

# Culture-Specific Metaphor in TGOC and Its C-E Translation\*

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The Governance of China features the application of metaphors with Chinese characteristics. Metaphor is very persuasive. It uses rational and conscious conceptual basis with emotional and metaphoric meaning to describe facts and affect people's perception. Through statistical analysis of Xi Jinping's metaphorical expression and its resonance of the source domain, the current research focuses on the identification of conceptual metaphors in TGOC and explores its translation strategies. It is found that the ROSD of JOURNEY, BUILDING and WAR metaphors are among the highest and significant. Four networks have been identified to translate the culture-specific metaphors from Chinese into English, while the Single-Scopes dominate an overwhelming majority. Single-Scopes and Double-Scopes are the main cognitive strategies for the C-E translation.

**Keywords:** The Governance of China, mapping, integrated blending, metaphor translation

## Introduction

As a widely accepted masterpiece in China, *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* (hereinafter is referred to as TGOC) is a typical example of political discourse, informative, thoughtful and good at using culture-loaded metaphors to make abstract and obscure political language vivid and persuasive. Metaphors are heavily clustered in TGOC, a collection of important speeches and written works by Xi Jinping from 2012 to 2020 covering topics of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the Chinese Dream, a moderately prosperous society in all respects, deeper reform, rule of law, governing the Party with strict discipline, new development concepts, the new normal of economic development, socialist democracy, cultural confidence, the wellbeing of the People, beautiful China, one country, two systems, China's diplomacy as a major country, peaceful development and cooperation with other countries, the Belt and Road Initiative, and a community of shared future. The English version of TGOC, translated by authoritative experts, can be regarded as the "translation prototype" of similar political texts.

Metaphors are produced in the flow of talk. As an integral aspect of talking-and-thinking, metaphors offer the researcher an interesting way to track the development of ideas, attitudes and values over the timescales of the discourse system (Cameron, 2011, pp. 24-25). Therefore, selecting typical data from President Xi Jinping's

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speeches, the current research intends to discuss two questions: a. the culture-specific metaphor in TGOC and its ideology. b. metaphorical mappings in the synchronic construction and translation of meaning in such context. By locating and scientifically identifying representative metaphors, we try to describe in full detail the hiding images culture-specific metaphors convey to the target readers, and hope that the Corpus-based evidence would shed light on valuable attention in further study.

### **Metaphor in Political Discourse**

Metaphors in political discourse have been studied in great detail. Wang argued that metaphors in political speech are usually used for 4 general purposes (2018, pp. 447-449). One is the general rhetoric purpose to gain audience's attention and to establish trust; the second is to simplify or reify abstract and complex concepts into intelligible ones in a way favorable to the speaker's intention; the third is to evaluate the prospective political action and actor; and the fourth is to arouse the audience's emotions and feelings favoring the speaker.

Chilton and Ilyin analyse how the metaphor of "the common European house" undergoes a number of transformations when it passes between linguistic and political cultures. They argue that, as well as at the level of individual text, metaphor also has an important conceptual role in communication across national boundaries, and "metaphors are not transferred with fixed meanings, but are processed in accordance with local languages, local discourse formations and local political interests" (1993, p. 27). In a comparison of the metaphors in English and French press reports of European defense issues, Thornborrow (1993) argues that policies for the defense of the "the European house" are represented by building metaphors in English whereas in French, they are represented by system metaphors. The English building metaphors are indicated by the presence of terms from architecture and the word "structure". Straehle et al. (1999, p. 68) agree with Chilton's (1996, p. 71) view of the importance of metaphor in creating common ground between participants and identifies for metaphor "a variety of purposes, including persuasion, legitimation, group solidarity, and 'the production of new conceptualizations for problematic situations'" (Chilton, 1996, p. 74). Musolff (2000) identifies the way that very similar train metaphors are evaluated differently in German and British press reports, and he identifies the way that the same source domain of building is shifted for particular rhetorical purposes (2000, p. 228). Both languages show evidence of a cognitive semantic schema for a train in terms of its parts, and a journey scenario in terms of travelling from one station to another on tracks, at a certain speed, according to a timetable to a given destination. In a pilot study with students of various nationalities, Musolff (2016) evidences that readers creatively reconstruct metaphors to fit new scenarios and argues in favor of scenario analysis as a methodological approach to cognitive metaphor studies. Charteris-Black (2004) examines the use of metaphor by the New Labour party in Britain in both manifestos and political speeches and find that there are metaphors drawing on the source domain of religion and that these are motivated by a conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS RELIGION. He argues that these constitute a new 'ethical' political discourse (p. 48). In his latest works, Charteris-Black overviews different approaches to the analysis of political speeches and proposes a four interrelated and "recursive" stage (2014, p. 176) of critical metaphor analysis process, that is, contextual analysis, metaphor identification, interpretation and explanation. Branum and Charteris-Black (2014) identified differences in the reporting strategies of *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* that provide insight into the ideology of the British press by keyword analysis (pp. 199-220).

### Cognitive Metaphor Theory and Discourse Dynamics

Aristotle believed that metaphors were implicit comparisons based on principles of analogy for enhancing stylistic elegance through linguistic ornamentation. The motivated and embodied nature of metaphor has come to be appreciated by cognitive scholars (Lakoff & Johnson, 1987; Brown, 1990; Turner, 1991; Fauconnier & Turner, 1994) since 1980s. while criticisms are still flak as it is time to approach metaphor as “social and situated phenomenon, not just a matter of thought” (Zanotto et al, 2008, pp. 11-43). Carmon (2003) argued that the recent emphasis on cognitive aspects has consequently resulted in an “unwarranted lack of interest in the linguistic aspect of metaphor” (p. 8). Nevertheless, the ubiquity of metaphor is widely accepted and metaphor, as a way of thinking one thing in terms of another, is possible precisely in a person’s conceptual system (Lakoff & Jonhson, 1987, pp. 5-6). Metaphor is characterized as a set of metaphorical mapping from the source domain on the target domain. The notion of metaphorical mapping has been developed through substantial linguistic analyses (Sweester, 1988, 1990; Lakoff, 1993) and its mechanisms are elaborated by Lakoff (1993, p. 216) and Fauconnier (1997, 2010) in his conceptual blending theory.

Four systematic metaphors were found to be significant in framing talking-and-thinking about the evolving conciliation process (Cameron, 2007b). Lakoff argues that primary metaphors are embodied in three ways: they arise from bodily experiences, they are physically in the brain, and they give rise to physical behavior (2012, p. 3). While overviewing the basics of metaphorical thought and language from the perspective of Neuro cognition, Lakoff (2014, pp. 1-14) outlines a theory of metaphor circuitry and discusses how everyday reason makes use of embodied metaphor circuitry.

Cognitive metaphor theory (CMT), born with *Metaphors We Live By* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), and developed since then inside the broader field of cognitive linguistics, holds that metaphor is “a matter of understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another” (Lakoff, 2003, pp. 3-7). Metaphor is a matter of mind, not of language, and works with metaphor as general phenomenon, not as context-specific (Gibbs, 1994). Metaphors are systematic and pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Metaphors offer a way of “seeing one thing in terms of something else” (Burke, 1945, p. 503). As a salient and pervasive cognitive process linking conceptualization and language, metaphor depends crucially on a cross-space mapping between the source and target inputs, in which blended spaces play a key role (Fauconnier, 2010, pp. 168-169). Close relations between metaphor and cognition have been studied insightfully in works of Hu Zhuanglin (1997), Shu Dingfang (2000) and Chen Min (2010) with the active role conceptual metaphor plays in language acquisition closely examined. The typical form of conceptual metaphor Target-domain Is Source-domain, or alternatively, Target-domain as Source-domain is widely accepted.

The magnitude of mapping in metaphor analysis is highly stressed by Faconnier, who argued that mappings are central to any understanding of semantic and pragmatic language interpretation and cognitive construction. Mappings are central to meaning construction, the high-level, complex mental operations that apply within and across domains when we think, act, or communicate (2010, pp.1-13).

While the discourse dynamics approach to metaphor concerns with metaphor as a discourse phenomenon and as multi-dimensional socio-cognitive activity, which may involve any of the interconnected and multiple resources of participants: dimensions that can be described as linguistic, social, psychological or cognitive,

affective, cultural, physical. Metaphor analysis combines close scrutiny of metaphors with analysis of lexical, syntactic and rhetorical choices in immediate dialogic action, and, on a longer timescale, the contribution of metaphors to narratives, justifications and explanations as they are presented and re-presented. Three levels of metaphor analysis, that is, local, emergent and distributional will be involved in this research.

The current research will put focus on conceptual metaphor studies in political speech with more corpus-based evidence and attempt to address two research questions: (1) What does corpus analysis reveal about the culture-specific conceptual metaphor in TGOC? (2) What does corpus analysis reveal about the metaphorical mappings in the synchronic construction and translation of meaning in such context?

As argued in Fauconnier (2010, pp. 149-151), four conditions are satisfied when two Input spaces  $I_1$  and  $I_2$  are blended, namely, cross-space mapping, generic space, blend and emergent structure. The blend has emergent structure in three interrelated ways of composition, completion and elaboration. Schematically, then, a full four-space blend has been created like Figure 1. As far as metaphorical mappings are concerned, the blending of two spaces is far more complicated than that depicted in Figure 1.

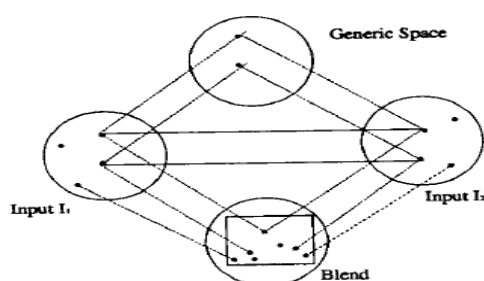


Figure 1. Conceptual Blending.

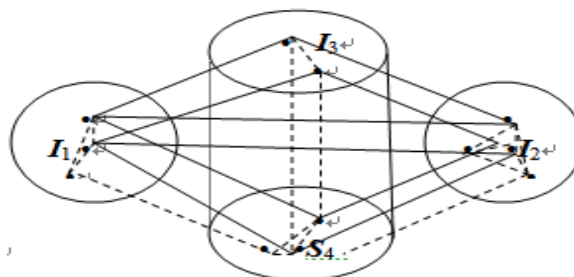


Figure 2. Integrated Blending.

We found that the four spaces blend as much multi-dimensionally as dynamically as suggested in the new integration model (Figure 2): input space  $I_1$  (the source) is partially mapped onto input space  $I_2$  (the target); the two inputs projected onto a fourth space, the blend, provided with the prototypical emergent structure of space  $I_3$ . It is worth noting that elements in the four spaces are dynamically interweaved with each other. The generic space  $I_3$  is derived from the prototypical structure of  $I_1$  and  $I_2$ . The mappings would be realized either by the fused elements or separate projection: on the one hand, when counterparts are projected into the blend, they may be fused into a single element by virtue of  $I_3$ ; on the other hand, one of the counterparts is projected but not the other.

## Dynamics of Culture-Specific Metaphor in TGOC II and Its Translation

Following a now established CMT framework for using corpus linguistic methods, our research aims to undertake critical studies of discourse (Bednarek & Caple, 2014; Hunter & MacDonald, 2013; Kim, 2014) and attempt to identify the conceptual metaphors in TGOC II, the ideology the conceptual metaphor carries and mapping strategies in translating.

### Sources and Data Collection

Experience with metaphor identification shows that around 70% or so vehicle terms will be uncontroversially identified and accepted by several raters working on a text; agreement can be reached through discussion on a further 15-20% but around 10% are likely to remain disputed because of the inherent fuzziness of

human meaning-making (Cameron, 2003; praggeljaz group, 2017). Inspired by Praggeljaz Group and Charteris-Black (2004), metaphorical expressions in this research would be reliably identified in two stages, in which the relationship between the contextual meaning and the basic meaning of each lexical unit has been closely examined. In other words, if the former and the latter are closely related to each other, they are not metaphorically used. The metaphorically used lexical units would be otherwise identified as they are significantly contrast with each other. Firstly, a close reading of a sample of texts particularly the culture-loaded Chinese sayings with the aim of identifying candidate metaphors. Secondly, a further qualitative phase in which corpus contexts are examined to determine whether each use of a keyword is metaphoric or literal. One point worth noting is that we are particularly interested in conventional metaphors because are likely to contain more convert types of evaluation since few metaphors have not previously been taken up or used in a language community.

Fairclough's (1995a, p. 6) 3 stages of metaphor analysis would be employed in the whole process, that is, metaphor identification, interpretation and explanation. Metaphor identification is initially concerned with ideational meaning—ie. Identifying whether they are present in a text and establishing whether there is a tension between a literal source domain and a metaphoric target domain. Metaphor interpretation is concerned with interpersonal meaning—ie. Identifying the type of social relations that are constructed through them. Metaphor explanation is concerned with textual meaning—ie. The way that metaphors are interrelated and become coherent with reference to the situation in which they occur.

### Metaphors in TGOC II and Resonance of Source Domain

As proposed by Charteris-Black (2004, p. 89), the resonance of the source domain (ROSD) measures the extent to which the metaphorical source domain appears in a specific corpus, that is, the universality of the source domain. According to Charteris-Black, ROSD can be calculated by the following formula:  $ROSD = \sum \text{keyword} \times \sum \text{frequency}$ , in which  $\sum \text{key word}$  means the keyword type and its total amount, that is, the number of metaphorical expressions of keywords in the same source domain while  $\sum \text{frequency}$  measures the sum of the occurrences of each keyword. For instance, under the source domain of JOURNEY there have been found keywords such as mountain, sea, river, way, bridge with occurrences of 10, 12, 11, 9 and 10 respectively, then the  $ROSD = \sum \text{keyword} \times \sum \text{frequency} = (1+1+1+1+1) \times (10+12+11+9+10) = 260$ . By calculating and comparing the resonance values of each source domain, we have figured out the distribution of metaphorical expressions in the second volume of TGOC. As described in Table 1, the highest degree of metaphor intensity was observed for the source domain of JOURNEY, an act of long-distance travelling from one place to another. Journey metaphor is widely adopted in TGOC II with a high ROSD of 228,480 accounting for 55.79% of the list followed by BUILDING and WAR metaphors with occurrences of 1510 and 981 respectively. It is worth noting that ANIMAL, DISEASE, FAMILY and WEATHER metaphors comprise the least favorable sources of domains in the existing metaphorical expressions.

Table 1

#### *Conceptual Metaphor in TGOC II and the ROSD*

Conceptual Metaphor	$\sum \text{keyword}$	$\sum \text{frequency}$	ROSD	Percentage
JOURNEY metaphor	128	1785	228,480	55.79%
BUILDING metaphor	57	1510	86,070	21.02%
WAR metaphor	69	981	67,689	16.53%

HUMAN metaphor	45	203	9135	2.23%
PLANT metaphor	29	239	6931	1.69%
MACHINE metaphor	16	331	5296	1.29%
DISEASE metaphor	38	76	2888	0.71%
FAMILY metaphor	21	72	1512	0.37%
WEATHER metaphor	21	45	945	0.23%
ANIMAL metaphor	19	31	589	0.14%

As Charteris-Black (2004, p. 66) note, journey is a powerful source of metaphor with four prototypical elements of starting point, path, end point and displacement. As a purposeful behavior along the road to the destination (Lakoff, 1993, p. 9), journey metaphors in TGOC offers an interesting way to track the development of ideas, attitudes and values over the timescales of the modern China. Take the following examples.

Example 1:

ST: ...我们还有许多”雪山”、“草地”需要跨越，还有许多”娄山关”、“腊子口”需要征服。(Xi, 2017, p. 49)

TT: ...there are still many snow-capped peaks that we must scale, many grasslands that we must cross, and also many Loushan Passes and Lanzikou Passes that we must conquer. (Xi, 2017, p. 51)

As put by President Xi Jinping in TGOC II, Chinese socialism is a great journey. As a purposeful behavior along the road with Chinese characteristics, Chinese socialism is a great journey full of snow-capped peaks, many grasslands, Loushan Passes and Lazikou Passes, Chinese socialism is the starting point of a long march which will take the CPC and the Chinese people over towering peaks, treacherous rivers, and through bleak grasslands. And every leg of the journey as stressed by President Xi Jinping formed part of a bigger strategic picture. Not only did the CPC and Red Army win the fight, they also seized the strategic initiative.

It is worth noting that “雪山” “草地” “娄山关” and “腊子口” in the source text are culture-specific metaphors in China. 雪山 (Snow-capped peak) and 草地 (grassland) witness the fearless spirit of the Red Army in the Long March from 1934 to 1936, during which the red front army successively climbed over 20 high snow-capped mountains with 5 at an altitude of more than 4000 meters. Grassland, as a matter of fact, is desolate plateau wetland with muddy swamp, over which about 16299 members of the Red Army has lost their lives. 娄山关 (Loushan Pass), also known as Taipingguan, is located at the junction of Zunyi and Tongzi counties in China. It is an important gateway on the main traffic road between Sichuan and Guizhou provinces. As the main peak of Dalou mountains, Loushan Pass is the throat of Northern Guizhou and a place for strategists to fight for. With a height of 1576 meters, thousands of peaks and steep cliffs towering into the sky, Loushan Pass was regarded as a natural undefeatable barrier in ancient China. While 腊子口 (Lazikou), an important pass of 30 meters wide in Minshan mountain range, is the gateway from Northwest Sichuan to Gannan in China. Surrounded by towering mountains and cliffs, the terrain to the pass is very dangerous. With a narrow gully extending upward and hanging cliffs on both sides, the wooden bridge over the turbulent river crashing its way through the pass is the only way to pass through Lazikou.

In this case, socialism with Chinese characteristics is like a great journey to secure new progress to uphold and develop Chinese socialism, to yield new results in developing the Party and claim new victories in a struggle with many new historic features. During the new long march of Chinese socialism and communism, there are still

many snow-capped peaks that the CPC and Chinese people must scale, many grasslands, Loushan Passes and Lanzikou Passes for them to conquer.

Example 2: ST: 没有比人更高的山, 没有比脚更长的路。(Xi, 2017, p. 86)

TT: There is no mountain top we cannot reach; there is no voyage without a final destination.  
(Xi, 2017, p. 91)

The source texts come from a beautiful poem, a representative works of the famous poet Wang Guozhen. The JOURNEY metaphor describes that no matter how long the journey of life is, the pursuer's steps can measure it; no matter how high the mountain is, the mountaineer could reach it. President Xi Jinping quoted the JOURNEY metaphor to encourage the people in poverty-stricken areas to act with passion and fight poverty through hard work while delivering the speech at the Central Conference on Poverty Alleviation and Development in November, 2015. Be positive, fearless of difficulties and obstacles, and dare to fight against poverty. It gives CPC and the Chinese people great encouragement and spiritual guidance during the journey of Chinese socialism and communism.

Example 3: ST: 面对工作难题, 要有明知山有虎, 偏向虎山行的劲头...(Xi, 2017, p.146)

TT: In the face of difficulties at work, one must be brave and confront them head-on...(Xi, 2017, p.159)

The underlined part “明知山有虎, 偏向虎山行” is a well-known Chinese idiom originally from *Outlaws of the Marsh*, one of China's four literary masterpieces by Shi Nai'an at the end of Yuan Dynasty and the beginning of Ming Dynasty. In the popular act of *Wu Song Beat the Tiger* of the fiction, it depicted vividly how Wu Song killed the tiger bare-handed, and removed a great harm for the local civilians. On his way home to visit his brother, Wu Song was told after heavy drink that there was a tiger on Okayama that would hurt people and advised not to go forward. But Wu Song didn't believe it and insisted continuing his journey. Unexpectedly, he fulfilled the impossible mission for the ancient government. Since then, the idiom has been widely circulated to encourage bravery. Literally, it means that clearly knowing that there are tigers in the wood, one still insists going to the deep. Knowing that it is difficult or even dangerous to do so, but you have to do it. Nowadays, it can be used as a commendatory meaning to show bravery and courage; or as a derogatory meaning to refer to recklessness.

In the face of difficulties at work on the new long march, as stressed by President Xi Jinping in TGOC, we must be brave and confront them head-on. The commendatory meaning of the source text is partially mapped onto the target space and metaphorically blended into the generic space of the target domain. As Lakoff and Johnson note, metaphorical expressions are pervasive and inspiring in these contexts and evoke strong imagery for both the source and target domains. More importantly, the concrete sources for the abstract targets are not random, but fall into patterns or schema which is defined as cognitive or mental structure by which the individual intellectually adapts to and organizes the environment (Huitt & Hummel, 2003). Four main types of integration networks have been distinguished, namely Simplex, Mirror, Single-Scope, Double-Scope (Fauconnier & Turner, 1998, pp. 133-187) to construct meaning of conceptual integration.

### Single-Scope Network and Metaphor Translation

Four networks have been identified to translate culture-specific metaphors in TGOC II, among which Single-Scope network dominates an overwhelming majority of 91.6%. In Single-Scopes, the organizing frames of the inputs are different, and the blend inherits only one of those frames.

Example 4: ST: 抓住了创新, 就抓住了牵动经济社会发展全局的“牛鼻子”。(Xi, 2017, p. 201)

TT: Innovation is the key to driving overall social and economic development. (Xi, 2017, p. 221)

“牛鼻子” in the source text literally means the nose of an ox, which is metaphorically used to describe something important or the key of things. It is culture-specific. In China, ox plays an essential role in ancient China and has made great contributions to China’s agricultural development for thousands of years. Ox is closely related to characters of integrity, industry and fearlessness. President Xi Jinping related the nose of an ox to the importance of innovation in China; and stressed in TGOC that like the nose of an ox, innovation (创新) is the key to driving overall social and economic development in China.

However, ox has been endowed with different symbolic meanings in western cultures. In the West, horses are used in hunting and farming in the west, and horses, instead of ox are a symbol of hard work. The two different organizing frames have been co-activated in the two cultures during on-line metaphorical processing. The translator strategically uses the *key*, the source familiar to target readers in the translation space to convey the cognitive mapping. The blend in this case inherits only one of those frames.

### Double Scope Network and Metaphor Translation

In Double-Scopes, essential frame and identity properties are brought in from both inputs. Double-Scope Blending can resolve clashes between inputs that differ fundamentally in content and topology.

Example 5: ST: ...教育引导广大党员、干部筑牢信仰之基、补足精神之钙、把稳思想之舵...(Xi, 2017, p. 181)

TT: we should try to guide Party members and officials to strengthen their beliefs, reinforce the marrow of their faith, and maintain the correct way of thinking. (Xi, 2017, p. 198)

Ideological education is the key link to be grasped in uniting the whole Party for great political struggles (Mao Zedong, 1975, p. 265). As described in Van Dijk (2001), ideologies are ‘beliefs shared by groups’, including attitudes, norms and values which “form the basis” of their belief systems (p. 12). Ideologies are not inherently negative, but are dependent on the ways in which they are socially practised: positive representations can “organise dissidence and opposition” to oppressive regimes, whereas negative ones can be used to “establish and maintain social dominance”. President Xi took the MARROW metaphor to stress the importance of ideological education within the Party in the speech at the second full assembly of the Sixth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee. In Example 5, “钙” (Calcium) is to “精神” (spirit) in Chinese culture as bone marrow is to faith in English. The two different organizing frames have been co-activated in the two cultures during on-line metaphorical processing. As demonstrated in Figure 3, essential frame and identity properties from the two inputs are brought in. The blend inherits properties of both frames of MARROW and FAITH.



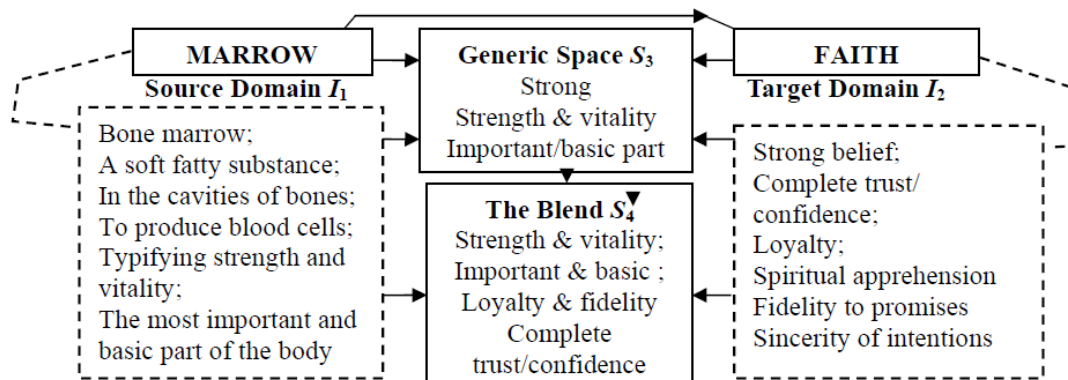


Figure 3. Marrow-Faith Cross-Space Mapping.

## Conclusion

Selecting typical data from President Xi Jinping's speeches in TGOC II, the current research identified and analysed culture-specific metaphors and the ROSD in great detail. Within the framework of integration blending, the research explores the cognitive strategies for C-E metaphor translation. It is found that the ROSD of JOURNEY, BUILDING and WAR metaphors are among the highest and significant. While translating culture-specific metaphors in TGOC II from Chinese to English, the translators adopt Single-Scopes, which dominate an overwhelming majority, to partially project the frames or property elements onto the blend, which inherits only one frame from the inputs. Single-Scopes and Double-Scopes have been identified as the main cognitive strategies for the C-E translation in TGOC II. By locating and scientifically identifying representative metaphors, we describe the hiding images the culture-specific metaphors convey to the target readers, and hope that the corpus-based evidence would shed light on valuable attention in further study.

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