**Response Letter**

General Report on the revision:

1. The manuscript has been rewritten to address the problems and shortcomings indicated in the valuable comments from the reviewers.
2. The literature Review is reorganized and rewritten
3. The hypotheses are now clearly proposed
4. The Method Section is rewritten to include a more systematic framework and more details on decisions.
5. The results and discussion sections are entirely rewritten.

We are very grateful for the comments from the reviewer and the chance to revise the current manuscript. We sincerely look forward to hearing your potential comments and guidance on the paper. In the following part, we provide answers to the reviewers’ comments in *italics*.

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Reviewer A:

I wanted to commend the authors for the time and efforts conducting this

extensive longitudinal research. Regretfully, lots of preliminary work in

both conceptualization and methodology should have been done or seriously

considered even before the implementation of the project.

• Among many others, the purpose and significance of the study need to be

clearly established. However, the authors made different claims in the texts

ranging from image of China, image of FDI (foreign direct investment), to

the differences and similarities of the media outlets’ coverage, very

confusing. Why the differences or similarities among them are theoretically

interesting in the first place? In the introduction part, the paper says it

would also analyze the factors behind the differences and similarities, but

that should be part of the discussion, not the purpose of the study. Those

questions can hardly be answered solely by content analysis, or framing

analysis----I dare to assume that’s what the research project actually did

although framing analysis can be loosely seen as one special type of content

analysis.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we now fully acknowledge the flaws in the first presentation of the manuscript, the purpose of the paper is now revised to be clearer in the introduction, the LR and in the hypotheses and RQs. We now solely focus on the reporting about a foreign country’s FDI and uses this case as a proxy to explore associations between coverage volume and economic data. Moreover we have not abandoned entirely our analysis of frames, given media frames as a reliable framework for the analysis of content, especially across time periods.*

• Very limited literature review was done despite tons of literature were

there in the field of media images of nations and framing analysis.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have almost entirely rewritten our LR to be more focused on the purpose of the paper. It may still bear notable shortages but we very much look forward to your kind instructions on this version of the manuscript.*

• The coding scheme were not clearly defined and operationalized, let

aside the questions where the categories came from. Yes, the paper mentioned

two coders came up with the categories by reading the text, then based on

what? Any references to previous studies? How can you have a satisfactory

level of confidence on their validity if all were subjectively created by

the coders.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have added reference to the Semetko and Valkenburg study in 2000, which was also used by recently published studies focusing on international portrayal of China in Latin America. We have explained again our methods in the new methods section, and provided the code sheet in the Appendix.*

• The method section should focus on how the study was conducted such as

sampling and the rationals behind the sampling, detailed description of the

coding process and so son,  rather than pages of education on what content

analysis is.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have addressed these issues in this version and now there is a standalone method section covering the topics you kindly instructed. Moreover, we have provided extensive explanations on why some of the decisions are made during the process.*

• I applaud the authors in reporting the intercoder reliability. However,

the value for each valuable should be reported rather than an overall

number, as the overall average may  be easily inflated by some of the

administrative categories, and some of the more manifest content variables.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have provided a systematic report on the alphas of the main variables used in the current study. The whole code sheet also achieved good alphas given our team has experience with coding Latin American newspapers. The generic frames were also used in other studies.*

• Finally, I would like to strongly advise the authors to spend more time

to check, edit and polish the manuscript before submitting to academic

journals. And I of course wanted to apologize if my comments appeared to be

too critical.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we are very grateful for the kind comments and hope to be given a chance of another review. We are also ready to answer more questions and make more revisions, if given that opportunity.*

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Reviewer B:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review this manuscript. I enjoyed

learning about the Peruvian newspaper environment, and I found the topic

very interesting and timely. However, I have significant concerns about this

project after reading and reviewing the manuscript. Please see below my

comments:

General Comments:

1) Theoretical contribution. The first major concern I have is the

theoretical contribution of this work. It isn't easy to see as it is

presented right now. As the paper is written, there is much empirical

evidence, but it is generally disconnected from a more specific contribution

to the literature. In that sense, the questions would be: What literature

would you like to contribute and engage in? Is it about newspapers in Peru

and the role of ideology or political leaning and its effect on news

coverage (using the case of Chinese Foreign investment)? Or is the

literature about Nation Banding and how the image of China is perceived in

Peru based on the issue of Chinese Foreign Investment? Or is the literature

on framing and how this case presents a new case of studying framing using

the example of developing countries to contrast the theory generally

developed in the Global North?

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, your questions helped us immensely in clearing our thoughts about the purpose of the study. Given the purpose was not stated clearly in the previous version, we now have a much more focused goal on exploring 1. The relationship between news coverage amount and bilateral economic indeces 2. The influence of bilateral relationship phases on the distribution of frames 3. The relationship between editorial political inclination and use of frames. We hope this small case could be an exploratory study into how international economic events are reported and what factors can influence this.*

I would encourage the author(s) to think harder about the theoretical

contribution and the literature they would like to engage in. By doing this,

the "narrative" of the paper could be a little clearer and more cohesive.

One example of how this exercise (i.e., thinking on the theoretical

contribution) could help make the literature review more focused on the

theoretical contribution and build arguments that advance the objective of

this paper. As it reads right now, the literature review seems more like an

annotated bibliography. One way to work on this issue is to build an

argument based on the literature and cite the author that supports the views

instead of naming the author and their ideas separately. Then, make sure the

argument you are making and supporting by the literature is aligned with

this paper's objective and research question.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have completely rebuild our paper with new LR, method, Results and Discussions. Potential theoretical contributions are raised in the intro and discussed in the discussion section. Instead of dwelling into Nation Branding, we decided to focus on the literature about economic news reporting, and editorial, geopolitical factors in news reporting.*

If you decide to go with the idea of Nation Branding, here is some

literature that could be useful:

Aronczyk, M. (2013). Branding the nation: The global business of national

identity. Oxford University Press.

Anholt, S. (2002). Nation Branding: A continuing theme. Journal of Brand

Management, 10(1), 59-59.

Kaneva, N., & Popescu, D. (2011). National identity lite: Nation branding in

post-Communist Romania and Bulgaria. INTERNATIONAL journal of CULTURAL

studies, 14(2), 191-207.

2) Methodological approach and results:

I think the idea of quantitative content analysis is a very appealing one

for this type of research. However, the way the methods are presented raises

several questions related to the little detail shown about the decisions,

and the disconnection between the method and how they are somewhat informed

by the literature you engaged about framing. Also, for 20 years, 332 seems a

bit on the lower end, particularly if you are looking into six different

media outlets. Can you show similar work by validating the number you

present as your sample size? Do you have the yearly distribution of the news

articles?

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have explained with details about how we decided on the search term, and why the sample size was crystalized to 332. We have yearly data since 2001 until 2020, with the exception of 2002, which have no articles about Chinese FDI. We understand that this is an important flaw for analysis, and we have explained our solution in the analytical strategy part of the method section. Expanding the search criteria would solve the problem but it would also change the theme of the paper as well.*

Additionally, I think you need to show your coding instrument and what is

the evidence supporting the coding instrument/dictionary. Or, if you don't

show it, provide the literature on which it is based. Definitions are

missing, for example, regarding the generic codes: attribution of

responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality, and economic

consequence. In sum, how do you create the categories and codes, and how is

it based on the literature?

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have provided support to the use of the current instrument, while we have indeed coded all five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg, we have only included the conflict and economic consequence frame in the current analysis. Given the discussion about morality and human interest frames may go beyond the scope of this paper. However, we are very open to and grateful of your future suggestions and instructions, and are ready to make necessary additions and changes.*

Other questions that are not clear in the method section and results are:

1) Did you also code for relevancy? How did you determine if an article was

related to or about the topic of Chine foreign investment? Do you analyze

only news explicitly about Chinese Foreign Direct Investment or all news

articles about China covered in these newspapers during the 20 years? Was

332 the total number of articles retrieved from Factiva? How did you narrow

the search to 332? What criteria did you use? Did you use a Boolean search

or only rely on the two search roots? What is the reason and evidence to

support this method of retrieving the articles? "hlp = Peru" and "atleast2

China."

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, all these questions are address in the newly written method section and hopefully can provide a clearer picture of our method application.*

2) How do you define the main topic and journalistic tone? Did you have

intercoder reliability for each main topic, journalistic tone, and all the

frames coded?

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have discarded main topic and journalistic tone in the analysis because of very little variance in the data, which can also be seen in the previous version of the paper. The intercoder reliability is reported for the conflict and economic consequence frame only in the current version since they are the only frames analyzed. However, the appendix contains the code sheet as an illustration of the possibility of analytical variables.*

3) If you selected 50 articles for each news outlet, I don't understand if

Table 1 should reflect the total 50 articles for each newspaper. Shouldn't

the total be 300 articles, and the 50 each should reflect in your results?

Am I missing something or not reading it correctly?

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, the method section has been rewritten and the earlier presentation, actually the final collected articles from each outlet varies to a great extent. Although we have hoped that the distribution could be more balanced, but the sample is indeed like this, we also feel not very necessary to pool the sample again, for some outlets, for example the national news agency, only published a few dozen of articles. Given our sampling rules, we consider that the sample is representative per se because it is almost census data. Potentially, the Peruvian coverage on Chinese FDI in these 6 outlets are just around a few hundred. As mentioned in the methods section, we have then manually filtered unrelated articles to get 332 out of 507 total results from Factiva.*

4) What do you mean by this, and how did you do it? "Before coding, several

sub-categories were established under five frames" (Graph 3). Also. What is

the conceptual difference between Table 2 and Table 3? Your sample size

could be too small for this type of granular analysis.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment. We are very grateful to learn from your comment and checked that chi-square tests can be problematic here, the reason is directly related to your question. Because under the Conflict frame, if an article applied such frame, it can discuss the actors involved in the conflict, the sub-categories are referring to our typology of the conflict and economic consequences, they are also not mutually exclusive, while some count in certain cells may drop below 5, it would also be necessary to use Fisher’s test. In all, to solve these problems, we have changed our analysis to binary logistic regression, using articles as unit of analysis.*

5) How did you define and code for this? The Economic Consequences of

Chinese Investment: Opportunity, Mutual Benefit, Trouble, Damage (Table 4).

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we have added the introduction of this on pp.20-21, with detailed questions instructing the coders to code accordingly.*

6) What are you trying to show with Table 6 and Graph 7? This is something

you have already indicated in Table 1, right?

7) You mentioned an ANOVA test, but then you reported a Chi-square in the

results.

8) Cross-Analysis Between the Use of the Frame and the Media to Which it

Belongs. In this case, could we move beyond the descriptive and show the

theoretical implications of this?

I would suggest that if you don't engage in the difference between each news

media from a theoretical perspective, perhaps the results would be best

displayed as aggregated and not necessarily making a distinction between

each newspaper. Can you engage in any meaningful distinction of the

newspapers you analyzed? Traditional versus non -traditional, right-left

wing? Etc.? But again, here, the sample size might be an issue. Your

conclusion hint at the difference between newspapers, but you don't engage

in any meaningful distinction that could make the findings more

theoretically interesting.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, indeed we learned from your comments that this categorization of newspapers lies at the heart of the current paper, after consulting earlier literature on media systems, political clientelism in Latin American media, we have categorized newspapers according to their editorial political stance/inclination.*

Overall, I think the current manuscript version is not yet publishable. I

believe there are interesting findings and potential contributions to

theory, but MAJOR changes are required.

*Response: Thanks for the valuable comment, we are very grateful for the instructions, the manuscript is now (largely) rewritten with a new theoretical framework, clear hypotheses and research questions, and clearer method section. New results and discussions are written accordingly. We hope that this paper could have the opportunity to be further strengthened, thanks to your kind guidance.*

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