
Foreign Correspondents and Their News Frames: A Study of News Contents on North Korea

Byung-Jong Lee

(Graduate School of International Service, Sookmyung Women's University)

Abstract: News contents about foreign countries can be misleading because they are often shaped by government policies related to national interests. But individual journalists' attitudes and news organizations' ideologies also affect news contents about foreign countries. In the case of foreign correspondents dealing with international news, how do these three factors — government policy, corporate ideology and individual attitude — affect their news coverage? To answer this question, the paper analyzed the news frames of foreign correspondents based in Seoul as pertaining to their news stories about North Korea's nuclear issue. Eight newspapers from five nations with high stakes in the issue — the U.S., the U.K., Russia, Japan and China — were selected for the analysis. In-depth interviews with the Seoul correspondents of these newspapers were also conducted. The results show that government policy is a main factor deciding their news frames. But the role of individual attitudes increases in relation to the capabilities of the individual correspondent. That is, those correspondents with longer experiences and better knowledge of local culture or language were found to have more control in their news frames.

Key words: International News, Framing, Foreign Correspondents, National Interests

Korean Social Science Journal, XXXVI No. 1(2009): 147~175.

www.kci.go.kr

I . Introduction

During the nationally televised New Year's press conference in early 2007, then President Roh Moo Hyun expressed his dissatisfaction with the coverage of foreign media in South Korea. Responding to a question by Jonathan Thatcher, Reuters Seoul bureau chief, Roh said foreign media's reporting on North Korea's nuclear problem was often "groundless." "U.S. media portray North Korea in a negative manner in line with their government perspective," Roh argued (Yonhap News, 2007). His view that foreign media report the North's nuclear issue from the viewpoint of their respective countries, not from an objective viewpoint, is not without grounds. In fact, many scholars have pointed out that news represents pictures in our heads, not reality (Lippman, 1997), and it is a frame shaping the world rather than a mirror reflecting the world (Tuchman, 1978). In international news, national interests often play a key role in shaping stories and it is particularly so in controversial issues like North Korea's nuclear program. Various studies support this view (Gans, 1980; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Bennett, 1990; Entman, 1991; Peh & Melkote, 1991; Entman, 1993; Kim, 2000; Kim, 2004; Kim, 2005). The idea of patriotic journalism further strengthens this notion (Cohen, 1963; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Bennett & Paletz, 1994).

In this type of international reporting, foreign correspondents are the main actors. As the first gate-keepers of international news, they can exert either positive or negative influence on international relations (Suh, 1997). In this regard, studies on foreign correspondents are essential for a better understanding of international communication. However, studies on foreign correspondents have generally focused on their demographics and attitudes, not their actual stories (Rosten, 1937; Kruglak, 1955; Lambert, 1956; Wilhelm, 1963; Yu & Luter, 1964; Suh, 1970

Hess, 1996; Wu & Hamilton, 2004). Not much attention has been given to the question of whether and how their demographics and attitudes affect their reporting. Studies have in general confirmed that international news is shaped by national interests, but such studies have not distinguished stories written by staffers based at headquarters and foreign correspondents. But given their physical and possibly psychological distances from home offices, foreign correspondents might feel and act differently from their home counterparts.

To make this distinction, this paper focuses on foreign correspondents and their news articles. Foreign correspondents covering the Korean peninsula are suitable for this type of research because the region is a well known conflict zone drawing keen global attention. Because of North Korea's controversial activities, such as its nuclear and missile programs, and the ensuing military tensions, the peninsula is heavily covered by the international media. In Seoul alone, more than 200 journalists from 14 nations are registered with the Seoul Foreign Correspondents' Club. Even while they may all cover the same story, for example North Korea, these correspondents are presumed to write with different perspective because they are all from different countries. Differences in the ideologies of their news organizations are expected to further widen their differences. Also, their personal differences, deriving from different demographics and belief systems, are likely to enhance the differences.

To analyze foreign correspondents in Korea, this paper examines how their national, organizational and personal differences influence their reporting. Toward that end, the paper analyzes the frames of the articles written by the foreign correspondents. They are expected to use different news frames in reporting. For example, we take North Korea's nuclear test in October 2006. Those from the U.S., an adversary of Pyongyang, are expected to have reported the event more critically than those from China, an

ally of Pyongyang.

Yet even the correspondents from the same countries are expected to have used different news frames depending upon the ideologies of their companies and their personal attitudes toward the North. Especially those who disagree with the foreign policy of their governments are likely to have used news frames that are more congruent to their personal attitudes or beliefs. To analyze all these factors, in-depth interviews with foreign correspondents will be added to their news frame analysis. By combining the frame analysis with the interviews, the workings of foreign correspondents can be better understood.

1. Theoretical Review and Analytical Framework

1) International Reporting and Foreign Policy

Bernard Cohen (1963) said journalists and government officials are confrontational by nature in reporting foreign policy because the former seeks publicity and the latter privacy. But Cohen's view seems to overestimate the influence of news media. More contemporary scholars believe journalists often cooperate with governments and diplomats to help promote national interests. Bennett and Paletz (1994) pointed out U.S. media embraced the first Gulf War in the early 1990s without much criticism due largely to effective media control by the U.S. administration. Bennett added his Indexing Theory was supported by the war because U.S. media more or less reflected opinions and debates within Washington during the time, using them as an index. This stems from the so-called patriotic journalism where media fail to question and challenge foreign policy, especially for such critical matters as war, in the name of promoting national interests. This trend could be found again during the second Gulf War.

In their book "Manufacturing Consent," Herman and Chomsky

(1988) note media try to reproduce the dominant ideologies of their society. According to their Propaganda Model, U.S. media tend to promote such dominant ideologies as anti-Communism in their coverage of killings in Cambodia and East Timor. They argue media work as a propaganda tool for the ruling class by disseminating its ideologies. This is particularly so in covering international affairs. The Propaganda Model was supported by various studies (Peh & Melkote, 1991; Dickson, 1992; Krishnaiah et al., 1994; Gutierrez-Villalobos, 1994). Hallin (1986) also found that U.S. media promoted Washington's political ideology through the coverage of the wars in Korea, Vietnam and Iraq. Entman (1991) unveiled a similar trend by analyzing the U.S. media coverage of the two tragic incidents in the early 1980s—the downing of a Korean airplane by the former Soviet Union and that of an Iranian airplane by the U.S. The shooting by the Soviet military was described by U.S. media as a merciless atrocity, while that by the U.S. military was depicted as a simple technical error. Kim (2000) also discovered the same tendency of U.S. media. In covering two similar civilian uprisings in Kwangju, Korea and Tiananmen Square, China, U.S. media downplayed the crackdown upon the former uprising carried out by the Seoul government, then Washington's ally, while playing up the crackdown upon the latter case committed by the Beijing government, then Washington's adversary.

Patriotic journalism is found in media coverage of the Korean peninsula as well. According to a study by Shim (2004) on the coverage of the 1995 famine in North Korea by *the New York Times* and *the Washington Post*, the U.S. papers reported the incident through an ideological prism. In three levels—representation, description and political discourse—the elite papers were reluctant to convey the voices of the North, while emphasizing the harsh stance of Washington towards Pyongyang. The news coverage gradually shifted its focus from the crisis to “Pyongyang

bashing,” while downgrading the starving people to “victims unworthy of covering.” This trend was not limited to Western media. Chinese media faithfully followed Beijing’s foreign policy in covering North Korea (Kim, 1989). This is not surprising given that media in socialist nations in general work as a tool for government and party policy (Siebert et. al., 1963).

2) Factors Deciding News

News is often constructed by journalists. Many factors determine the process of newsmaking by journalists. In their book, “Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Media Content,” Shoemaker and Reese (1991) said various factors in five different levels determine media contents. They are (1) individual level, (2) media routines level, (3) organization level, (4) extra-media level and (5) ideological level. The research is closely related to earlier studies on gate-keeping.

The individual elements are the characteristics, backgrounds and experiences of journalists as well as their attitudes, values and norms. Their professional and ethical aspects are also included (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). Their attitudes and values are greatly affected by family, education, religion and social interactions. U.S. journalists tend to be politically liberal and atheistic and value family, love, friendship and economic prosperity. According to Gans (1980), they also cherish ethnocentrism, altruistic democracy, responsible capitalism, small-town pastoralism, individualism, moderatism, social order and national leadership. Others cited individualism, free enterprise, competition and materialism as typical values of American journalists (Paletz & Entman, 1981). U.S. journalists, particularly those in the East Coast, are generally liberal (Lichter et. al., 1986).

Media organizational forces play a more visible role in shaping news contents. There are official forces such as editorial meetings or article evaluation committees. Company policies,

norms and hierarchy affect news contents in a more unofficial manner (Tuchman, 1978). News reporting routines are also important. Traditionally journalists have accepted the hierarchical structures and professional routines of newsrooms (Hallin, 1992). Through this, journalists acquire such news values as timeliness, importance, unusualness, proximity and controversy (Stephens, 1980).

Extra-media or social factors affecting news include government rules and legal claims. Such external forces can be divided into six categories (Ryu, 2004). They are (1) government power, (2) advertisers and companies, (3) interest groups, (4) individual readers or viewers, (5) other media's reports and (6) social common values. A more subtle but important force is ideology. In the U.S., for example, liberal democracy and free capitalism are main ideologies that are reflected in news contents. Such ideologies are presented through familiar cultural themes that resonate with news consumers (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991).

3) News Frames

The social construction of meaning through media has become a dominant paradigm for today's media studies (Yang, 1997). News frames play a key role in this social construction by media. By organizing and arranging events and facts in a certain frame, news media can shape the world perceived by news users (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). There are two types of frames — media frames and receiver frames. The former is the frame media use by selecting, stressing or eliminating certain aspects of facts (Gitlin, 1980). The latter, also called schema, is the frame of individuals who receive news (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Entman (1993) said media make certain aspects salient through problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendation.

Frame studies in general focus on three aspects — discourse

analysis of news frames, news frames' effect on receivers and news frames as a dependent variable. Discourse analysis includes a study by Wolfsfeld (1997) that analyzed media frames on the Middle East conflicts. According to Wolfsfeld, frames are divided into meta frames and packages. Meta frames are dominant frames that represent ideology and culture, whereas packages are secondary frames that together form meta frames. The meta frame of the Palestine uprising was law and order for Israel and injustice and defiance for Palestine. Packages here were violence and intifada. Media frame studies are often used for social conflicts. In conflict situations, media frequently defend existing order by way of news frames (Yang 2001).

For a study of news frames as a dependent variable, Semenko and Valkenburg (2000) analyzed forces that determined news frames of the 1997 European summit. They discovered the nature of media (serious or sensational) had more impact on news frames than the type of media (newspaper or television) did.

This paper will first analyze the discourses of news frames and then examine how three independent variables — government policies, company ideologies and individual attitudes — affected the news frames. For the discourse analysis, the frames will be divided into meta frames and secondary frames based on the studies of Wolfsfeld (1997). The secondary frames will then be categorized according to frame devices conceptualized by Entman (1993). In this paper, four such devices are adopted: (1) definition of problem (2) identification of cause (3) moral judgment and (4) suggestion of remedies.

Then this paper examines the relations between the three independent variables (government policy, company ideology and individual attitude) and the dependent variable (news frame). Entman (1991) established relations between government policy and news frame as early as 1991. Entman later elaborated his

findings in his book, “Projections of Power” (2004). He noted frames pursued by governments don’t always end up as news frames. Government frames that are culturally congruent have better chances of becoming news frames. Frames on North Korea seem to be culturally congruent, at least in the U.S. Because North Korea is a rogue state that suppresses human rights and develops weapons of mass destruction, news articles on the North written by U.S. media are likely to follow the frames set by the U.S. administration. Such black-and-white, good-and-bad, dichotomy news frames can easily accommodate the dominant U.S. cultural schema. But as Shoemaker and Reese (1991) and others have repeatedly pointed out, individual journalists’ attitudes and media companies’ ideologies must have affected the news frames as well.

Based on such an analytical framework, the following research questions are drawn:

Q1) How different are the news frames written by foreign correspondents in Korea, depending on the government policies of the countries they are from?

Q2) How different are the news frames written by foreign correspondents in Korea, depending on the ideologies of the companies they belong to?

Q3) How do national policies, company ideologies and personal attitudes interact among themselves to shape the news frames written by foreign correspondents in Korea?

II. Methods

For the discourse analysis, news articles of foreign correspondents in Korea from five nations — the U.S., Japan, the U.K., China and Russia — were analyzed. Those nations were chosen

because of their heavy involvement in the issue. A total of eight newspapers from the five nations were selected because of their influence in international relations. They are the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ), the *New York Times* (NYT) and the *International Herald Tribune* (IHT) from the U.S., the *Financial Times* (FT) from the U.K., *Asahi* and *Sankei* from Japan, *People's Daily* from China and *Rossiskaya Gazetta* (RG) from Russia. In the U.S., the WSJ is regarded conservative and the NYT liberal. In Japan, *Asahi* is considered liberal and *Sankei* conservative. Of their stories on the nuclear issue, only those written by their bureau chief in either Seoul or Tokyo were chosen because their articles were more analytical and interpretive. The articles were collected from the digital edition of "Today's Overseas Editorial Line" compiled by the Korea Overseas Information Service. The government agency compiles dozens of articles on Korea from news media all over the world every day through its press attaches all over the world.

The period of analysis was from July through November of 2006 because it was the most critical time involving the issue. The North escalated military tensions around Korea by firing a missile on July 4 and testing a nuclear weapon on October 9. Immediately after the nuclear test, the U.N. adopted a resolution condemning the action. In this paper, 78 stories on the nuclear issue that were written during the period by the eight foreign correspondents were analyzed. There were six articles from the NYT, 13 from the WSJ, 14 from the HIT, 14 from the FT, 7 from the RG, 11 from *Asahi*, 6 from *Sankei* and 7 from the *People's Daily*. The Holsti inter-coder reliability was 0.87 for the meta frames and ranged between 0.71 and 0.85 for the secondary frames (0.71 for problem definition, 0.80 for cause identification, 0.77 for remedy recommendation and 0.85 for moral judgment).

To find the frames, an inductive method was used because the nuclear issue is a rather unique topic that has not been analyzed thoroughly before. The researcher and three mass communi-

cation graduate students in Seoul carried out the analysis from November 2006 through February 2007. According to preliminary studies, meta frames used for the coverage of the nuclear issue were divided into engagement and containment. The former is a soft carrot policy based on dialogue and compromises with North Korea. The latter is a harsh stick policy based on pressures and sanctions against North Korea. Accordingly, the articles were divided into (1) engagement (2) containment or (3) neutral, based on their meta frames.

For the secondary frames, the articles were divided by frame devices. For the definition of the problem, they were divided into the frames of (1) North Korea's self defense against U.S. threat (2) threat to the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Northeast Asian security (3) diplomatic row among nations or (4) lack of problem definition. Here, (1) is regarded engaging and (2) containing. For the identification of the cause, they were divided into the frames of (1) U.S.'s responsibility (2) Japan's responsibility (3) North Korea's responsibility (4) South Korea's responsibility or (5) lack of responsible nation. Here, (1) and (2) are engaging and (3) and (4) are containing. For the recommendation of the remedy, they were divided into the frames of (1) peaceful dialogue and diplomatic efforts (2) simple suspension of aids to North Korea (3) economic sanctions (4) semi-military sanctions or (5) lack of remedy recommendation. Here, (1) and (2) are engaging and (3) and (4) containing. For the judgment of the main actor, they were divided into the frames of describing the Pyongyang regime (1) as a force fighting against external threats (2) as a dangerous and dictatorial leadership or (3) neutral. Here, (1) is engaging and (2) is containing. To determine whether the meta frames are engagement or containment, the four secondary frames (packages) were used. If two or more of the secondary frames were engaging, their meta frame was considered engaging and vice versa. If the four secondary frames were split equally,

the remedy recommendation frame was used to determine the meta frame because, according to an inductive study, articles with engaging remedy recommendation tended to be highly engaging overall and vice versa.

At the same time, in-depth interviews with the eight correspondents were carried out from September 2006 through March 2007. This was because in-depth interviews are generally helpful in understanding complex journalism issues (Lee, 2003). The interviews were done all in Seoul. Interview length ranged from 90 minutes to three hours. English was used for the WSJ, the NYT and the FT and Korean for the IHT, Asahi, Sankei, People's Daily and RG. All the interviewees were Seoul bureau chiefs, except for the NYT correspondent who was the Tokyo bureau chief. Email and telephone interviews were conducted for follow-up questions and clarification of answers. The questions focused on the following points:

(1) Demographics: nationality, age, education, major experiences, length of career as journalist and correspondent, length of stay in Korea and Korean language fluency

(2) About Their Companies: circulation, major ideologies and characteristics, status of Seoul or Tokyo bureau, number of articles filed weekly, average length of articles, autonomy in selecting and reporting articles, degree of editing, degree of disagreement with head office, overall work autonomy

(3) About North Korea: individual attitudes toward the regime (engagement or containment?), their companies' attitudes toward the regime, their countries' positions toward the regime

The demographics of the correspondents and the number of their articles used for the analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics of the Foreign Correspondents

	NYT	WSJ	IHT	FT	RG	Asahi	Sankei	People's Daily
Nationality	Canada	U.S.	Korea	New Zealand	Russia	Japan	Japan	China
Age	37	41	43	31	33	44	66	58
Korean Fluency	Low	Low	High	Middle	High	High	High	High
Years as Journalist	15	20	16	10	5	21	43	33
Years in Seoul	4 in Tokyo	1	43	3	9	5	22	9
Number of samples	6	13	14	14	7	11	6	7

III. Results

1. News Frames by Country

According to the results, the five nations showed significant differences in their news frames of the nuclear issue. As for the definition of the problem, 49 percent of the U.S. articles (10 articles) defined the nuclear issue as a threat to Northeast Asian security and the NPT. Only 6 percent (two articles) defined it as Pyongyang's self defense. This clearly reflects the policy of the U.S. administration towards the North during the period. The Japanese articles showed a similar trend, with 41 percent (seven articles) defining the issue as a threat to regional security. This also coincides with Tokyo's tough official policy towards the North. Compared with the containing positions of the U.S. and Japan, Russia and China were more engaging. No Russian articles defined the issue as a threat to regional security and only

29 percent of the Chinese articles (two articles) defined the problem that way.

As for the cause of the problem, similar differences were shown. Of the U.S. articles, 52 percent (17 articles) cited the North as the cause of the problem. This again supports Washington's hawkish view towards Pyongyang. The figures ranged between 41 and 42 percent for the U.K., Japan and Russia. But of the Chinese articles, only 14 percent (one article) saw the North as the cause, reflecting the fact that Beijing still remains Pyongyang's most important ally. On the other hand, 29 percent of the Chinese articles (two articles) cited the U.S. as the main cause of the nuclear problem, showing Beijing's mistrust of Washington. The number compares with 12 percent for the U.S. (four articles). No Japanese articles identified the U.S. as the main cause.

As for the remedy of the problem, 33 percent of the articles written by the U.S. correspondents (11 articles) recommended economic or semi-military sanctions, including the search of suspicious North Korean vessels — highly containing measures. The U.K. and Japan showed higher numbers of 43 and 35 percent (six articles each). On the other hand, the articles by the Chinese and Russian correspondents reflected only 14 percent support for such hawkish measures (one article each), again showing their governments' dovish attitudes toward Pyongyang. The Chinese articles had instead 29 percent support (two articles) for more engaging remedies, such as diplomatic efforts.

As for their attitudes toward the main actor of the problem (Kim Jong Il or the Pyongyang regime), 55 percent of the U.S. articles (18 articles) viewed the regime as dangerous and dictatorial. The figure was 50 percent for the U.K. (seven articles) and 53 percent for Japan (nine articles). Interestingly, 57 percent of the Russian articles (four articles) also saw Pyongyang as dangerous and dictatorial, indicating Moscow's relative lack of affection for Pyongyang, despite its support for engagement. On the other

hand, only 14 percent of the Chinese articles (one article) described Pyongyang as dangerous or dictatorial, again showing close ties between the two nations.

Based on the analysis of the four above-mentioned secondary frames, the primary (meta) frames of the five nations were determined. As expected, the meta frames clearly match the foreign policies of their respective governments. Of the articles written by the U.S. correspondents, 58 percent (19 articles) had containment meta frames. It was even higher at 65 percent for Japan (11 articles). The U.K. was placed at the middle with 57 percent (eight articles), followed by 29 percent (two articles) for Russian and 0 percent for China. In other words, none of the stories written by the Chinese correspondent had containment meta frames.

On the other hand, 43 percent of the Chinese articles (three articles) used engagement meta frames, compared with 14 percent for the U.K. (two articles) and Russia (one article), 12 percent for Japan and 6 percent for the U.S.(two articles each). In short, the U.S., Japan and the U.K. used more containment frames, while China and Russia used more engagement frames, in line with their governments' respective policies toward North Korea. During the period, the Bush administration put huge pressures on Pyongyang, calling it a part of the axis of evil. Japan's Koizumi government was also highly critical of Pyongyang because of its abduction of several Japanese as well as its dangerous missile and nuclear programs. The U.K. was also critical of the North, but its diplomatic relations with Pyongyang kept London relatively mild. On the other hand, both China and Russia continued their supports for the North. China in particular remained Pyongyang's loyal patron throughout the period. The meta frames by the countries are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Meta Frames by Country

	U.S.	Japan	U.K.	Russia	China	Total
Engagement	6%	12%	14%	14%	43%	13%
Neutral	36%	23%	29%	57%	57%	36%
Containment	58%	65%	57%	29%	0%	51%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Based on Table 2, the relative positions of the five nations’ meta frames can be placed in an ideological spectrum.

Figure 1. Relative Positions of Five Nations in Ideological Spectrum



As shown in Figure 1, the five nations can be divided into three groups based on their frames. China and Russia can be categorized as North Korea’s socialist allies trying to engage the North. The U.S. and Japan can be categorized as North Korea’s capitalist adversaries trying to contain the North. The U.K. can be called North Korea’s capitalist critic that has diplomatic ties with the North.

2. News Frames by Newspaper

Among the U.S. newspapers, the conservative WSJ showed the most containing or hawkish frames and the NYT most engaging or dovish frames. The IHT was generally similar to the WSJ. For the meta frames, the NYT supported containment in 33.3

percent of the cases (two articles), while the WSJ and the IHT approved containment in 61.5 percent (eight articles) and 64.3 percent (nine articles) respectively. Similarly, the NYT supported engagement in 33.3 percent (two articles), while the other two newspapers backed engagement in no cases. These results are generally in line with the basic ideologies of the newspapers. According to the in-depth interviews with the correspondents, the WSJ was considered conservative and the NYT liberal. The IHT was regarded liberal, but its frames were not.

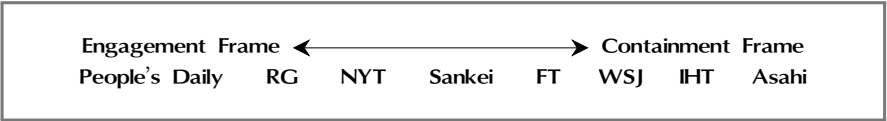
Things were quite different for the Japanese newspapers. Although the interviews with the correspondents showed Asahi is more liberal and Sankei conservative, the results were quite different. While Asahi used containment meta frames in 72.7 percent (eight articles), Sankei used such frames in 50.0 percent (three articles), indicating Asahi is more conservative or hawkish. Similarly, liberal Asahi used engagement meta frames in 9.1 percent (one article), while conservative Sankei used such dovish frames in 16.7 percent (one article). Contrary to original expectations, the results reveal Asahi was more conservative despite its liberal stance and Sankei more liberal despite its conservative stance. The unexpected results will be explained in more detail in the next section. Table 3 shows the differences among the papers.

Table 3. Meta Frames by Newspaper (in percent)

	Asahi	IHT	WSJ	FT	Sankei	NYT	RG	People's Daily	Total
Engagement	9	0	0	14	17	33	14	43	13
Neutral	18	36	39	29	33	33	57	57	36
Containment	73	64	61	57	50	33	29	0	51
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Based on Table 2, the relative position of the eight newspapers' meta frames can be placed in an ideological spectrum. This is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Relative Position of Eight Newspapers in Ideological Spectrum



3. News Frames by Correspondent

To examine how national policies, newspaper ideologies and individual attitudes interact to affect the news frames of foreign correspondents, the eight correspondents of the eight newspapers were interviewed. Table 4 sums up the results of the interviews plus their news contents.

Table 4. Interview Results of the Foreign Correspondents

	NYT	WSJ	IHT	FT	RG	Asahi	Sankei	People's Daily
Individual Autonomy	High	Middle	Middle	High	High	Middle	High	High
Degree of Editing	Little	Heavy	Light	Little	Little	Light	Little	Little
Personal View on Pyongyang	E	N	N	N	E	E	C	E
Company View on Pyongyang	E	C	E	N	E	E	C	E
Country View on Pyongyang	C	C	C	N	E	C	C	E
News Content	E	C	C	N	E	C	N	E

Note: E is engagement, N is neutral and C is containment.

As seen in Table 4, government policy was the most important factor explaining news contents. For six correspondents, their government policies matched their news contents. The second most important factor was company ideology. For five correspondents, their company ideologies matched their news contents. The least important factor was personal attitude. Personal attitudes coincided with new contents only for four correspondents. In other words, government policy, company ideology and personal attitude affected new contents in that order.

Yet this general finding is rejected for those correspondents with a high degree of autonomy. The NYT correspondent says the U.S. government's conservative policy (at least until the mid-term elections in November 2006) toward the nuclear problem doesn't keep him from expressing his liberal attitudes toward the issue. His liberal stance is not a byproduct of his company's liberal ideology either. He believes he is given a full degree of autonomy in selecting and writing news articles. Differences in news reporting derive mainly from different values and attitudes of individual correspondents, not different policies or ideologies of their countries or companies, at least in the U.S. media, he says. He adds his editors respect and rely heavily on the views of foreign correspondents like him because correspondents are very familiar with local situations as well as local cultures and languages. (He speaks perfect Japanese.) "New York headquarters relies on foreign correspondents and foreign correspondents listen to local voices," he says. "There are hardly any interferences and the news items I propose are accepted without much change." He further notes U.S. foreign correspondents pay much attention to what local people say and often write articles that go against the policy of the U.S. government. In fact, his generally engagement-prone articles support this observation.

The WSJ correspondent has a different view. Firstly, he says, the WSJ doesn't allow its correspondents full autonomy. Editors

have greater control in news selection and they edit articles heavily. According to him, his New York editors regard foreign correspondents' views as rather parochial and often call for stronger U.S. perspectives. "New York editors have a great influence on feature stories, particularly front-page stories," he says. "They sometimes reject or greatly alter my story proposals." He notes his paper is ultra right when it comes to the nuclear issue, as was seen in its calls for a regime change in the North and the suspension of all aids to the North. But he contends his view is rather neutral. But his articles on the nuclear issue generally used containment frames, reflecting his company's conservative viewpoint. This can be explained by the fact that he is not given much autonomy at the company. His relatively short experience in Korea (only one year) and the lack of Korean language skills are likely to have reduced his autonomy further, while strengthening the voice and view of the headquarters. In the same token, his articles reflect more of the U.S. government's and his paper's containment policy and less of his neutral perspective.

As a wholly-owned subsidiary of the NYT, the IHT also has the liberal ideology of its parent company, according to the IHT correspondent. It is headquartered in Paris, France, but it is a U.S. company which can be subject to Washington's conservative stance toward Pyongyang. He notes his view on the nuclear issue is neutral. Unlike the NYT, the IHT doesn't grant its correspondents full autonomy, he says, and editing by head office editors is heavier at the IHT than at the NYT. This heavier editing and more control by editors are likely to be the reason why his articles on the nuclear issue are more conservative than his personal attitudes. Despite his neutral perspective, his articles generally used containment frames. Yet the fact that he is a Korean citizen who speaks Korean and fully understands the Korean culture and history works to his advantage. Compared with others correspondents' articles, his stories present more local context and

dives into the deep backgrounds of the issue in a more detailed and interpretive manner. "Because the IHT is a global paper, it tries to give more local voices," he says. "As a Korean citizen, I can convey more Korean voices." This shows that the demographic elements of foreign correspondents are reflected on their articles.

The FT correspondent regards her position toward the nuclear issue as conditional engagement that can be interpreted as neutral. She also notes her paper's ideology and the U.K. government's policy toward the issue are both neutral. The FT is more on the left, compared with the WSJ, but not at the far left, she says. Similarly, the Tony Blair government supports the U.S. in most cases, such as the War in Iraq, but due to its diplomatic ties with Pyongyang, she says, London is softer to Pyongyang than Washington is. Because the positions of herself, her company and her country are all neutral, the FT correspondent feels little strains in doing her job. There is not much conflict at the workplace and she has relatively high job satisfaction. In addition, she says, the FT allows its correspondents a high degree of autonomy in both news selection and news writing. In that regard, she adds, the FT is lot different from the more control-oriented WSJ. "If U.S. papers are editors' papers, U.K. papers are reporters' papers," she says. "My editors hardly change my stories." The neutral positions of all three factors determining the FT articles explain why their news frames on the nuclear issue are generally neutral. Overall, they were placed between containment-prone U.S. and Japanese articles and engagement-prone Chinese and Russian articles.

The RG is a 17-year-old Russian paper that has the second largest circulation in Russia. Because it was founded after Perestroika (reform), the paper has an open organizational system allowing much freedom to its correspondents. The RG correspondent in Seoul has additional autonomy because he is the

most experienced expert on the Korean peninsula within his company. Having studied the Korean language in Russia, he speaks perfect Korean and has a master's degree from Seoul National University. He also has well-connected news sources within the South Korean government, which makes him even more authoritative within his newspaper. His head office highly respects his views on the nuclear issue and there is hardly any editing done on his writing. "Because I am the best expert on the Korean peninsula in my newspaper, I enjoy autonomy," he says. "My conciliatory view on North Korea is shown on my stories." He believes North Korea has to be engaged because it will not collapse under any external pressures. He says this engagement stance is shared both by the Russian government and his newspaper. Because the positions of himself, his company and his country are all same — engagement — his articles also show engagement frames in general.

The Asahi correspondent says his view on the nuclear issue is engagement because containment will make the North further resent the outside world, making dialogue impossible. His newspaper is also known as one of the most liberal papers in Japan — a point corroborated by the correspondent. Yet he admits his government in Tokyo is very harsh on the North mainly because of the issue of several Japanese abducted by Pyongyang. Because Japanese public opinion is highly critical of Pyongyang, he says, the Japanese government is conservative. Although his and his company's views are rather liberal, his articles have to follow the conservative line of the Japanese government and public opinion. "I believe dialogue is the best way to solve the North Korean problem," he says. "But I cannot insist my viewpoint because I have to follow the lines of the Japanese government or Japanese public opinion." The fact that he enjoys only a medium level of autonomy in news selection and news writing furthers this tendency. Indeed, his articles had the most containment-prone

frames among those of the eight correspondents. Unlike the NYT which can defy the U.S. government's official position, Asahi faithfully follows the line of the Japanese government. This could be related to a relative diversity of opinions within the U.S. society and a more conformist trend within the Japanese society.

The Sankei correspondent is a veteran correspondent who not only speaks Korean, but also has close relations with high-ranking news sources in Seoul. This makes him extremely autonomous within his newspaper. As the paper's most distinguished Korean expert, he has a full degree of freedom in selecting news and his stories are hardly edited by Tokyo. This might explain why his articles had a perspective that is quite different from that of his paper or his country. Like the Japanese government, Sankei is known for its ultra-right-wing view on the North. The correspondent himself is highly conservative on the issue — possibly a product of internalization of company values. But his articles are rather liberal — more engagement-oriented than those of liberal Asahi. This is likely to be related to his ability to go beyond company or country lines — a result of his authority and professionalism. “Like my newspaper, I am very conservative,” he says. “But I don't have to follow company ideology, because I am granted a full control of my stories.” Reflecting this, his articles were also more opinionated than those of others.

The correspondent for China's People's Daily is also a highly experienced veteran who worked in both South and North Korea. Having worked as a Seoul and Pyongyang correspondent for 18 years, he has full authority in selecting and reporting news articles on the nuclear issue. But he also admits that he closely follows the line of his government because he believes the media's role is to help government to pursue its policy. In the same vein, he is obliged to follow the policy of his paper, an official news outlet of the Communist Party. “We have to faithfully convey the government's voice,” he says. “Especially for foreign policy, media

should have the same voice.” This works rather conveniently for him because the positions of all three — himself, his company and his country — are conciliatory toward the North and its nuclear issue. And this is clearly reflected in his articles. The articles have the most engagement-oriented news frames among those surveyed. The correspondent notes China respects North Korea’s sovereignty and disapproves of the U.S. government’s tendency to interfere with other countries’ domestic affairs. With this kind of strong position on the issue and his full autonomy, his articles are highly sympathetic to the Pyongyang regime.

IV. Conclusion and Discussion

According to the content analysis, the news frames of the five countries all followed their governments’ foreign policies. In the meta frame, Japan was the biggest supporter of containment and pressure, followed by the U.S. On the other hand, China was the most engaging or dovish, followed by Russia. The U.K. was in the middle. In other words, even in this post-Cold War era, such Cold War issues as North Korea’s nuclear problem are covered by news media according to the national interests of their governments. As Entman (1993) pointed out, news frames for such international conflicts are formed by several frame devices, including the definition of problem, the identification of cause, moral judgment and the recommendation of remedy. The results also show that the frame analysis method of Wolfsfeld (1997) using meta frame and package is valid for studies on international news. For stories on North Korea, meta frames were either engagement or containment. The secondary frames categorized by frame devices were also divided into engagement or containment.

But the results also show that the news frames of foreign correspondents in Korea are affected by individual journalists’ attitudes and newspaper companies’ ideologies as well. Although

government policies are the most influential factor, the two factors also help shape the news frames. In other words, the three elements interact to determine the news frames. This finding is generally in line with most previous studies on factors determining news (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). But the results indicate such interaction works differently in different countries. In more diversity-oriented societies like the U.S., different ideologies of different newspapers are often reflected in their news frames. But in more conformist societies like Japan, differences in newspapers' ideologies are not shown clearly in their news frames. This finding can contribute to the studies of comparative journalism.

Although foreign correspondents generally follow the policies of their governments, they are not complete slaves to their national interests. Sometimes they defy such policies to express their own attitudes and beliefs. This is a rather positive finding of this study. Foreign correspondents at times can be a free soul transcending the boundaries of their countries or companies. This is particularly so for foreign correspondents with a substantial professional background. Those who have longer experiences as correspondents and know more about local cultures and languages are more likely to have greater autonomy in news selection and news reporting and, hence, express their own opinions and views more vocally in their news articles. In other words, professionalism of foreign correspondents can lead to more accurate and balanced international news going beyond national or company boundaries, eventually contributing to the easing of international conflicts and the promotion of understanding among nations.

Although this study helped strengthen the findings of previous studies on similar issues, it has several limitations. First, the number of sample articles was only 78 because the period of analysis was only a few months. More samples for a longer peri-

od could yield more comprehensive results. Also, a longitudinal study can be applied to compare differences in the policies of the same government at different times. For example, the second term Bush administration from 2005 was quite different from the first term from 2001 in terms of its stance toward North Korea. A comparative study on these two different periods can produce more interesting results and clearer ideas on how the news frames of foreign correspondents are shaped.

References

- Bennett, W. L. 1990. "Toward a Theory of Press-State Relations in the U.S." *Journal of Communication*, 40, 103-125.
- Bennett, W. L., & Paletz, D. L. 1994. *Taken by Storm*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cohen, B. 1963. *The Press and Foreign Policy*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Dickson, S. H. 1992. "Press and U.S. Policy toward Nicaragua, 1983-1987: A Study of the New York Times and the Washington Post." *Journalism Quarterly*, 69, 562-571.
- Dimitrova, D., & Stromback, J. 2005. "Mission Accomplished? Framing of the Iraq War in the elite newspapers in Sweden and the U.S." *Gazette*, 67(5), 399-417.
- Entman, R. M. 1991. "Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran Air incidents." *Journal of Communication*, 41(4), 6-27.
- Entman, R. M. 1993. "Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm." *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.
- Entman, R. M. 2004. *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinions, and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Galtung, J., & Ruge, M. H. 1965. "The Structure of Foreign News." *Journal of Peace Research*, 31, 64-90.
- Gamson, W. A., & Modigliani, A. 1989. "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist approach." *The American Journal of Sociology*, 95(1), 1-37.
- Gans, H. 1980. *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*, New York: Vintage Books.
- Gitlin, T. 1980. *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gramsci, A. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, New York: International Publishers.
- Gutierrez-Vilalobos, S., Hertog, J. K., & Rush, R. R. 1994. "Press Support for the U.S. Administration During the Panama Invasion: Analysis of strategic and tactical critique in the domestic press." *Journalism Quarterly*, 71(3), 618-627.
- Hallin, D. 1986. *The Uncensored War*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hallin, D. 1992. "The High Modernism of American Journalism." *Journal of Communication*, 42, 14-25.
- Herman E., & Chomsky, N. 1988. *Manufacturing Consent: the Political Economy and the Mass Media*, New York: Pantheon Books.
- Hess, S. 1996. *International News & Foreign Correspondents*, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute.
- Kim, S. H. 2005. *Educating Public Opinion: Understanding U.S. Dollar Hegemony in the Age of Global News Media*, Ph.D. Dissertation submitted to Pennsylvania State University.
- Kim, S. T. 2000. "Making a Difference: U.S. Press Coverage of the Kwangju and Tiananmen Pro-Democracy Movements." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77, 22-36.
- Kim, S. T. 2004. "Mapping an Economic Globalization News

- Paradigm: A Multi-National Comparative Analysis.” *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(3), 601-621.
- Kim, W. T. 1989. “A Study on the International Reporting Pattern of Chinese Media.” *Korea Newspaper Journal*, 24, 211-235.
- Krishnaiah, J., Signorielli, N., & McLeod, D. M. 1994. “The Evil Empire Revisited: New York Times Coverage of the Soviet Intervention in and Withdrawal from Afghanistan.” *Journalism Quarterly*, 71, 618-627.
- Kruglak, T. E. 1955. *The Foreign Correspondents: A Study of the Men and Women Reporting for the American Information Media in Western Europe*, Geneva: Librairie E. Droz.
- Lambert, D. A. 1956. “Foreign Correspondents Covering the United States.” *Journalism Quarterly*, 33-3.
- Lee, J. K. 2003. “A Study on the Korean Society and the Conditions of Press Freedom Through the Perception of Journalists.” *Korean Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies*, 47(2), 54-77.
- Lichter, S. R., Rothman, S., & Lichter, L. S. 1986. *The Media Elite*, Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler.
- Lippman, W. 1997. *Public Opinion*, New York: Free Press Paperbacks.
- Paletz, D. L., & Entman, R. M. 1981. *Media, Power, Politics*, New York: Free Press.
- Peh, D., & Melkote, S. R. 1991. “Bias in Newspaper Reporting: A Content Analysis of the Coverage of Korean Airline and Iran Airbus Shootings in the U.S. Elite Press.” *Gazette*, 47, 59-78.
- Roston, L. C. 1937. *The Washington Correspondents*, New York: Harcourt.
- Ryu, H. R. 2004. *A Study on News Gatekeeping Process*, M.A. Thesis submitted to Yonsei University.
- Scheufele, D. 1999. “Framing as a Theory on Media Effect.” *Journal of Communication*, 49(4), 103-122.
- Semetko, H. A., & Valkenburg, P. M. 2000. “Framing European

- Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News.” *Journal of Communication*, 50(2), 93-109.
- Shim, H. 2004. “News Analysis of the New York Times and the Washington Post on the 1995 North Korean Famine: Based on Herman and Chomsky’s Propaganda Model.” *Korean Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies*, 48(1), 57-83.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Reese, S. D. 1991. *Theories of Influence on Mass Media Contents*, New York: Longman.
- Siebert, F. S., Peterson, T., & Schramm, W. B. 1963. *Four Theories of Press*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Stephens, M. 1980. *Broadcast News*, New York: Holt, Reinehart & Winston.
- Suh, J. W. 1970. *The Socio-Professional Aspects of Foreign Correspondents in the U.S.: A Study of International Communication*, Ph.D. Dissertation submitted to the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
- Suh, J. W. 1997. *International Communication*, Seoul: Nanam.
- Tuckman, G. 1978. *Making News*, New York: Free Press.
- Wilhelm, J. 1963. “The Re-Appearing Foreign Correspondents: A World Survey.” *Journalism Quarterly*, 40-2.
- Wolfsfeld, G. 1997. *Media and Political Conflict: News from the Middle East*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wu, H. D., & Hamilton, J. M. 2004. “U.S. Foreign Correspondents: Changes and Continuity at the Turn of the Century.” *Gazette*, 66(6), 517-532.
- Yang, J. H. 2001. “Meaning Construction of Social Conflicts.” *Korean Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies*, 45(2) 284-315.
- Yang, S. M. 1997. “Press and Public Opinion: A Constructionist Approach.” *Press and Society*, 17, 6-40.
- Yonhap News 2007. Jan. 25.
- Yu, F., & Luter, J. 1964. “The Foreign Correspondent and His Work.” *Columbia Journalism Review*, 3-1.