

Chapter III

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

I. SELECTION OF NEWSPAPERS FOR ANALYSIS

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative analysis to examine the news coverage in the Chinese and Taiwanese press on Lee Teng-hui's visit to Japan in May-June 2007. Quantitative content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980; Wimmer and Dominick, 1997) provides the general statistics about frequency and size of coverage in selected newspapers, while qualitative analysis reveals the lexical and syntactic styles to show how Lee's visit was being framed by the selected newspapers in Mainland China and Taiwan.

In order for the analysis to show both between-group and within-group differences, chosen for analysis were a total of 14 newspapers, 12 from China and 2 from Taiwan. A pilot research discovered the dominant characteristic of coverage of Lee Teng-hui's visit by mainland China's official Party press is either little or nil. In the little coverage, astonishing similarity was found in the usage of words among absolutely different newspapers. Thus, in the lack of enough samples for meaningful analysis of China's newspaper coverage of Lee Teng-hui's visit, more Chinese newspapers, representing different regions and different degree of closeness to the orthodox party-line were identified, to present a more detailed picture of the press in China. Besides, it may also demonstrate to what extent China's press reform of the past 30 years has loosened up the central control.

These considerations eventually led us to select 12 Chinese newspapers for analysis. In Beijing they were the domestic *People's Daily*, *overseas People's Daily*, *Global Times* (环球时报), *China Youth Daily* (中国青年报), *Beijing Daily* (北京日报), *GuangMing Daily* (光明日报). In Guangzhou, we have chosen *Nanfang Daily* (南方日报), *Guangzhou Daily* (广州日报), *New Express* (新快报), *Information Times* (信息时报). In Shanghai, *Wenhui Bao*, *Shanghai Morning Post* (新闻晨报) were chosen.

The choice decision on Taiwanese newspapers was a lot easier and strait forward. We have chosen *Liberty Times* and *China Times*, that usually have been considered as reflecting more opposite political stances dailies, to compare their assumed different coverage of Lee's Japan visit.

Table 3.1 Selected Newspapers for Analysis

Newspaper	Political Affiliation	Location
People's Daily (domestic)	CCP Central Committee	Beijing
People's Daily (overseas)	CCP Central Committee	Beijing
Global Times	CCP Central Committee	Beijing
China Youth Daily	Chinese Youth League	Beijing
Beijing Daily	Beijing Municipal Party Committee	Beijing
Guangming Daily	Beijing Municipal Party Committee	Beijing
Nanfang Daily	Nanfang Daily Newspaper Group	Guangzhou
Guangzhou Daily	Guangzhou Municipal Party Committee	Guangzhou
New Express	Yangcheng Evening post Newspaper Group	Guangzhou
Information Times	Guangzhou Daily Newspaper Group	Guangzhou
Shanghai Wenhui Bao	Shanghai Municipal Party Commitee	Shanghai
Shanghai Morning Post	Jiefang Daily Newspaper Group	Shanghai
Liberty Times	Pan-Green league, Pro-DPP	Taipei
China Times	Pan-Blue league, Pro-KMT	Taipei

To provide a better understanding of the choice of newspapers, each's background is briefly presented. First we turn to the 12 Mainland China newspapers.

The Dailies in Beijing.

The *People's Daily* as the Chinese Communist Party's mouthpiece is one of the most researched papers, for it is regarded as the most influential paper in China reflecting official Party or government positions. It has both promoted and condemned state and Party leaders. The

daily's circulation in 2008 was to 2,325,500 copies (World Association of Newspapers, reports on World Dailies circulation, 2007). The overseas edition of the *People's Daily* sometimes is more open than the domestic edition. While having the same status it is mainly aimed at overseas Chinese. Editors of both editions are selected and appointed by the Party. *People's Daily* overseas edition was launched on July 1, 1985. As Xinhua news agency reported in the edition's 20 anniversary issue: "For the ethnic Chinese living in different countries, this newspaper has become not just the media through which they have the opportunity to learn all the news about mainland China, but something more. The newspaper on its anniversary received many letters from the Chinese who live in the USA to show respect and offer thanks". The overseas edition also has the mission of promoting China's economic reforms all around the world. They advanced a slogan, under which the newspaper has been constantly working: "Let the whole world understand China, Let China trend toward the world". It has established 11 editorial offices abroad. It became one of the five largest Chinese media for an international audience and, even that it is hard to define the actual circulation of the paper, because it has been distributed overseas both in Chinese and domestic languages, however according to domestic *People's Daily* statement, overseas daily has the biggest circulation among Chinese media oriented on international audience.

Global Times was launched in January 1993 as an affiliate to the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, to focus on covering international news and events. Originally titled the "*Global Cultural Collection*" (环球文萃), until 1997 the current *Global Times*. Like other China controlled newspapers it is inclined to CCP's political interests, sometimes revealing a lack of objectivity. However, people who support this newspaper consider it as objective international news daily which just upholds the rights and interests of the Chinese government. *Global Times* pays a lot attention especially to coverage of Japanese, American and Taiwanese events. Being under the patronage of the *People's Daily*, *Global Times* has around the world its own correspondents or journalists. Hence, it has many exclusive news stories and has its own

characteristics, distinguishing it from other Chinese newspapers, it has become rather popular among mainland China's and foreigner readers. In 2007 its circulation surpassed 2,000,000 copies ("Global Times", 2007 report on Media Information).

China Youth Daily is a popular official newspaper and the first independently operated central level news media portal in China. It has been owned and supervised by the Communist Youth League (CYL) since 1951. As it claims, CYL's unique mission is to unite and lead the young people in the country and to indoctrinate the young into Chinese Communist Party. *China Youth Daily* although run by CYL, is also the first profit-generating paper in China. By taking advertisement profit enables the paper to support itself. With a daily circulation of around 400,000 copies (China Printing Materials Net) the paper has grown increasingly in the past decades and been criticized by the Party several times for its non-orthodox independent political comments.

Beijing Daily is the largest daily owned and supervised by Beijing Municipal Party Committee, one of the ten largest dailies in China. Having circulation of 400,000 copies, the paper claims that its content is "intellectual and analytical". Being able to attract an audience with better education, higher income and high position or social status (Media Resources Center).

Guangming Daily is another daily owned and supervised by Beijing Municipal Party Committee, started publishing on June, 16, 1949. It was initially published under the China Democratic League with Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De honoring its launch by the calligraphy. In spite of the newspaper's small circulating at only 200,000 copies, it is very influential as it addresses the better educated readers in China, such as teachers and professors (Media Resources Center).

The Dailies in Guangzhou.

Nanfang Daily was established on January 1, 1999 by the Nanfang Daily Newspaper Group. Among the provincial level dailies it has always been looked up as a pioneer in

supporting economic reforms. The daily circulation reaches 750,000 copies (Media Resources Center).

Guangzhou Daily is the official newspaper of the Guangzhou Municipal Party Committee and published by the Guangzhou Daily Newspaper Group. Established on October 1, 1952, it has pioneered in reporting business news and the expanding market. It has gained fame and status and has become very influential among other dailies. It has circulation to 1,650,000 copies (Media Resource Center).

New Express newspaper was founded in March 1998 by the Yangcheng Evening post Newspaper Group (羊城晚报报业集团). According to Sohu Media Alliance, it was the first newspaper in the country to have started using multicolor synthesis printing. Average 32 pages, it focuses on people's livelihood and social problems. The papers' readership is basically made of business or middle class people with higher income and consumption power. In 2006 circulation of *New Express* reached 1,500,000 copies (Sohu Media Alliance).

Information Times is the second largest newspaper in the Guangdong province in terms of its sales volume. Beginning from the January 2005, its hardcopies circulation reached 1,330,000 and its web-site 5,000,000. The daily claims to be able to reach all classes of the society with many business executives. The majority of the news focuses on business and political issues, however entertainment is also presented on the pages of daily (Sohu Media Alliance).

The Dailies in Shanghai.

Wehnui Bao was founded in Shanghai in 1938 by leftist leaning intellectuals led by writer and journalist Ke Ling. It was closed down twice by the KMT government for its leftist political leanings. In early 1956, CCP relocated Wen Hui Bao to Beijing and renamed it Jiao Shi Bao (Teacher's Daily). In late 1965, *Wenhui Bao* was made an outlet for the Shanghai leftists around Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao to launch the infamous Cultural Revolution. On January 4, 1967, the paper was taken over by radical Red Guards in the first power seizure in Shanghai. In the 1980s, *Wenhui Bao* re-emerged as an intellectually stimulating and widely read paper with mass

circulation. When readership dropped in the 1990s, it was merged with the market-oriented *Xinmin Wanbao* (新民晚報) to form the Wenhui-Xinmin United Press Group. The daily now has a circulation of 1,700,000 copies (Sohu Media Alliance).

Shanghai Morning Post is a newspaper published by the Jiefang Daily Newspaper Group since January 1, 1999. It claims to be the newspaper which appears in Shanghai's newspaper shops the earliest in the morning. Tabloid's circulation is around 500,000 copies. The paper's slogan is: "Close attention to all major events in the world, and care about the lives of the city's residents" (Media Resource Center).

The Dailies for Taiwan.

Liberty Times, originally named *Liberty Daily* (自由日報), is owned by the Liberty Times Group (自由時報企業股份有限公司). With its slogan "Taiwan as a priority, Freedom first" ("台灣優先, 自由第一"). In contrast to the *China Times* and the *United Daily News* that are widely regarded as taking an editorial line that leans toward the China-friendly Pan-Blue coalition, the *Liberty Times* leans toward the pro-independence Pan-Green coalition. Even before the historic change of the regime in the 2000 presidential election, the *Liberty Times* had been considered as the newspaper which in the majority of cases supported the pro-democracy movement's positions. Chinchuan Lee (李金銓, 2003) observed that "After lifting restrictions in Taiwan..., especially the *Liberty Times* had no fear in opposing, breaking through the blockade. It was not afraid to publish information about DPP"⁵. Claiming to be the largest daily in Taiwan, the paper has a circulation to 719,700 copies in 2007 (World Association of Newspapers, 2005).

The China Times - One of the four biggest newspapers in Taiwan, the *China Times* is owned by The China Times Group. Established in 1950 under the originally name "*Evidence News*" (徵信新聞), on September 1, 1968, it began to use the current name-plate. The *China Times* has recruited many known intellectuals on its editorial staff. This daily pays a lot attention

⁵ Chinchuan Lee (李金銓), June of 2003 "The Theory of political science: mutual influence between China, Hong Kong, Taiwan media and democratic reforms", "21st century", "政治学的理论: 中港台传媒与民主改革交光互影", 香港中文大学, "二十一世纪"

to international news and the Taiwan Strait issues. By a lot of science and ordinary Taiwan people, it is considered to be more affiliated to the Pan-Blue coalition stances, while some people consider it as more neutral (World Association of Newspapers, 2005). The latest report on the circulation of the daily, which was found, claims to have the circulation of approximately 1,000,000 in 2004. However, during the last 4 years circulation of *China Times* reduced noticeably.

II DATA ANALYSIS

Lee Teng-hui left Taiwan for his Japan visit on May 30, 2007 and returned to Taiwan on June 9, 2007. To provide a comprehensive study on the news coverage of his visit, all news articles that appeared two weeks before and two weeks after his visit in the selected newspapers were included in the analysis. As for the Global Times, the Guangzhou Daily, and the Nanfang Daily, the National Chengchi University libraries do not subscribe to their hardcopies. Instead, “Wise News” data base was used to identify news articles about Lee’s visit in these three dailies. For all others, library hardcopies were used.

This thesis implements Van-Dijk’s methods of news analysis without concentrating on particular news articles for the deep analysis of lexical, syntactical connections in the texts. Data collected were subject to two kinds of analysis: quantitative and qualitative. In the quantitative part “frequency and size” are presented for a comprehensive overview and for comparison across the selected dailies. As frequency alone do not reflect the real amount of coverage, the mean sizes of the articles and total coverage per each newspaper in square centimeters were also measured and compared. Types of articles and the location of the article in newspaper were also coded for presentation. The next we have discussed the frequency of actors in the articles. Here, actors refer to persons, groups, institutions, or countries mentioned in the article. The frequency and the size of photos, accompanying the articles were also measured. The sampled photographs which accompany the chosen articles, were analyzed to see whether they were positive or

negative, color or black-and-white, the impression from the way and the situation when actors were portrayed.

Textual analysis, in contrast to quantitative content analysis, requires greater interpretation to assess the salience of themes and the differences in textual presentation. For this Van Dijk's "News Analysis" (1988) was adopted. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in order to give a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the characteristics of coverage by China and Taiwan media.

Thematic structures of the news articles about Lee Teng-hui's visit would be described to gain an understanding of the hierarchical organization of themes or topics of the text. Respective topics and their mutual relations were identified by sentences or paragraphs, thus we were looking at the derivation of topics from the text. Through this derivation we can much clearly see the evaluation of one fact or actors.

Next, lexical style in the chosen articles that refer to Lee Teng-hui was identified to show the writer's or newspaper's stances toward Lee Teng-hui and the visit itself: friendly, neutral or hostile. Comparison was made across newspapers.

News sources as emphasized by Sigal (1986) and Hall (1982) are one of the main structural factors which influence news content. They were coded to note whether they were domestic, foreign, or the newspapers' own staff. Again, comparison was made across newspapers and across the Strait. Such analysis informs in detail about the weight assigned to Lee's visit by the newspapers in China and Taiwan.