The Chien-Ming Wang Phenomenon:
A Critical Metaphor Model Analysis of newspaper discourse in Taiwan

Ying-Yu Lin
Wen-Yu Chiang
National Taiwan University

This study investigates “critically” how metaphors are used to present a particular message or ideology by analyzing newspaper discourse. The framework, Critical Metaphor Model (CMM) is adopted in this study. CMM is a modified approach which incorporates the central tenets of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1993) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995a; 1995b; 2003; 2004; van Dijk 1988, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2001). With regard to the approach of CMM, there are three stages in the analysis of metaphors: (1) Textual-level metaphor identification; (2) Discourse-level metaphor interpretation; (3) Social-level metaphor explanation. By using the CMM approach, I identify the dominant metaphors used by the newspapers, analyze the entailments and implications of the metaphors, and further explore the ideology reflected through the use of the metaphors.

Previous studies (Howe, 1988; Booth, 1991; Capuzzo, 1991; Edelson, 1991; Gibbs, 1994; Jansen and Sabo 1994; Semino and Masci 1996) mainly focus on sports metaphors in political discourse or war-reporting discourse. This study examines metaphors concerning Chien-Ming Wang (henceforth Wang), a Taiwanese baseball hero and currently an American Major League Baseball pitcher, in a variety of “sports-related discourse” in different newspapers. Moreover, despite previous studies (Wee, 2001; Nakamura 2004; Chiang and Duaan, 2007) focus on how certain issues are represented differently through linguistic devices motivated by the underlying ideologies, this study hypothesizes that the “Chien-Ming Wang phenomenon” will be represented through metaphors not only differently but also similarly depending on different aspects of ideologies. This study examines the connotations, entailments, and implications of the metaphors concerning Wang, analyzes the ideology reflected through the metaphors, and proposes the factors account for the representations of the “Chien-Ming Wang Phenomenon” in different newspapers in Taiwan.

The data is collected from the online database of three dominant Mandarin newspapers in Taiwan, including The Liberty Times (LT), The United Daily News (UDN) and Apple Daily (AD), from January 1 to December 31 in 2007. The selected newspapers are distinct in their political stances and features. There are 39 news articles, including news reports, editorials and opinion pieces related to Chien-Ming Wang, under analysis. The results show that there are four kinds of representations of metaphors concerning Wang: (1) similar metaphors with similar implications; (2) different metaphors with similar implications; (3) similar metaphors...
with different implications; (4) different metaphors with different implications, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications\Metaphors</th>
<th>Similar</th>
<th>Different</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
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The analysis of (1) and (2) show that metaphors concerning Wang, which include BURDEN metaphor, COMMODITY metaphor, LEADER metaphor, INDUSTRY metaphor, are used with similar implications in different newspapers to elaborate Wang’s condition in MLB or his influence on Taiwan. However, metaphors in (3), including LIGHT metaphor, CONSUMER metaphor, and BASEBALL metaphor, are used with different implications, especially in the politically-related issues, in different newspapers. The analysis of (4) shows that different metaphors may be used with different implications that concern specific domains and aspects depending on the characteristics of newspapers.

This indicates that the “Chien-Ming Wang phenomenon” is represented through metaphors with both “similar” and “different” implications in newspaper discourse in Taiwan. As the following **Figure 1** shows, I propose that different aspects of ideologies held by the newspapers are considered the main factor contributed to the similar or different implications; when the focus is on the national identity or political agendas from the perspective within Taiwan itself, metaphors are represented with different implications to reinforce the political ideologies held by different newspapers; while the focus is on Wang’s condition or how Wang arouses the international attention viewing from the perspective beyond Taiwan, the implications of the metaphors are similar in different newspapers.

On the whole, this study provides an analysis of the “Chien-Ming Wang phenomenon” from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. This is the first study that investigates metaphors in sports-related discourse linguistically and cognitively in the press in Taiwan. The theoretical contribution is applying the Critical Metaphor Model (CMM) for analyzing metaphors in news media. The CMM approach has integrated the perspectives of socio-linguistics, semantics, and pragmatics. Furthermore, this study highlights the uniqueness of the bi-directional relationship of baseball and politics in Taiwan.
Figure 1. The representations of “Chien-Ming Wang Phenomenon” through metaphors with similar/different implications in different newspapers (LT, UDN, and AD)

REFERENCES