

CHINESE NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE BEIJING OLYMPICS GAMES:
A COMPARATIVE FRAMING STUDY OF CHINESE MEDIA

by

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The Olympics games are not only a sport but also a media event. In 2008, China hosted the Olympics Games for the first time. The coverage of the Beijing Olympics Games in the Chinese media can reflect the characteristics of media and societal development in today's China. The study examines qualitatively the use of frames in coverage of the Beijing Olympics Games in 11 dailies and 2 weeklies in China. Four new issue-specific frames are found in the Chinese newspapers. The use of the existing six generic and five issue-specific frames are discussed in the Chinese context. The study finds that the Chinese media get more freedom in some areas that do not have direct links with politics. In the areas related to politics, the government is still controlling the media.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Olympic Games are attracting more and more attention in the contemporary world. They are not only a sporting but also a media event. For the first time, the Olympics were held in China in 2008. Thus, a study of coverage of the Beijing Olympics in Chinese newspapers provides an opportunity to enrich understanding of communication in today's China.

Today, governments often use the Olympics Games to burnish their national images. The Olympics can also become an important tool of creating national identity. Because all media are controlled by the government in China, they also serve to build national image under the guidance of the government. A study of Chinese media coverage of the Beijing Olympics then enhances our understanding of the relationship among media and government, political, and social development in China.

In essence, the Olympics Games are a product of Western culture. To some extent, the Beijing Olympics Games are an Eastern expression of Western events. As a result, the Beijing Olympics provide a ground for cross-cultural study. Compared to other Olympics studies, a study of Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics allows people outside China to gain a better understanding of China and Chinese culture.

For two reasons, the Beijing Olympics offer a unique opportunity to examine the transition of the media system in China from state controlled to more private control. First, the Beijing Olympics were such an important event that almost all news media in China had to cover them, allowing a holistic comparison of coverage among different media. Second, the Olympics are a sports event with political implications. The nature of the Olympics awards Chinese media a certain degree of editorial autonomy to cover the event. In contrast, when reporting solely political events, the Chinese media represent only the single voice of government. By analyzing the differences among media coverage, the extent of autonomy of different media are examined, and thus some current characteristics of the transition of the Chinese media system are explored.

The study focuses on analyzing the coverage of 11 dailies and 2 weeklies in China, covering the whole Olympics period from August 8 to August 25, 2008. By type, the sample includes Party organ papers and commercial newspapers. By location, the sample comes from 6 cities in China. The coverage in the study includes news reporting, editorials, commentaries, columns, and other stories related to the Olympics in those media during the whole Olympic Games period.

The study is a qualitative one. The author analyzes the application of traditional news frames in the Chinese context in 13 newspapers. At the same time, the author explores any emergent new news frames used by Chinese newspapers to cover the Beijing Olympics. The frequency of those frames in the Beijing Olympics Games is reported.

The purpose of the study is to examine how Chinese newspapers frame coverage of the Beijing Olympics Games. By discussing the use of news frames, some characters of

the media system during this transitional period from state controlled to private control in today's China are uncovered.

China and the Olympics

When the first modern Olympic Games were founded in Athens in 1896, China still was under the rule of the Qing Dynasty. Even at that time, Chinese elites began to realize the possibility to reinvigorate the country through Western sports (Xu, 2008). However, it was in the 1920s that China started to make a connection with the international Olympic movement. According to *Olympic Review*, an official publication of the International Olympics Committee (IOC), the Chinese Olympics Committee was accepted as a member of IOC in 1922 (IOC, 1973).

Nevertheless, China did not take part in the Olympics officially until the government of the Republic of China sent its delegation to the Los Angeles Olympics Games in 1932. In that Olympics, Liu Changchun, a male Chinese athlete, took part in the 100-meter and 200-meter races. From then on, the Government of the Republic of China continued to send its delegations to participate in the games: the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games and the 1948 London Olympic Games.

Founded in 1949, the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) sent a delegation to participate in the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki, Finland. In 1956, the government of the PRC declared that it would not take part in the Melbourne Olympics because the IOC also allowed a delegation from the Republic of China. Two years later, the Chinese government withdrew from the IOC for the same reason (IOC, *Olympics Review*, 1983).

After almost 20 years, China returned to the IOC in 1979. However, China boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics because of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. China began to take part in each Olympics thereafter, beginning with the 1984 summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

In the early days of the last century, some Chinese expressed their interest in hosting the Olympics. Zhang Boling, a famous Chinese educator, proposed that China should host an Olympics as early as 1907. However, it is Deng Xiaoping, the top leader in post-Maoist China, who made the Chinese Olympic dream closer to reality. In an interview with Japanese journalist Takeji Watanabe on February 26, 1979, Deng said, "The Olympics Games happen every four years; this means the Games will take place in 1984 and then 1988. It may not be possible for China to host one of those. But we may be able to host the Games later" (Liang, 2005, p. 113).

Supported by their top leader, the Chinese government took serious action to prepare for bidding for the Olympics, such as hosting the 1990 Asian Games. After a series of efforts, on December 3, 1992, Zhang Baifa, the deputy mayor of Beijing, submitted an application to IOC, officially requesting to host the 2000 Olympics.

Nevertheless, Beijing lost to Sydney in the final round by only 2 votes on September 23, 1993. Deng Xiaoping expressed his support again. When he heard the news, he said simply that "it does not matter. China needs learn its lesson and try again" (Zhong gong zhong yang wen xian yan jiu shi, 2004, p. 1365). Even though Deng died in 1997, the Chinese government still tried its best to win the bid for the Olympics. On April 4, 1999,

Chinese officials submitted an application to the IOC again. Finally, IOC delivered the 2008 Games to China in its Moscow session on July 13, 2001.

After receiving the bid for the 2008 Olympics, China put a huge amount of energy and money into the preparation for the Olympics. According to a press conference held by the Organizing Committee of the Beijing Olympics on August 1, 2008, 13 billion RMB (about \$2 billion) was put into building Olympic venues. About 280 billion RMB (about \$41 billion) was invested to improve infrastructure in Beijing after China won the bid for the Olympics in 2001. Finally, the 29th Olympic Games were held in Beijing from August 8 to August 24, 2008. A total of 11,194 athletes from 204 countries and regions took part in the Olympics Games (Chinese Olympic Committee, 2008).

The Chinese government's efforts to host the Olympics couples with its open-door policy started in 1978. From the beginning, the action was strongly supported by Deng Xiaoping, the designer of the policy and top leader in post-Maoist China. To some extent, it indicates the attitude and determination of the Chinese government, which has demonstrated a desire to be part of international society again after almost a 30-year Maoist closed-door period.

At the same time, the Olympic Games themselves have particular implications for China. After decades of rapid-paced economic growth, Japan and South Korea successfully hosted the Olympics. To a certain degree, hosting the Olympics has becomes a symbol of success in economic development for countries in East Asia. For instance, the 1964 Tokyo Olympics was the "coming out party" of economic development in post-war Japan (Espy, 1979, p. 76). Moreover, by hosting the Olympics,

Japan and South Korea also improved their international status: “in seeking to host the 1988 summer games, the Korean government fixed on the 1964 experience of neighboring Japan, for which the Olympics marked a new legitimacy in world affairs” (Manheim, 1990, p. 290). Undoubtedly, hosting the Olympics becomes an efficient tool of self-expression and self-improvement for countries in East Asia. After achieving remarkable economic success, the Chinese government also wanted to exhibit itself in front of the world.

The social situation in the post-Deng era (after 1997) also made hosting the Olympics necessary. Because of a lack of authority and charisma of the first-generation leaders, the post-Deng Chinese government needed a successful Olympics to enhance its legitimacy making, “winning the Olympic bid is much more than a matter of civic or even national pride” (Smith, 2001, para.12). At the same time, because discontent caused by great social changes has accumulated in today’s China among grass-root Chinese, “the government is seeking to divert these social frustrations into nationalism and away from the Communist party-state” (Shambaugh, 2008, para.11). Thus, the government could use a successful Olympics to serve the purpose.

Transition of the media system since 1978 in China

Chinese mass media have made great changes after Deng Xiaoping initiated reform and an open-door policy in 1978, which shifted the national focus from class struggle to economic construction. Accordingly, scholars began to cast doubts on the Marxist propaganda analytic model used to explain Chinese mass media in the Maoist era. New

theories were presented for the changes in Chinese media. On the whole, those studies can be divided into two kinds.

The first kind of study believes economic reform will bring a free media system to China. This viewpoint is easy to find among scholars before 2000. They usually trust the role of commercialization and argue that the market will ultimately weaken the control of the government (Chen & Gong, 1997; Chu, 1994; Hao, Huang, & Zhang, 1998; Huang, 1994; Liu, 1998; Lull, 1991; Wehrfritz, 1998; Zhang, 1993). They tend to believe that economic factors will ultimately devastate the Maoist propaganda model in China: “although market mechanisms were introduced by the government, the market and the state inevitably undermine each other” (Chen & Gong, 1997, p. 162).

The second kind of study doubts whether control of the government over media has loosened because of economic reform. Even from the early 1990s, some scholars have paid attention to the phenomena that market power is not incompatible with political control by the government. Some paradoxical article titles, such as *Commercialization without Independence* (Chan, 1993), *Professionalization Without Guarantees* (Yu, 1994), *Calling the Tune Without Paying the Piper* (Chan, 1995), and *Bird-Caged Press Freedom in China* (Chen & Chan, 1998) illustrate the point.

Some scholars point out that mass media in China actually are under the control of both the government and commercialization: “marketized operation does not necessarily lead to a loss of (political) control; the existence of (political) control does not necessarily hinder the development of news organization on their own terms” (Huang & Ding, 1997, p. 19).

In terms of governmental control, Zhou points out,

Through administrative agencies, such as the Central Propaganda Department (CPD) at the pinnacle of the administrative pyramid of the press control and its provincial and subprovincial administrations, licensing, centralized allocation of resources, preferential policy treatment and regulatory constraints, the state continues to intervene in the operation of the media market. Yet the state power is decreasing with the press sectors being closer to the market sphere, while the market power is increasing; and the vise-a-versus is also true. (2007, p. 7)

The market force is the other side that affects Chinese media because of the reduction and gradual termination of state subsidies and the return of advertising (Liang & Jacobs, 1996; Stross, 1990; Zhao & Shen, 1995).

In the process of media commercialization, a conference in 1992 was a turning point. In 1992, the National Working Conference on Press Management recognized the “commodity nature” of the press and formalized policy for commercialized publications. The policy that emerged from the conference was reduction and termination of subsidies to almost all media organizations except the *People’s Daily*, the *Economic Daily*, and the *Qiushi* (Chan, 1993).

In sum, China has dreamt of hosting the Olympics for almost 100 years. Given the history and current situation in China, Chinese media certainly paid much attention to the Beijing Olympics. At the same time, Chinese news media have undergone great changes

since 1978. Especially, rapid progress has been made in commercialization in recent years. Thus, an interesting question is raised.

How did Chinese media cover the Beijing Olympics?

Literature review

Three bodies of literature, framing theories, how news media have framed the Olympics, and how media are classified in today's China, are reviewed.

Theoretical foundation

Sociologist Erving Goffman (1974) points out frames means “the definitions of a situation that are built up in accordance with principals of organization which govern an event and our subjective involvement in them.” Later, the concept of frame was introduced into communication studies. Even though there is no standard concept of framing in communication, many concepts are centered on the literal meaning of “framing.” Entman (1993, p. 52) points out, “framing means selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation of the item described.”

Some scholars emphasize news framing in news coverage. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) suggest that media discourse can be conceived of as a set of interpretive packages that give meaning to an issue, the core of which is frame. Neuman, Just, and Crigler view news frames as “conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information” (1992, p. 60).

Some scholars argue that news frames are associated with social conditions. Scheufele (1999) proposes that media frames focus on “extrinsic and intrinsic factors influencing the production and selection of news,” such as ideology, social norms and values, and professional routines of journalists. Reese (2001) reviewed previous definitions of framing and viewed frames as “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world.” (p.11)

Thus, framing studies examining news media can contribute to how understanding of a certain society or culture is potentially shaped: “frames invite us to think about social phenomena in a certain way” (Reese, 2001, p. 25). However, the existing framing studies are mostly conducted in the context of Western society. As a result, the research methods and conclusions are difficult to apply to non-Western countries. For this reason, Reese (2007) advanced the concept of macro-frame and noted that macro-frames require that “analysis go beyond specific issue cultures.” Thus, it is necessary to explore news frames of Chinese media in the framework of Chinese culture. The Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics provides an opportunity to conduct this kind of framing study.

Framing devices

In *Framing Analysis*, Pan and Kosicki (1993, p. 59) point out that a news frame “is an idea that connects different semantic elements of a story (e.g., description of an action or an actor, quotes of sources, and background information) into a coherent whole.” They concluded that framing may be analyzed as a “strategy of constructing and processing news discourse or as a characteristic of the discourse itself” (1993, p. 57). Rowley and

Major (2008, p. 6) point out that “ the basic notion is to see news texts as a system that includes organized signifying elements that both promote specific ideas and offer devices to encourage certain types of audience processing of the texts.”

In order to analyze frames in news texts, Pan and Kosicki propose the concept of framing devices. Framing devices are the signifying elements of a frame, which are “structurally located lexical choices of codes constructed by following certain shared rules and conventions” (1993, p. 59).

Specifically speaking, four kinds of framing devices are found in news discourse.

Syntactical structures, which “for most news stories, is characterized by the inverted pyramid structure and by the rules of source attributions. An inverted pyramid refers to a sequential organization of structural elements (i.e., headline, lead, episodes, background, and closure). The signifying power of these elements varies in the same descending order” (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 59). And source attribution “can be used as framing devices in at least three ways: claiming empirical validity of facticity by quoting experts of citing empirical data, linking certain points of view to authority by quoting official sources,, and marginalizing certain points of view by relating a quote or point of view to a social deviant” (p. 60).

Script structures “consist of the familiar five Ws and one H in news writing: who, what, when, where, why and how. Even though they do not have to be present in every single story, these are categories of information that a reporter is expected to gather and report” (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 60). The reason why a script structure can become a

frame device is that “it contains the intrinsic push of our attention to drama, action, characters, and human emotions” (p. 60).

Thematic structures are related issue stories “that focus on one issue or topic at a time and report several events, actions, or statements related to the issue.” The kind of story “contains certain hypothesis-testing features: events are cited, sources are quoted, and propositions are pronounced; all function as logical support for the hypothesis we call this hypothesis-testing (or research finding) aspect of news discourse ‘thematic structure’” (p. 61).

When it comes to use of the device, Pan and Kosicki (1993) point out that “we may consider a thematic structure as consisting of a summary and a main body. The summary is usually represented by the headline, lead, or conclusion. The main body is where evidence supporting a hypothesis is introduced that contains episodes, background information, and quotes. Similarly, one may identify subthemes and their empirical support through episodes, background information, and quotes in a complex news article. A thematic structure of a news story, therefore, is a multilayer hierarchy with a theme being the central core connecting various subthemes as the major nodes that in turn, are connected to supporting elements” (p. 67).

Rhetorical structures refers to “the stylistic choices made by journalists in relation to their intended effects. Gamson’s five framing devices (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) – metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, and visual images—belong to this category.” It also refers to “the tendency of news to tout its facticity. In attempting to do so, journalists are in effect accepting the proposition that there is no clear distinction

between factuality and persuasion. For example, the *New York Times* marks distinctly as news analysis articles that contain journalists' opinions or interpretations" (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 62).

News frames of the Olympics

Generic news frames

There are many studies on how media frame news coverage in communication. Facing a variety of studies on news framing, de Vreese Peter and Semetko (2001) suggest a dichotomy: generic frames vs. issue-specific frames. Generic frames can be used in different news coverage. "Generic frames could be gauged from news coverage of various topics. They prevail across countries, media outlets and reporting formats as well as over years" (Han, 2007, p. 12). Issue-specific frames refer to those used in certain issues or events: "issue-specific frames are highly correlated with a certain topic or theme of the media content" (Han, 2007, p. 12).

Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) summarize five kinds of generic news frames: conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and responsibility. However, these news frames stem from an examination of Western media. The particular situation in China makes the application of those news frames in Chinese media complicated, as demonstrated below.

The conflict frame "emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). However, in China, the current party-line is to build a harmonious society. Given this situation, it may be that the conflict frame is not likely to appear in Chinese media.

The human interest frame “brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem, which personalizes the news, dramatizes or ‘emotionalizes’ the news” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). The aim of the frame is to attract an audience. However, many non-commercial media funded by the government in China do not have to try their best to capture an audience.

The economic consequences frame is to “report an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). Today, China’s economy mainly comprises state, foreign, and private sectors. Even media themselves are multi-affected by the three: “the party-state, transnational capital, and the domestic private sector intertwine and jointly shape the Chinese media system and broader cultural environment” (Zhao, 2008, p. 195). The same events or affairs can bring different economic consequences to the state, foreign, and private sectors. For Chinese media, then, it is unclear whose economic consequences they would stress more.

The morality frame “highlights the religious tenets or moral prescriptions, which raise an evaluation or message on a certain issue or events indirectly about how to behave” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). During economic reform from a central-planned system to a free-market system, China is also experiencing transformation in its value system. There is still an old left that “calls for the party to return to a state-directed economy based on public ownership and a reversal of the policy of opening its membership to capitalists” (Zhao, 2008, p. 342). There are liberal intellectuals “calling for the party to openly embrace capitalism and reinvent itself as a western-style social

democratic party” (Zhao, p. 342). There is also the new left, which “argues for the democratic renewal of Chinese socialism as part of a contemporary, worldwide, and open movement, drawing lessons not only from indigenous Chinese socialist experiments with economic democracy and people’s democracy but also from socialist thoughts and movements abroad” (Zhao, p. 342). Again, it is unclear how this generic frame might apply to Chinese media.

The responsibility frame “attributes accountability for the cause or solution of an issue or problem to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). In a media system of speech freedom, media retain freedom from government control. However, given the particular politics and media system in China, it is unclear to what extent media can comment on the government, powerful individuals, or groups often associated with the government.

Luther and Zhou (2005) identified another generic frame, the leadership frame, in which the story is centered on the activities, actions, or speech of a leader of the nation, group, government agency or an institution, or the discussion and assessment of leadership are highlighted.

A few studies have found these generic news frames used by Chinese media in some events, such as the SARS crisis (Hong, 2007; Zhou, 2007). However, more events or issues need to be examined to determine whether generic frames are used in Chinese media as much as in Western media, given the differences just outlined.

Issue-specific frames of the Olympics

Some scholars point out that generic frames can exist with issue-specific frames in the same news coverage --"Either issue-specific frames or generic frames, or both, can be found in news coverage" (Han, 2006, p. 43). Many studies of how the media frame the Olympics exist. In those studies, scholars focus on three aspects: gender, ethnicity, and nationality.

Some scholars discuss gender bias in Olympic Games reporting (Daddario, 1994; Eastman & Billings, 1999, 2002, 2003; Tuggle & Owen, 1999). Their main finding is that coverage of the Olympics is associated with gender; female athletes are underrated or underreported compared to male athletes.

Nevertheless, China's strategy of seeking gold medals may make things different in China. Winning gold medals has become one of the purposes of China's participation in the Olympics: "with its total devotion to winning gold medals and the regime's mobilization of national resources to achieve that goal, China has emerged as a major competitor in sports, and Olympic gold has become an important measure of China's strength" (Xu, 2008, p. 268). Chinese female athletes won more gold medals than males in each Olympics except for the 1984 Olympics. (Chinese athletes won 15 gold medals, including 5 by female athletes in 1984; 5 gold medals, including 3 by female athletes in 1988; 16 gold medals, including 12 by female athletes in 1992; 16 gold medals, including 9 by female athletes in 1996; 28 gold medals, including 16 by female athletes in 2000; 32 gold medals, including 19 by female athletes in 2004, 51 gold medals, including 27 by

female athletes in 2008). Given this situation, Chinese media may be less likely to underreport the performance of female athletes, as do some of their Western counterparts.

Some scholars conduct their framing studies on coverage of the Olympics from an ethnicity perspective (Billings & Eastman, 2002). Their studies indicate that coverage of the Olympic Games favors Whites, while it is biased against others, such as Black, Asian, and Latino-Hispanic athletes. However, race issues tend not to be problematic in China because the bulk of the Chinese population belongs to the Han people. According to 2005 population statistics, 123.33 million, only 9.44% of the total population of both mainland China and Taiwan, are ethnic minorities (Nation Bureau of Statistics of China, 2006).

Some scholars examine “nationality” issues in Olympic Games reporting (Billings & Eastman, 2002). They claim media pay more attention to athletes from their own countries in their coverage of the Olympics. However, there are differences between Western countries and Eastern countries in nationality. Because of their colonialist history, many Eastern countries tend to stress anti-Westernism rather than individual country origin. When it comes to China, nationality is more complicated. As Shambaugh (2008, *the New York Time*) points out, “Chinese society embodies both types (an aggrieved, defensive nationalism and a confident and proud nationalism), reflecting a deeper dualistic set of identities: one xenophobic type rooted in past indignities experienced by the Chinese people, the other more cosmopolitan version taking shape along with globalization and China's integration into the international community.”

Some scholars study Olympics coverage from a political perspective, pointing out that media tend to frame the Olympics as a political tool for enhancing peace, friendship, and

world understanding (Heinila, 1985; Ugboajah, 1987). There are non-commercial and commercial media in China. For the non-commercial media, it is likely they may use the frame in order to propagandize. However, it is unclear to what extent the commercial media use the frame.

Some scholars stress the reporting of winning medals in Olympics coverage. Morrow (1989, p 2/22) found a similar theme in the Olympics coverage in newspaper, which is “success means winning medals.” He points out that media tend to create Olympic illusions “the Olympics are and were whatever the media portrayed them to be.” In the Beijing Olympics, China won first place in the gold medal standings for the first time. It is interesting to speculate if the Chinese media use the frame in the context of the Beijing Olympics Games.

In sum, the existing framing studies concerning the Olympics Games would seem to be based on Western cultural assumptions. Two reasons make the study of news frames in Chinese media during the Beijing Olympics important. First, the Olympics were held for the first time in China. It is meaningful to study news frames of the Olympics Games in the context of Chinese culture. Second, the media system in China is shifting from a Marxist propaganda model to a more market-oriented style. In Western countries, framing studies usually are conducted based on the premise of the autonomy of journalists in free media systems. However, this is not the case in China because of the control of the government. In other words, there is a totally different media system in China. Thus, the framing studies of Chinese media have to examine the types of media in China.

Two types of Chinese press

Since 1992, “the year of commercialization,” more Chinese newspapers have found themselves operating as business organizations, either financially relying on advertising revenue or business organization sponsorship (Chan, 1993; Yu, 1994; Zhao, 2000).

Based on a state versus market dichotomy and an interaction of state power and market power, Chinese newspapers can be divided into organs and commercial newspapers in terms of bureaucratic affiliations, organizational practices, market share, and content appeal.

The first type is Party organ newspapers. The Party organs can also be classified into two categories according to bureaucratic affiliation.

The first kind of organs are run and directly controlled by the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) propaganda departments at different levels: “The organs represent the orthodox party-line voice in the central government, various provinces and autonomous regions, and municipalities. Regardless of their differences in terms of administrative hierarchy, all Party organ papers heavily rely on state-subsidized office subscriptions rather than private subscriptions”(Zhou, 2007, p. 8).

The second kind of organs belong to other government or government-related organizations, such as “official, semi-official, or non official organizations, bureaucratic authorities, and/or large state-owned enterprises” (Zhou, 2007, p. 8). Those organs are usually either special-subject newspapers or newspapers dedicated to certain audiences: “they function as the institutional voice of a given organization, institution, or enterprise aimed at promoting its policies and the operational goals while serving specialized

readers based on occupational backgrounds and/or socio-economic interests” (Zhou, p. 9). Compared to the organs run by CCP’s propaganda departments, the newspapers “are more self-financially supported because they do not have the privileges of resources that their Party organ peers enjoy” (Zhou, p. 9).

The second type is commercial newspapers, “which are now the majority of newspapers in China in terms of circulation and advertising revenue” (Zhou, 2007, p. 9). In terms of their content, the commercial newspapers can be divided into “city newspapers, evening and morning newspapers, digest papers, special-subject papers, and others that are less ideologically oriented than the party mouthpieces” (2007, p. 10). Though many commercial newspapers have some relationship with organ newspapers, “they enjoy less control from the central authorities, greater autonomy in management, and more popularity among residents in large- or medium-sized metropolitan areas” (2007, p. 10).

Some studies have been conducted to explore differences among the two types of newspapers by analysis of the use of news frames in their coverage (Hong, 2007; Luther & Zhou, 2005; Zhou, 2007). Nevertheless, more studies of Chinese newspapers need to be conducted for the following reasons.

First, the samples of previous studies are limited in location. The samples focus on economically developed regions in China, such as Beijing in Northern China and Guangzhou in Southern China. Few pay attention to other regions in China: as Zhou points out, “It should be more informative to include more local newspapers, especially those in the areas far away from Beijing” (2007, p. 27).

Second, previous studies have been conducted by comparing news frames in the coverage of different newspapers. Even though some studies include specific news frames, the studies mostly focus on 5 to 6 generic news frames that mainly come from reviewing the existing literature rather than exploring the events or issues themselves that they study.

Third, there are many special-subject newspapers in China. They include organ and commercial special-subject newspapers. The previous studies fail to deal with the special-subject newspapers. In order to further understand the transition of newspapers in China, more studies on the two types of special-subject newspapers should be done.

In sum, framing provides a unique perspective to observe communication events and societal development in a certain country. However, existing studies focus on these phenomena in Western societies. Given China's particular media system, political environment, and cultural tradition, framing studies need to pay attention to communication in China. The 2008 Olympics games offer an opportunity to examine the development of media and society in China.

Research questions

This study qualitatively examines news frames in the coverage of the Beijing Olympic Games in 13 Chinese newspapers. The research questions are

RQ1: Do the Chinese newspapers use the six generic frames (responsibility, human interest, economic consequence, morality, conflict, leadership) in the context of the Beijing Olympics Games?

RQ2: Are the specific Olympics news frames (i.e., gender, ethnicity, nationality, politics and gold medals) used in the coverage of the Beijing Olympics in Chinese newspapers?

RQ3: What new news frames emerge from the coverage of the Beijing Olympics in the Chinese newspapers?

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Sample

In the study, a purposive sample includes both organ and commercial newspapers from six cities in China, including dailies, weeklies, and special-subject newspapers (see Table 1).

By type, Chinese newspapers can be divided into dailies and weeklies. In today's China, dailies account the majority of the newspaper market. According to Data Monitor, a global business information company, "daily newspaper sales in 2006, generated total revenues of \$3.5 billion, equivalent to 81.5% of the market's overall value. In comparison, sales of non-daily newspapers generated revenues of \$0.8 billion in 2006, equating to 18.5% of the market's aggregate revenues" (*Newspapers in China*, 2007, p. 8). Most of the sample in this study is dailies because they constituted the majority of newspaper sales. According to Baidu, the largest search engine in China, there are not news organ weeklies in China. Thus, only one commercialized news weekly, *Southern Weekly*, was chosen as a representative of weeklies. Because the Olympics are a sporting event, 2 sporting newspapers are chosen as representatives of special-subject newspapers.

The newspapers examined come from six cities in China--Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Wuhan, and Changsha. According to Cao (2007), there are five newspaper centers in China: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, and Wuhan,

respectively, representing Northern China, Eastern China, Southern China, Western China, and Central China. Among those five cities, Beijing is the capital of China. Shanghai is a direct-controlled municipality and the largest city in terms of population in China. Both cities have a status equal to the provinces in China. Guangzhou is the capital of Guangdong Province; Chengdu is the capital of Sichun province, and Wuhan is the capital of Hubei province. Except for the *Titan Weekly* in Changsha, which is the capital of Hunan province in central China, all other twelve newspapers in the studies come from the five cities (see Table 1).

Table 1. Newspapers used in the study

		Beijing	Shanghai	Guangzhou	Chengdu	Wuhan	Changsha
Organ Newspapers	Daily	The People's Daily	Jiefang Daily	Nanfang Daily	Sichuan Daily	Hubei Daily	
	Special Subject	China Sports Daily					
Commercial Newspapers	Daily	Beijing Evening News	Xinmin Evening News	Guangzhou Daily	Chengdu Business News	Chutian Metropolis Daily	
	Weekly			Southern Weekly			
	Special Subject						Titan Weekly

Newspapers in China can be divided into national, province-level, city-level, and county-level. According to the statistics of the General Administration of Press and

Publication of PRC (2008), there are 1,938 newspapers in China in 2007, including 221 national newspapers and 816 province-level newspapers. The national and province-level newspapers account for 53.51% of all newspapers in China. Thus, the sample in the study focuses on national and province-level newspapers.

For the Party organ paper, the highest-level Party Organs in the five cities are chosen. They are *The People's Daily* in Beijing, *Jiefang Daily* in Shanghai, *Nanfang Daily* in Guangzhou, *Hubei Daily* in Wuhan, and *Sichuan Daily* in Chengdu. By administration level, *The People's Daily* is a national newspaper. The others are province-level newspapers. All issues covering the Beijing Olympic period from August 8 to August 25 in 2008 were analyzed.

Because the nature of the Olympics coverage is sports, *China Sports Daily* was chosen as representative of organ special-subject newspapers. The daily belongs to the General Administration of Sport of China, a ministry-level (equal to province-level) administration in the Chinese Central Government that is in charge of sports and sports-related activities in China. Published in Beijing, it is the highest-level sporting newspaper in the sporting administrative system in China. All the issues covering the whole Beijing Olympic period from August 8 to August 25 in 2008 were chosen.

According to 2008 statistics from the Century Chinese International Media Consultation Inc., an independent media research institution, the top newspapers in circulation in the five cities are chosen, *Beijing Evening News* in Beijing, *Xinmin Evening News* in Shanghai, *Guangzhou Daily* in Guangzhou, *Chutian Metropolis Daily* in Wuhan

and *Chengdu Business News* in Chengdu. All issues covering the Beijing Olympic period from August 8 to August 25 in 2008 were analyzed.

Moreover, *Southern Weekly* from Guangzhou, the top news weekly in circulation in China, is chosen. This study includes two issues of the *Southern Weekly*, published on August 14 and August 21, 2008 -- the Olympic period.

Titan Weekly, from Hunan Province, is the top sporting newspaper in circulation in China. During the Beijing Olympics, it published every day. Thus, all the issues covering the whole Beijing Olympic period from August 8 to August 25 in 2008 are chosen.

Definition of news story

The news item is used as the unit of analysis. Based on Han's definition (2007, p. 49), the news items in the study include news stories, editorials, commentaries, columns, and visual information associated with the item but exclude (1) viewers' comments, (2) Olympic medal tables, (3) advertisements, (4) visual content outside the news items (e.g. photos, maps), and (5) background materials (e.g., Olympic memorabilia).

Table 2. Number of stories in the 13 newspapers

Newspapers	Number of stories
The People's Daily	692
Jiefang Daily	628
Nanfang Daily	619
Sichuan Daily	311
Hubei Daily	281
China Sports Daily	553
Beijing Evening News	728
Xinmin Evening News	504
Guangzhou Daily	545
Chengdu Business News	521
Chutian Metropolis Daily	637
Southern Weekly	43
Titan Weekly	1561
Total	7623

All 13 newspapers have PDF editions online, which are as the same as the actual pages. In the 10 dailies and 1 weekly, there were Olympic special pages and other pages. All the news stories in the Olympic special pages were examined. For the other pages, key words were used to search the full text to identify those items related to the Olympics. The key words were the Beijing Olympics, the Olympics Games, and the 29 Olympics. For the 2 sporting newspapers (*China Sports Daily and Sports Weekly*), all the items except for those in other sports news pages were examined. In total, 7,623 news items were examined (see Table 2). All stories are in Chinese.

Data analysis

The purpose of this study is to examine news frames in the Beijing Olympics coverage.

Pan and Kosicki (1993) outlined four types of framing devices in *Framing Analysis*. This study uses their typology to analyze the emergent, generic, and Olympic-specific frames in the Chinese newspapers.

For research question one and two, the study synthesizes various news frames proposed and used by other framing scholars first. In order to identify how or if the frames are embedded in the news discourse of the Beijing Olympics in the Chinese newspapers, thematic structures, syntactical structures, and script structures of stories are explored and analyzed in the stories. Rhetorical and lexical features are examined to assist in the determination of the frames. To make sense of the frames as embedded in the news, background information is integrated into the study as well.

Typical examples that use the news frames are given. Frequency of the news frames is reported to show how often they appear in the Beijing Olympics coverage of the 13 Chinese newspapers. The characteristics of the frames in the Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers are presented.

For research question three, the author followed Pan and Kosicki (1993) and divided the stories into two kinds: event or action-oriented stories and issue stories that focus on one issue or topic at a time and report several events, actions, or statements related to the issue. Then, the researcher identified new news frames by exploring the framing devices in the stories.

For event or action-oriented stories, the study focuses on syntactical structures (inverted pyramid structure and source attributions), script structures (five Ws and one H), and rhetorical structures (metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, visual images and the tendency of news to tout its facticity).

For issue stories, the study focuses on thematic structures (hypothesis testing features) and rhetorical structures (metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, visual images and the tendency of news to tout its facticity).

Typical examples that use new news frames are given. Frequency of the news frames is reported to show how often they appear in the Beijing Olympics coverage of the 13 Chinese newspapers.

In the study, the analysis unit is an article. It is possible that an article contains two or more frames. In each article, the author identified the main frame only.

In this study, generic frames include responsibility, human interest, economic consequence, morality, conflict, and leadership frames. Specific frames include gender, ethnicity, nationality, politics, and gold medals frames. Thus, some stories that use specific gender, ethnicity, and nationality frames also use generic human interest and conflict frames.

The author is a Chinese student who is studying communication in the United States. In China, the author has worked as a journalist for five years. With this cross-cultural background, I have chosen to study China's media by application of Western communication theories. As a Chinese journalist, the author is familiar with the rules and styles of writing in Chinese media. Two years of training in communication methodology and theories in the United States have given me a broader perspective, which contributes to this qualitative framing analysis of the Beijing Olympics coverage in Chinese newspapers.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Results for research question one

RQ 1: Do the Chinese newspapers use the six generic frames (responsibility, human interest, economic consequence, morality, conflict, leadership) in the context of the Beijing Olympics Games?

Responsibility frame

The responsibility frame “attributes accountability for the cause or solution of an issue or problem to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95).

Table 3. Frequency of responsibility frame

Newspaper	Frequency
The People's Daily	1
Jiefang Daily	0
Nanfang Daily	1
Sichuan Daily	2
Hubei Daily	0
China Sports Daily	1
Beijing Evening News	0
Xinmin Evening News	2
Guangzhou Daily	0
Chengdu Business News	1
Chutian Metropolis Daily	0
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	0
Total	8

Nevertheless, the use of the frame is simple in the coverage of the Beijing Olympics. There is only one issue in the frame. That is, why can China host the Beijing Olympics successfully? The answer is limited to the reform and opening policy since 1978 (see Table 3).

The following story run by *Xinming Evening News* is a typical example.

2008 is a special year. This year, we welcome the arrival of the Beijing Olympics. This year, we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the beginning of the reform and opening policy. However, the coincidence contains a certain historic necessity. The material and spiritual wealth brought by implementing the reform and opening policy make it possible for us to host “unique and well-run Olympics.” The success of the Beijing Olympics is the fruit of the “reform and opening.” In other words, the Olympics are the best review of the achievement of the 30-year “reform and opening.”

There is a tough nut to crack for people: Who is the best athlete in the Beijing Olympics, Usain Bolt or Michael Phelps? Both of them take unprecedented brilliant victories in the Olympics. People will remember them. At the same time, they will also remember the Bird Nest and Water Cube. The two stadiums provide first class arenas to athletes from all over the world.

Among all the “hardware” in the Beijing Olympics, which are not first class? According to statistics, about 13 billion yuan was invested in

building the stadiums and 2 billion yuan was spent in running the Olympics. During the 7 years of Olympic preparation, 280 billion yuan was invested in the infrastructure in Beijing, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1978. For China, an old Eastern country with rich culture and vast territory, it is easy to host a unique Olympics. However, strong economic power is essential to a well-running Olympics. The material wealth accumulated since 1978 makes it possible for us to live up to the promise of hosting a successful Olympics. The Beijing Olympics display intensively the achievement of “the reform and opening policy.” In terms of the Olympics, Chinese are more confident in socialism than ever. In terms of the Olympics, the world furthers its understanding of the societal system and developmental model in China.

Besides the economic development, the 30-years reform and opening policy has changed our ways of thinking and spiritual worlds. The earth-shaking changes in the spiritual worlds are the software that ensures the success of the Beijing Olympics. (*Xinmin Evening News*, “The Olympics are the best review of the achievement of the 30-year ‘reform and opening’,” August 25, 2008, 3)

In this story, a multilayer hierarchy device in thematic structures is used. The hypothesis “the success of the Beijing Olympics is the fruit of the ‘reform and opening’ is made in the first paragraph. The two subthemes are proposed in the

following paragraphs. In the second and third paragraphs, the argument that the material wealth brought by the reform and opening policy contributes to the success of the Beijing Olympics is made. In the fourth paragraph, the argument that the spiritual wealth brought by the reform and opening policy contributes to the success of the Beijing Olympics is made.

Human interest frame

According to Semetko and Valkenburg (2000, p. 95), the human interest frame “brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem, which personalizes the news, dramatizes or ‘emotionalizes’ the news.”

Table 4. Frequency of human interest frame

Newspapers	Frequency	female athlete	Male athlete	Foreigner athlete	Chinese athlete
The People’s Daily	228	104	124	165	63
Jiefang Daily	276	116	160	94	182
Nanfang Daily	249	83	166	57	192
Sichuan Daily	148	51	97	27	121
Hubei Daily	139	45	94	21	118
China Sports Daily	354	177	177	43	311
Beijing Evening News	268	108	160	65	203
Xinmin Evening News	264	112	152	68	196
Guangzhou Daily	251	115	136	131	120
Chengdu Business News	260	65	195	82	178
Chutian Metropolis Daily	341	156	185	49	292
Southern Weekly	38	7	31	8	30
Titan Weekly	761	305	456	377	384
Total	3577	1444	2133	1187	2390

This frame is popular in Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics. On the whole, people in the frame tend to have a positive attitude toward the Beijing Olympics. In other words, nobody in the coverage puts blame on the Beijing Olympics. As a result, an optimistic atmosphere is created by use of the human interest frame in the coverage of the

Beijing Olympics (see Table 4). The characters in the frame deal with a variety of areas. However, they can be classified into four kinds.

The first kind is the athletes and coaches in the Olympics. It is frequently used when Chinese newspapers cover the events or matches in the Beijing Olympics. There is a story on Usain Bolt, the men's 100-meter champion, run by *Titan Weekly*.

At 23:35 at night, August 25th, Usain Bolt comes to the press hall on the first floor of the Bird Nest. With a sandwich in his mouth, Bolt looks like General Patton who smoked a cigar leisurely just after conquering Europe. By 9"69 seconds, Bolt breaks again the world record of the men's 100-meter race which he set two months ago.

Maybe Bolt is the laziest flying guy in history. From about 20 meters before the final line, he begins to look around and strikes his breast like a flaunting male in the animal world. Even so, he still wins the game by 9"69 seconds. This is the 19th world record in the men's 100-meter race. Bolt is even faster than the silver winner by a whole 0.2 second. It is hard to imagine that Bolt is just a new guy in the men's 100-meter race. So far he has participated in no more than 10 important matches in the men's 100-meter race. At first, he was an athlete in the men's 200-meter race and changed to the men's 100-meter race recently. If Bolt had not wasted time in the final part of the match, how much would the world record of the men's 100-meter race have been improved? Asafa Powell,

his teammate says, “He has good chance of finishing it in at least 9”65 seconds.”

From the field to the press hall, the question has been asked by people again and again. Bolt seems to be mad, “9”65 seconds? I thought I could finish in 9”60 seconds. When I knew nobody could compete with me for the championship, I was very happy and began to celebrate. I did not show off. The reason I came here is to win the championship. I have my plan. I carry out my plan. I was also a little surprised when I saw myself in the video. Everything is possible. The physical conditions of human beings are changing. It is hard to predict when the 9”69 second record will be shattered” (Titan weekly, “Maybe I could finish in 9”60 seconds,” August 17, 2008, 1)

The second kind is the participants in the Olympics, such as performers in the ceremonies, volunteers, and others who provide service to the Olympics. The following is a story on Li Ning, who lit the torch in the opening ceremony.

“I was nervous. To be honest, I was very nervous a few hours before the opening ceremony” after lighting the torch in the air, Li Ning said with a smile “For anyone, this is glory yet arduous work. I do not want to get all Chinese disappointed. This is the reason why I was nervous.”

Li Ning did not make any mistakes, even though he was very nervous at that time. In the air, he fulfilled his task with a perfect performance. Later, he said, “I was very excited. I could feel the power that came from

my heart. It was the outgrowth of the hard training of one month. At that moment, I felt that China melted into the world perfectly. It is the sweetest memory in my life.”

It looks easy to light the torch. However, there are many unknown stories behind it. When thinking it over, anyone will sense the hardship. In order to run such long distance in the air with the same posture all the time, how hard the 45-year old man had to work. (Beijing Daily, “Training hard for the 3”30 second flying in the air,” August 9, 2008, 16)

The third use of the human interest frame covers the people related to the athletes in the Olympics, such as their parents, spouses, coaches, and friends.

Half an hour before the match, people crowded the house of Lin Chaoying, the first coach of Zou Kai. When Zou Kai appeared on the TV, all the people held their breath. “Zou Kai will probably win the games if he does not make mistakes.” said Lin with tight fists. When the score of the last athlete was declared, all people exclaimed. “I am so excited” Lin said and turned to hug his wife with tears in his eyes. (Sichuan Daily, “Zou Kai wins the gold medal again, his hometown boils again,” August 18, 2008, B1)

The fourth use of the human interest frame covers the ordinary audience, including foreigners in China. The following excerpt is an example.

With little national flags and Olympic flags in hands, Li Songyu and his colleagues in red “I love China” T-shirts exclaim when watching the

perfect performance of the opening ceremony of the Olympics in the square. When the Chinese delegation begins to enter the field, he jumps up with excitement. “Today is the festival of all Chinese. The Beijing Olympics are also a party of the whole world. I hope the Olympics will be a life-long sweet memory for all people in the world.” (The People’s Daily, “People are all together in all co-host cities,” August 9, 2008, 9)

Economic consequence frame

The economic consequences frame is to “report an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country “ (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). Neuman, Just, and Crigler point out “the economic frame reflects the preoccupation with ‘the bottom line’, profit and loss, and wider values of the culture of capitalism..... The economic frame fits well with the media’s propensity to cover news from the standpoint of official sources.” (1992, p. 62)

Table 5. Frequency of economic consequence frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People’s Daily	2
Jiefang Daily	0
Nanfang Daily	0
Sichuan Daily	2
Hubei Daily	0
China Sports Daily	0
Beijing Evening News	6
Xinmin Evening News	2
Guangzhou Daily	8
Chengdu Business News	2
Chutian Metropolis Daily	1
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	0
Total	23

The frame is also used in coverage of the Beijing Olympics in Chinese newspapers. In the frame, the source attribution device in syntactical structures is often used (see Table 5).

With diversification of the economy, the government's viewpoints are no longer the only authority source today. Generally, there are three main sources used as source attribution in the frame: foreign businesses, the government, and non-government organizations. The following excerpt is about foreign businesses.

“This is a fantastic start to the 29th Olympic Games. Hoteliers are undoubtedly celebrating the success. After 7 years of planning and billions dollars being spent in the city, it is clear that Beijing is already reaping the benefits not only by putting on a dazzling opening ceremony but also in the city's hotels. London will be looking forward to 2012,” said Marvin Rust, Deloitte's hospitality managing partner. (Guangzhou Daily, “Hotel industry sets record during the Olympics,” August 19, 2008, A 15)

At the same time, the government is still used as an authority source. The following excerpt is an example.

The Olympics are a test for the financial industry in Beijing. Currently, there are more than 2,000 saving agencies that can provide foreign exchange service. Those agencies account for 74% of all financial agencies in Beijing. Foreigners can easily exchange money and pay by bank cards. Besides, they spend less time in the lines in those agencies. Yang Weiming, director of the Payment & Settlement Department in

People's Bank of China [a ministry in the Chinese government], said, "By cooperation of all involved parties, the settlement service in Beijing has been greatly improved. It will also have positive impacts on the financial industry in other tourist cities even all of the country." By taking advantage of the Olympics, the pace of financial reform will be accelerated. The living of ordinary people will benefit from it for sure.

(The People's Daily, "The Olympics and economy," August 25, 2008, 13)

Non-government organizations are also used as authority sources. The following excerpt is an example.

According to information that the journalist got from some big travel agencies in our city, the number of people who plan to travel after the Olympics is increasing sharply. Those agencies are glad yet surprised. "During the Olympics, more people prefer watching sport TV at home to traveling. So there is not a tour boom in this summer as before," said Gu Xunca, chairman of the travel industry's association in Guangzhou and president of China Travel Service in Guangdong. "The key of this year is the coming post-Olympics tour." (Guangzhou Daily, "Post-Olympics tour boom starts," August 22, 2008, A 27)

Morality frame

According to Semetko and Valkenburg (2000, p. 95), the morality frame "highlights the religious tenets or moral prescriptions, which raise an evaluation or message on a certain issue or events indirectly about how to behave."

In coverage of the Beijing Olympics, the frame is often used to discuss moral issues related to sport. There are generally three kinds of sporting morality in China. The first kind deals with the norms in the Maoist era, such as collectivism, nationalism, the role of the state in sport, and so on. The second kind stresses Western values, such as individualism, freedom, tolerance, and so on. The third kind promotes some values or norms in traditional Chinese culture. In general, the stories that use the morality frame are issue stories. The hypothesis-test is the main means of framing (see Table 6).

Table 6. Frequency of morality frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	44
Jiefang Daily	38
Nanfang Daily	16
Sichuan Daily	11
Hubei Daily	9
China Sports Daily	12
Beijing Evening News	39
Xinmin Evening News	22
Guangzhou Daily	21
Chengdu Business News	37
Chutian Metropolis Daily	18
Southern Weekly	3
Titan Weekly	18
Total	288

For the first kind, take a story in the *Titan Weekly* as an example. The purpose of the story is to defend the state-run sport system. There are three subthemes in the story: the universality of the system, the failure of Russia, and the success of China.

First, the story argues that state-run sports systems are used by many countries.

The sports system in South Korea is similar to the one in China. The only difference is how to call the system. It is called a state-run system in

China. Yet it is called a training camp in South Korea.....In my opinion, it is wrong to say that China's state-run sport system is unique. There are many similar systems in other countries and areas. The difference only lies in the levels, scope and forms of those systems.

Then, it points out that the decline in Russian sport is caused by the fact that the state no longer runs the system.

With respect to sport, Russia also destroyed the state-run system. The government provided little funding funds to the sport associations and asked them to seek self-support. In this situation, the whole Russian sport, especially the athlete training system, was in a terrible mess.

Finally, it points out that the system is still necessary based on the performance of Chinese athletes in the Beijing Olympics.

The performance of our athletes in the Olympics proves the efficiency of our sport system. We need to reform for certain. However, it doesn't mean that we have to abandon everything. It only means we need to improve and perfect ourselves. (Titan Weekly, "A remark on a state-run sport system," August 14, 2008, 39)

Some stories cast doubt about the state-run system and advocate privatizing the sport system in China. The following excerpt is an example.

At first glance, the Chinese Football Association is just a non-government organization (NGO). However, the association has a "black gauze cap." In fact, it is a department in a ministry in the central

government. In ancient times, the chairman of the association was an official of the fourth rank. Even though the fourth rank official did not belong to the most influential ones, it was also important in the central government. With the “black gauze cap,” everything has to be done according to the rules of officials. That is, the officials boss everything. Even if you are a well-known coach, you have to follow the orders of the officials of the Association. Thus, those famous foreign coaches who insist on their own views, such as Philippe Troussier, will never become the chief coach of the Chinese men’s football team even though they are always the candidates for the position.

Under the direction of those officials, the Chinese professional football league has to give way to the men’s Football World Cup for the sake of national interests. However, the Chinese men’s football team did not even get the ticket to the finals of the World Cup. Under the direction of those officials, the World Cup can also be given up in order to seek for the so-called breakthrough at Olympic football, which is not an important football match at all. The Football Association even dreams the men’s football team can enter the semi finals. In one word, the Chinese Football Association always keeps dreaming but keeps losing face.

This time, the Football Association loses everything again in men’s football in the Beijing Olympics. It is bad. Yet it is also good. After the countless failures, the Association should realize that it is time to abandon

the old system and start the reform of marketization and privatization.

From this standpoint, the Football Association should seek to return to its real role as a NGO by removing the “black gauze cap” in order to make a greater contribution to modernization of China’s sport. (*Nanfang Daily*, “The Football Association should become the first privatized sport organization,” August 15, 2008, 10)

For the second kind which promotes Western values and norms, the following excerpt is an example that advocates observing the Olympic rules.

Tennis, like gymnastics, has special requirements for audiences. The handbook issued by the Olympic Organizing Committee requires the audience in the courts to keep quiet during the games.

In my view, how to say “Jia You (go for it)” is a big issue. It needs to be done both warmly and rationally. It needs enthusiasm. It also calls for expert audiences with the capability to understand the games. More importantly, we need to be gentlemen. (*Jiefang Daily*, “Why did Li Na shout out?” August 18, 2008, 2)

Here is another example promoting individualism.

Some will argue that athletes have to do their best to win honor for our country. Even though Chinese athletes do not win gold medals in competitions, they still take responsibility for our country by their efforts, sweat and pain of injury caused by their hard training. They deserve the investment and support from our country and people. People are always

looking forward to the achievement attained by the athletes. However, we also advocate building a human-centered society today. Thus, we have no right to ask our athletes to risk their health or even their whole sports career to win in matches. (Jiefang Daily, “Return to nature of sport,” August, 15, 2008, 15)

The following excerpt is an example of the third kind of morality frame, which advocates traditional values and norms in China.

There is an old saying in China, “A gentleman never remarks when he watches others playing chess.” In the Olympics, “never remarking” is not to ask the audiences to watch quietly but be gentle. (Jiefang Daily, “Do not boo the foreign athletes,” August 14, 2008, 13)

In sum, there are three sets of values or norms that the morality frame promotes in the Beijing Olympics coverage. They reflect the left and new left, which stress values of the Maoist, and the right, which stresses Western values and tradition.

Conflict frame

The conflict frame “emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). In Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics, the frame is mainly used in the coverage of sporting events (see Table 7). However, there is a conflict-harmony model in some stories. Specifically speaking, there are two parts in this kind of story. The first part covers the events with a conflict frame. The second part is used to downplay the conflict.

Table 7. Frequency of conflict frame

Newspapers	Frequency	female athlete	Male athlete	Foreigner athlete	Chinese athlete
The People's Daily	301	97	204	92	209
Jiefang Daily	278	110	168	70	208
Nanfang Daily	308	120	188	51	257
Sichuan Daily	129	50	79	21	108
Hubei Daily	121	44	77	12	109
China Sports Daily	165	57	108	25	140
Beijing Evening News	396	205	191	60	336
Xinmin Evening News	190	42	148	46	144
Guangzhou Daily	244	54	190	32	212
Chengdu Business News	211	67	144	34	177
Chutian Metropolis Daily	264	118	146	42	222
Southern Weekly	0	0	0	0	0
Titan Weekly	773	352	421	253	520
Total	3380	1316	2064	738	2642

The following stories on China vs. the U.S. men's basketball match are examples.

As usual, the players of the Chinese men's basketball team form a line and warm up in the corridor for the coming match. The excited shouts of the spectators shook the stadium. However, all players look very calm. Only when stepping on the court do they show their excitement with a collective cry. It is the Wukesong Stadium in Beijing that they enter. In the deafening cry, there are a few big characters on the stands above the entrance—2008 Beijing.

The match is exciting from the first minute. Yao Ming begins with a three-point shot. Dwight Howard immediately strikes back with a dunk. In the first minute, the keynote of the game is set. The Chinese team focuses on the outside, the American team focuses on the inside.

“As long as I am on court, I will do my best to win,” Yao Ming said before the game. After a three-point shot, he immediately runs back to defense. When Kobe Bryant tries to make a slam dunk, Yao Ming blocks the shot. “Yao Ming is obviously going all out to win,” an expert sitting near the court says.

The first half ends. China gets 8 three - point shots, but loses to the U.S. 37 to 49. Even though the team is at a disadvantage, Yao Ming and his teammates win a great ovation from the thousands of spectators.

In the second half, the U.S. gains the upper hand gradually. In the fourth period, the U.S. pulls ahead of China by more than 30 points. There is not any suspense about the final result of the game. Yao Ming and his teammates are still playing with all their might. Yao Ming gets a rebound, tries to make a dunk and is blocked. He charges into the crowd and gets the rebound again. This time, he is pulled down literally. With the whistle of the referee, even Wang Zhizhi, a player sitting near the court, gives Yao Ming a standing ovation.

The final score is 101 to 70. At that moment, nobody cares about the result. The spectators still hail as warmly as they did at the beginning of the game. Yao Ming and his teammates gather in the middle of the court and cry out “Jia You (go for it) .” The game is a reward for their hard work. It also brings hope to their future. (The People’s Daily, “A game beyond sport,” August 11, 2008, 5)

In the final part in the above story, description is used to reduce the feeling of conflict. However, remarks of the athletes are often quoted in some stories. The following excerpt is an example.

“They are too strong. It hard to compete with them” said Liu Wei. “It is the difference. And this is exactly what I thought before the game,” Zhu Fangyu said calmly. Yao Ming thought the score was acceptable, “In the first half, we put much pressure on them with a high field goal percentage. But we are exhausted in the second half. So we cannot keep the high percentage. In one word, I can accept the result.” (Chengdu Business News, “70:101, China holds out for 20 minutes,” August 11, 2008, 26)

Moreover, background information also is introduced to create a harmonious climate. The following excerpt is an example.

Yesterday the Chinese men’s basketball team met its first opponent—the U.S. team, which is called the dream team. At the end, China lost to the strong opponent 70 to 101. However, the 31 points creates the smallest difference between the two teams in their Olympic history. (Hupei Daily, “China loses but creates the smallest point difference,” August 11, 2008, 4)

In sum, the conflict frame is also used by the Chinese newspapers. However, some parts are added in order to reduce the conflict in some stories that use this frame.

Leadership Frame

According to Luther and Zhou (2005), the leadership frame is centered on the activities, actions, or speech of a leader of a nation, group, or governmental agency or an institution or the discussion and assessment of leadership are highlighted. In Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics, the frame is mainly used in the coverage of the opening ceremony, the closing ceremony, and other related activities that the leaders of CCP and the government attend(see Table 8).

Table 8. Frequency of leadership frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	3
Jiefang Daily	6
Nanfang Daily	12
Sichuan Daily	2
Hubei Daily	2
China Sports Daily	14
Beijing Evening News	0
Xinmin Evening News	0
Guangzhou Daily	4
Chengdu Business News	1
Chutian Metropolis Daily	1
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	0
Total	45

Take the leading story on August 9, 2008 run by *The People's Daily* as a typical example. The story is on a banquet held by President Hu at noon on August 8th, 2008.

The title consists of three parts: the headline, the sub headline, and the lead. The first part is the headline, which outlines the event of the story. It is usual practice to indicate the name, title, or other information about the leaders, for example, the name and title of Hu Jintao in the story.

President Hu hosts a welcoming banquet for honored guests

The second part is the sub headline of the story. It explains further the headline. In the story, it includes who hosts the banquet, who attends the banquet, and why the banquet is held.

On behalf of the Chinese Government and all Chinese, Present Hu warmly welcomes all the honored guests at the Beijing Olympics.

The third part is the lead part of the story. In fact, some of the important words in Hu's speech in the body of the text are extracted and put here in order to highlight the meaning of hosting the Olympics.

Hu emphasizes that by taking part in the Olympics, we should promote the Olympic spirit of solidarity, friendship and peace, develop heart-to-heart communication among all the people in the world, deepen mutual understanding, enhance friendship and eliminate discrepancy in order to create a world of long-lasting peace, prosperity and harmony.

In the script structures, of the five Ws (when, what, who, where, why) and one H (how), the story stresses "who." That is, the activities and speech of President Hu: President Hu shaking hands with the guests one by one, a series of quotes from the speech of President Hu. Even though many other important Chinese and foreign leaders also attend the party, the story does not mention their activities and speech.

In regard to rhetorical structures, this story uses a metaphor in the third paragraph, "In the newly decked North hall, there is a huge embroidered Suzhou wall tapestry with an

imposing image of the Great Wall.” Here, the imposing Great Wall stands for the greatness of China.

In sum, the six generic frames are also used in the Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers. The use of the economic consequence and morality frames reflects diversity of economy and value system in China. However, the use of human interest is limited to the people who enjoy the Olympics. The use of responsibility is limited to only one issue. The effects of the conflict frame in some stories are diminished. The leadership frame is used to cover leaders of the CCP and the government.

Results for research question two

RQ2: Are the specific Olympics news frames (i.e., gender, ethnicity, nationality, politics and gold medals) used in the coverage of the Beijing Olympics in Chinese newspapers?

Among those frames, some are used by Chinese newspapers in their coverage of the Beijing Olympics. Those frames are nationality, politics, gender and the relation between success and winning medals. The ethnicity frame is used in hidden ways by the Chinese newspapers in their Beijing Olympics coverage.

Nationality

According to Billings and Eastman (2002), media usually pay more attention to athletes from their own countries in their coverage of the Olympics.

This phenomenon also exists in Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics. All the Chinese newspapers cover more natives than foreigners (see Table 9).

Take *The People's Daily*, the mainstream newspaper in China, as an example. There are 529 stories used to cover competition or people. Of them, 272 stories are related to Chinese athletes or other Chinese (such as coaches, audience, families or friends of athletes, participants of the Olympics). There are 257 stories devoted to foreign teams and athletes, or other foreigners (such as coaches, audience, families or friends of athletes).

Table 9. Frequency of nationality frame

Newspapers	Frequency	Foreigner	Chinese
The People's Daily	529	257	272
Jiefang Daily	554	164	390
Nanfang Daily	557	108	449
Sichuan Daily	277	48	229
Hubei Daily	260	33	227
China Sports Daily	519	68	451
Beijing Evening News	664	125	539
Xinmin Evening News	454	114	340
Guangzhou Daily	495	163	332
Chengdu Business News	471	116	355
Chutian Metropolis Daily	605	91	514
Southern Weekly	38	8	30
Titan Weekly	1534	630	904
Total	6957	1925	5032

Some stories that use the generic moral frame also use the specific nationality frame. In those stories, toleration is advocated when it comes to the complex national issues of today. Generally, there are two kinds of these stories. The first is for tolerance of the foreign delegation athletes or coaches who were born in China in foreign delegations. The second is to appeal for tolerance of Chinese delegation athletes who were not born in China. The following two excerpts are examples.

Luan Jujie won a gold medal in fencing in the L.A. Olympics 24 years ago. She left China for years. In Beijing, she participates in the Olympics as a Canadian athlete. She is 50 years old. In order to take part in the Olympics, she has trained intensively for 15 months. Why does she do this? The only reason is that China is her motherland where she spent a brilliant time in her life: “My homeland is hosting the Olympics. Nothing can prevent me from taking part.” When she wins her first match in Beijing, she shows a banner saying “hello, China” with tears in eyes. All the spectators are moved deeply and give her a burst of warm applause.

Participating in the Beijing Olympics as member of foreign teams has nothing to do with patriotism. Loving human beings does not run contrary to loving homeland. The interaction between Luan Jujie and the spectators, in my view, shows patriotism. (Nanfang Weekly, “The other kind of patriotism in the Olympics,” August 14, 2008, 8)

The following is another example. It discusses the athletes in foreign delegations who were born in China.

I am always absent-minded when watching diving. I am not so excited because it looks like internal games. Even though the athletes come from all of world, most of them are trained by Chinese coaches. For me, it does not matter who wins the game. With globalization, sport exchange becomes more and more popular. For example, there are Chinese

Americans in the U.S. delegation, such as Zhao Xiaolan and Guan Yinshan ...

It tells us that nationality is not an important issue in the Olympics. Why does the world honor the Olympics? It is because the Olympics embody the basic spirit of sports. This is to treat fairly all the countries and areas. Once you win the game, your national flag will be raised and your national anthem will be played. (Titan Daily, "The nationality issue in the fields," August 17, 2008, 39)

Ethnicity frame

According to Billings and Eastman (2002), some previous Olympic coverage has been in favor of whites, while it is biased against others, such as Black, Asian, and Latino-Hispanic athletes. However, in the Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics, the issues related to race, such as the color of the athletes, are rarely mentioned. In some cases, the issues are expressed in an indirect way. The following excerpt is an example. In the story, Asian and European rather than yellow and white are used.

In the weightlifting competition on August 18, 2008, the European wind blows finally. Andrei Aramnau, an athlete from Belarus, wins the gold medal in the men's 105 kilogram weightlifting class and shatters three world records. Russian athletes win second and third place in the competition. It is the first weightlifting gold medal that European athletes win in Beijing. It is also the first time that Asian athletes do not win any medals in a certain class of weightlifting in the Olympics. (Jiefang Daily,

“At last there are not Asian athletes on the winner stands,” August 19, 2008, 13)

The political perspective frame

Heinila (1985) and Ugboajah (1987) point out that media tend to frame the Olympics as political tools for enhancing peace, friendship, and world understanding. In the Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics coverage, the frame is still applied (see Table 10).

Table 10. Frequency of political perspective frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	30
Jiefang Daily	4
Nanfang Daily	1
Sichuan Daily	2
Hubei Daily	1
China Sports Daily	1
Beijing Evening News	1
Xinmin Evening News	2
Guangzhou Daily	1
Chengdu Business News	0
Chutian Metropolis Daily	1
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	1
Total	45

The following excerpt is an example.

We are reluctant to leave. For 16 days, we play the movement of solidarity, peace and friendship. People with different nationalities, races, and cultures gather together under the five rings flag. It shows the eagerness of mankind to head to the bright future, hand in hand. Those from poverty-stricken Somalia, turbulent Iraq, war-ridden Afghanistan

come and stand together in the fields of the Beijing Olympics. When athletes and champions from different countries wave to the audience for thanks, when the audience encourages the athletes by ovations, we see again the Olympic spirit beyond everything. One world, one dream. The Beijing Olympics picture solidarity, friendship, and harmony among all the peoples in the world. It is the glory of Beijing. It is also the glory of the Olympics. (The People's Daily, "Glory belongs to the great Olympics," August 25, 2008, 3)

In this paragraph, the hypothesis that the Olympics are a peace and friendship tool is made early: "the movement of solidarity, peace and friendship." Then a series of events that happened during the Olympics are cited to support the hypothesis. For instance, "People with different nationalities, races and cultures gather together under the five rings flag" symbolizes the peace brought by the Olympics. "Athletes and champions from different countries wave to the audience for thanks" and "the audience encourages the athletes by ovations" symbolizes friendship.

The following excerpt is another example.

The Olympics are a great invention. They also embody the wisdom of human beings. The Olympics are a torch which can direct us. In the fifth century B.C., one of the earliest slogans of the Olympics was "truce, truce, let us go to the Olympics." A few days ago, the IOC came up with a new slogan -- "truce during the Olympics." This is a moving appeal. In fact,

what human beings should stop is not only the bloody wars but also the meaningless debates. What we want is to tolerate, listen, respect, communicate and understand each other. Only in this way, will the world become peaceful and happy. Only in this way, will the world become as colorful and beautiful as the five-ring flag. (Jiefang Daily, “Enjoy the Olympics,” August 15 2008, 13)

In the paragraph, the origin of the Olympics and that the IOC appealed to Russia and Georgia for a cease-fire are mentioned. The facts are used to support the peace-keeping role of the Olympics today.

Winning medals means success frame

Some scholars point out that the media often frame the Olympics by focusing on the relationship between success and winning medals. Morrow (1987) found a similar theme in Olympics coverage: “success means winning medals.” The frame is also found in the Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics (see Table 11).

Table 11. Frequency of winning medals means success frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	3
Jiefang Daily	3
Nanfang Daily	1
Sichuan Daily	1
Hubei Daily	1
China Sports Daily	1
Beijing Evening News	3
Xinmin Evening News	0
Guangzhou Daily	0
Chengdu Business News	0
Chutian Metropolis Daily	1
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	0
Total	14

The following excerpt is an example.

It is said China has no reason to be proud even though it wins 51 gold medals. It is because those gold medals are not so gold and thus do not have so much connotation. It is also because we don't have super sport stars. However, the viewpoint is unfounded. The gold medals we win in the Olympics are gold medals indeed. Only the people who are higher, faster, and stronger can mount the victory rostrums in the Olympics. Each champion is a superstar. Each gold medal has its connotation. The gold medals are not only the outcome of the sweat and arduous training of the athletes but also the embodiment of our political-economic system, sport system, scientific researches and even comprehensive national power.

Why do our gold medals not have connotation? The process from the first gold medal in 1984 to the fifty-first gold medal today itself reflects the pace and degree of the societal development and drastic changes in China. Is it not true? It is disrespectful for our athletes to say our Olympic gold medals are not gold. At the same time, it is not confident of the development of China. (*Beijing Evening News*, "Our gold medals are gold medals indeed," August 25, 2008, 18)

In the story, the meaning of winning gold medals is defined as the outcome of training of athletes and the embodiment of national power. Then, the hypothesis is proved from two perspectives. First, the Olympic spirit "higher, faster, and stronger" is cited. Winning the gold medals means the success of the athletes:

“Only the people who are higher, faster, and stronger can mount the victory rostrums.” Second, the fact of societal development in China is presented. Then the increase in gold medals embodies the improvement of the national power.

In some local newspapers, it is usual to use the number of gold medals as an indicator of local development. In the following story, the fact of winning gold medals is mentioned and no remarks are made.

In the Beijing Olympic Games, Wu Minxia, Huo Liang, Liu Zige, Wang Liqin and Zou Shiming, the athletes from Shanghai, won a total of three gold medals for our city, which is the best result among all the Olympics that our athletes have participated in. It doubles the number of 1.5 gold medals in the 2004 Athens Olympics and breaks the record of the Barcelona Olympics in 1992 in which the our athletes won 2 gold medals. (*Jiefang Daily*, “Three, the athletes from Shanghai peak in our history of Olympic gold medals,” August 25, 2008, 1)

Gender frame

According to some scholars, gender bias exists in the coverage of the Olympic Games (Daddario, 1994; Eastman & Billings, 1999, 2002, 2003; Tuggle & Owen, 1999). They argue female athletes are underrated or underreported compared to male athletes in coverage of the Olympics. This phenomenon is present in the Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers (see Table 12). All the Chinese newspapers cover more males than females.

Table 12. Frequency of gender frame

Newspapers	Frequency	female	Male
The People's Daily	529	201	328
Jiefang Daily	554	226	328
Nanfang Daily	557	203	354
Sichuan Daily	277	101	176
Hubei Daily	260	89	171
China Sports Daily	519	234	285
Beijing Evening News	664	313	351
Xinmin Evening News	454	154	300
Guangzhou Daily	495	169	326
Chengdu Business News	471	132	339
Chutian Metropolis Daily	605	274	331
Southern Weekly	38	7	31
Titan Weekly	1534	657	877
Total	6957	2760	4197

Take *The People's Daily*, the mainstream newspaper in China, as an example.

There are mainly two types of stories related to the gender issue: the stories that describe or analyze female competitions and the stories that cover women in the Olympics.

The stories devoted to the female competitions are 97. The stories devoted to females (such as athletes, coaches, audience, families or friends of athletes) are 104.

Total, there are 529 stories that relate to competitions and people (such as athletes, coaches, audience, families or friends of athletes). Among them, there are 201 stories on female competitions and the females.

Results for research question three

RQ 3: What new news frames emerge from the coverage of the Beijing Olympics in the Chinese newspapers?

After exploring Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers, four new frames emerged. The four frames are Chinese culture, the green and high-technology Olympics, the attitude toward gold medals, and the efficiency of the Olympics. The first and second frames have their basis in the slogans of the Beijing Olympics—the culture-enriched Olympics, environment-friendly Olympics and technology-empowered Olympics. The third deals with the meaning behind winning gold medals. The fourth has to do with the operation of the Beijing Olympics.

Chinese culture frame

To host a “cultural-enriched” Olympics is one of the slogans of the Beijing Olympics. In the coverage of the Beijing Olympics, 94 stories focus on the features of Chinese culture.

The stories are usually event-oriented and used extensively in the coverage of the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics (see Table 13).

Table 13. Frequency of Chinese culture frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	24
Jiefang Daily	3
Nanfang Daily	11
Sichuan Daily	3
Hubei Daily	5
China Sports Daily	2
Beijing Evening News	5
Xinmin Evening News	12
Guangzhou Daily	7
Chengdu Business News	8
Chutian Metropolis Daily	9
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	5
Total	94

Generally speaking, the stories tend to frame Chinese culture as rich, peaceful, open-minded, tolerant, and harmonious. In these stories, exemplar and metaphor devices in rhetorical structures are used.

The emphases on aspects of Chinese culture vary from story to story. Some highlight the tolerant and peaceful aspects of the Chinese culture. The following excerpt from *Titan Weekly* is an example.

In the *Li Yue* part, the performers show the spectators an important period in cultural development in our 5,000-year old country by dressing like the exponents of various schools in the Spring and Autumn Periods (770 BC to 476 BC). Those performers who play the 3,000 disciples of Confucius recite classical sayings of Confucianism with bamboo slips in hands.

At the same time, a huge painting is slowly being spread in the middle of the field. There were a variety of thought schools in the period, such as Confucianist, Taoist, Mohist, Legalist, Political strategist, Naturalist and so on. It was a time period when various schools contended with each other. It was also a time period when various schools tolerated and assimilated each other. It was a time period when flames of war were raging everywhere. It was also a time period when people were eager for peace and unification. Confucius gathered together all that was good and created Confucianism. He traveled and preached around China. The classics written and compiled by him and those originated from his words

have become the symbols of the Chinese culture. (*Titan Weekly*, “Very Classical, Very Chinese,” August 9, 2008, 1)

Confucianism has been the mainstream culture in China for thousands of years. In this paragraph, Confucius disciples are a metaphor. By picturing the origin of the Confucianism, the article stresses that Chinese culture centered on Confucianism has sought for tolerance, peace, and assimilation with others from its very beginning.

The following excerpt in the same story focuses on the open-minded aspect of Chinese culture.

The first part of Silk Road is the Elegance of the Qin Empire. In the music of *Yang Guan San Die*, a famous song in ancient time, the performers dressed like Apsaras in the frescos of the Dunhuang Caves begin to dance in the air. The Qin-Han period is one of the splendid times in ancient China. The summit of the period was the reign of Wu Emperor in the Han Dynasty. During the reign of Wu Emperor (141 BC to 87 BC), Zhang Qian, an envoy who was sent to the Western Regions, contributed to the opening of the Silk Road. From Chang’an, the road extended westward across the vast desert to Central Asia, Western Asia, even to Europe. On this road, the East met the West. This road also indicates the opening attitude of China toward the world outside. By means of the Silk Road, China began to know the world. The world began to know China, made contact with China, and finally entered the old and mysterious

country. (*Titan Weekly*, “Very Classical, Very Chinese,” August 9, 2008, 1)

In this paragraph, the Silk Road is also a metaphor. By describing the origin of the Silk Road, it tells us that cultural exchange between the East and the West has been happening for thousands of years. More importantly, it stresses the open-minded aspects of Chinese culture. It was in ancient times that China began to try to incorporate itself into the world.

Some coverage highlights the aspect of harmony in Chinese culture. The following is an example from a story run by *Nanfang Daily*.

Taiji, in the *Nature* part of the ceremony, is the best way to present the combination of strength and beauty in Chinese culture.

Taiji, a kind of martial art, was created in the later days of the Yuan Dynasty by Zhang Sanfeng. It advocates modesty, toleration and harmony between human beings and nature. As one of the symbols of Chinese culture, it becomes a favorite sport among fans of Eastern culture. Today a green culture that promotes harmony between human beings and nature is prevailing in the world. Thus Taiji, whose core is naturalist, is becoming one of the most influential Chinese cultural forms in the world. (*Danfang Daily*, “Very Chinese, very Yimou,” August 9, 2008, 5)

In order to embody the richness of Chinese culture, some news items tend to present lots of cultural symbols in one paragraph. The following excerpt run by *The People's Daily* is an example.

In the artistic evening, a high-tech electronic painting is spread slowly in the middle of the field of the Bird Nest Stadium. On the painting, a series of performances used to display the endless flow of Chinese culture are presented one by one--three thousand disciples of Confucius, typographic printing, the Silk Road, the Admiral Zheng tour, Li Yue, the new look of today's China. In the performances, various cultural elements are displayed, such as papermaking, gunpowder, porcelain, compass, Apsaras, Kunqu opera, the Great Wall, dove of peace, the Bird Nest stadium, Taiji. In terms of the brilliant performances, people appreciate and grasp splendid Chinese history and prosperity in today's China. (*The People's Daily*, "Ignites enthusiasm, releases dreams," August 9, 2008, 4)

In this paragraph, the richness of Chinese culture is highlighted by enumerating a series of cultural symbols. Specifically speaking, the symbols include tolerant Confucianism, the Silk Road, and the Admiral Zheng tour, embodying China's eagerness to know the world even in ancient times, the Great Wall as a peaceful way to defend rather than attack, the four Great Inventions, porcelain, the Apsaras (an image of Buddhism), Kunqu opera, and Taiji (a kind of martial art).

The green and high-technology Olympics

Hosting an environmentally friendly Olympics, technology-empowered Olympics were also slogans of the Beijing Olympics. In the coverage of the Beijing Olympics, some stories adopt these slogans and frame the Olympics as green, high-technology ones.

In this kind of frame, the source attribution device in syntactical structures is usually used. That is to say, certain viewpoints of authority are quoted in order to explain specific examples or vivid depictions (see Table 14).

Table 14. Frequency of the green and high-technology Olympics frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	37
Jiefang Daily	6
Nanfang Daily	9
Sichuan Daily	6
Hubei Daily	1
China Sports Daily	1
Beijing Evening News	6
Xinmin Evening News	4
Guangzhou Daily	3
Chengdu Business News	1
Chutian Metropolis Daily	1
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	1
Total	76

The following excerpt is an example of how Chinese newspapers frame the Beijing Olympics as environmentally friendly.

At eleven o'clock last night when the Olympic opening ceremony would end soon, thousands of spectators were surprised to find that the firework display throughout the ceremony did not leave any pieces of burning residue. The grand fireworks show in the Bird Nest Stadium made a green myth in the history of the fireworks display.

"People always like watching fireworks. However, few of them like the pollution caused by the fireworks," Zhou Pingwei said. For a long time, it seemed that pollution was a natural drawback of fireworks. One

year ago, Zhou Pingwei started a study on pollution-free fireworks. After a year of hard work, the technology that can make the legend of environmental protection come true finally happened in the Beijing Olympics. (*Nangfang Daily*, “16,000 fireworks leave no residue,” August 9, 2008, 7)

In the following example, the Beijing Olympics are framed as high-technology ones.

During the sailing match on August 17th, 2008, it rains suddenly. However, journalists find all athletes do not have any feeling of cold at all. After the match, Wei Xing, a sailing coach, discloses the secret, “All athletes wear a special kind of clothes used to keep them warm. When wet by rain or sea water, the clothes can heat themselves automatically up to the normal level of body temperature.” (*China Sports Daily*, “High-technology in the sailing match,” August 20, 2008, 11)

Winning medals does not mean success

This frame is an opposite of the “winning medal means success” frame to some degree. In Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics, the frame is usually used in issue stories. The frame emphasizes that winning gold medals does not mean success. In order to make sense of this, the hypothesis-test, source, proposition, and event devices in thematic structures are used (see Table 15).

In some stories, Olympic spirit is cited as a source to prove the hypothesis-test. Usually, Olympic spirit is presented first. Then, Olympic spirit is interpreted or

explained in order to downplay the importance of winning gold medals. The following excerpt is an example.

Some people win. Some people fail. This is the law of sport. Since ancient time, victories and failures have accompanied competitions. However, the long-standing Olympic Games are different from other sports. In the Olympics, competition is not all. Winning gold medals is not all. As we have known, the Olympic spirit is not only “Faster, Higher and Stronger” but also “Participation, Mutual understanding, Friendship, Solidarity and Fair play.” Unquestionably, only if we truly comprehend the essence of the Olympics, we can learn how to treat the failures and victories in the Olympics. (*Guangzhou Daily*, “Winning gold medals does not mean all,” August 10, 2008, 9)

Table 15. Frequency of winning medals does not mean success frame

Newsletters	Frequency
The People's Daily	5
Jiefang Daily	5
Nanfang Daily	2
Sichuan Daily	2
Hubei Daily	0
China Sports Daily	1
Beijing Evening News	3
Xinmin Evening News	2
Guangzhou Daily	4
Chengdu Business News	0
Chutian Metropolis Daily	0
Southern Weekly	2
Titan Weekly	1
Total	27

In some stories, propositions are presented first by the authors. Through developing propositions, the hypothesis that winning gold medals does not mean success is tested. In the following story, a broader concept of sport is provided at first. By discussing the concept, the argument that winning medals does not mean success is made.

Sport is a broad concept. It includes not only athletics on playgrounds but also mass sports such as nationwide body-building, sport entertainment, scale of sport population and constitution of ordinary people. It also has to do with related issues, such as sport facility, sport industry, sport research, sport medicine, sport education, sport insurance and settlement of retired athletes.

Beyond the sports on playgrounds, we are not so strong that we can compete with the United States in every aspect. In China, most people do not pay much attention to body-building or cannot afford to do daily exercises. We are extremely short of fields and stadiums. Our sports population accounts for a very small part of our total population. Perhaps the most serious issue in China is that we have not integrated education into sport yet. In this circumstance, our athletes are not very well educated. After retirement, they have difficulty finding decent jobs or furthering their career goals. As a result, it is harder and harder to attract more young people to engage in athletics, which in turn raises the societal costs of the Olympic gold medals.

Even our performance in the Beijing Olympics is not perfect. We have attained great achievement in Diving, Shooting, Weight-lifting, Gymnastics, Table tennis, Badminton and Judo. We also won our first gold medal in Archery, Sailing, Canoe and Trampoline. However, we cannot make great breakthroughs in some basic events such as Athletics, Swimming and some professional sport events such as Basketball, Football (Soccer). Failures in those popular sports indicate that our gold medals in the Olympics are not really gold. (*Chutian Metropolis Daily*, “The first place in gold medal standing does not means a sport power,” August 22, 2008, 6)

Some stories cite events in Olympic history as evidence to make arguments. The following excerpt diminishes the importance of winning gold medals by pointing out the home court advantage in Olympic history.

Let us take a look those events. Before 1964, Japan won only four gold medals in all the Olympics. In Tokyo, it rocketed up to 16 gold medals. Spain got only one gold medal an each Olympics from 1980 to 1992. However, it won 13 gold medals in the Barcelona Olympics. South Korea won 12 gold medals and ranked in the top four in the Seoul Olympics. However, it had gotten only 7 gold medals total in all the Olympics before 1988. In Sydney, Australia won 16 gold medals. However, it had never gotten more than 10 gold medals in each Olympics before 2000.

According to Olympic history, the court advantage makes it possible for host countries to win about 10 more gold medals. Thus, it is not surprising if China wins more than 40 gold medals in the Beijing Olympics.

For a country, it takes 7 years from winning the bid to actually host the Olympics. During the 7 years, the preparation includes not only building the venues but also training the athletes. Moreover, the court advantage can inspire the athletes. Thus, the Olympics are a burst of sports in a country after 7 years accumulation. (*Nanfang Daily*, “It is normal for a host country to win more gold models,” August 18, 2008, 1)

The smooth and efficient Olympics

Some stories frame the Beijing Olympics as smooth and efficient ones. In this kind of frame, the source attribution device in syntactical structures is used (see Table 16).

Table 16. Frequency of the smooth and efficient Olympics frame

Newspapers	Frequency
The People's Daily	14
Jiefang Daily	9
Nanfang Daily	9
Sichuan Daily	3
Hubei Daily	2
China Sports Daily	1
Beijing Evening News	1
Xinmin Evening News	4
Guangzhou Daily	2
Chengdu Business News	0
Chutian Metropolis Daily	0
Southern Weekly	0
Titan Weekly	1
Total	46

The following excerpt cites the remarks of IOC officers.

He Zhenliang, a member of the IOC, said “the operation of the Beijing Olympics has been praised pretty highly. I give you an example. In order to keep the operation of the Olympics smooth, IOC normally has to have a meeting every day to tackle the problems during the Olympics. However, everything is going well in recent days. Thus IOC has decided not to hold the meeting until August 23, 2008. So far, the opening ceremony and other jobs win lots of praise. I hope we are able to continue to make the rest of the Olympics smooth.” (*Nanfang Daily*, “China is an excellent host country,” August 17, 2008, 2)

Some stories quote officers of public service in Beijing as a source attribution device. The following excerpt is an example.

The bus runs very smoothly. It takes only minutes to cover the distance from Stadium West Avenue to the Beijing Amusement Park, even though it has to pass three crossroads. However, few Olympic matches take the bus route. Does it affect public transportation? At the terminal, the journalist interviews Zhang Yongping, the director of the first bus team of the Beijing Bus Service. “During the matches, the buses take another route. But we will inform our customers beforehand, so they can make preparation. In order to smooth the Olympic Bicycle match, we used the big-stop to big-stop bus strategy a few days ago. During the match on

August 17, we will continue the strategy.” (*China Sports Daily*, “The smooth transportation in Beijing,” August 15, 2008, 10)

In this paragraph, a description of the event is provided. Then, the words of officers in public service are quoted in order to prove the smoothness of the Olympics.

In sum, four new news frames were found in the Beijing Olympics in the Chinese newspapers. For the Chinese culture frame, metaphor devices in rhetorical structures are used. In the winning medals does not mean success frame, source, proposition and event devices in thematic structures are used. In the green and high-technology and the efficient Olympics frames, source attribution devices are used.

In sum, four new news frames were found in the Beijing Olympics coverage in the thirteen Chinese newspapers. The six generic frames were also used by those Chinese newspapers. The four specific Olympic news frames were used by the Chinese newspapers. One specific Olympic news frame was used in a hidden way by the Chinese newspapers.

The four new news frames are Chinese culture, the green and high-technology Olympics, winning medals does not mean success, and the efficiency of the Olympics. Hosting a culture-enriched, environment-friendly, and technology-empowered Olympics are the slogans of the Beijing Olympics. Hosting an efficient Olympics is also one of the promises that the Chinese government made. In the Beijing Olympic coverage, the use of the Chinese culture frame, the green and high-technology Olympics frame, and the efficiency of the Olympics frame serves to highlight those slogans or promise of the

Beijing Olympics. The winning medals does not mean success frame advocates that people should not stress the meaning of winning gold medals.

The six generic frames are also used in the Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers. However, the use of those six frames is different from that in Western societies.

The economic consequence and morality frames are used relatively freely in the Chinese newspapers. In the economic frame, information from foreign businesses, non-government organizations, and the governments are cited as authority sources. In the morality frame, different values from the Maoist era, Western, and Chinese traditional cultures appear in the Beijing Olympics coverage.

Nevertheless, use of human interest, responsibility, and leadership is limited. In the coverage of the Beijing Olympics, all people in the human interest frame enjoy the Olympics. In other words, all characters in the frame have positive attitudes toward the Beijing Olympics. The use of the responsibility frame is restricted to discussing the reason why the Beijing Olympics can be hosted successfully. The use of the leadership frame is limited to officials of the CCP and the government.

In some stories using the conflict frame, there are two parts. The first part is a normal conflict frame. However, there is a second part used to reduce the effects of conflict in the first part.

For the specific Olympics frames, nationality, politics, gender, and the relation between success and winning medals are used in the Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers. However, the ethnicity frame is used in hidden ways by the Chinese

newspapers. That is, Chinese newspapers tend to cover the nationalities of athletes, instead of directly mentioning their races in the Beijing Olympics coverage.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

In this part, ideas highlighted by the use of the frames, comparison of frames in two types of newspapers in China, and the development of the media system and social development of today's China as reflected by studying the Beijing Olympics coverage are discussed. This section also examines this study's contribution to framing as well as its limitations.

The well-running of the Chinese society

Literally, the well-running of the Beijing Olympics and Chinese society is reflected by Beijing Olympics coverage in the Chinese newspapers.

In the Beijing Olympics coverage, the Chinese newspapers frame the Olympics as green, high-technology, and efficient. The impression of the Beijing Olympics operating smoothly is made. By using the human interest frame, the newspapers make it look like everyone in China enjoys the Beijing Olympics. By limiting the use of the responsibility frame to just governments, the media create a positive image of the Chinese government.

The well-running of the Chinese society has also to do with the mentality in today's China. By using Chinese culture, a positive image of Chinese culture is created. Tolerant attitudes towards differing nationalities are set up in the nationality frame. By using the morality frame, the media present a diversity of values in China.

Nevertheless, the Chinese newspapers only discuss the positive side of hosting the Beijing Olympic Games. The newspapers choose to avoid some negative effects of the Olympics. For instance, the newspapers ignore the people who dislike the Olympics and the bad effects caused by the Beijing Olympics, such as the displacement of people and factories.

The frequency of use of frames in newspapers

The use of frames varies across types of newspapers. The organs tend to use leadership, winning medals means success, green and high-technology Olympics, efficient and smooth Olympics, and political perspective frames (see Table 16).

The organs use 39 leadership frame, 10 winning medals means success, 60 green and high-technology Olympics, 38 efficient and smooth Olympics, and 39 political perspective frames, while the commercial newspapers use 6 leadership, 4 winning medals means success, 16 green and high-technology Olympics, 8 efficient and smooth Olympics, and 6 political perspective frames.

Table 17. Frames that organs tend to use

Frame	Organs	Commercial newspapers
Leadership	39	6
Winning medals means success	10	4
The green and high-technology Olympics	60	16
The efficient and smooth Olympics	38	8
Political perspective	39	6

The commercialized newspapers tend to use economic consequence, human interest, and conflict frames. The organs use 4 economic consequence, 1,394 human interest, and

1,302 conflict frames, while the commercial newspapers use 19 economic consequence, 2,183 human interest, and 2,078 conflict frames (see Table 17).

There is not a great difference in use of Chinese culture, responsibility, morality, and winning medals does not means success, gender, and nationality frames.

Table 18. Frames that commercial newspapers tend to use

Frame	Organs	Commercial newspapers
Economic consequence	4	19
Human interest	1394	2183
Conflict	1302	2078

The organs use 48 Chinese culture, 5 responsibility, 130 morality, and 15 winning medals does not means success frames, while the commercial newspapers use 46 Chinese culture, 3 responsibility, 158 morality, and 12 winning medals does not means success frames (see Table 18).

Table 18. Frames both types of newspapers tend to use

Frame	Organs	Commercial newspapers
Chinese culture	48	46
Responsibility	5	3
Morality	130	158
Winning medals does not means success	15	12

In organs, the stories using human interest and conflict frames are 2,696. Among them, 1,642 stories are used to cover males and male competitions. The ratio of male-related stories to the total (1642/2696) is 60.91%. In commercial newspapers, the stories using human interest and conflict frames are 4,261. Among them, 2,555 stories are used

to cover males and male competitions. The ratio of male-related stories to the total (2555/4261) is 59.96%.

In organs, 2,696 stories use the human interest and conflict frames. Among them, 2,018 stories are used to cover Chinese athletes and competitions that Chinese teams took part in. The ratio of Chinese-related stories to the total (2018/2696) is 74.82%. In commercial newspapers, the number of stories using human interest and conflict frames is 4,261. Among them, 3,014 stories are used to cover Chinese athletes and competitions that Chinese teams took part in. The ratio of Chinese-related stories to the total (3014/4261) is 70.73%

The issue of speech freedom

Is there speech freedom in China? By exploring the use of the frames in Chinese newspapers, the issue can be discussed in two respects.

On the one hand, the Chinese government is still taking control the media. The use of the responsibility frame illustrates the point. In the coverage of the Beijing Olympics, the responsibility frame is applied to only one issue: why can China host the Olympics successfully? Accordingly, there is only one answer to the question: the reform and opening policy since 1978.

In a system of free media, the duty of the government can be discussed in many cases. However, the issues related to the duty of the government are restricted to only one in Chinese coverage of the Beijing Olympics. More importantly, media appear to propagandize the positive role of hosting the Olympics.

On the other hand, in some areas that do not have a direct link with politics, the media discuss issues more freely. Take the use of the morality frame as an example. The frame is usually concerned with the behavior of the athletes or audiences at sporting events. Thus, media can discuss the moral issue from different perspectives. Some depend on traditional Chinese culture. Some prefer individualism from Western societies. Some focus on the concepts of the Maoist era. The variety of frames suggests speech freedom exists in some non-political subject areas.

The commercialization and political propaganda

In the Maoist era, all media in China were used to serve the political needs of the Party and government. However, this study found that the leadership frame, one of the main ways to wage propaganda, has decreased in both volume and frequency, since that time.

From the perspective of frequency, the leadership frame is used in the coverage related to the beginning and ending of the Olympics, such as the opening ceremony. In the whole Olympic period, Chinese newspapers pay more attention to the Olympic matches themselves than to the activities or speech of the officials. This is the case even for Party organs, such as *The People's Daily*--the throat and tongue of the CCP. It seems the Party organs are beginning to change their reporting style by devoting more coverage to the needs of ordinary audiences.

From the perspective of volume, the use of the leadership frame accounts for only a small amount of the total coverage. Some commercial newspapers just mention the name

and title of the leaders in headlines and do not cover the activities and speeches of those leaders in the body of the texts.

The limitations of the study

When it comes to methodology, the study uses a qualitative method. However, the method is related to the personal experiences of the author. For example, the author in the study has worked as a journalist in China. My previous working experiences contribute to the analysis. Some of the conclusions should be further tested by other studies; for example, the use of the six generic frames in Chinese media.

When it comes to the gender frame, previous studies focus on female athletes in Olympic coverage. Those studies report the ratio of stories covering female athletes and competitions to stories covering male athletes and competitions. However, some newspapers may experience difficulties in covering female athletes. For example, non-Beijing based newspapers could not interview as many as female athletes as Beijing based newspapers just because they could not afford to send enough journalists to Beijing. However, they can cover local females instead. Thus, the author in this study examines all females instead of just female athletes in stories. Therefore, the gender frame is problematic in this study. Other studies on the gender issue in Chinese media should be conducted in future.

When it comes to the sample, the author classified the Chinese newspapers in terms of five big areas in China. However, this study does not make comparison of the newspapers in the five areas. It is partly because there is a technological unbalance among the different areas. For instance, it is probable that newspapers in a certain area do not have

enough journalists who have the capability to interview foreigners, so they could not cover more foreigners in the Beijing Olympics. Other studies should make the area comparison quantitatively by finding some events that media in all areas have the capability to cover fully. Moreover, other studies should pay attention to newspapers in certain under covered areas to give more details about the development of media in China.

In this study, the sample focuses on national and province-level newspapers. However, there are many city-level and county-level newspapers in China. Other studies should pay attention to those city-level and county-level newspapers.

In this study, Chinese newspapers are divided into Party organs and commercial newspapers. However, the study indicates *the People's Daily* is different from other organs in using frames in many cases. This is partly because *the People's Daily* is a fully funded organ by the Chinese government. Other studies should pay attention to the distinction between *the People's Daily* and other Party organs.

The sample in this study focuses on newspapers. However, there are different types of media in today's China, such as the Internet, TV, and radio. Other studies should explore the use of frames in other types of media.

When it comes to the ethnicity frame, the Chinese newspapers use the ethnicity frame in hidden ways in the Beijing Olympics coverage. So, this study does not discuss the ethnicity frame deeply. However, it does not mean there are no ethnicity-related issues in China. It also does not mean there is no need to study the ethnicity frame in the future

with globalization. Others should conduct more studies on the ethnicity frame in Chinese media.

When it comes to identifying frames, this study focuses on the main frame in a story. However, it is possible there are two or more frames in a story. Other studies should pay attention to the complication of frames in a story.

The Beijing Olympics Games themselves are a sports event. Thus, it is likely there are more stories that use human interest and conflict frames in Olympics coverage. Framing studies of other topics in Chinese media might not yield the same results.

Last, the study focuses on exploring the news frames themselves rather than their effects on the audience. Thus other studies should try to find the effects of different frames on Chinese audiences.

The study and framing theories

By exploring the Beijing Olympics coverage, the six generic frames suggested by Western scholars were also found in Chinese newspapers. So this study reinforces the applicability of the generic frames in cross-cultural contexts.

Nevertheless, specific use of the six generic frames is different in the Chinese context. In the Beijing Olympics coverage of the Chinese newspapers, the use of the responsibility frame is limited to covering the positive role of the government in hosting the Olympics. It indicates that the government is still controlling topics of media in China. In some stories using the conflict frame, an additional part is added to reduce the feeling of conflict. Such a change may reflect China does not want to make enemies with others even in sports—reflective of political thought in today's China.

The study also finds the specific Olympic frames used by media in other countries are present in the Beijing Olympics coverage of the Chinese newspapers. Gender, nationality, politics, and winning gold medals means success frames are used in the Chinese Beijing Olympics coverage. The ethnicity frame is used in indirect ways. In today's China, the government does not want to exaggerate ethnicity issue. Thus, Chinese media usually choose to avoid or cover this issue in hidden ways in their coverage. These findings indicate that some specific frames can exist cross-culturally in coverage of the same kind of events.

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