

# Conceptual “Politics Is War” Metaphors in Titles and Sapo of Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times

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**Abstract:** Researching the title and sa-po/lead<sup>1</sup> of articles is not a new topic. However, researching these two key elements of news articles from the perspective of linguistics, especially cognitive linguistics, remains relatively strange and receives little attention. The article examines the cognitive metaphor “Politics is War” in the title and lead of the newspapers Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times. Based on correspondences, the article identifies this conceptual metaphor, as well as the mapping mechanism between the “journey” domain and the “politics” domain within Vietnamese people’s linguistic thinking. Based on logical relations in the organisation of the diagram of conceptual metaphor mapping, the article also identifies the distinct thinking behind conceptual structures of Vietnamese culture.

**Keywords:** Title, sa-po/lead, war, politics, source domain, target domain, mapping, diagram.

**Subject classification:** Linguistics

## 1. Introduction

Politics is a field that deals with power and policy-making and operation. It includes social relations related to authority and power. Politics covers many different aspects including politicians and political and political events. Political conflict can be viewed as a struggle for power between those who want to consolidate and retain their power and those who try to contest it or resolve various financial or other conflicts in the regional and international arenas.

In commentary discourses related to political issues, the source domain “war” is often mapped into the target domain “political” because the two domains share many similarities. It

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<sup>1</sup> The French term “Chapeau”, or “Sapo”, “Lead” is used in linguistics with almost the same meaning.

has been observed that political language aims to persuade an audience and uses conceptual metaphors spontaneously. Metaphors in political discourse mostly provide assessment and suggest solutions that serve a particular political agenda. Metaphors are also used to propagate political ideals and ideologies to readers and listeners. However, metaphors with the “war” source domain will emphasise conflict, downplaying the importance of negotiation and compromise. Therefore, between two political organisations, parties, and countries, whenever there is a conflict of interest, journalists and editors want to describe political conflicts through attributes from the source domain “war”.

## 2. Literature review

The study of metaphors can be traced back to Aristotle who regards metaphors as a matter of language in a traditional way (Lakoff, G., 1993, p.202). The traditional views of metaphors were overturned as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson put forward the new view on metaphors from a cognitive perspective in their book *Metaphors We Live By* in 1980 (Philip, E., 2000, p.1). They argue that metaphors are a conceptual phenomenon rather than a language one. The study of conceptual metaphors is further developed by Kövecses. He gives a detailed explanation of metaphors in his book *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, which helps readers to have a good understanding of conceptual metaphors. Because of these two books, research on metaphors has become one of the central fields of language research.

War metaphors have appeared in a few recent studies. In the book *War Metaphors: How President's Use the Language of War to Sell Policy*, Bacharach traces the evolution of metaphorical wars from rhetoric into public policy and also addresses the original goal for the president to use the language of war metaphors (Marc, N., 2006). Paula (Liendo, P., 2001) then analysed the widespread use of war metaphors in business language by presenting examples of business texts containing war metaphors and presenting the implications of this rhetorical choice. Another article related to war metaphors is found in Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). Yang Fengping (2009) analyses the use of war metaphors in headlines of sports news. The study finds that a large number of metaphorical war expressions is contained in sports news in English. War metaphors appear in the headlines of 45.5% of baseball news, 72% of basketball news, and 60.2% of football news. In addition, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson mentioned that arguments would be war in their book *Metaphors We Live By*. They pointed out that arguments and wars are different, i.e., verbal discourse and armed conflict; however, a portion of the conceptual network of battle partially characterises the concept of an argument (Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M., 2003)

Thus, the study of conceptual metaphors with the war domain in the headlines and leads of news articles is a new field that needs to be studied in Vietnamese linguistics. The research results of the article can be useful for reporters and editors interested in international political issues, helping them improve their editing skills.

### **3. Some related concepts**

Cognitive and conceptual metaphors are the conceptualisation of one mental domain through another, that is, the systematic mapping from a source domain to a target domain in order to create a cognitive model. According to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, a conceptual metaphor is a cognitive mechanism through which the logic of abstract concepts is replaced by the logic of more concrete concepts. Metaphors are associated with the cultural and spiritual characteristics of native speakers.

A structural metaphor is a metaphor where the meaning (or value) of a word (or expression) is understood (evaluated) through the structure of a word (or another expression). This type of metaphor often uses the result of symbolisation in association, helping people understand the target concept A (usually abstract) through the source conceptual constructs B (more concrete). In this type of metaphor, the source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target conceptual domain, and this understanding occurs through conceptual schema mappings between elements of domains A and B. A fixed system of correspondences between the elements constituting the source domain and the target domain forms a mapping scheme in the conceptual metaphor structure. When these correspondences are enabled, mapping schemes can project from the source domain to the target domain. Therefore, understanding a conceptual metaphor means understanding the mapping scheme of a source-destination pair.

Press title: the title of the press article is the part stating the topic of the article. In a journalistic work, the article's title can decide the fate of the article. If the title is attractive, it will win hearts and stimulate the readers' discovery. Newspaper headlines are generally short, succinct, and concise, showing a variety of forms and content. Researchers divide newspaper headlines into some basic types such as endorsement title, question title, call title, quote title, headline comments, sensational headlines, and sexy headlines.

A lead in a journalistic work is the preface after the title and before the body of the article. A lead is a complete text, which may include one sentence, several sentences or many sentences, stating the core information of the article with short text size, helping readers identify the topic of the article and stating the main ideas. Leads have many sub-categories such as naming leads, summaries, event-guided leads, portraits, scene-descriptive, and so forth.

### **4. Research methods**

To study structural metaphors with the “war” domain in the headlines and leads of the Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times, the author uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods that mainly consist of discourse analysis, combined with statistical methods and a classification based on corpus sources randomly collected from

800 titles and leads in the category “International commentary” of Nhan Dan’s Online newspaper; 800 headlines and leads in the “Opinion” column of The New York Times published between January 1, 2014, and December 1, 2021. With this number of titles and leads, we proceed to identify conceptual metaphors according to the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) proposed by Pragglejaz (2007), which is performed with four steps as follows: (i) read the titles and leads in their entirety to establish a common understanding of the meaning; (ii) identify potentially metaphorical words and related words in the context; (iii) determine the form of the expression with potential metaphorical words and compare the potential metaphor words into the source domains to call the source and target domains, thereby determining whether the title or lead is a metaphorical expression; (iv) name metaphorical expressions, which become “metaphorically-expressed words” (we call them “invoices”). Then, we define the set of features of the source and target domains in the conceptual model, thereby determining the corresponding points that are activated in the cognitive framework; list selected metaphors in each attribute of the source domain; make irradiation diagrams and explain the mechanisms of moving, copying the attributes between the source and destination domains in conceptual expressions; thereby showing the regularity in irradiation, understanding the characteristics of the writer’s thinking and perception. Thereby, we contribute to proving the close relationship between language, culture, and thinking expressed through conceptual expressions.

## **5. “Politics is War” mapping schema**

When it comes to war, anyone will subconsciously share the idea of a conflict between at least two or more organised groups/factions and armed groups. Fighting occurs between groups either to compete for territory or for other interests. The goal of offensive warfare is to destroy or knock down an opponent in order to assimilate, capture, or dominate. In contrast, the goal of defensive warfare is an attempt to repel the attacking force in order to preserve the force. The war ends with the division of victory between the two opposing sides, sometimes both sides lose the war due to casualties and war damage. The situation of war can apply to political conflicts. In press discourse, politics is often viewed refracted through the lens of war because political conflicts often go hand in hand with a spiral of violence. A political election always takes place in a fierce competition between two or more political parties to win. A trade or diplomatic war between two countries, two political opponents are as tense on the negotiating table as fights, when one of the parties fails to reach a satisfactory agreement, they may trigger wars. Politicians have different political positions and goals. When one side launches an attack during speeches in parliaments, the other side will respond in a tit-for-tat fashion. The parties will fight fiercely to gain their own interests. In political conflicts, each politician or party will use effective strategies to win on the political arena, just as the commander-in-chief of war chooses tactics in war to win. So politics is often seen as a real-life war. Many studies have

shown that the power of language to influence the public is a very powerful tool in the political arena, and can be used in a variety of ways to influence or manipulate the public. In it, metaphors are a powerful tool that can influence public opinion on politics. The mapping scheme for “Politics is War” shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: “Politics Is War” Mapping Schema

WAR source domain	POLITICS target domain
Battle commander/commander	→ Politicians
Soldiers in battle	→ Political factions
Enemies in the war	→ Opposing and hostile forces in politics
Weapons in the war	→ Geopolitical policies
Tactics in war	→ Political strategies
Battlefield	→ Political arena
Victory or defeat in war	→ Victory or defeat in politics

In the survey corpus of Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times, many metaphorical expressions like “Politics is War” appear with specific examples corresponding to each attribute of the source domain “war”. In fact, there are hundreds of military terms applied to non-military situations, as people have the ability to draw experience from a familiar area of life such as war to understand experience in an abstract field such as politics. According to the principle of metaphorical irradiation, typical examples belonging to the military terminology system have been selected, activated, and projected onto the “political” target domain, causing the target domain to have the attributes of the “war” source domain. As a result, political discourses have the colour of battle and are filled with drama.

## 6. “Politics is War” metaphors in Nhan Dan Online

Conceptual metaphors with a “war” source domain are universal in political discourse and have a solid empirical foundation. The source domain war allows to activate the typical attributes of the source domain, such as a soldier, battle commander/commander-in-chief, battlefield, enemies, weapons, tactics, victory, and defeat, thereby allowing the appearance of a series of metaphorical tokens, such as an attack, punishment, frontline, subversion, threat, ally, wind blow, a group out, war of words, wave of arms, martial arts, assassination, defuse, defence, and terrorism, deriving from the knowledge acquired by human experience about the wars.

Table 2: Examples of Conceptual Metaphors of “Politics Is War” in Nhan Dan Online

Attributes	Allegories	No. of appearances	Attributes	Allegories	No. of appearances
Parties in war	Đồng minh [Allies]	7	Weapons	Chiếc gậy trừng phạt [Punishment stick]	1
	Đối thủ [Adversaries]	2		Con dao hai lưỡi [Double-edged knife]	1
	Kẻ thù [Enemy]	2		Gậy ông đập lưng ông [His stick beaten his back]	1
	Liên minh [Alliance]	1		Tháo ngòi [Defuse]	1
				Gậy chỉ huy [Command stick]	1
Tactics	Đòn gió/ ra đòn [Wind blow/ blow]	3	Battlefield / the nature of the battlefield	Chiến dịch tranh cử [election campaign]	1
	Giương oai múa võ [stretched martial arts]	1		Cách mạng cam/ cách mạng sắc màu [Orange revolution/ colour revolution]	3
	Ám sát [Assassinate]	1		Cuộc chiến kinh tế [Economic war]	2
	Rút củi đáy nồi [draw firewood from the bottom of the pot]	1		Mặt trận thống nhất [United front]	1
	Phòng thủ [Defense]	2		Điểm nóng [Hotspot]	2
	Tiến công [Attack]	5		Nóng bỏng [hot]	1
	Lật đổ [Overthrow]	1		Hạ nhiệt [Hypothermia]	3
	Đe dọa [Threats]	1		Vòng xoáy bạo lực [Violent cycle]	1
	Khẩu chiến [War of words]	1		Sào huyệt của khủng bố [The lair of terror]	1
	Khiêu chiến [Provocative]	1		Chiến tuyến [Frontline]	2

Động tác giả [False move]	1
Trừng phạt/Biên pháp trừng phạt/ nói lỏng trừng phạt [Sanctions/ Sanctions easing]	7
Hoạt động tình báo [intelligence operations]	1
Giữ miếng [Hold pieces]	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>

Source: Nhan Dan's Online newspaper published between 1 January 2014 and 1 December 2021.

In the Nhan Dan Online newspaper, the metaphor “Politics is War” appeared in 31 headlines and 61 leads. Metaphorical expressions depict the political struggle between interrelated countries as a battle in the field, with dramatic tensions, knots and openings, frontlines, the parties used each type of weapon to overwhelm and threaten and punish the enemy. Tactics in the political arena are also full of calculations, similar to the tactics used in each attack in battle. The role of the politician is like the commander-in-chief in a real-life war. Different tactics and strategies will be used by the commander-in-chief to win a battle; political strategies will be considered by politicians to gain a position in the political arena. Metaphorical examples in the titles and leads of the Nhan Dan Online newspaper are shown in Table 2.

In metaphors with the source domain of “war”, political discourses aimed at helping readers realise the nature of political arenas with many similarities with battlefields. While in a battle, the commander-in-chief is the one who has the role to lead the army, controlling the troops and weakening the enemy's strength. In the political arena, the politician will play the role of a leader. The role of the leader requires using tactics and strategies to deal with political intrigues, knowing how to come up with appropriate tactics to entice allies, add friends, and reduce enemies, win the opponent on the political arena. In the political arena, they know how to use their tactics as a sharp weapon to attack the opposition. Economic or military sanctions are seen as a weapon to deter, command, and control the opponent.

For example:

(1) [Tiêu đề] **“Gậy chỉ huy” còn thiêng?** (“gậy chỉ huy” muốn ám chỉ các biện pháp trừng phạt của Mỹ và các phe đồng minh trong EU nhằm vào các lĩnh vực khai mỏ và khí đốt của Nga) (Đức Anh, 2014).

[**Title**] [*“Command stick” still sacred? (“command stick” refers to the sanctions imposed by the US and its allies in the EU against Russia’s mining and gas sectors)*].

(2) [**Lead**] *Tuy nhiên, con đường phía trước còn nhiều chông gai khi cả hai phía vẫn “giữ miếng” trong cách tiếp cận vấn đề, chưa thật sự tin tưởng lẫn nhau khi “chiếc gậy trừng phạt” luôn được Mỹ treo lơ lửng trước đối thủ I-ran cứng rắn, sẵn sàng “đốt nóng” các lò phản ứng nếu bị dồn ép* (Thanh Vân, 2014).

[**Lead**] [*However, the road ahead is still fraught with thorns as both sides still “hold pieces” in their approach to the issue, not really trusting each other when the “punishment stick” is always suspended by the US before the tough opponent Iran, ready to “heat up” the reactors if cornered*].

Even political conflicts and diplomatic crises are also seen as a bomb or a barrel of dynamite, just waiting for one side to make a trigger move to explode. Therefore, the move of the politician, as the commander of the battle, will be to decide on the defuse at the right time to cool down the political situation. The “defusing” of a detonation in diplomatic relations is considered a move to “draw firewood from the bottom of the pot”, reducing the fire to cool down and avoiding escalating tensions.

For example:

(3) [**Lead**] *Cuộc khủng hoảng ngoại giao giữa Thổ Nhĩ Kỳ và các nước phương Tây đã được “tháo gỡ” kịp thời, không nhà ngoại giao nước ngoài nào bị trục xuất như đe dọa của Tổng thống Thổ Nhĩ Kỳ Tayyip Erdogan. Động thái “rút củi đáy nồi” nhằm hạ nhiệt căng thẳng được xem là vì lợi ích của hai phía và của cả NATO* (Thái An, 2021).

[**Lead**] [*The diplomatic crisis between Turkey and Western countries has been “defused” in time, no foreign diplomats have been expelled as threatened by Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan. The move to “draw firewood from the bottom of the pot” to reduce tensions is considered to be in the interests of both sides and of NATO*].

In a war between opposing factions, choosing the right tactics to deal with the opponent is an important strategy for the commander-in-chief. It determines the success or failure of the war. Tactics in war to disperse the enemy such as blowing the wind, making fake gestures, to detonating tactics, and showing off forces such as challenge, verbal battles, and intimidation are mapped onto the political target domain, becoming strategies in the political arena.

For example:

(4) [**Title**] *Đòn gió!* (nói về việc nhà trắng ra động thái thông báo rút toàn bộ lực lượng khỏi Áp-ga-ni-xtan, nhưng vẫn “để ngỏ” khả năng để lại số lượng binh sĩ nhất định “theo yêu cầu” của Áp-ga-ni-xtan. Thực chất đây chính là kiểu ra đòn gió để uy hiếp tinh thần Áp-ga-ni-xtan) (An Hà, 2014).

[**Title**] [*Wind blow!* (about the White House’s move to announce the withdrawal of all forces from Afghanistan, but still “open” the possibility of leaving a certain number of



*troops “as required” of Afghanistan. In fact, this is a type of blow to threaten the spirit of Afghanistan.]).*

(5) [Title] **Động tác giả.** (nói về việc chính quyền Tổng thống Mỹ Ô-ba-ma đang gấp rút hoàn tất kế hoạch cải cách do thám khi thu thập "siêu dữ liệu" để phục vụ hoạt động tình báo. Động thái này diễn ra ngay trước thềm chuyến công du châu Âu của Tổng thống Ô-ba-ma. Đây được xem như “động tác giả” nhằm thể hiện ưu tiên của ông chủ Nhà trắng đối với các **đồng minh** vững chắc của Oa-sinh-ton tại "lục địa già") (Thạch Vũ, 2014).

[Title] [**False move.** (The administration of US President Obama is rushing to finalise a plan to reform espionage when collecting “metadata” for intelligence activities took place right before President Obama’s trip to Europe, which is considered a “fake gesture” to show the White House boss’ priority over Washington’s solid allies over on the old continent)].

In war, when a conflict cannot be negotiated by a peaceful solution, the warring parties are forced to choose confrontational tactics. In politics, too, when peace negotiations are unsuccessful, it will inevitably lead to antagonistic conflicts, even escalating conflicts that will bring parties with opposing interests to the two frontlines.

For example:

(6) [Lead] Cuộc “**khẩu chiến**” giữa Nga và Mỹ chung quanh cuộc khủng hoảng U-crai-na đang gia tăng sức nóng. Chính quyền Ô-ba-ma không chỉ “**giương oai múa võ**” với việc điều tàu chiến và tăng thêm máy bay chiến đấu đến gần U-crai-na mà còn **đe dọa** lôi kéo EU áp đặt các **biện pháp trừng phạt** Nga (Thanh Tùng, 2014).

[Lead] [The “**war of words**” between Russia and the US around the Ukraine crisis is heating up. The Obama administration not only “**stretched martial arts**” by sending warships and adding more fighter aircraft to Ukraine, but also **threatened** to entice the EU to impose **sanctions** on Russia].

(7) [Lead] Mới đây, hàng loạt bộ trưởng chính phủ I-xra-en đã công khai “**tiến công**” Bộ trưởng Ngoại giao Mỹ Ke-ri bằng những lời lẽ mỉa mai, thậm chí mang tính “**khêu chiến**” (Thanh Quân, 2014).

[Lead] [Recently, a series of Israeli government ministers publicly “**attacked**” US Secretary of State Keri with sarcastic, even “**provocative**” words].

(8) [Title] U-crai-na giữa hai “**chiến tuyến**”. (U-crai-na đang đứng giữa một bên là phe ủng hộ chính phủ có sự giúp đỡ của Nga, và một bên là phe đối lập đòi lật đổ chính phủ có sự ủng hộ của châu Âu và Mỹ, bối cảnh này khiến U-crai-na mắc kẹt giữa hai **chiến tuyến**) (Nhật Tân, 2014).

[Title] [Ukraine between two “**frontlines**” (Ukraine is standing between a faction that supports the government with the help of Russia, and the opposition that wants to overthrow the government with the support of Europe and the United States, this situation keeps Ukraine stuck between two front lines)].

## 7. Conceptual “Politics is War” metaphors in The New York Times

Conceptual “Politics is War” metaphors appeared in 37 headlines and 67 leads of The New York Times. Due to the characteristics of the source domain and the editor’s intention to see political conflict issues as similar to war conflicts, some properties of the source domain are activated, transformed, and moved to the target region. When the “political” target domain acquires knowledge from this source domain, the metaphorical expressions that have contributed to the description of political battles are also tough and fierce, requiring politicians to come up with appropriate tactics for each political opponent and situation. The appearance of metaphorical references in headlines and leads in The New York Times can be observed in Table 3.

Table 3: Examples of Conceptual “Politics Is War” Metaphors in The New York Times

Attributes	Allegories	No. of appearances	Attributes	Allegories	No. of appearances
Parties in war	allies	6	Tactics	Cold War	1
	strategic rival/ political adversaries	2		attacking/ attack	10
	alliances	1		punishes/ sanctions/ economic sanctions	5
	militants	1		strategy campaign	2 5
Battlefield/The nature of battlefield	fight/trade war	6	fight		1
	bastion	1	halting/ defending		3
	chaos	1	put pressure/ keep the pressure		4
	collapse	1	retreat		2
	conflict	2	threaten		2
	clash	1	blows		2
	threat	2	defensive		1
	tensions	1	meddling		1
	violence	1			
Total		67			

Source: The New York Times published between 1 January 2014 and 1 December 2021.

In politics, may it be in health, education, religion, foreign relations, national defence, or the economy, when one field is unstable or in crisis, it means that the entire political system is in turmoil/crisis. In some headlines and leads of The New York Times, a number of metaphorical expressions describe the political decisions of “allied” factions when they share similar geopolitical tensions and ideological clashes with some other superpowers. Although there is no direct battle between the two superpowers, they have supported the allies in conflict to increase their position. This political war is called a “cold war”, and the allied nations can be seen as an impregnable “fortress” in the war.

For example:

(9) [Lead] *For centuries, even when Athens was a **bastion** of the West during the **Cold War**, Greece and Russia have seen themselves as **allies*** (Nikos Konstandaras, 2018).

When looking at politics as war, politicians in the role of war commanders will be the ones to launch direct “attacks” on the political opponents of the country to carry out “sanctions” or political intrigues. They must know how to move and retreat flexibly, when they are strong enough to attack, and they should “retreat” in time to preserve their forces.

For example:

(10) [Lead] *President Trump refrained from publicly vilifying American institutions, assailing political adversaries, insulting **allies** or committing major gaffes* (Jeffrey Prescott, 2018).

(11) [Title] *President Obama **Punishes** Russia, at Last* (The Editorial Board, 2016).

(12) [Title] *Trump’s **Retreat** From the West* (Maxim Trudolyubov, 2018).

Similar to the real war, when the parties provoke and challenge each other, it is inevitable that the two sides will have “strike” blows to deter and put pressure on the opponent. In the political war, politicians have implemented tactics such as “maximum pressure campaigns” on the opponent to challenge the warring parties to “strike”.

For example:

(13) [Lead] *The Trump administration’s **campaign** of maximum pressure and minimal diplomacy is bringing the two countries ever closer to **blows*** (The Editorial Board, 2019).

Even the image of the politician in the role of representing the national image and the face of the country when going abroad is also refracted through the prism of the battle. When a politician plays a character who is not worthy of the head of state, behaves rudely or makes controversial statements in foreign relations, it is no different from him having delivered a “strong blow” in the diplomatic war. Even “threats” to national democracy.

For example:

(14) [Lead] *I have learned to brace myself for **blows** to our national standing every time Mr. Trump travels abroad - the mental equivalent of a pre-emptive **defensive** crouch* (Susan Rice, 2018).

(15) [Lead] *Both leaders **threaten** the region’s **hard-won** democracy* (Jorge G. Castaneda, 2019).

In the economic field, although the dispute over the status of the superpowers does not take place with gunfire, in political discourses, this is really a front, a tough battle in which all parties to the war are fighting and suffering great financial losses.

For example:

(16) [Title] *China wasn't ready for the trade war with the United States* (Matt Philips, 2019).

## **8. Similarities and differences between headlines and leads of Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times**

The results of the research on 1,600 Vietnamese and English newspaper headlines and leads in Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times show that there is a large number of conceptual “Policy is War” metaphors in both publications, with the popularity and frequency of these metaphors being almost equal in the two languages. Nhan Dan Online has 31 titles and 61 leads with such metaphors while The New York Times has 37 such headlines and 67 leads. However, we noticed some differences between Vietnamese and English. In Nhan Dan Online, there are four attributes from the source domain “war” that are mapped to the target domain “political”, in which the attribute of “weapons used in war” is used with five examples. Meanwhile, The New York Times did not enable this attribute from the source domain. Metaphors appeared often in the titles of articles. Vietnamese editors also tend to prefer to use idioms in newspaper headlines and leads to metaphorise political issues, such as *standing tall*, *dancing martial arts*, and *pulling firewood from the bottom of the pot* to talk about tactics in the political sphere. Other phrases, like a *double-edged knife* and *his stick beats him on the back* talk about the weapons that politicians use in parliamentary struggles. Meanwhile, in The New York Times, metaphorical expressions are mainly in the leads of the articles. Only three attributes from the source domain “war” were projected onto the target domain “political”. We found no idiom used in the articles’ titles or leads that serve as a token metaphor.

## **9. Conclusion**

By clarifying the mapping and attributes between the source and target domains in the conceptual “Politics is War” metaphor in Nhan Dan Online and The New York Times, we can confirm their awareness of politics and issues related to political life in the “International commentary” column of Nhan Dan Online and the “Opinion” column of The New York Times. From deciphering the mechanisms of these metaphors and their formation, it can be seen that the authors’ thinking is quite consistent when co-coding the political arena as a battlefield. Here, the war between the opposing forces is also full of

hardships and challenges. When facing complicated contexts, politicians must act as commander-in-chief, must know how to choose and make decisions, and use the right tactics and weapons to win in the political arena. All conceptual thoughts are represented by available images in the writer's subconsciousness, formed by the correlations in experience and available knowledge about "war" and located in a perceptual framework. Besides the similarities, there are some slight differences in the conceptual thinking and expression between the Vietnamese and American writers.

**Note:** Translator: Đoàn Hồng Nhung. Language editor: Etienne Mahler.

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