor categories have diverse metaphor keywords, such as DISEASE, FOOD and JOURNEY. However, there is also the case of a metaphor that has a single metaphor keyword, which is the BUBBLE metaphor (with *bubble* itself as the metaphor keyword). In the Contemporary Chinese Dictionary (2012), aside from its fundamental (literal) meaning, the entry for "bubble" also includes the following:

比喻某一事物所存在的表面上繁荣、兴旺而实际上虚浮不实的成分: ~ 经济 |房地产 ~

(Contemporary Chinese Dictionary 2005: 1026)

(Metaphorically means the existence of a certain thing that is prosperous but in fact it is false. For example, the bubble economy, the real estate bubble.) (translation added)

As previously specified, when the dictionary entry includes a word/phrase's extended (metaphorical) meaning, then this meaning counts as a conventional metaphor. Accordingly, BUBBLE metaphor should be labelled as a conventional metaphor which is not within the focus of the current project. However, given that the conceptual metaphor ECONOMY/REAL ESTATE IS A BUBBLE is so prevalent in the CHD, as well as informal/daily conversations, it is interesting to look at how BUBBLE metaphors are used. To give an overview of the use of BUBBLE metaphor, Table 4-5 presents a subset of the verb collocates (5L:5R; MI>3) of the lexical item 泡沫*(bubble)* in the News corpus, which evokes the BUBBLE frame and actions related to the concept of *bubble*.

破裂 shatter	11	11	1

---

[23] As categorised in the USAS semantic taggers (Rayson, 2008) as described in section 4.3.1.1

挤掉 squeeze out	3	3	1
戳 prick	3	3	1
破灭 burst	41	43	0.953488372
稀释 dilute	3	4	0.75
膨胀 expand, dilate	7	11	0.636363636
消解 eliminate	2	4	0.5
吹 blow	2	7	0.285714286
崩溃 collapse	3	12	0.25
治理 govern	7	40	0.175
挤出 squeeze out	3	24	0.125
产生 produce	23	198	0.116161616
破 broke	4	36	0.111111111
引发 initiate, trigger	9	120	0.075
造成 cause	8	220	0.036363636
形成 form	9	252	0.035714286
出现 emerge, appear	20	778	0.025706941
影响 influence	8	676	0.01183432
上涨 rise	12	1021	0.011753183
发展 develop	9	1465	0.006143345

Table4- 5 Verb collocates of 泡沫 Bubble listed by percent of metaphorical use[24]

As can be seen from Table 4-5, the significant triggers can be grouped into two types, the result of the bubble, and the action towards the bubble. The former type has 62 keyword occurrences includes: 破裂 (shatter, 11), 破灭 (burst, 41), 膨胀 (expand, 7) and 崩溃 (collapse, 3). The latter type compromises: 挤掉 (squeeze out, 3), 戳 (prick, 3), 稀释 (dilute, 3), 消解 (eliminate, 2) and 吹 (blow, 2). However, this cannot be directly applied to build up the conceptual metaphor CHINESE ECONOMY/REAL ESTATE IS A BUBBLE, because the attributes of the bubble cannot be seen merely from verb collocates. Therefore, a list of the collocates of *bubble* was generated to identify what kind of bubble or whose bubble is discussed in the news. All the collocates indicating an attributive relation to *bubble* were collected and listed in Figure 4-7.
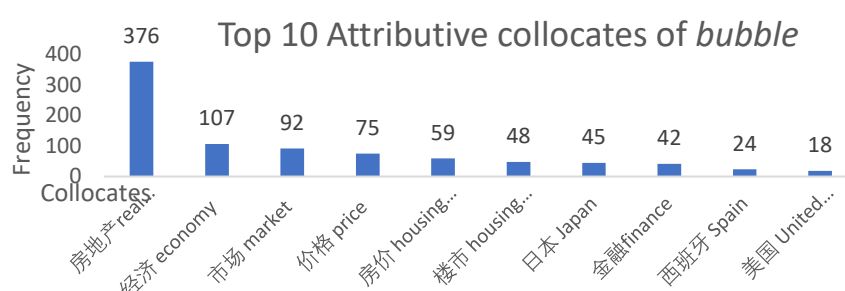
Figure4- 7 Top 10 (the Most Frequent) Attributive Collocates of Bubble in News Corpus

Among the attributive collocates of "bubble" in News corpus, foreign countries, such as Japan, Spain and the United States, appeared frequently. Beyond the verb collocates of "bubble" which indicate the frame and action towards the bubble, it is also worth commenting on the attributive collocates of "bubble". The attributive collocates of "bubble" are more common in the News corpus, where the state-controlled discourse diverts the attention away from the domestic bubble-related problems, often making reference to cases of foreign "bubbles" (e.g., Japan, Spain, and the United

---

[24] "Significant Triggers" as in Lederer (2016) are shaded.

States on this table).

From Figure 4-5 and 4-6, it may be noted that there is not a direct correspondence between the number of metaphor keywords and the frequency of metaphor types. For instance, DISEASE metaphors had the most metaphor keywords but ranked fourth in terms of frequency, while MEDCINE metaphors are the most frequent in the corpus but only have six metaphor keywords. The main finding here, which will form the basis of further analysis, is that the most frequent metaphor types in the News corpus are MEDICINE, WEATHER, DISEASE and FOOD, which are dominant in both Metaphor Keyword Ratio and Metaphor Occurrence.

Table 4-5 provides the summary of the 10 most frequently metaphorically used terms, whose joint frequency (845) represents 73.6% of the total of metaphors (1,148) investigated. As the data shows, these primary metaphor keywords belong to metaphor categories of MEDICINE (267), BUBBLE (214), WEATHER (209), FOOD (59), DISEASE (51) and GAME (45).

Keywords	Frequency[25]	Category
健康 health	267	Medicine
泡沫 bubble	214	Bubble
回暖 get warm again after a cold spell	90	Weather
*温 *warm	72	Weather
拳 fist	45	Game
消化 digest	41	Food
*伤**hurt*	34	Disease
阳光 sunshine	30	Weather
辣 spicy	18	Food
疯狂 insane	17	Disease
寒* cold*[26]	17	Weather

Table4- 6 Top 10 Metaphor Keywords in News Corpus

The ten categories of metaphor presented in Figure 4-5 and Figure 4-6 are based on the expanding list of category labels in USAS (232 in total), however, this categorisation to some extent is a bit over-detailed, leaving a certain proportion of metaphors uncategorised (due to the fact that they can belong to more than one category – see Figure 4-5). For the purposes of this project, these metaphors are re-labelled here:

　　i. DISEASE, MEDICINE and part of the BODY metaphors (which are related symptoms) are relabelled as DISEASE, as all of them are related to diseases and the treatment of disease.

　　ii. JOURNEY metaphors have incorporated some instances that would otherwise be labelled as BUILDING metaphors and that is because all of the latter relate to concepts such as "milestone" which is part of a journey rather than part of the building process.

　　iii. FOOD metaphors remain as FOOD as there are no other categories that are indistinguishable from it.

　　iv. GAME and some uncategorisable metaphors which have a strong sense of competition and combat are relabelled as WAR;

　　v. WEATHER and some BODY metaphors (mostly relating to TEMPERATURE) are relabelled as NATURE. This is because

Aside from these five categories of metaphors, the FAMILY metaphor, which is not included in Figures 4-5 and 4-6 due to its relatively low frequency, will also be considered as part of the CHD,

---

[25] The Frequency here refers to the metaphorical hits rather than the raw frequencies of the metaphor keywords.

[26] As 疯狂 (insane) and 寒 (cold) share the same frequency, they are listed together as the tenth keywords.

due to its significance and impact within the Chinese culture (Confucianism in particular). ANIMAL metaphors on the contrary, due to the fact that their usage was found to be limited to functions such as insult, irony/sarcasm, will only be discussed as part of the counter-discourse (see section 6.4.2 for further discussion), therefore not within the scope of the analysis in Chapter 5.

The aforementioned metaphor identification and selection criteria are also appliable to the Comment Corpus. That is to say, all metaphors to be analysed are identified from the Comment Corpus (which is constituted by reader comments from web portals, i.e.: NetEase, Sina, Tencent and iFeng, on the corresponding news articles in the News Corpus, see also 4.1), following the proposed identification procedures.

4.4 Data presentation and translation

Having explained the method for data collection and metaphor identification, what needs to be addressed here is data presentation and translation. For the News Corpus, each piece of news article will be numbered according to its date of publication. Of course, this date of publication will also be presented. As for each comment in the Comment Corpus, only the number of the particular news article it responds to will be given. This is because not all news articles attract equal amount of attention and some news articles may receive far me comments than the others. Meanwhile, the publication date of a news article is finite, while its corresponding comments (if only it receives comments) may have be posted from time to time. More importantly, given the discussion of intertextuality, it is the number of news article each comment responds to rather than its publication date that are considered to be crucial. Also, by doing this, it can be easily told whether an example is from the News Corpus or the Comment Corpus. Accordingly, each news article to be analysed in the subsequent chapters will be presented as:

Example + 'Chapter number-example number' + 'excerpt' + '(#N+"News article number, date of publication)'.

For each comment to be analysed, it will be presented as:

Example + 'Chapter number-example number' + 'excerpt' + '(#C + the number of News article it responds to)'.

Another issue worth pointing out is about translation. As both of the two corpora are written in Chinese, translation becomes a crucial part of the whole research project, and a clear system is needed. The conventional way of translating Chinese into English is following a three-level translation, which includes the original context, word for word translation, and free translation. However, it is very often that words/characters in Chinese do not have a one-to-one correspondence or have different connotations to English. To this end, this thesis leaves the 'word for word' procedure out and only provides the free translation. This does not mean that the 'word for word' translation is useless, but rather, it is often where the metaphorical meaning occurred. In this regard, a footnote will be added to explain this process. Furthermore, translations are somehow considered to be mixed with the translator's ideology (Schäffner, 2003). In order to minimize the presence of the researcher/translator's ideology, and to guarantee the accuracy of the translation, all translations in this research project are cross-checked at least three times with people from different language background, which are, a native English speaker (to ensure the quality of the translated text, particularly the translation of metaphors are expressed properly and correspondingly), a person whose mother tongue is neither mandarin Chinese nor English (to make sure the translation are accessible to global reader), and a Chinese with similar background as the researcher/translator (to ensure the Chinese-English translation is not biased or misleading).

In sum, based on the corpus-mediated enquiry, DISEASE, JOURNEY, FOOD, FAMILY, WAR and NATURE metaphors are the dominant metaphor categories in the CHD. In the next chapter (5), the focus will turn to the qualitative analysis of these six categories of metaphor.

Chapter 5

Analysis of Prevalent Conceptual Metaphors

This chapter sheds light on the ideological and rhetorical aspects of both sides of the CHD (the government-led discourse and its counter-discourse) by analysing the use of metaphors in context. Before conducting an in-depth analysis of each category of metaphor as outlined in Chapter 4 (i.e., DISEASE, JOURNEY, WAR, FOOD, FAMILY and NATURE), each subsection of this chapter will begin with contextualising the conceptual metaphor under examination, both in terms of its generalised uses and effects (as these are discussed in the relevant literature) and in terms of its particularities (if any) within the Chinese culture and society. In order to provide the full picture of how these metaphors work within CHD, examples from both corpora (the News corpus and the Comment corpus) will be analysed using the model that was proposed in Chapter 2.

5.1 DISEASE metaphors

5.1.1 DISEASE metaphors[27] in economic discourse

Being one of the major conceptual metaphor categories in economic discourse (Boers and Demecheleer 1997; Chrteris-Black 2011), DISEASE metaphors (in a range of languages) have received abundant attention from researchers. Previous research on DISEASE metaphors can be grouped into two types. The first and most common is research which aims at identifying the overall conceptual metaphor categories used in economic discourse, in which DISEASE metaphor is one of the more prevalent metaphor categories. Some of these research projects examine metaphors used in a single language (e.g., English: Lederer 2016; Chinese: Tan and Chen 2010; Spanish: Arrese 2015), but the majority of these studies focus on cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparisons (i.e., Chinese vs. English: Hu and Xu 2017; Chinese and German: Kong 2002; within European languages: Arrese and Vara-Miguel 2016). Differentiated from these types which study the general category of conceptual metaphors, the second dominant research approach focuses specifically on DISEASE metaphors (i.e., Boers 1997, 1999; Urbonaitė and Šeškauskienė 2007; Nader 2013).

Studies into western discourse suggest that there are two main goals that hegemonic discourse (i.e., discourse controlled by those who hold power) seeks to achieve when using DISEASE metaphors (Imani and Habil, 2004). The first goal is to obtain the audience's support through constructing a positive self-image. For example, De Leonardis (2008), who examined HEALTH metaphors in Italian political discourse, observes that the government is conceptualised as a doctor – i.e., someone with specialised expertise – uniquely able to address crucial (social, economic, etc.) problems, conceptualised as illnesses, and whom the public should trust and have confidence in. The second goal is to shape the audience's attitude towards socio-economic issues and it is indeed found that the impact of such metaphors on public perception can be strong (Boers 1997; Thibodeau and Boroditsky 2011). To test the impact of DISEASE metaphors, Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011) presented the problem

---

[27] The DISEASE metaphors discussed in this Chapter refers to metaphors that are related to the domain of disease, which are also named as ILLNESS/MEDICAL/HEALTH metaphors in the literature.

of high criminality to their participants by using two different metaphors, 'crime as virus' vs 'crime as beast', asking them to make suggestions for solving the problem. The results showed that when a social problem (crime, in this case) is conceptualised as a disease, people tend to give reform-oriented solutions (treating the disease), whereas when the problem is conceptualised as a beast, suggestions included more radical and even violent measures (controlling the beast). It is therefore shown that DISEASE metaphors are used when the promoted actions and measures (that the target audience is expected to adopt/accept) have similar properties to those of a medical treatment: i.e., unpleasant but necessary, possibly longer-term (requiring patience) and relatively less radical/aggressive compared to their alternatives.

Issues relating to economy and economic policy can become quite complex, convoluted, and involving expert knowledge (i.e., knowledge of the science of economics and involving jargon/advanced terminology). This means that such issues are not always easy to present to the public in a transparent and accessible manner. Studies show that metaphors serve as a way of facilitating comprehension (Chateris-Black, 2014). DISEASE metaphors, in particular, can create a mapping between physical disorders and social/economic issues. Charteris-Black (2011) argues that metaphors from the domain of health and disease come from the fundamental human experiences: life and death. He claims that between these two extremes, there are different levels of health and "metaphors can be graded anywhere on a scale of good and bad health according to the strength of the intended evaluation" (Charteris-Black, 2011:180). Thus, a negative economic situation can be evaluated according to the degree and nature of the problem (in terms of length/recurrence e.g., 'bout', in terms of type of ailment; 'wounds', in terms of permanence/ outcome; e.g. 'paralysis') and correspondingly a positive situation can be described in terms of '(in) recovery' 'healthy' 'robust'[28]. Overall, this type of conceptual metaphor acts as a medium of communicating basic information and knowledge, while also serving as an ideological tool through which people's understandings and intentions are conveyed (Arrese and Vara-Miguel, 2016).

In the study of DISEASE metaphors, there is a tradition that healthy condition of the economy is evaluated as normal within DISEASE metaphors. Following the life-death dichotomy, any disease is by default considered bad and any treatment is considered to be the correct course of action that is aimed at restoring normalcy. In other words, DISEASE metaphors convey the idea that the economic system is affected by something and is not working smoothly, which is in need of regulation (Roubini and Mihm 2010; Besomi 2011).

In related literature, the DISEASE metaphor presupposes two general conceptual metaphors: THE ECONOMY IS ILL, and ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IS MEDICAL TREATMENT (Esager, 2011). Based on the ILLNESS-TREATMENT dichotomy, Borriello (2017) further explains that in framing public finance issues, DISEASE metaphors are noticeably mapped from four kinds of vocabulary: (a) human body or organ, (b) diseases and symptoms, (c) the diagnosis and (d) the treatment. These four subdomains each present DISEASE metaphors in a more specific way, but they still fall within the scope of dividing DISEASE metaphors into two parts: the disease and the treatment. In line with such an approach, the following sections will use the disease-treatment distinction to analyse DISEASE metaphors in the contexts within which they are produced[29].

---

[28] Charteris-Black presents these terms on a severity scale, even if, in reality, they are not really comparable, since they are connected on different (semantic) domains of the concept of DISEASE.

[29] It should be noted that there is a superseding, higher-level metaphor, namely ECONOMY IS A HUMAN under which all these DISEASE metaphors are subsumed.

5.1.2 DISEASE metaphors in CHD

DISEASE metaphors (with the conceptual metaphor CRISIS IS DISEASE) represent a large proportion of the collected metaphors in the two corpora, particularly in the News corpus at 37.63%, whereas 9.02% in the Comment corpus. In line with the general observation in the literature about how DISEASE metaphors are used in economic discourse (Esager 2011, cf Borriello 2017), the metaphors found in the corpora primarily have two different kinds of emphasis: emphasis on the patient's symptoms versus emphasis on the doctor's prescribed treatment[30].

As shown on Table 5-1, the two perspectives (types of emphasis) through which the HOUSING CRISIS IS DISEASE metaphor can be instantiated are represented by a number of different keywords in the two corpora (405 tokens in the News corpus and 99 tokens in the Comment corpus).

When it comes to HOUSING MARKET IS A SICK PATIENT, the keywords concern the symptoms, both physical and mental, such as "headache", "insane", "weak" and "tired", or a (specific or non-specific) diagnosis, such as "illness", "ailment", "deficiency", "cancer". The keyword "cancer" is only found once, in the Comment corpus, whereas every other mention of illness is non-specific (for further discussion see 5.1.2.1.2). It is also worth noting that there is a correspondence between the way in which the (ailing) market, and housing prices in particular, are described and the state or direction of the relevant economic metrics: any sudden change in housing prices is seen as abnormal, with the keywords "deficiency fire", "insane", "fever" being associated with a rise in prices while the keywords "tired" and "weak" being associated to a drop. As Table 5-1 shows, the frequency of keywords associated to rising housing prices is much greater than that of keywords associated to dropping prices, the latter being completely absent from the Comment corpus.

When it comes to MEASURES AND POLICIES ARE TREATMENT(S), the related keywords concern (specific or non-specific) types of treatment, such as "pills", "medicines", "antidote" and "cardiotonic". The rest of the keywords concern the results of the treatment, which can range from curing the disease to failing to be effective and/or eventually causing death (Joris et al., 2014). At the same time, the metaphors that emphasise the treatment perspective have some strong culture-specific features, with knowledge of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) evoked and employed. This particularity deserves special attention in order to fully understand DISEASE metaphors in the studied corpora

---

[30] There are other metaphorical uses of DISEASE in political and economic discourse, especially in anti-government (counter-)discourse, for example metaphorically attributing diseases such as blindness to the leadership, with the goal of emphasising lack of knowledge / insight or unwillingness to recognize a problem. Such uses were not found in the examined corpora.

Conceptual Metaphors	Keywords	Freq. in News	Freq. in Comment
1. THE HOUSING MARKET IS A SICK PATIENT	*伤**hurt*	34	9
	疯狂 insane	17	43
	神经 nerve	9	1
	痛 pain/ache	9	7
	虚火 deficiency fire	8	0
	头疼 headache	6	0
	痼疾 persistent ailment	4	0
	烧 fever	4	0
	疼 pain	3	0
	*毒*poison	3	1
	沉疴 severe and lingering illness	2	0
	顽疾 recurring illness	2	1
	后遗症 sequela	1	0
	血 blood	7	4
	病症 disease, symptoms	1	0
	疲弱 tired and weak	3	0
	健康 health	267	2
2. MEASURES AND POLICIES ARE TREATMENT(S)	定心丸 a pill used to cure heart related diseases in TCM	11	1
	*药*medicine	11	28
	解毒剂 antidote	1	0
	愈合 heal	1	0
	癌症 cancer	0	1
	强心针 cardiotonic (a medicine for heart disease)	3	1
	治标 treat the symptom	6	4
	治本 treat the root	11	6
	瞎 blind	0	1

Table5-1 Metaphor keywords in DISEASE metaphors

5.1.2.1 THE HOUSING MARKET IS A SICK PATIENT

In the News corpus it appears that the HOUSING MARKET IS A SICK PATIENT perspective is used with the main function of creating an image of the housing crisis as an economic problem which can be handled, and therefore is not severe nor untreatable. Furthermore, it is used with the purpose of building up people's confidence in the government and the CCP (see also De Leonardis 2008).

Relevant studies have shown that problems are often defined as a specific disease, such as plague, influenza, or even cancer (Urbonaitė and Šeškauskienė 2007; Imani and Habil 2014). In particular, the infectious property of diseases is frequently raised in studies of economic discourse, especially the discourse of economic crises (Roubini and Mihm 2010; Bounegru and Forceville 2011). However, it is interesting to point out that in the News corpus the Chinese housing crisis is neither given a specific disease name, nor portrayed as a contagious disease. Rather, it is presented as treatable and curable, a perception which is mainly constructed through three kinds of disease terms borrowed from TCM, namely 痼疾 (persistent ailment), 沉疴 (severe and lingering illness) and 顽疾 (recurring illness),

and can be viewed as a CHRONIC DISEASE metaphor. What is translated here as "persistent ailment" (痼疾) is a Chinese expression that refers to a disease which is curable, but requires long-term consistent treatment. "Severe and lingering illness" (沉疴) is a disease which is severe and lasts for a long time (even though treatment is given). "Recurring illness" (顽疾) is a disease for which it is difficult to find the appropriate treatment (hence the recurrence), but that once the appropriate treatment is found its duration is relatively short. The differences between these three terms lie in their varied focus. Both the first term "persistent ailment" (痼疾) and the second term "severe and lingering illness" (沉疴) highlight the "long-term" aspect, but the former places emphasis on treatment time while the latter focuses on the severe state of the disease. As for the third term, "recurring illness" (顽疾), it emphasises the difficulty of treatment of the disease.

Example5-1住房市场化改革以来，一些地方的城镇化经常感染 "土地财政"的**<u>痼疾 ³¹</u>**，每每陷入房地产投资过热的怪圈。十八大报告提出的"推进城镇化"，如何在破除 **<u>沉疴</u>**中前行? (#N493, 2013/02/05)

> (Since the marketization of housing, urbanization in some places has often been infected with the **<u>persistent ailment</u>** of "land finance[32]", which often falls into the vicious circle of overheated real estate investment. How can the idea of "promoting urbanization", which was brought up in the report of the 18th national congress (of the CCP), overcome the **<u>severe and lingering illness</u>** and move forward?)

Example5-2自从开始建设保障房以来，分配不公的现象就一直是**<u>顽疾</u>**。…有了较大强化…也越来越完善。 (#N273, 2011/07/21)

> (Inequitable distribution of houses has been a **<u>recurring illness</u>** since the construction of IHP …more and more improvements have been made.)

Example5-3"**<u>顽疾</u>**的背后是利益集团"……有关部门正加大惩处力度，在一定程度上抑制了小产权房继续蔓延的势头。(#N433, 2012/06/12)

> ("Behind the **<u>recurring illness</u>** is the interest group"…Authorities are stepping up their efforts to punish small property owners, which had curbed the spread of small property houses to a certain degree)

Example5-4既然经适房容易引发诸多问题，那么，有没有可以替代它的更好的保障房类型答案是肯定的……不过，**<u>沉疴</u>**多年，不可能一日得疏… (#N510, 2013/05/03)

> (Since the affordable housing is prone to cause many problems, is there a better type of affordable housing to replace it? The answer is yes…However, **the <u>severe and lingering illness</u>** has existed for years, and it is impossible to get rid of it by a day)

Being one of the most severe social issues in China, the causes and problems of the housing crisis are complex and widely controversial. Therefore, it is difficult to diagnose it as any specific disease. The previous examples can be seen as an attempt of *People's Daily* to persuade its readership that, although the housing problem in China is serious, it is still within the control of the government and the CCP. Thus, the DISEASE metaphors appearing in the four examples above have two facets: on the one hand, they are used to express the idea that the housing crisis is too complex to be defined as a

---

[31] Metaphorical expressions within examples that are being analysed will be underlined and highlighted in bold.

[32] Land finance refers to the concept that local governments in mainland China receives financial revenue from land exploitation and management, which was accused of being one of the most important cause of Chinse economic problem (see detailed explanation in Chapter 1).

specific disease. On the other hand, they are manipulated to build the public's confidence in the real estate market and in the CCP's governing. Since the aforementioned disease terms are both treatable and curable, the state presents the housing problem in China as solvable. More specifically, it tries to create the impression that even though the housing issue in China is difficult to tackle and the process may last a long time (like a long treatment), with new problem potentially arising during the course of applying the planned solutions, the process will eventually be successful. In this vein, any problems emerging in the housing market (such as "the ghost cities" mentioned in Chapter 1) are presented as within expectation and control.

Aside from pointing out the complexity of disease causes and building people's confidence in the government, these DISEASE metaphors are also used to express the state's determination in carrying out the general housing reform, as well as area-specific reforms. Thus, "land finance" in example 5-1, "inequality distribution" in example 5-2, and "interest group" in example 5-3 are used as specific examples to draw the picture that the state/CCP has identified the problems in the housing market. This also lays the ground for the later metaphor "prescribe the right remedy for specific diseases" (对症下药). It is particularly worth noting that the use of "interest group" in example 5-2 matches the political ambition to "build a rule-of-law China". Moreover, examples 5-2 and 5-3 also show how *People's Daily* tries to convince its readership that the government/CCP has made great improvements in treating the "illness" by listing concrete measures.

Example5-5尽管调整结构并非一朝一夕就能完成，而且现阶段必然经历**阵痛**，但只有
寻找新的增长点，才能推动经济更**健康**地发展. (#N450, 2012/07/30)

> (Although the adjustment of (economic) structure cannot be completed overnight, and it is inevitable to experience **pain** at this stage, only by looking for new growth points can drive the economy to develop more **healthily**.)

In example 5-5, *People's Daily* portrays the problems in the housing market as a sequela of the treatment. Like treating any chronic disease, the 'treatment' of the economic structure cannot be completed in one day (reinforcing the argument in example 5-4). As a sequela of the therapy, current pain (problems) are inevitable. This argument comes from the same viewpoint as an argument based on the CHRONIC DISEASE idea. Although it does not directly use the CHRONIC DISEASE metaphor but focuses instead on the element of pain, it still conveys the idea of a long-term process, which, despite inevitably causing (occasional) pain, will eventually be successful. The SEQUELA metaphor is also used to deliver the message that the state possesses the long-term determination to solve the problem and that it is adaptable to changing circumstances and willing to adopt new perspectives in the process of regulating the economy.

In market economies, consumer confidence is seen as an important indicator which has an impact on near-term economic growth (Ludvigson, 2004). Knowing this, the state prioritises maintaining the people's confidence in the housing market, not only in practical terms (i.e., keeping prices within the affordable range) but also, and more importantly, by persuading people that the market's prospects are optimistic (at least in the long run if not in the immediate future) and by creating the impression that patience and trust in the government's actions will be rewarded.

Example5-6在新常态下, 传统的宏观调控思路和方式不仅难以有效应对经济增长下行、
结构调整加速的压力，而且过量过多使用会产生许多不良**后遗症**，使经济结构性

矛盾进一步**恶化**。(#N130, 2011/01/10)

> (Under the new normal, the traditional way of thinking and macro-control is difficult to effectively cope with the downward of economic growth and the pressure from structural adjustment; and further, excessive use (of the traditional way of thinking and macro-control) will produce many **adverse sequelae**, which makes the problems in economic structure **worse**.)

In example 5-6, the adverse sequela is presented as a result of retaining old (obsolete) ideas and old ways of regulating the economy. In December 2013, President Xi claimed that Chinese economy had entered the "new normal", which was frequently highlighted in the government-led discourse afterwards (XinhuaNet, 2016). In this line of thought, when the economy enters "a new normal" novel solutions are needed. However, "new remedies are needed" is not the term used here and, instead, the emphasis is placed on the message that the old measures are not workable. The SEQUELA metaphor, therefore, evokes the idea of the necessity of novel measures without explicitly referring to such measures, possibly in order to avoid having to give specific details of what those measure would be.

In sum, it can be argued that DISEASE metaphors in the government-led discourse are mainly manipulated to build people's confidence in the real estate market and in the state/CCP and its actions. This is achieved by presenting the housing crisis as a treatable and curable disease but avoiding giving that disease a specific name. By being rooted in TCM and Chinese culture, these metaphors can have a powerful effect, especially when it comes to encouraging patience and trust that, despite any setbacks during a long-term process, the results will eventually be positive.

Among the reader's comments found in the Comment corpus there are those which express anti-government sentiments or criticisms towards the state's specific measures and actions. Such comments form what we call the "counter-discourse" within the CHD. Within the counter-discourse, DISEASE metaphors are employed to conceptualise the housing market as having an untreatable disease which will eventually lead to death. The rhetoric of these comments is built around accusing the state of ineffective treatment, which accounts for the current condition of the disease, and eventually creating the impression that the state cannot be trusted to solve the housing problems. Therefore, in contrast to the CHRONIC DISEASE metaphor appearing in government-led discourse, the base-metaphor here seems to be TERMINAL DISEASE. The following example is a user comment attached to the news article talking about the housing market situation in the context of the state's New State Ten Measures("新国十条").

Example5-7**癌症晚期**没得救了 (#C92[33])

> (The housing market is at) a **late stage of cancer** and it cannot be saved

Although the subject of the sentence is omitted, it can be easily seen that the reader is talking about the housing market as the news article it responds to in about the housing market and housing prices. Unlike *People's Daily*, the comment directly portrays the housing market as diagnosed with late-stage cancer, which cannot be cured, leading to imminent death. With the state and real estate's embedded "doctor-patient" relationship, the expression of "late-stage cancer" triggers the implicature that the doctor failed to identify the patient's early symptoms of cancer, where the disease was most

---

[33] News article #92 attracts extensive comments, this is because it discusses a large-scale 2010 online questionnaire on housing prices, which is of interest to the public. Also, the conclusion of the survey is that 90% of the participants think housing prices are too high. The 10% then becomes the attack target of the commenters in the Comment corpus.

likely to be contained and treated. This evokes the image of a doctor who does not pay appropriate attention to their patient. Alternatively, the triggered implicature could be that the doctor may have noticed the symptoms, but not recognised them as indicators of cancer, thus suggesting that they are an incompetent doctor. At the same time, this rhetoric also targets the applied measures: if the patient had received proper treatment at an earlier stage of the disease, it would not have progressed to current late stage, therefore, in this argument, the state's regulations and policies have been proven incapable of regulating the housing market. Therefore the counter-discourse relies on a dual subversion of the state's rhetoric: the STATE IS A DOCTOR metaphor is used in a negative light, where the doctor is presented as either negligent or incompetent, while at the same time the POLICIES/MEASURES ARE TREATMENT metaphor is used to present state policies as inefficient. Although the CANCER metaphor has only one occurrence in the data, it is still with great significance. As shown in table 5-1, there are not many DISEASE metaphor keywords in the comment corpus, and the majority of them focus on "treatment" rather than "diagnosing".

The relationship between an ailing market (the housing market in this case) and other economic and political sectors, would normally be represented by DISEASE metaphors that emphasise the infectious nature of diseases (which can then spread across sectors – Roubini and Mihm 2010; Bounegru and Forceville 2011), however, such metaphors are not found in this corpus. Instead, what we find is metaphors of DEATH and TRAUMA, which are adjacent to the DISEASE family of metaphors. It appears that the real estate market is perceived as perpetrator in the event of death/trauma of the housing market and other economic sectors.

Example5-8 房地产正在**吸其它行业的血液**，其它行业的利润（工资、收入，公积金）全部都拿来买房了，还欠起银行买，所有资金都流向房地产，怎么不去炒。长此以往，吸干其它行业的血，让房地产臃肿而**死**。(#C352)

> (The real estate industry is **draining blood** from other sectors. Profits (wages, income, Provident Fund[34]) made from other industries are only used to buy houses, and even in the circumstances of owing the bank. All the money flow to the real estate industry. In the long term, **draining the blood of** other industries, will make real estate bloat to **death**.)

Example5-9 改善性住房，被这次调控**害死**了 (#C92)

> (The housing units for the purpose of improving current living conditions have **been killed** by the regulation.)

Example 5-8 is a reader comment responding to the news article discussing how to view house prices. In this example, the commenter uses a DRAINING BLOOD metaphor, where the real estate is the agent seeking treatment and solutions rather passively receiving treatment. In the course of receiving treatment, the real estate drains blood from other sectors, which is damaging to them and eventually kills them (as their blood drains). On the other hand, the real estate is also the victim in this context. It does not only hurt other sectors by draining their blood, but also kills itself through receiving too much blood. Wodak and de Cillia (2007) also claimed that the role of perpetrator and victim can be reversed in discourse. In contrast to viewing the real estate as the agent which seeks treatment and

---

[34] Provident Fund, translated from an economics term "公积金", The (Housing) Provident Fund is a mandatory saving scheme specifically for house purchasing. Every employee in China has their own HPF account opened by their employer. Every month, both the employee and the employer are required to deposit a certain percentage of the employee's salary into employee's HPF account. When the employee wants to buy a house, they can use the money in their HPF account and apply for a subsidized mortgage loan with lower rate through the HPF system (Chen et al., 2020).

hurts others as well as themselves, some readers believe that the real estate is the victim of the bad treatment, with an external perpetrator. At the same time, it is important to point out that there is an implicature (presented as fact) in these metaphors, which is that only those who are "weak and lack immunity" can be easily affected (Roubini and Mihm, 2010:66), so in this case the real estate being presented as the weak/ailing entity.

Death is the worst possible outcome of a medical issue, therefore DEATH metaphors have a notably strong rhetorical weight. In example 5-8, the commenter holds the opinion that even though the real estate market is much stronger than other economic sectors, all of them are weak and lack immunity. But the idea of how and who is responsible to treat/protect them is left unsaid. However, with the state acting as a governor and servicer in the nation's economic life, it can be easily understood that the commenter is placing blame on the state. Similarly, in example 5-9, the user adopts a DEATH metaphor where regulation is the killer/perpetrator, and the housing units are the victims. Unlike the previous example, where the death of real estate is caused by itself, the death of the housing units in this context is caused by regulation. According to Willams et al. (2011), the use of death metaphors could affect people's assessment of who is to blame for the failure. Thus, by building the above DEATH metaphor, the commenter shows their opinion that the regulation is not useful at all but a fatal factor to the housing units. Furthermore, the responsibility is attributed to the state since the (unsuccessful) regulation is entirely conducted by the state. Instead of directly addressing the state's nonfeasance, the utilisation of the BLOOD and DEATH metaphors, where all involved agents (even unnamed) carry a particularly heavy blame, is an effective way of criticising the state without becoming the target of censorship.

5.1.2.2 MEASURES AND POLICIES ARE TREATMENT(S)

The second perspective of the DISEASE metaphor views economic measures and policies as medical treatments. TREATMENT metaphors are discussed in this section within two different frames: the generalised (universal) frame and the TCM frame.

5.1.2.2.1 Treat the symptoms vs Treat the root

The basic understanding of the metaphor 治标治本 (treat symptoms and root) is that a right remedy should not only cure the symptoms (标) but also clear the root (本) of the disease. Therefore the key to treatment is to address the root cause of the disease. The difference between government-led discourse and counter-discourse in CHD lies in how these two present the regulations through TREATMENT metaphors.

> Example5-10"房价短期下降不应该是调控的唯一目标." 谭华杰表示, 如果调控不能解决楼市的深层次问题, 无异于**治标不治本**。(#N235, 2011/05/16)
>> (A short-term decline in house prices should not be the only target of regulation. If regulation fails to address the underlying problems in the housing market, Mr. Tam said, it would be a case of **palliative care (cure the symptoms, not the disease)**.
> Example5-11这是要**治本**的节奏了 (#C352)
>> (This is the pace to **cure the root**.)
> Example5-12我站在一个专业人士的位置讲: 限购, 限贷是不能**根治**房价上涨。要**治**房价就得砍掉投资属性, 但目前不可能做的到。(#C352)
>> (As a professional, I think restrictions on property purchases and

mortgages cannot **<u>radically treat</u>** the rising house prices. To **<u>cure</u>** the house prices, the investment attribute (of house) must be removed, which is impossible to be carried out at the moment)

Example 5-10 is taken from a news article in the News Corpus, titled "Will housing prices really drop?". In that news article, the author reviewed recent housing policies and interpreted their relations with the most recent drop of housing prices. In this example, the short-term decline in house prices is perceived as the symptom (标), while the underlying problems are the root (本). Instead of pointing out that although the house prices have declined, the state has not found the final solutions to the housing market problem. The article tactically quotes Mr. Tam (secretary of Vanke group) to make its point. A conditional sentence is used by Mr. Tam to mitigate the criticism (which is otherwise harsh), not directly stating whether the failure has already happened or whether it is just a possibility. He falls in line with what seems to be the government's attitude towards receiving criticism: they will accept criticism as long as it relates to facts that they have already admitted but it would be considered aggressive to point out that there is something that they have completely ignored/missed.

Example 5-11 is a reader comment responds to a similar news article discussing the future tendency of housing prices in 2011. Unlike the metaphor used in the government-led discourse, the comment in example 5-11 explicitly claims that the state is going to clear the root, praising the government for having diagnosed the disease. It takes a supportive attitude and evaluation towards the state's recent actions in regulating the housing market. It not only directly points out that what the state has done is "curing the root", but also uses the word "pace" to express the idea that the state will keep giving the right treatments to the industry in the future, so as to keep the "pace". This is one of few clearly supportive comments found in the Comment corpus and therefore does not form part of the discussed counter-discourse.

In contrast, in example 5-12, a reader comment responds to the same news article as example 5-11, the commenter attributes the cause of the illness (the rising housing price) to investment activities (buying houses as an investment). According to this argument, the state's restrictions on property purchases and mortgages are not the right remedies to reach the root of the illness. The state is presented as unable to cure the disease at the given time, as it does not dare cut the investment attribute of houses. In this vein, "house" is not just a place to live, but a profit-making enterprise unlike the state's claim that it follows the motto "house is for living, not for speculation". Therefore, the emphasis here is on the inconsistency between the state's words and actions: according to this comment the state claims to support one thing and does another.

5.1.2.2.2 DISEASE metaphors with culture-specific features

Aside from the universal frame of the DISEASE metaphor, the data also show some features which are culture-specific to China. These distinct features are present in two ways: the use of terms borrowed from TCM (see Table 5-2), and the utilisation of TCM philosophy.

虚火 deficiency fire
肾虚 deficiency of the kidney
痼疾 chronic disease (has a remedy, but requires long-time continual treatment)
顽疾 chronic disease (difficult to cure, but the treatment won't last long)
定心丸 a pill used to soothe one's nerves
解毒剂 antidote
灵丹妙药 best medicine
开药方 give a prescription

血脉	blood vessel in which the blood and qi circulate
心病	heart disease

Table5- 2 Terms borrowed from TCM in DISEASE metaphor

Compared to western medicine, traditional Chinese medicine is considered to be milder without side effects, since remedies used in TCM are predominantly from natural sources (Efferth et al. 2007; Lam, 2011). TCM is considered more suitable for completely curing disease, and the treatment process can be long because it possesses a holistic view rather than focusing on specific symptoms/diseases. Through borrowing terms from TCM, which are already familiar to the Chinese reading public, the idea that the state is regulating the housing market in a cautious and mild way is conveyed. However, as opposed to taking the route of a long-term treatment, the public is eager to see a more instant effect.

Example5-13抑制房价的**灵丹妙药**就是所有的土地出让金所有的税费全部都进入国家
税务，与地方税务脱钩，保证立竿见影 (#C352)

> (the **best medicine** for controlling house prices is taking all the land transfer taxes into the national taxation and separating them from the local taxation. (It) guarantees getting effect instantly.)
> 灵丹妙药
> (effective pill magic medicine)
> (best medicine)

In example 5-13, a reader comment responds to the same article as example 5-11 and 5-12, the user adopts the conceptual metaphor built in the corresponding news article, which is that the real estate industry is ill and in need of treatment, while the policies/regulation issued by the state is presented as "medicine" (药). However, compared to the mild remedies referenced in the government-led discourse, this commenter (positioning themselves as an authority on the issue) decribes restraining house prices as "best medicine" (灵丹妙药), a pill with near-magical properties, able to instantly heal a disease. In his view, what the government has done is wrong, since if the right remedies were prescribed, the effect should be seen instantly.

Among the borrowed lexical items, 心 (heart) and related terms appear frequently (14 occurrences in News corpus and 2 in Comment corpus). In Chinese language, 心 means both "heart" and "mind", which refers to both the "organ for thinking" and the "seat of thought and emotions" (Yu, 2009:1). In TCM, the heart has a special position in the human body, which is "the organ of emperor, ruling all psychological and mental activities" (Wang et al. 1997, cited in Yu 2003:18). Consequently, a heart problem also leads to psychological discomfort. If remedies are taken to cure the heart, the patient will also experience psychological healing. Complex expressions with the word "heart" which appear in the data are:

Example 5-14 (a) 定心丸 make heart calm pill
Example 5-15 (a) 强心针 make strong heart injection (=cardiotonic)

The contexts in which these appear are discussed below:

Example5-14(b) 各项调控举措及时出台，给市场吃了**定心丸**，稳定了市场预期，增强
了社会信心。(#N642, 2014/12/25)

> (The timely issuance of various regulatory measures has **given a**

reassurance to the market, which stabilised market expectations and enhanced social confidence.)

Example5-15(b) 央行连续降低存款准备金率、三年半以来首次降息，虽然意不在救楼市，但对资金紧张的房地产市场仍是一剂**强心针**。(#N438, 2012/06/18)

(The central bank has cut its reserve requirement ratio for the first time in three and a half years. Although it is not intended to save the housing market, it is still a **shot in the arm** for the cash-strapped real estate market.)

In example 5-14(b) the (housing) market is the patient, the state is the doctor, and the regulatory measures are the pills that soothe the patient's nerves. Reassurance (定心丸) is a compound word. The first character means "make…calm" (定), the second character is "heart" (心), and the last one means "pill" (丸). The word "定心丸" means "a pill that can calm the patient's heart". Through this metaphorical use, emphasis is placed on the effectiveness of the policies, on the one hand, and the correctness of the state's action on the other.

Although TCM is good at curing diseases gently without side effects, it is only appropriate for treating diseases that are mild and not life-threatening (Lam, 2011). Aware of the shortcomings of TCM, the government-led discourse also adopts terms from western medicine when convenient, especially when the problems (metaphorical illnesses) need to be presented as severe. Instead of using the TCM term "定心丸" (a pill to set one's mind at ease), the term from western medicine "强心针" (cardiotonic) is used in example 5-15(b). "Cardiotonic" (强心针) also happens to be a compound word which literally means "make heart strong injection". In the context of this example, the housing market is lacking capital and would be easily die without appropriate (radical) treatment. Compared to previous gentle remedies, the more radical approach of administering an injection is used, presumably as a response to the criticism that the government has not been able to find targeted solutions (i.e., metaphorically prescribe medicine that is specific and appropriate for specific diseases – "对症下药")

The previous examples address specific elements of TCM practice, but it is also worth exploring the philosophies within which TCM practices are rooted. Two of the philosophies of TCM are (a) 对症下药 (prescribe the right remedy for specific diseases) and (b) 长痛不如短痛 (would rather suffer the acute pain for a short while than a mild pain for a long time).

对症下药 (prescribe the right remedy for specific diseases)

In TCM, to prescribe the right remedy for an illness is the basic requirement for a doctor. In the 对症下药 (prescribe the right remedy for specific diseases – henceforth RRSD) metaphor, there are two primary concepts, the symptom(s) (症) and the medicine (药). To diagnose the disease is the precondition of prescribing. Once the disease has been diagnosed and the right remedies are given, the patient is bound to recover. In the government-led discourse the RRSD metaphor is widely used as a positive evaluation towards the government's regulation.

Example5-16政府对症下药，出台的各种措施密度大、针对性强。(#N170, 2011/03/02)

(Governments at all levels have **prescribed specific medicines** (to the real estate market), and the measures adopted are of great intensity and pertinence.)

Example5-17调控仍有压力，仍需进一步**对症下药。**(#N362, 2011/12/22)

(There is still pressure in the (real estate) regulation, and it still needs to target the symptom further **to prescribe the medicine**.)

In the News corpus, this metaphor appears four times. In the above examples, the state is portrayed as having prescribed (and/or continuing to prescribe in the future) the right remedies to the housing market, which implies that the problems in the housing market have been identified and the market is bound to recover soon. However, in the counter-discourse, the patient (the housing market) is perceived as not having taken the right remedies and there is no occurrence of the RRSD metaphor.

> Example5-18从来没有见过哪一个产业像房地产一样，年年**吃药**，一会**春药**，一会**打胎药**，扫黄也没有像房地产市场的调控如此热衷和频繁！(#C303)
>> (Have never seen an industry like real estate **taking medicines** every year, first an **aphrodisiac** followed by an **abortion pill** immediately after. Even "anti-vice" (cracking down on pornography) is not so keen and frequent like real estate market regulation!)

Example 5-18 is a reader comment responds to a news article discussing a new housing policy implemented Beijing city, where service fees for residential brokerages are lowered. The commenter here also uses the TREATMENT metaphor for expressing the opinion that regulating the housing market should be like treating diseases, which requires prescribing the right remedies to specific diseases. However, instead of merely evaluating whether the proper remedies were given to the housing market, the commenter gives detailed examples of what medicines the housing market has taken. The "aphrodisiac" refers to the loose policies which stimulate people to buy houses, while the "abortion pill" refers to the contemporary tightening policies in the real estate industry. These two terms counteract each other in a scenario of conception (as a result of sexual intercourse), which implies that the state issues policies in spite of the actual situation in the market. Thus, the state is portrayed as a charlatan who cannot prescribe the correct remedy (see further discussion in Chapter 6, example 6-18).

长痛不如短痛 (it is better to have short, sharp pains than long, dull pains)

The concept 长痛不如短痛 (it is better to have short, sharp pains than long, dull pains) is rather familiar to Chinese people (Abuaisha et al., 1998). In TCM, 长痛 (long pain) refers to pains which last long but not that painful, while 短痛 (short pain) refers to pain which is sharp but does not last long, and it is a truism that people prefer to endure the short pain rather than the long pain. The difference between the government-led discourse and the public's counter-discourse in this respect lies in which side of the metaphor they focus on.

> Example5-19虽然近期调整力度较大，整体经济下行压力增加，但必须看到，市场调整是房地产业必须经历的阶段，也是以"**短痛替代长痛**"的务实选择。(#N640, 2014/11/10)
>> (Although the recent changes are in larger efforts and the overall economic downward pressure is increasing, (we) must be aware that, the market adjustment is a stage that the real estate industry must go through, and it is a practical choice of **replacing the "long pain" with "short pain"**.)
> Example5-20求求你别调了，调一次涨一次实在是受不了啊
怕痒怕痛的能调吗？？(#C92)
>> (Please don't regulate anymore! The house prices go up after every

regulation. I cannot stand it. How could it be possible to regulate the (housing market) if you are afraid of **itch and pain**?)

Example 5-19 is taken from a news article discussing the future tendency of housing prices after the issued of a new housing loan policy in late 2014, whereas example 5-20 is a reader comment responding to a news article about people's (high) satisfaction towards housing prices. Through the above examples, it can be seen that the state and the public focuses on different sides of the metaphor. The state pays more attention to the length of pain, while the public is concerned with whether the state is brave enough to endure the sharp pain. By replacing the "long pain" with "short pain" metaphor, the state highlights that any current pain is worthwhile since it prevents future pain, thus creating optimism for the future. This is countered in the counter-discourse by presenting the state as "being afraid of pain and itch", thus not being determined to regulate the housing market, with the result of the current problem (metaphorical pain) lasting for a long time.

In sum, TREATMENT metaphors are used by the state to enhance trust in its measures and policies, presenting them as appropriate for the current problems and creating an optimistic outlook for the future. These are, in turn, subverted by the counter-discourse, which emphasises the short-sightedness of the state and the lack of effective measures. Further, the metaphorical use of TCM terms also reflects ideological differences between the government-led and anti-government rhetoric, with the former using TCM terms more widely and more frequently, portraying the handling of the crisis as a smooth process.

5.1.2.3 Promoting HEALTH

As noted in Table 5-1, "health" has 267 occurrences in the News corpus, while it has only two occurrences in the Comment corpus. In the HOUSING CRISIS IS A DISEASE metaphor, economic policies and measures are treated as remedies to the disease, which can eventually lead to a (future) healthy state of the housing market. Out of the possible outcomes of a treatment (healing, stabilising, worsening, leading to death), the treatments are always portrayed as effective and co-occur with positively charged terms, such as "positive" and "health".

Example5-21为促进房地产市场平稳**健康**发展, 今年1月7日和4月17日国务院相继发了两个重要通知。这是完全必要和非常及时的, 并已经有效地遏制了房价过快上涨的势头。(#N71, 2010/7/26)

> (To promote the steady and **healthy** development of the real estate market, the state council issued two important notices on January 7 and April 17 this year. This is absolutely necessary and very timely, and has effectively contained the rapid rise of housing prices.)

Example5-22…对房地产业的长期**健康**发展将产生积极影响。 (#N22, 2010/04/26)

> ((The measures) will have a positive impact on the long-term **healthy** development of the real estate industry.)

Example5-23打击投机、保障房地产市场**健康**发展, 是今年楼市调控的关键。(#N12, 2010/03/07)

> (Cracking down on speculation and safeguarding the **healthy** growth of the real estate market is the key to the regulation of the housing market this year.)

Both of these three examples come from news articles discussing potential ways of promoting a

healthy development of the housing market from different perspectives, such as reshaping understandings towards housing (example 5-21), property tax (example 5-22), and housing supply (example 5-23). As can be seen from these examples, the notion of HEALTH is present throughout the government-led discourse, and it is comprehended as the long-term positive prospect of the housing market. The "long-term" connotation reveals the influence of the holistic TCM philosophy. In example 5-22, the policies are issued for the purpose of promoting "health", rather than solving specific illnesses/diseases, which is in line with TCM approach to health. An interesting discursive strategy is observed here: policies commonly collocate with "promoting health" rather than "solving problem" in the government-led discourse. In this way, people cannot judge the effectiveness of the policies by evaluating whether the problem has been solved (since they do not claim to solve any problem); but if any issues end up improving, it is the efficacy of the policies and this success should be attributed to the policies (as shown in example 5-21).

As can also be observed in examples 5-22 and 5-23, the government-led discourse places emphasis on the future, rather than evaluating past actions and their current results. On the contrary, the public's evaluation towards the state's measures and policies mainly target the past. At the same time, the state places more emphasis on TREATMENT rather than DISEASE, thus avoiding addressing or naming the exact nature of the problem (metaphorical disease).

5.1.3 Summary

Overall, in this section it is shown that although DISEASE metaphors are used by both sides of the CHD, government-led (and pro-government) rhetoric favours positively charged notions relating to treatment, recovery, and sustained health. In Chinese research, Tan and Chen (2010) examined the Chinese economic discourse from before and after the reform and opening-up, and they found that the utilisation of metaphors reveals socio-cultural and ideological changes in Chinese society. As discussed in Chapter 3, the state claimed that it should shift its role from governor to servicer in the country's economy. The ideological change can be strongly seen in the government-led discourse, where GOVERNMENT IS A DOCTOR is prominent throughout. By conceptualising economic problems as diseases, the impression is left on the public that the government is a helper (improving people's living conditions as well as the economy), rather than a controller or governor, which also represents the proclaimed fundamental goal of the CCP, which is "to serve the people wholeheartedly". Thus, the manipulation of DISEASE metaphors in the News corpus can be seen as a strong representation of CCP's ideology and the party's intention to build people's confidence in its governance.

Through the comparison between the state and public in this respect, it can be seen that the state focuses more on restoring people's confidence in the housing market. From the perspective of risk management, Edmunds and Gay (2006) (cited in Smith 2006) pointed out that the uncertainty over the future of what they call an "epidemic" within the DISEASE metaphor will reduce people's confidence in the economy of affected countries. Kelly's (2001) study into the Asian financial crisis found that for the purpose of political stability, governments are prone to build a discourse of confidence, within which "any criticism must be subdued and legitimacy must not be questioned" (Kelly, 2001:738). Therefore, if the housing issue was portrayed as a pandemic, it would give the public an assumption that the state admits the truth that not only the housing market is ill, but also other economic sectors are weak and can be easily affected, or might have been infected. Obviously, this is something that the state does not want to deliver to the public, since it is against its ideology of building a "harmonious

society".

5.2 JOURNEY metaphors

5.2.1 JOURNEY metaphors[35] in economic and political discourse

JOURNEY metaphors have been researched by cognitive linguists for a long time. In the 1980s, JOURNEY metaphors were introduced by Lakoff and Johnson who considered the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. Lakoff (1993) later reformulated JOURNEY metaphors into PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS TRAVELLING ALONG A PATH TOWARD A DESTINATION (as cited in Charteris-Black 2011:66). According to Charteris-Black (2004a, 2011), social purposes are destinations as they share the dominant ideas in the domains of the journey, such as "step", "forward" and "milestone". Charteris-Black (2004a, 2011) categorises the concepts involved in JOURNEY metaphors into "required" and "optional" elements. The required elements are in line with the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), including the start and end points, the path connecting these two points, and the entity moving along the path. As the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL indicates, journeys entail movements from a "starting point" towards an "endpoint", and they imply the idea that the movement is planned progress and the object in question is moving along a fixed "path" towards the assumed "goal". As a result, JOURNEY metaphors are commonly used when discussing policies and decisions, indicating that the policies/decisions in question are planned progress, the agents (the political party/leaders) are actively following the "path", and they will eventually reach the imagined "goal" (Charteris-Black, 2011). The optional elements are parts of the journey experience, such as "mode" of travel (car, ship, carriage), "guides" (compass, maps, torch), "companions", and so on depending on the context (Charteris-Black, 2011). All of these elements are involved in political JOURNEY metaphors, with SOURCE-PATH-GOAL elements playing a role in creating the impression of confident and stable progress, under a knowledgeable leadership.

Based on these two sets of elements, Charteris-Black (2011) further interprets the mapping of JOURNEY metaphors in political communication into four categories (Charteris-Black, 2011:317):
     i. Purposes are Destinations
     ii. Means are Paths
     iii. Difficulties are Impediments to Motion
     iv. Long-term, Purposeful Activities are Journeys

In the context of CHD, JOURNEY metaphors fit into these four submappings. As introduced in Chapter 3, the housing reform in China is a top-down reform controlled by the state, and it is part of the big blueprint of social reform. The goal for the social reform is to meet the "two one hundred-year goals" (TOHYG) set out by the CCP 15th congress in 1997 (as introduced in 3.4.2.2). The CCP claims that at the first 100-year anniversary, China will have become a full "Xiaokang" society[36] and when reaching the second 100-year anniversary, China will have built a prosperous, democratic, civilised

---

[35] Also cited as JOURNEY/PATH/WAY metaphors in the literature. In this project, JOURNEY metaphors refer to metaphors that are mapped from the source domains of journey.

[36] Xiaokang is a Confucian term originated from "Shijing" (诗经, Classic of Poetry) as early as 3000 years ago, and it is the social formation anterior to the Great Unity (大同社会), a Utopia world in Chinese philosophy. A Xiaokang society refers to a moderately prosperous society, and it has been frequently used by Communist leaders since Deng Xiaoping in 1979 to support the need for developing the country's economy. As a concept, it often receives criticism from the public for being too materialistic.

and harmonious modern socialist society. The TOHYG was reemphasised by President Xi Jinping in the party's 18th congress in 2012 and was integrated into the "Chinese Dream" (中国梦). Consequently, social reforms (housing reform particularly in this case) have all the appropriate characteristics for being part of a JOURNEY metaphor, in which the TOHYG, or the Chinese Dream, are represented as DESTINATIONS, and the measures taken by the state (such as the limited purchase policies, building security houses, and setting up the housing fund) are part of the PATH, and all the factors contributing to the housing crisis (such as the shadow bank and local government debt crisis) are "impediments".

JOURNEY metaphors are particularly prevalent in political and economic discourse, across languages and cultures (Arrese 2015; Arrese and Vara-Miguel 2016; Lederer 2016; Hu and Xu 2017). The reasons for employing JOURNEY metaphors and the functions of JOURNEY metaphors in political communication have been investigated by researchers. Charteris-Black (2011) has conducted extensive research on how JOURNEY metaphors are used as rhetorical tools by American politicians. Through comparing the use of JOURNEY metaphors by British and American politicians, Charteris-Black (2011) claims that real (literal) journeys from the nation's history can reinforce the use of JOURNEY metaphors by politicians. In Chinese discourse, journey activities such as the Ming Treasure Voyages (郑和下西洋), Silk Road (丝绸之路), and the Long March (长征)[37], which have been deeply embedded in Chinese history and culture, can be spotted in political speeches and media discourse. For instance, the Ming Treasure Voyages and Silk Road trigger the use of MARITIME metaphors, as both of these activities were considered trailblasing and brave in their time, allowing the emergence of heroic characters. In western discourse, the "hero" schema rooted in culture and religion was also extensively used by politicians to promote their stature, where they were represented as epic heroes themselves, and their beliefs and policies regarded as heroic tasks (Charteris-Black, 2011). The Long March experiences, on the other hand, relate to a harsh natural environment and violent conflict, in which the Red Army soldiers are represented as full of ideals and faith and crucially contributing to the success of the Long March (Shi, 2007).

5.2.2 JOURNEY metaphors in CHD

JOURNEY metaphors are the second most prominent metaphor category in the corpora, accounting for 23% of the metaphors in the News corpus and 16% in the Comment corpus. 'Journey' has the most variable set of keywords, with a total of 58 linguistic forms in the News corpus and 31 in the Comment corpus. The characters that appear more frequently (either alone or in combination) are: 程 (journey), 路/途 (path), 向 (towards) and 步 (step), as highlighted in bold. Table 5-3 presents the metaphor keywords from the corpus within their larger source categories.

	Categories of sources	Keywords	Occurrences in News	Occurrences in Comment
Necessary Elements	Journey	进**程** process	45	6
		历**程** course	10	2
		征**程** (long) journey	1	0
		征**途** (short) journey	1	0
		长征 long march	1	0
	Path	**路**线 route	8	1
		道**路** path	10	3
		出**路** outlet/way out	8	0
		门**路** way (negative)	0	1

---

[37] A strategic military journey undertaken by the Red Army of CCP (October 1934–October 1936).

		路子 way	8	2
		退路 retreat	2	1
		新路 new road	4	0
		老路 old road	7	1
		必由之路 the only road	2	0
		前途 journey ahead	2	4
		歧途 wrong road	1	0
		半途而废 give up half way	2	0
		十字路口 crossroads	3	0
	Goal (destination) and direction of movement	目标 goal	535	13
		向着 moving toward	5	0
		方向 direction	117	11
		前行 forward	5	2
		朝着 toward	9	1
Optional Elements	Compass	定位 locate	31	3
		指引 guide	6	1
	Obstacle	坎 ridge	5	0
		绊脚石 stumbling block	1	0
		障碍 barrier	5	2
	Surroundings	悬崖 cliff	1	0
		巅/顶峰 peak	2	2
	Speed	加速 speed up	60	11
		减速 speed down	3	0
		放慢 slow down	6	1
	Burden	担子 baggage	2	0
		担负 carrying	3	0
	Mode of transport — Car	换挡 shift gear	4	0
		快车道 fast lane	4	0
		驶入 drive into	3	0
		慢车道 slow lane	2	0
		高速路 highway	1	0
		路标 road sign	1	0
		前行 forward	4	2
	Mode of transport — Foot	步伐 footstep/pace	24	2
		步子 footstep	1	3
		稳步 steady step	23	6
		起步 (to) start/starting step	36	2
		步入 step into	13	0
		迈 stride	14	6
		脚步 footstep	8	1
		踏空 miss one step	3	0
	Mode of transport — Train	轨道 rail	14	0
		接轨 connect the rail	3	7
		并轨 [38] merge	22	0
		双轨 double track	5	1
		单轨 monorail	2	0

[38] Both 接轨 and 并轨 mean connecting different rails into one. However, the difference lies in the direction of rail. 接轨 refers to connecting different railways into one, regardless of their direction, whereas 并轨 refers to merging two paralleled rails into one rail. Both of these terms are used in their conventional meaning, thus will not be interpreted further.

		出轨	0	1
	Horse	野马 wild horse	4	2
		鞭 whip	8	1
		马车 gharry	1	1
		缰 rein	7	0
		勒 rein in	3	0
	Maritime	海 sea	2	0
		船 ship	1	2
		巨轮 large ship	1	0
		舟 boat	1	0
		航线 ship route	1	0

Table5- 3 Metaphor Keywords in JOURNEY metaphors

As shown on Table 5-3, the "journey" domains are within the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema, with the addition of elements such as "mode" and "movement". In CHD, the uses of JOURNEY metaphors coincide with previous research findings (e.g., Koteyko and Ryazanova-Clarke 2009; Cibulskienė 2012; Moragas-Fernández et al. 2018). For instance, politicians' journeys are set out with clear and detailed destinations ("goals" 目标), "directions" (方向) and routes ("path/road" 路). The travellers' progress during the journey, such as 迈 (stride) and 减速 (slow down) is also represented in the corpora. Regarding the "mode" of travel, this analysis detects a variety of "modes" of transport that are used metaphorically ("foot", "train", "car", "ship, and "horse"), all of which are relevant to the present discussion, the object of which (i.e., the CHD) is rather wider in scope than that of prior research on the political uses of "mode of travel" metaphors. For example, the examination of the public debate between the Britain and Germany on the structure of the EU (Musolff, 2000) is focused on metaphors where "ship" is the mode of transport, while research on the European monetary union discourse is entirely focused on metaphors where "train" is the mode of transport (Semino, 2008).

Interestingly, although "car" is one of the most salient modes in the corpora, road/travel conditions for cars, such as "bumpy road", are noticeably rare in CHD, with adversities being represented instead as weather conditions (more relevant to MARITIME JOURNEY metaphors, which are themselves rare in the corpora). Moreover, although metaphors where "train" is the mode of travel are used, the actions of "departure" and "arrival" are not referenced in the corpora, but instead the action of "connecting rails" (接/并轨) is commonly used, emphasising the consistency of the state's policies.

There are two main types of JOURNEY metaphors discussed in this section, where different types of source domain-target domain mappings occur. The first (section 5.2.1.1) is the conceptualisation of the process of housing reform as a journey. Within this conceptualisation the state is in the position of the journey leader, the public are the passengers or crew, and the reform is the destination. The second (section 5.2.1.2) has to do with the housing prices themselves, which are conceptualised as moving between positions (high-low), where the relevant elements are speed and whether the movement can be controlled.

5.2.1.1 HOUSING REFORM IS A JOURNEY

In the context of CHD, the general conceptual metaphor PURPOSEFUL SOCIAL ACTIVITY IS TRAVELLING ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A DESTINATION evokes the entire mapping from knowledge about journey onto the knowledge about Chinese social development/reform and triggers the specific metaphor SOCIAL (/HOUSING) REFORM IS A JOURNEY. As introduced in 5.2.1, the destination of the social reform journey is the TOHYG. When it comes to the housing sector

specifically, the destination becomes "ensuring people have a place to live in"[39], "Housing Dream", or "Roof Over Head". According to the state's documents and state leaders' speeches, Roof Over Head is three-tiered: state-run (low-end) "security housing" mostly in rural environments, state-run (middle-end) "economically affordable housing" in urban environments, and private market (high-end) "commercial housing"[40]. This is different to how the public perceives housing in general, because they prioritise private property purchases (of the "commercial housing" classification) in order to avoid the lengthy procedure and complicated rules of applying for the other two. Within the housing system, the "housing fund" provided via application has an additional complication because it can be used to purchase commercial housing, thus blurring the boundaries between "economically affordable" and "commercial" housing. More importantly, cultural factors and the ideologies towards housing shaped by them (see Chapter 3) also account for people prioritising purchasing "commercial housing". The reason why "security housing" and "economically affordable housing" properties are unappealing is that these are properties for which people pay long-term rent and there is no transfer of ownership (they remain in the state's ownership).

When it comes to the Comment corpus, overall JOURNEY metaphors mostly concern the journey towards the Two Centenaries. "Passengers" and "paths" are also represented, with the former mostly referring to people with housing needs (on a journey to house ownership), whereas the latter being linked to the "destination", which tends to represent house ownership as a relatively short-term goal (as opposed to the state's long-term vision about housing). The political nature of the "path" corresponds to socialism with Chinese characteristics, which can carry negative connotations within the counter-discourse. Housing prices themselves are also viewed as being on a journey, whose "destination" is "to become affordable" (as opposed to the metaphors found in the News corpus, where the "destination" is "housing prices being controlled within a reasonable range"). Finally, housing policies are represented through "steering", which refers to the state's role and responsibility for regulating the real estate market (another short-term goal).

In the government-led discourse, the housing reform is conceptualised as a LONG JOURNEY through words such as "course", 征程/途 (journey) and 长征 (long march). Although "course" (represented as 进 or 历程) is prevalent in both corpora, it is used when discussing the development process of the housing journey, but does not carry a tone of ideology or persuasion. Thus, it is the words which contain "征" (journey) that build up the conceptualisation of HOUSING REFEORM IS A LONG JOURNEY. In Chinese language, the word 征 (journey) carries the connotation "long", and more interestingly, it is part of the word 长征 (long march). As a result, 征 (journey) has the further connotation of "hardship", which is extended from the (cultural experience of the) *Long March*. Interestingly, this metaphor is only found in government-led discourse and has not been adopted by the public within the Comment corpus.

Example5-24今天的城镇化依旧**征途漫漫**…(#N551, 2013/9/23)
(Today's urbanisation is still a **long journey**…)
Example5-25建成房子，只是保障房"**万里长征的第一步**". (#N380, 2012/2/6)
(Building a house is only **the first step in the long march** of the IHP.)

Examples 5-24 and 5-25 are both from the News Corpus, where example 5-24 comes from a news

---

[39] In Chinese: 住有所居 or 住房梦 安居梦 – both of which are slogans used within the state's housing propaganda.

[40] In Chinese: 低端有保障，中端有支持，高端有市场.

article discussing people's housing purchasing expectations and behaviours (which are regarded as conformities and should be changed by the author), whereas example 5-25 is taken from a news article discussing the distribution and management of social welfare houses. A wealth of studies into JOURNEY metaphor has shown that journeys in political speeches are substantially represented as "long" in order to attain the public's confidence and support (e.g., Cibulskienė 2008; Semino 2008; Charteris-Black 2011). In example 5-24, the journey refers to the urbanisation, while in example 5-25, "journey" is mapped onto the state's IHP. Although they are two different journeys, they share the same agents: the government as the leader and the people as the companions/travellers. As these two journeys are long lasting, and the destination cannot be reached within a day, patience and confidence are required. Besides, in example 5-25 the *Long March* is mapped onto the IHP, supporting the interpretation that the IHP is as difficult as the *Long March*, with the further implication that, once the project is completed, it will have as great significance as the *Long March*. Therefore, by analogising the IHP to the *Long March*, the IHP sounds honourable and the government's policies/measures in the project are infused with the right intentions.

Being one of the required elements of the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL scheme, PATH is favoured by politicians and it appears frequently in CHD, with 54 occurrences in the News corpus compared to 13 in the Comment corpus. Koteyko and Ryazanova-Clarke (2009) examine the collocates of PATH in Putin's speeches and they claim that PATH is used to connect the past and the present for the purpose of building communist nostalgia in Russia. In line with that research, here the collocates of PATH are also investigated through Antconc (presented in Table 5-4).

News corpus			Comment corpus		
Collocates	Translation	Frequency	Collocates	Translation	Frequency
调控	Regulation	36	最	The most	12
走	Walk	37	走	Walk	11
条	Modifier of path	27	全世界	The whole world	10
建设	Construction/Build	24	改革	Reform	8
新	New	23	万亿	Billion	8
住房	Housing	22	时间	Time	7
保障	Security	17	房价	Housing price	7
创新	Innovation	11	负债	Liability	6
房地产	Real estate	14	条	Modifier of path	6
宏观	Macro	13	买	Buy	6

Table5- 4 Top 10 Collocates of PATH in news corpus

As shown in Table5-4, the top ten collocates of PATH in the News corpus revolve tightly around the government and the housing market. Through the collocates, a picture is painted of "the government is walking on an innovative and new path towards the construction of security housing/real estate through macro regulation". In contrast, the collocates in the Comment corpus do not show a consistent tendency. A possible explanation for this variation might be the difference of genre, style and register. Therefore, these uses need to be analysed individually and in context.

PATH metaphors are employed by the state for the purpose of restoring the image of the CCP and state, alongside mottos such as 实事求是 ("seek truth from facts", a slogan brought up during the reform and opening-up period, which also has the interpretations "advance with the times", "be practical and realistic").

Example5-26这一做法妥善解决了拆迁、建设、安置、就业等一系列问题，**走**出了一

条独具特色的**新路子**。(#N200, 2011/04/08)

> (This approach [41] has properly solved a series of problems such as demolition, construction, resettlement and employment. It practiced/created (/**walked**) a **new path** with unique features.)

Example5-27如果**现阶段**放松调控，**重新走上过度依赖房地产拉动 GDP[42]的老路**，短期内可能会对经济增长起到刺激作用，长期看则无异于**饮鸩止渴** [43]。(#N450, 2012/7/30)

> (If we relax the regulation **at this stage** and **go back to the old way** of relying too much on real estate to boost GDP, it may stimulate economic growth in the short term, but in the long term, it will be like **drinking poison to quench thirst**.)

Example5-28不但要…更要考虑到…这样，政策调控才能真正推动楼市**走上**正常、合理的发展**道路**，帮助百姓早日实现"居者有其屋"的梦想。(#N23, 2010/04/26)

> (We should not only…but also…In this way, the regulation policy can truly push the housing market onto a **rational development path** and help people realize their dream of "home ownership" at an early date.)

Example 5-26 comes from a new article praising how a local government attracts social capital to solve the problems (lack of capital) in IHP. Example 5-27 is from a news article discussing why economic growth cannot be driven by the housing sector and how to promote economic growth without relying on the housing market. Example 5-28 comes from a news article reporting the state's new housing measures and its potential implications. Although the "old way" and "stages" in example 5-27 are dead metaphors, they still reinforce the picture of a journey. It is interesting to note the state's relationship with property developers: on the one hand selling land to property developers in order to boost the GDP is now considered "the old way", being a way towards increasing private property, and on the other hand, involving property developers in the building of new "security housing" is considered part of "the new path", making the process of construction faster and more streamlined (see footnotes 41 and 42).

In examples 5-26, 5-27 and 5-28 (and other similar examples in the News corpus), the context and some extra knowledge in Chinese housing help the reader conclude that the CCP and the state feel strongly that they are on the right "path", that of Socialism with Chinese characteristics (SWCC). More importantly, the government-led discourse suggests that the current regulation is an essential condition for achieving the "Housing Dream". By referring to specific (apparently) successful examples and by evaluating current regulations, the state can be seen as trying to convince the public that they (the state and party) have moved away from older unsuccessful models and are progressing with the use of new and successful models and introducing innovations in regulating the housing market. Notably, to intensify the criticism against the older model, the idiom "drinking poison to quench thirst" is used in example 5-27, representing the old measures as the worst possible, most detrimental, response to an existing need.

The counter-discourse responds to the state's rhetoric by subverting the notion of "way", using it with negative connotations.

---

[41] "this approach" in this example refers to: involving property developers in the process of relocating and constructing security housing by giving them the bonus to develop lands that are emptied due to the relocating.

[42] This refers to the phase soon after the 2008 crisis, during which politicians were very keen on selling land to property developers. See section 2.1.4 for a fuller explanation.

[43] This is an idiom in Chinese meaning: using the wrong approach to solve immediate problems without considering its serious consequences.

Example5-29跟以前的美国一样，**老路** (#C218)

> (Same as America before, **old way**)

Example5-30高，实在是高----先找好**退路** (#C240)

> ((What the state had done is) Great, it's indeed great! **Find the way back** first)

Example5-31没有房地产就没有新中国，没有房地产就没有新中国。房地产,它辛劳占耕地；房地产,它一心谋暴利。它**指给**了富豪圈钱的**门路**,它引导政府**走向**豪奢… (#C137)

> (Without real estate, there will be no new China. Without real estate, there will be no new China. Real estate toiled for occupying farmland. Real estate "wholeheartedly" sought exorbitant profits. It **pointed to the road** of misappropriating for the magnets. It **led** the government towards extravagance.)

It is common knowledge that China and the United States have two different social formations, one being classed as a developing socialist country and the other being considered a developed capitalist country (Zimbalist and Sherman, 1984). Example 5-29 is a reader comment responding to a news article reporting the rarely seen drop of housing prices in 12 cities and its potential causes. In this example, the state is considered to follow the United State's old path, which indicates that the state is neither innovative (following a path that is old) nor practical (since the two countries are so different). Aside from leading to a straightforward account of negation (example 5-29), PATH metaphors in the counter-discourse also come along with other rhetorical tropes, such as sarcasm in example 5-30 ("great, it is indeed great") and parody (of a Red Song) in example 5-31 (discussed further below), to produce indirect evaluations.

In particular, example 5-30 comments on a news article discussing the hidden dangers in the quality of IHP and discussing potential ways to avoid such problem in the future. According to Kapogianni (2013), background contrast is the first required condition for the presence of verbal irony, and in this case the discrepancy between hopes/expectations of the people (or that the people who believe in the state would have, i.e., that the state will construct reliable security housing for the public) and reality (i.e., the IHP being inundated with poor quality houses). Moreover, the contrast can also be seen through the image of "retreat", where the state is expected to move forward towards developing security housing, but in reality, it gives up the effort. The retreat from achieving the "housing dream" is represented by the counter-discourse as choosing a saving manoeuvre for the party/state, as opposed to the "wholehearted" commitment to the people proclaimed by the state. Example 5-30 can further be seen as an instance of sarcasm, since it conveys the commenter's intention to ridicule the state (Lee and Katz, 1998), who says one thing but does the opposite. Kapogianni (2013) also points out that sarcasm is the communicative goal achieved by irony (or other means) aiming at specifically negative evaluations, i.e., strong criticism. Therefore, the literally said "great" in example 5-30 does not just convey the opposite ("not great" or, in fact, "terrible") but also carries further implications of criticism against the state and its policies (the state is to blame, it is the policies which cause the terrible situation etc.).

Example 5-31 is a reader comment responding to a news article discussing whether the housing sector is (and should be) the pillar industry of China's economy. This comment is a satirical parody from the Comment corpus which parodies the lyrics of the "Without the communist party, there would

be no new China" (没有共产党就没有新中国)"[44], one of the most popular Red Songs[45] in China. The commenter pretends to praise the real estate (by mocking the format of the original song), i.e. that the real estate is as essential as the CCP to the new China, and both of them are leading and pointing the way. The commenter here drops the façade and reveals their true opinion by changing the original reference to "leading the people to the light" into "leading the government towards extravagance". The commenter, here, is satirising the real estate and parodying its "virtues" by imitating the style of the original song which is praising the "glorious achievements of CCP". By shifting the agents and twisting the tone of the lyrics, the writer mocks the CCP for deviating from its manifesto, in a way that is difficult to be picked up by censorship.

Aside from the traditional SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema, "modes" of travel are also predominant in the JOURNEY metaphor for housing reform. Cibulskienė (2012) asserts that the choice of "vehicle" (e.g., train, ship and car) carrying the politicians/passengers indicates the moving speed towards the destination. It is now worth discussing the "vehicles" appearing in the corpora in order of frequency, that is, "foot", "train", "car", "horse", and "ship".

Regarding the usage of different modes of travel, the MARITIME JOURNEY metaphor, which seems important for the government in the more general sense for its political discourse is present only once and it focuses on the harsh surroundings of the JOURNEY rather than the progress of the journey or relations between the travellers (see Musolff, 2000), by which the good spirits (such as courage and responsibility) of the state are highlighted. As for the counter-discourse, the CAR metaphor is preferred, since it carries stronger flavours of criticism: the driver being to blame about bad decisions on the route, wrong reactions towards road conditions, deviating from the destination, or getting involved in traffic accidents. Moreover, it is observed that the state prefers using metaphors related to fast speed vehicles (such as a car) when discussing topics that are easy to handle and have achieved some results, for instance, building security houses. However, metaphors where the mode of travel has a slow speed (foot) are used in talking about policies which involve uncertainty and are challenging to implement, such as the reform in security housing and the regulation of housing prices.

The main difference between travelling on foot and by car is speed. CAR metaphors often relate to (high) speed, but also involve a wider variety of elements from the source domain: the vehicle itself and its parts (e.g., brakes and accelerator) , the driver, passengers, road conditions, as well as different types of road (e.g., highway, slow lane). The notion of changing speed and changing gears is also evoked in CAR metaphors. For instance, after an ambitious goal of building 6.3 million units of IHP houses within 2013 was not met within that year, we find metaphors that include "change in gear" to show a faster movement towards a goal (the deadline for which has already passed). It can be argued that 2013 was a turning point both economically and politically, with a change in leadership of the CCP and the state (from Hu and Wen to Xi and Li, see Chapter 3) and, as a result, a change in rhetoric, regarding speed can also be observed. In order to better illustrate this change, Table 5-5 separates CAR and FOOT metaphors into those used before/during early 2013 and those used from December 2013 (when it became impossible for the housing deadline to be met) and afterwards.

MODES	Metaphor Keywords	Before 2013	After 2013
CAR	高速路 highway	0	1
	路标 road sign	0	1
FOOT	步伐 step	12	12

---

[44] Excerpt of original lyrics: "Without the Communist Party, there will be no new China. Without the Communist Party, there will be no new China. The Communist Party toiled for the nation. The Communist Party of one mind saved China. It pointed to the road of liberation for the people. It led China towards the light..."

[45] Red songs (红色歌曲/红歌) are songs which compliment the CCP.

	步子 step	1	0
	稳步 steady step	14	9
	起步 start step	**30**	**6**
	步入 step into	8	6
	迈 stride	10	4
	脚步 foot step	6	2
	踏空 miss a step	3	0

Table5- 5 Metaphor Keywords (News corpus) variance in reference to IHP divided by 2013

In 2011 and 2012, IHP is heavily conceptualised thorugh FOOT metaphors; but after 2013, it is conceptualised through CAR metaphors, emphasising speed and acceleration of IHP construction.

Out of all the "modes of travel", walking speed is the slowest. FOOT metaphors are, therefore, not used when high speed is the goal, but instead their connotations relate to slow but steady, as well as carefully planned (step-by-step) progress. Being related to the human body, FOOT metaphors in the corpora also involve the rhetoric trope of metonymy, where the subjects of expressions such as "the regulations" are metonymically linked to the regulators, and therefore attributes heroic characteristics such as being determined and adventurous, to the agent. Consider the following example:

Example5-32"十二五"开局之年 [46]，房地产市场调控和保障房建设已经**迈出了坚实一步**。(#N352, 2011/12/13)

（In the first year of the 12th five-year plan, the real estate market regulation and the construction of affordable housing **have stridden a solid step**.)

Example5-33在资金、土地等保障房建设难题还没有完全解决的时候，一系列新的、更复杂、更容易引发各种矛盾的难题已经摆在管理者面前……社保基金、公积金等支持保障房，探索的**步子**能不能再**大**一些？……(#N411, 2012/03/30)

（While the problems, such as capital and land in security housing construction, have not been completely solved, a series of new, more complex and tricky problems have been placed in front of the administrator. …Social security fund, provident fund, and other support security housing, can the **step** of exploration be **a little larger**?)

As shown in examples 5-32 and 5-33 (and other examples in the News corpus), by metonymically standing for the regulators behind the IHP, agency (and contribution to progress) is ultimately attributed to them. The "step" in example 5-32 is "solid", indicating the state's determination in regulating the real estate market and in the construction of security housing. Example 5-33 reflects the state's actions in the work of security housing. The "step" in the news article refers to the exploration of security housing, alluding that the state should invest more efforts to support the development of IHP. Although it is an exploration and therefore has its own uncertainties, the state is represented as being courageous to attempt a larger step. Moreover, both of the "steps" in the above examples are moving toward achieving the "Housing Dream", indicating that the agent (the security housing work) is a well-planned project with clear direction.

On the other hand, in the counter-discourse, the direction and destination of "step" shifts,

---

[46] This is referring to 2011. In February 2011, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development signed a responsibility agreement with local governments regarding the security housing, which aims to promote the construction and supplying of security housing. Thus, the "solid step" in example 5-32 refers to the agreement.

subverting the metaphor.

Example5-34离泡沫又**迈近**了**一小步** (#C218)
(**Stride** another step **closer** to the bubble)
Example5-35关键是**下一步**怎么办！(#C92)
(The key is what to do in next **step**!)

Example 5-34 is another instance of counter-discourse, commenting on a news article reporting housing prices, which is seen by the commenter as a step closer towards the creation of a "bubble" situation. This contradicts the state's propaganda and puts blame on the state for its erroneous policies and practices in the housing market. In contrast to the "planned-steps" in the government-led discourse, example 5-35 subverts the connotations of "next step": the full comment translates literally as "key is next-step what to do" (办 means "to do" or "to implement") and it therefore has dual function, one is to echo the expression used in the article's text (the government-led discourse) and the second is to highlight the difference between words and actions, by adding the verb "to do". The purpose of the comment is therefore to show that the state talks theoretically about planning but does not actually have an immediate action plan which it can carry out.

After the 2013 housing goal deadline expired, CAR metaphors start to become more prominent, placing emphasis on speed and acceleration towards a goal. In this rhetoric, despite the deadline having passed, the goal is still achievable with the right speed of progress. At the same time, excuses are sought for why the goal was not met in the first place, appearing in the form of road/travel conditions within the employed CAR metaphors.

Example5-36保障房建设已经驶入**高速路**，途中，新的**路标**不断出现，调整着**前进方向**，让国人的"安居梦"梦有所依，渐成现实。(#N557, 2013/10/18)
(The construction of security housing has **entered into the highway**. **On the way, new road signs** are constantly emerging, **adjusting the direction of moving forward**. It has made people's "housing dream" more realistic)

As shown in example 5-36, an overall picture of the road journey, such as road conditions and the driver's reaction responding to the changes, is painted in the government-led discourse. However, although the journey involves various road conditions and changes, the driver's action is only vaguely described as "shifting gear", without portraying specific action (e.g., speed up, slow down and press the brake). On the contrary, in the counter-discourse, there is no source domain mapping from road conditions, but rather, from the driver's reaction to the road conditions.

Example5-37一脚**刹车**，一脚**油门**，中国这两**经济大巴**快开**翻**了!**座车里**的我们怎么办？！(#C240)
(One foot on the **brake,** one foot on the **accelerator**, China, this economy bus, is about to **overturn**! What can we, the people **sitting in the car**, do?!)

In this comment, responding towards the news article reporting the problems in IHP (specifically poor quality housing), the commenter illustrates a clear divide between the leadership and the people. On the one hand, the leadership, as the "driver", is represented as having self-contradictory responses. The contrast between "brake" and "accelerator" in this metaphor is similar to the "aphrodisiac" and

"abortifacient" in the DISEASE metaphor (example 5-18), highlighting the incompetence of the leadership ("driver"/"doctor"). On the other hand, the people are conceptualised as the "passengers" who have no control over the situation and whose safety is entirely in the "driver's" hands. The type of comment (and other counter-discourse comments in the same vein, such as 5-18) contrasts the government's rhetoric regarding its role, against representation of the government as an agent who is not only incompetent but also reckless when it comes to serving and protecting the people.

Similarly to the CAR metaphor, the MARITIME JOURNEY metaphor also includes a variety of elements that allow the creation of extended metaphors: it includes the vehicle (ship), the path (sea), the conditions of the journey and the progress of the journey. Interestingly, this metaphor was not generally present in the studied corpora. There was a single article in the News corpus (a general report talking about the nation's overall economy), where the metaphor was used in its extended form, whereas the Comment corpus contains a few of uses of "storms" and "winds" which have been counted as WEATHER metaphors, but can also be associated to MARITIME JOURNEY. Given the broad source domain and possible extensions of the MARITIME JOURNEY metaphor, such as the captain's role in steering, the passengers on a boat as a unity (sharing the same fate), and the vivid imagery of the journey conditions (waves, weather, rocks), as well as its close relation to Chinese culture (the silk road and Ming Maritime Voyage), the MARITIME JOURENY metaphor was expected to occupy a greater proportion in the corpora. One possible explanation for the unexpectedly low frequency of this metaphor is that it is normally applied to international issues/relationships (e.g., the relationships among European countries – Musolff, 2000) or general economic/social development (e.g., Chinese leaders' speeches regarding the nation's development – Liu 2007; Pan 2016). Especially its China-specific connotations (silk road and Ming Maritime Voyage), evoke the idea of overseas exploration and are therefore less suitable for domestic issues. Regarding the specific news article containing the extended MARITIME JOURNEY metaphor, we can assume an influence by President Xi's speech (24/12/2014), given a day before the writing of the article, which presented the economic overview of the year, and used the same extended metaphor (mentioning "sailing in a new sea", "winds" and "storms").

The following examples come from the aforementioned news article:

Example5-38即将过去的 2014 年，中国经济**航船行进**在"新常态"这片新海域上。尽管有**风浪**、有**礁石**，但经济运行却**稳稳当当**. (#N642, 2014/12/25)

> (In the soon passing year of 2014, the **sailing ship** of China's economy is **heading towards the sea** of "new normal." Despite the **storm and the rocks**, the economy is **sailing steadily**.)

Example5-392015 年，有科学的宏观调控保驾护航，中国经济**巨轮**必将延续稳中有进的**好势头**，**驶向更壮丽的海面**。(#N642, 2014/12/25)

> (In 2015, under the escort of scientific macro)-control, the **great ship** of China's economy will continue its **good momentum of steady progress and sail to a more magnificent sea**.)

Example5-40面对重重困难和挑战，为何能稳中有进？这与宏观调控有力"**掌舵**"密不可分。(#N642, 2014/12/25)

> (Facing all kinds of difficulties and challenges, why do we make steady progress? This is closely related to the strong "**helming**" of macro-control.)

This news report draws on concepts and terminology introduced by president Xi Jinping in May

2014, starting with the notion of "new normal" which refers to to a deviation from the old economic development mode ("old normal"), which is "GDP-oriented", followed by his declaration of the "new normal" as "not a safe harbour". Cibulskienė (2012) suggests that the hazardous sea voyage is manipulated to understand the government's policies. Under precarious circumstances ("storm", "rocks"), a dedicated captain is required to save the crew members, passengers, as well as the ship from sinking. In examples 5-38, 5-39 and 5-40, the macro-control[47] (from the state) is perceived as a captain who saves the economy (including the housing market). According to the report from the Chinese Central government's official webpage, 2014 was considered to be a tough year – even though the GDP growth rate of that year was 7.4% it was still the lowest in the 24 years. With the difficult circumstances such as low GDP growth rate, local government debt, and shadow banking, the Chinese economy eventually achieved its goal of 7% of growth rate. Therefore, the MATITIME metaphor in this article is considered to be highlighting of the state's strong and successful leadership in politics and society.

Example 5-41 comes from the Comment corpus and is part of the counter-discourse:

Example5-41一个国家发展经济什么都想稳稳妥妥**无风无浪**，一颗**泡沫**都没有，那是不可能的，也违反了自然规律，强制实施只会适得其反，打击商人人民的积极性，近几年的经济倒退就最好的例子. (#N352)

> (**It is impossible for a country to develop its economy in a stable and sound way without wind or waves**. It also violates the rule of nature, Enforcement will only be counterproductive and will discourage the enthusiasm of the merchant people. The economic downturn in recent years is the best example.)

This comment is a response to an article discussing the state's housing regulations and the future tendency of the housing market and housing prices. The article's point was that "wind and waves" are unexpected conditions which need an extra (or even heroic) effort when being dealt with. The commenter responds to this by highlighting that dealing with "wind and waves" is nothing more than the state's usual duty. According to the comment, "wind and waves" (i.e., occasional adverse conditions) are part of "the rule of nature", and should have therefore been included in the state's original plan. Therefore, according to the commenter, the state is not legitimised to present its course of action as deserving any particular praise.

When describing the state's course of action regarding the housing market, the source domain of "shipping route" is also utilised in the government-led discourse:

Example5-42畸形发展的房地产业，使市场投机因素增长，已经严重影响老百姓的理财观，人们把购置房产作为投资和保值增值最佳手段。于是，购房**偏离**了它满足人的基本需求这一**航线**. (#N214, 2011/04/13)

> (The abnormal development of the real estate industry, which has led to the increase of market speculation factors, has severely affected the people's view on financial management. As a result, buying a house **deviates** from its primary **shipping route**.)

---

[47] In 30th September 2014, the Central Bank issued a new mortgage policy to in order to relax previous limits on housing mortgage. In 9th October, three departments of the state (Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Treasury Department and Central Bank) released the notification on further relaxing the provident fund loans.

In example 5-42, the news article is blaming the people for treating house purchasing as a way of investment and gaining wealth. So there is an implication that the government knows better and the people who are presented as passengers or mere crew members on a ship (cf Mussolf 2000, emphasising the notion of unity between crew members in MARITIME JOURNEY metaphors), and therefore not legitimised to steer the ship or ignore the captain's orders. Again, the state's motto of "serving the people wholeheartedlly" can be evoked here: the state's position is that it will do everything within its power to serve the people, as long as the people follow the state's recommendations, which are well-planned and prioritise the people's safety and wellbeing.

Finally, regardless of mode of transport (although more closely related to sea travel), the government-led discourse uses the EXPLORATION metaphor, which is notably not shared by the counter-discourse. The metaphor FINDING (NEW) POLICIES IS AN EXPLORATION is the only metaphor of the JOURNEY kind that appears frequently in the News corpus (202 instances) without appearing in the Comment corpus. In the government-led discourse, the explorer is always described as active, brave, and innovative, and therefore attributing such good qualities to the state.

Example5-43 目前我国社会资金介入保障房建设的运营模式仍处于**探索和起步阶段**。 (#N232, 2011/5/12)

> (At present, the operation mode of social capital intervention in the construction of social security housing in China is still in the **exploratory stage and the initial stage**.)

Example5-44 虽然江苏省在保障房分配工作中一直努力**探索**，但目前仍然面对很多困难。 (#N380, 2012/2/6)

> (Although Jiangsu province has been trying hard **to explore** how to ensure housing distribution, it still faces many difficulties)

Under the overall metaphor that FINDING (NEW) POLICIES IS AN EXPLORATION, an associated metaphor governments (both central and local) are represented as explorers. However, the agent of the exploration is frequently hidden in the government-led discourse (as in example 5-44). By leaving out the agent, it can be argued that the state attempts to shift the public's attention from the state's own agency and responsibility in the matter towards the actual policies and their (possible) results. As a consequence, if the policy/enterprise fails, it's not that the agent (government) is in the wrong, but just that the specific policy itself did not succeed. In other words, assuming the role of the (sometimes brave, others invisible) explorer, the state seeks to decrease blame in case of failure, and, potentially, to find excuses for any unsuccessful or problematic measures.

5.2.1.2 HOUSING PRICES ARE MOVING ENTITIES

Although housing prices in China are affected by both the market and the state's macro-control, the state's intervention is considered to be the most powerful factor. Accordingly, the fluctuation of housing prices reflects the intentions and effectiveness of the state's regulation. The conceptual metaphor HOUSING PRICES ARE MOVING ENTITIES in CHD has two contrasting manifestations: as controllable (a tame, sensible moving agent) and as uncontrollable (a wild, non-cooperating entity).

Similarly to the representation of the speed of the housing reform progress (discussed in the previous section), the speed of (rising or dropping) housing prices is visualised through FOOT metaphors. It can be claimed that these metaphors personify housing prices as an entity that has its own walking pace but is, at the same time, under the control of the state.

Example5-45楼市大调整态势下，狂飙猛进的房价**放缓了脚步**。(#N41, 2010/5/27)

(Under the situation of adjustment of the housing market, the **rapid walking pace** of housing prices **has slowed down**.)

Example5-46就近两年房地产市场调控效果而言，客观来看，住房投机和投资行为受到遏制，理性的基本住房需求成为市场主流，住房价格涨幅**稳步**回落，冷却降温效果明显。(#N498, 2013/3/8)

(Regarding the regulation effect of the real estate market in the past two years, objectively speaking, housing speculation and investment behaviour have been restrained; The rational and essential housing demand has become the mainstream of the market, and the <u>step</u> of housing price rise has **steadily** slowed down. The cooling effect is noticeable.)

Example 5-45 is taken from a news article written in May 2010, discussing the causes of change in housing prices in 2010. In this example, housing prices are presented as having slowed down due to the state's regulation, presenting the regulation as effective. A later example from 2013 (example 5-46) shows a similar use of the FOOT metaphor, where once again the slowing of the housing price rise is highlighted (also note the mix in metaphors occurring in this example, with the slowing rate being presented as a "cooling effect" – see the NATURE metaphor section). Both examples present a situation that is entirely under control: the state is able to regulate the "walking person" (i.e., housing prices), which behaves sensibly and is able to follow orders.

In contrast, in the counter-discourse found within the Comment corpus, housing prices are considered to be uncontrollable, and so is the "walking person":

Example5-47朝着百万每平**稳步**迈进！(#C218)

(Housing price) **Steadily strides** towards one million per square!

Example5-48蹬老爷子曰过：胆子放大一点，**步子**再快一些 [48].....从而让一部分人先富起来....100万美元太小，建议 100 亿美元/平方！！！ (#C92)

(Gramp Deng [49] once said, be more daring, quicken the **walking pace** ...thereby let some people get rich first...$1 million is too small, suggest $10 billion per square!!!)

Example5-49河北人民发来贺电.涨价的步子再迈大一点嘛 (#C218)

(People from Hebei[50] sent a congratulatory telegram. The **step** of price increases should be larger.)

In response to the regulating target claimed by the state, the commenter in example 5-47 (responding to a news article reporting and analysing nationwide housing prices in March 2011) exaggerates it as "1 million per square" in a satirical manner. Obviously, "one million per square" is completely beyond the "reasonable range", and therefore the direction of current regulation is wrong. The same type of satirical (ironic) exaggeration is also found in example 5-48. The Paramount leader

---

[48] 胆子再大一点，步子再快一点: "we should be more daring (in reform and opening up), quicken the pace (of economic development)" was put forward by Deng Xiaoping at the beginning of the reform and opening up.

[49] Referring to the Paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

[50] A province in Northern China, where housing prices dropped according to the original news article to which this comment refers.

Deng Xiaoping had made a statement (footnote 48) proclaiming that "we should be more daring" (in reform and opening up) and "quicken the pace" (of economic development). Using this statement as a basis, the commenter in example 5-48 changes the "walking" subject: in Deng's speech the subject is the reform, while here the subject is the housing prices. The commenter uses an ironic overstatement (exaggeration) in order to represent the unreasonable rising pace of the housing prices. Example 5-49, another instance of ironic counter-discourse commenting on a news article reporting housing prices, the agent of "the step" is, again, housing prices. The comment uses the phrases "congratulatory telegram" and "should be larger" ironically. The former mocks the original news article's title, which reports dropping housing prices, just because there was a small drop in the Hebei province – the original article suggesting that a small drop in one province is praise-worthy, even as the rest of the country was still seeing great increases in housing prices. The second comment (should be larger) expresses the view that housing prices have peaked and therefore should not go any higher. Once more, the divergence between government-led discourse and counter-discourse becomes evident, since the state and its policies concern overall metrics and longer-term economic goals, whereas the public is concerned with the immediate affordability of houses.

> Example5-50只要有项目，有油水的地方就有腐败。近十年来，中国各地的房价在人们的瞠目结舌中**一路高亢前行**，大小城市的房价普遍翻了 10 倍以上！(#C640)
>> (Where there are profitable projects, there is corruption. In the past decade, housing price across China has been **moving forward cheerfully**, leaving people eye-popping and jaw-dropping. Housing prices of all cities and cities, large or small, have escalated by more than 10 times.)

This example comments on a news article discussing the future tendency of housing prices after the issue new mortgage deals. Unlike the government-led discourse, FOOT metaphor here is employed to blame the state for not taking action to curb housing prices, letting it move forward without significant intervention all the way. If previous regulations had been effective, housing price should have slowed down its step somehow/somewhere, but in the counter-discourse it is described as "non-stop" and marching on. Moreover, the direction and destination of housing price journey are also subverted.

> Example5-51是我们理解错了，调控意思不是说房价下降，而是**稳步**增长的意思。(#C218)
>> (We got it wrong. The regulation does not mean dropping off housing price, but **steadily** rising.)
> Example5-52限购其实是在调控，防止大起大落。保护**稳步**增长而已。指望下跌，不是他们本意。(#C352)
>> (To Limit the purchase is actually to prevent big rise and fall. What they are doing is protecting the **rising steps** to be steady. They do not mean to expect a fall in housing price.)

Accordingly, in examples 5-51 and 5-52 (responding to a news article analysing the tendency of housing prices), they ironically subvert the state's claim and re-interpret the state's intention as to maintain the rise of housing prices by carrying on the "steady step". In other words, what these comments are saying is that the state's description of reality (a steady drop in prices) is different from

the actual facts, as people experience them (a steady rise in prices).

A different conceptualisation to that of prices as "walking entities" is their conceptualisation as (running/racing) horses, applying a standard HORSE-RIDER metaphor. According to MacArthur (2005), the HORSE-RIDER metaphor implies the notion of power and prestige, due to the fact that horses are expensive to own and maintain, which is a privilege to a small group of (wealthy and prestigious) people. Through the HORSE-RIDER metaphor, it can be understood that the rider (the state) attempts to control the horse (housing prices), which includes the connotation that the rider possesses the knowledge and skill to constrain the horse. That is, if the horse is being controlled, the rider is to be praised for their effectiveness and competence, and vice versa to be blamed if the horse is not controlled. In the image of steering a horse, there are some necessary elements, such as the person who rides the horse (the state), the tools to rein in the horse, such as whip and rein (regulatory policies), and the action of reining and whipping (macro control). In the government-led discourse, housing prices are represented as a wild horse, nearly being out of control.

> Example5-53随着近期国家对房地产调控政策陆续出台，一度曾像**脱缰野马**般疯涨的房价开始趋于理性。与此同时，人们也在关注，被称为房地产调控利器的房产税会在何时出台？(#N46, 2010/6/21)
>
> > (With the recent introduction of the national real estate control policies, the **once-runaway horse** of housing prices began to become rational. At the same time, people are also concerned that when will the property tax, a sharp weapon of regulating the real estate, be released?)
>
> Example5-54虽然房价**野马**已被套上了调控的缰绳，低下了高昂的头，但距离合理回归还差得远。(#N443, ;2012/7/10)
>
> > (Although the **wild horse** has been put on a curb and its high raising head is down, it is still far from a reasonable return.)

In example 5-53 and 5-54, the government is presented as managing to control housing prices, responding to what the public wants (again within the motto of "serving people wholeheartedly"). Notably, the expression "people are also concerned…" positions the state as knowledgeable of people's thoughts and wants. By representing the housing prices as wild horses, the emphasis is put on its unpredictability and difficulty to control, and the requirement of special skills and effort on the part of the horse rider. It is once more an attempt to limit responsibility, while also making any achievements appear as heroic feats.

> Example5-55房价没有国家的调控，就会向**脱了疆的野马**！控制不住了！(#C92)
>
> > (Without the state's control, housing prices will be like a **runaway horse** and cannot be controlled!)

It is interesting to point out that this is one of very few clearly supportive (pro-state) comments found in the Comment corpus (especially considering the responses to the widely commented-on news article #92 – see footnote 32). This commenter follows the state's rhetoric and uses a subjunctive mood to praise the government regulation for having controlled housing prices, stating as fact that housing prices have been controlled.

An interesting extension of the HORSE metaphor is found in the counter-discourse within the Comment corpus, where the horse is conceptualised as running without stopping until it eventually

dies (presumably of exhaustion):

Example5-56楼市要**一马奔腾**，**马不停蹄**了，以后更要**一马平川**。赶超英美日，成为靠房价支撑的全球第一经济大国，结果马跑死了（#C218）

> (The real estate market is a **horse** riding on the stretch of the open country and it is on a hurried journey without stopping. It will catch up with the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan, become the world's largest economy, supported by housing prices, resulting in the horse's death from running!)

Example 5-56 is a reader comment responding to a news article reporting the state's determination on regulating the housing market and how this resolute will benefit the people. In this example, the commenter employs three idioms containing the character of "horse" representing the rapid development of the housing market ("like a horse on a hurried journey without stop"). Even though it appears to recognize the contribution made by the housing market to the country's economy (and competitiveness in the global market), it primarily represents the constant inflation of housing prices as a danger. The comment promotes the idea that the state is too impatient and does not consider the actual state of the housing market, being too focused on quick results and its position in global economic rankings.

5.2.3 Summary

Through the above analysis, a conclusion can be drawn that HOUSING/SOCIAL REFORM IS A JOURNEY is a crucial metaphor in CHD. The state tends to portray itself as in control of the journey assuming the role of a reliable leader/driver/captain (this is comparable with the professional doctor role in TCM – see section 5.1). However, in the counter-discourse, the readers paint an overall picture of the journey as being out of control, not planned, running into trouble (such as traffic accidents) and with the government being to blame as a "careless driver".

The primary element of the HOUSING/SOCIAL REFORM IS A JOURNEY is PATH, and it has various features attributed to it depending on the stance of the author. On the government-led and pro-government side, it is perceived as innovative and new, which expresses the state's determination of following "the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics". As introduced in Chapter 3, the idea of "the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics" was first raised by President Deng Xiaoping and has been committed to by his successors. Although the notion of "the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics" was developed and refined with time, its core content is immutable, which claims upholding the leadership of the CCP is fundamental to the country's development. By selectively highlighting the concept of PATH, CCP attempts to immerse the public in its ideology. While on the anti-government side, the PATH, which the state is leading, is wrong in direction, not innovative and practical, and is leading to devastation.

It is interesting to point out that the distribution of JOURNEY metaphors in the two corpora varied: the government-led discourse has a larger account of the overall JOURNEY metaphor, but the public discourse has a larger portion in representing HOUSING PRICE IS A MOVING OBJECT. Through the analysis, it can also be observed that the public pay more attention to the housing prices at a micro-economic level, shifting the focus away from the state's macro-economic discourse, which centres on the development of the national economy and (housing) reform (see also the keyword

discussion in Chapter 4).

5.3 WAR metaphors

War has been present throughout the course of human history and can be defined as:

> *hostile contention by means of armed forces, carried on between nations,*
> *states, or rulers, or between parties in the same nation or state; the employment*
> *of armed forces against a foreign power, or against an opposing party in the state.*
> *(The Oxford English Dictionary Online)*

In this definition, the key elements of war are obviously stated, such as that it is violent, dangerous, has high-stakes, between different (opposite) powers and with uncertain outcomes. Words with frequent military connotations such as "win", "strategy", "fight" and "attack", are also used in our everyday parlance to refer to non-military proceedings (Kort, 2018). Of course, the aforementioned words are not limited to the field of warfare, but are also prevalent in sport, games and all kinds of activities involving competition. Nevertheless, these terms become more clearly and unambiguously linked to the concept of war, when associated to conceptual metaphors using war as a source domain. WAR metaphors are applied to different types of discourse, such as medicine and health (e.g., Chiang and Duaan 2007; Williams Camus 2009; Semino et al. 2017), sports competitions (e.g., Kellett 2002; Caballero 2012; Ross and Rivers 2019), as well as business and economic discourse (e.g., Ahrens et al. 2003; Koller 2004; Hu and Xu 2017; Flusberg et al. 2018).

The aforementioned studies also generally recognise different kinds of opponents in a war. In terms of agency, the opponent can be something of no individual agency/intentions, like a physical phenomenon or a disease (e.g., WAR ON CANCER, WAR ON SARS), whereas in other cases the opponent is a person or group of people with clear intentions (e.g., WAR ON TERRORISM). Another distinction is between visible/obvious opponents versus cases where the agent is obscured, since multiple different parties with different interests and intentions are involved. So, if we consider the WAR ON DRUGS as an example, even though the named opponent lacks agency (in literal terms, "drugs" are objects), the phenomenon which is being combatted involves a number of different agents who act within a complex network of activities (e.g., drug lords, drug smugglers, drug cartels, drug dealers). The relevant question, then, for the present study is the extent to which the complex elements of the opponent of the WAR AGAINST THE (HOUSING) CRISIS are named, explicitly discussed, given agency, or remain obscured.

5.3.1 Chinese understanding of war

War is an important component of Chinese culture and is therefore frequently discussed. During the *Spring and Autumn period and the Warring State period* (春秋战国时期) (BC770–BC221)[51], war was one of the highly debated topics by the *Hundred Schools of Thought* (诸子百家)[52]. The most influential theoretical tradition of approaching war is the Military School (兵家), which studies and

---

[51] This was an era in ancient China which saw the flourishing of diverse schools of thought and the expansion of intellectual/academic endeavours for the first time in ancient China.

[52] It is a general term referring to the philosophies and schools that bloomed in the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring State period, which build up the broad foundation of Chinese culture.

discusses the philosophy of war and provides comprehensive guidelines on conducting war (Heng, 2013). Though the Military School talks the most about war, it does not promote an encouraging attitude towards war, but rather a cautious one. In the opening sentence of *The Art of War* (孙子兵法) [53], it is written that war is of vital importance to the state and must be commenced with due consideration.

Confucianism, another influential school of thought in Chinese culture, advocates benevolence as the method of resolving problems and achieving peace (Feng, 2007). According to this, war brings about suffering, social disorder and injustice, which are contrary to harmony, one of the vital goals of the CCP's governance (for discussion on "harmony" see Chapter 3). However, Confucianism does not blindly resist war of all kinds. Since social harmony is the ultimate principle of Confucianism, it allows and rationalises some level of military engagement as an essential part of preventing social disturbances, saving the innocent people and restoring social justice. Military force is therefore referred to as the army of justice (仁义之师), with the only justification for war being the purpose of advocating benevolence and love of the people.

Mohism, which resembles Confucianism in many important respects, also holds an antipathic view towards war and advocates non-war solutions to all problems (Fraser, 2016). The *Mo Zi*, the principal Mohist work written by Mozi, condemns offensive war and urges people to lead a simple life, doing no harm. The Taoist School, founded by Lao Tzu, also opposes war and considers military force as a nefarious instrument.

A credible conclusion on Chinese people's war values is from Gawlikowski (1979), who summarises the traditional perspectives in early China as opposing war in general, but encouraging it in particular occasions. In other words, war is not the initial step in resolving conflicts and problems, but once the problem in question is excessively severe and harmful to the people, war is then a viable option. Despite the anti-war views promoted by the aforementioned philosophies, WAR metaphors are prevalent in Mandarin Chinese, especially in business and economic discourse (Ahrens et al. 2003; Hu and Xu 2017). The possible function of WAR metaphors is to justify extreme or violent actions, through creating a culture of violence (Lakoff 2012; Silverwood 2015).

5.3.2 WAR metaphors in CHD

The metaphor keywords in the source domain of war in the studied corpora are presented in Table 5-6. As shown in Table 5-6, the News corpus includes a greater number of war-related keywords than the Comment corpus. Although the Comment corpus only has a small range of WAR metaphor keywords, 41.18% of them are related to specific weapons, such as sword, gun and sharp weapon, compared 13.73% in the News corpus. This difference in keyword distribution is an indication that the state rhetoric concentrates more on the general (big-picture) conceptualisation of war, whereas the public's focus is more on the details (weapons in particular) of the battle.

Keywords	Occurrences in News	Occurrences in Comment
斗争 Fight	1	3
战斗 combat	1	1
兵　soilder	5	1
进军　march on	6	0

---

[53] A representative work of the Military School written by Sun Tzu.

主力军 major force	9	0
领军 military leader	2	1
应战 accept battle	1	0
败仗 defeat	1	0
胜利 victory	1	0
作战 combat	2	0
防守 defend	1	0
战略 strategy	60	3
战术 tactics	0	1
子弹 bullet	0	1
炮弹 cannon	0	1
烟雾弹 smoke shell	0	1
利器 sharp weapon	5	2
杀手锏 killer	3	0
剑 sword	2	1
枪 gun	4	1

Table5- 6 Metaphor keywords in WAR metaphors

Wiliński (2017), who conducted quantitative research into the WAR metaphors in business, suggests that it is military terms which are not closely related to combat, such as strategy and campaign, rather than terms which are directly associated with war and fighting, such as victory, invasion, attack, and combat, that appear more frequently in business discourse. The keyword choices observed in this study are in line with the findings of earlier studies, where "strategy" is the most frequent keyword in both of the two corpora, while combat related words are not that frequent. One possible explanation for this lies in the attitudes towards 战略 (strategy) and 战术 (tactics) within Chinese culture. As a term, strategy refers to the long-term and macro-level planning towards accomplishing the goals of war; while tactics are much more concrete and focus on the specific steps and actions undertaken to realise the strategy. In other words, strategy relates to the plan to win the war overall, while tactics relate to winning specific battles. The importance of this dichotomy is reflected in the famous quote from Chairman Mao, that "despise the enemy strategically, but take him seriously tactically" (战略上藐视敌人,战术上重视敌人) (Mao, 1948). When it comes to the application of this dichotomy in metaphors of war, the question of whether strategy and tactics share the same weight is something worth investigating and will be examined with respect to CRISIS IS WAR. Also, it is worth mentioning that "strategy" is not exclusive to war, as it can also be "game strategy". Accordingly, not all of the usages of "strategy" will evoke war, unless there are other war-related elements in the context.

5.3.2.1 HOUSING CRISIS IS WAR

WAR metaphors are employed to demonstrate the opposition of different powers/stakes. They are also used to discuss particularly urgent and difficult problems and the measures aiming to solve them (Semino, 2008). Such metaphors are intended to highlight the severity of the issues in question, and the difficulties encountered when trying to solve them. The main conceptual metaphor HOUSING CRISIS IS WAR is found throughout the CHD. "War" in this case is represented as involving different battles, such as the battle against rising prices and the battle against low quality of life. Obviously, the housing crisis itself can be construed as part of a larger war (e.g., war against poverty, or against economic depression), so on occasion the housing crisis can be represented as a battle in a larger war.

This section mainly focuses on examining the battles discussed by the state and the public in the housing crisis.

First, we shall examine what the state represents as important (general) battles, such as the battle against inflation and corruption, which it treats as necessary for the people's well-being and social harmony. The first example appears in an article (from the News corpus) entitled "stabilise prices and people's wellbeing", which summarises the government's work in 2010 on the eve of the 2011 "two sessions"[54].

Example5-57在过去近一年的时间中，中国政府实际上在进行一场**抗击**通货膨胀的**战斗**。
(#N170, 2011/03/02)

(In the past year, the Chinese government is **fighting a battle against** inflation.)

In example 5-57, a battle between the state and inflation is presented. In the article, the author listed the actions of the government against inflation, such as shifting the monetary policy from relatively "relaxed"/ "unregulated" to tight[55], raising the RMB benchmark interest rates[56] for deposits and loans of financial institutions (up to three times), and raising the reserve ratio[57] up to eight times. Since inflation in China is mainly caused by the real estate market boom (Zhang, 2013), the battle against inflation can viewed as a battle against housing prices, aiming at achieving the reduction of the dramatically high housing prices. As the article indicates, the goal of this battle is to stabilise people's wellbeing – yet another reference/allusion to the proclaimed party goal ("to serve the people wholeheartedly").

Aside from inflation, corruption is another "enemy" against whom there is a battle. The following example is taken from a news article discussing corruption in the housing market. The author first discusses how corruption works in the housing market and explains the harm and hazards that corruption brings to society (in the past and in future). In this example, the government's measures towards corruption are conceptualised as weapons in a battle, for which the government has a clear strategy.

Example5-58腐败热点领域的转换，一方面说明贪官在不断寻求利益扩张的新途径，
反腐败**斗争**具有长期性、复杂性；另一方面也为完善反腐机制揭示了努力方向.
(#N554, 2013/10/10)

(The spread of corruption across the housing market, on the one hand,

[54] Called 两会 or "Lianghui" (literal translation). It refers to the annual political sessions in China: the National People's Congress (NPC) and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The CPPCC provides advice and suggestions to the NPC, and the NPC makes political decisions.

[55]"Easy" and "Tight" are two different types of monetary policies. Easy monetary policy is normally used when the economy is weak, and it is normally conducted through lowering interest rates. By implementing easy monetary policy, such as lowering interest rates, more cash supply will be in the market, and thereby stimulate economic growth. Tight monetary policy is often implemented when the economy is overheated or during inflation periods.

[56]"Benchmark interest rate" is an economic term referring to the minimum rate that investors will accept for investing in non-government securities. The benchmark interest rate plays a leading role in the overall interest rate system. The level of benchmark interest rate determines the level of other interest rates. In China, to monitor the benchmark interest rate is the most common and useful approach used by the central bank to achieve the goals of corresponding monetary policies.

[57] The "Reserve ratio" is the minimum amount of a commercial bank's total deposits that it should hold as cash in order to meet the basic needs of its customers (i.e., cash out). The rate is generally set by central bank. Reserve ratio is normally used as a monetary tool, especially in non-market economies. In China, reserve ratio is considered to be a strong tool in the battle against inflation.

shows that corrupt officials are constantly seeking new ways to expand their interests. **The anti-corruption battle** is characterised as long-term and complex; on the other hand, it also reveals the direction of efforts to improve the anti-corruption[58] mechanism.)

Example 5-58 is a news article reporting the results of anti-corruption in the housing sector and praising how anti-corruption will benefit the people. In this example, the term "battle" evokes the war scenario, so everything that comes after it can be interpreted in a war context, thus, "direction of efforts" can be interpreted as the goal of the military campaign and "anti-corruption" positions once again "corruption" as the enemy. In a study into metaphor choice in China's anti-corruption discourse, Jing-Schmidt and Peng (2017) stated that metaphors used in the anti-corruption discourse carries two additional meanings; one suggests that the corrupt officials are "harmful and powerful", and the other one indicates that the anti-corruption work is heroic and it can eliminate corruption ("enemy" in this case). Through utilising the WAR metaphor in the anti-corruption discourse, the state can distance itself away from corruption and erect a fair and clean-fingered image.

Since war is fierce and dangerous, anyone who fights a just war is considered brave and heroic. Through such WAR metaphors, the state represents itself as a brave warrior and war leader, while its cause is represented as just and worthy (Jing-Schmidt and Peng, 2017). At the same time, the state (and party) emphasises its determination in fighting inflation and corruption as another means of serving the people's well-being.

When it comes to the Comment corpus, a different type of war and battle appears: the battle between people and low quality of life. The following example comes from a reader comment replying to a news article talking about housing prices trends and the state's effort in regulating the housing market.

Example5-59别怪房价高　只是我们的收入太低　水平不行～　这个时代是房价问题可能过个二十年以后就是健康问题了　没钱的我们 纠结依旧，所以只有提升自己的**战斗力**才是王道啊. (#C465)

> (Don't blame the high housing price. It's just that our incomes are too low, and our abilities are not good. The concern of this era is housing prices, and it may be health/medical concern 20 year later. Poor people like us will still be struggling. So, the only requisite is to enhance our **fighting capabilities**.)

Example 5-59 is a reader comment responding to a news article reporting the future tendency of housing prices, which argues that housing prices will prone to be steady. In this example, the commenter metaphorically regards the poor as under attack from a disadvantaged position and fighting for survival, while they also represent money (or the ability to earn money) as fighting capabilities in the battle against the causes of poor quality of life (such as the inability to afford a house or medical treatment). It is interesting to point out that the people (in the counter-discourse) perceive themselves as fighting this battle alone, regardless of the government's asserted commitment in improving people's living conditions (which can be understood as fighting for/alongside the people). Thus, the commenter indicates that the state and the people are not in the same camp, rejecting the state's rhetoric

---

[58] In Mandarin Chinese, words prefixed with "anti-" have the military connotation that objects after "anti-" are regarded as enemies, so the aim of "anti-X" is to destroy X.

that it fights on behalf the public (see also the analysis of the FAMILY metaphor). Further, according to the TOHYG, a full Xiaokang society should have been accomplished by the centenary of the founding of the CCP (in 2021). However, the commenter here suggests that 20 years later, i.e., in 2032, the poor will still be struggling. In other words, the commenter considers the government/party unable to lead the people out of poverty by 2032, let alone in 2021. The lack of confidence in achieving the goals of the "Two Centenaries" manifests through different positions, for instance, that the goals themselves are unrealistic, or that the government is inactive in implementing the party's policies, or that the government has not prioritised improving people's living conditions[59], or all of the above.

Another type of battle represented through WAR metaphors is that where, rather than being fought alone, participants join forces, which, in this case, has the state joining forces with occasional allies. The term "occasional" indicates that the allies are not permanent and, indeed, the most commonly discussed ally of the state, the property developers, have a varied position and representation. Sometimes they are represented in a positive light (working with the state, often represented as a metaphorical "friendship" or even "love affair") and sometimes a negative one (working against it, often represented as hostile, i.e., a relation between enemies who have opposing interests).

The state's rhetoric reveals a shifting stance towards the developers. Before the IHP, the government-led discourse would criticise developers for raising housing prices, depicting them as profiteers and enemies. During the IHP, while the assets and powers of property developers were needed, they were portrayed as friends or even heroes. However, after the state's mission in IHP was complete (with success in quantity but not in quality), once again, the developers become the target of the state's criticism. The government's change of attitude is noticed by the public and discussed in the counter-discourse (for further discussion see Chapter 6), with emphasis on the collusion between the state and property developers and the similarities in their tactics (one comment characteristically uses an idiom equivalent to "birds of a feather flock together" to describe that relationship).

Example5-60没见开发商跳楼，就是调控不力 (#C92)

> (Did not see the developers **jumping off the building**, it is not effective regulation)

Example5-61部长忙着和开发商喝茶呢，关心你个屁 (#C240)

> (The minister is busy **drinking tea** with the developer and "caring about you fart" (= he does not care about you)).

Both of these two examples are reader comments responding to news articles that attract extensive comments. Example 5-60 comments on a news article reporting people's high satisfaction towards housing prices, whereas example5-61 comments on a news article reporting the potential problems (i.e.: poor quality) of some social welfare houses. In example 5-60, although the relationship is not metaphorically constructed through war keywords, it strongly indicates that governmental regulations are meant to be against developers and meant to affect them extremely negatively (metaphorical suicide being the result of government regulations in example 5-60). It is therefore suggesting that the state is lenient with the developers. This comment presupposes that the state and developers are not meant to be allies and any collaboration between them is seen as an act of betrayal against the people.

Example 5-61 is another emotive comment representing the state and developers as being in

cahoots. Technically not a WAR metaphor (although it can be seen as a PEACE metaphor), it evokes the image of a strong friendship. The original news article that this comment responds to is based on a report from the minister of housing and urban-rural development, which focuses on the progress of the ongoing IHP. To this commenter, the state (the minister as a representative) has a close relationship with the developers, while ignoring the needs of the people.

These two examples are not directly relevant to WAR metaphors, but they set up the scene of whom the government is working for/against. When it comes to the agents involved in the whole crisis situation, it presents an argument about positioning. To the anti-government readers, the state and the developers are having affair, and their actions are in the developers' best interests, i.e., to make more profits or promotion[60]. However, in the government-led discourse, its relationship with the developer changes, depending on the stance of the developers, and it is for the public interest throughout. The following examples are taken from the News corpus and they show how the state shifts its attitude towards property developers.

Example5-625 月 13 日，作为上海保障房建设"**排头兵**"的城投控股，与中国平安携手推出债权投资计划，募集不超过 30 亿元的资金用于支持上海保障性住房建设。(#N248, 2011/06/16)

> (On May 13, as the **pacesetting soldier** of Shanghai affordable housing construction, City Investment Holdings[61], together with Ping An, launched a debt investment plan to raise no more than 3 billion yuan to support the construction of affordable housing in Shanghai.)

Example5-63中国房地产开发商已经开始**紧锣密鼓**地在美国市场布局，其中在纽交所上市的鑫苑置业旗下的美国公司成功地**抢占**了纽约住宅项目的开发权，引起彭博社、《华尔街日报》等众多媒体关注。 (#N507, 2013/4/15)

> (Chinese real estate developers have begun to **get in formation** in the US market. Among them, the American branch of Xinyuan Real Estate company, a company listed on the New York Stock Exchange, has successfully **seized** the development rights of residential projects in New York, causing much attention from the media, such as Bloomberg and The Wallstreet Journal.)

Both of these two examples come from news articles related to property developers. Example 5-62 comes from a news article reporting how local governments cooperate with commercial property developers to tackle the problem of lacking capital in IHP, whereas example 5-63 comes from a news article reporting the story of a domestic property developer entered the housing market in the United State.

As introduced in Chapter 3, there are three types of companies in China based on ownership: state-owned enterprises (SEO), private enterprises and foreign companies. Among them, SEOs are commonly referred to as the "son" of the state, possessing special rights in the markets but receiving more intervention from the government as well. In early 2011, the central government assigned a task to local governments, requiring them to build 10 million security houses by the end of the year. Facing

---

[60] As discussed in Chapter 3, GDP is the promotion ladder for the officials. The more profits developers make, the more taxes they will pay to local governments, which means more revenue and GDP, and therefore, promotion for the officials. This is often criticised by the people as "collusion between government and businessmen".

[61] City Investment Holdings is a joint-stock company re-organised from a state-owned enterprise in 1992. Ping An is private enterprise.

the deadline, the state required more capital and cooperative partners to become involved in the process of investment and construction. In example 5-62, a stated-owned company, City Investment Holdings, is metaphorically represented as the pacesetting soldier, while the private asset Ping An is its allied army. The IHP itself is conceptualised as a march (as in example 5-25 in the JOURNEY metaphor discussion), moving towards victory – victory being to improve people's living conditions. By praising the developers, especially including the private asset Ping An as an allied army, it sends out a friendly signal that the state and developers are allies, appealing for more cooperation and powers to the IHP.

Here the state portrays private developers positively as an important force for China's entry/expansion into overseas housing markets. In example 5-63, housing developers are praised for being the practitioners of the state's Go Out Policy, which encourages domestic enterprises to invest overseas. In this situation, the developers once again are viewed as being in the same camp as the state. Expressions such as "get in formation" and "seize" evoke the conceptual metaphor MARKET IS A BATTLEFIELD, and the state is positive towards what it considers a shift of the battlefield from domestic to international. The metaphor MARKET IS A BATTLEFIELD is also frequently utilised in economic discourse (Tang, 2017), as is further discussed in section 5.3.2.3.

Yet, the ally relationship between the state and developers was not meant to last. In 2014, developers start being represented as enemies of the state.

> Example5-64限购、限贷、提高二套房首付、抬高非户籍购房门槛、增加供地等一整套调控组合**拳**纷纷打出，让楼市"大佬"们率先感到了寒意。在诸多地产大佬"痛心疾呼"之后，杭州打响了 2014 年楼市降价的第一**枪** (#N599, 2014/03/17)
>> (The combination **punches** (which are made up of measures such as) the limiting purchases, restricting loans, raising the down payment for second homes, raising the threshold for non-hukou purchases, and increasing land supply, have been punched out and made the property market "gangster" feel the chill. After the painful and sad cries of these "gangsters", Hangzhou started the **first shot** of the 2014 property market price cuts.)

This extract from a news article talks about whether or not the real estate market will crash. The property developers are metaphorically conceptualised as enemy of the state, who are gangsters that should be punched and shot. By positioning developers as gangsters who make profits from the housing market, the state depicts itself as a defender, who is fighting for protecting people's interests. In this way, the relationships are clear, where the state and the people are allies against the developers, who are the mutual enemy.

Aside from positioning itself in an adversarial role against the developers, the state also suggests that housing prices will keep dropping. Since there is a "first" shot, it is implied that continuous shots will follow (something which did not actually happen, since prices kept rising). It is worth mentioning that "gun", the only named modern weapon in the government-led discourse, appears four times and all of them are conceptualised through HOUSING CRISIS IS WAR, where gun is used for aiming at the high housing prices and the profiteers. Since firearms are strictly controlled in China where private citizens are not allowed to possess guns, the ability to own/use a gun indicates a privilege/priority[62].

---

62 A similar indication can also be found in HORSE metaphors.

5.3.2.2 REGULATIONS AND POLICIES ARE WEAPONS AND ARMAMENTS

Shimizu (2010) claims that the conceptual metaphor X IS A WEAPON empowers the owner of X, who possesses the means to achieve their goal. In this study, weapons are found to be heavily used as a source domain in discussing the regulations and policies to lower housing prices. In the corpora, there are two types of measures being discussed; the first one is all kinds of economic policies/measures that are regarded as "weapons", such as security housing and any regulatory policies; the second type specifically refers to property tax, which is what attracts the public's attention the most.

Regulations and any sort of policies/measures that are supposed to lower housing prices, or defeat the housing crisis in a broader sense, are conceptualised as "weapon". In CHD, only the state is armed with weapons – which is a privilege due to the fact that private citizens cannot own guns. As Shimizu (2010) stated, the purpose of a weapon is to help the owner achieve something, in this case to lower housing prices/resolve the crisis. However, as the following examples show, aside from their basic function, WEAPON metaphors in the government-led discourse also have other intended results.

Example5-65保障房建设既是改善民生的**利器**，也是整个经济发展的稳定器. (#N455, 2012/08/27)

> (The security housing is not only a **sharp weapon** to improve people's livelihood, but also a stabilizer for the whole economic development.)

Example5-66一旦经济运行出现大幅波动，则要果断采取措施，对经济总量政策作出重大调整，使出宏观调控政策的"**杀手锏** [63]"，避免发生"硬着陆"或经济过热。 (#N130, 2011/01/10)

> (In the event of sharp fluctuations in the economy, decisive measures should be taken to make major adjustments to the aggregate economic policy and use the "**ace in the hole**" of the macro-control policy to avoid a "hard landing" or overheating)

The full article of example 5-65 discusses IHP and the people's housing dream. By conceptualising the IHP as a sharp weapon against the housing crisis, the gravity of the project is highlighted. In the article, the author lists the victorious battles where IHP has served as a sharp weapon: helping China overcome the 2008 financial crisis, helping the state deal with the downturn of commercial housing market, and boosting employment and the housing industry in 2011. In the article, the author metaphorically views achieving "xiaokang society" as the end-goal of the battle, with IHP being a weapon throughout. By listing the successful battles in which IHP participated, the government-led discourse defends its preference for using IHP as a generalised crisis response.

The original news article from which example 5-66 comes discusses China's macroeconomic regulation and control, as well as how it adapts to the "new normal" with innovation. In this example, there is a metaphorical battle against overheated economy, where "macro-control policy" is the weapon ("assassin's mace"). The assassin's mace is an ancient weapon in China, and by wielding it, people can defeat a far more powerful enemy (the state vs the overheated economy in this context) who becomes incapacitated suddenly and totally. The point of this rhetoric is to emphasise the fact that even though the enemy is powerful, the state has the ability to overpower it. It is interesting to point out that, aside from "assassin' mace", other ancient weapons (i.e., swords) are also used in the News

---

[63] Literally translation: killer mace.

corpus:

> Example5-67本轮楼市调控，动真格，出实招 [64]，**剑**指高房价，抑制投机性需求，加
> 强市场监管。(#N5, 2010/01/12)
>> (This round of housing market regulation is serious, and it had real actions.
>> The **sword** is pointing at the high housing prices, aiming to curbing the
>> speculative demand and strengthening market supervision.)

Example 5-67 is from a news article discussing the "real actions" that the state has taken in regulating the housing market. In China, sword-culture has had a strong impact since the early Bronze Age. Being a typical example of the Confucianism concept of "propriety" (礼), sword is particularly favoured by Junzi[65] in ancient China (Kammer, 2016). This example relates to the battle against high housing prices, where the state is a warrior equipped with a sword and the high housing prices are the enemy targets. Through this metaphor, the state represents itself as owning all the virtues of "junzi", while, once more, fighting on the side of the people and protecting their interests.

Among all the regulatory measures, property tax receives the most attention from the public. The division between the government-led discourse and the counter-discourse lies in whether property tax is the right measure against the housing crisis.

> Example5-68随着近期国家对房地产调控政策陆续出台，一度曾像脱缰野马般疯涨的
> 房价开始趋于理性。与此同时，人们也在关注，被称为房地产调控**利器**的房产税
> 会在何时出台？(#N46, 2010/06/21)
>> (With the recent introduction of the state's real estate regulation policies,
>> the housing price that once soared like a runaway horse began to become
>> rational. At the same time, people are also concerned about when the
>> property tax, known as the **sharp weapon** of real estate regulation, will be
>> introduced)
> Example5-69房价主要取决于供求关系，无论从发达国家还是我国试点地区经验来看，
> 不能指望房产税成为降低房价的**利器** (#N529, 2013/06/14)
>> (Housing price mainly depends on the relationship between supply and
>> demand. No matter from the experience of developed countries or China's
>> pilot areas, we cannot expect property tax to be a **sharp weapon** to reduce
>> housing price)

Both these two examples come from news articles related to the frequently mentioned property tax, where the first one is about whether the property tax can prick the housing bubble and the second one is about whether the property tax can lower down housing prices. Earlier in 2010, the state had conveyed the message that property tax would help reduce housing prices. Here, however, this is tactically represented as something which is the people's own expectation (as in example 5-68) as if it hadn't been the government's own choice or responsibility. Later in 2013, after trialling property tax in some cities, where the outcomes were not particularly positive, the state changed its rhetoric and announced that property tax is not effective in lowering housing prices, asking people to not place

---

[64] 出招, a term generally used in martial arts ("Wushu"), means the actions of defending/attacking in wuchu.
65 Junzi, means "gentleman" or "superior person (君子, literal translation "literally, "ruler's son"), a term in Confucianism referring to people with good conduct and morals.

much expectation on it. In example 5-69, the claim is that housing prices depend on the relationship between supply and demand, disconnecting housing regulations from the matter of prices. This can be seen as a contradiction in relation to the general rhetoric where macro-economic policies are represented as weapons in the fight against the housing crisis. Examples 5-70 and 5-71 below are reader comments on the news article of example 5-69.

Example5-70"人民日报: 不能指望房产税成为降低房价**利器**
不指望房产税成为降低房价**利器**,就指望房产税成为 ZF 增收**利器**么?狼子野心,昭然若揭" (#C529)

> (*People's Daily*: property tax can't be expected to be a sharp weapon for lowering housing prices. Do not expect property tax to be a **sharp weapon** to reduce housing prices, so expect the property tax to be a sharp weapon to increase government revenue? The ambition of the Wolf is evident.)

Example5-71开始不是说房产税是降房价的**利器**吗？开始不是说养老靠政府吗？开始不是。。。。。 (#C529)

> (Didn't it claim at the beginning that the property tax as a **sharp weapon** to reduce house prices? Didn't it say at the beginning that pensions rely on the government? Didn't it say at the beginning that….)

Both these two examples are reader comments responding to the news article discussed in example 5-69, whether the property tax can lower down housing prices. Example 5-70 follows the narrative style of example 5-69, and it further expands it by adding a question, "are we expecting the property tax to be a sharp weapon to increase government revenue?", which criticises the state for only caring about its own income. In this case, property tax is no longer a weapon for good purposes, while the represented battle is also different (subverted). Note that the "ZF" used in the comment is a widely used abbreviation for "government" for avoiding censorship, indicating that the commenter regards their comment as exceedingly critical. Example 5-71 starts by questioning what the state said about property tax at earlier stages of the crisis. It then begins a list of issues in which the state's attitude and rhetoric has been self-contradicting (such as the pensions issue), finishing with an elliptical sentence to indicate that the list can go on further.

Based on the discussed examples, it can be seen that the state's rhetoric is trying to build the image of a powerful warrior who is armed with different types weapons (sword, assassin's mace), in order to show its ability and confidence in winning the war. However, in the counter-discourse, this positive image is rejected. Instead, the state is described as self-contradictory and unfaithful to its promises.

5.3.2.3 MARKET IS A BATTLEFIELD

The conceptual metaphor MARKET IS BATTLEFIELD is one of the most popular metaphors in business/economic discourses (Tang, 2017). In CHD, this conceptual metaphor only appears in the News corpus.

Example5-72"炒房团"**转战**二、三线城市 (#N29, 2010/5/17)

> ("Real estate speculation group" **move their battlefields** to the second- and third-tier cities)

Example5-73但随着开发成本的不断提高，以及商品房市场高额利润的吸引，民营企

业纷纷**转战**商品房开发，保障房建设的"**硬骨头**"多由国有企业承担，或政府直接组织建设。(#N39, 2010/5/25)

(However, with the continuous increase of development costs and the attraction of high profits in the commercial housing market, private enterprises started to turn the commercial housing development sector into a **battlefield** one after another. The "**tough bones**"[66] of construction of IHP is mostly undertaken by state-owned enterprises or directly organised by the government)

Example 5-72 is the headline a news article discussing the withdrawal of speculators from tier-one cities due to the strict regulatory policies in those cities. Representing the market as a battlefield, it positions the state and the speculators as the two fighting armies. Under this metaphor, REGULATORY POLICIES ARE WEAPONS also appears with the aim to highlight the effectiveness of governmental regulation.

The article from which example 5-73 comes discusses the question of introducing private capital into the IHP. It is important to point out that this article was released in May 2010, near the "mid-term exam" of the IHP. So, under this circumstance, the government was facing a tough period and in urgent need of capital. In example 5-73, the author also perceives the market as battlefield, but in this case, the state and private companies are fighting different battles. It portrays private companies as profit-seekers, who are fighting on the battlefield of commercial market which has more profits, while SEO and the state are on another battlefield, which is the IHP. In this way a justification is given for why the IHP market is short of money and power (lack of profit), while the state still presents itself as bravely facing all difficulties.

5.3.3 Summary

This section mainly investigated the use of WAR metaphors in CHD. Aside from the common intentions discussed in previous metaphor sections in the government-led and the anti-government discourse (i.e., persuading people (not) to believe in the state, building confidence, pointing out the self-contradictory nature of the state), the main function specifically for FOODs has to do with positioning, that is, how the state and the public orient themselves and other social actors, especially the property developers, within a setting of war. It was argued that according to the state's rhetoric, the relationship between the state and developers can range from allies to enemies, the latter being the case when developers are no longer of use to the state. However, in the anti-government discourse, the state is conceptualised as betraying the people and in cahoots with developers. When it comes to cultural references, it was shown that the government-led rhetoric favours ancient weapons, making use of their strong positive connotations.

---

[66] Called 硬骨头 in Chinese, "tough bones" is a literal translation. This term originates from Chair Mao's famous book *On Protracted War*, and it means an arduous task. People who are willing to "bite" the "tough bone" are described as persevering and unafraid of difficulties.

5.4 FOOD metaphors

In Chinese society, there is an ancient saying that "for people, food is the most important thing"[67]. The importance of food in life is self-evident. FOOD metaphors, mapping from the broad source domains of food, such as flavour (i.e., spicy, sweet, bitter), variety (i.e., cake, rice, bread, meat) and cooking methods (i.e., fry, steam, boil), are therefore viewed as a powerful category of conceptual metaphors (i.e., Vanparys 1984; Zhao and Gu 2006; Tseng 2017).

Unlike other universally shared experiences that function as source domains, such as journey, disease or war, food is considered to be not only universal but also highly culture-dependent (Atkins and Bowler, 2016). Since people's understanding towards food varies, from food resources, to cooking methods, FOOD metaphors are endowed with strong cultural distinctions. For that reason, research into FOOD metaphors is most commonly contrastive across cultures. For instance, Tsaknaki (2016), who investigates the cooking verbs and metaphors in Greek and French, claims that the conceptual metaphors constituted by the same cooking verbs can have different connotations; while different languages arrive to the same metaphorical meaning through verbs with different literal meaning. Comparing the food names used in English and Chinese metaphorical idioms, with special focus on those English idioms that have passed into Chinese, Tang (2007) argues that, alongside food idioms coming from its own history, Chinese language has accommodated idioms borrowed from English in a way that reinterprets their meaning to fit the culture's own conceptualisations. The idioms mentioned in Tang's research (e.g., "have your cake and eat it too") are metaphors that are so conventionalised that their culture-dependence is apparent. Berrada (2007) investigates FOOD metaphors in Moroccan Arabic and Classical Arabic discourse, he argues that FOOD metaphors are not only culture specific, but also not translatable. With regards to translation, translatability is indeed an issue that is pertinent to the current study, as the efforts to provide adequate information and context for each example will demonstrate in the following sections.

When it comes to single-culture approaches, Lin and Depner's (2016) investigation of FOOD metaphors in Taiwan Hakka idioms books and dictionaries shows that life, personality and human relation are the primary domains that FOOD is mapped onto. Additionally, their research suggests that FOOD metaphors not only represent the unique Hakka culture, but also reveal Hakka people's traditional perceptions and values, such as the attention to interpersonal relations. Irajzad and Kafi (2018) analyse the cultural conceptualisations of edible items in contemporary Persian, stating that food items are often associated with personality, while appearance is the principal target domain.

The mapping from food onto human being traits is also used extensively as a metaphor for social position or identity in European culture (Zhang and Barnden 2010; López-Rodríguez 2014). In Zhang and Barnden's research, they found that FOOD metaphors as well as ANIMAL metaphors are heavily used by European people to conceptualise social/ethical groups in other European countries. The use of FOOD metaphor as a referring strategy is not found in the corpora, although a parallel can be found in the Comment corpus's (exclusively) ANIMAL metaphors (i.e., using names of animals to refer to individuals).

The most recognised conceptual metaphor of food is THOUGHT/IDEA IS FOOD, first discussed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), and subsequently developed by

---

[67] 民以食为天 in Chinese, and it originates from a biography of Li yiji, the emperor's advisor during the Han dynasty (called 《汉书·郦食其传》). The full excerpt is "王者以民为天，而民以食为天", which is translated as "For the Emperor, the people are everything; for the people, food is everything." or, "An Emperor cannot be without people; people cannot be without food".

other researchers (e.g., Kovecses, 2010). Within this prime metaphor, there are sub-metaphors such as THE CONTENT OF THOUGHT IS THE INGREDIENT OF FOOD and COMPREHENSION OF IDEAS IS DIGESTION OF FOOD (Hassan, 2010). Despite the abundance of research on FOOD metaphors cross-culturally (i.e., Hassan 2010; Khajeh and Imran 2012; Tseng 2017), not much of it has focused on economic or political discourse (Silaški and Đurović, 2013). In this regard, this section is both a contribution to the understanding of FOOD metaphors within political discourse and an investigation into culture-specific elements of Chinese FOOD metaphors.

5.4.1 FOOD metaphors in CHD

Based on the metaphor identification procedures discussed in section 4.3.2, Table 5-7 presents the FOOD metaphor keywords in the corpora.

Keywords	News	Comment
口粮 grain ration	2	0
粥 porridge	6	1
点心 dessert	2	1
骨头 bone	5	2
汤 soup	1	0
油 oil	2	2
蛋糕 cake	8	2
面包 bread	5	3
面粉 flour	4	4
肥 fat	4	3
熬 stew	1	0
辣 spicy	2	0
厨师 chef[68]	1	0
甜 sweet	2	1
啃 gnaw	4	0
消化 digest	41	2

Table5- 7Metaphor keywords in FOOD metaphor

As shown in table 5-7, metaphor keywords include food categories (being the most variable), cooking methods, taste of food, and digestion (having the greatest occurrence in the News corpus). Regarding the food category, it is interesting to point out that these keywords have a strong cultural/historical colour. For instance, there are terms borrowed from other countries/cultures, such as "bread" and "cake", there are also expressions from a particular period of time in history, for instance, 口粮 ("grain ration"). At the same time, foods, such as rice and noodles, which are eaten in people's daily meals, are unexpectedly absent from the corpora.

5.4.1.1 COMMODITIES ARE FOOD

In economic discourse, commodities associated to the economy, such as money, houses, lands and other resources are viewed as different varieties of food. Based on the examples from the corpora, this

---

[68] It is worth noting that although 厨师 is translated as "chef" in this research, it only serve as a profession, without its "luxury/posh" connotation in English culture. Compared to another alternative "cook", which refers to anyone who can cook, "chef" used here is regarded as a more formal way.

study argues that the variety/name of food is strategically chosen to represent a particular rhetoric. Examples 5-74 and 5-75 below are from the news discourse, while example 5-76 is a reader comment response to the news article of example 5-75. In these examples, affordable houses are viewed as grains, desserts and cakes.

Example5-74保障房是低收入群体的福利，**蛋糕**"不均"，人心不稳。(#N148, 2011/01/17)

> (Affordable houses are the welfare of the low-income group. (If) **cake** is divided unevenly, people's heart is unstable.)

Example5-75保障性住房是政府为解决中低收入家庭的住房困难、实现社会公平公正的有效举措。然而，近期一些地方屡现保障房"被骗购"、"被团购"、"被倒卖牟利"等乱象，原本分给中低收入群体的"**口粮**"成了某些富贵人士的"**点心**"，这让政府的公信力面临了新的考验。(#N238, 2011/5/24)

> (IHP is an effective measure by the government to solve the housing difficulties of low- and middle-income families, and to achieve social fairness and justice. However, in recent days, the chaotic phenomena such as "fraudulent purchase", "bulk purchase" and "selling for profit" are frequently seen in some places. The "<u>ration grain</u>" originally distributed to low- and middle-income groups have become the "<u>desserts</u>" of some wealthy people. This has put the government's credibility on a new test.)

Example5-76保障房是官老爷们的**蛋糕**。你个臭屁的想平等? (#C240)

> (The affordable houses are the bureaucrats' **cakes**. You assholes want equality?)

Example 5-74 is from a news article reporting a farmer worker's wish to gain a house and commenting on the relevant issues on affordable houses. Example 5-75 is from a news article reporting the problem in the management of affordable houses, where those houses were supposed to be allocated to people in need (particularly with low income) but actually lived by officials and the rich. Example 5-76 is a reader comment responding to a news article reporting the poor quality of some affordable houses.

In the news article of example 5-74, the author of the news article claims that farmer workers and migrant workers share the same housing rights with urban citizens. Therefore, the affordable houses, specifically for these low-income groups, should be managed fairly[69]. In this example, affordable houses are conceptualised as "cake", which indicates that affordable houses are social welfare but not necessities for the low-income group, which is in contradiction to the "ration grain", appeared in example 5-75. The question is therefore introduced of whether or not affordable houses are a necessity for the low-income groups.

The 1st June 2011 was a mid-term test on the previously mentioned IHP housing goal for 2011, aiming to check the project's progress. It can be seen that the cake metaphor was used in January 2011, where the IHP was at a very early stage, while the grain metaphor was used at the end of May, near the "mid-term exam" (i.e., test of progress) date. Regarding the actual progress of the project, it is reported that it has basically met the standard by the specific date in terms of quantity, the issue of quality not being discussed at that point. Therefore, it can be claimed that the state sets up an open and loose conceptualisation of affordable houses as cakes at the beginning of the project, aiming to deliver

---

[69] Also note the DISEASE metaphor in this example, which highlights the negative effects of uneven distribution of goods ("people's heart is unstable").

the idea that affordable houses are precious goods and not compulsory for maintaining life. Subsequently, when the initial target is almost fulfilled, it turns to a more ambitious and self-congratulatory rhetoric, treating affordable houses as necessities through adopting the term "grain".

It is interesting to point out that metaphorical terms used in example 5-75 are with strong cultural connotations. The term "grain ration" originates from the 1950s, when China was under a socialist planned economy; while the expression corresponding to "dessert" (点心) refers to foods eaten aside from meals, but it normally only appears in ancient Chinese or in literature. By adopting the term "grain ration", the scenario of a planned economy is evoked. Under this circumstance, it sends out the message that the affordable houses should be owned and regulated strictly by the state; (affordable) houses in this view are no longer a commodity that circulates in the market but should only be bought with coupons. In contrast, in example 5-76, the commenter conceptualises the affordable houses as cake, an edible item introduced from other cultures, which have no regulations on purchasing, and therefore having a different function to rationed goods. The concept of cake is also related to luxury and are considered a non-vital product. So, on the one hand the state views houses as a regulated item, while part of the public views affordable houses as a product circulating freely on the market.

The language style can be identified through the expressions chosen in reference to "cake". The state adopts the one from ancient literary discourse, while the public uses a common and vernacular expression. However, this difference might also be accounted for by the different registers of these two discourses: the News corpus having a more formal style, whereas the comments corpus are more discursive. Incidentally, this literary style used by the state was the preferred style of Wen Jiabao, the premier at the time when the article in 5-74 was written. The premier favoured using poems and quotations from traditional literature in his speeches, which was then recorded and written into a book. The name of the book is "温文尔雅", literally translated as "cultivated and refined", which is an idiom in Chinese to describe a person, especially a male, who is well-educated, gentle and mild[70]. So there is a possible additional explanation for the news article author's choice of wording, which is to imitate the premier's rhetoric.

5.4.1.2 HOUSES ARE CAKE

Regarding the metaphorical conceptualisation of cake, it is interesting to point out that the government's focus on "cake" shifted when China's economy slowed down in 2011. In 2010, with the increased wealth gap becoming more obvious, "cake theory" arose in Chinese society. The name "cake theory" is given to a political debate on economic development and wealth redistribution, which conceptualises economic development as the process of baking and serving a cake with one side arguing that economic development should focus on baking the cake bigger while the other argues that development is contingent on dividing the cake more fairly. It is noted that the ideological focus shifted from one side to the other. The following examples from the government-led discourse show the rhetoric change through "cake theory":

Example5-77 "房产税试点，可以说是我国完善财产税的一个突破口。"中国社会科学院财政与贸易经济研究所所长高培勇指出，房产税更为重要的现实意义是调节收入分配，分好社会财富的"**蛋糕**"。(#N160, 2011/01/29)

("The real estate tax pilot can be viewed as a breakthrough in perfecting

---

[70] Interestingly, the first word of this idiom shares the same word with the premier's surname, which is viewed as flattering by some of the public.

the property tax in China." Gao Peiyong, director of the Institute of Finance and Trade Economics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, pointed out that the more important real value of real estate tax is to regulate income distribution and divide the **cake** of social wealth.)

Example5-78展开式建设共有产权房，彰显的是政府的决心，更考验政府如何来算好这笔账，如何做大"**蛋糕**"。(#N594, 2014/02/10)

(The expanding construction of shared ownership properties highlights the government's determination, and it further tests how the government calculates this account, how to **make the "cake"** bigger.)

Example 5-77 comes from a news article explaining how property tax will increase the cost of owning a house and potentially bringing down speculations in the housing market. Example 5-78 comes from a news article introducing measures that have been implemented to meet the poor's need of housing. As can be seen in examples 5-74 and 5-77, in early 2011, the government-led discourse focuses on how to evenly distribute the cake, but it starts considering making the cake bigger in example 5-78 in 2014. China's GDP growth rate dramatically dropped between 2011 and 2012 and kept dropping until 2014. Thus, a possible explanation of this change in rhetoric might be the continuous economic downturn during 2011 to 2014.

The highly complimentary remarks towards real estate tax in example 5-77 supports the argument previously discussed in relation to WAR metaphors, where the real estate tax is considered to be a useful weapon for lowering housing prices, only to be later negated in 2013. This is more evidence in support of the observed shift in the state's rhetoric on real estate tax before and after 2013. The "national lianghui"[71] in 2013 is a significant turn for China, when Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang took over control of the party and government from Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao. Accordingly, the power transition within the party and government can be a possible explanation for the rhetoric changes in question.

After presenting how these FOOD metaphors are used in the corpora and identifying some changes, it is necessary to explain how they are discursively interpreted by the state (and its supporters) as well as anti-government groups. For the state and its supporters, the shifting rhetoric and policies are viewed as being in line with the party's ideology, which is claimed as "socialism with Chinese characteristics". To them, the state is strictly on the socialist road with Chinese characteristics, and these changing policies are ways of solving problems. However, for the anti-government position, these ever-changing policies are the documentation of inconsistency. Similarly, some scholars from outside China have criticised the CCP as a pragmatic organisation without an ideology (Brown, 2012 – see also Chapter 6).

5.4.1.3 HOUSES ARE BREAD

As previously mentioned, there is great cross-cultural variability in FOOD metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Liu 2002; Su 2002; Kövecses 2010; Khajeh and Imran-Ho 2012). In Chinese alimentary culture, noodles and rice are the most important staple. However, in the housing discourse, metaphors related to noodles and rice are not found. Rather interestingly, metaphors related to bread, a staple in western diet, are popularly used. The primary conceptual metaphor is HOUSES ARE BREAD, and it includes sub-metaphors such as BUILDING HOUSES IS MAKING BREAD, LAND IS FLOUR, and

---

[71] Refers to the annual plenary sessions the National People's Congress (NPC) and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). See section 2.1 for more explanation.

HOUSING DEVELOPERS ARE BAKERS. The following examples come from the News corpus. Examples 5-79 and 5-80 discuss the relation between land and housing prices, while example 5-81 is about land-use planning. All of these examples adopt the metaphorical conception of bread and flour.

Example5-79众说纷纭的楼市中，有一种观点认为，"**面包**"价格的高昂源于"**面粉**"价格的飙升，要想根本上解决房地产市场的问题，必须改革现有的一系列土地管理制度。(#N41, 2010/5/27)

> (In a housing market with diverse opinions, there is a view that the high price of "**bread**" stems from the soaring price of "**flour**". To fundamentally solve the problem of the real estate market, it is necessary to reform the existing series of land management systems.)

Example5-80只有从增加土地供给入手，稳定"**面粉**"的价格，才能稳住"**面包**"的生产，避免"地王"[72]与恐慌情绪。(#N565, 2013/11/11)

> (Only by increasing the supply of land and stabilising the price of "**flour**" can we stabilize the **production of "bread"** and avoid the "land king" and panic.)

Example5-81据北京市国土局消息，今年北京市计划供地总量为 5150 公顷，其中商品住宅 1000 公顷，将加大自住型商品住宅用地供应，确保完成 5 万套建设任务的用地供应。然而，如果没有"厨师"，"面粉"不会自动变成"面包"。(#N612, 2014/5/8)

> (According to the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Land and Resources, the total planned land supply in Beijing this year is 5,150 hectares, including 1,000 hectares of commercial housing, which will increase the supply of self-occupied commercial residential land and ensure the supply of 50,000 sets of construction land. However,–without a "**chef**",_"**flour**" will not automatically become "**bread**".)

Example 5-79 comes from a news article discussing the causes of the high housing prices, and it attributes this to the prices of land and land finance. Example 5-80 comes from a news article illustrating (and praising) the state's ideology on regulating the housing market from the supply end. Example 5-81 comes from a news article reporting a new housing policy implemented in Beijing City how this policy will ease the growth of housing prices in long term.

In examples 5-79 and 5-80, the government-led discourse presents the relation between land and house as flour and bread. In example 5-79, the metaphor represents the link between a rise in the price of land (ingredient) and a rise in the price of houses (product) as the link between the price of flour and the price of bread. It conveys the idea that the state has identified the core cause of soaring house prices and consequently knows how to fix the problem, aiming "to reform (the) current land management system". By adopting this metaphor, the attention is shifted away from the housing prices to the land prices, which is comparably not that urgent and severe. The government-led discourse appears to have a clearly identified target and solution in this case (the solution being the reform of the land management system). The solution that they finally offer, however, (example 5-80: increasing

$$\text{Single land value} = \frac{total\ land\ value}{quantity\ of\ supply}$$

[72] Land king: a nickname for housing developers who pay sky-high prices to obtain their ideal lands from the land bidding activities.

113

the land supply) is debatable. It is basic economic knowledge that the prices of goods are affected by supply and demand. In general, if supply does not meet demand, the price rises; while if supply exceeds demand, the price drops. As introduced in Chapter 3, all land in China is owned and sold by the state and it is thus much easier for the state to adjust the supply side rather than the demand side. It seems reasonable that if more land is provided, the land price will drop. However, being the result of the ratio of total land value over quantity of supply, land value does not necessarily drop by increasing the quantity of supply, since it is possible to remain stable or even rise if the total land value increases at the same time. With respect to land value and housing prices, the same conceptualisation process is shared in the reader corpus, as in example 5-82.

> Example5-82**面粉**那么贵，**面包**怎么可能便宜?因为土地采取拍卖的形式，无疑加大了房地产卖高价的压力……而政府不可能取消拍卖，土地拍卖占据一线地区政府20％的财政收入，除去公共事业支出还有少不了的烟酒钱，这笔钱确实很可观.(#C352)
>> (How can **bread** be cheap when **flour** is so expensive?   Because lands are sold through the form of auction, it undoubtedly increases the pressure to sell real estate at a high price...It is impossible for the government to cancel the auction. The land auction accounts for 20% of the fiscal revenue of the first-tier regional governments. Aside from the expenditure on public utilities and the money for tobacco and alcohol, the money is really considerable.)

Example 5-82 is a reader comment responding to a news article discussing the future tendency of housing prices. As shown in this example, the state is presented as neglecting the fact that land is sold through the format of bidding, which means whoever bids high gets the land. High-bidders accumulating land become land barons or, as per the Chinese term "land kings"[73], having great power and the ability to influence the market and even bully their competitors. It is also easily forgotten that even though land prices are lowered, through boosting the supply end, the total earning by selling lands does not drop, and may even be rising. As discussed in the WAR metaphor section, the relationship between the state and developers are as foe and partner. In example 5-80, the state emphasises the importance of developers with respect to commercial houses, empowering them and putting them to the front stage. By involving the "baker" in the metaphor (also referenced as "chef" in example 5-81), a scapegoat is found. For instance, high house prices can be blamed on high "baker's wages", while the "baker" would also be to blame for a poor-quality product (i.e., poor-quality housing)

In public discourse, the conceptual metaphor HOUSES ARE BREAD is also adopted. However, the DEVELOPERS ARE BAKERS metaphor is subverted, where developers are conceptualised as people without knowledge in making bread, such as a barber, magician, massager or farmer. The following examples are both reader comments responding to news articles discussing housing prices.

> Example5-83谁都知道房价为啥这么高，但是都假装看不见。恩格斯在资本论里写了垄断必然产生暴利。某个垄断集团垄断了**面粉**供应，却不给**面包**涨价! (#C352)
>> (Everyone knows why house prices are so high, but they pretend have not

[73] Called 地王 in Chinese. It is a term used by the people to refer property developers who bid their ideal lands with a substantial amount of money. People view the emergence of a "land king" as a prediction/concern of the rise in housing prices. Moreover, "king" (王) is the head of the regime in ancient China and generally involves a negative connation of bullying.

seen it. Engels[74] wrote in Capital that monopoly was bound to produce windfall profits[75]. Some monopoly has cornered the supply of **flour** without allowing the price of **bread** rising!)

Example5-84这楼大多是做**豆腐**的农民盖的。(#C240)

(These houses are mostly built by farmers who made **tofu**)

Example5-85卖面粉的涨价嘴里却喊着让卖**馒头**的降价，你妈造吗？ (#C218)

(The one who sells **flour** raises the price, but he shouts at the **steam bun** seller and asks him to reduce the price. Does your mother know it?)

It is interesting to point out that although "flour", as the main ingredient of staple food in FOOD metaphors, is commonly used by both by the state and the public, a reference to "steam buns" a more local food closer to Chinese culture, is only found in the Comment corpus (e.g., example 5-85).

5.4.2 FOOD metaphors within Chinese philosophy

As Lin and Depner (2016) suggest, FOOD metaphors not only reflect culture-specific linguistic expressions, but also indicate the behaviours and traditions of that culture. In this study, FOOD metaphors also reveal the stance towards consumption within Chinese philosophy, which regards going into overdraft as a reckless behaviour reflecting a flawed character.

The following examples are taken from the News corpus, in connection with the consumption habit of overdrafting.

Example5-86无节制地依赖土地财政，必将导致房价畸高，让百姓难以安居，也销蚀着城镇竞争力。同时也是一种**吃子孙饭**，透支未来资源的做法，使地方同时面临继续发展和民生还债的双重压力。(#N493, 2013/2/5)

(Unrestrained dependence on land finance will inevitably lead to abnormally high housing prices, which makes it difficult for people to live in peace and erodes the competitive ability of urban towns. At the same time, it is also a way of **eating the future food of our offspring**, and overdrafting future resources, which makes local governments face the dual pressure of continuing development and restoring people's welfare).

Example5-87专家和部分地方住房保障主管部门官员指出，租赁型的保障房，多数应该由政府掌握产权，否则**寅吃卯粮**，将来有一天将"无房可保"。(#N272, 2011/07/21)

(Experts and some local housing security authorities pointed out that most of the lease-type affordable houses should be owned by the government[76]. Otherwise, they will **eat next year's grain** in advance and will have no house to be guaranteed one day.)

---

[74] The actual author of The Capital is, of course, Marx (1867). Although China is a socialist country, The Capital is not a compulsory reading book for its people. People only know that Marx and Engels are the representatives (together with Lenin) of Marxism/Communism, not all of the citizens know the full name of these thinkers, let alone read their works. So it is understandable that this reader made this kind of mistake.

[75] Windfall profit, or windfall gain, is an economic term referring to a large amount of unexpected income. In the case of real estate industry, when property prices rise dramatically (in a short time) and the property owner sells the property, the substantial amount of money that the owner gains through the difference in prices is called windfall profits.

[76] In this context, it means the property right should be owned by the government.

Example 5-86 discusses the relation between the high rising housing prices and the land finance[77]. In this context, lands are conceptualised as meals, and local governments are the people who eat meals. In Chinese culture, borrowing from the future is viewed as a bad behaviour. In regards to having meals, people are supposed to have what they own currently and any sort of behaviour beyond this, such as eating other people's meals, is negatively regarded.

Similar to "having the offspring's meal", the expression "eating away next year's food in advance" is also conventionally used in Chinese. In example 5-87, where the news article discussed the ownership of affordable houses, affordable houses are treated as grain. Both of these two examples carry a negative evaluation and the connotation comes from Chinese people's attitudes towards borrowing from the future.

Aside from FOOD metaphors related to consumption culture, there are also FOOD metaphors reflecting food habits. Since China is the 4th largest country geographically, it possesses diverse food habits, and this is revealed in its language. The following example is from the News corpus discussing housing prices in Hong Kong, and the metaphor used in this example is strongly linked to the Cantonese style food habits:

Example5-88香港房价连涨 8 年，特区政府使出"**双辣招**"：对非港居民额外征收买家印花税，提高二套房印花税。(#N547, 2013/9/6)

> (Hong Kong housing prices have risen for 8 years, and the SAR government[78] has resorted to **"double spicy tricks":** levying additional stamp duty on buyers for non-Hong Kong residents, and raising stamp duty on second homes)

Canto and Hongkong are in the south end of China, where the weather is hot, and people prefer having light-tasting food. Thus, the Cantonese cuisine is not spicy, and the Cantonese are thought to not be able to bear spicy foods. Accordingly, "spicy" is considered as a very strong flavour, especially compared to Hunanese and Szechuaneses, and "spicy tricks" means measures that are strong and effective for curbing the housing prices. Therefore this expression, with these connotations, is specific to Cantonese.

Aside from the consumption culture and food habits discussed, there are also FOOD metaphors that are highly conventional, for instance, use 硬骨头 (hard bone) to mean difficult tasks, and "a speck of mouse dung spoils a whole pot of porridge" (一粒老鼠屎坏了一锅粥) to mean "a single person's problem can negatively impact the whole group". All of these metaphors are consistently shared by the government-led discourse and the counter-discourse, not having any observable variations in rhetorical effects, due to being so highly conventionalised.

5.4.2 Summary

The common observation here is, once more, the state's shifting rhetoric. When it comes to FOOD metaphors, it is identified that the state changed its conceptualisation on affordable houses at around the "mid-term exam" date of the IHP in 2011, from "cake" to "grain". Besides this, it also changed its rhetoric regarding the "cake theory", from focusing on distribution to focusing on supply. The observed point of shift is, once more (as in previous sections) the power transition of 2013.

With regards to cultural aspects, FOOD metaphors in the corpus involve both indigenous

---

[77] See section 2.2 for more explanation.
[78] SAR, abbreviation for "the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region"

metaphors as well as metaphors that are borrowed and adapted from other cultures. Within the latter ("bread" and "cake") we also see a tendency of misrepresenting reality through metaphorical mappings: on the one hand, the mapping between land and flour (as an ingredient) is not accurate, since the price of land is by no means the decisive factor for the housing prices, while on the other hand, the mapping between property developers and bakers also creates the impression that property developers enjoy an elite status (since within China the connotations of "baker" are "highly trained", "trained abroad", "luxury enterprise"). This means that the government-led rhetoric, in this case, tends to oversimplify problems and solutions while at the same time exaggerating on the role and impact of specific factors (land) and agents (property developers).

5.5 FAMILY metaphors

Being one of the most common ways of conceptualising a nation, FAMILY metaphors are frequently used in political discourse (Lakoff, 2010:153). Through the investigation into family models and moral systems used by American politicians in the 1994 election, under the conceptualisation "Nation As Family" Lakoff (2010) claims that the way people understand the government is in line with people's understanding of family structures and family relationships. Therefore, three main conceptual metaphors can be identified: NATION IS FAMILY, GOVERNMENT IS PARENT, CITIZENS ARE CHILDREN. Within the metaphorical family, the government, or the head of the government, occupies the role of the parent, typically in a patriarchal model (father), while the citizens are perceived as children, who are under the protection, as well as authority, of the parent. This perceived relationship seeps through the expected roles and responsibilities of both state and citizens.

In Lakoff's "Nation as Family" conceptualisation (Lakoff 2010:65), he identifies two kinds of family models, the "Strict Father" and the "Nurturant Parent". The former is based on the assumption that the world is dangerous and people's lives are full of difficulties, with survival being the principal concern. The central argument of this model is obedience, and it is based on the experience of how children learn to obey rules – being punished when violating the rules and being rewarded for following them. The purpose of this model is to train the children to be self-disciplined and to foster their ability to discipline others. This "Strict Father" model assigns to the father the responsibility to protect family members under difficult circumstances, but at the same time, it also imparts authority to the father figure as a moral obligation, legitimising his choices and acts of governance. The "Nurturant Parent" shares the idea of child-rearing with the former model, but its purpose is to make children capable of caring for themselves and others. The core concepts of this model are empathy and care, and it is based on the assumption that children learn through a secure and loving environment created by their parents. Due to the opposing worldviews behind these two models, it's easy to see how they would correspond to opposite sides of the bipartisan system in the United States, the former being favoured by conservatives and the latter being adopted by liberals (Lakoff, 2010).

The family models in Lakoff's work had a profound impact on later research into FAMILY metaphors, within which gender issues are frequently addressed. For instance, Norocel (2010, 2011, 2013) conducted studies on how politicians in Romania use conceptual metaphors to define the nation (Romania) as a family, and his body of research shows that the central function of these metaphors is to accommodate manifestations of masculinity. He argues that the nurturing presence does not necessarily involve a bond with the nurturing parent (normally a mother), it can also contribute to building up the image of a strict father, who plays the role as the head of a family. Aside from

investigating metaphors in the speech of politicians, the reception and interpretation of such metaphors can also be viewed under a gendered family model. For instance, Musolff (2015) examines the variation in metaphor interpretation among ESL/EFL[79] users from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. He states that in regards of the nation, MOTHER-type nation concepts are markedly preferred by some respondents, particularly Chinese respondents (compare to example 5-92 below, with the use of "motherland").

In response to the models of family proposed by Lakoff (1996, 2010), Cienki (2005) analyses how metaphors surrounding the aforementioned models are used by two United States presidential candidates as a strategy of reasoning on television debates. He claims that there is only a limited number of metaphorical expressions contributing directly to representing FAMILY metaphors in the debates, which is contrary to his expectation. He further argues that it is the non-metaphorical language that carried the larger function of reasoning rather than metaphorical expressions. Regarding the unexpected paucity of metaphorical expressions surrounding family models in his research[80], Cienki (2005) explains the difference between the competence and adherence to these models by whole social groups ("super-individual" – as also noted by Steen 1994 and Gibbs 1999) versus their usage by individual speakers, which may behave in a variety of ways – using those metaphors to a much lesser extent or in different ways to the more abstract models to which they correspond. In the present research, the rhetoric coming from the government can be considered coherent enough as if belonging to a single individual or a uniform social group, whereas, on the other hand, the metaphors used by the public are as varied as the views held by the commenters themselves (some of whom are pro-government and some anti-government).

5.5.1 Chinese understanding of family

In traditional Chinese society, family occupies a central position; at the same time, nation and family are perceived as sharing the same structure, the same as what Lakoff's "Nation as Family" model suggested. Family is considered the base of social stability and development. In Confucianism, society is based on five relations (五伦): emperor-ministers, father-son, elder brother-younger brother, husband-wife, friend-friend. The first four relations carry with them very rigid hierarchies, where the latter should follow the former. Regarding the friend-friend relation, Confucianism advocates that all people of the world are friends and they should unite and help each other.

Since Confucianism highlights family order, where parents are at the absolute superior position and all the children should obey them, it is favoured by the rulers as a political tool. Under the conceptualization of nation as family, people are viewed as obeying the ruler in the same way that children obey their parents at home. In Confucianism, "filial piety" (孝) and "benevolence" (仁 – known as "Ren" in western culture) are core concepts. The difference between filial piety and benevolence lies in the context they are used, where filial piety is specifically used in a family context, particularly in the relation of child and their parents, while benevolence is more of a broad sense of term that are related to treating other people in the society (Kwan, 2000). Also, filial piety is considered to be the root of benevolence. In ancient China, particularly in dynasties where Confucianism was positioned as the dominant ideology, filial piety was highly praised by both the governor and the people. It was considered as both a virtue and the basis of morality, being decisive in determining

---

[79] Abbreviation for "English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language".
[80] What we call FAMILY metaphors in this section

whether a person has the "ideal" personality"[81]. A characteristic saying by Confucius is 仁者，人也，亲亲为大 ("Being benevolent means to love people. The greatest benevolence is to love one's own parents" – Wang 2007:95)[82].

With its tradition of attaching great importance to family, Confucianism continues to impact social ideologies in China to this day (Wu, 2008). The dominant attitudes towards Confucianism can be seen from the party's manifestos and party leaders' speeches, particularly by the former Premier Wen Jiabao. However, it is only the idea of "Ren" that is promoted by the state while the thought of "filial piety" is gradually losing its impact as the latter is associated with stories of blind obedience and brutality. A representative example is the classic book *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* written during the Yuan Dynasty, which records stories of twenty-four ancient people. These stories are used to teach children (and adults) the Confucian moral values of filial piety. However, these stories can be criticised as portraying blind, or even inhumane, expressions of filial piety. For instance, there is a folk tale called "he buried his son for his mother", where a father, seeing that there was not enough food to feed his whole family, decides to sacrifice (bury) his son to make sure that his own mother (i.e., the grandmother of the child) has enough food to survive. This is characteristic of a rather brutal take on filial piety. Modern day China has moved towards a more egalitarian view of the child-parent relationship, placing more emphasis on the well-being of children (see for example the context of China's one-child policy – Sun, 2017).

Additionally, within the state's and the party's propaganda concerning social values, it can be seen that benevolence is still praised, while filial piety and other values that are associated with hierarchy, hardship, collectivism are gradually being discarded. For example, in the *Socialist Concepts on Honours and Disgraces* (社会主义荣辱观) proposed by president Hu Jintao in 2006, one of the values is "be united and help each other"(团结互助), which is in line with the friend-friend relation in Confucianism. However, in the *Core Socialist Values* (社会主义核心价值观) presented by Hu Jintao in the18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in late 2012, the value of "be united and help each other" is not listed, instead being replaced by "friendliness" (友善). Aside from this, values such as "work (extremely) hard" (艰苦奋斗 辛勤劳动) and "serve the people" (服务人民), which are associated with hardship and collectivism, were replaced by "dedication" (敬业). Thus, it can be seen that Confucianism is still perceived as an important ideology in contemporary Chinese society, but some of its traditional values (associated with feudalism) are gradually diminishing.

As indicated in Lakoff's model, the primary source domains of NATION IS FAMILY are family itself, family members, and the relationships among family members (i.e., parent-child, sibling, marriage etc.) The aforementioned studies, conducted within the United States and European contexts, mostly focused on the character of the government (parent), either as a strict father or a nurturant parent. However, in similar Chinese studies (e.g., Xiao 2016; Zhu 2018), the relationships between the family members are examined instead. For instance, "sibling", "son and daughter", "brotherhood", "servant", and "neighbour" are identified as the common source domains in the Chinese party reports (Huang and Wu 2009).

Aside from examining the source domains, the functions of FAMILY metaphors are also investigated. Ottati (2014) emphasizes that FAMILY metaphors often occur in the context of emergencies and bringing people together. Musolff (2016) also comments that unlike WAR metaphors, which usually deliver a hostile perception on relationships in question or involve defeating the

---

[81] The Chinese term for this is junzi (君子), literally translated as gentleman. It is the ideal personality of Confucianism. Also discussed in SWORD metaphor in 5.3.3.2.

[82] It is written in *Doctrine of the Mean* 《中庸》, one of the four representative books of Confucian philosophy.

opponents (as analysed in 5.3), FAMILY metaphors stress the relationships of love and solidarity among its members. This function is also analysed within Chinese contexts. Huang and Wu (2009) analysed the editorials of *People's Daily* from 1978 to 2007, finding that FAMILY metaphors have undergone a significant change during these 30 years[83]. They note that the frequency and use of FAMILY metaphors correlates with the state of the nation and the economy: FAMILY metaphors were used most frequently in the early days of the era of reform and opening-up, where unity was a goal, and then again during China's fast economic development in the 1990s, again with the need to unite the people under the changing circumstances.

In the framework of Chinese culture, Confucianism in particular, the general function of "bringing people together" has a unique interpretation. Confucianism places emphasis on family love and family reunion. In addition to serving the general conceptualisation of nation as family, this convention allows FAMILY metaphors in Chinese discourse to acquire an additional function, namely that of conceptualising dynamics between the mainland and Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan (Huang and Wu 2009; Zhu 2018). In these contexts, all the Chinese people, regardless of whether they live in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan, are conceptualised as members of a big family. Thus, they must unite and help each other like brothers and sisters and stay connected as a family[84]. Therefore, FAMILY metaphors in these circumstances are adopted to enhance the sense of belonging, responsibility and commitment of the people of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan to (mainland) China.

Another point worth mentioning is the linguistic style of FAMILY metaphors. Huang and Wu (2009) observe that FAMILY metaphors often appear in "revolutionary rhetoric", such as Chairman Mao's "the Chinese people are the masters from now on", and nowadays as a commonplace expression when referring to democracy (used frequently in the media). They state that this "revolutionary rhetoric" is frequently used at the beginning of the reform, and they explain it as the influence of the long revolutionary period China has gone through. Within the traditional context, the people are being ruled and they are perceived as CHILDREN. However, in this rhetoric that comes after the end of the empire, people have become the ruler – or the "master of the home" in Chairman Mao's words. It is interesting to investigate whether this shift in rhetoric from Chairman Mao's time still has an influence on the way in which FAMILY metaphors are used by the state and by the people, especially within CHD.

5.5.2 FAMILY metaphors in CHD

Although family plays a central role in Chinese society and people's lives, FAMILY metaphors are used less frequently than expected in CHD. One possible reason is that FAMILY metaphors in Chinese discourse are highly used in the context of discussing the dynamics between the mainland and its territories as already discussed. The other possible explanation is that although CHD can be regarded as political discourse, it is also economic discourse, and the issue in question (housing crisis) can only be addressed by the state. That is, there is no need to involve the people through the conceptualisation of family. A further conjecture is that the state deliberately avoids using FAMILY metaphors, because the NATION IS FAMILY metaphor not only endows the state with the right of governing (i.e., sole authority), but also the responsibilities of taking care and solving problems. Since the housing crisis is still in a critical state, the NATION IS FAMILY (and GOVERNMENT IS PARENT) can easily be subverted within the anti-government discourse to present the government as an incapable or negligent

---

[83] Similar investigation on rhetoric trajectory will be discussed in Chapter 6.
[84] Chinese tradition emphasises the importance of family members frequently communicating and visiting each other.

parent. The following table (Table 5-8) presents the metaphor keywords for FAMILY metaphors found in the corpora.

Keyword	News	Comment
家 family	0	4
家奴 house slave	0	1
主人 master	0	2
爹 father	0	1
子女 son and daughter	0	1
祖宗 ancestor	1	1
兄弟姐妹 siblings	2	3
老爷 grandfather[85]	0	6
亲戚 relatives	0	1

Table5- 8 Metaphor keywords in FAMILY metaphors

As shown in table 5-8, even though the overall occurrences of FAMILY metaphor in the corpora are rare, the Comment corpus includes more FAMILY metaphors than the News corpus. The limited keywords are distributed surrounding family and family members, particularly the master/head of family and siblings. Although source domains such as (the head of) family, ancestor and sibling are discussed in both the government-led discourse and the public discourse, they are used in a more feudal way by the latter, with terms from ancient China, such as 家奴 (house slave) and 老爷 (grandfather). Also, keywords relating to marriage, which are frequently studied in Western discourse (e.g., Lakoff 2010; Perrez and Reuchamps 2015; Musolff 2016) are not found in the corpora.

5.5.2.1 THE PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT ARE (A) FAMILY

In CHD, FAMILY metaphors participate in two rhetorical battles between opposing discourses: one that tries to determine which entities/agents belong to the same family and another that tries to claim the head of the family. In the government-led discourse, it is implied that all the people and the state are part of the same family, even placing the people as the "head of the family", echoing the constitution and Mao's rhetoric. For housing matters, the state presents itself as serving the people with filial piety. In contrast, the anti-government discourse rejects the idea that people and government are part of the same family, positioning the government as belonging with the developers (in the same family as them) instead.

Example5-89岂止是调控不力，简直就是弱智政策或者本就**是一家的**。如真想调控，办法多的是!!! (#C92)

> (It is not only that the regulation is weak, it is starkly a mentally retarded policy! They (the government and the property developers) **are** in fact **family**. If (the government) really wants to regulate, there are so many solutions!!!)

Example5-90政府越调控越不行？还相信政府？呵呵 [86]。。。。。。。。。他们**是一家人的**，最起码是穿一条裤子 (#C218)

> (The more the government regulates, the less it works. (Are you) still believing in the government? Ha ha . . . . They (the government and

---

[85] 老爷 (literally translated as "grandfather") is a term used in ancient China, referring to the head of a big (wealthy) family, similar to "Lord" in English.

[86]呵呵. Literally it means "haha" (smile), but it is an internet language to express scoff, disdain or angry.

the property developers) **are family**, at least they wear a same pair of pants.)

Example 5-89 is a reader comment responding to a news article discussing public opinions on current housing regulations in 2010. The commenter claims that the policies are not workable because the government and property developers are members of the same family and sharing the same interests, rather than serving the interests of the people. Through conceptualising the government and property developers as a FAMILY, the commenter distances the government from the people. To the commenter, housing regulations should be for the sake of the people and not for the benefit of property developers, which is the opposite of what the discussed regulations seem to be doing.

Example 5-90 is a comment on a news article reporting the national housing prices data. In this news article, the headline is "12 cities' housing prices have dropped, compared with the statistics of the last period". In Chinese, there are two terms normally used in statistics, which are 同比 ("compared with last year's performance", or "year-on-year ratio", i.e., compared with same period in the previous year) and 环比 ("compared with the performance in the last period"). The former bases the comparison on a specific time period, but the latter uses a loosely defined "last period" as its basis, meaning that this could be any previous time period of no fixed length. For this reason, the latter is often used in governmental statistics reports, as there is more room for relativity and sometimes the data can be presented in a way that masks a negative turn in the economy and the market. Case in point, in the discussed news article instead of reporting the overall rise in housing prices (especially in comparison to the previous year), the title is structured as "the increase of housing prices has dropped", basing this on a vague comparison with an unspecified "last period". Responding to the news article, the commenter claims that the more the government regulates the housing market, the worse the state of the market as a result of the regulation. This is part of the wider anti-government argument that the state is self-contradictory, declaring one goal and actively serving another. This is especially with respect to their loyalty to the people versus their actual affiliation to the developers.

Moving on to keywords related to family members, we find "ancestor", which is one of the only two metaphor keywords shared by both the government-led discourse and the public discourse. Confucianism has the tradition of ancestor worship, where ancestors are revered and commemorated by their descendants. In CHD, the nation is conceptualised as a family both within the government-led discourse and the public discourse, but the representation of the role of ancestors differs.

Example5-91现在，国家开始出台一系列新的政策。我们作为世界上的人口大国，始终不敢忘记**老祖宗**留下的"民以食为天"的祖训，确保 18 亿亩耕地底线是根本保障。国家为了有效控制土地，已经收回县一级政府的土地审批权。 (#N214, 2011/04/13)

> (Now, the government starts launching a series of new policies. As a country with a large population in the world, we have never dared to forget the motto from our **family ancestors** that "food is the most important to people", (so) to ensure the bottom line of 1.8 billion mu arable land is the fundamental guarantee[87]. In order to effectively control the land, the state has already reclaimed the authority of land approval of the county-level

---

[87] Translated from 亩. This is a unit of area used in China. 1 Mu corresponds to 666.7 m². This has been considered the minimum land necessary to feed the people. There is an ongoing debate on whether, given modern more efficient farming practices and technologies, this minimum should be lowered, to allow land to be used for other purposes (such as housing).

governments.)

Example5-92老百姓口袋里的钱快没了，企业银行账户里的钱快没了，同时还欠一屁股债。。。祖国啊，**祖宗**！对我们这些蚂蚁好点吧，不要再让你央行，央企，国企，税务及脑残不出活的**亲子女们**糟蹋我们辛苦创造的劳动价值了，wu,wu... (#N450, 2012/7/30)

> (The money in the pockets of the people is almost gone, the money in the corporates' bank account is almost gone, and they still owe a large amount of debt…. . . **Motherland ancestors!** Please kindly treat us, (us) being these **ants**. Don't let your central bank, central enterprises, state-owned enterprises, taxation and brain-destroying **children** ruin the labour value we have created, wu, wu (cry sound)...)

Example 5-91 is a news article written by a member of the National PCC (全国政协)[88] who comes from a minority group[89]. In this news article, the author alludes to the fact that the old motto "food is the most important to people" tends to be replaced by "house is the most important to people" within the CHD. The author takes a position in the debate regarding the use of land (whether food growing should still be prioritized over other land needs – see footnote 67), supporting the state's policies which, according to them, are in-keeping with what the family (deified) ancestors dictate. The term "ancestor" here (祖宗) does not have a generic meaning, but it is formed in a way that refers to the Confucian sense of individual family heritage (going back nine generations for each family). This is why the term's use, placing the "ancestor" as shared by everyone, is counted as metaphorical. The author resorts to this FAMILY metaphor in order to evoke the feelings of duty and veneration towards everyone's individual ancestors, giving more weight to the point that the old motto should be respected.

Example 5-92 is a reader comment responding to a news article that discusses the balance between economic growth and housing market regulation. The commenter subverts the FAMILY metaphor, even creating a mixed/extended metaphor with the use of "ants". This subverted mapping works as follows: the state itself is personified as an "ancestor" of a family that includes state agencies and departments (central bank, central enterprises, state-owned enterprises, taxation department) as descendants or "children", whereas the people are not part of the family, but are instead insignificant worker-ants, constantly contributing their labor for the family's sake without any power and without getting anything in return. Like spoiled children, the state agencies are ruining the creations of the metaphorical worker ants (i.e., the people). Interpreting this in the housing market context, the fruit of the workers' labor is the (good state of the) economy, while the ruination of this achievement comes through the investments and interference of the state agencies with(in) the housing market. The commentator here creates a strong image where the people are not only distanced from the state and its agencies but also disempowered, ignored, and harmed by them.

5.5.2.2 THE PEOPLE ARE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY

In Confucianism, the father has the highest position in a family and (the person acting as) father is considered the head of the family, with rights to make decisions for the whole family, while all family members should follow his orders. In ancient China, the ruler/emperor is perceived as a parent or head of the family, while the people are the children. However, since the foundation of the PRC, this

---

[88] It is an organisation made of delegates from different political parties, organisations and individuals. It plays a role of political legislative advisory body (further explanation in section 3.1.1.2).

[89] In China, there are 56 groups of people, among which Han people (汉族) are the majority, and the rest are the minority groups.

mapping changed and instead the people were represented as the head of family. Chairman Mao and his successors in the CCP claimed that "people are the head of the family and make decisions" (人民 当家作主). However, this metaphor is not necessarily the dominant one in the discourse, since metaphors that represent the state as head of the family are still present. The News corpus does not include people-as-head mappings, but the Comment corpus, where the following examples come from, does allude to this mapping.

> Example5-93人民不满意，也没办法，领导**当家**的。(#C92)
>
> > (The people are dissatisfied, but nothing can be done. (still) the (political)
> >
> > leader is the **head of the family**.)
>
> Example5-94GCD[90]是**你爹**么，好个 JB (#C240)
>
> > (Is the party **your father**? Good as a dick) (=It is not good)

Example 5-93 comments on the same news article as example 5-89, which discusses the public's opinions on housing regulations in 2010. In this example, the political leader is positioned as the head of the family, adopting the metaphor THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE ARE FAMILY, but contradicting the metaphor PEOPLE ARE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY. To this commenter, people are supposed to have the ability to change situations which they are dissatisfied with; however, the fact is that it is political leaders rather than the people who are the head of family. The use of the word "still" is also notable, since it implies that things should have changed since earlier times, but they have not: people are still under the rule of political leaders and the political system remains the same with the old/traditional ones, making no place for democracy. Once more, the anti-government discourse alludes to the self-contradictory nature of the state's rhetoric (claiming to serve the people but not delivering on this commitment).

Example 5-94 is a reader comment responding to the news article which discusses the IHP. In the news article, the author reports that even though there are some concerns with part of the IHP, the overall security housing project has good quality. In response to the author of the news article, the commenter directly rejects the PARENT metaphor and points out that the party does not have the role of the father (neither of the article's author nor of anyone reading this comment). Therefore, the addressee of this comment (i.e., anyone reading the comment section and/or the author of the article themselves) should not blindly obey and praise the party and the state regardless of their actions. It is not clear whether the commentator is addressing the author of the article in particular, or anyone reading the comment section, in the former case it would make the comment even more hostile, possibly also criticising the heavy control of the state over its media.

5.5.2.3 PEOPLE ARE SIBLINGS

Within the "Nation As Family" model, people are conceptualised as brothers and sisters. In CHD, "sibling" is one of the only two FAMILY metaphor keywords shared by the News corpus and the Comment corpus, but it is mapped onto two different kinds of families, being made up of different kinds of members.

> Example5-95同时，各地在制定目标后，都先上报国务院有关部门，获得默许后再对
> 社会公布，以做到"让上级同意，让**兄弟**城市没有压力。" (#N202, 2011/04/01)

---

[90] GCD, abbreviation for 共产党 ("communist party") in Pinyin (Mandarin pronunciation). It is a common way of referring the communist party for avoiding censorship on the internet.

(At the same time, after setting the target, local governments will first report to the relevant departments of the State Council, and will be announced to the public after obtaining the acquiescence, so as to "let the **superiors** agree and let the **brother** cities have no pressure.")

Example5-96未来靠你们这些醒了的**兄弟姐妹**！为子孙创造宜人居的环境！不是为我们！我们享受不到啦！(#C218)

(The future relies on **you sibling** who are awake! Create a pleasant living environment for future generations! Not for us! We can't enjoy it!)

Example 5-95 is a news article discussing how the central government sets targets for local governments on regulating the housing market. In this example, the author conceptualised different cities as siblings. This example can be seen as a mixed metaphor. First, there is the personification of the central government ("State Council") in an organisational metaphor, where the government is presented as the boss. Then, the family scenario emerges, where local cities are brothers and sisters, in which case the government is the implied parent. Although it is not claimed directly in the government-led discourse that the central government is the parent of local cities, it can be inferred on the basis of the strict family order of Confucianism, whenever a "sibling" mapping occurs.

When it comes to the reader public discourse, the family is considered as being made up by the people, without mention of the government. Example 5-96 is a reader comment responding to the same news article as example 5-90, which reports the national housing prices data. The commenter states that they (and people like them) are unable to create a pleasant living environment, which indicates that the current living environment is unpleasant. It also suggests that they do not have the ability/power to change the current conditions, which echoes what is said by the commenter of example 5-93 ("the political leader is the head of the family"). The government is conspicuously absent in this comment: this can be interpreted as an act of distancing from the government, which is positioned outside of the family schema. Once more in the anti-government discourse we find the people and the government on different sides (as seen in the counter-discourse uses of WAR and JOURNEY metaphors).

5.5.3 Summary

It is observed that FAMILY metaphors are primarily adopted by the public rather than the state, with particular emphasis on the family order of Confucianism. At the same time, source domain elements frequently used in western political contexts such as "marriage" and "couple" are not used. This can be explained through the political differences between China and Western countries, which commonly have two-party systems. It might also be attributed to the nature of Confucianism, which prioritises family order over marriage.

Regarding the question of whether Mao's conceptualisation of the people as head of the family is pertinent in Chinese society, we can draw only limited conclusions, due to the relatively low frequency of FAMILY metaphors within CHD. Despite family models and the conceptualisation of the family unit having moved away from the traditional Confucian "family order" (especially since the foundation of the PRC) and towards a more egalitarian perception of family relations, the old conceptualisation, still deeply rooted in Chinese culture and cognition, can be found as the basis of FAMILY metaphors, especially those within the counter-discourse. This, of course, can be explained by the goal of the counter-discourse to present the state as distanced from the people, in an authoritarian role, often far removed and unconcerned with the people's needs. Among the various

mappings between the source domain of FAMILY and the agents/participants of the housing market, we find links between "children" and the state's departments (the state being the parent), but also examples like 官老爷 (bureaucratic grandfathers), a conventional metaphor referring to the state's officials and subverting their officially named role as "public servants". In all, within the counter-discourse the family of the state (including its various departments and allies) is presented as separate from the family where the public belongs. From the state's side, we observe a lack of any FAMILY metaphors, possibly due to the fact that it would be hard to find a compatibility between the "people are the head of the family" concept and the rhetoric necessity of presenting the state as a competent leader (as seen in the previous sections).

5.6 NATURE metaphors

In this final section, metaphors coming from the source domain of nature are examined. Metaphors included in this section relate to the natural world, involving concepts such as temperature, seasons and the elements (water, fire), as well as entities and activities relating to the natural environment (plants, farming). The most common nature-related conceptual frame is ECONOMY AS NATURE (Charteris-Black, 2004a). The corresponding metaphors would be MONEY IS LIQUID (O'Connor 1998; Silaški and Kilyeni 2011), MARKET IS A CONTAINER (Alejo, 2010) and NEGATIVE ECONOMY IS NATURAL DISASTER (Charteris-Black and Ennis, 2001). However, the focus of previous studies that consider this type of metaphor falls primarily on conventionally used directional expressions, associated with economic progress, such as up, down, drop, growth (e.g., Charteris-Black and Ennis 2001; Chung et al. 2003; O'Mara-Shimek et al., 2015), while other studies investigate conventionalised colloquialisms such as the use of "green shoots" to refer to economic recovery/renewal or growth (Porto and Romano, 2013). Since these metaphors are so highly conventionalised, they can be regarded as frozen metaphors, being outside the main focus of the current study, in which novel metaphors are substantially examined instead.

Aside from studies on the expressions of NATURE metaphors in economic discourse, some scholars also highlight the differences between using NATURE metaphors and other categories of metaphor. In researching the intentions of utilising different metaphors in financial discourse, Charteris-Black (2004b) asserts that metaphors are deliberately chosen by reporters/journalists. He categorizes these metaphors into two types, which are "animate" and "inanimate" (Charteris-Black 2004b:135). He claims that there is a sharp pragmatic distinction between these two types of metaphor, since the former is adopted when journalists position themselves as experts, evaluating and making predictions about the market, while the latter is only used when journalists have no claim to specialist knowledge. In line with Charteris-Black (2004b), O'Mara-Shimek et al. (2015) study the implications of using different categories of metaphors in the stock market and classify them as NATURE metaphors and ORGANISM metaphors (O'Mara-Shimek, 2015:105). They point out that through NATURE metaphors, the (stock) market is understood as a whole ecosystem operating according to its own rules. In this perspective, the fluctuations of the market are seen as an inevitable part of the rules of nature. In contrast, the conceptualisation of the stock market as a living organism within a larger ecosystem involves the assumption that various external forces/factors will be affecting its trajectory. The analysis that follows will consider both of these distinctions (knowledge-based, and ecosystem-based) and their various implications.

5.6.1 Chinese understanding of NATURE

It is a common belief that in no other culture is nature valued as much as it is in China (Jenkins, 2002). In Chinese culture, nature is entrenched in people's lives and it is regarded as a guide for people to make their daily decisions and plans (Yang and Jia, 2016). The reason for the special position of nature is that China is a country with long history of agrarian culture, in which nature plays an important role. Farming activities are inextricably linked to the transitions of seasons and are highly dependent on natural conditions. For example, the division of the year into 24 solar terms[91], still in use nowadays, constitutes a calendar of agricultural activities. The prevalence of nature is not only evidenced with respect to farming activities but also with respect to all aspects of daily life, such as health and eating habits. Evidence of the value of nature is abundant in classical works, such as the *Huangdi Neijing* (黄帝内经，also known as *Esoteric Scripture of the Yellow Emperor*), a classical medical book from ancient China, which suggests that nature has its own laws and people should plan their diet and daily life accordingly.

The importance of nature in Chinese culture can also be seen in the way people perceive their relationship to nature. Unlike western culture, where humans are assumed to have absolute rights over nature (Stibbe, 2014), Chinese culture seems to seek harmony between humans and nature, and this dates back to the early Chinese philosophical systems such as Taoism and Confucianism (Meng, 2003). In Chinese thought, nature is regarded as a self-generating and complex world involving various elements which are constantly changing and interacting with each other. For Taoism, the thing/principle that unites all these diverse elements is the Dao (道), however in this case, Dao is never seen as a governing force. This is because in Taoism, and in any other schools of the *Hundred Schools of Thought* in ancient China, the main focus is the relationship between those elements in nature and not issues concerning hierarchies and struggle for power. For Taoism, humans, who cannot exist outside the natural world, should keep close to nature and follow its flow in order to sustain health both morally and physically, a concept referred to as "return to nature" (回归自然). Within the system of Taoism, each element consists of two complementary and opposite facets, which are the Yin and Yang. For example, female-male, moon-sun, dark-bright, old-young, black-white, cold-warm, soft-hard and negative-positive, of which the first part is Yin and the second part is Yang. As their symbol shows (Figure 5-1), these two opposite poles complement each other, with an element of the other at its core (manifested as the small dots on the symbol). Yin and Yang are dynamic forces which are constantly shifting and interacting with each other, in order to seek balance and harmony. The philosophy of Yin-Yang is ingrained in Chinese culture and it also affects the language used in CHD. For instance, the holistic approach of TCM, discussed in DISEASE metaphors (see section 5.1), is another representation of the Yin-Yang.

Figure5- 1 Yin and Yang in Taoism

Along with Taoism, Confucianism also holds a respectful view towards nature. As introduced earlier, the core of Confucianism is benevolence, which requires that a junzi ("gentleman") should not only be kind to people, but also should respect nature. In contrast to Taoism, which calls for "return to nature", Confucianism is people-oriented, viewing the achievement of harmony between humans and

---

[91] Called 节气 in Chinese. The 24 solar terms divide the whole year into 24 segments equally, based on the sun's annual circular motion.

nature as reliant on the benevolence of humans. Confucianism's view of nature was present in the *Scientific Outlook of Development* (可持续发展观)[92] proposed by the former President Hu Jintao, which was written into the constitution of the CCP[93] in 2007 and is still in use as the official view of nature.

Although Chinese people are conditioned to obey nature, they are also taught to conquer the difficulties that are brought about by nature. The tradition of agrarian culture endows Chinese history with plentiful stories related to water, and particularly how people fight against water disasters (mainly flood) and turn them into resources for farming and living. One of the well-known stories is the *Great Yu Controls Water* (大禹治水), which is about how a national hero named Da Yu kept fighting against flood. His story of controlling water is viewed as a unique symbol of Chinese people's bravery, intelligence and wisdom. His spirit generates the idea of "man can conquer nature" (人定胜天)[94], which is constantly quoted by Chairman Mao, highlighting human agency.

The above presented views on nature share the belief that nature has its own rhythms and humans should try to maintain harmony with it. In the following section, I will present how the Chinese views on nature are manifested and how their variability is reflected in metaphors used in CHD.

5.6.2 NATURE metaphors in CHD

The source domain of NATURAL DISASTER being frequently discussed in previous studies (e.g., Charteris-Black and Ennis 2001; Bounegru and Forceville 2011; Silaški and Đurović 2011) is scarce in the current study, with only two occurrences in the Comment corpus. In a comparative research project on metaphor usage in financial reports between Spanish and English, Charteris-Black and Ennis (2001) explain that it is the embedded culture that accounts for such variations. They elaborate that because of the island history of Britain, metaphors used in the English reporting are more based on maritime experience; while the Spanish reporting favours metaphors based on psychological mood and personality, because of the influence of religion. Accordingly, the explanation for paucity of NATURAL DISASTER metaphors in CHD can be sought in Chinese history and culture. Geographically, China is a continental country out of the seismic zones, thus it is not greatly affected by natural disasters such as tsunami or earthquake. Tenacity is considered to be one of the national characteristics (Cohen, 2020), together with the belief that "trials and tribulations only serve to revitalize a great nation" (多难兴邦)[95]. Natural disaster seems not to be an important part of Chinese people's life, and thus has had little impact on people's language use. If there is such an impact, it is only natural disasters related to farming activities, such as flood and pest disasters. Furthermore, the absence of conceptualising economic disasters as nuclear disasters in CHD fortifies Charteris-Black and Ennis's (2001) finding that such conceptualisations are exclusive to English discourse.

Based on the above understandings, NATURE metaphors used in CHD are analysed below. Table 5-9 presents the metaphor keywords in NATURE metaphors. As the table shows, NATURE metaphors in CHD involve five major source domains, with respect to temperature, weather, season, elements and farming. The distribution of each major source domain is presented in table 5-10. It is worth noting

---

[92] For further introduction on the Scientific Outlook of Development, please refer to section 3.4.2.2.

[93] It seems to be a convention that every president of the CCP summarises their political philosophies/practices before their resignation, to be written into the party's constitution, for example, the Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and the Three Representatives by Jiang Zemin.

[94] This phrase means man can conquer the difficulties produced in nature. However, it is often misunderstood as an arrogant belief that man's decision is better than nature, or man can defeat nature. The premise of this proposition is that human should respect nature and live with harmoniously.

[95] This quotation originated from one of the Confucian classics *Zuo's Commentary* (春秋左氏传). It was quoted by Premier Wen Jiabao during the 2008 Sichuan earthquake.

that these five major source domains are largely used in combination with one other. For instance, WEATHER metaphor in CHD is mostly come along with JOURNEY metaphors, that DIFFUCULTIES/IMPEDIMENTS ARE WIND AND WAVES in a journey[96] (see examples 5-38 and 5-39). ELEMENTS metaphors are mostly in conjunction with TEMPERATURE metaphors, where RESOURCES ARE LIQUID (see example 5-99). Accordingly, the analysis in this section will focus on TEMPERATURE and SEASON metaphors, and discuss their specificity from a perspective of culture.

	Keyword	News	Comment
TEMPERATURE	降温 cool down	36	2
	升温 warm up	2	0
	高温 high temperature	1	0
	冷 cold	4	0
	凉 cool	1	2
	暖 warm	34	7
	热 hot	32	1
	寒意 feel chill	6	0
WEATHER	寒潮 cold wave	3	0
	雷 thunder	0	1
	浪 wave	6	3
SEASON	冬 winter	26	3
	春 spring	3	3
ELEMENTS	水 water	8	3
	火 fire	1	1
FARMING	花 flower	5	0
	温室 greenhouse	0	1
	杀虫剂 insecticide	1	0

Table5- 9 Metaphor keywords in NATURE metaphors

Source domains	News	Comment
TEMPERATURE	66.24%	44.44%
SEASON	18.47%	22.22%
WEATHER	5.73%	14.81%
ELEMENTS	5.73%	14.81%
FARMING	3.82%	3.70%

Table5- 10 Distribution of major source domains of NATURE metaphors

5.6.2.1 TEMPERATURE metaphors

As table 5-10 shows, TEMPERATURE metaphors are dominant both in the News corpus and the Comment corpus, occupying 66.24% and 44.44% respectively of NATURE metaphors in the corpora. The analysis in this section starts with discussing how the aforementioned logical relationships between MORE-WARM and LESS-COLD and the MORE-X syllogism are revealed in

---

[96] In researching Taiwan's 1997 magistrate election, Wei (2001:72) found that reference to "natural disasters such as tornadoes, storms, or cyclones" is used to "convey the idea of upheaval and change in politics". In other words, the use of WEATHER metaphors indicates the unpredictable nature of politics. For further discussion on unpredictability/uncertainty see section 6.3.1

TEMPERATURE metaphors. Then the analysis will move on to examining how TEMPERATURE metaphors are adopted in different contexts and mapped onto various target domains, such as the (housing) market itself, economic environment, and people's emotions.

A highly intuitive type of metaphor is MORE IS UP and LESS IS DOWN (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Accordingly, if we conceptualise temperature through the same structure, it can be easily understood that WARM IS UP and COLD IS DOWN. In conjunction with the conceptualisation that UP IS BETTER and DOWN IS WORSE, WARM IS BETTER follows as a natural conclusion (as presented in Figure 5-2). However, in CHD WARM IS BETTER is not always realised, where warm/hot can be viewed as either negative or positive depending on the context.

MORE IS BETTER, LESS IS WORSE

$+$

MORE ENERGY IS WARM/HOT, LESS ENERGY IS COOL/CHILL/COLD

$\downarrow$

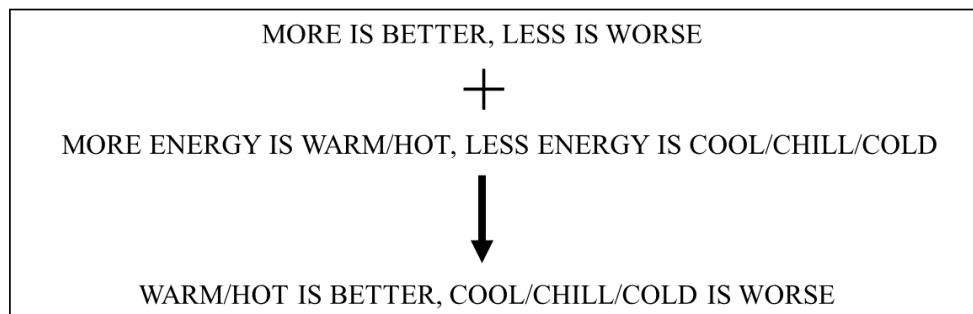WARM/HOT IS BETTER, COOL/CHILL/COLD IS WORSE

Figure5- 2 Logical relationships between MORE-WARM and LESS-COLD

Although temperature is one of the dominant source domains used in CHD, it is used differently by the state and the public. As suggested by the concordance lines generated from Antconc, TEMPERATURE metaphors are mostly used to conceptualise market changes (i.e., 升温 warm up, 降温 cool down, 寒 chill, 热 hot, 冷 cold, 凉 cool) and the feelings/reactions of property developers (i.e., 寒意 feel chilled) in the News corpus, in contrast, they are only adopted to conceive the feelings of the public in the Comment corpus discourse. When temperature is mapped onto the status of housing market, it is often found that MORE IS WORSE appears instead of MORE IS BETTER. The logic here is (a) MORE OF A GOOD THING IS GOOD vs MORE OF A BAD THING IS BAD, but also, crucially (b) TOO MUCH OF A THING IS BAD (as presented in Figure 5-3). Therefore, metaphors using the MORE-X syllogism will vary according both to the inherent value of X (so money, resources, labour, all have positive connotations, as opposed to speculation, instability, inflation) and to the balance or imbalance that this quantity can bring (so a difference between "a lot" and "too much", the latter leading to negatively perceived imbalances, especially considering the Yin-Yang philosophy).

When this MORE-X syllogism is applied onto temperature, the conceptual metaphors MORE X IS WARM and LESS X IS COLD are produced. The situation of market development is manifested through TEMPERATURE. For instance, as cold as winter and as hot was summer in the following example from the News corpus.

Example5-97地区发展的不平衡，造成了人力和资金的不均衡流动，也导致了一线城市和其他城市楼市的**寒暑不一，热的更热，冷的更冷**。(#N524, 2013/4/1)

> (The imbalance in regional development has resulted in an uneven **flow** of manpower and capital, which has also led to **different temperatures** in the first-tier cities and other urban property markets. The **heat is hotter and the cold is colder**.)

This example comes from a news article analysing the housing regulation effects. In the news article, the author tries to explain why "the more regulation, the higher the housing prices" even though

the direction and strength of the regulation are consistent and correct. It claims that the reasons lie in the housing market related fundamental systems, such as the over-reliance on land finance, the housing market's strong reaction to currency, and the inequality of regional development. Example 5-97 is presented as an illustration of the uneven development among different cities. In this example, manpower and capital are conceptualised as liquid which can flow between different cities and regions, within the conceptual metaphor of MORE X IS WARM, LESS X IS COLD. That is, cities/regions that own more manpower and capital are conceptualised as warm, whereas those with less resources are conceptualised as cold. Our knowledge and experience enable us to know that due to the effect of gravity, liquid generally flows from the vertically higher position to the lower position. Thus, this example also implies the spatial orientational metaphors that DEVELOPED IS HIGH and LESS DEVELOPED IS LOW.

In CHD, most of the TEMPERATURE metaphors are adopted in conjunction with other categories of metaphor, such as DISEASE and SEASON, but the combinations are exclusively used in the government-led discourse. One of the most frequent combinations is TEMPERATURE and DISEASE. This combination can be understood through the bridge of Yin-Yang philosophy, because Yin-Yang views disease as an imbalance of human immune system, and it also regards the temperature of being too high or too low as an imbalance. Besides, it is universal experience that the abnormal high/low body temperature is a sign of sickness. Thus, it comes easily to integrate these two domains together. The following example from a news article explaining how this combination works.

Example5-98政策的目标直指投资和投机型购房需求，给"**高烧**"的楼市迎头浇了一盆 "**凉水**"，引起人们的热议。新政甫一出台，效果立竿见影。(#N23, 2010/4/26)

(These policies[97] directly aim at investment and speculative purchases. They poured a basin of "**cold water**" over the "**high fever**" property market, causing people's hot discussion (on it). When the new policies came into being, the effect was immediate.)

Similar to example 5-97, this example also manifests MORE IS WARM, LESS IS COLD and the MORE-X syllogism. The X here refers to money/capital. Accordingly, policies that restricting/limiting capital from flowing into the housing market are conceived as COLD; while the housing market which involves a large amount of capital flowing into are perceived as HOT, and even to an extreme end, fever. The term "fever" indicates that the quantity of money is too much, causing the housing market negatively unbalance, which is a manifestation of the Yin-Yang philosophy. Thinking from the perspective of temperature, it is logically true (and right) that cold water can counteract the heat of fever, achieving a balance in-between. However, the term "fever" does not only suggest the temperature, but also creates a disease scenario, where fever should not be simply cured with cold water. Therefore, the effectiveness of these policies is questioned.

Based on the common experience and knowledge, it can be understood that cold water can have an instant effect to cool down a hot object. However, it is not an ideal approach to cool down human body heat with cold water in a medical context. For instance, when a person has caught a fever, if a basin of cold water is poured over them, their body heat might drop instantly, but this action cannot make them recover from the fever immediately, but even worse, it may do harm to their immune system, causing side effects such as sneezing and shivering. In this example, the overheated housing

---

[97] These policies include increasing the down payment ratio and loan interest rate of the second house, demanding commercial banks suspending loans to third (and even more) house buyers, and restricting people from buying multiple houses in some area.

market is conceptualised as a sick person with fever, while policies aiming to cool down the market are conceptualised as cold water. Based on medical knowledge, it can be inferred that cold water is not effective in, even harmful to, treating fever. However, in the news article, the author advocates such polices as "having instant effects" and regards them as effective and workable. As discussed in section 5.1, the TCM way of treating disease is to focus on treating the "root" rather than "symptoms". These policies seem to be effective in treating the symptoms, having cooled the body heat down, but from a holistic perspective, they cannot radically cure the root and may even harm the body system, which is in contrast to TCM philosophy and be criticised by the public (see examples 5-11, 5-12 and 5-13 in section 5.1.2).

This example provokes an interesting point regarding which philosophy does the government hold when treating the economy/housing market. As example 5-100 shows, when the policies are effective in cooling down the market immediately, the TCM philosophy, especially the holistic point of view, is abandoned. However, as discussed in section 5.1, the government favours DISEASE metaphors (the TCM in particular) when instant effects of the regulations cannot be seen, or the regulation result is not that optimistic.

The target of the regulation is to maintain the healthy development of the housing market, that is, to avoid the market being either too cold or too hot in terms of temperature. It is interesting to point out that, there is a great difference in the usage between "cool down" and "warm up". In the housing regulation journey between 2010–2014, there were five major steps that the government used in an effort to cool the housing market, which are the "State eleven measure" in January 2010, the "State ten measures" in April 2010, the "9.29 New policies" in September 2010, the "New State Eight Measures" in January 2011, and the "State Five measures" in February 2013. As can be seen from the date of these measures, the previous four initiatives were concentrated on 2010, and there is a policy vacuum until early 2013.
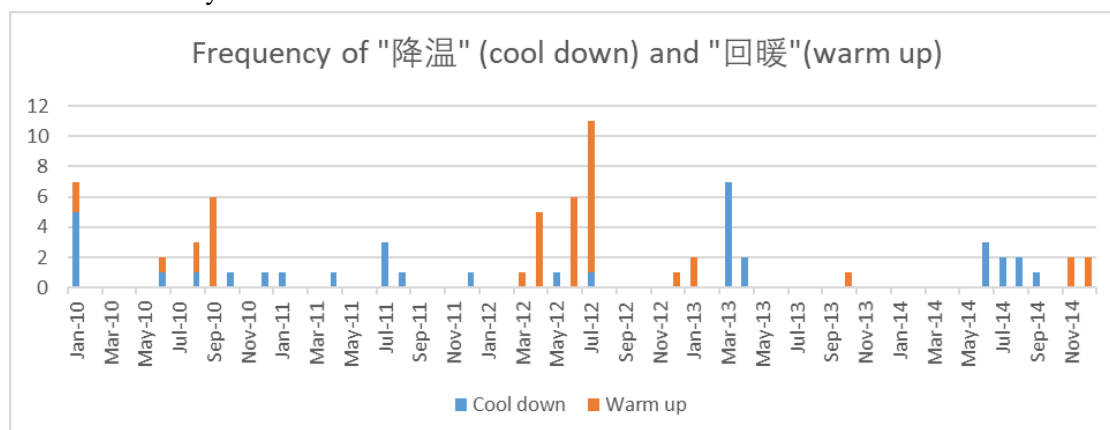
Figure5- 3 Distribution of "cool down" and "warm up" (2010-2014) in the News corpus

As figure 5-4 shows, the allocation of the COOL DOWN metaphors is in line with the policies, which is frequently used in post-2010 and particularly in the 2012, when the house prices growth rate became negative. In the government-led discourse, the drop of the growth rate is attributed to the regulation effect, however, it is neglected that the housing prices has its own economic rules. In other words, the housing prices were about to drop due to the economic environment, even without the housing regulation. The regulation on the market may or may not effect on the housing prices since the housing market has its own economic law. Thus, the cooling down of the housing market cannot be wholly attributed to the housing regulation. But in the government-led discourse, all of the cooling down is credited to the state's effective regulation (for further discussion on accountability see 6.3.2).

Aside from attributing all praise to the state, the COOLING DOWN metaphor also serves as a representation the state's holistic view of regulating economy.

Example5-99在楼市**降温**的同时，住房保障事业正**如火如荼**地开展。(#N616,2014/6/5)
（While the property market is **cooling down**, the IHP is developing under **raging fire**) (=is in full swing.)

This example comes from a new article discussing the housing regulation. Since the temperature of commercial housing system is cooling down, the temperature of the IHP needs to be rising up in order to keep the overall temperature of the housing system neither hot nor cold. This holistic view is a representation of the TCM and the Yin-Yang philosophy.

5.6.2.2 SEASON metaphors

In the field of economics, the notion of season is commonly used to understand economic development. Modis (1998) draws seasons in a s-curve and explain that the processes of economic growth, saturation and decline corresponds to the transition of seasons. He divides the s-curve into five equal parts as Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter again. He claims that as time passes, the economy starts from struggling to survive in the and seeking novelty in winter, to having growth in spring, and reaching its extremes and perfection in summer, to gradually declining in autumn and reaching the low valley in winter to start over again. Modis's mapping of seasons onto the processes of economic growth is in line with how Chinese people view the seasons, which is "to birth in spring, to grow in summer, to harvest in autumn, and to store in winter" (春生夏长，秋收冬藏), which gives the four seasons strong connotations. However in CHD, not all of these four seasons are mapped onto housing market, with only spring and winter favoured. The general conceptual metaphors are MARKET CHANGE IS SEASON TRANSITION, MARKET DOWNTURN IS WINTER, and MARKET RECOVERY IS SPRING. By framing economic/market environment as seasons, people are able to understand and evaluate the economic/market situation based on the WARM/HOT IS BETTER, COOL/CHILL/COLD IS WORSE logical reasoning. For instance, the SEASON metaphor in the following example from the News corpus is manifested through spring and winter.

Example5-100在这个长长的**冬天**里，开发商们也许应该研究一下怎样"**猫冬** [98]"…其实，即便**冬天**再长，**春天**也总会到来…企业大可以利用**冬天**锻炼好身体，调整未来的发展战略，为行业竞争发展的"下半场"做好准备。(#N346, 2011/11/28)
（In this long **winter**, developers probably should study how to "cat winter" (=hide at home during winter)... In fact, even winter is long, spring will eventually come... Enterprises can use the **winter** to exercise their body and adjust their future development strategy, preparing for the "second half" of industry competition development)

Example 5-100 comes from a news article reporting the downturn of the housing market and calling property developers to get prepared for this downturn. 2011 is considered to be the toughest

---

[98] The expression of "cat winter" comes from a dialect of northeastern China. Since the winter in the northeast of China is extremely cold even a cat will not go outside, but instead stay on the "kang bed-stove", a place with heat/fire underneath, to hide from the cold. Thus, "cat" is used as a verb to mean "hide", and "cat winter" accordingly means to hide/stay inside during winter day.

year for the housing market. Since the launch of the state's "Eight Measures" on 26th January and security housing project on 18th February, the (commercial) housing market is conceptualised as entering a winter. This news article is written in late 2011 when the state's regulation starts to be having effects and the housing market is in a downturn. Having introduced in Chapter 3 that the real estate sector is the driving force of China's economy, it is important for the state to bring confidence in the housing market and to assure that the investors/developers to stay in the industry. In order to maintain confidence and hope, the Yin-Yang philosophy is embraced in this example, that is, winter gives birth to spring and will eventually transfer into spring. Spring is normally associated with new, hope and rebirth, while winter is generally attached to difficulties and hardship and opportunities (Averill et al., 2012). By portraying the hope of a full spring ahead, it attempts to change people's view on the current market condition. That is, the current downturn is temporary and people (especially developers) should look at the market in the long-term. By framing the hardship as a short-term suffering, it can also impact people's actions. Since the winter in the housing market is impermanent, people do not need to escape it (e.g., "investors transfer their capital to the mining industry" in the example 5-104 discussed further below), but can just stay home and do exercise to build up a strong physique to face to new challenges in the future. Therefore, the winter in this example is not conceptualised as a time of negative or suffering, but a period of retreat and recovery.

In the counter-discourse, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT IS SPRING can also be found. However, it is not used under the discussion of the housing market, but the housing prices instead.

Example5-101长得好，使劲涨吧，**春天**快到了 (#C218)
(It's **growing well**, let (housing prices) increase wildly, **spring** is coming.)

This comment is in response to a news article on the national housing prices data. As discussed earlier in the FAMILY metaphor, this news article reports that the "the increase of housing prices dropped" which suggests that the housing prices will keep rising. It is also introduced that there is a phenomenon reported by the media that "the more regulation, the higher the housing prices". Accordingly, the post-regulation periods are metaphorically conceptualised as spring, with an embedded metaphor that HOUSING PRICES ARE PLANTS. The commenter claims that "spring is coming" which suggests that it is not spring yet, that is, the housing prices are currently under autumn or winter but they are peculiarly "growing well", which is against the natural rule. The possible explanations are either the plants (the housing prices themselves) are strong enough to resist the cold (economic/market downturn), or, there are manual interventions protecting the plants to get through the winter. The latter explanation indicates that the state is making efforts to maintain the high housing prices. From these metaphors, it can be seen that the commenter is satirising the state as what they actually doing is on the opposite to their intentions. In other words, the state claims to cracking down the housing prices, but they are creating favourable conditions for the high rising housing prices.

In the use of SEASON metaphors, the temperature feature of seasons, for instance hot for summer and cold for winter, is emphasised by the state. Among these metaphors, the emphasis of coldness of winter is particularly heavily used since late 2011 when strict housing regulations were launched. Winter, a season associated with hardship and extremely cold, is mostly studied within HEALTH metaphor, being part of reasons causing the illness (Kövecses 2009; Semino 2009). For instance, Boers (1999) claims that HEALTH metaphors are more popular in winter time than in any other seasons, and used by people to explain economic processes. This favoured grouping of metaphors in western economic discourse was not found in this study. WINTER metaphors in CHD are mostly adopted to

describe the housing market situation, that is, MARKET SLUMP/DOWNTURN IS WINTER.

> Example5-102严厉的房地产调控已持续一年多时间，"金九银十"的惨淡成交量让许多房地产公司提前感受到**冬天的寒意**。(#N325, 2011/10/13)
>
> (The strict real estate regulation has been going on for more than a year. The low trading volume in "Golden September and Silver October"[99] has caused many real estate companies to **feel the chill of winter**.)

This news article reports that many listed real estate companies have shifted their capital and started to invest in mining industry, and the example here is the background of the news. The term "Golden September and Silver October" suggests that the housing transaction volumes during these two months are supposed to be high. However, due to the state's series of regulations, the transaction volumes are extremely low. The "winter" in this example is a double entendre, which means the coming winter on the one hand, but metaphorically refers to the slump on the other. Accordingly, the conceptual metaphors in this example are MARKET SLUMP IS WINTER and LOW TRANSACTION IS CHILL. The term "winter" also suggests that there are two conceptual seasons. One is the season that the market/economy carries, which has its own rules. The other one is the property developers experienced, which is constituted and affected by the market rules and the state's regulation. Through the dual "seasons" the developers experienced, the idea of socialist market economy is expressed. That is, on the one hand, it shares the general features with the market economy, but on the other hand, it also has its unique feature which is intervened in by the state.

5.6.3 Summary

This section mainly investigated the use of NATURE metaphors in CHD. It was observed that NATURE metaphors are primarily adopted by the state rather than the public (as compared to FAMILY metaphors). It was also noticed that NATURE metaphors work closely with other categories of metaphors. When they are used together with DISEASE metaphors, they strongly represent the Chinese philosophy of TCM and Yin-Yang, contributing largely to the state's rhetoric on accountability (to be discussed in section 6.3.1). When NATURE metaphors are used together with JOURNEY metaphors, a scenario of an unpredictable (and difficult) journey is created, contributing to the state's rhetoric on unpredictability (to be discussed in section 6.3.2). In the public discourse, NATURE metaphors are not as prevalent as in other categories, most of which follow the state's conceptualisation. This could potentially be caused by the fact that both the state and the public share the same fundamental natural environment.

5.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has investigated the use of the primary categories of conceptual metaphors used in CHD. It has been shown that each category of metaphor is preferred differently in the government-led discourse (and pro-government public discourse) and its counter-discourse, and it is used to discussed different topics. For instance, DISEASE metaphors, metaphors associated with TCM in particular, are favoured by the government-led discourse to show the state's determination in regulating the housing

---

[99] It refers to the time period of September and October, which is the agrarian harvest season, and during this time, the consumption will be higher than rest time of the year.

market. It has also been shown that in the counter-discourse, the state's rhetoric (either source domain, or by target domain, or the whole conceptual metaphor) is frequently challenged or subverted. For instance, house is metaphorically conceptualised as "bread" in the government-led discourse, but it is subverted as "tofu" or "steam bun" in the counter-discourse; In the government-led discourse, "spring" is mapped onto the condition of housing market, suggesting hard time for property developers and the country's economy has gone, however, this source domain of "spring" it is mapped onto   the condition of housing prices, suggesting that hard time for the people is coming as housing prices will further go beyond their reach.

After a comprehensive analysis of metaphors used in CHD, the following chapter will focus on exploring the power dynamics behind metaphors, that is, how metaphors contribute to the argumentation of the government-led discourse and its counter-discourse.

Chapter6 A Battle of rhetoric

6.1 CDA and rhetoric

When investigating metaphors in political discourse, the analysis unavoidably reaches within the realms of traditional (Aristotelian in its origin) rhetoric. This is for two reasons: (a) rhetoric studies the (linguistic) means of persuasion (Charteris-Black 2011; Musolff 2016) and one of the typical usages of metaphor is indeed to persuade; and (b) among the spheres of discourse (or "orders of discourse" – Fairclough 1996; Albaladejo 2013), political discourse is traditionally the one with perhaps the most fixed/canonical rhetoric structure (Reisigl 2008; Van Dijk 2005; Wiesner et al., 2017; Charteris-Black 2018).

The CDA framework can overlap and/or be complemented by rhetorical analysis (Fairclough 1996). Compared to rhetoric, defined by Kennedy (2009:3) as "a specific cultural subset of a more general concept of the power of words and their potential to affect a situation in which they are used or received", CDA takes a wider social, cultural, and political scope which allows the contextualisation of discursive events and the detection of inter-discursive links. In doing so, it has to rely on associating micro-rhetorical linguistic aspects to macro-rhetorical purposes (Huckin et al., 2012). Metaphor belongs to the former and this is why it is frequently discussed by both rhetoricians and discourse analysts (Huckin et al. 2012; Peeples 2015).

The purpose of this chapter is to track the function of metaphors as a micro-rhetorical strategy that caters to macro-rhetorical purposes throughout the course of government-directed housing market discourse. Based on the premise that both the micro and the macro aspects of the government rhetoric shift and change according to political, social, and financial developments, it is also worth investigating if and how these changes are reflected in the counter-discourse by public commenters who express disagreement with the government.

The analysis so far has shown that, on the one hand, the government's metaphorical conceptualization of the housing crisis is varied, being presented with diverse categories of conceptual metaphors such as DISEASE, JOURNEY, WAR, FOOD and NATURE and, on the other hand, that the government and the anti-government discourse show different preferences in metaphor selection. The variable conceptualisations of the housing market and the crisis reveal not simply a diversity of metaphorical means, but also that the government's overall rhetoric is in a state of flux. It is crucial to ask whether this variability and fluctuation is random or whether it can be associated to specific events or even cycles in the economic and socio-political spheres.

I will begin by presenting an overview of metaphor use by the government with the aim of tracking its changes and associating them to their economic and socio-political contexts. The discussion in this section mainly concerns the following three questions: (a) how are the phases of the market (with its "ups" and "downs") associated with metaphor use in the News corpus? (b) how do the metaphors in each phase of the market contribute to the state's changing rhetoric on the housing crisis? (c) how is a counter-discourse constructed through metaphor subversion and playfulness within the Comments corpus?

6.2 Metaphors and the market: Contextualising the trajectory of metaphor use

6.2.1 Overview

China's real estate market has undergone frequent ups and downs during the early 2010s (Wu 2015; Ding et al. 2017; He et al. 2017; Fang et al. 2019). Among studies into the phases of China's real estate market, only the one published by Ding et al. (2017) provides a categorisation of distinct real estate "cycles" covering the time frame of this research (2010–2014). Using Ding et al.'s categorisation as a basis (Table 6-1) the present analysis divides the studied period into five Phases (the term "phase" is preferred over the term "cycle", since there is no discernible periodicity in their characteristics).

	January 2010 	 June 2010	January 2011 	 March 2012	April 2012 	 August 2013	September 2013 	 December 2014
Real estate cycles	Easing	Tightening	Easing	Tightening

Table6- 1 Real estate cycles (2010-2014), according to Ding et al 2017

In order to associate these Phases with metaphor use, Figure 6-1 presents the normalised (per 1000 words) frequencies of metaphor types for each quarter:
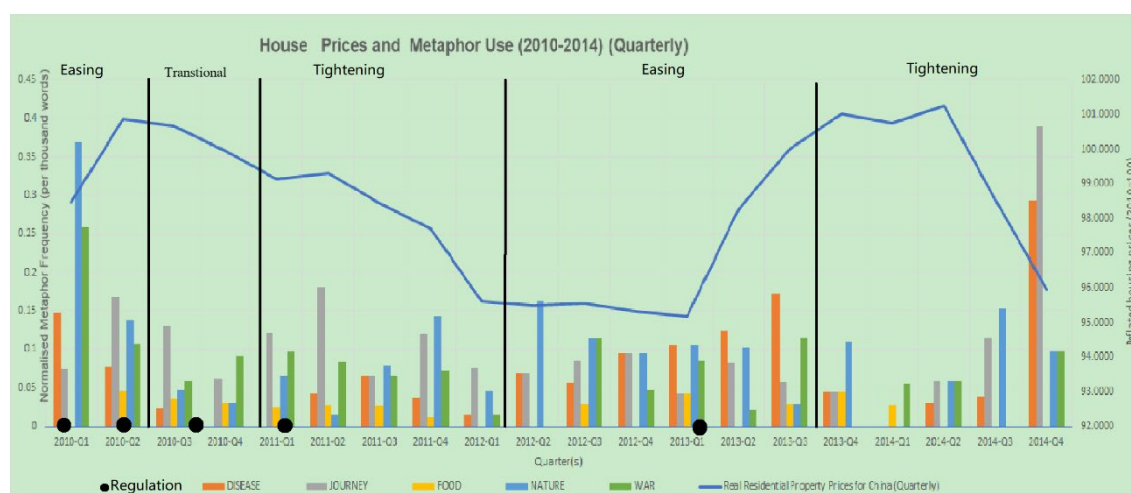
Figure6- 1 House Prices and Metaphor Use

Figure 6-1 records the normalised frequencies for the prevalent metaphors in the News Corpus: DISEASE, JOURNEY, FOOD, NATURE, WAR. On the y-axis (right-hand side), the housing prices are represented, adjusted for inflation using 2010 prices as a baseline. The figure also records the aforementioned five phases: easing, transitional, tightening, easing, tightening (per Ding et al. (2017). The period from June 2010 to January 2011 has not been included in Ding et al.'s (2017) analysis, since they consider it unremarkable. Here it is labelled as a 'transitional' Phase. Finally, the points in time at which major housing market regulations were introduced by the government are also represented on the graph (x-axis), since they also play a role in the government's rhetoric. The following section will focus on analysing the trajectory of metaphors along the five Phases, with

reference to the broader context of the housing market (e.g., economically, policy-wide, rhetorically).

6.2.2 Metaphors and real estate Phases

The overall frequency of metaphor use differs by Phase, which means that some phases are more 'metaphor-heavy' than others. This has implications for the importance (or 'weight') of those metaphor types that are prevalent in each phase. In a 'metaphor-light' phase, for example, the prevalence of certain metaphors may not be as indicative as when it happens in a 'metaphor-heavy' phase. This is why it is interesting to look at the relative weight of each metaphor type per phase, rather than just its frequency (as presented in Figure 6-2 and 6-3). Moreover, in order to present the dynamic of each metaphor type per Phase, we can use the average frequency of each metaphor type as a baseline for comparison with the frequency of each type per Phase (as shown in Table 6-2).
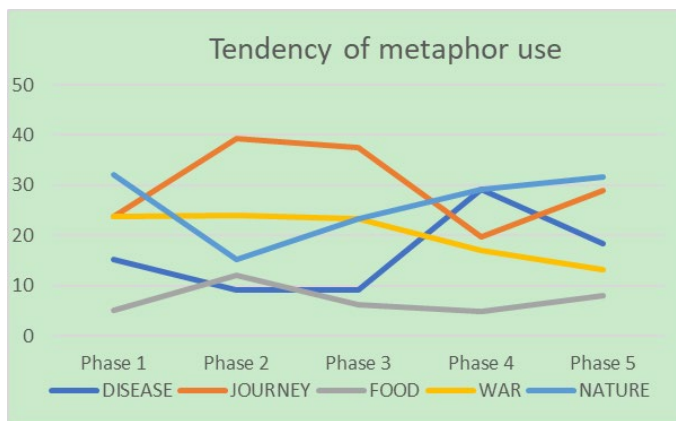

Figure6- 3 Tendency of metaphor use
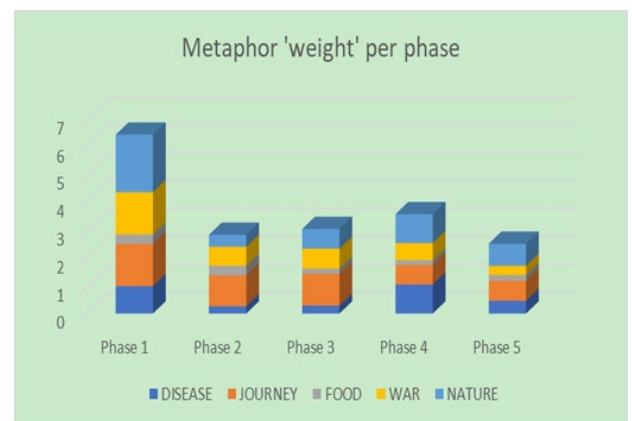
Figure6- 2 Metaphor 'weight' per Phase in News

Phase(s)	DISEASE	JOURNEY	FOOD	WAR	NATURE
1 Easing	⬆ 0.3892	⬆ 0.4817	⬆ 0.0800	⬆ 0.7481	⬆ 1.0543
2 Transitional	⬇ -0.4157	⬆ 0.0724	⬆ 0.0958	⬇ -0.0873	⬇ -0.5786
3 Tightening	⬇ -0.3018	⬆ 0.1020	⬇ -0.0555	⬇ -0.0581	⬇ -0.2938
4 Easing	⬆ 0.4565	⬇ -0.3404	⬇ -0.0714	⬇ -0.1608	⬆ 0.0379
5 Tightening	⬇ -0.1282	⬇ -0.3158	⬇ -0.0488	⬇ -0.4419	⬇ -0.2196

Table6- 2Weight in each Phase compared to average weights of each metaphor type

From Figure 6-2, 6-3 and Table 6-2, it can be observed that there is a big difference between Phase 1 and the rest. When it comes to the relative 'weight' of each metaphor type per Phase, JOURNEY has a steady strong presence throughout, reaching its peak weight in Phase 2, where it accounts for 40.7% of that Phase's metaphors, a figure that's followed closely by its weight in Phase 3 (37.6% of that Phase's metaphors). Even at its lowest weight (Phase 4) it still accounts for 19.7% of the metaphors of the respective Phase. DISEASE has a high weight peak in Phase 4 (accounts for 29.2% of that Phase's metaphors) and it has a remarkably low weight in Phases 2 and 3 (6.2% and 9.2% of the metaphors of these Phases). As such, it displays the second widest range of weights across Phases, behind NATURE. NATURE fluctuates, between its peak weight in Phase 1 (representing 32.9% of all the metaphors of that Phase) and its lowest weight in Phase 4 (only 9.3% of that Phase's metaphors), and then going back up to its second highest weight in Phase 5 (31% of that Phase's metaphors). WAR has a steady presence throughout (fluctuating between 23.8% and 17.1% of each Phase, for Phases 1–4), only showing a drop in weight in the last Phase, where it accounts for 13% of that Phase's metaphors.

FOOD, although generally very low in usage and weight, reaches peak weight in Phase 2, where it represents 12% of that Phase's metaphors. We shall now look into each Phase individually.

6.2.2.1 The early easing Phase (Jan 2010–June 2010)

This easing Phase is at the late stage of a lax regulation period for real estate, which starts from March 2009. Faced with the severe financial crisis of 2008, the Chinese government issued a ¥4 trillion (≈US$586 billion) stimulus package to rescue the market and economy. Consequently, housing prices soared dramatically in 2009 and 2010. To rein in runaway prices, the government introduced a string of policies and measures in January (State's Eleven Measures) and April (State's New Ten Measures). These regulatory measures were focused on the buyer; for instance, they included strict restrictions on home buying for migrant buyers and raising the standard for mortgages for second homes. These regulations can be viewed as the first of their kind, representing the state's determination to crack down on high-rising housing prices and regulate the housing market. However, the results of regulation are normally delayed, so they were not to become visible during this Phase.

As noted earlier, this Phase displays the highest degree of metaphoricity in the government's rhetoric. The most prevalent metaphor type in this Phase is NATURE – which is at its peak across the five Phases. The extensive use of NATURE metaphors at this early Phase of regulation can be viewed as deliberate. As discussed earlier in section 5.7.2, the Chinese philosophical understanding of nature is a dialectic unity between obeying nature's rules while being able to actively respond and take initiative within the parameters of those rules. Therefore, NATURE metaphors enable the state to explain no matter what results the housing regulation are. Within this metaphor, the government represents some initial positive results of the regulations (March–April 2010) as the product of carefully planned agricultural activity (e.g., in fishing and farming terms). At this stage, the outlook for the results of regulations is optimistic, hence the emphasis on the fruitful results of human intervention upon the natural environment. It has to be noted, however, that this is only a feature of this early stage, since the more prominent role of NATURE metaphors is to emphasise the unpredictability of the market (the market as a natural force or as a beast). In the latter cases, the idea put forward is that when faced with unpredictable forces, any action (no matter how excessive) is justified, therefore providing justification for harsh regulatory measures.

Since housing regulations in this Phase are represented as being "the strictest in history",[100] WAR metaphors are adopted to highlight the urgency and essentiality of drastic housing policies at the present time, but also looking to the future, where the task is to build an advanced housing information system. It is notable that, as in this Phase property speculation is considered to be the fundamental cause of high housing prices, property developers are portrayed as being greedy and dishonest and therefore as the real enemy in this metaphorical war. This representation is also specific to this Phase, later as the state comes to need help from developers this attitude takes a marked shift (see section 6.2.2.3).

At the same time, DISEASE metaphors are also heavily employed, either to show the state's ambition in bringing down housing price, or to strengthen its rhetoric on portraying the "success story". Both in its use of WAR and DISEASE metaphors, the state is mainly portrayed as playing an active role ("commander" or "doctor"). JOURNEY metaphors in this Phase mainly contribute to the conceptualisation of housing reform as a journey, which is still at its early stages and therefore facing an uncertain future (see the analysis in section 5.3).

---

[100] For example, "Four months ago, what was billed as 'the toughest property control policy in history' was launched". 03/09/2010. Accessed from https://finance.jrj.com.cn/opinion/2010/09/0308038090832.shtml

6.2.2.2 The transitional Phase (July 2010–December 2010)

The most notable change in this Phase is a continuous drop in the housing price growth rate, which is considered to be a positive outcome of regulations from the last Phase. In this Phase, strict housing regulation is continued and further strengthened to consolidate the positive outcomes. In September of 2010, the state issued another measure regarding real estate (*9.29 New Deal*). This "new deal" is actually not "new", as it was essentially an elaboration of previous policies (i.e., differentiated mortgage policies, cracking down land hoarding, accelerating the construction of IHP etc.), aiming to make these policies more operational and fully implemented. The only distinction for this new deal is its differentiation of various market behaviours. It continues to forbid speculative behaviours such as developers' land hoarding and brokers' speculation, but it also clarifies that low – and medium – sized family loan demand should be supported (as it is a reasonable housing need). It also encourages the construction of IHP and relevant preferential policies.

This Phase can be characterised by some level of concern: if the effects of the regulations continue, they may pose a threat to the health of real estate and the economy as a whole. Previous policies focusing on the buyer had pushed buyers to "sit on their cash," which led to the drop of the volume of transactions.[101] It was therefore apparent, at that point, that if the situation continued it would worsen the relation between housing supply and demand. The housing price growth rate continued to drop in this Phase despite the GDP growth rate recovering, suggesting that housing prices were dropping at an even faster rate. Here, the government presents its goal as the quest for a balance between the housing regulations and people's expectations of the housing market, while keeping the prices in a reasonable range. A reasonable range here means not too high – in which case people would not be able to afford them – nor too low – where the economy's development "engine" might stall.

As a result of this shifting balance, the News Corpus articles' attention falls on the conceptualisation of 'house' (/'home') and housing (e.g., "houses are for living, not for speculation"), while news reports on commercial housing, position housing as the key to happiness (e.g., "A rented house is not a home"; "With a house in hand, I don't have to worry"). It is therefore noteworthy, but not surprising, that FOOD metaphors, the least prevalent in the whole corpus, reach their peak weight in this Phase and approach in frequency to NATURE metaphors, which are normally a lot more prevalent in the corpus (especially in the previous Phase). As discussed in Chapter 5, Chinese culture places emphasis on food as a paramount necessity as evidenced by the fact that it is central to daily interactions, even acting as a conventional form of greeting. The conceptualisation of the (commercial) house as akin to food places the house in the category of bare necessities and essential for survival. There is undoubtably a degree of sentimentality and appealing to human values in this rhetoric.

Contrary to FOOD metaphors, DISEASE and NATURE metaphors appear very infrequently in this Phase, being at their lowest usage across the Phases. As previously observed (sections 5.2 and 5.7), these two metaphors are more market oriented. The infrequent use of DISEASE and NATURE metaphors suggests that the state (through its media) is deliberately avoiding discussing the housing market itself, its main focus at this point being to boost the demand for commercial housing.

JOURNEY, on the other hand, focuses on "vehicles" (manner of travel – justification of choices through the contrast between "one leg" and "two legs" where the latter represents the combination of welfare housing and commercial housing). In this transitional Phase, the state's regulation on housing

---

[101] Concrete nationwide housing transaction data has not been released by the NBSC. However. the drop in transaction volume is reported in the news. A local report from Zhuzhou government shows that housing transaction volume decreased 15.66% in 2010 compared to 2009 (Data from: http://www.zhuzhou.gov.cn/c15160/20191108/i1189157.html).

market seems to have come to a point of stagnancy with new measures needed. Accordingly, JOURNEY metaphors serve as means (e.g., "leg" and "rail") that can help the regulation reach its "destinations".

6.2.2.3 The early tightening Phase (January 2011–March 2012)

This Phase is an important one for the course of the state's regulation of real estate. In 2011, China's economy shifted from rapid growth stimulated by policies, to stable growth by structural adjustment, which is a new attempt the state conducts for the first time. In the context of "structural adjustment and price stabilisation", the central government continued to strengthen its regulation of real estate (e.g., "State's Eight Measures") through the implementation of property tax in pilot cities, and a comprehensive upgrade of purchase restrictions, price restrictions and mortgage restrictions. The number of cities with purchase restrictions increased significantly from fewer than 20 in 2010 to more than 40, and the purchase restrictions in tier-one cities were expanded to apply to second- and third-tier cities. The round of real estate regulation that began in 2010 was continuously refined and implemented in 2011, both restraining demand and increasing supply. 2011 was also the start of the 12th five-year plan for China's national development, while also being the year of IHP.

The major topic of discussion in the government-directed media in this Phase is the IHP, with a focus on the progress of IHP and its contributions to society. It does not address the public's primary concerns regarding the housing prices of commercial houses (Fang et al., 2016). In October 2011, the construction of 10 million affordable housing units was completed ahead of schedule. At the same time, housing prices significantly dropped (with negative growth rate), reaching their first trough since 2010. The severity of this situation makes news coverage unavoidable, so the state media's by necessity addresses the housing market once more, albeit indirectly, this time with a focus on the tough time for developers.

JOURNEY metaphors dominate this Phase, with the conceptualisation of the economy, the housing reform and the IHP as being on their own respective journeys. However, these journeys are portrayed differently. For IHP, it is on a joyful, successful (e.g., "advances triumphantly"), and innovative (e.g., "new path") journey; while the economy and housing reform are on uncertain and tough journeys (e.g., full of "slopes" and "ridges", see section 5.3 for further analysis). This different portrayal can be explained. The construction of IHP houses is just a matter of numbers (it is reported in a later Phase that these houses are in low quality) and it is a short-term journey where results can be seen quickly. Therefore, when houses are built, it can be claimed as successful. However, economic transition and housing reform are much complex than IHP and are full of uncertainties. By depicting these journeys as difficult and lengthy, the state seems to be aiming to win some time in its efforts to stabilise the market. Later in this Phase (fourth quarter of 2011), when the housing market is having a tough time, the use of reassuring and optimistic JOURNEY metaphors is aimed shift the public's attention away from the depressing matter of the housing market and towards the successful journeys of IHP, creating an impression that the journeys of the housing market and the economy in general can also be successful as they all share the same "guide" (i.e., the government) in their journeys.

Aside from JOURNEY metaphors, WAR and NATURE metaphors are also prevalent in this Phase. It is notable that there is an apparent shift from using WAR metaphors at an earlier stage to NATURE metaphors at a later stage within this Phase (although NATURE metaphors are at their second lowest at this Phase). WAR metaphors are primarily contributed to the state's rhetoric on IHP, attributing significant value to this project. Interestingly, there are no concrete enemies in these WAR metaphors, even enemies (property developers) represented in the previous Phase have now become allies. The shift of the developers' role is caused by the state's view on them. As mentioned previously,

this is the point at which the state's attitude towards developers shifts, since the state is in need of their support (money/capital) and involvement in IHP thus driving their metaphorical representation as war allies.

In this late stage of this Phase (fourth quarter of 2011), NATURE metaphors become the dominant rhetorical device. Normally, the drop of housing prices would be considered a positive outcome, where DISEASE and WAR metaphors normally focus on the state's successful leadership as "doctor" or "war general" respectively. However, this time, the drop was much more dramatic than what the state or the public could have expected, posing a threat to the housing market and the economy. One way in which the government approached this "unexpected" turn was via NATURE metaphors, which on the one hand, allowed it to attribute the developments to a complex "ecology" ("the housing market is the natural world"), and on the other hand, promoted the imagery of harnessing and taming nature with respect to the government's next steps.

6.2.2.4 The late easing Phase (March 2012–September 2013)

In this Phase, the state continued to implement policies for purchase restrictions and mortgage restrictions. The focus of real estate regulation is still to curb the rise of housing prices and to speed up the development of IHP. Housing prices stayed at their lowermost during the earlier stages of this Phase (between the second quarter of 2012 and the first quarter of 2013), but they then began to rise dramatically in the second half of 2012 – despite the fact that the GDP growth rate was slowing down. Facing the soaring upward tendency of growth rate, the government issued another harsh regulation ("State's Five Measures") in January 2013, raising second-home mortgage requirements. Since its announcement, the growth rate of the housing prices has started to drop slowly.

Perhaps the most important factor for this Phase, however, is the political change, i.e., the governance transition from Hu Jintao (President, head of party) and Wen Jiabao (Premier, head of central government) to Xi Jinping (President) and Li Keqiang (Premier) in March 2013. It has been observed that a rhetoric of deifying the top leader, reminiscent of the Mao era, has re-emerged after Xi came to power (Hart 2016; Gallelli 2018). In contrast to earlier government rhetoric which focused on the Party as a whole, the rhetoric in Xi's era specifically accentuates President Xi Jinping and features him as an exemplar of the party. There is also an increasing use of terms and metaphors borrowed from Mao's era (especially the "Red Army period" and the "planned economy era"), which can be seen as paying homage to Mao. Gallelli (2018) argues that Xi's use of Mao's language is much more a matter of "auctoritas" (i.e., building one's authoritative figure) rather than an intention to return to the Mao era in terms of politics. Thus Xi's era can be considered more person-centric or leader-centric than that of his predecessors.

The discussion in this Phase has two main sides: the recovery of housing market (and housing prices) and the healthy development of real estate market. There is also a considerable amount of discussion of the problems with IHP (e.g., the poor quality of IHP houses and messy management of IHP). In late 2013, it is highlighted that IHP is a project of state benevolence, suggesting that IHP is an act of mercy from the state.

Dominant metaphors in this Phase are DISEASE and NATURE. However, it is notable that NATURE has its lowest relative weight (across Phases) in this Phase but is still the second most prevalent here. NATURE metaphors are prevalent in earlier stage, contributing to the rhetoric on housing market, with its use mostly in line with the general intention of NATURE metaphors. As for DISEASE metaphors, especially TCM-related (Traditional Chinese Medicine) metaphors, are frequently used on the rhetoric of transitional era (e.g., problems, "pains", unpleasant outcomes etc.) (for detailed analysis see section 5.2).

JOURNEY metaphors are at their lowest relative weight across the five Phases although they still account for 19.6% of the total metaphors in this Phase. This may be because the public has seen how those "journeys" developed (especially after the governance transition), and found them to not be as positive as what the state promised. Moreover, since this Phase, JOURNEY metaphors have lost their prevalence among all types of metaphor. After March 2013, previous "journeys" are not continued in discussion, instead, new "journeys" are put forward (e.g., "turning point", "crossing road").

6.2.2.5 The late tightening Phase (October 2013–December 2014)

In the fourth quarter of 2013, during the multiple regular end-of-year congresses, the News Corpus articles' attention fell on the rhetoric on real estate as it developed within these congresses, one of the purposes of which is to shape public opinion. At a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in October, IHP was emphasised. However, in late 2013, there is relative silence on housing market matters from the government. At the party's third Plenum held in mid-November, there was only few property-related items raised (such as land reform, property-tax legislation, IHP and housing supply, and provident funds). In another major conference, highly related to the future of real estate, there was no mention of real estate regulation or housing prices. Although detailed plans and discussion on property-related topics were absent, the messages on which the state focused were the successful handling of the IHP and housing regulation.

As for the year 2014, it has been observed by some scholars and research institutes that the state's regulation of real estate has embarked onto a new round (Wu 2015; Evergrand Research Institute 2018; Deng and Chen 2019). In this Phase of housing regulation, harsh administrative measures represented by "Home Purchase Restrictions" (限购令) have evolved into multi-facet policies that integrate multiple measures (such as purchase restriction, sale restriction, price restriction and land auction restriction). This change in policy was also followed by a change in rhetoric as well as a strategic manipulation of information dissemination. There is emphasis on "information control" both when it comes to government-led media, but even (in more extreme cases) in the form of "hired"/controlled commenters who act as "cheerleaders" for the state on social media (King et al., 2017). In this phase, unfavourable reports (on the quality of affordable houses, for example, or any other housing-related matters) are minimal, while an optimistic and upbeat outlook is prevalent in the media. At the same time, the state's manner of decision-making has a certain pomposity (e.g., holding multiple major high-profile meetings and summits on the topic of housing) all with the purpose of creating propaganda, while the state rhetoric itself remains vague without detailed reference to future plans. With the public's attention diverted away from the details of the housing market problems, the state rhetoric aims to build the image of a powerful but approachable leadership (with President Xi at its core). Therefore, it can be claimed that there is a clear and arguably stricter-than-usual directive when it comes to government-led media in this Phase, which promotes a celebratory style of rhetoric.

At earlier stages of this Phase, housing prices did not change much, matching the ideal condition portrayed by the government (fluctuation within reasonable zones). Meanwhile, there is no particular type of metaphor that is favoured by the state, with all types of metaphor used but with lower than average frequency. The state's rhetoric on the housing market is much milder compared to previous Phases. Even the most powerful WAR metaphors are only adopted to express the attitude that the government will continue to regulate the housing market, without detailed explanations (and no specific reference to WEAPONS). It seems that the state was avoiding WAR metaphors at this Phase. A possible explanation is due to given internal conflict within the government the conceptual field of war was better avoided altogether so as not to draw any attention to this apparent lack of stability.

The dominant metaphor type in this Phase is still NATURE, which also keeps to its general usage.

144

JOURNEY comes in second place, being adopted to convey the idea that the previous (state-dominant) "journey" is at an end with a new "journey" starting. The reduction in both rhetoric on housing and metaphors in this Phase suggests the idea that the state will no longer be playing a central role in the new housing regulation "journey".

6.3 Metaphors and the state's wider rhetoric

Regarding the role of metaphor in argumentation, its function can be of two kinds: (a) metaphors create arguments (by analogy), and (b) metaphors support and strengthen existing premises that are literal rather than figurative. The discussion in this section mainly explores how metaphors advance the state's arguments on housing. Since the focus of this section is on the logical links between metaphor and argumentation, it will not go into the finer theoretical distinctions between different approaches in CDA that have links to argumentation (e.g., the DHA approach –Wodak 2001b; Reisigl 2014, and the DRA approach – e.g., Ieţcu 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Fairclough and Fairclough 2010, 2011, 2013). As a result, the analysis in this section will follow a "bare-bones" model (and terminology) of argumentation, as it can be found in the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004, 2016). In that framework, emphasis is placed on the "standpoint" (i.e., the conclusion of the argument), while the analysis reveals the structure of the logical steps (i.e., two types of premises: the starting premise and the bridge premise) that lead to the standpoint, making the argument valid (van Poppel, 2021).

This section also takes a step back from the micro-level and considers the macro-level elements of the data, taking into consideration the full text of each article included in the News corpus. This allows the detection of the overall elements of the state's rhetoric in a more wholistic way, alongside the identification of their linguistic instantiations within the immediate co-text of the investigated metaphors. From this perspective, the starting point for the analysis is to identify the two general standpoints around which the state's whole housing market rhetoric revolves during the investigated period.

The state's primary standpoint (across the collected data can be formulated as "we cannot predict with any certainty that our goals will be met"), and its argumentative process is presented in Table 6.3:

Premise	There are two sets of factors that will determine whether our goals will be met: (a) those we can control (i.e., regulations regarding the housing market) and (b) those we cannot control (i.e., behaviour of the markets and decisions of local authorities).
Premise	The factors we cannot control have a high degree of unpredictability.
Conclusion	We cannot predict with any certainty that our goals will be met.

Table6- 3 Syllogism of "We cannot predict with any certainty that our goals will be met"

This standpoint is further linked to the more general tendency to create a rhetoric that helps the state avoid accountability/responsibility. A more general overarching argument is presented in Table 6-4:

Premise	Offering guarantees requires certainty and results in accountability
Premise	We do not have the certainty requirement (given the conclusion/standpoint in table 6.3)
Conclusion	We cannot offer guarantees and therefore have limited accountability

Table6- 4 Syllogism of the argument on accountability/responsibility

In conclusion, the state's rhetoric on housing mainly addresses the following three aspects: (a) the unpredictable behaviour of the market, (b) the responsibility of local authorities, and (c) accountability – with emphasis on the role of being a leader and on the interplay with shifting the responsibility to local authorities. These three aspects are not randomly listed but are tightly connected to each other. The first and second aspects contribute to the state's rhetoric on uncertainty (the unpredictability of the market and the inability to control the decisions of local authorities), from which they lead to the third point on accountability. Accountability is further addressed when the discussion revolves around the effects of regulation (i.e., whether it worked, failed, or the results are yet to be seen). In the following sections, I will discuss how metaphors contribute to the state's rhetoric with examples from the News corpus.

6.3.1 Unpredictable behaviour of the market

The arguments discussed in this section have the unpredictability of the market as their starting point. Returning to the Phases presented in the previous section (6.2.2), the rhetoric of unpredictability came up the most in Phase 1, when the state's regulation had just started, and it is mostly supported by the JOURNEY metaphor[102] "the housing market is a wild horse". This metaphor is used to talk about factors that are both unpredictable and very hard to control and it presents the government as having managed to control them against all odds. For instance, the following example is taken from a news article in Phase 1, titled "How to view investing in housing". The main point of the article is that homebuying for investment purposes is the driving force of this round of soaring housing prices.

Example 6-1. 今年一季度,全国楼市价格如脱**缰野马**,一路狂**奔**,涨幅惊人。毫无疑问,投资型购房需求是这一轮房价飞涨的主要推手。(#N48, 2010/6/3, Phase 1)

> (In the first quarter of this year, housing prices nationwide were like **runaway wild horses**, **running insanely** all the way. The amount of increase is astonishing. There is no doubt that homebuying for investment purposes is the driving force of this round of soaring house prices.)

Generally, the scenario of a runaway horse suggests that the horse being disturbed or frightened by external forces. In this context, homebuying for investment purpose is the external force that made the "wild horses" (housing prices) run away. Accordingly, the "wild horse" metaphor here directly contributes to support the existing standpoint "homebuying for investment purpose should be curbed". The "wild horse" will run away at any time as long as this "driving force" exists. Thus, on the one hand, it reinforces the argument that housing market behaviour is unpredictable; on the other hand, it puts curbing the investment housing at the pivotal position of the state's regulation on housing.

People's expectations (e.g., their expectations of market performance and their expectations for how houses meet their needs) are presented as another factor of the unpredictability of the housing market, appearing most frequently in Phase 3 and 4 when housing prices dropped. In Phase 3, speculation was still one of the targets of the state's regulation. The state's argument on expectation in this Phase is "people should follow the state's leadership and change their expectations so as to realize their housing dreams". The logical process is presented in Table 6-5:

---

[102] This "JOURNEY" metaphor actually is a NATURE metaphor. As in previous metaphor identification and analysis procedures, the keyword "horse" is considered as a mode of travel, and it is accordingly categorised as JOURNEY metaphor. Although it is calculated as JOURNEY, this one instance of metaphor does not have much impact on the overall picture of metaphor use (as presented in Section 6.1)

Premise	The Chinese government is the institution that can act as the strong leadership needed in this period (see conclusion in Table 6-6)
Premise	Collective goals are only achieved when everyone does their part and follows the leadership
Conclusion	The goals will only be achieved if people follow the government's leadership

Table6- 5 The state's argument on people's housing needs

This argument is supported by JOURNEY metaphors through analogy. The following extract comes from a news article that was published in the third Phase when housing prices were moving downwards. This article focuses on analysing the "abnormal" phenomenon in society, whereby people treat house ownership as their paramount necessity, one that is comparable to (or even overrides, when exaggerated) the paramount necessity of food (representations of which are very central and prominent in Chinese culture). The article tries to explain the roots of this phenomenon, focusing on changing attitudes towards housing. In this extract, home purchase is presented as a journey, the original destination of which used to be meeting a basic living necessity. The practice of speculation is presented as a deviation from that original course, leading to a distortion (abnormality) in the journey that strays away from the destination (i.e., the realisation of the "housing dream").

Example 6-2. 畸形发展的房地产业，使市场投机因素增长，已经严重影响老百姓的理财观，人们把购置房产作为投资和保值增值最佳手段。于是，购房**偏离**了它满足人的基本需求这一**航线**。(#N214, 13/04/2011, Phase 3）

> (The abnormal development of the real estate industry increased market speculation, which has seriously affected the people's view on financial management. (Now) people see home purchase as the best way of investment. Accordingly, home purchase has **deviated** from its "**sailing route**" of meeting people's basic (housing) needs.)

This JOURNEY metaphor contributes to the overall argument on leadership that goals will only be achieved if people follow the government's leadership through the following analogy: a journey cannot be finished successfully if the ship went off course, so given that "people view home purchasing as a voyage, it is now going off its course" as claimed in the news article (as in example 6-2).

The state's argument on people's expectations changes in Phase 4, when the housing market experiences a downturn, and then gradually starts to recover. In that Phase, an important goal of the state's regulation is to stimulate housing demands and boost the housing market. Consequently, the state changes its argument and claims that "The government's approach to leadership must be changed in order to help the people achieve their goals (housing dream)". The following extract is taken from a news article published at the end of Phase 4, when housing market shows some tendency of recovery. The title of this article is "Change the market expectation of jumping on the home buying bandwagon". The article responds to the general question of why higher regulation leads to higher housing prices. It claims that the state had issued a string of measures and policies with focus on speculation and "squeezing bubbles out". The article argues that the high rise in housing prices in first- and second-tier cities is supported by rigorous and increasing demand, rather than the consequence of unsuccessful regulation. Therefore, it concludes that the reason of the polarisation of the housing market pattern is due to the large amount of rigorous demand.

Example 6-3. 改变预期，根本上需要改善信心。告别行政化的简单打压，不再和市场需求"**掰手腕**"，才能温暖"住有所居"的梦想。 (#N551, 23/09/2013, Phase 4)

(Changing (people's) expectations (on the market) fundamentally requires improving (people's) confidence (in the housing market). The housing dream can only be warmed if (the state) abandons previous simple administrative suppression and no longer play "**arm-twisting**" with market demands.)

The WAR metaphor "the state is playing arm-twisting against the housing market demands"[103] posed the state and the housing market demands, and further, the public in first- and second-tier cities with rigorous housing demands, in opposition. Through a negation to this metaphor, the state's argument on people's expectation is activated. The shift of the state's arguments on people's expectations is a further illustration of its arguments on flexibility (as discussed in Table 6-6). In this extract, a temperature metaphor ("warm is good and cold is bad" within the category of NATURE metaphor) is also used.

Regarding the state's regulation in the face of an unpredictable market, the state's main and constant (across the Phases) argument lies in its flexibility, which is to say that the state is more than willing to adapt its ways of governance in response to changing circumstances. The emphasis on flexibility is also a sign of the more general argument that the state is competent, which again feeds to the general rhetoric of accountability from Table 6-4. The premises and conclusion on the state's flexibility are presented in Table 6-6:

Premise	The challenges of uncertain and fluctuating conditions can only be met with flexibility (axiom)[104]
Premise	The government demonstrates flexibility in its governance
Conclusion	The government is able to rise up to the circumstances

Table6- 6 Syllogism on flexibility

This flexibility argument is particularly prevalent in Phase 1 when the state's regulation on housing had just begun, and it is also remarkable in Phase 3 when housing prices dropped significantly. Metaphors that are most related to this argument are DISEASE and WAR, as both of them highlight the competence and flexibility of the state. The following example (a) is an extract from a news article released soon after the launch of the state's first major regulation on housing in Phase 1. The extract in (b) is taken from a news article published in mid-2011 (Phase 3), when housing prices had dropped to a certain degree and the affordable housing project was in full swing, which the state described as promising ("initial results achieved"). In both of these examples the string of measures that (local) governments had taken to bring down housing prices are discussed, with example (a) entitled "Launched practical measures to bring down the housing market which got asthenic fire" and example (b) "Might punch crackdown on housing prices to help secure housing".

Example 6-4. (a)中央打出调控楼市的**组合拳**之后，北京、上海、广州、南京等城市迅速反应，落实中央精神，出调控实招，降楼市**虚火**。(#N5, 2010/1/12, Phase 1)

---

[103] Although "arm twisting" is a dead metaphor in English, it is far less conventionalised in Chinese. Also, as clarified earlier in section 5.4, this kind of COMBAT metaphor is considered within the more general field of WAR (further explanation see section 5.4).

[104] A premise that derives from general knowledge, comparable to the term "topos" in Wodak's DHA model (Wodak, 2001b)

(After the state punched out (with) the **combo fists** of housing regulation, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Nanjing and other cities responded quickly in line with the state's measures. They took practical regulative measures and reduce the **asthenic fire** in the housing market.)

Example 6-4. (b)面对一路攀升的房价，党和政府及时"**出拳**"，陆续推出一系列政策措施，加以强力调控。如此强力的调控, 成效到底如何呢? 应该说, 调控取得了一定成效。(#N298, 2011/8/17, Phase 3)

(Faced with the soaring housing prices, the party and the government's "**punch**" (was) timely and launched a series of policies and measures to forcefully regulate (housing prices). What is the result of such strong regulations? It should be said that the initial results have been achieved.)

DISEASE metaphor "the housing market has got asthenic fire" and WAR metaphor "policies are fists" occurred across both of these two articles. The DISEASE metaphor is related to the philosophy of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), where the symptoms of "asthenic fire" are "hypofunction" (housing market cannot meet people's basic housing needs) and "excitement" (housing prices being abnormal high). Accordingly, this DISEASE metaphor worked as an analogy to support the argument that "the state can diagnose (and correspondingly regulate) the housing market precisely and proactively". In a boxing match, the timing and strength of actions (punches) are important for winning the match, and accordingly WAR metaphors in these two examples lead to the idea of urgency and time-sensitivity to decisions, and therefore contribute to the argument that "the state is competent when it comes to emergency regulations".

Contrary to the literally stated "initial results achieved", the above discussed metaphors cannot directly lead to such strong and positive statement. In DISEASE metaphors, the regulations are conceptualised as treatments to the "asthenic fire", but only with a focus on the intention of the regulations, rather than claiming that the "asthenic fire" has been successfully treated. Moreover, in TCM, "asthenic fire" indicates disordered somatic function, which requires a long period of recovery and the symptoms may recur even if the treatment is correct. Similarly, in WAR metaphors, a player[105] cannot tell whether it will win the match until the game ends due to the everchanging situation and the unpredictability of the rival's responses. Within these two examples, by conceptualising the housing market as unpredictable the state is also leaving space to give excuses or explanations for their policies at a later date

Related to flexibility, another prominent argument that contributes to the rhetoric of unpredictability is the justification of "trial and error" processes, and its logic is outlined in Table 6-7.

Premise	Adapting to circumstances requires innovation and experimentation
Premise	Experimentation necessarily includes trial and error
Conclusion	Any setbacks at this stage are justified as part of the "trial and error" process

Table6- 7 Syllogism on "trial and error processes"

The most representative and topical trail measure is property tax. The state's discussion on property tax appears throughout the course of housing regulation. Before its actual launch as a pilot policy in some cities, property tax had been widely reported on all platforms of media and discussed by the public. One of the state's conventional strategies is to first encourage a discussion on a potential

---

[105] Similar to the previous COMBAT metaphor, this WRESTLING is within the sub-category of COMBAT, and thus is considered as part of WAR.

policy in order to test public reaction before its actual launch (Young, 2012). In the first Phase, the state's attitude towards property tax was unclear, as it was still in the debate stage. Property tax was accordingly conceptualised as either a "powerful weapon" for bringing down housing prices, or as not being the "effective remedy" for the "fever" (high housing prices) in the debates as reported in the news articles (WAR vs. DISEASE) (#46, 2010/6/21). In Phase 2, after the two major regulations launched in Phase 1, housing prices showed a timely drop. In this phase, the state intended to continue its previous tight regulations on housing speculation and investment, and accordingly conceptualised property tax as "a powerful bomb" with which to attack speculators who own multiple houses (#97, 2010/10/11).

All the media coverage in the first two phases were the preparation for the official launch of this property tax. In January 2011 (Phase 3), the state piloted the property tax, with Chongqing and Shanghai becoming the first two cities to implement it. In this Phase, JOURNEY metaphors are heavily used to deliver the message that "the journey of property tax begins". The following example is taken from a news article written soon after the property tax pilots, with a title "Property tax increases the holding cost of house".

Example 6-5. "房产税在一些城市空转已经好几年了，这次试点的推出，意味着房产税改革终于**迈**出了第一**步**."(#N160, 29/01/2011, Phase 3)

> (The property tax has been idle for years in some cities. The launch of property tax in Shanghai and Chongqing as pilots means that the property tax reform has finally **taken the first step**.)

Although this JOURNEY metaphor does not directly contribute to the premises and conclusion presented in Table 6-6, it creates the idea that the launch of property tax is after thorough consideration as the first step is difficult to make. As these pilots are led by local authorities, it hence contributes to the later discussion on accountability and the circularity of "the state is not responsible, since local authorities are responsible, but the state gave them that responsibility".

6.3.2 On accountability: the role of the leader

The arguments discussed in this section have accountability (with emphasis on the role of the leader) as their starting point. Different to the previous rhetoric of unpredictability, the rhetoric of accountability is constant throughout all the Phases, although it was especially prominent in Phase 4 when the housing market took an unexpected severe downturn. The arguments made on accountability vary from phase to phase as the conditions of the housing market and the effects of housing regulations vary across phases. Accordingly, the discussion in this section revolves around these broader conditions and the interactions between the characteristics of the phases introduced in section 6.2. A good way of presenting and discussing this variation is by grouping together similar sets of conditions, which can be linked to different kinds of rhetoric. This section is therefore split into three parts: (a) taking credit under favourable conditions (e.g., positive performance of the housing market;) (b) shifting the blame under unfavourable or unexpected conditions (e.g., an unexpected drop in housing prices and the downturn of the housing market); and (c) limiting one's liability for any unfavourable conditions under the pretext of unpredictability.

6.3.2.1 Taking credit

The state appears keen to link favourable conditions to specific actions taken (i.e., regulations) in order

to take credit for good outcomes. This appears the most in Phase 1 when housing regulations were starting to see results. This rhetoric is mostly supported by metaphors that have strong inclusion of agency, i.e., DISEASE, WAR, and NATURE (both "nature as agent" and "human as an agent over nature"). Arguments in this case are with regard to two possible agents: the state and local authorities. Arguments centring on the former present the state as an agent or authority (with metaphorical roles such as "doctor" or "boxer") in regulating the housing market. The following two examples taken from news articles in Phase 1 illustrate how metaphors serve to create such an argument. Example (a) is from a news article issued two weeks after the issuing of the "State's Eleven Measures" and it discusses the effectiveness and consistency between Jinan city's measures and the state's newly launched "Eleven Measures", with the title "What is the effect of Jinan city's "first punch" on reining in housing prices?". Example (b) is from a news article published nine days after the state's "Ten New Measures" and it focuses on reporting the changes in the housing market after the new measures, it is titled "Expand housing land supply to expel the deficient fire in the housing market".

Example 6-6. (a) 从"国四条"到"国十一条"，从"抑制"到"遏制"，中央从财政、税收等多方面打出"**组合拳**"，挤泡沫、稳房价。(#N8, 2010/1/21, Phase1)

> (From the "State Four Measures" to the "State Eleven Measures", and from "suppression" to "containment", the central government has thrown "**combo punches**" from different angles, such as fiscal and tax measures, to deflate bubbles and to stabilise housing prices.

Example 6-6. (b)政策的目标直指投资和投机型购房需求，给"**高烧**"的楼市迎头浇了一盆"**凉水**"。 (#N23, 2010/4/26, Phase 1)

> (The policy (is) aimed directly at the investive and speculative housing demand, pouring a basin of "**cold water**" over the "**feverish**" housing market.)

In example (a), the conceptual metaphor "regulating the housing market is a boxing match" is employed, where the state is conceptualised as a flexible boxer capable of adjusting its strategies during a match. The use of WAR metaphor here creates the gravity of such "combo punches" on the one hand and highlights the state's capability on the other hand. Similarly, in example (b) the state is conceptualised as a medical doctor who has the ability to treat the symptom of disease ("fever") in a timely and efficient manner (DISEASE metaphor). The state's newly launched "Ten New Measures" are represented as "cold water", which can instantly bring down high temperature (speculative housing demand). Both of these two examples draw upon the state having powerful agency, supporting an argument that emphasises the state's contribution to favourable conditions and outcomes.

It is interesting that local authorities are also present as an agent in argumentation where the state takes credit for favourable conditions, but there is a tendency to diminish their role. Although the state admits the value of the work achieved by local authorities, in this case it tends to emphasise the fact that local authorities act in accordance to the general measures issued by the state. This contributes to the general argument regarding the state as a good leader by attributing local successes to good central leadership. The logic of this reasoning process can be broken down in Table 6-8.

Premise	Local authorities' regulation worked
Premise	Local authorities' regulations are the elaborations of the state's regulation.

Conclusion (standpoint)	The state's regulation on housing is effective and successful.

Within this syllogism (Table 6-8) local authorities are regarded as operatives of the state. It is worth pointing out some level of circularity in this argument, namely: "the local authorities have done well because of our good leadership – our leadership is good because the local authorities have done well".

In Phase 1, where this type of argument is most prominent, we can also notice the tendency to explain and justify any advice issued for the local authorities, making the top-down relationship between state and local authorities more transparent. The top-down relationship is considered to be the major driver of the Chinese economic miracle, where the central government became a regulatory role ("helping hand") of the market by enacting macroeconomic policies and rules (Nee 2000; Nee and Opper 2007). To smooth the transition to the role of a "helping hand", the state extensively invested in the construction of the "elite, rational-legal bureaucracy" (Nee, 2010:2), which largely involved the promotion path of local officials discussed earlier in the thesis (see 3.4.1 and 5.3.2). Here, the state explains its philosophy for housing regulation. In the following example, taken from a news article published in Phase 1, titled "Multi-pronged measures regulated housing prices"[106], the emphasis is on the effectiveness of the multi-pronged measures issued by the state.

Example 6-7. 既不能**甲河有水滔滔**、易被私藏，也不能**乙河蓄水浅浅**、只够**养金鱼**。
(#N16, 2010/3/24, Phase 1)

> (It must not be that water in **river A is surging** and be privately owned by a small group, nor that water in r**iver B is scant** which can only be used to **raise goldfish fry**.)

In this example, the NATURE metaphor "housing regulating is farming" is used, with local authorities as the farmers and the state as an expert providing consultancy services to them. It comes as part of a news article that reports the positive outcomes of previous multi-pronged measures and offers explanations for the effectiveness of these measures. The state's philosophy is presented here as an effort to maintain the structural equilibrium of land supply. This balance is metaphorically represented by the balance between river flow and appropriate (fish-)farming activities. As analysed in section 5.7.3, resources are mostly conceptualised as "water" in economic discourse, the water discussed in this example is mapped onto the allocation of land use. The distribution of land is the responsibility of the local authorities in this case, which is why this particular metaphor relates to the advice issued directly to the local authorities, which have the tendency to distribute lands for commercial use rather than social welfare use. The state's multi-pronged measures, on the other hand, specify the proportion of commercial and social welfare land use, imposing this on the local authorities.

It is interesting to note here, that there seems to be a link between the stage of progress for specific measures/processes and the metaphors used to describe the state's contribution to those processes: when a process is at an early stage more radical metaphors (e.g., WAR) are used to show the state's strong commitment and that it is in control of all related tasks; when, on the other hand, the results of a process start to become visible (and may be less remarkable or less impressive than predicted) then the metaphors become more "mellow"/moderate (e.g., JOURNEY, NATURE) in order to divert attention from any hurdles or failings, as well as mitigating the state's control and accountability over

---

106 The original title does not present clear tense whether these regulations are to be or have been issued. The past tense written here is inferred from the news texts.

the results.

For instance, in Phase 3, at which point the IHP was vigorously under way, the rhetoric on the state as a good leader reappears in the corpus. In this case, WAR metaphors are used, with the state is conceptualised as the "general" and local authorities as "soldiers" who are under the command of the state. The following example is taken from a news article in Phase 3 titled "Heavy punch suppresses housing prices and indemnification assists (the realisation of) the security of tenure". This news article reviews the state's preceding housing regulations and draws the conclusion that previous measures worked, despite the challenges that are still present. The news article conveys the idea that to solve the problem, the state needs to sustain its previous proven-to-work regulations, especially the IHPs. Reporting on its progress, the IHP is depicted as:

Example 6-8. 眼下，各地正按照中央**部署**，坚决**打**好住房保障这场"**硬仗**"。
(#N298,17/08/2011, Phase 3)

(At present, all local authorities are following the central government's **deployment**, so as to firmly **win the "hard battle"** of IHP.)

In this example, the local authorities' engagements in IHP are described as "following the central government's deployment". The aforementioned policies are presented as being directly effective. In terms of responsibility, this separation between the general (state) and the soldiers (local authorities) allows for a separation of agency that can go either way: if successful, the general (state) can take all the credit, if unsuccessful, the soldiers (local authorities) can be blamed for not following the general's directives. This recurring rhetoric strategy, observed mostly during the early stages of a new set of measures, will be further discussed in the next two sections.

6.3.2.2 Shifting the blame

Unlike situations in which there are clearly favourable conditions and results such as those described above, the state adopts a different kind of rhetoric when the results are not visible and the conditions are not clearly determined (especially with reference to the future). We shall call this "the rhetoric of blame-shifting", because in this case the government attempts to evade any current or future blame by emphasising the role of other actors, such as the local authorities, the (uncertain) market, and private enterprises (developers).

Local authorities are one of the key actors in the housing market regulation. The state's rhetoric on blame-shifting lies heavily on its inability to control the decisions of local authorities. The main argument in these occasions is that the state is not accountable for problems in the housing situation (the reasoning process for is presented below in Table 6-9). This argument appears frequently after the housing price "troughed" in 2013 (Phases 4 and 5), and it is mostly supported by DISEASE metaphors.

Premise	The government's efforts have been on decentralising processes (including housing processes)
Premise	Local authorities are responsible for managing the housing situation
Conclusion (standpoint)	The government is not accountable for problems in the housing situation.

Table6- 9 Syllogism of "no accountability"

Sometimes local authorities are perceived as being directly controlled by the state and at other times they are being used as the scapegoats for problems or adverse effects of regulations. As shown in Table 6-9, (similarly to the logic of taking credit) the logic of "no accountability" also includes a degree of circularity ("when there are problems the government is not to blame because the local authorities are to blame – the local authorities are to blame because the government is not to blame"). In this case, the state is still presented as a strong and reliable leader, but it will divest powers when needed. The following two examples show how the state makes the argument of "no accountability" through DISEASE metaphors. Example (a) is taken from a news article in Phase 4, titled "Will encouraging rigid housing demand drive up house prices?". It discusses whether local government initiatives to encourage rigid housing demand will drive housing prices high. Example (b) was published in Phase 5, at a time when some local governments lifted restrictions on the housing market, titled "Can the lift of *Purchase Restriction Order* save the housing market?" This article reports on the regional divergence on housing.

Example 6-9. (a)如果有些地方政府打着"鼓励刚需"的旗号，行给房地产市场"**输血**"之实，目的在于激活房地产市场和土地交易市场，则需严格禁止。

> (If some local governments **"inject blood"** into the real estate market in the name of "encouraging rigid demand" in order to activate the real estate market and land trading market, it should be strictly prohibited.) (#N422, 14/05/2012, Phase 4)

Example6-9. (b) 除了管理好楼市预期，不少专家也建议地方政府抓住楼市调整机遇，根治土地财政"**痼疾**"。 (#N630, 2014/8/22, Phase 5)

> (In addition to managing the housing market expectations, many experts also suggest that local governments should seize the opportunity of housing market adjustment so as to eradicate the **"chronic disease"** of land finance.)

The use of DISEASE metaphors in these two examples create the scenario that doctors are responsible for prescribing treatment to patients. In example (a), local authorities are presented as the doctor, thus they are directly responsible for the housing market ("the patient"). Even though local authorities are responsible for managing the housing situation they are also the ones who are left to deal with the crises in housing, so they could also be conceptualised as the patient. In this case, the writers (on behalf of the state) specifically choose not to do so.

On the other hand, in example (b), local authorities are presented as riddled with a chronic disease. Dealing with the chronic disease (land finance) is presented as a prerequisite for being able to manage any further issues in the housing market. Therefore, the involvement of the state is presented as conditional upon the local authorities resolving their underlying conditions in order to be able to follow the government's advice. In this metaphor, the state is positioned as the general medical expert who diagnoses a condition which it is not responsible for treating: the state-as-medical-expert can only prescribe treatment for the condition it is responsible for (in this case, the housing market crisis) but it cannot itself help with the underlying health condition (in this case, the land finance problems).

Aside from DISEASE metaphors, NATURE metaphors are also powerful in shifting the weight of responsibility to the local authorities. The following example comes from a news article published in Phase 3, which mainly presents the efforts of the state in solving the housing issue, entitled "Heavy punch suppresses housing prices, and indemnification assists (the realisation of) the security of tenure"

(comes from the same news article with example 6-8 in section 6.3.2.1).

Example 6-10. 地方政府作为房地产调控政策的执行者，作为保障性住房建设的组织者，肩负着重要职责。中央的政策措施能否"**落地**"、"**开花**"，关键在于地方政府的决心和力度。(#N298,17/08/2011, Phase 3)

> (As the executors of the real estate regulation policies and the organisers of the construction of IHP, local governments shoulder important responsibilities. Whether the policies and measures from the central government can "**be sowed**" and "**blossom**" depends on the determination and strength (in carrying out these regulations) of local governments).

This example serves as an analogy argument. In farming activities, the result depends on the farmer's devotion to the process. Through this metaphor, the farmer is mapped onto the local authorities, the devotion of the farmer is mapped onto the effort that the local authorities invest to solve housing-related problems. The use of this NATURE metaphor fosters the understanding of housing market responsibilities as being attached to the local authorities. Of course, placing all the responsibility on the farmer's devotion obscures the many other factors that play a role in the success of farming activities (e.g., seed quality – in this case the quality of the state-issued policies). As a rhetorical choice, then, this shows that the intention of the state is not just to demonstrate that the success of actions taken depends on multiple factors (any of which can go wrong) but it is specifically to single out an agent who can fully take blame (away from the state) in the case of unsuccessful results. It is, in other words, creating a convenient scapegoat.

Aside from local authorities, the inability to control private enterprise is also a significant part of the rhetoric of blame-shifting. The major argument here rests on IHP when the project was lacking capital, with the state arguing that local authorities and private enterprises should be responsible for the realisation of the IHP goal. Potential cause and effects could be: the IHP lacking capital because it is impacting the project; because it is a convenient way to scold private enterprise; because local governments are responsible for IHP and there is an issue, focus is given to the lack of support from private enterprise as a way to shift the blame. To further address this issue, detailed examples from the state's discourse are needed. The following example is from a news article in Phase 4, titled "Moving towards the housing dream", which reviews the state's policies and measures, and related topics (e.g., people's housing needs, "land financing", a healthy management system of IHP etc.). The basic tone of this article is that the housing issue is a complex one and cannot be solved quickly, but that the state will work towards it and make the housing dream come true. This example comes from the section discussing the IHP construction goal for 2012.

Example 6-11. "**巧妇难为无米之炊**"，盖房子离不开土地和资金。要完成 2012 年建设目标，首要的是落实土地供应和资金投入. (#N443, 10/07/2012, Phase 4)

> (**Even the cleverest housewife cannot cook rice without rice.** Houses cannot be built without land and capital. To achieve 2012's construction target, land supply and financial investment should be put at the highest priority)

Similar to the previous NATURE metaphors, this FOOD metaphor works as an analogy argument, where indemnificatory houses can only be built with enough land and capital, just as a (proverbial

traditional Chinese) meal can only be cooked with (the inclusion of) rice. Later in the article, in another occurrence of a FOOD metaphor, the IHP is presented as a "meatless rib" (i.e., the part of a meal that does not have much to offer/is no one's first choice), in the sense that it has little profit and can hardly attract private enterprise, given that private entrepreneurs, by definition, prioritise profit. In that vein, if the goal of IHP in 2012 (which is to build 8 million indemnificatory houses) cannot be met, it is local authorities (who are responsible for providing the land) and private enterprise (which is responsible for providing the capital) that can be held accountable.

6.3.2.3 Limited liability in unpredictable conditions

The third kind of state rhetoric regarding accountability occurs when the housing regulation either fails or strays away from its original intentions in situations that can be described as unpredictable. This kind of rhetoric arises the most during the later stages of housing regulation, Phase 4 in particular. This rhetoric is mostly supported by the dominant metaphors of that Phase (i.e., DISEASE and NATURE), but it also has a substantial reference to WAR metaphor despite it not being a primary rhetorical device in Phase 4. Different from the rhetoric of taking credit for achievements, this rhetoric does not pose a direct discussion of the state's regulation effects on most occasions, but rather, it focusses more on the urgency of future regulations.

As introduced in section 6.2, the state imposed strict housing measures in the first three phases, and the housing market experienced an unexpected downturn in the later stages of Phase 3. Some scholars attribute this downturn to the state's strict regulations on the market (e.g., Wu 2015; Ding et al. 2017). Soon after the downturn in 2012, the state issued the "State's Five Measures" in early 2013 (late-stage Phase 4), which was reported in the media as a potential stimulus measure to rescue the housing market. With increasing accusations and criticism of the state being the major force of the high rising housing prices, the state's rhetoric on the housing market slide from taking credit to blame-avoidance.

One of the ways of avoiding the blame is to place emphasis on the changing circumstances and conditions outside of the state's control. For instance, the fluctuation of prices is presented as part of a normal (natural) process, as is done in the following example taken from a news article in Phase 4. In this example the housing market is conceptualised as a "natural world". This news article, published at the turning point as housing prices began to recover from the earlier downturn, and is titled "High housing prices are not the benefits of urbanisation". It describes the trajectory of housing prices in recent years and attributes these changes to the frequently discussed "land finance", viewing it as a side effect of China's rapid urbanisation during that time. The main idea of this article is that the high housing price is the result of land finance being dominated by local governments during the process of urbanisation. Based on this claim, the article maintains that the housing market has its own rules, offering an analogy between the housing market and the "natural world".

Example 6-12. 中心城市房地产行业"限购令"实施已近两年, "二手房市场再次火爆"的消息近日又有耳闻, 畸高房价是否挺过**寒冬**又见**暖阳**？(#N493, 2013/2/5, Phase 4)
> (The "Purchase Restriction Order" has been implemented in central cities for nearly two years. Recently, news like "second-hand housing market is hot again" has spread again. Has the abnormally-high-housing-price survived the **cold winter** and is it starting to meet the **warm sun** again?)

In this article, the housing market is metaphorically conceptualised as the habitat of the "abnormally-high-housing-price", which is in turn conceptualised as a creature (which, like all

creatures, strives to survive cold winters and finds safety in warmer climates). The market's changing state is conceptualised as the cyclical passing of the seasons. Within the frame of NATURE metaphors, the state's regulation cannot radically eliminate the downturn from the housing market in the same way as human intervention cannot change or disrupt the cycle of seasons. Accordingly, by pushing the argument that the downturn in the housing market is natural, the state absolves itself from the accusation of imprudent regulation.

Although a less frequently used metaphor type in this Phase, WAR metaphor, is adopted when the discussion turns to the state's regulation and its effects. Although previous regulations had some success on bringing down housing prices, they also posed threats to people's rigid housing demands as they mainly focused on managing the market at the buyer end. Instead of admitting its fault in suppressing the "rigid housing need", the state argues that "accidental suppression on second-home buying for upgrading is hardly avoidable" – the reasoning process is presented in Table 6-10 below. The following example is taken from a news article published a few days after the "State's Five Measures" were issued. The article is titled "(The regulation) intended to suppress speculation and 'rigid housing demand' can enjoy welfare". The news article discusses the rationality of rigid demands and conceptualises previous threats to rigid demands as "collateral injury".

Example 6-13. 调控新政策出台后, 受到关注最大的是"个人转让住房严格征收差额 20% 的个人所得税"。有人认为, 在热点城市这一税收可能会转嫁到购房者身上, 从而增加购房成本, 推高房价。尤其是改善性购房需求可能会被"误伤"。 (#N496, 07/03/2013, Phase 4)

> (After the introduction of the new regulation policy, the topic "individual home sellers will be levied 20% tax of the transaction price difference" received the most attention. Some people argued that the tax could be passed on to home buyers in some big cities, increasing the cost of housing and pushing up prices. In particular, the type of housing that aims to improve living conditions can suffer "collateral injury")

Premise	The intended goal of regulation is to curb speculative and investive house buying
Premise	Second-home buying to improve quality of life has some similarities with speculative and investive house buying
Conclusion (standpoint)	The regulation will also (unavoidably /unintentionally) curb second-home buying

Table6- 10 Syllogism of "collateral injury"

In this example, the rigid demands are conceptualised as "collateral injuries" (in a war). As in a war, collateral injuries are, by definition, unintended and unavoidable. Through the "collateral injury" metaphor, the state can therefore avoid its responsibility in the suppression on second-home buying for upgrading (/rigid housing demand), and further justify that their measures had good intentions. Compared to previous uses of NATURE metaphors where the state distances itself from the discussed issue, the use of WAR metaphor in the later part directly involves the state in the event. Although the position of the state differs in the two occasions, they both contribute to shifting the blame away from the state.

6.4 The counter-discourse: the rhetoric of anti-government commentary

6.4.1 Overview

As one of the objectives of this study and CDA studies in general is to examine the discourses of the powerless (see discussion in Chapter 3), the analysis naturally includes the counter-discourse originating in public comments which attack or subvert the dominant (the state's) ideologies and arguments. Section 6.3 showed that the state's main arguments centre on justifying the effectiveness and timeliness of their policies, reinforcing its legitimacy as the leader of the country. However, neither public opinion nor academic research (fully) support the state's arguments. In the field of political studies, the Chinese state's official rhetoric is interpreted from two perspectives: first, focusing on the scrutiny of the legitimacy of the state's claims regarding its accomplishments (e.g., Lu and Simons 2006; Xing 2009; Kluver 2010; Wang 2017; Gallelli 2018; Hartig 2018); second, centring on the ideological conflict between the self-proclaimed "communist" leadership and the market-oriented reform/economy. It is therefore reasonable to expect that counter-discourse (as it is defined in this study) targets not only the state's policies but also the party's legitimacy. It is worth noting, however, that the latter, being a more sensitive and censorship-prone matter, is achieved indirectly or more subtly through criticism that falls into three categories: (a) commentary targeting the political and economic system and blaming it for being the cause of various social issues (such as bureaucracy, low standards of living, abnormally high housing prices); (b) commentary targeting the unhealthy relations between different social actors (i.e., general corruption, collusion between [local] authorities and developers, government control of the media); and (c) commentary targeting the lack of correspondence between the purported state ideology and state policies. This categorization is made based on the topics these comments respond to. To make this categorisation, keywords of news articles that these comments respond to are identified; then, keywords that have been addressed by the comments are further collected; next, these selected keywords are tagged and grouped according to their themes, and these become the above-presented categorisation.

As shown in earlier sections (4.3.3 and 4.3.4), alongside metaphors that are shared between the two corpora (i.e., DISEASE, JOURNEY, FOOD, WAR and NATURE), the Comments corpus also includes a range of additional metaphors. These additions are: FAMILY, PLAY and ANIMAL metaphors. Of course, not all commentary can be taken as counter-discourse, since the public's diverse views range from supportive to various degrees of opposition. In Figure 6-4, the pie chart on the left shows the general distribution of stances expressed in the comments that contain metaphors: only 4% of these have a clearly expressed positive stance, whereas the rest (96%) do not express any support and/or have varying degrees of explicit or implicit criticism. It is on this latter category that the analysis in this section is focused, since this is where the elements of counter-discourse are located. It is, however, worth noting that any use of metaphor occurring in the supportive comments follows the same patterns as the state discourse without challenging or deviating from it. In the same Figure 6-4, the pie chart on the right breaks down the distribution of metaphor categories used in the non-supportive comments. Although the state-preferred JOURNEY, NATURE and WAR metaphors are still in use in the Comment corpus, they are less prominent. Instead, ANIMAL, a metaphor category which has not been used in the state's discourse, becomes the most prominent. Alongside ANIMAL, metaphor categories that have been identified as prominent within the Chinese culture are also strongly present: DISEASE and FOOD.
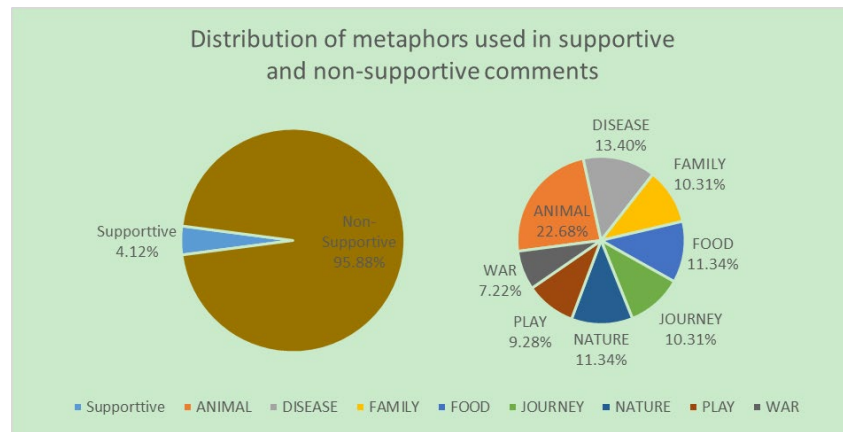
Figure6- 4 Distribution of metaphors used in supportive vs non-supportive comments

In order to compare the metaphor usage in the News Corpus and the Comment Corpus, metaphors used in the Comment Corpus are also normalised by per 1000 words. A detailed presentation of metaphor use in each phase and the overall normalised metaphor weight of each phase are shown in Figure 6-5.
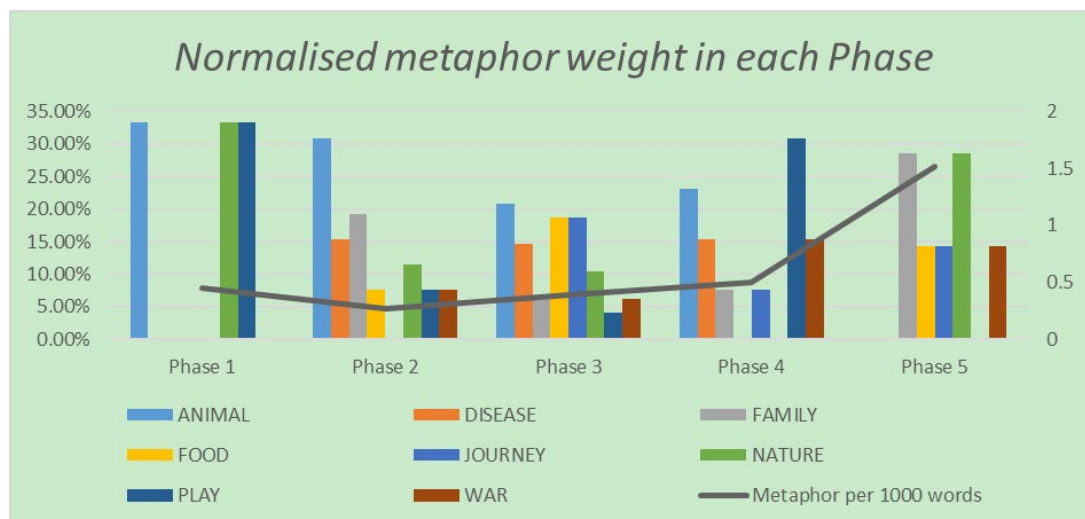

Figure6- 5 Normalised metaphor weight in each Phase

Through a comparison between the metaphor use as shown in Figure 6-3 ("Metaphor weight per Phase in News Corpus") and Figure 6-5 above, we can observe notable differences in the use of metaphor by the state and the public in different phases. First of all, the highest degree of metaphoricity occurs in different phases: Phase 1 for the News corpus versus Phase 5 for the Comment corpus. The normalised metaphor weight in Phase 5 for the Comment corpus is considerably higher than the rest, especially compared to Phase 2 and 3 which happen to have a much larger number of commentary posts. This difference can potentially be explained by the state of free speech before and after President Xi came to power, as it has been observed by scholars that there is greater freedom of speech in Hu/Wen's time (2002–2012) than in Xi's era (from 2012 onwards – see Brady 2017; Wang 2017). Accordingly, the heavier metaphor weight in Phase 5 (followed by Phase 4) suggests that metaphor may serve as a means of avoiding censorship – this will be addressed in the coming section.

The prevalence of metaphor in each phase also varies. In Phase 1, NATURE metaphors are the only category shared by both corpora (News and Comment), however, given the limited number of metaphor occurrences in the Comment Corpus (only three), this similarity is negligible. In Phase 2, the transitional phase, the state favours JOURNEY metaphors to discuss the prospects of the housing market, whereas this category of metaphor is absent in the public's discourse. Instead, ANIMAL and

159

DISEASE metaphors become dominant. In Phase 3, JOURNEY metaphors are shared by both the state and the public, although it is worth noting that they include cases of subversion, as the discussion later in this chapter will reveal (section 6.4.2.1). Aside from JOURNEY, the other metaphors that dominate the public discourse are ANIMAL and FOOD, which are absent from the state's rhetoric. In Phase 4, at which point housing prices reached their bottom and gradually recovered in the later stage within the phase, the new PLAY metaphor remarkably becomes dominant in the public discourse, and the state-favoured NATURE metaphors are absent. Phase 5 is the only phase that both the state and the public take NATURE as their dominant metaphor, although this is unsurprising as these NATURE metaphors are largely being subverted in the counter-discourse.

In the Comment Corpus, there were only 4 comments (out of a total of 97) that could be identified as clearly pro-state. These supportive comments come from Phase 2 and 3, phases where the state's rhetoric emphasizes the turning point of housing regulation (Phase 2), a phase with extensive anti-government rhetoric in the Comment corpus. These commenters align themselves with a position of "spokesperson" or "defender" of the state. Interestingly, the persuasive power of these comments is mostly realised through references to Chinese culture (e.g., Confucianism and food culture). For instance, in Phase 2, responding to the state's policies towards the limitations on home purchase of migrants,[107] the commenter employed a FAMILY metaphor with strong cultural connotations to persuade the public that the state's policy is right on target.

Example 6-14. 房价打压最根本的是限制外地人买房，炒房者大部分是外地人。调控房价的<u>老爷们</u>的智商难道不如老百姓吗？(#C92)

> (The fundamental way to supress housing prices is to limit the home purchasing of migrants. Did you think that the intelligence of the <u>grandfathers</u> who regulate housing prices is inferior to that of ordinary people?)

In this example, the commenter used the powerful FAMILY metaphor that conceptualises the public and the state as parts of a "family", within which the state officials are "grandfathers" with great experience in managing issues within the "family". The power of this metaphor can be attributed to the Confucian ideology of family, which is deeply rooted in the Chinese people's mind. According to this ideology the eldest male has absolute sovereignty and power, impervious to questioning by any other members of the family. The Confucian tradition also encourages seeking answers through experience (Wen 2009; Allen 2011), which reinforces the attribution of honour to elders, who are seen as possessing the most life experience. The state's officials are therefore represented as the wise elders in the family, which validates their choices and decisions. Another culture-related metaphor employed in support of state policy is that of FOOD. The following example is a response to the representation of the fundamental function/nature of "house" enforced by the state, as a "place of living".

Example 6-15. 虽说数九天气凉，幸有经济适用房。砂锅虽破煮饺子，任它昼短夜漫长。
(#C365)

---

[107] The migrant here refers to people whose residence is different from their registered household place (normally birthplace). Therefore, this definition includes both people who have reasonable housing needs (migrant workers) and the speculators (the target of suppression). This explains why the policy received extensive criticism when it was launched.

(Although it is the coldest winter, we are lucky to have affordable housing.

A shabby cooking pot can still cook dumplings, even when the days are

short and nights are long.)

In this example, the metaphor "affordable housing is grain ration (/essential food)" used in the state's rhetoric is extended to "the affordable housing scheme is a shabby (i.e., basic/bare function) cooking pot" and housing needs are mapped onto alimentary needs, "houses are dumplings". The power of this metaphor relies on the importance of food for subsistence, which is equated to the importance of a house for shelter/survival, which has priority over any considerations of luxury or quality. The commenter's stance here shows satisfaction and even gratitude, promoting the idea that it is not fair to have too high expectations when it comes to the quality of affordable houses.

Within the non-supportive comments, we can distinguish between discernibly critical and those where there is no discernible criticism. Within those that are discernibly critical we can further distinguish between those that use literal language to criticise, where metaphor as an additional rhetorical device, and those that criticise through non-literal (metaphorical) language only/primarily, where metaphor is used as an analogy. Accordingly, there are four categories of comments in total, which are (1) supportive, (2) non-supportive but with no discernible criticism, (3) discernible criticism through literal language, and (4) discernible criticism through non-literal language. The frequency and proportions of these categories of comments are presented in Figure 6-6. The last two categories are the place of counter-discourse. As Figure 6-6 shows, almost three quarters (71.13%) of the comments are counter-discourse, and near half (47.42%) of the comments are discernible criticism through metaphors.

Figure6- 6 Distribution of comments by attitude
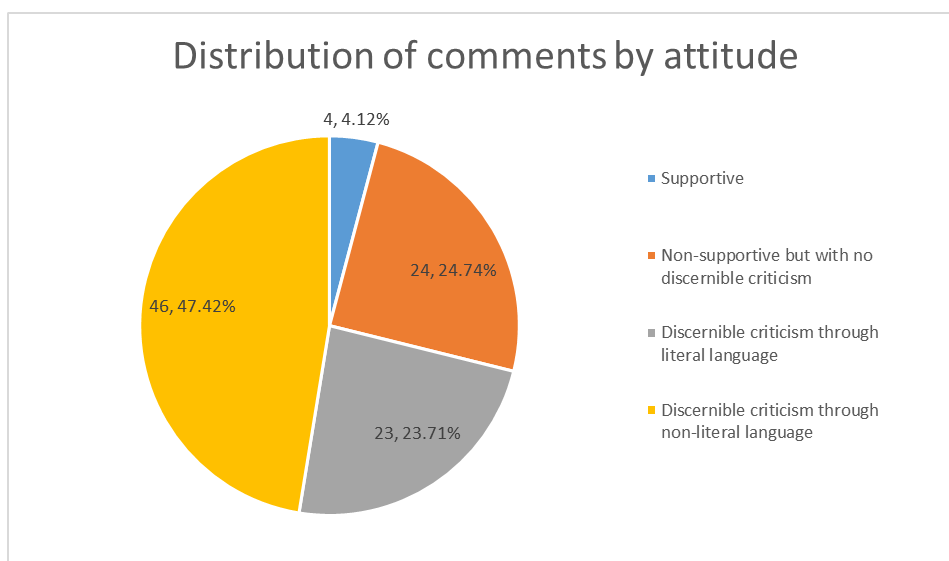
Table 6-11 shows the comments topic/target (based on the aforementioned three-way distinction of critical comments) in each phase.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Frequency
Purported ideology vs. policy	1	10	17	6	4	38
ANIMAL			2			2
DISEASE		3	7	1		11
FAMILY		1				1

FOOD		1	1		1	3
JOURNEY		1	4	2	1	8
NATURE	1	1	1		2	5
PLAY		3	1	3		7
WAR			1			1
System	1	2	3	3	2	11
ANIMAL		1		2		3
FAMILY		1	1		2	4
FOOD			2			2
PLAY	1					1
WAR				1		1
Unhealthy relations	1	8	11			20
ANIMAL	1	5	7			13
FAMILY		2	1			3
FOOD			3			3
NATURE		1				1
Frequency	3	20	31	9	6	69

Table6- 11 Distribution of topics by Phase (counter-discourse)

One of the features of the phases being examined is that there is a significant political power transition, with the first three phases under the leadership of Hu and Wen, and the latter two phases are known as the Xi Era. From Table 6-11, a difference can be seen in the focus of criticism in these two eras. The most obvious distinction is the absence of discussion on "unhealthy relations" in the Xi Era. This abruptly change could be explained that anti-corruption was the main propaganda at the time under the leadership of Xi. Anti-corruption was a major platform when Xi came to power, and it has become the central task of the party and government. Accordingly, corruption and other related topics that reveal the unhealthy relations has faded out from the public's attention. Instead, people's criticism (by metaphorical language) towards the system considerably increased in Xi's era. This shift could potentially be caused by the fact that Xi's power and influence has gradually penetrated all corners of the society. More importantly, Xi's official power became much stronger than his predecessors as the party and the government promoted the concentration of power into Xi's hands, where he is the symbolic icon of the party/government/country through nationalistic propaganda (Kojima 2015; Brown 2017).

In the counter-discourse, over half of the metaphors contribute to the criticism of the lack of correspondence between the state's purported ideologies and the actual policies (see Chapter 2 for detailed discussion on the state's ideologies). This criticism takes three forms: the state being theoretically divorced from the people (questioning its ideologies); the state being hypocritical and sanctimonious (using housing regulation as a veil); and, the state's inability to regulate the housing market. The comments that form the counter-discourse (or, in other words, the resistance to the state propaganda) also question the state for deviating from its original path. This criticism is particularly noteworthy in Phase 3, which can be considered as a response to the state's rhetoric on "structural adjustment" during this same phase. In the media, the state's position is that both state and party members should remember their original aspiration to serve the people wholeheartedly (the slogan is written as "不忘初心" in Chinese). This is precisely the point that gets frequently questioned in the counter-discourse. Additionally, the state's claims of benevolence through different policies and

measures is exposed by its critics as being hypocritical. As regards to the critics' perception of the state's inability to govern, there are three main points of criticism: the inconsistent and sometimes contradictory housing policies; incorrect approaches to housing regulation (with the people having better ideas); and blaming ineffectual policies for less than desirable market performance.

According to Table 6.4.1a, most of the state's dominant metaphors, such as DISEASE, JOURNEY and NATURE, are also frequently used in the counter-discourse under the discussion of the deviation between the state's purported ideologies and actual policies in practice. This is because most of these metaphors are being subverted within the counter-discourse (more detailed discussion on subversion will be presented in the next section). Aside from these dominant metaphors shared by both the state and the counter discourse, a new category of metaphor, the PLAY metaphor, is created and used specifically and extensively to outline the acting of the state ("the state is an actor"). In so doing, the counter-discourse seeks to expose the hypocritical and sanctimonious characteristics of the state, which are being disguised by using housing regulation as a fancy veil.

The second most frequently discussed topic within the counter-discourse comments is the unhealthy relationships of different social actors, which reveals animosity towards the state, the officials and property developers. As shown in Table 6.4.1a, this topic appears frequently in Phase 2 and 3 when IHP becomes a popular topic in the news reports. These are also phases in which housing prices went through significant changes, dropping from a high peak to a deep valley, and then gradually recovering. Among all categories of metaphor, the ANIMAL metaphors is used remarkably more extensively than the others. This is because the (discernible critical) discussion on unhealthy relations involves different social actors, such as state officials, property develops and the media, with ANIMAL metaphors being used as a powerful device of dehumanisation (Ana, 1999). Accordingly, the extensive use of ANIMAL metaphors indicates people's distaste for these social actors.

The third area of criticism in the counter-discourse targets the political and economic system, dealing with issues such as bureaucracy, the low standard of living, and abnormally high housing prices. It has been argued that China's ruling Communist Party has moved China's economy increasingly toward capitalism[108] since 1978, putting its legitimacy under the spotlight (Lu and Simons 2006; Xing 2009). Similarly, there are also commentary posts pointing out the state's deviation from its original path, criticising the political and economic system of China, attributing the fundamental reasons of any social issue to the system, even including revolutionary undertones (e.g., by making reference to rebellions in the history of China).

6.4.2 Metaphor in the counter-discourse under surveillance and media censorship

In the 2010s China gradually allowed freer social media, which crucially contributed to monitoring and exposing corruption (Qin et al., 2017). The studied corpus contains signs of this with frequent references to corruption. However, the severity of internet censorship as a whole cannot be ignored when discussing contemporary Chinese online communication (e.g., Fu et al., 2013; Tai 2014). It therefore needs to be noted that all of the commentary posts in the studied corpus are those that have successfully passed through the censorship system, meaning that there is an unknown volume/level of intended criticism that was never allowed to be seen publicly. Also, the previsoused discussed research (in 3.31) led by King and his colleagues (King et al., 2013) took place during a time that is now

---

[108] The word "capitalism" used by the author is inappropriate in CPC's view. For CPC, going marketisation does not mean moving towards capitalism.

considered more liberal in terms of freedom of speech, whereas a considerable portion of this corpus comes from a later time, known for its stricter censorship policies (Pei, 2020). Within this context, metaphor can be seen as having the additional function of conveying criticism in a more subtle or symbolic manner, and in ways that do not get picked up by the censors (Ortony, 1975). It is in other words presumed that the use of metaphor made it possible for some of these comments to survive censorship.

As Figure 6-6 shows, 23.71% of the commentary posts express their discernible criticism through literal language. In these commentary posts, metaphors also exist and are used in the same way as in the state's rhetoric but as counter proposals. These commentary posts mainly contribute to the argument that the state's purported ideologies and its policies are inconsistent. The following two examples are of this kind. Example 6-16 is a commentary post responding to a news article published in Phase 2 which reports the trends in housing prices, and example 6-17 is in response to a news article issued in Phase 3 discussing the relationship between the housing sector and the economy. The news article claims that the steady growth of economy cannot rely on the housing sector, signalling that current strict housing regulations will be continued.

Example 6-16. 越限越涨。已经**无药可救**了，崩盘吧 (#C352, Phase 2)
(The more (housing) regulations, the higher the housing prices. There is **no medicine that can save** (the housing market). Just let it crash.)

Example 6-17. 为什么不征房产税？这可是**一剂良药**哦。(#C450, Phase 3)
(Why not levy the property tax? That is **a good medicine.**)

In example 6-16, the main criticism is expressed through the literal statement that the more the state regulates the housing market, the higher the housing prices, which suggests either the state's regulation is not effective, or the housing market is beyond help. Through adopting the metaphors ("the housing market is sick" and "housing regulations are treatment") previously used by the state, the comment further reinforces the criticism that the housing market is severely diseased, without hope of being treated by any medicine. The final part of the comment "let it crash" is an expression of exasperation and resignation. Rather than subverting MEDICINE metaphors, the comment uses them as a link to the state's rhetoric, while presenting a very different picture of reality, one in which measures (metaphorical treatment/medicine) are now futile.[109]

The criticism in example 6-17 has a somewhat sarcastic tone. This example echoes the state's metaphor "housing regulations are treatment" and its subordinate "helpful/effective regulations are good medicines". An alternative to these regulations has always been levying the property tax. However, the current measures mentioned in the news article do not include levying the property tax, which leads the commenter to bring up this alternative as truly "good medicine", juxtaposing it to the state's false (by implication) "good medicine" of housing regulations. Like in the previous example, the role of the metaphor here is not to carry the criticism in itself, but to reinforce it via the means of echoing. The overall tone, aided by the use of metaphor, comes across as somewhat playful and biting, hence the sarcastic nuance of this comment.

---

[109] On the topic of futility, see also a previously discussed comment (example 5-7 in section 5.1.2) where a DISEASE metaphor is used to represent the state of the market as having "late stage cancer" and thus being unable to be saved, in this way subverting the state's usual MEDICINE metaphors and their emphasis on treatment and hope.

6.4.2.1 Subversion

One of the primary features of the counter-discourse lies in its prevalent use of subversion. According to Chilton (1996:58–59), there are mainly three ways of contesting a metaphor.

The first, is by replacing the source domain of the original metaphor with a different but related one. For example, in the examined corpora, "houses are bread" is the metaphor used by the state (with land being represented as "flour"), while the critical comments prefer "houses are steamed buns". What, on the surface, seems like a minor tweak of the source domain might carry considerable weight, since the connotations of "bread" in Chinese culture are very different to those of "steamed buns": the former, being a western product, is far less traditional, accessible, and important to everyday life than the latter. With this change, counter-discourse reveals that the state's rhetoric on houses may be treating them as less essential for the people as they really are.

The second way of contesting a metaphor is by retaining the source domain but reframing it. One of the most common subversions through reframing the source domain is manifested in JOURNEY metaphors. In the state's discourse, the housing reform is conceptualised as a "journey", with policies and measures are "paths" to the successful journey, or at least innovative "paths". In the counter-discourse, the source "path" is maintained, but it is perceived as a route to failure or as a road that has already been travelled.

The third main way to contest a metaphor is by retaining the conceptual metaphor but reinterpreting it as a whole. For instance, in the state-employed HOUSING REFORM IS WAR metaphor, the state and the people are fighting on the same side, with the same goal. When the same metaphor is used in the counter-discourse, the state is presented as standing side-by-side with developers rather than the people, with its goals not being aligned with the people's interests. This further leads to the suggestion that the people should not obey the state's orders, because they are not fighting in the same camp.

In the counter-discourse, the state's rhetoric is also contested in similar ways as outlined by Chilton. With regards to the state's primary rhetoric of uncertainty, which posits that the uncertain nature of the housing market requires the state to adjust its regulations in response to change, the counter-discourse tends to argue that the uncertain circumstances are caused by the state's inconsistent policies, an argument which is in line with the observations of scholars (e.g., Stern and Hassid 2012; Xu et al. 2016; Chen et al. 2018). The following two examples both refer to such inconsistencies. They have been discussed earlier as well (section 5.1, example 5-18 and section 5.2, example 5-37) but by revisiting them here, we can now place emphasis on the element of subversion:

Example 6-18. 从来没有见过哪一个产业像房地产一样，年年**吃药**，一会**春药**，一会**打胎药**，扫黄也没有像房地产市场的调控如此热衷和频繁！(#C303, Phase 2)

(Have never seen an industry like real estate, **taking medicines** every year, "at first an **aphrodisiac** followed by an **abortion pill** immediately after. Even "anti-vice" [cracking down on pornography) was not so keen and frequent as real estate market regulation!)

Example 6-19. 一脚**刹车**，一脚油门，中国这两经济大巴快开翻了!座车里的我们怎么办？！(#C240, Phase 2)

(One foot on **brake**, one foot on **accelerator**, China, this **economy bus** is about to **overturn**! What about us **sitting in the car**?!)

One aspect of these examples (as discussed in section 5.1) is the contrast between natural

remedies (the aphrodisiac), which are more in-line with TCM, and artificial, as well as invasive, substances like the abortion pill. On top of that contrast, the element of subversion comes from the fact that a medical term (the abortion pill) is not used to represent a remedy, nor with any positive connotations, but instead in order to place emphasis on the action of undoing and ultimately the futility of two actions that cancel each other out. The metaphor evokes the image of an undecided mind, choosing one path and then choosing to undo its consequences, hence the representation of the state as inconsistent, as well as irresponsible in its actions. This irresponsibility is also implied as contradictory approaches are not only inefficient, but also potentially dangerous, in the same way that burdening the body with conflicting/incompatible substances can have serious consequences.

Example 6-19 also deals with an action-reversal pair, "brake" and "accelerator", again with the aim of pointing out inconsistencies. The state discourse has included the metaphorical use of "shifting gear" to conceptualise regulations in reaction to the housing market conditions. Using the same general source domain (driving), the commenter moves away from the image of "gear" to the image of the two controls that instantly change the speed of the car, and which also have the ability to cancel each other out. The image of a sudden and disastrous move is also being created, contrary to the state's portrayal of the effects of regulations as smooth and gradual. At the same time, the image of the overturning of the vehicle is in itself a subversion of the state's use of JOURNEY metaphors: rather than emphasising the hopefulness of a journey towards a goal or a bright future, here the metaphor uses the scenario of an accident, which is a sudden and tragic end to a journey.

It is worth teasing out two different types of inconsistencies that these two comments reveal. The first is internal to the central government's process of decision making: the central government is reformist in practice but it frequently adopts a more conservative rhetoric in order to allow the vote on regulations to pass with more conservative members (see Huang, 2013). This divergence of opinion between the reformist and the more conservative tendencies within the government is clear to the public, as reflected in their comments. At the same time, however, there is also a divergence between the central government and the local government. While the central government designs, plans, and announces the policies, the local governments are charged with implementing them. This process does not always go smoothly, since local governments frequently make their own decisions about whether/how to implement the central government's measures. This immediately creates a situation of two actors, which can be visualised as two "doctors" or "drivers" to borrow terms from the two previous examples. This is in contrast to the state rhetoric's emphasis on a united strong leadership (as shown in WAR metaphors, for example, where there is only one "general", the state, who has the absolute power). The counter-discourse can, therefore, be seen as working with the negative connotations of a divided (rather than united) leadership, the consequences of which are ineffective and inconsistent, if not disastrous, results.

Aside from the frequently subverted JOURNEY and DISEASE metaphors, FAMILY metaphors are also popular within the critical comments, especially when discussing the collusion between the state/officials and developers. According to Wang (2017), the CCP's rhetoric favours traditional Chinese culture, while also aiming to legitimise the Party's ideologies as moral norms and principles. Although FAMILY metaphors do not appear frequently in the state's discourse (with only two instances conceptualising the people as "brothers and sisters"), family still frequently appears in the state's rhetoric when it refers the country (China).[110] In the counter-discourse, this rhetoric is also subverted, for example:

---

[110] i.e., "our country+family" (我们国家), a word which is composed by joining the characters for "country" and "family".

Example 6-20. 老子打儿子，会动真格吗？还指望儿子来养呢！(#C92, Phase 2)

(Will the **father** beat his **son** severely? [He) still expects his **son** to support him [when he gets old)!)

This comment responds to a news article reporting that several illegal property enterprises were closed by local authorities. In this example, the image of "father" is mapped onto local authorities, and "son" is mapped onto developers through a FAMILY metaphor. In Chinese culture, the distinction between the dynamics/relationships within the family and those that the family forms with the public (the public image of the family unit) is quite important. Following this distinction, the punishment of children when done in public view is considered rather "symbolic" and a show of respect for rules and customs: the more severe the public punishment, the greater the authority of the father. Within the family unit, on the other hand, such severe punishments are normally avoided. If they ever occur, then they constitute a rather serious conflict and potential breakage of family bonds. This example refers to this latter case using the word "seriously". As tradition dictates that the elders (the fathers) be supported by the young generation (the sons), a breakage of family bonds may lead to the father being abandoned by the sons when he gets old. Here we have a metaphorical representation of the shutting down of the illegal property enterprises as a form of public punishment ("for show") rather than an actual severe punishment that would end up in the breaking of bonds between the two entities involved, i.e., the local government and the illegal developers, who are represented as having a family (father–son) relationship. What is more, there is the conventional belief in Chinese culture (and in other cultures) of "spare the rod, spoil the child". Therefore, if the beating (punishment) is not intense, the "child" (developers) might be spoiled and be of no use to the family and society. In that case, the blame would fall on the "father" (the local government) for being too lenient towards the "son" (developers).

Moving on to another subversion of metaphor, it is worth looking into the case of FARMING metaphors. In the state's discourse, FARMING metaphors represent the government as an honest/benevolent farmer, reaping the results of hard work and cultivating the land (regulating the economy, and more specifically the housing market). An interesting subversion of this metaphor within the counter-discourse occurs when the "farmer" (the government) is presented as greedy and selfish, caring for its own profit.

Example 6-21. 三十年整地除草，三十年卖地分赃。(#C92, Phase 2)

(Thirty years for **weeding the field**, and thirty for **selling the land and dividing the spoils**.)

In this example, the "rule of three" is used to create a stronger rhetorical effect, while also employing the dual meaning of "30 years": as a literal duration of the phases between the founding of the PRC (1949), the "reform and opening up" stage (1978), and the present day (2010), but also as an allusion to the popular saying "30 years East bank and 30 years West bank", which is used to mean "things change/nothing lasts forever". The comment starts with a positive image that corresponds to the first thirty years since the founding of the PRC when land reform was taking place (meant to be used by the people), followed with two negative images, where the farmer, instead of cultivating the field, gives up on it and sells it (representing the local government stopping the land reform and using the land for profit or for political gain) and finally the farmer dividing the spoils with the land-buyers in a self-serving manner (representing the collusion between local government and developers).

In the state's rhetoric, metaphors such as DISEASE, WAR and JOURNEY constantly convey an image of "further reform". This in turn creates an expectation that market reforms are a way towards the accomplishment of the people's housing goals, which are metaphorically represented as dreams. Overall, the "Chinese dream" is a rhetoric used for arousing the sentiment of nationalism and for building the collective hope that people will eventually enjoy the benefits of reform (Xing 2009; Gallelli 2018; Hartig 2018). Counter-discourse subverts this conceptualisation of dreams, focusing not on the positive connotations (state of bliss, accomplishment) but on the negative ones (unattainable, easy to dissolve), as in the following example:

Example 6-22. 对，让民众安居**梦随风飘散**吧 （#C573, Phase 5)
(Yes, let the people's housing **dream go with the wind**)

Example 6-22 is a reader comment responding to a news article reporting the danger of houses with limited property rights and calling for the government to take measures to ban it. Since houses with limited property rights are sold in a lower price compared to the general houses sold in the housing market, they became popular among the people who wants to own a house but with limited amount of money, and being regarded as a way of realising their housing dreams. In this news article, the author suggest the government to ban this type of houses with limited rights, thus, being considered as a dream that is about to be broken by the commentor of this example. It interestingly mixes its metaphors, by adding the element of the wind, creating the image of something blowing in the wind and eventually disappearing. This is potentially linked to the metaphor used in the article it responds to, which is a JOURNEY metaphor of a sailing ship. In particular, it concerns a news article in Phase 5 at the end of year 2014, which reports the state's expectation for the new year and quotes the words from President Xi Jinping, "to realise the housing dream, and the Chinese dream", followed by "the economy is a ship sailing into a new field of sea, of which is full of winds and reefs". Thus, the comment makes use of both the dream as a source domain and the implied wind (present in the act of sailing) as a second source domain, jointly creating a powerful metaphorical image that counters those included in the article.

6.4.2.2 Language play and metaphors

Another characteristic of the counter-discourse is its sense of playfulness. One of the most obvious features is the extensive use of near homophones to address officials as animals, such as: "public servant ape" (originally, "公务员/ public servant official", where "official/员" is the near homophone of "ape/猿"); "Bureau of Chicken" (originally, "统计局/Bureau of Statistics", where "计/statistics" is the near homophone of "鸡/chicken"); and "Department of Pig" (originally, "住建部/ Department of housing", where "住/housing" is the near homophone of "猪/pig"). The use of these near homophones in the critical commentary posts triggers amusing imageries.

The playfulness of the commentary posts is also revealed through parody, for instance:

Example 6-23. 想起一首歌：起来，饥寒交迫的**奴隶**！ （#C476, Phase 4)
(Reminds me of a song. Arise, ye who are **slaves**, hungry and cold!)

In this example, the commenter quotes an older (now abandoned) version of the national anthem of China (*March of the Volunteers*) where the vocative addresses "slaves, hungry and cold". The modern version of the anthem says instead "arise ye who refuse to be slaves". The national anthem is

set in the war against Japan's invasion of China, highlighting the courage and fighting spirit of the people. Interestingly, the modern version does not represent the people as being already enslaved (they refuse to become slaves), whereas the older version did, also representing them as suffering (hungry and cold). By choosing this version, presumably referring to the people who expect to buy houses, the commenter represents them as enslaved and suffering, and being oppressed and impoverished due to the high housing prices. The prompting towards an uprising shows the belief that people in the current circumstances have to fend for themselves and not trust the government to protect or fight for their interests.

Irony is, of course, another common strategy in the counter-discourse.

Example 6-24. 胡说，房价调一次涨一次，怎么能说不力？明显是很有力吗，比吃**伟哥**还见效！(#C92, Phase 2)

> (Nonsense, every time when there is a housing regulation, there is a rise in housing prices. How can (you) say it is not powerful (/ineffective)? Obviously, it is very powerful, even more effective than **taking Viagra!**)

In this example, the commenter ironically compares the relation of housing regulation and the rise of housing prices to taking Viagra and having an erection. Through this metaphor, a causal relationship is created, which supports the argument that housing regulation brings up housing prices. By ironically affirming that housing regulations are effective, this commenter blames the state for its ineffective policies and incompetence.

Even more powerful and extended imagery is employed in the case of allegory, which is also used playfully and with a sarcastic tone. In the following example, when criticising the collusion between the state/officials and property developers, an allegory is used, which is inspired by a common idiom: "fox/dog friends" (狐朋狗友), which in Chinese culture conventionally refers to "bad friends/companions".

Example 6-25. **狐狸和狗演的一场戏**。就是想看**羊**着急的样子。(#C352, Phase 3).
> (**A play acted by the fox and a dog.** (They) just want to see the anxious face of the **sheep**.)

This example comes from a comment responding to a news article reporting the lack of capital/money invested into IHP because of property developers' reluctance to get involved. In this example, the commenter metaphorically portrays this phenomenon as a "play", where the "fox" (the developers) and the "dog" (the state) are the main characters. The representation of the state as a loyal dog is common in the counter-discourse, which emphasises the collusion between the state and the developers. In this imagery, then, "fox" stands for the cunning and selfish developers. On the other hand, the play is watched by the "sheep" representing the people, who can do nothing but wait for these "bad friends" to make all the decisions for them. The format of this comment is reminiscent of the popular allegorical short stories involving animals, which usually come with a moral. The moral presumably here being that the people should not trust anything that the state and developers say or do.

Interestingly, the imagery of a stage play appears again in the comments in the following example, where the state is once more represented as an actor:

Example 6-26. **演戏**，天下第一了，其他的一无是处！(#C482, Phase 4)

([Their] **acting** ranks number one in the world, but everything else is good for nothing!)

This example comments on a news article which reports that the state is planning to modify the law on affordable houses so as to suit people's changing needs in housing. However, this movement is criticised as putting on a show. The state constantly promotes the idea that the political system of China and the party are superior to the rest of the world's, which becomes the target of this comment. It sarcastically points out that the only area where China is superior to the rest of the world is acting, thus expressing through exaggeration the state's insincerity, while also criticising the country's failure to meet its ambitious targets.

Another use of allegory is to critique the state's faithfulness to its principles (see also example 6-22, with the selfish farmer) and its purported goal of serving the people:

Example 6-27. **厨师**问一头**猪**，你死后想被做成什么**菜**啊？糖醋排骨，红烧肉，水煮肉片，还是四喜丸子什么的？
猪: ......额......
厨师：哎呀，民主社会嘛，畅所欲言，随便说没关系的
猪: ......其实我不想死。
厨师：你看看你，一开口就跑题了吧。。(#C235, Phase 3)

(The **cook** asks a **pig**: "what **dish** do you want to be made of after you die? Sweet and sour spareribs, braised pork in brown sauce, sliced pork in hot chili oil, or braised pork balls in gravy?"

Pig: "...eh…."

Cook: "Hey, (this is) a democratic society, just say whatever you want, it doesn't matter."

Pig: "…Actually, I don't want to die."

Cook: Look at you. You go off on a tangent.)

This is a comment posted in Phase 3, responding to a news article discussing the future tendencies of housing prices. In that news article, the journalist surveyed the public's attitude towards housing and housing prices. In this example, the commenter targets the survey format in the news article, allegorically linking the journalist (representing the interests of the state) with the chef and the people with the pig in the story. In this example, the chef (state) offers several options to the pig, asking what it wants to be made after its death. The pig, knowing the pointlessness of the whole exercise, does not say a word. In order to encourage the pig to speak (or to participate in a "democratic" process), the chef claims that it can pick whatever it wants. Then the pig of course points out that there is no good option for it, since the goal was not to die in the first place, a point which is dismissed by the chef. In the chef's eyes, of course, the only value of the pig is to be cooked into dish. This example creates a sarcastic scenario where democracy as understood by the chef is a false sense of the pig having any rights, when in fact democracy only exists on paper and essentially for the satisfaction of the chef. This example, similarly to the previous one, presents once more the image of the powerlessness of the people and dissociation between the people's needs/interests/beliefs and the state. At the same time it is a sharp criticism towards the current state of "democracy" in modern China. It is worth noting that this is the kind of sharp criticism that might have fallen victim to censorship had it not been presented as an allegory.

Finally, the reference to the classic story of the "Emperor's New Clothes" also appears in the

comments with the usual goal of pointing out a bad situation that everyone pretends they are not seeing. The example below is a response to another comment, with both comments linked to a news article is titled "Housing prices in 12 cities dropped on a month-over-month basis".

Example 6-28. A: 我 TM 都没听过这些城市！你能说点大城市吗？(#C218, Phase 3)
(I have fucking never heard of these cities, can you name some big ones?)
Example 6-28. B: 你不是"**皇帝的新衣"故事**里的那孩子？(#C218, Phase 3)
(You are the child in the "**Emperor's New Clothes" story)**

Comment B praises comment A for pointing out an obvious flaw that no one dared to mention, just like the child in the story, who speaks out the truth. Here the emperor represents the state, while his pretend-clothes (which do not exist) represent the pretend-success of the regulations, the reporting of which is based on heavily skewed/unreliable data. This is the case not only because the number and size of the mentioned "12 cities" is tiny, but also because the statistics are misleading. "Month-over-month basis" is not as accurate as "yearly basis", even more so when this reporting compares the months of March and February, the latter being the holiday month for Chinese New Year when housing prices always tend to be much higher.

6.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has demonstrated the rhetoric trajectories of the government-lead discourse in different phases of the housing market. It has also been shown that the rhetoric battle between the governlent-led discourse and its counter-discourse is actually power struggles between social acotrs these discourses represent. For the governmnt-led discourse, metaphors are used to legitimize the state's role as a leader. For instance, to explain the unpredicatable behaviour of the market, thus, addressing to its freuqnely accused issue of being inconsistent, or taking credit when positive results (normally a drop of housing prices no matter is due to the state's regulations of bacause of the econminc cycle) are observed, shifting blame when unwanted conditions are happened, and claiming limited liability in unpredictable conditions.

In the government-led discourse, metaphor is eitehr used as a premise of an argument, or as a conclusion or standpoint of an argument, however in the counter-discourse, metaphor is mostly used as a way of subversion. Also, in the counter-discourse, metaphors sued by the anti-government public are with diverse linguistic forms, such as the extensive use of near homophones (e.g.: "Bureau of Chicken", "Department of Pig"), parody, irony, and allegory. The different use of metaphors in the government-led discourse and its counter-discourse also supports the argument earlier made in this research project, that is, it is an representation of the power and power struggles in Chinese society. For the government-led discourse, which represents the state, its primary goal is to legitimize it governing position; while for the counter-discourse, mostly representing people being oppressed and whose speech being censored, its primary goal is to make their voices pass through the censorship system, thus potentially to challenge/subvert the state's hegemonic power.

7 Conclusions

Motivated by easing the power struggles in Chinese society and improving people's living conditions, this thesis investigated the rhetorical battle regarding the Chinese housing discourse (2010–2014) and the role of the government in regulating it, analysing the ways in which different conceptual metaphors contributed to the argumentation and power dynamics between government-led discourse and its counter-discourse.

First, a synergised model for analysing metaphors in Chinese discourse was proposed (Chapter 2), triggered by the observation that the existing theoretical approaches do not attempt a tailored approach that would be able to cover both the individuality of the Chinese context and the tradition of CDA. Then, a model for metaphor identification in a large data set (corpus) was proposed. This methodological proposal consisted of a set of necessary and jointly sufficient steps, and it was meant to modify previous MIP methods in ways that would better serve this project's particular research needs (Chapter 4). The greatest difference between the proposed method and traditional MIP methods is that it calls for an additional step of querying collocates of collocates. This step can largely avoid any risk of missing any related metaphors that do not possess the keywords identified from the sample corpus.

Before heading towards metaphor analysis, the social background of CHD is investigated. Through the investigation of the socio-economic context of CHD, it was shown that there are crucial power struggles in Chinese society regarding housing, and the presence of censorship and surveillance system make these power struggles even severe. Through the investigation of major social actors, it was found that there are dispute ideologies (on housing in this case) among Chinese society.

Answering the first Research Question (identified in 1.1: "How is the state's authority, agency, and accountability represented through metaphors within different camps (pro-government and anti-government) of the CHD?"), it was found that the government-led discourse and the pro-government public discourse portray the state as a responsible and competent leader, assisted by the use of metaphors that highlighting the autonomy and professionalism of the agent, such as doctor, general, captain and horse-rider. It was also found that the state's agency changes depending on the state of the market and the IHP, as well as the interpreted effectiveness of the regulatory measures: when the latter can be presented as successful, the government-led discourse uses metaphors where credit is given to the state as an active agent whereas when blame needs to be avoided and placed elsewhere, emphasis is given on metaphors that represent the unpredictability of conditions, as well as the interference of factors that are outside the control of the state (notably, the property developers, whose representation as friend or foe also shifts depending on the state of the market. From the perspective of the counter-discourse, we see attempts at subverting the dominant metaphors, which result in the state being presented as an irresponsible or reckless leader, who says one thing but does another. The participants in the counter-discourse also use metaphors not found in the government-led corpus (ANIMAL, FAMILY), which they can then have full control over, within the CHD, thus making their own claim to power.

Answering the second Research Question ("What are the rhetorical, argumentative, and ideological underpinnings of the changes in metaphor use within CHD per the housing market conditions?"), it was found that the role of conceptual metaphor use is twofold: (a) it can be the root of argumentation, as well as reinforcing the premises of argumentation and (b) it is deliberatively adapted to the changes in market conditions, in order to serve the state's changing rhetorical purposes.

In other words, metaphors are employed to serve different intentions at different political, economic, and situational contexts. The power dynamics between the government-led discourse (holders of power/hegemony) and the anti-government discourse (claiming or reclaiming power) are also reflected in and affected by metaphor use. We saw a number of very characteristic examples of metaphor subversion on the part of the counter-discourse, which had a clear connection to the commenters' attempt to (re)claim power and diminish the power of the state. Not only that, but also the use of metaphor with the aim of avoiding censorship can also be viewed as an attempt to reclaim power, i.e. the power of free speech, which is limited through the actions of the state.

Aside from addressing the main research questions, the findings also show that the case of CHD is, to a great extent, culture-specific. It was shown that the government-led rhetoric favours Chinese traditional culture, for instance, the Yin-Yang philosophy, TCM and ancient weapons. This observation is in line with previous research findings that the CCP's rhetoric favours traditional Chinese culture in order to legitimize the party's ideologies as moral norms and principles. In the counter-discourse, culture is also a powerful weapon. There, we also find metaphors that are not present in the government-led discourse, most characteristically FAMILY metaphors, which adopt the traditional Confucian view of family order, hierarchy, and absolute power, in order to portray the role of the state as a non-egalitarian leader, who deviates from the Maoist principle and the constitution of the People's Republic, according to which Chinese people are the "head of the family".

In all, the main contribution of this research project is that it is a thorough analysis of the use of metaphor in CHD, focusing on the rhetoric battle and the representation of variant ideologies. This fruitful analysis does not only provide a perspective for understanding CHD, but also enriches the study of metaphor with findings from Chinese culture and context, which has. This research project also has significant contribution to other fields, such as censorship studies, media studies, and Chinese studies.

This research project also has the potential for further impact, following the manifesto of CDA, which is to push towards social change, aside from providing an analysis of discourses. It can be argued that, in order to better address the housing issue, it is important to acknowledge the diversity of housing needs, something which is missing from the state's actions and its representative rhetoric. Recognising the diversity of housing needs can also reveal the increasing class gap in current Chinese society, which, to the state could be seen as a threat to "social union" and "social harmony". It should, however, not be neglected, as these divisions and inequalities are already perceived by the public, as shown in the analysis of the Comment corpus.

Another issue that arises from the examination of the counter-discourse is the alienation between the state and the lived reality of the people. While the state presents itself as making decisions and plans on behalf of the people and assigning tasks for local authorities, it has very little contact with the individual needs and conditions of different regions. One aspect of the problem is, therefore, the limited power of local authorities, which the state seems to promote in its rhetoric, especially when taking credit for positive change. If, on the other hand, the state was to recognize the ability of local authorities to recognize and address the needs of their own regions, acting in a more decentralized manner and giving more autonomy, some of the elements of the housing crisis could be better addressed (e.g. controlling mortgage rates and land planning in ways that would make housing affordable).

Of course, this research project also has its limitations. First, as discussed earlier in Chapter 4, that reader comments analysed in this research cannot fully represent the public discourse due to different factors that cannot be avoid, such as the presence of censorship system. Then, with a focus

on metaphor, this research is down in presenting contextual information of plain content that are not metaphorically expressed but would be potentially relevant to a critical analysis. Although these limitations do not deny the value of this research project, future research in this like can be done in private setting, that is, to study the metaphor use of participants in private discourse. This can largely avoids the influence from censorship and give a more comprehensive picture of public discourse.

Finally, this thesis also opens a few windows for future research: first, given its interdisciplinarity, its data and analysis can be further discussed within the context and through the perspective of different disciplines, which can provide new questions and insights. It is therefore relevant to researchers from the fields of economics, urban planning, sociology, politics, cultural studies, and media communication. Another interesting field for future research is to investigate housing discourse in different cultural contexts, with the aim of exploring the universality and cultural variations of metaphor use, especially with a view to questioning the stereotypical East-West divide. Finally, further study on the issue of censorship in online discourse can provide useful insights, especially with the possibility of comparing on-line and off-line behaviour (when privately asking the readers to provide their commentary, without being exposed to the possibility of online censorship) and the differences between the two regarding metaphor use.

Reference

Agarwal, J. and Wu, T., (2004) China's entry to WTO: global marketing issues, impact, and implications for China. *International Marketing Review*, *21*(3), pp.279-300.

Albaladejo, T. (2013) Rhetoric and Discourse Analysis. In I. En Olza., Ó. Loureda and M. Casado (eds.) *Language Use in the Public Sphere: Methodological Perspectives and Empirical Applications*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, pp.19-51.

Alejo, R. (2010) Where does the money go? An analysis of the container metaphor in economics: The market and the economy. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *42*(4), pp.1137-1150.

Al Maghlouth, S. H. (2017) *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Social Change in Womenrelated Posts on Saudi English-Language Blogs Posted between 2009 and 2012*. PhD thesis - Lancaster University.

Amadeo, K. (2021) *How to calculate the GDP growth rate.* Available at: https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-the-gdp-growth-rate-3306016 (Last accessed: 15/09/2021).

Ana, O. S. (1999) Like an animal I was treated': Anti-immigrant metaphor in US public discourse. *Discourse & society*, *10*(2), pp.191-224.

Anagnost, A. (2008) From 'Class' to 'Social Strata': grasping the social totality in reform-era China. *Third World Quarterly*, 29(3), pp.497-519.

Anderlini, J. and Hornby, L. (2014) "*China overtakes US as world's largest goods trader*", *Financial Times*, January 13, available at: www.ft.com/content/7c2dbd70-79a6-11e3-b381-00144feabdc0 (Last accessed 12/09/2020).

Anthony, L. (2014) AntConc (Version 3.4.3) [Computer Software] Tokyo, Japan: Waseda University.

Ahrens, K., Chung, S. and Huang, C. (2003) Conceptual metaphors: Ontology-based representation and corpora driven Mapping Principles. *Proceedings of the ACL Workshop on the Lexicon and Figurative Language*, pp.35-41.

Arrese, Á. (2015) Euro crisis metaphors in the Spanish press. *Communication and society,* 28(2), pp.19-38

Arrese, Á. and Vara-Miguel, A. (2016) A comparative study of metaphors in press reporting of the Euro crisis. *Discourse & Society*, 27(2), pp.133-155.

Atkins, P. and Bowler, I. (2016) *Food in society: economy, culture, geography*. Routledge.

Averill, J., Catlin, G. and Chon, K. (2012) *Rules of hope*. Springer Science and Business Media.

Baker, P. (2004) Querying keywords: Questions of difference, frequency, and sense in keywords analysis. *Journal of English linguistics, 32*(4), pp. 346-359.

Baker, P. (2012) Acceptable bias? Using corpus linguistics methods with critical discourse analysis. *Critical discourse studies*, *9*(3), pp. 247-256.

Baker, P., Gabrielatos, C., Khosravinik, M., Krzyżanowski, M., McEnery, T. and Wodak, R. (2008) A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press. *Discourse & society*, *19*(3), pp. 273-306.

Baker, P. and Levon, E. (2015) Picking the right cherries: A comparison of corpus-based and qualitative analyses of news articles about masculinity. *Discourse & Communication*, *9*(2), pp. 221-236.

Bamman, D., O'Connor, B. and Smith, N. (2012) Censorship and deletion practices in Chinese social media. *First Monday*, 17, pp. 3–5.

Bernstein, T.P., Chen, T.M., Goikhman, I., Guan, G., He, D., Hou, X., Ji, Y., Kong, H., Luthi, L., McGuire, E. and Rohlf, G., (2010) *China learns from the Soviet Union, 1949–present.* Rowman & Littlefield.

Berrada, K. (2007) Food metaphors: A contrastive approach. *Metaphorik. de*, *13*(1), pp. 1-38.

Besomi, D. (2011) Crises as a disease of the body politick: A metaphor in the history of nineteenth-century economics. *Journal of the History of Economic Thought, 33*(1), pp. 67-118.

Bian, Y. (2002) Chinese social stratification and social mobility. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *28*(1), pp. 91-116.

Bian, Y., Breiger, R., Galaskiewicz, J. and Davis, D. (2005) Occupation, class, and social networks in urban China. *Social forces*, *83*(4), pp. 1443-1468.

Black, M. (1962) Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Blass, R. (2005) Manipulation in the speeches and writings of Hitler and the NSDAP from a relevance theoretic point of view. In L. Saussure and P. Schulz (eds.) *Manipulation and Ideologies in the Twentieth Century: Discourse, language, mind*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp.169-190.

Bloom, N., Draca, M. and Van Reenen, J. (2016) Trade induced technical change? The impact of Chinese imports on innovation, IT and productivity. *The Review of Economic Studies, 83*(1), pp. 87-117.

Bloor, M. and Bloor, T., (2013) *The practice of critical discourse analysis: An introduction.* Routledge.

Blommaert, J. (2005) *Discourse: A critical introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

Boers, F. (1997) "No Pain, No Gain" in a Free Market Rhetoric: A Test for Cognitive Semantics?. *Metaphor and symb*ol, *12*(4), pp. 231-241.

Boers, F. (1999) When a Bodily Source Domain Becomes Prominent. The Joy of Counting Metaphors in the Socio-Economic Domain. In R. W. Gibbs and G. J. Steen (eds.) *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 47–56.

Boers, F. and Demecheleer, M. (1997) A Few Metaphorical Models in (Western) Economic Discourse. In: W. Liebert, G. Redeker, and L. Waugh (eds.) *Discourse and Perspective in Cognitive Linguistics*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, pp.115–129.

Bounegru, L. and Forceville, C. (2011) Metaphors in editorial cartoons representing the global financial crisis. *Visual communication*, *10*(2), pp. 209-229.

Borriello, A. (2017) 'There is no alternative': How Italian and Spanish leaders' discourse obscured the political nature of austerity. *Discourse & Society*, *28*(3), pp. 241-261.

Brady, A. (2009) *Marketing dictatorship: Propaganda and thought work in contemporary China.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Branigan, T. (2013) *Xi Jinping vows to fight 'tigers' and 'flies' in anti-corruption drive.* [Online] the Guardian. Available from: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/22/xi-jinping-tigers-flies-corruption [Last accessed 23/12/2016].

Brezina, V., McEnery, T. and Wattam, S. (2015) Collocations in conte*xt: A new perspective on collocation networks. International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 20*(2), pp.139-173.

Brighton, P. and Foy, D. (2007) *News values*. London: Sage.

Brookes, G. and Baker, P. (2017) What does patient feedback reveal about the NHS? A mixed methods study of comments posted to the NHS Choices online service. *BMJ open*, 7(4), pp. e013821.

Brown, K. (2012) The communist party of China and ideology. *China: An International Journal, 10*(2), pp. 52-68.

Brown, K. (2017) The Powers of Xi Jinping. *Asian affairs, 48*(1), pp. 17-26.

Caballero, R. (2012) The role of metaphor in tennis reports and forums. *Text & Talk, 32*(6), pp. 703-726.

Caterina, D., (2018) Investigating hegemony struggles: Transdisciplinary considerations on the role of a critical discourse analysis of practical argumentation. *Critical Discourse Studies*, *15*(3), pp.211-227.

Chan, S., Han, G., and Zhang, W. (2016) How strong are the linkages between real estate and other sectors in China?. *Research in International Business and Finance*, *36*: 52-72.

Charteris-Black, J. (2004a) *Corpus approaches to critical metaphor analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Charteris-Black, J. (2004b) Why "an angel rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm": A corpus-based comparative study of metaphor in British and American political discourse', in K. Aijmer and B. Altenberg (eds.) *Advances in Corpus Linguistics*: Papers from the 23rd International Conference on English Language Research on Computerized Corpora (ICAME 23). Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, pp. 133-150.

Charteris-Black, J. (2011) *Politicians and rhetoric: The persuasive power of metaphor*. Springer.

Charteris-Black, J. (2018) *Analysing political speeches*. Macmillan International Higher Education.

Charteris-Black, J. and Ennis, T. (2001) A comparative study of metaphor in Spanish and English financial reporting. *English for specific purposes*, *20*(3): 249-266.

Chen, D., (2017) "Supervision by public opinion" or by government officials? Media criticism and central-local government relations in China. *Modern China*, *43*(6), pp.620-645.

Chen, M., Wu, Y., Liu, G. and Wang, X., (2020) The effect of the housing provident fund on income redistribution: the case of China. *Housing Policy Debate*, *30*(6), pp.879-899.

Chen, M. and Zhang, C., (2016) Framing corruption in the Chinese government: A comparison of frames between media, government, and netizens. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, pp. 5494–5513.

Chen, Y., Ye, Z., and Huang, G. (2018) The Financial Crisis in Wenzhou: An Unanticipated Consequence of China's" Four Trillion Yuan Economic Stimulus Package". *China: An International Journal*, *16*(1), pp.152-173.

Cheng, T. and Selden, M. (1994) The origins and social consequences of China's hukou system. *The China Quarterly*, 139: 644-668.

Chiang, W. and Duann, R. (2007) Conceptual metaphors for SARS: 'war' between whom? *Discourse & Society*, 18(5): 579-602.

Chilton, P. (1996) *Security metaphors: Cold war discourse from containment to common house*. Peter Lang Pub Incorporated.

Chilton, P. (2005) Missing Links in Mainstream CDA: Modules, Blends and the Critical Instinct. In R. Wodak and P. Chilton (eds.) *A New Research Agenda in Critical Discourse Analysis*. John Benjamins. 19-51

Chilton, P. (2011) Still something missing in CDA. *Discourse Studies*, *13*(6): 769-781.

Chivakul, M., Lam, W., Liu, X., Maliszewski, W. and Schipke, A. (2015) *Understanding Residential Real Estate in China*. IMF Working Paper. [Online] Available from: https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2015/wp1584.pdf [Last accessed 11/11/2016].

Chow, M.Y.V., (2011) *A comparative study of the metaphor used in the economic news articles in Britain and Hong Kong*, PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, UK.

Chow, G.C., (2003) Impact of joining the WTO on China's economic, legal and political institutions. *Pacific Economic Review*, *8*(2), pp.105-115.

Chu, Y. and Ruthrof, H. (2017) The social semiotic of homophone phrase substitution in Chinese netizen discourse. *Social Semiotics*, *27*(5), pp. 640-655.

Chung, S. F., Ahrens, K., and Sung, Y. H. (2003) Stock markets as ocean water: A Corpus-based, comparative study of Mandarin Chinese, English and Spanish. *Proceedings of the 17th Pacific Asia Conference on Language, Information and Computation*, pp. 124-133.

Cibulskienė, J. (2012) The development of the journey metaphor in political discourse: Time-specific changes. *Metaphor and the Social World*, *2*(2), pp. 131-153.

Cienki, A. (2005) Metaphor in the "Strict Father" and "Nurturant Parent" cognitive models: Theoretical issues raised in an empirical study. *Cognitive Linguistics, 16*(2), pp. 279-312.

Cohen, P.A. (2020) The Tenacity of Culture: Old Stories in the New China, in W. Kirby (ed.), *The People's Republic of China at 60: an international assessment*. BRILL, pp. 388-400.

Contemporary Chinese Dictionary. (2012) 6ᵗʰ edition. Beijing: Commercial Press. (In Chinese)
现代汉语词典. (2012). 第 6 版. 北京: 商务印书馆

Creemers, R., (2018) China's Social Credit System: an evolving practice of control. *Available at SSRN* pp. 3175792.

D'Alessio, D. and Allen, M. (2000) Media bias in presidential elections: A meta-analysis. *Journal of communication*, *50*(4), pp. 133-156.

Davis, D. (2000) Social class transformation in urban China: training, hiring, and promoting urban professionals and managers after 1949. *Modern China*, 26(3), pp. 251-275.

Davies, M. (2008) The Corpus of Contemporary American English: 450 million words, 1990-present [Online Corpus].

Davies, M. (2009) The 385+ million word Corpus of Contemporary American English (1990- 2008+): Design, architecture, and linguistic insights. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics. 14*(2), pp. 159–190.

Deignan, A. (2005) *Metaphor and corpus linguistics*. John Benjamins Publishing.

Deignan, A. (2015) MIP, the corpus and dictionaries: What makes for the best metaphor analysis?. *Metaphor and the Social World*, *5*(1), pp.145-154.

De Leonardis, F. (2008) War as a medicine: the medical metaphor in contemporary Italian political language. *Social Semiotics*, *18*(1), pp. 33-45.

Delury, J. (2008) "Harmonious" in China, *Policy Review*, 148, pp. 35–45.

DeLisle, J., Goldstein, A. and Yang, G. (2016) 'The Internet, Social Media, and a Changing China', in J. DeLisle, A. Goldstein and G. Yang (eds.) *The internet, social media, and a changing China*. University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 1-27.

Demmen, J., Semino, E., Demjén, Z., Koller, V., Hardie, A., Rayson, P. and Payne, S. (2015) A computer-assisted study of the use of violence metaphors for cancer and end of life by patients, family carers and health professionals. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, *20*(2), pp.205-231.

Deng, J., (2018) The National Supervision Commission: A new anti-corruption model in China. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, *52*, pp.58-73.

Deng, L. and Chen, J. (2019) Market development, state intervention, and the dynamics of new housing investment in China. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *41*(2), pp. 223-247.

Derrida, J. (1976) *Of Grammatology*. Translated by G. Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Desagulier, G. (2014) 'Visualizing distances in a set of near synonyms: Rather, quite, fairly, and pretty', in D. Glynn & J. Robinson (eds.) *Polysemy and Synonymy: Corpus Methods and Applications in Cognitive Linguistics*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp.145-178.

Dickins, J. (2005) Two Models for Metaphor Translation. *Target*, *17*(2), pp. 227–273.

Dickson, B. (2003) Whom does the party represent? From" three revolutionary classes" to" three represents". *American Asian Review*, *21*(1), pp. 1-24.

Ding, D., Huang, X., Jin, T. and Lam, W. (2017) The residential real estate market in China: Assessment and policy implications. *Annals of Economics and Finance*, *18*(2), pp. 411-442.

Ding, X. (2009) The socialist market economy: China and the world. *Science & Society, 73*(2), pp. 235-241.

Ding, X. and Zhong, D.Y., (2021) Rethinking China's Social Credit System: A Long Road to Establishing Trust in Chinese Society. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *30*(130), pp.630-644.

Dreger, C. and Zhang, Y. (2016) *Is There a Bubble in the Chinese Housing Market?*. [Online] Available from: https://www.diw.de/documents/publikationen/73/diw_01.c.364149.de/dp1081.pdf [Last accessed 16/11/2016].

Druckmann, J. and Parkin, M. (2005) The impact of media bias: How editorial slant affects voters. *Journal of politics*, *67*(4), pp. 1030-1049.

Dryzek, J and Holmes, L. (2002) *Post-communist democratization: political discourses across thirteen countries.* Cambridge University Press.

Eagleton, T. (2007) *Ideology. An introduction.* New and updated edition. London, Verso.

Eagleton, T., (2008) *Literary theory: An introduction*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Efferth, T., Li, P., Konkimalla, V. and Kaina, B. (2007) From traditional Chinese medicine to rational cancer therapy. *Trends in molecular medicine*, *13*(8), pp. 353-361.

Emmons, S. (2001) Freedom of speech in China: A possibility or a prohibition? *Loyola of Los Angeles International and Comparative Law Review*, *23*(2), pp. 249-295.

Ernst, M., Scartozzi, C., Thomas, C. and Wang, Y., (2022) Chinese Crisis Communication in the Early Stage of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Discourse Analysis of People's Daily News Articles in Response to Threatening International News Coverage. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, pp.1-25.

Esager, M. (2011) Fire and water–a comparative analysis of conceptual metaphors in English and Danish news articles about the credit crisis 2008. Available at: http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_35503.pdf [Last accessed at:08/02/2018]

Esarey, A. (2005) Cornering the market: state strategies for controlling China's commercial media. *Asian Perspective*, *29*(4), pp. 37-83.

Evergrand Research Institute. (2018) Review, reflection and prospect of this round of real estate regulation (2014-2018). Available at: http://pdf.dfcfw.com/pdf/H3_AP201812141268504787_1.pdf [Last accessed 30/09/2020] (In Chinese)
恒大研究院. (2018) 本轮房地产调控的回顾、反思和展望 (2014-2018)

Eviatar, Z. and Just, M.A. (2006) Brain correlates of discourse processing: An fMRI investigation of irony and conventional metaphor comprehension. *Neuropsychologia*, *44*(12), pp. 2348-2359.

Fairclough, N. (1989) *Language and Power*. London: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (1991) Language and Ideology. *Trab. Ling. Apl., Campinas, Jan/Jun* (17), pp. 113-131.

Fairclough, N. (1992a) *Discourse and Social Change.* Cambridge, Polity Press.

Fairclough, N. (1992b) Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis. *Discourse & society*, *3*(2), pp.193-217.

Fairclough, N. (1995a) *Media discourse*. London: Arnold.

Fairclough, N. (1995b) *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Longman.

Fairclough, N. (1996) A reply to Henry Widdowson's' Discourse analysis: a critical view'. *Language and literature*, *5*(1), pp. 49-56.

Fairclough, N. (2001) 'Critical discourse analysis as a method in social scientific research', in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds.) *Methods of critical discourse analysis*, London, Sage, pp. 121-138.

Fairclough, N. (2003) *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.

Fairclough, N. (2009) Language and globalization. *Semiotica*, 173, pp. 317-342.

Fairclough, N. (2010) *Critical Discourse Analysis* (2nd edition). Harlow, Pearson Education.

Fairclough, N. (2015) *Language and power*. 3rd edition London, Routledge.

Fairclough, N. and Fairclough, I. (2010) 'Argumentation Theory in CDA: Analyzing Practical Reasoning in Political Discourse', in R. de Cillia, H. Gruber, M. Krzyzanowski and F. Menz (eds.) *Diskurs-Politik-Identität [Discourse-Politics-Identity]*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, pp. 59–70.

Fairclough, I. and Fairclough, N. (2011) Practical reasoning in political discourse: The UK government's response to the economic crisis in the 2008 Pre-Budget Report. *Discourse & Society*, *22*(3), pp.243-268.

Fairclough, I. and Fairclough, N. (2013) *Political discourse analysis: A method for advanced students*. Routledge.

Fairclough, N. and Wodak, R. (1997) 'Critical discourse analysis', in T.A. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as Social interaction* [Discourse Studies vol. 2]. London: Sage, pp. 258-284.

Fang, H., Gu, Q., Xiong, W. and Zhou, L.A. (2016) Demystifying the Chinese housing boom. *NBER macroeconomics annual*, *30*(1), pp. 105-166.

Feng, H., (2007) *Chinese strategic culture and foreign policy decision-making: Confucianism, leadership and war*. Routledge.

Fernald, J.G., Spiegel, M.M. and Swanson, E.T. (2014) Monetary policy effectiveness in China: Evidence from a FAVAR model. *Journal of International Money and Finance*, *49*, pp. 83-103.

Fewsmith, J. (2003) Studying the three represents. *China Leadership Monitor*, 8(1), pp. 1-11.

Fleischer, F. (2007) "To Choose a House Means to Choose a Lifestyle." The Consumption of Housing and Class-Structuration in Urban China. *City & Society*, *19*(2), pp. 287-311.

Flusberg, S., Matlock, T. and Thibodeau, P. (2018) War metaphors in public discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol*, *33*(1), pp.1-18.

Fong, M.W., (2009) Digital divide between urban and rural regions in China. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, *36*(1), pp.1-12.

Forgacs, D. (1988) *The Gramsci reader: selected writings, 1916-1935*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Foucault, M. (1972) The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language. New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1981) 'The Order of Discourse', in R. Young, (ed). *Untying the text: A post-structuralist reader*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 48-78.

Fraser, C., (2016) The Mozi and Just War Theory in Pre-Han Thought. *Journal of Chinese Military History*, *5*(2), pp.135-175.

Fraser, D (2000) 'Inventing Oasis: Luxury Housing Advertisements and Reconfiguring Domestic Space in Shanghai', in D. Davis (ed.) *The Consumer Revolution in Urban China*, Berkeley: University of California, pp.25-53.

Fu, K.W., Chan, C.H. and Chau, M., (2013) Assessing censorship on microblogs in China-Discriminatory keyword analysis and the real-name registration policy. *IEEE Internet Computing*, *17*(3): 42-50.

Gallelli, B, (2018) Doing Things with Metaphors in Contemporary China: Analysing the Use of Creative Metaphors in the Discourse on the Chinese Dream, *Annali di Ca' Foscari. Serie orientale*, 54, pp. 595-617.

Gavriely-Nuri, D. (2010) If both opponents "extend hands in peace"—Why don't they meet?: Mythic metaphors and cultural codes in the Israeli peace discourse. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *9*(3), pp. 449-468.

Gavriely-Nuri, D. (2012) Cultural approach to CDA. *Critical Discourse Studies*, *9*(1), pp. 77-85.

Gavriely-Nuri, D. (2017) 'Cultural approach to CDA (CCDA): From theory to practice', in J. Flowerdew and J. Richardson (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies. Routledge, pp. 120-132.

Gawlikowski, K. (1979) Traditional Chinese concepts of warfare and CPC theory of people's war (1928-1949). *Cina* (2), pp. 143-169.

Gee, J.P., (1999) *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London, Routledge.

Gibbs, R. (1999) 'Researching metaphor', in L. Cameron and G. Low (eds.) *Researching and Applying Metaphor,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 29–47.

Giannetti, B.F., Agostinho, F., Almeida, C.M.V.B. and Huisingh, D., (2015) A review of limitations of GDP and alternative indices to monitor human wellbeing and to manage eco-system functionality. *Journal of cleaner production*, 87, pp.11-25.

Giora, R. (1999) On the priority of salient meanings: Studies of literal and figurative language. *Journal of pragmatics*, *31*(7), pp. 919-929.

Goatly, A. (2007) *Washing the brain: Metaphor and hidden ideology*. John Benjamins Publishing.

Goh, G.Y. (2011) Choosing a reference corpus for keyword calculation. *Linguistic Research*, *28*(1), pp. 239-256.

Goodman, D. (2014) *Class in contemporary China*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Grace, G. (1987) The Linguistic Construction of Reality, London, Croom Helm.

Guo, F. and Pu, X. (2012) *China 's real economic development in 2012 report*. Available at: http://finance.jrj.com.cn/2012/12/20090714848978.shtml [Last accessed: 15/11/2016]

Guveia, C.A.M. (2003) 'Critical discourse analysis and the development of the new science', in G. Weiss and R. Wodak (eds) *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and interdisciplinarity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 47-62.

Habermas, J. (1972) *Knowledge and Human Interests*, London, Heinemann.

Hall, S. (1980) Cultural studies: Two paradigms. *Media, culture & society*, *2*(1), pp. 57-72.

Hall, S. (1993) Culture, community, nation. *Cultural studies*, *7*(3), pp. 349-363.

Halliday, M. (1994) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 2nd edition London, Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. and Hasan, R. (1989) *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Han, A.G. (2008) Building a harmonious society and achieving individual harmony. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *13*(2), pp. 143-164.

Harris, Z. (1952) Discourse analysis. *Language 28*(1), pp. 1-30.

Harrison, J. (2005) *News*. London, Routledge.

Hart, B. (2016) Creating the Cult of Xi Jinping: The Chinese Dream as a Leader Symbol. *Cornell Internation Affairs Review*, *9*(2), pp. 4-32.

Hart, C. (2008) Critical discourse analysis and metaphor: Toward a theoretical framework. *Critical discourse studies*, *5*(2), pp. 91-106.

Hart, C. (2010) *Critical discourse analysis and cognitive science: New perspectives on immigration discourse*. Springer.

Hart, C. (2011) 'Introduction', in: C. Hart (ed.) *Critical Discourse Studies in Context and Cognition*, Amsterdam, Benjamins, pp.1-5.

Hart, C. (2011) Moving beyond metaphor in the cognitive linguistic approach to CDA. *Critical discourse studies in context and cognition*, 43, pp. 171-192.

Hart, C. (2015) 'Cognitive Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis', in E. Dabrowska and D. Divjak (eds.) *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton De Gruyter, pp. 322-346.

Hartig, F. (2018) Political slogans as instruments of international government communication–the case of China. *The Journal of International Communication*, *24*(1), pp. 115-137

Harvey, D. (2007) *A brief history of neoliberalism*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Hassan, S. (2010) A cognitive linguistics study of food. Metaphors in Iraqi Arabic. *Misan Journal of Academic Studies, 8*(16), pp. 1-15.

Heng, Z., (2013) *Characteristics of Chinese military culture: A historical perspective*. Stockholm: Institute for Security and Development Policy.

Henry, F. and Tator, C. (2002) *Discourse of domination: racial bias in the Canadian English-language press,* Toronto, University of Toronto Press.

Hertel, T. and Zhai, F., (2006) Labor market distortions, rural–urban inequality and the opening of China's economy. *Economic Modelling*, *23*(1), pp.76-109.

Hill, J.S., (2006) Confucianism and the art of Chinese management. *Journal of Asia Business Studies*, pp.1-9.

Hodge, R. and Kress, G. (1993) *Language as ideology*, London, Routledge.

Holbig, H. (2013) Ideology after the end of ideology. China and the quest for autocratic legitimation. *Democratization*, *20*(1), pp. 61-81.

Holz, C.A. (2003) "Fast, clear and accurate": how reliable are Chinese output and economic growth statistics? *The China Quarterly*, *173*, pp. 122-163.

Holz, C.A. (2008) China's 2004 economic census and 2006 benchmark revision of GDP statistics: more questions than answers?. *The China Quarterly*, *193*, pp.150-163.

Hu, C. and Xu, Y. (2017) A comparison study on economic metaphor: based on Chinese and English media corpora. *Foreign Language Teaching,* 38(5), pp. 8-43.
(胡春雨, 徐玉婷. (2017) 基于汉英媒体语料库的"经济隐喻"对比研究. *外语教学,* 38(5), pp. 38-43.)

Hu, J. (2005) Talk Delivered to Provincial Main Leading Cadres In Seminar about Enhancing Capacity to Build a Socialist Harmonious Society. *Renmin Ribao (People's Daily)*, 27/06/2005.
(胡锦涛，2005，在省部级主要领导干部提高构建社会主义和谐社会能力专题研讨上的讲话. 人民日报, 27/06/2005)

Huang, H. (2013) Signal left, turn right: Central rhetoric and local reform in China. *Political Research Quarterly, 66*(2), pp. 292-305.

Huang, P. (2012) Profit-Making State Firms and China's Development Experience: "State Capitalism" or "Socialist Market Economy"?. *Modern China, 38*(6), pp. 591-629.

Huang, Q. and Wu, B. (2009) A Diachronic Analysis of Political Metaphors Based on Editorials on "Two Sessions" in People's Daily (1978-2007). *Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies,* (5), pp. 91-96. (In Chinese)
(黄秋林 and 吴本虎. (2009). 政治隐喻的历时分析——基于《 人民日报》(1978—2007) 两会社论的研究. *语言教学与研究*, 5, pp. 91-96.)

Huang, Y. and Wang, B. (2010) Cost distortions and structural imbalances in China. *China & World Economy*, 18(4), pp. 1-17.

Huckin, T., Andrus, J., and Clary-Lemon, J. (2012) Critical discourse analysis and rhetoric and composition. *College composition and communication*, pp. 107-129.

Huntington, S.P., (1991) Democracy's third wave. *Journal of democracy*, *2*(2), pp. 12-34.

Hwang, Y.J. and Schneider, F. (2011) Performance, meaning, and ideology in the making of legitimacy: The celebrations of the People's Republic of China's sixty-year anniversary. *China Review*, *11*(1), pp. 27-55.

Hyatt, J. and Simons, H. (1999) Cultural codes–Who holds the key? The concept and conduct of evaluation in Central and Eastern Europe. *Evaluation*, *5*(1), pp. 23-41.

Ibarretxe-Antuñano, I. (2013) The relationship between conceptual metaphor and culture. *Intercultural pragmatics*, *10*(2), pp. 315-339.

Imani, A. and Habil, H. (2014) HEALTH metaphors in Dr Mahathir's business speeches. *Malaysian Journal of Languages and Linguistics (MJLL), 3*(1), pp. 15-30.

Irajzad, F. and Kafi, M. (2018) Cultural Conceptualisations of Edible Items in Persian. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, 26*(2), pp. 873-892.

Jameson, F., (1991) *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Duke university press.

Jenkins, T. N. (2002) Chinese traditional thought and practice: lessons for an ecological economics worldview. *Ecological Economics*, *40*(1), pp. 39-52.

Jia, H. (2004) The Three Represents Campaign: Reform the Party or Indoctrinate the Capitalists? *Cato Journal, 24*(3), pp. 261-276.

Jing-Schmidt, Z. and Peng, X. (2017). Winds and tigers: metaphor choice in China's anti-corruption discourse. *Lingua Sinica*, *3*(1), pp. 1-26.

Jørgensen, M. and Phillips, L. (2002) *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method,* London, Sage Publications.

Joris, W., Puustinen, L. and Sobieraj, K. (2015) 'The battle for the Euro: Metaphors and frames in the Euro crisis News', in R. Picard (ed.) *The Euro Crisis in the Media*, London, I.B. Tauris & Co, pp. 127–150.

Kammer, R. (2016) *Zen and Confucius in the Art of Swordsmanship: The'Tengu-geijutsu-ron'of Chozan Shissai*, Routledge.

Kapogianni, E. (2013) *Irony and the literal versus nonliteral distinction: A typological approach*. PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge.

Kellett, P. (2002). Football-as-war, coach-as-general: Analogy, metaphor and management implications. *Football studies*, 5(1): 60-76.

Kelly, P.F. (2001) Metaphors of meltdown: political representations of economic space in the Asian financial crisis. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *19*(6), pp. 719-742.

Kennedy, G. A. (2009) *A new history of classical rhetoric*, Princeton University Press.

Khajeh, Z. and Imran, H. (2012) Persian culinary metaphors: a cross-cultural

conceptualization. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, *12*(1), pp. 69-87.

KhosraviNik, M., (2017) 'Social media critical discourse studies (SM-CDS)', in J., Flowerdew and J. E. Richardson (eds) *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies*, pp. 582-596, Routledge.

Kienpointner, M. (1992) Alltagslogik. Struktur und Funktion von Argumentationsmustern. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog.

Kim, S. (2016) Public trust in government in China and South Korea: Implications for building community resilience. *Chinese Public Administration Review*, *7*(1), pp. 35-76.

Kim, U. and Park, Y.S., (2000) Confucianism and family values. *Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, *3*(2), pp.229-249.

King, G., Pan, J. and Roberts, M. (2013) How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression. *American political science Review*, *107*(2), pp. 326-343.

King, G., Pan, J. and Roberts, M. (2014) Reverse-engineering censorship in China: Randomized experimentation and participant observation. *Science*, *345*(6199), pp. 1–10.

King, G., Pan, J. and Roberts, M. (2017) How the Chinese government fabricates social media posts for strategic distraction, not engaged argument. *American political science review, 111*(3), pp. 484-501.

Kluver, A.R. (2010) *Legitimating the Chinese economic reforms: A rhetoric of myth and orthodoxy*. SUNY Press.

Knight, N. (1983) The Form of Mao Zedong's Sinificant of Marxism'. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, (9), pp. 17-33.

Kojima, K. (2015) The power structure under the leadership of Xi Jinping. *Public Policy Review*, *11*(1), pp. 45-66.

Koller, V. (2004) Businesswomen and war metaphors: 'possessive, jealous and pugnacious'?. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *8*(1), pp.3-22.

Koller, V. (2005) Designing cognition: visual metaphor as a design feature in business magazines. *Information Design Journal & Document Design*, *13*(2), pp. 136-150.

Koller, V., Hardie, A., Rayson, P. and Semino, E. (2008) Using a semantic annotation tool for the analysis of metaphor in discourse. *Metaphorik. de*, *15*(1), pp. 141-160.

Kong, D. (2002) The concept of metaphor in economic discourse: from a cognitive perspective. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching,* 2, pp. 13-16. (In Chinese)
(孔德明. (2002) 从认知看经济语篇中的隐喻概念. *外语与外语教学*, 2, pp. 13-16.)

Kort, S. (2018) *Metaphor in media discourse: Representations of 'Arabs' and 'Americans' in American and Arab news media.* PhD thesis, University of the West of England.

Kosetzi, K. and Polyzou, A., (2009) 'The perfect man, the proper man'Construals of masculinities in Nitro, a Greek men's lifestyle magazine-an exploratory study. *Gender & Language*, *3*(2), pp.143-180

Koteyko, N. and Ryazanova-Clarke, L. (2009) The path and building metaphors in the speeches of Vladimir Putin: back to the future?. *Slavonica*, *15*(2), pp. 112-127.

Kövecses, Z. (2005) *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kovecses, Z. (2009) 'Metaphor, culture, and discourse: The pressure of coherence', in J. Zinken & A. Musolff (eds.) *Metaphor in discourse*. Amsterdam, Benjamins, pp. 11–24

Kovecses, Z. (2010) *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Kövecses, Z. (2015) *Where metaphors come from: Reconsidering context in metaphor*. Oxford

University Press, USA.

Kövecses, Z. (2017) 'Context in cultural linguistics: The case of metaphor', in F. Sharifian (ed.) *Advances in cultural linguistics*, Singapore, Springer, pp. 307-323.

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2001) *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. London, Arnold.

Krusekopf, C. (2002) Diversity in land-tenure arrangements under the household responsibility system in China. *China Economic Review*, *13*(2), pp. 297-312.

Kwan, K.L.K., (2000) Counseling Chinese peoples: Perspectives of filial piety. *Asian Journal of Counseling*, *7*(1), pp.23-41.

Kung, J. and Lin, J. (2003) The causes of China's great leap famine, 1959–1961. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *52*(1), pp. 51-73.

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (1980) *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago press.

Lakoff, G. (1993) 'The contemporary theory of metaphor', in A. Ortony, (ed.) 2nd edition *Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 202-251.

Lakoff, G. (2010) *Moral politics: How liberals and conservatives think.* University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. (2012) Metaphor and war: The metaphor system used to justify war in the gulf. *Cognitive Semiotics*, *4*(2), pp. 5-19.

Lam, T., (2001) Strengths and weaknesses of traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine in the eyes of some Hong Kong Chinese. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 55*(10), pp. 762-765.

Lams, L. (2018) Examining strategic narratives in Chinese official discourse under Xi Jinping. *Journal of Chinese Political Science, 23*(3), pp. 387-411.

Latham, K. (2000) Nothing but the truth: News media, power and hegemony in South China. *The China Quarterly*, 163, pp. 633-654.

Laverty, S, (2003) Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International journal of qualitative methods, 2*(3), pp. 21-35.

Ieţcu, I. (2006a) *Argumentation, Dialogue and Ethical Perspective in the Essays of H.-R. Patapievici*. Bucureşti: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti.

Ieţcu, I. (2006b) *Discourse Analysis and Argumentation Theory: Analytical Framework and Applications.* Bucureşti, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti.

Ieţcu, I. (2007) Legitimation and argumentative strategic maneuvering in the political field: Traian Băsescu's 'suspension speech'. *Bucharest Working Papers in Linguistics*, (2), pp. 28-42.

Lederer, J. (2016) Finding source domain triggers: How corpus methodologies aid in the analysis of conceptual metaphor. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 21, pp. 527–558.

Lee, C. and Katz, A. (1998) The differential role of ridicule in sarcasm and irony. *Metaphor and Symbol,* 13, pp. 1–15.

Leezenberg, M., (2021) *Contexts of metaphor*. Brill.

Leung, W.K. (2010) Real Estate Market Issues in China: Guest Editor's Introduction. *The Chinese Economy, 43*(2), pp 3-4.

Lewis, J. and Xue, L. (2003) Social Change and Political Reform in China: Meeting the Challenge of Success. *The China Quarterly*, 176, pp. 926-942.

L'Hôte, E. (2014) *Identity, narrative and metaphor: A corpus-based cognitive analysis of new labour discourse*. Springer.

Li, J. (1994) The Characteristics of Chinese and Russian Economic Reform. *Journal of Comparative*

Economics, 18(3), pp. 309-313.

Li, J. (2013) *Translating Chinese political discourse: A functional-cognitive approach to English translations of Chinese political speeches*, PhD thesis, University of Salford (United Kingdom).

Li, Y. and Chui, E. (2011) China's policy on rural-urban migrants and urban social harmony. *Asian Social Science, 7*(7), pp.12-22.

Liang, F., Das, V., Kostyuk, N. and Hussain, M. (2018) Constructing a data-driven society: China's social credit system as a state surveillance infrastructure. *Policy & Internet, 10*(4), pp. 415-453.

Liang, H. (1996) *Thinking About the Principles of Journalism*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. (In Chinese)
梁衡. (1996) 新闻原理的思考). 北京: 人民出版社。

Lin, C. and Depner, S. (2016) 'Food Metaphors in Taiwan Hakka', in S. Depner (ed.) *Embodiment in Language (II): Food, emotion and beyond.* Singapore: Springer, pp. 7-20.

Lin, Y. and Feng, Y. (2016) A New Understanding of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Hong qi wen gao, 17, pp. 34-36.
林彦虎, & 冯颜利. (2016) 对苏联解体教训的再认识. *红旗文稿*, (17), pp.34-36.

Liu, D. (2002) *Metaphor, culture, and worldview: The case of American English and the Chinese language*. University Press of Amer.

Liu, T. and Bates, B. (2009) What's behind public trust in news media: A comparative study of America and China. *Chinese Journal of Communication, 2*(3), pp. 307-329.

Liu, W. (2007) *Metaphors in contemporary Chinese political language*. Jinan, Shandong University.

Liu, Z. and Mao, X. (2012) Housing Stratification in Urban China: A Study Based on a Guangzhou Household Questionnaire Survey. *Social Sciences in China, 33*(4), pp.5-27.

Long, Y., (2016) Redefining Chinese city system with emerging new data. *Applied geography*, 75, pp.36-48.

López-Rodríguez, I. (2014) Are we what we eat? Food metaphors in the conceptualization of ethnic groups. *Linguistik online, 69*(7), pp. 3-37.

Lu, J. and Zhao, Y. (2018) Implicit and explicit control: Modeling the effect of internet censorship on political protest in China. *International Journal of Communication*, 12, pp. 3294-3316.

Lu, X. (1999) An Ideological/Cultural Analysis of Political Slogans in Communist China. *Discourse & Society, 10*(4), pp. 487-508.

Lu, X. and Simons, H. (2006) Transitional rhetoric of Chinese communist party leaders in the post-Mao reform period: Dilemmas and strategies. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 92*(3), pp.262-286

Lu, X.Y. (2002) *A Study of Social Classes in Contemporary China*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press.
陆学艺. (2002) 当代中国社会阶层研究报告. 北京: 社会科学文献出版社。

Lu, X.Y. (2003) Social stratification and mobility in contemporary China. Jiangsu Social Science, 4, pp. 1-9. (In Chinese)
陆学艺. (2003). 当代中国社会阶层的分化与流动. *江苏社会科学*(4), pp. 1-9.

Ludvigson, S.C. (2004) Consumer confidence and consumer spending. *Journal of Economic perspectives*, *18*(2), pp. 29-50.

Luqiu, L. (2017) The cost of humour: Political satire on social media and censorship in China. *Global Media and Communication*, *13*(2), pp. 123-138.

Ma, Z. (2001) Urban labour-force experience as a determinant of rural occupation change: evidence

from recent urban-rural return migration in China. *Environment and Planning A, 33*(2), pp. 237-255.

MacArthur, F. (2005) The competent horseman in a horseless world: Observations on a conventional metaphor in Spanish and English. *Metaphor and Symbol, 20*(1), pp. 71-94.

MacKinnon, R. (2008) Flatter world and thicker walls Blogs, censorship and civic discourse in China. *Public Choice, 134*(1-2), pp. 31-46.

Man, J.Y. (2011) Affordable housing in China. *Land Lines*, 1, pp. 16-20.

Mao, Z. D. (1948) *Regarding several important issues in the current party policy*. (In Chinese) 毛泽东. (1948) 关于目前党的政策中几个重要问题.

Mautner, G. (2016) 'Checks and balances: How corpus linguistics can contribute to CDA', in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds.) *Methods of critical discourse studies*, London, Sage, pp. 155-180.

McEnery, T., McGlashan, M., and Love, R. (2015) Press and social media reaction to ideologically inspired murder: The case of Lee Rigby. *Discourse & Communication*, *9*(2), pp. 237-259.

McNeill, J., (1999) GDP growth and human wellbeing: a brief look at why we need a better measure of progress. *New England Perspectives*, (3), pp.135-144.

Meng, P. (2003) Relationship between Man and Nature in Traditional Human Rights Concepts on China and West. *Human Rights,* 2, pp. 6-9.

Mills, S., (1997) *Discourse.* London, Routledge.

Mina, A. X. (2014) Batman, pandaman and the blind man: A case study in social change memes and internet censorship in China. *Journal of Visual Culture, 13*(3), pp. 359-375.

Modis, T. (1998) *Conquering uncertainty: understanding corporate cycles and positioning your company to survive the changing environment*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Monaghan, A. (2016) *China surpasses US as world's largest trading nation*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/jan/10/china-surpasses-us-world-largest-trading-nation [Last accessed: 19/11/2016].

Moragas-Fernández, C., Montagut Calvo, M. and Capdevila Gomez, A. (2018) The process en route: the metaphor of the journey as the dominant narrative for the political discourse in Catalonia. *Critical discourse studies*, 15(5), pp. 517-539.

Morrison, N., (2014) Building talented worker housing in Shenzhen, China, to sustain place competitiveness. *Urban Studies, 51*(8), pp.1539-1558.

Morrow, R and Brown, D. (1994) *Critical theory and methodology*. Sage.

Musolff, A. (2006) Metaphor scenarios in public discourse. *Metaphor and symbol*, 21(1): 23-38.

Musolff, A. (2000) Maritime journey metaphors in British and German public discourse: transport vessels of international communication?. *German as a foreign language*, 3, pp. 66-80.

Musolff, A. (2012) The study of metaphor as part of critical discourse analysis. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 9(3), pp. 301-310.

Musolff, A. (2015) Dehumanizing metaphors in UK immigrant debates in press and online media. *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict*, 3(1), pp. 41-56.

Musolff, A. (2016) 'Metaphor and persuasion in politics', in E. Semino and S. Demjén (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Metaphor and Language*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 309-322.

Musolff, A. (2017) Metaphor, irony and sarcasm in public discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 109, pp. 95-104.

Nakamura, E., Steinsson, J. and Liu, M. (2014) *Are Chinese Growth and Inflation Too Smooth? Evidence from Engel Curves*. National Bureau of Economic Research.

Naughton, B. (2007) 1st edition *The Chinese economy: Transitions and growth*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Naughton, B., (2009) Understanding the Chinese stimulus package. *China Leadership Monitor*, *28*(2), pp.1-12.

Nader, M. (2013) The PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS Metaphor in the Financial Times. *Arab World English Journal*, 4(4), pp. 128-142.

NBSC. (1998) *Statistical yearbook*. Beijing: SSB Press.

NBSC. (2015) *China statistical yearbook-2015*. Available at: http://www.stats.gov.cnf/tjsj/ndsj/2015/indexeh.htm [Last accessed: 16/11/2016].

Nee, V. (2000) The role of the state in making a market economy. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 156, pp. 64-88.

Nee, V. (2010) Bottom-up economic development and the role of the state: A focus on China. *Sociologica*, *4*(1), pp. 1-12.

Nee, V. and Opper, S. (2007) 'On politicized capitalism', in V. Nee and R. Swedberg (eds.) *On Capitalism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 93-127.

Newman, C. (1985) *The post-modern aura: The act of fiction in an age of inflation*. Northwestern University Press.

Noesselt, N. (2015) Relegitimizing the Chinese Party-State: "Old" Sources of Modern Chinese Party Power. *Asiatische Studien-Études Asiatiques*, 69(1), pp. 213-233.

Norocel, O.C. (2010) Romania is a family and it needs a strict father: conceptual metaphors at work in radical right populist discourses. *Nationalities Papers*, 38(5), pp. 705-721.

Norocel, O.C. (2011) Heteronormative Constructions of Romanianness: A Genealogy of Gendered Metaphors in Romanian Radical-Right Populism 2000–2009. *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 19(1-2), pp. 453-470.

Norocel, O.C. (2013) *Our people a tight-knit family under the same protective roof: A critical study of gendered conceptual metaphors at work in radical right populism*. PhD thesis, University of Helsinki.

O'Connor, K. T. (1998) Money and finance as solid, liquid, and gas in Spanish. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 13(2), pp. 141-157.

O'Halloran, K. (2003) *Critical discourse analysis and language cognition*. Edinburgh University Press.

O'Halloran, K. (2007) Critical discourse analysis and the corpus-informed interpretation of metaphor at the register level. *Applied linguistics*, 28(1), pp. 1-24.

O'Mara-Shimek, M., Guillén-Parra, M., and Ortega-Larrea, A. (2015) Stop the bleeding or weather the storm? Crisis solution marketing and the ideological use of metaphor in online financial reporting of the stock market crash of 2008 at the New York Stock Exchange. *Discourse & Communication*, 9(1), pp. 103-123.

Orpin, D. (2005) Corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis: Examining the ideology of sleaze. *International journal of corpus linguistics*, 10(1), pp. 37-61.

Ortony, A. (1975) Why Metaphors Are Necessary and Not Just Nice. *Educational Review,* 2, pp. 45–53.

Ortner, S. B. (1998) Identities: hidden life of class. *Journal of Anthropological Research, 54*(1), pp. 1-17.

Paltridge, B (2006) *Discourse Analysis.* London: Contiunuum.

Pan, Y. (2016) The Metaphor Study of Xi Jinping's Speeches Based on the Corpus. Guangzhou: Jinan University.

Pang, C., (2008) Self-censorship and the rise of cyber collectives: an anthropological study of a Chinese online community. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, *17*(3), pp. 57-76

Park, Y. (2005) Culture as Deficit: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Concept of Culture in Contemporary Social Work Discourse. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 32*(3), pp. 11-33.

Peeples, J. (2015) 'Discourserhetorical analysis approaches to environment, media, and communication', in A. Hansen and R. Cox (eds.) *The Routledge handbook of environment and communication Routledge*, Routledge, pp. 59-68.

Pei, M., (2020) China's coming upheaval: Competition, the coronavirus, and the weakness of Xi Jinping. *Foreign Aff.*, *99*, pp. 82.

Perkins, D. (2015) T*he Economic Transformation Of China.* World Scientific Publishing Company.

Perrez, J. and Reuchamps, M. (2015) A crazy machine or a strong "living apart together" relationship?. *Mots. Les langages du politique*, (3), pp. 126-126.

Pistor, K. and Xu, C. (2005) Governing stock markets in transition economies: Lessons from China. *American Law and Economics Review*, 7(1), pp. 184-210.

Polyzou, A. (2012) Critical discourse analysis and cognitive science: new perspectives on immigration discourse. *Critical Discourse Studies, 9*(3), pp. 315-317.

Porto, M.D. and Romano, M. (2013) Newspaper metaphors: Reusing metaphors across media genres. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 28(1), pp. 60-73.

Pragglejaz Group (2007) MIP: A method for identifying metaphorically used words in discourse. *Metaphor and symbol*, *22*, pp. 1-39.

Pritzker, S. (2007) Thinking hearts, feeling brains: Metaphor, culture, and the self in Chinese narratives of depression. *Metaphor and Symbol,* 22, pp. 251–274.

Qian, Y., (2000) The process of China's market transition (1978-1998): The evolutionary, historical, and comparative perspectives. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics,* 156, pp. 151-171.

Qian, Y., and Wu, J. (2000) "China's transition to a market economy: How far across the river?" *Center for Research on Economic Development and Policy Reform Working Paper Series* No. 69, Stanford: Stanford University.

Qian, Y. and Tian, H. (2014) 'A decade of change in China: A corpus-based discourse analysis of ten government work reports', In Q. Cao, H. Tian and P. Chilton (eds.) *Discourse, politics and media in contemporary China*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 77-96.

Qiang, X. (2019) The road to digital unfreedom: President Xi's surveillance state. *Journal of Democracy,* 30(1), pp. 53-67.

Qin, B., Strömberg, D. and Wu, Y. (2017) Why does China allow freer social media? Protests versus surveillance and propaganda. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(1), pp. 117-140.

Qin, Y. (1999) China's middle class Beijing: Chinese planning press. (In Chinese)
秦言. (1999)*中国中产阶级*. 北京: 中国计划出版社。

Quah, D. (2009) *Time to save the world economy through the sheer weight of numbers*. [Online] DQ-en. Available from: http://www.dannyquah.com/writings/en/2009/07/17/time-to-save-the-world-economy-through-the-sheer-weight-of-numbers/ [Accessed 12/10/2016].

Ralston, D., Holt, D., Terpstra, R and Kai-Cheng, Y. (1997) The impact of natural culture and economic ideology on managerial work values: a study of the United States, Russia, Japan,

and China. *Journal of international business studies*, *28*(1), pp. 177-207.

Rasiński, L., (2011) The idea of discourse in poststructuralism: Derrida, Lacan and Foucault. *Teraźniejszość–Człowiek– Edukacja,1: A quarterly of social and educational ideas,* pp. 7-22.

Rawski, T. (1979) *Economic Growth and Employment in China*. Oxford University Press.

Rawski, T. (1994) Chinese industrial reform: Accomplishments, prospects, and implications. *The American Economic Review*, 84(2), pp. 271-275.

Rayson, P. (2008) From key words to key semantic domains. *International journal of corpus linguistics*, 13(4), pp. 519-549.

Rayson, P., Archer, D., Piao, S. L. and McEnery, T. (2004) The UCREL semantic analysis system. In *Proceedings of the workshop on Beyond Named Entity Recognition Semantic labelling for NLP tasks in association with 4th International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC 2004)*, 25th May 2004, Lisbon, Portugal. Paris: European Language Resources Association, pp. 7–12.

Read, B. (2003) Democratizing the neighbourhood? New private housing and home-owner self-organization in urban China. *The China Journal*, 49, pp. 31-59.

Reisigl, M. (2008) 'Analyzing political rhetoric', in R. Wodak and M. Krzyzanowski (eds.) *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 96–120.

Reisigl, M. (2014) 'Argumentation Analysis and the Discourse-Historical Approach. A Methodological Framework', in C. Hart and P. Cap (eds.) *Contemporary Critical Discourse Studies*. London: New York Bloomsbury, pp. 67-96.

Reisigl, M. (2017) 'The Discourse-Historical Approach', in J. Flowerdew and J. Richardson (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies*, Routledge, pp. 44- 59.

Rigotti, E. (2005) 'Towards a typology of manipulative processes', in L. Saussure and P. Schulz (eds.) *Manipulation and Ideologies in the Twentieth Century: Discourse, language, mind*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. 61-83.

Robinson, D. and Tannenberg, M., (2019) Self-censorship of regime support in authoritarian states: Evidence from list experiments in China. *Research & Politics*, *6*(3), pp.1-9.

Ross, A. and Rivers, D. (2019) "Froome with His SKY Bodyguards, Layers of Armour": The 'Sport is War'Conceptual Metaphor in Grand Tour Cycling Commentary. *Communication & Sport*, 7(2), pp. 176-197.

Roubini, N. and Mihm, S. (2010) *Crisis economics: A crash course in the future of finance*. Penguin.

Ruan, L., Knockel, J., Ng, J. and Crete-Nishihata, M. (2016) One App, Two Systems: How WeChat uses one censorship policy in China and another internationally. Available online at https://citizenlab.org/2016/11/wechat-china-censorship-one-app-two-systems/ [Last accessed 16/03/2021].

Saeed, A. (2007) Media, racism and Islamophobia: the representation Of Islam and Muslims in the media. Sociology compass, 1(2), pp. 443-462.

Salama, A.H. (2011) Ideological collocation and the recontexualization of Wahhabi-Saudi Islam post-9/11: A synergy of corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 22(3), pp. 315-342.

Salkind, N. (2010) *Encyclopaedia of research design*. Sage.

Sandby-Thomas, P. (2008) *The legitimating logic of stability: Analysing the CCP's stability discourse.* PhD thesis, University of Nottingham.

Sandby-Thomas, P. (2014) How do you solve a problem like legitimacy? Contributing to a new

research agenda. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 23(88), pp. 575-592.

Saussure, F. (1960) *Course in General Linguistics.* London: Peter Owen.

Schäffner, C. (2003) 'Third Ways and New Centers: Ideological Unity or Difference?', in M. Calzade-Pérezed (ed), *Apropos of Ideology: Translation Studies on Ideology – Ideology in Translation Studies*, Routledge, London, pp. 23-41.

Schegloff, E. A. (1997) Whose text? Whose context?. *Discourse & society*, 8(2), pp. 165-187.

Schneider, F. and Hwang, Y. (2014) The Sichuan earthquake and the heavenly mandate: legitimizing Chinese rule through disaster discourse. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 23(88), pp. 636-656.

Scollon, R. (2000) Generic variability in news stories in Chinese and English: A contrastive discourse study of five days' newspapers. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 32(6), pp. 761-791.

Scott, M. (1999) WordSmith Tools, Version 3 (corpus analytical software suite). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Semino, E. (2008) *Metaphor in Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Semino, E. (2009) Metaphor and situational motivation. *Quaderns de filología. Estudis lingüístics*, 14, pp. 221-233.

Semino, E. (2017) 'Corpus linguistics and metaphor', in B. Dancygier (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 463-76.

Semino, E., Demjén, Z., Demmen, J., Koller, V., Payne, S., Hardie, A. and Rayson, P., (2017) The online use of Violence and Journey metaphors by patients with cancer, as compared with health professionals: a mixed methods study. *BMJ supportive & palliative care*, *7*(1), pp.60-66.

Sengul, K., (2019) Critical discourse analysis in political communication research: a case study of right-wing populist discourse in Australia. *Communication Research and Practice*, *5*(4), pp.376-392.

Šeškauskienė, I. and Urbonaitė, J. (2007) HEALTH metaphor in political and economic discourse: a cross linguistic analysis. *Kalbų studijos*, (11), pp. 68-73.

Shen, F. and Guo, Z. (2013) The last refuge of media persuasion: News use, national pride and political trust in China. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 23(2), pp. 135-151.

Shepard, W. (2015) *Ghost cities of China: The story of cities without people in the world's most populated country*. London: Zed Books.

Shi, T. and Lou, D., (2010) Subjective evaluation of changes in civil liberties and political rights in China. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *19*(63), pp.175-199.

Shi, X. (2005) *A Cultural Approach to Discourse*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Shi, X. (2009) Reconstructing Eastern paradigms of discourse studies. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 4(1), pp. 29-48.

Shi, X. (2012) Why do cultural discourse studies? Towards a culturally conscious and critical approach to human discourses. *Critical Arts,* 26(4), pp. 484-503.

Shi, X. (2014) *Chinese Discourse Studies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Shi, Z. (2007) The Long March of the Red Army and the Long March Spirit. *CPC History Studies*, pp. 55–63.

Shimizu, T. (2010) Born to be a weapon: A critical analysis of metaphorical business communication. *Osaka Keidai Ronshu (The Journal of Osaka University of Economics)*, 61(3), pp. 165-177.

Sigley, G. (2006) Chinese governmentalities: government, governance and the socialist market economy. *Economy and Society*, 35(4), pp. 487-508.

Silaški, N. and Đurović, T. (2013) The FOOD metaphor in structuring the global financial crisis in Serbian–magazine covers as multimodal discourse. *Communication, Cognition and Media (CICOM 2012)*, pp. 507-519.

Silaški, N. and Kilyeni, A. (2011) The MONEY IS A LIQUID metaphor in economic terminology–a contrastive analysis of English, Serbian and Romanian. *Professional communication and translation studies*, 4(1-2), pp. 63-72.

Silverwood, V. (2015) *'Five for fighting': the culture and practice of legitimised violence in professional ice hockey*, PhD thesis, Cardiff University.

Slembrouck, S. (2001) Explanation, interpretation and critique in the analysis of discourse. *Critique of Anthropology*, 21(1), pp. 33-57.

Smith, R.D. (2006) Responding to global infectious disease outbreaks: lessons from SARS on the role of risk perception, communication and management. *Social science & medicine*, 63(12), pp. 3113-3123.

Song, Z., Dong, J., Li, X. and Dong, Z. (2020) The Impact of the 4 Trillion Renminbi Stimulus Package on the Chinese Real Estate Market: A Regional Comparative Study. *Asian Economic and Financial Review*, 10(7), pp. 875-884.

Song, Z., Wang, C. and Bergmann, L., (2020) China's prefectural digital divide: Spatial analysis and multivariate determinants of ICT diffusion. *International journal of information management*, *52*, pp.1-12.

Stahl, B.C., (2004) Whose discourse? A comparison of the Foucauldian and Habermasian concepts of discourse in critical IS research. *AMCIS 2004 Proceedings*, pp. 4329-4336.

Steen, G. (1994) *Understanding metaphor in literature: An empirical approach*. Longman Publishing Group.

Steen, G., (1999) 'From linguistic to conceptual metaphor in five steps', in R Gibbs and G Steen (eds), *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics,* John Benjamin Publishing Company, pp.57-78.

Stefanowitsch, A. (2005) The function of metaphor: Developing a corpus-based perspective. *International journal of corpus linguistics*, 10(2), pp. 161-198.

Stern, R.E. and Hassid, J. (2012) Amplifying silence: uncertainty and control parables in contemporary China. *Comparative Political Studies*, 45(10), pp. 1230-1254.

Stibbe, A. (2014) 'Ecolinguistics and Erasure: restoring the natural world to consciousness', in C. Hart and P. Cap (eds.) *Contemporary critical discourse studies*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 583–602.

Stubbs, M. (1997) Whorf's children: Critical comments on critical discourse analysis (CDA). *British studies in applied linguistics*, *12*, pp. 100-116.

Su, L. (2002) What can metaphors tell us about culture? *Language and Linguistics*, 3(3), pp. 589–613.

Sun, Y. (2017) Among a hundred good virtues, filial piety is the first Contemporary moral discourses on filial piety in urban China. *Anthropological Quarterly*, pp. 771-799.

Tai, Q. (2014) China's media censorship: A dynamic and diversified regime. *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 14(2), pp. 185-210.

Tan, L. and Chen, M. (2010) A longitudinal study of metaphors in Chinese economic discourse. *Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies,* 5, pp. 84-90.
(谭业升, 陈敏. (2010) 汉语经济隐喻的一项历时研究. *语言教学与研究*, 5, pp. 84-90)

Tannen, D., Hamilton, H., and Schiffrin, D. (2015) *The handbook of discourse analysis.* John Wiley

& Sons.

Tang, C. (2007) A comparative study of English and Chinese idioms with food names. *USTWPL,* 3(7), pp. 83-93

The Economist. (2010) Keqiang ker-ching: How China's next prime minister keeps tabs on its economy. Available from: http://www.economist.com/node/17681868 [Last accessed 14/11/2016].

Thibodeau, P.H. and Boroditsky, L. (2011) Metaphors we think with: The role of metaphor in reasoning. *PloS one*, 6(2), pp. e16782.

Tian, H. and Chilton, P. (2014) 'Issues in discourse approach to social transformations in China', in Q. Cao, H. Tian, and P. Chilton (eds.) *Discourse, politics and media in contemporary China.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. 195-207.

Toolan, M. (1997) What is critical discourse analysis and why are people saying such terrible things about it? *Language and literature*, 6(2), pp. 83-103.

Toolan, M. (2002) *Critical discourse analysis: critical concepts in linguistics.* London and New York: Routledge.

Tsaknaki, O. (2016) Cooking verbs and metaphor Contrastive study of Greek and French. *Selected papers on theoretical and applied linguistics*, 21, pp. 458-472.

Tseng, M.Y. (2017) Primary Metaphors and Multimodal Metaphors of Food: Examples from an Intercultural Food Design Event. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 32(3), pp. 211-229.

Tyrwhitt-Drake, H. (1999) Resisting the discourse of critical discourse analysis: Reopening a Hong Kong case study. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *31*(8), pp. 1081-1088.

van Dijk, T. (1993) Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse Society*, 4, pp. 249-283.

van Dijk, T. (1995) Aims of critical discourse analysis. *Japanese discourse*, 1(1), pp. 17-27.

van Dijk, T. (1998a) 'Opinions and ideologies in the press', in A. Bell and P. Garrett (Eds) *Approaches to media discourse*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp. 21-63.

van Dijk, T. (1998b) *Ideology: a Multidisciplinary Approach*. London: SAGE.

van Dijk, T. (2005) War rhetoric of a little ally: Political implicatures and Aznar's legitimatization of the war in Iraq. *Journal of language and politics*, 4(1), pp. 65-91.

van Dijk, T. (2006) Ideology and discourse analysis, *Journal of Political Ideologies, 11*(2), pp. 115-140.

van Dijk, T. (2013) CDA is NOT a method of critical discourse analysis. Available at: https://www.edisoportal.org/debate/115-cda-not-method-critical-discourse-analysis [Accessed on 13/04/2022]

van Dijk, T. (2007) 'The Study of Discourse: An Introduction', in T.A. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse Studies*, London, Sage, pp. xix-xlii.

Van Dijk, T. (2014) *Discourse and knowledge: A Sociocognitive approach*, Cambridge, CUP

van Dijk, T. (2015) 'Critical discourse analysis. In D. Tannen', H. Hamilton, and D. Schiffrin. (eds.) 2nd edition *The handbook of discourse analysis*, John Wiley & Sons, pp. 466-485.

van Eemeren, F. and Grootendorst. R. (2004) *A systematic theory of argumentation: The pragmadialectical approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

van Eemeren, F. and Grootendorst, R. (2016) *Argumentation, communication, and fallacies: A pragma-dialectical perspective*. Routledge.

van Leeuwen, T. (1996) 'The Representation of Social Actors', in C. Caldas-Coulthard and M. Coulthard (eds.) Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis. London:

Routledge pp. 41-79.

van Poppel, L. (2021) The study of metaphor in argumentation theory. *Argumentation*, 35(1), pp.1-32.

Vanparys, J. (1984) Source metaphors in English. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 8(3), pp. 395-410.

Verschueren, J. (2001) Predicaments of criticism. *Critique of Anthropology*, 21(1), pp. 59-81.

Vessey, R., (2013) *Language ideologies and discourses of national identity in Canadian newspapers: A cross-linguistic corpus-assisted discourse study*, Doctoral dissertation, Queen Mary University of London.

Walder, A. (1986) *Communist Neo-Traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry*. Univ of California Press.

Walder, A. (1995) Career mobility and the communist political order. *American Sociological Review*, 60: 309-328.

Wallace, J. (2014) *Cities and stability Urbanization, redistribution, and regime survival in China*. Oxford University Press.

Wang, A. and Katik, M. (2015) China: Is "Li Keqiang" Index Out of Date? *The London Post*. Available from: http://thelondonpost.net/china-is-li-keqiang-index-out-of-date/ [Last accessed 14/11/2016].

Wang., G. (2007) The Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean. Zhonghua Book.

王国轩(译注). (2007) 大学·中庸. 中华书局

Wang, H., Runtsova, T. and Chen, H. (2013) Economy is an organism–a comparative study of metaphor in English and Russian economic discourse. *Text & talk*, 33(2), pp. 259-288.

Wang, H., Sparks, C. and Huang, Y., (2018) Measuring differences in the Chinese press: A study of People's Daily and Southern Metropolitan Daily. *Global Media and China*, *3*(3), pp.125-140.

Wang, J. (2017) Representations of the Chinese Communist Party's political ideologies in President Xi Jinping's discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 28(4), pp. 413-435.

Wang, Q. (2018) Linguistic violence and online political communications in China: The example of 鸡的屁 (Ji De Pi) as an ironic spoof of gross domestic product in online debates around environmental issues. *Global Media and China*, 3(1), pp. 18-31.

Wang, Q., Luo, X., Li, Y., and Liu, Y. (1997) *Zhongyi zangxiang xue* [Theory of internal organs medicine]. Beijing, China: People's Health Press. (in Chinese).

Wang, R. and Groot, G. (2018) Who represents? Xi Jinping's grand united front work, legitimation, participation and consultative democracy. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 27(112), pp. 569-583.

Wang, T., (2013) *Talking to strangers: Chinese youth and social media*. University of California, San Diego.

Wang, Y., Li, Y., Huang, Y., Yi, C. and Ren, J., (2020) Housing wealth inequality in China: An urban-rural comparison. *Cities*, 96, pp.102428.

Wang, Y., Shao, L. and Wang, Y.P. (2015) Pre-reform socialist welfare housing estates in China: Physical conditions and social profiles. J*ournal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering,* 14(3), pp. 609-616.

Wang, Y.P. and Murie, A. (2011) The new affordable and social housing provision system in China: Implications for comparative housing studies. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 11(3), pp. 237-254.

Wei, L. and Hua, Z. (2019) Transcripting: playful subversion with Chinese characters. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 16(2), pp. 145-161.

Weiss, G. and Wodak, R. eds., (2007) Critical discourse analysis, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

Whyte, M.K. (1999) 'The changing role of workers', in. M. Goldman and R. MacFarquhar (eds.) *The Paradox of China's post-Mao Reforms*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 173-196.

Widdowson, H. (1995) Discourse analysis: a critical view. *Language and literature*, 4(3), pp. 157-172.

Widdowson, H. (2000) On the limitations of linguistics applied. *Applied linguistics*, 21(1), pp. 3-25.

Widdowson, H. (2004) *Text, Context, Pretext: Critical Issues in Discourse Analysis*. Blackwell Publishing.

Wiesner, C., Haapala, T. and Palonen, K. (2017) *Debates, rhetoric and political action: Practices of Textual Interpretation and Analysis-Palgrave.* Macmillan.

Wike, R. and Parker, B. (2015) *Corruption, Pollution, Inequality Are Top Concerns in China*: *Many Worry about Threats to Traditions and Culture.* Pew Research Center. [Online] Available from: http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/09/24/corruption-pollution-inequality-are-top-concerns-in-china/ [Last accessed 23/12/2016].

Wiliński, J. (2017) War Metaphors in Business: A Metaphostructional Analysis. *ANGLICA-An International Journal of English Studies*, 26(2), pp. 61-78.

Williams, A.E., Davidson, R. and Yochim, E.C. (2011) Who's to blame when a business fails? How journalistic death metaphors influence responsibility attributions. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 88(3), pp. 541-561.

Williams Camus, J. (2009) Metaphors of cancer in scientific popularization articles in the British press. *Discourse Studies*, 11(4), pp. 465-495.

Williams, R. (1973) Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory. *New Left Review,* 82, pp.1-14.

Winfield, B. and Peng, Z. (2005) Market or party controls? Chinese media in transition. *Gazette*, 67(3), pp. 255-270.

Wodak, R. (1999) Critical discourse analysis at the end of the 20th century. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, 32(1-2), pp. 185-193

Wodak, R. (2001a) 'What CDA is about: a summary of its history, important concepts and its developments', in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds.) *Methods of critical discourse analysis*, London, Sage, pp. 1-13.

Wodak, R. (2001b) 'The discourse-historical approach', in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds.) *Methods of critical discourse analysis*, London, Sage, pp. 63-94.

Wodak, R. (2006) Mediation between discourse and society: Assessing cognitive approaches in CDA. *Discourse studies*, *8*(1), pp. 179-190.

Wodak, R., (2007) Pragmatics and critical discourse analysis: A cross-disciplinary inquiry. *Pragmatics & cognition*, *15*(1), pp.203-225.

Wodak, R. (2014) 'Critical discourse analysis', in C. Leung, & B. Street (eds.) The Routledge companion to English studies, London, Routledge, pp. 302-316.

Wodak, R. (2014b). 'Political Discourse Analysis -- Distinguishing Frontstage and Backstage Contexts: A Discourse-Historical Approach', in J. Flowerdew (ed.) *Discourse in context: Contemporary applied linguistics*, Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 321-346.

Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. (2016) 3rd edition *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*. London: Sage.

Womack, B. (1986) Where Mao Went Wrong: Epistemology and Ideology in Mao's Leftist Politics. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, (16), pp. 23-40.

Wong, K.L.X. and Dobson, A.S., (2019) We're just data: Exploring China's social credit system in relation to digital platform ratings cultures in Westernised democracies. *Global Media and China*, *4*(2), pp. 220-232.

Wu, F. (2015) Commodification and housing market cycles in Chinese cities. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 15(1), pp. 6-26.

Wu, G. (1994) Command communication: The politics of editorial formulation in the People's Daily. *The China Quarterly*, 137, pp. 194-211.

Wu, L. (2008) The Construction of Confucianism Benevolence and Core Socialist Values. *Chuanshan Journal,* 3, pp. 195-197. (In Chinese)

(吴立群. (2008) 儒家仁学思想与社会主义核心价值体系的建构.*船山学刊*, 3, pp. 195-197.)

Wu, S. (2013) *Ideological change in contemporary China*. PhD thesis, Wuhan University.

Xiao, M. Q. (2016) An Interpretation of the Political Persuasiveness of Family Metaphor. *Journal of Kaifeng Institute Education*. 36(3), pp. 31-32. (In Chinese).
(肖明齐. (2016) 家庭隐喻的政治说服力解读. 开封教育学报, 36(3), pp. 31-32.)

Xiao, R. and Hu, X. (2015) *Corpus-based studies of translational Chinese in English-Chinese translation*. Berlin: Springer.

Xinhua. (2016) *Xinhua Insight: Xi's worldwide diplomacy benefits China, the world*. Available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-01/05/c_134980392.htm [Last accessed 06/01/2017].

Xing, G. (2009) Hu Jintao's Political Thinking and Legitimacy Building: A Post-Marxist Perspective. *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, 36(4), pp. 213-226.

Xu, B. (2014) Media Censorship in China. *Council on Foreign Relations.* Available at: http://www.cfr.org/china/media-censorship-china/p11515 (Last accessed 16/09/2020)

Xu, N., Chen, Q., Xu, Y. and Chan, K.C. (2016). Political uncertainty and cash holdings: Evidence from China. *Journal of Corporate Finance*, 40, pp. 276-295.

Xu, X., Mao, Z.M. and Halderman, J.A. (2011) Internet censorship in China Where does the filtering occur. *International Conference on Passive and Active Network Measurement*. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer. 133-142.

Yang, X. Y., & Jia, C. H. (2016) Metaphorical Expressions of Temperature Sensory Words in the Theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine. *DEStech Transactions on Social Science, Education and Human Science*, (icssd).

Yao, S. and Chen, M. (2009) Chinese economy 2008: A turbulent year amid the world financial crisis. *Briefing series.* (47) [Online] Nottingham. Available from: https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/iaps/documents/cpi/briefings/briefing-47-economic-review-2008.pdf [Last accessed 12/10/2016].

Yao, Z. and Gao, J. (2014) A Social Dimension Analysis and Tendency Study of the Change of Contemporary China 's Ideological Discourse System. *Ideological & Theoretical Education*, (6), pp. 19-24.

Ye, J. P., and Wu, Z. H. (2008) Urban housing policy in China in the macro-regulation period 2004–2007. *Urban Policy and Research, 26*(3), pp. 283-295.

Young, D. (2012) *The Party line: How the media dictates public opinion in modern China*. John Wiley & Sons.

Yu, A. (2020) Digital surveillance in post-coronavirus China: A feminist view on the price we pay. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 27(5), pp. 774-777.

Yu, N. (2003) Metaphor, body, and culture: The Chinese understanding of gallbladder and courage,

Metaphor and Symbol, 18(1), pp. 13-31

Yu, N, (2008) Metaphor from body and culture. In R. Gibbs (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press. 247–261.

Yu, N. (2009) *The Chinese heart in a cognitive perspective*. De Gruyter Mouton.

Yu, Y., (2011) China's policy responses to the global financial crisis. In *The Impact of the Economic Crisis on East Asia*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Yusuf, F. and Brooks, G. (2010) Demographics and consumption patterns in urban China. *Population research and policy review*, 29(1), pp. 5-17.

Zagorski, K., Evans, M.D., Kelley, J. and Piotrowska, K., (2014) Does national income inequality affect individuals' quality of life in Europe? Inequality, happiness, finances, and health. *Social Indicators Research*, *117*(3), pp.1089-1110.

Zandi, M. (2016) Interviewed by Fung, E. *China Housing Revival Buffers Economy. [Online] The Wall Street Journal*. Available from: http://www.wsj.com/articles/china-housing-revival-buffers-economy-1463288631 [Last accessed 16/11/2016].

Zeng, J., Chan, C.H. and Schäfer, M.S., (2022) Contested Chinese dreams of AI? Public discourse about Artificial intelligence on WeChat and People's Daily Online. *Information, Communication & Society*, *25*(3), pp.319-340.

Zhao, J. and Tang, J. (2015) Industrial structural change and economic growth in China, 1987–2008. *China & World Economy*, 23(2), pp. 1-21.

Zhao, Y. (2016) *Protocols of Control in Chinese Online News Media: The Case of Wenzhou News*, PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield.

Zhang, C. (2013) Money, housing, and inflation in China. *Journal of Policy Modeling*, 35(1), pp. 75-87.

Zhang, L. and Barnden, J. (2010) Affect and metaphor sensing in virtual drama. *International Journal of Computer Games Technology*, pp. 1-12.

Zhang, W. (1996) *Ideology and economic reform under Deng Xiaoping, 1978-1993.* Routledge.

Zheng, Y. and Chen, M., (2009) How effective will China's four trillion yuan stimulus plan be?. *The University of Nottingham China Policy Institute Briefing Series*, *49*(2), pp.28-37.

Zheng, Y. and Tok, S.K., (2007) Harmonious society and harmonious world: China's policy discourse under Hu Jintao. *Briefing Series*, *26*, pp.1-12.

Zhao, Y. (2000) From Commercialization to Conglomeration: The Transformation of the Chinese Press within the Orbit of the Party State, *Journal of Communication*, 50, pp. 3–26.

Zhao, Z. and Gu, L. (2006) A cognitive approach to English and Chinese FOOD metaphors. *Morden Chinese,* 12, pp.28-29.

Zhou, X. (2001) Political dynamics and bureaucratic career patterns in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1994. *Comparative Political Studies*, 34(9), pp. 1036-1062.

Zhou, Y. and Moy, P. (2007) Parsing framing processes: The interplay between online public opinion and media coverage. *Journal of communication*, 57(1), pp. 79-98.

Zhou, Z. (2016) IPP review--china's latest housing boom: A resurrection of the old development model? Available at: http://ippreview.com/index.php/Home/Blog/single/id/84.html [Last accessed: 19/12016]

Zhu, X. (2012) Understanding China's growth: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26(4), pp. 103-24.

Zhu, N. (2016) *Rigid bubble*, Beijing: CITIC Press Group (In Chinese).
(朱宁, 2016 刚性泡沫, 中信出版社, 北京).

Zibin, A. and Altakhaineh, A. (2018) An analysis of Arabic metaphorical and/or metonymical compounds: A cognitive linguistic approach. *Metaphor and the Social World*, 8(1), pp. 100-133.

Zou, Y. (2014) Contradictions in China's affordable housing policy: Goals vs. structure. *Habitat International*, 41, pp. 8-16.

Appendix

Scripts (written with Python) for collecting online news articles:

```
# NetEase_Check
# python NE_Check.py

import requests
from html.parser import HTMLParser
import time

def _attr(attrs,attrname):
 for attr in attrs:
  if attr[0]==attrname: return attr[1]
 return None

class URLParser(HTMLParser):
 def __init__(self):
  HTMLParser.__init__(self)
  self.in_div=False
  self.in_url=False
  self.url=[]

 def handle_starttag(self,tag,attrs):
  if tag=='div' and _attr(attrs,'class')=='results': self.in_div=True
  if tag=='h3' and self.in_div:
   self.in_url=True
  if tag=='a' and self.in_url: self.url.append(_attr(attrs,'href'))

 def handle_endtag(self,tag):
  if tag=='a': self.in_url=False

 def handle_data(self,data):
  pass

headers={
'Accept':'text/html, application/xhtml+xml, image/jxr, */*',
'Accept-Encoding':'gzip, deflate, br',
'Accept-Language':'zh-Hans-CN, zh-Hans; q=0.7, ja; q=0.3',
'Connection':'Keep-Alive',
'Host':'www.sogou.com',
'Cookie':'ABTEST=0|1506279532|v17;                       IPLOC=CN3201;
SUID=B92806DD3921940A0000000059C8006C;   SUV=1506279533718726;  sct=1;
SUIR=1506279534;            SNUID=3BAA845F8286DA778B2EB57F8390079A;
```

```
ld=Cylllllll2BhlxZllllVXwlawlllllTyYomylllwlllllplll5@@@@@@@@@@;
LSTMV=45%2C35; LCLKINT=2772; browerV=3; osV=1',
'Referer':'https://www.baidu.com/link?url=wkHqmmQWOoSbFq063eZufHsvZF4xGVE
unI0k4n_zY-S&wd=&eqid=bc8419f7000138b00000000359c804b4',
'User-Agent':'Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML,
like Gecko) Chrome/60.0.3112.90 Safari/537.36 OPR/47.0.2631.80'
}
params={}
url='https://www.sogou.com/web'
infile=open('titles.txt','r')
outfile=open('URLs.csv','w')
bad_titles=open('bad_titles.txt','w')
for line in infile.readlines():
 title=line.strip()
 params['query']=title+' site: 163.com'
 page=requests.get(url,params=params,headers=headers) #,proxies=proxies
 #page=requests.get(url,params=params,proxies=proxies)
 urlPar=URLParser()
 urlPar.feed(page.content.decode('utf-8'))
 #print(page.content.decode('utf-8'))
 print(urlPar.url[1])
 try:
  page=requests.get(urlPar.url[1]).content.decode('utf-8').split('replace('")
  outfile.write(title+','+page[1].split('")')[0]+'\n')
 except:
  bad_titles.write(title+'\n')
outfile.close()
infile.close()
bad_titles.close()
```