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Ma Ying-jeou's Presidential Discourse

Jonathan SULLIVAN and Eliyahu V. SAPIR

Abstract: Despite the substantial advances made in cross-Strait relations during Ma Ying-jeou's (Ma Yingjiu) first term, the ROC president's rhetoric varied considerably as he grappled with the difficult reality of implementing campaign and inauguration pledges to establish better relations with China while striving to maintain national respect and sovereignty. In this article, we put forward a framework for measuring, analysing and explaining this variation in President Ma's first-term discourse. Analysing a very large number of Ma's speeches, addresses, etc., we provide empirical assessments of how the content of Ma's public pronouncements has developed over time, how his rhetoric varies according to the strategic context and timing of a speech, and how his discourse compares to that of his predecessor, Chen Shui-bian (Chen Shuibian). In addressing these questions, the article contributes a quantitative perspective to existing work on political discourse in Taiwan and to the growing methodological and applied literature on how to systematically analyse Chinese political text.

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Keywords: Taiwan, Ma Ying-jeou, ROC president, presidential discourse, automated text analysis, cross-Strait relations

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Introduction

Cross-Strait relations during Ma Ying-jeou's (Ma Yingjiu) first term as ROC president developed in stark contrast to those during the term of his immediate predecessor, Chen Shui-bian (Chen Shuibian) (Muyard 2010). Yet, despite warming relations between Beijing and Taipei, multiple political obstacles remain in place and are likely to persist in the foreseeable future. Although semi-official, Track Two and party-to-party interactions burgeoned during Ma's first term, the ROC president's rhetoric remains an influential (for better or for worse) conduit of cross-Strait relations. Developing reliable methods for analysing presidential discourse in Taiwan is thus an important undertaking in terms of policy, theory and methodology. Specifically, the article provides a systematic empirical assessment of Ma's presidential discourse during his first term. Contrary to popular representations of his "rapprochement policy", Ma's rhetoric on issues relating to cross-Strait relations shows substantial variation in content, tone and emphasis. As a presidential candidate, he ran newspaper advertisements containing the headline message "Taiwan's future must be decided by the Taiwanese people" (堅決主張台灣的前途必須由台灣人民自己決定, *Jianjue zhubuzhang Taiwan de qiantu bixu you Taiwan renmin ziji jueding*), a position not dissimilar to that of his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) opponents. Indeed, as a presidential candidate, close to one-third of the ideological appeals in Ma's advertising addressed Taiwanese identity (Sullivan 2010: 149), and his stated policy preferences shifted toward those of his DPP opponent, Frank Hsieh (Xie Changting) (Jacobs 2012: 235). At other junctures, President Ma has espoused a substantially different view on ROC sovereignty and the relationship with China, to such an extent that some observers in Taiwan have questioned whether he is even "interested in preserving Taiwan's sovereignty" (Jacobs 2012: 243). Throughout his first term, Ma's rhetoric on cross-Strait relations varied considerably as he faced up to the difficult reality of implementing campaign and inauguration pledges to establish better relations with China while maintaining national respect and sovereignty. The article advances a framework for measuring, analysing and explaining this variation in Ma's first-term discourse. How does the content of Ma's public pronouncements develop over time? Does his discourse vary according to the strategic context of primary audiences or the timing of a speech? How does his discourse compare to that of his predecessor, Chen Shui-bian? In addressing these questions, the article contributes a quantitative perspective to existing work on political dis-

course in Taiwan (e.g. Lams and Liao 2011; Sullivan and Lowe 2010; Sullivan et al. 2011) and to the growing methodological and applied literature on how to systematically analyse Chinese political text (e.g. Chen 2011; Hassid 2012; Sullivan and Renz 2010).

Cross-Strait Developments in Ma's First Term

The long-term and linked processes of democratization, nation-building and nationalism in Taiwan have fundamentally influenced the dynamics of cross-Strait relations (Chu 2004; Dittmer 2005; Wu 2004, 2005). Under former presidents Lee Teng-hui (Li Denghui) and Chen Shui-bian, a combination of the exigencies of electoral competition and an evolving position on ROC sovereignty and Taiwanese national identity (Fell 2005; Schubert 2004) rendered Taipei the most dynamic and volatile actor involved in the cross-Strait relationship. Until recently, the absence of channels of communication between Taipei and Beijing meant that high-level interactions predominantly took the form of unilateral public pronouncements on each side. As a result, cross-Strait relations followed a cyclical pattern of "working silences" punctuated by "provocative statements" (Dittmer 2004: 478) issued by presidents Lee and Chen. Whether indicative of strategic calculations or deep-seated convictions, the propensity of both leaders to issue statements mentioning the "special state-to-state relations" and that there is "one country on each side", combined with Beijing's intractable "One China" position, has resulted in periodic spikes in tension across the Strait. Because of their public pronouncements, both former presidents came to be characterized as "pro-independence". These pronouncements have also had concomitant effects on Taiwan's relations with Beijing and, to some extent, with the US (Ross 2006). Consequently, rapidly growing, informal socio-economic connections across the Strait were accompanied by political relations that were essentially deadlocked in Lee's term as elected president and during Chen's two terms. However, unofficial visits to the mainland by Lien Chan (Lian Zhan) and other Kuomintang (KMT, Guomindang) figures during Chen's fractious final term paved the way for a rapid tightening of ties following Ma Ying-jeou's presidential election victory in 2008.

President Ma entered office after a landslide victory and thus had an unequivocal mandate to improve cross-Strait relations and reinvigorate the economy. All but the most partisan DPP supporters were disillusioned with the Chen administration's governance problems (not all of

its own making), over-emphasis on ideological issues and, ultimately, high-level corruption scandals (Copper 2009). With a correspondingly large majority in the legislature, an untainted personal lustre and facing an opposition in disarray, Ma was well positioned to implement the policies he had campaigned on (Hughes 2009; Jacobs 2008). He quickly endorsed the “1992 Consensus” – namely, that there is one China, though the ROC and PRC have different interpretations about which government is the legitimate representative – which was Beijing’s minimum requirement as a basis for open high-level contacts, and which Chen had rejected. Soon after, the semi-official Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and Beijing’s Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) resumed dialogue for the first time since the mid-1990s. Focusing on “easy” economic issues, regulating practices that were already a reality and smoothing economic interactions that did not impinge on security or sovereignty issues, they quickly endorsed an agreement to allow regular weekend charter flights across the Taiwan Strait, soon followed by agreements to allow mainland tourists to visit Taiwan, and to create direct shipping links, implement daily flights and improve postal services across the Strait. A year later, further initiatives on food safety, crime, and financial cooperation were quickly passed by the KMT supermajority in the Legislative Yuan. These practical successes paved the way for the much more ambitious – and, within Taiwan, politically contested – Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). Despite domestic opposition, the ECFA passed in June 2010, removing tariffs on hundreds of products and becoming the centrepiece policy of Ma’s first term.

Ma’s endorsement of the “Three Nos” (No unification, No independence, and No war) and “1992 Consensus” generated unprecedented goodwill and constituted a workable platform for engaging China. Consequently, cross-Strait relations quickly reached a historical level of coexistence and cooperation, manifest in the discontinuation of unseemly competition for diplomatic allies and Taipei’s annual and fruitless marshalling of allies to propose its entry into the UN (Wang, Lee, and Yu 2011). In return for the *entente cordiale* ushered in by the Ma administration, Beijing made concessions on Taiwan’s participation in international organizations (a key issue for Ma’s domestic competitors and public opinion). For example, the two sides reached an understanding that would enable Taiwanese representatives to attend the World Health Assembly meeting in 2009. Although it required adopting the designa-

tion “Chinese Taipei” (rather than “Taiwan”, as the Chen administration had insisted), participation had been a goal for Taipei (buttressed by strong domestic support) since the SARS crisis in 2003. Zhang (2011) identifies both ideological and materialist motivations behind Ma’s strategy of engaging China, emphasizing goals of maximizing opportunities and minimizing threats. Clearly, relations with China represent simultaneously Taiwan’s greatest opportunity (economically) and threat (in terms of national security), and during Ma’s first term he was keen to assure Beijing that Taipei did not seek to undermine the “One China” principle.

Disaggregating the ROC President’s Discourse

In order to analyse President Ma’s discourse, it is first necessary to identify the parameters of political discourse in Taiwan. To do this, we have drawn on the Taiwan Studies literature and identified five major themes in political competition in Taiwan: Chinese national identity, Taiwanese national identity, sovereignty, democracy and the economy. These concepts, chosen for their relevance to cross-Strait relations, the main focus of the article, provide the framework for our subsequent empirical analyses. Naturally, these categories are not an exhaustive disaggregation of all potential political discourses in Taiwan. Although we argue that these categories cover the major components of Ma’s discourse, there are other topics, such as the role of the KMT, which are not explicitly accounted for. In the case of the latter, we do not cover it in this analysis as it is mainly a domestic issue with less relevance for cross-Strait relations. However, our analysis is not intended to be the final word on Ma’s discourse, and further work, both quantitative and qualitative, is required to evaluate more nuanced discursive elements.

National Identity

National identity has long been “the dominant cleavage underpinning Taiwan’s party situation” (Hsieh 2004: 479). The domestic dimension of national identity is rooted in relations between “native Taiwanese” and “mainlanders” (for discussion and critique of this nomenclature, see Corcuff 2004). The former category refers to Han Chinese whose ancestors’ migration from Fujian Province in southern China preceded the Taiwan’s Japanese colonization, which began in 1895. The latter are also Han Chinese, but come predominantly from other provinces, most arriv-

ing on Taiwan following the emergency evacuation of nationalists between 1947 and 1949. Suspicious of native Taiwanese sympathies to their former colonial masters, the “liberating” nationalist army was involved in several incidents of aggression from 1945 onwards. When the KMT and its supporters evacuated en masse to Taiwan between 1947 and 1949 they immediately filled the power vacuum left by the departed Japanese, leading to resentment amongst native Taiwanese who felt that one colonial master had been replaced by another. Relations between the mainlanders and native Taiwanese were deeply scarred by the February 28th incident and the subsequent murder of Taiwanese civilians in 1948, which Hsiao (2000) argues marked the beginning of a specifically Taiwanese history. The pursuant White Terror, in which many native Taiwanese elites were arrested or killed, soured sub-ethnic relations for decades (Roy 2003).

Conceiving of itself as the defender of the authentic Chinese nation and culture (which were under attack from the communists on the mainland), the KMT suppressed Taiwanese culture and language. The party-state barred Taiwanese from participating in politics and public policy and oversaw a strong authoritarian regime that benefitted from aid, trade and military support from the US. Relegated to the margins of society, native Taiwanese, who made up 85 per cent of the population, nevertheless benefitted from the “economic miracle” created in part by the KMT’s “developmental state” framework (Wade 1990). By the 1970s many native Taiwanese were economically empowered and nativist activists began to push for democratization, “ethnic justice” and an independent Taiwanese state. As the demographics of the island have changed, sub-ethnic boundaries have become blurred through intermarriage and the internalization of Taiwan-centred identities by many mainlanders (Corcuff 2002). The ethnic make-up of the KMT has diversified, partly a matter of necessity as older members have died. Native Taiwanese have risen to positions of political power at all levels of society, including the presidency. However, national identity remains one of the most salient issues in Taiwanese politics, with two distinct blocs coalescing around the unresolved politics of the Blue/ Green identity cleavage (Wu 2008). Blue refers to the KMT and its allies, traditionally mainlander and pro-unification. Green refers to the DPP and its allies, traditionally native Taiwanese and anti-unification. It should be noted that there are also geographical and socio-economic features to the divide, and the correlation between the Green and Blue blocs and ethnic identity, or

preference for independence or unification, is weaker now than in the past.

Under Chen Shui-bian, the DPP insisted on a “specific Taiwanese national identity” (Schubert 2004: 548) consistent with its genesis as an opposition party with a strong nativist orientation. Lynch argued that Chen attempted to “imagine a completely new and genuinely autonomous Taiwan” (Lynch 2004: 514). Chen’s “deliberate nation-building effort” (Dittmer 2004: 475) included aggressive Taiwanization and de-Sinicization programmes and attempted to consolidate and routinize Taiwan’s separation from the PRC (Wachman 2002). Cabestan has argued that Taiwanese nationalism expressed opposition between mainlanders and native Taiwanese rather than a desire to separate from the Chinese nation (Cabestan 2005: 34). Certainly, Chen’s attempts at identity formation were “inhibited domestically by split sub-ethnic identities” (Dittmer 2005: 72), although both major parties evince “love for Taiwan” in their election campaign platforms (Fell 2005). Born outside of Taiwan, Ma Ying-jeou adapted to the normalization of Taiwan-centric identification in the electorate by framing himself as a “new Taiwanese”, the concept used by Lee Teng-hui in his endorsement of Ma prior to the 1998 Taipei mayoral election. The so-called “new Taiwanese” identity attempted to de-essentialize Taiwan identity, allowing non-native Taiwanese who shared in Taiwan’s post-war collective experience to claim a form of Taiwanese identity. During his time as Taipei mayor, Ma carefully constructed his new Taiwanese image, learning local languages and avowing his love for Taiwan. Ma’s identification with the ROC and support for the “1992 Consensus” have not been changed by his transformation into a new Taiwanese. In addition to his *entente* policies, Ma has reversed many of the de-Sinicization/ Taiwanization initiatives carried out by the Chen administration.

Sovereignty

The external dimension of national identity in Taiwan involves unresolved questions of national status, sovereignty, and relations with the PRC. The basis of this conflict is often stylized as one of “independence versus unification”, although the reality is more nuanced than this dichotomy suggests, certainly in terms of public opinion (Wang and Liu 2004). As a party-state made up of mainland elites who took it upon themselves to represent and preserve “authentic” Chinese culture in the face of the communist revolution on the mainland, the KMT naturally

associated with the Chinese motherland rather than the expediently located island of Taiwan. Indeed, the KMT government conceived of Taiwan explicitly as a “temporary base for the recovery of the mainland” and frequently treated it as such (Roy 2003). Even when the likelihood of achieving this ambition receded, the goal of the KMT and its supporters remained unification (Corcuff 2004). However, demographic and generational change within the population and the party led to a change in the KMT position coinciding with democratization processes. By the late 1990s, the policy of indigenization begun in the 1970s had radically altered the ethnic make-up of the KMT. For instance, the proportion of native Taiwanese on the KMT Standing Committee in 1969 was less than 7 per cent. In 1998, this had risen to 50 per cent (Rich 2009: 2). The “Temporary Provisions” were lifted in 1991, effectively giving up the ROC’s claim to the mainland and marking the start of the transition to Lee Teng-hui’s “two states” position. The KMT no longer fits the simplistic description of a “mainlander/ unificationist” party, although its ideological orientation is clearly much closer to China’s than is the DPP’s, the latter often having been styled as a “pro-independence party”, although it depends how independence is defined (see Sullivan et al. 2011).

The desire for an independent Taiwan became a rallying call for ethnic frustrations during the 1960s and 1970s (Copper 1997). Independence supporters were harshly dealt with for introducing the perspective of a previously inconceivable nation: a republic of Taiwan that would be independent of both the PRC and the ROC. The issue of Taiwanese independence was taken up by the DPP when it formed in the mid-1980s, partly to galvanize a weakly institutionalized organization made up of diverse anti-KMT factions. The DPP’s position on independence was solidified in 1991 when a plebiscite on independence was written into the party platform. However, with the PRC equation of “Taiwanese independence equals war” (for example, Article 8 of the Anti-Secession Law states that the PRC will use “all necessary means” to prevent Taiwan’s “separation” from the mainland), public support for independence expressed in opinion surveys and at the polls has never exceeded a tiny minority. Following Peng Ming-min’s (Peng Mingmin) failed independence-based campaign for the presidency in 1996, the DPP qualified its stance on independence in its 1999 “Resolution on the Future of Taiwan”, converging on a position similar to Lee Teng-hui’s that “the ROC has been a sovereign state since it was founded in 1912

[and] *consequently there is no need to declare independence*” (extracted from Lee’s interview with Deutsche Welle in 1999; emphasis added). After espousing a similar position during the presidential campaign in 2000, Chen Shui-bian aggressively promoted Taiwanese sovereignty and steadfastly rejected the existence of “One China”, even “with different interpretations”. And after losing the presidential election in 2004 the KMT adopted a much stronger “pro-China” position. Yet, radical moves toward either “independence” or “unification” are constrained by popular support for the status quo. The configuration of Taiwanese public opinion has been stable and in favour of the status quo for 30 years (Paolino and Meernik 2008), which has effectively rendered party support for immediate independence or unification off-limits. When Ma proposed a “peace accord” during his re-election campaign, it coincided with a rapid downturn in support and was quickly dropped from his campaign agenda.

Democracy

Although restricted elections for local offices had been held since the 1950s, Taiwan was ruled by a one-party regime while the KMT government remained technically in a state of war with the Chinese communists. Under martial law, the KMT utilized existing social structures to establish a political machine based on patron–client networks (Bosco 1992) and demobilized or co-opted every organized sector of society. When rapid economic modernization increased the economic and political influence of the numerically superior but politically marginalized native Taiwanese, the KMT brought many of them into the party. Others lent their support to a nascent democracy movement fuelled by perceived ethnic and social injustices. The shock of diplomatic de-recognition by the US and the loss of the UN China seat to the PRC forced the KMT to look for alternative sources of legitimacy. Political liberalization was one way to both retain the moral support of the US and release growing domestic tensions. Seizing on these developments, the *Dangwai* opposition movement (literally “outside the party”) increased its demands for democratic reform. Major *Dangwai* figures were arrested in 1979, and this was followed by a temporary tightening of openings allowed to activists. However, the setback known as the *Mei-lidao* Incident did not derail the gradual trend toward liberalization. Compromises between the government and *Dangwai* gradually ushered in democratization processes that were generally peaceful and extended

over a prolonged period (Lin and Chu 2001; Tien 1996; Tien and Chu 1996). By 1986, opposition activists were sufficiently organized to form an opposition party, the DPP. Although this action was technically illegal, the DPP was permitted to field candidates in the 1986 legislative election and martial law was officially rescinded a year later.

The DPP initially “linked the goal of democratization directly to the issue of Taiwanese identity and the principle of self-determination” (Lin, Chu, and Hinich 1996), mobilizing support for “ethnic justice internally and independence from China externally” (Clark 2004: 74). Thus there has always been a “symbolic dimension to democratization” in Taiwan (Corcuff 2002). Taiwan’s democracy is a source of pride and identification for Taiwanese, both in the sense of identifying with the “liberal constitutional state of the ROC” (Schubert 2004: 535) and in contradistinction to the PRC. Former presidents Lee and Chen both campaigned on their bona fide pro-democracy credentials in presidential elections, Lee as the “father of democracy in Taiwan” and Chen as a lawyer associated with the Meilidao activists. As presidential candidate and president, Chen campaigned vigorously for the need to broaden and deepen democratic reforms, but his major democratic innovations (particularly defensive referenda and constitutional reforms) were clearly motivated by instrumental concerns (Mattlin 2004). The KMT’s establishment and exploitation of non-democratic political structures during the one-party era also persist in its influence on many sectors of society, including the civil service, military, industry and the media. These interests, in addition to the KMT’s seeming inability to act as a “loyal opposition” during the Chen era (Mattlin 2011), have made the party vulnerable to critique by the DPP, which continues to frame itself as the “pro-democracy” party despite Chen’s conviction for corruption. This context gives some indication of how democracy is a politicized issue with substantial ideological baggage in Taiwan.

Issue Salience, Strategic Context and the Time Dimension

In order to guide our analysis of President Ma’s discourse, we draw on the theory of issue salience as a means to estimate the relative importance of different discursive categories. Like other studies on salience (e.g. Budge, Robertson, Hearl 1987), we exploit the assumption that the more a political actor addresses a certain issue, the greater the im-

portance he or she attaches to it. The salience approach has been used in various contexts – including Fell's (2005) analysis of party politics in Taiwan – to identify cross-party and temporal variation in the importance of various issues. Unlike Fell, however, we focus on the meta-level issues encapsulated by our five discursive categories. The methods we employ can be modified to measure specific issue areas and policy sectors, but the role of the president and the function of his discourse are different to party political communications such as manifestos and campaign advertising. Our focus is thus on the salience of higher-level concepts and aggregations of issues – for example, those pertaining to “the economy”. As with other forms of political communication, such as campaign advertising (see for example, Sullivan and Sapir 2012), we expect that Ma's discursive emphases (meaning, the salience of different topics) will vary over time and according to a range of different factors. One factor that we explicitly build into our analytic model is strategic context. Any democratic political leader must engage multiple constituencies and stakeholders, and as prior research on Taiwan demonstrates, this feature of democratic communications affects the content of political leaders' public pronouncements (Lin 2005). In their analysis of what Clark called Chen Shui-bian's “strategic ambiguity” – elucidating different positions at different times and making different appeals on the same issue to disparate constituencies (Clark 2004: 80) – Sullivan and Lowe (2010) found that the identity of the audience Chen was addressing was a significant predictor of the content of his speeches. For example, when addressing overseas independence supporters, Chen's speeches included a much greater amount of language associated with Taiwanese independence than his speeches to business leaders or foreign dignitaries did. Sullivan and Lowe conclude that it was no coincidence that Chen's infamous “one country on each side” speech was delivered to a pro-independence support group overseas (Sullivan and Lowe 2010). In colloquial terms, this behaviour is known as “playing to the crowd”. More technically, it is consistent with spatial politics models where the gains for modifying appeals to the median voter position of a single audience outweigh the risks of moving away from the median voter position in the electorate as a whole (for research on modelling “cheap talk”, see Austen-Smith 1990). Because Ma makes a large number of speeches (as Chen before him did) and the vast majority of these addresses go unreported in the media, the opportunity costs associated with telling an audience what they want to hear are relatively low. Modifying speech

content is also consistent with studies of rhetoric, where rhetors are expected to adjust the content of their speech according to the expectations of their audience (Herrick 2008).

Like those of his predecessor Chen, we expect that Ma's speeches on the discourse dimensions we have elucidated above should show variation according to the identity of the immediate audience to whom the speech is delivered and, by implication, the strategic relationship he has with that audience. Extending the analysis of Sullivan and Lowe (2010), we further note the importance of timing in political communications and put forward a method for incorporating the time dimension into our analysis of presidential speech. The concept of time has long occupied a place in the formal theoretical literature – for example, in Schelling's (1969) work on political bargaining and in research on signaling games (Sobel 2007) – but it has been largely neglected, particularly as an independent variable (Meyer-Sahling and Goetz 2009), in analyses of political discourse. We argue that the timing of a speech should have an observable effect on the content of presidential discourse, as democratic leaders react to a range of agent-based and contextual factors. There is prior evidence that time has an effect on presidential speech in Taiwan. Sullivan and Lowe (2010), for instance, show how the Anti-Secession Law and Chen's re-election had substantial and statistically significant effects on the content of Chen's speeches. Building on this prior work, we put forward a method for identifying how time interacts with strategic context to affect the content of presidential speech; in other words, we attempt to show how Ma's addresses to different constituencies vary at different points in time.

Methods and Data

In order to identify and assess the extent to which Ma's speeches reflected our five discourse categories (Chinese and Taiwanese identity, sovereignty, democracy, the economy), we employed computer-assisted content analysis (CCA) (Popping 2000). Content analysts assume that although theoretically relevant categories are not directly observed, particular words and phrases reflect this latent content in a systematic way (Krippendorff 2004). More specifically, a speaker's choice of words and the frequency with which he or she uses them indicate latent content (Neuendorf 2002). Although single words or phrases are unreliable indicators of a complex concept, combining multiple indicators in a theoretic-

cally informed category structure has been shown across the social sciences to be a reliable mechanism for tapping latent content (Benoit et al. 2005; Budge, Robertson, and Hearl 1987; Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003; for many diverse examples see Krippendorff and Bock 2009). Furthermore, automated text analytical methods are increasingly common in political science (e.g. Benoit, Laver, and Mikhaylov 2009; King and Lowe 2003; Slapin and Proksch 2008) and in the analysis of Chinese texts (e.g. Hasid 2012; King, Pan, and Roberts 2012; Sullivan and Renz 2010).

We assume that each of Ma's speeches can express a different volume of language associated with our five categories, in addition to other topics not covered by our dictionaries. In some cases, Ma does not use words or phrases from any of our categories: If our content dictionary is well constructed, this is because the speech does not cover any of our five topics. The five discursive categories are thus signals to be distinguished from the background noise of other topics. Our strategic conception of Ma's public pronouncements allows the content of his speeches to vary over time and by primary audience. We recognize that the notion of a primary audience is not absolute in the case of public political speeches, given that speakers sometimes implement a "two-level game" (Putnam 1988). This describes situations where speakers simultaneously address the immediate audience to whom the speech is being delivered and a second-level audience consisting of political opponents, supporters, the media, the US or PRC governments, and so on. However, we argue that since we cannot control for Ma's concerns about the "second audience", the local audience is the primary audience and he must position himself with respect to them. Consequently, if there is significant variation in our measures depending on the primary audience we should see it, despite damping by second-level audience considerations.

Measures of Sovereignty, Identity and Democracy

Our five major discursive categories were determined by our reading of the literature on Taiwan. The sovereignty category is intended to cover references to the ROC's existing independent status; its claim to sovereignty; boundary distinctions between the ROC on Taiwan and the PRC; and advocacy of actions that reinforce these ideas – for example, strengthening the sovereignty claim by expanding the ROC's international role. The national identity category is divided into Taiwanese identity and Chinese identity. In each case, the category covers signifiers of a

distinct collective identity based on common points of identification and endorsements of or duties to the identifying collectivity. Indicators in the two categories are distinguished by their focus on a specifically Taiwanese identity that is distinct from identification with a broader Chinese cultural and ethnic affiliation. As we can see from the results reported below, there is significant overlap between the categories of sovereignty and Chinese identity in terms of how frequently Ma mentions them, but substantial differences in the emphasis that he places on each category. In practice, he does not make claims about Taiwan's sovereignty, which would in effect equal claiming that Taiwan is or should be independent and contravene his position on the sovereignty of the ROC (and the 1992 Consensus position that there is one China with different interpretations). On the other hand, Ma sometimes does address Taiwanese identity in terms of culture, values, etc. – which are picked up by our Taiwanese identity category – and makes similar references to Chinese identity, which are similarly distinguished. The democracy category covers references to democratic achievements, the existence of rights and freedoms, and further reforms. The economics category covers references to the economy, financial policy, business, and trade.

We selected indicators (words and phrases) of these categories inductively by manual analysis of a sample of 200 of Ma's speeches (approximately 10 per cent) and using the recent literature on Taiwanese politics as a guide. Table 1 shows our framework with example indicators. The dictionary contains 250 patterns (approximately 50 in each category) and it is from the frequency of these terms and their derivatives in Ma's speeches that data is derived. This dictionary is not intended to be the final word on textual indicators of our five categories. Indeed, the advantage of using CCA is that theory-driven changes to dictionaries are easily accommodated, allowing, where necessary, for an improved fit between theory and data. Constructing a content dictionary requires making subjective decisions about the connotations of words and phrases in an on-going discourse. For example, we define "ECFA" as an indicator of the economy, while other analysts (some in the opposition) may emphasize non-economic aspects of the ECFA. We acknowledge that even our decision to divide speech content into five categories is itself substantively important. However, if this theoretical distinction is not reflected by appropriate differences in our data, then we have some reason to believe that the distinction is in fact illusory. The dictionary that we report here is part of an on-going project to eval-

uate the discourse of all ROC presidents since 1992, and we expect it to be refined and extended in future work.

Table 1: Organization of Dictionaries with Example Indicators

Category	Example patterns in English	Selected search entries
Sovereignty	One China, Senkaku Islands, ROC 100 years, ROC constitution, enter the WHO, international status, national sovereignty, international participation, national borders	一個中國，釣魚台，中華民國一百年，中華民國憲法，加入世界衛生組織，國際地位，國家主權，國際參與，國家疆域，
Taiwanese identity	The Taiwanese people, the Taiwanese nation, Taiwan's future, new Taiwanese, Gemeinschaft, China's weapons, military threats, Taiwan first, love Taiwan, the Taiwan spirit	台灣人民，台灣民族，台灣的前途，新台灣人，共同體，中國的武器，武力的恐嚇，台灣優先，愛台灣，台灣精神
Chinese identity	Chinese culture, Chinese nation, Chinese wisdom, 1992 Consensus, all the world's Chinese, Father of the Nation (Sun Yat Sen), Confucius, the Classics, people on both sides, mainland compatriots	中華文化，中華民族，中華民族智慧，九二共識，全球華人，國父，孔子四書五經，兩岸人民，大陸同胞，
Democracy	Democratization, democratic reforms, democratic freedom, human rights, freedom of speech, political rights, citizen rights/freedoms, liberal constitutional system, referenda	民主化，民主改革，民主自由，人權，言論自由，政治權利，公民自由，人民的權利，憲政體制，公投，公民投
Economy	ECFA, charter flights, 12 big infrastructure projects, TaiEx, Three Links, investment environment, economic development, FTA, financial crisis	ECFA，包機客運，十二建設，台股/股市，三通，投資環境，經濟發展，自由貿易協定，金融危機，

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Data

The empirical basis of our analysis is the 2,162 speeches given by Ma Ying-jeou from 20 May 2008 (his inauguration) through 30 June 2011 (the most recent date of our data collection). The speeches were downloaded from the website of the Office of the President <www.president.gov.tw>. The website has undergone a major organizational change since Chen Shui-bian's time in office, when "speeches" were kept separate from press releases, presidential decrees, etc. Now, presidential speeches, press releases, decrees and all other presidential business are all housed under the slightly misleading heading 新聞稿 (*xinwengao*, press release). The restructuring of the website required a substantial effort on our part to "weed out" extraneous information. We conducted this process twice, once when we downloaded the raw data and again when we coded the audiences. Thus we are confident that the speech set we examine in the paper, with the normal degree of random error, represents Ma's speech output. Although the number of speeches may appear high, Chen's output was within the same range (see Sullivan and Lowe 2010). The full set of Chinese texts was then cleaned and converted into a machine-readable format for analysis. To construct the content dictionary we used the Yoshikoder, an open-source software package (available at yoshikoder.org) developed by Will Lowe as part of the Identity Project at Harvard's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. The Yoshikoder is a desktop application that runs on any operating system, can deal with text documents in any natural language, and has produced valid and reliable results using simplified (Hasid 2012; Sullivan and Renz 2010) and traditional characters (Sullivan and Lowe 2010). In a recent methodological note, Chen (2011) reports several inconsistencies in the Yoshikoder's ability to identify search terms, thus compromising the validity of the data generated. However, we were unable to replicate the difficulties described in Chen's paper, and can only surmise that her idiosyncratic results were a result of glitches in earlier versions of the software. Constructing a dictionary is the most intellectually challenging process involved in CCA, but in practice it is straightforward to achieve in the Yoshikoder, which offers concordance functions, a wildcard function to capture words and phrases, and a drag-and-drop system for organizing dictionary entries. The Yoshikoder facilitates automatic searches inside each document and records the number of times patterns from each category are matched in the text. When we were satisfied with the dic-

tionary we developed, we used a related application to generate counts for all 2,162 speeches.

In languages with non-logographic writing systems, content analysis is usually performed by counting how many times patterns match particular words. But, while separating Chinese-language sentences into “words” is possible, it is still an acknowledged problem in computer science. Therefore, in order to avoid introducing what are essentially transcription errors into our data (for example, by segmenting a sequence of characters in a way that splits a semantic unit), we chose to simply divide our texts into sentences, which are more easily determinable units of analysis. Consequently, our counts represent how many sentences in a speech contain a sequence of characters matching one of our patterns; and when we refer to the proportion of a document expressing Chinese identity, we mean the proportion of all of a given speech's sentences that match a pattern defined in our Chinese identity category.

We use the following extract taken from Chen Shui-bian's “one country on each side” speech to illustrate the dictionary approach. Although the focus of this article is Ma Ying-jeou, we use Chen's speech because it is, in our opinion, one of the most categorical delivered by any ROC president. Underlined are search entries in the sovereignty category, in bold **Taiwanese identity** and in italics *democracy*. In this short excerpt, there are six references to sovereignty, eight to national identity, and two to democracy. There are some relevant phrases that were not present in our category structure, which is inevitable, as it is part of the trade-off between the number of indicators in a dictionary and its ability to distinguish between concepts:

阿扁這幾天有講，我們必須要認真思考，要走自己的路，走我們台灣的路，走出我們**台灣的前途**，什麼叫「我們台灣自己的路」，很簡單，也很清楚，非常明白，我們自己台灣的路就是台灣的民主之路、台灣的自由之路、台灣的人權之路、台灣的和平之路。**台灣是我們的國家，我們的國家不能被欺負、被矮化、被邊緣化及地方化**，台灣不是別人的一部分；不是別人的地方政府、別人的一省，台灣也不能成為第二個香港、澳門，因為台灣是一個主權獨立的國家，簡言之，台灣跟對岸中國一邊一國，要分清楚 (Extracted from a speech delivered 3 August, see Chen 2002).

In addition to the content analysis of the speeches, we are also interested in a strategic dimension: Ma's decision to emphasize or de-emphasize language related to a certain category in accordance with his relationship to a particular audience. Analysing speech content across

time or across audiences is informative in itself, but each type of analysis tells a different and incomplete part of the story. In this paper, we analyse each dimension separately and, importantly, interact both dimensions. To distinguish audiences we have again drawn on the literature as a guide to the groups Ma has had to engage. We identified 33 different audiences, which we then aggregated into ten broader categories. The aggregated categories are shown in Table 2 with examples of finer-grained audience distinctions. Audience codes are short forms of audience names used as compact figure labels. With audience categories established, we assigned an audience to each speech using metadata attached to the speeches provided by the Office of the President. As an exception, in the case of “New Year’s and National Day” and “other formal” speeches (such as addresses to the nation), we coded the form of the speech rather than the audience.

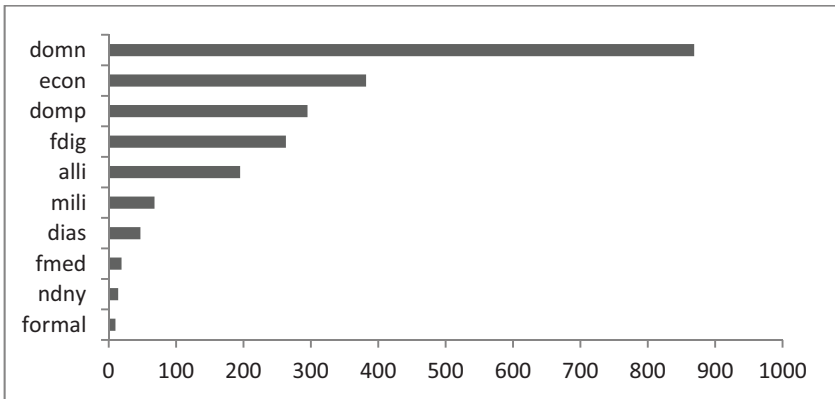
Table 2: Breakdown of Audience Categories

Broad audiences	Example narrow audiences	Code
National Day, New Year	Includes 1 January and Chinese New Year speeches	ndny
Allies	Diplomatic allies, heads of state and other political leaders, in Taiwan and overseas.	alli
Diaspora	Taiwan and ROC diaspora groups located overseas	dias
Domestic non-political	Schoolchildren and students, athletes, cultural groups, scientists, women’s groups, environmentalists, lawyers, rescue workers, recipients of awards, etc.	domn
Domestic political	DPP party, policymakers, foundations, campaign supporters, local media interviews	domp
Economic	Regional economic organizations, Taishang, Taiwanese businesspeople, chambers of commerce	econ
Foreign dignitaries	Politicians of non-diplomatic allies, scholars, cultural leaders from non-allied countries visiting Taiwan and addressed overseas	fdig
Foreign media	Interviews with international publications	fmcd
Military	All branches of armed forces and coast guard	mili
Other formal speeches	Inauguration speeches, addresses to the nation	form

Source: Authors’ own compilation.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of Ma's speeches according to the audiences that received them. Two out of every five speeches delivered by Ma in this period were to audiences that were coded as "domestic non-political". Addresses to students, athletes, cultural groups, scientists, women's groups, environmentalists, rescue workers, etc., thus account for a substantial proportion of Ma's speaking engagements. One in every six speeches was delivered to economists, one in every eight to foreign dignitaries, and one in every eleven to diplomatic allies. This distribution shows a high degree of continuity with the behaviour of Chen Shui-bian as reported in Sullivan and Lowe (2010).

Figure 1: Distribution of Ma's Speeches to Different Audiences



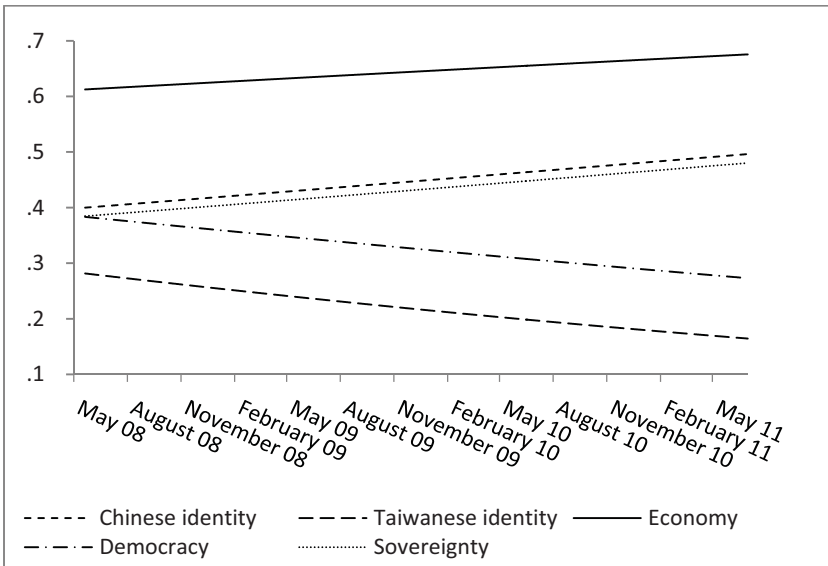
Source: Authors' own compilation.

Findings

To see how often each of the five categories is covered in a speech, it is sufficient to record whether one (or more) pattern from a category is matched by any sentence in a speech: a mention. If a speech has mentions relating to a category, we assume that the topic was addressed, although we cannot yet say how much coverage Ma subsequently gave to it. Figure 2 shows the estimations of a regression model of the content category mentions over time. Each line in the figure corresponds to the fitted probability of mentioning one of the categories. Figure 2 displays the aggregate probabilities for all types of audience and is intended to show the longitudinal trend of including each category in a speech. The

findings show that the economy was the most frequently mentioned category in Ma's speeches over time. Mentions of the economy were almost uniformly high throughout Ma's first term, and by the end of the period covered he referred to this topic in two out of every three speeches delivered. Mentions of sovereignty and Chinese identity grew from four to five out of every ten speeches, while mentions of democracy and Taiwanese identity respectively dropped from 38 per cent to 27 per cent and from 28 per cent to 16 per cent. Comparing these findings to Sullivan and Lowe's (2010) work on Chen Shui-bian, for which they used a similar method, we find that Ma mentions democracy and Taiwanese identity substantially less often. For instance, during the early period of Chen's first term, there were mentions of democracy and Taiwanese identity in approximately 60 per cent of his speeches, rising at a consistent rate until the anti-secession law was passed, at which point Taiwanese identity issues increased to being mentioned in 80 per cent of Chen's speeches. Like Ma, Chen also mentioned the economy more than any other single category, suggesting that this topic is consistently the most pressing for two ROC presidents of otherwise substantially different political orientations.

Figure 2: Probability of Mentioning a Speech Category



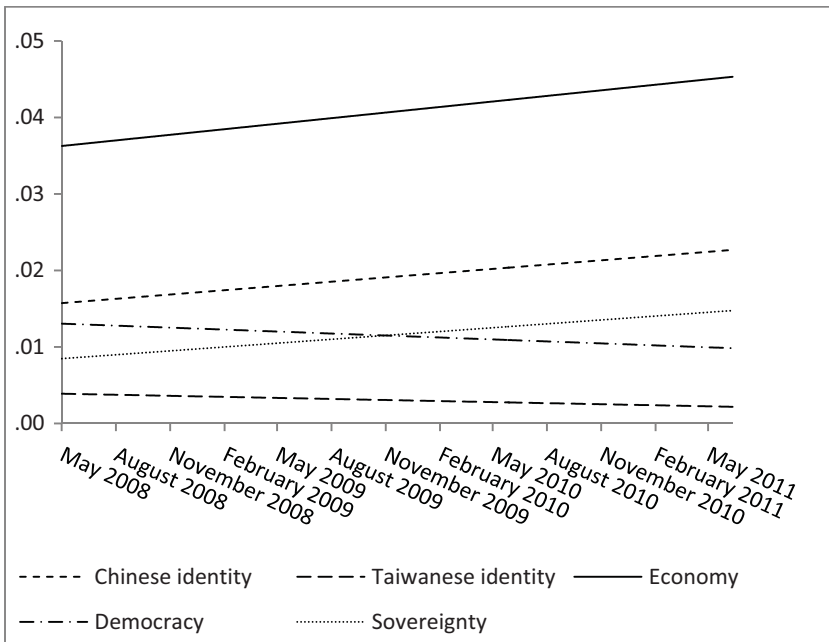
Source: Authors' own compilation.

Examining mentions allows us to measure how often Ma's speeches cover one of our categories but does not allow us to see how much he subsequently addresses them. To achieve this, we examined the proportion of each speech devoted to each of our categories. Figure 3 shows the results of a regression model fitted to the number of sentences in each speech attributable to each of our categories over time. The longitudinal trends show that the share of Ma's speeches dedicated to the economy, democracy and Chinese identity gradually increased as his term progressed. Figure 3 shows that the economy is not only Ma's most frequently mentioned category, but also, by a substantial margin, the most heavily emphasized topic. Indeed, Ma's emphasis on the economy has increased over his time in office – unlike Chen Shui-bian, whose emphasis on the economy decreased the longer he was in power (Sullivan and Lowe 2010). Again contrary to Chen, Ma's emphasis on Taiwanese identity and democracy did not increase. Indeed, these two categories were Ma's least emphasized: Taiwanese identity mentions remained static, and democracy mentions declined to a level below those relating to sovereignty 18 months into Ma's tenure. Although these results are largely confirmatory, from a methodological perspective it is encouraging that they are consistent with more detailed qualitative analyses of Ma's first term. The results also provide an explanation for the concerns about Ma's presidency recorded by Jacobs (2012: 243) – for example, the strong emphasis on Chinese identity and declining attention to democracy. The non-salience of Taiwanese identity in this large collection of Ma's presidential speeches is contrary to the relative importance he placed on such claims in his first presidential campaign in 2008.

Up until this point we have reported on the content of Ma's speeches in terms of all audiences together. However, as discussed above, we suspect there to be variation in Ma's speech content according to the identity of the primary audience. We now turn to this part of the analysis, which we achieved by disaggregating the audiences. Figure 4 sets out the proportion of sentences in Ma's speeches on each category divided by audience. Looking at the economy topic, which we reported earlier as being the most salient issue discussed by Ma in his speeches (averaging over 1 per cent of his speeches to all audiences), the identity of the primary audience played a major role in the share of the speeches dedicated to this topic. As expected, the largest share of language associated with the economy was observed in speeches delivered to economic audiences. When addressing commercial organizations, businesspeople, financial

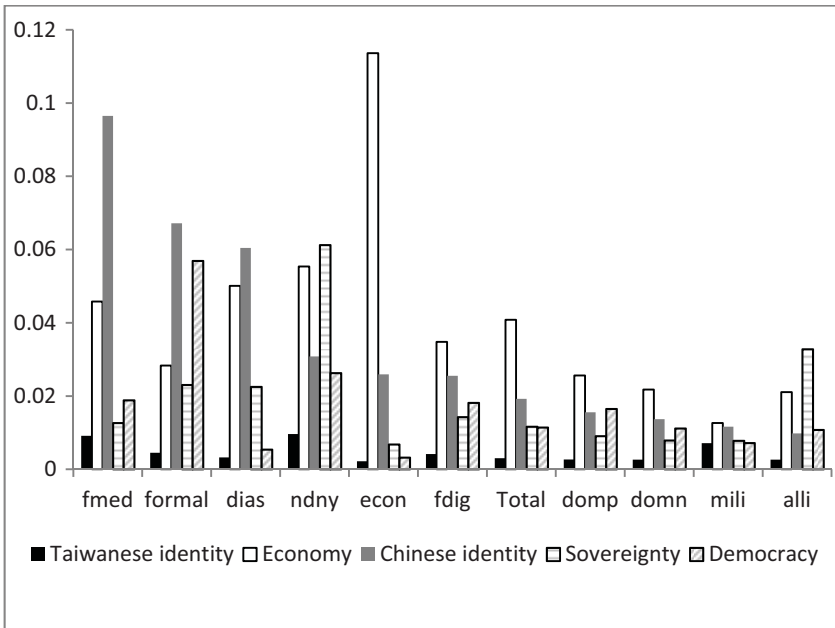
institutions, etc., Ma dedicated over 11 per cent of his speeches to discussing the economy. In speeches delivered on National Day and New Year's Day, and those delivered to diaspora groups and foreign media, 5 per cent of the speeches dealt with the economy. Chinese identity was most salient when Ma addressed the foreign media or diaspora groups, in contrast to Chen Shui-bian, who used his speaking engagements with these two groups to emphasize Taiwanese sovereignty issues. The issue of ROC sovereignty was most salient in Ma's National Day and New Year's speeches, and in those addressed to diplomatic allies. The issue of democracy was also more evident in addresses to foreign media and dignitaries and on National Day or New Year's. Taiwanese identity was almost a non-issue for Ma, regardless of the primary audience.

Figure 3: Proportion of Categories in Speeches



Source: Authors' own compilation.

Figure 4: Proportion of Speech Categories to Each Audience



Source: Authors' own compilation.

In order to examine in more detail the substantial variation in Ma's speeches to different audiences, we employed a logit model to predict mentions of each of the five content categories in Ma's speeches. Each of these models, shown in Table 3, calculated the logged likelihood of mentioning each category for each of the audiences, compared to a constant likelihood for domestic non-political audiences (the majority audience type, as we showed earlier). The main point of this analysis is to determine which of the audiences significantly affect(s) the share of each of these topics in his speeches, and in what way(s). The findings show that Ma's speeches were 5.5 to 8.3 times less likely to include references to Chinese identity when they were given before audiences comprised of diplomatic allies or before domestic political and economic audiences, in contrast to domestic non-political audiences. Speeches delivered to the foreign media and on National Day and New Year's Day were 3 to 3.5 times less likely to include such messages, although this difference was only borderline statistically significant. Ma's decision to include the issue of Taiwanese identity also seems a function of the primary audience.

Table 3: Logit Model to Predict Mentions of Each of the Five Content Categories in Ma's Speeches

Audience	Chinese identity			Taiwanese identity		
	B	S.E.	O.R.	B	S.E.	O.R.
alli	-2.13**	0.67	0.12	-2.47***	0.62	0.08
dias	1.39	0.88	4.00	-1.88**	0.68	0.15
domp	-1.99**	0.66	0.14	-2.40***	0.60	0.09
econ	-1.69*	0.66	0.18	-2.35***	0.61	0.10
fdig	-0.66	0.66	0.52	-2.20***	0.60	0.11
fmed	-1.29+	0.66	0.28	-2.05**	0.61	0.13
formal	1.59	1.22	4.91	0.11	0.79	1.12
mili	0.90	1.24	2.46	-1.76+	0.91	0.17
ndny	-1.18+	0.70	0.31	-0.92	0.64	0.40
Constant	1.30*	0.65	3.67	0.92	0.59	2.50
Pseudo R ²	0.133			0.053		
Audience	Economy			Democracy		
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
alli	-1.08	0.67	0.34	-1.50*	0.61	0.22
dias	0.01	0.74	1.01	-1.48*	0.67	0.23
domp	-1.11+	0.66	0.33	-1.84**	0.60	0.16
econ	-1.01	0.66	0.37	-1.21*	0.60	0.30
fdig	2.05**	0.71	7.74	-2.06**	0.60	0.13
fmed	-0.84	0.66	0.43	-1.50*	0.61	0.22
formal	0.02	0.86	1.02	0.41	0.82	1.50
mili	-0.89	0.92	0.41	0.47	0.99	1.60
ndny	-0.76	0.70	0.47	-1.40*	0.64	0.25
Constant	1.30*	0.65	3.67	0.92	0.59	2.50
Pseudo R ²	0.175			0.046		

Audience	Sovereignty		
	B	S.E.	O.R.
alli	-1.15	1.05	0.32
dias	-1.50	1.09	0.22
domp	-3.26**	1.04	0.04
econ	-3.13**	1.05	0.04
fdig	-3.10**	1.04	0.05
fmed	-2.34*	1.05	0.10
formal	-1.79	1.15	0.17
mili	-2.57*	1.22	0.08
ndny	-2.86**	1.07	0.06
Constant	2.57*	1.04	13.00
Pseudo R ²	0.129		

Note: * p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.05; + p < 0.1; ++ Reference category: Domestic non-political (domn).

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Compared with the odds for the reference category (domestic non-political audiences) and formal and military audiences as well as speeches delivered on National Day or New Year's, speeches to all other audiences were significantly less likely to contain this type of message. A similar trend was observed regarding the issue of democracy, with the sole exceptions of National Day and New Year's speeches being significantly less likely to include this topic. Sovereignty was less likely to be included in formal speeches and speeches delivered to all audiences except diplomatic allies and diaspora groups. Regarding the economy, the findings suggest that other than foreign dignitaries (who were almost eight times as likely to receive such messages in Ma's speeches to them), no other audiences were significantly more or less likely to, compared to the reference category of domestic non-political audiences. As discussed earlier, Ma frequently addressed this topic in his speeches. This finding is the result of that fact and suggests that the audience was not a significant factor in Ma's decision to include this topic in his speeches.

The final stage of our analysis was to determine any interactions between the timing of the speeches and the identity of the receiving audiences. To do this, we employed a Chi-squared Automatic Interaction Detector (CHAID) analysis to test the mean differences in mentions of the various categories. We repeated the analysis for each content category and found that time–audience nodes for Chinese identity, democracy and the economy had significantly different means. Figures 5, 6, and 7 show the results of this analysis for these three discourse categories. The figures reveal significant differences in the salience of these issues according to when Ma addressed certain audiences, and reflect exogenous events and changes in Ma’s relationship with different groups. This is an important finding, as it alerts analysts to the need to account for both strategic context and timing when making inferences about presidential speeches.

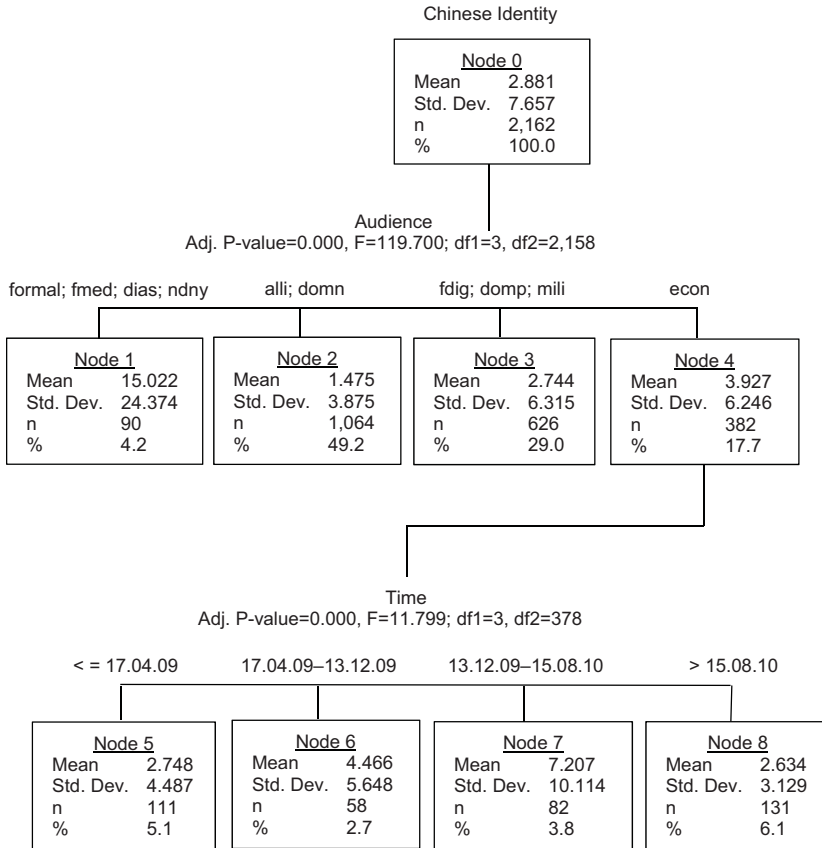
Figure 5 reveals that, on average, the topic of Chinese identity accounted for 2.9 per cent of the content of Ma’s speeches. The first step in the analysis produced four significantly different audience nodes. The first included formal and National Day and New Year’s speeches, as well as those delivered to foreign media and diaspora audiences. Compared to the baseline mean, the 90 speeches in this node had a very high average of 16 per cent, which was stable over time. The average fit of the other nodes and the group of economic audiences was similar to the baseline, but the time dimension added in the second step revealed that this average was not stable over time for economic audiences. Since the beginning of his term, Ma has gradually increased the share of the topic of Chinese identity in his speeches, and between December 2009 and August 2010 it went up to 7.2 per cent. The average dropped back to 2.6 per cent after August 2010. The rise and fall in Chinese-identity language coincides with Ma’s campaign for ECFA, which was signed on 29 June 2010. During the preceding period, in which Ma participated in a televised debate with the DPP, the economic dimensions of ECFA were accompanied by appeals to Taiwanese citizens’ Chinese cultural identifications. The mobilization of this frame suggests that Ma was aware that ECFA was not, or was not seen to be, a purely economic arrangement.

Moving to the topic of democracy, shown in Figure 6, we found a similar interaction effect. While the baseline average was 1.7 per cent, there were three discrete nodes with significantly different averages. The first node was identical to the one found in the analysis of Chinese identity. These audiences’ average share of democracy in Ma’s speeches was

over twice the amount for the baseline, while the average for the economists' node was about one-third of the baseline average. The third node, consisting of diplomatic allies, diaspora groups, foreign dignitaries, domestic political groups and military personnel, heard about democracy 1.5 per cent of the time, but this share changed over time. At the beginning of Ma's tenure, the average share of this topic in Ma's speeches was 1.9 per cent, and between April and late November 2010 it dropped to 0.7 per cent. The average share has increased since, and between December 2010 and the end of the period under study it was 1.2 per cent.

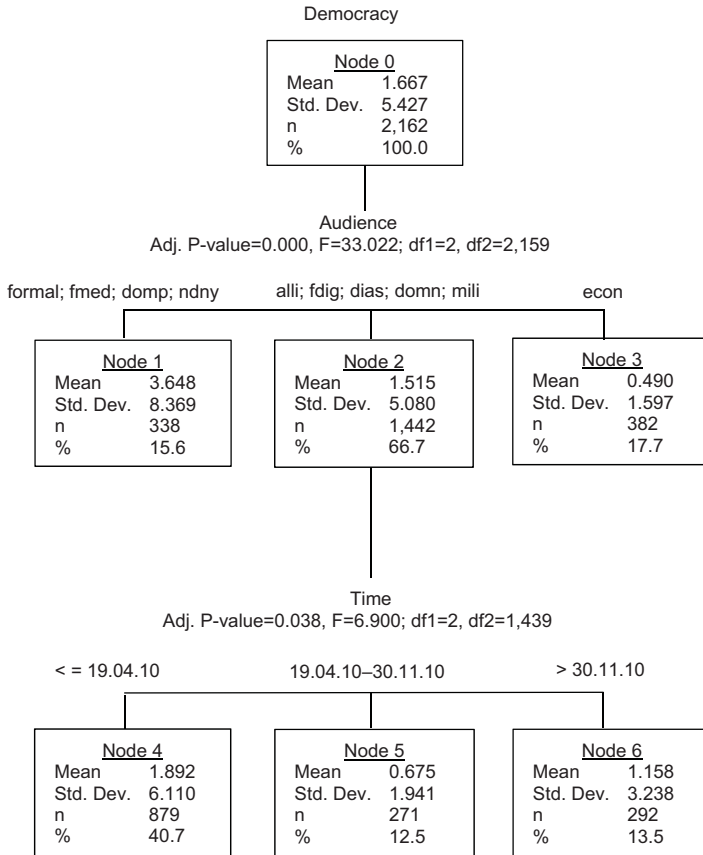
Finally, the economy displayed similar interactive trends. While the baseline average was 5.3 per cent, a slightly different division into audience nodes yielded interesting results. Four audiences were part of the first node (formal, foreign media, diaspora groups and National Day speeches). When Ma addressed these audiences, on average over 15 per cent of his speeches was dedicated to the issue of economy. The other two nodes had a significantly lower average, but for one of them, comprising foreign dignitaries, diaspora groups and domestic political audiences, an interaction with the time dimension was evident. At the beginning of his term, the average share of mentions of the economy to these audiences was 3.2 per cent. Between December 2009 and August 2010 it increased twofold, only to go back to 3.4 per cent, on average, until the end of the period. We interpret this finding as evidence of Ma's selective emphasis in mobilizing support for ECFA. To economic and domestic political audiences, the major frame employed in discourse about ECFA was economic, whereas other audiences received a large dose of Chinese-identity language.

Figure 5: CHAID Analysis of Chinese Identity in Speeches to Different Audiences



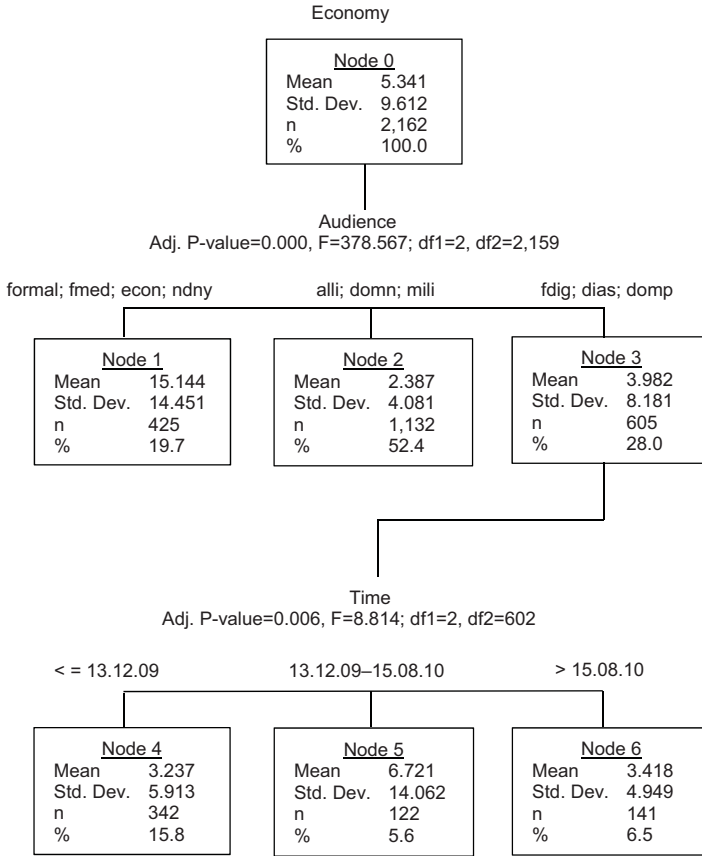
Source: Authors' own compilation.

Figure 6: CHAID Analysis of Democracy in Speeches to Different Audiences



Source: Authors' own compilation.

Figure 7: CHAID Analysis of the Economy in Speeches to Different Audiences



Source: Authors' own compilation.

Conclusion

Given the relatively stable preferences of the PRC and US, the contingencies of electoral competition, and the support for divergent positions across competing parties and within the electorate in Taiwan, ROC President Ma has emerged as the most volatile actor in cross-Strait relations.

Despite the smooth progress and goodwill generated during Ma's first term, as long as underlying political obstacles and cleavages remain, the ROC president (regardless of his or her identity) is likely to continue to be a focal point. Developing our understanding of presidential discourse is an important undertaking now and in the future. The analysis reported in this article contributes to this understanding by revealing both the temporal and strategic variation in Ma Ying-jeou's public pronouncements. This article provides strong evidence that the strategic context of primary audiences should be included in analyses of the ROC president's speeches. It also reports a methodological advance that facilitates identifying interactions between strategic context and a time dimension. Employing CHAID models enables analysts to pinpoint changes in rhetorical emphases at different points in time in speeches to different groups. This enabled us to identify, for example, the increase in Chinese-identity language to certain groups, but not others, during Ma's mobilization of support for ECFA. We suggest that the methods employed in this analysis hold promise for further systematic analyses of the discourse of ROC presidents, past and future. Although both Ma and Chen Shui-bian emphasized the economy more than any other topic, the similarities in the two presidents' discourse ends there. The democracy and Taiwanese-identity topics, which were major components of Chen's discourse, were downplayed during Ma's first term. In the first decade of the 2000s, Taiwanese identity was a – if not the – major component of political communications in Taiwan (Fell 2005; Sullivan 2010; Sullivan and Lowe 2010), but under Ma this has been replaced by discourse on Chinese identity. Chen Shui-bian barely touched on sovereignty issues (Sullivan and Lowe 2010), while Ma placed much greater emphasis on this topic. Furthermore, our findings demonstrate that ROC sovereignty is very tightly linked to discourse on Chinese identity: Indeed, the convergence of sovereignty and identity represents one of the major features of Ma's first-term discourse. This convergence is reminiscent of much earlier KMT positions, and contrary to the party's seeming embrace of Taiwanese identity, particularly in elections during the last decade. However, the number of citizens with Taiwan-centred self-identities is stable if not increasing under Ma, and whether this emphasis continues in his second term remains to be seen.

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