



Framing of corporate crises in Dutch newspaper articles

A corpus study on crisis response strategies, quotation, and metaphorical frames

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Abstract

Research topic - The purpose of this study was to find answers to how corporate crises are framed in Dutch media. A journalist frames a crisis by making choices about information, quotation, and language. This thesis focusses on these aspects by analysing what crisis response strategies can be found, and how this information is reported by the journalist using quotation and metaphor.

Hypotheses and research – It was expected that a company’s cultural background would influence the crisis response strategy that is reported in the newspapers. The hypotheses stated that companies originating from countries with an *individualistic* culture appear in newspapers more often with a *diminish* strategy and less often with a *no response* or *rebuild* strategy than companies originating from countries with a *collectivistic* culture. The *denial* strategy was expected to appear equally frequent. Furthermore, it was studied whether a link exists between these crisis response strategies and the occurrence of quotes and metaphors within Dutch newspaper articles.

Method – These topics were studied using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. A corpus of Dutch newspaper articles ($N = 606$) covering corporate crises was analysed.

Findings – No significant relation was found between the reported crisis response strategies and companies’ cultural backgrounds (*individualistic* or *collectivistic*). A relationship was found between the reported crisis response strategy and (in)direct quotation of the company in crisis. Furthermore, the qualitative analyses of the newspaper articles showed some patterns in the combination of reported crisis response strategies and usage of quotation and metaphor.

Conclusion – This research shows that the crisis response strategy that is reported in newspapers might be less related to a company’s cultural background than expected. It also shows a link between crisis response strategy (as reported by the journalist), and the journalist’s usage of quotes by the company in crisis. Furthermore, this research provides some insights on how Dutch journalists combine crisis response strategies with quotation and metaphors.

Keywords: Framing; media; crisis communication; crisis response strategies; quotation; metaphors; metaphorical frames; corpus study; individualism; collectivism.

Introduction

“I accept responsibility for the irregularities that have been found in diesel engines (...) even though I am not aware of any wrong doing on my part.” (Volkswagen, 2015). This official statement by Volkswagen’s CEO was published by the company a few days after its corporate crisis started: Their diesel cars had been emitting up to 40 times more toxic fumes than permitted. This affected about eleven million cars worldwide (Topham, 2015).

Although the Volkswagen CEO had tried to diminish the crisis situation by carefully picking his words, Dutch newspapers did not just copy paste his statement. Instead, the people that were quoted within the news stories, where car experts who stated that it was impossible for the Volkswagen board not to have known about the ‘cheating’. In addition, the Dutch journalists did not only decide not to quote the company in crisis, they also used a different type of language. The CEO’s ‘irregularities’ where quickly relabelled as ‘cheating’ (NOS, 2015) and the word ‘sjoemelsoftware’ (‘cheating software’) was even elected as “word of the year 2015” (Van Dale Uitgevers, 2016).

The example above shows that companies in crisis can try to influence the information that is published about the crisis by sending out press releases or making statements in interviews. Whether it is a deliberate policy or not, with these statements, a company chooses a crisis response strategy. Research has distinguished various crisis response strategies an organisation can implement when encountering a crisis situation. Some examples of such response strategies are denying the problem, claiming to be the victim of the situation, or admitting wrongdoing (Benoit, 2015; Claeys & Cauberghe, 2012; Coombs, 2007). What strategy is chosen by the company can depend on the company’s history with similar crises (Coombs, 2007), but can also be affected by people’s personal preferences due to cultural differences (Eisenberg & Riley, 2000; Falkheimer & Heide, 2006; Fatima Oliveira, 2013; Schneider & Meyer, 1991; Verhoeven, Tench, Zeffass, Moreno & Vercic, 2014).

The example above also shows that choosing a crisis response strategy as a company, does not automatically result in successful damage control (Onwumechili, 2018) because its message will most likely reach the public through media (An & Gower, 2009; Carroll, 2017; Meadows & Meadows, 2016; Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006; Onwumechili, 2018). This gives journalists the ability to adjust the message and influence public opinion about the crisis. The way a journalist shapes a certain message is often called ‘framing’. According to Shah, Watts, Domke and Fan

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(2002, p.367), a journalist can construct a frame by making “choices about language, quotations and relevant information”. In other words, the journalist decides on what is said (*information*), and how this is said (using *quotation* and *language*). This study focusses on these three elements by studying the research question

“How is corporate crises framed in Dutch media?”.

Theoretical framework

Cultural differences in crisis communication

Countries, and their corresponding national cultures, can differ from each other on many dimensions. These dimension are said to affect the values and behaviours of individuals (Hofstede, 1980) and seem to become more intense during crises (Falkheimer & Heide, 2006). There is a large volume of studies providing evidence for cultural differences in interpreting and responding to crisis situations (e.g. Eisenberg & Riley, 2000; Falkheimer & Heide, 2006; Fatima Oliveira, 2013; Hofstede 1980; Schneider & Meyer, 1991; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, & Asai, 1988; Verhoeven et al., 2014). A dimension that is linked to these cultural differences in handling crisis situations is Hofstede's dimension 'individualism' (Hofstede, 1980; Kim, Cha & Kim, 2008).

National cultures that score high on this 'individualism' scale are said to be more individualistic. Examples of countries that are known for their individualistic cultures are Western countries like the United States and The Netherlands. In individualistic cultures, individuals are expected to focus on their personal interests rather than group-oriented interests. People from countries with an individualistic culture generally communicate more directly when encountering crisis situations, focussing on the need for control (Chua & Gudykunst, 1987).

In contrast, national cultures that score low on the Hofstede's (1980) 'individualism' scale are said to be more collectivistic. Examples of countries with more collectivistic cultures are Asian countries like South-Korea, Japan, and China. In collectivistic cultures it is common to prioritise group interests over personal interests (Trubisky, Ting-Toomey, & Lin, 1991). Therefore, people from collectivistic countries generally prefer more indirect communication when encountering crisis situations, focussing on the maintenance of harmony with more conflict-avoiding strategies (Chua & Gudykunst, 1987).

Corporate crisis communication

Cultural differences do not only affect personal communication. Differences in the handling of crisis situations can also be found in business context. Sha (2006) explains this finding by stating that not only individuals, but also companies create and share cultural values through their communication. Pauchant and Mitroff (1990) underline this statement by indicating that a company's country-of-origin influences its overall culture, which again is strongly related to its corporate crisis communication.

Corporate crisis communication, like official statements made by spokespersons and company leaders, is needed when a company encounters a crisis situation. A corporate crisis situation can be defined as an unexpected and often unpredictable event that is threatening the fundamental goals of an organisation and its stakeholder (Verhoeven et al., 2014). Unfortunately for companies, these crisis situations occur frequently (Verhoeven et al., 2014). They often damage a company's reputation and disturb normal business (Carroll, 2017; Lerbinger, 2012; Lin, Spence, Sellnow, & Lachlan, 2016; Meadows & Meadows, 2016; Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). A clear example of this is the aftermath of Volkswagen's "emission scandal" which caused a quarterly loss of 127 million euros for the car manufacturer in 2016. This was a huge loss compared to the 780 million quarterly profit it made in the previous year, before the scandal became public (De Volkskrant, 2016). Despite this loss, Volkswagen recovered quite rapidly. This is not the case for every company: in the worst case, a corporate crisis can be the end of the organisation (Fearn-Banks, 2002; Seeger, et al., 2003). Therefore, corporate communication is central in the aftermath of a corporate crisis situation (Lin et al., 2016; Van der Meer, 2016).

Crisis response strategies

Whether deliberately or not, companies always use a certain crisis response strategy when responding to a corporate crisis situation. When a company is deliberately using a crisis response strategy, it can anticipate on stakeholders' possible reactions. This is done by presenting information in such a way that it can positively influence the public's perception of the crisis, and consequently the public's perception of the company (Coombs, 2007; Fatima Oliveira, 2013). These strategies can calm down emotions, diminish responsibility and/or control damages (Carroll, 2017; Coombs, 2007; Lerbinger, 2012; Meadows & Meadows, 2016; Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006; Onwumechili, 2018).

Several studies have distinguished crisis communication strategies (e.g. Benoit, 1997; Claeys & Cauberghe, 2012; Coombs, 2007; Park, 2017; Verhoeven et al., 2014). One of the founders of crisis communication theories is Benoit (1997) with his 'Image Restoration Theory'. Based on a body of existing theory and research, he gave five suggestions for companies to design messages during crises. He suggested that companies can influence the public opinion on a crisis situation by the following strategies: denying, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, mortification (admitting), or presenting corrective actions.

Coombs (2007) shared Benoit's belief in the power of communication in crisis situations. However, Coombs believed that the 'Image Restoration Theory' was missing a crucial link between elements of the crisis and effective crisis response strategies, namely, stakeholders' reactions towards the crisis. Coombs (2007) stated that a company's perceived responsibility for the crisis can predict these reactions. Therefore, he made a framework called the 'Situational Crisis Communication Theory'. In this framework, he integrated Benoit's (1997) strategies by matching them to three types of crises. According to this 'Situational Crisis Communication Theory', a denying strategy, in which the company would focus on the fact that it has no responsibility and/or role in the crisis situation, would be most effective if the public thinks that the company is the victim of a crisis. If the public sees the crisis as the result of an accident, in case of technical issues for example, a diminish strategy would be the best option. With a diminishing strategy, the company would minimize the size of and/or responsibility for the crisis. In case the public thinks the crisis was intentional or could have been prevented, a strategy that focusses on rebuilding the relationship with the stakeholders would be best. Examples of the 'rebuild' strategy would be apologising towards victims of the crisis and taking responsibility (Coombs, 2007).

This study, used a combination of the crisis response strategies distinguished by Benoit (1997) and Coombs (2007) in order to cover all crisis responses strategies that occurred in the corpus (see: Table 3).

Cultural differences in crisis response strategies

It can be concluded that previous studies have focussed on categorising crisis response strategies and matching them to certain types of crisis situations. This would suggest that companies choose a certain crisis response strategy based on the type of crisis situation they are in. However, as mentioned before, researchers also found a strong link between national cultural values and the way a company handles crises (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1990; Sha, 2006).

This link between national cultural values and the handling of crisis situations by companies has been widely studied. For example by Kim, Cha, and Kim (2008) who examined the crisis responses of South Korean companies. They found that crisis response strategies that focussed on loyalty towards a company, interpersonal relationships and harmony were considered adequate in South Korea. They explain this finding by pointing out that these crisis response strategies match South Korea's collectivistic values. South Korea scores 18/100 points on Hofstede's (n.d.)

individualism scale and is thus considered a country with a rather collectivistic culture. People's perceptions of what is an acceptable crisis response could therefore be affected by the level of individualism of their culture.

The effects of cultural values on the way crises are handled by companies can also be found when comparing companies from different countries. This was done by Haruta and Hallahan (2003) whom compared the crisis response strategies of a Japanese and an American company concerning a plane crash. They found that the biggest difference between the two crisis responses lied in the amount of apologies made by the CEOs. Even though the cause of the crash was still unknown, the Japanese CEO publicly apologised repeatedly to both the nation and the families involved. The American CEO in contrary, tried to diminish the situation by emphasising that the cause of the crash was still unknown and more information was needed to point out a culprit. According to Haruta and Hallahan (2003), an explanation for this difference in corporate crisis response could be culture. They explain that in Japanese culture an apology does not have to imply guilt, like it does in many Western cultures, but is a sign of deep sorrow and sympathy. Although Haruta and Hallahan's study (2003) does not specifically links these differences to the dimension 'individualism', this dimension could be an explanation. Japan scores 46/100 points on Hofstede's (n.d.) individualism scale which makes its culture considered relatively collectivistic compared to the United States, which culture is considered very individualistic with 91/100 points.

Another example of a study that compared crisis response strategies between countries, is the study of Verhoeven et al. (2014). In their study, they compared the use of different crisis response strategies by companies from several European countries. They found that crisis response strategies focussing on sympathy are more commonly used in Southern and Eastern Europe than in Western and Northern Europe. They indicate that cultural aspects play a role in these differences. Generally, all European countries are said to have more individualistic cultures than for example most Asian countries. However, this difference could be due to the fact that countries from North-West Europe generally score higher on the 'individualism' dimension compared to countries in the South-Eastern side of Europe.

Lastly, a study by Claeys and Cauberghe (2012), Lee (2004), and Park (2017) shows that in many Asian countries, silence is interpreted as wisdom and therefore 'no response' can be seen as an adequate crisis response. Whereas in Western cultures not responding is often an unsuccessful strategy because it is interpreted as uncertainty and lack of control (Coombs, 1999). It can therefore

be expected that a 'no response' strategy is used more often by companies from countries with more collectivistic cultures than by companies from countries with more individualistic cultures.

This study

Based on the previous mentioned studies, it can be assumed that a company's country-of-origin and its corresponding culture, is related to a company's crisis response strategy. When Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension 'individualism' is linked to this finding, a difference is expected between companies with individualistic and collectivistic cultural backgrounds. According to Taylor and Perry (2005), it is likely that these differences can be found in the news. Statements made by companies, so they explain, affect what is published about a corporate crisis in the news. This means that crisis response strategies, as interpreted by a journalist, can be found in media like newspapers.

The first difference that was expected to be found was based on the outcome of the study from Haruta and Hallahan's (2003). Their research that compared the response strategies from a Japanese and an American CEO, implicated that rather defensives strategies are more acceptable within rather individualistic cultures than in rather collectivistic cultures. This would implicate that a rather defensive strategy, like Coombs' (2007) 'diminish' strategy, appear more often in the newspapers in combination with a company with an individualistic cultural background. It would also implicate that the 'diminish' strategy would appear less often in combination with a company from a country with a more collectivistic culture as a 'diminish' strategy could harm the relational harmony. Therefore the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Companies in a crisis situation with an individualistic country-of-origin will more often appear in newspaper articles with the crisis response strategy 'diminish' than companies with a collectivistic country-of-origin.

The second difference in the use of crisis response strategies between companies with an individualistic and collectivistic cultural background was expected to be found in the use of 'no response' and a 'rebuild' strategy. This expectation was based on previous studies that have shown that strategies focussing on harmony and the avoidance of conflict seem to be more acceptable in collectivistic cultures (Haruta & Hallahan's, 2003; Kim, Cha, & Kim, 2008). An example is

apologising towards possible victims. This strategy matches Coombs' 'rebuild' strategy (2007), as it focusses on restoring harmony by taking responsibility and preventing further conflict. Previous research also showed that in many countries with more collectivistic cultures a 'no response' strategy is acceptable (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2012; Lee, 2004; Park (2017). In contrary, previous studies have shown that a 'no response' seems to be unacceptable in many individualistic cultures (Coombs, 1999). Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H2: Companies in a crisis situation with a collectivistic country-of-origin will more often appear in newspaper articles with the crisis response strategies 'no response' or 'rebuild' than companies with an individualistic country-of-origin.

Lastly, a similarity between companies with different cultural backgrounds was expected to be found in the use of a 'denial' strategy. On the one hand, Coombs' (2007) 'denial' strategy can be a way of trying not to become associated with the crisis situation. This can therefore be considered defensive and individualistic strategy as a company is trying to not getting harmed. On the other hand, Coombs' (2007) 'denial' strategy can be seen as a way to keep harmony by acting like nothing happened. and therefore a be considered a strategy that fits collectivistic values. Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H3: Companies with a collectivistic country-of-origin will appear in newspaper articles with the crisis response strategy 'denial' as often as companies with an individualistic country-of-origin.

Corporate crises in newspapers

Ni (2008) claims that the public's perception of a corporate crisis is equally important as, if not more important than, the actual crisis. This perception may not be dependent on just simply the combination of crisis type and the company's response, which Coombs' 'Situational Crisis Communication Theory' (2007) suggests. Instead, An and Gower (2009) argue that the public's view on a crisis depends on what journalists portray about it. According to Carroll (2017), Meadows and Meadows (2016), Meijer and Kleinnijenhuis (2006), and Onwumechili (2018), this is due to the fact that on the one hand, an organisation is largely dependent on journalists to transmit their

message to the public. The public, on the other hand, is also largely dependent on journalists, as it can be hard for individuals to find information directly distributed by the company regarding corporate crises (An & Gower, 2009). Journalists are known to be very willing to fill in this information gap as companies are key players in a society's economy. Corporate crises and scandals are therefore extremely newsworthy (Benoit, 2015). In other words, a company's crisis response strategy will most likely be interpreted by a journalist and influence the public's view on the corporate crisis through media like newspapers.

Framing of corporate crises by journalists

When writing about corporate crises and scandals, it is almost impossible for journalists to present news articles with only objective facts. Kiouisis, Popescu and Mitrook (2007) suggest that this is impossible due to the fact that journalists always have to make decisions on which attributes of a crisis to ignore and which attributes to place emphasis on. Therefore, whether deliberately or not, journalists are always 'framing' corporate crises. The most commonly used definition of framing was drawn up by Entman (1993, p.52): *"to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described"*. Framing can thus be seen as giving a story a certain 'spin'. With this 'spin', media attention can influence the way the general public sees a topic (Burgers, Konijn, & Steen, 2016; Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 1999).

For example, two companies are merging and the negotiations are not running as smoothly as both parties hoped for. A journalist can then decide to write about the situation as a 'battle'. This image of a battle can shape the idea of a situation in which two parties are present, they dislike each other, and only one of them can win. If the journalists describes the merge as a 'marriage', this will most likely result in an image in which both parties love each other, have some struggles, but will manage to come to consent. How badly damaged a company gets, could therefore depend on how the situation was framed by the media. According to Shah et al. (2002) and De Vreese (2005), a journalist can construct a frame by selecting information, and decide on how to communicate this information by making choices on quotation and language use.

This research focussed on all three aspects of framing as described by Shah et al. (2002) and De Vreese (2005). Firstly on 'information' by analysing the kind of crisis response strategies that

were found in the newspaper articles (as presented in H1, H2 en H3). Secondly, on 'quotation' by analysing whether or not a company's comment about the crisis was mentioned and whom (else) was quoted within these articles about corporate crises. Lastly, on 'language use' by analysing the appearance of metaphorical frames. The next two paragraphs will go into further details about quotation and language use.

Quotation

Making use of quotations is considered a powerful 'framing device' for journalists (Gibson & Zillmann, 1993). Together with making choices about language it can be used by journalists to frame information about a corporate crisis. Gibson & Zillmann (1993) found support for the notion that, in print news reports like newspaper articles, quotation can greatly influence readers' judgements of issues and even change their perceptions of reality. In case of a corporate crisis, this would mean that the use of quotation could influence how the public perceives the crisis situation, and consequently the company in crisis. Spokespersons from companies in crisis try to have an influence on how their company is presented in the news by making official statements. By doing so, they try to encourage journalists to quote them. Research by Taylor and Perry (2005) has shown that this is quite effective as a full quote from a company leader ends up in 12% of the news coverage of a crisis and a partial quote in 28% of the news stories.

However, Gibson & Zillmann (1993) also found that whether or not a quote actually influences the readers' views, depends on how it is written down by the journalist. In their study, three groups of respondents had to read a newspaper article that challenged the safety of amusement parks. One group received an article containing direct quotes, a second group received an article with indirect quotes, and a third control group received an article without any quotation. Although all three versions of the article contained the same information, the group that had read the article that contained direct quotes was much more likely to question the overall safety of amusement parks than the groups with the indirect quotes and no quotes condition. Gibson and Zillmann (1993) explain this finding by pointing out that people tend to see direct quotes as more truthful and reliable than indirect ones. By putting a sentence or a part of a sentence between quotation marks, a journalist implies that the statement is an exact replication of a source's words. This is said to transfer that source's beliefs and emotions to the reader. Readers pay less attention to indirect quotes, being statements in third person, because it is clear that the original information was

rephrased and the source may have been tampered with by the journalist (Gibson & Zillmann, 1993).

Because of this research by Gibson and Zillmann (1993), we know that a journalist is able to frame a corporate crisis by reporting the crisis response strategy and combining this information with quotation. By making choices on whether or not to use the company as a source, and if so, whether to quote it directly or indirectly, the journalist is able to construct a frame. As this research focussed on how corporate crisis is framed in Dutch media, the following research question was formulated:

RQ1: How are reported crisis response strategies combined with quotes from the company in crisis in Dutch newspaper articles?

By using quotation, a journalists can present different views on the crisis response strategy as represented by the company in crisis (De Vreese, 2005; Gibson & Zillmann, 1993). Examples of different views on a corporate crisis are the views of a (former) employee of the company itself, a victim of the crisis, and the view of a politician. If journalists do not attempt to represent all points of view on a corporate crisis, they have the ability of swaying the reader's opinions about the crisis to one side of an issue without them realising this (Gibson & Zillmann, 1993). Therefore, it is not only relevant to know if, and how, the company in crisis is quoted in combination with a certain crisis response strategy, but also which other types of people are quoted by the journalist. Knowledge about potential patterns in the use of quotation in combination with reported crisis response strategies would be a valuable addition to the framing theory. Therefore, the following research question was formulated:

RQ2: How are reported crisis response strategies combined with quotations from different types of sources in Dutch newspaper articles?

Metaphors

Making use of quotation is not the only way to frame a corporate crisis response. Another important framing device is language use (Shah et al., 2002; De Vreese, 2005). With language, journalists make decisions on how information about a corporate crisis is presented to society. By using

figurative language, journalists can activate people's conceptualisations of emotional experiences. This gives journalists the ability to present information in such a way that it evokes emotional reactions (Gibbs, Leggitt & Turner, 2002). The effects of figurative language has been widely studied (e.g. Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016; Gibbs, Leggitt & Turner, 2002; Semino, 2008) and is proven to be an effective framing device.

A prototypical example of figurative language is the use of metaphors. Metaphors are used as means to talk about a certain concept (e.g. a corporate crisis) in terms of another concept (e.g. a disease). By using a metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) explain, a journalist can make the audience focus on one aspect of a concept (e.g. the disease can be fixed/healed) and keep them from focussing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor. In other words, it is a process of highlighting and hiding which can influence reasoning (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Metaphorical framing is said to be one of the most important shaping tools for the achievement of persuasion (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016; De Vreese, 2005; Semino, 2008; Sopory & Dillard, 2002). This makes metaphorical framing particularly relevant in the context of challenging issues and societal debates and thus, corporate crisis situations (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016).

A recent study showed the power of metaphor by describing its effects on how cancer treatment is perceived (Semino, Demjén, Hardie, Rayson, & Payne, 2017). The researchers compared the two most commonly used cancer metaphors: 'journey' and 'fight'. They found that different metaphors facilitate different ways of making sense of an experience or topic. When cancer was described as a 'journey' it highlighted the importance of reaching one's destination, namely getting healthy. It also evoked associations like having to overcome obstacles on the way. When the cancer treatment was described as a 'fight', the disease became an enemy that had to be fought down. This frame, in which the relationship between the illness and the patient is described as a 'battle', has often been criticized as it implies that people who did not overcome the disease did not fight hard enough (Semino, et al., 2017). This example shows how metaphors have the ability to change people's way of thinking about a certain topic.

Metaphorical frames

It is not a coincidence that the two most commonly used metaphorical frames for cancer are a 'journey' and a 'fight'. Research on framing of issues and societal debates shows that a great variety of figurative expressions can be clustered into four set of conventional metaphorical frames,

namely: ‘health / human body’, ‘war / game’, ‘path’, and ‘love / marriage’ (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Joris, d’Haenens, & Van Gorp, 2014; Koller, 2002; Semino, 2008). The ‘journey’ metaphor from the study of Semino et al. (2017) would be an example of the ‘path’ frame, and the ‘fight’ metaphor would be an example of the ‘war / game’ frame.

It can be concluded that the conventional metaphorical frames as mentioned above, can be a powerful framing device for media to shape public discourse about corporate crises (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Lerbinger, 2012). However, what previous studies have not yet dealt with, is how these metaphorical frames are used by Dutch journalists to frame information about corporate crises. Therefore, the following research question was formulated:

RQ3: How are certain conventional metaphorical frames used within Dutch newspaper articles about corporate crises?

As mass media, like newspapers, are still said to be the most important and most frequently used crisis communication instrument (An & Gower, 2009; Verhoeven et al., 2014), it is relevant to understand how corporate crises is framed within this medium. Therefore, this study focusses on Dutch newspapers. The outcomes of the hypotheses testing and the answers to the research questions cover all three aspects of framing. It covers ‘information’ by studying the crisis response strategies as reported by the journalists and the possible influence of cultural backgrounds from the company in crisis on this. It also covers ‘quotation’ and ‘language use’ (De Vreese, 2005; Shah et al., 2002;) by analysing quotes and metaphorical frames. Therefore, it will answer the overall question:

How are corporate crises framed in Dutch media?

Method

Materials

A corpus-based study was conducted to test the hypotheses and to answer the research questions. The corpus consisted of data that was gathered using convenience sampling. Twenty corporate crisis cases were selected. It was expected that the level of individualism from a company's country-of-origin could affect the crisis response strategy that is reported in the media. Therefore, ten cases were crisis situations from companies with a more individualistic country-of-origin, and ten cases were corporate crises from more collectivistic countries.

The United States of America, Japan and China are all three in the top of the world's biggest export countries ("Top exporting countries worldwide 2017", n.d.). Therefore, organisations which have their origin in these countries will often be relevant for the Dutch audience. This makes it likely that American, Japanese and Chinese organisations in crisis situations will often appear in the Dutch media. In addition, these countries differ maximally on their level of individualism (Hofstede, 1980). On a scale from 1-120, the United States of America scores 91 points and the Netherlands 80. Thus, these two countries can be described as very individualistic. In contrast, Japan has a score of 46 and China 20, which makes these countries very collectivistic (Hofstede, n.d.). Therefore, companies with The Netherlands or the United States of America as their country-of-origin were picked as 'the individualistic part of the and companies with Japan or China as their country-of-origin as 'the collectivistic part of the corpus'. Per country, five cases were selected that were well-known cases from companies in crisis that had appeared in Dutch media.

As mass media like newspapers are still said to play a central role in shaping public's perception (An & Gower, 2009; Verhoeven et al., 2014), the corpus contained texts from Dutch newspapers. The newspaper articles were selected from news database "NexisUni" by searching for words that indicated that particular crisis case. To ensure that the corpus consisted of news articles covering different moments of the crisis event (the run-up, the peak, and aftermath), articles were selected that had appeared in Dutch newspapers between one month before the crisis event and five months after. NexisUni arranged the articles by relevance, showing the ones that matched the search terms best first. Exact copies of articles were filtered out. Some cases had had more news coverage than others, resulting in unequal amounts of articles. In order to keep the corpus a balanced variation of cases, a maximum of 50 articles per case were checked on relevance and added to the corpus. When a case had more than 50 articles, the 50 that appeared first in NexisUni were selected.

The relevance check was based on the following criteria:

- The article was published in a Dutch newspaper (any source marked as ‘newspaper’ on NexisUni);
- The article’s main focus was the crisis situation from the organisation that was selected as a case;
- The organisation involved with the crisis had a Dutch, American, Japanese or Chinese origin.

The gathering of the corpus as described above, resulted in a 606 unique and relevant articles (see Table 1). A full list of the search terms, the time settings, and the exact numbers of articles that did and did not get selected can be found in Appendix A. The units that were analysed were the headings and body texts of the newspaper articles.

Table 1: Composition of corpus

Individualistic / Collectivistic	Country-of-origin	Company	Articles <i>N</i>
Individualistic	The Netherlands	Heineken	28
		Hema	16
		Shell	26
		ING	45
		Tata Steel	40
	USA	Facebook	34
		Google	13
		Pepsi	20
		Tesla	21
		Uber	48
Collectivistic	Japan	Kobe Steel	11
		Nissan	40
		Sony Pictures	48
		Takata	30
		Mitsubishi	46
	China	Anbang	41
		Didi Chuxing	8
		Huawei	37
		JD.com	6
		Sanlu	48
Total Individualistic			291
Total Collectivistic			315
Total corpus			606

The corpus was gathered from all newspapers and other news sources that were labelled by NexisUni as ‘newspaper’. This means mostly newspapers were included, but also, for example, news agency “ANP”. This resulted in a corpus containing articles from 39 different sources. The top 10 sources that appeared most frequently can be found in Table 2. A complete overview of the newspapers and number of articles that were used from it, can be found in Appendix B.

Table 2: top 10 newspapers that appeared most frequently in the corpus

Newspaper	Articles	
	<i>N</i>	% of total corpus
1. FD	106	17.5
2. ANP	76	12.5
3. de Volkskrant	46	7.6
4. nrc Handelsblad	38	6.3
5. Trouw	35	5.8
6. nrc Next	34	5.6
7. Het Parool	29	4.8
8. De Telegraaf	26	4.3
9. nd	26	4.3
10. AD	23	3.8
Total number of articles from top 10 newspapers	439	72.5

Procedure

Firstly, every newspaper article was analysed on ‘information’, in order to test the hypotheses. The ‘information’ analysis focussed on whether or not a crisis response strategy could be found in the article, and if so, which one(s). This was done using a coding scheme. As described in the theoretical framework, the crisis response strategies were analysed using a coding scheme based on a combination of the crisis response strategies distinguished by Benoit (1997) and Coombs (2007). Initially, only the three crisis response strategies ‘denial’, ‘diminish’, and ‘rebuild’ as distinguished by Coombs (2007) and ‘no response’ were used for this study. However, during the coding process it was found that not all types of crisis response strategies that could be found in the corpus, could fit one of Coombs categories. Examples were cases in which the journalist reported that the company in crisis did promises, announced to start an investigation, take measurements, or disclose more information. As these actions fit perfectly in the crisis response strategy “corrective action’, formulated by Benoit (1997), this strategy was also added to the coding scheme of this study.

However, some actions from the company in crisis that were described in the newspaper articles would still not fit into any of the five categories. An example of such is the description of a company that admitted fault of the crisis, without diminishing the crisis nor rebuilding the brand. Another example is a case in which a company paid a penalty (to a government) without compromising any possible victims of the situation. To make sure these cases could also be included in the study, the category “other strategy” was added to the coding scheme. This resulted in the crisis response strategy coding scheme as described in Table 3. A more elaborate version of this scheme can be found in Appendix C.

Table 3: Reported crisis response strategies

Strategy	No response	Denial	Diminish	Rebuild
Key characteristics	- No comment	- Did not perform act - Shift blame: Act was done by someone else - There is no crisis	- Excuse - Justification	- Apology - Asks for forgiveness - Compensation
Strategy	Corrective action	Other strategy	No strategy	
Key characteristics	- Measurements - Investigation - Informing - Promises	- Other...	- No clear strategy seems to be used - Objective information only	

In total, the number of articles without a clear crisis response strategy was 215 (35% of total corpus), leaving a group of 391 articles that could be further analysed on the possible influence of ‘culture’ (H1, H2 & H3). Of these 391 articles, 145 were articles about companies with an individualistic country-of-origin and 164 articles about companies with a collectivistic country-of-origin. According to Neuendorf (2012), at least two coders should have at least 10% overlap in order to do a reliability test and establish intercoder reliability. Therefore three other coders together coded a total of 10% of the corpus on the variable ‘Crisis response strategy’. This resulted in a satisfactory interrater reliability for the second coder: $\kappa = .71$, $p = <.001$, for the third coder: $\kappa = .70$, $p = <.001$, and for the fourth coder $\kappa = .75$, $p = <.001$. As the interrater reliability score was considered satisfactory, the coding of the first coder was used for further analyses.

To be able to draw conclusions on how this information, these reported crisis response strategies, were combined by journalists with ‘quotation’ (RQ1 & RQ2) and ‘language use’ (RQ3),

only articles containing no more than one strategy, were used for further analyses. Therefore, the corpus used to analyse ‘quotation’ and ‘language use’ contained 309 articles.

The second element of the newspaper articles that was studied was ‘quotation’. This was done by analysing how the use of quotation was combined with ‘information’ (the reported crisis response strategies) within the newspaper articles. ‘Quotation’ was split up into two research questions. The first research question focussed on whether or not the company in crisis was used as a source to describe the information. The second research question focussed on what kind of people were quoted within newspaper articles describing these crisis response strategies. For the first research question, three coding options were used:

1. Direct: Someone from the company in crisis was directly quoted: *a quote between quotation marks*;
2. Indirect: The company was indirectly quoted: *“According to the company (...)”*;
3. Not used as source: The newspaper article contained no direct or indirect quotes from the company.

In case an article contained both one or more direct quotes as well as indirect quotes, the article was coded as ‘1’. Option ‘2’, was coded using a list of words that can indicate an indirect quote. This list can be found in Appendix C. When an article pointed out that the company did not want to respond, this was coded as an indirect response (see Figure 1: Examples indirect quotation ‘no-response’).

“On Wednesday night, Hema replied that it does not want comment on the case since the process has not yet been finalised” [Translation TH] (“Hema liet woensdagavond weten niet te reageren nu de procedure nog loopt.” FD, 2018a)

“Shell did not answer the question” [Translation TH] (“Shell geeft geen antwoord op de vraag” FD, 2018b).

Figure 1: Examples indirect quotation ‘no-response’

The second research question covering the framing device ‘quotation’ focussed on what kind of people were quoted in combination with these crisis response strategies. Therefore, all newspaper articles containing one crisis response strategy were coded on the kind of people that were directly quoted within it. A small-scale pre-test resulted in a list of 10 categories of people that

were quoted within the article (See Appendix C). Chairs of the board of directors, presidents and people in similarly high positions were coded as '1. CEO/CFO'. When only the name of the company was mentioned as the source of a quote, this was coded as '2. spokesperson'. Within the category '5. expert' only experts from outside the company were coded. When an expert from the company itself was quoted, or any other employee, this was coded as '3. other employee'. Category 4 was for quotes from 'former employees' and category 6 for 'politicians'. The category '7. prosecution' included the public prosecutor and judges. Within the category '8. victim', people who suffered from the crisis situation as well as their possible representatives (e.g. the lawyer of a group of victims) were coded. The ninth category 'other person' contained, among others, supervisors, spokespersons of competitors, writers of books about the crisis, members of a committee of inquiry, aid organisations, and bloggers. Sometimes the journalists put quotation marks in a phrase to emphasize that these words were not hers/his, without telling the reader whose words it were. In these cases the quote was coded as '10. unclear'. Quotes from different people within the same category were not coded individually. For example, in case of two experts being quoted within one article, this would be marked on the code form as 'at least one expert was quoted'. In case no quotation was used within the article, the article was coded as '11, no quotation'.

The third, and last, framing device that was analysed was the presence of four conventional metaphorical frames in combination with the crisis response strategies. These frames were determined from the studies as mentioned between brackets:

- Health / human body (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Joris, d'Haenens, & Van Gorp, 2014; Semino, 2008);
- War / game (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Joris, d'Haenens, & Van Gorp, 2014; Koller, 2002; Semino, 2008);
- Path (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Semino, 2008);
- Love / marriage (Koller, 2002; Semino, 2008).

The coding of the metaphors was done mostly top-down. As Braun & Clarke (2006) describe, it can be seen as a thematic analysis as a code book was made to determine what words or word combination indicated a certain metaphorical frame. In the first place, these lists were based on translations of and variations on examples from the literature. These lists were supplemented with other words and word combinations that indicated one of the four selected metaphorical frames that were found in a small-scale pre-test. As can be seen in the code book (Appendix C), this

resulted in four lists of various sizes, with words and word combinations that could indicate one of the formulated conventional metaphorical frames. To determine whether the words and word combinations from the lists were used metaphorically and not literally, they were analysed within their linguistic context. This was done using the analyses program “AntConc”.

AntConc was used to filter out all the words and word combinations from the lists that could indicated a certain metaphorical frame (See Appendix C). It showed the article in which the word or word combination appeared and also part of the phrase in which the word was placed in the article. This piece of context was used to determine whether the word, which represents a conceptual domain, was meant literally or referred to another conceptual domain (Kovecses, 2002) and is thus used metaphorically. For example, in Figure 2, the word “couple” was filtered out by AntConc as a possible indicator of the “love / marriage” frame. As the couple does not literally refer to two people having a relationship, but rather to the company (Tata Steel) and the group of stakeholders, this was coded as a “love / marriage” metaphor.

“Just like a couple that had just thrown a party to celebrate their anniversary and is fighting over the household effects a few months later” [Translation TH] (“Als een stel dat net een knalvuif heeft gegeven om hun huwelijksjubileum te vieren en een paar maanden later over de inboedel loopt te vechten” Kreling & Schoorl, 2019).

Figure 2: Example Love/Marriage frame

Statistical treatment and qualitative analyses

The hypotheses contained a possible relation between two categorical variables, namely ‘Culture’ and ‘Crisis response strategy’. The same counts for the first research question that focussed on ‘Company in crisis as a source’ and ‘Crisis response strategy’. Hence, two chi-square tests were used to test the hypotheses and answer this research question.

The second and third research questions were answered using a qualitative approach. The combinations between crisis response strategies and quotation and crisis response strategies and metaphor use were analysed with more in-dept text analyses. This was done by looking at frequencies of combinations and by searching for examples from the newspapers that indicate patterns.

Results

This study focussed on framing of corporate crisis in Dutch newspaper articles by looking at what (*information*) was reported by journalists and how (*quotation & language use*) this information was reported. The hypotheses covering '*Information*' were tested by conducting a chi-square test. These hypotheses tested whether or not the crisis response strategies, as reported by the journalist, were related to the culture (*individualistic* versus *collectivistic*) of the company in crisis' country-of-origin. Research question one and two, which focussed on '*quotation*' in combination with the crisis response strategies, were answered using a combination of a chi-square test and qualitative text analyses. The third research question, which focussed on '*language use*' by analysing the combination of crisis response strategies and metaphors, was answered using only qualitative text analyses.

Information – Reported crisis response strategies

Table 4 shows how often the different categories of crisis response strategies occurred in the corpus. 'corrective action' appeared most often (39%) and "no response" least (4%).

Table 4: Occurrence of crisis response strategies

Strategy	Articles	
	<i>N</i>	%
Corrective action	152	39
Multiple strategies	82	21
Denial	58	15
Other strategy	35	9
Rebuild	27	7
Diminish	22	6
No response	15	4
Total	391	100

Sometimes more than one crisis response strategy could be deduced from the article (21%) (See Table 5). In order to be able to draw conclusions about the combination of sources and language use with the different crisis response strategies, the articles should only contain one strategy. Therefore, the group of articles with multiple strategies were analysed separately.

Table 5: Number of strategies used per article

Number of response strategies in article	Articles	
	<i>N</i>	%
1	309	79
2	73	19
3	7	2
4	2	1
Total	391	100

Eighty-two articles in the corpus contained multiple crisis response strategies. This was 21% of the total number of articles with a clear crisis response strategy. Most articles of this group contained a combination of two strategies, seven articles had a combination of three strategies and in two articles four types of crisis response strategies were reported. As can be seen from the data in Table 6, ‘corrective action’ and ‘rebuild’ were the two strategies that occurred most often in combination with each other within the newspaper articles.

Table 6: Occurrence of combinations of two crisis response strategies

Strategy	<i>N</i>	Corrective action	Denial	Diminish	No response	Other strategy	Rebuild
		<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
Corrective action	<i>N</i>						
Denial	<i>N</i>	17					
Diminish	<i>N</i>	10	2				
Noresponse	<i>N</i>	2	8	5			
Other strategy	<i>N</i>	3	0	0	0		
Rebuild	<i>N</i>	23	3	0	0	0	

Information – Reported crisis response strategies & culture

A Chi-square test showed no significant relationship between crisis response strategy and culture ($\chi^2(5) = 9.48, p = .091$). This means that this study does not provide evidence for a connection between the crisis response strategy that is reported by journalists in the newspapers and the individualistic or collectivistic values of the country-of-origins from the companies in crisis (see Table 7).

Table 7: Crisis response strategies in articles about companies with individualistic and collectivistic countries-of-origin

Strategy	Individualistic country-of-origin			Collectivistic country-of-origin			Total	
	<i>N</i>	Expected count	%	<i>N</i>	Expected count	%	<i>N</i>	%
Corrective action	79 _a	71	55	73 _a	80	45	152	49
Denial	28 _a	27	19	30 _a	31	18	58	19
Other strategy	11 _a	16	8	24 _a	19	15	35	11
Rebuild	15 _a	13	10	12 _a	14	7	27	9
Diminish	6 _a	10	4	16 _a	12	10	22	7
Noresponse	6 ^a	7	4	9 _a	8	6	15	5
Total	145	145	100	164	164	100	309	100

Different subscript letters denote row proportions which differ significantly from each other at the .05 level

Quotation – The organisation in crisis as a source

A Chi-square showed a significant relationship between the variables ‘crisis response strategy’ and ‘use of company in crisis as source’ ($\chi^2(10) = 60.85, p < .001$). This means that the crisis response strategy that could be deduced from the newspaper article was related to whether or not the company in crisis was directly or indirectly quoted by the journalist.

Table 8: The use of organisation in crisis as a source within the newspaper articles

Strategy	Direct			Indirect			No quotation		
	<i>N</i>	Expected count	%	<i>N</i>	Expected count	%	<i>N</i>	Expected count	%
Corrective action	30 _a	41	36	34 _a	47	35	88 _b	64	68
Denial	29 _a	16	35	16 _b	18	17	13 _b	24	10
Diminish	8 _{a, b}	6	10	11 _b	7	12	3 _a	9	2
Noresponse	3 _{a, b}	4	4	11 _b	5	12	1 _a	6	1
Other strategy	4 _a	9	5	17 _b	11	18	14 _{a, b}	15	11
Rebuild	9 _a	7	11	7 _a	8	7	11 _a	11	9
Total	83	83	100	96	96	100	130	130	100

Different subscript letters denote row proportions which differ significantly from each other at the .05 level

Corrective action

As can be seen from table 8, newspaper articles containing a corrective action strategy appeared relatively more often in the news without any quotation from the company in crisis than with a direct or indirect quotes. When the journalists did use the company as a source, direct and indirect quotes occurred equally frequently.

Denial

Table 8 shows that when a denial strategy could be deduced from the newspaper article, this was relatively more often combined with a direct quote from the company in crisis than with an indirect quote or no quote. No significant difference was found in the number of articles in which the company in crisis was indirectly quoted and articles without quotation from the company in crisis.

Diminish

Newspaper articles containing a diminish strategy contained relatively more indirect quotes from the company in crisis than no quotation. As can be seen in Table 8, no significant differences were found between the relative amount of direct and indirect quotation nor between direct quotation and no quotation.

No response

Newspaper articles in which a no response strategy could be deduced contained relatively more often indirect quotes from the company in crisis than no quotes. No significant difference was found between the occurrence of articles with indirect and direct quotation, nor between the occurrence of articles with direct and no quotation.

Rebuild

As can be seen from the data in Table 8, no significant differences were found in the use of the company in crisis as a source within article containing a rebuild strategy. All three options (direct quotation, indirect quotation, and no quotation) appeared relatively equally.

Quotation – different types of sources

The previous section covered whether or not the company in crisis was indirectly or directly quoted. This section does not merely focus on the company in crisis, but covers all sources that are quoted. In this part of the study only direct quotation that appeared within the newspaper articles was analysed. About half of the newspaper articles contained one or more direct quotes (see Table 9).

Table 9: Quotation in newspaper articles

Strategy	Articles	
	N	%
One or more quote(s)	163	53
No quotation	146	47
Total	309	100

Table 10: The appearance of quotes from different types of sources within each crisis response strategy

Strategy (<i>N</i> = <i>number of articles</i>)	Corrective action (152)	Denial (58)	Diminish (22)	No response (15)	Other strategy (35)	Rebuild (27)	All strategies (309)
Type of source	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
CEO/CFO	20	12	3	3	4	7	49
Expert	15	10	1	1	4	4	35
Former employee	8	0	1	0	0	2	11
Prosecution	7	1	0	0	0	2	10
Other employee	3	6	0	2	0	2	13
Other person	21	5	3	1	5	4	39
Politician	18	17	4	0	8	3	50
Spokesperson	19	17	7	1	0	1	45
Unclear	1	3	1	2	1	1	9
Victim	4	4	1	2	1	1	13
Total number of quotations	116	75	21	12	23	27	274

Corrective action

Eighty-seven percent of all articles with a corrective action strategy contained quotation. As the table above shows, the category ‘Other person’ was mostly quoted. This category included for example other journalists, but also writers of books about the crisis situation. An example of the latter was the writer of a book about Heineken’s promotion girls in Africa. He was used by the journalist as a source to describe the situations of these promotion girls. Quotes from CEOs and CFOs were also often used by journalists in newspaper articles with a crisis response strategy.

Denial

Articles that contained a denying strategy were, with a mean of 1.3 quotations per article, the articles in which most quotations occurred. Fifty-nine percent of the articles with this strategy contained quotations. Spokespersons and politicians were quoted mostly. Politicians were often quoted when a crisis situation at a company revealed a larger societal issue. When it came out that Shell did not have to pay any income taxes, its CEO denied the crisis situation by telling the audience that Shell did everything according to the Dutch law. As this turned out to be true, the crisis situation evoked a political discussion, which was mentioned within articles about the crisis situation. An example of this can be found in Figure 3.

“Shell makes use of all kinds of loopholes. We have to thoroughly look into this.” [Translation TH]

(“Shell maakt gebruik van allerlei mazen die in de wetgeving zit. Daar moeten wij secuur naar kijken.” Brandsma, 2018)

Figure 3: Example quote from spokesperson within article with diminish strategy

Diminish

Fifty-nine percent of the articles in which a diminishing strategy could be deduced contained at least one quote. Of all types of sources, spokespersons of the company in crisis were quoted mostly (see Table 10). An example of a diminish strategy in combination with a quote from a spokesperson that could be found in the corpus can be seen in Figure 4.

“Heineken shares that these practices “fully go against everything this company stands for”. The brewery does point out that the girls are employed by an external agency. This makes monitoring harder.” [Translation TH]

(“Heineken laat weten dat deze praktijken „volledig indruisen tegen waar we als bedrijf voor staan”. De brouwer wijst er wel op dat de meisjes in dienst zijn van externe bureaus. Dat bemoeilijkt de controle.” Dagblad van het Noorden, 2018)

Figure 4: Example quote from spokesperson within article with diminish strategy

No response

Sixty percent of the articles with a ‘no response’ strategy contained one or more quotes. As only 15 articles contained a ‘no response’ strategy, no hard conclusion can be drawn about the type of sources that gets quoted mostly. However, as can be seen in Table 10, in 5 articles it was an employee of the company in crisis that was quoted. Namely, a CEO/CFO, spokesperson or other employee. These quotes were not only the “I do not want to comment” ones, they were also quotes on other topics. An example of such direct quotation can be found in Figure 5.

“We will not be forced to reveal our confidential information”

[Translation TH]

(“We laten ons niet dwingen vertrouwelijke informatie op straat te gooien” Van der Boon, 2018)

Figure 5: Example quote from a spokesperson within article with no-response strategy

Rebuild

56% of all articles with a rebuild strategy contained one or more direct quotes. CEOs and CFOs were quoted relatively more often compared to other types of sources within these articles. An example of such a quote is a quote from Nissan’s CEO (see Figure 6).

“Saikawa started the press conference with a 7 minute lasting apology in which he said to have and feel “not only regrets, but also great disappointment, frustration, despair, and resentment”

[Translation TH]

(“In een 7 minuten durend sorry waarmee Saikawa maandag de persconferentie begon, liet hij weten “naast spijt ook grote teleurstelling, frustratie, wanhoop, verontwaardiging en wrok” te voelen.” Vermaas & Houtekamer, 2018).

Figure 6: Example quote from a CEO within article with rebuild strategy

Language use - Metaphors

The third research question focused on possible patterns within newspaper articles between crisis response strategies and the use of metaphorical frames. Table 11 provides an overview of the presence of the four metaphorical frames that were selected for this study, divided by crisis response strategy. An in-dept text analysis showed some patterns in terms of metaphor use in combination with crisis response strategies within the newspaper articles. These patterns could be found in the combinations of metaphorical frames with quotes or in the specific context of the crisis. These types of patterns are described below, divided per crisis response strategy.

Table 11: Number of metaphors in corpus divided per metaphorical frame and crisis response strategy

Strategy	Corrective action (152)	Denial (58)	Diminish (22)	No response (15)	Other strategy (35)	Rebuild (27)	Total (309)
Metaphorical frame	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
Health/Human body	39 (27%)	15 (24%)	9 (50%)	6 (40%)	5 (20%)	7 (21%)	81 (27%)
Love/Marriage	12 (8%)	5 (8%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	4 (16%)	5 (15%)	27 (9%)
Path	47 (33%)	22 (35%)	3 (16%)	5 (33%)	4 (16%)	10 (30%)	91 (30%)
War/Game	44 (31%)	20 (32%)	6 (33%)	3 (20%)	12 (48%)	11 (33%)	96 (32%)
Total	142 (100%)	62 (100%)	18 (100%)	15 (100%)	25 (100%)	33 (100%)	295 (100%)

Corrective action

In articles with a ‘corrective action’ strategy, metaphors that represented a ‘path’ were mostly used to explain the current context of the crisis situation or to visualise the situation after corrective actions were carried out. An example of this can be found in figure 7.

“But, Hamers [CEO] wants to take a big jump forwards”

[Translation TH]

(“Maar Hamers [CEO] wil een grote sprong voorwaarts maken”
Bökkerink, Couwenbergh, & Van der Boon, 2019).

Figure 7: Example ‘path’ metaphor within article containing a ‘Corrective action’ strategy

Denial

Articles in which it was reported that a company denied the crisis, often contained metaphors from the ‘path’ frame that were used in quotes by the ‘opposite party’. Examples of this opposite party were victims of the crisis or politicians that disagreed with the companies’ statement. The ‘path’ metaphors were used to express the change they wanted to see. Examples of the latter are the quote in figure 8 and 9.

*“The surroundings are the starting point, the goal is to reduce the
nuisance”* [Translation TH]

(Uitgangspunt is de omgeving, met als doel het terugbrengen van
de overlast” Van Eijk, 2019)

Figure 8: Example ‘path’ metaphor within article containing a ‘Denial’ strategy

*“(…) there hasn’t been much progress in reducing the
environmental nuisance”* [Translation TH]

(“(…) tot dusver weinig vooruitgang is geboekt in het
verminderen van de milieuhinder.” Vuijk, 2019)

Figure 9: Example ‘path’ metaphor within article containing a ‘Denial’ strategy

Diminish

In newspaper articles in which it was reported that companies tried to diminish the crisis, journalists often compared the crisis itself with a disease or ‘unhealthy’ situation (‘Health/Human body’ frame). An example of such metaphor use can be found in figure 10.

“Since the financial crisis, banks are considered infected”

[Translation TH]

“Sinds de kredietcrisis gelden banken als besmet” Haegens, 2018)

Figure 10: Example ‘health/ human body’ metaphor within article containing a ‘Diminish’ strategy

No response

Within articles containing a ‘no response’ strategy, the ‘health/human body’ frame was often used by the journalist and by external experts. These ‘health/human body’ metaphors often described actions of the company leaders and/or the company in crisis itself. This is illustrated with the two examples in figure 11 and 12.

“The smeared and money bleeding Uber” [Translation TH]

(“Het besmeurde, geldbloedende Uber” Stil, 2017)

Figure 11: Example ‘health/ human body’ metaphor within article containing a ‘NoResponse’ strategy

“He was on top of it with his nose” [Translation TH]

(“Hij zat er met zijn neus bovenop” Jessayan, 2018)

Figure 12: Example ‘health/ human body’ metaphor within article containing a ‘NoResponse’ strategy

Rebuild

Within the articles that contained a ‘rebuild’ strategy, metaphors belonging to the ‘war/game’ frame were often used to describe the context of the lawsuit belonging to the crisis. Two examples of this can be found in figure 13 and 14.

“(…) led by a legal heavyweight” [Translation TH]

(“(…) onder leiding van een juridisch zwaargewicht” Van Noort, 2017)

Figure 13: Example ‘war/game’ metaphor within article containing a ‘rebuild’ strategy

“The battle in the courtroom” [Translation TH]

(“De strijd in de rechtszaal” Van der Ploeg, 2017)

Figure 14: Example ‘war/game’ metaphor within article containing a ‘rebuild’ strategy

Conclusion & Discussion

This study raised the question how corporate crises are framed in Dutch newspaper articles. It focussed on two elements of framing; ‘what’ was reported (*information*), and ‘how’ this was done (*quotation and language use*).

Information – reported crisis response strategies

The information within the newspaper articles was analysed by focussing on the crisis response strategies used by companies and consequently reported by the journalist. Regarding the articles that contained multiple strategies, the data showed that especially the combination of ‘corrective action’ and ‘rebuild’ occurred more often than any other strategy combinations. It could be the case that these strategies are often combined because carrying out corrective actions often means admitting the crisis. Benoit (1997) labels admitting the crisis as ‘mortification’, which could be freely interpreted as ‘letting a piece of the company die’. He stated that if a company wants to continue to exist, it will need a second strategy to help overcome the possible financial and reputational damage. Rebuilding the brand with a ‘rebuild’ strategy would therefore be a logical next step.

Even though there were differences found in articles with multiple strategies, many more information was retrieved from articles with just one crisis response strategy. Therefore, this research mainly focussed on newspaper articles in which only one crisis response strategy was reported. The question was raised whether the cultural background of a company’s country-of-origin (*individualistic* versus *collectivistic*) was related to the reported crisis response strategies (*corrective action, denial, diminish, no response, rebuild*) within Dutch newspapers. It can be concluded that this study did not find a significant difference in the reported crisis response strategies between newspaper articles about companies in a crisis situation with individualistic and collectivistic country-of-origins. Therefore, both *H1: Companies in a crisis situation with an individualistic country-of-origin will more often appear in newspaper articles with the crisis response strategy ‘diminish’ than companies with a collectivistic country-of-origin* and *H2: Companies in a crisis situation with a collectivistic country-of-origin will more often appear in newspaper articles with the crisis response strategies ‘no response’ or ‘rebuild’ than companies with an individualistic country-of-origin* were rejected. However, this study did confirm the following hypothesis: *H3: Companies with a collectivistic country-of-origin and companies with an*

individualistic country-of-origin will appear equally in the newspapers with the crisis response strategy 'denial'.

Even though many studies have shown that cultural differences influence people's preference for a certain crisis response strategy (Eisenberg & Riley, 2000; Falkheimer & Heide, 2006; Fatima Oliveira, 2013; Schneider & Meyer, 1991; Verhoeven et al., 2014), in this study hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were rejected. However, hypothesis 3 was in line with previous research. As hypothesis 3 was confirmed, it is possible that a 'denial' strategy (Coombs, 2007) is considered an adequate crisis response strategy by people from individualistic as well as collectivistic cultures.

There are a few possible explanations for this difference in findings between previous literature and the hypotheses 1 and 2 of this current study. First of all, a possible explanation could be the fact that the crisis response strategies were analysed indirectly, namely via newspaper articles, and thus via a journalist. The crisis responses that were analysed were not directly sent by the company in crisis. This makes it possible that the study was influenced by the possible framing of the journalist and therefore this study did not get to see the crisis response strategy as it was meant by the company. In other words, this research studied crisis response strategies as interpreted and reported by Dutch journalists. Analysing direct communication from the company in crisis (e.g. press releases and speeches), could have reduced the chance of incorrect or missing information on the crisis response strategy as meant by the company.

Secondly, previous studies mainly focussed on the cultural background of the receiver of the crisis response. In other words, how a crisis response is perceived as adequate by a person. This study focussed indirectly (via newspaper articles) on the senders of the response. In this case, the companies in crises. It is possible that a difference exists between people's preferences for sending out and receiving a crisis response. Therefore, it is possible that the hypotheses were based on literature that was not fully applicable to this study.

Thirdly, the real difference between companies with individualistic and collectivistic countries-of-origin possibly lies in the way it is presented by the company. Not in response strategies itself. Take the study from Haruta and Hallahan (2003), for example. They compared the crisis response strategies of a Japanese and an American CEO. Eventually, both CEOs apologised, but the biggest difference in the response strategies was the intensity of the apology. This was more intense for the Japanese CEO as he apologised multiple times, even before he knew whether his

company was responsible for the crisis or not. Whereas the American CEO only apologised after he could not diminish the situation any further. The coding scheme that was used in this study, did not cover the emotional intensity of the response. It is therefore possible that another coding scheme, that focussed more on 'how' a company responds instead of 'what' information was presented by the company, could have led to different results.

Fourthly, nowadays globalisation could also be an explanation for the difference in findings between the literature and the current study. This research studied possible differences in reported crisis response strategies based on the cultural background of a company's country-of-origin. The source that claimed that country-of-origin is strongly related to a company's crisis response strategy (Pauchant and Mitroff, 1990), is rather outdated. Therefore, it is possible that within business context in today's globalised world, a company's country-of-origin does not have as much of an influence on business practices as might be thought. This globalisation could mean that companies worldwide try to adjust their crisis responses to a global market. Globalisation could also mean that the company in crisis has offices in many countries. As Sha (2006) stated, people share their cultural values through their communication practices. This could thus mean that the cultural values of employees that decides on which crisis response strategy is used, do not necessarily share the cultural values of the company's country-of-origin. This explanation is in line with Fatima Oliveira (2013) who stated that key element for crisis communication management is the interconnectedness of a globalised society. It is therefore possible that focussing on companies, and dividing them based on the cultural background of their country-of-origin, might not have been the most convenient way to study possible cultural differences.

Lastly, another possible explanation for the unexpected outcome of this study could be the influence of cultural dimensions other than individualism versus collectivism. An example would be 'level of uncertainty avoidance' (Hofstede, 1980) as Haruta and Hallahan (2003) suggests in their research. This would contradict the conclusion of Kim, Cha and Kim (2008) who claim that the differences were due to the countries' level of individualism, but it could still explain their outcomes on the differences in preference between the studied countries. Additionally, even though Fatima Oliveira (2013) recognises the influence of cultural backgrounds on crisis strategies, she also states that many other elements, like religion, age, gender and educational level, affect the way crises are handled within business context.

Quotation

The quotes used by journalists to present the information on the crisis, were studied using two research questions. The first research question focussed on the combination of the information, namely the crisis response strategies, and the use of the company in crisis as a source in the newspaper articles. The second research question focussed on the type of sources that were quoted in combination with the crisis response strategies within the newspaper articles.

Regarding the first research question, a significant relationship was found between a company's crisis response strategy as reported by the journalist and the use of the company in crisis as a source within the newspaper article. The data showed that in most newspaper articles in which a 'denial' strategy could be found, the journalist used the company in crisis as a source by directly quoting it. This could be explained by the fact that it is impossible for a company to deny a crisis without giving a response. Also, with a direct quotation from the company the journalist can make it clear that the denial was not wrongly interpreted.

In addition, a significantly larger number of newspaper articles containing a 'diminish' strategy appeared with direct or indirect quotes from the company in crisis, than without any quotation. A logical explanation for this combination of a 'diminish' strategy and (in)direct quotation might be the fact that a company has to give a response in order to diminish a crisis.

Furthermore, a somewhat counterintuitive result was found within newspaper articles with a 'no response' strategy. Amongst these newspaper articles it was more common to find the company in crisis being indirectly quoted rather than not being quoted at all. An explanation for this finding might lay in the complexity of the coding scheme used in this study. Indirect responses in which the company said it was 'not willing to respond' were coded as an indirect response (examples can be found in the 'procedure' paragraph of the method section). This was done so because, by telling the audience it does not want to respond, a company in crisis is still sending out a message. A journalist decided on writing down this information, while (s)he could also have decided to not mention this (lack of) response. Because of this difference, the 'not willing to respond' response was coded as an indirect quote.

With regard to the second research question, an in-dept text analysis showed some patterns between the type of source that was quoted and the crisis response strategy that could be found within the newspaper articles. For example, the analysis showed that the largest number of quotes could be found in articles in which a 'denial' strategy was reported. Within those articles, mostly

employees were quoted. A possible explanation for this finding could be the fact that a corporate response is needed in order to deny a crisis. When a journalist uses a direct quote from someone within the company, the denial is not open for interpretation. As quotation affects the audience's judgements about the crisis, directly quoting the company that is denying the crisis, is a way for the journalist to frame the information.

Language use - metaphors

The language use within the Dutch newspaper articles covering corporate crises, were studied by analysing metaphor use. This study covered the use of four conventional metaphorical frames (*health/human body, love/marriage, path, and war/game*) within Dutch newspaper articles in which a crisis response strategy was reported. No differences were found between the articles in which different crisis response strategies were reported in terms of how often the metaphorical frames appeared. However, some patterns were found between the crisis response strategies and the metaphorical frames. Patterns were found when looking at the context which was described by using metaphors. Patterns were also found when looking at by whom they were used (e.g. in quotes). The 'path' frame was used mostly to visualise the outcomes of corrective actions in the 'corrective action' strategy. Within the 'denial' strategy, this 'path' frame was often used by the 'opposition', such as victims of the crisis. Furthermore, for the 'diminish' strategy 'health / human body' metaphors were often used by the journalist to compare the crisis with a disease. Newspaper articles with a 'no response' strategy often contained 'health/human body' metaphors. These metaphors could be found in the claims made by the journalist self and within quotes from external experts. Articles describing lawsuits that happened after a company chose a 'rebuild' strategy, often contained 'war / game' metaphors that described the context of the crisis.

Limitations

This study focussed on how corporate crises were framed in Dutch newspaper articles. It focussed on what information was reported by the journalist, and how this was done. The information was studied by analysing reported crisis response strategies and their possible connection to a company's cultural background. This was done using a corpus of Dutch newspaper articles ($N = 606$). According to De Vreese (2005) society's view on corporate crises is still greatly influenced by traditional media. Therefore, newspaper articles was found to be a good choice to study framing.

However, the use of newspaper articles gave insights in crisis response strategies through the eyes of Dutch journalists and thus not as communicated by the companies in crisis themselves.

Therefore, this corpus might have been very suitable for studying the concept of framing, but less suited for cultural comparison.

Another limitation of the corpus choice is that sometimes within a newspaper article, multiple crisis response strategies were reported. A pre-test showed that it was impossible to objectively decide on which quote and which metaphor belonged to which strategy. Therefore, it was decided to analyse articles with multiple strategies separately and to not use them for the analyses covering corporate response, quotations, and metaphors. However, excluding these newspaper articles might have affected the results of this study as this group of articles formed a substantial part of the corpus, namely 21%.

Additionally, the corpus was gathered using convenience sampling. This way of sampling made it possible to carefully select 20 cases with articles covering all kinds of crises and sectors. This has led to a corpus that could be used for analyses that gave a broad view on framing in the Dutch media. However, because of this sampling method, the results of this study cannot be generalised to all Dutch newspaper articles covering crisis communication (Neuendorf, 2012).

Another limitation of this study could have been the fact that the metaphorical frames were analysed using a computer program. An advantage of this method was that the chances of 'overlooking words' were brought to a minimum and this method was less time consuming than searching for metaphors manually. This made it possible to analyse a greater number of articles. However, a disadvantage of this method is the limitation of the lists of words that had to indicate a metaphorical frame. It is therefore possible that not all variations of the indicators of a metaphorical frame were analysed. A more qualitative bottom-up approach could have led to finding more metaphors.

Practical implications & Future research

This study focussed on the information that is reported in newspapers regarding corporate crises and the way this information was reported using quotation and language. The insights of this study contribute to the theories about framing, cultural differences, and crisis response communication. The qualitative study of Fatima Oliveira (2013) showed that although communication professionals consider cultural differences a crucial element of crisis communication, they did not feel prepared

enough to culturally adjust their crisis response strategies. The insights gained from this and further research may be of assistance to those kinds of communication experts and spokespersons in order to adjust their response strategies to their target group.

This study provides insights in the way corporate crises are framed within Dutch newspaper articles. The next step would be to find to what extent the crises response strategies are framed by the journalists. This could be researched by comparing the message as communicated by the company with the message that can be found in the newspapers. Another interesting follow-up study could be to find out to what extent readers' attitudes are affected by a journalist's framing. This could be studied by conducting experiments.

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Appendix A – Composition of corpus

Company				Total number of hits	Total number of hits (doubles filtered out by NexisUni)	Number of unique and relevant articles (from first 50 hits)
Country		Search terms	Time setting			
1. NL	Heineken	Heineken AND promotiemeisj! OR "promo girls" OR biermeisjes	01/02/2018 - 01/09/2018	95	46	28
	Hema	Hema AND Levi's	01/04/2018 - 01/10/2018	46	18	16
	Shell	Shell AND winstbelasting OR belastingontwijking OR belastingontduiking	01/10/2018 - 01/04/2019	139	76	26
	ING	ING AND witwas!	01/08/2018 - 01/02/2019	1579	1497	45
	Tata Steel	"Tata Steel" AND stofoverlast OR grafietoverlast OR fijnstofoverlast OR stofuitstoot OR grafietregen	01/01/2019 - 01/07/2019	188	73	40
				Total NL		155
2. USA	Facebook	Facebook AND datale! OR hac!	01/08/2018 - 01/02/2019	515	388	34
	Google	Google AND datale!	01/09/2018 - 01/03/2019	121	50	13
	Pepsi	Pepsi AND "Black Lives Matter" OR "Kendall Jenner"	01/03/2017 - 01/09/2017	56	31	20
	Tesla	Tesla OR Musk AND joint OR wietgebruik OR blow!	01/08/2018 - 01/01/2019	52	35	21
	Uber	Uber AND "seksuele intimidatie" OR seksisme	01/01/2017 - 01/07/2017	216	110	48

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				Total USA	136	
3. JPN	Kobe Steel	"Kobe Steel" AND fraud!	01/09/2017 - 01/03/2018	14	13	11
	Nissan	Nissan AND wangedrag OR zelfverrijking OR fraud	01/10/2018 - 01/04/2019	135	71	40
	Sony Pictures	"Sony Pictures" AND hac!	01/10/2014 - 01/04/2015	333	236	48
	Takata	Takata AND terugroepactie OR teruggeroepen OR "defecte Takata-airbag" OR "gevaarlijke airba!" OR "levensgevaarlijke airba!"	01/04/2015 - 01/10/2015	38	29	30
	Mitsubishi	Mitsubishi AND brandstofschandaal OR schandaal OR sjoeme! OR gesjoeme!	01/03/2016 - 01/09/2016	155	79	46
				Total JPN	175	
4. CHN	Anbang	Anbang AND curatele OR fraud!	01/01/2018 - 01/07/2018	82	50	41
	Didi Chuxing	Didi Chuxing AND moord OR vermoord OR verkrach!	01/07/2018 - 01/01/2019	16	11	8
	Huawei	Huawei AND sancties OR arrest!	01/11/2018 - 01/05/2019	706	606	37
	JD.com	JD.com AND verkrach!	01/08/2018 - 01/02/2019	6	6	6
	Sanlu	Sanlu AND melamine OR melamineschandaal OR babymelkschandaal OR melkschandaal OR "vergiftigd melkpoeder"	01/08/2008 - 01/02/2009	252	144	48
				Total CHN	140	
				Total number of articles:	606	

Appendix B – Newspapers

Newspaper	N	% from total corpus
1. FD	106	17.5
2. ANP	76	12.5
3. de Volkskrant	46	7.6
4. nrc Handelsblad	38	6.3
5. Trouw	35	5.8
6. nrc Next	34	5.6
7. Het Parool	29	4.8
8. De Telegraaf	26	4.3
9. nd	26	4.3
10. AD	23	3.8
11. Reformatorisch Dagblad	19	3.1
12. IJmuider Courant	18	3.0
13. Dagblad van het Noorden	13	2.1
14. Leeuwarder Courant	12	2.0
15. BNR	12	2.0
16. Noordhollands Dagblad	12	2.0
17. Leidsch Dagblad	10	1.7
18. De Limburger	10	1.7
19. Haarlems Dagblad	7	1.2
20. MD	7	1.2
21. Quotenet	5	0.8
22. BN/De Stem	4	0.7
23. De Stentor	4	0.7
24. De Twentse Courant Turbantia	4	0.7
25. Eindhovens Dagblad	4	0.7
26. FTM	3	0.5
27. PZC	3	0.5
28. De Gelderlander	3	0.5
29. De Gooi- en Eemlander	3	0.5
30. Fondsnieuws	2	0.3
31. Metro	2	0.3
32. Brabants Dagblad	2	0.3
33. Boerderij Vandaag	2	0.3
34. Elsevier Weekblad	1	0.2
35. De Groene Amsterdammer	1	0.2
36. Limburgs Dagblad	1	0.2
37. PensioenPro	1	0.2
38. Spits	1	0.2
39. Almere Vandaag	1	0.2

Appendix C – Code book

<u>What is coded</u>	<u>Coded as</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
Case number	Numerical (Every case will be numbered)	Numerical
Article number	Numerical (Every article will be numbered)	Numerical
Company	Name of company	Name
COO	1. Dutch 2. American (USA) 3. Japanese 4. Chinese	- Location of headquarter - Country where original launch took place
Collectivistic/individualistic	1. Individualistic 2. Collectivistic	Japanese + Chinese Dutch + American
Year of publication	Year	Year
Newspaper	1. FD 2. nrc Next 3. de Volkskrant 4. Trouw 5. FTM 6. nrc Handelsblad 7. ANP 8. Dagblad van het Noorden 9. AD 10. Leidsch Dagblad 11. Het Parool 12. Reformatorisch Dagblad 13. Haarlems Dagblad 14. De Telegraaf 15. Leeuwarder Courant 16. De Limburger 17. nd 18. PZC 19. BN/De Stem 20. De Gelderlander	21. De Stentor 22. De Twentse Courant Turbantia 23. Ijmuider Courant 24. Fondsnieuws 25. MD 26. Quotenet 27. De Gooi- en Eemlander 28. Eindhovens Dagblad 29. Elsevier Weekblad 30. BNR 31. Metro 32. De Groene Amsterdammer 33. Brabants Dagblad 34. Beleggers Belangen 35. Noordhollands Dagblad 36. Limburgs Dagblad 37. PensioenPro 38. Boerderij Vandaag 39. Spits 40. Almere Vandaag
Number of words per article	Numerical (including headline)	Numerical
Crisis response strategy	1. No response	Words/phrases that indicate: - The organisation not commenting
	2. Denial	Words/phrases that indicate: - The organisation claiming they did not perform the act - The organisation shifting the blame to another party - The organisation denying a crisis is happening
	3. Diminish	Words/phrases that indicate: - an excuse (the act was a response to act of another party; the situation is like it is due to lack of information/ability; it was an accident; the company had good intentions) - Justification (Good traits are stressed; the act/situation is minimized or made less offensive; other more important considerations are emphasised)

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	4. Rebuild	Words/phrases that indicate: - An apology - A request for forgiveness - Victims being compensated (money/kind)
	5. Corrective action	Words/phrases that indicate: - Measurements being taken - Starting an investigation - Informing those involved - Promises about improvement
	6. Other strategy	- Other strategy than any of the above (e.g. admitting fault of crisis <u>without</u> diminishing the crisis nor rebuilding the brand; paying a penalty without compromising the victims)
	7. No strategy	No clear strategy seems to be used. There only is objective information.
Number of crisis response strategies used	Numerical	Numerical
Corporate response	1. Direct / direct & indirect	“”; ‘’; - direct quote(s) as well as indirect quote(s)
	2. Indirect	Zegt; zei; vertelt; vertelde; Aldus; volgens; verklaart; verklaarde; bevestigt; bevestigde; “geen commentaar”; “geen verklaring”; “niet gereageerd”; “geen reactie”;...
	3. Not used as source	Nothing in the article refers to the organisation’s response towards the crisis situation
Quotation used in article	1. Yes, by CEO/CFO	... of organisation in crisis
	2. Yes, by spokesperson/only company mentioned	... of organisation in crisis (e.g. Aldus Heineken/de woordvoerder)
	3. Yes, by other employee	... of organisation in crisis
	4. Yes, by former employee	... of organisation in crisis
	5. Yes, by expert	External expert in the field of crisis, not part of the organisation in crisis
	6. Yes, by politician	
	7. Yes, by prosecution	
	8. Yes, by victim of crisis / representative of victim(s) (e.g. lawyer)	
	9. Yes, by other person	
	10. Yes, unclear by whom	
	11. No	No one is directly quoted
Conventional metaphorical frames	Health / Human body = Metaphors that indicate something that has to do with health or the human body (e.g. ‘hart van de organisatie’; ‘drong als een virus binnen’)	Check Table A
	War / Game = Metaphors that indicate a war or (sports) game (e.g. ‘de strijd verloren’; ‘bleef de concurrent voor’)	Check Table B
	Path = Metaphors that indicate the movement away from or towards a goal (e.g. ‘op de juiste koers’; ‘gaat langzaam de goede kant op’)	Check Table C

	Love / Marriage = Metaphors that indicate love or marriage ('de twee organisaties waren als een goed huwelijk'; 'scheiden de wegen van de twee partijen')	Check Table D
Number of metaphors	Numerical (words/phrases)	Singular words (nouns/verbs), word combinations (e.g. 'als... met...'), (conventional) expressions/sayings

Table A – Metaphors 1. Health/Human body

<p><u>Kövecses (2002), Lakoff & Johnson (1980), Reijnierse, Burgers, Krenmavr & Steen (2015)</u></p> <p>Been Benen Besmettelijk Besmetten Besmet Bloed brein chronisch chronische Diagnose Dik Dikke Dun Dunne Fit Geest Gezicht Gezichten Gezichtsverlies gezond gezonder gezondere Hand Handen Haren Hart Hoofd Hoofdpijn Huid Immuun In vorm Lichaam Mond Monden Mondig Ogen ongezond Oog Openhartig Pijn Schouder Schouders Symptomen Symptoom Tand Tanden uitgeput uitputten</p>	<p>uitputtend uitputtende Verdoofd Verdoofde Verlamd Verlamde verziekt verziekte Virus ziek ziekte Ziel</p> <p><u>Search terms, not based on literature:</u></p> <p>aandoening afgezwakt afzwakken buik Geïnfecteerd Geïnfecteerde Infectie Knie Knieën Kop Lijf Lippen Maag mank onderbuik Oor oren Rib Rug Tong Vinger Vingers Voet Voeten zwakt zwakte</p>
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Table B – Metaphors 2. War/Game

<p><u>Burger, Konijn & Steen (2016), Koller (2002), Lakoff & Johnson (1980)</u> Aan kop Aanval Aanval Aanvallen Aanvallende Aanvaller Aanvaller Achterlopen Achterliggen Competitie Doden Doel Doelwit Dood Duel Eindstreep Finish Front Front Gedood Geeft gewonnen Gestreden Gevecht Gewonnen geven Guerrilla Invasie Kamp Kampen Koploper Koplopers Liep voor Liepen voor Loopt achter Loopt voor Lopen voor Moord Moordenaar Nek-aan-nek Oorlog Opnemen tegen Opoffering Opponent Overgeven Prooi Rivaliteit</p>	<p>Schot Schoten Slachtoffer Slachtoffers Slag Slagveld Soldaat Spel Speler Spelers Spelletje Sport Strijd Strijden Strijder Strijders Strijdtoneel Team Teams Tegenpartij Tegenpartijen Tegenspeler Tegenstander Tegenstanders Tweestrijd Vechter Vechtpartij Vermoord Verslaan Verslaat Verslagen Versloeg Verzet Veteraan Veteranen Vijand Vijandelijk Vijanden Vijandig Voorlopen Wapen Wapen Wapens Wedstrijd Winnaar Winnaars Winnen Winst</p>	<p>Wint Won Wonnen Worsteling Zwaard Zwaargewicht</p> <p><u>Search terms, not based on literature:</u></p> <p>Aan zet Aanvechten Beurt gespeeld Gevlucht Neemt het op tegen Opnemen tegen Opstand Race Speelden Spelen Strijdbijl Tegen elkaar opnemen Verdedigen Verdediger Verdediging Verliest Verliezen Verloor Verloren Verzetten Vlucht Vluchten Vluchtte Vluchtten</p>
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Table C – Metaphors 3. Path

<p><u>Kövecses (2002), Lakoff & Johnson (1980)</u> Achterliggen Achteruit Achteruitgang Achterwaarts Afdrijven Afgedreven Afremmen Andere weg Bereiken Bereikt Bereikte Bereikten Bestemd Bestemming Bewegen Beweging Blokades Directie Doel Doorkruisen Doorkruist Dreven af Drijven af Eindpunt Geblokkeerd Goed op pad Goede weg Halt Halverwege Helpt Kant kantelpunt Klimmen Klimt Klom Klommen Koers Kroop Kropen Kruipen Kruipt Ladder Opklimmen Lag stil Levensloop Ligt achter Ligt stil</p>	<p>Naar achter Naar achteren Naar boven Naar onder Naar voor Naar voren Obstakel Obstakels Omhoog Omlaag omslagpunt Ontspoorde Ontsporen Op weg Opsturen Overstag Pad Paden Reis Reizen Rem Remde af Richting Richtingen Schakelde Schakelden Schakelen Staat stil Stagnatie Startpunt Stil liggen Stil staan Stond stil Sturen Stuurde Stuurt Tegenslag Tegenslagen Ten onder Terug bij af Versneld Versnelde Versnelling Versnelt Verwijderen van Verwijdert van Vooruit Vooruitgang Voorwaarts</p>	<p>Vorderen Vordering <u>Search terms, not based on literature:</u> Brug Bruggen Doelbewust Gaande weg Kant Legde zich Leggen zich Legt zich Mobiel Mobiliteit Neergelegd Neerleggen Stap Stappen</p>
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Table D – Metaphors 4. Love/Marriage

<p><u>Koller (2002), Kövecses (2002)</u> Translations and synonyms of Koller's Appendix TABLE A1</p> <p>Aanzoek Affaire Bruiloft Flirt Flirten Flirterig Flirtte Geflirt Gehuwd Geliefd Geliefde</p>	<p>Geliefden Geromantiseerd Gescheiden Getrouwd Getrouwde Huwelijk Liefde Liefdevol Lust Minnaar Relatie Relaties Scheiden Scheiding Seks</p>	<p>Seksueel Sexy Trouwde Trouwen Trouwen Vechtscheiding Verleid Verleidelijk Verleidelijke Verleiden Verliefd Verliefde Verliefdheid</p>
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