

Faculty of Education, Language and Communication

A Corpus-Based Cross-Cultural Study on Feminist Conceptual Metaphors in American and Chinese Magazines

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A Corpus-Based Cross-Cultural Study on Feminist Conceptual Metaphors in American and Chinese Magazines

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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ABSTRACT

Existing studies on metaphors in magazines show generalized feminist conceptual metaphors. There is lack of research on how cultural values shape the construction of "woman" via feminist conceptual metaphors in different ideological contexts. This study adopts Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Social Role Theory, Intersectionality Theory, and Cultural Dimensions Theory to conduct a corpus-based comparative analysis of feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines. In this study, 1,098 articles with 1,664,733 words in the American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust* and 4,182 articles with 3,631,345 words in the Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China)* and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. AntConc 4.2.4 and SegmentAnt 1.0.0 tools were used for analysis. Analysis involved using Collostructional Analysis and Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) methods. The prevailing metaphors employed in American magazines include "war" and "journey", which serve to construct women as resistors challenging gender binaries, fighting for individual rights (political, economic, and reproductive autonomy), and acknowledging other genders. In Chinese magazines, "architecture" and "force" are dominant metaphors. These metaphors serve to portray women as fundamental pillars of the social system, emphasizing their role in national development within the context of state frameworks, and placing a strong emphasis on the concept of harmonious integration. Cross-cultural analysis reveals shared metaphors (war, architecture, and journey) but divergent contexts. Conceptual metaphors in American magazines reflect an individualism and masculinity while conceptual metaphors in Chinese magazines reflect a collectivist ideology and femininity. Conceptual metaphors in magazines actively reconstruct women's social roles and quietly stratify the needs of intersecting identities. They shape who counts in gender equality across cultures.

Keywords: Feminism, conceptual metaphor, American and Chinese women's magazines, cultural ideology, gender discourse

Kajian Perbandingan Berasaskan Corpus mengenai Metafora Konseptual Feminis dalam Majalah Amerika dan Cina

ABSTRAK

Kajian sedia ada mengenai metafora dalam majalah menunjukkan metafora konsep feminis umum. Terdapat kekurangan penyelidikan tentang bagaimana nilai budaya membentuk pembinaan "wanita" melalui metafora konseptual feminis dalam konteks ideologi yang berbeza. Kajian ini menggunakan Teori Metafora Konseptual, Teori Peranan Sosial, Teori Interseksionaliti, dan Teori Dimensi Budaya untuk menjalankan analisis perbandingan berasaskan korpus metafora konseptual feminis dalam majalah Amerika dan Cina. Dalam kajian ini, 1,098 artikel dengan 1,664,733 patah perkataan dalam majalah Amerika Ms. dan Bust dan 4,182 artikel dengan 3,631,345 patah perkataan dalam majalah Cina 中国妇女 (Wanita China) dan 婚姻与家庭 (Perkahwinan dan Keluarga) dari 1 Julai 2023 hingga 30 Jun 2024. AntConc 4.2.4 dan SegmentAnt 1.0.0 telah digunakan untuk analisis. Analisis terlibat menggunakan kaedah Analisis Kolostruksi dan Prosedur Pengenalpastian Metafora (MIP). Metafora lazim yang digunakan dalam majalah Amerika termasuk "perang" dan "perjalanan", yang berfungsi untuk membina wanita sebagai penentang yang mencabar binari jantina, memperjuangkan hak individu (politik, ekonomi, autonomi reproduktif), dan mengiktiraf jantina lain. Dalam majalah Cina, "seni bina" dan "kekerasan" islah metafora dominan. Metafora ini berfungsi untuk menggambarkan wanita sebagai tonggak asas sistem sosial, menekankan peranan mereka dalam pembangunan negara dalam konteks rangka kerja negara, dan memberi penekanan yang kuat pada konsep integrasi harmoni. Analisis silang budaya mendedahkan metafora yang sama (perang, seni bina, perjalanan) tetapi konteks berbeza. Penggunaan metafora Amerika menunjukkan ideologi individualistik, dengan tumpuan bersamaan pada

perjuangan hak dan kepelbagaian jantina. Metafora konseptual dalam majalah Amerika mencerminkan individualisme dan maskuliniti manakala metafora konseptual dalam majalah Cina mencerminkan ideologi kolektivis dan kewanitaan. Kajian ini memperoleh pemahaman baharu tentang bagaimana media, bahasa dan ideologi berinteraksi untuk membina "wanita" merentas budaya. Metafora konseptual dalam majalah secara aktif membentuk semula peranan sosial wanita dan secara halus menglapisi keperluan identiti bersilang. Ia membentuk siapa yang dianggap penting dalam kesaksamaan gender merentas budaya.

Kata kunci: *Feminisme, metafora konseptual, majalah wanita Amerika dan Cina, ideologi budaya, wacana jantina*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

US	The United States
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
MIP	Metaphor Identification Procedure
KWIC	Keyword in Context
MI-Score	Mutual Information Score
GII	Gender Inequality Index

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 presents the problem statement, aims and objectives of the study, operational definition of key terms, significance of study, and organization of the thesis.

1.1 Problem Statement

Conceptual metaphors are a thinking system rooted in the human cognitive structure. They construct a systematic cognitive framework by mapping abstract concepts to specific experiential domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Unlike linguistic metaphors, which are merely rhetorical devices, conceptual metaphors break through the limitations of surface expressions and reveal the deep cognitive paths that people follow when understanding abstract issues, thereby making scattered discourse present an internal consistency.

When understanding the concept of “women”, the value of conceptual metaphor becomes particularly prominent. Language metaphors may randomly appear in specific contexts, while conceptual metaphors, as stable cognitive templates, shape society’s understanding of women’s roles, values, and rights (Koller, 2004). For instance, conceptualizing the feminist movement as “war” or “journey” is not only a rhetorical choice but also reflects the fundamental perception of the path to gender equality. This depth cannot be obtained through the analysis of isolated language metaphors. In China, Bao (2024) analyzed 206,089 feminists related posts on Weibo in 2022 and identified six major metaphors: “war”, “business”, “disease”, “animal”, “religion”, and others. Research by Janusz (1994) showed that Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde use metaphor in their poetry

to reveal patriarchal oppression and promote self-reconstruction and social change in the context of female empowerment. Of these, the war metaphor is the most prevalent, both reinforcing and weakening feminists, portraying them both as defenders of justice and as a group with extreme motives.

To date, numerous studies have explored the use of feminist metaphors in newspapers and magazines in different countries, including Spain (Carnero, 2024; Reali, 2021), China (Bao, 2024), the United States and the United Kingdom (Rub, 2022), and literary works (Janusz, 1994; Nicholson, 2015). For example, Reali (2021), using standardized metaphor recognition techniques, found that the most common metaphor in popular online media in Spain during 1999–2014 was the war metaphor, which conveyed a feminist sense of power but also portrayed women as victims and objects. Carnero (2024) analyzed the metaphors of "war" in Spanish opinion columns from 2004 to 2023 using the tool Sketch Engine, and found that feminists often used words such as "battle" and "struggle" to symbolize their struggle against social injustice. Female columnists tend to use it to emphasize importance, while men may use it to downplay the significance of women's struggles. Research by Rub (2022) reveals the influence of cultural context on the use of metaphors in female representations, such as the tendency of American newspapers (*USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *and Washington Post*) to use war metaphors, British newspapers (*the Financial Times*, *the Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times*) prefer the journey metaphor. This indicates that there are significant differences in the framing of feminist issues between the two cultures. American discourse emphasizes conflict and struggle, portraying feminism as a battle of rights, while British discourse highlights progress and the ongoing process of achieving equality, and holds a more optimistic and developmental perspective on women's rights. Ahmed (2018) pointed

out that Nigerian newspapers reinforce traditional gender roles through metaphors. Ahmed (2018) revealed that metaphors used in Nigerian newspapers primarily conceptualize women as commodity and household managers, reflecting and perpetuating traditional gender roles and social attitudes that maintain male dominance and female subordination. These metaphors not only revealed complex public attitudes toward feminism, but also highlight the important role of social media in disseminating and shaping those attitudes. Bao (2024) found that the war metaphor in Weibo is widespread but has both extreme and justice-like dual images.

The differences between newspapers and magazines suggest that the media attributes may shape the metaphorical function. However, as a targeted communication medium, the special nature of the metaphorical function of magazines has not been fully verified. Compared with the immediacy of newspapers and the fragmentation of social media, it is not clear whether the in-depth narrative of magazines will weaken the contradiction of metaphors. Whether the metaphor selection for specific audiences (such as readers of women's magazines) will form a functional bias different from other media remains unproven.

Previous studies have mainly focused on newspapers, literary works and social media platforms (such as Weibo), while magazines, an important form of media, have not received enough attention. Magazines, as a kind of media with clear theme orientation and style characteristics targeting specific audience groups, may have unique patterns and rules in the dissemination and metaphorical application of feminist issues. In particular, magazines with different types and positioning, such as fashion magazines, cultural magazines and feminist magazines may differ greatly in the choice and presentation of

feminist metaphors due to differences in target audience groups and editorial policies. The study of conceptual metaphors related to feminism in magazines can help us to have a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the spread and acceptance of feminist ideas in different audiences, and further expand the breadth and depth of feminist research.

Although various types of feminist metaphors have been identified (such as the war metaphor) and analyzed in depth, there is still lack of understanding on the relationship between different metaphors, the evolution mechanism of metaphors in different cultural contexts, and how metaphors interact with socio-cultural factors and jointly shape the feminist discourse system. For example, different metaphors may have complementary, substitutive or conflicting relationships when expressing feminist ideas, and how these relationships affect the overall public perception of feminism has not been fully explored. Furthermore, cultural background plays a crucial role in the process of cross-cultural transmission and transformation of metaphor, but conceptual metaphors related to feminism are used in different cultural contexts. For example, Reali (2021) found in her research on Spanish online media that the war metaphor not only conveys a sense of feminist power but also portrays women as victims and objects. This contradiction is also present in Carnero's (2024) analysis of the Spanish column. The female author uses "battle" to emphasize the importance of resistance, while the male author uses it to undermine the significance of women's demands. However, Reali (2021) does not clarify the generation mechanism of this duality, that is, why the same metaphor can simultaneously carry both empowering and restrictive functions.

The cognitive roots of cross-cultural differences in metaphor preferences have not yet been clarified by past research. Existing cross-cultural studies mostly focus on the

Western culture, such as Rub's (2022) comparison of British and American newspapers, and the metaphorical differences often stem from local social movement trajectories, making it difficult to touch upon the shaping of metaphorical cognition by the fundamental cultural divide of "individualism – collectivism".

Studying how feminist conceptual metaphors are used in magazines in different ideological contexts will produce understanding that goes beyond studies on one country. China and the United States lie in the same category of gender inequality based on the Gender Inequality Index (GIF) in 2023 but have different ideological and cultural contexts. China (GII rank 41) and the United States (GII rank 45) both fall within the "moderate inequality" range (31–100) (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). Both countries face similar gender disparities in political representation, wage gaps, and leadership access. However, the two countries differ in ideological and cultural factors which may influence choices of feminist conceptual metaphors in media materials on feminism. In cultural traditions, China adheres to Confucian collectivism while the United States has Western imperialism. Therefore, it is important to investigate how metaphorical framing of feminism reflects distinct ideological contexts, insights that cannot be obtained through single-nation studies or comparisons within similar ideological frameworks. However, there is lack of cross-cultural comparisons in existing research as the research are mostly descriptive. The cognitive mechanism is ambiguous and the connection between metaphors and thinking patterns is unclear. Thus, there is limited understanding of the social function of metaphors, making it difficult to study deeper cognitive contradictions. A comparative analysis of magazines published in different ideological contexts, which focuses on different cultural and gender contexts, can reveal the commonalities and differences in the generation mechanism and operational logic of this duality.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to conduct a corpus-based cross-cultural analysis of feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines. To achieve the aim of the study, the objectives are as follows:

i. To identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in American magazines (*Ms.*, *Bust*) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse.

ii. To identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in Chinese magazines (中国妇女 (*Women of China*), 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse.

iii. To compare these metaphorical constructions to uncover shared and divergent cultural ideologies shaping the representation of women in American and Chinese magazines.

This study is to address the following questions:

i. What conceptual metaphors in *Ms. and Bust* construct "woman" in American feminist discourse?

ii. What conceptual metaphors in 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) construct "woman" in Chinese feminist discourse?

iii. How do metaphorical constructions of “woman” converge or diverge between American and Chinese magazines, and what cultural ideologies do these patterns manifest?

1.3 Operational Definition of Key Terms

1.3.1 Metaphor

Metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon and cognitive means to understand and express abstract concepts by mapping the structure, features and relationships of one conceptual domain (source domain) to another conceptual domain (target domain) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

In this study, metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon revealed through corpus analysis. Using the corpus tool AntConc 4.2.4 to analyze the corpus composed of the texts of two American and two Chinese magazines, the words that frequently appear in the texts and have specific semantic association and collocation patterns are identified as metaphorical expressions.

1.3.2 Woman

In this study, the term “woman” does not merely refer to the biological gender category, but rather represents a dynamic identity constructed by social and cultural factors (Butler, 1990). Its meaning is generated by the context and integrates the specific societal perceptions of female roles, rights, and values. In the discourse of American and Chinese magazines, the presentation of “woman” encompasses both the basic reference of physiological attributes and the gender expectations bestowed by culture. This constructive difference is one of the main objects of the comparative analysis in this study.

1.3.3 Feminist

In this study, “feminist” refers to individuals or groups that advocate for gender equality and challenge gender oppression (Sen, 2019). Their identity is not merely a static self-identification but is also dynamically constructed through discourse practices. In American magazines and Chinese, the presentation of “feminist” encompasses the pursuit of equal rights as well as reflecting the action logic in different cultural contexts. This difference is made concrete through the selection of conceptual metaphors.

1.3.4 Feminism

In this study, “feminism” is defined as an ideological and practical movement that pursues gender equality and challenges systemic gender oppression (Rachman, 2023). Its core is not only a collection of rights demands, but also a dynamic discourse construction that redefines gender relations. This construction presents cultural specificity in the context of American-Chinese magazines: in the American context, it is often associated with individual empowerment and breaking through structural barriers, while in the Chinese context, it is more embedded within the framework of social development and collaborates with collective progress. Both point to the ultimate goal of gender equality, but are realized concretely through different conceptual metaphorical paths, forming the core dimension for cross-cultural comparison.

1.3.5 Feminist Conceptual Metaphor

Feminist conceptual metaphor refers to a type of metaphor that uses metaphor to express, construct and disseminate feminist ideas and concepts, as well as women’s social role, status and value in the context of feminism (Aragbuwa & Omotunde, 2022). Based on specific cultural, social, and historical contexts, these metaphors connect abstract concepts

related to feminism with concrete, familiar conceptual domains, thereby influencing people's understanding, perceptions, and attitudes toward feminism (Reali, 2021). "Feminist conceptual metaphor" refers to the cognitive mechanism that systematically maps feminist abstract concepts (such as gender equality, female resistance, and gender role reconfiguration) to the concrete experiential domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Its core lies in achieving the perceptual visualization of abstract feminist ideas through cross-domain mapping. For instance, "the advancement of the feminist movement" is mapped to "the progress of a journey", and "the breakthrough of gender dilemmas" is mapped to "the crossing of obstacles".

In the context of this study, "feminist conceptual metaphor" specifically refers to the stable metaphorical system used in American and Chinese magazines to present "female roles", "feminist practices", and "equality goals".

1.3.6 Dominant Feminist Conceptual Metaphor

Linguistic metaphors are surface manifestations (e.g., "fight for rights", "break barriers"), while conceptual metaphors are deep cognitive structures mapping source domains (e.g., war, journey) onto target domains (e.g., feminist struggle, gender equality) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). "Dominant feminist conceptual metaphor" refers to the type of conceptual metaphor that has the highest frequency of occurrence, the widest distribution range, and the strongest cognitive influence in the discourse of a specific magazine, when it comes to the metaphorical presentation of abstract categories related to feminism (such as female social roles, the process of gender equality, and gender resistance practices) (Carastathis, 2014).

In the context of this research, “dominant feminist conceptual metaphor” specifically refers to the core metaphorical model systematically constructed by American and Chinese magazines through specific experiential domains (such as “battle”, “growth”, and “cooperation”) to construct feminist cognition.

1.3.7 Magazine Discourse

“Magazine discourse” refers to the systematic verbal practice formed in magazines regarding feminist issues, which is a mediated expression of social meaning construction (Fairclough, 1995). Its main components include texts such as articles and comments related to feminism in the magazines, formed through specific word choices, narrative structures and argumentation logic, into a relatively stable expression system.

This study focuses on the discourse of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust* and Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), both of which exhibit the discourse characteristics of media texts, serving as carriers of information dissemination while also reflecting the positioning and editorial concepts of the respective media through content organization, providing a specific context for metaphor analysis.

1.4 Significance of Study

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this study lies in its integration of CMT, Social Role Theory, Intersectionality Theory and Cultural Dimensions Theory to advance the understanding of feminist discourse construction, breaking through the limitations of previous studies which mainly applied CMT to analyze specific types of metaphors or

limited contexts. In the existing studies, the research on newspapers (Fontecha & Catalań, 2003; Reali, 2021; Rub, 2022; Pérez-Hernández, 2016) mainly focuses on the manifestation characteristics of feminist conceptual metaphors. Their research findings show that such metaphors in newspapers often have generalization, fluctuate with news events and lack long-term stability, making it difficult to deeply present the cross-complexity of multiple female identities (such as race, class), and due to the need to cover a wide audience, the narrative depth is limited, and the social function is significantly constrained by the media attributes. Studies on literary works (Janusz, 1994; Nicholson, 2015) also focus on feminist conceptual metaphors. The results show that literary works often shape radical or symbolic female images through metaphors. Janusz (1994) observed that some American literary works use metaphors such as "multifaceted puzzle" to highlight the cross-influence of gender and race in feminist struggles. The research on social media (Bao, 2024) focused on the feminist concepts' metaphors on these platforms, finding that these metaphors exhibit fragmented characteristics, are easily influenced by real-time interactions and change frequently, and often contain negative connotations, making it difficult to form a stable and in-depth feminist ideological narrative. Compared to these media, the present study focuses on the magazine, a relatively stable and meticulously arranged discourse platform, aiming to reveal the more consistent, more delicate, and more deeply rooted cultural feminist conceptual metaphors contained within it. The present study particularly endeavors to clarify how magazines, as a unique medium, can facilitate a richer and more sustained presentation of the complex interaction between multiple female identities (such as race, class, and profession) and social regulatory roles, thereby providing insights into the construction of feminist discourse. These insights, in

comparison to those found in the contexts of news, literature, or social media, have less temporariness and stronger structural integration characteristics.

Intersectionality Theory is used to analyze the combined effects of multiple identities of women (such as race, class, and occupation) (Crenshaw, 1989). Social Role Theory, on the other hand, focuses on how gender roles are shaped by social norms (Eagly, 1987). The present study is pioneering in its integration of identity complexity and social role expectations as separate analytical domains, an integration which has hitherto been neglected in previous research. This integrated framework unveils a fundamental theoretical insight: feminist conceptual metaphors function not merely as reflections of identity intersections or social role constraints in isolation, but as dynamic constructs mediating the interplay between the complex "coexistence of differences" (Intersectionality Theory) and the pervasive "adaptation of role expectations and cultural logic" (Social Role Theory). This novel theoretical synthesis moves beyond the fragmented understanding offered by applying either theory alone. The present study provides a more comprehensive explanatory framework for understanding how metaphorical representations of women are fundamentally shaped by the convergence of multidimensional identity positions and the normative pressures of social roles. Consequently, this integrated approach offers a new lens for analyzing feminist discourse across diverse cultural contexts, directly addressing the theoretical gap concerning the co-constitutive nature of identity and role in metaphorical constructions of gender.

Crucially, this study further incorporates Cultural Dimensions Theory into its integrated framework, expanding the theoretical framework into a four-dimensional analytical system of "metaphor-identity-role-culture". This not only illuminates how

metaphor mediates the interaction between identity and role at the individual level, but also reveals how macro-cultural dimensions systematically shape metaphor selection, thus providing a complete theoretical chain for cross-cultural feminist metaphor research, from micro-identity interactions to macro-cultural logic. Through this four-theoretical integrated framework, this study further analyzes how cultural values, through metaphor as a medium, influence the interactive process between identity complexity and social role expectations, ultimately forming a culturally specific path for the construction of feminist discourse, further improving the theoretical system of metaphor and gender research in a cross-cultural context.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

The research results have many practical significance. For feminist organizations and activists, the findings provide insight into the characteristics of feminist discourse in American and Chinese magazines. By clarifying the use of various conceptual metaphors, they can more effectively use these metaphors in organizing activities, advocacy, and communication with the public to enhance the transmission of feminist ideas. For the media industry, especially for the media workers concerned about women's issues, this study has the guiding value. Editors and journalists can more accurately interpret and report feminist related events based on the analysis of various metaphors in the research. For example, when reporting the news of women's entrepreneurial success or outstanding achievements in society, clearer language can be used instead of metaphors to accurately convey the efforts, tenacity and challenges faced by women in the process of growth. This is to solve the problem of meaning losses due to insufficient understanding of metaphors, and to enhance the professionalism and objectivity of the media in disseminating feminist ideas and portraying women.

In the field of education, this study provides abundant teaching resources and theoretical support for gender education. Educators can use the metaphorical examples in the research results to guide students to understand the connotation, cultural background and social significance of feminism. For example, in Chinese or sociology courses, through the analysis of the unique performance of specific metaphors in American or Chinese magazines (and the differences in cultural contexts from other countries), students can be inspired to think about the influence of cultural factors on gender concepts, cultivate students' critical thinking and cross-cultural awareness can be cultivated, all of which enable students to have a more comprehensive and objective understanding of feminism and actively participate in the construction of a gender-equal society.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction, delineating the research problems, research domain and expounding the merits of feminist conceptual metaphors for research purposes. It also puts forward the central issues and objectives, thereby establishing the boundaries of the research and its innovative aspects, which form the foundation for the entire study.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the extant literature and empirical research in this field. It focuses on the cognitive mechanisms of CMT, the gendered logic of Social Role Theroy, Intersectionality Theory, Cultural Dimensions Theory, and the existing findings on single cultural and cross-cultural metaphor comparison.

Chapter 3 describes the research method, including the standards for constructing corpora, with particular reference to the selection of lexis in American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, as well as Chinese 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*). The chapter also elucidates the quantitative analysis procedures of

Collostructional Analysis and the qualitative identification standards of MIP, thereby ensuring the replicability of the research methods employed.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study and the ensuing discussion. Utilizing a linguistic analysis, it unveils the prevalence of metaphorical expressions such as “war”, “journey”, “architecture” and “force” in the corpus of American and Chinese magazines. It also elucidates the underlying cultural semantics and the theoretical framework that underpins the observed discrepancies.

Chapter 5 summarizes the study and findings, unpacks their theoretical and practical implications, suggests future research directions, and closes with a holistic conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of feminist theoretical foundations, CMT, and metaphorical portrayals of women in discourse.

2.1 Feminist Theoretical Foundations

2.1.1 Feminism

The origin of feminism is set in the days of the patriarchal rule of humanity. Feminism originated in France and grew in Western societies and gradually gained global influence (Mohajan, 2022; Tong, 2009). The French utopian socialist Charles Fourier first coined the term “feminisme” around 1830 (Mohajan, 2022; Tong, 2009). This term began to gain popularity after the actress and politician Marguerite Durand from Paris, France, convened a conference demanding women’s rights and called for women’s rights in 1892 (VanderHaagen, 2021). The term “feminism” itself is relatively recent and is believed to have originated from the Latin word “femina” (meaning woman) (VanderHaagen, 2021).

Feminism focuses on the inequalities, subordinate status, and substandard treatment that women universally encounter globally (Mohajan, 2022). Feminism is both a social and political movement and an ideology (Mohajan, 2022). The fundamental goal of feminism is to achieve gender equality and social justice.

The rise of the modern feminist movement is linked to social changes in Europe and America in the 18th and 19th centuries (Mohajan, 2022). Long-term suppression in history forced women to rise up against the male-dominated society (VanderHaagen, 2021).

Early thinkers had already laid the foundation for feminism. In 1673, the French theologian Poulain de La Barre published *On Equality Between Men and Women*, stating that women were not inferior to men in intelligence (VanderHaagen, 2021). Along with the French Revolution, Olympe de Gouges published *Declaration of the Rights of Women and Female Citizens* in Paris in 1791, which was an important early document of feminism as a political ideology (Mohajan, 2022; Mousset, 2007). This declaration was based on the *Declaration of Human Rights and Civil Rights* and demanded that women enjoy equal rights. Similar waves of ideas also emerged in the United States (the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848), the United Kingdom (the struggle for the right to vote in various places such as London in the 1870s), Russia in 1848, and China in 1911 (Mohajan, 2022; Raj & Davidson, 2014).

Scholars have described the changes in the feminism movement in terms of waves. The first wave of the modern feminism movement from the late 19th century to the early 20th century mainly focused on the pursuit of legal and political rights, particularly suffrage and property rights (Mohajan, 2022). The first wave of the feminism movement took place in the United Kingdom (especially London), the United States (New York, Boston and other northeastern cities, as well as the national movement in Washington D.C.) and the Nordic countries. The Women's Political Union led by Emmeline Pankhurst in the United Kingdom. Figures such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in the United States were iconic figures in the feminism movement. The 19th amendment to the United States Constitution, passed in 1920, marked the attainment of the right to vote by American women (Mohajan, 2022; Tong, 2009). The landmark texts of modern feminism movements, such as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* written in 1792 in the United Kingdom, advocated that women should have equal educational

opportunities with men (Tong, 2009; Wollstonecraft, 1792). John Stuart Mill's "The Subjection of Women" in 1869 further called for equality between men and women in economic opportunities, political rights and civil liberties in the United Kingdom (Mill, 1869; Tong, 2009). The first wave of the feminism movement achieved some legal rights for women.

The second wave of the feminism movement (1960s – 1980s) focused on gender discrimination within social and cultural structures, and the focus of the issues expanded to reproductive rights, sexual autonomy, domestic violence, and workplace equality (Mohajan, 2022; Tong, 2009). The center of this movement was mainly in the United States (Boston, New York, Chicago, university and urban centers on the West Coast) and Western Europe (Britain, France, Germany, Italy, etc.). In her publication *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan analyzed the distressful family life of middle-class white women in the United States, becoming an important catalyst for the movement (Friedan, 1963). Millett's (1970) *Sexual Politics* and other radical feminist texts also emerged in the United States during this period. Millet (1970) wrote about women striving for abortion rights such as the United States Roe v. Wade case, establishing shelters for abused women, and promoting the Equal Rights Amendment (eventually not passed).

The third wave of the feminism movement (1990s – 2000s) emphasizes the intersectionality of identity and focuses on the interweaving of multiple forms of oppression such as race, class, and sexual orientation (Mohajan, 2022). Intersectionality refers to the fact that different social identity categories such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability do not exist independently but rather overlap and intersect with each other. The forms of oppression they generate are not simply additive but rather act in

synergy, shaping forms of systemic discrimination or unequal experiences (Crenshaw, 2010). Its theoretical origin is mainly in American universities and academic circles influenced by postmodernism, postcolonial theory, and critical race theory, with representatives such as Bell Hooks, Patricia Hill Collins, and Kimberle Crenshaw who proposed the concept of intersectionality. The third wave of feminism not only includes gender but also delves into issues such as LGBTQ+, body politics, and cultural appropriation. Walker's (1983) "Womanism" is also an important concept in this stage. "Womanism" emphasizes the subjectivity of black women's experiences, the intersectional oppression of race and gender, and the commitment to the liberation of the entire community including men, providing a framework that is more culturally specific and inclusive than the mainstream white feminism.

With the widespread adoption of the Internet and social media, the fourth wave, from the 2010s to the present, is often associated with digital activism. The fourth wave of the feminism movement spread through social media such as the hashtag movements "#MeToo", "#YesAllWomen", "#TimesUp" to oppose sexual harassment, everyday sexism, and slut-shaming, and advocating for bodily autonomy (Mohajan, 2022). "The #MeToo movement" originated in Hollywood in the United States and quickly spread globally, demonstrating the power of cross-national feminist mobilization in the digital age. The fourth wave of feminism also continues to focus on intersectionality, that is, how multiple social identities such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and ability intersect, overlap and interact with each other, resulting in unique forms of oppression or privilege and places greater emphasis on inclusiveness and female issues from a global perspective. After the 1960s, feminist theories experienced a multi-dimensional explosion. Radical feminism regarded patriarchy as the root cause of oppression. Millett, in her book *Sexual*

Politics (1970), analyzed the gender power relationship as a political control mechanism (Tong, 2009). This school of thought divided into two main branches. Radical-libertarian feminism advocated for the deconstruction of gender roles and supported sexual liberation and bodily autonomy. Radical-cultural feminism emphasized praising the essential value of women and criticized the heterosexual system and the pornography industry (Tong, 2009). These internal divisions reflect the depth of feminist criticism.

Socialist feminism attempts to integrate class and gender analyses. Capitalism and patriarchy are intertwined systems of oppression (Mohajan, 2022). Mitchell proposed in *Woman's Estate* (1971) that four major structures (production, reproduction, sexual relations, and socialization) jointly shape the situation of women. Alison Jaggar used the concept of "alienation" to explain the fragmented experience of women in the public and private domains (Tong, 2009). This dialectical framework has influenced contemporary intersectional theories.

Psychoanalytic feminism focuses on the psychological construction mechanism. In *The Reproduction of Mothering*, Chodorow (1978) described how the division of parenting roles reproduces gender identity. Girls develop a relationship-oriented self through identification with their mothers, while boys establish autonomy through separation (Tong, 2009). Carol Gilligan's ethics of care further clarifies the "different voices" of female moral development. She challenges the ethical system based on male experience (Tong, 2009). These studies reveal the internalization process of oppression.

Postmodern feminism deconstructs the essentialist gender categories. Judith Butler proposed in *Gender Trouble* (1990) that gender is a performative social practice (Tong, 2009). In other words, the "universal female experience" is fictional because identity varies

with context. The very process of knowledge production is regarded as a field of power struggle (VanderHaagen, 2021). This anti-essentialist stance has influenced the third wave of feminism.

The global context highlights the local knowledge of feminism. VanderHaagen (2021) criticized the discourse hegemony of Western feminism in *Under Western Eyes.* Portraying "Third World women" as a homogeneous group of victims is a form of knowledge colonization. VanderHaagen (2021) emphasized that Indian feminism is a response to local gender issues, rather than a replication of the Western agenda. This post-colonial perspective highlights respect for localized resistance strategies.

The development of Chinese feminist traditions can be divided into four distinct phases based on key historical and social shifts, such as regime changes, transitions between planned and market economies, and the rise of digital technology. These phases have fundamentally shaped the core demands, organizational forms, and discourse spaces of women's movements.

The first wave was from the early 20th century to 1949, feminist thought gradually emerged, driven by the May Fourth Movement and the New Culture Movement. Issues such as women's education and marriage autonomy became focal points of social attention (Barlow, 2004). Women's liberation was closely linked to national independence, and women were viewed as a vital force for national modernization. Feminism during this period was influenced by both the West and emphasized local aspirations, contributing to the initial improvement of women's social status (Yu, 2015).

The second wave was from 1949 to 1978. With the establishment of the People's Republic of China, state-led "women's liberation" became mainstream, mobilizing women

to participate in social production and gaining equal legal rights (Dong, 2023). State policies promoted women's employment, education, and political participation, but feminist discourse was more often presented as "women's liberation" rather than "feminism", emphasizing collectivism and serving socialist construction. The advancement of women's rights was closely aligned with national goals (Spakowski, 2018).

The third wave was from 1978 to 2009. During this period of time, reform and opening up ushered in a market economy and social diversification. Academia began to incorporate Western feminist theories, leading to a growing sense of self-awareness and demands for women's rights. NGOs and civil society organizations emerged, promoting issues such as gender equality and the fight against domestic violence (Liao, 2020). Simultaneously, the phenomenon of "pseudo-feminism" in consumerism and popular culture sparked discussion, leading to a diversification and complexity of feminism (Yin, 2021).

The fourth wave was from 2009 to the present day. With the rise of social media and online culture like Singles' Day, digital feminism has become a new trend. Young women have used online platforms to promote social movements such as #MeToo, challenging gender stereotypes and patriarchal structures (Hou, 2020). This new generation of feminists emphasizes individual rights, social participation, and cross-sector alliances, but they also face online stigma and policy restrictions. The relationship between the state and feminism has become more complex, with both policy support and repression and guidance (Wu & Dong, 2019).

Each stage of Chinese feminism is closely linked to specific historical contexts and social structures. Chinese feminism needs to be placed within a unique social and cultural

context. Confucian ethics and revolutionary heritage shape the complex gender norms. Modern women's liberation is often incorporated into the national narrative. Contemporary digital activism creates new spaces for resistance. Mao (2020) studied how Weibo feminism uses the internet to challenge gender violence.

Feminism has always been a dynamic and evolving practice. From the right to vote to "the #MeToo movement", its form has changed along with the evolution of social contradictions. Theoretical differences reflect the diversity of struggle strategies. The current challenge lies in coordinating universal demands with cultural particularities.

2.1.2 Social Role Theory

The present section is concerned with an exploration of the manner in which Social Role Theory elucidates the correlation between social role norms and the metaphorical representation of gender. This theoretical framework is utilized to analyze how feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines reflect and construct gender roles, thereby establishing a foundation for the comparison of cross-cultural variations in these metaphorical practices.

Social Role Theory was formally proposed by Eagly in 1987. Social Role Theory explains how the trait cognition of social groups originates from the roles that these groups occupy in society (Eagly, 1987). This theory addresses the limitation of attributing group differences to innate traits, and instead emphasizes the decisive role of role division in the social structure of society. In Eagly's (1987) view, people's stereotypes of men, women, or other social groups do not stem from the inherent attributes of the groups themselves, but from the repetitive behavioral patterns that these groups exhibit in social domains such as

family and career – these behavioral patterns are also regulated by social roles (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

The underlying logic of Social Role Theory is based on the correspondent inference mechanism. This mechanism states that people tend to associate others' behaviors with their inherent traits, that is, they believe that behaviors are the external manifestations of traits (Gawronski, 2003; Gilbert, 1998). Specifically in terms of social roles, when a certain group continuously occupies a specific role such as women more often taking on family care, and men more often participating in workplace competition, observers will infer the required behaviors of the role such as patience and decisiveness as the inherent traits of that group (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). This inference is not a deliberate bias, but a natural result of simplifying information processing in social cognition.

In gender studies, Social Role Theory offers a classic interpretation of gender stereotypes. The research reveals that the societal stereotypes regarding men's "agentic" (active, competitive) and women's "communal" (cooperative, caring) traits directly correspond to the traditional gender roles in society: Men dominate the production and decision-making in the public domain, while women dominate the care and maintenance in the private domain (Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Eagly, 1987). For instance, Cejka and Eagly (1999) analyzed 80 occupations and found that male-dominated occupations such as firefighters and law enforcement officers are considered to require high agency and low communalism, while female-dominated occupations such as nurses and social workers are considered to require low agency and high communalism, which is highly correlated with the proportion of men and women in these occupations.

The persuasiveness of Social Role Theory is also demonstrated in its predictions regarding the impact of role change on stereotypes (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006). When a group breaks away from traditional roles, the perception of their associated traits also changes. Diekman and Eagly (2000) found that as the proportion of women entering the workplace increased, society's evaluation of women's "competence" significantly improved. Koenig and Eagly's (2014) experiments showed that if participants were informed that a certain group would assume a new role in the future, their stereotypes of that group would tilt towards the required traits of the new role, and this change was significantly correlated with the degree of association between the role attributes.

However, the development of Social Role Theory has also been accompanied by theoretical controversies. The most prominent controversy is the shifting standards model. This model suggests that the convergence in the evaluation of group traits based on role information such as men and women being regarded as equally capable in the same profession might be due to the observers adopting the standards within the group using female standards for women and male standards for men, rather than the true fading of stereotypes (Biernat, 2003). In response to this, Bosak et al. (2012) conducted an experiment. They compared subjective evaluation scales with objective frequency measures of behavior (common rule measures). Their findings showed that regardless of the measurement method, role information can significantly reduce gender trait differences, showing that it is the role itself rather than the judgment criteria that determines cognition. In other words, Bosak et al. (2012) showed that the core viewpoint of Social Role Theory is valid.

It is worth noting that the explanatory power of Social Role Theory is not limited to gender. Koenig and Eagly (2014) extended it to studies of race, class, and other groups. They found that Latinos in the United States are more likely to engage in occupations such as gardening and catering, leading to their stereotyping as “service-oriented”. The wealthy are more likely to occupy roles such as lawyers and executives, and are regarded as more “ambitious and capable”. These findings indicate that Social Role Theory can explain stereotypes of a wide range of social groups, and its core lies in the chain of role occupation – behavior observation – trait inference. However, Social Role Theory also needs to be considered in conjunction with other dimensions of identity. Schneider and Bos (2016) pointed out that in the political field, the influence of gender roles is intertwined with factors such as race and class: African-American female politicians not only face the gender bias of lack of leadership ability but are also constrained by racial stereotypes, which requires that Social Role Theory incorporate the perspective of Intersectionality in its application. Nevertheless, Social Role Theory provides crucial insights for understanding social cognition. To change the prejudice against a certain group, the fundamental lies in changing the role assigned to it in the social structure.

Social Role Theory is predicated on the premise that the relationship between a single social identity (such as gender) and role norms is of primary importance. The theory analyzes how specific identities shape behavioral expectations and cognitive stereotypes in isolation. However, in actual social settings, women’s experiences are not solely determined by their gender, they are intricately interwoven with factors such as race, class, occupation, and other identities. To illustrate this point, one may consider the marked differences in gender role expectations faced by a white middle-class woman in the workplace compared to those experienced by a black working-class woman. It is important

to note that such disparities cannot be adequately explained by Social Role Theory, which tends to conceptualize identities as discrete variables.

2.1.3 Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality Theory is a critical lens for understanding the interdependence of multiple identities, illuminating the dynamics of power structures through the intricate interweaving of race, gender, and class (Wyatt et al., 2022). This theoretical framework enables us to capture the nuanced experiences and metaphorical representations of women that are frequently overlooked by single-identity analyses.

> Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LBGTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things. (Crawshew, 2017, para. 4)

Individual identities are not composed of a single dimension, but rather are formed by multiple social factors such as gender, race, class, age, and sexual orientation, which interweave with each other in specific social relationships, creating complex structures of oppression and privilege (Hopkins, 2019). Crawshew (2017) proposed Intersectionality Theory to explain the multiple inequalities faced by marginalized groups. The theory also explains the invisible privileges in dominant discourses (Garry, 2011).

Crenshaw's (1989) Intersectionality Theory emerged from an insight into the double marginalization of black women. In the United States in the 1980s, the anti-discrimination legal system was trapped in a "either-or" dilemma. In employment

discrimination cases, black women could neither obtain protection through the racial discrimination clause nor be fully covered by the framework of gender equality. This legal blind spot made Crenshaw (1989) realize that a single-dimensional analysis of oppression simply could not capture the unique experiences of black women. Their predicaments were not a simple combination of racial and gender oppression, but rather a product of the entanglement of the two in the power structure (Bauer et al., 2021).

The core of Intersectionality is to reject the notion of treating social identities as isolated variables. Crenshaw (1989) pointed out that identity categories such as race, gender, and class are "interdependent" in nature. For instance, the workplace discrimination faced by black women is always embedded within the racialized gender bias. They are both labeled as "unprofessional" due to their race and are restricted to low-paying positions due to their gender. The cumulative effect of this interweaving of oppressions cannot be explained by analyzing race or gender alone (Haynes et al., 2020). For instance, the gender experiences of white middle-class women differ qualitatively from those of black poor women. The former may face career advancement barriers, while the latter may lose even basic employment opportunities due to the intersection of "race + gender + class" (Davis, 2008). Bright et al.'s (2016) causal analysis further proved that this difference is not an accidental individual difference, but a necessary product of the power structure at specific intersection points of identities. In intersectional research, only 73.1% of the studies clearly defined the core concepts, while 17.5% of the studies mistakenly included categories unrelated to social power in the analysis, exposing a misunderstanding of the "interdependence" concept (Bauer et al., 2021).

Crenshaw (1991) further categorized intersectionality into three dimensions, providing a framework for analysis. Structural intersectionality focuses on the interweaving of institutional oppression, such as how black women are segregated in resource-poor communities due to their race and face gender discrimination from landlords due to their gender, and the double barriers exacerbate their survival predicaments (Hopkins, 2019). Political intersectionality reveals the paradox of identity politics: black women were required to prioritize "first race and then gender" in the civil rights movement, and "first gender and then race" in the feminist movement. This fragmentation keeps their demands always on the periphery (Echeverria, 2025). Representational intersectionality criticizes the violence of cultural symbols, as the media portray black women as "angry Sapphire" or "hypersexual Jezebel", these stereotypes both reinforce racial prejudice and solidify gender control (Haynes et al., 2020).

Based on identity categories (Crenshaw, 1989) and on three dimensions (Crenshaw, 1991), it can be seen that structural intersectionality deals with rules of the country. Political intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) connects to the class mentioned by Crenshaw (1989). Representational intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) refers to messages sent about the violence of cultural symbols in media such as magazines, newspapers, and blog.

Crenshaw's (1989) Intersectionality Theory is essentially an "analytical sensibility" (Bauer et al., 2021). It does not provide a fixed theoretical framework but rather requires researchers to constantly ask: Which identities are intertwined in a specific context? How does power generate unique oppression through this interweaving? Whose experiences are obscured by the mainstream narrative? Only by maintaining this critical stance can one avoid the theory becoming a formalized label game and truly achieve Crenshaw's (1989)

original vision – allowing the voices of marginalized groups to emerge from the intersectional blind spots. The introduction of intersectionality has also spurred methodological innovation. Crenshaw (1989) sharply criticized the "dominant effect worship" in quantitative research – calculating only the independent effects of race and gender would mask the "excessive oppression" faced by black women. She advocated for the use of methods that can capture interaction effects, such as regression models with interaction terms, or cross-category analysis (Bauer et al., 2021).

However, intersectionality faces the risk of being diluted in its dissemination. Davis (2008) pointed out that when this concept becomes an academic "buzzword", some studies simplify it to an "identity list", merely listing categories such as race, gender, and class, while neglecting inquiries into the power structure. Echeverria's (2025) field investigation provides a vivid case: Although a certain LGBTQ+ organization claimed to practice intersectionality, in its recruitment process, it gave priority to hiring white queer individuals, reducing "diversity" to a mere superficial decoration, completely deviating from the theory's pursuit of structural change.

Even so, the vitality of intersectionality lies in its openness. It not only provides tools for the study of black women, but has also been extended to analyze cross-pressures such as class, sexual orientation, and immigrant identity (Hopkins, 2019). In linguistic research, this theory enables researchers to pay attention to the "cross-encoding" of female metaphors in media. For example, the metaphorical representation of black women may simultaneously incorporate racialized "animalization" (dehumanize as animals) and genderized "objectification" (reduce to objects). This dual encoding can only be fully decoded through intersectionality (Haynes et al., 2020).

2.1.4 Cultural Dimensions Theory

Cultural Dimensions Theory explains the underlying values of national cultures through quantitative dimensions, providing a theoretical framework for analyzing the differences in the feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines.

Originally proposed by Geert Hofstede in 1980, Cultural Dimensions Theory was grounded in a large-scale empirical survey of employee values in multinational corporations. Cultural Dimensions Theory provided the first systematically measurable framework for analyzing cultural differences in cross-cultural research (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018). Between 1967 and 1973, Hofstede, using factor analysis, extracted four core cultural dimensions based on 116,000 employee attitude questionnaires from IBM covering 50 countries and three regions. The theory transforms "culture" from an abstract concept of "collective mental programming" into an operational, quantitative indicator (Fog, 2022). That is, the value differences between different cultures can be compared through specific numerical values of unified dimensions (such as the Power Distance Index, Individualism Index), rather than remaining at the level of vague qualitative description (Fog, 2022). This enables the comparison of value differences across cultures through a unified dimensionality.

There are six dimensions in Cultural Dimensions Theory, which are power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term/short-term orientation (also known as Confucian dynamism), and indulgence/restraint.

First, power distance, one of the core dimensions of Cultural Dimensions Theory, goes beyond simply describing unequal power distribution. Rather, it focuses on the acceptance and expectations of this inequality among disadvantaged members of society.

This dimension influences individuals' perceptions and expressions of gender power structures within a culture. Hofstede (1980) defines as the degree to which disadvantaged members of organizations and institutions accept the unequal distribution of power. In cultures with high power distance like China, members tend to accept hierarchical power structures. This is reflected in gender issues, where women are more accepting of traditional gender divisions of power (e.g., "men dominate the workplace, women dominate the home"). This perception may be expressed through metaphors such as "women are appendages of the family" and "women are helpers of men". In contrast, in cultures with low power distance like the United States, individuals' demands for equal power are more intense, and feminist metaphors are more likely to include expressions of resistance, such as "women are equal participants in power" and "women are breakers of gender barriers" (Hofstede, 2005). In contrasting the United States and China, as a low-power distance culture (power distance index 40), metaphors in the United States more directly highlight the demand for gender power equality. Whereas, as a high-power distance culture (power distance index 80), feminist metaphors in Chinese magazines may more implicitly reflect gender power coordination. (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Second, the individualism/collectivism dimension distinguishes the relationship between individuals and groups within a culture. This relationship directly shapes the core connotations of feminist metaphors: individualistic cultures tend to emphasize women's individual rights, while collectivist cultures emphasize coordination between women and groups (family, society). Hofstede (1980) noted that in individualistic cultures, "individuals only need to care for themselves and their immediate families", while in collectivist cultures, "individuals are integrated into the group from birth, offering loyalty in exchange for group protection". This difference impacts feminist metaphors: As a high-

individualism culture (individualism/collectivism index 91), the feminist metaphors in American magazines often center on “individual rights”, such as “women are independent warriors” and “women are self-actualizers”, emphasizing women’s individual aspirations to break free from group constraints. In contrast, as a low-individualism culture (individualism/collectivism index 20), metaphors in Chinese magazines focus more on the connection between women and groups, such as “women are the bond of the family” and “women are the guardians of the community”, tying women’s values to family and social stability (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). Although Triandis (1994) categorizes individualism/collectivism into “horizontal and vertical individualism”, Hofstede’s (1980) dimensions are more comparable across countries, providing a theoretical basis for the macro-level differences in feminist metaphors between the United States and China.

Third, the masculinity/femininity dimension in Cultural Dimensions Theory is most directly related to feminist research. Its core is not gender opposition, but rather the cultural prioritization of “success and competition” (masculine values) versus “care and quality of life” (feminine values). This prioritization determines the value orientation of feminist metaphors. Hofstede (1980) defines high- masculinity/femininity cultures as those that prize success, money, and material achievement, while low- masculinity/femininity cultures are those that value care for others and quality of life (Hofstede, 1980). In high-femininity cultures, feminist metaphors may tend to be “competitive”, such as in American magazines, where phrases like “women are career winners” and “women are challengers who break the glass ceiling” appear, equating female success with “winning in male-dominated fields”. In contrast, in high-masculinity cultures, metaphors tend to be more “careful”, such as in Chinese magazines, where phrases like “women are the protectors of the family” and “women are the bringers of warmth to the community” link female values

to “care” and “harmony” (Hofstede, 2001). Although the GLOBE project breaks down masculinity/femininity into “Assertiveness” and “Gender Egalitarianism”, Hofstede’s (1980) dimensions are more concise and suitable for initial theoretical framework development, providing clear dimensions for analyzing the value orientations of feminist metaphors (House et al., 2004).

Fourth, the uncertainty avoidance dimension focuses on a culture’s tolerance for ambiguity and unknown situations. This dimension indirectly influences the openness of feminist issues within a culture, thereby shaping the radicalism and reach of feminist conceptual metaphors. Hofstede (1980) defines uncertainty avoidance as “the threat perception and avoidance tendency of cultural members in ambiguous situations” (Hofstede et al., 2010). In cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, societies tend to avoid uncertainty through rules and traditions, are less accepting of non-traditional female roles (such as “single mother” and “female leader”), and may use more conservative feminist metaphors, such as “women are inheritors of tradition” and “women are rule-abiding”. In cultures with low uncertainty avoidance, societies are more tolerant of ambiguity, and feminist metaphors are more innovative and radical. For example, in American magazines, phrases such as “women are pioneers in breaking the rules” and “women are reconstructors of gender norms” may appear. The difference in uncertainty avoidance between the United States and China (uncertainty avoidance index for the United States is 46, while the Uncertainty Avoidance index for China is 60) may explain why feminist conceptual metaphors in Chinese magazines tend to favor “incremental change” while those in American magazines tend to favor “radical expression”.

Fifth, Cultural Dimensions Theory has been continuously refined through subsequent developments. Hofstede and Bond (1988) added the Confucian dynamism dimension to the Chinese values survey, focusing on the degree to which a culture values long-term planning and tradition. Long-term/short-term orientation is the fifth dimension. Long-term oriented culture emphasizes the continuity of tradition and the stability of the future. Short-term oriented cultures focus more on immediate needs and immediate change.

Sixth, the indulgence/restraint dimension was added in 2010, and focuses on the control of basic desires (Hofstede et al., 2010). High-indulgence culture allows individuals to express their desires and demands more freely than high-restraint system culture while the latter emphasizes the restraint of desires and the observance of social norms.

McSweeney (2002) criticized Hofstede's (1980) Cultural Dimensions Theory for ignoring cultural diversity within countries, and Jones (2007) also pointed out the industry limitations of its sample which is only IBM employees. Through a study of cross-cultural tourism behavior, Hsu et al. (2013) demonstrated that Hofstede's (1980) dimensions can effectively predict behavioral differences resulting from cultural differences. This logic also applies to the study of feminist conceptual metaphors: the dimensions provide theoretical explanations for the "why" of differences, while the corpus provides empirical evidence for the "how" of differences.

2.2 CMT

2.2.1 Principles to CMT

Before the proposal of CMT, metaphor was mainly understood as a kind of linguistic modification or figure of speech in the Aristotle tradition, mainly used for rhetorical or poetic functions (Martinengo, 2024). CMT was systematically proposed by

linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson in their groundbreaking work *Metaphors We Live By*, published in 1980. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that metaphor is essentially the primary mechanism of human thought and the basis for understanding abstract concepts and conducting daily reasoning. This view of elevating metaphor to the conceptual level, namely, "metaphor as thought", is the most primary insight of CMT (Hamidova, 2019). It assumes that our everyday conceptual system is essentially metaphorical (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

The key claim of CMT is that the essence of human thinking is largely metaphorical. When we understand and express those abstract concepts that are invisible, intangible and difficult to grasp directly (such as time, emotion, morality, thought, and social relations), we always rely on more concrete and easily perceived through physical senses, experience domains originated from the physical world (such as space, movement, body sensations, and object manipulation). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) describe this cognitive process as a systematic "cross-domain mapping" from a relatively concrete "source domain" to a relatively abstract "target domain". This mapping is not random or isolated, but systematic and structured. The internal structure of the source domain (including its elements, relationships, features and logic) is projected on a large scale and consistently onto the target domain, thereby shaping the way we understand and reason about this abstract concept.

For instance, the conceptual metaphor "time is money" that we encounter most frequently, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have analyzed in detail how it profoundly shapes our conceptualization of time. In this mapping, specific experiences related to money (the source domain), such as "saving", "wasting", "investing", "budgeting", "spending", "giving", "lending", "running out", and "preciousness", are systematically transferred to

time (the target domain). Thus, we naturally use expressions like “save time”, “waste time”, “invest time”, “time budget”, “spend time”, “give you some time”, “lend some time”, “time is running out”, and “time is precious”. This is not merely a linguistic habit. It reflects the way we cognize time, viewing it as a quantifiable, manageable, and even depletable resource like money. Similarly, the metaphor “Argument is War” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) maps concepts from war (such as attack, defend, counterattack, victory and defeat, strategy, and position) onto argument. As a result, we say “attack his argument”, “defend my position”, “refute the opponent”, “win the debate”, “debate strategy”, “give up a point”, which directly influences our cognitive framework of perceiving argument as an adversarial conflict.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) distinguished several major types of metaphors. Orientational metaphors utilize spatial orientations to organize conceptual systems, such as “happiness is up” (elevated mood), “sadness is down” (depressed mood), “consciousness is up” (awakening), and “unconsciousness is down” (falling ill). Ontological metaphors treat abstract concepts as discrete entities or substances for the purpose of reference, quantification, classification, and reasoning, such as “inflation as an entity”, “be in trouble”, and “be under pressure”. Architecture metaphors, as mentioned earlier, are the most abundant type, which systematically construct one concept (the target domain) by using a highly structured concept (the source domain), such as “Life is A Journey”, “Love is A Journey”, and “Theory is A Building”.

CMT holds that these metaphorical mappings are not isolated linguistic phenomena learned later in life, but rather stem from embodied bodily experiences that repeatedly occur in our interactions with the physical and social environment. These experiences form neural connections known as “primary metaphors” (Grady, 1997), such as “Important is

Big" (important matters feel like they take up more space), "Intimate is Close" based on the experience of having a small physical distance with someone close, and "Difficult is Heavy" based on the experience of struggling to move heavy objects. Multiple primary metaphors can be combined to form more complex compound metaphors, which jointly construct the understanding of complex and abstract concepts.

CMT has received extensive empirical support from multiple fields such as cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, neuroscience, and linguistics. For instance, the psycholinguistic research by Gibbs (2011) and others has demonstrated that when people understand and process metaphorical language, they do activate the conceptual knowledge of the source domain, and the speed and manner of processing metaphorical expressions support the existence of conceptual metaphors as cognitive structures. Meanwhile, experiments by Casasanto and Boroditsky (2008) have shown how bodily experiences such as left or right-handedness, physical cleanliness directly influence the cognition of abstract concepts such as value judgments, moral purity, highlighting the embodied basis of metaphor.

2.2.2 Main Criticisms of CMT

The criticisms of CMT mainly focus on aspects such as methodology, theoretical logic and the scope of interpretation.

The main criticism is its methodological issues. Critics point out that CMT's key claim like metaphor as thought, especially in its early development, relied too much on intuitive analyzes by researchers (Gibbs, 2011; Zhang, 2021). Specifically, in their foundational work, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) mainly relied on the researchers' introspection and intuition. By identifying systematic metaphorical expressions in

everyday language (such as “win/lose an argument”, “attack a position” related to “Argument is War”), they inferred the underlying conceptual metaphorical structure in reverse. This raises concerns about confirmation bias where researchers may tend to seek and interpret evidence that supports their preconceived conceptual metaphors such as “Argument is War” and “Time is Money”, while ignoring or downplaying language phenomena or counterexamples that do not conform to their assumptions (McGlone, 2007; Steen, 2007). For instance, researchers might focus on collecting expressions that align with the metaphor “Anger is Heated Fluid” (such as “boil with anger”), while neglecting other non-thermal expressions of anger (such as “cold fury”), thereby reinforcing the impression of the metaphor’s universality, but failing to fully reflect the actual complexity of language usage. It is precisely because of the ambiguity and difficulty in application of these identification criteria that in metaphor elicitation studies (such as requiring participants to complete the “X is Y” format), a high proportion of invalid responses (such as no answer, non-metaphorical, and uncategorizable) often occur. This reflects the limitations of task design (such as out-of-context researcher-constructed prompts) and biases in participants’ comprehension (Eren & Tekinarslan, 2012; Wan et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the fuzziness, indeterminacy and contextual dependence of metaphor recognition constitute a continuous challenge (Low & Todd, 2010; Zhang, 2021), which has already been reflected in the aforementioned issues of recognition criteria and the difficulties of eliciting tasks. For instance, the same word (such as “grasp”) may be interpreted as its literal meaning or metaphorical meaning (understanding ideas or grasping objects) in different contexts, and the criteria for judgment may vary from person to person or be difficult to clearly define.

Besides, critics (Gibbs, 2011; McGlone, 2007) question the logical basis of CMT which appears to be cyclical. They question the use of language evidence such as the systematization of conventional expressions to infer the existence of cognitive structures (conceptual metaphors), and then uses these inferred cognitive structures to explain language phenomena such as why there are these systematic expressions. The existence of conceptual metaphor is only proved by the language pattern it attempts to explain. Although scholars such as Gibbs (2011) have endeavored to break this cycle by introducing non-verbal evidence such as psychological and behavioral experiments, methodological challenges have made it difficult to completely avoid the suspicion of circular argumentation. Taking "Anger is Heated Fluid" as an example, the theoretical cycle is that researchers first observe the systematicity of expressions such as "boil with anger", "simmer down", and "let off steam", and then infer the existence of a conceptual metaphor "Anger is Heated Fluid in A Container". They then use this conceptual metaphor to explain the existence and understandability of these expressions. The evidence for its existence is consistent with the phenomena being explained. Gibbs (2011) argues that only when evidence from different methods such as psycholinguistic experiments, gesture analysis, cross-modal priming converges and independently supports the psychological reality of conceptual metaphor can the criticism of circular reasoning be effectively weakened.

The second criticism that the development of foundational image schemas like "container" and "path" is not as direct, universal, or innate as proposed, but is more complex, potentially lagging, and influenced by developmental sequence and cultural environment. One of the propositions of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is that conceptual metaphors are rooted in embodied experience. They argue that imagery schemas such as

"container" directly stem from the interaction between the infant and the physical world such as the body as a container, entering and exiting the container. Some criticisms point out that the development of some image schemas like "containers", which are considered innate or directly based on physical experience, may be more complex or lagging than theoretical assumptions and are not always "directly emergent" (Rakova, 2002). For instance, children's complete understanding and application of container schemas may occur later than some more basic spatial relationship cognition. This study has implications for the research on feminist metaphors based on CMT. If the development of main schemas like "container" (often used as a metaphor for constraints, such as "breaking the cage") and "path" is not as direct and universal as the theoretical presuppositions suggest, but is influenced by factors such as the development sequence and cultural environment, then when analyzing feminist conceptual metaphors such as "Freedom is Escaping from A Container/Moving Along A Path Cross-cultural Corpora", it is necessary to interpret their cognitive universality and cultural particularity more carefully. In different cultural contexts, the ways in which these schemas are activated, combined, and used to understand the concept of gender may have significant differences, and cannot be simply attributed to the universal embodied basis (Lin, 2024).

The third criticism of CMT is its overemphasis on universal embodied experience at the expense of socio-cultural factors. Critics argue that many metaphors derive their meaning and persuasive power from culturally specific knowledge, narratives, and strategic communication purposes, rather than solely universal physical experiences, challenging CMT's claims of universality and unconscious operation. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) acknowledged the role of culture in shaping specific metaphorical expressions. However, the focus of their theoretical framework was to reveal the universal cognitive

basis of metaphorical concepts (i.e., embodied experience), relatively weakening the independent and crucial role of social cultural factors in the generation, selection, and understanding of metaphors. They tended to view cultural differences as different "realizations" of the universal cognitive structure. Critics argue that many source concepts, such as "Frankenstein", "Garden", and "Symphony" are themselves culturally shaped stereotypes. Belonging to intertextual metaphors, their meanings and power stem from specific cultural knowledge and narrative traditions, rather than merely universal physical experiences (Bateman, 2023). In discourse, metaphor is a dynamic communication tool that is often strategically selected, reformulated and even contested by the speaker. For the purpose of serving specific social, political or ideological purposes, its use is not completely unconscious or driven only by conceptual structure (Samuels, 2021). CMT's claim of universality is also challenged by significant variations between different cultures like different conceptualizations of "love" and individuals. More empirical support is needed to verify its cross-cultural cognitive mechanism (Lin, 2024).

The fourth criticism of CMT is its over-reliance on static, conventional metaphor structures, which fails to adequately account for the dynamic construction, extension, and real-time negotiation of metaphors in actual discourse. This static model struggles to reconcile its claim of "fixed correspondences" with the observable "open-ended" creativity in novel and context-specific metaphorical expressions, such as "cold fury" challenging the conventional "Anger is Heat" mapping. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) mainly focused on the already standardized and systematic conceptual metaphor structures in language, regarding them as relatively stable and fixed cognitive patterns, and using them to explain the regularity of language. However, their model pays insufficient attention to the dynamic construction, negotiation and change process of metaphors in real-time discourse

interaction, as well as the online understanding mechanism of novel metaphors. It is difficult to fully explain its dynamic usage in real-time language processing and real discourse (El Refaie, 2019). When dealing with novel metaphors, there is tension within the theory. On the one hand, it emphasizes that the mapping is a “fixed correspondences”, while on the other hand, it acknowledges its “open-ended class”. It is difficult to reconcile the two (Tay, 2022). The example of “Anger is Heated Fluid” can illustrate the tension between this static view and the dynamic nature of the concept. This metaphorically describes a set of relatively fixed correspondences between the source domain (the heated fluid) and the target domain (anger) such as heat corresponding to the intensity of anger, container pressure corresponding to emotional repression, explosion corresponding to emotional outburst. However, in actual language usage, speakers usually dynamically expand, mix or challenge these mappings. For instance, the term “cold fury” challenges the fixed mapping that “Anger is Necessarily Related to Heat”, introducing the complexity of the temperature dimension. Another example is the expression “His anger is like a pressure cooker, but the safety valve is welded shut”. While using the core mapping, it dynamically constructs a more specific and urgent scenario through details (the welded shut safety valve), going beyond the simple list of “fixed correspondences” and reflecting the “open extension” characteristic of the mapping. The traditional CMT model struggles to explain this dynamic process that is both based on conventional structures and real-time innovation.

2.2.3 Strengths of CMT

Although CMT faced the aforementioned criticisms, it remains an applicable primary theoretical framework that is used in many studies from the time of its first formulation by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). CMT reveals that the human conceptual system is largely metaphorically constructed. This construction occurs through a process

called cross-domain mapping, where structures from a relatively specific and familiar source domain structures such as “journey”, “war”, “container”, and “up-down” spatial orientation to the relatively abstract and unfamiliar target domain such as “life”, “argument”, “emotions”, and “social status” to understand the latter (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1993; Lin, 2024). This mapping mechanism explains the systematic patterns of numerous conventional expressions observed in the language. For example, regarding the expression of a romantic relationship such as “We’re headed somewhere”, “Our relationship hit a dead end” or “We went our separate “ways” is not an arbitrary idiom but reflects the systematic correspondences inspired by the conceptual metaphor “Love is A Journey”. In this metaphor, the entities and events in the domain of journey are mapped to those in the domain of “love”. It shows the fundamentality and systematicness of metaphorical thinking (Hamidova, 2019). “Metaphor as thought” is the most key proposition of CMT. It means that metaphor is not only a rhetorical decoration in language, but also the fundamental way for our conceptual system to operate. It profoundly shapes the patterns in which we understand the world, reason and take actions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) emphasized that “the conceptual system of our daily life, the system on which we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (p. 3). This means that metaphor is inherent in our cognitive processes themselves, rather than merely an external tool for expressing these processes. Many abstract concepts like time, emotion, morality, and thought themselves lack a direct and independent structure. We understand them by systematically conceptually conceptualizing them into more concrete domains, usually based on physical experience like spatial movement, physical force, container, and journey (Gibbs, 2011). This conceptualization process mostly occurs at the cognitive unconscious level, and we are usually not aware of the role these metaphorical structures

play in shaping our perception, judgment and behavior (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Therefore, systematic metaphorical expressions observed in language, such as the example of "Love is A Journey" mentioned above, are regarded as manifestations of deep conceptual metaphorical structures at the linguistic level (manifestation), rather than accidental characteristics of language. This view completely overturns the traditional notion that metaphor is regarded as an appendage of language or the exclusive skill of poets, and establishes its main position in human cognition (Gibbs, 2011; Hamidova, 2019).

Closely linked to "metaphor as thinking" is CMT's profound emphasis on embodied cognition. Embodied cognition refers to the theory that the cognitive process is rooted in the interaction between the body and its physical and social environment. CMT posits that the choice of source domains for metaphorical mapping is not arbitrary but deeply rooted in the body experience of human interaction with the physical and social environment (embodied experience). For example, orientational metaphors such as "Happy is Up" / "Sad is Down" "More is Up" / "Less is Down", which are considered to originate from the basic physical experiences of humans in a gravitational environment (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999). In this environment, physical increase is often associated with positive states (health, control) and abundance, while physical decrease is associated with negative states (disease, failure) and scarcity (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999). These body-based image schemas, such as "container", "path", and "force", provide a physical basis for abstract thinking and endow CMT with strong cross-cultural interpretive potential because many body experiences are regarded as universally shared (Mittelberg, 2018). This perspective rooted in potentially universal physical experiences provides significant cross-cultural interpretive potential for CMT, as many fundamental physical experiences of interacting with the world are shared in human culture (Gibbs, 2011; Kövecses, 2005).

This embodied perspective of CMT, which transforms bodily experiences into conceptual structures (such as “Container” → “Social Boundaries”) through image schemas and maps them into systematic language expressions (such as “break through the circle”), while language usage feeds back into cognitive simulation (Gibbs, 2011; Lakoff, 1987), is one of its most attractive and explanatory aspects (Gibbs, 2011; Zhang, 2021). Other appealing aspects include its systematicity in explaining language patterns and its ability to link language analysis with cognitive processes.

The success of CMT also lies in its strong explanatory power and the ability to generate empirical research. It explains the creation and understanding mechanisms of novel metaphors such as creative instantiation as a conventional mapping (Gibbs, 2011). More importantly, it has given rise to a vast amount of empirical research that spans multiple fields. In linguistics, corpus studies systematically identify cross-language and genre-specific metaphorical patterns (Deignan, 2006; Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2003). Psycholinguistics explores the role of conceptual metaphors in online language processing, comprehension, and memory (Gibbs, 2011; Thibodeau & Durgin, 2008). Neuroscience investigates the potential neural correlates of metaphor processing (Gallese & Lakoff, 2005). Educational research examines how metaphors shape teaching, learning, and conceptual understanding (Wan et al., 2011). Cultural studies analyze the variations and universality of metaphorical conceptualization across different societies (Kövecses, 2005). These studies not only provide support from the perspective of language analysis like cross-language systematic metaphorical models (Gibbs, 2011), has also gradually delved into non-verbal fields, such as gesture, mental imagery, spatiotemporal cognition like the “Time is Space” metaphor, social judgment such as “Good is Up”/“Bad is Down” impact assessment. Overall, this expanding interdisciplinary body of evidence provides

increasingly strong support for the key claim of CMT, that metaphor is the fundamental structure of human thinking, shaping both linguistic and non-linguistic cognition (Gibbs, 2011; Hendricks et al., 2017).

A large number of empirical studies published after 2020 continue to use CMT as their core analytical tool, demonstrating its continued applicability and explanatory power. For instance, Amaireh (2022) combined critical metaphor analysis and CMT to study the metaphorical persuasive strategies in COVID-19 news reports. Ding (2021) used CMT to analyze the metaphorical expressions of "wind" in the corpora of Chinese and English learners and native speakers and their cultural cognition. Li (2021) based on CMT analyzed the translation strategies and effects of taste metaphors in *The Fortress*. Yang (2023) and Jing (2023) used the CMT framework to respectively examine the cognitive features and social effects of war metaphors in official news and diplomatic rhetoric. Lahlou and Rahim (2022) used CMT to analyze the conceptual metaphors in COVID-19 discourse in the North African French-speaking region. Xu (2023) used CMT combined with critical metaphor analysis to compare the cognitive differences of COVID-19 metaphors in Chinese and English social media. Zhang (2021) even used the complex adaptive system theory and CMT to explore the synchronic patterns and diachronic evolution of the "heart" metaphor in English and Chinese. These latest studies across different contexts (media, diplomacy, social media, literary translation, cross-cultural comparison, diachronic research) have successfully applied the core concepts of CMT (such as systematic mapping, conceptual domain, and experiential basis) to analyze the conceptual structure behind language phenomena, fully demonstrating the indispensability of CMT as a fundamental analytical framework in the present era (Romero-Trillo & Rozina, 2023).

Kövecses (2017) criticized the original CMT, arguing that it overly emphasized the universality and static nature of metaphors, while neglecting the diversity of context and cognitive levels. Kövecses (2017) pointed out that the traditional CMT mainly focused on the conceptual structure of metaphors, but failed to adequately explain the variations, activation mechanisms, and individual and cultural differences of metaphors in different context. Therefore, Kövecses (2017) proposed the Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor, introducing a multi-level structure and contextual factors, emphasizing that the generation of metaphorical meanings not only depends on the conceptual structure, but is also influenced by context, cognitive levels, and ontological levels. Kövecses (2017) believes that only by incorporating these dynamic and multi-dimensional factors can the flexibility and creativity of metaphors be better explained, especially in the understanding of emotional metaphors.

However, many scholars still support the original CMT, believing that its viewpoint, i.e. metaphor is the fundamental mechanism of human thinking and language, has broad explanatory power and theoretical simplicity. Critics point out that although Kövecses' (2020) Extended Theory is more complex, it may lead to the theory becoming overly cumbersome and losing the universality and operability of CMT (Almasharfeh, 2024). Additionally, the original CMT still demonstrates strong explanatory power in cross-linguistic and cross-cultural metaphor studies (Winter et al., 2015). Many researchers believe that the universality and fundamentality of metaphor should not be overly contextualized or fragmented (Mladovsky, 2020). Therefore, although Kövecses' (2020) Extended Theory brings new perspectives to metaphor research, many scholars still prefer to adopt the original CMT as the theoretical basis. Choosing CMT enables a clear examination of the fundamental proposition whether conceptual metaphors are indeed

grounded in universal bodily experiences, as Lakoff and Johnson argued in 1980 (Gibbs, 2011). Taking all these factors into consideration, in the present study, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT is used as a theoretical framework and recent studies have shown that it is still applicable and useful.

2.2.4 Collostructional Analysis for Identifying the Collocates

Collostructional Analysis serves as a critical quantitative instrument within the CMT framework, operationalizing how conceptual metaphors become grammatically entrenched through statistically significant lexico-constructional associations. Collostructional Analysis is rooted in constructive grammar and regards the grammatical constructive itself as the unit that carries meaning. Its semantic potential is manifested through the words (collocates) that frequently coexist with it (Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2003). Collostructional Analysis proposed by Stefanowitsch and Gries (2003) is a corpus quantification method based on constructional grammar theory, aiming to reveal the dynamic correlation between vocabulary and grammatical constructions through statistical means. This method addresses the limitations of traditional collocation analysis, regards construction as an independent meaning unit, and emphasizes the contribution of its co-occurrence relationship with vocabulary to semantic activation.

The assumption is that the semantic potential of a construction can be characterized by the distribution of its collexemes, while the collostruction strength quantifies the attraction or repulsion between the term and the construction. When a specific word (such as a verb expressing giving or passing) shows statistically significant attractiveness (high MI-Score) in a certain grammatical structure (such as the ditransitive structure "SVOO"), this usually reveals a strong association between the structure and a specific semantic

framework like ownership transfer. This association is often the solidified manifestation of conceptual metaphors like “Ideas Are Objects/Possessions” in the surface structure of language. By calculating the highly attractive collocates (high MI-Score) in the verb positions of specific metaphorical related constructs such as structures expressing control, oppression, empowerment, the lexical-grammar co-selection patterns that embody specific conceptual metaphors related to feminism such as “Women Are Objects”/“Women Are Agents” can be captured, thereby laying an objective corpus foundation for subsequent metaphor recognition and cross-cultural comparison.

In particular, the method takes a specific construction such as dual tonome “SVOO” as the starting point, searches the high frequency co-occurrence of lexical items in its grammatical slots such as verb slots through the corpus, and calculates its statistical significance. For example, when analyzing English ditransitive constructions, the verbs “give” and “tell” are identified as highly attractive collexemes because of their high frequency co-occurrence and unique distribution, while low-frequency words such as “allocate” may be excluded by chance. This analysis avoids the misjudgment caused by the deviation of the overall frequency of terms in the traditional method, and at the same time does not rely on the normal distribution hypothesis, which enhances the reliability of the results.

Compared with traditional collocation analysis, collocation structure analysis pays more attention to the interaction between the hierarchy of grammatical structure and semantic framework. For example, the verb slot collexemes (as in “acknowledge” or “express”) in the construction “VP sb’s anger” activates the specific semantic framework (as in “ownership”) of A metaphor, “Anger is A Possession” (Li, 2020). Then it reveals the

structured knowledge of metaphor concept. This method realizes automatic calculation, improves the accuracy of cross-language comparison and culture-specific research, and becomes an important methodological innovation in cognitive linguistics and corpus research. Its focus on the interaction between the constructional semantic framework and lexical semantics makes it a tool for exploring how conceptual metaphors are realized and solidified at the grammatical level (Stefanowitsch, 2003), especially for cross-cultural metaphor comparisons based on large-scale corpora like this study.

2.2.5 MIP for Identifying the Conceptual Metaphors

MIP is a foundational methodological tool within the CMT framework, serving to bridge the theoretical premise of conceptual metaphors (mapping from concrete source domains to abstract target domains) with empirical analysis by systematically identifying metaphorical language expressions. This operationalized protocol, through its meaning contrast procedure, addresses the critical need to ground conceptual metaphor analysis in tangible linguistic evidence. Without such a systematic identification method, the detection of metaphorical mappings would risk subjectivity and inconsistency. MIP occupies a central position in the empirical research of CMT. MIP proposed by Pragglejaz Group (2007) is a method to systematically identify metaphorical words in texts, which is used in language and interdisciplinary research such as feminist discourse analysis. The method defines metaphor through four steps. Firstly, the text is to read through to grasp the overall meaning. Secondly, all lexical units are segmented and labeled. Each word is then examined one by one to see if it has a basic meaning that is more concreteness, perceptual imagery, bodily actions, precision, or historical priority out of context. Finally, if there is a significant contrast between the contextual meaning and the basic meaning, the word is judged to be a metaphor.

Researchers using MIP identify metaphors by comparing the "basic meaning" and "contextual meaning" of words, avoiding subjective assumptions. For example, the verb "grasp" in "grasp an idea" has its basic meaning "to grasp with the hand" in contrast to the abstract context and is thus marked as a metaphor. MIP occupies a central position in the empirical research of CMT. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) emphasized that the essence of metaphor is to understand another abstract experience domain (target domain) through a specific experience domain (source domain). The operational definition of MIP reflects this main idea, that is, to capture the metaphorical mapping in language by identifying the phenomenon where words deviate from their specific and physical experiential "basic meanings" in a particular context and point to abstract concepts. Due to its standardization and repeatability, this method has become a benchmark tool for metaphorical empirical research, especially in the analysis of cross-cultural and social issues (Ahmed, 2018). Its rigor provides methodological support for the quantitative and qualitative study of metaphor. In this study, MIP is the main program for identifying specific metaphorical lexical units. MIP is systematic and uses a dictionary-based "basic meaning" determination criteria, thereby guaranteeing the validity of subsequent cross-cultural comparisons (Steen et al., 2010). According to the MIP steps, the metaphorical words in the corpus that reflect the relevant concepts of feminism such as power, body, struggle, and achievement will be labeled one by one, providing a language evidence basis for analyzing the similarities and differences of conceptual metaphors related to feminism in different cultures.

2.2.6 Studies on Feminist Metaphors

This section describes the functional analysis of metaphor in social and political contexts, as well as the deconstruction and reconstruction of specific metaphorical patterns.

After the critical examination of the basic theories, the positive political functions of metaphor gradually came into the focus of research. Metaphor possesses an inherent subversive power within the patriarchal and phallocratic systems and is a crucial tool that feminists can utilize. Janusz (1994) examined the complex and contradictory position of metaphor in feminist discourse, where it is both regarded as a threat due to its historical use in demeaning women and as a potential empowering tool. The aim was to demonstrate that metaphor fundamentally subverts phallocratic reality and to prove its effectiveness as a feminist political tool. A method combining theoretical criticism and textual close reading was employed, with the corpus consisting of poetry and prose works by Adrienne Rich (*On Lies, Secrets, and Silence, Time's Power, An Atlas of the Difficult World*) and Audre Lorde (*Chosen Poems, Sister Outsider, Our Dead Behind Us*). The analytical framework was rooted in the historical review of phallocratic epistemology emphasizing logic, rationality, and categorization from Aristotle's categories and doctrine of separate substance to 17th-century Hobbes and Locke's derogation of metaphor as "ornamental" and "deceitful" and its association with femininity and Paul Ricoeur's metaphor theory emphasizing the violation of established classification orders by metaphor. Janusz (1994) traced how metaphor was historically equated with femininity, emotion, and irrationality and marginalized, forming the basis of feminists' concerns.

The subversive nature of metaphor within the phallocratic system, and its capacity to challenge dominant realities by dismantling rigid logical categories that uphold the status quo, has been illuminated by Janusz (1994). Rich's poetic practice such as in *Eastern War Time* where through "I am a canal" and "I am a mass grave". The series of metaphors deconstruct Aristotle's separate substance and establish connections based on empathy. In *Solfeggietto*, the "black and white" metaphor is used to criticize the binary

opposition thinking, effectively demonstrating how metaphors can be used to expose the oppressive structure of phallocratic reality and envision alternative, more inclusive worldviews. Lorde's poetry such as the challenge to the definition of "reason" in *On a Night of the Full Moon*, and the public declaration of existence as "contradiction" in *Outlines* directly confronts the phallocratic logic that lesbians are "logically impossible" using metaphors. Through this, Janusz (1994) highlighted the power of metaphors in naming and confirming marginalized experiences and undermining orthodox epistemology. Ultimately, the core of the problem lies not in metaphors themselves, but in the intentions (intent or motive) of the users (Janusz, 1994). Metaphors are like hammers, capable of both harming and building. Therefore, feminists should not be afraid of metaphors but should actively utilize their subversive potential.

Janusz (1994) emphasized the disruptive political function of metaphor, and the crucial role of intention. His detailed interpretation of how Rich and Lorde challenged the dominant discourse through specific metaphorical practices has laid an important analytical foundation for examining how conceptual metaphors related to feminism are strategically constructed and deployed in different cultural contexts to achieve social criticism and ideological reconstruction. His view on metaphor as an ideological struggle tool directly inspired the exploration of the comparative research path on how metaphor serves feminist discourse empowerment in different social and cultural backgrounds.

When the research focused on describing the specific metaphors of the feminist movement, the limitations of the wave metaphor became the focus of discussion. Its simplified framework fails to capture the complexity and discontinuity of gender activism. The utility and flaws of the wave metaphor, such as the first wave, the second wave, the third wave, in the feminist self-understanding were examined by Nicholson (2015), aiming

to criticize the historical misleading nature of this metaphor and its hindrance to understanding the current state of feminism in the United States. Nicholson (2015) conducted historical analysis and theoretical criticism methods, with the corpus covering the suffrage movement in the 19th century, feminist activities in the early 20th century such as the National Women's Party's pursuit of the Equal Rights Amendment, the changes in gender norms between the 1920s and 1960s such as married women entering the paid labor force, feminist movements from the 1960s to the 1980s such as liberal feminism, radical feminism, socialist feminism, and developments after the 1990s such as institutionalization as seen in Women's Studies and Emily's List. The analytical framework focused on how this metaphor obscures historical specificity that suffragists in the 19th century were not necessarily feminists and the diversity within the movements.

The wave metaphor has become invalid (Nicholson, 2015). It wrongly implies linear continuity and homogeneity of goals, obscuring key historical differences such as the goals of the 19th-century suffrage movement and the "women's equality" concept of 20th-century feminism are not equivalent. The wave metaphor is unable to explain the contradictory state of contemporary feminism, in some areas. An alternative "kaleidoscope" metaphor was proposed by Nicholson (2015), emphasizing that gender activism presents dynamic, multi-focus, and asynchronous pattern changes like a kaleidoscope, with certain elements standing out while others fading away, which is more in line with the actual trajectory of the movement. Nicholson (2015) emphasized that the survival and influence of feminism depend on its resonance with the public's "felt needs" such as liberal feminism's response to the needs of working women, which has led to its continuous prosperity, rather than the more abstract "wave" replacement.

The limitations of the wave metaphor in masking complexity and imposing false continuity have been highlighted in recent scholarship, which warns researchers to carefully examine the potentially simplified narratives implied by dominant feminist metaphors such as “wave”, “journey”, and “battle” in cross-cultural contexts (Nicholson, 2015). Nicholson’s (2015) “kaleidoscope” alternative model further inspires researchers to focus on how American and Chinese magazines use diverse, non-linear spatial metaphors to construct feminist discourse, and how specific metaphor choices reflect or shape differences in understanding of the driving forces of social change and the essence of the feminist movement.

To overcome the shortcomings of the wave metaphor, scholars began to explore more realistic alternative models. The traditional wave metaphor (ocean waves) used to depict the history of feminism in the United States has created harmful simplifications and generational divisions. Hewitt (2012) criticized the limitations of the dominant wave model (the first wave, second wave, third wave), aiming to demonstrate that it distorts the complexity of history by obscuring the diversity within the movement, the temporal overlap, the breadth of issues, and the cross-generational connections. An alternative “radio waves” metaphor framework was proposed by Hewitt (2012) to more accurately capture the rich picture of feminist activism. Hewitt (2012) employed historical criticism and conceptual modeling methods, with the data sourced from detailed feminist historiography such as studies of 19th-century activists, *Sara Evans’ Tidal Wave*, and third wave collections such as *The Fire This Time* and specific historical cases focusing on the interracial and cross-issue “short wave” network formed by Lucretia Mott, Frederick Douglass, Amy Post, Sojourner Truth, etc. and its dissemination nodes such as the North Star newspaper from the 1820s to the 1870s. The analytical framework systematically

dismantled the three major flaws of the ocean wave model: creating historical “fault lines” like the period from 1920 to 1960 being regarded as a blank, narrowing issues like The first wave being simplified to suffrage, and reinforcing the generational “replacing” narrative (each wave overwhelming the preceding wave).

The achievement of Hewitt (2012) is providing a detailed argument on the superiority of the radio wave metaphor. First, it allows multiple “frequencies” such as “short waves” and “long waves” to coexist and overlap. For example, the “short wave” movement focusing on “universal human rights” and the “long wave” movement focusing on “voting rights” coexisted in the 19th century. Second, Hewitt (2012) acknowledges that social movements are ongoing, even if they are not actively noticed by people because their signals are always “in the air”. Third, the radio wave metaphor can well reflect power differences, that is, different “wattages” and “geographical reach” represent different levels of influence. Fourth, it can explain the interference factors encountered in the movement, such as “static interference” and “signal jamming”. Taking the radical “short wave” of the 19th century as an example, the high-frequency characteristic of radio waves is manifested in cross-border connections (Britain, France, Canada, Mexico), cross-issue coordination (abolitionism, labor rights, religious freedom, women’s rights), cross-racial cooperation (white Quakers, free blacks), and innovative communication methods (newspapers, lecture tours, spiritualist “receiving” signals). The radio wave model avoids the issue of generational superiority and inferiority (Hewitt, 2012). Instead the radio wave model allows scholars to “tune in” to voices that are submerged by mainstream narratives. Ultimately, the radio wave framework aims to generate a richer and less distorted feminist historical understanding, countering the deeply rooted ocean wave narrative.

The limitations of the traditional wave metaphor in feminist theory include oversimplification, linearization, and the creation of generational opposition (Hewitt, 2012). Hewitt's (2012) criticism reminds researchers that in a cross-cultural context, those dominant feminist metaphors may also contain similar (simplification, linearization, generational opposition) problems. Therefore, researchers need to examine these issues. His radio wave model emphasizes the coexistence of multiple frequencies, signal propagation, power differences, and interference mechanisms, offers an extremely enlightening analytical framework for analyzing the diversity, communicative power, interaction relationships, such as the "frequency competition" between mainstream and marginal discourse as well as their historical continuity and cultural adaptability. This model is suitable for exploring how metaphors construct the complexity of movements, cross-generational connections, and power dynamics.

Wave metaphors not only influence the perception of the history of movements, but also affects the construction of the identity of feminists. Reger (2016) examined how the wave metaphor, as a discursive legacy, shaped the identity and historical positioning of contemporary American feminists, despite the metaphor being criticized by the academic community for simplifying history and ignoring marginalized groups. A qualitative approach was employed to conduct semi-structured interviews with 40 young activists with an average age of 22 who identified themselves as feminists from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, covering three communities on the East Coast, Midwest, and Northwest denoted as Evers, Woodview, and Green City (Reger, 2016). The sample was recruited through snowball sampling from personal networks, and the analysis of the corpus focused on the respondents' contradictory use of the wave metaphor. The theoretical framework

combined Clare Hemmings' narrative political critique and Patrick Coy et al.'s concept of discursive legacy.

Three contradictions was identified by Reger (2016). Firstly, although the wave metaphor has been criticized as historically reductionist, such as erasing the contributions of women of color, it remains the main discourse tool for feminists to position themselves. Respondents used the disidentification strategy to define the "third wave" as a correction to the "second wave" (such as emphasizing inclusivity and cultural activism). Secondly, the presentist teaching in Women's and Gender Studies classrooms reinforces historical simplification, leading contemporary feminists to view the past as issues that need to be "corrected" rather than a continuous spectrum. Finally, metaphors give rise to ambivalent identities. Respondents used water-like words like "floating" and "seeping" to describe the loose movement state, but questioned the existence of the movement due to the lack of a unified push, falling into a self-denying cycle of "measuring by historical yardstick".

Reger's (2016) findings have dual implications for the feminist conceptual metaphor research. On the one hand, they reveal how the wave metaphor continues to influence the discourse of the movement through the discursive legacy mechanism, warning of the need to distinguish similar dominant metaphors (such as "Iron Lady") in cross-cultural comparisons. It is necessary to be vigilant against the structural inequalities replicated when metaphors simplify history.

From a philosophical perspective, metaphor demonstrates a cognitive function in understanding the female body experience and the mechanism of oppression. Feminist philosophy strategically deploys metaphor to articulate complex gender experiences and critique patriarchal structures. Mishra (2023) focuses on the cognitive function of metaphor in feminist philosophy The two metaphors, namely, the menstrual closet of Iris Marion

Young and the envelope of Luce Irigaray, were systematically analyzed. The epistemological significance of metaphor beyond rhetorical adornment in philosophical discourse has been demonstrated through its ability to provide epistemic access to female physical experiences such as menstrual taboos and maternal divination (Mishra, 2023) Mishra (2023) adopted the methods of philosophical analysis and close reading of original texts such as Young's *Throwing Like a Girl* and Irigaray's *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*. In particular, the application of Black's substitution, comparison, and interaction models, Kittay's epistemological model, and Ricoeur's multi-level metaphor theory was central to this analysis as demonstrated by Mishra (2023).

The two metaphors jointly point to the "veiling" motif, concretizing the control of women's bodies by patriarchy (Mishra, 2023). Young's menstrual closet reveals the social mechanism by which menstruation is constructed as a shameful/disgusting event and forced to be concealed. The metaphor menstrual closet associates the concept of menstrual taboos with that of spiritual pollution, portraying muted femininity and diminished lived experience of women. Irigaray's envelope metaphor criticizes the forced separation of women from the womb (as the first home). Irigaray exposed how male imaginary reduces women to commodity (splitting into the matrile-body and impenetrable envelope). Both achieve triple cognitive functions through epistemological engagement: Concept concretization (Abstract oppression → Concrete spatial metaphor), reflection on consciousness triggering (reveal the operational logic of the male-dominated order), and exposure of oppressive mechanisms such as social discipline of menstrual etiquette and maternal dispossessions. Mishra's (2023) study emphasizes metaphor as a revelatory mechanism to provide immediate learning and promote the re-conceptualization of female socio-ontological status.

Based on Mishra (2023), analytical frameworks of body-space metaphors such as menstrual closet and envelope can be used to decode similar gender-based control metaphors in magazine texts such as beauty standards as artificial envelope, career barriers as closet. Its epistemic access model inspires researchers to pay attention to how metaphors guide readers to concretize abstract oppression, which is crucial for analyzing the cognitive differences of readers towards metaphors in cross-cultural contexts.

Returning to the context of everyday language, the encoding and reinforcement mechanisms of gender through metaphor have become an important target of gender criticism. Metaphor and metonymy are the key rhetorical mechanisms for constructing gender in language, and their operation often encodes and reinforces patriarchal ideology. Montashery (2013) studied how metaphor and metonymy covertly construct gendered meanings in language, particularly how terms related to women are given specific and identifiable connotations, thereby serving the reproduction of sexism. The research is based on the critical linguistic analysis framework, combined with feminist theory (Cameron, 1990; Mill, 1869) and CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), by analyzing naming and representation strategies in everyday language examples like nicknames, advertisements, literary texts, to dissect how these figurative structures participate in the construction of gendered identities and social relations.

Montashery (2013) demonstrates two main mechanisms. The metaphor level, where women are often placed in concept domains such as “food” (honey, sugar, cupcake, pancake), “flowers” (flower, rose, peach, cherry), “pet/toy” (kitten, chick, pet, doll), or “angel”. These nicknames are non-arbitrary and essentially construct women as consumed (devoured) objects, aesthetically appreciated objects, or objects lacking agency. Their

presupposition is women's vulnerability. When women deviate from male expectations, derogatory metaphors such as "bitch" are applied. These metaphors, as "systems of belief", reproduce patriarchal culture and deny women's agency and identity. The metonymy level focuses on the fragmentation of women's bodies like lips, hips, breasts in advertisements, indicating that this is the application of synecdoche (part representing the whole), simplifying women to body parts like "skirt for woman"), resulting in the depersonalization, objectification, and reduction of the body to its parts (Mill, 1869), and making women's experiences "omitted from the text", serving the "male gaze". These strategies collectively constitute "metonymizing and fragmenting the female body". The resistance of feminists to this is also pointed out, such as advocating "ecriture feminine" to regain body subjectivity and language agency, echoing Foucault's (1978) "where there is power, there is resistance". A detailed dissection of how metaphors and metonymies systematically encode sexist ideology, revealing the core roles of specific concept domains like "food", "pet" and "strategies like fragmentation in constructing patriarchal metaphors" (Montashery, 2013).

The emphasis on language as the "carrier of ideas" and metaphors as "systems of belief" strengthens the explanatory power of metaphor analysis in decoding the deep gender ideology in magazine texts. Feminist resistance also provides a reference dimension for observing the confrontational metaphor practices (Montashery, 2013).

In the field of science, the alternative to the traditional masculine metaphor has provided a new practical direction for feminist metaphor research. Quilting, as a feminist metaphor, challenges the aggressive masculine metaphors such as exploring, hunting, penetrating, conquering that have long dominated the field of scientific inquiry. Flannery

(2001) aims to demonstrate the potential of quilting as an alternative metaphor, exploring how it can restructure the understanding of scientific inquiry to promote a more inclusive and connected view of science. Flannery's (2001) study is based on the author's dual participant-observer identity as a biologist and quilter, combining Black's view of metaphor and Lakoff and Johnson's CMT. It compares the similarities between scientific inquiry and quilting in terms of process (bricolage, tacit knowledge, trial and error, tedious work, silence, tactile engagement), communal activities (collaboration, reworking past theories/quilts), and product (published research as a quilt; science as an AIDS quilt), analyzing the entailments of this metaphor and its potential reshaping of scientific cognition.

The quilting metaphor contains significant feminine connotations (Flannery, 2001). It emphasizes the value of craft and aesthetics, collegiality rather than individual heroism, establishes an intimate connection with the research object ("listening to nature") rather than exerting control ("wresting secrets"), and values the integration of "hand, brain, and heart". This challenges the traditional masculine scientific metaphor based on domination and control that has shaped the concept of objectivity, advocating for dynamic objectivity and situated knowledge. The culturally inclusive nature of this metaphor such as the African American quilting tradition, Japanese quilting provides the possibility of attracting groups that have been marginalized by traditional scientific discourse. by providing a new system of associated commonplaces, it can reconstruct the reality of science and promote its reconstruction towards a less aggressive, more human direction. Science requires a diverse metaphorical foundation, and the quilting metaphor is an effective tool for promoting the inclusivity of the scientific community and achieving reconciliation between Snow's two cultures (Flannery, 2001).

The construction and verification of quilting as a subversive feminist metaphor have been demonstrated by Flannery (2001). Flannery (2001) showed how to identify and deconstruct the dominant masculine metaphors such as hunting or penetrating in specific fields such as science, and argued for the effectiveness of alternative metaphors such as craft/connection in challenging deep gender ideologies such as objectivity as domination and reshaping cognitive frameworks. The method of analyzing metaphor entailments such as community, aesthetics, tactile engagement to determine how they give new meanings to the target domain can be applied to decoding the ideological encoding of conceptual metaphors related to feminism in American and Chinese magazine texts. In this framework, metaphor functions as a "reality definer" and holds potential to promote inclusivity (Flannery, 2001).

In the interpretation of religious texts, the metaphor decoding from a feminist perspective further expands the research boundaries and reveals the construction of gender power relations by metaphors in religious texts. The *Feminist Companion to the Hebrew Bible* series demonstrates the diverse approaches and main concerns of feminist biblical criticism. Three systematic works by reviewing the contents of a series of eleven volumes were conducted by Reinhartz (2000). Firstly, Reinhartz (2000) analyzed the common basic assumptions shared by contemporary feminist biblical criticism, such as the social position of the interpreter would affect the interpretation. The interpretation of the biblical text is diverse, and the biblical text and its interpretive history inherently possess androcentrism and patriarchy characteristics. Secondly, Reinhartz (2000) explored the diverse research methods adopted in this field, including historical criticism, literary criticism, social-scientific approaches, ideological or gender-critical readings, and intertextual readings. Thirdly, he presented the results achieved by applying these methods.

Feminist critics employ various methods to challenge traditional interpretations (Reinhartz, 2000). In the field of metaphor analysis, scholars have delved deeply into the complex use of female imagery in the *Bible*, such as how the imagery of "wasf" in *Song of Songs* might potentially subvert gender stereotypes, how the naming of Eve might imply remnants of earlier goddess figures, the possibility of Huldah as an Asherah prophet, and the literary compensation of personification of lady wisdom as a literary compensation for the suppression of goddess worship. Special attention was paid to problematic metaphors, such as equating women with cities (woman as city), especially in the context of military disasters, and using harlot as a symbol of the unfaithful Israelite community. These metaphors reinforce gender oppression and continue to have negative effects. Additionally, some scholars attempt to argue for possible female authorship such as in the *Song of Deborah* by identifying specific textual features such as matrilineal values, female discourse, and metaphors derived from female life experiences. However, the feasibility of this method is controversial. Reinhartz (2000) also emphasizes the resistant reading strategy, refusing to ally with the dominant patriarchal voice of the text, and striving to uncover suppressed female voices and subtexts. At the same time, the weaknesses of feminist criticism was pointed out, such as sometimes oversimplifying the dichotomy of male or female traits, and acknowledging lacunae such as insufficient attention to activism, multiculturalism, and queer theory.

The identification and analysis of conceptual metaphors related to women, particularly in religious classics, reveal their ideological functions in either reinforcing or challenging patriarchy (Reinhartz, 2000). Moreover, its critical interpretation of problematic metaphors such as "woman as city" and "harlot symbol" provides an analytical framework for examining similar derogatory or stereotypical female metaphors

that may exist. Furthermore, the discussion around “female authorship” and the identification of “female voice” inspires thinking about how female creators in different cultural contexts may use unique metaphors to express their feminist perspectives. Finally, the resistant reading method and the focus on interpretation’s social location have methodological significance for conducting comparative studies of conceptual metaphors related to feminism across cultures, reminding researchers to pay attention to their own positions and critically interpret the implicit power structures in the text.

To sum up, these studies collectively established a theoretical foundation for analyzing conceptual metaphors related to feminism. They clarified the functions and strategic, critical nature of metaphors in deconstructing patriarchy and expressing female experiences, improving the theoretical tools for metaphor analysis and emphasizing the central role of context. They reflected on and reconstructed the metaphorical framework of the description itself, and revealed the contemporary discourse fragmentation context that influences the acceptance and use of metaphors.

2.3 Metaphorical Portrayals of Women in Discourse

2.3.1 Single Cultural Dimensions of Gender Metaphors

This section focuses on the study of gender metaphors within a single cultural context in Europe, Asia, and Africa. It reveals the encoding logic and unique expressions of metaphors within specific cultures regarding gender power relations.

In European culture, the gender metaphors of multilingualism and multiple media convey the diverse encoding of the patriarchal ideology. In Western Europe, the semantic degradation of animal metaphors exhibits a distinct gender difference mechanism within the language. Fontecha and Catalań (2003) studied the semantic degradation phenomenon

when two pairs of animal names (fox/vixen, bull/cow) used as metaphors to refer to people in English (fox/vixen, bull/cow) and Spanish (*zorro*/*zorra*, *toro*/*vaca*). Fontecha and Catalań (2003) aimed to explore through comparative cognitive analysis: whether the conceptualization of these animal metaphors is the same in the two languages. Whether there is semantic degradation in each pair of animal words. Whether the degradation acts equally on male and female terms. The differences in the degree and type of degradation between the two languages. Fontecha and Catalań (2003) adopted a comparative cognitive analysis based on dictionaries, selecting multiple monolingual, bilingual, slang, and metaphor dictionaries in English and Spanish as the source of materials. The analytical framework relied on CMT and the Great Chain Metaphor, by identifying and comparing the metaphorical meanings in the dictionary entries and conducting cognitive mapping analysis.

Fontecha and Catalań (2003) show that, first, animal metaphors exist in both languages, but there are differences. Secondly, semantic degradation is widespread, and it mainly targets female terms. Specifically, the English term "vixen" emphasizes spitefulness, shrewishness, and ill-temper. "Cow" mainly relates to unattractiveness, large size, untidiness, and coarseness, occasionally including the meaning of prostitution. The Spanish term "*zorra*" has a core negative connotation of prostitution (as in "*zorra*, *zorrea*" which clearly refer to prostitutes), and it also includes idleness. "*Vaca*" mainly relates to fatness. Male terms such as "fox/*zorro*" for craftiness and "bull/*toro*" for physical strength can be negatively interpreted, but the overall negative degree is lower than the corresponding female terms. Thirdly, the metaphorical meanings carried by female terms are generally more negative than those of male terms. Fourthly, cross-language comparison shows that for the "fox/*vixen-zorro*/*zorra*" pair, Spanish degradation is more severe

because "*zorra*" clearly relates to prostitution. For the "bull/*cow-toro*/*vaca*" pair, English degradation is stronger because "cow" not only relates to size (unattractiveness, large size) but also additional behavioral negative characteristics (untidiness, coarseness). Fontecha and Catalań (2003) attributes this to the patriarchal society cognitive model operating through the Great Chain Metaphor, which places women at a lower level than men, leading to their more likely being mapped with negative characteristics, especially related to sexual behavior (such as prostitution).

Fontecha and Catalań (2003) demonstrate a methodological example for cross-language comparative analysis, especially involving semantic degradation and gender asymmetry, highlight the importance of animal metaphors as carriers of gender stereotypes, providing an analytical lens for identifying and comparing similar metaphor patterns like "bitch/maiden", and emphasize the explanatory power of CMT and specific cultural cognitive models such as the great chain metaphor in interpreting the gender meaning of metaphors in different cultural contexts.

Similarly, in Montenegro, which is also located in Europe, the animal metaphors in its online texts reveal the local culture's perception framework of women. Vujković (2019) used CMT to analyze the three high-frequency realizations of the "Woman is An Animal" metaphor (Woman is Cat/Fish/Lioness) in the domain web pages of Montenegro, exploring their contextual characteristics and underlying values. The research adopted a corpus-driven approach: extracting animal words and action verbs such as "*mačka*" through Metaphorical Pattern Analysis, and manually annotating metaphorical expressions using MIP, ultimately identifying 53 valid metaphor instances from real online texts.

Vujković (2019) shows that "Woman is Cat" (21 cases) highlights positive evaluations, representing both physical attractiveness such as "*prava mačka*" indicating sexy beauty and defensive strength ("*sikćem*, *grebem*" and other behaviors symbolizing independent women). "Woman is Fish" (18 cases) focuses on the objectification of the body, "*dobra riba*" although seemingly pjraising physical beauty, Vujković (2019) pointed out that its cognitive mechanism actually simplifies women through metonymy to reproductive organs. "Woman is Lioness" (14 cases) specifically refers to maternal sacrifice such as "*majka lavica*" praising single mothers, and all 14 cases contain "*boriti se kao lavica*" (like a lion fighting) and other combat semantic fields, constructing parenting as a woman's natural duty. It is notable that in the online context, men mostly dominate cat or fish metaphors (accounting for 75%), while lioness is often used by women themselves (such as Facebook posts), reflecting the difference in metaphorical discourse power.

Vujković (2019) offers three implications. Firstly, it confirms that even "positive animal metaphors" such as "lioness" can still reinforce traditional gender roles. Secondly, the methodology combining Metaphorical Pattern Analysis and MIP can be applied to the study of magazine metaphors. Finally, the metonymic mechanism of "fish" (genital organ → woman) reveals the shared objectification cognitive pattern behind cross-cultural metaphors such as "bunny" in English and "mermaid" in Chinese, providing an analytical dimension for comparative studies.

In the Bulgarian and Croatian cultures of the Balkan region, the gender specificity of certain animal metaphors demonstrates the interaction between language and culture. The conceptual metaphor "Woman is a bird" operates clearly in Bulgarian and Croatian languages, as demonstrated by Vasung's (2020) study. Vasung (2020) aimed to

systematically identify the specific manifestations of this gender-marking metaphor in the two languages, analyze the semantic connotations (positive or negative) of the bird names used for female references, reveal the conceptual mapping mechanisms such as anthropomorphism or zoomorphism, and explore cross-language variations and their causes (culture, context, grammatical gender). Vasung's (2020) employed a corpus-based comparative analysis method, selecting materials from general monolingual dictionaries, idiom dictionaries, online dictionaries, slang dictionaries, and academic literature. The Sketch Engine tool was used to retrieve examples in the hrWac (Croatian) and Bulgarian Web 2012 (Bulgarian) online corpora for supplementary verification. The analytical framework was based on CMT, integrating Kövecses interlingual/intralingual variation theoretical perspective. The research process included collecting the metaphorical usage of 12 bird names covering domestic birds such as "*kokoš*"/"hen", "*guska*"/"goose", "*patka*"/"duck", and "*tuka*"/"turkey", and wild birds such as "*čavka*"/"jackdaw", "*svraka*"/"magpie", and "*kukavica*"/"cuckoo", and through qualitative analysis, examining the mapped semantic domains such as "stupidity", "garrulousness", "infatuation", "contentiousness", "vociferousness", "physical characteristics", "evaluation tendencies", and mapping types.

Vasung's (2020) shows that the metaphor "Woman is A Bird" mainly serves to derogate the semantics of women, with derogatory expressions dominating. The names of domestic fowls exhibit higher metaphorical productivity, mapping strongly onto negative traits such as "stupidity" and "garrulousness", achieved through the mechanism of anthropomorphism-interpreting the instinctive behaviors of birds as intellectual deficiencies or personality flaws of humans, thereby reinforcing gender stereotypes. Even affectionate terms such as kokica and koka in Croatian may imply derogatory meanings or

eventually develop sexualized connotations, for example, koka in slang can refer to "prostitute", revealing the deeply rooted sexism in the metaphor. Among wild birds, "*čavka*" and "*svraka*" prominently depict the negative characterization of the female group "*pugnaciousness*" and "*vociferousness*", and often appear in the plural form. The significant cross-linguistic differences lie in the emphasis and limitations of specific semantics. The Bulgarian word "*kukuvica*" (cuckoo) has a strong age and gender marker, specifically referring to unpleasant older women, while the Croatian word has no such restrictions. the Croatian word "*roda*" (stork) can be used to refer to tall women due to its grammatical gender being feminine, while the corresponding masculine word "*ūrlej*" in Bulgarian has no such usage. Similarly, the Bulgarian word "*kukumjavka*" (scops owl) can metaphorically represent ugly women, while the corresponding masculine word sivi čuk in Croatian has no such gendered meaning. Only a few bird names such as "*golubica*"/"*gŭlbica*"/"*gŭrguica*" carry stable positive connotations used for affectionate terms. Vasung's (2020) emphasizes that this metaphorical system is filled with anthropomorphism, androcentrism, and gender markedness, and its specific meaning highly depends on the context and the communicative participants, verifying Kövecses' (2010) proposal of interlingual/intralingual variation.

Vasung's (2020) provides a clear case study for analyzing how the conceptual metaphor, especially "Woman is Animal" and its sub-mappings becomes a tool for semantic degradation of women. Secondly, the mechanism it reveals that the metaphorical meaning is profoundly influenced by cultural context and language structure such as grammatical gender offers a crucial analytical dimension and theoretical reference point for cross-cultural comparative research.

In the political discourse of Germany, a central European country, metaphorical strategies reveal the socially constructed nature of gender identity. Koller and Semino (2009) analyzed the interview and speech materials of former German Chancellor Schroeder and current Chancellor Merkel, aiming to verify the genderized patterns of metaphor usage within the framework of social constructivism. A case comparison design was adopted, based on a 220,000-word German political discourse corpus including 150 texts by Schroeder and 100 texts by Merkel, combined with CMT and the gender perspective of social constructivism, and through quantitative statistics (metaphor frequency and type) and qualitative discourse analysis, decoded how metaphor choices served the construction of political identities.

Koller and Semino (2009) shows that Schroder frequently used war metaphors such as "*Wirtschaftskrieg*" economic war, competition metaphors such as "*Wettlauf*" competition, and architecture metaphors such as "*Reformen auf den Weg bringen*" to promote reform) to strengthen the image of aggressive leadership. Merkel significantly reduced war metaphors (only one-third of that of Schroder), preferred journey metaphors such as "*Weg der Reformen*" and the road of reform and the metaphor of family such as "*gesellschaftlicher Zusammenhalt*" and social cohesion, and shaped a consultative image. Qualitative decoding reveals. Schroder constructed a masculine temperament through the metaphor of the boxer "*im Ring stehen*" standing boxing ring, while Merkel weakened confrontation with metaphors such as "*Bruckenbauerin*" (bridge builder). Its metaphorical choice is subject to social variables such as party identity (CDU vs. Social Democratic Party), personal background (East German scientists vs. West German labor lawyers), and voter expectations, rather than biological gender. Both of them flexibly invoked metaphorical resources to manage the gender-based political image-Schroder strengthened

the traditional male leadership model, while Merkel reconstructed the female leadership paradigm. Merkel provides a model by deconstructing war metaphors and other "de-genderization" strategies, which helps analyze how female magazines reconstruct the male-dominated metaphorical domain.

Feminism has been the subject of much debate in France within the Muslim community, particularly concerning the concept of the hijab. However, this discourse has often become mired in a dualistic debate characterized by either oppression or resistance, thereby limiting the depth of the discussion on agency. Bilge (2010) sought to deconstruct the mainstream feminist interpretation of agency in the hijab, integrating postcolonial and intersectional theories to propose a framework that transcends the binary opposition of "subjugation vs. resistance". The central objective is to elucidate how existing literature has conceptualized the hijab as a symbol and to reconstruct an agency theory that can accommodate religious dynamics.

A critical discourse analysis framework was employed to examine the 1989 French headscarf ban controversy as a case in point (Bilge, 2010). In the year 2006, a combination of policy documents, media discourse, and feminist texts was observed, including the debate in the French newspaper Le Monde and the Stasi commission hearing records. The critical analysis of structuralism, as exemplified by Butler's theory of subjectivity, was integrated with cross-disciplinary theories, such as Collins' power matrix model, leading to the establishment of an intersectional dynamic. The concept of agency is examined through a three-pronged approach that utilizes a combination of three strategies. Firstly, a deconstruction of the "false consciousness" theory is employed to refute the assertion that women who choose to wear headscarves possess a distinct subjectivity such as Badinter's

reduction of religion to a state of passivity. Secondly, the "resistant paradigm" is subjected to a process of instrumentalization and reduction, such as Hoodfar's transformation of religious motivation into a social phenomenon. Thirdly, the underlying logic of Orientalism is exposed such as Djavan's narrative of "internal Orientalists".

Bilge (2010) has revealed a number of key findings. Firstly, the "from subjugated position" of the individualist approach of libertarianism can be considered as being similar to the "resistance position" of postcolonial feminism, in that both are based on the dynamic concept of humanism. However, it should be noted that neither of these approaches can provide an explanation for the phenomenon of religious devotion in practice. Secondly, the complex interplay of different forms of oppression in France has been obscured. This is illustrated by the fact that the discourse of gender equality has been influenced by the concept of ethnicity, and Muslim women are compelled to choose between anti-sexist and anti-ethnicist positions. In 1993, the concept of "agency" was proposed to be regarded as "historical possibilities" rather than as an attribute of the individual. This was achieved through an analysis of the "power matrix" (structural/hegemonic/regulatory/interpersonal) in order to determine how the subject negotiated the constraints of agency in a particular context. For example, how a woman who wears a headscarf acquires relative autonomy through submission to a divine will. This framework challenged the perception of institutions as simply resisting, and instead provided a new approach to analyzing the agency of institutions. Though using Intersectionality Theory, Bilge's (2010) study failed to explain women by integrating Intersectionality Theory.

The hunting metaphor plays a non-neutral cognitive role in the construction of gender ideology. Maestre (2020) investigated how the source domain "the hunt" in English

texts shapes gender relationship representations through conceptual metaphor "Love/Seduction/The search for a partner or husband is A Hunt", aiming to critically analyze the implicit patriarchal ideology. Maestre (2020) adopted a framework combining CDA and CMT, with the corpus consisting of dating manuals, online articles, and novels (such as The Rules, Secrets for the Ultimate Husband Hunter) from the 1990s to the 2010s. Texts containing core metaphorical expressions such as "hunt", "chase", "capture", and "trap" were collected through purposive sampling. Data analysis combined transitivity analysis (Halliday's systemic functional linguistics) and lexical evaluation (Jeffries), examining the transitivity structure and evaluative connotations of the metaphor.

Maestre (2020) has found that the hunting metaphor presents a triple contradictory gender representation. Firstly, as the active huntress (such as husband hunting, capturing his heart), women subvert the traditional "male hunter" model, but reinforce the stereotype that women aim for marriage and love as their life goals, and reduce men to trophies or Quality Men. Secondly, the philosophy of the chase thrill requires women to balance "availability" and "unavailability" (play hard to get), maintaining the patriarchal order of Man as Hunter Principal by creating an illusion of male dominance (such as making him chase you). Thirdly, when women are overly proactive, the metaphor turns negative (such as trap, snare), constructing the misogynistic image of the female trickster (example: trapping him for money). Maestre (2020) reveals that the metaphor naturalizes the gender power imbalance through analogical mappings (hunter-prey/pursuer-pursued), and the choice of source domain (hunting vs. war/disease) directly affects the evaluation of women's agency.

Maestre (2020) confirms that Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris-Black) can deconstruct the ideological load of metaphors and is applicable to the gender discourse analysis of magazine texts. Moreover, the "surface subversion" and "substantial conservatism" contradiction of the hunting metaphor suggests that cross-cultural comparisons need to be cautious of the traps of pseudo-feminist rhetoric. Finally, the negative mappings such as "trap" and the expressions like "fish for a wealthy husband" in Chinese have similarities, providing an entry point for comparing the gender violence codes of metaphors in the United States and China.

The gender metaphors in Asian culture are rooted in local traditions and social changes, and take on diverse forms. In Javanese culture, the body metaphors found in traditional poetry reflect the local cultural perception of the beauty of women's bodies. Kurnia (2021) based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT, systematically analyzed the metaphorical expressions of female body beauty in traditional Javanese poetry "*panyandra*", aiming to decode its cultural cognitive model. A qualitative descriptive design was adopted from the anthropological linguistic perspective, with the corpus consisting of the written text of the ritualistic praise poem "*panyandra*" without specifying the exact word count, emphasizing the selection of collective and standardized expressions to reflect cultural consensus. Kurnia (2021) followed the CMT framework, by identifying the mapping relationship between the source domain (animals/plants/artifacts) and the target domain (body parts), and combining the cultural context to explain the generation mechanism of the metaphor.

Kurnia (2021) reveals that Panyandra constructs the ideal female body through three types of source domains. The animal domain such as "*bangkekane navon kemit*"

which uses the waist of a yellow wasp to represent a slender waist, the plant domain such as "*pakultiane ugulit langsep*" which uses the skin of a *langsat* fruit to represent olive-colored skin, and the man-made domain such as "*bathuke nyela cendhani*" which uses the texture of marble to describe a smooth forehead. Metaphor formation relies on four similarity principles: morphological similarity such as "*sangkal putung*" where the V-shaped of a plant corresponds to a pointed chin, color similarity (the yellow skin of a *langsat* corresponds to the ideal skin tone), texture similarity (the lustrous texture of marble maps onto a wrinkle-free forehead), and dynamic similarity ("*mlakuue kaya macan luwe*" which uses the gait of a hungry tiger to describe an elegant posture). These metaphors are deeply nested within the Javanese agricultural tradition such as the coconut leaf woven item "*panjang ilang*" which represents a round buttocks and the clothing culture ("*cengkir gadhing*" which corresponds to the ideal breast shape of *kebaya* clothing), and even give rise to practices like "*luluran*" exfoliation beauty treatments. It is notable that the distribution of metaphors reflects the hierarchical focus on body parts-facial metaphors account for over 50% (such as "*uwange nyangkal putung*" which describes the chin), reinforcing the value of "the face being the core of beauty". In Kurnia (2021)'s study The mapping of the plant/animal domain reveals non-Western aesthetic standards such as the worship of yellow skin as key parameters for cross-cultural comparison. Moreover, the metaphors in the artificial domain, such as "marble", reveal the objectification logic and the commonality with the Western concept of "woman as ornament", but Javanese culture, through local symbols like "*cengkir gadhing* (coconut shell cup)" , gives cultural coding to objectification, suggesting that in comparative studies, the universality and cultural specificity of the objectification mechanism need to be distinguished.

In the modern Chinese cultural context, the gender symbolism in literary works provides an important window for understanding the gender power structure of a specific historical period. Literary metaphors conceal gender ideological manipulation. Zhou (2017) analyzed 1.47 million words of modern Chinese novels from the Republican Era (1912-1949) using Critical Cognitive Analysis, integrating Critical Discourse Analysis and CMT. Zhou (2017) revealed how cultural gender metaphors construct the social power structure. Through the MIP metaphor identification process of the Pragglejaz Group and Steen's five-step analysis method, 2,425 examples of gender metaphors were extracted. A critical cognitive interpretation was conducted based on the Great Chain of Being theoretical framework. The objective was to deconstruct the ideological functions of metaphors in literary discourse and their shaping mechanisms for gender identities.

Zhou (2017) found that there is a systematic asymmetry in four types of cultural gender metaphors. The "Man or Woman is Person" metaphor associates men more with authoritative roles such as "army" (113 times) and "superior" (47 times), while women are constructed as passive figures such as "child/infant" (79 times) and "saved/helpless person" (31 times). "The man/woman is animal" metaphor shows that men are more often depicted as lions (25 times) and wolves (16 times) as fierce beasts, while women are more often mapped as small birds (16 times) and lambs (3 times), with the same animals like fox having different interpretations-men emphasizing cunning traits, while women highlighting seductive attributes. In the "Man/Woman is Plant" metaphor, 72.46% of women are concentrated on the flower imagery (such as "lotus"), strengthening the status of decorative objects. Men account for 43.48% as tree such as "strong tree", highlighting the strength trait. In the "Man/Woman is thing" metaphor, "women" have a significant objectification, with the frequency of "commodity" (30 times), "property" (29 times), and "present" (15

times) being 10 times, 1.9 times, and 5 times that of men, respectively, while men are more associated with “device/machine” (56 times) and “iron” (22 times) as tool-like metaphors. The chi-square test confirmed that there are significant gender differences in the distribution of these four metaphors ($p < 0.5$), reflecting that in the Great Chain metaphor hierarchy, women are systematically downgraded to a lower existence form.

Zhou (2017) provides crucial insights. The metaphorical frameworks such as “Woman is Flower/Commodity” in the novels of the Republic of China correspond historically to the “beauty-as-object” metaphor in contemporary American magazines. The Great Chain analysis model can be applied to the comparison of cross-cultural magazine metaphors to deconstruct the hierarchical gender order. The MIP identification method offers a methodological paradigm for multi-lingual corpus metaphor annotation, and is particularly suitable for handling the culturally-loaded metaphors unique to Chinese such as “huò shuǐ (femme fatale)” .

In the Chinese context, social media has become a new arena for the clash of gender discourses, and its metaphorical representation exhibits a distinctive negative tendency. Bao (2024) focused on the metaphorical use of feminism in the Weibo platform in 2022, aiming to reveal its type distribution, semantic characteristics, and potential social impact. Research objectives included identifying the types of metaphors used by Weibo users to discuss feminism, analyzing how these metaphors reflect public perceptions and evaluations of feminism, and exploring their special implications in the context of Chinese social media. Bao (2024) adopted a mixed approach design, combining corpus analysis and metaphor recognition framework, to systematically investigate metaphor phenomena in large-scale social media data. The corpus contained 206,089 posts containing the keyword

"women's rights" obtained through Weibo advanced search tools in 2022, with a total number of 15,893,896 words. The analytical framework was based on CMT, combined with the MIP proposed by Pragglejaz Group (2007), and ensured reliability through two-person coding. In the process of data collection, researchers excluded original posts and anonymized them to avoid traceability risks. The data was analyzed by frequency threshold screening, and only metaphors that appeared more than 10 times were retained.

Bao (2024) showed that the metaphors related to feminism in Weibo could be summarized into six categories. War metaphors accounted for the highest proportion (62.2%), and framing feminism as a violent conflict or national security threat through terms such as "fighters", "foreign powers", and "terrorism" could either legitimize the movement or reinforce its radical image. Commercial metaphors (15.6%), such as "feminist business" and "archway", suggested that feminism was instrumentalized as a means of profit, undermining its social justice demands. The disease metaphor (14.2%) was dominated by "malignant tumor" and "cancer", which turned the pathology of feminism into a social crisis that needs to be cured. Animal metaphors (3.1%) disparaged feminists as irrational or dependent through derogatory expressions such as "mad dog" and "parasite". Religious metaphors (3.1%), such as "cult" or "demon", emphasized their departure from mainstream values. Other metaphors (1.7%), including "flood" and "shackles", were mostly negative. It was worth noting that the war metaphor presented a paradox-one that could either portray feminism as a force for good against patriarchy or stigmatized it as an extremist force destabilizing society. The business and disease metaphor reflected the public perception bias caused by the consumerist pseudo-feminism in the post-reform era, that is, feminism was reduced to a privilege grab or a social disease. Bao (2024) revealed the complex metaphorical network of feminist discourse in the

context of micro blog, in which negative representations dominate, reflecting the ongoing tension between traditional gender concepts and emerging gender politics in the digital public sphere.

Bao (2024) provides methodological references (such as MIP application, frequency screening, cross-coder verification) and a localized classification framework foundation (core categories such as War/Business/Illness) for the research on feminist conceptual metaphors in Chinese magazines. They particularly highlight the unique metaphorical patterns in the Chinese context (such as foreign force, feminist fist, malignant tumor) and their profound social, cultural and political roots (such as post-reform masculinity crisis, consumerist pseudo-feminism, state discourse influence), providing key reference points and analytical dimensions for identifying cultural-specific metaphors and their social functions in cross-cultural comparisons.

The social and cultural metaphors in Japanese society of East Asia reveal the influence of social coding on the conceptualization of women. Takada et al. (2000) focused on the metaphorical expressions in Japanese that conceptualize the female gender as animals and plants such as "*ofisu-no hana*", proposed and verified a new subclass called "socio-cultural metaphor". The research objective is to break through the traditional framework of CMT and define the mapping types that rely on social-cultural interpretation such as "Women are Plants/Animals". The research method adopts a triple design: a. language instance analysis (dictionary, daily expressions, and appendix classified corpora); b. mapping attribute extraction based on core attributes such as "size", "pet-like function", "passive function"; c. empirical questionnaire (112 Japanese native speakers aged 18-43 judged the gender orientation of 12 metaphors). Through intergenerational comparison

(23-43 years old vs 18-22 years old), the study verified the impact of social changes on the interpretation of metaphors.

Takada et al.'s (2000) research found that there is a systematic asymmetry in the metaphorical mapping of Japanese women: only animals and plants with "social smallness" such as being easily manipulable and ornamental can be mapped onto women such as flower "*hana*" and butterfly "*choo*", while large/wild entities such as wolf "*ookami*" and pine tree are exclusively mapped onto men. The main attributes "pet-like function" (pleasing men) and "passive function" (passivity of prey) directly reflect the social power structure. The questionnaire shows that metaphor interpretation has intergenerational dynamics. The traditional male metaphor "*dooki-no sakura*" (same-sex cherry blossom) has been 31% transformed into neutral by the younger generation due to the disappearance of military cultural background. While "*udo-no taiboku*" (false giant tree) has been misinterpreted by 62% of young respondents as a male metaphor because of the lack of plant cognition. Social structural changes such as women's participation in the workplace have led to the neutralization of some metaphors, but the female-exclusive metaphors still reinforce gender stereotypes such as "yoru-no choo" referring to sex workers.

Takada et al. (2000) proposes a socio-cultural metaphor analysis model that can be applied to the power decoding of the "Woman as Object" type metaphor in American and Chinese magazines. Moreover, it reveals the co-variation mechanism between metaphor changes and social changes, providing a methodological reference for diachronic comparisons. Finally, the intergenerational comparison paradigm in the questionnaire design can be directly applied to the study of cognitive differences among cross-cultural audiences.

In the natural language of women in South Asian Pakistan, metaphor serves as an important tool for reflecting the power structure under the patriarchal system. Zubair (2007) revealed how literacy and gender identity are constructed through the natural speech of Pakistani women. The research aimed to explore the metaphorical patterns used by women when discussing reading and writing abilities and self-identity, and to analyze how they reflect the power structure under patriarchy and the mechanism of social silence. The ethnographic discourse analysis method was employed. The data came from three studies conducted in rural/urban areas of South Punjab, Pakistan from 1996 to 2004: 35 in-depth interviews with rural women, 16 non-structured interviews with college students, and focus group discussions involving college teachers and students. The naturally emerging (unprompted) metaphorical expressions were extracted, and the analytical framework integrated Gee's (1999) cultural models and Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT, with a particular focus on analyzing how the seven core metaphors such as buildings, birds, and silence/sound encode social discipline and resistance.

The research of Zubair (2007) reveals that metaphors reflect intergenerational and regional divisions: rural women over 60 years old use "silent birds" and "caged birds" to metaphorically represent lifelong speechlessness and social confinement. Urban professional women aged 30-59 are caught in a dual identity conflict (we are lions at work but wet cats at home). Young women use "first raindrops" and "heavy downpour" to symbolize educational empowerment, and use "retreat" to metaphorically represent the resistance space constructed through English reading and writing (English is my love, my passion, and my retreat). Architecture metaphors (four walls, cages) run through all groups, directly pointing to the confinement of the patriarchal space. Education is regarded as a "bright way" and a "guiding star", but its empowerment is limited to the micro level such

as autonomous decision-making, and has not shaken the gender power structure. The metaphor cluster such as “my love, my passion, my retreat” reveals the interweaving of emotional investment and political resistance.

Zubair’s (2007) analysis shows that the “unintentionality” of metaphors in natural language corpora highlights social reality, suggesting that magazine texts should capture non-preconceived metaphors. Besides, spatially confined metaphors such as “silent birds” can have cross-cultural dialogue with the American and Chinese media’s “Woman as contained object”.

In the diverse cultural landscape of India, the female character traits depicted in literary works exhibit differences among various ethnic groups. Ahuja et al. (2017) took nine fictional works from three ethnic groups, namely, the Indo-European language family, the Dravian-language family, and the Tibeto-Burman language family, as corpora, used the MIPVU program to identify metaphorical expressions, and combined the cognitive dimensions of social and cultural diversity of CMT. Ahuja et al. (2017) aims to present the research framework of conceptual metaphor variations in literary texts and reveal the differences in the source and target domains of femininity metaphors among different ethnic groups.

Ahuja et al. (2017) identified 113 metaphorical expressions from nine works, summarized 126 conceptual metaphors, and found that “animal” and “object” were the main source domains. The Tiburman language group, due to its close connection with the natural ecology, uses more animal metaphors such as “tigress” and “eagle” and gives females assertive traits. The Dravidian language group has the most objectified metaphors such as “ornamental object” and “firewood”, while the Indo-European language group uses

metaphors such as “caged animal” and “clay” to represent passive and restricted women. Their analysis of female-related metaphors in different cultural groups can help researchers pay attention to the influence of cultural background on the construction of metaphors such as “women as objects” and “women’s connection with nature” when exploring the commonalities and differences of feminist cognition in different cultural contexts.

In African culture, proverbs, as a traditional form of discourse, carry profound gender metaphors that deeply uphold the patriarchal structure. The tribal proverbs of the tribes in Kenya, Africa, reinforce gender inequality within the patriarchal structure through animal metaphors. Barasa and Opande (2017) investigated how animal metaphors in the proverbs of the Bukusu and Gusii ethnic groups in Kenya represent women and men. The main objective was to test whether the universal proposition about animal schemas (animal schemas) proposed by Lakoff and Turner holds true in this cultural context, and to reveal the gender ideology contained in the metaphors. Specific goals include identifying the main attributes attached to women and men, and analyzing the similarities and differences in the meanings of animal metaphors in the two ethnic groups. A qualitative method was employed, collecting 48 proverbs related to animals from the elders of the two ethnic groups through ethnography. The analytical framework integrated CMT (particularly the Great Chain of Being model) with Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, focusing on the mapping relationship from the source domain (animals/objects) to the target domain (humans/gender), in order to reveal potential metaphorical schemas and ideologies.

Ahuja et al. (2017) has clearly refuted the universality of the proposition made by Lakoff and Turner (1989), and has revealed that the animal metaphorical meanings in the proverbs of Bukusu and Gusii have significant cultural specificity. The results present a

systematic gender inequality: women are largely mapped onto metaphors that convey inferiority, subordination, and objectification. Key mappings include women being represented as pets (such as "dog"/"*embwa*"/"*esese"* suggesting ugliness, promiscuity, or evil sources), farmyard animals (such as "cow"/"*eng'ina*"/*ekhafu*" emphasizing servitude, edible nature, economic/sexual productivity, and fertility as a core value, while also associating promiscuity), birds (highlighting family roles such as food supply, but also associating gossip and unreliability), inanimate objects/vessels (such as "pot"/"*enyungu*", door, vessel symbolizing limitation, practicality, disposability, and lack of agency), and occasionally wild animals (describing dangerous and non-conformist women). These metaphorical systems systematically construct women as beings who are dependent on men, submissive to men, whose value mainly depends on physical attractiveness, chastity, household labor, and having sons (to continue the family line), thereby maintaining hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic femininity. In contrast, men are associated with control, ownership, and freedom. The research conclusion states that these language resources play an ideological role of marginalizing women and consolidating the patriarchal power structure.

Barasa and Opande (2017) provides evidence to support the notion that cultural-specific conceptual metaphors (especially those derived from the animal domain) are powerful carriers for encoding and maintaining gender hierarchies and stereotypes. The findings of Barasa and Opande (2017) are highly consistent with the core concerns of feminist conceptual metaphor analysis. The methodological framework it integrates the Great Chain of Being model and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis offers a directly applicable path for analyzing how metaphors carry and reproduce gender power relations,

and particularly highlights the importance of focusing on the specific cultural connotations and ideological functions of metaphors in cross-cultural comparisons.

The metaphors employed by Nigerian female authors in their newspaper opinion articles reveal how the dominant gender ideology profoundly shapes the self-representation of femininity. Ahmed (2018) aimed to analyze how female writers in Nigerian newspapers describe women through metaphors and explored how these metaphors are involved in constructing and reinforcing gender ideologies. Ahmed (2018) focused on identifying metaphor types, deconstructing its cognitive basis, and revealing female writers' unconscious representation of gender roles in discourse practice. Ahmed (2018) adopted a qualitative approach, combining critical discourse analysis and metaphor analysis. Ahmed (2018) examined 100 opinion articles on gender issues published in five Nigerian national newspapers (*The Guardian*, *Daily Trust*, *New Nigerian*, *The Punch*, *Vanguard*) between 1999 and 2014, with a corpus size of 183,047 words. The theoretical framework integrated feminist critical discourse analysis, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT and presupposition theory, focusing on the ideological function of metaphor. Data collection was done by manually searching newspaper archives and online resources, and strictly selecting articles that fit the topic and format. Pragglejaz Group's (2007) MIP and Steen's metaphor mapping method were used for data analysis. The surface language metaphor was first identified, and then the cognitive mapping between source domain and target domain was traced. Special attention was paid to the prescriptive nature of metaphor (such as "dead metaphor" and "new metaphor") and its ideological effects in context. For example, "Women are Commodities" reinforced the logic of materialization through words such as "acquire" and "property". And "Women are Home Managers" through the "hands that rock the cradle" and other expressions solidified the concept of family division of labor.

The results of Ahmed (2018) showed that the 339 metaphors could be summarized into nine conceptual metaphors, including “Women are Commodities” (25.66%), “Women are Power” (20.35%), and “Women are the Weaker Sex” (13.27%). While some metaphors attempt to challenge traditional gender roles such as describing women as “economic drivers”, most unconsciously reproduce male-dominated ideologies, such as analogies of women as “farmlands” or “building materials”, implying instrumentality and subordination. These findings indicated that even if female authors intend to criticize gender inequality, their discourse was still deeply constrained by the mainstream gender norms in society, highlighting the complexity and contradiction of language in the construction of gender identity.

Ahmed’s (2018) findings provide crucial methodological references and critical perspectives for this research. Ahmed’s (2018) empirical revelation of the unconscious replication of patriarchal logic through metaphors such as the frequent occurrence of “Women are Commodities” warns researchers to be vigilant of similar internalization phenomena that may exist in feminist discourse in cross-cultural contexts. His mixed method combining CMT, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis and presupposition analysis provides an operational framework for systematically identifying and critically deconstructing potential gendered metaphors in American magazines such as the cross-cultural variations of “Feminine as the foundation/home guardian”. And the discovery regarding “the deviation between intention and effect” highlights the necessity of exploring the agency of metaphor usage and the tension between social ideology in comparative research.

In Europe, the body metaphors of poetry have a diachronic significance in reconfiguring the gender power relations. Aljawazari et al. (2023) focus on the two epics, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, to explore how Shakespeare subverts the patriarchal narrative of the Renaissance through bodily metaphors. Aljawazari et al.'s (2023) study is based on cognitive poetics and combines CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to analyze the mapping mechanism between the source domain and the target domain in the text. The specific goal is to reveal Shakespeare's inheritance and innovation of the Ovidian tradition, with particular attention to his strategies of reversing gender roles through metaphors. The method adopted Aljawazari et al. (2023) is a theory-driven textual close reading, with the corpus strictly limited to the original texts of the two poems. By identifying key metaphor clusters such as "Lucrece as City/Treasure" "Venus as Predator", Aljawazari et al. (2023) analyzes how they deconstruct the conventional representation of "women as passive objects".

Aljawazari et al. (2023) reveals that Shakespeare systematically employs metaphors to achieve a triple subversion. Firstly, in *The Rape of Lucrece*, the metaphor "Love is a Treasure" as Collatine regards his wife as a "rich jewel" ironically exposes the disasters caused by men's show-off desires, while Lucrece's body, as a mapping of a besieged city ("ivory wall" and "heart of a poor citizen"), evokes readers' sympathy, preventing them from ending up in the Ovidian monster-like fate and maintaining the radiance of human nature and the right to speak. Secondly, in "Venus and Adonis", through the hunting metaphor, the subject of desire is reversed. Venus is depicted as a "wild beast" and a raptor ("devouring" kiss), while Adonis becomes a passive "flower" or "prey", subverting the traditional role of men as hunters. Venus' explicit expression of sexual desires such as stating "no defects" even challenges the Elizabethan decorum that suppresses female

desires. Finally, both poems share the metaphor "Body is Landscape" such as Adonis' "caves" and "pits" representing dimples, and Venus' chest as a "cradling bed", transforming the physical image into a domain of power struggle, highlighting the subjectivity of the female. These metaphorical strategies distinguish Shakespeare from his contemporaries, inheriting Ovidian erotic writing while eliminating his tendency to demonize women, and constructing a "female-friendly" narrative resolution.

Shakespeare's transformation of classical traditions is analogous to the creative transformation of local cultural metaphors by Western and Chinese media, particularly highlighting that when comparing how American and Chinese magazines handle "desire subjectivity", attention should be paid to the diachronic cultural baggage and synchronic innovative potential of metaphors.

The study of the representation mechanism of the war metaphor in Spanish media regarding the feminist movement focuses on the diachronic discourse analysis of opinion columns. Carnero (2024) based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT, using the Sketch Engine tool, analyzed 800 opinion columns from national and local newspapers in Spain from 2004 to 2023. She quantitatively identified frequent war terms such as "*lucha*", "*guerra*", and "*combatir*" and qualitatively deconstructed the metaphorical framework, aiming to reveal how the war metaphor shapes the media image of feminism and the differences in metaphorical usage among different gender authors and political positions.

Aljawazari et al. (2023) reveals that the war metaphor system constructs feminism as a multi-dimensional battlefield: a. The core metaphor "*La guerra del feminismo*" frequently appears, anchoring the struggle for gender equality as a military operation against patriarchy such as "l*ucha contra violencia de genero*" accounting for 27.3% of the

sample; b. The spatial metaphor shows a two-level differentiation-female authors focus on the embodied battlefield (*cuerpo como campo de batalla* mapping body autonomy), while male authors emphasize the institutional battlefield (*batalla politica* emphasizing political game); c. The actor metaphor reveals the power structure, with feministas acting as combatants against internal enemies such as machismo and external enemies such as patriarchal judges, and the conquest metaphor deconstructs the legal reform achievements such as the Equality Law; d. Ideology significantly influences the metaphorical value-progressive newspapers such as reinforcing the legitimacy of the war, while conservative newspapers such as El Faro de Ceuta construct the language equality debate as a "*batalla contra feminismo*". The research also verifies gender differences: female authors dominate "survivors of violence" and other traumatic narratives (accounting for 73%), while 32% of male authors use irony to disavow the resistance of the metaphor.

Aljawazari et al. (2023) validates the "universalism of war metaphor" hypothesis within the CMT framework, especially the interactive pattern of the metaphorical interaction between body politics and institutional resistance can be applied to the analysis of the Chinese context. It reveals the strong correlation mechanism between ideology and metaphor selection, warning that the comparison between the United States and China needs to control the variables of political discourse. It provides an example of the cross-text application of Sketch Engine, and its keywords function offers methodological inspiration for the large-scale identification of Chinese metaphors. The usage patterns of the deconstructive metaphors used by male authors such as constructing "linguistic equality" as the attacked object provide an analytical dimension for exploring the differences in feminist discourse between American and Chinese male intellectuals.

The proverbs of Kazakhstan in Central Asia, through the use of binary opposition metaphors, reflect the gender concepts in its social culture. Ramanova et al. (2024) studied the binary gender opposition expressed through conceptual metaphors in Kazakh proverbs such as “man – woman” and “husband – wife” aiming to reveal how they reflect the gender relationship cognition in Kazakh culture and the new information conveyed by these oppositions. A qualitative design was adopted, with the corpus coming from the three-volume Kazakh proverb dictionary *The Words of the Ancestors* (Babalar sozi). Through purposive sampling, 12 proverbs explicitly containing binary gender oppositions (involving social roles such as “father-mother, husband-wife, boy/son-girl/daughter” were selected. The analytical framework was based on CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and the Great Chain Metaphor model (Lakoff & Turner, 1989), focusing on the mapping process from the source domain (such as animals, complex objects, natural physical things, parts of the body) to the target domain (gender-opposed roles), identifying the cognitive basis and interpreting its cultural connotations.

Ramanova et al. (2024) reveals that the gender metaphors in Kazakh proverbs mainly present a binary opposition under the patriarchal ideology. Men are often depicted as powerful, dominant entities with high social value such as “Man is A Mountain”, “Husband is A Head”, “Boy is A Star”, and “Son is A Flag/Settlement”, emphasizing their roles as providers, protectors and family pillars. Women are often portrayed as entities related to the family, nurturing, subordinate status or temporariness such as “Mother is A Spring/Treasure”, “Wife is A Neck/River”, and “Daughter is Paint/Swan/A Field”, highlighting their roles as family guardians, comfort creators and the fate of leaving the original family after marriage. However, Ramanova et al. (2024) also reveals a key complementarity: The opposing sides are often regarded as functionally interdependent

such as the head relying on the neck, fish relying on the river, mountain and spring coexisting, and nearly half of the proverbs in the metaphor structure place women at the beginning of the sentence such as “A good girl is a beaver collar” and “a good boy is a star”, challenging the pattern of women always being in a subordinate position in certain cultures. Moreover, Ramanova et al. (2024) identifies culturally specific metaphorical expressions, such as using “food without salt” to negatively evaluate a wife (a unique negative variant of “Woman is Food”), and using “treasure” to highly praise a mother. These oppositions are mainly based on parallel structures such as simultaneously describing a couple or contrast structures such as son’s stability vs daughter’s departure, jointly reinforcing the cognitive of gender role differences but complementarity.

Ramanova et al. (2024) demonstrates how metaphors systematically encode and convey specific cultural (in this case, the Kazakh patriarchal society) gender ideologies, providing a powerful methodological (CMT) and comparative framework (for identifying cross-cultural similarities and differences) for analyzing how metaphors construct gender concepts in American and Chinese magazines. Secondly, the “complementary” narrative of the findings although still within the patriarchal framework and the variability of the position of female metaphors suggest that when analyzing feminist discourse, attention must be paid to how metaphors might be used to challenge or subtly subvert traditional gender dualism. Finally, the identification of culturally specific metaphors such as “Woman is Treasure” and “Woman is Food Without Salt” emphasizes the need to examine the cultural connotations of conceptual metaphors and their impact on gender evaluations in cross-cultural comparisons.

To sum up, the study of gender metaphors within a single cultural context reveals that conceptual metaphors related to feminism are not merely neutral language phenomena. Rather, they are symbolic expressions of cultural cognition and gender ideology. Animal metaphors are the carriers of gender stereotypes and exhibit systematic semantic degradation (Fontecha & Catalań, 2003; Vujković, 2019). Moreover, the gender coding of metaphors is determined by social construction factors rather than biological gender (Koller & Semino, 2009; Zubair, 2007), with cultural specificity profoundly shaping their metaphorical mapping logic (Barasa & Opande, 2017; Kurnia, 2021). Meanwhile, metaphors simultaneously carry the dualities of empowerment and discipline. (Ahmed, 2018; Bao, 2024; Carnero, 2024). These studies lay the foundation for cross-cultural comparisons. The semantic degradation mechanism of animal metaphors, the influence of social construction on metaphor selection, and the shaping of mapping logic by cultural specificity, together constitute the core dimensions of gender metaphor analysis. However, its limitation lies in that a single cultural perspective is unable to reveal the differences in the interaction between metaphors and ideology in different cultures, especially lacking a systematic comparison of specific media such as American and Chinese magazines.

2.3.2 Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Gender Metaphors

This section focuses on the comparative study of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic metaphors. By analyzing the pragmatic functions, cognitive acceptance, translation conversions, and media representations of metaphors in different cultural contexts, it reveals the influence of cultural factors on the generation and interpretation of metaphors.

Pérez-Hernández (2016) compared the columnistic corpora of Spanish and English newspapers to explore the gender-specific patterns of male and female journalists in

realizing pragmatic functions such as criticism and praise through conceptual metaphor. Pérez-Hernández (2016) adopted a cross-cultural comparative design, constructed a corpus of 600 opinion column texts from newspapers like *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, and *El País* with equal Spanish and English content, and balanced male and female authors from 2005 to 2014. Based on the framework of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT, it focused on three pragmatic functions: representation of reality, criticism, and praising. Through quantitative statistics (recorded 1,393 metaphors) and cognitive pragmatic analysis, it decoded the mitigating/intensifying mechanisms of the metaphors.

Spanish male journalists frequently use metaphors to intensify negative criticism (198 cases), such as "People are Animals" which maps the criticized object as an animal (examples 5, 7-10) (Pérez-Hernández, 2016). Female journalists tend to use metaphors to weaken criticism (138 cases) or self-mocking humor (54 cases), such as "Divided self" which metaphorically constructs self-deprecating humor (example 14). English journalists, on the whole, rely more on metaphors to implement polite strategies, but the gender difference is weakened. Both men and women frequently use metaphors to soften criticism (153 cases for men/208 cases for women), such as "Love is A Journey" which metaphorically indirectly refers to death (example 18). Cultural variables dominate the choice of pragmatic strategies-Spanish culture accepts direct criticism from men, while English culture is driven by the Modesty Maxim and generally adopts indirect strategies. Self-mocking strategies exist for both women in both cultures (5:1 in Spain, 1.56:1 in English), but Spanish female journalists systematically obtain readers' empathy through animal metaphors.

Pérez-Hernández (2016) offers a crucial reference. Firstly, it confirms the gendered division of labor in the pragmatic function of conceptual metaphor (strengthening/weakening criticism), which offers direct enlightenment for analyzing the rhetorical strategies of feminist metaphors in American and Chinese magazines. Secondly, the modulation effect of cultural parameters such as Modesty Maxim on gender differences warns that cross-cultural comparisons need to control cultural variables. Finally, self-deprecating metaphors as a means for women to obtain the right to speak can deepen the interpretation of the rebellious rhetoric of conceptual metaphors related to feminism.

The cross-cultural differences in the mechanism of animal metaphors reveal that conceptual mapping is significantly influenced by the cultural filtering effect. Fernandes (2021) investigated the cognitive acceptability of the direct translation of the English-specific metaphor "Woman is Animal" into Spanish, using a double questionnaire experimental design. The Likert scale was used to assess the correlation of 10 pre-set features, and open-ended questions were used to capture free association. The corpus selection was based on the comparison with authoritative dictionaries, and finally, 15 animal terms (including 10 English-specific metaphors such as shrew/roach/stud, 3 Spanish conventional metaphors such as zorra/vaca, and 2 cross-cultural empty terms such as stork) were tested. The data analysis integrated quantitative statistics and qualitative coding, with a focus on the interference of metaphor novelty on the stability of interpretation.

Spanish speakers exhibit a systematic semantic shift when translating metaphors into English (Fernandes, 2021). Novel metaphors primarily associate with "ugliness" (the highest scoring characteristic in the scale for animal terms). For instance, "musarana" (the

corresponding word in English for “shrew”) loses its original meaning of “quarrelsome” and instead activates the concept of “ugly and confused”. The “sexy” metaphor of “beaver” is covered by the concrete feature of “big teeth”. Only the “roach’, “bat”, and “stud” parts retain the negative semantic meaning of the English language. The cultural filter reshapes the interpretation of metaphors, such as “trout” unexpectedly strengthens the association with “lesbian” due to the background of Spanish homosexual slang. Animal metaphors default to negative connotations, with negative traits (ugly/promiscuous) significantly outweighing positive traits. Methodologically, 39.62% of the “no se” responses in the open questionnaire reflect the uncertainty in interpretation caused by the novelty of the metaphor, which is much higher than the questionnaire scale (7.39%).

Fernandes (2021) supports cross-cultural research on female metaphors-animal metaphors in American and Chinese magazines also face cultural adaptation challenges. For example, the semantic mismatch between the English “vixen” and the Chinese “狐狸精 hú li jīng” proves that cultural scripts can overturn the emotional orientation of metaphors. The discovery of “ugliness” as the default association suggests that new animal metaphors in media texts may automatically activate a negative framework, which has value for corpus analysis in deconstructing sexist rhetoric.

The transformation mechanism of metaphor in the translation process further reflects the negotiation of power relations and ideologies in cross-cultural communication. The Discourse Dynamics Framework provides a dynamic and multi-dimensional analytical approach for metaphor translation studies. It naturally aligns with the critical perspective of feminist metaphor research by integrating the characteristics of multiple layers of context, such as cognition, emotion, and social culture. Li et al. (2023) examined 179 female

metaphors in Qian Zhongshu's novel *Wei Cheng* in the Spanish translation by Taciana Fisac, focusing on three dominant systematic metaphors (including 40 vehicle-topic mappings). "Woman is An Animal", "Woman is Food", and "Woman is Plant". The Discourse Dynamics Framework multi-level model was employed, using the revised MIP process to annotate the Chinese original text, establishing metaphor systematic patterns through semantic clustering, and then comparing the reconstruction effects of the Spanish translation in the four dimensions of cognitive mapping, semantics, affectivity, and socio-cultural-historical context. The corpus includes the original 1947 edition of the novel (253,000 words) and the 2009 Spanish reedition. The historical context cognition was verified through the corpus.

Li et al. (2023) reveals that metaphorical transformation exhibits context-dependent hierarchical negotiation: Firstly, in animal metaphors, "chicken" (with a derogatory connotation implying prostitute) is translated as "pollos" (meat for consumption), which weakens the negative emotional value while retaining the "commercialization" meaning but eliminating the critical aspect of exploitation. Secondly, in food metaphors, "small beef" is replaced with "venado" (deer meat), maintaining the association with an exotic culture, but "*shark fin*" is directly translated as "*aleta de pez*", losing the dual meanings of "noble/cold", and masking the class objectification under male gaze. Thirdly, in plant metaphors, idioms such as "flower/*ligustrum*" ("seeking prostitutes") are mostly translated idiomatically, directly pointing to "*prostitutas*", although it conveys the literal meaning, it erases the patriarchal cognitive prototype of Chinese language regarding women as "flexible flowers". These transformations show that translators prioritize handling cultural accessibility such as replacing rare ingredients in Spanish, but often at the cost of sacrificing the ideological critical dimension of the source language metaphor. The method

of the Discourse Dynamics Framework model analyzing the linkage between emotional value and cultural context can be transferred to the comparison of magazine materials, revealing how media translation reconciles the global flow of feminist discourse with local acceptance tensions.

Even for the United States and the United Kingdom, which belong to the same English-speaking cultural circle, the metaphorical representations in their media vary due to differences in historical and social contexts. The cross-cultural analysis of conceptual metaphors in feminist discourse focuses on the metaphorical representation patterns in mainstream newspapers of the United States and the United Kingdom during the Women's History Month in 2022. Rub (2022) compared the newspaper corpora of the United States such as *USA Today*, *The New York Times* and the United Kingdom such as *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph* using the corpus linguistics method (13,300 words/110 articles in the United States, 11,800 words/129 articles in the United Kingdom). Based on Lakoff and Johnson's CMT and framing theory, and in combination with the AntConc software, the study identified metaphorical expressions related to "women/gender/feminist". The research adopted a corpus-driven approach, extracting two types of metaphors through keyword and concordance analysis: fixed form expressions derived from the conventional conceptual system and new meaning expressions creating new social cognition. After quantitative frequency statistics, the context was qualitatively interpreted.

Rub (2022) reveals that both countries predominantly use "war" related fixed form metaphors (67 cases in the United States and 52 cases in the United Kingdom), but there are differences in the social issues mapped by the metaphors. The American discourse highlights systemic oppression: "attack" maps the deprivation of reproductive rights such as the abortion penalty in Guatemala. "Barriers" points to the punishment of motherhood

(lack of childcare hindering career development). “Struggle” relates to racial intersectionality (the case of Ketanji Brown Jackson’s nomination). The unique metaphor “weaponized” reflects the stigmatization of anti-feminism. The UK emphasizes workplace equality: “fight/combat” focuses on salary equality and prevention of sexual harassment. “Close” metaphor promotes equal pay although the salary gap was 8% in 2021. “Solidarity” builds a political alliance for women. The reproductive rights issue shows progress (home-based medical abortion solutions). The use of new meaning metaphors is significantly higher in the United States (48 cases vs 20 cases), with “push” advocating for abortion legalization and “voice” reconstructing social cognition reshaping social perception, while the United Kingdom’s “close” reflects a pragmatic policy orientation. These differences confirm the influence of the history of the feminist movement. The early advantage in rights acquisition in the United States has not eliminated the deep patriarchal structure, while the United Kingdom focuses more on the core issues of the fourth wave of the movement.

Rub (2022) validates the effectiveness of the corpus-driven CMT framework in cross-cultural comparisons. She reveals the metaphorical mapping of the gap between legal guarantees and actual implementation such as the repeated “deconstruction” of reproductive rights in the United States. Rub (2022) highlights the constraints of historical and cultural contexts on the choice of metaphors such as the contrast between “solidarity” in the British workplace and “struggle” in the American racial context.

The cross-cultural acceptance of specific metaphors can be quantitatively analyzed through experiments. The social cognitive effect of war metaphors is a typical example. The war metaphor significantly reshapes the public’s perception of women’s rights issues in feminist media discourse. Reali and Avellaneda (2023) conducted an experiment to

explore the influence of war metaphors and gender-inclusive Spanish on attitudes towards the right to abortion. A 2x2 between-subjects design was employed, with 264 Colombian undergraduate students reading different versions of abortion scenario texts. The key variables were language framework (war metaphors such as *luchaba*/*combatido* vs. neutral frames such as *exigia*/*intercedido*) and language type (gender-inclusive Spanish such as *todes*/*aquelles* vs. non-gender-inclusive forms). The metaphor design of the experimental text was based on the analysis of feminist news in the Spanish NOW corpus (*Corpus del Espanol*) by Reali and Avellaneda (2023). Participants evaluated four cognitive aspects using a Likert scale: Right-to-Decide autonomy, Partner's-Say intervention right, Role Strength intensity, and Coldness. Data analysis used regression models and controlled variables such as political ideology, religiosity, gender identification, and feminist identification.

Reali and Avellaneda (2023) results clearly demonstrate that war metaphors enhance the sense of empowerment: compared to neutral frames, they significantly increase the Right-to-Decide identification rate (β= -0.23, p = 0.032), decrease the Support for Partner's Words endorsement rate (β = 0.24, p = 0.026), and reduce the negative evaluation of Coldness (β = 0.24, p = 0.021). Gender-inclusive Spanish only slightly improves the Strength score (β = 0.21, p = 0.048), with overall limited impact. Social demographic variables have a stronger effect-conservative, religious, and male participants systematically devalue autonomy and reinforce the stereotype of coldness, confirming the negative labels of feminists. The unexpected result of war metaphors reducing coldness may be related to the embodied cognition theory. The "heat" schema such as the anger metaphor triggered by the warrior metaphor neutralizes the coldness stereotype in the "heat" schema. These findings empirically demonstrate the role of CMT in feminist discourse,

revealing that the war framework reconstructs the subject's agency while implicitly carrying the risk of polarization.

Reali and Avellaneda's (2023) experimental paradigm verified the directional influence of specific metaphors such as war metaphors on cognition, suggesting that cross-cultural research needs to quantitatively analyze the effectiveness differences of the war framework in media materials. The moderating effect of social variables such as conservatism and religiosity further highlights the importance of cultural background. this has implications for comparing the acceptance of metaphors in the individualistic American context and the collectivist Chinese context. Reali and Avellaneda (2023) based on the corpus-driven method of *Corpus del Espanol*, also provided a reusable analytical model for cross-language metaphor research.

To sum up, in a cross-cultural context, the operation of gender metaphors is constrained by cultural variables and exhibits systematic differences and negotiated characteristics. Cultural filtering reshapes the metaphorical mapping logic. Fernandes (2021) conducted an experiment on the translation of animal metaphors in English and Spanish, showing that Spanish speakers' interpretation of metaphors such as "shrew" has undergone semantic shifts. The new metaphors default to activating the "ugly" framework, confirming the reconfiguration of metaphorical meanings by cultural scripts and suggesting that cross-cultural comparisons should pay attention to the cultural compatibility of source domain meanings.

Metaphor translation is a process of ideological negotiation. Li et al. (2023) analyzed the English translation of *The Fortress* and found that the transformation of the metaphor "Woman is Animal/Food" (such as translating "chicken" as "pollos") weakened negative emotions while retaining the logic of commodification. This reflects the

translator's balance between cultural accessibility and ideological criticism, and reveals the implicit adjustment of power relations in metaphor transmission.

The historical context shapes the bias in metaphor selection. Rub (2022) compared British and American newspapers and found that both countries frequently used war metaphors, but the United States focused on systemic oppression (such as "attack" symbolizing the deprivation of reproductive rights), while the United Kingdom emphasized workplace equality (such as "fight" related to fair salary). The differences stem from the historical trajectory of the feminist movement, confirming that the context restricts the mapping of metaphors to social issues.

The cognitive effect of metaphor has cultural boundaries. The experiment conducted by Reali and Avellaneda (2023) indicates that war metaphors enhance the autonomous cognition of abortion rights, but social variables (such as conservative tendencies) moderate this effect, suggesting that cross-cultural applications need to take into account the cultural cognitive schemas of the audience. These findings provide a methodological reference for comparing the metaphors of magazines in the United States and China, but they also highlight the insufficiency of existing research in systematically comparing conceptual metaphors related to feminism of media (especially magazines) in the United States and China, leaving room for future research.

2.3.3 Magazines as Gendered Discursive Spaces

This section focuses on magazines as discourse spaces. The operational logic of gender metaphors within them and revealing how the characteristics of magazines shape the expression of gender power relations are analyzed.

Women's magazines, as an important carrier of traditional gender discourse, often use animal metaphors as a means to solidify the power structure. Rodríguez (2009) revealed how animal metaphors solidify the gender power structure, which provides methodological inspiration for deconstructing the implicit gender ideology in media texts. This study systematically compared the cognitive mechanisms and social functions of female animal metaphors in English and Spanish, aiming to demonstrate how animal metaphors become tools of patriarchal discourse through the "Great chain of being" theoretical framework and ethnobiological classification method. Rodríguez (2009) employed cultural semantic analysis, integrating Leach's animal classification model based on social distance and palatability and historical etymology research, focusing on three types of metaphor carriers: pets (such as bitch/kitten), farmyard animals (such as cow/chick), and wild animals (such as vixen/fox). It analyzed semantic migration paths through dictionary definitions ("*oed*", "*drae*", "*dihh*") and case studies of common sayings.

Rodríguez (2009) has found that animal metaphors reinforce gender oppression through three dimensions. Firstly, the pet metaphor (bird/*perrita*) emphasizes the domesticated nature of women, using the infantile characteristics (small size, helplessness) to imply their dependence, such as the sexual objectification mapping of "pussy". Secondly, farmyard animals highlight their edible and serviceable nature, combined with the concepts of "Desire is Hunger" and "Sex is Riding", reducing women to sexual resources such as "filly" implying "rideable", "rabbit" pointing to reproductive functions. Thirdly, wild animals stigmatize women's autonomy, constructing women who resist patriarchal control as threats such as "vixen/*zorra*" being endowed with "promiscuous/fierce" meanings, while the male fox symbolizes wisdom. Rodríguez (2009) particularly reveals the age discrimination mechanism of metaphors. Young women are mostly associated with small

young animals (chick/kitten) carrying positive values, while older women are degraded to large livestock (hen/*nag*) or ugly beasts (*hyena*/crow).

Rodríguez (2009) confirms that conceptual metaphors are the linguistic crystallization of cultural power relations and can be directly transferred to the ideological criticism of American Chinese magazine texts. Secondly, its cross-cultural comparison model like the semantic differentiation of the "fox" metaphor in English and Spanish inspires the development of genre research design. Finally, the dual mechanism of domestication-stigmatization of animal metaphors provides an analytical framework for interpreting the implicit degradation of "independent women" discourse in media.

From women's magazines to broader British and American magazines, a systematic analysis of frequent metaphors can provide a more in-depth examination of the gender coding in magazine discourse. Rodríguez (2008) analyzed six types of high-frequency metaphors in English teenage and women's magazines that represent women: edible substances (e.g., honey, tart), animals (e.g., chick, vixen), babies (e.g., babe), body parts (e.g., arm candy), aristocracy (e.g., queen), and supernatural creatures (e.g., goddess, siren). Based on CMT and the Great Chain of Being theory, Rodríguez (2008) critically examined the print and electronic texts of 11 mainstream British and American magazines (such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*), using metaphor mapping analysis to reveal the implicit gender discrimination logic beneath the surface "positive" expressions.

Rodríguez (2008) reveals that these metaphors objectify women through systematic downgrading or sexualization strategies: Firstly, the "Woman is Dessert" metaphor network (such as cookie, and pudding) emphasizes decoration, separability, and short-term satisfaction, implicitly suggesting unimportance and promiscuity, and collaborates with the

"Sex is Eating" metaphor. Secondly, animal metaphors are stratified by body type and controllability-PET types (kitten/bitch) highlight the need for domestication, farmyard types (chick/hen) associate edibility with availability, and wild types (vixen) stigmatize women's autonomy. Thirdly, even the seemingly "upgraded" aristocrat (queen) and supernatural (goddess) metaphors are narrowed down to sex queen or sex goddess, thereby undermining their power connotations. The key mechanism lies in the hiding function of metaphors (Low, 1988) and the hierarchical manipulation of cognitive chains: 93% of the cases place women at a lower level than humans in the categories of food/animals/infants, and only 7% of the "upgraded" metaphors remain sexualized. Rodríguez (2008) provides a core analytical dimension for cross-cultural metaphor comparison-the ideological tendencies of metaphor types (such as the universality of downgrading strategies), the systematic network construction (such as the derivation of chick from chick flick/chick lit), and the contextual sexualization patterns. It is urgently needed to verify its variations and continuities in different cultural media.

The research on the female metaphor framework in 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) magazine reveals the impact of social changes on the representation of gender ideology. Chen (2023) aimed to explore the metaphorical framework of women in the magazine *Women of China* and the gender and female ideology it embodied. Chen's (2023) research objectives were to analyze the changes in the use of female metaphors in two different periods (1956-1966 and 1978-1998), to reveal the social ideology conveyed by these metaphors and to explore the productivity of metaphor in different historical contexts. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The corpus comes from the titles of articles in the magazine *Women of China*, with a total of 11,497 data, including 3,417 from 1956 to 1966 and 8,079 from 1978 to 1998. Chen (2023) combined corpus linguistics with

CMT and used MIP to ensure the accuracy of metaphor recognition. Corpus processing involved encoding female metaphors in titles and classifying them according to lexical unit frequency and semantic domain.

Chen (2023) found that there were differences between the two periods of female metaphors. From 1956 to 1966, the semantic domains of "war" and "family" were mainly concentrated, accounting for 42% and 32% respectively. From 1978 to 1998, the "nature" semantic domain became the most important source, accounting for 46%. Specifically, the war metaphors such as "warrior" and "female general" mostly appeared in the early stage, highlighting women's revolutionary and public roles. The "nature" metaphor of "flower" increased significantly from 1978 to 1998, accounting for 25.21% of the lexical frequency during this period, and reflecting the soft and beautifying turn of female images. In addition, statistical analysis showed that the difference of time had a significant impact on metaphor use. Chen (2023) revealed that the use of female metaphors was closely related to social ideology. In 1956-1966, metaphors emphasized women's roles in the public sphere, such as the "Work Role Model". From 1978 to 1998, metaphors focused more on women's private sphere identities, such as "wife" and "mother". This change reflected the transformation of social culture and gender concepts in different historical periods. Chen (2023) provided a new perspective for understanding how media metaphors shaped and reflected gender roles in society. These analysis of the interaction between cultural context and metaphorical framework is helpful for understanding the construction logic of feminist cognition under different social systems, and offers methodological insights for comparing ideologies.

To sum up, the magazine functions as a gendered discursive space, serving as both a repository for power codes and a dynamic instrument of social change (Chen, 2023; Rodríguezb, 2008, 2009). These studies have revealed the functional role of metaphor in terms of its capacity for dynamic interpretation. However, a comparative analysis of the cultural and media characteristics of metaphor in different cultures, such as the depth of narrative, has yet to be conducted. This analysis could provide a foundation for future studies that explore the cultural differences in metaphorical expression.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 presents the research design, corpus sources, instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and limitations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study aimed to conduct a corpus-based comparative analysis of feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines from July 1st, 2023 to June 30th 2024. This study adopts a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative corpus analysis with qualitative cultural interpretation to align with its objective of exploring both linguistic patterns and their cultural embeddedness. The corpus of the four American and Chinese magazines in this study were self-built. Corpus linguistics is a method of language research based on actual language use cases (Cushing, 2017). As a computational program, corpora can reveal linguistic patterns and thus understand how language is used in discourse construction (Adjei, 2013).

The corpus-driven approach was adopted in this study. The corpus-driven approach means that the research starts with no presuppositions, centers on the corpus, and discovers new categories and rules through research (Biber, 2009). This approach is operationalized through two interconnected stages. First, quantitative analysis using tools like AntConc and SegmentAnt identifies and quantifies conceptual metaphors, which focuses on frequency, collocational patterns (e.g., MI-scores), and distribution across the two cultural contexts. Second, qualitative analysis interprets these linguistic patterns by situating them within their specific cultural and social frameworks. By collecting American and Chinese

textual data from between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, it was possible to identify and quantify conceptual metaphors related to feminism used in these magazines that reflect actual language use, rather than based on subjective understandings or assumptions of the researcher. Figure 3.1 shows the conceptual framework for the study.

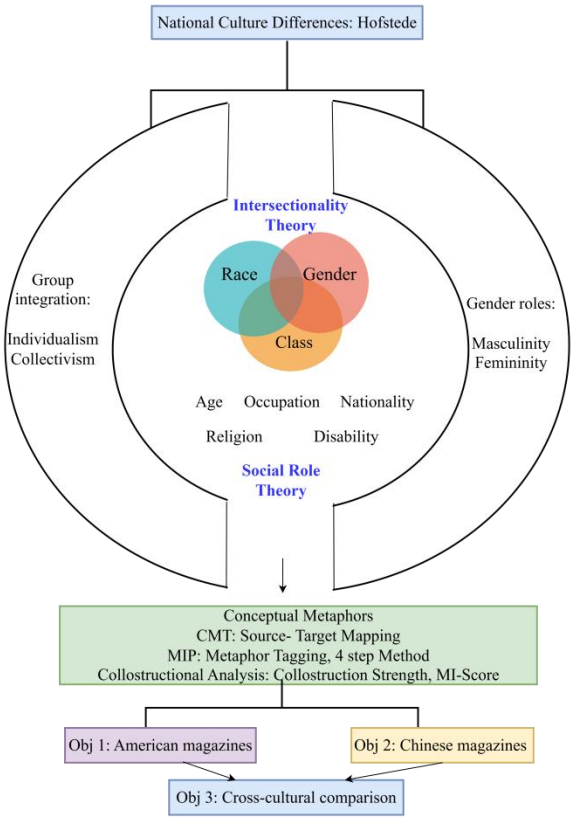


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework

This study integrates CMT, Stefanowitsch and Gries' (2003) Collostructional Analysis, and Pragglejaz Group's (2007) MIP to construct a composite framework for cross-cultural metaphor analysis. To address objective 1 and 2, firstly, metaphorical lexical units in American and Chinese magazine texts are systematically identified based on MIP standardization process (four-step method) to ensure the objectivity of metaphorical labeling. Secondly, it quantifies the collostruction strength of collexemes in specific

constructions (e.g. [VP feminism]) through Collostructional Analysis to reveal the frequency distribution and cultural preference of metaphorical expressions. To address objective 3, finally, based on Social Roles Theory, Intersectionality Theory, and Cultural Dimensions Theory, the cultural specificity of the cognitive structure of metaphor in the source domain mapping is analyzed. The combination of the three factors takes into account the rigor of metaphor recognition, the accuracy of statistical analysis and the systematicness of cognitive hierarchy, which provides methodological innovation for the cross-cultural contrast of feminist discourse.

3.2 Corpus Sources

3.2.1 Selection of Magazines

In this section, the corpus sources and the selection criteria for the magazines and the magazine articles are described. It is important to note that the selection of magazines from the United States and China is not arbitrary, nor does it exclude other potential pairs (e.g., Malaysia and the United Kingdom). Instead, they serve as cases to compare gender discourse in different ideological systems (liberal democratic versus socialist). The corpus sources for the study are four online magazines, namely, *Ms.*, *Bust*, 中国妇女 (*Women of China*), and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*). Two selection criteria were used to select the magazines. The selected magazines are online-accessible publications, ensuring that researchers can easily obtain the complete content of the articles and enabling real-time access to contemporary discourse. Online platforms also provide searchable full-text databases critical for systematic corpus analysis across cultural contexts. In addition, the selected magazines focus on women-related issues and are free. Magazines that rely on

subscription systems or have paywalls were excluded from the study due to financial constraints.

The American corpus was taken from two online women's magazines. The first American magazine is *Ms.* (*Ms.*, n.d.), which is a feminist magazine founded in 1972 by American feminist Gloria Steinem, among others. Gloria Steinem is a chief editor of Ms.. The editorial team comprises long-time women's rights activists scholars and journalists who participated in the United States second and third-wave feminist traditions. Gloria Steinem is a prominent American feminist, journalist, and activist whose life and work have shaped the women's rights movement in the United States for over half a century (Steinem, 2017). Rising from a challenging childhood, she became a leading voice for gender equality, co-founding Ms. Magazine and advocating for equal opportunity and social justice. Gloria Steinem's activism, writing, and organizing have made her a powerful symbol of feminism and a catalyst for change, inspiring generations to challenge traditional roles and pursue equality for all people (Izzo, 2002). The magazine is known for its exploration and advocacy of women's rights, gender equality and feminist issues. It covers not only the achievements and challenges of women in the political, economic, cultural and social spheres, but also all aspects of women's lives, including health, education, career and family (Shragai, 2025). *Ms.* magazine has influenced generations of women and men, becoming one of the important voices of the feminist movement (Doherty, 2023).

The second American magazine is *Bust* (*Bust*, n.d.) founded in 1993, an American cultural magazine centered on feminism. Debbie Stoller is an American feminist writer, editor, and co-founder of *Bust* magazine, a publication that has been influential in shaping

third-wave feminism since the 1990s. Known for blending feminist advocacy with pop culture, Debbie Stoller helped create a space where issues of gender equality, sexuality, and lifestyle could coexist with humor and style (Chidgey, 2020). Debbie Stoller is also recognized for her work in the "Stitch'n Bitch" knitting movement, which reframed traditional crafts as empowering and feminist. Her contributions have made her a key figure in contemporary feminist media and culture. The *Bust* magazine is edited by a collective of independent cultural workers and young feminist activists reflecting the U.S. feminist tradition of challenging mainstream norms through diverse creative expression. *Bust* is dedicated to exploring and promoting the independent spirit and diverse interests of women in art, music, fashion, film, literature and more. Known for its non-commercial, iconoclastic editorial style and independent spirit, *Bust*, has as its readership young women and feminists (Groeneveld, 2009). According to Groeneveld (2009), *Bust* showcases the creativity, achievements and social roles of women in contemporary society through in-depth feature stories and commentaries.

For American magazines, *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan* were not selected because the articles could not be accessed online without subscription. The researcher has financial constraints which made it not feasible to select these two magazines as corpus sources. Specifically, the preferential price for the digital subscription access of *Vogue* for one year is $3 per month, for annual digital access is $1 per month and "vogue + All access" is $5 per month (*Vogue*, n.d.). The preferential price for the "print+digital" combination subscription access is $9 per month for one year (*Vogue*, n.d.). The most basic digital subscription option offered by *Cosmopolitan*, "Website Access Only", costs $4 per month, while its annual limited-time offer for "Unlock it all" access is $15 per year (*Cosmopolitan,* n.d.). Because of the financial constraints, these two women's magazines were not selected

as data sources for conceptual metaphors related to feminism. Thus, although these more commercial, widely consumed media can offer further insight into how conceptual metaphors shape gender representations across a wider spectrum of discourse, they were not selected. This is acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

The Chinese corpus were from two online women's magazines. The first Chinese magazine is 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) (*Women of China*, n.d.), which is a monthly magazine published by the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) with an editorial board including feminist scholars and ACWF members. The magazine bridges academic research and state-led gender equality initiatives reflecting China's state feminism tradition. Lu Jin is the Editor-in-Chief of *Women of China*. She plays a key role in leading one of China's prominent publications focused on women's issues, advocating for women's rights, health, and social status in contemporary China (Andrews, 2018). Lu Jin is recognized for her work in promoting research and awareness related to women's quality of life and welfare in China. Through her editorial leadership, Lu Jin contributes significantly to the discourse on gender equality and women's empowerment in Chinese society (Wang, 2010). Founded in 1939, 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) is the longest-running women's magazine in Chinese history. The magazine covers a wide range of topics, including women's health, rights, education, employment, entrepreneurship and the environment. In 1949, with the birth of New China, the magazine changed its name to *New Chinese Women*. In 1956, when the country entered a new era of socialist revolution and construction, the magazine resumed its original name of 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) (Frith & Feng, 2009). The magazine holds a significant position in the history of women's magazines in China. In the 1950s, it not only fulfilled the tasks of disseminating national policies and shaping new female images, but also broadened the horizons of women through daily life guidance and

discussions on female topics, providing practical assistance to the lives of women at that time (Chen, 2016).

The second Chinese magazine is 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) (*Marriage and Family*, n.d.), an academic magazine co-sponsored by China Marriage and Family Research Association and China Women's Magazine. The magazine is a comprehensive monthly publication focused on marriage, family life, and related social issues. It emphasizes a blend of theory and practicality, covering topics from sociology, psychology, education, law, and health to literature and aesthetics. The contributors include sociologists specializing in gender studies and grassroots family counselors aligning with China's feminist tradition of integrating family harmony with social development. The Editor-in-Chief of the magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) is Li Huiyun. Established in 1982, the magazine has become one of China's leading publications in the field of marriage and family studies, actively promoting socialist cultural values and providing readers with scientific and practical guidance on family life (Baidu Baike, 2022). Since its inception in 1985, 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) has exerted a wide influence in China and even around the world with its rich and touching content, authoritative and authentic reports and rigorous and pragmatic spirit (Luo & Choi, 2016).

3.2.2 Selection of Magazine Articles

In this section the selection criteria for articles in the four selected magazines are described. Firstly, articles are focused on feminist topics such as "female", "women", and "feminism", excluding unrelated themes. When these search terms are used in the magazine archive, the articles selected are those that are highlighted. Secondly, articles are written by magazine editors and contributors, excluding third-party reprints or

advertisements. Thirdly, articles are published between July 1st, 2023 and June 30th, 2024 to ensure contemporary relevance. All the articles that are published in this time period were selected, regardless of the number of articles whether it is 57 in *Bust* or 3,837 in 中国妇女 (*Women of China*). Table 3.1 shows the American and Chinese corpus details.

Table 3.1: Comparative Table of American and Chinese Corpus

Data Category	**Circulation/Readership**	**Number of Articles**	**Number of Words**
American magazine *Ms.*	~65,000 quarterly copies/168,000 readers (*Ms.*, n.d.)	1,041	1,613,274
American magazine *Bust*	~300,000 readers (*Bust*, n.d.)	57	51,459
Total	**468,000 readers**	**1,098**	**1,664,733**
Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*)	280,000+ monthly copies (*Women of China*, n.d.)	3,837	3,159,025
Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)	180,000 monthly copies (*Marriage and Family*, n.d.)	345	472,320
Total	**460,000+ monthly copies**	**4,182**	**3,631,345**
Grand Total		**5,280**	**5,296,078**

Altogether 5,280 magazine articles were collected for analysis, that is, 1,098 articles from the two American magazines and 4,182 articles from the two Chinese magazines. The total word count of the articles is 5,296,078, that is, 1,664,733 words from the two American magazines and 3,631,345 words from the two Chinese magazines. The corpus size is bigger than other studies such as Bao (2024) who analyzed Weibo feminist metaphors with 206,089 posts (15 million words) in their dataset. Chen (2023) analyzed the Chinese magazine *Women of China* with 11,497 titles (5 million words) in their dataset. Rub (2022) analyzed newspapers with 1,200 articles (3 million words) in their dataset.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

There are three steps in the data collection procedures are magazine selection, article identification and corpus construction, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Data Collection Procedures

Phase	Step	Action
1. Magazine Selection	1.1	Identified target magazines based on their established authority in feminist discourse.
2. Article Identification	2.1	Accessed magazine archives
	2.2	Filtered articles by Date range in each of the four magazines separately.
		Exclusions: third-party reprints or advertisements
	2.3	Compiled and converted articles to plaintext (.txt)
3. Corpus Construction	3.1	Retained structural elements (headings, paragraphs)
		Removed images, captions, hyperlinks, author bios
	3.2	Processed files with:
		English texts: AntConc 4.2.4
		Chinese texts: SegmentAnt 1.0.0 (word segmentation) → AntConc 4.2.4
	3.3	Validated corpus against source URLs; resolved formatting errors (e.g., encoding mismatches).

Firstly, the magazine selection is based on the pre-determined selection criteria (see Section 3.2). Four women's magazines were selected, that is, two from the United States (*Ms.* and *Bust*) and two from China (中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage & Family*).

Secondly, the selection of articles was conducted using three keywords: "women", "gender", and "feminist". For the American data, the first magazine was *Ms.*. The option "explore by topic" was clicked from the main website, and there were three topics

“Politics”, “Violence & Harassment”, and “Health”. The second American magazine was *Bust*. On the main page of its website, there were two topics, namely, “Feminism” and “Living”. Articles that deal with “women”, “gender”, and “feminist” issues or topics were selected from the two American magazines.

For the Chinese data, the first magazine was 中国妇女 (*Women of China*). From the main website, there were four topics “要闻 yào wén (Top News), 妇联直播间 fù lián zhí bō jiān (Women’s Federation Live Studio), 巾帼风采 jīn guó fēng cǎi (Women’s Elegance and Charm), 法律帮助 fǎ lǜ bāng zhù (Legal Assistance). The second Chinese magazine was 婚姻与家庭 hūn yīn yǔ jiā tíng (Marriage and Family). From the main website, there were three topics 妇联直播 fù lián zhí bō (Women’s Federation Live), 人物 rén wù (Profiles), and 婚姻之道 hūn yīn zhī dào (The Art of Marriage)”. Articles that deal with “women”, “gender”, and “feminist” issues or topics were selected from the two Chinese magazines.

The relevant articles dealing with “women”, “gender”, and “feminist” topics within the time period between July 1st, 2023 and June 30th, 2024 were selected from the four magazines. The articles were copied and pasted and uniformly converted into plain text format (.txt). This process, while preserving key structural elements such as titles and paragraphs, removed non-text content such as images, captions, hyperlinks, and author profiles, ensuring that subsequent analysis focused on linguistic features. The txt. format could maintain the original layout and format of the article, which was convenient for subsequent processing with AntConc 4.2.4.

Table 3.3 shows the specific details of the American and Chinese corpora. For *Ms.* the total word count is 1,613,274, number of articles is 1041, comprising 251 articles on politics, 194 articles on violence & harassment, 596 articles on health. For *Bust* the total word count is 51,459, number of articles is 57, comprising 12 articles on feminism, and 45 articles on living. For 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) the total word count is 3,159,025, number of articles is 3,837, comprising 2,464 articles on 妇联直播间 fù lián zhí bō jiān (Women's Federation Live Studio), 1,324 articles on 要闻 yào wén (Top News), 35 articles on 巾帼风采 jīn guó fēng cǎi (Women's Elegance and Charm), and 14 articles on 法律帮助 fǎ lǜ bāng zhù (Legal Assistance). For 婚姻与家庭 hūn yīn yǔ jiā tíng (Marriage and Family) the total word count is 472,320, number of articles is 345, comprising 300 articles on 妇联直播 fù lián zhí bō (Women's Federation Live), 23 articles on 人物 rén wù (Profiles), 22 articles on 婚姻之道 hūn yīn zhī dào (The Art of Marriage).

Table 3.3: Special Details of American Magazines *Ms.* and *Bust and* **中国妇女** (*Women of China*) and **婚姻与家庭** (*Marriage and Family*)

Magazine	**Topic**	**Number of Articles**	**Number of Words for the Articles**
Ms.	Politics	251	413,657
	Violence & Harassment	194	297,152
	Health	596	902,465
Total (*Ms.*)		**1041**	**1,613,274**
Bust	Feminism	12	10,517
Total (*Bust*)	Living	45	40,942
Grand Total		**57**	**51,459**
中国妇女 (*Women of China*)	妇联直播间 fù lián zhí bō jiān (Women's Federation Live Studio)	2,464	2,863,722

	要闻 yào wén (Top News)	1,324	173,813
	巾帼风采 jīn guó fēng cǎi (Women's Elegance and Charm)	35	93,582
	法律帮助 fǎ lǜ bāng zhù (Legal Assistance)	14	27,908
Total (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))		**3,837**	**3,159,025**
婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)	妇联直播 fù lián zhí bō (Women's Federation Live)	300	343,775
	人物 rén wù (Profiles)	23	86,663
	婚姻之道 hūn yīn zhī dào (The Art of Marriage)	22	41,882
Total (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))		**345**	**472,320**
Grand Total		**4,182**	**3,631,345**

Finally, as shown in Table 3.3, the third stage of data collection is corpus construction. Text standardization and verification operations were carried out. Different language texts were processed differently. American materials were directly analyzed using AntConc 4.2.4, a corpus analysis tool developed by Professor Anthony. While SegmentAnt 1.0.0 was pre-processed to segment Chinese text. The Chinese magazine data were built in an integrated version, and uploaded into the SegmentAnt 1.0.0 for word segmentation. Within a minute, the segmented Chinese magazines corpus was stored. The completeness of the corpus was verified against the original source URLs article by article, and encoding errors and other format anomalies were corrected to ensure the accuracy and

usability of the text data. This standardization process ultimately produced a unified and machine-readable corpus.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

This research aimed to conduct a corpus-based comparative analysis of feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines.. As for objective 1 which is to identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in American magazines (*Ms.*, *Bust*) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse.

3.4.1 Data Analysis Procedures for Objective 1

This section describes the four steps of data analysis procedures for identifing dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in American magazines (*Ms.*, *Bust*) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse. Firstly, the American magazines corpora were uploaded into AntConc 4.2.4 for word frequency analysis. It not only helps efficiently browse and analyze corpora data, but also filters out key words based on word frequency statistics. In this study, special attention was paid to the words with the frequency higher than 100 times in terms of word frequency in the "Word" function, because these high-frequency words tend to reflect the primary themes and trends of the corpus. English words of different plural or derivative forms would be considered as one word. The prepositions, articles, conjunctions, pronouns, and other unrelated non metaphorical words were deleted, leaving the meaningful words most of which were nouns and verbs for analyzing. This resulted in a list of 62 meaningful words for metaphor analysis.

Secondly, the high frequency of the words in the corpus highlights the significant position of feminist issues in women's magazines. In order to further explore the correlation between these 62 keywords and other words one by one, AntConc's "Collocate"

analysis function was also used. Under the Settings menu, “MI” from the “Effect size measure” drop-down menu was selected. After running the “collocate” analysis, the MI-Score of each collocate was displayed in the result list. Significant collocates with MI-Score greater than or equal to 3.0 were identified. MI-Score is a statistical index to measure the correlation between words (Jahagirdar & Saccenti, 2020). When MI-Score is equal to or greater than 3.0, it is generally considered that there is a strong correlation between the two words (Mohr et al., 2001). In this selection process, the analysis of 24 feminist English words was focused on, i.e. “campaign(s)”, “fight(ing), “barriers”, “attack(s)”, “solidarity”, “victory”, “break”, “battle”, “combat”, “free”, “struggle”, “access (accessing, accessible)”, “progress”, “ways”, “path”, “foundation”, “building”, “hold”, “light”, “power”, “economic”, “wave”, “push”, “voice”. The ones with MI-Score greater or equal to 3.0 will be selected.

Thirdly, using AntConc’s keyword in the context (KWIC) function, the collocates with metaphorical meanings can further be screened out, and the top 24 collocates in frequency can be found out and a detailed understanding of how these words are used in specific contexts can be gained, including their context and frequency distribution. By analyzing the context in which metaphors appear, its relationship with specific cultural concepts, social values and historical background was explored. For example, how the feminist metaphor reflects social expectations of female roles, the evolution of gender relations, and the idea of gender equality. For example, from the “collocate” function, “women” + “collaborative” was found. In the “KWIC” function, one of the original examples is “We are passionate about building a more cohesive movement for gender-balanced democracy through our newest initiative, the Women’s Power Collaborative, to help remedy the barriers outlined in the report.” This initiative aims to promote a gender-

balanced democratic movement through collaborative efforts and address the obstacles identified in the report. The collocate reflects the society's great attention to gender equality and the important role of women in politics, reflecting the efforts and historical background of promoting gender equality in modern society.

Fourthly, at the stage of conceptual metaphor recognition, every article in the online magazines was reviewed to identify the feminist metaphorical use and distinguish it from the literal meaning. KWIC analysis and MIP method (2007) were utilized to determine the feminist metaphorical meaning by examining the use of words in specific contexts, collocation with other words and syntactic functions. The recognition and determination of metaphor follow the operation process of MIP (2007) and carry out a four-step analysis. The first step is to establish a corpus containing the texts of American and Chinese magazines and conduct word segmentation and part-of-speech tagging. The second step is to determine whether there is a semantic conflict between their meanings in the context and their basic meanings. The third step is to type the identified metaphors based on CMT involved in each metaphor instance. MIP provides a systematic and reproducible operating procedure to ensure the objectivity and consistency of metaphor recognition. Then the fourth and final step is to identify feminist metaphorical terms. For example, "fight barriers" or "overcoming challenges" can be identified as metaphorical usages that go beyond their literal physical conflict meanings. Furthermore, based on Lakoff and Johnson's CMT, the identified language metaphors are systematically summarized and abstracted. This process aims to extract the higher-level cognitive structure that governs these specific language expressions, which is the conceptual metaphor. For instance, when expressions such as "battle for equality", "combat discrimination", and "break down walls" are repeatedly used in the text, these specific

language metaphors are summarized and abstracted into higher-level conceptual metaphors like “War is Feminism”. Therefore, data analysis does not merely focus on the frequency of occurrence of specific metaphorical words (language metaphors), but rather through systematic classification, reveals and verifies the cultural-restrictive conceptual metaphor framework and mapping patterns (such as the source domain [war] → target domain [women’s rights movement]) behind these words. This process of refining from specific language instances to abstract cognitive frameworks is the main method for identifying and analyzing conceptual metaphors in this study.

Moreover, integrating Social Role Theory and the Intersectionality framework enriches this analytical process by emphasizing that conceptual metaphors are not static cognitive structures but are shaped by the interplay of multiple social categories, transnational cultural flows, and discursive power. Specifically, social role keywords (e.g., “caregiver”, “advocate”) and identity markers (e.g., “race”, “class”, “urban-rural”) were tagged in the corpus to examine their co-occurrence patterns with identified metaphors. Quantitative analysis of these co-occurrences, paired with qualitative interpretation of how metaphors mediate role negotiations across intersecting identities, further revealed how conceptual metaphors dynamically reflect and reshape the interplay of social roles and power structures in feminist discourse. From an intersectional perspective, the feminist war metaphor may carry distinct meanings when intertwined with race, class, or ethnicity, reflecting differential experiences of gendered oppression (Crenshaw, 1989). This integration, therefore, ensures that the analysis captures the complexity of feminist conceptual metaphors as dynamic, multi-layered cultural and discursive practices.

3.4.2 Data Analysis Procedures for Objective 2

This section describes the four steps of data analysis procedures for identifying dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in American magazines and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse. The Chinese corpus comprising 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) were analyzed. One extra steps needed to be carried out for the Chinese corpus before the four steps of analysis which were described for the American corpus. The first step is translating the Chinese data to English. All Chinese corpus needed to be converted into English before being included in the analysis to ensure the consistency of cross-language corpus analysis. After the researcher completed the initial translation, a co-supervisor proficient in both Chinese and English and familiar with the research field independently reviewed all translations, especially key terms (especially metaphor expressions, culturally specific concepts, and core theoretical terms). Uncertain or difficult translation examples found during the review were discussed by both parties, and the most appropriate translation method was determined based on the context and research objectives, and a unified terminology translation table was formed and applied to the entire database.

The second, third and fourth steps follow the same of those of the American corpus. High-frequency words (≥100 occurrences) were filtered, excluding function words. This resulted in a list of 77 meaningful words (mainly nouns and verbs) for metaphor analysis. Significant collocates (MI-Score ≥ 3.0) of 32 feminist-related keywords (e.g., "建设 jiàn shè (build), 力量 lì liàng (power), 征程 zhēng chéng (journey) were identified using the "Collocate" function. These collocations provided insights into key feminist concepts and their sociocultural contexts. Expressions like 战胜职场挑战 zhàn shèng zhí chǎng tiǎo

zhàn (overcome workplace challenges)" can be abstracted as feminist obstacle metaphors, highlighting the gender discrimination and professional challenges faced by women in the workplace competition in Chinese society. The operationalization was guided by Social Role Theory, which was employed to analyse how the concept of "overcoming workplace challenges" influences women's professional roles. The text goes on to explore how these metaphorical representations of obstacles reflect societal expectations that frame women's participation in the workplace as a balance between professional advancement and traditional care roles. This analysis reveals tensions in role negotiation. Furthermore, Intersectionality Theory suggests that, the metaphor analysis of the Chinese corpus needs to pay more attention to the interweaving of multiple dimensions. The frequency differences of the word "power" in the narratives of urban and rural women can reveal the cross-influence of class and gender (Crenshaw, 1989). This multi-dimensional analysis can more comprehensively present the cultural particularity and connectivity of feminist metaphors in the Chinese context.

3.4.3 Data Analysis Procedures for Objective 3

After objective 1 and 2, the following analysis addresses objective 3 which is to compare these metaphorical constructions to uncover shared and divergent cultural ideologies shaping the representation of women in American and Chinese magazines.

This analysis is conducted from four dimensions. First, at the level of metaphor type distribution, statistics and comparisons are made of the main conceptual metaphors that appear in the corpora of both countries (such as "war", 'journey", "architecture", "power", and "obstacle"), to examine the commonalities and characteristics of the frequently used metaphor types on both sides. Second, at the level of metaphor frequency weights, the absolute occurrence frequencies of various metaphors in the American and

Chinese corpora and their relative proportions in the total number of metaphors are calculated, quantifying the differences in the importance of different types of metaphors in the discourse of both sides. Thirdly, Social Role Theory and Intersectionality Theory are employed to interpret the cultural implications behind metaphorical differences. How metaphors reflect divergent societal expectations of women's roles is explored. Moreover, this dimension needs to incorporate the intersectionality perspective, focusing on the differentiated manifestations of the same metaphor type in different social groups. For instance, war metaphors in the United States are more often associated with words like "race" and "immigration" in discussions about minority women, while obstacle metaphors in China are more frequently linked to "education" and "mobility" in the narratives of rural women, revealing the cross-effects of gender with other social categories (Crenshaw, 1989). Fourthly, integrating Cultural Dimensions Theory, this analysis further unpacks how cultural values, such as American individualism emphasising "individual agency" and masculinity orienting towards "confrontation as progress", versus Chinese collectivism prioritising "collective synergy" and femininity valuing "harmony as stability", shape these metaphorical patterns. This dimension establishes a correlation between the frequency and distribution of metaphors and more profound cultural logics, thereby elucidating the reasons why role expectations and identity intersections manifest differently in metaphorical discourse across different contexts.

3.5 Methodological Rigor Guarantee

This study strengthens the methodological rigor through three measures. In terms of inter-coder reliability, a double-person independent coding and comparison mechanism was adopted. The specific process was as follows. After clearly defining the criteria for identifying conceptual metaphors such as source domain, target domain mapping

relationship, and language representation form, the researcher, Decoder A, invited a linguistics master, Decoder B, whose native language is Chinese for this task. Given the huge size of the corpus, the identification process might take several months, and different interpretations of the metaphor structure could lead to differences in the results, thereby prolonging the coding time. To overcome this challenge, the coders randomly selected one sample American and Chinese article for preliminary analysis first.

The first article is about Trump's remarks on abortion. It covers Trump's stance on the overturning of the Roe v. Wade case, his misleading statements about abortion drugs, and his distortion of Democratic policies. Decoder A identified "decimating abortion access" and classified it as a war metaphor because "decimate" implies a destructive confrontation against the abortion rights. "Roll back rule changes" was classified as a journey metaphor, "roll back" represents the process of policy regression. "Battle over mifepristone" was classified as a war metaphor, "battle" directly points to the conflict. Decoder B identified "yanking the constitutional right" as a war metaphor, "yank" implies a confrontational act of forcibly depriving. "Push for restrictions" was classified as a journey metaphor, "push" reflects the continuous process. "Clash in challenges" was classified as a war metaphor, "clash" clearly points to the conflict. Both sides identified six metaphorical items, five of which were completely the same, and one had different expressions but was classified consistently. The consistency rate was 83.3%.

The two decoders continue to analyze the second article. The second article is about the Southern Baptist Church, focusing on the organization's rejection of the amendment regarding female pastors, its expulsion of churches with egalitarian views, its condemnation of IVF technology, and its inaction on clergy sexual abuse issues, reflecting

the suppression of women's rights by religion. Decoder A identified "kicking out churches" and classified it as a war metaphor, "kicking out" indicating confrontational expulsion. "Move to the hard right" was classified as a journey metaphor, "move" reflecting a political tendency shift. "Building a dystopian society" was classified as an architecture metaphor, "building" related to structural construction. "Silencing women's voices" was classified as a war metaphor, "silencing" being a confrontational suppression. Decoder B identified "kicking out churches", "move to the hard right", and "building a dystopian society", and classified them in the same way as Decorder A, who also identified "silencing women", classified as a war metaphor, which was consistent with A's "silencing women's voices". Both decoded individuals identified seven items, six of which were completely consistent, and Decoder B had similar expressions and the same classification, with a consistency rate of 85.7%.

The point of contention lies in the phrase "building a dystopian society" in the second article. Decoder A believes it is merely a metaphor for architecture, emphasizing the construction of structure. Decoder B suggests that it encompasses both the structural nature of architecture and the antagonistic connotation implied by "dystopian", which can be associated with a war metaphor. By referring to the MIP method (2003), it was determined that the core source domain is "building", the target domain is social structure construction, and the antagonistic aspect is a derived feature. Therefore, it was classified as a metaphor for architecture, and both sides reached an agreement. This process enhanced the consistency of classification by clearly identifying the core source domain.

As for the Chinese corpus, the first article focuses on how the Women's Federation in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province has gathered the strength of women in various aspects such as

industry, talent, and culture in the process of rural revitalization. It covers topics such as activating women's potential and establishing service platforms. Decoder A identified "驱动巾帼动能 (driving female momentum)", "激活她力量 (activating her power)", "释放阵地辐射力 (releasing the radiation power of the position)", classifying them as metaphorical expressions. The basis for this classification is that these expressions highlight the energy and influence of the female group. Decoder A also identified "筑巢引凤 zhù cháo yǐn fèng (building a nest to attract birds)", "打造品牌活动 dǎ zào pǐn pái huó dòng (creating brand activities)", classifying them as architecture metaphors because they involve the construction of platforms and systems. Decoder B identified "触发领航键 chù fā lǐng háng jiàn (triggering the leading key)" "点亮护航键 diǎn liàng hù háng jiàn (lighting the protection key)", "发力助航键 fā lì zhù háng jiàn (exerting the guidance key)" as metaphorical expressions, believing that they emphasize the driving role. At the same time, Decoder B identified "建设巾帼示范基地 jiàn shè jīn guó shì fàn jī dì (building a women's model base)", "搭建创业园区 dā jiàn chuàng yè yuán qū (building an entrepreneurship park)" as architecture metaphors, reasoning that they reflect the construction of entities and systems. Both decoded individuals identified five metaphorical expressions in total. Four of them were consistent in identification and classification, while one (the classification of "释放阵地辐射力 shì fàng zhèn dì fú shè lì (releasing the radiation power of the position") had a difference. The similarity rate was 80%.

Then, the analysis of the second article continues, focusing on the way Hubei Yichang Mulan Company has promoted employment for women through the construction of a domestic service brand, including measures such as skills training and community

services. Decorder A identifies “打造西陵峡江月嫂劳务品牌 dǎ zào xī líng xiá jiāng yuè sǎo láo wù pǐn pái (building the Linghai River Yangzi Maternal Care Labor Brand) and 构建服务网络 gòu jiàn fú wù wǎng luò (constructing the service network) as architecture metaphors because they involve the construction of brands and networks. Identifies 凝聚产业合作力 níng jù chǎn yè hé zuò lì (cohesive industrial cooperation power) as a force metaphor, reflecting the energy generated by cooperation. Decoder B identify 培育家政品牌 péi yù jiā zhèng pǐn pái (cultivating domestic service brands) and 组建培训学校 zǔ jiàn péi xùn xué xiào (establishing training schools) as architecture metaphors, based on the establishment of brands and institutions. Identifies 助力女性就业 zhù lì nǚ xìng jiù yè (facilitating female employment) as a force metaphor, emphasizing the promotion of employment. Both parties have identified five metaphorical expressions, four of which are consistent, and one has a difference (the classification detail of 凝聚产业合作力 níng jù chǎn yè hé zuò lì cohesive industrial cooperation power), with a similarity of 80%.

Then, the analysis of the third article continues, describing the roles played by the women’s federations at all levels in Zhejiang Quzhou during the flood prevention efforts, such as conducting inspections and evacuating the public. Decoder A identified 筑起防洪防汛巾帼防线 zhù qǐ fáng hóng fáng xùn jīn guó fáng xiàn (building a female front line for flood prevention and control) and classified it as a construction metaphor because 防线 fáng xiàn (the line) is an abstract structure. Decoder B also identified this expression and classified it as a construction metaphor for the same reason. Additionally, both parties identified the extended meaning of 防线构建 fáng xiàn gòu jiàn (constructing the line)

hidden in 巡查隐患点 xún chá yǐn huàn diǎn (inspecting potential hazards) and 转移群众 zhuǎn yí qún zhòng (evacuating the public), and classified it as a construction metaphor. A total of three metaphorical expressions were identified, all being consistent, with a similarity rate of 100%.

Overall, the average similarity of the three articles is 86.7%. The points of contention lie in the classification of 释放阵地辐射力 shì fàng zhèn dì fú shè lì (exerting the radiation power of the position) in the first article. Decoder A believes that 阵地 zhèn dì (position) belongs to the category of architecture metaphor, and 辐射力 fú shè lì (radiation power) is an extension of its function, which should be subordinate to architecture metaphors. Decoder B, however, believes that 辐射力 fú shè lì (radiation power) more directly represents the diffusion of energy and conforms to the characteristics of force metaphors. By consulting the MIP method (2007), it is clarified that the core of the metaphor lies in the mapping from the source domain to the target domain. The source domain of 辐射力 fú shè lì (radiation power)" is the physical energy diffusion, and the target domain is the influence of the female position. The cross-domain mapping is more in line with the characteristics of force metaphors, and ultimately a consensus was reached. This process improved the validity of the single-article and overall analysis by refining the metaphor identification criteria, ensuring the consistency of classification.

Subsequently, a selective filtering mechanism was implemented to eliminate metaphors with a frequency of fewer than 100 occurrences. This methodological approach was underpinned by two principal considerations. First, the research endeavor is centered on the identification of prevalent metaphors associated with feminism, rather than the exhaustive enumeration of all metaphorical expressions. Second, given the extensive scale

of the corpus and the inclusion of numerous infrequent metaphorical constructs, a comprehensive exposition of all such metaphors within a single scholarly paper is not practicable. Accordingly, the study established a frequency threshold of 100, with the objective of reconciling the requirement for representativeness and the constraints of practicality. Furthermore, this measure ensures that the research article maintains a focused discussion on more commonly occurring metaphors, particularly as the excluded ones are rarely employed by the target demographic.

The researcher recognized the potential impact of her own position and background knowledge orientation on data interpretation. First, the researcher has a cultural background from mainland China and possesses a native cultural intuition for Chinese women's magazine discourse, but may have a blind spot in understanding the subtle political implications of Western gender discourse. Ethically, strict adherence to digital humanities research norms was followed. All text data came from the public online archives of magazines, not involving privacy acquisition. When handling citations, the researcher's name and identifiable personal information were deleted.

3.6 Limitations

The corpus sources of this study were mainly four magazines *Ms.*, *Bust*, 中国妇女 (*Women of China*), and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), between July 1st, 2023 and June 30th 2024. Although they can reflect some trends of current feminist discourse, they may not be able to comprehensively cover the historical development and diversity of feminist movement. In addition, as a source of corpus, e-magazines may be affected by factors such as publication cycle, editorial policy and market orientation, resulting in some important issues or ideas being ignored or downplayed. Furthermore, women's magazines

with a wide audience and stronger commercial attributes, such as *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan*, were not included in the corpus. This is mainly due to the practical obstacles in obtaining complete online articles from these magazines, requiring subscriptions, which constitute economic and access limitations of the researcher. Although the inclusion of these more commercialized and wider-audience media could have shown how conceptual metaphors shape gender representations within a broader discourse spectrum, and their absence has limited the breadth of the scope examined in this study. Therefore, future research should consider expanding the range of corpus sources, including historical documents, academic works, and social media, in order to obtain more comprehensive and diversified feminist discourse data.

Furthermore, cross-language comparative research inherently involves translation issues. To ensure the consistency of cross-language corpus analysis, all Chinese samples must be translated into English before being included in the analysis. Although the researchers independently reviewed all translations by a co-supervisor who is proficient in both Chinese and English and familiar with the research field after the initial translation was completed, the translation process itself may still lead to subtle semantic differences, potential loss of the connotations of cultural loaded words, or weakening of metaphorical power.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter 4 presents the results for dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, and in the corpus of Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) separately, comparative analysis of feminist conceptual metaphors between corpus of American magazines and that of Chinese, and discussion, by integrating CMT, Social Role Theory, Intersectionality Theory, Cultural Dimensions Theory, Collostructional Analysis and MIP methods.

4.1 Dominant Conceptual Metaphors Constructing "Woman" in American Magazines

The results in this section addresses objective 1, which is to identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in American magazines (*Ms.*, *Bust*) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse. In the analysis of the corpus between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, nine different dominant feminist conceptual metaphors were identified. These metaphors not only reflected social expectations of women's roles and the evolution of gender relations, but also revealed the concept of gender equality. Table 4.1 shows the frequency of conceptual metaphors in the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*. There are nine dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in the corpus of the American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, namely war metaphors, journey metaphors, architecture metaphors, force metaphors, container metaphors, voice metaphors, obstacle metaphors, economy metaphors, and light source metaphors. The highest frequency is war metaphors, while the lowest is light source metaphors.

Table 4.1: Frequency of Feminist Conceptual Metaphors in the Corpus of the American Magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*

Number	Conceptual Metaphor	Lexical Realizations	Frequency	Total
1	War Metaphors	freedom/free	764/471	4369
		campaign/campaigns	721/121	
		fight/fighting/fought	639/282/114	
		attacks/attack	403/235	
		solidarity	161	
		victory	148	
		struggle	141	
		battle	102	
2	Journey Metaphors	way/ways	1163/422	4356
		march	485	
		progress	422	
		course	316	
		forward	307	
		move/moving	282/126	
		step/steps	256/112	
		path	166	
		advance	157	
		track	142	
3	Architecture Metaphors	support	1622	2469
		foundation	351	
		building/build	298/198	
4	Force Metaphors	power/powerful	1054/271	1486
		push	161	
5	Container Metaphors	hold	378	1203
		open	287	
		expand/expanding	172/100	
		breaking/break	146/120	
6	Voice Metaphors	voices/voice	372/200	1151
		heard	327	
		speak	252	
7	Obstacle Metaphors	barriers	427	660
		challenge	233	
8	Economy Metaphors	economic	282	282
9	Light Source Metaphors	light	193	193

By observing the frequency of different metaphor groups, Table 4.1 shows that in the corpus of American women's magazines, war metaphors are the most dominant metaphors in the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, reaching 4,369 times. Table 4.1 also shows that the frequency of conceptual metaphors for "journey" and "architecture" is also high, with 4,356 and 2,469 metaphors respectively. In addition, other types of metaphors such as force, container, voice, obstacle, economy, and light source metaphors have a relatively low frequency.

Within the category of war, specific source domains such as "freedom" (764 times), "campaign" (721 times), "fight" (639 times), and "free" (471 times) are often used. Other source domains associated with "war" include "attacks" (403 times), "fighting" (282 times), "attack" (235 times), "solidarity" (161 times), "victory" (148 times), "struggle" (141 times), "campaigns" (121 times), "fought" (114 times), and "battle" (102 times). The war metaphor emphasizes the struggle, confrontation and victory, and highlights the resilience of women in the process of striving for equality in hostile environments (Reali & Avellaneda, 2023; Rub, 2022). For example, when referring to women's efforts to fight for equal rights, the expression "fight for freedom" may be used to metaphor the process of women's pursuit of equal rights as a war, in which "freedom" is the goal of their fight, and "war" reflects the difficulty and intensity of the process.

The journey metaphor is the second most frequent metaphor type in the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, with a total frequency of 4,356 times. Source domains such as "way" (1,163 times), "march" (485 times), "progress" (422 times), and "ways" (422 times) are frequently used. Other "journey" related source fields include "course" (316 times), "forward" (307 times), "move" (282 times), "step" (256 times), "path" (166

times), “advance” (157 times), “track” (142 times), “moving” (126 times), and “steps” (112 times). The journey metaphor focuses more on progress, path and direction, emphasizing the continuous efforts and progressiveness of women in the process of pursuing equality (Mishra, 2023). For example, when describing women’s career development or social advancement, they might say “on the way of women’s progress”, metaphorically referring to women’s development as a journey, with each stage being a step in the journey.

The total frequency of architecture metaphor in the American corpus is 2,469 times, which is also a relatively high frequency metaphor type. Source domains such as “support” (1,622 times), “foundation” (351 times), “building” (298), and “build” (198 times) are frequently used. These metaphors show that support systems and foundational building blocks are as essential to the feminist movement as the foundations and frames of the edifice (Witkowska et al., 2024). For example, when referring to the development of the feminist movement, one might say “build a solid support system for women” and compare the women’s movement to constructing a building with “support” as the cornerstone of the building. “Constructing” embodies the process of building and developing the feminist system.

The total frequency of the force metaphor is 1,486 times. The source domain “power” appeared 1,054 times, “powerful” was used 271 times, and “push” was used 161 times. These words underscore the importance of power and influence in the feminist discourse system, which means that women realize the role of their own power in the pursuit of equality and actively use their power to promote change (Ferreira & Santos, 2022). For example, when discussing the role of women in social decision-making,

"women's power" may be mentioned, emphasizing the power and influence that women have.

The total frequency of the container metaphor is 1,203 times. Source fields such as "hold" (378 times), "open" (287 times), "expand" (172 times), "breaking" (146 times), "break" (120 times), and "expanding" (100 times) are often used. The concepts of inclusion, openness, expansion and breaking through limits conveyed by these source words are all important aspects of feminist discourse, reflecting women's resistance to traditional constraints and their pursuit of a broader space for development (Harvey & Fisher, 2015). For example, when describing women breaking out of traditional constraints, they might use the phrase "break the limits of the gender container" as a metaphor for women breaking out of the framework set by traditional gender roles. The frequent use of this type of metaphor.

The total frequency of the voice metaphor is 1,151 times. Source domains such as "voices" (372 times), "heard" (327 times), "speak" (252 times), and "voice" (200 times) are frequently used. These words express that women strive to make their voices heard at all levels of society in the process of fighting for equality, in order to express their own demands and opinions (Green, 2016). For example, "let women's voices be heard" is used to emphasize the importance of women's voices being expressed.

The total frequency of obstacle metaphors is 660 times. The source domain "barriers" occurred 427 times and "challenge" 233 times. The high frequency of use of this metaphor type embodies the determination and courage of women to constantly fight against various obstacles in the pursuit of equality (Kemp, 2016). When describing the problems faced by women such as the glass ceiling in the workplace, it can be regarded as

obstacle metaphors, that is, obstacles encountered by women in the path of career advancement.

The total frequency of economy metaphors is 282 times with the source domain like “economic”. This metaphor reflects feminism’s concern about women’s equal rights and interests in the economic field and emphasizes the important influence of economic factors on the promotion of women’s status (Swirsky & Angelone, 2016). For example, when discussing women’s economic independence, it will directly refer to “economic” factors, such as women’s position in the job market, income gap and other economic related issues.

Finally, the total frequency of the light source metaphor is 193 times with the source domain like “light”. Although the frequency of use of this type of metaphor is relatively low, it still conveys the concept of light and hope, and symbolizes women’s longing and pursuit of an equal future (Hu, 2019). For example, the expression “the feminist movement is a beam of light in the darkness” might be used to describe the new hope and outlook that the women’s movement has brought to women.

The 24 feminist-related lexical realizations identified through AntConc’s “Collocate” function to analyze their significant collocates (with MI-Score≥3.0), namely “campaign(s)”, “fight(ing), “barriers”, “attack(s)”, “solidarity”, “victory”, “break”, “battle”, “combat”, “free”, “struggle”, “access(accessing, accessible)”, “progress”, “ways”, “path”, “foundation”, “building”, “hold”, “light”, “power”, “economic”, “wave”, “push”, and “voice”, thereby exploring their roles in constructing conceptual metaphors related to feminism in American magazines.

4.1.1 War Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism



Figure 4.1: War Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.1, the hierarchical structure of war metaphors in American magazines, through the three dimensions of "conflict actions", "collective efforts", and "positive outcomes", constructs the confrontational narrative of the feminist movement (framed by CMT).

Within the "conflict actions" dimension, terms such as "fight" and "battle" have been employed to transform feminist struggles into "combat behaviors" (the source domain mapping of CMT). Through the lens of Social Role Theory, this is a conflict practice where women challenge the established "subordinate" role. In the American context, gender discrimination is analogized as "enemies", and women break through the role constraints in the workplace and family with a "fight" attitude. However, Intersectionality Theory reveals that the "fight targets" of different identity women vary: white women's battles mostly focus on salary equality, while minority women also need to confront the combined oppression of race and gender (such as double discrimination in the workplace), which leads to the semantic stratification of "struggle" in cross-identity contexts.

Collective efforts refer to a dimensional campaign and solidarity, metaphorically representing the “collective battle” (the organizational mapping of CMT) of the feminist movement. In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, this phenomenon signifies the transition of women from a state of “isolated individuals” to that of “collective actors”. Within the context of the United States, such endeavors frequently manifest through the medium of political lobbying and street movements, with the objective of redefining the role of women’s social participation. However, within the framework of Intersectionality, there are inherent fissures in American solidarity. The white feminist movement has historically disregarded the demands of minority groups (e.g. the disregard of poor women’s abortion rights in the reproductive rights movement), which hinders the efficacy of collective actions due to disparities in identity.

The “positive outcomes” dimension of victory and freedom/dom, which metaphorically represents the “victory” in the feminist movement (mapping onto the goal of CMT). According to Social Role Theory, this can be interpreted as a symbol of women’s emancipation from the “dependent” role, thereby achieving equal social status. In the American context, victory is frequently associated with specific rights, such as career advancement and voting rights, while free(dom) has been narrowed down to the release of individual rights. However, Intersectionality Theory has been criticized for its inability to address the unique demands of certain demographic groups. For instance, the definition of “victory” in the United States mostly uses the rights of white middle-class women as the benchmark, ignoring the demands of immigrant women for “identity freedom” and poor women for “economic freedom”.

Table 4.2 shows the example of war metaphors with the lexical realization of "fighting" in *Ms*.

Table 4.2: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realizations of "fighting"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
fighting	282	keep	6.558	1. We must keep **fighting** for our right to be mothers. (*Ms.*)

Extract 1 is about the threat abortion bans pose to women's reproductive freedom, especially the right to safe pregnancy, miscarriage care, and bodily autonomy. Table 4.2 presents the total frequency of "fighting" is 282 times, and the MI-Score when it co-occurs with "keep" is 6.558. The use of the word "fighting" as a metaphor for war enables a cross-domain mapping (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) between the feminist struggle (target domain) and the war battle (source domain). In "keep fighting", the continuous nature of "keep" forms a cognitive connection with the logic of "protracted war" in war, making the abstract pursuit of rights concrete as a combat action with a temporal dimension. This mapping not only gives the struggle action the tension of "offensive and defensive confrontation", such as the legislative game between anti-abortion forces and feminist groups in the United States, but also through the "zero-sum nature of victory and defeat" of war, implies the urgency of the rights struggle. If "fighting" is stopped, maternal rights will be deprived like a lost position on the battlefield.

In traditional societies, the definition of a woman's "maternal role" was a passive form of identity regulation (Eagly, 1987). The statement "fighting for our right to be mothers" in Extract 1 breaks through this regulatory framework. The use of the word "right" emphasizes the subjectivity of motherhood. Women are no longer "assigned" mothers by

society, but actively strive for the right to “become mothers”, including the freedom to decide the timing of childbirth and ensure reproductive health. This struggle directly targets the core of institutional oppression. When anti-abortion bills attempt to forcibly bind women’s bodies to the obligation of motherhood, “fighting” becomes a weapon to restructure the definition of motherhood. Through the act of resistance, individuals challenge the society’s one-dimensional imagination of “motherhood” (Eagly, 1987).

The intensity of the struggle for “motherhood rights” varies due to the interweaving of identity dimensions (Crenshaw, 1989). After the Roe v. Wade case was overturned in the United States, the regional differences in abortion laws (such as the “near-total ban” in Texas versus the “reproductive rights protection” in California), health identities (such as the “threefold risk of miscarriage” for PCOS patients), and class identities (poor women having greater difficulty accessing reproductive resources) together constitute the differentiated context of the struggle. In Extract 1, the subject of “keep fighting” is not a homogeneous group. Women living in anti-abortion states resist the restrictions of regional legislation. Women with reproductive diseases endure the double pressure of health and law. Poor women struggle with the combination of resource scarcity and institutional discrimination. This complexity of identity interweaving makes the meaning of “fighting” go beyond individual resistance and become a collective action under multiple oppressions. Women in different identity positions face completely different “battlefields” and “enemy lines” in the metaphor of the “war for motherhood rights”.

Table 4.3 shows the example of the war metaphors with the lexical realization of “campaign” in the two American magazines *Ms.*.

Table 4.3: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "campaign"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
campaign	721	militant	8.533	2. Over the last few years, widespread concern about the increasing incidence of sexual assaults on women has crystallized into a militant **campaign** against rape. (*Ms.*)

Extract 2 is about an African American woman Joan Little's landmark legal battle for self-defense against sexual violence, exposing the intersecting rights of racial justice, gender equality, and prisoners' rights. As illustrated in Table 4.3, the frequency of "campaign" is recorded as 721 times, indicating its predominance as the primary lexical item in the metaphorical expression of war within the feminist discourse on sexual violence. The MI-Score of 8.533 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with "militant", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "protracted resistance movement" and underscoring the active resistance against the oppression of sexual violence.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "Anti-Sexual Violence Movement is a War". The characteristics of the source domain "war", such as "organized resistance", "clear goals" and "opposition to oppression", are systematically mapped to the target domain "the social movement of women against sexual violence". In Extract 2, the term "militant campaign against rape" is employed to denote the transformation of abstract anti-violence demands into a war-like action. Analogous to the strategic deployment of military forces by an opposing army, the anti-rape movement employs a range of "tactics" in its efforts to confront the "systemic oppressive force" of

sexual violence. These tactics encompass legal struggles and public mobilization, among other strategies. This mapping facilitates public comprehension of the urgency of the movement through the medium of war experiences. In the Joan Little case, the resistance against judicial injustice was likened to a “battle”, with each trial and each act of support being regarded as a “confrontation”. This transformation of “anti-sexual violence” from scattered demands into an organized “front of resistance” is of particular interest.

Conventional social roles have rendered women passive victims of sexual violence, with their response to such acts being limited to “silent acceptance”. The metaphor of “militant campaign” signifies a breakthrough in role conditioning. Women actively organize and openly resist, thereby redefining their role identity as “resistance subjects”. When women consistently act as “resisters”, the stereotype of “women being unable to resist” in society will gradually disintegrate (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). In Extract 2, Joan Little’s self-defence and the national solidarity movement have achieved this through role practice to effect a shift in perceptions, thus establishing “women actively resisting sexual violence” as a socially acceptable behavioral paradigm.

The concept of multiple identities is posited as a factor that engenders disparate forms of resistance and objectives among the cohort of women participating in the “campaign”. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the intersection of identities, such as race, class and gender, would result in unique forms of oppression. The “frontlines” of the anti-rape movement demonstrate hierarchical disparities resulting from the cumulative effect of multiple identities. In the context of American society, the anti-rape struggle of white middle-class women may concentrate on gender violence itself, while black women like Joan Little need to engage in a dual struggle against both “race and gender” forms of

oppression. It is imperative that they not only substantiate the occurrence of sexual violence, but also dispel the racial stereotype that "black women are inherently promiscuous". The defamation of Joan Little as a "prostitute" in Extract 2 serves as a pertinent example of this phenomenon. It is evident that women from lower socio-economic backgrounds encounter greater challenges in accessing legal resources and garnering public attention, in comparison to their more affluent counterparts. This disparity is further compounded by the fact that the resources and support available to these disadvantaged groups are significantly more limited than those possessed by their more privileged counterparts. As the number of identity dimensions increases, the "firepower" and "coverage range" of the "campaign" become more varied, and the resistance of marginalized groups must overcome multiple "battlefield defenses" simultaneously.

Crenshaw (1991) posited that identities such as race, gender and class engender distinctive forms of oppression. In Extract 2, Joan, as a black person, is subjected to the historical legacy of violence that has been historically and socially constructed to permit the violation of black bodies. As a female prisoner, she was confined within a space occupied by "male guards and male prisoners". This resulted in a marked exacerbation of the gender disadvantage she faced. Due to her limited financial means, she was unable to secure the necessary financial resources to satisfy the substantial bail amount, and consequently, she was subjected to the rigors of the judicial process. In Extract 2, a former prisoner corroborated allegations of a general pattern of sexual assault by prison guard groups towards female prisoners. It is evident that Joan, in consideration of her "black + female + prisoner" triple identity, became the focal recipient of systemic violence. This cumulative oppression is not merely the simple addition of individual identities. Rather, it

is an illustration of the collaborative malevolence of the power structure across multiple dimensions.

This metaphor is indicative of the intricate nature of the anti-sexual violence movement in the United States. The employment of the metaphor of "militant campaign" has been observed to increase in proportion to the intensity of cross-pressures, as evidenced by cases ranging from the racial and gender-based violence tragedy of Cordella Stevenson in 1915 to the resistance against racial bias in the judicial system in the Joan Little case. This phenomenon is not merely a reflection of the intricacies involved in the struggle. It also functions as a means to advance the movement towards achieving "racial and gender justice". Achieving a genuine victory against violence necessitates not only the dismantling of the "fortress" of gender oppression, but also the deconstruction of the racial and class "foundations" that underpin it.

Table 4.4 shows the example of war metaphors with the lexical realization of "victory" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.4: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "victory"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
victory	148	decisive	10.233	3. In February 2022, the Federation pledged to compensate male and female players equally for all scrimmages, games and tournaments, including the World Cup–a decisive **victory** in the gender equality fight. (*Ms.*)

Extract 3 is about Megan Rapinoe's advocacy for social justice, particularly focusing on gender pay equity and LGBTQ+ rights. As illustrated in Table 4.4, the

frequency is 148, indicating that “victory” is a recurrent theme in the discourse of gender equality struggles. The MI-Score of 10.233 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with “decisive”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “a crucial victory in the struggle for gender equality”, thus emphasizing the breakthrough and symbolic nature of the outcome.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor “Gender Equality Achievements are Battle Victories”. The characteristics of the source domain, including “phase-wise achievements”, “adversarial”, and “strategic significance”, are systematically mapped to the target domain, “the progress of the gender equality movement”. As illustrated in Extract 2, the United States women’s soccer team’s victory signifies a pivotal triumph in the ongoing struggle for gender equality, as it represents a substantial advancement in achieving equal remuneration. As with the consolidation of the front line following a battle victory, the attainment of equal pay represents a breakthrough in more than one field. Indeed, it can be argued that it also becomes a “strategic fulcrum” for the promotion of gender equality throughout society. This mapping enables the public to understand the stages of the equality struggle through the experience of war. It is asserted that each modification to a policy, in addition to the validation of each right, constitutes a “victory”. The term “decisive” is employed to underscore its foundational role in subsequent struggles, thereby transforming the abstract process of equality into a perceivable “accumulation of achievements”.

Conventional social roles have confined female athletes to the category of “entertainment performers”, and their value has been limited to “entertainment value” rather than “competitiveness”. The salary disparity has been regarded as “reasonable”. The

metaphor of “decisive victory” essentially subverts this role regulation. It is evident that female athletes have achieved equal salary recognition with their male counterparts through a process of resistance, thereby reconfiguring the conventional role of “professional competitors”. Eagly and Wood’s (2012) research indicates that the stereotype regarding the inferiority of women’s abilities in comparison to those of men will gradually disintegrate when women continue to defy the expectations associated with traditional roles and achieve substantial results. The triumph of the United States women’s soccer team can be attributed to the strategic reinterpretation of the concept of the “gender salary gap”, the promotion of social recognition of women’s “equal participation” in the domain of sports, and the validation of the interconnection between role practice and cognitive transformation.

The possession of multiple identities by women results in a spectrum of rights obtained from “victory”. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the intersection of identities, such as race, class and sexual orientation, can result in a unique and unequal distribution of rights. The “victory” of gender equality frequently fails to encompass marginalized groups to a greater extent than privileged groups. In the context of American society, white female athletes may benefit directly from this proposed salary equality. However, female athletes from minority ethnic groups still face the dual barriers of “race + gender” in terms of salary. For instance, the mean remuneration of black female athletes in the WNBA remains lower than that of their white counterparts, and they also encounter more marked inequitable allocation of media resources. Female athletes, due to a paucity of resources such as commercial sponsorship, even within the context of the pursuit of “victory”, typically exhibit a lower income than their elite counterparts. Despite the illuminating nature of “decisive victory” in terms of gender equality, it is evident that for women subjected to

multiple forms of oppression, the necessity to overcome further “invisible frontlines” remains, in order to ensure a complete sharing of victory outcomes.

This metaphor reflects the “layered victory” reality of the gender equality movement in the United States. The employment of the metaphor of “victory” in the context of the equal pay for equal work movement, exemplified by the United States women’s football team, and the persistent gender pay gap in the workplace, underscores the phased nature of these achievements. It also exposes the incomplete nature of the equality process. The examination of “victory” from an intersectional perspective is precisely the deep revelation of the metaphor. Achieving true victory in the realm of equality necessitates the dismantling of the various barriers that hinder women from diverse backgrounds from progressing to the next level. This is the very essence of “decisive victory” for systemic change.

4.1.2 Journey Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

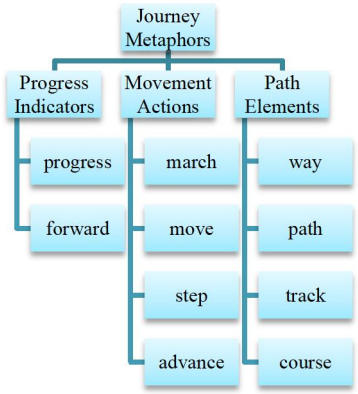


Figure 4.2: Journey Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.2, The hierarchical structure of journey metaphors in American magazines, through the three dimensions of progress indicators, movement actions, and path elements, constructs the “procedural” narrative of the feminist movement.

The “progress” in the “progress indicators” dimension is metaphorically related to the “linear progress” narrative of the American feminist movement (CMT source domain mapping). From the standpoint of Social Role Theory, this can be interpreted as a symbol of women breaking away from the “family dependents” role and entering the public domain. However, Intersectionality Theory highlights the theory’s limitations: the racial stratification in American society means that the definition of “progress” is highly exclusive. The “forward” of white women mostly refers to equal workplace pay, while the progress of African American women still needs to break through the double shackles of racial violence and gender discrimination. The “forward” trajectories of the two are intertwined by identities, thereby presenting a rift, which reflects the fact that the equalistic demands of the American feminist discourse have not yet covered all women.

The action verbs, including “march” and “move”, in the “Movement Actions” dimension, serve to construct the metaphor of “collective movement” in the feminist movement (the mapping of CMT’s actions). In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, this phenomenon signifies a transition in which women move from a state of passive obedience to one of active engagement, thereby reconfiguring their social roles through participation in collective actions such as marches. However, according to Intersectionality, it has been revealed that there are inherent fractures in the feminist actions in the United States: In the abortion rights movement of the 1970s, marches led by white middle-class women disregarded the economic pressures on poor women, leading to a shift in focus towards survival guarantees. The actions of minority women also necessitate consideration of racial equality, resulting in a gradual pace of advancement due to the challenges posed by identity, thereby highlighting the inclusivity dilemma of collective feminist actions in the United States.

The terms “way” and “path” in the “path elements” dimension metaphorically represent the “development trajectory” (CMT’s spatial mapping) of the feminist movement. Social Role Theory is interpreted as representing women’s attempts to break through the traditional gender roles that have been in place for many years and explore new social roles. However, Intersectionality Theory challenges this perception. The mainstream feminist discourse in the United States, in fact, represents the privileged path of white middle-class women, with minority women encountering significant barriers to career advancement, including “glass ceilings” and “racial barriers”. Moreover, the economic constraints experienced by low-income women prevent them from following the same career path as their higher-income counterparts. This discrepancy in pathways can be interpreted as a manifestation of the interwoven social identities in the United States being projected onto the feminist discourse.

Table 4.5 shows the example of journey metaphors with the lexical realization of “forward” in *Bust*.

Table 4.5: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of “forward”

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
forward	307	inched	12.350	4. Yet while Congress and many states have seen steady growth in numbers of female lawmakers over the years since then, much of the Southeast has stagnated or barely inched **forward**. (*Bust*)

Extract 4 is about gender disparities in Southern the United States state legislatures and how underrepresentation of women, especially Black women, undermines their reproductive, health, and political rights. As illustrated in Table 4.5, the frequency is 307

times, indicating that “forward” as the core word of the metaphor for the journey, frequently appears in the discourse related to the development of women’s political representation. The MI-Score of 12.350 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with “inched”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation that “the progress of women’s political representation is extremely slow”. This underscores the arduous nature of effecting change in the face of opposition.

CMT elucidates the cognitive logic of the metaphor “The development of women’s political representation is a journey (Women’s political representation progress is a journey)”. The features of the source domain, herein referred to as “journey”, including “path resistance”, “speed difference” and “rough terrain”, are systematically mapped onto the target domain, defined as “the process by which women achieve equal representation in the political field”. In Extract 2, the statement “The majority of the southeastern regions have stagnated or moved only slowly” provides a concrete illustration of the abstract concept of lag in progress, transforming it into a physical movement in space. This phenomenon can be likened to the challenges encountered when navigating muddy or steep terrain, where progress is impeded by the accumulation of obstacles. The stagnation of women’s representation rights in the southeastern region can be interpreted as an intuitive manifestation of this “movement obstruction”. This mapping facilitates public comprehension of the intricacies of change through the medium of their quotidian journey experiences. The observed variations in “forward speed” across different regions are indicative of the degree of acceptance and resistance to women’s participation in politics in each area. The term “inched” is used to denote the gradual and incremental advancement of women into the political sphere, thereby illustrating the ongoing and pervasive

suppression of the traditional power structure. This transformation of “systemic change” into a tangible and arduous journey is a salient aspect of the text.

The conventional social roles assigned to women have historically confined them to a marginalized position within the political sphere. Consequently, any involvement in politics is often perceived as a departure from the prevailing social norms. This perception has had a profound influence on the “progress” (if any) in the speed of women’s political representation. The southeastern states have historically been characterized by a predominance of male legislative bodies, with the participation of women in politics often being regarded as “superfluous”. This rigid expectation of roles has been shown to have a direct impact on the pace of change. When society continuously binds women to the private domain role of “family caregivers”, their “progress” in the public political sphere naturally faces more stubborn resistance. The implicit societal perception that “women should not lead politics” has evolved into tangible structural impediments, rendering each stride towards progress particularly arduous.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the differential rate of “progress”, that is, the presence of multiple identities engenders significant inequality in the “forward” movement of disparate female groups. In the southeastern states, the accumulation of identity dimensions engenders a hierarchical resistance to “progress”. White women may be able to achieve a modicum of “progress” on a local level by leveraging family resources and social networks. However, Black women are confronted with the dual challenges of not only breaking through the gender barrier, but also confronting the historical legacy of racial segregation and the prevailing systemic discrimination that continues to impact them. The proportion of Black women in the state legislatures of the southern states is, on average,

less than 5%. This figure is significantly lower than that of White women. The "progress" of these individuals is impeded by dual obstacles, namely "gender + race". The underprivileged female demographic is encountering an impediment to advancement as a consequence of an insufficiency of educational resources and inadequate campaign funding, thus engendering a "triple predicament" that is predicated on gender, race and class. The aforementioned differences are evidently demonstrated. The so-called "slow progress" in the southeastern region may be limited progress for privileged women but nearly stagnant for marginalized women, exposing the differential suppression of the power structure on "progress" in multiple identity dimensions.

This metaphor is indicative of the "regional imbalance" reality in the development of women's political representation in the United States. The utilization of the metaphoric "forward" motion varies geographically, from the stagnation observed in the southeastern region to the predominance of women in the New York City Council. This phenomenon is indicative of the intricate nature of change, and moreover, it unveils the geographical distribution characteristics of cross-pressures. In order to promote the "forward" of women's political representation, strategies must be formulated with specific reference to different regions and different identities of women, so that all women can truly "inch" towards equality.

Table 4.6 shows the example of journey metaphors with the lexical realization of "step" in *Bust*.

Table 4.6: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "step"

Lexical Realizations	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
step	256	backward	12.197	5. Its cancellation is a step backward in achieving gender equality. (*Bust*)

Extract 5 is about efforts to advance women's political representation and leadership through electoral reforms, international advocacy, and youth civic engagement, with rights involved including gender equality, political participation, and equal representation. As illustrated in Table 4.6, the term "frequency" denotes the number of instances in which the word "step" occurs in the corpus, amounting to 256 occurrences. This observation is indicative of the term's frequent utilization as a core vocabulary element within the discourse on gender equality, wherein it functions as a metaphorical representation of a journey. The MI-Score of 12.197 indicates a close co-occurrence relationship between "step" and "backward", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical meaning that "the process of gender equality is like a journey with backward steps".

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "Gender Equality Progress is a Journey". The spatial movement characteristics of "forward and backward" in the source domain "journey" are systematically mapped to the target domain "the development process of gender equality" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In Extract 5, the term "the cancellation of it is a step backward in achieving gender equality" is employed to concretize the abstract event of Georgia's cancellation of the gender quota for elections into an action of "taking a backward step" in the journey. The word "backward" is chosen to emphasize the trait of "deviating from the target and reversing direction" in the journey. This mapping enables the public to understand the volatility of gender equality through their daily journey experiences. In the same way that a journey may encounter obstacles and retreat, the process of achieving equality may also reverse due to institutional changes, thereby rendering the abstract social transformation perceivable.

Conventional social roles have historically confined women to the "domination of the private sphere", and the gender quota system is a systematic recognition of women's roles in the public domain (Eagly & Wood, 2012). The metaphor of "step backward" essentially reflects the resurgence of society's perception of women's public roles: The abolition of quotas can be interpreted as a weakening of the institutional support for women's entry into the political field, which can be seen as a reinforcing of the "traditional role training" of "women should be confined to the private sphere". This finding aligns with Eagly's proposition of "role practice shaping cognition". It is evident that the societal perception of women's "public capabilities" is contingent upon the encouragement, or lack thereof, of women in assuming public roles by the system. Consequently, a shift in societal attitudes towards women's public capacities can be anticipated, with these attitudes becoming increasingly conservative.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the differentiated oppression logic underpinning the phenomenon of the "backward step". Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the interweaving of gender with other identities, such as race and class, leads to unique inequalities. Georgia's abolition of the gender quota in elections has been criticized for its potential to engender a hierarchical differentiation in its impact on different women. For white middle-class women, the abolition of the quota might merely result in a narrowing of political participation channels. For minority women, however, it signifies the loss of gender protection beyond racial barriers, thus representing a "race + gender" double backward step. The original reliance on the quota system was driven by the objective of challenging the prevailing stereotype within mainstream society concerning "minority women lacking leadership". However, the current situation is characterized by the introduction of even more stringent entry barriers. It is evident that impoverished women

are similarly subject to considerable pressure. The economic disadvantage experienced by these groups already limits their access to political resources, and the abolition of the quota further exacerbates the problem of class bias within institutions, resulting in a "class + gender" combined predicament. The concept of a "backward step" in gender equality is not a simplistic, one-dimensional retreat, but rather a multifaceted and interconnected constriction on marginalized groups, operating under the influence of multiple power structures. Extract 4 articulates the concern of the United Nations with regard to "systemic exclusion of women", a concept which precisely aligns with the notion of interwoven oppression. In the absence of institutional protection, women who occupy marginal positions within the identity spectrum are rendered the most vulnerable group in a state of regression.

This metaphor is indicative of the fragility of global gender equality. The metaphor of 'taking a step backward' has repeatedly emerged in discourse on gender equality, from Georgia's abolition of quotas to the restrictions on abortion rights in some US states. This metaphor reflects the dynamic and non-linear nature of the process of gender equality, which is influenced by a range of factors including institutions and culture. The metaphor is frequently used not only to map reality linguistically, but also to issue a warning to society to be vigilant against the risks of regression in the process of achieving equality.

Table 4.7 shows the example of journey metaphors with the lexical realization of "ways" in *Bust*.

Table 4.7: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "ways"

Lexical Realizations	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
ways	422	other	4.453	6.During this time, they may find other **ways** to feel affirmed in their gender identity, such as changing their names or pronouns to improve their mental health. (*Bust*)

Extract 6 is about the ethical issues in the United States adoption system and involves the rights to informed consent, reproductive justice, and family preservation. As illustrated in Table 4.7, the frequency is 422, suggesting that “ways” as the core word of the journey metaphor is a frequently occurring concept in gender identity-related discourse. The MI-Score for this instance is 4.453, suggesting a certain intensity in the co-occurrence relationship between “ways” and “other”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “seeking other paths”.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor “Gender Identity Affirmation is a Journey”. The diversity and substitutability (other ways) of the “paths” in the source domain “journey” are mapped to the target domain “the process of affirming gender identity of transgender youth”. In Extract 6, “they may find other ways to feel affirmed in their gender identity” provides a concrete example of the abstract identity affirmation practice, demonstrating the process of seeking alternative paths during the journey. In a manner analogous to exploring alternative routes when the primary route is rendered inaccessible, transgender youth attain identity through the process of “changing their names or pronouns” and other “various other methods” when the medical path is obstructed (for instance, the prohibition of gender affirmation medical treatment). This mapping facilitates public comprehension of the adaptive strategies employed by the transgender community in the face of institutional barriers, as evidenced by their daily experiences in terms of path selection. This in turn renders the complex identity affirmation process perceivable.

Social Role Theory is a concept that analyzes the underlying logic of role struggles in metaphors. Conventional social roles are known to impose stringent regulation on

gender, confining it to a binary and fixed framework (Eagly, 1987). The expression “other ways” is indicative of a departure from this regulation. Transgender youth demonstrate a refusal to be defined by traditional gender roles, instead opting for the reconstruction of their self-identity through a variety of means, including the alteration of names and pronouns. This is a challenge to the social perception that “gender roles are unbreakable”. It is evident that when groups persistently transgress conventional role behaviors, the prevailing stereotypes concerning roles in society will progressively dissipate. As Eagly and Wood (2012) argue, “other ways” is precisely the practical carrier that promotes the transformation of gender roles from rigidity to flexibility.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the multifaceted characteristics of “ways” beneath the metaphor. As Crenshaw (1989) noted, the intersection of identities such as race, class and gender can result in a unique form of oppression. Transgender youth from minority ethnic groups demonstrate notable variations in their “other ways” as a consequence of the cumulative impact of their multiple identities. For white, middle-class transgender youth, the decision to “change names or pronouns” may be regarded as a matter of personal preference. However, for transgender youth from minority ethnic backgrounds, the issue may entail the simultaneous experience of racial discrimination and gender bias. Consequently, their “other ways” may need to contend with the dual regulation of “racialized gender roles”. To illustrate this point, consider the experience of black transgender youth who opt to change their names. In the process, they may find themselves confronted with challenges related to both “not conforming to racial stereotypes” and “challenging gender norms,” as a result of dual questioning. Transgender youth from disadvantaged backgrounds may encounter obstacles in their pursuit of legal name changes, primarily due to limited financial resources. Consequently, these

individuals may resort to alternative methods, which often entail less costly approaches such as community support. The collaborative effect of the power structure across multiple identity dimensions is such that “other ways” are established as an adaptive strategy for different transgender groups to cope with varied forms of oppression.

This metaphor is indicative of the reality of identity struggles in the context of institutional constraints. In Extract 6, the “other ways” selected by transgender youth are not arbitrary choices but survival strategies in the aftermath of political intervention in the medical field (e.g., the prohibition of gender-affirming medical treatments). In circumstances where institutional support is deficient, individuals engage in seemingly trivial actions such as altering names and pronouns. However, these actions represent a continuous process of dismantling the prevailing institutional discipline that asserts a requirement for gender to conform to physiological characteristics. This struggle is characterized by an explicit focus on identity politics. For white, middle-class transgender youth, these “ways” may serve as a form of personal identification. However, for minority transgender youth, these issues frequently coincide with a resistance against racial stereotypes. To illustrate this point, consider the case of Latino transgender youth. These individuals, in order to affirm their gender identity, opt to change their names while retaining cultural symbols. This practice serves as a refusal to have their ethnic traces erased by mainstream culture. It has been demonstrated that transgender youth from disadvantaged backgrounds may be dependent on the support of their peers in order to complete the process of adjusting their pronouns. This collective strategy itself constitutes a silent challenge to class barriers. The intensity and form of the “other ways” of struggle by transgender youth in different identity positions precisely reflect the differentiation effect of institutional oppression in multiple dimensions. The totality of these “ways”

constitutes a diffuse impact on the traditional gender order, thereby promoting society to gradually accept the diverse possibilities of gender expression beyond rigid institutions. This is the most profound reality significance behind the metaphor. It is important to note that the struggle does not have to rely on a single path; multiple "ways" themselves are the beginning of change.

4.1.3 Architecture Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

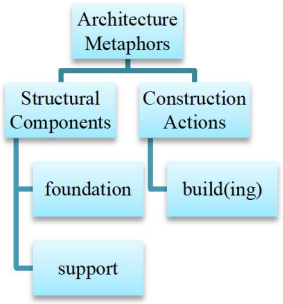


Figure 4.3: Architecture Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.3, The American magazine "Architecture Metaphors" employs a framework that utilizes the concepts of "Structural Components" (foundation, support) and "Construction Actions" (build(ing)). The present study draws upon the conceptual framework of CMT to offer a comparative analysis of the feminist movement, conceptualizing it as a "systematic project". The publication Architecture Metaphors provides a detailed analysis of the supporting cracks and construction deviations that arise in the development of feminism due to the interweaving of identities within its social context.

The "foundation" dimension of Structural Components is metaphorically representative of the "equal foundation" of the American feminist movement (CMT domain mapping). Within the framework of Social Role Theory, this can be interpreted as

a symbol of women's emancipation from the "family dependents" role and their demand for equality within the social system. However, Intersectionality Theory has been shown to have certain limitations. The racial stratification inherent in American society engenders a highly exclusive definition of the term "foundation". The demands of white women primarily concern themselves with workplace salaries and political participation, while the foundation of African-American women is still required to dismantle the dual shackles of racial violence and gender discrimination. The "roots" of both are fractured due to the interweaving of identities, exposing that the equal framework of American feminist discourse has not yet covered the reality of all women.

Within the same dimension, "support" functions as a metaphor for the "collective support" (the structural mapping of CMT) of the feminist movement. In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, this suggests that women have transitioned from a state of "isolated resistance" to one of "group aggregation". This shift has led to an augmentation in their capacity for action, facilitated by the support of communities and organizations. However, informed by Intersectionality, this reveals an illusion: mainstream feminist organizations in the United States have historically prioritized the demands of white middle-class women, and in the civil rights movement of the 1960s, white feminist groups overlooked the racial equality demands of black women, leading to challenges in uniting support forces due to differences in identity. This reflects the inclusive predicament of the feminist collective support in the United States.

The "systemic construction" metaphor (the action mapping of CMT) of the "building" action in the construction actions dimension. According to Social Role Theory, women transition from a position of passive acceptance of social rules to a more active role

in the creation of social structures. This transition is achieved through policy promotion, cultural reshaping, and other forms of social action, which are intended to reshape the existing social order. However, Intersectionality Theory reveals its privileged nature. The development of mainstream feminist discourse in the United States is, in fact, the privileged practice of white middle-class women. The construction of workplace equality imposes "glass ceilings" and "racial barriers" on minority women, and the construction of the rights of poor women is also constrained by economic oppression and is difficult to integrate into the mainstream build process. This construction disparity can be considered as the projection of the interwoven oppression of American social identities in the feminist discourse.

Table 4.8 shows the example of architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "foundation" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.8: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "foundation"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
foundation	351	upon	6.349	7.It has been one **foundation** upon which women's freedoms have been built: Professor Claudia Goldin, who just won a Nobel Prize in economics, is perhaps most famous for her work demonstrating the birth control pill's huge impact on women's labor force participation. (*Ms.*)

Extract 7 is about the Alliance Defending Freedom's efforts to reshape the United States law based on conservative Christian values, involving rights to abortion, contraception, LGBTQ+ equality, anti-discrimination, religious freedom, and freedom of

speech. As illustrated in Table 4.8, the frequency is 351, suggesting that “foundation” is a recurrent element in feminist discourse, serving as the pivotal concept within the architecture metaphor. The MI-Score of 6.349 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with “upon”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical meaning that “women’s freedom is built upon the foundation”.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor “Women’s Freedom is Architecture”. The foundational role of “architecture” in the source domain is systematically mapped to the target domain of “the construction of women’s freedom”. In Extract 7, the assertion is made that “it has been one foundation upon which women’s freedoms have been built”, with birth control pills being likened to this “foundation” that supports women’s freedom, in a manner analogous to the way in which the foundation of a building supports the entire structure. The utilization of birth control pills confers upon women the capacity to exercise agency over their fertility, thereby establishing a foundation for their entry into the workforce and the independent planning of their lives. This mapping process renders the abstract concept of freedom construction concrete, enabling the public to comprehend the pivotal role of birth control pills in women’s liberation through architecture experience. The metaphorical foundation of this construction is akin to the stability of a building. If the foundation is unstable, the structure is susceptible to collapse, and if it wavers, sustaining freedom becomes arduous.

Social Role Theory is a theoretical framework that analyzes the logic of role reconstruction behind metaphors. Conventional social roles have historically constrained women to the role of “family caregiver”, thereby confining their social value to the private domain (Eagly, 1987). The “foundation” referred to by “contraceptive” is, in fact, the key

support that breaks this role regulation. It has been argued that this enables women to break free from the constraints of childbirth on their careers, thereby promoting the shift in society's perception of women's roles from "family-centred" to "multilateral participation". As Eagly and Wood (2012) have demonstrated, changes in role practice have the capacity to reshape social cognition. The contraceptive, as the "foundation", has been demonstrated to gradually dismantle the traditional expectation that "women are only for the family" through the following mechanisms. Firstly, it has been demonstrated to support women's participation in the public domain, such as the workplace. Secondly, it has been demonstrated to provide material and cognitive foundations for the new role identification.

Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the interweaving of identities such as race and class can result in unique forms of oppression. The contraceptive pill, as a "foundation", exhibits significant variability in its efficacy for different women. White middle-class women have greater access to the contraceptive pill and related medical resources, and their freely constructed "foundation" is more stable. It is important to note that minority women may encounter unequal distribution of medical resources as a result of racial discrimination. Furthermore, economically disadvantaged women may encounter difficulties in obtaining the contraceptive pill due to financial constraints, thereby compromising the stability of their foundation. When the distribution of "foundation" resources is influenced by multiple power structures, the construction of women's freedom is more likely to tilt towards marginalized groups due to the "weak foundation", thus revealing the stratified role of power oppression in resource distribution.

This metaphor is indicative of the fragility and resilience of women's freedom. In Extract 7, ADF seeks to challenge the very basis of contraceptives, thereby aiming to

dismantle the foundation of women's autonomy. This challenge serves to underscore the profound implications of the architecture metaphor. The notion of women's freedom can be considered an artificial construct, rather than a natural phenomenon, and as such it requires constant maintenance to ensure its continued existence. Any impact on the foundation may cause overall instability. The contention and guardianship exhibited by different women over the "foundation" can be interpreted as a manifestation of resistance across multiple identity dimensions.

Table 4.9 shows the example of architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "build" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.9: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realizations of "build"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
build	198	women	3.337	8.Guaranteeing safe, affordable housing is one of the best ways to help **build** women's financial stability. (*Ms.*)

Extract 8 is about the housing affordability crisis disproportionately affecting single women, especially women of color, and involves economic rights, housing rights, and protections against discrimination. As illustrated in Table 4.9, the frequency is 198, indicating that "build" as the core word of the architecture metaphor frequently appears in the discourse related to women's financial stability. The MI-Score of 3.337 indicates a statistically significant co-occurrence with "women", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "building financial stability for women".

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "Women's financial stability is architecture". The gradual construction and reliance on the foundation

(e.g. the foundation of a building) features of the word “build” in the source domain “architecture” are systematically mapped to the target domain “the establishment of women’s financial stability” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In Extract 8, “Guaranteeing safe and affordable housing is one of the best ways to help build women’s financial stability” draws parallels between guaranteed housing and the “foundation” of a building, suggesting that, just as a building must be firmly laid before it can be gradually constructed, so too must the foundation of housing be firmly established before progress can be made towards financial stability. The establishment of financial stability in women is predicated on housing security, which in turn is supported by a stable living environment that enables income planning, savings accumulation, and other subsequent steps. This mapping process serves to render the abstract concept of economic stability more concrete, thereby enabling the public to comprehend the fundamental role of housing security in women’s economic independence through the experience of building construction. A weak foundation can lead to a collapse, and unstable housing can lead to instability in finances.

In traditional societies, women were defined as “family dependents” and their economic capabilities were regarded as secondary. The “financial stability construction” indicated by “build” effectively circumvents this role regulation by alleviating the economic burden of women in housing through the provision of affordable housing. This, in turn, enables them to allocate resources towards career development and skill enhancement, thereby progressively shedding the label of “economic dependence”. As Eagly and Steffen (1984) have demonstrated, alterations in role behaviour have the capacity to effect a transformation in the realm of social cognition. Achieving financial autonomy through housing security has been demonstrated to gradually dispel the

stereotype that “women need to rely on the family to obtain economic security”, thereby promoting the transformation of role cognition to “independent economic entities”.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the multifaceted predicaments of “construction” beneath the metaphor. Crenshaw (1989) emphasizes that the interweaving of identities such as race and class can result in unique forms of oppression. The challenges encountered by women in establishing financial stability are influenced by a combination of factors, including but not limited to their multiple identities. In the context of housing affordability, white women may encounter challenges due to the wage gap (84 cents to 1 dollar). This disparity can have implications for their financial stability and ability to secure housing. In contrast, minority women, including black women, face not only a larger wage gap but also the potential for encountering rental discrimination due to racial bias. This can result in a lower initial starting point for construction, further exacerbating the challenges faced by minority women in accessing and maintaining housing. It is evident that impoverished women, with financial resources that are solely adequate to cover rental expenses, as Chantelle Mitchell asserts, expending 95% of their income on this purpose, possess a paucity of residual assets with which to engage in the process of “construction”. In circumstances where the distribution of “building materials” (i.e. resources) is subject to the influence of multiple power structures, the financial stability of marginalized women is rendered even more challenging in achieving its zenith. This phenomenon unveils the stratified nature of power oppression in the context of resource acquisition.

This metaphor underscores the pivotal role of institutional support in promoting women’s economic empowerment. In the document under scrutiny, housing security is

regarded as the core tool for “building”, essentially serving as a means of institutional intervention to address structural injustices. For single mothers, stable housing can reduce work disruptions caused by frequent moves, allowing them to participate in skills training to increase income and gradually break free from the predicament of “only being able to take low-paying jobs”. For minority women, housing security combined with anti-discrimination policies can reduce the additional burden of racial bias in the rental market, clearing some obstacles for them to “build” financial stability. The construction of these identities necessitates the simultaneous navigation of the dual challenges posed by race and gender. It is evident that for impoverished women, the implementation of long-term rent assistance and analogous systems can effectively regulate housing expenditures within a reasonable proportion. This enables them to possess surplus income, which can be allocated towards the accumulation of “building materials” (e.g., emergency savings, career investments). Consequently, this approach precludes the collapse of “financial construction” due to a solitary, unanticipated expense. The removal of this structural impediment to housing through policy intervention enables women to assume the new role of “economic independent individuals”, thereby facilitating the establishment and enhancement of financial stability.

4.1.4 Force Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

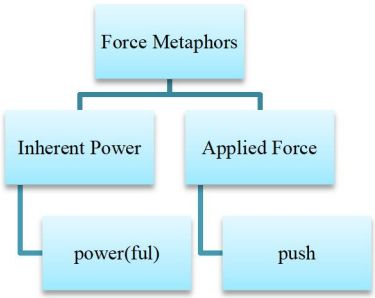


Figure 4.4: Force Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.4, In the context of American magazines, the concept of force metaphors is characterized by two distinct frames: “inherent power” (powerful) and “applied force” (push). In this discourse, the feminist movement is conceptualized as a “power game arena”, a notion that is predicated on the tenets of CMT. The co-occurrence characteristics of frequent words (assumed to be related to Frequency and MI-Score) reveal the inherent rift and action deviations in the distribution of gender power in the American social context due to the interweaving of identities.

The “power(ful)” dimension of the inherent power category (CMT source domain mapping) refers to the metaphorical concept of “inherent feminine power endowment”. Viewed through Social Role Theory, this represents a subversion of the traditional role of “women’s inherent subordination”, aiming to reconfigure women as “power subjects”. However, Intersectionality Theory has been shown to have certain limitations: The racial stratification inherent in American society engenders a highly exclusive definition of “power(ful)”. For white middle-class women, power is frequently synonymous with workplace influence and political decision-making capacity, while for African-Americans, the concept of power assumes different forms. It is imperative that American women break through the dual shackles of racial violence and gender discrimination (for example, the “skin colour + gender” double exclusion encountered in political participation). The fracturing of the “power core” of the two is exposed by the interweaving of identities, which demonstrates that the power framework of American feminist discourse has not yet covered the reality of all women.

The “push” dimension of the applied force category constructs the metaphor of “external force breakthrough” in the feminist movement (CMT action mapping). In

accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, women transition from a position of passive acceptance of social rules to a state of active promotion of order. This transition is characterized by the adoption of assertive actions, such as the formation of social movements and the undertaking of policy lobbying, in pursuit of rights and social change. However, applying Intersectionality, this illusion is shattered. The mainstream feminist movement in the United States is characterized by its focus on the demands of the white middle class. In the context of the welfare reform movement of the 1990s, the "work-welfare system" advocated by white feminist groups appeared to disregard the survival needs of impoverished women, particularly those belonging to minority ethnic groups. This resulted in a lack of cohesion within the push force, primarily due to disparities in class and race, thereby highlighting the inclusive challenge faced by external-driven feminist progress in the United States.

The metaphor's inherent fragmentation can be understood as a projection of the intertwined social identities in the United States onto the discourse of feminism. When the power of white women focuses on "breaking through the elite domain" and their push revolves around "gaming the mainstream system", the power needs of minority groups and poor women remain marginalized. Their power needs to combat "the deprivation of the right to survival", and their push needs to break through "the double discrimination barriers". This discrepancy does not stem from inherent flaws in the metaphor itself, but rather from the inability of the American feminist movement to formulate a cohesive power narrative within the context of identity stratification.

Table 4.10 shows the example of force metaphors with the lexical realization of "power" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.10: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "power "

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
power	1054	political	6.106	9.Ensuring that women have political **power** and are equally represented in decision-making is not only morally right; it also yields practical benefits. (*Ms.*)

Extract 9 is about the challenges and victories in women's representation, addressing issues such as court rulings on funding for black women entrepreneurs, the historic election of women presidents in Mexico and Iceland, and the ongoing struggle for gender equality in politics and housing. As illustrated in Table 4.10, the frequency of is 1054, suggesting that "power" is a recurrent theme in discourse pertaining to female political participation. The MI-Score of 6.106 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with "political", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "female political power".

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "Women's Political Power is Force". The characteristics of the source domain "power", such as "influence" and "driving force", are systematically mapped to the target domain "women's political power in politics" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In Extract 9, "Ensuring that women have political power and are equally represented in decision-making", the concept of women's political participation is concretized as a force that can exert influence, akin to the physical force that can alter the state of an object. The political agency of women has the potential to influence policy in a manner that prioritizes issues such as livelihoods and human rights, as evidenced by the gender equality policies enacted by female heads of state in Mexico and Iceland. This mapping enables the public to understand the actual role

of women's political participation in social change through the cognition of "power"–the stronger the power, the more far-reaching the influence.

In traditional societies, women were confined to the role of "caretakers in the private sphere", and political power was regarded as "exclusive to men" (Eagly, 1987). The metaphor of "political power" essentially represents a departure from this role conditioning. The attainment of political power by women is predicated on the fundamental rupture with the conventional expectation that "women should not be involved in politics". The documentation pertaining to the attainment of gender parity within the legislative bodies of Mexico, in conjunction with the uninterrupted election of female leaders in Iceland, serves to substantiate Eagly & Wood's (2012) assertions. The prevailing stereotype regarding women's perceived lack of leadership skills in society is hypothesized to be subject to gradual dissolution as women continue to assume political roles. This is predicted to result in a shift in societal perception of women, leading to their identification as "political participants" rather than "lacking leadership".

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the differential acquisition of "power" beneath the metaphor. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the interweaving of identities such as race and class can result in unique forms of oppression. The challenge faced by women in their pursuit of political authority is subject to hierarchical variation, stemming from the cumulative impact of various identities. White women may gain entry to the political arena by breaching gender barriers, whereas black women are required to surmount both racial and gender restrictions in a single endeavor. As demonstrated in Extract 9, the underrepresentation of minority women in the state legislature of the United States is evident. The Alabama Senate, for instance, comprises a mere 11.4% women, with even

fewer minority women represented among the state's legislative bodies. It is evident that women from disadvantaged economic backgrounds encounter significant challenges in overcoming the barriers that exist within their respective social classes in order to engage in political participation. This predicament can be understood through the framework of a "race + class + gender" triple predicament, which conceptualizes the intertwined dynamics of social stratification, systemic racism, and gendered societal norms. The aforementioned differences are indicative of the suppression of the power structure, which hinders female political participation across multiple dimensions. That is to say, the accumulation of "power" among different women is met with varied forms of resistance.

This metaphor reflects the imbalanced reality of global female political empowerment. From gender parity in Mexico to the slow progress in the United States, there is a positive correlation between the frequency of the metaphor of "political power" and its actual representation. This indicates that while language maps reality, it also becomes a discourse tool for promoting change. For marginalized groups, the attainment of political power is not merely an individual accomplishment, but also a systemic resistance to the intertwined oppressions that they face.

Table 4.11 shows the example of force metaphors with the lexical realization of "push" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.11: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "push"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
push	161	for	4.04	10.Women were excluded from our founding documents, but the **push** for gender equality has been taken up by successive generations of women–and momentum is building again. (*Ms.*)

Extract 10 is about the ongoing struggle for gender parity in political representation and leadership across the United States, and involves rights related to political participation, equal representation, and protection from discrimination. As illustrated in Table 4.11, the frequency is as 161, indicating that the term “push” is identified as the core word of the metaphor of force and is frequently present in discourse related to gender equality. The MI-Score of 4.04 indicates a statistically significant co-occurrence relationship with “for”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “pushing for gender equality”.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor “Gender Equality Movement is a Forceful Push”. The characteristics of the source domain, such as “continuous exertion of force” and “overcoming resistance”, are systematically mapped to the target domain, “the process of promoting gender equality” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In Extract 10, “The push for gender equality has been taken up by successive generations of women” is a concrete conceptualization of the abstract equality movement, which can be likened to a physical concept of “continuous pushing”, analogous to the exertion required to overcome friction when propelling a heavy object. The female group has been observed to overcome institutional and cultural resistance through intergenerational relay. This “push” maintains its continuity, from Alice Paul’s promotion of the amendment for equal rights to contemporary women’s struggle for the right to abortion, allowing the public to understand the persistence and difficulty of the movement through physical experience. The message is that only with continuous force can obstacles be overcome.

In traditional societies, women were confined to the role of “passive recipients”, and their social participation was regarded as “crossing boundaries”. The “push” action embodied in “push” actually subverts this role regulation: The pursuit of equality has

resulted in women re-identifying themselves as “active agents”. As Eagly and Steffen (1984) demonstrated, alterations in role behaviour have the capacity to reconfigure social perceptions. The persistent efforts of women to secure voting rights, workplace equality and reproductive rights serve to gradually erode the prevailing stereotype that “women should not participate in public affairs”. This, in turn, promotes the transformation of role expectations towards a paradigm of “equal participants”.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the concept of “push” from a multifaceted perspective, emphasizing the existence of varied forms of resistance that lie beneath the metaphorical surface. Crenshaw (1989) emphasizes that the interweaving of identities such as race and class generates unique forms of oppression, and that the “push” of different women faces hierarchical resistance. The “push” of white middle-class women may concentrate on the issue of gender barriers, whereas black women are required to address both racial and gender-related forms of resistance. As previously mentioned in Extract 10, black women were marginalized within the women’s suffrage movement, and their efforts to gain recognition had to overcome not only gender-based limitations but also the prevailing racial segregation system. The hypothesis that impoverished women rely more on community mutual assistance for their “push” is one that merits further investigation, given their limited access to resources. The repression of the “push” force by the power structure in multiple dimensions necessitates that marginalized groups should pay a higher price.

This metaphor is indicative of the generational resilience of the gender equality movement in the United States. The term “push” is frequently used in the context of the movement, which can be traced back from the 19th-century women’s fight for the right to

vote to the current struggles for abortion rights and workplace equality. This use of the word “push” serves to emphasize the continuity of the movement. Despite the fact that different groups’ “push” is faced with various resistances, they collectively form the force to break through traditional roles and institutional barriers. The metaphor’s stability is, precisely, the linguistic testimony of society’s continuous response to the demand for equality.

4.1.5 Container Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

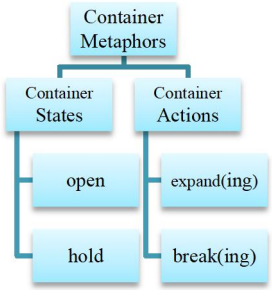


Figure 4.5: Container Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.5, The container metaphors in American periodicals, predicated on the “container states” (open, hold) and “container actions” (expand (ing), break(ing)), and drawing upon CMT, draws parallels between the feminist movement and a “field of gender space regulation and breakthrough”.

The “open” state in the container states dimension is indicative of the state in which women break free from the “closed gender containers” (CMT source domain mapping). Social Role Theory suggests that this represents a subversion of the traditional role of “women trapped in the family and subordinate to the public domain”, aiming to reconfigure women as “space subjects”. However, Intersectionality Theory has been shown to have certain limitations: The racial stratification inherent in American society engenders

a highly exclusive connotation of “openness”. The term “open” is predominantly employed by white middle-class women in reference to the openness of career advancement and political participation spaces. It is evident that African-American women’s “open” must also dismantle the dual closures of racial violence and gender discrimination (for example, the “skin colour + gender” double exclusion encountered in community activities). The “open dimensions” of these two concepts are fractured due to the interweaving of identities, thus exposing the fact that the space framework of American feminist discourse has not yet covered the reality of all women.

Within the same dimension, the “hold” symbolizes the state in which women “strive for inclusion” in the social space (the spatial mapping of CMT). In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, women transition from the status of “peripheral individuals” to that of “domain possessors”. This transition is characterized by an endeavor to attain the “hold” qualification of public space, a process that is facilitated by communities and organizations. However, framed by Intersectionality, this assertion is rendered invalid, as it exposes the illusion that the demands of the mainstream American feminist movement often centre on the concerns of the white middle class. In the context of the LGBTQ+ rights movement in the 2000s, the “gender-inclusive space” advocated by white feminist groups overlooked the cultural adaptation requirements of minority queer women (e.g., the exclusion of people of colour from religious communities). This rendered the designated space challenging to genuinely accommodate due to racial and sexual orientation disparities, thereby mirroring the multifaceted challenges inherent in the accommodation of feminist spaces within the United States.

The “expand” dimension of the container actions category (CMT action mapping) can be interpreted as a metaphor for the expansion of gender boundaries within the feminist movement. According to Social Role Theory, the transition of women from the role of “role limiters” to that of “boundary breakers” is a significant phenomenon. It is evident that through educational expansion, career crossover, and other “expand” actions, a reconstruction of the social space is effected. However, Intersectionality Theory highlights the privileged nature of this expansion. The broadening of mainstream American feminist discourse is, in fact, the privileged practice of white middle-class women, with the expansion of career opportunities creating “glass ceilings” and “racial barriers” for minority women. Furthermore, the spatial expansion of poor women is hindered by economic oppression, such as the inability to afford vocational training costs, thereby making it difficult for them to integrate into the mainstream expansion process. This expansion disparity can be considered as a manifestation of the interwoven oppression of American social identities within the context of feminist discourse.

Within the framework of Social Role Theory, the metaphor of “breaking the container” in the “break(ing)” dimension signifies a comprehensive overthrow of the “gender regulatory container”. However, this concept is intricately interwoven with the phenomenon of action fragmentation due to Intersectionality. The rupture among white women is predominantly focused on institutional containers within the workplace and political spheres. In contrast, minority women continue to confront containers of cultural violence, as exemplified by African American women in their challenge to the stereotype of “objectifying the body”. Whilst the break of white feminism revolves around the “reconstruction of the elite field”, the break of marginalized women is still trapped in “breaking through the guarantee of survival”. This action stratification is precisely the

inevitable result of the American feminist movement's difficulty in constructing a unified space narrative in the complex reality of identity.

Table 4.12 shows the example of container metaphor with the lexical realization of "hold" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.12: Feminist Container Metaphor with the Lexical Realization of "hold"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
hold	378	women	3.124	11. The documentary's findings resonate with our research, affirming that women's issues receive greater attention when women **hold** positions of power. (*Ms.*)

Extract 11 is about advancing women's political representation and leadership, with rights involved including political participation, racial and gender equality, voter access, and maternal health equity. As illustrated in Table 4.12, the frequency is 378, suggesting that "hold" as the core word of the container metaphor is a frequently occurring concept in discourse pertaining to women and power positions. The MI-Score of 3.124 indicates a statistically significant co-occurrence with "women", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "women occupying positions of power".

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "Power positions are containers". The "containment" and "occupation" characteristics of the "container" in the source domain are systematically mapped to the target domain "occupation of power positions" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In Extract 11, entitled "Women hold positions of power", the concept of power as a container that can be occupied is made concrete. The women "hold" these positions as if items are contained in a

container, which not only reflects the state of power possession but also implies the constraints and shaping of the position by the holder. In a similar manner to how a container defines the form of an item, power positions not only confer influence on women but also require them to adapt to the existing power structure. This mapping facilitates public comprehension of the distribution of power through the physical experience of containers. The capacity and access restrictions of the containers are analogous to the degree of social acceptance and structural obstacles for women to hold power.

In traditional societies, the concept of power was regarded as “exclusive to men”, with women being viewed as “spectators outside the container”. The expression “women hold positions” signifies a departure from the role conditioning that has historically prevailed. The entry of women into traditionally male domains, such as politics and sports, can be seen as a challenge to the long-standing expectation that “women should not enter the realm of power”. As demonstrated in Extract 11, there was an increase in the visibility of women in NCAA events, and a corresponding rise in their representation in state legislatures. It is evident that the prevailing societal stereotype regarding women’s purported “lack of leadership” will undergo a gradual transformation upon the continuous occupation of power positions by women. This shift in perception is likely to result in a redefinition of the role of “power holders” (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the predicament of “holding” beneath the metaphor. Crenshaw (1989) emphasizes that the interweaving of identities such as race and class can result in unique forms of oppression. The challenge faced by women in maintaining a position of authority is subject to variation according to hierarchical factors, attributable to the cumulative impact of various identities. White women may gain entry to

the power container by breaking through the gender barrier, while black women need to overcome both racial and gender restrictions simultaneously. For instance, in Extract 11, the challenges confronting black women in the maternal health sector, irrespective of their professional standing, underscore the necessity to confront systemic racial prejudice. It is evident that women from disadvantaged economic backgrounds encounter heightened challenges in their attempts to ascend the social hierarchy. This phenomenon, characterized by the interplay of race, class and gender dynamics, has been widely documented and is widely regarded as a triple predicament. The entry threshold of power containers for different women varies hierarchically, with marginalized groups having to pay a higher price to "hold" power.

This metaphor is indicative of the gradual transformation of the distribution of power among American women. In Extract 11, there has been an increase in the visibility of women in sports and politics, and the frequent use of the word "hold" indicates the gradual opening up of the power container to women. Nevertheless, intersectional oppression continues to exclude some women from this category. The contradiction of this metaphor is precisely the language mirror image of the social reality. The expansion of the power container has not yet achieved true inclusiveness, and the continuous struggle is to dismantle the invisible barriers of the container. Each endeavor by marginalized women, including those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, ethnic minorities, and individuals with disabilities, to "possess" authority in fact serves to expand the limits of the existing framework. In Extract 11, black women advocate for legislation mandating implicit bias training, while Latina women pursue political office through organizations. These practices are not merely individual breakthroughs, but also represent a reconstruction of the structure of the power container, thereby ensuring that it is no longer

dominated by a single identity. From the standpoint of CMT, this uninterrupted "holding" is tantamount to a dynamic remodeling of the cognitive framework of "power container". The transition from a "male-exclusive container" to a "diverse and inclusive container" is achieved without recourse to Intersectionality Theory, which demonstrates the collaborative resolution of multiple oppressions. The paradox inherent in this metaphor ultimately serves as the impetus for change, thereby bringing the expansion of the power container closer to true equality.

Table 4.13 shows the example of container metaphors with the lexical realization of "break" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.13: Feminist Container Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "break"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
break	120	glass	9.279	12. I have no doubt she will carry the baton left by Senator Feinstein, continue to **break** glass ceilings, and fight for all Californians in Washington. (*Ms.*)

Extract 12 is about the global struggle for gender equality and human rights, highlighting women's resistance in Iran and the broader fight against gender-based oppression. As illustrated in Table 4.13, the frequency is 120, signifying that "break" emerges as the pivotal lexical item within the metaphor of the container. This particular metaphor is frequently employed in discourse centred on the notion of transcending gender-related boundaries. The MI-Score of 9.279 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with "glass", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "breaking the glass ceiling" and underscoring the breakthrough of implicit gender barriers.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "Gender Barriers are Glass Ceilings". The "transparent yet hard" and "visible yet difficult to break" characteristics of the source domain "glass ceiling" are systematically mapped to the target domain "hidden gender power structure". In Extract 12, "continue to break glass ceilings" is employed to concretize the abstract gender barriers as physical obstacles. The glass ceiling, a metaphor used to describe the barriers that prevent women from advancing in their careers, appears to be fragile. However, it is argued that the glass ceiling is in fact a significant impediment to women attaining positions of authority and influence within organizations. The action of "break" is indicative of the active impact on this structural limitation. This mapping enables the public to understand the concealment of gender inequality through physical experience: just as the glass ceiling is hidden in the field of vision, gender barriers often disguise themselves as "natural differences", and the metaphor of "breaking" gives the abstract struggle an operational cognitive framework.

Conventional social roles have historically relegated women to the periphery of the power domain, with the "glass ceiling" representing an institutional expression of this role regulation. The expression "break glass ceilings" can be interpreted as a symbolic representation of this rebellious spirit. The phenomenon of women challenging the conventional boundaries in professional domains, such as career and politics, can be interpreted as a direct challenge to the prevailing societal norms that expect women to assume a subordinate role in positions of authority. Eagly and Steffen's (1984) seminal work posited that the continuous breakthrough of role behaviors would reshape social cognition. For instance, the appointment of Laphonza Butler as the first openly black lesbian senator not only symbolized a significant shift in gender norms but also represented an overturning of the prevailing restrictions on both race and sexual orientation. This

development is widely regarded as a crucial step in fostering societal acceptance of "multicultural identity women in power".

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the concept of "breaking through" from a metaphorical perspective, emphasizing the heterogeneity of resistance that lies beneath this metaphor. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the interweaving of multiple identities creates a hierarchical structure for the glass ceiling. White women may only need to break through the gender barrier, while Black women face "race + gender" as a double ceiling. In Extract 12, Butler's standpoint challenges conventional notions of gender, race, and sexual orientation, defying the boundaries that have historically confined individuals to specific categories. The notion of "breaking" marginalized groups does not signify a solitary breakthrough; Rather, it denotes a concerted confrontation against multiple forms of oppression. This discrepancy unveils the intricate nature of the power structure. The thickness of the glass ceiling increases due to the accumulation of identities, and each "breaking" by minority women incurs a higher cost.

This metaphor is indicative of the gradual and complex nature of the breakthrough of American women's power. As evidenced by the increasing presence of women in fields such as politics and sports, as discussed in Extract 12, and the recurrent utilization of the metaphorical "glass ceiling", it is evident that these latent barriers persist. The varied and distinct breakthrough pathways exhibited by these groups are a precise reflection of the dynamic nature of power as elucidated by the Intersectionality Theory. Achieving true equality necessitates not only the dismantling of gender-based barriers, but also the dismantling of the racial and class foundations that perpetuate systemic inequalities. This is precisely the profound appeal of the metaphor for systemic change.

4.1.6 Voice Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

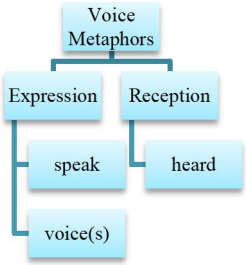


Figure 4.6: Voice Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.6, In American magazines, the concept of voice metaphors (e.g. “speaking”, “voice(s)”, “heard”) form the framework. The feminist movement is analogized as a “domain of empowering discourse” in reliance on CMT.

Within the “expression” dimension, the act of “speaking” can be conceptualized as metaphorically breaking free from the role of the “silent subordinate” (reconstruction of roles according to Social Role Theory). The “speaking” of white middle-class women is predominantly concerned with issues of equal pay in the workplace and political participation rights. To construct an “elite narrative”, these women rely on mainstream media and political channels. However, it is imperative to recognize that African-American women’s “speaking” must concurrently confront both racial violence and gender discrimination. In the context of police violence, for instance, it is imperative that they not only expose the neglect of the law enforcement system towards black women, but also accuse the double harm of gender violence. The content of their discourse is more complex due to the interweaving of identities, but due to the “racial blindness” of the mainstream feminist circle, they are unable to obtain equal dissemination resources, resulting in obvious identity barriers in the practice of “speaking”.

The voices of the same dimension(s) represent the metaphorical efforts of women to construct “collective discourse” (the source domain mapping of CMT). In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, this constitutes a subversion of the prevailing male-dominated discourse system, with the objective of unifying the voices of women. However, through the lens of Intersectionality, this assertion is rendered invalid: At the inception of the #MeToo movement, the experiences of white women constituted the focal point of media discourse, while those of minority women were marginalized due to their perceived atypicality. The issue of workplace harassment faced by Asian women is often associated with prevailing racial stereotypes, and the demands articulated by Latina women can be challenging to comprehend by the general public due to language and cultural differences. This has resulted in the construction of a narrative dominated by the voices of white middle-class women, thereby fragmenting the inclusivity of the collective voice due to differences in identity.

The “reception” dimension of “heard” (a metaphor for the appeal of female discourse, mapping onto the goal of CMT) represents the demand for “being heard”. According to Social Role Theory, this signifies a significant advancement for women, as they transition from the periphery of discourse to the centre of the public agenda. However, Intersectionality Theory exposes a dual predicament: The concept of “being heard” for white women is contingent on prevailing political and media resources, such as gender equality proposals in congressional hearings. For Native American women, the ability to “be heard” necessitates a departure from the oversight of “colonial history” by the white feminist establishment, as well as a resistance to the subjugation of the traditional gender order within the tribe. Their grievances concerning land rights and gender violence are

repeatedly obscured within the dual power structure, culminating in a markedly asymmetrical realization of "being heard" due to the intertwined oppression of identities.

This stratification of discourse practice is fundamentally the projection of the power structure of social identities in the United States in the context of feminist discourse. When white women's "speaking" focuses on "institutional empowerment", their "voices" construct "elite narratives", and their "being heard" relies on "mainstream channels", the voices of marginalized women are still trapped in "survival expressions". The fragmentation of the voice metaphor must be considered a necessary consequence of the challenges faced by the American feminist movement in achieving true discourse inclusivity within the complex context of identities such as race, class and culture. This phenomenon cannot be viewed as an accidental aspect of language representation, but rather as an inevitable outcome of the movement's efforts to navigate and address these intricate issues.

Table 4.14 shows the example of voice metaphor with the lexical realization of "voice" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.14: Feminist Voice Metaphor with the Lexical Realization of "voice"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
voice	200	equal	5.238	13. What I wish is that women could have a more equal **voice** and we could work together. (*Ms.*)

Extract 13 is about the exclusion of women experts from global peace talks, underlining the need for their inclusion in peace-making processes and the ongoing efforts for gender equality in peace initiatives. As illustrated in Table 4.14, the frequency is 200,

suggesting that “voice” as the core word of the metaphor of sound, frequently appears in the discourse of women’s participation rights in the field of peace and security. The MI-Score of 5.238 indicates a statistically significant co-occurrence relationship with “equal”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “women should have equal speaking rights” and highlighting the urgent demand for equal rights to express themselves.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism of the metaphor “Women’s Discourse Right in Peace Processes is Voice”. The physical characteristics of the source domain “voice”, such as “volume”, “communication range”, and “degree of being listened to”, are systematically mapped to the target domain “the participation weight and influence of women in peace negotiations”. In Extract 13, “women could have a more equal voice” provides a concrete illustration of the abstract gap in discourse rights as the inequality of sound. As with any voice that is weak and inaudible, women’s participation in peace processes is significantly underrepresented, with their demographic accounting for a mere 16% of the overall rate. Consequently, their demands are frequently disregarded on the basis of being “insufficient volume”. This mapping facilitates public comprehension of structural injustice through auditory experiences in their daily lives. In circumstances where male voices predominate within the “frequency band”, the presence of female voices is rendered challenging in terms of gaining access to the decision-making “channel”. The metaphor of “equal voice” offers a discernible cognitive framework for this abstract power imbalance, thereby converting “being marginalized” into an intuitive experience of “not being heard”.

In traditional societies, women were confined to the role of “passive listeners”, and their voices were regarded as “outside the bounds”. The pursuit of “equal voice” can be

regarded as a departure from established role conditioning. It is evident that women are redefining their role identity as “active participants” through their efforts to achieve equal participation in peace negotiations and policy-making. As Eagly and Wood (2012) have observed, the continuous change in role behaviour will reshape social perceptions. The documented practice of female peace workers in conflict-affected areas is precisely through challenging the stereotype that “women should not be involved in security affairs”, thereby promoting societal acceptance of their role as “participants in public affairs”.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the hierarchical power structure that underpins the concept of “voice”. Crenshaw’s (1989) structural intersectional analysis demonstrated that the suppression of women’s voices is not attributable to a single gender factor, but rather to the confluence of various identities, including race, class and region. As demonstrated in the document, Nigerian women suffered the most direct impact in the conflict. However, due to their dual identity of being both “female” and “residents of conflict areas”, they were excluded from the peace negotiations. Brazilian naval commander Carla Araujo was honored by the United Nations, but her voice as a Latina woman still needed to break through the dual filters of “male dominance in the military field” and “racial invisibility”. This discrepancy is also significant in American society: the voices of white middle-class women may be regarded as “exceptions”, while the peace initiatives of black women are often labeled as “minority demands”. The process of “voice” being filtered by the power structure invariably unfolds along the fault lines of multiple identities.

The fundamental tension inherent in this metaphor is predicated on the demand for “equal voice” transcending the confines of formal equality, thereby necessitating a

reconfiguration of the prevailing power distribution. In light of the fact that the vast majority of 614 million women in conflict zones around the world have been deprived of the right to speak, and that the number of female participants in the UN-led peace processes has continuously declined for two consecutive years, the metaphor of "voice" precisely exposes this paradox. Those women who are most affected by conflicts have their voices suppressed the most thoroughly. In order to overcome the suppression of women's voices, superficial reforms alone are insufficient. Rather, a systematic dismantling of the intertwined power networks that are inextricably linked to race, class and gender is required. The metaphor of "equal voice" can be seen as a profound demand for structural equality.

Table 4.15 shows the example of voice metaphors with the lexical realization of "heard" in *Bust*.

Table 4.15: Feminist Voice Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "heard"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
heard	327	seldom	9.558	14. And with men always in charge, women's voices remain always lesser, so that when they seek to report abuse, they are seldom **heard**. (*Bust*)

Extract 14 is about the Southern Baptist Convention's efforts to ban women from pastoral leadership, involving women's rights to religious leadership, equality, and protection from institutionalized gender discrimination and abuse. As illustrated in Table 4.15, the frequency is recorded as 327 times, indicating that "heard" as the core word of the voice metaphor frequently appears in the discourse where women are subjected to power oppression. The MI-Score of 9.558 demonstrates a very strong co-occurrence

relationship with “seldom”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “systematic suppression of women’s voices” and highlighting the deep obstruction of the power structure to women’s expression.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism of the metaphor “The degree of attention given to women’s appeals is the audibility of their voices (Women’s Appeals’ Visibility is Audibility)”. The physical characteristics of the source domain “sound”, including “volume”, “propagation resistance” and “capture degree”, are systematically mapped to the target domain “the influence of women’s appeals in the power structure”. In Extract 14, the assertion that “women’s voices... they are seldom heard” serves to materialize the abstract neglect of appeals, thereby concretizing this neglect into the physical disappearance of sound. This is analogous to the manner in which a weak sound in a noisy environment is rendered indistinguishable. In circumstances where the voices of women are rendered inaudible as a consequence of the pervasive presence of the male-dominated power structure in the context of reporting abuse, this mapping facilitates a comprehension of structural injustice through auditory experience. The metaphorical expression “seldom heard” serves to transform the abstract power imbalance into an intuitive “unheard” experience, thereby rendering “systemic marginalization” perceivable. This transformation occurs when “male authority” occupies the dominant “sound domain”, resulting in the filtration of women’s voices due to “frequency mismatch”.

Social Role Theory is a theoretical framework that analyzes the reproduction of power relations that are embodied by metaphors. In conventional social roles, women are often depicted as “passive followers”, and their anticipated role behaviors are “silent acceptance” rather than “active demands” (Eagly, 1987). The Southern Baptist Church

places significant emphasis on the theological doctrine of “male authority” and “female submission”, a doctrine that essentially reinforces the aforementioned power relationship through role training. In this context, when women are expected to “graciously submit”, their reports of abuse are regarded as “beyond the bounds” and “seldom heard”. This phenomenon can be attributed to the role cognition mechanism proposed by Eagly and Steffen (1984), which states that when individuals are expected to adopt specific roles, they may develop a cognitive framework that limits their ability to perceive or process information that does not align with those roles. Society tends to attribute women’s “expression of non-compliance” to “irrationality” rather than as a result of power oppression. This has the effect of rationalizing the suppression of their voices, thus forming a closed loop of “role expectations → behaviour denial → voice silencing”.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the differential deprivation “heard” under the metaphor. Crenshaw’s (1989) structural intersectional analysis posits that the voice predicament of women is the result of the interweaving oppression of factors including race, class and religion. As outlined in the document, black women belonging to the Southern Baptist Church are subject to not only gender oppression, but also racial discrimination. Within the dual structure of religious authority and the dominance of white men, when individuals report abuse, their voices are diminished by the gender filter of “female subordination” and further silenced by the prejudice of “racial inferiority”. This discrepancy is pervasive in American society. Women from disadvantaged backgrounds are frequently devoid of the necessary resources, which consequently hinders their ability to articulate their concerns. Moreover, women from minority ethnic groups are often stigmatized as “untrustworthy” as a consequence of prevailing cultural prejudices. The

distribution of “heard” by the power structure invariably aligns along the fault lines of multiple identities, with the most marginalized women constituting the “most silent group”.

This metaphor is a reflection of the systematic silencing of female voices by the religious patriarchal system. The Southern Baptist Church’s theological doctrines have been identified as contributing to the marginalization of female voices within the religious community. This marginalization is evident in the document, where female voices are defined as “secondary” and are seldom given a voice in reports of abuse. The repeated utilization of this metaphor serves as a reflection of reality. When religious authority is intertwined with male power, not only are female voices physically disregarded, but they are also ideologically rationalized. This silencing is not an accident; Rather, it is systematic. For women at the periphery of power, the “audibility” of their voices is systematically diminished by the power centre, and the dismantling of this suppression requires not only individual voices but also the deconstruction of the intertwined structure of religious patriarchy and gender power.

From the perspective of American social reality, the Southern Baptist Church has exerted its influence in the political domain. For instance, the “Biblical worldview” espoused by the Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, has further expanded this “lack of hearing for women’s voices” logic to public policies, resulting in the marginalization of women’s demands in areas such as healthcare and abortion rights. The “heard” metaphor is not merely a linguistic phenomenon. It is also a symbolic representation of the power structure, revealing how gender oppression is maintained through the unequal distribution of voices.

4.1.7 Obstacle Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

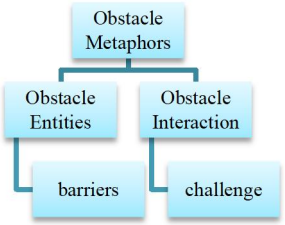


Figure 4.7: Obstacle Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.7, In American periodicals, the notion of "obstacle metaphors" is predicated on the conceptual framework of "obstacle entities (barriers)" and "obstacle interaction (challenge)". CMT posits that the impediments encountered by the feminist movement are conceptualized as "materialized barriers" and "competitive interactions".

Within the obstacle entities dimension, the barriers are indicative of the "institutional-cultural barriers" (CMT source mapping) that white middle-class women encounter when challenging traditional social roles. The obstacles confronting white middle-class women frequently allude to the concept of a "glass ceiling" in professional settings, signifying the covert limitations imposed on their career progression. For African-American women, these impediments are further compounded by "racial barriers," which encompass the systemic disregard of black women's rights by law enforcement agencies and the diagnostic bias encountered by women of colour within the medical sector. The barriers experienced by these two groups present qualitative differences due to the interweaving of racial and class identities, reflecting the multiplicity of the oppression of women in American society. However, the mainstream feminist discourse's "barrier

narrative" frequently employs a template based on white experiences, thereby obscuring the survival predicaments of marginalized groups.

The "obstacle interaction" dimension poses a challenge that engenders an action metaphor of "facing obstacles" for women (the interactive mapping of CMT). As posited by Social Role Theory, this may be interpreted as a symbol of women's transition from the role of "obstacle recipients" to that of "resistance subjects". However, from the standpoint of Intersectionality, this illusion is shattered. The challenge faced by white feminists relies on educational resources and political networks, such as lobbying to promote equal employment legislation. While the challenge faced by immigrant women needs to simultaneously overcome language barriers, immigration identity restrictions, and gender discrimination. In instances where individuals seek equal remuneration for low-wage labour, they frequently encounter limitations in legal knowledge and are subject to coercion stemming from their employers' identity. The practical challenges associated with this endeavor are compounded by the intersection of various identities, resulting in a marked increase in the complexity and cost of the undertaking. The mainstream feminist movement's "resistance narrative" focuses on the strategic manoeuvres of the elite, yet it overlooks the challenges faced by marginalized women in their efforts to "survive" resistance, leading to a significant imbalance in the discourse presentation of Obstacle Interaction.

This hierarchical division of the barrier cognition can be considered as a projection of the power structure of social identity in the United States society onto the discourse of feminism. When the barriers for white women are said to point to "developmental restrictions" and the challenges are viewed as "resource-based struggles", the barriers for

marginalized women are still trapped in “survival-based oppression” and the challenges are struggling to break through the “survival line”. The fracturing of the barrier metaphor must not be considered an inadvertent linguistic manifestation. Rather, it is an unavoidable consequence of the American feminist movement’s failure to attain authentic inclusivity in its comprehension of barriers, amidst the intricate intertwinement of factors such as race, class, and immigrant identity.

Table 4.16 shows the example of obstacle metaphors with the lexical realization of “barriers” in *Ms.*.

Table 4.16: Feminist Obstacle Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of “barriers”

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
barriers	427	dismantling	8.173	15. We believe dismantling **barriers** to equality for women of all backgrounds will spark widespread social progress. (*Ms.*)

Extract 15 is about women’s political representation and leadership, focusing on rights to equal participation, workplace equity, freedom from discrimination, and access to supportive structures such as childcare. As demonstrated in Table 4.16, the frequency is 427, indicating that “barriers” as the core word of the metaphor of obstacles frequently appears in the discourse related to gender equality. Furthermore, the MI-Score 8.173 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with “dismantling”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “removing equality barriers” and highlighting the active pursuit of breaking down systemic obstacles (Han et al., 2019).

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor "The obstacles to gender equality are physical barriers". The characteristics of the source domain, "obstacles" such as "blocking pathways", "hierarchical obstruction", and "requiring active removal" are systematically mapped to the target domain, "structural limitations faced by women in all social fields". In Extract 15, the concept of "dismantling barriers to equality for women of all backgrounds" is explored, with the abstract obstacle of equality being concretized as removable physical barriers, akin to walls obstructing thoroughfares. The obstacles confronting women, including parenting costs, workplace discrimination and restrictions on political participation, are metaphorically represented by the concept of "obstacles", while the act of "dismantling" symbolizes the active removal of these impediments. This mapping facilitates public comprehension of the equality predicament through physical experience, whereby the material of the obstacles (e.g. wood and stone) mirrors the nature of the restrictions (cultural concepts, institutional rules). The difficulty of removal corresponds to the complexity of change, thereby transforming "systemic injustice" into an operational cognitive framework.

Conventional social roles have imposed limitations on women, confining them to the status of "limited participants". The scope of their social activities has been "naturalized" by "obstacles". The metaphor of "dismantling barriers" essentially represents a subversion of this role conditioning. Women have been breaking through the restrictions on their participation in politics, the workplace, and public affairs, fundamentally challenging the role expectation that "women should be subordinate to specific domains". As Eagly and Wood (2012) demonstrate in their research, the continuous breakthrough of role behaviors has the potential to reshape social cognition. Extract 15 shows that the Nevada legislature has a majority of women, which is achieved by dismantling the

"obstacle that women should not lead politics", promoting society's acceptance of the role of "public affairs decision-makers" for women, and confirming the interconnection between role change and obstacle removal.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the hierarchical nature of "obstacles", positing that the interweaving of diverse identities engenders varied thicknesses in these obstacles. As Crenshaw (1989) noted, the intersection of identities such as race, class and gender can generate unique forms of oppression. The "obstacles" confronted by women are more arduous to overcome due to the superposition of identities. As illustrated in Extract 15, white women may only need to overcome the gender obstacle, while black women need to overcome the dual obstacles of "race + gender" concurrently. For instance, Angela Alsobrooks, a black woman in Maryland, confronted gender bias and the inequitable allocation of resources stemming from racial discrimination during her senate election campaign. Poor mothers, confronted with the superposition of "class + gender" obstacles, encountered greater challenges in bearing the temporal and economic costs of political participation. The "sturdiness" of the obstacles increases with the superposition of identities, and different strategies must be adopted to remove the obstacles at different levels.

In the United States, the removal of such cross-cutting barriers has been shown to exhibit a gradient characteristic in the real society. The election of the first female president in North Macedonia signifies a significant breakthrough in the dismantling of gender barriers. However, the low proportion of minority women in the fields of technology and politics (for instance, constituting only 1/6 of the positions in venture capital decision-making) exposes the persisting intractability of the "race + gender"

barriers. It is evident that the metaphor of "dismantling barriers" signifies more than a mere linguistic expression. It functions as a cognitive instrument that facilitates the recognition of intersecting forms of oppression. This metaphor underscores the notion that societal transformation towards true equality cannot be achieved by concentrating solely on single-dimensional barriers. Instead, it emphasizes the necessity for the formulation of precise strategies that address the unique obstacles confronting diverse female groups, including cultural biases among minority groups and the resource scarcity experienced by impoverished women. By doing so, the metaphor signifies the aspiration to achieve comprehensive equality for women from all walks of life. It is only by confronting the hierarchical nature of barriers that we can truly foster "widespread social progress".

Table 4.17 shows the example of obstacle metaphors with the lexical realization of "challenge" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.17: Feminist Obstacle Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "challenges"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
challenges	318	face	5.025	16. Women still face **challenges** in achieving equal representation in government, despite making "historic" gains in elected office in recent years. (*Ms.*)

Extract 16 is about the ongoing struggle for women's equal political representation and leadership, involving rights to political participation, reproductive freedom, and gender equality. The "obstacles" confronted by women are more arduous to overcome due to the superposition of identities. As illustrated in Extract 16, white women may only need to overcome the gender obstacle, while black women need to overcome the dual obstacles of

“race + gender” concurrently. For instance, Angela Alsobrooks, a black woman in Maryland, confronted gender bias and the inequitable allocation of resources stemming from racial discrimination during her senate election campaign. Poor mothers, confronted with the superposition of “class + gender” obstacles, encountered greater challenges in bearing the temporal and economic costs of political participation. The “sturdiness” of the obstacles increases with the superposition of identities, and different strategies must be adopted to remove the obstacles at different levels.

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Social Role Theory is a useful analytical framework for understanding the role expectation conflicts that are often manifest in metaphorical language. Conventional social roles are often regarded as defining women as "peripheral participants in the political field", and their participation is frequently perceived as "unnatural". The fundamental challenge is rooted in role conditioning (Eagly, 1987). As stated in Extract 16, the "historical progress" of women in the government is still deemed to be inadequate. In essence, it is the continuous influence of traditional role expectations. The reasoning mechanism proposed by Eagly and Steffen (1984) indicates that society regards women's political participation as "deviating from the role". This is followed by the formation of challenges through biases, unfair resource distribution, and so on. For instance, during electoral processes, women are often interrogated on their ability to juggle familial obligations with their engagement in politics. This role-based questioning becomes a specific challenge they face, confirming how role cognition transforms into structural obstacles.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the concept of "challenges" which are said to be distributed unequally due to the interweaving of identities. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the intersection of identities, such as race, class and gender, would result in unique forms of oppression. The "challenges" confronted by women are compounded by the cumulative effect of multiple identities. As illustrated in Extract 16, despite the presence of a majority of women on the New York City Council, minority women continue to confront "race + gender" dual challenges. They are confronted not only with the pervasive gender bias but also with the necessity of surmounting resource limitations and trust deficits stemming from racial stereotypes. Moreover, poor women, grappling with the intertwined challenges of "class + gender", encounter greater difficulties in financing campaign costs

and allocating time for political engagement. Such disparities are pervasive throughout the United States. For instance, the proportion of white women in state legislatures exceeds that of minority women. Moreover, among minority women, black women encounter more hidden challenges compared to Latina women. The cumulative effect of the challenges faced by marginalized groups is compounded by the increase in identity dimensions, thereby exacerbating their resistance.

This metaphor is indicative of the "fragmented progress" of political equality for American women. The utilization of the term "challenge" by the majority of women in local councils and the persistently low proportion in Congress not only acknowledges the progress made but also reveals the deep structure of inequality. The analysis of challenges from an intersectional perspective precisely reminds society that equality transformation cannot be measured solely by "overall progress of women", but also needs to pay attention to the unique challenges faced by those women marginalized by multiple identities. Achieving true "equal representation" necessitates the targeted elimination of cross-pressures. The metaphor of "challenges" is not merely a linguistic symbol, it is also a cognitive tool that facilitates understanding of the intricacies of power structures, thereby promoting societal progression from "generalized equality" to "differentiated justice".

4.1.8 Economy Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

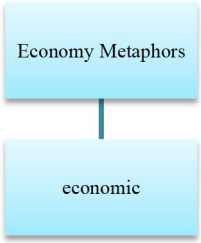


Figure 4.8: Economy Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.8, The “economy metaphors” in American magazines construct their framework based on the core word “economic”, and rely on CMT to draw parallels between the rights struggle of the feminist movement and the “field of economic resource allocation”. The presence of recurrent concomitant linguistic characteristics is observed.

Under the lens of Social Role Theory, the economy metaphor that represents women’s efforts to break free from the “economic subordinate” role points to demands such as equal pay in the workplace and independent property rights. However, the economic narratives of white middle-class women frequently revolve around so-called “developmental demands”, such as equal pay on Wall Street and competition for board seats in enterprises. In contrast, the economic predicament of Latina immigrant women is characterized by wage exploitation in the gig economy and barriers to rights protection due to their immigrant status. The demands put forward by the group in question are for so-called “survival guarantees”. This disparity can be attributed to the interweaving of race and class identities, reflecting the distinct stratification of the shaping of women’s economic roles in American society. The prevailing feminist discourse on “economic equality” implicitly assumes uniformity in demands, thereby obscuring the distinct challenges faced by marginalized groups.

Intersectionality Theory further challenges the simplistic nature of this metaphor, highlighting the limitations of a narrow economic perspective that fails to acknowledge the diverse sources of economic oppression experienced by women from various identities. In the context of the struggle for rights to tribal land by indigenous women, it is evident that they encounter not only colonial discrimination under federal laws but also the constraints

imposed by the traditional gender order of the tribe. Furthermore, disabled women seeking economic independence are confronted with the dual challenges of employment discrimination and the absence of accessible facilities. Consequently, these interwoven oppressions cannot be addressed within the confines of a linear narrative of "equal pay". The simplification of the economic metaphor in American feminist discourse can be understood as the mainstream group generalizing the economic demands of all women based on their own experiences. This exposes the inclusivity predicament of the feminist movement in the economic dimension, echoing the hierarchical logic of metaphors such as obstacles and voices. Furthermore, it jointly points to the profound shaping of feminist narratives by the power structure of social identities in American society.

Table 4.18 shows the example of economy metaphors with the lexical realization of "economic" in *Bust*.

Table 4.18: Feminist Economy Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "economic"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
economic	282	empowerment	8.335	17. She advocates for women's **economic** empowerment and promises to create jobs and a bank for women. (*Bust*)

Extract 17 is about efforts to increase women's and LGBTQ+ individuals' political representation, involving rights to gender equality, political participation, reproductive justice, and protection from gender-based violence. As demonstrated in Table 4.18, the frequency is 282, indicating that "economic" is identified as the core word of the economic metaphor and is frequently present in discourse related to women's empowerment. The MI-Score of 8.335 demonstrates a very strong co-occurrence relationship with

“empowerment”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “female economic empowerment” and highlighting the crucial significance of the economic field in enhancing women’s power.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism of the metaphor “Women’s empowerment is economic resource accumulation”. The characteristics of the source domain “economy”, such as “resource acquisition”, “autonomous control”, and “system support”, are systematically mapped to the target domain “women’s empowerment in society”. In Extract 17, the abstract concept of economic empowerment is concretized into the actual allocation of economic resources through the creation of employment opportunities and the establishment of a financial institution specifically for women. This is analogous to the manner in which the economic system supports individual development through employment and financial institutions. Similarly, women’s empowerment is contingent on this “infrastructure” of economic autonomy. This mapping facilitates the public’s comprehension of the essence of empowerment through economic activity experience: employment provides “economic fuel”, and the women’s bank builds “resource pipelines”, thereby transforming “empowerment” from an abstract concept into an operational economic practice.

In traditional societies, women were confined to the role of “economic dependents”, and their value was limited to the auxiliary role in the family economy (Eagly, 1987). The metaphor of “economic empowerment” signifies a paradigm shift in the prevailing role regulation, whereby women reconfigure their role identity as “economic subjects” through employment and control over economic resources. Eagly and Wood’s (2012) research indicates that the ongoing involvement of women in economic production, coupled with

their agency in resource allocation, contributes to the gradual deconstruction of the stereotype that "women lack economic capabilities". The "women's bank" advocated by the Senegalese female presidential candidate in the document is precisely through institutional economic support to promote society's recognition of women as "economic decision-makers", confirming the interconnection between role practice and cognitive change.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the varied barriers to "economic empowerment", that is, the interweaving of multiple identities which engenders unequal obstacles in the economic field for women. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the intersection of identities, including but not limited to race, class and region, would generate unique economic oppression. The concept of "economic empowerment" for women is significantly influenced by the combination of multiple identities. In the United States, white middle-class women have the potential to achieve economic autonomy through career development. However, minority women encounter a number of obstacles that hinder this possibility. Firstly, they face a gender wage gap, with the overall income of women being 84% of that of men, and the income of minority women being particularly low. Secondly, they face additional barriers in loans and career promotions due to racial discrimination. Thirdly, impoverished women are limited by class and have difficulty accessing quality employment and financial services, forming a "race + class + gender" triple economic predicament. As demonstrated in the document, in addition to gender-related barriers, Senegalese women may encounter more structural limitations in their "economic empowerment" due to the underdeveloped regional economy and scarce resources. The "threshold" of economic empowerment has been shown to increase in proportion to the

number of identity dimensions, and it is therefore the case that marginalized groups must make greater efforts to cross it.

This metaphor is reflective of the unequal reality of global female economic empowerment. The utilization of the metaphor in relation to the female banking concept in Senegal and the economic predicament of minority women in the United States is indicative of the urgency of the demands and the function of the metaphor as a discourse tool to promote targeted changes. The varied experiences of different groups serve to illustrate the diverse manifestations of various practices in the context of intersecting forms of oppression. This lends further support to the notion that the economic metaphor can serve as a conduit between cognitive understanding and practical action. True empowerment must not only focus on the gender dimension, but also address the economic power network that is intricately intertwined with factors such as race and class.

4.1.9 Light Source Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

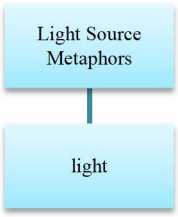


Figure 4.9: Light Source Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.9, In American periodicals, the notion of “Light Source Metaphors” is predicated on the fundamental term “light”, employing CMT to draw parallels between the feminist movement and the “enlightening process that dispels ignorance”.

In the context of Social Role Theory, the term “light” is employed to denote the awakening of women, signifying their emancipation from the role of “ignorant subordinates”. This concept is intertwined with demands for knowledge, empowerment, and the enlightenment of consciousness. The light narratives of white middle-class women frequently focus on gender studies courses in schools and the awakening of consciousness within the elite circle, emphasizing “rational enlightenment”. In contrast, the light predicaments of African-American women are trapped in the survival awakening under the shadow of racial violence. Their demands are for “safety enlightenment”, and they need to simultaneously break through the dual ignorance of gender discrimination and racial oppression. This discrepancy can be attributed to the interweaving of racial and class identities, reflecting the distinct stratification in the shaping of women’s awakening paths in American society. The prevailing feminist discourse, with its “bright narrative”, implicitly assumes the homogeneity of the Enlightenment, thereby obscuring the authentic struggles of marginalized groups.

Intersectionality Theory further challenges the validity of this single metaphor by highlighting the limitations of the narrow portrayal of “light”, which fails to acknowledge the diverse sources of “ignorance” experienced by women from different identities. In the context of the pursuit of cultural heritage rights by indigenous women, it is evident that they encounter two significant forms of oppression. Firstly, they are subject to the erasure of local knowledge through colonial educational practices. Secondly, they are confronted with the concealment of their tribal traditional gender order. Similarly, when disabled women advocate for equality, they are confronted with the dual challenges of physical barriers and social prejudice. These interwoven forms of oppression cannot be addressed by a simplistic narrative of “knowledge enlightenment”. The simplification of the

metaphor of light in American feminist discourse can be considered to be the mainstream group standardizing the awakening path of all women based on their own experiences. This is an important aspect of the inclusiveness dilemma of the feminist movement in the enlightenment dimension. Furthermore, it is important to note that this simplification also echoes the stratified logic of economic and voice metaphors. These factors, when considered collectively, point to the profound shaping of the power structure of social identities in American society on feminist narratives.

Table 4.19 shows the example of light source metaphors with the lexical realization of "light" in *Ms.*.

Table 4.19: Feminist Light Source Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "light"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
light	193	shedding	11.797	18. Using global data from 2021 and 2022, the Golden Year Analysis will identify the most effective strategies to advance and maintain women's representation worldwide, shedding **light** on the path forward to gender parity. (*Ms.*)

Extract 18 is about honoring Senator Dianne Feinstein's legacy and advancing gender equality through women's political representation, feminist foreign policies, and constitutional protections for equal rights. As illustrated in Table 4.19, the frequency of "light" is 193, indicating its prevalence as the core word in the metaphor for the source of light in the discourse on the development path of women's representation rights. The MI-Score is 11.797, suggesting a very strong co-occurrence relationship with "shedding",

thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “providing guidance for the path of gender equality” and highlighting the significance of exploring systematic strategies.

CMT elucidates the cognitive mechanism underlying the metaphor “Exploring Gender Equality Paths is Shedding Light”. The features of the source domain, hereafter referred to as “light”, such as “dispelling darkness”, “clarifying direction”, and “range differences”, are systematically mapped to the target domain, “Exploring the Path of Global Female Representation Rights Development” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In Extract 18, entitled “Shedding light on the path forward to gender parity”, the abstract strategy exploration is concretized into a physical process of light, which is analogous to the penetration of darkness by light to outline the path. The research employs data analysis to reveal effective strategies, thereby rendering the “gender equality path” from vague to identifiable. This mapping enables the public to understand the complexity of change through their daily experience of light. The intensity of the light corresponds to the effectiveness of the strategy, the range of illumination corresponds to the breadth of equality, and transforms “systemic change” into a perceivable cognitive framework.

Social Role Theory is a theoretical framework that analyzes the cognitive reconstruction of roles as they pertain to metaphors. Conventional social roles tend to delineate women as “passive beneficiaries of the equality process”, with their developmental trajectories often determined by external factors. The metaphor of “shedding light” essentially represents a breakthrough in this role regulation: Women actively explore and summarize strategies (such as the practices in Iceland promoting gender equality), thereby reconstructing their role identity as “path shapers”. Eagly and Wood’s (2012) research indicates that the stereotype attributing an absence of leadership

capacity to women can be progressively dispelled through the continuous involvement of women in strategy formulation and the execution of change initiatives. The implementation of feminist foreign policies in 16 countries, as outlined in Extract 18, serves as a case study exemplifying the transformation of cognition through role practice.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the multifaceted nature of “lighting”, signifying the intricate interweaving of identities that results in disparate female groups being subjected to varying degrees of “uneven illumination”. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized that the intersection of identities, such as race, class and region, would produce unique marginalization, and that the concept of “shedding light” needs to address this “lighting gap” of inequality. In the United States, white women may benefit more from existing strategies (e.g. ranked-choice voting), while minority women, due to the “race + gender” dual barriers, still remain in the “shadow zone” of strategy coverage. For example, the low proportion of black women in state legislatures (only 11.4% in Alabama) reflects the fact that the general strategy has not yet broken through the racialized gender barrier. Despite the fact that the gender quota law in India provides “light sources” for women, it does not include caste sub-quotas. This results in low-caste women still being unable to be “lit up”. The uniformity of “lighting” necessitates the formulation of strategies predicated on multiple identity dimensions. In the absence of such strategies, marginalized groups will remain in a state of “cognitive darkness”.

This metaphor reflects the “uneven lighting” reality of global gender equality. The employment of the metaphor of “shedding light” is a frequent occurrence in discourse, yet this does not necessarily correspond with the actual progress being made. This is evident in a range of contexts, from Iceland’s high gender equality index to India’s quota system

exploration. This discrepancy is indicative of a duality in approach, reflecting both a universal desire for strategies and an acknowledgement of the limitations of single-dimensional methodologies. In order to explore the true path to equality, it is necessary to dispel the layers of barriers that exist, such as race, class and region, in order to illuminate the exclusive paths for each category of female groups.

4.1.10 Summary

The gender equality metaphorical divergence between the American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust* reflects the inherent tension within the American discourse on gender equality between collectivity and individuality. In this text, the fundamental metaphor for "War/Conflict" is employed in *Ms.*, and, in accordance with the tenets of CMT, the feminist movement is conceptualized as "a collective war against patriarchal oppression". According to Social Role Theory, this metaphor engenders the concept of "collective protesters" for women, diverging from the conventional subordinate position and emphasizing the critique of systemic oppression. However, Intersectionality Theory elucidates its limitations. The "collective protest" spearheaded by the white middle class frequently obscures the varied oppression experienced by minority groups and impoverished women. To illustrate this point, it is imperative to acknowledge the necessity for African American women to combat not only gender discrimination but also racial violence. The protest's dimensions extend far beyond the confines of a single patriarchal framework. However, within the war metaphor of *Ms.*, it is simplified into a united front, thereby exposing the predicament of inclusivity in collective narratives.

Bust employs the journey/business metaphor as its fundamental conceptual framework, utilizing CMT to construct a feminist vision of "individual advancement". In

accordance with Social Role Theory, this denotes the transition of women from “resistance followers” to “growth leaders”, emphasizing individual breakthroughs such as career advancement and personal development. However, within the framework of Intersectionality, this notion is rendered invalid. The barriers to individual growth (education, capital, social networks) impede minorities and lower-class women from emulating the advancement trajectory of “journey/business”. For instance, immigrant women encounter difficulties in surviving within the gig economy, lacking the “journey” planning resources and the “business” capital support. The individual growth narrative has been shown to function as a template for elite women, thus exposing the class and racial fragmentation of the American feminist discourse.

The underlying cause of this metaphorical discrepancy can be attributed to the divergent audience and ideological orientations of the magazines in question. *Ms.* appeals to both commercial and ideological audiences, critiquing the patriarchal system in order to uphold its radical feminist stance. However, it becomes entrapped in a dilemma concerning intersectionality due to the homogeneity of collective narratives. *Bust* targets the individualized demands of the young group, employing the metaphor of growth to echo the concept of “self-actualization” in the context of consumerism. However, it neglects to consider differences in resource distribution, thereby reducing the advancement of feminism to an elite game. It is evident that these two periodicals reflect the fundamental contradiction inherent in the discourse of American feminism. This contradiction can be defined as the inclusive problem of collective struggle and the limited privileges of individual growth. In addition, these publications expose the shaping effect of the social identity power structure in the United States on feminist narratives.

4.2 Dominant Conceptual Metaphors Constructing "Woman" in Chinese Magazines

The results in this section addresses objective 2, which is to identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in Chinese magazines (中国妇女 (*Women of China*), 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)) and and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse. In the analysis of the corpus between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, thirteen different dominant feminist conceptual metaphors were identified. These metaphors not only reflected social expectations of women's roles and the evolution of gender relations in China, but also revealed that the concept of gender equality is growing. Table 4.20 shows the frequency of conceptual metaphors counted from which the collocates that are metaphorically constructed in the corpus of Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.20: Frequency of Feminist Conceptual Metaphors in the Corpus of Chinese Magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Number	Conceptual Metaphors	Lexical Realizations	Frequency	Total
1	Architecture metaphors	建设 jiàn shè (build)/建立 jiàn lì (establish)/搭建 dā jiàn (erect)/构建 gòu jiàn (construct)/组建 zǔ jiàn (form)/建 jiàn (build)/建成 jiàn chéng (constructed)	5,338/1,068/613/533/427/190/177	13,286
		打造 dǎ zào (create)/营造 yíng zào (create)	1494/978	
		创建 chuàng jiàn (creation)/共建 gòng jiàn (co-construction)/共创 gòng chuàng (co-creation)	959/670/101	
		筑牢 zhù láo (build a solid barrier)	201	
		顶梁柱 dǐng liáng zhù (pillar)	160	
		支撑 zhī chēng (support)/撑起 chēng qǐ (support)	150/108	
		建设者 jiàn shè zhě (builder)	119	
2	Force metaphors	力量 lì liàng (power)/力度 lì dù (power)/全力 quán lì (power)/聚力 jù lì (power)/之力 zhī lì (power)/发力 fā lì (power)/贡献力量 gòng xiàn lì liàng (contribute power)	3,086/284/269/219/168/152/113	12,159
		推动 tuī dòng (promote)/推进 tuī jìn (promote)/助力 zhù lì (promote)/助推 zhù tuī (promote)	2,883/2,227/1,562/297	
		赋能 fù néng (empowered)	677	
		半边天 bàn biān tiān (half the sky)	453	
		能量 néng liàng (energy)	258	
3	Journey metaphors	征程 zhēng chéng (journey)	908	4,952
		奋进 fèn jìn (striving to)	820	

Table 4.20 continued

		探索 tàn suǒ (explore)/积极探索 jī jí tàn suǒ (explore actively))	584/158	
		驿站 yì zhàn (post station)	458	
		渠道 qú dào (channels)/道路 dào lù (roads)	308/265	
		路 lù (road)/一路 yī lù (along the way)/路径 lù jìng (path)/路上 lù shàng (on the road)	303/174/165/122	
		护航 hù háng (escort)	251	
		进步 jìn bù (progress)/前行 qián xíng (advance)	249/187	
4	War metaphors	阵地 zhèn dì (positions)	814	4,365
		建功 jiàn gōng (creating achievements)/建功立业 jiàn gōng lì yè (make one's mark)	812/124	
		团结 tuán jié (unite)	533	
		奋斗 fèn dòu (struggle)/奋斗者 fèn dòu zhě (striver)/拼搏 pīn bó (fight for)	424/216/102	
		一线 yī xiàn (frontline)	394	
		战略 zhàn lüè (strategic)	235	
		突破 tū pò (breakthroughs)	157	
		攻坚 gōng jiān (fighting against challenges)	153	
		防线 fáng xiàn (defense line)	150	
		坚守 jiān shǒu (adhere to)	150	
		先锋 xiān fēng (pioneer)	101	
5	Innovation metaphors	创造 chuàng zào (create)/开创 kāi chuàng (initiate)	400/100	2,975
		创新 chuàng xīn (innovation)	2,475	
6	Plant metaphors	培育 péi yù (cultivate)/培养 péi yǎng (cultivate)	654/517	2,202
		绽放 zhàn fàng (shine)	283	
		挖掘 wā jué (dig out)	283	
		花 huā (flowers)	244	
		扎根 zhā gēn (are rooted)	108	
		种子 zhǒng zi (seeds)	113	
7	Container metaphors	覆盖 fù gài (coverage)	534	1,446
		拓展 tuò zhǎn (expand)/拓宽 tuò kuān (expand)	453/261	
		注入 (inject)	198	
8	Voice metaphors	听 tīng (listened to)/聆听 líng tīng (listened to)/倾听 qīng tīng (listened to)/听取 tīng qǔ (listened to)	325/182/134/129	1,013
		声音 shēng yīn (voices)	243	
9	Performance metaphors	舞台 wǔ tái (stage)	168	168
10	Light Source metaphors	点亮 diǎn liàng (light up)	153	153
11	Wave metaphors	热潮 rè cháo (wave)	131	131
12	Obstacle metaphors	挑战 tiǎo zhàn (challenges)	130	130
13	Animal metaphors	领头雁 lǐng tóu yàn (leading geese)	115	115

The architecture metaphor is widely used in the two Chinese magazines to depict women's roles in family, society and self-growth. The core word "建设 jiàn shè (build)" is

the most frequently used (5,338 times), followed by “打造 dǎ zào (create)” (1,494 times), “建立 jiàn lì (establish)” (1,068 times), “营造 yíng zào (create)” (978 times), and “创建 chuàng jiàn (creation)” (959 times). The Chinese language offers a more diverse choice of words when expressing the concept of “create”. The word “打造 dǎ zào (create)” emphasizes hard work and attention to detail to willfully achieve a specific goal or vision. The word “营造 yíng zào (create)” puts more emphasis on the creation of atmosphere and environment. The term “创建 chuàng jiàn (creation)” is broader and includes the concrete material construction and the spiritual creation. Although the English word “create” is concise and clear, the diversified expressions in Chinese can more accurately convey the feelings, attitudes and efforts of feminists.

Other words associated with the architecture metaphor deals with construction: “共建 gòng jiàn (co-construction)” (670 times), “搭建 dā jiàn (erect)” (613 times), “构建 gòu jiàn (construct)” (533 times), “组建 zǔ jiàn (form)” (427 times), “筑牢 zhù láo (build a solid barrier)” (201 times), “建 jiàn (build)” (201 times), “建成 jiàn chéng (constructed)” (177 times), and “顶梁柱 dǐng liáng zhù (pillar)” (160). “共建 gòng jiàn (co-construction)” emphasizes the collaborative and joint effort in building structures or systems, indicating a collective approach to achieving goals. “搭建 dā jiàn (erect)” focuses on the act of setting up or establishing something, often implying a physical or organizational framework. “构建 gòu jiàn (construct)” involves the comprehensive and systematic creation of something, suggesting a more intricate and detailed building process. “组建 zǔ jiàn (form)” refers to the formation or establishment of groups or organizations, indicating the initial steps in creating a structure. “筑牢 zhù láo (build a solid barrier)”

underscores the effort to create a strong and resilient foundation, often metaphorically representing the strengthening of women's positions or achievements. "建 jiàn (build)" is a general term for constructing or establishing something, covering a broad range of activities from inception to completion. "建成 jiàn chéng (constructed)" marks the completion of a project or structure, indicating the end result of the building process. Each term reflects a unique facet of this journey, from collaborative efforts to individual achievements, ultimately converging to elevate women's status as societal "顶梁柱 dǐng liáng zhù (pillar)", which raises the important role of women in society to a new height. It symbolizes the core status and supporting role of women, and is a recognition and praise of women's value. In the traditional Chinese social structure, cultural elements such as Confucianism influence the role positioning of women as the cornerstone concept of architecture.

In the category of force metaphors, the conceptual domain centered on "power" shows a very high frequency of 3,086 occurrences, accounting for a significant proportion of the 12,159 total word frequencies. This finding highlights the importance of force metaphor in the construction of women's images and feminist issues. Specifically, the word "推动 tuī dòng (promote)" (frequency: 2,883), is the most representative word in this category. In addition, the word "推进 tuī jìn (promote)" (2,227 times) also appears frequently, further emphasizing women's driving force in social change.

The words "助力 zhù lì (promote)" and "赋能 fù néng (empowerment)" appear 1,562 and 677 times respectively, revealing that women not only receive help as beneficiaries, but also provide strength and support to themselves and others as empowered persons. Words such as "助推 zhù tuī (promote)", "力度 lì dù (power)" and "全力 quán

lì (power)" show women's firmness and determination in pursuing their goals, such as "助推 zhù tuī (promote)", with a frequency of 297 times.

It is worth noting that "能量 néng liàng (energy)" and "聚力 jù lì (power)" appear 258 and 219 times respectively, which not only depict the source of women's inner strength, but also reflect the solidarity and collaboration among women's groups. In addition, the words "之力 zhī lì (power)" and "发力 fā lì (power)" also appear frequently, with 168 and 152 occurrences respectively, further emphasizing women's initiative and influence in the social arena. Finally, the word "贡献力量 gòng xiàn lì liàng (contribute power)" appears 113 times, highlighting women's active contribution to society and their sense of responsibility. "半边天 bàn biān tiān (half the sky)" appears 453 times, which vividly expresses the important status and role of women in society as half of the sky. In China, there is a saying that "women hold up half the sky", which emphasizes that women play an indispensable role in all fields. For example, in economic construction, many female entrepreneurs and women in the workplace have made great contributions. In the family, women bear the heavy responsibility of taking care of the family and managing family affairs. In education, health care, culture and other fields, women have also shown strong ability and influence.

It is worth noting that the Chinese language shows a rich choice of words and a delicate semantic distinction when expressing the corresponding concepts of "power" and "promote". When describing "power", not only the basic word "力量 lì liàng (power)" is used, but also "力度 lì dù (power)", "全力 quán lì (power)", "聚力 jù lì (power)", "之力 zhī lì (power)" and "发力 fā lì (power)" are used to express different intensity, direction

and focus. Other forms of "promote" in Chinese words are "推动 tuī dòng (promote)", "推进 tuī jìn (promote)", "助力 zhù lì (promote)", "助推 zhù tuī (promote)".

The journey metaphor shows a process of continuous exploration and progress. "征程 zhēng chéng (journey)" 908 times, "奋进 fèn jìn (striving to)" 820 times, "探索 tàn suǒ (explore)" 584 times, "驿站 yì zhàn (post station)" 458 times, "渠道 qú dào (channels)" 308 times, "路 lù (road)" 303 times, "道路 dào lù (road)" 265 times, "护航 hù háng (escort)" 251 times, "进步 jìn bù (progress)" 249 times, "前行 qián xíng (advance)" 187 times, "一路 yī lù (all the way)" 174 times, "路径 lù jìng (path)" 165 times, "积极探索 jī jí tàn suǒ (explore actively)" 158 times, "路上 lù shàng (on the road)" 122 times.

"征程 zhēng chéng (journey)" usually refers to a journey full of challenges and struggles, emphasizing that the goal is ambitious and the process is difficult. "奋进 fèn jìn (striving to)" emphasizes active effort to move forward. "探索 tàn suǒ (explore)" emphasizes the exploration and research of the unknown field. "驿站 yì zhàn (post station)" symbolizes the stopping point of the journey, which can represent the stage results or the stage of rest adjustment in the development process of women. "渠道 qú dào (channels)" can be seen as a path or passage in the journey, emphasizing the way to obtain information or resources. "路 lù (road)" and "道路 dào lù (road)" both emphasize the path forward, which is a relatively basic and general expression. "护航 hù háng (escort)" emphasizes protection and support during the journey to ensure that the direction of travel is correct and safe. "进步 jìn bù (progress)" emphasizes constantly moving forward in the

journey to achieve better results. “前行 qián xíng (advance)” emphasizes continuing to move forward, is a relatively simple and direct expression. “一路 yī lù (all the way)” is usually used to describe the entire journey. “路径 lù jìng (path)” is similar to “路 lù (road)” and “道路 dào lù (road)”, but emphasizes a specific route planning or direction guidance. “积极探索 jī jí tàn suǒ (explore actively)” emphasizes maintaining a proactive attitude in the process of exploration. “路上 lù shàng (on the road)” is a colloquial expression that emphasizes a certain place or stage in a journey. The richness of the Chinese vocabulary enables the Chinese magazines to portray different stages in the feminists’ journey.

The war metaphor is also unique in corpus of Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*). “阵地 zhèn dì (position)” 814 times, “建功 jiàn gōng (creating achievements” 812 times, “团结 tuán jié (unite)” 533 times, “奋斗 fèn dòu (struggle)” 424 times, “一线 yī xiàn (front line)” 394 times, “战略 zhàn lüè (strategic)” 235 times, “奋斗者 fèn dòu zhě (striver)” 216 times, “突破 tū pò (breakthrough)” 157 times, “攻坚 gōng jiān (fighting against challenges)” 153 times, “防线 fáng xiàn (defense line)” 150 times, “坚守 jiān shǒu (adhere to)” 150 times, “建功立业 jiàn gōng lì yè (make contributions)” 124 times, “拼搏 pīn bó (strive)” 102 times, “先锋 xiān fēng (pioneer)” 101 times.

“阵地 zhèn dì (position)” usually means the place or area of battle. “建功 jiàn gōng (creating achievements” emphasizes the establishment of merit in battle. “团结 tuán jié (unite)” emphasizes uniting the forces of all parties in battle to fight the enemy. “奋斗

fèn dòu (struggle)" emphasizes hard work in battle, reflecting an indomitable spirit. "一线 yī xiàn (frontline)" usually refers to the most advanced battlefields or jobs. "战略 zhàn lüè (strategic)" emphasizes the overall planning and strategy of the battle. "奋斗者 fèn dòu zhě (striver)" emphasizes the individual who participates in the struggle. "突破 tū pò (breakthrough)" emphasizes breaking through difficulties and making progress in combat. "攻坚 gōng jiān (fighting against challenges)" emphasizes overcoming difficulties. "防线 fáng xiàn (defense line)" is a defensive concept. "坚守 jiān shǒu (adhere to)" means to be firm in one's position or post. "建功立业 jiàn gōng lì yè (make contributions)" is the combination of "建功 jiàn gōng (creating achievements)" and "立业 lì yè (establishing)", emphasizing the establishment of merits and achievements in the battle. "拼搏 pīn bó (strive)" emphasizes to strive for in the battle, reflecting a strong sense of competition and struggle spirit. "先锋 xiān fēng (pioneer)" emphasizes being in the front and taking the lead in battle.

In addition, there are also some other metaphors. For the innovation metaphor, the word "创造 chuàng zào (create)" appears 400 times and is a more general term, meaning to create something completely new. "创新 chuàng xīn (innovation)" appeared 2,475 times, emphasizing improvement and innovation on the basis of the original, and focusing more on the optimization of existing things. "开创 kāi chuàng (initiate)" occurs 100 times and emphasizes the importance of pioneering a new field or direction.

For the plant metaphor, "培育 péi yù (cultivate)" appears 654 times, emphasizing that nourishment for a plant to grow. "培养 péi yǎng (cultivate)" appears 517 times, focusing more on making the object possess certain abilities or qualities through education

and training. The word “绽放 zhàn fàng (shine)” appears 283 times, symbolizing beauty and brilliance. The phrase “挖掘 wā jué (dig out)” is used 283 times and can be understood as the discovery of potential. The word “花 huā (flowers)” appears 244 times and is often used as a metaphor for women’s beauty and tenderness. The phrase “扎根 zhā gēn (are rooted)” occurs 108 times to emphasize firmly growing in a certain place. The word “种子 zhǒng zi (seeds)” occurs 113 times, and symbolizes hope and potential for future development.

For the container metaphor, “覆盖 fù gài (coverage)” occurs 534 times, emphasizing complete coverage of an area or scope. “拓展 tuò zhǎn (expand)” appears 453 times, and this word focuses more on the expansion of the scope on the basis of the original, which can refer to the expansion of space, and can also involve the expansion of fields, scope and other aspects, such as expanding women’s career development fields. “拓宽 tuò kuān (expand)” appeared 261 times, with the emphasis on increasing the width, such as broadening the employment channels for women, and emphasizing the width change in a certain dimension. “注入 zhù rù (inject)” appears 198 times, and it is often used to describe adding some element to a container or field, which in the context of feminism can be understood as injecting new vitality or resources into women’s development.

For the voice metaphor, “听 tīng (listened to)” occurs 325 times, which is a relatively basic and general word that simply refers to the action of the ear receiving a sound. “聆听 líng tīng (listened to)” appears 182 times, with a serious, focused and respectful attitude, when we say “聆听 líng tīng (listened to)”, often means to listen more

attentively, such as listening to women's voices, reflecting the importance of women's words. "倾听 qīng tīng (listened to)" appears 134 times. It is similar to "聆听 líng tīng (listened to)", but it puts more emphasis on listening to others' opinions and voices. In feminist discussions, it is very important to listen to women's thoughts and feelings. "听取 tīng qǔ (listened to)" appears 129 times, and it not only includes the act of listening, but also emphasizes accepting and considering what is heard, such as listening to women's suggestions in the decision-making process, which means thinking and weighing these suggestions.

For the performance metaphor, "舞台 wǔ tái (stage)" appears 168 times, symbolizing a platform to show oneself and give full play to talents, providing opportunities and space for women to show their abilities and pursue their dreams.

For the light source metaphor, "点亮 diǎn liàng (light up)" appears 153 times, symbolizing bringing hope to women, enlightening women's consciousness, or making certain characteristics, rights and interests of women more prominent. In China, the deeds of many female role models light up a beacon, inspiring more women to pursue the realization of self-worth. For example, Tu Youyou won the Nobel Prize, and her achievements inspired countless women to join scientific research, lighting up the road for women in the field of scientific research.

For the wave metaphor, "热潮 rè cháo (wave)" appears 131 times, and usually refers to a large-scale, influential trend or trend. In China, with the development of society, the awakening of women's consciousness and the improvement of women's status have become a wave. For example, in recent years, more and more women participate in the

workplace competition and pursue equal career development opportunities. At the same time, the performance of women in culture, art, sports and other fields has also attracted wide attention, forming a wave of female power.

For the obstacle metaphor, "挑战 tiǎo zhàn (challenges)" appears 130 times, highlighting the difficulties and obstacles women face in pursuing their own development and rights and interests. In China, women may face challenges such as gender discrimination in career development and the difficulty of balancing family and career. For example, there is a bias against women in recruitment in some industries, which limits women's career development. Within the family, traditional attitudes may place more responsibility on women for housework and family care, affecting their commitment to their careers.

In the animal metaphor, "领头雁 lǐng tóu yàn (leading geese)" occurs 115 times and is often used to refer to an individual or force that leads in a group. In China, there are many excellent female leaders and role models who are like leading geese, leading other women to progress together. For example, some female entrepreneurs, after their success in the business field, actively contribute to the society and provide support and guidance for female entrepreneurship. Some female public welfare activists are committed to promoting the protection of women's rights and interests, and have become leading geese among female groups.

The following sections present the lexicial realizations of the thirteen dominant conceptual metaphors related to feminism with the original words in Chinese and the English translation (pinyin were added for all the extracts) given in brackets in all the figures, in the rest only the English words are used.

4.2.1 Architecture Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

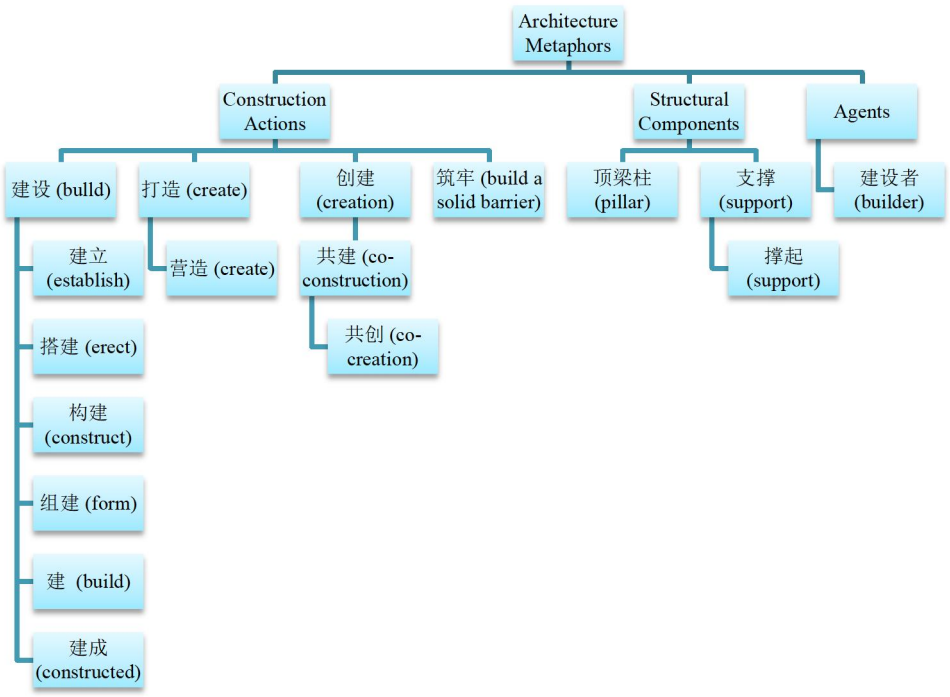


Figure 4.10: Architecture Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

In Figure 4.10, architecture metaphors in Chinese magazines, through the three dimensions of "construction actions", "structural components" and "agents", based on CMT, constructs the narrative of "collaborative social engineering", reflecting the inclusive and integrated logic of Chinese systems towards the diverse identities of women.

In the "co-construction" and "co-creation" dimensions of construction actions, the CMT action sequence (build/establish/erect) is employed to concretize feminist practices as "layered collaborative engineering advancement". Informed by Social Role Theory, this transformation reflects the evolution of Chinese women from a traditional "family-centred" role to a position as social construction subjects. Rural and urban women collaborate to "build" industrial platforms, while working women and retired women "create" community service systems. From an intersectional perspective, the concept of "co-

construction" challenges the prevailing American-style identity fragmentation. Women from diverse age groups, geographical locations and occupational backgrounds come together to create and shape shared construction discourses. For instance, frontier women are depicted as "strengthening" the barriers of ethnic unity and gender equality, while urban white-collar workers are portrayed as "constructing" the structure of work-family balance. This reflects the Chinese system's capacity to integrate diverse identities, in contrast to the more elite-dominated practice seen in the American architecture metaphors.

In the "pillar" and "support" dimensions of structural components, the metaphor of CMT's structural components represents that women bear the "differential shared load" in the social system. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women have ascended from the "subordinate support" echelon to the "core pillar" status. Rural women have assumed the dual role of providing support for both family and industrial responsibilities, while working women have become the "pillar" of the industry. Intersectionality reveals that this load-bearing is not an individual breakthrough, as has been previously observed in the United States, but rather a fit of differences under institutional support. Disabled women "build" an accessible employment system, minority women "establish" a path for integrating cultural inheritance and gender equality, and the "support" of women of different identities forms synergy based on the development needs of the country, avoiding the rupture between identity and structure as depicted in the American architecture metaphors.

Within the "agents" dimension, the term "builder" is employed to denote the reconstruction of the female "engineering subject" identity through CMT. In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, this may be interpreted as a subversion of the conventional "male-dominated builder" archetype. Recent developments in Chinese

society have seen a shift in the role of women, who are now increasingly assuming active planning roles. This transition is characterized by the establishment of service networks by grassroots women's federation cadres, and the construction of industrial ecosystems by entrepreneurial women. From an intersectional perspective, Chinese "builders" embody multifaceted identities. Elderly women, for instance, are instrumental in establishing the elderly volunteer service system, while immigrant women play a pivotal role in weaving together support networks for urban integration. This intricate subject practice stands in stark contrast to the "builder" of the elite group in the American architecture metaphor, underscoring the emphasis on "all-inclusive construction" in Chinese feminist discourse and resonating with the logic of diverse participation under institutional guarantees.

Table 4.21 shows the example of architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "建设 jiànshè (build) " in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.21: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "建设 jiànshè (build)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
建设 jiànshè (build)	5338	研修班 yánxiū bān (workshop)	6.129	19. 江西省宜春市女企业家能力**建设**研修班成功举办。Jiāngxī Shěng Yíchūn Shì nǚ qǐyèjiā nénglì jiànshè yánxiū bān chénggōng jǔbàn. (Capacity **Building** Workshop for Women Entrepreneurs in Yichun City, Jiangxi Province was successfully held.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 19 focuses on a training program in Yichun City aimed at enhancing the skills and capabilities of female entrepreneurs, emphasizing the role of women in advancing business and economic development through increased knowledge and

leadership. As illustrated in Table 4.21, the frequency of “build” is 5,338 times, indicating that “build” is identified as the core word of the architecture metaphor and is frequently present in the discourse related to the enhancement of women’s capabilities. The MI-Score of 6.129 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with “workshop”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “building women’s capabilities through systematic training” and highlighting the organized and structured empowerment process.

The metaphor “Women’s Capacity Building is Architectural Construction” serves to render the abstract process of capacity development more concrete. The characteristics of “laying the foundation”, “building”, and “strengthening” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifesting as the training courses through systematic steps such as curriculum design and practical guidance, which build a solid capacity foundation for female entrepreneurs. In a manner analogous to the coordination of diverse processes inherent in the construction of a building, the integration of political theory learning, tax knowledge imparting, and IP creation skills in training constitutes the various “components” of the “architecture” of capacity. This transformation of the improvement process, from scattered experience accumulation to a structured “construction” process, is pivotal in achieving a more systematic and organized approach to capacity development.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently perceived as “assistants” within the economic domain, and their business capabilities are often underestimated. The metaphor of “capacity building” essentially involves redefining this role: through systematic training in training courses, women are pushed from being “dominators of family roles” to “enterprise decision-makers”, thereby strengthening their dominant position in the economic field. This role transformation is not isolated. Instead, through the strategic deployment of “high-quality development leaders” and “technological innovation

leaders" within the curriculum, it progressively challenges the prevailing stereotype that "women are not proficient in management", enabling society to recognize the professional value of female entrepreneurs.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the process of "construction" presents different demands for various women. Urban female entrepreneurs may have a greater need for advanced capabilities such as digital transformation and brand building, while female entrepreneurs in rural or county areas may face the dual challenges of weak educational foundations and difficulty in accessing resources. It is imperative to recognize the heightened urgency for tax knowledge and policy interpretation within this context. Should the training courses fail to acknowledge these discrepancies, it may result in a "structural imbalance" with regard to "capacity building". To illustrate this point, an excessive emphasis on high-end business skills may hinder resource-poor women's ability to remain competitive; conversely, an absence of focus on technological innovation could impede those with a foundation from overcoming obstacles. The training content in the document is extensive, encompassing a broad spectrum of courses. These include political theory and traditional Chinese medicine health preservation. This is a response to the cross-demands of female entrepreneurs from different backgrounds. The objective is to enable each type of woman to find an appropriate "construction plan" in the "construction" process.

This metaphor is reflective of the systematic characteristics of the empowerment of Chinese women. The training courses led by the Women's Federation can be regarded as the "chief architect" of "capacity building", insofar as they simultaneously take into account the macro direction and the specific needs of different women at the micro level. However, the true "completion" of this process still requires attention to the deep barriers

brought about by intersectionality. For instance, female entrepreneurs in poverty-stricken areas may simultaneously face difficulties such as a lack of funds and a weak social network. In order to ensure the stability of the improvement of capacity, it is necessary to incorporate targeted resource links into the construction process. The "build" metaphor offers a profound insight into this issue. The development of women's capabilities must be tailored to the interwoven needs of different identity dimensions to achieve true empowerment; a uniform approach to this process is therefore inadequate.

Table 4.22 presents feminist architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "营造 yíngzào (create)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.22: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "营**造** yíngzào (create)"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
营造 yíngzào (create)	978	男女平等 nánnǚ píngděng (equality between men and women)	4.910	20. 赣榆区妇联组织各镇、村妇联收看全国妇联"消除性别歧视，保障女性平等就业权"普法直播，**营造**男女平等，和谐发展社会氛围。Gànyú Qū fùlián zǔzhī gè zhèn, cūn fùlián shōukàn quánguó fùlián "xiāochú xìngbié qíshì, bǎozhàng nǚxìng píngděng jiùyè quán" pǔfǎ zhíbō, yíngzào nánnǚ píngděng, héxié fāzhǎn shèhuì fēnwéi. (The Women's Federation of Ganyu District organized all town and village women's federations to watch the live broadcast of the All-China Women's Federation's Eliminating Gender Discrimination and Guaranteeing Women's Equal Right to Employment' campaign, so as to **create** an atmosphere of equality between men and women and harmonious development of the society.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 20 is about various feminist-related activities and initiatives, including community support for working parents, educational programs for children, and the promotion of gender equality and women's rights through training and events organized by local women's federations. As demonstrated in Table 4.22, the frequency is 978 times, indicating that the term "create" as the core word of the architecture metaphor frequently appears in the discourse related to gender equality. The MI-Score is 4.910, showing a significant co-occurrence relationship with "equality between men and women", reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "building an equal social atmosphere through systematic actions" and highlighting the purposeful and step-by-step process of environmental shaping.

The metaphor "Gender-equal Social Atmosphere is Architectural Space" is employed to render the abstract concept of equality more concrete. The characteristics of "planning", "constructing", and "maintaining" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting that the Women's Federation of Ganyu District has "constructed" a social environment for gender equality through systematic actions such as organizing the viewing of legal education live broadcasts and spreading the concept of equality. In a manner analogous to the necessity of a foundation design and continuous maintenance for the construction of a space, the "construction" of an equal atmosphere also requires "foundation projects" such as legal education, publicity, and long-term ideological guidance as "reinforcement measures" to transform equality from an abstract concept into a perceivable social reality. Within the context of social roles, women in the workforce are frequently designated as "secondary workers," and their professional value is often underestimated. The metaphor of "creating an atmosphere of gender equality" essentially involves redefining this role: through legal education and public broadcasts, explicitly

opposing gender discrimination, liberating women from the fixed role of “family dependents”, and strengthening their identity as “equal employment subjects”. This transformation in role is not an accident. It is achieved through the systematic dissemination of publicity with the aim of disrupting the stereotype that “women should return to the family”. By doing so, society is able to recognize the equal status of women in the employment market, and gender biases in the professional field are gradually eliminated.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the process of “creating” must respond to the varied needs of different female groups. Urban women may encounter implicit discrimination in career advancement, while rural women or impoverished women may concurrently experience the triple pressures of limited educational attainment, narrow employment channels, and traditional constraints. The demands for equal employment rights are of heightened urgency, and the necessity for targeted support is paramount. Should the “creation” process fail to acknowledge these discrepancies, it may result in a “structural imbalance” within the equitable atmosphere. To illustrate this point, the prioritization of legal provisions without concomitant emphasis on skills training for rural women may impede their ability to fully avail themselves of equal employment opportunities. The Women’s Federation of Ganyu District orchestrated a collaborative effort among the town and village women’s federations, with the explicit objective of ensuring the inclusion of women from diverse geographical locations and sociocultural backgrounds within the ambit of the “equal atmosphere”, thereby mitigating the disparities between “heated cities and cold rural areas”.

This metaphor is reflective of the systematic nature of China's endeavors to promote gender equality. The Women's Federation, as the primary agent in "creating", not only establishes the direction through top-level planning, but also takes into account the diverse needs of different women through grassroots organizations. Nonetheless, authentic "successful creation" remains contingent upon a cognizance of the deeply entrenched, intersecting barriers that impede progress. To illustrate, disabled women may encounter dual limitations stemming from their gender and physical conditions. Consequently, they require augmented support in the form of accessible employment opportunities beyond the scope of legal education to ensure the establishment of an equitable atmosphere. The "creating" metaphor also has a more profound implication: the social atmosphere of gender equality cannot be regarded as a simplistic "one-size-fits-all" endeavor; Rather, it necessitates the implementation of precise policies founded upon the intricate interwoven needs of diverse identity dimensions, thereby ensuring that every woman is afforded the opportunity to attain equal development within this milieu.

Table 4.23 demonstrates feminist architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "创建 chuàngjiàn (creation) " in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.23: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "创建 chuàngjiàn (creation) "

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
创建 chuàngjiàn (creation)	959	内涵 nèihán (connotation)	5.046	21. 深化巾帼建功**创建**内涵，促进女性综合素养提升。Shēnhuà jīnguó jiàngōng chuàngjiàn nèihán, cùjìn nǚxìng zōnghé sùyǎng tíshēng. (Deepening the connotation of the **creation** of women's capacity-building and promoting the enhancement of women's comprehensive literacy. (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 21 is about rural revitalization, where women's federations in Jiangsu Province's Huai'an City's Xuyi County contribute to empowering women, enhancing entrepreneurship, and advancing female competencies to promote economic and social progress. As demonstrated in Table 4.23, the frequency is 959 times, signifying that "creation" is a pivotal concept within the discourse concerning women's capacity building and development. It is noteworthy that the term "creation" is frequently encountered in such contexts. The MI-Score of 5.046 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with "connotation", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "improving the quality of women's development through deepening the construction content". This highlights a layered and profound empowerment process.

The metaphor "Deepening Women's Capacity Building is Expanding Architectural Connotation" has been employed to render the abstract concept of quality improvement more concrete. The characteristics of "creating" in the source domain, such as "strengthening the foundation", "enriching the layers", and "deepening the connotation", are mapped to the target domain, reflecting that the Women's Federation of Xuyi County has contributed to women's capacity building by refining the activities of women's achievements and expanding the service dimensions. In the same way that a building requires not only an external framework but also internal functions that are perfected, the deepening of "creating connotation" includes not only "basic projects" such as skills training but also "internal decoration" for comprehensive quality improvement, enabling women's development to move from surface participation to deep empowerment. In the context of social roles, women are frequently constrained within the "auxiliary participant" paradigm in domains such as rural revitalization, with their capabilities and values predominantly aligned with conventional family roles. The metaphor of "deepening the

connotation of women's achievements and creation" essentially represents a breakthrough of this role: through various practices such as job achievements and entrepreneurship support, women are pushed from "passive beneficiaries" to "active builders", thereby strengthening their dominant position in economic and social development. This role transformation is not isolated; Rather, it is achieved through initiatives such as "Women's Model Posts" and the "New Farmer Program", which are gradually dismantling the stereotype that "women's capabilities are limited to the family domain". These programs are intended to raise societal awareness of women's core value in entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as rural revitalization.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, it is essential that the deepening of the connotation of "creation" responds to the heterogeneous needs of different female groups. It is imperative to recognize the necessity for rural women to acquire practical skills, such as elderly and infant care, in order to achieve a harmonious balance between familial responsibilities and professional commitments. Female college students encounter a dual challenge, namely a paucity of entrepreneurial funding and social experience. Consequently, they are in an acute need for policy support, such as the "Rural Revitalization Entrepreneurship Loans". Furthermore, women in families with autistic children face the concomitant challenges of caregiving pressure and inadequate social resources. This predicament necessitates the provision of psychological counselling and targeted family education services. It is asserted that if the concept of 'creation' is confined to the realms of standardized training, it may result in the generation of 'empty connotation'. To illustrate this point, it is proposed that the time characteristics of rural women, which are often fragmented due to their involvement in agricultural activities, are to be considered. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that if skills training is not transformed

into actual employment, and if entrepreneurial women lack subsequent resource connections, they may encounter difficulties in advancing after commencing their endeavors. The “Four-Entry” action and job-village pairing carried out by the Women’s Federation of Xuyi County, for example, achieve this objective by subdividing service scenarios. This allows women of different identities and needs to receive suitable support in “creation”, thereby avoiding the “surface-level” nature of capacity building.

This metaphor is reflective of the refined characteristics of empowering Chinese women. The Women’s Federation, as the leader of “creation”, not only grasps the overall direction of “women’s achievements”, but also deepens the meaning through stratified and categorized services. Nevertheless, authentic “successful creation” remains contingent on persistent consideration of the profound and interwoven needs engendered by intersectionality. To illustrate, when disabled women engage in entrepreneurship, they may concurrently encounter both physical limitations and social prejudice. It is imperative that they receive supplementary assistance in terms of accessibility, in addition to skills training, so that the concept of “creation” can genuinely encompass all women. The “construction” of women’s capabilities cannot be satisfied with a unified framework. It needs to continuously enrich its meaning based on the interwoven needs of different identity dimensions, so that every woman can achieve quality development within it.

Table 4.24 shows feminist architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of “筑牢 (build a solid barrier...)” in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.24: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "筑牢 (build a solid barrier...)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
筑牢 zhùláo (build a solid barrier...)	201	维护 wéihù (safeguard)	4.961	22. 协同配合各有关方面全链条治理侵害妇女权益问题，共同**筑牢**维护妇女权益的坚固屏障。Xiétóng pèihé gè yǒuguān fāngmiàn quán liàntiáo zhìlǐ qīnhài fùnǚ quányì wèntí, gòngtóng zhùláo wéihù fùnǚ quányì de jiāngù píngzhàng. (We will work with all relevant parties to tackle the issue of infringement on women's rights and interests across the chain and jointly **build a solid barrier** for safeguarding women's rights and interests.) **(**中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 22 highlights an article by Chen Yiqin, Chairwoman of the All-China Women's Federation, emphasizing women's contributions to national development. As demonstrated in Table 4.24, the frequency is 201 times, indicating that "build a solid barrier..." is identified as the pivotal lexical item within the architecture metaphor employed in the discourse concerning the protection of women's rights. This metaphor is a recurrent theme within this particular discourse. The MI-Score is 4.961, suggesting a significant co-occurrence relationship with "safeguard", which reinforces the metaphorical connotation of "building a solid barrier to protect women's rights" and highlights the necessity and solidity of systematic protection.

The metaphor "Women's Rights Protection is a Defensive Architectural Project" is a rhetorical device that serves to make the abstract concept of rights protection more concrete. The characteristics in the source language, such as "strengthening", "laying the

foundation", "reinforcing", and "full-chain protection", are mapped onto the target language, reflecting the construction of a solid protection barrier for women's rights through multi-sectoral collaboration and full-process governance. In a manner analogous to the necessity for a building to have a robust foundation, walls, and protective nets, the protection of rights also requires a multifaceted support system comprising laws, policies, and social collaboration. The concept of a "solid barrier" serves to illustrate the dispersed nature of the extant protection measures, thereby engendering a perception of systematic and holistic governance. This, in turn, enables the public to comprehend that the protection of rights does not constitute a solitary action, but rather an engineering project that necessitates the collaboration of multiple parties.

In the context of social role perception, women are frequently categorized as a "protected group". This role expectation is reinforced by the metaphor of "building a barrier". In accordance with conventional principles, the prerogatives of women within the public sphere are susceptible to violation. Consequently, society has assumed the role of "protector" and has met this responsibility through the establishment of institutional frameworks and the facilitation of interdepartmental collaboration. The expression "full-chain governance" is an accurate reflection of this role practice. From prevention to response and then to relief, each stage of reinforcement is a response to the role perception that "women's rights need systematic protection". This promotes the formation of a consensus of "active protection" in society rather than passive response to infringements.

From a cross-cutting perspective, the process of "building a barrier" must address the heterogeneous needs of different female groups and avoid a "one-size-fits-all" protection model. The challenges faced by women in urban and rural areas are distinct. It is

evident that women residing in rural areas may be more susceptible to violations of their land rights, while those residing in urban areas may face discrimination within the professional sphere. Disabled women encounter not only gender-based injustice but also the potential deprivation of equal opportunities as a consequence of their physical conditions. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge the cultural nuances inherent in the protection of the rights of ethnic minority women. Should the construction of the barrier be disregarded in this manner, it may result in certain groups being situated within a "protection blind zone". The document under scrutiny places significant emphasis on the imperative of "cooperative coordination of all relevant parties". This suggests that the protection measures in question must address the cross-impediments faced by different groups. To illustrate this point, one may consider the following example: when providing legal aid to economically disadvantaged women, it is necessary to address the obstacles to their rights protection caused by their economic difficulties. Similarly, when formulating policies for ethnic minority women, it is necessary to design protection paths that take into account their cultural customs to ensure that the barrier can effectively protect all women.

This metaphor is reflective of the systematic approach to the protection of the rights of Chinese women. The process of "building up" encompasses a range of activities, including legal revisions, grassroots implementation, multi-sectoral collaboration, and social participation. This multifaceted approach not only perpetuates the conventional role of protection but also addresses the intricate, interrelated challenges that characterize the contemporary landscape. This underscores the necessity for comprehensive barriers that not only encompass the "entire chain" but also undergo "differential strengthening," thereby ensuring that every female group can attain equal safety and dignity under the

barrier. This is precisely the dual requirements of the "building up" metaphor for the depth and breadth of rights protection.

Table 4.25 presents feminist architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "顶梁柱 dǐngliángzhù (pillar)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.25: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "顶梁柱 dǐngliángzhù (pillar)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
顶梁柱 dǐngliángzhù (pillar)	160	母亲 mǔqīn (mothers)	11.313	23. 通过"妇工+社工+义工"队伍常态化、陪伴式跟踪服务，联合心理专家为压力大、情感焦虑的"**顶梁柱**母亲"提供咨询服务和心理治疗 117 人次，帮助她们提升自信心。Tōngguò "fùgōng + shègōng + yìgōng" duìwu chánghuà huà、péibàn shì gēnzōng fúwù, liánhé xīnlǐ zhuānjiā wèi yālì dà、qínggǎn jiāolǜ de "dǐngliángzhù mǔqīn" tígōng zīxún fúwù hé xīnlǐ zhìliáo 117 réncì, bāngzhù tāmen tíshēng zìxìnxīn. (Through the "women workers +social workers+ volunteers" team's regular, accompanying follow-up service, joint psychologists have provided 117 counselling services and psychological treatment to "**pillar** mothers" with high stress and emotional anxiety, helping them to improve their self-confidence.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 23 outlines a multifaceted initiative by the Nanping Women's Federation to support "pillar mothers", who are single-handedly supporting their families due to divorce,

widowhood, or job loss. As demonstrated in Table 4.25, the frequency is 160 times, indicating its frequent appearance in descriptions of mothers who bear the main responsibilities of the family. The MI-Score is 11.313, showing a very strong co-occurrence relationship with “mothers”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “mother as the core support of the family” and highlighting the crucial role and heavy responsibilities of these mothers in the family.

The metaphor “Mothers in Families are Pillars Supporting a Building” is employed to render the abstract family responsibilities tangible. The characteristics of “pillar” in the source language, such as “bearing weight”, “core support”, and “irreplaceable”, are mapped onto the target language, reflecting the dual roles of “pillar mothers” in the family, namely, providing economic support and serving as a spiritual pillar. In a manner analogous to the function of pillars in supporting the overall structure of a building, these mothers provide a vital support system for vulnerable families grappling with circumstances such as divorce, widowhood, or the loss of the husband’s ability to work. The role of mothers in maintaining familial stability and continuity is a fundamental aspect of societal structure, and the metaphorical representation of this relationship in architectural form serves to underscore the indispensability of maternal figures within the domestic environment.

Within the context of social roles, mothers are frequently perceived as “family caregivers”, and the metaphor of “pillar of the family” serves to further solidify their role as “family supporters”. In conventional frameworks, the financial and emotional obligations of the family are predominantly shouldered by males. The phenomenon of women being compelled to assume the role of the “pillar of the family” is indicative of a

societal shift towards a greater acknowledgement of the maternal role. However, this shift concomitantly engenders additional pressures on women. The provision of psychological services and training to these mothers by the Women's Federation of Nanping City constitutes a response to role pressure. The text not only acknowledges the supporting role of mothers but also attempts to alleviate their burden by promoting a re-examination of the diverse roles of mothers in the family.

From a cross-cutting perspective, the predicament of "pillar mothers" varies due to the interweaving of their identities and requires targeted support. The disparities between urban and rural areas result in unequal access to resources, which can hinder the educational and professional prospects of rural women known as "pillar mothers". For instance, the "mobile workshop" in Zhenghe County has been meticulously designed to address the employment challenges faced by rural mothers. It is evident that prevailing economic conditions give rise to disparate demands. Thus, impoverished mothers are likely to require greater economic assistance, whilst those of middle income may benefit from increased psychological counselling. The challenges experienced by individuals are influenced by the structure of their family unit. Mothers with elderly and young children to care for face the pressure of balancing the responsibilities of multiple generations. The "one household, one plan" customized service implemented in Nanping City, for instance in the form of the "care for the elderly and children" initiative for 76 mothers, is an example of a service that has been tailored to address the unique needs of the community, which have arisen from the cross-cutting identities of its members. This initiative represents an alternative to the "one-size-fits-all" approach to assistance.

This metaphor is reflective of the complex understanding of the role of mothers in Chinese society. The term "the pillar" is employed not only to affirm the resilience and dedication of mothers, but also to reveal the considerable burden they face. The integration of diverse resources and the provision of personalized services in assistance measures constitute a response to the cross-cutting predicaments. The consideration of multiple identity characteristics, including urban-rural background, economic status and family structure, is imperative in order to alleviate the burden of the "pillar" and enable mothers to support their families while also gaining space for their own development. This is the practical significance of the "pillar" metaphor in the new era.

Table 4.26 presents feminist architecture metaphors with the lexical realization of "支撑 zhīchēng (support)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.26: Feminist Architecture Metaphors with the Lexical Realizations of "支撑 zhīchēng (support)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
支撑 zhīchēng (support)	150	人才 réncái (talents)	7.447	24. 长远统筹谋划素质建设，强化女性人才**支撑**，稳步夯实组织建设基础。Chángyuǎn tǒngchóu móuhuà sùzhì jiànshè, qiánghuà nǚxìng réncái zhīchēng, wěnbù hāngshí zǔzhī jiànshè jīchǔ. (Long-term integrated planning for quality construction, strengthening the **support** of women's talents, steadily consolidating the foundation of organizational construction.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 24 is about the Inner Mongolia Hohhot Women's Federation's efforts to enhance the "Walking Women's Home" initiative by focusing on improving quality and

expanding services, thereby strengthening the connection between the party and women in the community through grassroots engagement. As demonstrated in Table 4.26, the frequency is 150 times, indicating that “support” as the core word of the architecture metaphor frequently appears in discourse related to the role of female talents in organizational construction. The MI-Score of 7.447 shows a significant co-occurrence relationship with “talents”, reinforcing the metaphorical connotation that “female talents are the supporting force of organizational construction” and highlighting the crucial role of female talents in the foundation of the organization.

The metaphor “The role of female talents in organizational construction is architectural support” serves to render the abstract value of talents more concrete. The characteristics of “bearing weight”, “stabilizing the foundation”, and “coordinating the force” of the word “support” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting that female talents provide fundamental support for the construction of the women’s federation organization through their own abilities and contributions. In the same way that the supporting structure of a building requires the coordinated action of components of different materials and positions, organizational construction also requires various female talents to play roles in different fields. The expression “strengthening the support for female talents” elucidates the dispersed talents’ strength, thereby demonstrating a systematic nature. This enables the public to comprehend that female talents are not isolated but are essential for the stable development of the organization.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently confined to the “auxiliary role”. However, the metaphor of “support” has effectively challenged this perception. In conventional theoretical frameworks, the fundamental forces driving organizational

construction are predominantly attributed to male figures, while female contributions are frequently perceived as marginal supplements. The Women's Federation of Hulun Buir City has implemented measures that include the training of grassroots committee members and the cultivation of domestic service talents. This strategic approach positions female talents as "supporters" in the organization's construction, contributing to its overall development. This role reconfiguration not only acknowledges women's capabilities but also promotes societal recognition of women's fundamental role in public affairs. For instance, the "Grassland Good Wife" training program has empowered domestic service women to become a significant force in grassroots service, thereby confirming the transformation of role expectations.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the realization of "female talent support" necessitates an acknowledgement of the varied needs of different groups and the avoidance of a monolithic support model. It is evident that there is a considerable disparity in resources available to female talents in both urban and rural areas. It is evident that rural women may require additional practical skills training, such as the planting techniques imparted at the Jiarong Banner Executive Committee Training Station. Moreover, ethnic minority women inhabiting border regions are required to strike a balance between cultural adaptation and capacity enhancement. In addressing this need, the "Women's Model Base for Strengthening the Sense of the Chinese Nation Community" in the Hulun Buir Border Area has been instrumental in considering these multifaceted considerations. Furthermore, the demands that are placed upon professionals in different fields can vary significantly. It is imperative that housewives obtain professional certification, while those engaged in legal practice must enhance their capabilities with regard to protecting their rights. The document mentions a number of measures that are designed to provide support for the

cross-identities of different female talents. These include “thousands of legal education campaigns for ten thousand people” and “training for family education instructors.” The aim is to ensure that each group can become an effective “supporting component.”

This metaphor reflects the emphasis that the Chinese Women’s Federation places on female talents in its organizational construction. The “supporting” process is not only an acknowledgement of the capabilities of women, but also a response to cross-cutting needs, as evidenced by the training of grassroots committee members and the expansion of organizations in new fields. This underscores the notion that a robust organizational framework cannot disregard the significance of female groups. It is only by providing support for a range of identity characteristics, including urban and rural distinctions, ethnic diversity, and occupational categories, that the full potential of female talent can be realized. This is precisely the depth requirement of the “supporting” metaphor for organizational construction.

4.2.2 Force Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

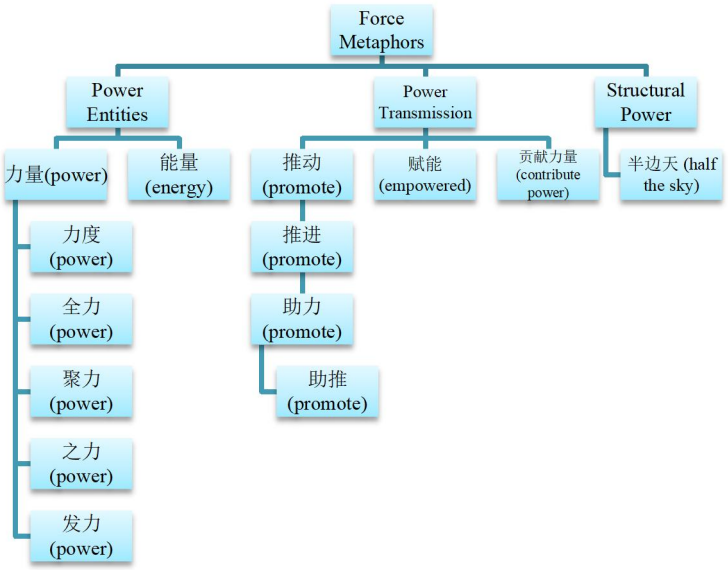


Figure 4.11: Force Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.11, The “force metaphors” that are prevalent in Chinese magazines are predicated on three dimensions: power entities, power transmission, and structural power. CMT is utilized to construct a “cooperative empowerment” narrative of force, which is distinct from the American “individual power game” paradigm. This narrative reflects the integrative support logic of the Chinese system for the diverse identities of women.

The “power” and “energy” spectra of the power entities dimension are represented by CMT, which transforms the female power into a hierarchical and aggregated entity. From a Social Role Theory perspective, Chinese women have moved beyond the traditional “family dependents” role, becoming dynamic contributors to economic, cultural and social development. Rural women “unite their efforts” to revitalize local resources in the context of a collective economy. Scientific and technological women “fully exert their strength” to overcome technical barriers in the field of innovation research. Elderly women “apply their strength” to perpetuate social values through volunteer services. From an intersectional perspective, institutional guarantees provide an integration channel for the power of different identities. To illustrate this, consider the case of ethnic minority women in border areas, who integrate their “energy” into the national narrative of guarding borders and maintaining security. Similarly, disabled women’s “strength” is released through the accessibility support system to avoid the separation of identity and power in the American force metaphor. This demonstrates the power aggregation logic of “harmony but different”.

The “promote” and “empowered” sequence in the “Power Transmission” dimension, presented through CMT, illustrates the step-by-step practice of power transmission. Social Role Theory is interpreted as follows: It is evident that Chinese

women have evolved from a state of “passive assistance” to one of “active empowerment” in a two-way interaction. The women’s connection system has been identified as a facilitator, enabling grassroots women to overcome the impasse in rights protection. Enterprises have been observed as agents of change, propelling entrepreneurial women to transcend market barriers. Furthermore, universities have been recognized as catalysts for advancement, empowering female students to chart their career paths. Intersectionality reveals that this transmission is not a unidirectional phenomenon: urban white-collar workers “empower” rural sisters to master e-commerce skills, returning female villagers “push” their hometown to upgrade and restructure the economic structure, forming a cross-identity energy circulation. The Chinese system of power transmission is distinct from the “elite-led empowerment” model observed in the United States. It facilitates the enhancement of women from diverse social strata and geographical locations through interaction, emphasizing the concept of “co-construction and sharing” as a means of achieving empowerment.

The “half the sky” and “contribution” dimensions of the Structural Power dimension, anchored by CMT, strategically position women in the national structure. In accordance with Social Role Theory, the aforementioned constitutes the institutional recognition by the state of women’s role as “equal co-builders”, thereby disrupting the conventional structure of “male dominance, female assistance” in the context of poverty alleviation efforts. Women’s contributions to the economic landscape of impoverished rural areas are transformative, and female engineers represent the “half the sky” for industrial upgrading in the domains of science and technology. From an intersectional perspective, this structure is conducive to the accommodation of differences in identities. Pastoral women protect the ecology and family with the “half the sky”, new employment

forms by women build the "half the sky" for flexible employment, and women of different identities find collaborative fulcrums through "structural power" narratives in the overall national development. This forms a contrast to the fragmented nature of the metaphor of American power.

Table 4.27 shows feminist force metaphors with the lexical realization of "力量 lìliàng (power)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.27: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "力量 lìliàng (power) "

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
力量 lìliàng (power)	3,086	磅礴 pángbó (great)	7.808	25. 唐昕表示，奋力开创现代化新南岸建设新局面，需要凝聚包括广大女同胞在内的磅礴**力量**.....Táng Xīn biǎoshì, fènlì kāichuàng xiàndàihuà xīn Nán'àn jiànshè xīn júmiàn, xūyào níngjù bāokuò guǎngdà nǚ tóngbāo zàinèi de pángbó lìliàng. (Tang Xin said that striving to create a new situation in the construction of the new modern south bank, we need to gather the great **power** including the majority of female compatriots...) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 26 is about the Chongqing Women's Federation celebrating the International Women's Day on March 4th by featuring various activities focused on legal education and women's rights, including law-themed performances, interactive games, and a market highlighting women's contributions to rural development. As illustrated in Table 4.27, the frequency is 3086, suggesting that "power" is a recurrent theme in the discourse

surrounding women's participation in social construction. The MI-Score of 7.808 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with "great", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "the powerful force gathered by the female group", thus highlighting the scale and influence of the female collective effort.

The metaphor "Women's Collective Power is Natural Force" has been employed to render the abstract concept of group power tangible. The characteristics of "convergence", "impact" and "unstoppable" of "profound power" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, representing the overall energy of different female groups that are coalesced in social construction. Analogous to the concept of rivers converging to form the sea and thereby creating a magnificent momentum, the activities of Nan'an District in Chongqing demonstrate a similar phenomenon. Urban and rural women, women from diverse occupations, and disabled women participate collectively in the activities of the district, thereby constituting a powerful force driving social development. This collective participation encompasses activities such as legal education and rural revitalization. The public is thereby enabled to intuitively understand that female power is not the isolated existence of individuals but rather a grand energy achieved through group collaboration.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently perceived as "isolated individuals". However, the metaphor of "massive power" has contributed to a shift in this perception. In conventional paradigms, women's contributions are predominantly perceived as individual actions, which hinders the establishment of collective influence. The event under discussion places significant emphasis on the concept of "coalescing the massive power including the vast number of female compatriots", thereby elevating women from the role of isolated individuals to that of core participants in social

construction. This is evidenced by the collaborative participation of different groups, such as “Guangyang Sister” and “Wheelchair Dance Team”, which confirms the transformation of role expectations from “individual assistance” to “collective leadership”.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the convergence of “profound power” necessitates the acknowledgement of the varied contributions of disparate female groups and the prevention of homogenized integration. The manifestation of the power of women in urban and rural contexts varies. Rural women engage in grassroots governance through legal education and market activities, while urban women demonstrate professional capabilities in their respective fields. Disabled women express tenacity through artistic performances, complementing the professional legal education lectures delivered by healthy women. The activities of the “Women’s Association for Governance and Rights Protection” address a range of issues, including the protection of rights and the provision of employment support. These activities are specifically designed to tackle the cross-boundary challenges faced by women from diverse identity backgrounds. The objective is to ensure that the capabilities of each group are activated and integrated into the larger whole, while also preventing the marginalization of certain women due to the neglect of their differences.

This metaphor reflects a novel understanding of the influence of female collectives within Chinese society. The concept of “profound power” encompasses both individual contributions and collective synergy, thereby affirming the diversity of women and emphasizing the significance of collaboration. The multifarious participation forms in the activity are, in fact, a response to the cross-cutting needs. It is only by allowing the female power of different dimensions, such as urban and rural areas, occupations, and physical

conditions, to be released, that a truly unstoppable “profound power” can be formed. This is precisely the interpretation of the role of women in social construction by this metaphor.

Table 4.28 presents feminist force metaphors with the lexical realization of “推动 tuīdòng (promote)” in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.28: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of “推动 tuīdòng (promote)”

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
推动 tuīdòng (promote)	2833	五级 wǔ jí (fifth-level)	7.119	26. 曲靖市妇联认真落实云南省妇联“四下基层”优良传统，深化“三访四察五送”**推动**五级妇联干部共同为妇女儿童解难题、办实事工作要求。Qǔjìng Shì fùlián rènzhēn luòshí Yúnnán Shěng fùlián “sì xià jīcéng” yōuliáng chuántǒng, shēnhuà “sān fǎng sì chá wǔ sòng” tuīdòng wǔ jí fùlián gànbù gòngtóng wèi fùnǚ értóng jiě nántí、bàn shìshí gōngzuò yāoqiú. (Qujing Women’s Federation earnestly implements the fine tradition of “four grassroots” of Yunnan Women’s Federation, deepening the requirements of “three visits, four inspections and five deliveries” to **promote** fifth-level women’s Federation cadres to solve problems and do practical work for women and children.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 26 details the Yunnan Province Qujing City Women’s Federation’s 2024 International Women’s Day activities, including community support and care for women and children, highlighting the organization’s commitment to addressing practical issues and enhancing social welfare for women. As demonstrated in Table 4.28, the frequency is

2,833 times, thus indicating that the term “promote” is identified as the core word of the metaphor of force and is frequently present in the discourse of the coordinated work at the level of the women’s association system. The MI-Score is 7.119, which demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with “fifth-level”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “multi-level women’s association cadres jointly promoting work” and highlighting the systematicness and driving force of the hierarchical synergy.

The metaphor “Hierarchical Collaboration in Women’s Federations is Mechanical Transmission” serves to render the abstract nature of organizational collaboration more concrete. The characteristics such as “pushing”, “hierarchical transmission”, “combined force driving”, and “precise exertion” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as five-level women’s federation cadres conducting “three visits, four inspections, and five deliveries” to convey policies and services from higher levels to the grassroots. Analogous to the interlocking gears in a mechanical transmission system, the collaboration of the women’s federations at the municipal, county, township, village, and group levels ensures the effective transmission of power at each level. This collaborative system is designed to address the specific challenges faced by women and children, while also enabling the public to comprehend the complexity of the system and its efficacy.

In the context of social roles, female employees at Women’s Federation frequently find themselves assigned two distinct roles: “servant” and “connector”. The metaphor of “pushing forward” serves to reinforce their positioning as active agents. In conventional wisdom, the function of grassroots organizations is frequently perceived as one of passive implementation. However, the statement “promoting the joint efforts of five-level female workers in Women’s Federation to solve problems for women and children” highlights

their proactive ability to integrate resources and implement them at all levels. The Cuizhen City Women's Federation's meticulous visits to the village sites to express condolence is a quintessential illustration of this role practice. The organization's commitment to service delivery is not merely a matter of compliance. It is an active agent that enhances the efficacy of its operations through a systematic, hierarchical structure. This approach is not merely an administrative convenience, but rather a deliberate strategy that underscores the fundamental role of Women's Federation in the realm of grassroots governance.

From a cross-cutting perspective, the process of "promoting" must address the differentiated needs of different female groups and ensure that hierarchical forces reach precisely the intended targets. The needs of women residing in rural areas, women from disadvantaged backgrounds, and female teachers, among others, are subject to variation. Female teachers at Haishan Primary School require career advancement opportunities, women from disadvantaged backgrounds require both material and spiritual assistance, and mothers residing in rural areas may express heightened concerns regarding educational resources. The advantage of the five-level linkage is that each level is able to adjust services according to actual circumstances. For instance, the municipal women's federation is able to coordinate resources, while the township women's federation is able to implement door-to-door visits, thus avoiding a "one-size-fits-all" approach. The document's door-to-door visits for disadvantaged women and the distribution of gift packages to students are precisely responses to different identities of women and families, reflecting the coverage of cross-cutting needs by the hierarchical promotion.

This metaphor is indicative of the organizational efficiency of the Chinese women's organization system. From the central-level planning to the grassroots

implementation, the hierarchical linkage of "promotion" not only ensures policy uniformity but also responds to diverse needs through the localized actions of local women's federations. This underscores the necessity for grassroots services to harmonize the synergy across various levels with individual differences, thereby ensuring that women from diverse backgrounds and circumstances receive the support of the system. This is precisely the dual requirements of the "promotion" metaphor for the depth and breadth of women's federations' work.

Table 4.29 shows feminist force metaphors with the lexical realization of "赋能 fùnéng (empowerment)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.29: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "赋能 fùnéng (empowerment)"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
赋能 fùnéng (empowerment)	677	蓄力 xùlì (build up momentum)	9.139	27. 以巾帼家政技能培训为千名"好宁嫂"**赋能**蓄力，举办 200 场"巾帼健康行动"大宣讲为妇女健康保驾护航。Yǐ jīnguó jiāzhèng jìnéng péixùn wéi qiān míng "Hǎo Níng sǎo" fùnéng xùlì, jǔbàn 200 chǎng "Jīnguó jiànkāng xíngdòng" dà xuǎnjiǎng wèi fùnǚ jiànkāng bǎojià-hùháng. (It also **empowered** and built up momentum for thousands of "Good Wife" through training in housekeeping skills for women, and organized 200 large-scale lectures of the "Women's Health Action" to protect women's health.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 27 is about the joint efforts between the Fujian and Ningxia Women's Federations, encompassing a broad spectrum of initiatives, from cross-regional support and empowerment efforts to health, education, and economic initiatives that build solidarity among women. As demonstrated in Table 4.29, the frequency is 677 times, indicating that "empowerment", as the core word of the metaphor of power, frequently appears in the discourse of women's skill improvement and capacity building. The MI-Score of 9.139 demonstrates a very strong co-occurrence relationship with "build up momentum", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "accumulating development momentum for women through systematic training" and highlighting the promoting effect of the empowerment process on the continuous growth of women.

The metaphor "Women's Capacity Building is Energy Endowment" serves to render the abstract process of empowerment more concrete. The characteristics of "empowerment" in the source domain, such as "injecting energy", "accumulating momentum", and "activating potential", are mapped to the target domain, manifested as the provision of professional capabilities and development momentum for female groups such as "Good Wife" through female housekeeping skills training. Analogous to the process of energizing a machine to enhance its operational efficiency, the training program has been found to empower women by equipping them with employment skills and confidence. This transformation of women from potential laborers into competitive professionals has been observed, thereby demonstrating that empowerment is not a one-time assistance but a continuous process of building up strength.

Within the context of family services, women are frequently perceived as "low-skilled practitioners" in terms of their social roles. The metaphor of "empowerment" has

been instrumental in effecting this reorganization. In accordance with conventional principles, domestic work is regarded as a form of unskilled labour. “Good Wife” has obtained professional certification through training, which has resulted in an upgrade to her role from “ordinary service provider” to “skilled worker”. This transformation not only enhanced her professional status but also promoted society’s recognition of the professional value of women in the service industry. For instance, the “Good wife” model, which was cultivated through collaboration between Fujian and Ningxia, not only perpetuated the historical involvement of women in domestic services but also transcended conventional role constraints through the demonstration of specific skills.

From a cross-cutting perspective, the concept of “empowerment” must address the varied demands that result from the intersection of diverse female identities. In Ningxia, “Good Wife” may face multiple constraints, including region (rural), ethnicity (Hui), and economy (poverty). Rural women must adapt to the local employment market, ethnic minority women may need to balance cultural customs, and impoverished women are more concerned about income stability. As outlined in the document, the “Women’s Housekeeping Skills Training” program has been developed in response to specific local requirements. The program is complemented by health education initiatives, emphasizing the importance of health promotion and awareness. This addresses the aforementioned issues by offering a multifaceted approach. Firstly, it enhances skills to cope with economic difficulties. Secondly, it addresses health issues in the region, which is particularly pertinent given the shortage of medical resources. Finally, it ensures that empowerment covers multiple identity dimensions.

This metaphor is reflective of the targeted nature of China's women empowerment practices. The integration of "empowerment" and "accumulation of strength" not only addresses immediate women's needs but also fosters long-term development. The text draws attention to the fact that true empowerment must overcome the interconnected barriers of region, ethnicity and economy, ensuring that all women receive the appropriate "energy injection".

Table 4.30 shows the example of the force metaphors with the lexical realization of "半边天 bànbiāntiān (half the sky)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.30: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "半边天 bànbiāntiān (half the sky)"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
半边天 bànbiāntiān (half the sky)	453	能顶 néng dǐng (hold up)	11.834 (10.83)	28. 发挥出"妇女能顶**半边天**"的作用，充分展现新时代女性新气象、新担当、新作为。Fāhuī chū "fùnǚ néng dǐng bànbiāntiān" de zuòyòng, chōngfèn zhǎnxiàn xīn shídài nǚxìng xīn qìxiàng、xīn dāndāng、xīn zuòwéi. (By doing so, they will fulfill the role of "women can hold up **half the sky**", fully demonstrating the new spirit, new responsibilities, and new actions of women in the new era.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 28 is about the role of women in rural agriculture in Guazhou County, Jiuquan City, Gansu Province, where they actively participate in spring farming activities, showcasing feminism through their contributions to economic development, employment opportunities, and empowerment as key players in rural revitalization and social progress. As demonstrated in Table 4.30, the frequency is 453 times, thereby indicating that "half the

sky" functions as the core lexical element of the metaphor of power. This term is frequently employed in the discourse that delineates women's social contributions. The MI-Score of 11.834 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with "hole up", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "women can support half of the sky in society", thus underscoring the pivotal role of women in social development.

The metaphor "Women's Social Contribution is the Power Holding Up the Sky" is employed to render the abstract concept of gender equality more concrete. The characteristics of "indispensable", "balanced support" and "wide coverage" in the source language, such as "half the sky", are mapped onto the target language, reflecting the important roles that women play in areas like agricultural production and rural revitalization. In the same way that the firmament requires balanced support from both sides in order to be stable, social development also requires the joint efforts of men and women. The depiction of rural women working in the fields in Guazhou County is a poignant illustration of this "support", facilitating a intuitive comprehension among the public that women are not marginal participants in society but pivotal contributors.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently confined to the "domestic sphere". The metaphor of "being able to hold up half the sky" has been employed to illustrate this perception. In conventional frameworks, the worth of rural women was predominantly associated with domestic responsibilities and child-rearing. The statement in the document "no longer being a housewife who merely rotates around the stove" highlights the role breakthrough – they obtain economic income through field labor while also taking care of family responsibilities, becoming "the main pillar for increasing income and achieving prosperity". This role transformation not only changed society's perception

of rural women but also promoted the female self-identification from “an accessory” to “a contributor”.

Intersectionality Theory elucidates the varied practices of “toppling the ceiling”, signifying that the “support” provided by disparate female groups assumes diverse forms. The concept of the “half-ceiling” for rural women is exemplified by the balancing act of agricultural production and family care, as evidenced by women in Daita Town who “live close to home and are capable of taking care of the elderly and children”. Furthermore, minority women may also need to play a role in cultural inheritance, balancing tradition and modernity. It is evident that impoverished women are more reliant on such forms of labour to achieve economic independence and extricate themselves from the pernicious cycle of poverty. The observed variations can be attributed to the interweaving of identities, including region, economy and ethnicity. To illustrate this point, consider the case of the “headscarf”: women residing in both urban and rural areas may have more straightforward access to training opportunities. In contrast, women residing in remote rural areas may encounter additional constraints related to transportation and resource availability. Furthermore, the manner and complexity of “topping” vary due to the layering of identities.

This metaphor reflects the diversity of Chinese women’s participation in social construction. The connotation of “the half of the sky” has expanded with the times, encompassing a range of activities from agricultural work to the revitalization of rural areas. This approach not only validates the broader contributions of women but also demonstrates an appreciation for the nuances that differentiate between diverse groups. The training programs provided by the women’s federation in the document have been meticulously designed to address the multifaceted demands faced by rural women, thereby

assisting them in more efficaciously “holding up” their own “sky” while adeptly balancing numerous roles.

Table 4.31 presents feminist force metaphors with the lexical realization of “能量 néngliàng (energy)” in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.31: Feminist Force Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of “能量 néngliàng (energy)”

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
能量 néngliàng (energy)	258	大大的 dàdà de (great)	9.946	29. 小小的她，蓄积着大大的**能量**，她创建的清凉山茶电商团队，积累粉丝 4 万余人，成交 3 万余单，销售额达 500 余万，间接带动 1.65 万农户近 6 万人受益，户均增收 3000 余元。Xiǎoxiǎo de tā, xùjīzhe dàdà de néngliàng, tā chuàngjiàn de Qīngliángshān chá diànshāng tuánduì, jīlèi fěnsī 4 wàn yú rén, chéngjiāo 3 wàn yú dān, xiāoshòu’é dá 500 yú wàn, jiànjiē dàidòng 1.65 wàn nónghù jìn 6 wàn rén shòuyì, hù jūn zēngshōu 3000 yú yuán. (Small she, accumulated great **energy**, the cool camellia e-commerce team she created, accumulated more than 40,000 fans, sold more than 30,000 orders, and reached more than 5 million sales. Indirectly, 16,500 rural households benefited nearly 60,000 people, and the average household income increased by more than 3,000 yuan.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 29 is about how the Qingliang Mountain tea company, led by a mother-daughter duo, utilizes its success to promote women’s entrepreneurship and contribute to

rural income through a combination of product quality, technological advancement, and community development. As illustrated in Table 4.31, the frequency of “energy” as the core word of the metaphor of power is 258, indicating its prevalence in discourse pertaining to the vitality and influence of female entrepreneurship. The MI-Score of 9.946 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with “enormous”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “women having a huge amount of development energy”, and thus highlighting the potential explosive power of women in industrial innovation.

The metaphor “Women’s Entrepreneurial Vitality is Energy Accumulation” serves to render the abstract entrepreneurial influence tangible. The characteristics of “accumulative nature”, “explosive nature” and “conductive nature” of “energy” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifesting as Xu Jiankun’s process of establishing an e-commerce team. This process can be broken down into three stages: firstly, accumulating fans; secondly, achieving sales growth; and finally, benefiting tens of thousands of farmers. This is analogous to the process of energy from accumulation to release, which ultimately generates a chain reaction. This mapping enables the public to understand the value of women entrepreneurship through the physical process of energy transmission: the individual’s innovative energy not only drives the development of the enterprise, but also passes through the industrial chain to benefit rural women, poor families and other groups, making “energy” a cognitive bridge connecting individuals and society.

In the context of social roles, women in the agricultural industry are frequently perceived as “traditional participants”. However, the metaphor of “great potential” has

served to redefine this role. In accordance with conventional principles, the primary function of rural women is to undertake fundamental agricultural activities. Xu Jiankun, a "tea second-generation" entrepreneur, has achieved commercial success through e-commerce by circumventing geographical limitations and promoting "Qingliangshan" tea to a broader market. Her role has been elevated from that of a mere "inheritor" to that of a "industry innovator". This transformation is evident not only in economic gains, but also in the training of rural women and the promotion of employment, the reshaping of society's perception of women as "innovative entities" in agricultural modernization, and the confirmation of the influence of role practice on cognition, as stated in Social Role Theory.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the release of "energy" manifests in a variety of forms due to the interweaving of the identities of the female group. When women from rural areas participate in the tea industry, they may encounter multiple restrictions, including "gender + region + education". Women in remote areas may lack e-commerce skills, minority women need to balance traditional tea culture with modern marketing, and impoverished women rely more on stable income to improve their lives. As stated in the document, 1,200 rural women are trained each year, thereby addressing these cross-cutting needs. This is achieved through the following means: skills training to bridge the educational gap, flexible employment to balance family responsibilities, and ensuring that women of different identities can all participate in the chain of energy transmission. To illustrate this point, consider the case of impoverished women who earn income by picking tea. This activity not only alleviates their economic hardships but also fosters social cohesion through collective labour, thereby exemplifying the varied release of energy at different levels.

This metaphor reflects the diverse value of female energy in China's rural revitalization. The accumulation and transmission of "energy" is of particular interest in this context, as it highlights the core role of women in industrial innovation and reveals the complex demands brought about by cross-identity. The "agriculture, tourism, and culture" integration model outlined in the document is meticulously executed by considering the unique circumstances of diverse female populations, thereby ensuring the maximization of inclusivity in the release of energy. The "energy" metaphor is a compelling one, particularly in terms of the profound empowerment that it engenders. It posits that the key to unlocking the potential of female energy lies in the dismantling of the barriers that are intricately intertwined with identities. By doing so, each component of female energy can be transformed into a catalyst for sustainable development.

4.2.3 Journey Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

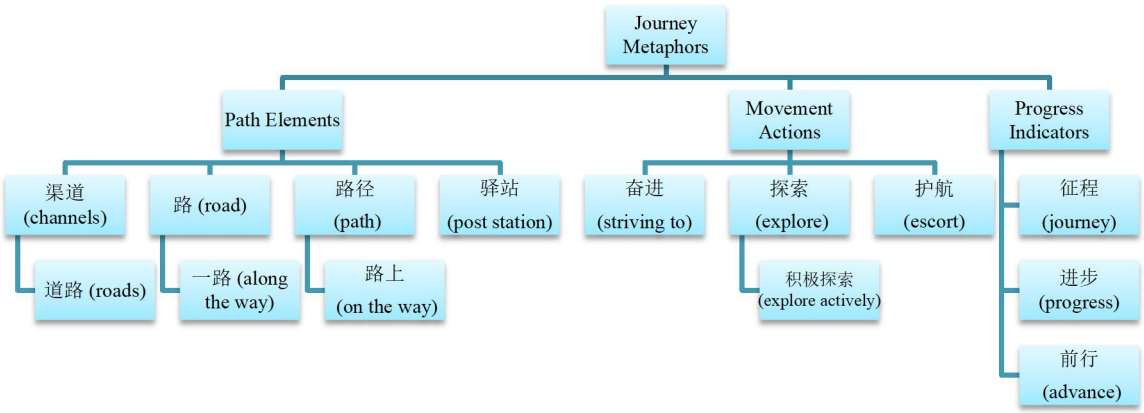


Figure 4.12: Journey Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.12, The "journey metaphors" in Chinese magazines, based on the three dimensions of "path elements", "movement actions" and "progress

indicators", construct a "layered co-movement" development narrative through CMT. This is in contrast to the "individual fragmented journey" in the United States, and reflects the collaborative support logic of the Chinese system for women's diverse identities.

The "channels", "road", and "post station" elements of the path elements dimension are transformed by CMT into a "three-dimensional interconnected spatial network" for the practical implementation of women's rights. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women are breaking away from the traditional role of a "single life trajectory" and establishing a path system that interweaves urban and rural areas, fields, and generations. Rural women are utilizing e-commerce channels to initiate the process of industrial revitalization, while urban white-collar workers are pursuing the "career path" to expand their career boundaries. Furthermore, "post stations" (such as community women's homes) provide phased supplies for pregnant and retired women. From an intersectional perspective, institutional guarantees facilitate the convergence of diverse identities, achieving a harmonious yet distinct connection. The "border-guarding path" adopted by ethnic minority women in border regions integrates into the broader context of fortifying border defence and promoting development. In contrast, the "unobstructed path" pursued by disabled women relies on policy measures to enhance employment opportunities, circumventing the "one-way street" predicament of identity fragmentation in the American journey metaphor. This demonstrates China's capacity to seamlessly integrate diverse developmental domains.

The "striving to", "explore", and "escort" actions in the "Movement Actions" dimension are presented through CMT to illustrate the journey momentum of the "subject–support" interaction (the upgrading of roles in Social Role Theory). The present

study sets out to explore the hypothesis that women can be said to be transforming from "passive followers" to "active strivers". This is evidenced by rural innovators who are "exploring" new paths in ecological agriculture, and tech-savvy women who are "striving" to break through technical barriers. At the same time, the Women's Federation is "building" a systemic support network to "escort" female entrepreneurs to overcome market risks, and universities are "escorting" female students to plan their career directions. Intersectionality reveals the layered inclusiveness of this interaction: elderly women "explore" new forms of volunteer services for the elderly, new employment women "strive" to build flexible employment models, and the "explore" and "escort" of different identities form a collaborative cycle, thereby eliminating the isolation of the "individual breakthrough-driven striving" in the United States and highlighting the driving logic of "mutual assistance and joint progress" in China.

The "journey", "progress" and "advance" dimensions of the progress indicators are anchored by CMT to position the "journey of national-female collaborative development" (the strategic integration of Social Role Theory). The "journey" of Chinese women has always been in sync with national development. Female "progress" in poverty alleviation has resulted in a rewriting of the economic landscape of rural areas, female engineers have driven industrial upgrading through their advancements in scientific and technological innovation, and the depth of the "journey" is deeply integrated into the national strategy. From an intersectional perspective, "progress" is seen to transcend a unidimensional focus, as evidenced by the advancement of pastoral women in environmental protection and that of urban women in career advancement. These objectives are pursued within the overarching framework of the "basic national policy of gender equality", which aims to foster mutual progress through the recognition and acceptance of differences.

Table 4.32 shows the example of the journey metaphors with the lexical realization of "征程 zhēngchéng (journey)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.32: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "征程 zhēngchéng (journey)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
征程 zhēngchéng (journey)	908	筑梦新 Zhùmèng xīn (building a new... of dreams)	8.509	30. 11 月 9 日，"凝集 '她'智慧·筑梦新**征程**"－西湖区妇联系统学习中国妇女十三大精神宣讲暨西湖"她"学堂活动在西湖区文体中心正式启动。11 yuè 9 rì, "Níngjí 'Tā' zhìhuì·Zhùmèng xīn zhēngchéng"-Xīhú Qū fùlián xìtǒng xuéxí Zhōngguó Fùnǚ Shísān Dà jīngshén xuǎnjiǎng jí Xīhú "Tā" xuétáng huódòng zài Xīhú Qū wéntǐ zhōngxīn zhèngshì qǐdòng.(On November 9, "Gathering 'her' wisdom and Building a new **Journey** of Dreams" – Xihu District Women's Federation's systematic learning of the 13th Spiritual Lecture of Chinese Women and the West Lake "She" School activity was officially launched in Xihu District Cultural and Sports Center.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 30 is about the activities of the Hangzhou Xihu District Women's Federation, which focus on promoting the spirit of the 13th National Women's Congress of China and involve empowering women through education, recognizing female achievements, and advocating for a child-friendly city environment. As demonstrated in Table 4.32, the frequency is used 908 times, indicating that "journey" is the core word of the metaphor for the journey and frequently appears in the discourse of the female group as they collectively pursue development goals. The MI-Score is 8.509, showing a significant

co-occurrence relationship with “building a new... of dreams”, which reinforces the metaphorical connotation of “women pooling their wisdom to jointly embark on a new journey”, highlighting the goal-oriented and collaborative nature of the collective action.

The metaphor of “Women’s Collective Development is a Journey” is employed to render the abstract concept of collective action more concrete. The characteristics of “moving forward together”, “goal-oriented”, and “stage advancement” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifesting as the Women’s Federation of Xihu District, through activities such as lectures, training, and selection, uniting the forces of female entrepreneurs, grassroots cadres, and ordinary women, and moving towards the goal of building a highland for science, education, culture and creativity. Just as a journey necessitates the collaboration and coordination of different roles, the “New Journey of Dream Building” is predicated on a similar collaborative effort. Han Fang, the “Most Beautiful Female Host of the Asian Games”, provides direction, Professor Xiao Erping disseminates knowledge, and all parties collaborate to transform the ’journey’ from an abstract vision into concrete practice.

In the context of social role perception, women are frequently perceived as “isolated individuals” in public affairs. However, the metaphorical reconfiguration of “Building a New Journey of Dreams” has resulted in a shift in perception. In conventional theoretical frameworks, the involvement of women in the process of social construction is predominantly conceptualized as a series of individual actions. The expression “coalescing her wisdom” in the documents serves to elevate women from the status of individual participants to that of the core force driving collective actions. The selection of “The Most Beautiful Asian Games Female Host” is an embodiment of this role transformation.

Women are no longer passive observers in public events. Rather, they become "female hosts" of urban development by actively participating and promoting the recognition of the collective value of women in the public domain.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the women in the "journey" face different challenges due to their varying identities and require targeted support. Female entrepreneurs, such as Han Fang, who possess a distinct advantage in terms of resources and platforms, are well-positioned to assume leadership roles in this process. Meanwhile, grassroots women's federation cadres shoulder the responsibility of implementing policy measures and must navigate the dual challenges of numerous tasks and constrained resources. It is important to note that ordinary women may encounter impediments due to educational or geographical constraints when engaging in these processes. The initiatives of the Hangxihu Women's Federation, including the "Her" training courses and stratified selection, have been meticulously designed to address these disparities. These initiatives seek to enhance the professional competencies of grassroots cadres, provide a platform for the promotion of ordinary women, and ensure that women from diverse backgrounds can participate in a manner that aligns with their identities. This approach is intended to prevent the marginalization of certain groups through a unilateral approach.

This metaphor reflects the practical logic of the coordinated development of the Chinese female group. The transition from theoretical discourse to practical empowerment signifies an evolution in the paradigm of "the journey", emphasizing the alignment of collective objectives and a response to intersecting needs through diversified strategies. This concept underscores the notion that the collective "journey" of women does not constitute a uniform progression. Rather, it should cater to the distinct contributions of

diverse identities, thereby enabling each type of woman to realize her potential through collaborative endeavors.

Table 4.33 shows the example of the journey metaphors with the lexical realization of "奋进 fènjìn (striving to)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.33: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "奋进 fènjìn (striving to)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
奋进 fènjìn (striving to)	820	逐梦花开 zhúmèng huākāi (pursue dreams)	10.656	31. 3 月 8 日，南霞乡妇联开展"巾帼**奋进**逐梦花开"、"三八"国际劳动妇女节活动，组织全体女职工干部前往三明市现代农业科技示范园参观学习。3 yuè 8 rì, Nánxiá Xiāng fùlián kāizhǎn "Jīnguó fènjìn zhúmèng huākāi"、"Sānbā" Guójì Láodòng Fùnǚjié huódòng, zǔzhī quántǐ nǚ zhígōng gànbù qiánwǎng Sānmíng Shì xiàndài nóngyè kējì shìfànyuán cānguān xuéxí. (On March 8, the Women's Federation of Nanxia Township carried out the activities of "Women **striving to** pursue dreams" and "March 8" International Working Women's Day, and organized all female workers and cadres to visit and study in Sanming modern agricultural science and Technology Demonstration Park.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 31 is about the celebration of the 114th International Women's Day in various districts of Shaxian, Sanming, Fujian Province, through activities that showcase women's talents, promote camaraderie, and empower them through skill-building. As demonstrated in Table 4.33, the frequency is 820 times, indicating that "striving to" is the

core word of the journey metaphor and frequently appears in the discourse of women pursuing their dreams and development. The MI-Score of 10.656 demonstrates a very strong co-occurrence relationship with “pursue dreams”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “women achieving their dreams through hard work” and highlighting the close connection between action and goal.

The metaphor “Women’s Pursuit of Dreams is a Striving Journey” is a useful conceptual framework that renders the abstract process of striving more concrete. The characteristics of “continuous progress”, “overcoming obstacles”, and “clear goals” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting that women continuously improve themselves and realize their values by participating in various activities. For instance, the Women’s Federation of Nanxia Township organized female cadre workers to visit the modern agricultural science and technology demonstration park. During the learning process, the participants broadened their horizons, in a manner comparable to the approach of gradually advancing towards a goal. This facilitated the public’s comprehension that women’s endeavors are not an isolated effort, but rather a continuous action characterized by direction and incremental progression.

Within the context of social roles, women are frequently constrained within the paradigm of “stable life”. The metaphor of “striving forward” disrupts this perception. In conventional frameworks, the worth of women is predominantly associated with the familial unit. However, the expression “striving for dreams and blossoming” appears to encourage women to adopt an active approach in pursuing their professional aspirations. Activities such as floral arrangement and skill development, organized by the women’s federations at all levels in Shaxian District, have been instrumental in enabling women to

transcend conventional roles and embark on a journey of self-improvement. For instance, female volunteers in Zhenghu Township have been instrumental in patrolling and protecting rivers, thereby redefining their identity as “active actors” within their community.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the concept of “progress” manifests in diverse forms due to the varied identities of the female population. It is evident that rural women may encounter a number of challenges, including a paucity of resources. One solution that has been employed is the empowerment of creativity through manual activities, with the aim of addressing the skills gap. Furthermore, grassroots female cadres are required to enhance their professional skills, and the visit and learning activities in Nanxia Township are targeted measures. Finally, it has been demonstrated that ordinary women can relieve stress through enjoyable activities and accumulate the motivation to “progress”. These varied arrangements are designed to address the diverse needs arising from intersecting identities, including region, occupation and social class. This approach ensures that each woman is able to identify a suitable “progress” method, thereby preventing the marginalization of certain groups under a single standard.

This metaphor is reflective of the aspirational archetype of Chinese women in a variety of scenarios. The forms of “striving” – ranging from skill acquisition to volunteer work – point to the self-actualization of women. The wide-ranging activities of the various levels of women’s federations outlined in the document are indicative of the cross-cutting needs. It is essential to acknowledge and address these differences, and to provide precise empowerment, if every woman is to be able to “realize her dreams and bloom flowers” throughout her striving journey.

Table 4.34 shows the example of the journey metaphors with the lexical realization of "路 lù (road)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.34: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "路 lù (road) "

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
路 lù (road)	303	搭好 dā hǎo (paving a good...)	12.415	32. 动员女职工砥砺奋进、时代建功，要把服务大局作为重点，服务国家重大战略，服务女职工成长进步，为女职工发展铺好**路**、搭好桥。Dòngyuán nǚ zhígōng dǐlì fènjìn、shídài jiàngōng, yào bǎ fúwù dàjú zuòwéi zhòngdiǎn, fúwù guójiā zhòngdà zhànlüè, fúwù nǚ zhígōng chéngzhǎng jìnbù, wèi nǚ zhígōng fāzhǎn pū hǎo lù、dā hǎo qiáo. (To mobilize female workers to forge ahead and make contributions to The Times, it is necessary to focus on serving the overall situation, serving the major national strategies, serving the growth and progress of female workers, and paving a good **road** and bridge for the development of female workers.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 32 is about the establishment of a women's federation in the private sector in Chongqing's Fuling District. As demonstrated in Table 4.34, the frequency is 303 times, indicating that the term "road" as the core word of the journey metaphor frequently appears in the discourse of women's development support. The MI-Score of 12.415 demonstrates a very strong co-occurrence relationship with "paving a good...", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "laying the road for women's development" and highlighting the necessity of systematic support.

The metaphor “Women’s Development Process is Road Construction” serves to render abstract support measures more concrete. The characteristics of “foundation”, “accessibility” and “connectivity” of the “road” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting that the women’s federation organization creates development conditions for female workers through measures such as building platforms and safeguarding rights. The Women’s Federation of Hualan Biotechnology has been established as an organization that functions as a “path” for female workers, facilitating their personal growth and career achievements. By establishing this organization, the public is able to comprehend and offer support for the development of women, rather than merely providing sporadic assistance. This development is regarded as a systematic foundational project.

Within the context of social role perception, women employed in the non-public sector are frequently categorized as “auxiliary workers”. The metaphor of “building the road” has redefined this role. In conventional wisdom, the developmental needs of female employees are frequently disregarded. However, the expression “building a path for the development of female employees” positions them as the “development subjects” that require key support. The election of executive committee members by the Women’s Federation of Hualan Biotechnology, and the practice of safeguarding their rights and interests, have confirmed the core position of women in the enterprise through institutional arrangements, and promoted the recognition of their professional development value by society.

From a cross-cutting perspective, the provision of support must address the intertwined differences in the identities of different female employees, avoiding a “one-

size-fits-all" approach. It is evident that young female employees may require additional vocational skills training. Furthermore, married female employees are likely to encounter pressure in terms of balancing their professional and familial responsibilities. In addition, female employees at the grassroots level may prioritize the assurance of their rights and the safeguarding of their interests. The Women's Federation of Fuling District places a particular emphasis on "facilitating the growth and progress of female employees", thereby implicitly responding to these differences. This commitment is evidenced by the provision of promotion channels for female employees in technical positions, the coordination of flexible working hours for those with children, and the establishment of a developmental path appropriate to the identities of women from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, the organization has adopted a policy of avoiding "obstacles in their journey" caused by neglecting cross-cutting needs.

This metaphor elucidates the underlying logic of the support system for women in the non-public sector in China. From the establishment of the organization to the protection of rights, the "paving the way" process not only emphasizes the uniformity of basic guarantees but also responds to diverse needs through targeted measures. It is imperative to recognize that effective support must transcend the confines of occupation, marital status, and age, thereby ensuring that all female employees are able to progress along a seamless "development path".

Table 4.35 shows the example of the journey metaphors with the lexical realization of "护航 hùháng (escort)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.35: Feminist Journey Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "护航 hùháng (escort)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
护航 hùháng (escort)	251	计划 jìhuà (plan)	5.501	33. "创业奋斗就在吉林"，今年 3 月以来，吉林省妇联深入推进女大学生**护航**计划。"Chuàngyè fèndòu jiù zài Jílín", jīnnián 3 yuè yǐlái, Jílín Shěng fùlián shēnrù tuījìn nǚ dàxuéshēng hùháng jìhuà. ("Entrepreneurial struggle is in Jilin", since March this year, Jilin Province Women's Federation has further promoted the **escort** plan for female college students.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 33 is about the extensive support provided by the Jilin Provincial Women's Federation to empower female college graduates through the "Escort Plan for Female College Students," ensuring job opportunities and entrepreneurial support. As demonstrated in Table 4.35, the frequency is 251 times, indicating that "escort" is a recurrent element in the discourse surrounding the support of female college students' employment and entrepreneurship. The MI-Score of 5.501 demonstrates a substantial co-occurrence relationship with "plan", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "systematic guarantee for the development of female college students" and underscoring the planned and protective nature of the support measures.

The employment and entrepreneurship process of female college students is an escorted journey, a metaphor which renders the abstract support actions of the program tangible. The characteristics of "full accompaniment", "risk avoidance", and "direction guidance" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as the

Women's Federation guiding female college students through measures such as policy dissemination, job linkage, and mentorship. The "escort plan" of the Jilin Women's Federation can be likened to a ship navigating around reefs and reaching its destination under the escort of a more experienced vessel. This plan assists female college students in overcoming difficulties in the process of job-hunting and clarifying their career directions. It is important to note that this kind of support is not a temporary assistance, but a systematic guarantee throughout the process, as the public can be assured of this.

In the context of social role perception, female college students are frequently perceived as constituting "the disadvantaged group in the job market". The metaphor of "guiding" has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In accordance with conventional wisdom, women are frequently underestimated at the commencement of their professional journeys. Nevertheless, the "guidance program" positions them as "a potential group that needs empowerment" through role models, training, and other means. The entrepreneurial narratives of distinguished women, such as Yang Lina, along with the employment opportunities offered at specialized job fairs, have had a direct and significant impact on the career confidence of female college students. These initiatives have also contributed to a broader societal recognition of their developmental potential.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the term "escort" must address the intertwined differences in the identities of different female college students and avoid homogenized support. Female students majoring in science and engineering may encounter the prejudice that "women are not suited to technical positions", and thus require targeted career planning guidance. Female students residing in rural areas may be more dependent on entrepreneurship subsidy policies due to economic constraints. Female students from

minority backgrounds may encounter cultural adaptation issues and thus require consideration of their unique needs. The “policy interpretation team” and “entrepreneurship mentor group” of the Federation of Women’s Associations of Jilin Province, among other entities, have been specifically designed to address these disparities. Their efforts include the provision of clarifications regarding subsidy policies for economically disadvantaged students, the facilitation of connections between technical roles and those suited to science and engineering students, and the assurance that female students from diverse backgrounds can all access suitable “escort resources”. This approach is intended to prevent the occurrence of disparities due to the oversight of cross-demand considerations.

This metaphor reflects the refined approach of China’s support system for female university students. It is evident that the provision of “protection and escort” encompasses a multifaceted array of services, ranging from ideological guidance to job matching. This comprehensive approach is characterized by a duality of considerations, namely universality and individuality, thereby ensuring a nuanced and tailored provision of support and assistance. This underscores the imperative for effective protection policies to acknowledge the diverse identities of female university students. It is imperative that the intersecting needs of female university students are addressed with precision in order to facilitate a seamless progression through their respective career trajectories.

4.2.4 War Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

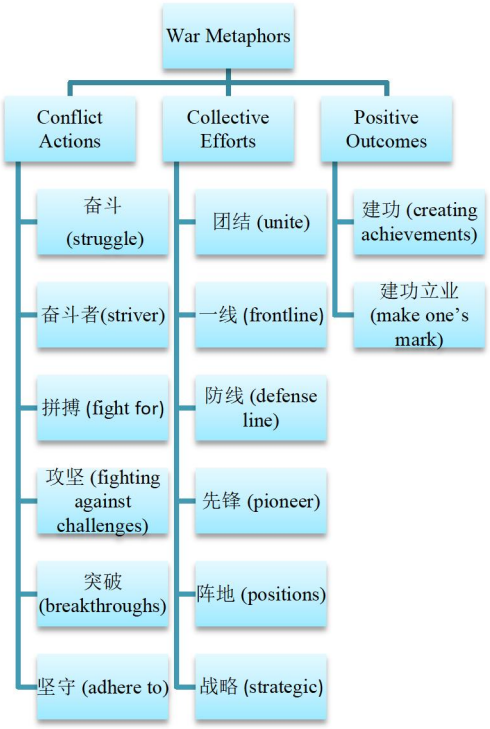


Figure 4.13: War Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.13, The employment of war metaphors in Chinese magazines, predicated on the three dimensions of "conflict actions", "collective efforts" and "positive outcomes", serves to construct a collective narrative of "collaborative effort" through CMT. This is in contrast to the "confrontational division" paradigm of the United States, and is indicative of the integrative empowering logic of the Chinese system for the diverse identities of women.

The "struggle" and "fighting against challenges" elements under the Conflict Actions dimension are represented by CMT as an action spectrum where female practices are depicted as "layered breakthroughs". Viewed through Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the role of "passive recipients" and become the primary agents of change, actively resolving challenges. Rural innovators are at the forefront of developing new pathways in ecological agriculture, tech-savvy women are "breaking

through" technical barriers, and elderly volunteers are "adhering to" service posts. From an intersectional perspective, the system provides adaptive support for actions of different identities: frontier ethnic women "breakthrough" the dual challenges of border security and development, disabled women "struggle" to break through barriers to accessible employment, and "strivers" of different identities find the breakthrough points in the national strategy, thereby eliminating the isolation of "individual confrontation" in the American war metaphor and highlighting the action logic of "differentials jointly breaking through".

Within the "collective efforts" dimension, the concepts of "unite" and "defense line" are presented. As illustrated by CMT, the "interconnected entities" of the primary body are portrayed as an offensive network. According to Social Role Theory, the process of aggregation of women from "dispersed individuals" into "cooperative arrays" is a key tenet. The Women's Federation has been instrumental in uniting urban and rural women in order to establish a "defence line" for the protection of their rights. In addition, industry pioneers have been known to "form teams" with the objective of overcoming workplace discrimination "positions". Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that elucidates the inclusive nature of this aggregation: Urban white-collar workers and rural women are said to "unite'' on the "frontline" of rural revitalization. New employment forms for women rely on "strategic" collaboration to break through survival difficulties, and "collective efforts" of different identities form institutional linkage. This is in contrast to the rift of "elite-led unity'' in the United States (Moore et al., 2020), and highlights the offensive ecological system of "mutual assistance and prevention" in China (Feng et al., 2022).

The “achieving success” and “making one’s mark” aspects of the Positive Outcomes dimension are anchored by CMT in the value coordinate of “nation – woman” symbiosis. In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, the “military achievements” of Chinese women have been in alignment with the development of the nation. The success of women in the field of poverty alleviation has resulted in a transformation of the economic landscape of rural areas, while the contributions of female engineers in the domains of scientific and technological innovation have been instrumental in driving industrial modernization. From an intersectional perspective, the concept of “achieving success” transcends a single dimension. It signifies the perseverance of rural women in protecting the ecology and the breakthrough of urban women in career advancement. This advancement achieves differences and progress within the framework of the “basic national policy of gender equality”. It also signifies the breaking away from the fragmentation of the “elite enjoying war achievements” in the American war metaphor. This forms an essential distinction and profoundly echoes China’s “cooperative prosperity” feminist practice logic.

Table 4.36 shows the example of the war metaphors with the lexical realization of “阵地 zhèndì (positions)” in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.36: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of “阵地 zhèndì (positions)”

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
阵地 zhèndì (positions)	814	舆论 yúlùn (public opinion)	8.842	34. 最后提出如何通过强化各方责任、坚持正确路径、倡导价值追求、打造舆论**阵地**等方法途径来促进男女平等基本国策更好的转化为保障效能。Zuìhòu tíchū rúhé tōngguò qiánghuà gèfāng zérèn、jiānchí zhèngquè lùjìng、chàngdǎo jiàzhí zhuīqiú、dǎzào yúlùn zhèndì děng fāngfǎ tújìng lái cùjìn nánnǚ píngděng jīběn guócè gèng hǎo de zhuǎnhuà wéi bǎozhàng xiàonéng. (Finally, how to strengthen the responsibility of all parties, adhere to the correct path, advocate the pursuit of value, create a **position** of public opinion and other methods are put forward to promote the basic national policy of gender equality into a better guarantee of effectiveness.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 34 is about a lecture on the basic national policy of gender equality, focusing on its implementation and the high-quality development of women's causes. As demonstrated in Table 4.36, the frequency is 814 times, indicating that "position" is the core word of the war metaphor and frequently appears in the discourse for the construction of gender equality-related public opinion. The MI-Score of 8.842 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with "public opinion", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "building a public opinion platform for disseminating the concept of gender equality". This highlights the importance of the public opinion domain in the dissemination of equality concepts.

The metaphor "Public Opinion Communication for Gender Equality is Holding Positions in War" serves to render the abstract issue of public opinion more concrete. The

characteristics of “defensive”, “strategic” and “controlling” of the word “position” in the source language are mapped onto the target language, reflecting the act of establishing public opinion positions to consolidate the dissemination space for the concept of gender equality. In a manner analogous to the importance of military positions in warfare, public opinion positions are pivotal in disseminating the concept of equality and countering gender bias. The special lectures in Zaozhuang City have been achieved through systematic dissemination, allowing the concept of equality to take root in the public’s cognition and making public opinion a “strategic fulcrum” for promoting policy implementation.

Through the lens of Social Role Theory, traditional public opinion often portrays women as “passive recipients”. The metaphorical reconstruction of the “public opinion battlefield” has resulted in a redefinition of this role. Historically, the discourse on gender issues has been predominantly shaped by male voices, resulting in the marginalization of women’s perspectives. The establishment of an exclusive public opinion battlefield is a strategy that has the potential to grant women equal rights to express their opinions. The lecture placed particular emphasis on the communication responsibility of leading cadres. This was achieved by expanding the communication subjects of the equal concept, challenging the stereotype that “gender issues are only concerned by women”, and promoting the whole society to become disseminators of the equal concept.

The cross-sectional perspective reveals that the “public opinion platform” must address the diverse and differentiated needs of various female groups. A significant disparity exists between urban and rural women, between highly and less educated women, and between ethnic minority and Han women, with regard to their exposure to public

opinion and their expression of opinions. For instance, rural women may rely more on grassroots preaching rather than online public opinion, and ethnic minority women need to balance the equal dissemination in the cultural context. It is important to note that if the public opinion platform focuses exclusively on the mainstream group, this may result in the neglect of marginalized women. This is analogous to ignoring flank positions in a battle, thereby leaving defence loopholes unguarded. Zaozhuang City utilizes video conferencing to encompass all districts (cities), with the objective of ensuring that women from diverse regions and backgrounds are able to engage with the concept of equality. This initiative is undertaken to guarantee the "comprehensive defence" of the public opinion platform.

This metaphor is reflective of China's public opinion strategy for the promotion of gender equality. From special lectures to multi-channel dissemination, the construction of "positions" is indicative of the uniformity of core ideas, whilst also responding to diverse needs through hierarchical coverage. It is important to recognize that a public opinion position that is truly effective cannot be a one-dimensional dissemination; Rather, it must penetrate the intertwined barriers of regions, education, and ethnicity. In this way, it can ensure that every type of woman can find resonance in the public opinion. This is precisely the depth requirement of the "public opinion position" metaphor for equal dissemination.

Table 4.37 shows the example of the war metaphors with the lexical realization of "突破 tūpò (breakthroughs)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.37: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "突破 tūpò (breakthroughs)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
突破 tūpò (breakthroughs)	157	势如破竹 shì rú pòzhú (unstoppable)	13.363	35. 从花旦、小旦到刀马旦、武旦，再到女扮男装，惠敏莉的**突破**势如破竹。Cóng huādàn、xiǎodàn dào dāomǎdàn、wǔdàn, zài dào nǚ bàn nánzhuāng, Huì Mǐnlì de tūpò shì rú pòzhú. (From huadan (female lead roles in traditional Chinese operas), xiaodan (young female roles), to daomadan (female warrior roles), wudan (female martial arts roles), and even cross-dressing roles, Hui Minli's **breakthroughs** have been unstoppable.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 35 is about the life and achievements of Hui Minli, the first female leader of the century-old Yisu Society, who embodies feminism through her artistic pursuits, leadership roles, and personal life. As demonstrated in Table 4.37, the frequency is 157 times, indicating that "breakthroughs" is employed as the core term of the war metaphor with high frequency in the discourse that describes the breakthroughs of female artistic achievements. The MI-Score of 13.363 demonstrates a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with "unstoppable", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation that "female breakthroughs in the field of art are unstoppable", thus highlighting the rapidity and continuity of the breakthroughs.

The metaphor "Women's Artistic Breakthroughs are Unstoppable Offensives" serves to render the abstract artistic achievements of women tangible. The characteristics

of “swift advance”, “continuous attack” and “breaking barriers” in the source domain are mapped onto the target domain, thereby reflecting Hu Minli’s role transitions from huadan (female lead roles in traditional Chinese operas), xiaodan (young female roles), to daomadan (female warrior roles), wudan (female martial arts roles), and cross-dressing female roles. In a manner analogous to the breaking through of one defensive line after another in a military attack, she continuously breaks gender and role restrictions in the field of opera, thereby enabling the public to comprehend the strength and scope of her artistic breakthroughs through the imagery of war’s assault.

In the context of traditional operas, women are frequently constrained to specific roles in terms of their social function. The metaphorical “breaking through” has restructured this perception. In accordance with conventional notions, the female roles in Qin Opera are predominantly characterized by the depiction of gentle courtesans and young actresses. However, Hui Minli’s challenge of the martial and warrior roles, as well as her portrayal of women in male attire, effectively debunked the stereotype that “women can only play weak roles”. Her status as the inaugural female leader of the Yisui Society further challenged the prevailing role inertia that “the management of operas is dominated by men”, thereby promoting the social recognition of the diverse possibilities of women in traditional arts.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the process of “breakthrough” becomes more complex due to the interweaving of multiple identities. As a female artist, she must overcome the barriers of gender; as a traditional opera performer, she is required to balance tradition and innovation; as a theatre troupe manager, she is also under pressure to manage operations and implement reforms. The combination of these identities gives rise to a

unique set of challenges. For instance, when promoting 3D films of Qin Opera and other innovations, she is confronted with the scepticism of traditionalists and must surmount the resistance to her female management's voice in decision-making. Her success can be attributed to her ability to transcend conventional boundaries across multiple domains, including gender, profession, tradition, and modernity. This accomplishment serves as a testament to the resilience and adaptability that can emerge from the process of identifying with multiple identities.

This metaphor elucidates the profound significance of women's breakthroughs in the traditional art field. The "unstoppable momentum" of Huiminli is evident not only in the expansion of personal roles but also in the innovation of theatre companies. This phenomenon is not merely an individual achievement, but rather a catalyst for the contemporary transformation of Qin Opera art. This observation underscores the notion that women's achievements are not merely advances in a single dimension, but rather the profound and simultaneous penetration of multiple barriers, intricately interwoven with the complexities of multiple identities. Intersectionality Theory elucidates that acknowledging and integrating the power of different identity dimensions is imperative for achieving a truly transformative breakthrough.

Table 4.38 shows the example of the war metaphors with the lexical realization of "战略 zhànlüè (strategic)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.38: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "战略 zhànlüè (strategic)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
战略 zhànlüè (strategic)	235	帮共富 bāng gòngfù (Work Together for Prosperity)	11.871	36. 落实"山海姐妹帮共富"**战略**合作协议。Luòshí "Shānhǎi jiěmèi bāng gòngfù" zhànlüè hézuò xiéyì. (Implement the "Mountain-Sea Sisters Work Together for Prosperity" **strategic** cooperation agreement.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 36 is about the efforts of the Women's Federation in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, in promoting economic empowerment and community development by leveraging women's resources and talents. As demonstrated in Table 4.38, the frequency is 235 times, indicating that "strategic" is a recurrent component of the war metaphor in discourse pertaining to women's collaborative prosperity. The MI-Score of 11.871 signifies a highly significant co-occurrence relationship with "Work Together for Prosperity", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "promoting women's common prosperity through regional collaboration strategies" and underscoring the planning and long-term nature of the cooperative actions.

The metaphor "Women's Collaborative Prosperity is a Strategic Deployment" serves to render the abstract concept of regional cooperation more concrete. The characteristics of "overall planning", "resource integration" and "collaborative efforts" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifesting as the "Mountain-Sea Sister Aid for Common Prosperity" agreement. This agreement coordinates the resources of mountainous areas and coastal regions to assist rural women in overcoming geographical limitations. In a manner analogous to the coordination of efforts in different

battle zones through strategic deployment, the Women's Federation of Wenzhou collaborates with various resources to ensure the congruence of measures such as skills training and industrial support. This enables the public to comprehend that this cooperation is not an arbitrary assistance, but rather a systematic project with meticulous planning and clearly defined steps.

In the context of social role perception, rural women are frequently perceived as "passive beneficiaries". The reconfiguration of "strategy" in a metaphorical sense has resulted in the redefinition of this role. In accordance with conventional principles, women engaged in the field of rural development are predominantly positioned in a subordinate capacity. Nevertheless, the "strategy for achieving common prosperity" positions them as the "main body of common prosperity". It is evident that the utilization of platforms such as "women's common prosperity workshops" and "skill competitions" has resulted in the transformation of women from mere participants to leaders. This role transformation not only enhances their economic status but also, through activities such as "navigator search", strengthens their decision-making power in rural revitalization, promoting society's recognition of their core role.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the implementation of "strategy" must address the interwoven differences in identities of various female groups and avoid a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Women residing in mountainous regions may encounter dual limitations, namely the inaccessibility of transportation and the scarcity of resources. Consequently, they may require the "Women's Technological Assistance Vehicle for Agricultural Development" to provide them with technical support. Women inhabiting coastal areas may require additional e-commerce training to expand their market reach.

Furthermore, ethnic minority women are compelled to strike a balance between their cultural heritage and the demands of industrial development. A notable example of this is the “Mom’s Taste” brand, which specializes in ethnic cuisine. The “layered and categorized training” program implemented by the Women’s Federation of Wenzhou is a response to these variations, offering fundamental skills training for economically disadvantaged women, connecting entrepreneurial resources for those with basic skills, and ensuring that women from diverse regions, ethnic groups, and economic backgrounds can all identify suitable pathways to prosperity within the strategy. This approach prevents the marginalization of certain groups due to the oversight of cross-demand.

This metaphor is reflective of the systematic thinking inherent in China’s practice of women’s common prosperity. From the standpoint of regional collaboration to the implementation of precise policy, the “strategy” is characterized by an acknowledgement of both the overall situation and the existence of differences. This underscores the notion that effective strategies for achieving common prosperity must take into account the multifaceted identities of women. It is only through the dissolution of the interconnected barriers that exist between regions, ethnicities, and classes that women can collectively benefit from the fruits of development through collaborative endeavors.

Table 4.39 shows the example of the war metaphors with the lexical realization of “先锋 xiānfēng (pioneer)” in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.39: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "先锋 xiānfēng (pioneer)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
先锋 xiānfēng (pioneer)	101	于漪 Yú Yī (Yu Yi)	14.014	37....涌现出改革**先锋**于漪、"世界第一吊"研发女将孙丽等一大批巾帼典型。Yǒngxiàn chū gǎigé xiānfēng Yú Yī、 "shìjiè dì-yī diào" yánfā nǚjiàng Sūn Lì děng yī dàpī jīnguó diǎnxíng. (...giving rise to a large number of exemplary women, such as Yu Yi, a **pioneer** of reform, and Sun Li, a female researcher behind the "world's largest crane.") (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 37 is about the call by Jiangsu's Provincial Party Committee Secretary to encourage women to contribute to China's modernization, focusing on their historical achievements, contemporary roles, and future aspirations. As demonstrated in Table 4.39, the frequency is 101 times, indicating that the term "pioneer" as the core term of the war metaphor frequently appears in the discourse describing female reform leaders. The MI-Score of 14.014 shows a very strong co-occurrence relationship with "Yu Yi", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "the exemplary significance of women as pioneers in the field of reform", and highlighting the exemplary role of individual leadership.

The metaphor "Female Reformers are Pioneers on the Frontier" serves to render the abstract reform leadership behaviour tangible. The characteristics of "breaking through barriers", "leading the direction", and "being the first to act" of the word "pioneer" in the source language are mapped onto the target language, reflecting that female figures such as Yu Yi broke traditional norms and opened new paths in fields such as education. In a

manner akin to pioneering explorers traversing uncharted terrains, Yu Yi advocated for educational reforms, Sun Li pioneered the development of "the world's first crane," and Sun Li also initiated explorations into novel avenues for industrial advancement. The image of pioneers serves to facilitate public comprehension of the pioneering contributions of women in the reform process.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently constrained within the paradigm of "preserving tradition". The metaphor of "pioneer" has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In conventional wisdom, innovation and reform are predominantly associated with males, while females are expected to preserve the prevailing social order. However, the expression "Reform Pioneer Yu Yi" positions women as "the leader of change", and her innovative practices in the field of education have been shown to challenge the stereotype that "women are not suitable for promoting systematic reforms", thereby promoting the recognition of women's pioneering value in public affairs by society.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practices of "pioneers" present a series of challenges, stemming from the interweaving of multiple identities of women. To illustrate this point, consider the following examples. In the field of education, an individual such as Yu Yi may encounter gender bias, for example when confronted with the statement, "It is difficult for women to lead educational policies." Similarly, in the field of technology, an individual such as Sun Li may face the double barrier of "women lacking voice in hard-core technology fields." The observed differences can be attributed to the intermingling of various occupations, genders and other identities. Given its pioneering status in both domains, the field of education may prioritize the dissemination of ideas, while those in technology face the dual challenges of technology and gender. The pioneering practices of

female individuals in different fields in Jiangsu Province are the result of penetrating barriers through the interweaving of their respective identities, demonstrating the unique paths brought about by cross-identity.

This metaphor elucidates the profound significance of women's pioneering role in the reform process. The achievements of female pioneers in various fields, ranging from education to technology, are not merely individual accomplishments but also represent a paradigm shift in the industry's perception of gender. This observation serves to underscore the notion that the pioneering role of women is not a unidimensional progression, but rather a trajectory forged through the interweaving of multiple identities.

Table 4.40 shows the example of the war metaphors with the lexical realization of "团结 tuánjié (unite)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.40: Feminist War Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "团结 tuánjié (unite)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
团结 tuánjié (unite)	533	公安战线 gōng'ān zhànxiàn (the public security front)	11.6	38. 她说，要立足本职工作，以"八大警务"为牵引，**团结**公安战线上的姐妹们。Tā shuō, yào lìzú běnzhí gōngzuò, yǐ "bā dà jǐngwù" wéi qiānyǐn, tuánjié gōng'ān zhànxiàn shàng de jiěmèimen. (She said that we should base on our own work, take the "eight police" as the traction, **unite** the sisters on the public security front.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 38 is about the empowerment of women in modern China and their roles in national development and family well-being, particularly during the 13th National

Congress of Chinese Women in Guizhou. As demonstrated in Table 4.40, the frequency is 533 times, indicating that “unite” as the core word of the war metaphor frequently appears in the discourse of female groups’ coordinated actions. The MI-Score of 11.6 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with “the public security front”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “female coordinated operations in the police field”, and highlighting the cohesion and combat effectiveness of collective actions.

The metaphor of “Women’s Collaborative Action is Unity on the Battlefront” serves to render the abstract concept of collective power more concrete. The features of “unity” in the source language, such as “cooperative operation”, “consistent goals”, and “mutual support”, are mapped onto the target language, manifesting as the women on the public security front collaborating to handle the tasks of maintaining public security. Analogous to the manner in which soldiers on the battlefield cooperate to resist foreign enemies, Zhou Haihong alluded to “unifying the sisters on the public security front”, combining “public security blue” and “female red” to form a joint force to address challenges, thereby enabling the public to comprehend that this unity is not a simple gathering, but rather a strategic collaboration with a common goal.

Within the context of social roles, women involved in public security are frequently perceived as “peripheral participants”. The metaphor of “unity” has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In conventional wisdom, the core strength of public security work is predominantly attributed to men, thereby resulting in women’s contributions being frequently overlooked. The term “United Sisters” conveys the notion of women as the “main force on the front line,” thereby challenging the prevailing stereotype that “women are not suitable for high-intensity policing” through collective action. For instance, the

active involvement of female police officers in special patrol teams, criminal investigation, and other such roles, serves to promote societal recognition of their fundamental value in the domain of public security.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the concept of "unity" must address the complex differences in the identities of women within the public security system and avoid the adoption of a homogeneous approach to collaboration. Female police officers at the grassroots level may face pressure in balancing work and family responsibilities. Female police officers from ethnic minorities must find a balance between cultural adaptation and professional requirements. Furthermore, young female police officers may exhibit deficiencies in terms of experience accumulation. In order to achieve effective unity, it is necessary to formulate targeted responses to these differences. For instance, the coordination of flexible scheduling for female police officers with children, the provision of bilingual training for female police officers from ethnic minorities, the guarantee that women from diverse backgrounds can all play to their strengths in collaboration, and the avoidance of neglecting cross-cultural needs, resulting in some groups being "outside the front line".

This metaphor elucidates the profound significance of women's collaborative actions in the domain of public security. The concept of "unity" has been demonstrated to enhance work efficiency in a variety of professional contexts, including routine police work, emergency response, and the handling of crises. Furthermore, the implementation of "unity" has been shown to influence the gender power relationship. This serves to underscore the notion that a genuine united front must be cognizant of the multifaceted identities that characterize women. It is only by overcoming the interconnected obstacles

of profession, ethnicity and family that women can become integral components of a robust and unified front.

4.2.5 Innovation Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

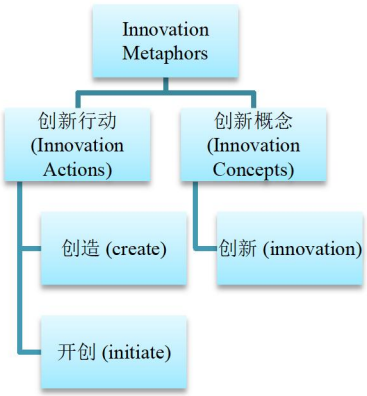


Figure 4.14: Innovation Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.14, The innovation metaphors in Chinese magazines, based on the two dimensions of “innovation actions” and “innovation concepts”, utilize CMT to construct a “multifaceted innovation” narrative, reflecting the enabling integration logic of Chinese systems for the cross-gender identities of women.

In the “creation” and “initiation” dimensions of the Innovation Actions category, CMT conceptualizes female practices as “subjective actions from nothing to something”. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the “traditional followers” position, becoming creators of social structures. Rural innovators are responsible for the creation of ecological agricultural integration models, working women have initiated flexible systems for balancing family and career, and elderly volunteers have established the silver-haired wisdom service system. From an intersectional perspective, the system provides a conducive environment for the formation of diverse identities.

Frontier ethnic women are instrumental in establishing integrated pathways for cultural heritage and industrial revitalization. Disabled women, in turn, have been recognized as key agents of innovation in the realm of employment, pioneering novel mechanisms for accessibility. The national development strategy serves as a unifying framework within which diverse identities intersect, thereby countering the isolation of "individual breakthrough" as espoused in the American innovation metaphor. This approach underscores the pragmatic essence of "differently co-creating," emphasizing the collaborative nature of innovation and the importance of inclusive processes.

In the "Innovation" dimension of innovation concepts, the concept of "innovation" is reinterpreted through CMT to restructure the perception of women's capabilities. Social Role Theory is interpreted as follows: society is said to be breaking the stereotype of "conservatism" for women, thereby recognizing their innovative talents in fields such as technology, culture, and governance. Female engineers are instrumental in driving the technological upgrading of industries, while community women are pivotal in establishing a collaborative model for grassroots governance. Intersectionality reveals the inclusive nature of this perception: the technological "innovation" of urban white-collar workers and the "creation" of rural women in their local contexts, under the framework of the "basic national policy of gender equality", achieve mutual recognition of values, highlighting China's "diverse and mutually recognized" innovation ecosystem.

Table 4.41 shows the example of the innovation metaphors with the lexical realization of "创造 chuàngzào (create)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.41: Feminist Innovation Metaphor with the Lexical Realization of "创**造** chuàngzào (create) "

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
创造 chuàngzào (create)	400	新质 xīnzhì (new qualities)	6.991	39. 持续开展科技助企、助农服务，加速科技成果落地转化，培育更多具有**创造**新质的巾帼企业主体。Chíxù kāizhǎn kējì zhù qǐ、zhù nóng fúwù, jiāsù kējì chéngguǒ luòdì zhuǎnhuà, péiyù gèng duō jùyǒu chuàngzào xīnzhì de jīnguó qǐyè zhǔtǐ. (Continuously carry out services to assist enterprises and farmers with science and technology, accelerate the implementation and transformation of scientific and technological achievements, and cultivate more female-led enterprises that possess the ability to **create** new qualities.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 39 is about the efforts of the municipal Women's Federation to create a supportive environment for women in the "three new" sectors (new economic organizations, new social organizations, and new employment groups). As demonstrated in Table 4.41, the frequency is 400 times, indicating that "create" as the core word of the innovation metaphor frequently appears in the discourse describing the innovation and development of female enterprises. The MI-Score is 6.991, showing a significant co-occurrence relationship with "new qualities", which reinforces the metaphorical connotation that "female enterprises give birth to new qualities through innovation" and highlights the breakthrough significance of innovation for the development of enterprises.

The metaphor "The innovative development of female enterprises is the creation of new qualities" serves to render the abstract process of innovation more concrete. The

characteristics of “from nothing to something”, “breaking conventions” and “cultivating new traits” of the word “creation” in the source domain are mapped onto the target domain, reflecting that female enterprises generate unique competitiveness through technological transformation and model innovation. The Women’s Federation of Zaozhuang City has been instrumental in promoting science and technology-assisted enterprise and agricultural services, which have been shown to enhance the productivity of female-led enterprises. This initiative has been successful in transforming technology into tangible outcomes, thereby establishing “new qualities” as a quantifiable metric for evaluating the vitality of enterprises. This development is particularly noteworthy as it has demystified the concept of innovation, making it a tangible driving force for development that is accessible to the public.

In the context of social role perception, female entrepreneurs are frequently categorized as “traditional and conservative”. The metaphor of “creating new qualities” has been instrumental in redefining this perception. In accordance with conventional wisdom, enterprises under female leadership are predominantly found in the light industry or service sectors, and their innovation potential is frequently underestimated. However, the statement “cultivating female enterprises with the ability to create new qualities” positions female enterprises as “innovation entities”. In Zaozhuang City, for instance, financial support and technological services have been instrumental in encouraging female enterprises to overcome the technical limitations prevalent in specialized industries. This has served to dispel the prevailing stereotype that “women have limited innovation capabilities” and has contributed to the promotion of society’s recognition of their pivotal role in the cultivation of new productive forces.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of “creating new qualities” takes diverse paths due to the interweaving of the identities of female enterprises. The “Jazi Xiangxiang” base, established by rural women, must integrate traditional craftsmanship with modern technology. Its novel quality is evident in the integration of “employment at home + characteristic industry”. Enterprises led by female scientific and technological workers in cities emphasize technological research and development, and their new quality is manifested as patent achievements and market transformation. Conversely, minority women enterprises may innovate in cultural inheritance, for example, by combining ethnic elements and modern design. Zaozhuang City’s provision of tiered technological services and financial support is precisely targeted at these differences. This is achieved by providing technical training for rural enterprises, connecting transformation channels for scientific and technological enterprises, ensuring that female enterprises with different backgrounds can find suitable innovation paths, and avoiding that “new quality creation” becomes superficial due to neglecting cross-demand.

This metaphor reflects the inclusive nature of women’s enterprise innovation. The process of “creating new qualities” encompasses a range of factors, from traditional industry upgrading to the implementation of scientific and technological achievements. It is important to note that this process not only emphasizes breakthroughs but also takes into account differences. This underscores the notion that genuine innovation cannot disregard the multifaceted backgrounds of women-owned enterprises. It is only by penetrating the intertwined barriers of regions, industries and cultures that each female enterprise can give birth to unique “new qualities”.

Table 4.42 shows the example of the innovation metaphors with the lexical realization of "创新 Chuàngxīn (innovation)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.42: Feminist Innovation Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "创新 Chuàngxīn (innovation)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
创新 Chuàngxīn (innovation)	2,475	驱动 qūdòng (drives)	8.227	40. **创新**驱动妇联工作与基层治理工作同频共振。Chuàngxīn qūdòng fùlián gōngzuò yǔ jīcéng zhìlǐ gōngzuò tóngpín gòngzhèn. (**Innovation** drives the synchronization of women's federation work with grassroots governance.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 40 is about how the Hainan Provincial Women's Federation, under Party guidance, promotes the role of women's federations in social governance. As demonstrated in Table 4.42, the "frequency" is 2475, indicating that "innovation", as the core word of the innovation metaphor, frequently appears in the discourse of the collaborative development of women's federation work and social governance. The MI-Score is 8.227, showing a significant co-occurrence relationship with "drives", which reinforces the metaphorical connotation that "innovation is the core driving force for the synchronous development of women's federation work and grassroots governance", highlighting the crucial role of innovation in the collaboration between the two.

The metaphor of "Innovation for the Synergy of Women's Federation Work and Grassroots Governance is a Driving Force" serves to render the abstract process of synergy more concrete. The characteristics of "continuous momentum", "linkage effect", and

“breaking through limitations” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifesting as the promotion of the synergy between women’s federation work and grassroots governance through innovative measures such as digitalization, construction and mechanism reform. The establishment of the “Digital Women’s Federation” by the Hainan Women’s Federation, and the innovation of the mechanism for resolving marital and family disputes, can be considered as analogous to an engine driving the operation of a machine. This provides continuous momentum for synergy, and enables the public to understand that this synergy is not passive cooperation, but rather an active and dynamic development process.

In the context of social role perception, women’s federations are frequently regarded as “auxiliary governance forces”. The metaphor of “innovation-driven” has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In conventional wisdom, women’s federations predominantly execute subsidiary roles, encompassing publicity and assistance in social governance. However, the expression of “innovation-driven collaboration” positions them as “core participants in governance innovation”. For instance, Hainan Province has embedded women’s federations into the social governance grid, extending their service reach through “Women’s Homes” and “Women’s Micro-Houses”. This has served to dispel the stereotype that “women’s federations can only conduct cultural and sports activities” and promote the recognition of their innovative leading role in grassroots governance.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of “innovation-driven” must address the interwoven differences in identities among various female groups and avoid superficial collaboration. It is imperative to recognize the necessity for rural women to

have access to more convenient channels for the protection of their rights. One potential solution is the establishment of a connection between the 12338 hotline and the 12345 hotline. In contrast, urban professional women prioritize the safeguarding of their rights within the workplace, relying on the legal education and enterprise empowerment provided by the Women's Federation. Finally, ethnic minority women must consider governance methods that take into account cultural customs, such as the establishment of distinctive "Women's Micro-Houses". The innovations in resource integration and service integration in Hainan Province have been developed with the specific objective of addressing these differences, namely the provision of door-to-door services for rural women, the establishment of skill platforms for professional women, and the assurance that women from diverse backgrounds can all benefit from collaborative governance. This approach ensures that the concept of "innovation-driven" does not become a superficial form when the cross-demand is disregarded.

This metaphor elucidates the profound significance of the women's federation organization's innovative role in social governance. The concept of "innovation-driven" governance encompasses a wide range of reforms, including mechanisms, digital transformation, and the integration of intelligence into various facets of governance. This approach has the potential to enhance governance efficiency and reshape the interaction between the women's federation and the female community. This underscores the imperative for effective collaborative governance to acknowledge and value the diverse identities of women. It is only by penetrating the intertwined barriers of region, occupation and ethnicity that innovation can truly become a lasting driving force for the upgrading of governance.

4.2.6 Plant Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

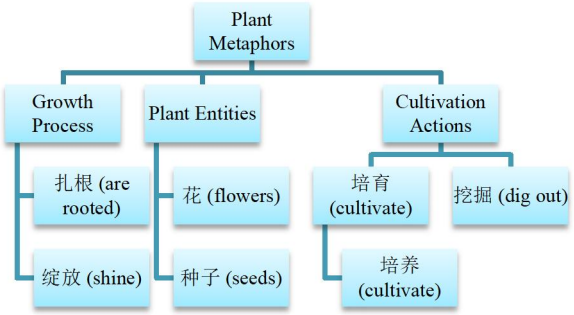


Figure 4.15: Plant Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.15, The plant metaphors in Chinese magazines, based on the three dimensions of "growth process", "plant entities", and "cultivation actions", utilize CMT to construct a development narrative of "Natural Growth – System Cultivation", reflecting the nurturing integration logic of Chinese systems for the cross-gender identities of women.

The "are rooted" and "shine" dimensions of the growth process dimension, using CMT, concretize the development of women as a "dynamic rooting – layered shining" life process. Within the framework of Social Role Theory, Chinese women deviate from the "dependent growth" position and become the primary entity embedded within the social ecosystem. Rural innovators are firmly established in the countryside, with the objective of revitalizing industrial resources. Scientific and technological women are entrenched in laboratories, striving to overcome technological obstacles. Elderly volunteers are deeply entrenched in communities, with the aim of utilizing the valuable contributions of the silver-haired population. From an intersectional perspective, the system provides a suitable environment for the development of different identities. Frontier ethnic women, for example, are able to "root" in the dual soil of border protection and cultural inheritance.

Similarly, disabled women are able to “root” in the growth of the accessibility support system. The “rooting” of different identities finds the growth fulcrum in the national strategy, thereby eliminating the isolation of “individual competitive growth” in the American metaphor and highlighting the development logic of “deeply rooted differences”.

Within the “plant entities” dimension, the terms “flowers” and “seeds” are interpreted metaphorically to represent the value of women through CMT. As posited by Social Role Theory, the term “flowers” is employed to denote the accomplishments of women in diverse domains. Rural women are likened to “flowers” in the context of poverty alleviation, while female engineers are regarded as the bearers of wisdom in the realms of scientific and technological innovation. The term “seeds” is used to signify future potential. Female students are considered to be the “seeds” of educational equity, while returning young people are regarded as the “seeds” of rural revitalization. Intersectionality is revealed to be an inclusive concept in these metaphors: the “flowers” of ethnic minority women integrate cultural heritage and development momentum, while the “seeds” of impoverished women carry the hope for survival and breakthrough. The concept of “flowers” and “seeds” representing different identities achieving a symbiotic value within the framework of the “basic national policy of gender equality” is a notable contrast to the more limited perspective of the “elite symbolic plants” in the United States. This approach underscores the growth ecology of “diversity and coexistence” in China, highlighting the importance of a comprehensive and inclusive policy framework.

CMT presents the “cultivate” and “dig out” actions in the “Cultivation Actions” dimension as a support network of “systemal nourishment – potential activation”. In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, the state and society establish a

hierarchical cultivation system. The Women's Federation is responsible for the cultivation of grassroots women with a view to breaking through the deadlock in rights protection. Meanwhile, universities are tasked with the extraction of the research potential of female students, and enterprises are responsible for the training of the promotion capabilities of female workers in the workplace. From an intersectional perspective, this support is adapted to identity differences: rural women need to "dig out" local skills to transform into industrial momentum, new employment women need to "cultivate" the anti-risk ability for flexible employment, and the "cultivation" and "digging" of different identities form a systematic linkage.

Table 4.43 shows the example of the plant metaphors with the lexical realization of "扎根 zhāgēn (are rooted)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.43: Feminist Plant Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "扎根 zhāgēn (are rooted)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
扎根 zhāgēn (are rooted)	108	她们 tāmen (they)	5.207	41. 永安市税务局第一税务分局讲述她们**扎根**基层一线用专业诠释价值，用服务演绎担当的青春故事。 Yǒng'ān Shì shuìwùjú Dì-yī Shuìwù Fēnjú jiǎngshù tāmen zhāgēn jīcéng yīxiàn yòng zhuānyè quánshì jiàzhí, yòng fúwù yǎnyì dāndāng de qīngchūn gùshì. (The First Tax Branch of Yongan Tax Bureau tells the stories of their youth. They **are rooted** in the front-line of the grass-roots level, interpreting value with professionalism and demonstrating responsibility with service.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 41 is about the “She Power: Ming Sister Storytelling” event in Sanming City, Fujian Province, which illustrates the achievements and struggles of remarkable women. As demonstrated in Table 4.43, the frequency is 108, indicating that “are rooted” as the core phrase of the plant metaphor frequently appears in the discourse describing women’s work at the grassroots level. The MI-Score of 5.207 shows a significant co-occurrence relationship with “they”, reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “female groups deeply working and contributing at the grassroots level”, thereby highlighting the stability and depth of grassroots practice.

The metaphor ’Women’s Grassroots Work Practice is Plant Rooting’ serves to render the abstract concept of grassroots dedication more concrete. The characteristics of “deeply penetrating the soil”, “absorbing nutrients”, and “stabilized growth” in the source domain are mapped onto the target domain, reflecting that the female staff of the First Tax Branch of Yong’an Tax Bureau are at the grassroots front line, interpreting value with professional capabilities and demonstrating responsibility through service actions. In a manner analogous to the necessity for plants to establish a firm root system and absorb nutrients in order to thrive, these women engage with the community to ascertain its requirements, build trust through consistent professional service delivery, and facilitate public comprehension of the tenacity and dynamism inherent in grassroots work through the metaphor of plant growth.

In the context of social role perception, women are frequently regarded as “temporary participants” at the grassroots level. The metaphor of “taking root” has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In conventional wisdom, the arduous nature of grassroots work is predominantly attributed to male figures. Consequently, women’s

contributions within this domain are often perceived as being of a “transitional” nature. However, the expression “rooting oneself in the grassroots frontline” positions women as “stable forces in grassroots governance”. For instance, they remain at their posts and accumulate experience in tax services, thereby challenging the stereotype that “women are unable to adapt to long-term grassroots work” and promoting society’s recognition of their core position in grassroots governance.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of “rooting” assumes diverse forms as a consequence of the interweaving of women’s identities. It is evident that rural grassroots women may face dual pressures from family and work, necessitating the balancing of serving the people with the undertaking of farm work and raising children. In contrast, urban grassroots women, such as tax collectors, are required to strike a balance between professional accuracy and service warmth, whilst also dealing with complex business demands. Furthermore, minority women are required to identify points of service convergence amidst cultural differences. Sanming City has been instrumental in showcasing the struggles of different grassroots women through the “Ming Sister Story Show”. This initiative can be understood as a response to the aforementioned differences. It not only acknowledges the professional dedication of tax women, but also recognizes and supports the diverse practices of women in other fields. This ensures that the “rooting” of women of different identities can be recognized and supported, and that cross-demand is not neglected due to a single standard.

This metaphor elucidates the profound significance of women’s deep-rooted presence in grassroots governance. The process of “rooting” is indicative of both personal growth and the consolidation of the female foundation of grassroots governance, ranging

from daily services to long-term dedication. This underscores the notion that authentic grassroots mobilization must be inclusive of the multifaceted identities that characterize women. It is only through the acknowledgement and consideration of the complex interplay of factors, including regional differences, occupational backgrounds, and familial dynamics, that women can establish a strong foundation within their local communities.

Table 4.44 shows the example of the plant metaphors with the lexical realization of "花 huā (flowers)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.44: Feminist Plant Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "花 huā (flowers)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
花 huā (flowers)	244	争艳 zhēngyàn (competing for beauty)	11.724	42. 白云街道在横河社区开展"巾帼**花**争艳，巧手绽芳华"手工活动。Báiyún Jiēdào zài Héng Hé Shèqū kāizhǎn "Jīnguó huā zhēngyàn, qiǎoshǒu zhàn fānghuá" shǒugōng huódòng. (Baiyun Sub-district carried out a handicraft activity named "Women's **Flowers** Competing for Beauty, Skillful Hands Blooming with Youth" in Henghe Community.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 42 is about a "Women's Day" craft event in Henghe Community involving DIY activities, health services, and lectures, highlighting feminism through community engagement and health awareness for elderly women. As demonstrated in Table 4.44, the frequency is 312, indicating that "flowers" as the core word of the relational metaphor frequently appears in the discourse describing the connection of female organizations with social resources. The MI-Score of 6.892 shows a significant co-occurrence relationship

with “competing for beauty”, reinforcing the metaphorical connotation that “female organizations are the hubs linking the government, enterprises and social forces”, highlighting the integration role of women in cross-departmental collaboration.

The metaphor “The role of women’s organizations in social governance is a bridge” serves to render the abstract collaborative network concrete. The characteristics of “two-way connection”, “resource integration” and “stability maintenance” of the “bridge” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as the women’s federation organizations by building platforms such as “women’s deliberation meetings” and “women’s volunteer service stations”, precisely matching policy resources, market resources with grassroots needs. The “four new fields” women’s federation organization construction promoted by the Zhejiang Women’s Federation can be regarded as a bridge connecting different components to form a whole. It has included groups such as e-commerce women and entrepreneurial women in the governance network, thereby enabling the public to understand the structural value of women’s organizations in social governance through the image of physical connection.

In the context of social role perception, women’s organizations are frequently characterized as “peripheral coordinators” and “bridges”. The reconfiguration of this perception in a metaphorical sense has resulted in a shift in perspective. In conventional theoretical frameworks, organizations such as the Women’s Federation frequently assume supplementary roles in facilitating both upward and downward communication. However, the expression “linking multiple entities” positions them as “the core nodes of the governance network”. For instance, the Women’s Federation of Guangdong Province integrates resources such as courts and psychological counselling institutions through the

"Yuejiejie" platform to provide one-stop services for women and children, thereby challenging the stereotype that "women's organizations can only carry out cultural and sports activities" and promoting the recognition of their leading role in resource allocation by society.

This metaphor elucidates the profound significance of the role of women's organizations as a connecting link in social governance. The "linking" process, which encompasses aspects such as resource integration and relationship reconfiguration, has been shown to enhance governance efficiency and to influence the interaction patterns between women and the public domain. This underscores the imperative for effective social collaboration to acknowledge and value the diverse identities of women. It is only by breaking through the interwoven barriers of region, occupation and ethnicity that the "link" can truly become an elastic structure that maintains the resilience of social governance.

Table 4.45 shows the example of the plant metaphors with the lexical realization of "培育 péiyù (cultivate)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.45: Feminist Plant Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "**培育** péiyù (cultivate)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
培育 péiyù (cultivate)	654	一批 yī pī (a batch of)	7.085	43. 深入实施女农民提素工程，推动将农村妇女培训纳入政府普惠性培训计划，**培育**一批高素质女农民和乡村振兴女致富带头人。Shēnrù shíshī nǚ nóngmín tí sù gōngchéng, tuīdòng jiāng nóngcūn fùnǚ péixùn nàrù zhèngfǔ pǔhuìxìng péixùn jìhuà, péiyù yī pī gāo sùzhì nǚ nóngmín hé xiāngcūn zhènxīng nǚ zhǐfù dàitóurén. (Deeply implement the program to enhance the quality of female farmers, promote the inclusion of rural women's training into the government's inclusive training plans, and **cultivate** a batch of high-quality female farmers and female leaders in rural revitalization who can lead the way in becoming prosperous.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 43 is about the “12345” development system of the Hainan Provincial Women’s Federation for the next five years, explaining how rural women and female leaders can contribute to Hainan’s development as a free trade port. As demonstrated in Table 4.45, the frequency is 654 times, indicating that “cultivate” as the core word of the plant metaphor frequently appears in the discourse related to the cultivation of female talents. The MI-Score is 7.085, showing a significant co-occurrence relationship with “a batch of”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “systematic cultivation of a large number of female talents” and highlighting the scale and continuity of the training work.

The metaphor “Women Talents’ Cultivation is Plant Cultivation” serves to render the abstract cultivation process more concrete. The characteristics of “careful nurturing”, “stage growth”, and “environmental adaptation” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting the efforts to assist rural women in becoming high-quality talents through inclusive training and skill enhancement measures. Just as the cultivation of plants necessitates the provision of nutrients tailored to their species characteristics, the Women’s Federation of Hainan Province has integrated rural women’s training into the government plan, offering precise support tailored to different needs. This enables the public to understand that this cultivation is not sporadic assistance but a planned and systematic project.

In the context of social role perception, the designation “traditional farmer” is frequently ascribed to women residing in rural areas. The metaphor of “cultivation” has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In accordance with conventional principles, the worth of rural women is predominantly associated with fundamental agricultural

activities. However, the expression “cultivating high-quality female farmers” positions them as “innovative entities for rural revitalization”. Through training, they evolve into leaders of prosperity, transcending the limitations imposed by a passive role. As previously stated, female farmers have been identified as playing a leading role in the process of agricultural modernization, and as a result, their core value in terms of rural development has come to be recognized by society at large.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of “cultivation” must address the complex identity differences of rural women and avoid homogenized training. It is important to note that minority women may encounter dual obstacles of language and culture, and thus require courses that combine bilingual training with ethnic skills. Furthermore, impoverished women need basic skills and start-up capital support, such as the systematic assistance provided by “Women’s Inspirational Training Class”. Finally, suburban women may need to acquire combined skills in both agricultural and non-agricultural industries. The inclusive training program in Hainan Province has been developed to address these differences by designing content in a stratified and categorized manner. This ensures that women from different regions, ethnic groups and economic conditions can all obtain suitable “training resources”. This approach avoids the situation where some groups “experience growth obstacles” due to the neglect of cross-demand.

This metaphor unveils the underlying logic of female cultivation in China’s rural revitalization program. The cultivation process emphasizes both the scale effect and individual differences, ranging from basic training to the cultivation of leaders. It is imperative to acknowledge that effective talent cultivation cannot disregard the multifaceted identities of rural women. It is only by overcoming the complex barriers of

region, ethnicity and class that women can achieve the necessary conditions for growth and development.

4.2.7 Container Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

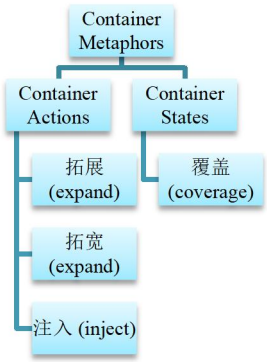


Figure 4.16: Container Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.16, The container metaphors in Chinese magazines, based on the two dimensions of "container actions" and "container states", construct a systematic narrative of "active expansion – layered coverage" through CMT. This is in contrast to the "closed – breakthrough" style of container metaphors in the United States, and reflects the inclusive empowerment logic of Chinese systems for women's cross-gender identities.

The "expansion", "widening" and "injection" dimensions of the container actions category, through CMT, transform female practices into "active expansion-oriented subject actions". Informed by Social Role Theory, Chinese women break free from the passive positioning of being "limited containers" and become the expanders of the social support space: Women's Federation has been instrumental in broadening the scope of grassroots service provisions for newly employed women. Furthermore, enterprises have been encouraged to expand their workplace provisions to accommodate a more diverse range of

family structures. In addition, public welfare institutions have been allocated resources to facilitate the development of rural women. From an intersectional perspective, the system provides a malleable pathway for the proliferation of diverse identities. For instance, borderland ethnic women "expand" the scope for integrating cultural heritage and safeguarding rights, disabled women "expand" the support framework for barrier-free employment, and the "expansion actions" of various identities find a nexus in national governance. This process eliminates the confrontational nature of "breaking through closure" in the American container metaphor and underscores the pragmatic logic of "differentially inclusive" approaches.

The "coverage" dimension of the Container States category, as conceptualized through the CMT framework, metaphorically alludes to the domain for safeguarding women's rights. Social Role Theory posits that society is undergoing a transition from the conventional "local protection" model to a more structured, hierarchical network of support. Poverty alleviation policies are designed to benefit rural women, while resources are allocated to female engineers in scientific research. Community governance services are intended to address the fundamental needs of elderly women. Intersectionality reveals the inclusive nature of this coverage: the workplace protection for urban white-collar workers and the rural women's support from the countryside, in the framework of the "basic national policy of gender equality", achieve spatial interlocking, highlighting China's "diverse and overlapping" guarantee ecosystem.

Table 4.46 shows the example of the container metaphor with the lexical realization of "拓展 tuòzhǎn (expand)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.46: Feminist Container Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "拓展 tuòzhǎn (expand)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
拓展 tuòzhǎn (expand)	453	科技 kējì (science and technology)	5.010	44.....希望各相关单位高度重视、密切配合，深化**拓展**科技创新巾帼行动..... Xīwàng gè xiāngguān dānwèi gāodù zhòngshì、mìqiè pèihé, shēnhuà tuòzhǎn kējì chuàngxīn jīnguó xíngdòng... (... hoping that all relevant units attach great importance to and cooperate closely with each other to deepen and **expand** women's science and technology innovation...) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 44 is about the launch of the "Women's Science and Technology Volunteer Service" in Liupanshui City, Guizhou Province, aimed at empowering female scientists and technologists to contribute to healthcare, agriculture, enterprises, and education. As demonstrated in Table 4.46, the frequency is 453 times, indicating that "expand" as the core word of the container metaphor frequently appears in the discourse related to women's technological innovation actions; MI-Score of 5.010 shows a significant co-occurrence relationship with "science and technology", reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "expanding the scope of women's participation in technological innovation", and highlighting the breadth and depth of the action expansion.

The metaphor "Expanding Women's Science and Technology Innovation Actions is Container Space Expansion" makes the abstract scope of the action tangible. The characteristics of "boundary extension", "capacity increase", and "space expansion" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as expanding women's

participation in fields such as technology-assisted agriculture, healthcare, and business through volunteer services and cross-sectoral cooperation. Just as a container's expansion can accommodate more contents, the Women's Science and Technology Volunteer Service Team of Liupanshui City encompasses female scientific and technological professionals from various industries, enabling technology services to cover a wider range of groups, and allowing the public to understand that this expansion is not simply an increase in quantity, but a diversified extension of the service dimension.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently perceived as "limited participants" in the domain of scientific and technological innovation. The metaphor of "expansion" has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. In conventional wisdom, technological advances are predominantly attributed to male innovators, while female contributions are often confined to supportive roles. The expression "Promoting Women's Contributions in Technological Innovation" positions women as "active expanders of technological services". This can be illustrated by female technology workers in different industries who go deep into the grassroots to solve practical problems, thereby challenging the stereotype that "women have limited roles in hard-core technology fields" and promoting society's recognition of their leading value in technological promotion.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of "expansion" must address the interwoven differences in the identities of different female scientists and technologists, and avoid a one-sided approach to service. Female scientists and technologists in the agricultural field may need to adapt to rural environments and solve technical problems in planting and breeding. Those in the health field need to focus on the shortcomings of grassroots medical services and provide health services. Those in the education field

should focus on scientific popularization and enhance public literacy. The aforementioned disparities are attributable to the interweaving of identities, including profession and service recipient status. The provision of technological services in the agricultural sector must be contingent on considerations such as regional remoteness, while the expansion in the health sector necessitates an assessment of resource scarcity. The service team in Liupanshui City comprises professionals from a variety of disciplines, with the specific aim of addressing these differences. This ensures that female scientific and technological forces from diverse backgrounds can identify suitable service scenarios in the expansion process, thereby avoiding the "expansion" becoming superficial due to the neglect of cross-demand.

This metaphor reflects the inclusive development logic of women's participation in technological innovation. The transition from a single field to a range of services has not only expanded the scope of action but also enriched the connotation of women's roles in technology. This underscores the notion that the genuine augmentation of technological pursuits must take into account the multifaceted identities of women. It is only by overcoming the intertwined barriers of occupations and service scenarios that the "container" of technological innovation can accommodate a more diverse range of female forces.

Table 4.47 shows the example of the container metaphors with the lexical realization of "注入 zhùrù (inject)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.47: Feminist Container Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "注入 zhùrù (inject)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
注入 zhùrù (inject)	198	源源不断 yuányuán bùduàn (a steady stream of)	10.913	45. 她们履职尽责，她们为税收事业高质量发展**注入**源源不断的巾帼力量。Tāmen lǚzhí jìnzé, tāmen wèi shuìshōu shìyè gāo zhìliàng fāzhǎn zhùrù yuányuán bùduàn de jīnguó lìliàng. (They perform their duties, and they **inject** a steady stream of women's strength for the high-quality development of the tax cause.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 45 is about the launch of the "Binzhou's Four Seasons: Voices Resound Forever" campaign in Binzhou, Shandong Province, celebrating the upcoming 13th National Women's Congress. As demonstrated in Table 4.47, the frequency is 198 times, indicating that the term "inject" as the core word of the container metaphor frequently appears in the discourse describing the contribution of female power to career development. The MI-Score is 10.913, showing a very strong co-occurrence relationship with "a steady stream of", which reinforces the metaphorical connotation of "female power continuously providing impetus for the development of the industry", highlighting the continuity and vitality of the contribution.

The metaphor "Women's Strength Contribution to Career Development is Energy Injection" is a useful conceptual tool that makes the abstract process of contribution more tangible. The characteristics of "continuous supply", "deep penetration", and "activation of efficiency" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting that female groups such as the "Blue Army" continuously provide impetus to the tax industry through

their duties and responsibilities. Analogous to the constant infusion of liquid into a container to maintain its vitality, the continuous input of female strength sustains the industry's dynamism and ensures the public comprehends that this contribution is not a one-time endeavor but a sustained and dynamic form of support.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently perceived as "supplementary forces" or "injecting" into the professional domain. This metaphorical reconfiguration of perception has been formed. In conventional wisdom, the core professions within the field of taxation are predominantly occupied by males, thereby resulting in the marginalization of women. However, the expression "injecting an endless stream of female strength" positions women as the "core driving force for career development". To illustrate this point, we may consider the role of female workers in the tax system. These individuals are known to promote high-quality tax development through meticulous and rigorous work, thereby challenging the stereotype that "women can only engage in auxiliary work" and promoting society's recognition of their key value in professional fields.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of "injection" assumes diverse forms due to the interweaving of women's identities. The integration of female workers within the production line has been demonstrated to enhance production efficiency and quality. This integration necessitates a harmonious balance between physical strength and skill sets. The inclusion of female tax officials emphasizes policy implementation and service optimization, relying on their professional expertise and communication proficiency. The appointment of female judges is exemplified by the integration of judicial fairness and humanistic care, a balance that encompasses the coordination of professional authority and gender-related characteristics. The publicity activities in Binzhou City

showcase these diverse contributions, which is a response to the cross-differences – it not only affirms the unique injection methods of women in different fields, but also uses the platform to enable these forces to form synergy, avoiding the neglect of the contribution value of certain types of women due to a single standard.

This metaphor is reflective of the continuity and diversity of women's professional contributions. The "injection" process is characterized by its emphasis on two key aspects: the accumulation of quantity and the distinction of quality. These aspects are relevant across a range of contexts, from daily work to industry innovation. This underscores the notion that effective force injection cannot disregard the multifaceted identities of women. It is only by penetrating the intertwined barriers of profession, field, role, etc., that female strength can become a catalyst for the development of the cause.

Table 4.48 shows the example of the container metaphors with the lexical realization of "覆盖 fùgài (coverage)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.48: Feminist Container Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "覆盖 fùgài (coverage)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
覆盖 fùgài (coverage)	534	不全 bù quán (incomplete)	11.182	46. 为着力破解妇联组织"**覆盖**不到、覆盖不全"的问题，楚雄州深化实施基层妇联组织改革"破难行动"..... Wèi zhuólì pòjiě fùlián zǔzhī "fùgài bù dào、fùgài bù quán" de wèntí, Chǔxióng Zhōu shēnhuà shíshī jīcéng fùlián zǔzhī gǎigé "pò nán xíngdòng" (To effectively address the issue of "inadequate and incomplete **coverage**" faced by women's federations, Chuxiong Prefecture has deepened the implementation of the "Challenge-Breaking Initiative" for reforming grassroots women's federations.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 46 is about the “Challenge-Breaking Initiative” in Chuxiong Prefecture, Yunnan Province, aimed at reforming grassroots women’s organizations. As demonstrated in Table 4.48, the frequency is 534 times, indicating that “coverage” is the core word of the container metaphor and frequently appears in the discourse describing the service scope of the women’s federation organization. The MI-Score is 11.182, showing a very strong co-occurrence relationship with “incomplete”, which reinforces the metaphorical connotation that ’the women“s federation organization has an incomplete service scope and fails to cover all groups”. This highlights the urgency of addressing the coverage gap.

The metaphor “The service scope of the Women’s Federation is container coverage” has been demonstrated to facilitate the comprehension of the abstract issue of organizational coverage. The characteristics of “wide coverage”, “no blind spots”, and “inclusiveness” of the term “coverage” in the source language are mapped onto the target language, reflecting that the Women’s Federation needs to break through the limitations of “not being able to cover or not covering comprehensively” and provide comprehensive services to different groups of women. In a manner analogous to the function of a container in completely enclosing its contents, the Chuxiong Prefecture established the Women’s Federation organization in the “new three” fields through the “challenge-breaking action”, thus filling the coverage gaps and enabling the public to comprehend that coverage is not a superficial existence but a systematic project that penetrates various female groups.

In the context of social role perception, the coverage of women’s federations is frequently characterized in simplistic terms as either “ubiquitous” or “incomplete coverage”. This represents a clear manifestation of a prevailing cognitive bias. In conventional wisdom, the existence of the women’s federation within the administrative

system is sufficient to ensure its inclusion, with the needs of emerging fields and marginalized groups being disregarded. The targeted, standardized creation carried out in Chuxiong Prefecture is precisely an amendment to this bias. For example, the establishment of organizations in the “three new” fields serves to dispel the stereotype that “women’s federations only exist in traditional units”. Furthermore, the promotion of society to recognize that coverage should be dynamically adjusted according to the distribution of female groups is indicative of a broader shift in perspective.

The cross-sectional perspective reveals that the root cause of “incomplete coverage” lies in the complex interweaving of identities of the female population. The geographical isolation of rural women can result in their exclusion from available services. Women in the “new economy” sectors (e.g. those in new business models) may present a challenge in terms of coverage due to their unique organizational structures. Furthermore, minority women may encounter language and cultural barriers that result in service disconnection. The aforementioned disparities can be attributed to the convergence of identities such as region, occupation and ethnicity. Women in urban professional roles are typically well-served by the prevailing system. However, women residing in mountainous regions who belong to minority communities may encounter challenges in accessing services due to the presence of numerous obstacles. The “county-based segmented responsibility system” and “model point establishment” in Chuxiong Prefecture have been developed to address these cross-cutting needs. Through meticulous measures, they ensure the inclusion of women from diverse backgrounds within the purview of the service, thereby circumventing a “one-size-fits-all” approach that might result in residual disparities.

This metaphor elucidates the underlying logic of the reform of the women's federation organization. The process of enhancing "coverage" is characterized by an emphasis on both the expansion of scope and the consideration of varied responses. This is evident from the investigation and assessment phases through to the classification-based construction stage. This underscores the notion that comprehensive coverage must embrace the multifaceted identities of women. It is only by overcoming the interconnected barriers of region, occupation and ethnicity that the services of the women's federation organization can genuinely "reach" all women.

4.2.8 Voice Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

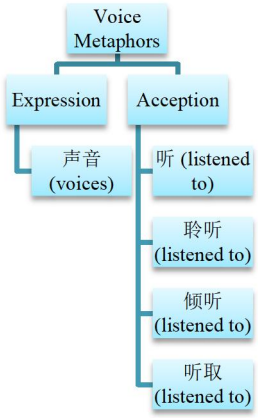


Figure 4.17: Voice Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.17, The voice metaphors in Chinese magazines, based on the two dimensions of "expression" and "acceptance", utilize CMT to construct an interactive narrative of "multiple voices – systematic listening", reflecting the inclusive empowerment logic of Chinese systems for women's cross-gender identities.

In the "voice(s)" dimension of expression, CMT transforms female expressions into a pluralistic discourse practice involving multiple subjects. From a Social Role Theory

perspective, Chinese women have moved beyond the “silent subordinate” role, becoming prominent figures in various sectors, including economics, culture, and governance. Rural innovators have been instrumental in charting new paths for revitalizing local industries, while tech-women have contributed significantly to technological breakthrough solutions. Frontier ethnic women, too, have been vocal about strategies for integrating border security and development. From an intersectional perspective, the system provides adequate channels for the articulation of diverse voices, leading to the attainment of synergy within the national strategy. This underscores the expression logic of “shared voices of differences”.

The “listening” aspect of “acceptance” is presented through CMT to reflect society’s proactive response to female voices, as illustrated by the use of the verbs “listened to”, “listening”, “hearing” and “hearing attentively”. In accordance with the principles of Social Role Theory, society deviates from the “passive listening” paradigm, instead establishing a systematic listening network. Illustrative of this are the following examples: the Women’s Federation is responsible for the hearing of demands from grassroots women for the protection of their rights; enterprises are tasked with the listening to the career development suggestions of female employees; and universities are responsible for the listening to the research and innovation ideas of female students. Intersectionality is a concept that elucidates the inclusive nature of this acceptance. The voices of rural women are “heard” through the channels of rural revitalization, the accessibility needs of disabled women are “listened to” through the public welfare network, and the “voices” of different identities respond differently within the framework of the “basic national policy of gender equality”, highlighting China’s “diverse listening” acceptance ecosystem.

Table 4.49 shows the example of the voice metaphors with the lexical realization of "听 tīng (listened to)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.49: Feminist Voice Metaphor with the Lexical Realization of "听 tīng (listened to)"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
听 tīng (listened to)	325	心声 xīnshēng (the inner voices)	7.472	47....指导落实中国妇女十三大目标任务，与妇女群众面对面**听**心声问需求。...Zhǐdǎo luòshí Zhōngguó Fùnǚ Shísān Dà mùbiāo rènwù, yǔ fùnǚ qúnzhòng miàn duì miàn tīng xīnshēng wèn xūqiú. (...guided the implementation of the goals and tasks of the 13th National Women's Congress of China, **listened to** the inner voices and inquired about the needs of women face-to-face.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 47 describes Huang Xiaowei's emphasis on enhancing leadership and organizational capacity during her visit to Jilin Province. As illustrated in Table 4.49, the words "listened to" and "the inner voices" frequently co-occur (with a frequency of 325 and an MI-Score of 7.472), indicating that this is the core mode for the magazine to construct feminist discourse. In Extract 47, the magazine links the country's actions to promote women's cause with "capturing women's demands". From the standpoint of the CMT, the magazine metaphorically represents women's abstract needs and ideas as "audible voices". The original demands hidden in individuals' hearts become concrete auditory signals, turning the "implementation of policies" from an abstract plan into a specific action of "listening attentively", thus building a cognitive channel for the interaction between the state and women.

When analyzed within the framework of the Social Role Theory, the “13th National Women’s Congress” is an institutional framework set by the state, which has clearly defined the social role of “safeguarding women’s rights and interests”. However, the action of “listening to women’s voices face-to-face” makes women no longer passive objects waiting for protection, but subjects capable of actively expressing their needs. This transformation does not break the institutional foundation of “the state leading and promoting women’s development”, but endows women with the right to express within the framework, enabling the social role to quietly complete a dynamic adjustment in the interaction between “institutional constraints” and “individual initiative”.

Through the lens of Intersectionality Theory, Chinese women naturally carry identity intersections such as urban-rural, occupational, and generational differences. For instance, rural women are more concerned about old-age security, while career-oriented women focus on workplace equality. However, the “listening to voices” in the example is carried out within the collective narrative of “implementing the tasks of the 13th National Women’s Congress”. Regardless of the identity differences, diverse demands are incorporated into the unified context of “the country’s development of the women’s cause”. This diverges from the metaphor of “highlighting individual struggles” in American magazines and echoes the “diversified integration” characteristic proposed by Wang (2021). Instead of magnifying the confrontation between differences, it emphasizes the synergy between diverse demands and national goals, deeply reflecting the unique logic of the interaction among the “state-society-individual” in the Chinese context.

In this way, the metaphor of “listening to voices” makes abstract demands tangible through CMT, promotes the dynamic growth of roles based on Social Role Theory, and

demonstrates the discourse wisdom of "diversified co-existence" at the Intersectionality dimension. It not only anchors the institutional background of the state's guarantee for women's development but also reserves space for individual demands. It truly embeds the shaping of feminist metaphors by the cultural context into the specific scenario of "implementing the tasks of the 13th National Women's Congress".

Table 4.50 shows the example of the voice metaphors with the lexical realization of "声音 shēngyīn (voices)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.50: Feminist Voice Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "声音 shēngyīn (voices)"

Lexical Realization	**Frequency**	**Collocates**	**MI-Score**	**Extract**
声音 shēngyīn (voices)	243	好 hǎo (good)	7.450	48. 陇原巾帼宣讲团面向各行业、各领域妇女群众开展理论宣讲，巾帼好**声音**广泛传播。Lǒngyuán Jīnguó Xuǎnjiǎng Tuán miànxiàng gè hángyè、gè lǐngyù fùnǚ qúnzhòng kāizhǎn lǐlùn xuǎnjiǎng, jīnguó hǎo shēngyīn guǎngfàn chuánbō. (The Longyuan Women's Propaganda Team conducts theoretical presentations to women from various industries and fields, spreading the "good **voices**" of women widely.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 48 is about the Gansu Women's Federation's women's grand lecture relay activity, which emphasizes learning, propagating, and implementing President's important speech spirit, particularly highlighting the role of women in contributing to national development. As demonstrated in Table 4.50, the frequency is 243 times, indicating that "voices" as the core word of the sound metaphor frequently appears in the related expressions of female discourse dissemination. MI-Score of 7.450 shows a significant co-

occurrence relationship with “good”, reinforcing the metaphorical connotation that “positive and affirmative female discourse has extensive dissemination value”, highlighting the social influence of female voices.

The metaphor “Women’s Positive Discourse Communication is the Spread of Good Voices” serves to make the abstract influence of discourse tangible. The characteristics of “transmissibility”, “penetrability” and “resonance” of “sound” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as the Longyuan Women’s Publicity Team spreading the spirit of the Party and the stories of women’s struggles to various fields through diverse forms. In a manner analogous to the propagation of sound through the atmosphere, these “good voices of women” employ various carriers, such as “bench classrooms” and “horseback preaching”, to transcend geographical and cultural boundaries. This enables the audience to comprehend the radiating potency of women’s discourse through the medium of sound wave transmission.

In the context of social role perception, the public discourse of women is frequently characterized as “peripheral expression”. The metaphorical reconstruction of “good voice” has thus far served to reform this perception. In accordance with conventional principles, the contributions of women in public discourse are frequently disregarded. However, the statement “The widespread dissemination of the good voices of women” positions them as “shapers of social consensus”. For instance, ethnic minority women utilize a combination of the Chinese language and their own ethnic language in delivering their speeches, thereby preserving cultural characteristics while conveying mainstream values. This challenges the prevailing stereotype that “women’s voices lack social influence” and promotes the recognition of their fundamental role in ideological leadership within society.

Through the lens of Intersectionality Theory, the dissemination of “The Good Voice” must adapt to the diverse identity-interwoven demands of different female groups and avoid homogenization. It has been hypothesized that rural women may be more receptive to concrete explanations in “Fields and Crops”, such as the articulation of policies in conjunction with agricultural activities. Conversely, female university students have been shown to prefer digital dissemination, such as inspirational stories in the form of short videos. Finally, minority women are required to balance language habits and cultural psychology, such as the immersive communication in the “Mongolian Hut Lecture Hall”. The stratified and categorized dissemination strategy employed in Gansu Province is a salient example of an approach that has been meticulously tailored to address the aforementioned differences. This strategy involves the implementation of dissemination methods that are specifically adapted to the diverse characteristics of women from different regions, ethnic groups, and occupations. The objective of this adaptation is to ensure that the “Good Voice” is able to effectively transcend the barriers of identity interweaving, thereby ensuring that no group is rendered unable to comprehend the message.

This metaphor reflects the inclusive strategy of Chinese female discourse dissemination. The transition from offline to online, and from a common language to a bilingual approach, underscores the importance of both coverage and precision in the dissemination of “Good Voice.” This underscores the imperative for effective discourse dissemination to acknowledge and value the diverse identities of women. It is only by acknowledging and respecting the complex interplay of factors such as region, ethnicity, and educational background that the diverse voices of women can be fully integrated into the broader societal discourse.

4.2.9 Performance Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism



Figure 4.18: Performance Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.18, From a CMT standpoint, the metaphor of "stage" is employed to depict the progression of women as a "layered social arena". Viewed through Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the passive role of "family dependents" and become active contributors in various aspects of society, including the economy, culture, and governance. Rural innovators have emerged as key players in the field of industrial revitalization, showcasing innovative plans at the "stage" of industrial development. Women in scientific and technological fields have also made significant contributions to the "stage" of scientific research, presenting breakthrough achievements in technological advancements. Furthermore, ethnic women from border areas have demonstrated their ability to integrate culture and development, contributing to the "stage" of border control and promotion. From an intersectional perspective, the system provides appropriate support for the "performance" of different identities. Disabled women, for example, rely on accessibility support to step onto the "stage" of employment and entrepreneurship. Elderly women, meanwhile, appear on the "stage" of social contribution through the volunteer service system. The "performances" of different identities achieve synergy in the national strategy, thus highlighting the practical logic of "co-evolution of differences". The multifaceted performances of women, encompassing a spectrum of identities, reflect not only the evolution of social roles but also the inclusive integration of diverse identities through intersectionality. This phenomenon is evident in various aspects

of society, ranging from poverty alleviation to scientific innovation, community governance to cultural heritage.

Table 4.51 shows the example of the performance metaphors with the lexical realization of "舞台 wǔtái (stage)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.51: Feminist Performance Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "舞台 wǔtái (stage)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
舞台 wǔtái (stage)	168	大 dà (big)	7.466	49. 小小合作社，妇女就业"大**舞台**"，它将"传统农业"变"智慧农业"。Xiǎoxiǎo hézuòshè, fùnǚ jiùyè "dà wǔtái", tā jiāng "chuántǒng nóngyè" biàn "zhìhuì nóngyè". (Small cooperatives, women' s employment "big **stage**", it will turn "traditional agriculture" into "smart agriculture".) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)

Extract 49 is bout how a cooperative in Tongling, Anhui Province, serves as a significant platform for women's employment, showcasing feminism through its role in empowering rural women via job opportunities, entrepreneurship support, skill training, and social responsibility initiatives. As demonstrated in Table 4.51, the frequency is 168 times, indicating that "stage" is the core word of the performance metaphor and frequently appears in the discourse describing the employment development space for women. The MI-Score of 7.466 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with "big", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of "cooperatives providing broad employment space for women", and highlighting the supporting role of the platform for women's development.

The employment landscape is rendered more concrete through the metaphor "Women's Employment Development is a Diverse Performance on Stage". The features of "display space", "role diversity" and "value realization" in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as Tongling Gaoduo Planting Professional Cooperative providing employment opportunities for rural women, allowing them to demonstrate their abilities in agricultural production. Analogous to a stage that accommodates a variety of roles, the cooperative transforms "fragmented employment" into "cooperative employment", thus enabling women to showcase their talents in a variety of positions, including those in planting and management. The employment platform is realized through the imagery of the stage, and the public can thereby understand its significance in terms of the realization of the value of women.

In the context of social roles, rural women are frequently perceived as "dependents of the family unit". The metaphorical reconfiguration of "the big stage" has had a significant impact on this perception. In accordance with conventional wisdom, the economic contributions of rural women are frequently eclipsed by their familial roles. However, the expression "the employment big stage" positions them as "the main body of agricultural production". The cooperative has employed over 50 women, including those who are left behind, and through their labour, it has achieved income growth. This has served to refute the stereotype that "rural women are difficult to participate in economic development" and to promote the social recognition of their economic roles.

From a cross-cutting perspective, the inclusiveness of the "stage" must address the interwoven differences in the identities of rural women. Women who have been left behind may encounter a conflict between caring for the family and seeking employment. Cooperative seasonal employment provides them with flexible options. Older women may

lack skills, and the “Women’s Technological Assistance for Agriculture Express Train” offers targeted training to enhance their capabilities. Impoverished women need to directly improve their lives through employment, and the increase in cooperative income provides them with security. These diversified arrangements are designed to address the demands posed by intersecting identities, including familial responsibilities, age, and economic status. This approach ensures that women from diverse backgrounds can identify suitable roles within the field, thereby preventing the exclusion of certain groups under a monolithic employment model.

This metaphor reflects the construction logic of the employment platform for women in rural revitalization. The establishment of the “stage” is indicative of the vastness of the space, and also demonstrates an awareness of the need to respond to diverse requirements. This phenomenon serves to underscore the intricate nature of identity interweaving, a concept that cannot be disregarded by the “big stage” for women’s employment. It is only through the implementation of flexible mechanisms and precise support that every rural woman can realize her full potential in this arena.

4.2.10 Light Source Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism



Figure 4.19: Light Source Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.19, In Chinese magazines, the concept of “light source metaphors” is centred around the word “light up”. The development narrative constructed by CMT is one of “synergistic illumination”, which reflects the nurturing empowerment logic of Chinese systems for women’s cross-gender identities.

Applying CMT, “lighting up” portrays women’s practices as “a stratified social field illuminated by light”. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the traditional role of “ignorant subordinates” and have become active agents of change in the economic, cultural, and governance sectors. Rural innovators have been instrumental in charting new paths for the revitalization of local industries through the adoption of ecological agricultural models. Female scientists have been pivotal in guiding the direction of innovation through their technological achievements. Finally, ethnic women in border areas have been crucial in shaping the vision for stabilizing and developing the frontier through their cultural and development integration practices. This phenomenon of “lighting up” can be considered as a systematic practice embedded in the national development strategy. The presence of this phenomenon is evident in various contexts, including the efforts to alleviate poverty among women, where it serves as a symbol of hope for the enhancement of economic well-being in impoverished communities. Similarly, the involvement of female engineers in the realms of scientific and technological innovation offers a tangible illustration of the technical framework necessary for the process of industrial upgrading. This, in turn, serves to underscore the efficacy of China’s system in promoting the advancement of women’s social roles.

Intersectionality Theory further reveals that the “illumination” of different identities of women varies in terms of adaptability. It is evident that disabled women have been instrumental in “illuminating” the path of employment and entrepreneurship by leveraging the accessibility support system. Elderly women have similarly been able to “illuminate” their contribution value through the volunteer service network, while new employment forms have been instrumental in “illuminating” their career development

space by leveraging flexible guarantee policies. These differences are said to "illuminate" and achieve synergy within the framework of the "basic national policy of gender equality".

Table 4.52 shows the example of the light source metaphors with the lexical realization of "点亮 diǎnliàng (light up)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.52: Feminist Light Source Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "点亮 diǎnliàng (light up)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
点亮 diǎnliàng (light up)	153	困境 kùnjìng (the plight)	5.655	50. 黑龙江省伊春市" '伊起把爱带回家'党建引领**点亮**困境妇女儿童家庭微心愿"活动全面启动。Hēilóngjiāng Shěng Yīchūn Shì " 'Yī qǐ bǎ ài dài huí jiā' dǎng jiàn yǐnlǐng diǎnliàng kùnjìng fùnǚ értóng jiātíng wēi xīnyuàn" huódòng quánmiàn qǐdòng. (Yichun City, Heilongjiang Province, " 'I bring love home' Party building leads to **light up** the plight of women and children family micro wish" activity was fully launched.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 50 is about the initiatives in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province, to improve women's welfare, focusing on childcare services, community parenting education, and legal awareness. As demonstrated in Table 4.52, the frequency is 153 times, indicating that "light up" is the core word of the metaphor of the light source and frequently appears in the discourse describing the action of assisting disadvantaged women and children. The MI-Score is 5.655, showing a significant co-occurrence relationship with "the plight", thereby strengthening the metaphorical connotation of "bringing hope to disadvantaged families through caring actions" and highlighting the targeted nature and warmth of the assistance.

The metaphor “Aid to Vulnerable Women and Children is Light Ignition” has been employed to render the abstract act of providing assistance more tangible. The characteristics of “dispelling darkness”, “bringing light”, and “guiding direction” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifested as Yichun City providing practical help to mothers with “cervical cancer” and children in difficult situations through the “three-one” activities. Analogous to the manner in which light penetrates darkness, these actions serve to bridge the gap in assistance and enable the public to comprehend that the assistance provided is not superficial care, but rather a systematic effort to genuinely illuminate the difficulties.

In the context of social roles, disadvantaged women and children are frequently perceived as “passive recipients of assistance”. The metaphorical reconfiguration of the term “lighting up” has been a contributing factor to this shift in perception. In conventional wisdom, this group is frequently designated as “vulnerable”, while the expression “lighting up small wishes” positions them as “bearers of hope”. Through interactions such as heart-to-heart talks and practical activities, the recipients are involved in realizing their wishes, thereby challenging the stereotype of “purely relying on assistance” and promoting society’s recognition of their potential for making active changes in their lives.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the practice of “lighting up” must address the complex identity differences of disadvantaged groups and avoid the homogenization of assistance. Mothers afflicted with both cancer and infertility may consequently encounter a triad of maladies, encompassing both diseases and poverty, in addition to psychological distress. This predicament necessitates a multifaceted approach encompassing not only medical interventions but also psychological counselling. Children in difficult situations may have different identities, such as being from single-parent families or having

disabilities, and thus have different needs in education, life, or rehabilitation. The “one household, one plan” approach in Yichun City is a pertinent example of an approach that has been shown to address these differences (Smith, 2019). It connects medical resources for sick mothers and solves the enrolment problems for children who have dropped out of school, ensuring that individuals with different intersecting identities can all receive appropriate “lighting”, and avoiding the neglect of some needs due to a single assistance model.

This metaphor reflects the practical logic of China’s efforts to care for disadvantaged women and children. The process of “lighting up” encompasses a wide range of interventions, from material assistance to spiritual support, with a focus on both immediate rescue and long-term support. This underscores the imperative for effective assistance to recognize and respect the diverse identities of disadvantaged groups. It is only by penetrating the intertwined barriers of health, economy, family, etc., that each act of care can precisely illuminate the areas in need.

4.2.11 Wave Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism



Figure 4.20: Wave Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.20, In Chinese magazines, wave metaphors are centred around the concept of “wave”, and are constructed based on CMT to present a development narrative of “collective surging”. This phenomenon can be attributed to the synergistic aggregation logic inherent in Chinese systems with regard to women’s cross-gender identities.

Applying CMT, the term “wave” serves to concretize women’s practices as “layered and aggregated collective potential energy”. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the traditional “individual isolates” paradigm, instead becoming recognized as collective actors across economic, cultural, and governance domains. The “wave” of women in rural revitalization has been shown to revitalize local industrial resources. The “wave” of female engineers in scientific and technological innovation has been demonstrated to break through technical breakthrough barriers. Furthermore, the “wave” of women in grassroots governance has been evidenced to build community collaborative networks. This “wave” is not a random aggregation but a systematic linkage deeply embedded in the national development strategy. During the poverty alleviation stage, the “wave” of women resonated with policy support, achieving the unification of individual income increase and collective prosperity through the “Women’s Empowerment Poverty Alleviation Campaign”. This demonstrated the supporting efficacy of the system in upgrading women’s social roles from “isolated individuals” to “collective forces”.

Intersectionality Theory further reveals that the “booms” of different identity groups of women exhibit differences in adaptability. The “boom” of cultural inheritance has enabled frontier ethnic women to achieve integration and advancement in border security and gender equality. Disabled women have been able to expand their participation in employment and entrepreneurship thanks to accessibility guarantees. Finally, new employment forms for women, with flexible rights protection, have broken through the traditional boundaries of career development.

Table 4.53 shows the example of the wave metaphors with the lexical realization of “热潮 rècháo (wave)” in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.53: Feminist Wave Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "热潮 rècháo (wave)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
热潮 rècháo (wave)	131	掀 xiān (stir up)	13.209	51. 河北唐山：学金句、悟思想、送服务，巾帼大学习大宣讲掀**热潮**。Héběi Tángshān: Xué jùjù、wù sīxiǎng、sòng fúwù, jīnguó dà xuéxí dà xuǎnjiǎng xiān rècháo. (Tangshan, Hebei: Studying Key Quotes, Grasping Thoughts, and Providing Services – The Great Study and Propaganda Campaign by Women Has Stirred Up a **Wave** of Enthusiasm.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 51 is about a feminist initiative in Tangshan, Hebei Province, where the Women's Federation organized a grassroots campaign to spread President's important speeches, fostering unity, inspiration, and empowerment. As demonstrated in Table 4.53, the frequency is 131, indicating that "wave" as the core word of the wave metaphor frequently appears in the discourse describing the enthusiasm of female learning and preaching activities. The MI-Score is 13.209, showing a very strong co-occurrence relationship with "stir up", which reinforces the metaphorical connotation of "Women's University Learning and Large-scale Preaching Activities Stimulate Widespread Participation Enthusiasm", highlighting the activity's appeal and dissemination power.

The metaphor "Women's enthusiasm for learning and propaganda is a stirred wave" serves to render the abstract enthusiasm for participation tangible. The characteristics of "wide coverage", "strong continuous momentum", and "group coordination" of the "wave" in the source language are mapped onto the target language, reflecting that Tangshan City has mobilized a significant number of women to participate in learning and propaganda

through various forms. Analogous to the manner in which a wave consolidates multiple streams of water to generate a formidable force, the women's federation organization, in conjunction with female representatives, volunteers, and other groups, utilizes calendars, Spring Festival couplets, and analogous materials as conduits to disseminate information regarding activities at the grassroots level. This approach facilitates public comprehension of the concept that participation constitutes not an individual action, but rather a collective action of group resonance, akin to the image of a wave.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the formation of the "wave" is predicated on the adaptation to the interwoven differences in the identities of various female groups. It has been observed that elderly women may prefer traditional carriers such as calendars and Spring Festival couplets. In contrast, young women are more likely to accept digital dissemination. Furthermore, rural women require proximity to door-to-door dissemination, while urban women may participate through community platforms. The tiered policy implemented in Tangshan City is a response to these variations, and it is evident that the policy is effective in addressing the specific needs of different groups. The policy involves the distribution of paper calendars to the elderly, the organization of large-scale lectures in rural areas, the establishment of learning points in communities, and the provision of services that cater to women of various ages, regions, and living habits. The policy is also designed to avoid the situation where a single form leaves some groups "left out of the trend".

This metaphor is reflective of the practical wisdom embodied by China's women's ideological leadership activities. The "upsurge" was initiated with emphasis on the scale of participation and also on responding to diverse needs, ranging from door-to-door lectures

to group learning sessions. This phenomenon serves to underscore the notion that authentic collective fervour ought not to overlook the cross-gender identities that are present within female-identifying individuals. It is only by overcoming the intertwined barriers of age, region, lifestyle, etc., that the “upsurge” of ideological leadership can truly permeate every woman.

4.2.12 Obstacle Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism



Figure 4.21: Obstacle Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.21, In the context of Chinese magazines, the concept of “obstacle metaphors” is predicated on the notion of “challenges”. Utilizing the tenets of CMT, it engenders a developmental narrative of “systemic response”. This is in contrast to the “confrontational obstacles” in the United States, which is indicative of the collaborative breakthrough logic of Chinese systems for women’s cross-gender identities.

CMT suggests that, “challenges” have been shown to transform female practices into “development propositions of hierarchical breakthroughs”. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the traditional role of “obstacle bearers” and instead become active agents in the resolution of problems. Rural entrepreneurs are confronted with the “challenges” of industrial upgrading and, through the “Women Entrepreneurship Initiative”, integrate policy and technical resources to achieve model innovation. Technological women overcome technical barriers “challenges” by relying on the research collaboration network to break through key sector bottlenecks. Grassroots

women respond to governance innovation “challenges” by leveraging the “Women’s Federation + Community” collaborative mechanism to explore new paths of self-governance. These “challenges” are not isolated but deeply embedded in the systematic propositions of the national development strategy. During the poverty alleviation stage, the “Women’s Challenge to Overcome Poverty” resonates with industrial support and training, promoting the unification of individual income increase and collective prosperity, and demonstrating the supporting efficacy of the system in upgrading women’s social roles from “passive obstacle avoidance” to “active breakthrough”.

Intersectionality Theory further reveals the differences in the adaptability of the “challenges” faced by women of different identities. The “challenges” experienced by ethnic minority women in border areas are multifaceted, integrating cultural heritage and its preservation, alongside the necessity to safeguard ethnic cultural identities while also addressing the challenges of homogeneity within the industry. The “challenges” encountered by disabled women pertain to the creation of accessible environments and the assurance of employment stability. Both of these issues necessitate the promotion of facility renovations and the pursuit of equitable employment opportunities. The “challenges” confronted by women in new employment forms are related to the need for flexible rights and career progression. These challenges require the establishment of a labour security system within the sharing economy model. It is acknowledged that these differences in so-called “challenges” are addressed within the framework of the “basic national policy of gender equality”. The women’s association system progresses layer by layer to solve the “challenges”. This is achieved through “industrial assistance programs” for rural women, “research support funds” for scientific and technological women, and “accessible entrepreneurship incubation” for disabled women. This process eliminates the

isolation of "individual confrontation with obstacles" in the American obstacle metaphors, and forms a practical logic of "diversity overcoming together".

Table 4.54 shows the example of the obstacle metaphors with the lexical realization of "挑战 tiǎozhàn (challenges)" in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*).

Table 4.54: Feminist Obstacle Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "挑战 tiǎozhàn (challenges)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Extract
挑战 tiǎozhàn (challenges)	130	各种 gè zhǒng (various)	7.325	52. 她们以"乘风破浪"的姿态，迎接着工作中的各种**挑战**和困难。Tāmen yǐ "chéngfēng pòlàng" de zītài, yíngjiēzhe gōngzuò zhōng de gè zhǒng tiǎozhàn hé kùnnan. (With the attitude of "riding the wind and waves", they meet various **challenges** and difficulties in their work.) (婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*))

Extract 52 is about the achievements of women in Tongliao, Inner Mongolia, during the city's first Women's Workers Sports Meet. As demonstrated in Table 4.54, the term "challenge" is used 130 times, indicating that "challenges" is the core word of the metaphor of obstacles and frequently appears when describing the difficulties faced by women in their work. The MI-Score of 7.325 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with "various", thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation that "women need to deal with multiple difficulties at work", thus highlighting the complexity and diversity of the challenges.

The metaphor "Women's Response to Work Difficulties is Riding the Waves to Overcome Challenges" has been employed to render the abstract process of coping with

difficulties more tangible. The characteristics of “diversity”, “obstructiveness” and “the need for active breakthrough” of the “challenge” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, reflecting the proactive attitude of female employees in Tongliao City when facing various problems at work. In a manner analogous to navigating through successive waves during a voyage, the subjects demonstrate their ability to overcome challenges with wisdom and courage. This enables the public to comprehend the initiative of women in overcoming obstacles in the workplace, as depicted by the image of challenges.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently perceived as possessing limited capabilities when confronted with professional challenges. The metaphor of “sailing through difficulties” has been instrumental in reshaping this perception. Conventional wisdom often understates women’s capacity to manage intricate work-related challenges. However, the expression “embracing various challenges” positions them as “active problem solvers”. Female employees have been shown to create value and overcome difficulties in their work, thereby challenging the stereotype that “women are unable to handle high-intensity challenges” and promoting society’s recognition of their professional capabilities.

From a cross-cultural perspective, responses to challenges vary due to the interweaving of women’s identities. It is important to note that minority women may face the dual challenge of navigating cultural differences and meeting professional requirements. In order to strengthen the sense of the Chinese nation community, it is essential that they find a balance between tradition and modernity. It has been demonstrated that young female employees may encounter a contradiction between career development and a paucity of experience, and as a consequence require more extensive training support. It is an acknowledged fact that married women may encounter conflicts between their

professional and familial obligations, and as such, there is a necessity for flexible working mechanisms to be put in place. The aforementioned disparities can be attributed to the interweaving of identities, including but not limited to ethnicity, age and family roles. In addressing challenges, it is imperative to consider the cultural adaptation needs of minority women, whilst also acknowledging the multifaceted responsibilities faced by married women. The "stepping forward" of female workers in Tongliao City is precisely to seek suitable response strategies within these intersecting identities, avoiding "running aground" of some groups due to a single approach.

This metaphor reflects the resilience logic employed by women in dealing with challenges in the workplace. The response to "challenges" emphasizes individual capabilities and environmental support, with implications for skill enhancement and role balance. This underscores the imperative for effective challenge responses to acknowledge the multifaceted identities of women. It is only by overcoming the complex barriers of ethnicity, age, family, and other factors that women can navigate their way through challenging circumstances and achieve stability.

4.2.13 Animal Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism



Figure 4.22: Animal Metaphors Used in Representations of Feminism

As can be seen from Figure 4.22, In Chinese periodicals, the animal metaphor is centred around "leading geese", and, based on CMT, it constructs a development narrative

of “coordinated leadership”, reflecting the aggregative empowering logic of Chinese systems for women’s cross-gender identities.

Framed by CMT, “leading geese” conceptualize female practices as a “collective ecological system with hierarchical leadership”. According to Social Role Theory, Chinese women have moved beyond the conventional role of “followers” and have become active leaders in economic, cultural, and governance fields. In the context of rural revitalization, female village officials assume a pivotal role as “leading geese”, facilitating the integration of local resources and spearheading the development of industries such as eco-tourism and specialty planting. Within the domain of scientific research, female scientists constitute “leading geese” teams, which are tasked with the formidable challenge of overcoming significant technical obstacles, including research into chip technology and biomedicine. This leadership is not an isolated action, but rather a systematic collaboration that is deeply integrated into the national development strategy. The “Women’s Science Leadership Pigeon Project” collaborates with universities, enterprises, and research institutions to promote the transformation of scientific research results into industrial momentum. This demonstrates the supporting efficacy of the system in upgrading women’s social roles from “individual breakthrough” to “collective leadership”.

Intersectionality Theory further reveals the differences in the adaptability of the roles of “leaders” among women with different identities. It is imperative that ethnic women, as “leaders”, integrate their cultural heritage with industrial development. In doing so, they can guide their communities in preserving the cultural identity of the frontier region and achieving economic growth through the e-commerce of ethnic handicrafts. Disabled women leaders depend on the accessibility support system to establish an “employment assistance platform for disabled women”, thereby promoting their own

career development whilst concurrently encouraging more disabled individuals to overcome employment barriers. New employment forms by women leaders are establishing a "flexible employment rights protection alliance" in the context of the sharing economy, with the objective of securing labour protection for groups such as delivery riders and live-streaming practitioners. The aforementioned "leaders", who exhibit a diverse range of characteristics, achieve synergy within the framework of the "basic national policy of gender equality".

Table 4.55 shows the example of the animal metaphors with the lexical realization of "领头雁 lǐngtóu yàn (leading geese)" in the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*).

Table 4.55: Feminist Animal Metaphors with the Lexical Realization of "领头雁 lǐngtóu yàn (leading geese)"

Lexical Realization	Frequency	Collocates	MI-Score	Example
领头雁 lǐngtóu yàn (leading geese)	115	巾帼 jīnguó (women)	4.61	53. 学员们纷纷表示，将以学促干、以知促行，加压奋进、拼搏实干，在妇女创业、带动就业、促进共同富裕中继续发挥巾帼"**领头雁**"作用，为强省会建设贡献智慧和力量。Xuéyuánmen fēnfēn biǎoshì, jiāng yǐ xué cù gàn、yǐ zhī cù xíng, jiāyā fènjìn、pīnbó shígàn, zài fùnǚ chuàngyè、dàidòng jiùyè、cùjìn gòngtóng fùyù zhōng jìxù fāhuī jīnguó "lǐngtóu yàn" zuòyòng, wèi qiáng shěnghuì jiànshè gòngxiàn zhìhuì hé lìliàng. (The participants have expressed their determination to use learning to drive action and knowledge to promote deeds, to work under pressure with diligence and perseverance, and to continue playing the role of "**leading geese**" among women in entrepreneurship, employment promotion, and facilitating common prosperity. They are committed to contributing their wisdom and strength to the construction of a stronger provincial capital.) (中国妇女 (*Women of China*))

Extract 53 is about the successful hosting of a specialized training program, “Chuangye Quancheng Training Camp,” for female entrepreneurs in Jinan, Shandong Province, aimed at empowering women through education and networking, fostering feminist values of empowerment, leadership, and economic independence. As demonstrated in Table 4.55, the frequency is 115 times, thereby indicating its status as the core word of the animal metaphor and its frequent appearance in discourse pertaining to women leading entrepreneurship and employment. The MI-Score of 4.61 demonstrates a significant co-occurrence relationship with “women”, thereby reinforcing the metaphorical connotation of “women playing a leading role in the process of common prosperity” and highlighting the exemplary value of female leaders.

The metaphor “The Leading Role of Women in Entrepreneurship and Employment is the Guidance of Leading Geese” is employed to render the abstract act of leading tangible. The characteristics of “taking the lead in navigation”, “leading the group”, and “providing direction” of the “leading geese” in the source domain are mapped to the target domain, manifesting as the female entrepreneurs in Jinan. Following the enhancement of their capabilities through training camps, these entrepreneurs have assumed a leading role in entrepreneurship and employment. Analogous to a leading goose guiding the flock in its migration, these female entrepreneurs, through the establishment of cooperation intentions and the sharing of experiences, have been shown to encourage more women to participate in economic development. This in turn allows the public to understand their radiating effect through the image of group leadership.

In the context of social roles, women are frequently perceived as “assistants” in economic leadership. The metaphorical reconfiguration of “leading geese” has been

identified as a factor in the alteration of this perception. In conventional economic thought, leadership roles are predominantly associated with males. The expression “female leading goose” positions women as “the active leader in achieving common prosperity”. Recent studies have demonstrated that female entrepreneurs have been successful in their efforts to interpret new quality productive forces and innovate business models. This has served to refute the stereotype that “women are unable to lead the economic direction” and has promoted a greater recognition of their role as key contributors to industrial upgrading within society.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, the leadership of “the leading vanguard” must address the interwoven differences in identities among various female groups and avoid the homogenization of the leadership approach. Female entrepreneurs in the technology sector may focus on technological innovation leadership, such as the forward-looking vision brought by the visit to Chuan Da Zhi Sheng. Those in traditional industries may emphasize craftsmanship inheritance and market expansion, like the cultural empowerment of Pixian Douban. And small business owners may need to drive flexible employment for surrounding women, such as the radiation effect of “women-oriented” enterprises. These disparities are attributable to the interweaving of identities, including industry and scale. Despite their designation as “leading vanguards”, those in the technology sector demonstrate a proclivity for pursuing the “innovation path”, while those in traditional sectors tend to favour the “steady cruising” approach. The Jinan training camp offers a variety of courses and visits, providing leadership skills that are conducive to the effective functioning of “leading vanguards” from diverse backgrounds. This ensures that the vanguards can exercise their influence with precision, taking into account their intersecting identities.

This metaphor is reflective of the prevailing logic underpinning Chinese women's involvement in economic development. The role of the "leading figure" is one that emphasizes both pioneering spirit and inclusiveness, ranging from individual improvement to group promotion. This underscores the notion that effective leadership cannot disregard the multifaceted identities of women. It is only by overcoming the intertwined barriers of industry and scale that female leaders can lead their groups towards shared prosperity.

4.2.14 Summary

The gender equality metaphorical divergence between the Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) reflects the complementary logic of Chinese gender equality discourse between state collaboration and family growth. The present study explores the use of architecture metaphors as the fundamental building blocks in the construction of a narrative, with particular reference to the concept of a "national collaborative project". This approach is informed by the tenets of CMT, which serves as the theoretical framework for the analysis. According to Social Role Theory, women transition from the role of "family dependents" to that of active contributors to national development. Rural female entrepreneurs are instrumental in establishing industrial platforms, while scientific and technological women play a pivotal role in fortifying innovation positions. Furthermore, the concepts of collective responsibility and national strategy are intricately intertwined. From an intersectional perspective, institutional guarantees enable different identities to collaboratively participate. For instance, ethnic women in border areas "build" barriers for cultural and development integration, disabled women "construct" an accessible employment system, and in the national framework, they achieve architectural integration of different identities, highlighting the practical logic of "collective construction".

The concept of 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) is explored through the lens of the family as the core and natural metaphor, with CMT serving as a medium for mapping "the growth practice of the family domain". Social Role Theory is interpreted as a synthesis of conventional family roles and contemporary individual development. According to this theory, women attain "personal blossoming" through the cultivation of family harmony. A pertinent metaphorical narrative is that of a working mother "balancing" career and parenting. Intersectionality reveals its inclusive nature. While it is focused on the family domain, it provides growth anchors for urban and intergenerational women in the integration of Confucian "harmony at home" values and neoliberal individualism. It is evident that rural women achieve entrepreneurial growth through the medium of "family workshops". Meanwhile, urban white-collar workers are breaking through tradition in the "family-self" balance. The family context thus becomes a growth container for diverse identities, thereby avoiding the fragmentation predicament of American individualism.

The disparities between the two are attributable to their ideological and functional positioning. The ideology of 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) is characterized by its emphasis on the national ideology, with its foundation in a patriarchal-socialist framework. Within this ideological framework, women are portrayed as stabilizers of social order. The approach does not entail the suppression of radical demands. Rather, it is characterized by the establishment of a synergy between tradition and modernity through the process of institutional integration, with a particular emphasis on the promotion of social harmony. The integration of Confucianism and neoliberalizm in 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) is a notable feature, with the former being emphasized in promoting individual growth within the family dimension. This integration also serves the overarching objective of achieving social harmony. This division does not entail opposition. Rather, it is

complementary within the socialist framework. The metaphorical national collaboration and the growth narrative of family/nature jointly construct a feminist discourse system of "state – family – individual" interlocking, reflecting the unique logic of "multiple unification" in China's social governance.

4.3 Cross-cultural Comparison of Metaphorical Constructions and Gender Ideologies

The results in this section addresses objective 3, which is to compare these metaphorical constructions to uncover shared and divergent cultural ideologies shaping women's representation. The criteria for comparing feminist conceptual metaphors cross-culturally are (1) Frequency of feminist conceptual metaphors is above 100, and (2) MI-Score is above 3.0. There are eight shared metaphors in four magazines, that are metaphor of war, architecture, journey, force, container, voice, obstacle, and light source.

4.3.1 Shared Metaphorical Constructions and Common Gender Ideologies

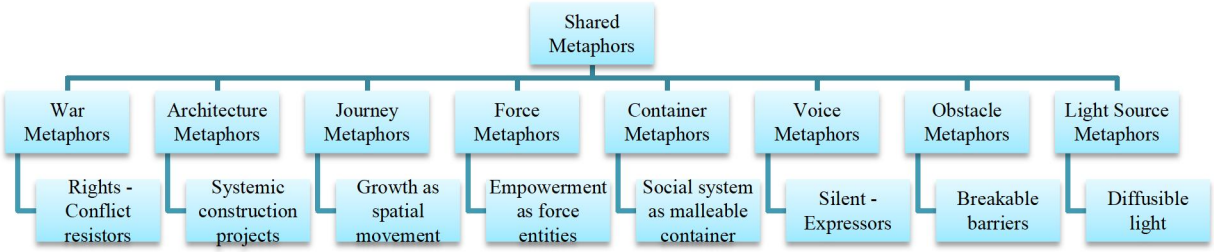


Figure 4.23: Shared Metaphorical Constructions and Common Gender Ideologies

Both Chinese and American magazines frequently use war metaphors, reflecting the struggles women in both countries face against gender inequality and influenced by the "competitive context" of masculinity. The American magazine *Ms.* uses the phrase "fight for freedom" (282 times) to metaphorically represent women's struggle for reproductive rights as a "war". The second-wave feminist movement in the United States emphasizes

breaking the patriarchal competitive structure (Eagly, 1987) and Hofstede (2001) defined of the "competitive orientation" of American masculinity. Even within individualistic contexts, women still need to break through the male-dominated competitive framework through "struggle", as when minority women engage in "battles" and simultaneously confront the dual oppression of race and gender. In the Chinese magazine 中国妇女 (*Women of China*), the use of "hard battles" and "positions" (e.g., "a solid barrier to safeguard women's rights", with a frequency of 201) metaphorically represents gender equality practices as a "collective battle". While this reflects "group collaboration" under a collectivist orientation, it is essentially a response to the "power monopoly" of traditional masculinity. For example, rural women break through the constraints of "male-dominated industries" through "entrepreneurship" (Chen, 2016). It is noteworthy that while *Ms.* magazine (an independent feminist magazine) and 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) differ in their nature, both use war metaphors, demonstrating that "fighting gender inequality" is a common core of feminist discourse in both countries, regardless of the publication's political or independent nature (Rub, 2022).

Both American and Chinese magazines use journey metaphors to construct the gradual nature of women's empowerment. This commonality reflects the shared understanding of "progress" in individualistic and collectivist cultures. The phrase "inched forward" (MI-Score 12.350) in *Bust* magazine describes the slow growth of women's political representation, viewing empowerment as an "individual breakthrough path," consistent with Hofstede's (1980) definition of American individualism, which emphasizes the value of "individual growth requiring continuous effort." For example, white women in the "way of progress" focus on career advancement, while Black women face the additional challenge of overcoming racial barriers. The phrases "journey" and "escort"

(e.g., “Female College Student Escort Plan,” with a frequency of 251) in 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) in China metaphorically portray women’s development as a “collective journey,” echoing Hofstede and Bond’s (1988) emphasis on the Chinese collectivist principle that “collective progress requires systematic support.” For example, rural women in the “rural revitalization journey” rely on skills training and policy support (Luo & Choi, 2016). Lakoff & Johnson’s (1980) CMT states that the core of the journey metaphor is “goal-oriented process.” Although the two countries differ in their focus (individual vs. collective), both acknowledge that women’s empowerment is not achieved overnight but requires path-based practice and gradual understanding of role change (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Architecture metaphors in magazines from both countries reflects the emphasis on support systems for women’s development. This commonality connects the “construction orientation” of masculinity with the “systemic needs” of collectivism and individualism. In the American magazine *Ms.*, the word “support” (1622 times) metaphorically represents women’s mutual support networks as “architectural support,” as in “building a solid support system for women.” This aligns with the American individualist belief that “individual breakthroughs require group support” (Hofstede, 1980) and the masculine recognition of “constructive capacity” – women demonstrate their equal “constructive capacity” by building “support systems” (Witkowska et al., 2024). In China’s 中国妇女 (*Women of China)*, the phrases “building a strong foundation” and “supporting pillars” (e.g., “supporting mother,” MI-Score 11.313) metaphorically portray women as “core components of social structures,” reflecting the collectivist logic that “systemic stability requires individual support” (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). This also echoes the masculine orientation toward “responsibility.” For example, women as “family pillars” both continue

the traditional “communal” role (Eagly, 1987) and break through the limitations of being “merely family appendages” (Bao, 2024). This commonality demonstrates that, regardless of cultural orientation, both countries recognize that women’s development requires structural support, and the architectural metaphor is a linguistic expression of this understanding.

Both American and Chinese magazines use metaphors of power to highlight women’s breakthroughs in gender power structures, reflecting the shared needs of masculinity for “competence recognition” and collectivism/individualism for “power acquisition.” In the American magazine *Ms.*, the term “power” (1054 times), such as “women’s political power,” metaphorically represents women’s political participation as “individual power acquisition,” aligning with the American individualist value of “individual power autonomy” (Hofstede, 2001) and linking it to the second-wave feminist movement’s call to “break the monopoly of male power” (Mohajan, 2022). In the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), the term “half the sky” (453 times) and “empowerment” (677 times), such as “women can hold up half the sky,” metaphorically represent women’s contributions as “collective strength,” aligning with the collectivist logic that “group power depends on individual contributions” (Hofstede & Bond, 1988) and echoing the national gender equality policy’s positioning of “women as the core force of development” (Chen, 2023). Ferreira and Santos (2022) pointed out that the core of the power metaphor is “explicit ability.” Although the two countries have different power subjects (individual vs. collective), they both use this metaphor to break the stereotype that “women lack power.” The cognition of role ability needs to be explicitly expressed (Eagly, 1987).

4.3.2 Divergent Metaphorical Constructions and Culture-specific Gender Ideologies

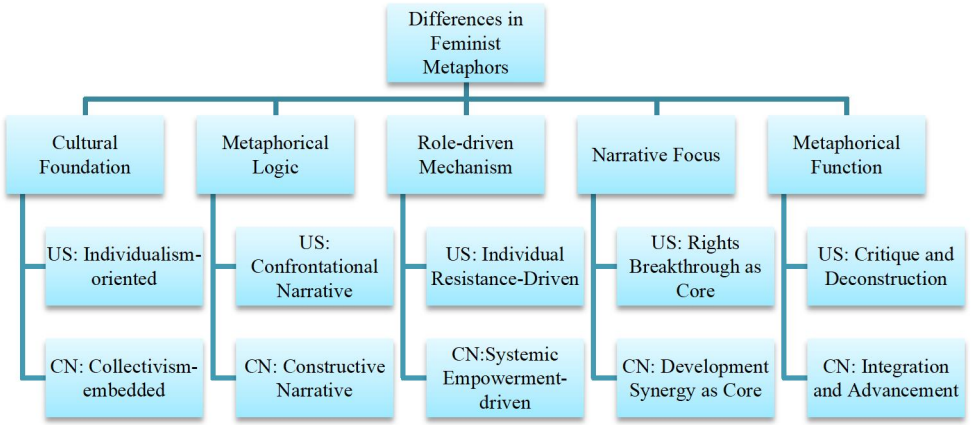


Figure 4.24: Divergent Metaphorical Constructions and Culture-specific Gender Ideologies

The voice metaphor in American magazines tends to be more individualistic, while Chinese magazines emphasize the collective response of voices. This is related to the different priorities between the two countries for "individual expression" and "group consensus." The phrase "seldom heard" (frequency 327, MI-Score 9.558) in *Bust* magazine describes the indifference of women's voices when reporting abuse. Its core theme is to highlight the "denial of the right to express" of individual women. This expression emphasizes individual demands in American culture and is under the discourse of the American third-wave feminist movement, which emphasizes "individual identity expression" (Mohajan, 2022). For example, within the "voice" metaphor, minority women must simultaneously fight for the right to express themselves on both the racial and gender levels, which embodies the "individual struggle under multiple oppressions" revealed by Crenshaw's (1989) intersectionality theory. In contrast, the phrase "Listen to the Heart"

(frequency 325, MI-Score 7.472) in Chinese 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) emphasizes the Women's Federation and women's "face-to-face listening to their needs." Its focus is on integrating individual voices into collective demands, consistent with the "group consensus-first" logic of Chinese collectivism. This metaphorical choice also resonates with China's "state-led gender equality practice," which aggregates women's demands through institutional channels rather than emphasizing individual confrontation (Chen, 2023). It is worth noting that the American *Ms.*, as an independent feminist magazine, tends to amplify the voices of marginalized individuals, while the Chinese 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) as a magazine sponsored by the Women's Federation, focuses more on the collective transformation of voices. This difference is directly influenced by the publication's sociopolitical nature.

Chinese magazines frequently use plant metaphors to construct a collective nurturing logic for women's growth, while American magazines rarely employ such metaphors, reflecting the different understandings of "women's development dynamics" between the two countries. In China's 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), the term "cultivation" (frequency 654, MI-Score 7.085) describes the "cultivation of high-quality female farmers," metaphorically comparing women's growth to "plant cultivation," requiring support from government-subsidized training programs (Luo & Choi, 2016). This expression reflects the collectivist understanding that "individual development depends on group support," same as the description of Chinese culture as emphasizing long-term cultivation and the inheritance of tradition (Hofstede, 2001). Another plant metaphor, "rooting" (frequency 108), such as "rooting in the grassroots," emphasizes women's stable growth within a collective framework. Chinese women's roles are deeply tied to group needs. In contrast, plant metaphors are rare in American magazines. This is primarily due

to the American culture's emphasis on individual breakthroughs and natural growth. For example, the "light" metaphor in the American magazine *Ms.* focuses on the individual woman as a "symbol of hope," rather than relying on external nurturing (Hu, 2019). This difference is also related to the tradition of "individual self-struggle" in the American feminist movement, from the first wave of the voting rights movement to the fourth wave of the #MeToo movement, which all began with individual demands (Mohajan, 2022).

The obstacle metaphors used in American magazines focus on individual breakthroughs, while those in Chinese magazines emphasize collective responses. This difference is related to the two countries' understanding of the "path to achieving gender equality" and is also influenced by the value orientations of "competition" and "harmony" within the masculinity-femininity dimension. In the American magazine *Ms.*, the term "barriers" (frequency 427, MI-Score 8.173), such as "dismantling barriers to equality," metaphorically represents gender barriers as "entities that individuals must actively break." This expression reflects the competitive masculinity characteristic of American culture (Hofstede, 1980) and the tradition of "confrontational breakthroughs" in the American feminist movement, such as the second-wave feminist movement's street protests that broke down gender barriers in the workplace (Mohajan, 2022). In contrast, in the Chinese magazine 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) (frequency 130, MI-Score 7.325), the term "challenges," such as "jointly meeting challenges," emphasizes addressing obstacles through "collaboration among five levels of Women's Federation cadres." This core concept embodies the feminine orientation of "harmonious problem-solving" in collectivist culture (Hofstede, 2001). This metaphorical choice is also consistent with China's practice of "in-system collaborative promotion of gender equality," such as the collaborative efforts of the Women's Federation, the government, and enterprises to address women's

employment barriers (Bao, 2024). From the perspective of publication attributes, *Bust*, as an independent cultural magazine, tends to highlight narratives of individual breakthroughs, while 中国妇女(*Women of China*), as a state-affiliated publication, prioritizes collective collaboration, further reinforcing the metaphorical differences.

The unique animal metaphors used in Chinese magazines (centered around the "leading goose") highlight the logic of collective leadership, while American magazines lack such frequent use. This reflects the differences in the two countries' understandings of "female leadership" and is also related to the definition of "leadership roles" in collectivist and individualist cultures. In 中国妇女 (*Women of China*), the phrase "leading geese" (frequency 115, MI-Score 4.61), such as "playing the role of a 'leading goose'," metaphorically depicts female leaders as "the leader of a flock, leading the group forward." The emphasis is on the "coordinated progress of leaders and the group," with the characteristic of Chinese collectivism described by Hofstede and Bond (1988) that leadership serves the group's goals. It also resonates with China's integration of female leadership into national strategies such as rural revitalization (Chen, 2023). For example, rural women "leaders" are expected to inspire surrounding women to start businesses, embodying the logic of "individual leadership serving the collective." However, American magazines lack this common animal metaphor. Instead, they often depict women's leadership through "war" or "journey" metaphors (e.g., "battle leader" and "pathfinder"). This emphasis emphasizes the individual leader's "breakthrough ability". Leadership stems from individual achievement" (Hofstede, 1980). Individual women break the monopoly on leadership positions, as exemplified by female political leaders using the image of "fighters" to gain voice (Rub, 2022). This difference is also influenced by the magazine's positioning. As a platform for policy dissemination, China's 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) emphasizes

the narrative of “collective leadership,” while the American *Ms.*prioritizes the narrative of “individual leadership breakthroughs.”

4.4 Discussion

Through the metaphorical analysis of feminist discourse in the corpus of two American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, and corpus of two Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), this study revealed how metaphors construct and reflect the concepts of power, resistance and social change.

The study has produced three key findings. Firstly, metaphors like “war” and “journey” in American magazines indicate that American women have been fighting not only against gender binaries for individual rights such as political, economic and reproductive autonomy but also acknowledging the existence of other genders. Secondly, collectivist metaphors like “architecture” and “force” legitimize gender equality emphasizing Chinese women’s roles in national development within state frameworks but obscure dissent in favor of harmony. Thirdly, magazines shape feminist ideology differently than other forms of media.

First of all, metaphors like “war” and “journey” in American magazines indicate that American women have been fighting not only against gender binaries for individual rights such as political, economic and reproductive autonomy but also acknowledging the existence of other genders. In his analysis of metaphors in Nigerian newspapers, Ahmed (2018, p. 90) simply noted that expressions like “women are the engine room of childrearing” solidify women’s passive caregiving role, but failed to explore how metaphors reflect the tension between social function and cognition. In his study of metaphors in Adrienne Rich’s poetry, Janusz (1994, p. 295) noted that the “dreamwood”

metaphor can subvert patriarchal realities, but failed to address the functional differences of media for specific audiences, let alone explore cognitive contradictions. In this study, the war metaphor in *Ms.* (Extract 1) serves the social function of mobilizing women to actively fight. The frequent use of "keep" and "fighting" consolidates scattered individual demands into a collective consciousness of action. In light of Social Role Theory, this metaphor breaks with Eagly's (1987) traditional perception of women as passive family members, reconstructing them as active agents fighting for reproductive rights. However, this also reveals a deeper cognitive contradiction: the individual autonomy referred to in the metaphor as "our right" conflicts with the systemic oppression of anti-abortion laws in some parts of United states, such as Texas, creating a tension between "individual rights demands and systemic constraints." The journey metaphor in *Bust* in Extract 4, further fills this gap. Its social function is to present the differential political progress of women. The contextual detail of "Black women make up less than 5% of the Alabama State Legislature", combined with Intersectionality Theory, shows that the metaphor both acknowledges the existence of other gender groups and exposes cognitive contradictions. Mainstream feminist discourse often benchmarks the progress of white women while ignoring the dual barriers of "race + gender" faced by Black women. Janusz's (1994) study of poetic metaphors never addressed such a specific identity-based contradiction. Existing research often focuses on describing phenomena within a single culture, without integrating cultural dimensions to reveal cognitive mechanisms. Fontecha and Catalaán (2003, p. 782), when comparing the animal metaphors of "fox/vixen" in English and "zorro/zorra" in Spanish, only described differences in semantic derogatory meaning (e.g., "zorra" specifically refers to a female prostitute, while "vixen" emphasizes a bad temper) without integrating cultural dimensions to analyze the cognitive roots of metaphorical

preferences. Rub (2022), while mentioning American feminist metaphors in their related research, did not draw comparisons with other cultures. Drawing on Hofstede's (1980) individuality and collectivism dimension, this study finds that the "war" and "journey" metaphors in American magazines are rooted in individualistic cognition. The war metaphor in *Ms.* (Extract 9) metaphorically represents "women's political power" as "resources that individuals can independently strive for." The case study of "California women legislators using their political power to promote abortion rights" directly reflects the individualist emphasis on "individuals proactively acquiring rights." The journey metaphor in *Bust* (Extract 4) attributes progress to individual breakthroughs (e.g., "Black women in Georgia overcame racial and gender bias to be elected to Congress"), further confirming the influence of individualistic thinking on metaphor construction. This "metaphor-cognition-culture" connection lays the foundation for subsequent cross-cultural comparisons with Chinese collectivist metaphors (e.g., "jointly building a barrier for women's rights and interests" in "Chinese Women"). Fontecha and Catalaán's (2003) descriptive study never explored this cross-cultural analysis at the level of cognitive mechanisms. In terms of the details of theoretical application, Reali and Avellaneda (2023) noted that war metaphors embody women's resilience but did not use Social Role Theory to analyze the specific pathways of role transformation. This study, through metaphorical analysis of Extracts 1 and 9, clearly identifies metaphors as the linguistic vehicle for the transformation from "passive dependents" to "active rights holders," thus supplementing the practical details of the theory's application in media discourse. Bao (2024) explored the collectivist nature of Chinese feminist metaphors but did not contrast them with American individualist metaphors. This study, through the introduction of Hofstede's dimensions,

provides a practical analytical framework for this cross-cultural comparison, addressing the shortcomings of previous research in cultural cognitive connections.

Secondly, collectivist metaphors like “architecture” and “force” legitimize gender equality emphasizing Chinese women’s roles in national development within state frameworks but obscure dissent in favor of harmony. In analyzing Adrienne Rich’s poetic metaphors, Janusz (1994, p. 295) noted that the “dreamwood” metaphor conceives of female growth as “an exploration beyond darkness,” centered on individuals subverting patriarchy through language. However, he never explored how metaphors integrate the power of multiple agents within a collective framework, let alone how metaphors dismantle individual dissent. In contrast, the “architectural” metaphor in “Chinese Women” (Extract 22) in this study serves the social function of integrating government, the Women’s Federation, and communities into the national governance framework. Through the collective action of “building together,” it reconstructs women from the “traditional family dependents” proposed by Eagly (1987) in Social Role Theory into “co-builders of national development” – a role reconstruction that legitimizes gender equality within the national framework. However, deeper cognitive contradictions also emerge. The demand for collective unity in “coordination” can weaken the individual demands of some women. For example, rural women’s differing opinions on the rights protection process are obscured by the priority of collective goals. This tension between “collective integration and individual expression” is precisely the dimension of the social function of metaphor that Janusz’s research fails to address.

In his analysis of metaphors in Nigerian newspapers, Ahmed (2018, p. 90) simply notes that expressions such as “women are the engine room of childcare” solidify women’s

passive caregiving role, but fails to explore the metaphor's connection to specific national frameworks, let alone its dual function of "legitimizing equality and concealing dissent." The metaphor of "power" used in this study further highlights this duality. Extract 28 in 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) metaphorically depicts women's contributions as "the core force supporting collective development." In this context, the case study of "rural women's participation in rural revitalization and industrial upgrading", combined with Hofstede's (1980) dimension of collectivism, demonstrates that its social function is to deeply bind women's values to national strategies, through the image of "holding up half the sky," ensuring national recognition of gender equality. However, this metaphor can also obscure potential dissent. For example, urban women's demands for career advancement barriers are weakened by the narrative priority of "collective contribution." This combined function of "legitimacy construction and dissent resolution" represents a deeper social function not explored in Ahmed's research.

This finding also fills a gap in the lack of cross-cultural comparisons and the predominance of descriptive research. Existing research rarely integrates metaphors with cultural dimensions for comparative analysis, nor does it reveal differences in the cognitive mechanisms of metaphors between collectivist and individualist cultures. When comparing the animal metaphors of "fox/vixen" in English and "zorro/zorra" in Spanish, Fontecha and Catalaán (2003, p. 782) only described the differences in semantic derogatory meaning (e.g., "zorra" in Spanish specifically refers to a female "prostitute" while "vixen" in English focuses on a "bad temper"), but did not analyze the cognitive roots of metaphor construction by linking the "Collectivism vs. Individuality" dimension. Although Chen (2023) mentioned the role of Chinese women in national development, she did not contrast it with the American individualism metaphor. This study, drawing on Hofstede's (1980)

cultural dimensions, contrasts Chinese collectivist metaphors with American individualist metaphors. While the American "war" metaphor (Extract 1) from the American magazine *Ms.* emphasizes individual initiative in the struggle for rights, the Chinese architecture metaphors (Extract 22) emphasizes collective action through "coordination." American force metaphors focus on individual power acquisition (Extract 9), while Chinese force metaphors (Extract 28) emphasize the collective contributions that support national development. This interconnected "metaphor-culture-cognition" chain allows research to transcend descriptive limitations. While studies like Fontecha and Catalaán focus solely on semantics, this study reveals how cultural dimensions shape the functional orientation of metaphors, providing a reusable cognitive mechanism framework for cross-cultural comparison.

Based on Intersectionality Theory, existing research has also failed to fully analyze the relationship between identity dimensions and metaphors within the Chinese context. Crenshaw (1989) emphasized the oppression of multiple identities, but studies like Ahmed (2018) fail to address the integration and contradiction of identity demands within a collective framework. While the architecture metaphor of 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) in this study (Extract 26) focuses on the identity of "mother" and incorporates it into a collective support system, it may obscure the specific needs of women of different identities. For example, the urgent need for economic support from impoverished "bone mothers" is undermined by the unified narrative of "collective support." This contradiction between "identity differences and collective integration" not only adds to the practical details of Intersectionality Theory in Chinese media discourse, but also further demonstrates the limitations of the collectivist metaphor in its social function. This is also a cognitive depth not explored in studies like Janusz (1994) and Fontecha and Catalaán

(2003). Although Bao (2024) mentioned the collectivity of Chinese feminist discourse, she did not specifically analyze how metaphors achieve the dual functions of "legitimizing equality" and "covering up dissent." This study, through cases such as Extract 22 and Extract 28, demonstrates the functional mechanism of metaphors within the national framework. It legitimizes gender equality through role reconstruction and resolves possible differences through collective narratives. This detailed analysis fills the gap in Bao's research on the practical operation of metaphor functions.

Thirdly, magazines shape feminist ideology differently than other forms of media. Janusz (1994, p. 295), studying the poetry of Adrienne Rich, noted that Rich's use of the "dreamwood" metaphor frames female growth as a "quest to break through darkness." While this type of poetic metaphor can subvert patriarchal cognition, it remains limited to the personal emotional expression inherent in literature and fails to design narratives for a specific audience, such as women. For example, the imagery of "dreamwood" often reflects the poet's personal struggle and fails to precisely connect with the real-world rights demands of female readers, as does a magazine. In contrast, Extract 1, the war metaphor used in the American magazine *Ms.* in this study, is entirely targeted at female readers. Through the narrative of "keep fighting," it emphasizes the ongoing struggle for reproductive rights, and in this context explicitly connects it to the Texas anti-abortion law, a real-world issue of concern to women. In light of Social Role Theory, this metaphor reconstructs women from the "passive family dependents" posited by Eagly (1987) to "active rights holders." This role reconstruction closely aligns with the actual needs of female readers, something that the poetic metaphors studied by Janusz cannot achieve. Poetry focuses on individual emotional resonance, while magazines focus on awakening the real rights of specific groups.

Ahmed (2018, p. 90), in his study of metaphors in Nigerian newspapers, found that, in pursuit of information immediacy, newspapers often use simplified metaphors to solidify women's roles, such as "A woman is the engine room for the birth and upbringing of children." These expressions emphasize women's passive caregiving function and avoid a deeper exploration of gender rights contradictions. Meanwhile, the American magazine *Bust*'s journey metaphor, Extract 4, leverages the magazine's depth of narrative to not only highlight the slow pace of women's political progress but also, through the detail of "Black women make up less than 5% of the Alabama State Legislature," reveals the dual barriers of "race + gender" through the lens of Intersectionality Theory. This nuanced portrayal of identity dimensions is impossible with newspaper metaphors. Newspapers, driven by the need to transmit information quickly, struggle to carry such specific narratives of identity differences. Magazines, on the other hand, can, through specialized content, present a more comprehensive perspective on the rights and interests of female readers, thereby shaping a more comprehensive feminist ideology.

The uniqueness of Chinese magazines is equally evident. Take, for example, Extract 22 in 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) which, targeting female readers, constructs the role of "collaborative builder" within the framework of national development. Incorporating Hofstede's (1980) dimension of collectivism, this narrative aligns with Chinese collectivist cultural cognition while allowing female readers to clearly perceive the value of their roles in national governance. However, social media platforms (such as Weibo) investigated in existing research often lack such systematic role narratives due to their fragmented information. Feminist expressions on social media are often fragmented and personal, lacking the targeted, audience-specific, and macro-framed ideological communication of magazines. Another example is Extract 26 of 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) which

focuses on the niche identity of "mother," incorporating Intersectionality Theory to address the needs of impoverished "bonehead mothers." This precise coverage of identity groups is difficult to achieve with newspapers (such as those studied by Ahmed) and social media. Newspapers pursue universal coverage, while social media lacks a thematic focus. Only magazines, through segmented content, can shape ideological cognition for specific groups of women, tailored to their specific circumstances.

Fontecha and Catalaán (2003, p. 782), while comparing animal metaphors in English and Spanish, do not address the influence of media type on ideological transmission. Bao (2024), while noting the collectivist nature of Chinese feminist discourse, does not focus on the specific role of magazines as a medium. This study, through the specific cases of American and Chinese magazines, reveals the uniqueness of magazines in shaping feminist ideology. Unlike literary works that focus on personal emotions, unlike newspapers that seek to simplify information, and unlike social media that is fragmented, magazines are centered on the target audience and deliver more targeted and systematic feminist ideology through in-depth narratives, identity segmentation, and cultural adaptation. This is precisely the key difference that existing studies have failed to discover due to their neglect of magazines, and it also fills the gap in media type research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Chapter 5 presents the summary of findings, implications of the findings, recommendations, as well as conclusion.

5.1 Summary of Study

The aim of this study was to conduct a corpus-based cross-cultural analysis of feminist conceptual metaphors in American and Chinese magazines. The objectives of this study were as follows: (1) To identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in American magazines (*Ms.*, *Bust*) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse. (2) To identify dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in Chinese magazines (中国妇女 (*Women of China*), 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)) and examine how they construct "woman" in discourse. (3) To compare these metaphorical constructions to uncover shared and divergent cultural ideologies shaping women's representation in American and Chinese magazines.

This study adopts a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data for this study were collected from online American and Chinese female magazines, namely, American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, as well as Chinese 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) from July 1st, 2023 to June 30th 2024. A total of 5,280 articles were analyzed (*Ms.*: 1041; *Bust*: 57; 中国妇女 (*Women of China*): 3,837; 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*): 345). The word count for the American magazines is 902,465, for the Chinese magazines it is 3,631,345. The selection criteria for

these magazine articles were based on the following considerations. Firstly, the selected materials must be online-accessible publications, ensuring that the researcher can easily obtain the complete content of the articles. Secondly, the explicit requirement that articles directly addressed feminist topics ensured that the research data was closely related to feminism and reflected the use of feminist conceptual metaphors. For American magazines, *Ms.* and *Bust* were representative in the field of feminism. *Ms.* has long been concerned about women's rights and gender equality issues, covering a lot of feminist movement related reports, in-depth comments and discussions on the problems faced by women in various fields of society, its content was rich and diverse, and could provide multiple perspectives for research (Shragai, 2025). Focusing on the intersection of women's lifestyles, cultural phenomena and feminism in a unique style, *Bust* has been widely distributed among young women, helping to capture the characteristics of feminist conceptual metaphors in different age groups and cultural contexts (Groeneveld, 2009).

中国妇女 (*Women of China*), as an authoritative women's publication, focuses on the role and contribution of Chinese women in social construction and family life, actively propagates national policies and regulations on women's development, promotes the dissemination of the concept of gender equality, and can reflect the development and practice of feminism in the Chinese social context (Chen, 2016). 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) focuses on the role of women in family relations, female emotions and family harmony, and reflects feminist issues from the micro level of the family, providing rich materials for the study, showing the metaphorical expression of feminism in the field of family and its impact on women's lives (Luo & Choi, 2016).

In the main website of the magazines, a further search was made. For *Ms.*, the "explore by topic" option was clicked, and three topics emerged: "Politics", "Violence & Harassment", and "Health". Articles under all topics were selected. For *Bust*, there were two topics on the main webpage: "Feminism", and "Living" articles under all of which were chosen.

As for the Chinese women's magazines, on the homepage of 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) website, there were four topics, which are "要闻 (Top News)", "妇联直播间 (Women' s Federation Live Studio)", "巾帼风采 (Women' s Elegance and Charm)", and "法律帮助 (Legal Assistance)" respectively. For "婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*)", three topics were on the main webpage, namely "妇联直播 (Women's Federation Live)", "人物 (Profiles)", and "婚姻之道 (The Art of Marriage)". Articles under these seven topics were copied and pasted in a word document.

The study employed the analytical framework of CMT (1980), integrating Stefanowitsch and Gries's (2003) Collostructional Analysis for quantifying lexical-constructional associations and Pragglejaz Group's (2007) MIP to ensure rigorous metaphor annotation to analyze the dominant feminist conceptual metaphors in the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust* and corpus of Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) magazines separately and make a comparative analysis of the two. First of all, professional tools were used to pre-process the collected corpus of American magazines (from *Ms.* and *Bust* magazines) and corpus of Chinese magazines (from 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) magazines) respectively. For the corpus of American magazines

Ms. and *Bust*, AntConc 4.2.4 was directly used to carry out word frequency analysis, and high-frequency words such as "freedom", "way" and "support" were initially selected, which suggested the expression tendency of feminism in the American context. SegmentAnt 1.0.0 was used to segment the Chinese text into individual words or phrases, such as "建设 jiàn shè (building), 力量 lì liàng (power) and 征程 zhēng chéng (journey), and then AntConc 4.2.4 was used for word frequency statistics to find out words like 建设 jiàn shè (build), 力量 lì liàng (power), 征程 zhēng chéng (journey)" and other words that were frequently associated with feminist concepts.

Then, collocate (MI-Score) analysis was conducted in the respective corpus. In the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust*, word combinations such as "militant campaign" and "hindering progress" with close semantic connections were identified to further clarify their metaphorical relationships. The representative combinations of "建设研修班 jiàn shè yán xiū bān (building workshop) and 磅礴力量 páng bó lì liàng (tremendous power) (the great power)" were identified in the corpus of Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), and their metaphorical meanings were clarified. Meanwhile, through keyword extraction, the corpus of American magazines *Ms.* and *Bust* focuses on core metaphorical category related words such as "war", "journey" and "architecture", while the corpus of Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) focuses on metaphorical category related words such as "architecture", "power" and "journey" to analyze the distribution and application of these key words in their respective texts.

Finally, the KWIC function of AntConc 4.2.4 was used to check the application of collocates selected from the two corpora in the actual context, so as to more accurately

grasp the meaning and use context of metaphorical expressions. On this basis, the similarities and differences in metaphor types, frequencies and forms of expression of the two corpora were compared. Throughout this process, CMT model guided the examination of schematic hierarchies from image schema to mental spaces, while Collostructional Analysis quantified frame-level associations that traditional CMT approaches might overlook.

Based on the research questions and the empirical findings, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The magazine is the primary medium through which the women's movement has constructed its ideology. It functions as a symbol of social inequality and reflects the fundamental differences between the American and Chinese societies in terms of individual and collective interests and the development of society. The terms "war" and "journey" serve as the primary metaphors, anchoring the concept of female individualism in the struggle for individual rights and the intersection of various forms of resistance. Within the context of individualist culture, these terms often become symbols of fragmented identities and political contention, transforming resistance into a form of consumer choice in the prevailing social landscape. Conversely, Chinese magazines, on the other hand, mainly employ collective metaphors such as "architecture" and "power" to embed female characters within the framework of national development. This not only grants them social legitimacy but also uses "harmony" to dissolve diverse demands, revealing the commonality of metaphors as a tool of power. A comparison of these metaphorical constructions reveals a shared metaphorical pattern between American and Chinese magazines. Metaphors such as war, architecture, and journey are employed to

illustrate the process of female development. However, cultural specificity is more pronounced. The employment of metaphors in American discourse is characterized by a pronounced emphasis on confrontation and the pursuit of individual breakthrough, reflecting the prevailing ideology of “individualism” and “power struggle”. In contrast, Chinese metaphors are marked by a focus on collaboration and system integration, reflecting the logic of “collectivism” and “system integration”. This discrepancy is evident not only in the divergence of the meanings of the same metaphor, but also in the selection of unique metaphorical types, collectively delineating the divergence of cross-cultural gender ideologies. The former exposes identity rifts, while the latter achieves difference tolerance, both reflecting the profound influence of cultural traditions on metaphor construction.

5.2 Implications of the Findings

By focusing on the specific medium of magazines, this study provides a novel insight into the varied operational logic of feminist metaphors in the United States and China. American magazines utilize war and journey metaphors to portray women as individuals embedded in the framework of individualistic rights struggles, while Chinese magazines employ architecture and force metaphors to construct the pillars of a collectivist social system. This discrepancy not only underscores the profound interweaving of metaphors and ideology in these two cultures, but also illuminates the manner in which magazines, through the curation of bespoke metaphors, function as distinctive discursive conduits for shaping particular female images. This phenomenon has hitherto received scant attention in previous studies that have explored either a single culture or a solitary medium. It signifies a cross-cultural operational mechanism. Previous studies such as Reali and Avellaneda (2023) examined the portrayal of women in mass media, with a particular

focus on passive versus active depictions. However, their study overlooked the intersecting dynamics of role depictions with identity layers such as race and class. Rub (2023) observed the tendency of mainstream media to confine gender metaphors within binary frameworks. However, the potential for metaphors to encompass diverse identities in an active manner was not explored. Fontecha and Catalań's (2003) observation that newspaper metaphors fluctuate with events, lacking stability, does not extend to an analysis of how medium-specific traits (e.g. magazines' thematic continuity) shape metaphorical depth. Janusz (1994) examined literary metaphors as artistic expressions of gender roles, yet overlooked the connection to real-world identity struggles.

The distinguishing feature of this study is its integration of two theoretical frameworks: Social Role Theory, which is utilized to examine the process by which metaphors reconfigure roles, and Intersectionality Theory, which is employed to elucidate the manner in which these roles are distributed across diverse identities. For instance, American journey metaphors (Extract 2) include transgender and minority women, demonstrating how some metaphors amplify intersectional voices. Conversely, Chinese force metaphors (Extract 22) frequently assimilate rural or disabled women's needs into collective narratives, obscuring intersectional differences. This dual focus captures the complexity of metaphorical discourse – how roles are both redefined and stratified by identity – in a way single-theory or single-medium studies cannot.

The findings underscore the significance of metaphors as tools that influence how readers perceive women's roles and identities, a crucial consideration for magazine writers and editors. American magazines, utilizing metaphors of "war" and "journey", have the potential to enhance inclusivity by explicitly naming specific identities within their

framing. For instance, expanding from the metaphor of "fighting for equality" to the more inclusive "Black women fighting for both racial justice and gender rights" (building on the focus of Extract 3 on minority political participation). This approach is adopted to ensure that the voices of marginalized groups are not overshadowed by a generic "woman's experience".

Chinese magazines, with their "architecture" and "force" metaphors, can honor collective progress while preserving diversity. Instead of vague references to "women's strength," editors might specify: "rural women as the foundation of agricultural innovation" or "disabled women as adaptive pillars of community service". This keeps the focus on unity without erasing what makes different groups' contributions unique.

For feminist fighters, the study emphasizes the strategic use of metaphors. In the U.S., the employment of "war" metaphors has been demonstrated to galvanize action around specific rights (e.g., reproductive freedom, Extract 1), while the pairing of "journey" language has been shown to engender cross-identity solidarity, thus gaining power. Within the Chinese context, the utilization of architecture metaphors has the potential to legitimize the roles of women in policy. Activists may seek to exploit this by advocating for terms such as "ethnic women as cornerstones of border development," thereby associating the needs of marginalized groups with national objectives.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The future directions of research take off from some limitations of the study. In the selection of corpus in this study, the corpus was selected from the year 2023. Therefore, the findings cannot account for the changes in the use of feminist conceptual metaphor in magazines. Future research should further expand the corpus to include more types of

magazines, other media forms such as online media, social media such as Weibo and Facebook (Bao, 2024; Liu, 2023; Wang, 2024) and literature from different periods. For example, with the rise of social media, women's expression of feminism on these platforms has taken on new characteristics and trends.

Besides, diachronic research methods can be used to track the change of feminist metaphors over a longer time span. For example, through a systematic analysis of relevant literature in the United States and China over the past few decades, we observe the evolution trajectory of feminist metaphors in different stages of social development (Bao, 2024). Research can focus on how major social events (such as the rise of the women's movement, and the introduction of relevant laws and policies) affect the change of feminist metaphors, and how the evolution of these metaphors in turn affects the social cognition and practice of feminism, so as to reveal the dynamic interaction between conceptual metaphors related to feminism and social development.

It is also important to compare use of conceptual metaphors related to feminism in magazines targeted at the younger and older readership. Due to the different growth environment and social experience, women of different ages may have different understandings and expressions of feminism, which are often reflected through metaphors. For example, the younger generation of women, who grew up in the internet age and are influenced by the globalized culture, may use more novel and cybercult-specific metaphors to express feminist ideas (Jackson, 2018; Schuster, 2013). While older women may be more influenced by traditional ideas, their metaphorical use may be more inclined to expressions related to traditional values. By studying the differences in the use of feminist metaphors by women of different ages, we can understand the inheritance and

development of feminism in different generations, and the influence of social and cultural changes on the concept of women.

At the same time, not only the United States and China, but also the corpus from other countries and cultures should be included in the research scope, so as to better compare the commonalities and differences of feminist metaphors between different cultures and avoid the one-sidedness of research conclusions caused by corpus limitations (Dean & Aune, 2015).

Future studies on conceptual metaphors related to feminism should include men's magazines to find out what narratives are presented to reflect the thinking of the male gender and to shape the readers' views on feminism. The present study focused on the corpus of four women's magazines *Ms.* and *Bust* published in the United States and Chinese magazines 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*) published in China. The development of feminism is not only an issue for women themselves, but also for men's perceptions and attitudes. Men's understanding of conceptual metaphors related to feminism reflects their views on feminism. Studying how men understand and respond to feminist metaphors, such as men's cognition of the metaphor "women are half of the sky", can reveal the role and potential influence of men in the feminist movement, and help promote the communication and cooperation between the two sexes on feminist concepts, so as to promote the full realization of gender equality (Van der Gaag, 2014).

5.4 Conclusion

This study focuses on cross-cultural differences in feminist metaphors in American and Chinese magazines. Through a corpus analysis of four magazines, *Ms.* and *Bust* in the

United States, and 中国妇女 (*Women of China*) and 婚姻与家庭 (*Marriage and Family*), and by triangulating Social Role Theory, Intersectionality Theory, and Cultural Dimensions Theory, this study identifies the core patterns of feminist metaphors in magazines from both countries. The top three feminist metaphors in American magazines are war metaphors, journey metaphors, and architecture metaphors, while those in Chinese magazines are architecture metaphors, force metaphors, and journey metaphors. This study also reveals the underlying role reconstruction logic, identity integration mechanisms, and cultural value orientations underlying these metaphorical patterns. This provides a new analytical approach for studying the cognitive and social functions of feminist metaphors in a cross-cultural context.

From the perspective of the interaction between metaphor and social role, the metaphorical choices of American and Chinese magazines are essentially linguistic practices in reconstructing the social roles of women in both cultures. American magazines centered around war and journey metaphors. Using Social Role Theory, we can see that these metaphors transcend the traditional notion of women as passive family dependents, reconstructing them as active agents pursuing rights. The war metaphor highlights women's confrontational efforts against gender inequality, while the journey metaphor depicts their gradual growth in the pursuit of rights. Chinese magazines, on the other hand, are dominated by architecture and force metaphors. Also informed by Social Role Theory, these metaphors extend women's traditional role as "center of the family" and reconstruct them as "collective co-builders of national and social development," emphasizing the coordination of women's roles with collective goals rather than isolated individual struggles. This difference in role reconstruction is not simply a distinction between "active" and "passive", but rather the different approaches to gender equality in the two cultures.

American culture emphasizes role transformation through the struggle for individual rights, while Chinese culture prefers to achieve role expansion through the integration of collective frameworks.

Intersectionality Theory, through its connection between metaphor and identity differences, provides a key perspective for analyzing the inclusiveness of metaphors in the two countries. While the metaphors in American magazines focus on individual rights, they do not ignore identity differences. Instead, they contextualize metaphors to present the stratified struggles of women of different identities. Whether it's the divergent goals of women of different races in their pursuit of rights or the varying obstacles faced by women of different social classes in overcoming gender barriers, these are all captured through the detailed narratives of metaphors. This approach allows metaphors to become a vehicle for embodying diverse identity demands. The metaphors in Chinese magazines, on the other hand, are anchored in collective narratives. Intersectionality theory reveals that they don't eliminate identity differences, but rather integrate the needs of women of different identities (such as rural women's development needs and ethnic minority women's cultural heritage needs) into the framework of collective development. They achieve stratified inclusion through the form of "differentiated contributions," making metaphors the link between individual identities and collective goals. This difference reflects the metaphorical manifestation of American culture's recognition of "diverse struggles" and Chinese culture's pursuit of "diverse collaboration."

From the perspective of the compatibility of metaphors with cultural values, Hofstede's (1980) theory of cultural dimensions further explains the underlying roots of the differences between American and Chinese metaphors. The war and journey metaphors

used in American magazines align with their individualistic cultural dimensions and masculinity. Individualism emphasizes individual agency, leading metaphors to focus on individuals' active struggle for power. Masculinity's value orientation of "progress through confrontation" makes war metaphors a natural choice for expressing gender struggle. The architectural and force metaphors used in Chinese magazines echo their collectivist cultural dimensions and femininity. Collectivism emphasizes group collaboration, leading metaphors to emphasize the synergy between women and the collective. Femininity's value orientation of "stability through harmony" makes architectural metaphors (emphasizing shared structure) and force metaphors (emphasizing collective contribution) core vehicles for conveying the concept of gender equality. The shared journey metaphor in both magazines reflects the shared understanding that gender equality requires gradual progress. However, the American version emphasizes the differences in individual paths, while the Chinese version emphasizes the guarantee of collective support.

At the theoretical integration level, this study organically combines Social Role Theory, Intersectionality Theory, and Cultural Dimensions Theory to construct a linked analytical framework of "metaphor-role-identity-culture." This framework not only explains how metaphors reconstruct social roles (Social Role Theory) and integrate identity differences (Intersectionality Theory), but also addresses the question of why different cultures develop different metaphor preferences (Cultural Dimensions Theory). This overcomes the limitations of existing research, which often focuses on describing metaphorical phenomena or interpreting them through a single theory, and provides a reusable theoretical integration approach for subsequent cross-cultural metaphor research.

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PUBLICATIONS FROM THESIS

1. **Chen, S. F.,** Ting, S. H., & Chuah, K. M. (2025). Voice Metaphors in Female Magazines in the United States and China. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. *7*(5): 916 – 931.
2. **Chen, S. F.,** Ting, S. H., & Chuah, K. M. (2025). Feminism: "WAR" and "JOURNEY" Metaphors in *Ms.* and *Bust* Magazines. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. *7*(3): 397 – 411.
3. **Chen, S. F.,** Ting, S. H., & Chuah, K. M. (2024). Conceptual metaphors of Chinese "脸 face" and "面 face". *Asian Journal of Research in Education and Social Science*s, *6*(4), 106 – 120.