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Master's Thesis

針對在台灣的三家英文報對於兩岸經濟合作架構協議的新聞評論

**News discourse of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement
(ECFA) in Taiwan's three English newspapers**

Student: David Williams

Advisor: Prof. L. Chu

中華民國 100 年 7 月

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Abstract

This thesis examines how Taiwan's three English language newspapers covered the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) signed between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China (China). By gaining an understanding of the discourse structure of how these newspapers reported ECFA will demonstrate the role they play in either trying to create a nationalistic Taiwanese or pan-Chinese identity to their English speaking audience. This identity construction is important because it will add legitimacy to whichever direction Taiwan eventually sets its social and political course towards. Examining how the *Taipei Times*, *The China Post* and *The Taiwan New* use discourse in their headlines, articles and editorials when reporting and interpreting ECFA, the thesis has found that they all use similar strategies to present their respective position. These strategies can be broken down into the omission of only reporting either the pros or cons of the agreement, the exclusion of the public voice, and the dominant voice of the elite who either support or oppose ECFA. The *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* appear to both structure their dominant discourses around overlapping themes that ECFA is a highly controversial agreement that will quickly lead an irreversible loss of sovereignty in Taiwan. In contrast, *The China Post* establishes a dominant discourse around ECFA's economic benefits, while ignoring the negative aspects of the agreement.

Key word / ECFA / newspaper / discourse analysis / textual features / headlines / articles / editorials

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1. Introduction

1.1 The research problem

English is a global language and has acquired the status of lingua franca in many parts of the world, and it is considered the leading language of discourse in business, science and politics (The triumph of English, 2001; Kawai, 2003). There has been an extensive amount of research on Taiwan's Chinese language media; however there has been very little research on its English media. This could be due to the fact that local Taiwanese and Chinese scholars are more comfortable doing researching in their native language. However, since Taiwan is home to a group of English newspapers, which have been continuously publishing since 1949, that they must hold some kind of deeper role. This paper will demonstrate how English is being used in a predominantly Chinese speaking society like Taiwan's to inform the rest of the world on its internal developments. Its goal is to understand how Taiwan's English language newspapers covered a recent regional trade agreement between China and Taiwan that has the potential of changing the face of Asia. As of 2010, both Taiwan and China signed a controversial trade deal called the Economic Cooperative Framework Agreement (ECFA). ECFA is part of a larger trend of globalization and regional integration that follows loosely in the footprints of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and more specifically in the shadow of the Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between China and Hong Kong. Many Taiwanese critics point to the rapid erosion of democratic and political freedoms that have occurred in Hong Kong since it signed CEPA (Hsiu-chuan, 2010, July 11). ECFA is considered controversial because some say that it is really a ploy to reunify democratic Taiwan with communist China. Officially Taiwan and China are still technically at war, and Beijing has passed a law that if Taiwan ever declares independence or tries to change the current status quo that it will invade. At the same time, America has

vowed to protect Taiwan from any attempts of forceful unification with China. In sum over the last 50-years the Taiwan Strait has remained one of the world's most volatile flash points and now is transforming into a new economic development model that has the potential of reshaping the social and economic structure of Asia.

To many ECFA is considered a milestone event in ushering in an era of peace and stability to the Taiwan Strait (Chung, 2010, July 01). However, the political gulf that separates the Taiwan Strait still runs deep on the notions of nationality, culture and identity (Spence, 1990; Fenby, 2005; Lynch, 2004; Pakula, 2009). The issues that separate these uneasy neighbors have played a decisive role in the recent democratization of Taiwan, including the rise of a Taiwanese identity movement that strives for political and cultural independence from China.

With all the competing forms of media available newspapers are still a relevant medium in how we gain our knowledge about the world. Even though newspapers are quickly shifting towards digital formats, the fundamentals of what they contain still appears to be the same. Heavy newspaper readers spend an equal amount of time reading the 'paper' and scanning the online headlines. Newspapers now more than ever have the ability of reach both local and global audiences, and it is crucial for us to understand how the mass media continues to play a vital role in the reality-construction process (Tai, 2003).

Taiwan's English newspapers represent a unique dimension of international communication that reaches far outside of the island's national boundaries. These English newspapers are engaged in a complex discourse of persuasion as they attempt to sell their interpretation of ECFA to their audiences. The use of the words 'sell' and 'interpretation' are used to highlight the fact that the consequences of accepting or rejecting ECFA are far reaching. Since there is no universal standards of what defines discourse this paper will follow a simple definition that a discourse refers to a written communication or debate

(Oxford, 2001). However this definition will also include that discourse is also a system of statements that constructs an object which is the message, supports institutions, reproduces power relations and has ideological effects (Parker, 1990; 1992). These discourses will demonstrate various representations of how Taiwan is communicating with itself and the outside world on how they see their collective future in relation to ECFA.

The goal of this thesis is to understand the discourse structure in Taiwan's three English dailies around ECFA, and how they would prefer their audiences to understand and react to the agreement. To study discourse we must understand and isolate the language or more specifically the words being used in the newspaper's headlines, articles and editorials. Due to its very nature very few people have any idea of the complexity of agreement on the scale of ECFA, and the only way the public can gain an understanding of it is by using the media. Unlike other trade agreements ECFA falls into the ambiguous category because of Taiwan's undetermined status; to some Taiwan is a sovereign nation and to others it is a territory that is currently outside of the control of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Therefore this study will also examine if these English newspapers portray ECFA as an inter-national agreement between two sovereign nations or as an intra-Chinese trade agreement. Ever since Taiwan split from China it has had the distinction of having English newspapers, and even today Taiwan does not have any dedicated TV based English broadcast news media, but because of the Internet it does have three (inter)national English newspapers. To sum up, this study will shed light of on how these newspapers have informed their audiences and the world on one of the most important yet least understood trade agreements of the twenty-first century. It will investigate a newspaper's discourse by studying the underlying messages contained in its headlines, news reports and editorials in Taiwan's three English language dailies. The thesis will also attempt to demonstrate the extent Taiwan's media are being instrumentalized to represent the ideologies that dominate and have split its social and cultural identity.

To achieve this objective, this thesis will first briefly discuss the complicated and complex relationship between the Republic of China, i.e. Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China, and the media's lingual environment comprising of the English language press and its role in comparison to the Chinese language press. In addition ECFA's meaning to Taiwan in the current globalized world will also be addressed. Doing this shall lay a foundation for understanding the social, political and enormous context in which the research is conducted, contributing as well to understanding the review of discourse analysis in Chapter 2, and the method used in collecting the news samples for discourse analysis in Chapter 3.

1.2 Taiwan

Since the nature of this study is a discourse analysis of a major trade agreement between China and Taiwan we must first have some background information to better understand this complicated situation.

For most of its recorded history, Taiwan has had the seeds of a multilingual society planted deep within it (Tsai, 2010). It can be argued that this multilingualism was established over 400 years ago when the Dutch, Spanish, Japanese and Chinese respectively attempted to colonize the island. However, even though these multilingual seeds were sown, European languages such as Dutch and Spanish did not take root. Taiwan has always stood on the periphery of the Chinese Empire, and it has played a major role in the twentieth century in reshaping Asia's socio-economic landscape (Lynch, 2004). These repeated patterns of colonization triggered a wave of competing Eastern and Western influences that have shaped modern Taiwanese identity. Out of these colonizing influences some foreign incursions appear to have left longer lasting cultural footprints than others.

Japan wrestled Taiwan from Qing dynasty China in 1895. Over the next 50 years (1895-1945) the Japanese attempted to transform the linguistical and cultural identity of Taiwan to

match its imperial ambitions, and although this colonial experiment came to an end in 1945, have continued to play an important cultural role in influencing Taiwanese identity (Ching, 2001; Lynch, 2004; Pakula, 2009).

After the defeat of Imperial Japan in 1945, Taiwan was relinquished to the stewardship of the Republic of China (ROC). Currently there is a considerable amount of international ambiguity as to the status of the ROC and Taiwan (Spence, 1990; Lynch, 2004; Fenby, 2005; Pakula, 2009). This ambiguity lies in the controversial questions: is Taiwan a sovereign nation, how to interpret the ROC in relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC), and does the now democratic ROC have the right to become an independent nation known as Taiwan (Spence, 1990; Lynch, 2004; Brown, 2004)? It is a matter of historical record that pre (1911-1949) and post (1949-2000) Republican China has been deeply influenced and guided by Washington (Spence, 1990; Lynch, 2004; Fenby, 2005; Pakula, 2009). This relation between the ROC and the USA has been both socio-economical and political in nature. It was through large sums of America aid that Republican China (pre 1949) was able to withstand the devastating effects of the Japanese invasion (1937-1945), and this foreign aid also played a key role in helping China defend itself during the Second World War (Spence, 1990; Fenby, 2005; Chang & Halliday, 2005; Pakula, 2009).

From 1949 to 1971, the ROC (Taiwan) was officially the representative of China in the United Nations. However in 1971, the United Nations General Assembly expelled the ROC in favor of the PRC, which became the official representative of China. In 1979, after the US diplomatic reconfirmation of the People's Republic of China, Washington signed The Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), a legally binding agreement between the USA and ROC (Taiwan), that Washington will provide the ROC with sufficient defensive weapons, and that the issue surrounding who is the legitimate representative of China must be settled peacefully. In addition, the TRA also maintains that all national agreements and treaties between

Washington and the ROC prior to 1979 still maintain their validity. By virtue of the TRA Washington continues to maintain a close yet unofficial working relationship with the ROC (Taiwan) through its de facto embassy the American Institute of Trade (AIT).

During the Japanese invasion (1937-1945), China was embroiled in a devastating civil war between Republican and Communist forces. By 1949, the forces of Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) claimed victory over Mainland China and the defeated Republican Nationalist Party of China (KMT) retreated to Taiwan taking with them among other things the frayed ties of their American ally (Spence, 1990; Fenby, 2005; Chang & Halliday, 2005; Pakula, 2009). During this time over two million KMT soldiers became refugees and fled to Taiwan. This large-scale migration tipped the ethnic and political balance of power in Taiwan in favor of the newly landed KMT mainlanders (Lynch, 2004).

From 1895 to 1945, Japanese was the official language of Taiwan. However, after 1945, the KMT began the process of re-sinosizing Taiwanese society to bring it under a cultural and language homogeneity of a KMT Chinese cultural identity (Lynch, 2004; Pakula, 2009). In 1948, the KMT announced a Mandarin-only National Language Policy in Taiwan banning the use of local Taiwanese dialects and Japanese on the penalty of punishment (Tsai, 2010). This language policy was not aimed at eliminating the use of English, as English was not a widely spoken language, but instead used to consolidate the Chinese cultural homogeneity of the KMT. It has been well documented that English was heavily used by the KMT to solicit resources and political support from the USA and its allies (Spence, 1990; Fenby, 2005; Chang & Halliday, 2005; Pakula, 2009). Many influential American publications firmly supported the KMT as the official and legitimate representative of China (Spence, 1990; Fenby, 2005; Pakula, 2009). This support can still be found in various pro-Taiwan American media publications such *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*, including the powerful American congressional pro-Taiwan lobby. Kawai (2003) contends that the state will use

their education systems to create and reinforce their ‘nationalist ideologies’. Taiwan’s National Language Policy was necessary to diffuse the cultural influence of the Japanese and create a bond of belonging between the people and their new national identity (Kawai, 2003). According to previous research, in 1950s the KMT adopted many English educational policies, and these were designed with the goal of helping Taiwan transform itself economically (Hung, 2010; Tsai, 2010). Tsai (2010) contends that since 1949, the Taiwanese government has mandated various forms of English instruction at the secondary school level, and that English was supposed to be a semi official language by 2008. Indeed English has been used as a tool by various Taiwanese governments in their attempts of bringing Taiwan onto the world stage through the instrumentalization of its English media (Tsai, 2010).

The historical and socio-political context between China and Taiwan has also led to the development of Taiwan’s media structure from an authoritarian to a liberal democratic one. In 1949, under the pretext of defending against communist insurgency an authoritarian press ban was initiated in Taiwan and it remained in force for 37-years and was finally lifted in 1988 (Wei, 1997). This press ban falls in the ranks as one of the longest in history and Taiwan was considered an ‘oligopolistic monopoly’ to how tightly the state controlled media licenses (Wei, 1997). However, this press ban did little in trying to officially interfere and censor Taiwan’s English language newspapers. This could largely be due to the fact that the ruling authoritarian KMT government was playing lip service to the deeply held American belief of freedom of expression, and saw it as a minor concession as it scrambled for international political recognition and influence.

1.3 Instrumentalization of Taiwan’s newspapers

Taiwan’s English newspapers are unique in that they belong to a previous era of instrumentalization that appears to be maintaining its influence even though Taiwan has

transitioned into its democratic era (Hallin & Mancini, 2005). In most Western styled democracies newspapers are nearly all aligned to a profit oriented business model, but this does not appear to be the case in Taiwan. Noam Chomsky (1993) argues that major media are large corporations and they are tied to even larger corporations. He states that the media's main goal is to sell advertising space, which in sum is the reader's attention to other businesses. Therefore, the media specialize in providing a target audience to the business community, which in turn provides the newspaper with its advertising revenue and profits. According to Chomsky, the media will then tailor its content to fall in line with the values of the advertisers. However, this model does not reflect Taiwan's English newspaper industry, as there is not any noticeable advertising base to create this relationship between the media and the business community. Hung (2010) contends that the *Taipei Times* has lost over NT\$100 million since it began publishing in 1999 and that its parent company (The Liberty Times Group) is not concerned with the losses as they can afford to subsidize it indefinitely. Similarly, over 90 per-cent of what little advertising can be found in the *Taiwan News* is directly related to retail products from the parent company the I-Mei Group.

According to Wei's (1996) research on Taiwan's Chinese newspapers, he benchmarked their performance according to Lars Engall's (1978) concept that the dual goals of a newspaper are business profits and excellence in journalism. Taiwan's English newspapers do not appear to follow either of Engall's dual goals of business profits and excellence in journalism. However, the *Taipei Times* has won international awards, but those have been in the fields of their layout and design, and not for its editorial content (Taipei Times, 2010).

It is well understood that news is a commodity and various market forces may influence it. Currently the state of the Western newspaper industry has been experiencing a significant decline in profitability, and its business model is in jeopardy (Wei, 1997; Pernez-Pena, 2008). Taiwanese daily newspapers including both print and Internet fall into three types: general,

entertainment and specialized. However, there has been little attempt in classifying Taiwan's English news publications (Lee, 2007).

In many countries there is a concern that financial pressures may seriously undermine a news organization's journalistic objectivity, and many traditional newspapers have decreased their content diversity in their attempts at maintaining a sustainable business model (Lee, 2007; Beam, 2008). In this research the three newspapers being studied are privately owned and appear to be resistant to the same market pressures that affect their peers.

Previous American research has demonstrated that publicly and privately owned newspapers are more alike than different, even though they maintain a reliance on locally produced content (Beam, 2008). Therefore, this study is the first step to understanding the discourse and content structure of Taiwan's English newspapers to see if they mimic their American counterparts. According to research done on Taiwan's Chinese newspaper and broadcasting market, product diversification and market structure is formed to mirror advertiser preferences (Lee, 2007). However, this does not appear to be the case for Taiwan's English newspapers as their advertising content is almost non-existent in both their print and online formats (Hung, 2010).

A brief note on the business model of Taiwan's English news organizations. Currently the *Taipei Times*, *The Taiwan News* and *The China Post* all publish daily hard copy publications and also maintain online versions. These online versions mirror their hardcopy editions in content structure and design. Unlike their Western or Chinese language counterparts, both online and print publications occasionally carry the odd advertisement (Hung, 2010). This lack of advertising is a strong indicator that none of the three English news organizations are generating any substantial profits and are relying on an alternative source of funding. In Taiwan, the English newspapers enjoy somewhat of a geographical advantage, as the majority of their readers are concentrated in Taiwan's five largest cities. All three English newspapers

are priced at a uniformed NT\$15, and are therefore on average NT\$5 more expensive than their Chinese language counterparts. This uniformed pricing structure could indicate that the hardcopy readership is not price sensitive. It is well understood that newspapers that operate on a profit model should adjust their product to match the market's needs. If a newspaper does not adjust itself to market demands it runs the risk of alienating its readership and more importantly erodes its crucial advertising base. To determine whether Taiwan's English language newspaper industry operates to generate sustainable revenue or follows an alternative agenda would require further study. This raises the natural question of what is the purpose of Taiwan's English language newspapers? This paper takes the position that this question can be partially answered through a discourse analysis.

Since it appears that Taiwan's English newspapers are not subjected to the same market pressures of their Western counterparts the answer must then lie in the discourses they are creating. This thesis will attempt to demonstrate that their discourses mirror the political and economic interests of either the pro-independence and pro-unification groups in Taiwan. This means that economic gains are not their primary concerns, but instead they are reverting back to promoting the foreign policy of the KMT or advocating the policies of the opposition, and these issues will be further dealt with in the coming section.

1.4 Taiwan's lingual media environment

Taiwan is a Chinese speaking society that is currently home to three English daily newspapers that serve a small but influential audience both domestically and internationally. Due to its modest size, these English newspapers are in effect circulated nationally. In comparison, Canada a predominantly English speaking country, excluding French-speaking Quebec, there are only two national English newspapers. When comparing Canada's national newspaper market with Taiwan's it is important to note the similarities between these two

countries. Canada's population of 33.7 million is similar to Taiwan's population of 22.8 million in that they are relatively modest (List of countries by population, 2010). Much larger socio-economic neighbors overshadow both Canada and Taiwan. For Canada, it is the USA and for Taiwan, it is China. Both Canada and Taiwan share similar linguistical, cultural and economical linkages with their larger neighbors. The issue of trying to maintain a unique cultural identity, while also allowing for separatist ideologies can also be found within both countries. For Canada it is clear that its vast geography makes launching a national daily a challenging venture. Currently, one of Canada's national dailies *The National Post* has entered bankruptcy protection due to the tough economic climate, and this is mainly because of the erosion of its advertising revenue (CBC, 2010). This means that Canada is better served by regional newspapers and their online counterparts that play the role of informing the public on local issues. Taiwan does not face the same geographic challenges as Canada, but it does have greater obstacles in maintaining three 'national' English news organizations. These obstacles include the language barrier of its Chinese speaking society and the overall market viability of the English newspaper industry.

According to the Government Information Office (GIO) newspaper readership in Taiwan peaked in 1991 at 76.3 percent, and since 2008 has fallen by 30 per cent (Mass Media Chapter 15, 2010). However, what is surprising and somewhat contradictory is that as of June 2010, there were 2,091 newspapers registered in Taiwan, but that advertising revenue has largely migrated to the TV and Internet (Mass Media Chapter 15, 2010).

To what amount do Taiwan's three English newspapers differentiate their news content? Previous studies during Taiwan's authoritarian era have established that their content was nearly identical. However, there have been no recent studies since end of the authoritarian era (Bishop & Hansen, 1981). Likewise, there has been very little research done in measuring Taiwan's newspaper market diversity (Lee, 2007). However, it has been clearly established

that English newspapers published in China have a clear goal, and this is to influence their Western audiences with political themed messages (Kenney, 1993; Wang 2009). In China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) uses advanced Western methods and theories of media production to target their foreign audiences (Brady, 2007). This is also consistent with previous research that has correlated the mass media's role in building and developing national identity (Billig, 1995; Lewis, 2008). Wang (2009) argues that 'media institutions in China and Taiwan manipulate language to represent politically significant events in the ways that are compatible with their political or ideological standpoints' (p. 180). According to an American study, regardless of a newspaper's ownership structure, it appears that newspaper content is becoming a uniformed and a generic commodity (Beam, 2008). Moreover, in comparison based on research done on Taiwan's Chinese language newspapers, it appears that the more developed the media concentration, the more widespread the content diversity (Lee, 2007). Once again these differences show that Taiwan is indeed a diverse and unique place and its media systems deserve to be studied to understand the role they play in both regional and international developments.

Taiwan's main language groups are Mandarin Chinese (official), Taiwanese and various Hakka dialects (CIA Fact Book, 2009), and English is still somewhat restricted to the island's elites and expats, overseas Taiwanese. Tsai (2010) contends that Taiwan has implemented many comprehensive English education polices since 1949, and is now required for students at all levels of Taiwan's public school system, however English is still not widely used in daily communication (Tsai, 2010). Taiwan is well served with a wealth of popular ESL (English as a Second language) publications (Mass Media Chapter 15, 2010). One simple way of judging if these Taiwanese students are the target audience of the English newspapers is by looking for corresponding advertisements. In my five years of reading all three newspapers on a near daily basis, there appears to be no ESL or youth demographic targeted

advertising. Therefore, it is realistic to assume that Taiwanese students are not the audience that is consuming these publications. Because of Taiwan's limited market size it seems implausible that the residing English speaking expats could financially support all three national English dailies in either Internet or print form. In a market study of the Chinese-language newspapers in the U.S, Chinese readers have been satisfied as long as they received news from their homelands (Lau, 1989). Due to the diverse nationalities of the expats residing in Taiwan this source of information is better serviced by the Internet. However, it is clear that the Taiwanese diaspora is one of the most successful communities in the world and they are heavily concentrated in English speaking countries, predominantly the United States (Lin, 2010, July 31). This area deserves further research as Taiwan's English newspapers are a unique blend of regional news reflecting human-interest stories, civic and national politics. Here it should be noted that the political news emphasizes heavily on geo-political developments concerning Taiwan and its relationship to China and the United States. The present research will allude to the possibility that these online newspapers are part of the identity construction process necessary to create Billig's (1995) 'banal nationalism' and Anderson's (1991) 'imaged community.' Due to Taiwan's unique historical development it is still unclear how it will eventually define its national identity. As previously mentioned ECFA is trade agreement in theory, but represent much more to the newspapers that are discoursing about its long-term economic impact and political consequences.

1.5 ECFA and globalization

ECFA is part of a larger trend of globalization and its corresponding regional integrations. Many of the arguments for and against ECFA have previously surfaced during various trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The arguments against Free Trade Agreements (FTA) such as

NAFTA include the erosion of political, cultural and economic sovereignty (Jackson, 1997; Boudreaux, 2004; Maklin, 2009; Rickards, 2010). The arguments for FTAs have included enhanced economic competitiveness, anti-isolationism and global integration (Rickards, 2010).

Unlike a national FTA such NAFTA, ECFA is much more similar in structure to Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between China and Hong Kong (Rickards, 2010). Therefore, many consider ECFA and CEPA to be more akin to an intra-Chinese economic agreement than a true FTA as those signed by sovereign countries (CNA, 2010; Tung, 2010). Many in Taiwan point out that under CEPA Hong Kong has been both economically and politically marginalized and brought under a tighter centralized influence or control from Beijing (The Liberty Times Editorial, 2009).

ECFA is preferential trade agreement between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan). It was signed on June 29, 2010 in Chongqing, China. ECFA is the most comprehensive agreement to date between the two political adversaries (Chung, 2010). The ROC retreated to Taiwan after losing the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949), yet to this day a peace treaty has never been signed, and both sides are technically still at war (Staff writer, 2011, February 15).

ECFA was embraced by Taipei in the hope that Beijing would ease pressure on Taiwan and allow it to sign other Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with other countries. It is believed that if Taipei can maintain a trade pact with China and sign FTAs with other countries, this should stop the erosion of Taiwan's economic competitiveness (Chung, 2010). Yet, as previously mentioned many critics have considered ECFA to be uncomfortably similar in structure to the trade agreements Beijing has with Hong Kong (CEPA) and Macau, which are commonly known as "the one country, two systems" model (Chang, 2010).

Currently, ECFA addresses tariff issues on 539 Taiwanese products and 267 Chinese products (Chung, 2010). It is considered to offer Taipei a very competitive advantage of

nearly US\$ 14 billion compared to China's US\$ 3 billion. Under the terms of the trade agreement China will open 11 service sectors while Taiwan will expand access in 7 sectors.

In Taiwan one of the most vocal concerns to ECFA is that it will hollow out Taiwan's core industries and flood the island with Chinese white collar workers (Chung, 2010). Pro-independence groups argue that ECFA will rapidly lead to eventual unification with China as it opens Taiwan to Chinese investments and this capital is designed to integrate the two economies (Lin, 2009). These are both similar to reactions that have appeared in previous FTA arguments that have caught the public's imagination (Jackson, 1997; Boudreaux, 2004; Maklin, 2009; Rickards, 2010). The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) organized large-scale anti-ECFA protests took place days before the agreement was signed (Ho & Kao, 2010).

The present thesis intends to employ a discourse analysis to understand a complicate issue such as ECFA, not its specific legal or trade contents, but its implications such as whether it will erode Taiwan's political, economic and cultural sovereignty or bring it closer to China. The following chapters will address the theories and concepts relevant to discourse analysis and understand news reports of ECFA in Taiwan's three English newspapers

2. Review of literature: Discourse analysis

2.1 Discourse analysis

More than a tool of for studying language, discourse analysis is a method to establish an interpretive framework. According to van Dijk (1995), we live in a world of ideological constructions and these constructions give us our understanding and knowledge on how we relate to politics, policies and the economy. To establish and reinforce these ideological constructions, they must enter a cycle of being produced and then more importantly reproduced (van Dijk, 1995). These cycles of production and reproduction are most commonly created in the discourse of public text traditionally found in newspapers (van Dijk, 1995). Fairclough (1993; 1995) contends that discourse contains social identities, social relation, and systems of knowledge and belief about the world, methodologically legitimizing discourse analysis in the study of the news and editorials of these English newspapers.

It is important for scholars and the public to understand the structures that control our media discourse also controls its access (Van Dijk, 1989). Various scholars have created in-depth bodies of work that demonstrate that media access is a key dimension of control (Chomsky & Herman, 1988; van Dijk, 1989). The media creates and then reinforces this as a public consensus when dealing with the manufacturing and distribution of what it considers news content. This media created public consensus then complements the dominant discourses of the ruling elite (Chomsky & Herman, 1998; van Dijk, 1989; Seedat, 1999; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). It is thus important to examine especially who is speaking in the text and the groups that they represent. Does the newspaper offer a balance of voices and opinions or does it use a strategy of only including carefully selected actors to strengthen its ideological position? Thus discourse analysis can help reveal the dominant and non-dominant ways ECFA has been discussed un Taiwan's English newspapers.

2.1.1 Discourses create inquiry through their construction

A newspaper's discourse is a carefully constructed form of communication that helps their audience understand an event from a particular point of view (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Parker (1992) identifies the various elements of discourses traditionally used in the print media. He argues that these elements of discourse are realized in text and are about objects and subjects; they create a coherent system of meaning that link to other discourses; they mirror their own patterns of speaking; they are historically located and support corresponding institutions that reproduce and reinforce power relations that have ideological effects (as cited in MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). More importantly, Parker (1992) believes that a news discourse is not created in vacuum, therefore one of his criteria is to speculate with others on the meaning of what is being said. Finally, by speculating with others creates a more realistic interpretation of the social nature of discourse and how it effects our perception (Parker, 1992).

Burr (1995) establishes that discourses are based on a set of meanings and metaphors. These discourses are representations of the stories, images, and statements that lead to the creation of certain perspective of events (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Discourses may offer subjective truth claims that attempt to be objective in how they interpret our important events. These interpretations may become our version of reality and they allow us to form opinions which we would not be previously aware of (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008).

As discourses are used as a technique to frame and establish agendas, they create public knowledge about specific events (London, 1993; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). London (1993) argues that a frame is the central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue. News and information has no intrinsic value unless embedded in a meaningful context, which organizes and lends it coherence (London, 1993). News stories can be understood as narratives, which include information and factual elements that also

carry an implicit message and a newspaper's subjectivity (London, 1993).

It would not be possible for the public to understand such a complicated event as ECFA without the media first informing, and then offering its interpretations as the event unfolds. This thesis is based around these core developments of how Taiwan's English newspaper are informing and interpreting ECFA's impact both domestically and internationally. As each newspaper creates its own unique narrative through its headlines, articles and editorials it is then possible to link other issues such as how these publications identify with Taiwan's position in relation to China and the world.

2.2 News headlines and lead sentences

A news headline is the gateway to an article or editorial. News headlines are the most visible method of attracting a reader's attention and quickly communicate a newspaper's values to its audience (van Dijk, 1985). In addition, a news headline can quickly communicate complicated social and discursive interactions all within a few words (van Dijk, 1985; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). News headlines are the most persuasive aspect of a text, however the lead sentences then reinforce these themes by drawing the reader in. All news relies on and is influenced by social schemata and social representations of how we interpret our values (van Dijk, 1985; Morrison, 2006; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). More importantly headlines and lead sentences help readers in their characterization of news and identify with the "relevance" of the event (van Dijk, 1985). Therefore the "relevance structure communicates to the reader" which information in the text is most important or prominent (van Dijk, 1985, p. 70).

Some critics claim that headlines may be ambiguous, but to the public these headlines tend to hold deeper meanings and associations through the use of their linguistic features such as puns and emotional vocabulary (Develotte & Rechniewski, 2002; MacRitchie & Seedat,

2008). Newspapers and the print media in general use influential social values in combination with headlines and lead sentences to create a persuasive message (van Dijk, 1985; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). When reading headlines and the corresponding lead sentences the public can quickly create a roadmap on how the article will most likely frame an event. Simply put, when the public is scanning a newspaper or website their first point of contact is with the headlines. It is thus logical to deduce that headlines are one of the most influential parts of a newspaper's message because they reinforce the article's key messages (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008).

As already established, a headline is the reader's first point of contact with a newspaper. Potential readers usually scan the headlines and lead sentences before making a decision to continue or abandon reading a newspaper in either print or online (van Dijk, 1988). As people live in a world filled with messages competing for attention, a newspaper's headline may be the only aspect of its overall message that has the ability to persuade a potentially a reader in a momentary scan of the content. A headline showcases to the reader the importance of the issue within its message, and its impact relies on the persuasion power of the linguistic construct of vivid, forceful and dramatic vocabulary (van Dijk, 1988).

Newspaper headlines offer flexibility and represent an important message the publication is trying to highlight to its readers. In addition, editorials have been established to reinforce the underlying message structure of a newspaper's headlines (van Dijk, 1996b). According to Lee and Lin (2006), a newspaper's editorial plays a special role as it is written to be persuasive compared to the more objective stance it takes with its non-editorial content. This study will demonstrate the similarities in messaging structure in how a Taiwanese English newspaper writes its headlines in comparison to its editorial stance. This paper will pay special attention to the newspaper's editorial page as it is a special arena where the publication enters the public debate by taking an ideological position on issues that it

considers important (Hacket and Zhao, 1994; Le, 2003). Therefore it is fitting that this study uses discourse analysis to find out how ECFA is being "reconstructed" in the English dailies to Taiwan's foreign audiences. Even though this study is on newspapers it does not differentiate between hard copy content (print) and online content. As more readers migrate to the Internet newspapers have in effect become publishing hybrids.

2.3 Voices and actors in discourse

The media is a powerful social and discursive institution that helps regulate and organize social life (Li, 2009). The media plays an important role in the production of social knowledge, and the creation of values and beliefs through various linguistic methods (van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 1995; Fowler, 1996; Li, 2009).

Studies demonstrate that persuasive and strategic news discourses imply that the goals of the dominant class appear to mirror the interests of the greater society (Kellner, 1995; Louw, 2001; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). More importantly these discourses reinforce the creation and maintenance of key socio political and economic institutions, beliefs and values that appear to be universal and normal to the entire society (Kellner, 1995; Louw, 2001; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Therefore, if news is only a selection of selective sources that fall in-line with the social values that the media represents, then it is necessary to understand which voices and actors the media includes or omits when covering an event of impact.

As mentioned before, news cannot be formed in an objective vacuum. Therefore, it is safe to argue that news construction is based on *symbiotic relationships* between influential voices and actors (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Many times these voices and actors are professional communicators, that include public relations agents and established institutions that give validity to how the event is being covered (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). When certain voices become familiar and consistent, they take on the role of a professional communicator (actors)

who then reinforces the image the media is trying to establish (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Scholars argue that these professional communicators (actors) use symbols and specific language that creates the illusion of a common vision and public consensus (Louw, 2001; Matheson, 2005; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008).

For a theoretical framework to have merit, it must examine language use and language variations, such as what are the particular representations of the social actors: what are their social identities, and the version of reality they build a discourse around (van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 1995; Li, 2009). This is very similar to the 20 Steps used by Parker (1992), although his framework builds a more mythological structure in breaking down and understanding discourse (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008).

As previously discussed strong evidence suggests that elites use media discourses to reinforce their legitimacy and authority in framing socio-political policies for public acceptance and action (Chomsky & Herman, 1998; van Dijk, 1989). News then establishes and fuels the elite agenda and creates a consensus, and that includes the depth of the discourse and how it will be communicated (Louw, 2001). This thesis will identify within *Taiwan News*, *The China Post* and the *Taipei Times* who is given a voice and see if there is any relationship to them having a position influence. Many symbolic power structures play out in the media, and the debate surrounding ECFA will provide an insight into how these are portrayed to their English audiences (van Dijk, 1995). It has been well established that the media can be classified as a limited social resource that maintains barriers of open public participation (van Dijk, 1989). Chomsky and Herman (1988) have argued that the public is unable to shape media discourse because of the corporate ownership structure of the media. In Taiwan however, it is clear that the media follows an ownership structure that is not based on a profit-oriented model. This is unique to Chomsky and Herman's argument in that it appears that in Taiwan politics may be more important than money. However, this digresses

from their underlying assumption that the media is part of bigger structure that works toward its own best interest.

Elites maintain a considerable amount of authority in shaping public discourse because they have the most say in social situations and have the necessary influence within our institutions (Chomsky & Herman, 1988; van Dijk, 1989). Elites have the power to influence public opinions and ideologies because they have created a relationship of mutual dependence between themselves and the media (van Dijk, 1989). Media elites are also deeply tied into this relationship as they need other elites to become the sources, actors and more importantly the topics of interest (van Dijk, 1989). Finally, it is the political elites who especially need the media to legitimize and demonstrate their power to the public (van Dijk, 1989). This link establishing Taiwan's English newspapers to an elite structure has been established, and it follows that these newspapers should adhere to media/elite dynamic when discoursing ECFA.

2.4 Dominant discourses as reproduction of power structures

As it has been established newspapers play an important role in public communication, and more importantly the information we read in them maintains a high level of recall (van Dijk, 1989; Lo & Chang, 2006). They are a part of a fundamental process in the production and reproduction of social power structures, and it is through the creation of these social power structures that we gain our understanding of the world (Chomsky & Herman, 1988; van Dijk, 1989; van Dijk, 1995; Guo, Hin, Chen, 2007). In addition, previous research has shown that newspapers are an important vehicle of public discourse that can create a public consensus or challenge the dominant discourse previously established by others (Kellner, 1995; Consalvo, 1998; Seedat, 1999; Picard & Brody, 2000; Louw, 2001; MacDonald, 2003; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008).

Li (2009) contends that newspapers play a critical role in creating national identities and acts as an important channel of debate in framing the national agenda. As this thesis takes the position that ECFA as a trade agreement in practice represents how Taiwanese view their national identity in relation to their social and political identity with China. According to Anderson (1991) and Hall (1996), a nation is very similar to an imagined community that is built on how a society creates various symbolic relationships with itself. This imagined community is built on an ongoing process of creating a national culture through discourse that is a part of our 'systems of cultural representation' (Hall, 1996, p. 612). The imagined community is a direct challenge to our previous notions that a national society is based on geography, linguistics or even a shared cultural background (Anderson, 1991; Hall, 1996; Lynch, 2004). The naming structuring in the *Taipei Times*, *The Taiwan News*, and *The China Post* can show how this process is being (re)created in Taiwan.

The concept of nationalism is an ideology that is used to cement the nation into its imagined construct of a natural community (Billig, 1995). Therefore, for nationalism to appear natural, a daily ideological ritual must be played out. Known as 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 1995), this daily ideological ritual of is played out in the media, and it is the media that reinforces ideas of what our imagined community is (Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995; Guo, et al., 2007). Lynch (2004) argues that in Taiwan there are various forces at play actively trying to either create a Chinese or Taiwanese national identity. It is plausible to assume that since only one of the three Taiwanese English newspapers has kept its original name (*The China Post*) that this newspaper could be aligned to a pan-Chinese identity structure. Therefore, this study may also demonstrate if this concept of 'national imagination' is being recreated within Taiwan's three English newspapers when reporting ECFA to influence how their foreign readers and we 'see' Taiwan and the Taiwanese people in relation to China.

Many scholars have argued that the concept of a national community is allowed to expand

and be (re)produced through the mass communication of ideas that newspapers diffuse so well (Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995; Guo, et al., 2007). This re(production) is played out in headlines, articles and editorials, and they offer us a unique window in understanding how a newspaper helps build a national identity, which then in turn become shared through a discourse that links the readers of the same newspaper (Anderson, 1991). The analysis of the headlines, lead sentences, and voices and actors in the articles and editorials should be able to reveal the power structure and corresponding ideology of each newspaper.



3. Collecting Data for Discourse Analysis

3.1 A Brief History of English Newspapers in Taiwan

This thesis will analyze the discourses in news about ECFA in Taiwan's three English newspapers to examine their ideological or political positions in communicating Taiwan's identity to their international audiences. To this goal, a brief history of English newspapers in Taiwan is first presented, and then details on how news articles are selected for analysis will be discussed.

Since 1949, Taiwan has had the distinction of maintaining a continuous tradition of English newspapers (China Post, 2010; Hung, 2010; Taiwan News, 2010; Taipei Times, 2010). Taiwan's first English newspaper *The China News* was established in 1949 (The Taiwan News, 2010), and three years later *The China Post* was founded in 1952 (The China Post, 2010). What is surprising is that both *The China News* now known as the *Taiwan News* and *The China Post* are still operating as newspapers in both print and online mediums.

During its handover after the end of World War II, Taiwan went from a developed former Japanese colony, into the last refuge of the ROC (Spence, 1990; Lynch, 2004; Fenby, 2005; Chang & Halliday, 2005; Pakula, 2009). By 1952, Taiwan had two English newspapers, even though it did not have a sufficient local Taiwanese audience to consume these newspapers (Hung, 2010).

Because of its limited size and language barriers, it was difficult to find people who had a living memory or a professional relationship with Taiwan's early English newspapers. This link is necessary to gain a better understanding of the role these newspapers have played, as

there is very limited scholarship to reference back to. In an interview with veteran journalist Joe Hung, President and Chairman of the Central News Agency (CNA) and former managing editor of *The China Post*, *The China News* was originally published as a morning styled mimeograph sheet in 1949, and was part of the KMT's English language propaganda department (Hung, 2010). Over his long career Hung, now 82-years old, has worn many hats ranging from reporter to diplomat. Besides his current duties as CNA president and chairman, Hung has a 50-year career as a journalist, he has worked as the regional United Press International (UPI) correspondent in the 1960s, the CNA's Washington, Tokyo and London bureau chief, journalism professor, and an ambassadorial level envoy to the Holy See. Hung (2010) recalls that the early propaganda department was under the direct authority of the Taiwan Provincial Security Command and acted among other things as a secret police and intelligence agency that helped enforce martial law that lasted from 1949-1987. Over the next decades this security apparatus evolved in name and structure, however its basic function remained the same (Hung, 2010). Taiwan's early Chinese and English press followed a pattern of authoritarian instrumentalization. The term instrumentalization refers to when the media acts as an 'instrument' in pushing through the state's agenda or is closely aligned with a political party or movement (Hallin & Mancini, 2005; Hung, 2010). One of the most important examples of this instrumentalization is found in the state news agency the CNA. The CNA was established in 1924 (China) by the KMT, and in 1949 was relocated to Taiwan. Before Taiwan entered its democratic phase the CNA was the official state news agency of the ROC. In 1996, the CNA became an autonomous news agency that continues to receive partial funding from the central government (Mass Media Chapter 15, 2010).

In 1952, *The China Post* was first published as mimeograph sheet and soon switched over to a morning newspaper format to meet the demands of the American soldiers stationed in Taiwan in response to the Korean War (Pakula, 2009; Hung, 2010). At this time *The China*

Post was considered “the only real regular English newspaper” in the ROC and was mainly consumed by American military personnel and other residing expats (Hung, 2010). During the early 1950s, *The China News* flirted briefly with becoming a morning publication, but quickly reverted back to an afternoon publication as the KMT’s propaganda department was having limited success in turning it into a stand alone newspaper (Hung, 2010). It was only later in the 1960s that *The China News* transformed into an independent newspaper free of the direct governmental control of the Taiwan Provincial Security Command propaganda department (Bishop & Hansen, 1981; Hung, 2010).

Hung (2010) believes that the early success of Taiwan’s English newspapers was directly linked to the larger geo-political events such as the Korean War (1950-1953), and Vietnam War (1955-1975). Together these conflicts played a role in stimulating Taiwan’s developing export economy, while at the same time helped rebuild a frayed relationship with Washington (Spence, 1990; Fenby, 2005; Pakula, 2009). Between 1950-1965, Taiwan received billions of dollars of economic and military aid from Washington, reversing a previous policy of disengaging from the ROC (Spence, 1990; Chan, 1997; Fenby, 2005). “In the late 1960s, these newspapers made a hell of a lot of money,” said Hung (2010), “Taiwan was going through unprecedented economic prosperity, and people had to line up to advertise in either Chinese or English newspapers.”

Bishop and Hansen (1981) state that in the early 1970s, the foreign community made up of 60 per cent of the readership of these two English newspapers (1981). Hung (2010) disputes the possibility that 40 per cent of the English newspaper’s could have been consumed by Chinese readers arguing that as one of the few English speaking Chinese journalists working, English was not a widely spoken language in Taiwan, as the government had limited success with its overall English educational policy.

From 1949 to 1988, Taiwan was under an authoritarian national press ban, however, Hung

(2010) argues that this press ban was mainly directed at the local Chinese newspapers since very few Taiwanese had sufficient English abilities, and that the English newspapers were not aimed towards them. It should be noted *The China News* and *The China Post* did refrain from publishing overt governmental based propaganda, as this would undermine their credibility with the foreign community (Bishop & Hansen, 1981; Hung, 2010). Both English publications were sensitive to the guidelines of the Taiwan's security agencies and did their best to adhere to them, while also trying to serve their foreign audience (Bishop & Hansen, 1981; Hung, 2010). Bishop and Hansen (1981) contend that *The China Post* and *China News* were a virtual reflection of each other in content, and that they both refrained from publishing negative news about the KMT. This demonstrates that there was some press control in the English newspapers; however, the Chinese newspapers experienced the brunt of it as they had the widest influence on the general public (Bishop & Hansen, 1981; Hung, 2010).

Taiwan has come a long way since its authoritarian birth in 1949. For decades Taiwan's media was restrictive and mirrored the ruling power structure of the KMT government. In 1988, Taiwan's KMT party lifted the decades old press ban, and this is considered the beginning of a golden age for the island's newspaper industry (Wei, 1996; Lee, 2003; Hung, 2010). Taiwan's transformation into an open society is largely attributed to KMT president Lee Teng-hui (1988-2000) as he is credited for pushing through the democratization process by heavily advocating an independent Taiwanese national identity that was separate from China. It took decades for Taiwan's media to undergo its gradual liberalization, and since the 1990s, Taiwan's media has evolved into one of Asia's freest (Chao, 2010, May 01).

Taiwan's English newspapers follow a pre-established strategy used in the Chinese press of niche-seeking and politicization their publications by leaning heavily towards independence or unification agendas (Wei, 1996). This follows very closely the same model

of political pluralism proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2005). Both English and Chinese newspapers follow an earlier pattern of being influenced by socio-political movements, and this is played up heavily in their editorial orientation (Wei, 1996). Taiwan's English newspapers are somewhat paradoxical as they do not follow the profit-oriented model of their Chinese counterparts as market pressure does not appear to erode their audiences or business models (Wei, 1996).

In 1999, the *Taipei Times* entered Taiwan's English language newspaper market by becoming the third national newspaper (*Taipei Times*, 2010). During the same year, the 50 year-old *The China News* was acquired by a local food conglomerate, the I-Mei Corporation and renamed *The Taiwan News* (*The Taiwan News*, 2010). In 2000, the Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) Chen Shui-bian broke the KMT's 50-year hold on power and became the first non-KMT politician to hold the presidency (2000-2008). President Chen Shui-bian was a strong advocate of the Taiwanese independence movement and his administration attempted to reinforce a national Taiwanese identity that was culturally and ideologically separate from China. According to Hung (2010), the renaming and rebranding of *The China News* to *The Taiwan News* was a direct reflection of the growing sense of Taiwanese identity and corresponding independence movement. In the mission statement of the *Taipei Times*, it states that it is dedicated to pursue non-partisan journalism that highlights Taiwan focused issues nationally and internationally (*Taipei Times*, 2010). The *Taipei Times* is a subsidiary of the Chinese language media organization the Liberty Times Group and it follows the parent company's "Taiwan First, Liberty Foremost" mandate which is associated with an pro-independence political stance (Wei, 1997; *Taipei Times*, 2010). Billionaire Lin Rong San who was a national policy advisor to the pro-independence presidents Lee Teng-Hui (KMT) and Chen Shui-bian (DPP) (Flannery, 2008) owns the Liberty Times Group. In addition, there is further evidence of instrumentalization if we examine the editorial staff of

the *Taipei Times*. Their current deputy editor is a former Canadian Intelligence Secret Service agent J. Michael Cole who writes both signed and unsigned editorials; and then there is special advisor to the Liberty Times Group, former AIT Chairman and retired American ambassador Nat Bellocchi who also contributes both signed and unsigned editorials. Both men write extensively on cross-strait politics, Taiwan's role in the Asia Pacific region and the need of keeping Taiwan outside a Chinese sphere of political influence (Bellocchi, 2011; Cole, 2011).

Even though it is evident that there is a unique audience of each publication, there appears to be no recent studies comparing the content of Taiwan's three English newspapers. Honglei Wang (2009) contends that *The China Post* is the leading English newspaper in Taiwan and compares it with having the same influence as the Chinese Communist's Party's *China Daily*. Wang argues that both papers uphold the eventual reunification of Taiwan and China, although *The China Post* also hopes to maintain the ambiguous status quo between China and Taiwan (Wang, 2009). Hung (2010) contends that the current KMT government considers the *Taipei Times* as the newspaper with the greatest foreign influence. He adds that the current KMT administration has created a new online governmental publication called *Focus Taiwan*, which has CNA resources at its disposal. Within these various stated funded publications we have examples of the continuation of the English media as a tool of political instrumentalization (Hallin & Mancini, 2005; Hung 2010). The KMT believes that *Focus Taiwan* will act as an additional online counter weight to the pro-independence *Taipei Times* (Hung, 2010). In addition, the KMT administration of President Ma Ying-jeo (2008-present) has established various online governmental news publications such as *Taiwan Today* to also compete with the pro-independence *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* (Hung, 2010). This appears to be consistent with the KMT's policy of eventual reunification with China (Lynch, 2004; Adams, 2005; Pakula, 2009).

It is also possible to directly gather information indicting the political leanings from these government-funded publications themselves. The government publication *Taiwan Today* maintains the slogan; “Delivery top stories from the local media” (*Taiwan Today*, 2010). Doing an informal scan through *Taiwan Today*’s content categories, it quickly appears that a majority of the content has been internally sourced through various official state news sites. This warrants further research to uncover if *Taiwan Today* really does “deliver top stories from the local media”. The “About Us” page under the Readership section states that “*Taiwan Today* readers include media professionals, government officials, politicians, academics, business leaders and those seeking an accurate and balanced view of Taiwan” (*Taiwan Today*, 2010). Once again further study is needed to see if this is indeed a true reflection on the content that *Taiwan Today* carries. Also available in print and online are the government published *Taiwan Review* and *Taiwan Panorama*. Both publications received funding during the administrations of former president Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008) and were published to help increase Taiwan’s independence movement and increase its international space (Hung, 2010). Under the About Us section in *Taiwan Review* the following can be found:

The purpose outlined in the first editorial remains remarkably close to *Taiwan Review*’s mission statement. The two-stage name change (from *Free China Review* to *Taipei Review* in April 2000 followed by the adoption of the current name in March 2003) tracked rising Taiwanese consciousness. Whereas the first publisher of the *Free China Review* identified with the Chinese Nationalists’ goal of delivering *unfree* China from oppression in 1951, the current publisher identifies with Taiwan’s goal of gaining greater international recognition of its statehood (*Taiwan Review* about us, 2008).

This style of mission statement is also found in the government published *Taiwan Panorama*:

In keeping with our reporting on Taiwan and Taiwan's efforts toward internationalization, in January 2006 we formally changed the magazine's name from *Sinorama* to *Taiwan Panorama*. Our content is unchanged—we remain committed to reporting on all facets of Taiwan and Taiwanese society, and to tracking developments affecting ethnic Chinese around the globe. We at *Taiwan Panorama* hope to make the magazine an important spokesperson for Taiwan in the world's print media, one that keeps the world better informed about Taiwan and raises our island's international profile (About Taiwan Panorama magazine, 2010).

Even though Taiwan lifted its press ban in 1988, it appears that both the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the pro-unification KMT governments continue to be actively involved in maintaining English media channels to push their own political agendas and influence foreign audiences. The growing division of independence versus unification political identity in Taiwan is not a new issue (Lynch, 2004; Adams, 2005). However, as this division continues to increase it has created another dimension to the long-standing and consistent policy of the KMT to reunify Taiwan with Mainland China (Lynch, 2004; Adams, 2005; Wang, 2009; Pakula, 2009). This pro-unification policy of the KMT appears to be in direct conflict with the growing sense of Taiwanese identity and the demand that the issue be determined solely by the public and not through governmental policy (Carpenter, 2008).

It is clear that Taiwan's various public and private English media channels have been leveraged to influence external audiences. Hung (2010) argues that that KMT's *Focus Taiwan* is a direct online challenger to the pro-independence leaning *Taipei Times* in swaying international public opinion. Moreover, this has been part of a previous government strategy

that started with the DPP's use of expanding the online reach of the CNA to help create more international awareness of the Taiwanese independence movement (Hung, 2010). It is now a matter of the historical record of the ongoing conflict between Taiwan and China, and how this conflict has divided Taiwanese society in either the pro-independence and pro-renunciation camps; however, the identity construction issues of what Taiwan represents are far from over (Lynch, 2004; Wang, 2009).

3.2 Research question and choice of newspapers for analysis

As discussed earlier, this thesis attempts to address a simple yet complicated question: how has Taiwan's three English newspapers informed and interpreted ECFA to their audiences? To answer the many dimensions of the question the research has chosen the three English language dailies *The Taiwan News*, *The China Post*, and the *Taipei Times*, each newspapers is circulated 'nationally' and maintains an online version (see Table 1). These three newspapers are chosen because a. they are the only local English newspapers in Taiwan, b. can be broken into a pro-unification or pro-independence ideology, c. are some of the oldest (*The Taiwan News*, 1949 & *The China Post*, 1952) and arguably most international media in Taiwan, and d. can be interpreted as either friendly or hostile to China. As the largest circulating paper, the *Taipei Times* is the paper with the greatest influence in Taiwan and with the international community (Hung, 2010). *The China Post* was chosen as it is a political opposite to the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News*, and maintains a high search engine ranking due to its name (Hung, 2010). *The Taiwan News* is currently the smallest publication of the three, however, it maintains the highest search engine ranking when searching for news about Taiwan (Hung, 2010). The language use of each newspaper will offer direct comparisons of the discourses that are being created on how ECFA will affect Taiwan.

Table 1. Readership of the three Taiwanese English dailies

The Taiwan News (Daily readership of 250,000)

The China Post (Over 400,000 unique readers through print and online media)

Taipei Times (200,000 hits a day or up to 6 million readers a month)

Source: Each daily's website - there is no newspaper audit bureau in Taiwan. These newspapers no longer offer circulation figures.

All three English language dailies have played a role in the Taiwanese mediascape that started in 1949 and continues until the present. In 2000, Taiwan experienced a huge transition as it evolved from an authoritarian into a democratic state. Previous to this democratic shift Taiwan did have the distinction of having had the longest period of martial law of any country in the world (1949-1987). As Taiwanese society continues to liberalize new segments are challenging the existing order. Or to put this in another perspective, this democratic shift also coincides with the establishment of the *Taipei Times* (1999) and the rebranding of *The China News* into *The Taiwan News* (1999) and this is linked to the emergence of a large scale Taiwanese independence movement (Hung, 2010). Finally as Chinese is not widely spoken outside of Asia, these English newspapers play a critical role in informing the world on Taiwan's social and political developments. ECFA is a major trade agreement that has the potential of playing an important role in reshaping how democratic Taiwan and communist China globalize and integrate.

Table 2. Key ECFA dates & developments

	Location	Dates
Initial discussion		December, 2009
First round of talks	Beijing, China	January 26, 2010
Subsequent rounds of talks	Taipei, Taiwan Beijing, China	March 31, 2010 June 13, 2010
Final agreement signed	Chongqing, China	June 29, 2010
Executive Yuan approves	Taipei, Taiwan	July 02, 2010
Legislative Yuan approves	Taipei, Taiwan	August 17, 2010
ECFA comes into effect		September 12, 2010

3.2.1 Selection of news articles for analysis

Before we can report the findings of the corpus of articles analyzed, it must be noted that this study neither exhaustive nor all encompassing. Due to the extensive coverage ECFA has generated within the Taiwan's English newspapers, this paper will only attempt to isolate the dominant discursive themes that appear. Originally the researcher planned to access LexisNexis as the source of the texts, however *The Taiwan News* was not archived in their database. Due to the limitations of maintaining a consistent and balanced text selection method it was decided to use each newspaper's internal search engine function. The researcher found that the *Taipei Times* and *The China Post* both had suitable internal search engines, however, *The Taiwan News* did not. This left a dilemma on how to get the necessary samples? As Google is the world's largest and most extensive search engine it was decided to acquire the corpus of texts through it (Tracer & Womack, 2011).

The search dates were set between January 01, 2010 and December 31, 2010, which covers the main developments leading up to ECFA's ratification (Table 2). Even though the selected articles and editorials cover the one full-year the majority of them fall between the March – August, 2010, during which major rounds of ECFA negotiation were held and debated with the final approval in the Executive Yuan in July, and coming into effect in September (Table 2).

For each newspaper Google was used to choose the first 20 articles or editorials from each newspaper (Appendix A) that matched the criteria of ECFA and the one-year time frame (January 01 – December, 31) within its headline. Therefore the Google search followed a consistent method (ECFA + *Taipei Times*), (ECFA + *The Taiwan News*) and (ECFA + *The China Post*) when sourcing the corpus of texts. Due to the nature of the Internet the articles sourced ended up representing a well-rounded sample group. In hindsight Googling the source articles offered the opportunity of mimicking how the public might search for information or follow an event such as ECFA.

According to various scholars (Potter & Wetherrell, 1987; Elliot, 1996; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008) a large sample is not necessary with discourse analysis as this study is only trying to establish how these newspapers represented ECFA. The reasoning for this generalized representation is the highly interpretive nature of discourse analysis which is open to the researcher's discretion (Elliot, 1996). Therefore, it is not necessary to read all articles published on ECFA by these three newspapers as it is highly unlikely an average newspaper reader would have the opportunity to do this. By selecting 20 articles per newspaper over ECFA's major developments will create a generalized yet detailed window into how each publication crafted their discourses and how their foreign audiences could possibly interpret them.

3.2.2 Doing discourse analysis

The steps of data analysis are simple yet exhaustive. All articles are read to gain understanding of how the English print media in Taiwan portrays ECFA. Each article is analyzed with Parker's 20 Steps (see Appendix B) on discourse analysis. Parker's 20 Steps (1994) are exhaustive in their methodology and offer an interpretive framework to follow. In general each text will be broken down according to its linguistic features, including its headlines, articles and editorials that will be based on quotations, syntactical structures and lexical choices to uncover their dominant and non-dominant discourses (Wang, 2009).

For this thesis various types of analysis are performed to provide an in-depth examination of ECFA in the Taiwan's English newspapers. First, it examines the tone of the headlines as either positive, negative, or neutral (table 3). Headlines are then further examined to compare and contrast them to uncover what themes and dominant discourses they carry. Second, the discourse within the lead sentences are examined to see if they stay consistent to the tone of the headlines. More importantly in this age of reading online news, the headline and the lead sentence are the most persuasive elements of the article or editorial that is designed to capture the reader's immediate attention. Third, the discourse analysis looks into the voice and actors in the articles and editorials to see how each daily builds their dominant messages themes around who is given a voice and who is not and to better understand each newspaper's use of either including or excluding certain dominant actors. Fourth, the dominant discourse and language in all texts will be compared to uncover any overriding or reproduced themes, messages or textual features. Finally, this study will summarize how each newspaper reported ECFA and the discourse variation within each publication.

4. Findings

In the chapter findings for discourse analysis are grouped under four headings: headlines, discourse and within lead or opening sentences, the voice and actors in the editorials and articles, and the dominant discourse and language used in articles. Finally, the results will be summarized and compared to gain a comprehensive understanding in how these newspapers reported and interpreted ECFA.

4.1 Headline discourse analysis

A discourse analysis is a time consuming process that by its nature makes it difficult to analyze a large number of articles (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). A discourse analysis is a qualitative approach which can be supplemented by measuring the frequency a key word appears in a headline or article over a certain time frame (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). By studying a newspaper's headlines, articles and editorial content will create a well balanced sample of what ideological messages three English dailies are trying to frame to their respective readers.

Headlines are analyzed because of their prominent position within a relevance structure and their "systematic relationship between news text and context" (van Dijk, 1985, p. 70). This plays an important role in our decision making process. As previously mentioned, headlines act as signposts that compete for our attention, and we (the language user) only have a limited amount of information within the headline to continue reading or reject the message.

In general examining the tone of newspaper headlines (Table 3), a pattern quickly emerges that indicates that the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* have established a negative messaging structure and *The China Post* a positive messaging structure toward ECFA. The *Taipei Times* had 15 negative headlines while *The Taiwan News* had 16, in contrast only one headline was positive in the *Taipei Times* and two in *The Taiwan News*. However, *The China Post* had 18 positive headlines, with only one negative and one neutral headline.

Table 3.
Headline discourse by tone (positive, negative or neutral message structure)

Message headline coding	(+) Positive	(-) Negative	(o) Neutral
<i>The Taiwan News</i>	2	15	3
<i>Taipei Times</i>	1	16	3
<i>The China Post</i>	18	1	1

4.1.1 Taipei Times headlines

Overall the *Taipei Times* (Table 4) headline discourse structure follows a similar tone and theme as *The Taiwan News*. In the beginning of the year its language intensity of opposition, danger and risk evolves as the trade deal nears, however after the deal is signed a new headline discourses emerge on the negative consequences of ECFA.

In an early (January, 2010) headline (Legislative Yuan could overrule ECFA: speaker) a theme and tone of political opposition to ECFA appears through the textual structure of ‘Legislative Yuan’ + ‘could overrule’ that builds on a sense of doubt that will create an

agenda for the coming year. Within this headline structure the *Taipei Times* insinuates that in the ruling KMT party there is still a sense of inter-party opposition. In addition it plays up the public's notion that the KMT's founding principles are to eventually reunify Taiwan with China (Editorial, 2010, April 12). The headline frames itself to create a sense of doubt that the KMT is internally divided on ECFA, and that the trade agreement is being pushed through by a political group whose loyalty is questionable. This discourse structure follows directly into the second headline (ECFA conspiracy must be stopped, 2010, April 12) with the use of 'conspiracy' and the call to action of 'must be stopped' alluding once again that the KMT's political agenda is not in the best interests of Taiwan. The message of conspiracy, danger and the an overall threat to the public good is revisited as the *Taipei Times* that quickly establishes an overall theme that soon turns alarmist (ECFA a threat to food security: experts; How healthy will ECFA be?, 2010, May 23) with terms such as 'threat' 'food security' 'experts' and 'healthy' by adding another layer of doubt and its corresponding danger; finally the use of 'experts' is used to imply a voice of authority that is independent from the ruling administration as the current government is incompetent in protecting Taiwan's sovereignty. It should be noted that a common headline appears in both (2010, July 09) the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* (Legislators brawl over ECFA review; Talk of the day - Legislative brawl over ECFA; economic forecast) in that these newspapers include the terms 'brawl' and 'legislators' creating the impression to their foreign audiences of fierce opposition within the government. The use of 'brawl' and 'legislators' also create images of urgency and panic as the opposing lawmakers will do anything to try and stop the trade deal. As the signing date for ECFA approaches (Report from legislative agency details the cross-strait political risk of ECFA, 2010, July 29) the *Taipei Times* begins strengthening its previous discourse and reinforces the validity of the brawling anti-ECFA legislators. The use of 'report,' 'legislative agency,' 'details,' 'cross straight,' and 'political risk' once again build upon the previous

headline discourses of treachery and conspiracy. As the official date (June 29, 2010) of ECFA's ratification approaches the overall headline messages take on an urgent tone (Nightmare scenario under ECFA, 2010, June 05; Opposition vows '10-year' ECFA fight; Lee Teng-hui calls on public to oppose, 2010, June 13) of outright rejection. There is little doubt that 'nightmare scenario,' 'opposition vows 10-year fight,' and having the former president calling for a public uprising could be considered the climax to the *Taipei Times* headline discourse. In final headline published after ECFA's ratification (US concerned over ECFA notification, 2010, December 16) the themes of conspiracy are once again brought to attention; 'US concerned' creates a discourse that ECFA is not a trade agreement, but a geo-political agreement that will tip the balance of power in the Taiwan Strait in favor of China. The post-ECFA headline discourses all appear to follow a common theme that ECFA is not a trade agreement supported by the public, but instead a unification mechanism that is being forced through and opposed by the Taiwanese public and American government. Out of the headlines sampled only one could be considered a positive message (New BOFT chief takes post, touts benefits of ECFA, 2010, October 19) and this can be summed up with a simple word combination not found in the *Taipei Times* of 'benefits' + 'ECFA'. Even within this positive sounding headline its is still possible to speculate that since the *Taipei Times* has discoursed an anti-business stance towards ECFA and its backers with the added use of 'touts' may give the readers a hint into the biasness of the 'BOFT chief' and his pro-business and pro-ECFA agenda. In contrast, the two neutral headlines are ambiguous in their tone. (Ma succeeded in pushing ECFA, 2010, March 16 & Students hold nationwide debate on ECFA, 2010, May 23). In the first headline it could be argued that 'Ma' the president forced ECFA through. However this interpretation would be speculating on the negative. In the second neutral headline 'Students hold nationwide debate on ECFA' (2010, May 23), suggest a yet

“un-settled” position among the students on ECFA. It can thus be said that the *Taipei Times* is overwhelming negative about what benefits ECFA can bring to Taiwan.

Table 4. *Taipei Times* headlines in articles and editorials

Legislative Yuan could overrule ECFA: speaker (2010, January 16) -
Editorial: ECFA conspiracy must be stopped (2010, April 12) -
Tung, Ma, Article 23 and an ECFA (2010, April 21) o
Academics support ECFA referendum (2010, May 02) -
Ma succeeded in pushing ECFA (2010, May 05) o
Wen Jiabao a ‘liar,’ ECFA a tool: DPP (2010, March 16) -
ECFA a threat to food security: experts (2010, May 23) -
Students hold nationwide debate on ECFA (2010, May 31) o
Editorial: Nightmare scenario under ECFA (2010, June 03) -
Opposition vows ‘10-year’ ECFA fight (2010, June 05) -
Lee Teng-hui calls on public to oppose ECFA (2010, June 13) -
Editorial: How healthy will ECFA be? (2010, June 25) -
Legislators brawl over ECFA review (2010, July 09) -
Post-ECFA China will seek social integration (2010, July 20) -
Post-ECFA poll finds record number against unification (2010, July 21) -
Report from legislative agency details the cross-strait political risk of ECFA (2010, July 29) -
DPP threatens boycott over referendum (2010, August 14) -
A downturn would strip the ECFA’s thin façade (2010, September 05) -
New BOFT chief takes post, touts benefits of ECFA (2010, October 19) +

US concerned over ECFA notification (2010, December 16) -

Message headline coding (+) **Positive** (-) **Negative** (o) **Neutral**

4.1.2 *The Taiwan News* headlines

As previously mentioned *The Taiwan News* headline discourses closely mirror those of the *Taipei Times* in that their language use creates a sense of a public betrayal towards ECFA (See Table 5 for a complete list of *The Taiwan News* headlines analyzed). In the first three examples (DPP to boycott MAC briefing on ECFA, 2010, February 03; Taiwan President Ma in hurry to sign ECFA to push unification with China: Experts, 2010, March 07; Taiwan people must reject ECFA scam, 2010, March 17) the use of ‘boycott’, ‘unification’, ‘must’, ‘reject’ and ‘scam’ creates a discourse of urgency and betrayal that Taiwan is being sold out by its own government. This messaging theme is expanded on with a following headline (Taiwan services to face onslaught from China after ECFA: DPP, 2010, April 06) that continues with an alarming undertones of ‘services to face onslaught from China’ thereby adding a new level of aggression and conflict, confirming the notion that ECFA is really a ploy to attack Taiwan from within. These themes are continually revisited (ECFA will marginalize Taiwan in PRC market, 2010, March 17) that Taiwan is on the cusp of being engulfed and assimilated by China. The use of ‘Taiwan’ and ‘PRC’ is also noted, as this headline does not use the official name of the ROC to represent Taiwan nor the pro-China term ‘mainland’ to represent the PRC. The headline does use ‘Taiwan in PRC market’ to create the frame that Taiwan’s political independence is at stake. Once again in a later headline (Taiwan president: ECFA is conducive to peace with China, 2010, May 15) we see a similar ‘Taiwan president’ and not the official title of ROC president; the term ‘conductive’ establishes that ECFA is not a trade agreement but a political agreement. Furthermore the use

of 'Taiwan president' also creates a sense of betrayal as the president is selling out Taiwan and not protecting it. The fifth headline discourse (June signing of ECFA uncertain: premier, 2010, June 12) uses the terms 'uncertain: premier' to create the message tone that ECFA is an ambiguous agreement even within the ruling pro-unification KMT. Similarly, a later example (What China intends for Post-ECFA Taiwan, 2010, July 12) once again revisits a previously established theme of a conspiratorial unification agenda through the use of the 'What China intends.' This theme appears again in the headline (How ECFA threatens Taiwan news freedom, 2010, July 30) by framing the political nature of the agreement through the use of an alarmist and attention grabbing 'threatens news freedom.' This choice of words create a discourse tone that alludes to a political compromise that may undermine Taiwan's democratic values. In the final headline, (Taiwan-China ECFA needs renegotiation, 2010, August 14) a message is being structured to highlight the notion of separate national identities through the use of 'Taiwan (-) China'; 'needs renegotiation' and casts doubt on the loyalty and competence of the ruling KMT administration in protecting Taiwan's sovereignty. Overall, *The Taiwan News* built a hostile ECFA based headline discourse. However, out of the two positive coded headlines one stood out as ambiguous: 'Taiwan president: ECFA is conducive to peace with China.' I chose to classify this as a positive message even though it is unclear what its meaning is, but decided that since 'peace' is generally accepted as good thing that I would ignore the potential political speculation that could be added to deciphering this headline. Thus, *The Taiwan News* could be considered an ideological mirror with the *Taipei Times* in that both publications have carefully built their themes around near identical issues of a loss of sovereignty, public opposition and the conspiratorial and controversial aspects to ECFA.

Table 5. *The Taiwan News* headlines in articles and editorials

DPP to boycott MAC briefing on ECFA (2010, February 03) -
Taiwan President Ma in hurry to sign ECFA to push unification with China: Experts (2010, March 07) -
Editorial: Taiwan people must reject ECFA scam (2010, March 17) -
Taiwan services to face onslaught from China after ECFA: DPP (2010, April 06) -
Editorial: ECFA will marginalize Taiwan in PRC market (2010, April 07) -
3rd round of Taiwan-China ECFA talks to take place in China in late April (2010, April 11) o
China ECFA debate about more than economy:Taiwan white collar alliance (2010, April 18) -
Taiwan president: ECFA is conducive to peace with China (2010, May 15) +
June signing of ECFA uncertain: premier (2010, June 12) -
Editorial: Ma's push to stampede Taiwan people to ECFA (2010, June 16) -
ECFA signing scheduled for June 29 (2010, June 25) o
Editorial: How ECFA will affect U.S. arms sales to Taiwan (2010, July 05) -
Talk of the day-Legislative brawl over ECFA; economic forecast (2010, July 09) -
Editorial: Democracy put on altar for Taiwan-China ECFA (2010, July 09) -
Taiwan legislature clashes mark start of ECFA review (2010, July 09) -
Editorial: What China intends for Post-ECFA Taiwan (2010, July 12) -
Editorial: How ECFA threatens Taiwan news freedom (2010, July 30) -
Talk of the day-ECFA effect:Taiwan begins FTA talks with Singapore (2010, August, 05) +

Taiwan Legislature continues session after ratification ECFA with China (2010, August 07) o
Editorial: Taiwan-China ECFA needs renegotiation (2010, August 14) -

Message headline coding (+) **Positive** (-) **Negative** (o) **Neutral**

4.1.3 *The China Post* headlines

In sharp contrast to the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News*, *The China Post* creates its headline discourses around the use of positive language with references to how ECFA is an important, historic and beneficial trade agreement for Taiwan. Table 6 lists the sampled *The China Post* headlines. In addition, it also incorporates a messaging theme that the opposition to ECFA is weak and represents a minority voice. In an early headline (90% of CEOs of top 1,000 firms back ECFA, 2010, January 14), the message is clearly established that there is overwhelming corporate support for ECFA with the use of '90%' 'CEOs' 'Top 1,000 firms' that all reinforce this theme. By including 'CEOs,' a voice of non-political authority is established to demonstrate that the decision makers and corporate leaders have given their full support to ECFA and the government. This discourse of positive economic benefits is again revisited in the headline (ECFA to boost stocks: analyst, 2010, April 03), the use of the words 'boost stocks' and 'analyst' continues to build on a sense of public of authority and prosperity that is a direct contradiction to the negative themes in *The Taiwan News* and the *Taipei Times*. Within the same month a new theme appears (Is the ECFA debate necessary?, 2010, April 12) and the headlines begin to establish a message that opposition to ECFA is unwarranted. The use of 'debate necessary?' once again directly challenges the overall discourses of the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* who claim that the public is urging for a national debate on ECFA. Soon on a new political theme emerges (ECFA makes rapprochement irreversible, 2010, June 07) and *The China Post* establishes a message of political ambiguity through the use of 'rapprochement' and 'irreversible.' This wording delineates from previous discourses

of economic benefits into one of possible political integration, thereby confirming the intense negativity of its rivals. Even when examining a neutral headline (ECFA with China ready for signing, 2010, June 14) we can speculate that it is sending the message that ECFA is a non-controversial agreement and that there is a consensus to push it through. As the agreement approaches ratification *The China Post* goes back to reinforce a previous message of prosperity (Taiwan to gain in ECFA; Ma eyes global market after ECFA, 2010, July 02) by building on a theme of social reassurance and economic prosperity. When examining the headline ‘Ma eyes global market after ECFA’ the discourse takes on a political tone establishing that ‘Ma’ the president or authority, ‘eyes’ or has a long-term plan in place that looks at increasing the ‘global market’ of Taiwan’s international space. When placed into context of Taiwan’s current political situation the use of ‘eyes’ + ‘global’ also adds a political dimension to the theme of Taiwan continuing to expand its sovereignty which is a direct contradiction to the loss of sovereignty being discoursed in the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News*. In a post-ratification headline (Lawmakers pass landmark ECFA with China, 2010, August 18) the use of ‘lawmakers’ adds a voice of authority and legitimacy to the ‘landmark’ or historical agreement, and contradicts the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* ‘brawling legislators’. Furthermore a series of post-ECFA headlines take on a theme of reassurance, economic prosperity and Taiwan’s emergence onto the world stage as an economic power with: ‘ECFA signing boosts our investment,’ ‘ECFA to raise Taiwan's competitiveness,’ ‘ECFA to help turn us into Asia-Pacific trade hub,’ and ‘ECFA attracting foreign firms to Taiwan.’ In conclusion, *The China Post* maintains a polar opposite headline messaging and ideological structure to *The Taiwan News* and *Taipei Times* by playing up themes of economic prosperity, pro-business and growth of Taiwan’s international space.

Table 6. *The China Post* headlines in articles and editorials

90% of CEOs of top 1,000 firms back ECFA (2010, January 14) +
ECFA to boost stocks: analyst (2010, April 03) +
Editorial: Is the ECFA debate necessary? (2010, April 12) -
Editorial: Ma succeeded in pushing ECFA (2010, May 05) +
Editorial: ECFA makes rapprochement irreversible (2010, June 07) -
ECFA with China ready for signing (2010, June14) o
Taiwan to gain in ECFA (2010, June 16) +
Editorial: ECFA brings new start for Taiwan (2010, June 23) +
ECFA will hurt South Korean export: trade group (2020, June 30) +
Ma eyes global market after ECFA (2010, July 02) +
Editorial: A new era of negotiation dawns with the ECFA (2010, July 20) +
Firms more willing to stay in Taiwan after ECFA (2010, July 31) +
Lawmakers pass landmark ECFA with China (2010, August 18) +
ECFA to help Taiwan's future trade talks: report (2010, August 27) +
China wants ECFA approved as is (2010, September 02) +
ECFA signing boosts our investment environment: report (2010, September 20) +
ECFA to raise Taiwan's competitiveness: deputy economics head (2010, October 07) +
ECFA to help turn us into Asia-Pacific trade hub: Ma (2010, October 07) +
Canada wants more trade after ECFA: rep (2010, October 08) +
ECFA attracting foreign firms to Taiwan: Siew (2010, November 4) +

4.2 Discourse and tone within the lead sentence

In general, the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* both establish dominant discourses and tones that are very critical of ECFA and play up a pro-Taiwanese or anti-unification identity structure. A common example is how the *Taipei Times* uses the lead sentence to set the tone “A number of academics yesterday called on the government not to block people’s wish to express their opinions through a referendum on the government’s plan to sign an economic cooperation framework agreement (ECFA) with China” (Chang, 2010, May 02). “Legislators and academics yesterday warned that signing an economic cooperation framework agreement (ECFA) with China could potentially undermine Taiwan’s food security (Shu-Shui, 2010, May 23). “The debate over a controversial trade pact Taipei intends to sign with China entered the classroom yesterday” (Chao, 2010, May 31). Within these three examples the discourses use textual features such as “not to block,” “wish to express opinions,” “legislator and academics yesterday warned,” “undermine food security,” “controversial trade pact” to produce a large element of doubt in the wisdom of signing ECFA.

In contrast, *The Taiwan News* does not take such a heavy-handed approach in their non-editorial discourse structure as the *Taipei Times* when playing up the negative aspects of ECFA. “Lawmakers began their review of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement with China amid clashes yesterday after failing to reach a consensus on the process” (Staff writer, 2010, July 09). “Although Taiwan and China hope to sign an economic cooperation framework agreement (ECFA) by the end of June, it is not certain whether the two sides will arrive at an accord by that time, Premier Wu Den-yih said Saturday” (CNA, 2010, June 06). This difference in discourse style and tone may be attributed to the

fact that *The Taiwan News* is sourcing its content from the more pro-government CNA and the *Taipei Times* is producing it independently or translating it from its Chinese language sister paper *The Liberty Times*. However, *The Taiwan News*' editorial pages do have the tendency of using the lead sentence to establish various alarmist and sensationalist themes loaded with hostile tones towards ECFA. An example can be found in the editorial 'Taiwan people must reject ECFA scam' (2010, May, 03) that opened with:

People's Republic of China Premier Wen Jiabao made global headlines Saturday in Beijing when he expressed optimism on the early signing of a "cross-strait economic cooperation framework agreement" with Taiwan because while "negotiations are complex, differences between brothers cannot sever blood ties and problems can always be solved."

This opening sentence creates a conspiratorial discourse by referencing "People's Republic of China Premier Wen Jiabao" "expressed optimism" "differences between brothers cannot sever blood ties." The use of 'blood brothers' helps reinforce the concept of unification as it alludes to the fact that Taiwan and China are both part of the same historical and cultural family. Another example can be found in *The Taiwan News* editorial 'What China intends for Post-ECFA Taiwan' (2010, July 07) that also creates a similar discourse by placing the terms "controversial," "overshadowed," "grave implications," "intentions" and "authoritarian People's Republic of China" within the opening sentence.

The China Post takes on different discourse strategy and messaging theme in its lead sentence by using empirical data such as economic statistics and positive language to establish a tone that appears to be more objective:

The export value of the 500 Taiwan products eligible for tariff exemptions or reductions amounts to about US\$12 billion a year, four times the sales of the 250 Chinese products that will enjoy similar preferential tariff treatment, said Minister of Economic Affairs

Shih Yen-shiang.” (Taiwan to gain in ECFA, 2010, July 16)

Here, we have the use of precise factual data ‘500 Taiwan products,’ ‘US\$12 billion’ and ‘250 Chinese products’ that is reinforced with positive language structures such as ‘tariff exemptions’ ‘reductions’ ‘enjoy,’ ‘preferential’ and ‘treatment.’ This pattern reappears as a consistent example of positive reinforcement with pro-ECFA message themes filled with word choices such as ‘consensus reached’ (ECFA with China ready for signing, 2010, July 14), ‘landmark trade pact’ (Lawmakers pass landmark ECFA with China, 2010, August 18), ‘90 percent,’ ‘expressed their support,’ and ‘famous’ (90% of CEOs of top 1,000 firms back ECFA 2010, January 14). In sum, the tone and discourse of the lead sentence in articles and editorials of the three dailies correspond nearly identically to that of the headlines. A look at the voice and actors in the editorials and articles further supports these observations.

4.3 Voices and actors in editorials and articles

When reading the articles and editorials chosen to represent the discourse structure of the *Taipei Times* the most prominent actors or voices are politicians who represent a pro-independence or Taiwan centric ideology. In the majority of articles pro-independence legislators were the elite actors who had the most dominate voice. In one of the few articles that did not have a politician directly speaking is the editorial ‘How healthy will ECFA be?’ (Editorial, 2010, June 25). At the beginning of the editorial the first voice used is that of pro-ECFA Japanese business guru Kenichi Ohmae speaking at a forum in the Presidential Office, and is quoted as stating that ECFA is an “elaborately designed vitamin” that will benefit Taiwan economical. The editorial then incorporates a dominant counter discourse to dilute Ohmae’s pro-ECFA statement:

The vitamin metaphor is an interesting one. Not all doctors, for example, agree on exactly how much good they do us. It doesn’t really hurt if we neglect to take

them, and if we do, the benefits are hard to see, if indeed they exist at all. Of course, there are times we lack certain vitamins when supplements can make up for this deficiency, but the positive effects of taking vitamins with our diet are far from established. Signing it may well bring certain advantages, but it will just as likely create headaches. The government is forever extolling the virtues of the agreement, but they are not exactly forthcoming about the possible downsides. In other words, they are being economical with the truth, leading many to conclude that the government is not being entirely honest.

It appears evident that the *Taipei Times* consistently uses voices and actors of authority to reinforce the discourse that is first established in the article's headline. These voices of authority are dominated primarily by politicians and secondly by academics. Therefore it is safe to say that the *Taipei Times* uses an elite dominant discourse structure and offers little or no opportunity of having a minority voice heard such as the general public.

If we examine the *Taipei Times* article 'Academics support ECFA referendum' (Chang, 2010, May 10) four elite actors are used, and out of these four, one is the institutional Central Election Commission (CEC) and the remaining three are the Taiwan New Century Foundation chairman Chen Lung-chu (陳隆志), Taiwan Solidarity Union Secretary-General Lin Chih-chia (林志嘉) who represent pro-independence political parties and National Chengchi University history professor Chen Wen-hsien (陳文賢) who represents the academics.

In the next *Taipei Times* article published within the same month 'ECFA a threat to food security: experts' (Shu-hui, 2010, May 23) a similar discourse structure is found. The article contains three elite voices with those being a DPP pro-independence politician and two academics. Within the first paragraph the article creates a theme based on word combinations such as 'undermine Taiwan's food security' and 'self-sufficiency rate is alarmingly low,' and

in the following paragraphs the text structure continues to follow a pattern of ‘food security at risk,’ ‘virtual monopoly,’ ‘serious impact,’ and ‘food crisis’. Not surprisingly the article does not attempt to create an objective balance or seek out any pro-ECFA voices or actors.

The *Taipei Times* builds its dominant discourses around the use of elite and expert actors and voices by excluding any message that could potentially run counter to their interpretation of ECFA. As this sample represents only ECFA headlined articles it is not possible to fully understand who all the voices and actors may be. However, due to the abstract and complex nature of ECFA it seems likely that there are not very many occasions when non-elites actors will have the opportunity of being heard.

Likewise *The Taiwan News* maintains a similar discourse structure as the *Taipei Times*, however both publications do use different strategies when discoursing their anti-ECFA positions. In the articles sampled from *The Taiwan News*, the majority relies on creating a dominant discourse structure by using political elites as their primary sources and voices and academics are a very distant second. Unlike the *Taipei Times*, academics do not have such a prominent and active role in *The Taiwan News*.

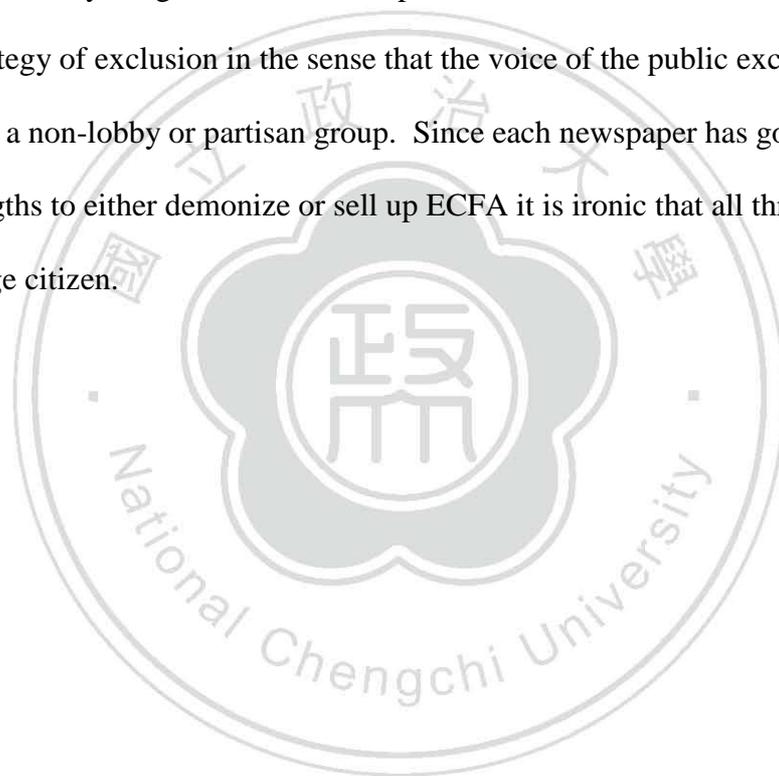
Finally, in *The China Post* the most dominant actors and voices are those of senior KMT politicians, including the president who all speak in support of ECFA. In second place, the most prominent non-politician actors are the ‘representatives’ from the business community such as analysts, experts and corporate leaders. *The China Post* had no academic actors or voices who supported or opposed ECFA, but did use a rare voice of opposition such as in the article ‘Ma eyes global markets after ECFA’:

Taiwan's economy will go through structural changes including a bigger gap between the rich and the poor and over-dependence on Chinese industries," party chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen said Wednesday. China will use its increased economic clout to expand its interference in Taiwan's politics and media.

(2010, July 02).

However, this non-dominant elite actor and voice is placed near the bottom of the article signifying that it is unimportant (van Dijk, 1985; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008) and is also contradicted by the following sentence, ‘Polls show a narrow majority of Taiwanese favor the agreement.’

All three newspapers follow a similar pattern (table 7) in that they rely primarily on official or elite actors when informing their audiences on ECFA. These elite actors can be called the political heavy weights of Taiwanese politics. In addition all three newspapers also use a similar strategy of exclusion in the sense that the voice of the public excluded. Here the public represents a non-lobby or partisan group. Since each newspaper has gone to considerable lengths to either demonize or sell up ECFA it is ironic that all three publications ignore the average citizen.



**Table 7. Common actors found in all three newspapers
Voices included & excluded according to each newspaper**

Actors	Newspapers	Voices	
		Included	Excluded
President Ma (馬英九)	<i>Taipei Times</i>	Academics	Public
Ministry of Economic Affairs		Politicians	Businesses
DPP Chairperson Tsai (蔡英文)		NGOs	Farmers
Former president Lee (李登輝)		Students	
Priemer Wu (吳敦義)			
Vice President Siew (蕭萬長)	<i>Taiwan News</i>	Academics	Public
TSU Chairperson Huang (黃昆輝)		Politicians	Businesses
Kaohsiung Mayor Chen (陳菊)		NGOs	Students
Legislators (DPP)			Farmers
Legislators (KMT)			
Government agencies:	<i>China Post</i>	Businesses	Public
Ministry of Foreign Affairs		Analysts	Students
Taiwan's Council for Economic-		Senior Chinese-	Farmers
Planning and Development		Officials	Academics
		Politicians	

NGOs represents Non Governmental Organizations

4.4 Dominant discourse and language in ECFA articles

Equally revealing of the polarized positions is the examination of the dominant language and its corresponding message structures within the articles and editorials. In the following (table 7) the textual features listed are what appeared to be the most frequent word choices that follow consistent and repetitive themes in each newspaper's interpretation of how the public should understand ECFA.

Table 8. Dominant themes and word use

<i>Taipei Times</i>	<i>The Taiwan News</i>	<i>The China Post</i>
Loss of sovereignty	Unification mechanism	Beneficial and historical
Security: political	Authoritarian PRC	Economic prosperity
Security: social	Bitterly controversial	International recognition
Impact on people's rights	Force down the wages	Non unification
Impact on jobs and salaries	Total Taiwanese economic dependence on China	Prevents economic marginalization
Controversy		
unification	Will not benefit the public	Improved cross-strait ties
Political agenda	Will harm Taiwan's sovereignty	Broke Taiwan's isolation

Within each newspaper overlapping themes can be found in the word choices that are repeated in the headlines, news articles and editorials. For *The Taiwan News* and the *Taipei Times* their main messages are structured around a loss of sovereignty, loss of security, and what it considers the controversial elements of ECFA that go against the public good. The

dominant message of sovereignty can be directly linked to issues based on anti-unification or a pro-Taiwan ideology. Examples can be found in the *Taipei Times* such as ‘China may force Taiwan to negotiate and sign a peace agreement by 2012 following the recently signed cross-strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), (Wang, 2010, July 9), or ‘Chinese state-run agricultural product manufacturers are already able to affect the prices of wheat and corn, and when these products start to be imported into Taiwan, they would have a virtual monopoly (Lin, 2010, 23). This once again is a parallel theme found in *The Taiwan News* with ‘National Taiwan University economics professor Kenneth Lin said that in the financial sector, only low-wage jobs would be left, leading to takeovers by Chinese financial groups and to the demise of Taipei as a financial center (Staff writer, 2010, April 06) and ‘The realization of the single market would lead automatically to peaceful political unification the way Beijing wants it,’ (Staff writer, 2010, March 07). It appears to be clear that both newspapers are following a complementary and similar theme of security that overlaps between the realms of maintaining social security and offering the necessary psychological security that an uncertain public demands. Finally the two dailies maintain a similarly dominant overall message that is ECFA’s highly controversial nature. By continually using the word ‘controversial’ they appear to be conditioning their audience to carry it over and question the overall leaning of the Ma administration.

In contrast, *The China Post* follows its familiar strategy of structuring its dominant themes into its textual choices. *The China Post*’s dominant themes continually play up the beneficial, pro-business and political nature of ECFA that will inspire more countries to negotiate with Taiwan. ‘The signing of the key trade agreement between China and Taiwan yesterday could deal a serious blow to South Korean exports to the mainland, a South Korean trade group warned, (Central News Agency, 2010, October 07). In an editorial just before ECFA was ratified this theme was brought to the forefront:

Taiwan has lost a chance to become an Asian hub for business. That chance was seized by Shanghai, Hong Kong and Singapore. But, with the help of the ECFA, Taiwan can become an active player in regional economic affairs instead of standing on the sidelines. (2010, July, 07)

To *The China Post*, ECFA is absolutely necessary to fuel Taiwan's growth, maintain its competitive edge in global market and prove that the opposition or anti-China voice in Taiwan is inconsequential as it is largely based on the upcoming .2012 presidential elections.

4.5 How the newspapers reported ECFA

To sum up, findings about the discourse variations in the three dailies follow a unique strategy within each publication. *The China Post* uses a positive discourse structure of economic prosperity as a main message within its news articles. Its dominant discourses are based on having senior politicians extol the virtues of ECFA. The non-dominant discourses in its news articles are based on how the opposition is using fear mongering and partisan tactics to stall ECFA. In addition, a similar non-dominant theme that is also evident is that the opposition to ECFA is only opposing the agreement as an election ploy. In *The China Post*'s editorial pages, the dominant discourse take on a combative and alarmist tone and accuses the political opposition (DPP) of creating a racial and disruptive stance that has the potential creating a conflict within Taiwan and with China.

The Taiwan News established its discourses around reporting on the development and opposition to ECFA. On the surface *The Taiwan News* appears to be discoursing a neutral message about ECFA. However, when comparing its article content with *The China Post*, it is evident that *The Taiwan News* does not place emphasis on the economic benefits of ECFA. *The Taiwan News* uses a discourse strategy of omission and exclusion when crafting its ECFA message. In addition, *The Taiwan News* takes a radical position in its editorials to

push a dominate message that the KMT and China are conspiring to undermine Taiwan's sovereignty, and that ECFA is a ploy designed to speed up cross-straight unification.

The *Taipei Times* bases its dominant discourses around a message structure that maintains a consistent tone and voice in the vast majority its articles and editorials. Its articles discourse the political risks and public opposition to ECFA, and its editorials reconfirm their message of the KMTs pro-unification agenda. Out of the three newspapers the *Taipei Times* does not appear to separate its dominant discourses between its articles and editorials, and uses a similar structure in that its articles could be considered a more subdued version of its editorials.

Not surprisingly, *The China Post* uses a headline discourse strategy that reinforces positive economic messages and themes related to ECFA. Out of the three newspapers it appears to be in the middle with the amount of five editorials published. As previously mentioned, the dominant discourse message in these editorials is of the historical and economic importance of ECFA. *The China Post's* news articles are headlined with messages filled with terms such as '90%,' 'CEOs,' 'top,' 'boost stocks,' 'debate necessary?,' 'Taiwan to gain,' 'global markets,' 'landmark,' 'raise,' and 'competitiveness' playing up the theme of positive reinforcement. Their editorials also establish a clear and firm discourse that the opposition to ECFA is based on scare tactics and not on facts with 'ECFA brings new start for Taiwan' 2010, May 23 and 'A new era of negotiation dawns with the ECFA' (2010, July 20). It appears that overall in *The China Post's* articles and editorials help support the dominant theme that ECFA will lead Taiwan to a better future and opposition to in unwarranted.

The *Taipei Times* unlike *The China Post* or *The Taiwan News* had the least amount of editorials with three. However what it lacked in quantity it made it in quality with themes such as 'ECFA conspiracy must be stopped' (2010, April 12), 'Nightmare scenario under ECFA, (2010, June 25) and How healthy will ECFA be? (2010, June 25).

The *Taipei Times* dominant headline discourse is based on a message structure that uses words such as ‘overrule,’ ‘referendum,’ ‘threat,’ ‘security,’ ‘expert,’ ‘debate,’ ‘nationwide,’ ‘brawl,’ ‘political risk,’ ‘threatens,’ and ‘concerned.’ These lexical choices all support and reinforce the editorial content of the *Taipei Times*. The theme and tone within their editorials are based on ‘conspiracy,’ ‘unification,’ annexation,’ ‘force,’ ‘survival,’ ‘implications,’ and ‘suspicion.’ It is evident that the *Taipei Times* uses a headline discourse strategy to create a consistent and parallel messaging structure between its news content and its editorial content.

As it has been established *The Taiwan News* is unique in the fact that eight of its texts are editorials and that they appear to maintain a more visible distinction between news content and editorial opinions. These headlines are filled with terms such as ‘face onslaught,’ ‘uncertain: premier,’ ‘legislature clashes,’ and ‘conducive to peace with China,’ that follow the main message and theme found in their editorials of a loss of ‘sovereignty’ (2010, July 05), the erosion of Taiwan’s democratic institutions and the ‘authoritarian’ nature of the PRC (2010, March 17; 2010, July 09; 2010, July 30).

Finally, it could be argued that the *Taipei Times* and *The China Post* both use a similar headline discourse strategy to reinforce and support their editorials, and that their headlines in general create a dominant and consistent message with their associated text. This study has demonstrated that headlines establish a key message structure that primes their audience to understand how to make sense of a news event, and there is enough evidence to confirm the ideological positioning each organization has taken on ECFA.

5. Conclusion and discussion

To summarize, *The China Post* incorporated a dominant discourse of extolling the economic benefits of ECFA while ignoring or downplaying any of its potential negative especially political impacts. It did this by using economic statistics to frame ECFA as historical yet calculated agreement that could be simplified into a cost benefit analysis. A clear relationship exists between the various elite actors and voices, and the position the newspaper has taken is in support of ECFA. The primary actor in *The China Post* is the elite pro-ECFA politician, and who is then supported by the corporate elite. Both actors use a heavy dose of empirical economic data of the merits of ECFA and the need of its immediate implementation. A supplementary dominant discourse is established in its editorials that demonize the opposition to ECFA and fails to create a balanced argument on the pros and cons of ECFA as it excludes any actor or voice that does not support its ideology. Finally, *The China Post* established an ambiguous discourse around the concept that ECFA is an inevitable agreement and sooner or later Taiwan will be re-unified with China. It based this around the KMT's political ideology that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of that one China (Is the ECFA debate necessary?, 2010, April 12; Ma succeeded in pushing ECFA, 2010, May 05; ECFA brings new start for Taiwan, 2010, June 23). It can therefore be speculated that *The China Post* considers ECFA to be an intra-Chinese trade agreement.

It can be argued that *The Taiwan News*' messaging strategy can be broken down into two main parts: articles and editorials. On the surface *The Taiwan News* appears to have taken an objective stance on how it reported ECFA within its non-editorial content. However, on closer examination it is clear that *The Taiwan News* built a dominant discourse of how the state failed in its role of protecting the social structure of Taiwanese society. Within *The*

Taiwan News' editorials a scathing and emotional charged all out attack is launched on ECFA and its supporters. Even though all three newspapers used their editorial pages to passionately argue their support or opposition to ECFA, *The Taiwan News* had twice the amount of editorials as the *Taipei Times* and *The China Post* combined. Moreover *The Taiwan News* also used a similar discourse strategy of exclusion when choosing its actors and voices. Unlike *The China Post*, it did not use any elite actors or voices outside of politicians and academics. Finally, *The Taiwan News* created a one-sided editorial based discourse of the mainly political negative consequences of ECFA and did not address any potential qualitative or quantitative (economic) benefits. *The Taiwan News* just like *The China Post* discoursed on the fact that ECFA is in reality an intra-Chinese agreement designed to assimilate Taiwan's political sovereignty (Taiwan people must reject ECFA scam, 2010, March 17; ECFA will marginalize Taiwan in PRC market ,2010, April 07; Democracy put on altar for Taiwan-China ECFA, 2010, July 09).

The *Taipei Times* created a different discourse strategy by using the majority of its news headlines to prime the reader and then reinforce this dominant message in its news articles and editorial content. The *Taipei Times* is unique out of the three newspapers as it did not attempt to camouflage its dominant discourse messaging structure of its opposition to ECFA. It can be argued that the *Taipei Times* used the largest amount of emotionally charged textual features to persuade its audience on the negative and controversial aspects of ECFA. However, just like *The Taiwan News* and *The China Post*, the *Taipei Times* also used a dominant strategy of exclusion when choosing its elite actors and voices. Just like *The Taiwan News*, and *The China Post*, the *Taipei Times* crafted a dominant discourse that ECFA is an intra-Chinese agreement as they argue in both their news articles and editorials that it can only lead to re-unification with China (Wen Jiabao a 'liar,' ECFA a tool: DPP, 2010, March 16; Lee Teng-hui calls on public to oppose ECFA, 2010, June 13; How healthy will

ECFA be?, 2010, June 25). This stance is unique to the other two newspapers as they only used their editorials to build on the theme that ECFA is intra-Chinese agreement, while using their news articles to discourse a more toned down message that ECFA could lead to Taiwan increasing its international space.

It becomes evident that examining connotations through free associations can quickly reveal the frames behind the discourses. Parker (1990: 1992) argues that to truly understand the power of a discourse it cannot be achieved in isolated, but must be achieved in a social setting. In hindsight, this makes sense since people are social creatures who don't live in enclosed bubbles, but spend our time consuming information and trying to persuade others to our points of view. This study has extensively classified the textual features used in each of the texts to better gain an understanding of the message structure and themes surrounding ECFA.

Parker builds a qualitative approach when using his method by including the necessity of speculation. This added dimension of speculation as briefly reviewed on p. 24 brings the discourse analysis back full circle by creating concrete links on how this research may affect our reality construction process. The *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* both use their discourse structures to create a conspiratorial China centric hegemonic world of oppression, treachery and fear. In contrast *The China Post* built a Taiwan centric worldview of it reaping the economic benefits of its inevitable economic and political re-integration back into China. All three newspapers created an overlapping discourse around theme of using a public referendum to placate or satisfy the public's right to participate in such a historical event. However, the *Taipei Times* and *The Taiwan News* both framed their referendum based messages as a preliminary and symbolic democratic vote on the dangers of ECFA by playing up the fact that it undermined Taiwanese identity and will lead to cultural integration. In contrast *The China Post* championed the needs of a more ambiguous referendum that

highlights the benefits economic integration.

The findings in this study did not break any new ground in the sense that it did not change the fact that newspapers still play a crucial role in knowledge acquisition and our opinion formation as we try and make sense of our world (van Dijk, 1989). Again, each of Taiwan's English newspapers confirms the fact that their discourse establishes a relationship between the public and the various stakeholders it represents, and they all maintain an ideological bias that attempts to persuade and influence their readers (van Dijk, 1989; Parker, 1992; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Media political instrumentalization and polarization of the news is clearly established in the three English language dailies in Taiwan. Given the ambiguous and complexity of Taiwan's political and social situation the Chinese language media in Taiwan could also be expected to exhibit similar patterns.

This study is an attempt of filling in the research gaps on Taiwan English newspapers. It must be noted again that this is a limited study that is neither exclusive nor exhaustive, but a mere glimpse in how these three newspapers reported and interpreted ECFA to their audiences. However, it has been decades since any in-depth studies have been done on understanding Taiwan's English newspapers (Bishop & Hansen, 1981) and this is an attempt of bringing to light the role they play in informing the world of Taiwan's internal developments. Previous studies have written on the role of Taiwan's Chinese media and its role in identity construction (Lynch, 2004). Whatever the language, the media is used internally and externally to represent a social and political reality (Wang, 2009) and this is indeed what Taiwan's English newspapers have done when interpreting ECFA. This study confirms that Taiwan's English newspapers are alive and well, and are actively taking part in Billig's (1995) 'banal nationalism' by recreating either a Taiwan centric or pan-Chinese national identity. This is also consistent with past studies that have uncovered that the general media in Taiwan manipulates language to represent politically important events to fit with

their own ideological views (Wang, 2009).

As Asian continues to integrate both regionally and globally this study will further act as an indicator of the unique dynamics effecting both the local and the global. Previous research has demonstrated that regional integration will lead to social conflicts in smaller and weaker nations as opposition to economic and cultural assimilation still remains a sensitive issue (Zhang, 2003; Hong & Tong, 2009). Taiwan is not unique to this development of social conflict as it is a common theme that runs deep in man Asian nations (Dent, 2005).

In conclusion future research can continue tracking developments such as banal nationalism and identity construction by studying and interpreting the language used in discoursing messages related to regional and global integration.



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Appendix A.

Newspaper articles selected for discourse analysis

Taipei Times

- Chang, R. (2010, May 02). Academics support ECFA referendum. *Taipei Times*.
- Chao, Y. V. (2010, March 16). Wen Jiabao a 'liar,' ECFA a tool: DPP. *Taipei Times*.
- Chao, Y. V. (2010, May 31). Students hold nationwide debate on ECFA. *Taipei Times*.
- Chao, Y. V., & Lowther, W. (2010, June 05). Opposition vows '10-year' ECFA fight. *Taipei Times*.
- Cole, M. J. (2010, April 21). Tung, Ma, Article 23 and an ECFA. *Taipei Times*.
- Editorial. (2010, April 12). The Liberty Times editorial: ECFA conspiracy must be stopped. *Taipei Times*.
- Editorial. (2010, June 03). Nightmare scenario under ECFA. *Taipei Times*.
- Editorial. (2010, June 25). How healthy will ECFA be? *Taipei Times*.
- Hsiu-chuan, S. (2010, December 16). US concerned over ECFA notification. *Taipei Times*.
- Jennings, R and Miao-jung, L. (2010, January 16). Legislative Yuan could overrule ECFA: speaker. *Taipei Times*.
- Ko, S. (2010, June 13). Lee Teng-hui calls on public to oppose ECFA. *Taipei Times*.
- Ko, S. (2010, July 20). Post-ECFA China will seek social integration. *Taipei Times*.
- Ko, S. (2010, July 20). Post-ECFA poll finds record number against unification *Taipei Times*.
- Novak, N. (2010, September 05). A downturn would strip the ECFA's thin façade. *Taipei Times*.
- Shih, H. (2010, August 14). DPP threatens boycott over referendum. *Taipei Times*.
- Shu-hui, L. (2010, May 23). ECFA a threat to food security: experts. *Taipei Times*.
- Tan, J. (2010, October 19). New BOFT chief takes post, touts benefits of ECFA. *Taipei Times*.
- Wang, F. & Yan-chih, M. (2010, July 09). Legislators brawl over ECFA review. *Taipei Times*.
- Wang, F. (2010, July 29). Report from legislative agency details the cross-strait political risk of ECFA. *Taipei Times*.

The Taiwan News

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- Central News Agency. (2010, June 13). Signing of ECFA in June uncertain, says Premier Wu. *Taiwan News*.
- Central News Agency. (2010, July 09). Talk of the day -- Legislative brawl over ECFA; economic forecast. *The Taiwan News*.
- Central News Agency. (2010, August, 05). Talk of the day--ECFA effect:Taiwan begins FTA talks with Singapore. *The Taiwan News*.
- Editorial. (2010, March 17). Taiwan people must reject ECFA scam. *The Taiwan News*.
- Editorial. (2010, April 07). ECFA will marginalize Taiwan in PRC market. *The Taiwan News*.
- Editorial. (2010, April 21). Taiwan's alternatives to Ma's ECFA with PRC. *The Taiwan News*.
- Editorial. (2010, June 16). Ma's push to stampede Taiwan people to ECFA. *The Taiwan News*.
- Editorial. (2010, July 05). How ECFA will affect U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. *The Taiwan*

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Editorial. (2010, July 09). Democracy put on altar for Taiwan-China ECFA. *The Taiwan News.*

Editorial. (2010, July 12). What China intends for Post-ECFA Taiwan. *The Taiwan News.*

Editorial. (2010, July 30). How ECFA threatens Taiwan news freedom. *The Taiwan News.*

Editorial. (2010, October 13). Taiwan-China ECFA needs renegotiation. *The Taiwan News.*

Staff Writer. (2010, March 07). Taiwan President Ma in hurry to sign ECFA to push unification with China: Experts. *The Taiwan News.*

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Staff Writer. (2010, April 11). 3rd round of Taiwan-China ECFA talks to take place in China in late April. *The Taiwan News.*

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The China Post

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Editorial. (2010, July 20). A new era of negotiation dawns with the ECFA. *The China Post.*

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Staff writer and agencies. (2010, July 02). Ma eyes global market after ECFA. *The China Post.*

Staff writer. (2010, August 18). Lawmakers pass landmark ECFA with China. *The China Post*.
Staff writer. (2010, September 02). China wants ECFA approved as is. *The China Post*.
Staff writer. (2010, October 07). ECFA to raise Taiwan's competitiveness: deputy economics head. *The China Post*.



Appendix B

Parker's Twenty Steps (abridged)

A discourse is realized in texts:

1. The objects of study are the texts and words. Only that text can be studied and there are no other sources outside of it.
2. Examining connotations through free associations, and this best achieved with other people.

A discourse is about objects:

3. Questioning what objects are referred to, and described, which then itemizes the objects.
4. Talking about the talk as if it were an object, which is in itself a discourse.

A discourse contains subjects:

5. Specifying and identifying what types of person are discussed in the discourse, and some may already have been identified as objects, which can itemize the subject.
6. Speculating about what can be said in the discourse, and what you could say if you identified with them.

A discourse is a coherent system of meanings:

7. Creating a map of the world this discourse presents.
8. Working out how a text using this discourse would deal with objections to the terminology (treason, sell out, Trojan horse).

A discourse refers to other discourses:

9. Contrasting ways of speaking (discourses), discourses must be set against each other, and the different objects they constitute must be looked at.
10. Identify overlapping points.

A discourse reflects on its own way of speaking:

11. The discourse as it occurs must be elaborated by referring to other texts and as the discourse addresses different audiences it also must be elaborated.
12. Reflecting on the term used to describe the discourse, a matter that involves moral/political choices on the part of the analyst. Labeling the discourse.

A discourse is historically located:

13. Looking at how and where the discourses emerged.
14. Describing how the discourse and story has changed.

Discourses support institutions:

15. Identifying institutions that are reinforced by the various discourses used.
16. Identifying institutions that are attacked or subverted when a discourse is used.

Discourses reproduce power relations:

17. Looking at which categories of lose or gain from the employment of the discourse. Who are the beneficiaries?
18. Looking at who would want to promote or dissolve the discourse.

Discourses have ideological effects:

19. Showing how a discourse connects with other discourses, which sanction oppression.
20. Showing how the discourses allow dominant groups to tell their narratives about the past in order to justify the present.

(Parker, 1992; Von Krosigk, 2004; MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008)

