DISCOURSE OF FEMALE MARRIAGE-BASED IMMIGRANTS IN TAIWAN

A Dissertation in
Applied Linguistics
by
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

December 2008
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This dissertation aims 1) to analyze the multiple discourses of female marriage-based immigrants (FMI) in Taiwan, which emerged in late 80s and have spread and evolved in the past decades, and 2) to develop a refined approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) addressing the analytical needs for scrutinizing those discourses.

Data used in this dissertation include 1) 82 news articles on/about FMI as “foreign brides,” “foreign spouses,” and “new immigrants”, published in a one-month period (10/1-10/31, 2006), 2) 179 news articles on/about “false marriage,” a lexical item that has been used predominantly to describe FMI’s marriages, dated from 1986 to 2006, and 3) 16 narratives by FMI, published in 2005.

Research foci of this dissertation are 1) the labeling of FMI in mainstream news media, 2) the voices of FMI and related social groups/individuals in the news, 3) the co-existing and contesting representations of them in public discourses, and 4) the (re)appropriation of linguistic items longue durée in discourses of FMI.

The methodology of this dissertation synthesizes Norman Fairclough’s Functional linguistic approach and Ruth Wodak’s Discourse-historical approach of CDA with modifications in 1) broadened coverage of data by including both mainstream and alternative discourses and a longitudinal collection of texts, 2) analytical emphases on dialogical relationship between discourses, and on the trajectory of language evolvements and shifts of discourse over time, and 3) cross-language sensitivity as multiple languages are involved in research.

This dissertation may contribute to 1) our understanding of FMI and relevant social groups (e.g. women, immigrants, ethnic minorities, economically or socially unprivileged groups), 2) the promotion of social change addressing discursive/ideological inequity faced by FMI, 3) accumulation of knowledge in related fields (e.g. critical applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, gender studies, media studies, cultural anthropology), and 4) the refinement of previously developed approaches of CDA.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation was completed upon many people’s contributions. First acknowledgements must go to Dr. Hsia Hsiao-chuan and the TransAsia Sister Association, for their work with female marriage-based immigrants in Taiwan has inspired this study.

I would also like to thank my committee, Dr. Sinfree Makoni, Dr. Sandra Savignon, Dr. Robert Schrauf, and Dr. Meredith Doran. They have always been supportive and constructively critical of my research. I could not have completed this journey without their advice, encouragement, and inspiration.

I am also in debt to my friend Patria Lopez and my husband Anthony Navarre, who have been my first readers for feedback. Lastly but not leastly, my family both in Taiwan and the US, Huang Wan Kuang, Liu Hsiang Ling, Huang Chih Pin, Katherine Christ and Stephen Allen for the unconditioned support they have provided me.
1
Introduction: Discourse of Female Marriage-based Immigrants in Taiwan

“我們的孩子不像電視新聞所報導的那樣，他們不遲緩，很聰明、乖巧，請不要用異樣的眼光看我們，這就是我想對台灣社會說的心聲。”
“Our children are not like what they report in the TV news. They don’t have developmental delay. They are smart and clever. Please do not look at us with alienating eyes. This is the voice of my heart that I want to express to the Taiwanese society.”

--Lin Jin Hui, FMI from Vietnam (In Hsia, 2005, p. 74)

1.1. Purpose and scope

1.1.1. Goals of research

This dissertation focuses on the discourse of female marriage-based immigrants in Taiwan, who I shall refer to as FMIs hereafter. This research aims to achieve two goals: 1) to analyze the representations of FMIs in multiple public discourses in Taiwan, which emerged in the late 80s and have spread and evolved in the last decades, and the underlying competing ideologies, and 2) to develop a refined approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) addressing the analytical needs for scrutinizing multiple and competing discourses.

1.1.2. FMIs in Taiwan

The emergence of female marriage-based immigrants as an identifiable social category in Taiwan involves the recent trend of transnational marriages between Taiwanese men and foreign women, mostly from Southeast Asian countries and Mainland China. This trend began in the 1980s and grew vastly in the 90s through the prosperous business of marriage brokers (Hsia, 2002). The number of FMIs had been increasing annually for nearly 2 decades and reached its peak in the year of 2003, when they accounted for nearly 28% of newly-wed brides in that year (Ministry of the Interior, 2007). As far as the distribution of nationality is concerned, 18.12% were from Mainland China including Hong Kong and Macao, 9.59% from Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Myanmar, respectively listed by the size of each group, and only 0.26% were from other countries/areas of the world (ibid,
also see figure 1.1 for the locations of FMIs’ countries of origin in relation to Taiwan). After 2003, such transnational marriages have declined due to the intervention of the Taiwanese government through the implementation of a stricter interview procedure towards women from Mainland China and Southeast Asia. In 2006, the rate was reduced to 14% (ibid), which still brought in a considerable number of FMIs to Taiwan.

Figure 1.1. Locations of China and Southeast Asian Countries in Relation to Taiwan

Despite their considerable number as a major minority in Taiwan, the FMIs remained understudied until very recently. Even while researchers, particularly in areas such as policy making, education, social work, and public health, are catching up in studies of this population, up to now there has been very little research on the discursive representations of them, for which the current study aims to compensate.

1.1.3. Discourses of FMIs in public sphere

The discourse of FMIs in the current study has two layers of meanings: Firstly, it refers to
discourse on or about FMIs, particularly in the news media in Taiwan. The analysis of such discourse focuses on how FMIs are represented in print news reports (e.g. as mothers, foreigners/outsiders, commodities, cultural representatives, etc.) which reflect mainstream perspectives and ideologies. Secondly, it also refers to discourse by FMIs. A collection of FMIs’ published narratives will be analyzed and their self-representations will be compared to the other-initiated representations of them in mass media news. I shall particularly focus on the dialogical relation between the discourse on/about FMIs and the discourse by them that co-exist and compete in the public sphere.

1.1.4. Issue of representation

From a perspective of semiotics, all the signs we use, including language, are in essence representational. While acknowledging this broad view of representation, the current study focuses primarily on the representation of human characters and organizations as social actors, namely FMIs and related individuals/organizations (e.g. family; the government). It is worth bearing in mind that these representations are not generated in a vacuum by a neutral machine but rather are (re)produced by social actors who have their own ideological orientations towards the represented in contexts where some social orders pre-exist. Therefore, the current study aims to study not only the products (i.e. texts) but also the process (i.e. discursive practice in which participants make active choices in creating/interpreting the texts) of representation.

The quote in the beginning of this chapter says much about the interlocked relationship between the representing (news media), the represented (FMIs and their family), and those who consume and react to such representation (the Taiwanese society). While the represented FMIs are beginning to assume the role of the representing, inserting their voices into the domain of public discourse, and initiating a conversation to the very broadly defined, media-affected audience, the society, as the author quoted above did, it further complicates the already complex relationship between them and opens more possibilities, which has fascinated and inspired the current study.

1.2. Methodology

1.2.1. Data

As mentioned earlier, the data of the current study include multiple public discourses on/about and by FMIs. The former is composed of two subsets of data: 1) 82 news articles with FMIs in the texts, alternately termed as 外籍新娘 (“foreign brides”), 外籍配偶 (“foreign
spouses”), and 新移民 (“new immigrants”), published in a one-month period (10/1-10/31, 2006), and 2) 179 news articles on 假結婚 (“false marriage”), dated from 1986 to 2006. All of these news articles are retrieved from a Taiwanese newspaper, United Daily, for two reasons: Firstly, United Daily is the newspaper of the largest average readership in Taiwan for the period specified for the data collection², which suits the goal of the current study as to examine the mainstream representation of FMIs in public discourse. Secondly, all the news articles of United Daily have been digitized and are accessible through a database, which makes possible the keyword search (e.g. different labels of FMIs; “false marriage”) for texts.

The second set of data (i.e. discourse by FMIs) is a collection of narratives written by FMIs themselves, published in a book titled Don’t Call Me Foreign Bride (Hsia, 2005b). Due to the overall rarity of FMIs’ self-account in the domain of public discourse, the number of texts in this collection is relatively small (total article # = 16) yet provides valuable in-group perspectives to which the mainstream media representations of them may be compared and contrasted in the current analyses.

1.2.2. Synthesized critical approach to discourse

The methodology of the current study fits in the broadly-defined coverage of CDA as a school of approaches with a shared goal. Leading scholars such as Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk, Ruth Wodak, and Paul Chilton, have developed their own institutional tools and analytical procedures from their diverse backgrounds and predilections (see Blommaert, 2005 for review). As Fairclough (2003) pointed out, CDA is “a method which can appropriate other methods” (p. 210). Methods that have been “appropriated” in CDA works include those from systemic functional linguistics, literary analysis, metaphor analysis, and conversation analysis, etc. In alignment with this highly flexible and integrative tradition of CDA, the method adopted in the current study is also a synthesis of Fairclough’s Functional linguistic approach (1989, 1995b) and Wodak’s Discourse-historical approach (1991, Wodak & Reisigl, 1999), to which I also made some refinements addressing the analytical needs of the specific data and context in the current study. Details about the refinements I made will be introduced in the next section.

Incorporated from Fairclough’s Functional linguistic approach, the current study pays particular attention to the linguistic choices (i.e. lexicon, grammar, rhetoric patterns, etc.) in contrast with other available options in the users’ sociolinguistic repertoire. I also adopted Fairclough’s (1995b) attention to the number and quality of reported speech, which was also referred to as “secondary discourse” in his works, as indexing the unequal representation of voices in given texts.

The current study also incorporates the attempt of Wodak’s Discourse-historical approach to
“integrate systematically all available background information in the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a text” (Wodak & Reisigl, 1999). Therefore, multiple texts from different sources are analyzed (e.g. mainstream news articles and FMIs’ published narratives) or drawn upon (e.g. governmental policies, local anthropologists’ works) to help with the interpretation and explanation of the target texts.

1.2.3. Refinements of CDA

In addition to the incorporation of Functional-linguistic and Discourse-historical approaches, the current study proposes three main modifications addressing the analytical needs emerging from the pilot and preliminary analyses of data. These modifications may hopefully compensate for some potential weaknesses of the previously-developed approaches of CDA.

The first refinement of CDA approach made in the current study is the collection of data. CDA has been criticized for its highly selective data and the opaqueness of its selective criteria. As Edward Haig, a student of Norman Fairclough and an exponent of CDA, once admitted:

I have found very few [CDA] studies which display much interest in seeking to establish the representativeness of their samples, either through statistical survey methods, the use of corpora or even just explaining the protocol according to which they were gathered. (Haig, 2004, p. 144)

This lack of clear rationale of data collection/selection may in consequence render CDA to the criticism of selecting a very small number of samples that confirm the analyst’s own prejudices and preferred interpretations (Widdowson, 1995).

To address this potential weakness in the current study, I use a relatively large corpus (82 sychronic news texts, 179 diachronic news texts, and 16 published narratives) and have attempted to develop the representativeness and meaningfulness of my data by providing a detailed rationale of the inclusive criteria (see 1.2.1).

The broader scope of data also allows the current study to conduct more comprehensive analyses of the relation between texts. While such intertextuality has been an important concept and research focus of CDA (Fairclough, 1995, 2003), the actual analysis of it has nevertheless suffered two primary limitations, namely the lack of historical perspective and the overlook of counter-discourse. The lack of historical perspective indicates a failure in recognizing the seamless and transformative features of discourse, which may be compensated for by conducting a longue durée analysis on the trajectory of discourse over a relatively long period. Such analysis will be introduced in detail in Chapter 3, the diachronic analysis of “false marriage” discourse.
over 21 years. The overlook of counter-discourse, which is coined with the over-emphasis upon the objectionable dominant discourse, may result in a neglect of the spontaneous resistance that coexists with and contests against the hegemonic power. In Chapter 4, I will attend to this gap by conducting upon the FMIs’ narratives a positive discourse analysis (PDA) proposed by James Martin and colleagues.

Another refinement I made to the traditional CDA addresses the issue of translatability of data. While dealing with data of a language unfamiliar to the researchers or their assumed readers, most CDA practitioners may simply analyze the translated data (e.g. Fairclough, 2005a, 2005b) or present only word-to-word translation in their analysis without explanations for linguistic features of the original text (e.g. Wodak & van Leeuwen, 2002), assuming that language itself is *transparent* and that using another language does not influence our interpretation of the text. I would argue that this lack of sensitivity towards the potential interpretative problems caused by translation has largely contravened the underlying belief of CDA that language to a large degree construes one’s thoughts and defines culture. While conducting analyses of discourse, using a different language may entail the use of a different set of *member resources* upon which the researcher relies for her/his interpretation of texts.

I would thus propose that texts be analyzed in their original language. Analysis of translated data could be confounded by the untranslatable concepts and linguistic items, as well as the application of inappropriate linguistic-cultural schema. Although this dissertation is written in English, all of the texts were analyzed in their original language—Chinese. English translation is only provided for the readers who do not know Chinese. Detailed descriptions and explanations will also be provided as non-translatable concepts and linguistic items appear in texts.

### 1.3. Chapters Overview

A main focus of the current study is the representations of FMIs in mainstream news and their own narratives. Since the representation of certain (members of) groups in texts could be constructed jointly through different means (e.g. lexical selections, grammatical patterns, metaphors, rhetoric structures, etc.), multiple discursive/linguistic elements that contribute to the representations of FMIs will be analyzed and discussed in the following chapters.

In Chapter two, I focus primarily on the issue of the labeling of FMIs in mainstream news media. The use of three common labels, namely 外籍新娘 (“foreign brides”), 外籍配偶 (“foreign spouses”) and 新移民 (“new immigrants”), are discussed in light of their ideological connotations and indexical functions which are associated with the reproduction and reshaping of FMIs’ social positioning. This chapter will provide both the documentation of the emergence and
development of each label in its sociopolitical context, and the comparative analysis of their concurrent use in news texts collected from 2006.

As mentioned earlier, representations of social actors could be achieved with different means yet achieve the same ideological purpose. Chapter three thus uses the same set of news data as Chapter two with analytical emphasis placed on a different discursive element, namely the utilization of reported speech. Distinction will be made in this chapter between the representation of the related social actors’ (e.g. FMI themselves, their family, government officials, etc.) words and the representation of their voices. Viewing reported speech as a site of power struggle, this chapter examines whose voice is present or absent, whose voice is made salient and whose is marginalized through the analysis of the reporters’ decision in terms of the quantity and quality of the reported speech from different sources.

Related to the findings of the analyses of the synchronic news data in Chapters two and three, in Chapter four I expand the scope of data to include news texts published from 1986 to 2006 in order to examine the evolution and transformation of the news discourse of FMI. The appropriation of one particular lexical item, namely 假結婚 (“false marriage”), makes the locus of this diachronic analysis. In particular, this chapter examines how the FMI’s marriage has been discursively constructed as “false” and how the meaning of this lexical item has evolved and shifted over the two decades.

While the three chapters above examine the other-initiated representations of FMI, Chapter five on the other hand addresses the in-group representations of FMI themselves. Particularly of interest is the dialogical relation between mainstream news discourse of FMI and their own narratives as counter-discourse resisting and subverting the dominant hegemonic practice.

In the conclusive chapter six, I will then reflect on both the findings and the analytical process of this dissertation.

---

1 Even though whether Taiwan and China are two “nations” is a long-lasting debate, which I do not intend to discuss here, the marriages between Taiwanese and Mainlanders are often considered “transnational” in terms of policy making and enactment, as well as in day-to-day interaction in Taiwanese society.

2 The *United Daily* remained the newspaper of the largest readership until mid-90s. Its current readership is second to the *Liberty Times*, but this record does not take into consideration the readers of the *United Daily’s* online version. According to the World Association of Newspapers (www.wan-press.org), the current release of the *United Daily* is about 1,000,000 issues every day. (The release is about half of *USA Today*, and the population of Taiwan is less than 8% of the US.)
2
Media labeling of FMIs (2006)

2.1. Introduction

As van Leeuwen (1996) pointed out, multiple sociosemantic devices and means could be drawn upon in representing social actors. Among these devices and means, this chapter will focus on labeling, which is a major discursive way to identify and categorize social actors. In particular, I will discuss the media labeling of FMIs in Taiwan using the data of 82 news reports published in October, 2006 in the United Daily. The use of three current labels for FMIs, namely 外籍新娘 ("foreign brides"), 外籍配偶 ("foreign spouses"), and 新移民 ("new immigrants"), is analyzed against the sociocultural context in which they are used. As the selection of linguistic elements is neither random nor apolitical, I focus this analysis on the ideological function of the choices made between these socially available labels and how the FMIs are represented and positioned in the discursively constructed social reality.

Labels in this study are understood broadly as names of categories. However, the analytical focus in this study goes beyond the discussion of the labels as products and aims in discussing the process of labeling as “endowing labels with meaning” and “creat[ing] categorizations” (Eckert, 2003, p. 388). Labeling/categorization is a common way of representing social actors (van Leeuwen, 1996) and may serve as “a strong means of social control” (Eckert, 2003, p. 388) by maintaining the social distinction between us (the labeler) and them (the labeled).

Previous research has shown that the labeling of minorities or socially less privileged groups tends to reflect and reproduce the ideology with which the dominant groups define inferior others (e.g. Minh-ha, 1989; Cameron, 1998; King & Clark, 2002; McConnell-Ginet, 2003). With its privileged access to mass communicative means and possession of sociolinguistic capital, the dominant social group is able to enforce through labeling “its own particular bias on everyone, including those who do not share its view of the world” (Spender, 1980, p. 145). This perpetuation of the dominant group’s ideology, however, is amenable to resistance from the dominated groups, as manifested in the linguistic reform by feminists and civil right activists, who assert “their right to be called by a name of their own choosing rather than one given by an oppressor” (Romaine, 1999, p. 147). The labeling process thus becomes a “site of ideological dispute” (King & Clark, 2002, p.537) where the meanings are continuously contested, (re)appropriated, and reclaimed.
2.1.1. Research questions about FMIs’ labeling

This chapter seeks to achieve two main goals: 1) to document the development of the three labels of FMIs in question, and 2) to examine their current use in mainstream media news discourse. The former functions to situate the latter in a broader sociohistorical context. This chapter will address the following questions:

1. How/in what contexts/by whom were these labels created?
2. What is the relationship between the labels (e.g. one label proposed to contest another)?
3. What are the “socially salient differences” (Cameron, 1998, p. 18) currently being emphasized between these labels?
4. How is the referred group (FMIs) represented under each label?
5. What ideological assumptions are embedded in, reproduced through, or contested against with the use of each label?

With the insight gained from the discussion of the questions above, I will further discuss in this chapter whether the newer labels (i.e. “foreign spouses” and “new immigrants”) function as emancipatory discourse (Freire & Macedo, 1987) or instead as new hate speech (Butler, 1997) created to the tune of the old hate context and ascribe to pre-existing dominant beliefs and social meanings (Spender, 1980). The findings will also be discussed in relation to 1) the long-existing debate on the likelihood for linguistic reforms (e.g. label change) to bring about social reforms (see Ehrlich & King, 1992; Cameron, 1995; Romaine, 1999) and 2) the ongoing campaign promoting the use of the label “new immigrants” in Taiwan.

2.1.2. Methodology

Since CDA, particularly the branch of discourse-historical approach, is a “problem-oriented” (Wodak, 2001, p. 69) method which requires that the problem under investigation be situated in its socio-historical context, this chapter will begin the analytical procedure of the labeling issue of FMIs in Taiwan with a historical account of the emergence and development of the three labels in question. Insight from the works of anthropologists and indigenous critics is drawn upon for this account, as well as governmental documents and other historical texts.

Following the historical account of the three labels is a text analysis on all news reports qualified by using any (combination) of them in United Daily, published in a one-month period
(10/1-10/31, 2006). The represented images of FMIs under each label were identified and coded using grounded methodology (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), which helped avoid imposing pre-made categories for coding upon the texts. Multiple reading and coding procedures were repeated until the categorization reached saturation.

Complementing the frequency list of FMIs’ images by the labels, themes/patterns of FMIs’ representations across texts and labels were identified, as well as label-specific variations. These convergent themes and variations will be discussed and explained in this chapter in light of their social functions regarding the embedded ideologies and power relations among relevant social groups and/or institutions such as FMIs, husbands’ families, Taiwanese women, and the government.

2.2. A Historical Account for the Labels of FMIs

The first label designating FMIs as a social category is 外籍新娘 (“foreign brides”), which emerged in the late-1980s and spread widely in media discourse in the 1990s. While these immigrant women differed in their national, social, and cultural backgrounds, scattered in different areas in Taiwan, and might not even have had contact with any other “foreign brides” in their daily lives, under this shared label they were positioned by mainstream discourse as a homogeneous social group.

Despite the imaginary nature of this label and the community it designated in its early development, the increasing institutional practices conducted in the name of “foreign brides” have gradually embodied it with real communal meanings. For instance, through the utilization of services such as “Foreign Brides Life Adjustment Programs” held by the Ministry of Interior in 2002 or “Supportive Services for Foreign Brides” augmented by Taipei City Government in 2003, which grouped FMIs under a collective name and treated them as such, these immigrants (unconsciously) confirmed their membership as one of the “foreign brides.” Also through these practices, FMIs had the opportunity to know other “foreign brides” and establish social networks and a sense of community. However, it is when they established this ingroup identity that they began to question the appropriateness of the label “foreign brides” initiated by outgroups’ gazes.

Contesting against the apparent gender-discriminative connotation of “foreign brides”, another term 外籍配偶 (“foreign spouses”) was proposed by social activists such as feminists and migrant right advocates at the turn of the century, and first gained popularity within academia and campaigns concerning FMIs’ rights. The key factor for its wide spread in political and media discourse, however, was an announcement made by the Taiwanese government (Ministry of the Interior, 2003), which legitimized its use as the official label for FMIs in governmental documents and publications. Since government agencies are one of the most
powerful sources of media messages (Hilgartner & Bosk, 1988; Donohue, Tichenor & Olien, 1995), “foreign spouses” has become the dominant label in media discourse up to the present.

The replacement of “foreign spouses” for “foreign brides” was nevertheless not the final resolution of this labeling dispute. As Hsia (2005a) pointed out, the label “foreign brides” has been associated with “social problems,” “decline in population quality,” and “appropriation of social welfare resources,” and this association has been gradually transmitted to the new label “foreign spouses.” In other words, this new label has been reappropriated by mainstream discourse to reproduce dominant biases, and has lost its reformative effect.

When the first attempt for renaming themselves did not turn out to be productive due to this unintended appropriation against the purported reformative goal, the search for yet another label was put on request by FMIs themselves, with support from feminists, and migrant movement activists. In 2003, the first poll addressing the labeling issue was conducted among FMIs. The label 新移民女性 (“new immigrant females”) were preferred over “foreign brides” and “foreign spouses” (Hsia, 2005b). In the actual use of this new label, however, an abbreviated form, 新移民 (“new immigrants”), is more commonly adopted for linguistic effectiveness, given that 1) a term of more than 4 morpho-syllabic characters is conventionally less preferable in Chinese and 2) the inclusion of 女性 (“female”) in the label is redundant, given that “new immigrant males” do not exist as a social category in Taiwan.

In reaction to the ingroup and social activists’ request for renaming, the government of Taiwan has recently re-confirmed the legitimate use of “foreign spouses” by arguing that “foreign spouses” is literally inclusive of both sexes and all different ethnicities/nationalities and is “a term free from discrimination” (Ministry of the Interior, 2006), thus ruling out an overall label change in policies and official documents.

The remaining question, however, is whether the label “foreign spouses” is really neutral, apolitical, and free from discrimination, as the government has claimed. Since labels, as well as other linguistic choices, are in essence social semiotics (Halliday, 1978), what this and other labels really mean may only be understood by looking at the way they are actually used in social contexts. The following text analysis of news reports in this chapter should help provide such insight into the social meanings of each label and the ideologies and social relations embedded in, reproduced by, and/or contested against with their uses.

2.3. Text Analysis

2.3.1. Interpreting the Preliminary Frequency Counts

Table 2.1 demonstrates the result of the preliminary frequency counts of the news articles
using each (combination) of the labels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label(s) used in the article</th>
<th># of articles</th>
<th>% (#/82)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FB only</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS only</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI only</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB and FS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB and NI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS and NI</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB, FS and NI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of articles using FB</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of articles using FS</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of articles using NI</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1. Frequency Counts and Percentage of Labels Used in News
(FB=Foreign Brides, FS=Foreign Spouses, NI=New Immigrants)

These preliminary frequency counts reveal two important features of the current labeling of FMIIs in the data. Firstly, with its official status, “foreign spouses” is still the most dominant label in current mainstream news, whose occurrence (61/82) doubles the sum of the other two (FB 15/82; NI 18/82).

Secondly, the incidences of using multiple labels in one article are sparse except for the overlap between “foreign spouses” and “new immigrants” (8/82), which may indicate that the newest label “new immigrants” is still going through the defining process with the realization of its meaning dependent on its collocation with other labels, especially with “foreign spouses” as its immediate precedent.

This argument is further supported by the way it is introduced in the texts. For instance, in excerpt (a), “new immigrants” is introduced as a predicate of “foreign spouses” rather than a proper noun by itself; in (b), the use of parenthesis indicates “foreign spouses” and “new immigrants” are mutually explanatory; in excerpt (c), FMIIs are first mentioned as “foreign spouses” and then referred to as “these new immigrants:”

(a) 100 名新生兒有 8 名的父母之一具外籍身分，外籍配偶已經是台灣新移民。
8 out of 100 newborns have one parent with foreign identity. Foreign spouses have become new immigrants in Taiwan. (“外籍配偶三千多人社會局將主動輔導” “Over 3000 Foreign Spouses, Social Affairs Bureau Will Assist Actively,” 2006-10-17/United Daily/C1)
(b) 生命之愛文教基金會開辦的外籍配偶(新移民)中餐烹調訓練班有成。

Love of Life Foundation succeeded with the Foreign Spouses (New Immigrants) Chinese Cooking Program. (“外偶學烹調 「吃」得開” “Foreign Spouses Learn Cooking, Eat well” 2006-10-14/United Daily/C2)

(c) 民政局統計，縣內有外籍配偶 4655 人，因文化差異、語言隔閡及價值觀等不同而產生不適應問題，為了協助這些新移民順利融入台灣社會，建立幸福美滿的家庭，89 年起開辦外籍配偶生活適應輔導班，報名人數年年增加。

According to the statistics of Citizen Bureau, there are 4655 foreign spouses in the County, who have the problem of maladjustment because of cultural differences, language barriers, and different values. In order to help these new immigrants assimilate into Taiwanese society more smoothly and develop happy and sound families, Foreign Spouse Life Adjustment Program has been open since 2000, and the number of enrollments is increasing yearly. (“結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝” “Wearing Costumes for the Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

2.3.2. Cross-label Themes of FMIs’ Representations

Table 2.2 lists the representations/images of FMIs in the examined news articles under each label:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foreign Brides (15)</th>
<th>Foreign Spouses (61)</th>
<th>New Immigrants (18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughters-in-law</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassifiable domestic roles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor members of family</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career women</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users of social services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incapable individuals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent individuals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activists</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providers/contributors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influx of population</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreigners</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally assimilated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is worth noticing that these images do not function separately in texts but jointly or contrastively shape 5 primary themes, representing FMIs as 1) traditional domiciliary members, 2) social burdens/problems, 3) intruders from the outland, 4) victims of mistreatment, and 5) model minorities. Detailed explanation and discussion of each theme are provided as follows:

(1) FMIs as traditional domiciliary members

The domiciliary memberships and responsibilities traditionally assigned to women are one of the most prevalent themes in the representation of FMIs across labels. Such domestic roles broadcasted in the news articles include wives (FB 1, FS 12, NI 5), mothers (FB 4, FS 28, NI 8), and daughters-in-law (FB 0, FS 8, NI 3). I shall begin the discussion with the representation of FMIs as mothers, which appears to be one of the most dominant images of them in the dataset.

The exceeding frequency of the representation of FMIs as mothers may be explained by the emphasis on the continuum of the paternal genealogy in traditional Chinese/Taiwanese culture. It is not uncommon that this familial reproduction need is brought up as a reason for arranged marriages including these cross-border ones, which is even recognized and legitimized in governmental documents and policies. For instance, Policy of Taiwan Women’s Health (Executive Yuan, 2003) stated explicitly, “The main purpose of such marriage, which is pooled rashly through agencies, is to reproduce the next generation” (p. 5). While the media representation of these FMIs reflects this social expectation upon them as mothers, ironically their ability of being good mothers is frequently questioned as in the following extracts:

(1) 陪讀班負責人李師母說,目前陪讀班有 17 個小朋友,家長多是單親媽媽,也有外勞、外籍新娘的小孩,大人多學歷不高,忙於生計,無暇照顧子女,「孩子來,什麼都不會,要從 123 跟ㄅㄆㄈ開始教。」

Ms. Lee the director of the after-school program said, currently there were 17 kids in the program, most of whom were children of single mothers, foreign laborers, and foreign brides. Most of these adults are less educated and too busy working to take care of their children. “The kids came not knowing a thing. We had to begin with 123 and bo-po-mo” (“哆啦A夢來了！弱勢孩子摸了又摸 以為在做夢” “Doraeemon comes! Underprivileged Children Touched it, Feeling Like in Dream,” 2006-10-05/United Daily/C7)

(2) 越南籍媽媽阮氏白雪嫁來台灣十年,兒子就讀小學四年級。現為賽珍珠基金會志工的她說,當孩子讀幼 幼班時,她開始讀華語班,三年後畢業,剛好兒子上小一,「哆啦A夢來了! 弱勢孩子摸了又摸 以為在做夢” “Doraeemon comes! Underprivileged Children Touched it, Feeling Like in Dream,” 2006-10-05/United Daily/C7)
Ran Bai-xui, a *Vietnamese mother* who married into Taiwan ten years ago, has a son in the fourth grade at elementary school. She who currently volunteers in the Pearl S. Buck Foundation said, when her child was attending the lowest class in kindergarten, she began to attend Chinese courses. When she graduated three years later, her son just attended the first grade and she could barely handle “beh-peh-meh-feh” and basic math. Now the schoolwork of her son is getting more and more difficult and she can’t understand the less common Chinese characters or those with more strokes, or she may replace “同事” (tongxu, “co-workers”) with “同式” (misprinting of tongxu) in writing.


While the “foreign mothers’” incapability to educate their children is frequently emphasized by the media, the news articles analyzed in this chapter predominantly lack equal attention paid to their “Taiwanese fathers.” In the following extract (3), even though the children’s weakness in learning seems to be attributed to both of “the parents,” the primary blame is still placed on the mothers by referring to these children as “born by foreign spouses” without mentioning that they were born to Taiwanese fathers as well. Such device in consequence frames the problem as the mother’s problem and places the blame on their foreignness, which legitimizes the proposed solution that follows in the text: The foreign mothers should attend the computer program, and be assimilated.

(3) 陳信正說，外籍配偶所生的「新台灣之子」有學習盲點，主要是父母無法協助孩子課業；圖書館透過電腦教學，幫助外籍配偶真正融入台灣生活。

Chen Hsin-jang said, “New Taiwan Kids” born by *foreign spouses* have a blind spot in learning, mostly because of the parents’ incapability of helping them with their schoolwork. The library helps these foreign spouses to assimilate into real Taiwanese life through the computer program. (“外籍婦學敲鍵盤 伊媚兒回鄉” “Foreign Women Learning to Hit the Keys, Emailing Home,” 2006-10-12/United Daily/C2)

Through the association between the maternal responsibilities of FMIs and their level of assimilation, this text seems to indicate that these mothers are incapable of being qualified mothers simply because they are not “Taiwanese” enough. In the same text, two indirect quotes from the “foreign spouses” themselves also reflect this intertwining relationship between the lack of computer ability, the maternal responsibility, and the need and desire for them to assimilate.

(4) 嫁來台灣 5 年的印尼女子宋秋妮說，兒子做功課時常需用到電腦，修機器的老公也不懂，派她先來學習再教孩子讀書、上網查資料。來台 2 年的越南籍的丁氏莊才學完烹飪和識字班，又參加電腦課，希望在短時間內融入生活，當個道地的台灣媳婦。
Indonesian woman Song Qiu-ni, married into Taiwan for 5 years, said that her son needed to use the computer for school assignments. Her mechanic husband, who did not know about computers either, sent her to learn [computer skills] in order to teach their son to study and research using the Internet. Vietnamese Ding zhuang, who came to Taiwan two years ago, attends this computer course while she just finished the learning and literacy programs, with the hope that she may assimilate into life and become an authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-law. ("外籍婦學敲鍵盤 伊媚兒回鄉" “Foreign Women Learning to Hit the Keys, Emailing Home,” 2006-10-12/United Daily/C2)

The expression “assimilate into life” in this extract apparently means “assimilate into Taiwanese life,” but the author does not seem to find it necessary to put “Taiwanese” before “life,” which may imply an assumption that “Taiwanese life” is the only “life.” The original life experiences and styles of these “foreign spouses” are thus reduced and marginalized into the domain of non-life.

The use of the verb “sent” in this article is also worth analyzing. As a matter of fact, it is the only action depicted in the current data as taken by the Taiwanese father, concerning the education of their children, but ironically, this only action stops at “sending” the foreign mother to learn the necessary skills for this purpose, which indicates an asymmetrical power relation and responsibility distribution between Taiwanese men and their foreign wives.

The remark of “being an authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-law” in this text brings us to another domiciliary role of FMIs that is broadcasted in news articles. The simultaneous mention of “Taiwanese” and “daughter-in-law,” as well as the stress on its authenticity, reflects an orientation towards a Taiwanese-centric and patriarchal ideology possessed by Taiwanese and Taiwanese men in particular (for the association between authenticity and social value systems, see Coupland, 2003; Heller, 2003). While “being an authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-law” is also a recurring topic in the data, a question worth our contemplation is: What makes an “authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-law” authentic?

Firstly, as shown in the extract above, in order to be seen as an authentic or good Taiwanese daughter-in-law, an FMI has to comply with the Taiwanese-centric values and assimilate as shown in the extract above. Secondly, they have to take the responsibilities traditionally assigned to women as housewives and serve the husband’s family’s needs a la carte, such as in Ex. (5):

(5) 「從印尼嫁到台灣，什麼都不會」，「還好老公疼愛」，現在，「婆婆想吃什麼，我都能夠做出來」，印尼籍的黃蜜拉昨天在新竹市「國際親子日／新移民說故事」比賽中，真情告白，她自己落淚，台下的人也掉眼淚。 “Married to Taiwan from Indonesia, and not able to do anything,” “I was lucky that I had my husband’s care and love.” Now, “whatever my mother-in-law wants to eat, I am able to make it.” Huang Mi-lah from Indonesia told her story with affection in Hsin-chu City “International Parental Day: Telling the Stories of New Immigrants” contest. She shed tears, as well as the audience under the platform. ("新移民說故事 台上台下都掉淚" “New Immigrants
On the other side of the coin, FMIs should refrain from activities of which the parents-in-law disapprove, despite their own preference. For instance:

(6) 外籍配偶們上課成果琳琅滿目；三田國小輔導主任陳滿玉說，上課增加才藝，很多學員都想學，學校透過戶政所提供名冊下鄉逐一找人來學，但有些公婆不喜歡外籍媳婦拋頭露面。

The exhibition of the foreign-spouse program made a feast for the eyes. Chen Mun-yu the chief counselor of Santian Elementary School said, these courses improved the knowledge and ability and many wanted to attend. The school invited attendance door by door based on the census data provided by Household Registration Office, but some parents-in-law do not like their foreign daughters-in-law to “pao-tou-lou-mian.” ("結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝" "Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents," 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

Pao-tou-lou-mian is an old Chinese idiom referring to women only, meaning “to go out and reveal their faces in public,” which seriously violates the doctrine for women to limit their living space to within the household. While in the modern society Taiwanese women have long been freed from such legacy of ancient Chinese culture and “go out and reveal their faces” whenever they like, this patriarchal value seems to have somehow been revived in some family’s attitudes and treatments towards the FMIs, and is represented in media discourse as a neutral reality without being questioned or contested.

More importantly, in order to be considered authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-laws, the FMIs have to totally internalize such traditional female virtues and “be proud of it,” such as in (7) and (8):

(7) 另一金獅獎得主謝秀鴛，來自北越河內市，為了協助夫家改善經濟，她投入洗薑、包裝毛巾、種香菇等粗活，工作雖辛苦，家庭生活美滿，與婆婆如同母女親密。10年前她初到台灣，心裡不安又惶恐，夜裡常暗自哭泣，甚至想逃回越南，現在慶幸有好老公、好婆婆，自己扮演好媽媽的角色，也以成為台灣媳婦為榮。

Another winner of the Golden Lion Award, Hsieh Xio-yuan from Hanoi, North Vietnam, devoted herself to laborer jobs such as washing ginger, packing towels, and planting mushrooms, in order to help improve the husband’s family’s finances. Even though the work was hard, she had a happy family life and a close relationship with her mother-in-law just like daughter and mother. 10 years ago she had just come to Taiwan. Feeling anxious and worried, she often cried secretly at night and even thought of running back to Vietnam. Now she feels lucky that she has a good husband and a good mother-in-law. She plays the role of a good mother well, and feels proud of being a Taiwanese daughter-in-law. (新台灣模範家庭金獅獎頒獎 “New Taiwan Model Family Golden Lion Award Bestowed,” 2006-10-23/United Daily/C1)
The first Golden Lion Awards for the New Taiwan\textsuperscript{5} Model Family were given yesterday in Nantou City. 46 foreign spouses from families in Nantou and Changhua Counties were all proud of becoming Taiwanese daughters-in-law, among whom a winner, who is also the wife of the Village Chief of Nankang, Guohsing, Nantou, [won the prize for] “xiang-fu-jiao-zi” and developing a harmonious family. (新台灣模範家庭金獅獎 頒獎 “New Taiwan Model Family Golden Lion Award Bestowed,” 2006-10-23/United Daily/C1)

Nowadays with Taiwanese women enjoying higher education and more economic independence than ever before, they no longer accept such patriarchal virtues entailing the role of traditional daughters-in-law. This makes the “authenticity” of the image of “authentic Taiwanese daughters-in-law” very suspicious, given that most “Taiwanese” daughters-in-law do not behave as such.

Therefore, the image of “authentic Taiwanese daughters-in-law” functions to reproduce the fantasy of Taiwanese men and their parents, predicated upon an obedient, devoted, and self-ascribed domestic servant. Such a fantasy has been found prevalent among cross-border arranged marriages with the men and their family fancying an “old-fashioned” woman who would willingly “commit to (traditional) familial values” (Constable, 2005, p. 8). While such fantasy gains “authenticity” through the discursive construction and repetition of the image of “authentic Taiwanese daughters-in-law,” the sexist- and nationalist-chauvinist ideologies are both reproduced and naturalized. This may contribute to the imposition of such ideologies over FMIs as well as the inculcation of related hegemony among them.

The third image of FMIs to be discussed here is the representation of them as wives. Such association between FMIs and the role of wives seem natural and intuitive, given that their status as FMIs is built upon their marriage. In other words, being an FMI is contingent on the acquisition of the status as the wife of a Taiwanese man. However, the findings of the current suggest that this association is made trivial and peripheral in the analyzed texts comparing to the other domiciliary memberships mentioned above (i.e. mothers and daughters-in-law).

First of all, the representation of FMIs as wives rarely stands by itself but tends to collocate with their role as mothers or daughters-in-law. Take the following extracts for example:

Indonesian woman Song Qiu-ni, married into Taiwan for 5 years, said that her son needed to use the computer for...
school assignments. Her mechanic husband, who did not know about computers either, sent her to learn [computer
skills] in order to teach their son to study and research using the Internet. Vietnamese Ding Zhuang, who came to
Taiwan two years ago, attends this computer course while she just finished the learning and literacy programs, with
the hope that she may assimilate into life and become an authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-law. (“外籍婦學敲鍵盤
伊媚兒回鄉” “Foreign Women Learning to Hit the Keys, Emailing Home,” 2006-10-12/United Daily/C2)

(5) 「從印尼嫁到台灣，什麼都不會」,「還好老公疼愛」,現在,「婆婆想吃什麼，我都能夠做出来」,印尼籍
的黃蜜拉昨天在新竹市「國際親子日／新移民說故事」比賽中，真情告白，她自己落淚，台下的人也掉眼淚。
“Married to Taiwan from Indonesia, and not able to do anything,” “I was lucky that I had my husband’s care and
love.”” Now, “whatever my mother-in-law wants to eat, I am able to make it.” Huang Mi-lah from Indonesia told her
story with affection in Hsin-chu City “International Parental Day: Telling the Stories of New Immigrants” contest.
She shed tears, as well as the audience under the platform. (“新移民說故事 台上台下都掉淚” “New Immigrants
Told Stories, Tears among Cast and Crowd,” 2006-10-29/United Daily/C2)

(7) 另一金獅獎得主謝秀鴛,來自北越河內市,為了協助夫家改善經濟,她投入洗薑、包裝毛巾、種香菇等
粗活,工作雖辛苦,家庭生活美滿,與婆婆如同母女親密。10 年前她初到台灣,心裡不安又惶恐,夜裡常暗
自哭泣,甚至想逃回越南,現在慶幸有好老公、好婆婆,自已扮演好媽媽的角色,也以成為台灣媳婦為榮。
Another winner of Golden Lion Award, Hsieh Xio-yuan from Hanoi, North Vietnam, devoted herself to laborer jobs
such as washing ginger, packing towels, and planting mushrooms, in order to help improve the husband’s family’s
finances. Even though the work was hard, she had a happy family life and a close relationship with her
mother-in-law just like daughter and mother. 10 years ago she just came to Taiwan. Feeling anxious and worried, she
often cried secretly at night and even though of running back to Vietnam. Now she feels lucky that she has a good
husband and a good mother-in-law. She plays well the role of a good mother, and feels proud of being a Taiwanese
daughter-in-law. (“新台灣模範家庭金獅獎 頒獎 “New Taiwan Model Family Golden Lion Award Bestowed,”
2006-10-23/United Daily/C1)

(9) 社工員陳瑟說,台東是民風保守的後山,遠渡重洋來台的外籍配偶需兼負起家中媳婦、太太、新台灣之
子母親的角色,並不是那麼容易,有很多外籍配偶面臨家暴問題,卻求助無門,希望未來能夠主動協助,讓
外籍配偶們在台灣落地生根、安身立命。
Chen Se the social worker said, Taitung is the back-mountain area with conservative folkways. It is not that easy for
foreign spouses from far overseas to assume the roles of daughters-in-law, wives, and mothers of new Taiwan kids.
Many foreign spouses are faced with the problem of domestic abuse but find no way for help. It is hoped that in the
future [the association] can provide active assistance to help these foreign spouses become rooted and settle down
in Taiwan. (“外籍配偶三千多人社會局將主動輔導” “Over 3000 Foreign Spouses, Social Affairs Bureau Will
Assist Actively,” 2006-10-17/United Daily/C1)
With a beamingly smile, cordial and friendly Ruanshi Yan has been married into Taiwan for over four years and has a son with her husband. Holding a high school diploma from Vietnam, although she has never attended foreign spouse literacy programs, she has adjusted well and learned eloquent Taiwanese through being with her parents-in-law day and night. (“越南雜貨店 為越籍配偶解鄉愁” “Vietnamese Grocery Store, Comforting Nostalgic Vietnamese Spouses,” 2006-10-17/United Daily/C2)

While FMIs are often represented simultaneously as wives and other domiciliary female figures, it is in most cases that these other domiciliary roles as mothers or daughters-in-law are prioritized over their identity as wives, manifested in the emphasis on their responsibilities as mothers in Ex. (4) and the foregrounding of the close relationship with the mother-in-law in Ex. (7) and (9). Texts addressing FMIs’ relationship with their husbands such as Ex. (5) are relatively rare, and even when such mention occurs, it tends to be accompanied by co-texts regarding their other roles as mothers or daughters-in-law.

This priority given to the representations of FMIs as mothers and daughters-in-law reflects traditional Confucian family ethics that center around age and gender. Summarizing works of earlier scholars on marriage and family in Chinese culture, Xu and Lai (2004) pointed out that the core value, filial piety, demands that “the role of the wife is inferior to the role of the daughter-in-law. If children were born, the role of the mother should take precedence over the role of the wife” (p. 321). It is worth noting that the model of marriage in modern Taiwan society has been largely transformed from one of familial responsibility, namely the continuum of the paternal family line, submission to parental authority, and the devaluation of sex and intimacy between the couple (Xu and Whyte, 1990; Peng, 2003), to the model of conjugal relationship emphasizing love, affection, and egalitarianism between the couple (Shen, 2005). However, this transition does not seem to apply to the FMIs in Taiwan, which again supports Constable’s (2005) theory of fantasy in cross-border marriages: The husbands, in this case their families as well, who take the local women as “too liberated, demanding, or independent” (p. 8) for marriage, subscribes to and imposes the imagination of the foreign women to be more old-fashioned and subordinated to the patriarchal values.

(2) FMIs as social burdens/problems

Social burdens/problems as a theme of FMIs representations can be seen as a continuum constructed along the line of utilization/consumption of social resources. The weaker version of it is social burdens, which implies the use of social resources that is not desirable but is somewhat necessary or legitimate, whereas the stronger version takes the form of social
problems, which results in loss or damage to the whole society and whose solution calls for tremendous social costs.

FMIs are represented as users of social services in the current data with considerable frequency (FB 8, FS 37, NI 10). The social services reported in the current data as utilized by this population include Chinese literacy courses, birth subsidies, life adjustment programs and career skill training, all of which involve capital infusions from the government and thus may provoke antagonism from Taiwanese tax payers. What’s more, it is not uncommon for the news reports to emphasize the use of such services in light of the FMIs’ incapability to participate as full members in the society as in Ex. (11), which reproduces the stereotype of FMIs as solely consumers/receivers of the society (vis-à-vis providers/contributors).

(11) 民政局統計, 縣內有外籍配偶 4655 人, 因文化差異、語言隔閡及價值觀等不同而產生不適應問題, 為協助這些新移民順利融入台灣社會, 建立幸福美滿的家庭, 89 年起開辦外籍配偶生活適應輔導班, 報名人數年年增加。

According to the statistics of the Citizen Bureau, there are 4655 foreign spouses in the County, who have the problem of maladjustment because of cultural differences, language barriers, and different values. In order to help these new immigrants to assimilate into Taiwanese society more smoothly and develop happy and sound families, Foreign Spouse Life Adjustment Program has been opened since 2000, and the number of enrollments is increasing yearly.

("結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝” “Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

This stereotype may further be reinforced with the lack of counter-representations of the FMIs. In these news articles, the portrait of them as contributors to the society is not only exceptionally rare (FB 0, FS 4, NI 0) but also either trivialized as irrelevant to the main argument, as in excerpt (2), or limited to benefiting the in-group only as in (12).

(2) 越南籍母親阮氏白雪嫁來台灣十年, 兒子就讀小學四年級。現為賽珍珠基金會志工的她說, 當孩子讀幼幼班時, 她開始讀華語班, 三年後畢業, 剛好兒子上小一, 「ㄅㄆㄇㄈ」、數學加減乘除她還可以應付; 現在兒子功課越來越難, 不常出現或筆畫多的國字會看不懂, 或像「同事」寫成「同式」。

Ran Bai-xui a Vietnamese mother has married into Taiwan for ten years and has a son in the fourth grade at elementary school. She who currently volunteers in the Pearl S. Buck Foundation said, when her child attended the lowest class in kindergarten, she began to attend Chinese courses. When she graduated three years later, her son just attended the first grade and she could barely handle “beh-peh-meh-feh” and basic math. Now the schoolwork of her son gets more and more difficult and she can’t understand the less common Chinese characters or those with more strokes, or she may replace “同事” (tongxu, “co-workers”) with “同式” (mispelling of tongxu) in writing. ("新台灣
(12) 許育寧特別拜託這三人未來要成為縣府外籍配偶的義工教師，因為從8月起至明年5月，社會局要透過之前輔導302名成功的外籍配偶個案，在各鄉鎮市成立生活輔導班。
Xu Yu-ning asked these three [foreign spouses] in particular to be the volunteer teachers for the foreign spouses of the county, since from August to May of the next year, the Social Affairs Bureau will open life-adjustment programs in each district through [the help of] the 302 successfully assisted/coached previous cases of foreign spouses. (“外籍配偶過來人要開輔導班” “Foreign Spouses, Ones Having Come through, Will Open Assistance Program” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

In addition to the utilization of social resources and the lack of reciprocal contribution, the social value of FMIs may be further demeaned by the even less desirable image of them as social problems. Some of such discourse involves general statements designating FMIs as a group, as in Ex. (9), which problematizes their influence on the next generation, and in (11), which problematizes their maladjustment, while others may involve the portrayal of individual members of the group as trouble-makers or villains, as in (13).

(9) 社工員陳瑟說，能夠加入家庭服務中心的外籍配偶，其實都算是好命的，有很多外籍配偶不知道、甚至不能加入，多數外籍配偶行動權都操在夫家手中，並沒有太大的自主權，但在封閉過度的環境也容易產生各種問題，對下一代的影響以負面居多，值得注意。
Chen Se the social worker said, foreign spouses who can attend the family service center could actually be counted as the lucky ones. Many foreign spouses are not aware of or not even allowed to attend. Most foreign spouses’ actions are under the control of the husband’s family and they do not have much power of self-determination. But living in such closely-shut environments may produce all kinds of problems, rendering a mostly negative influence upon the next generation, which deserves [our] attention. (“外籍配偶三千多人社會局將主動輔導” “Over 3000 Foreign Spouses, Social Affairs Bureau Will Assist Actively,” 2006-10-17/United Daily/C1)

(11) 民政局統計，縣內有外籍配偶4655人，因文化差異、語言隔閡及價值觀等不同而產生不適應問題，為協助這些新移民順利融入台灣社會，建立幸福美滿的家庭，89年起開辦外籍配偶生活適應輔導班，報名人數年年增加。
According to the statistics of Citizen Bureau, there are 4655 foreign spouses in the County, who have the problem of maladjustment because of cultural difference, language barrier, and different values. In order to help these new immigrants to assimilate into Taiwanese society more smoothly and develop happy and sound families, Foreign Spouse Life Adjustment Program has been opened since 2000, and the number of enrollment is increasing yearly. (“結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝” “Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)
Ah-zi, the Indonesian Spouse who married a man named Zheng in Taitung, was missing after her husband’s death because she found both she and her husband were AIDS infected. The Police of Taitung found yesterday that she had returned to Indonesia, which made the disease prevention unit “sigh with relief.” The police have suggested that the Immigration Office ban her re-entrance.

However, because Ah-zi had left the country many times during her stay in Taiwan and had changed her last name, where she received the disease cannot be traced. In addition, since AIDS has a quite long latent period and Ah-zi had been involved in prostitution in Taiwan, the Department of Health is worried that it might make a breach to disease protection and has begun investigating her sphere of activity and subjects of contact during her stay in Taiwan. (‘‘阿姿’已回印尼 防疫單位鬆口氣’’ ‘‘Ah-zi’ Returned to Indonesia, Disease Prevention Unit Sighs with Relief,” 2006-10-14/United Daily/C1)

It is worth noticing that in (9), the quoted authority is aware that the problem may be (partially) attributed to the control of the husband’s family over the FMI. However, such control is questioned only in light of the “negative influence upon the next generation,” trading off the agenda of FMIs’ own human rights. Furthermore, through the dichotomy constructed around the “lucky” (who are allowed to go out and use the service) and “unlucky” FMIs (whose actions are restricted by the husband’s family), their lack of agency is framed as simply a consequence of misfortune. There is thus no one to blame for their undesirable situation. That’s too bad, but it’s just her bad luck.

In Ex. (13), the “Indonesian spouse” was portrayed as an uncontrollable virus-carrier, who may cause “a breach to disease protection.” This image of Ah-zi as danger to the public is further reinforced by the implicit accusation that she is immoral through the mention of her prostitution. The suspicion of her morality makes her “missing” after her husband’s death vulnerable to the interpretation that she might be spreading the disease intentionally to more innocent Taiwanese men. In addition, even though the source of her infection is reported as untraceable, the emphasis on her original nationality and her multiple leaves from and reentries into Taiwan may lead the readers to infer that she probably acquired the disease from outside of Taiwan, which makes her motivation appear even more vicious. Such framing explains and naturalizes the relieved reaction of the disease prevention unit when learning she was back to Indonesia, and justifies the solution of keeping the “foreign spouse” and consequently the “foreign disease” outside of our
land.

Such problematizing view may be combined with the role of FMIs as mothers and be further expanded to their children. Take the following extract for instance:

(14) 雲林縣家庭教育中心主任吳水銀昨天指出, 有名越南籍配偶的兒子國中畢業, 到台北一家印刷廠工作被同事欺侮, 憤而糾集多名外籍配偶孩子, 將對方打傷住院。她對外籍配偶生育的「新台灣之子」, 面臨人際關係等生活適應難題, 憂心仲仲。

吳水銀說, 雲林現有１萬多名外籍配偶, 人數不斷增加, 外籍配偶子女多數在校就讀, 早婚、早移民生育的子女, 已陸續踏出校門謀職, 她從輔導個案中發現, 部分新台灣之子在工作職場, 適應不良, 和同事間人際互動關係不佳。

Wu Shui-yin the executive of Yunlin Family Education Center pointed out yesterday, there was one son of Vietnamese spouse, graduating from junior high, was bullied by his colleagues in a printing factory. Out of rage, he ganged up with many children of foreign spouses and beat [the colleague] to the degree that [he needed] to be hospitalized. She was very worried about the life-adjustment problems, such as interpersonal relationship, faced by these “new Taiwan kids” born to foreign spouses.

Wu Shui-yin said, there are currently more than 10 thousand foreign spouses in Yunlin and the number is still going up. The majority of the children of these foreign spouses are studying in school, but the children of early marriage and early immigration have gradually left school and entered the job market. She found from her counseled cases that some new Taiwan kids adjust poorly to the working environment and had adverse interpersonal relationship with colleagues. (“新台灣之子生活成長營 免費” “New Taiwan Kids Life and Growth Camp, Free,”
2006-10-19/United Daily/C2)

Quoting the authority, the executive of Yunlin Family Education Center, this text may lead us to infer that the “new Taiwan kids” are to be blamed for this fight between them and the Taiwanese colleague, depicting “new Taiwan kids” as youths who “adjust poorly to the working environment and had adverse interpersonal relationship with colleagues,” ignoring/trivializing other factors such as the unfriendly working environment which does not “adjust” to their needs, and the hostile attitudes from their colleagues that may have contributed to their “adverse interpersonal relationship.” Even though it was the Taiwanese colleague who “bullied” this “new Taiwan kid” first and was at least partially to blame for the fight, no comment is given in this news article concerning his or other Taiwanese workers’ responsibility. In addition, quoting exclusively the executive’s biased account of this event, this news report seems to endorse it as the only account from the only valuable or trust-worthy source, threading this particular view into the report of event that is most likely to be taken as factual by the readers.

Furthermore, in this short extract, the frequency of mentioning “foreign spouses” as these “new Taiwan kids”’ mothers is extremely high. Such repetition highlights and problematizes the
motherhood of FMIs, which echoes the image of them as incapable or unqualified mothers as discussed earlier, and places blame on them for the maladjustment and violence of their children. In the conclusion of this article, not surprisingly, this highly stigmatizing representation against “foreign spouses” and their children, along with the exemption of the Taiwanese’s responsibility, legitimates the following treatment proposed for “children of foreign-spouse families” regarding their “problem:”

In order to avoid the recurrence of similar unfortunate accidents, The Family Education Center authorized the Social Care Association of Yunlin County to host from 10/27 to 29 and from 11/10 to 12, 3-day/ 2-night Life, Education, and Growth Camps for children from foreign-spouse families, teaching new Taiwan kids knowledge and skills for developing interpersonal relationships. (“New Taiwan Kids Life and Growth Camp, Free,” 2006-10-19/United Daily/C2)

Reinforced by the media representation of FMIs as social burdens and problems without contribution to the society in general, the antagonism against them may further contribute to the rationalization and legitimization of social inequality and thus increase the challenges faced by the social activists in their campaign for the civil rights of FMIs, as demonstrated in the following extract:

Yesterday the “New Immigrants Research Association” was also launched. The president Chai Song-lin cited a report that two-thirds of Taiwanese believed foreign spouses were treated unfairly, but when asked whether they should be treated equally, “eighty percent [of Taiwanese] said no,” which rendered [New Immigrants Research Association and New Immigrants Care Association] a heavy mission. (“New Immigrant Care Association, to Take the Role of Village Deity” 2006-10-16/United Daily/A9)

(3) FMIs as invaders from the outland

One common feature of xenophobic discourse is the emphasis of the others (vis-à-vis us) as sources of problems or threats so as to invoke social anxiety (van Dijk, 1991; Mitten & Wodak, 1993; van Leeuwen, 1996), which could be seen in both the previously discussed theme of FMIs as social burdens/problems and in this other prevalent theme of FMIs as invaders from the outland. Such representation of FMIs as invaders is realized jointly through the depiction of
them as an *influx of population* (FB 4, FS 18, NI 7) and through the emphasis placed on their *foreignness* (FB 6, FS 31, NI 8). As the former highlights the number, percentage, or rising trend of FMI population, the latter involves the broadcast of their nationality of origin.

While the representation of FMIs as an influx of population itself does not necessarily embed positive or negative attitudes towards them, its frequent collocation with other derogatory images nevertheless enhances the negativity of this representation. For instance, in extract (14) above, the remark of the increasing number of “foreign spouses” in Yunlin County is used to imply the urgency and severity of the “problem” of their maladjusted children. Earlier discussed extract (2), whose topic was the difficulty the foreign mother has in educating her children, is presented after the following statement:

(17) 肯愛協會表示, 國內外籍配偶約 37 萬人, 據教育部統計, 超過三萬名外籍配偶所生的新台灣之子已進入國小, 國中就讀。

The Love Association expressed, there are about 370,000 foreign spouses in our country. According to the statistics by the Ministry of Education, more than 30,000 new Taiwan kids born to foreign spouses have entered elementary or high schools. (“新台灣之子 自覺「和同學不同」” “New Taiwan Kids, Feeling ‘Different from Classmates’,” 2006-10-26/United Daily/C5)

Such rhetorical design, with statistics followed by a detailed report of one or two detailed *cases* may lead the readers to infer the prevalence of the described matter. By emphasizing the large number of FMIs, a sense of urgency is created, suggesting that these “problems” have to be treated as soon as possible.

As illustrated in these extracts, the most frequent image collocated with the representation of FMIs as an influx of population is that of incapable mothers, which may have to do with the hidden agenda of maintaining *population quality* of Taiwanese, which was repeated considerably in early political and media discourses advocating more strict *management* over FMIs, especially their *birth control*. As Hsia (2002) and Chen (2005) pointed out, the children of such transnational marriages are regarded as *secondary* and even harmful to the population quality of Taiwan, and thus are not welcome by “Taiwanese society and hygiene and population policy makers” (Chen, 2005, p.178).

Even though the overt discourse of such superior Taiwanese perspective has been protested largely by activist groups and has gradually faded out from the mass media, this agenda is nevertheless maintained in a more subtle manner, through broadcasting the huge number and inappropriate quality of these “foreign” mothers. In the following extract, being born to a “foreign spouse” is treated as self-explanatory of the inferiority of the children:
Principal Wu Wen-yi expressed, among 1690 students in school, there are 216 aboriginals, 176 children of foreign spouses, 235 exempted from insurance fees because of familial poverty, over 200 receiving subsidy because they cannot afford lunch at school, and 140 with book charges and/or tuition (partially) waived. Also because the tuition and other charges have not been completely collected up to today, the Parents Association has loaned [them] more than NT$100,000. ("寫真 POLO 衫募款 僑愛助學弱勢" “Photo POLO Shirts for Fund Raising, Qiao-ai" Subsidizes Underprivileged Children,” 2006/10/30, United Daily, C2.)

Through the co-listing of “children of foreign spouses” and other socially unprivileged children who cannot afford lunch, insurance, or schooling, this text assumes that all of the foreign-spouse families have equally underprivileged status as the latter, regardless of their actual socioeconomic conditions, as if being “foreign” itself is sufficient for constructing their inferiority.

Such Taiwanese superiority is also frequently realized in the news through the emphasis of differences between us (superior self) and them (inferior others), which tend to be framed in terms of the deviance of FMIs and their children from expected societal norms. Take the following extract for instance:

As a survey targeting foreign spouses conducted two years ago revealed, 84% “New Taiwan Kids” had difficulty in doing homework; more than half felt themselves “different from others.” Therefore, the Love Association, the Teacher Chang Funds, and the Pearl Fund Association initiated “Love Doughnut” service, showing care to “New Taiwan Kids” through family service and academic assistance. (“新台灣之子 自覺「和同學不同」” “New Taiwan Kids, Feeling ‘Different from Classmates’,” 2006-10-26/United Daily/C5)

Two features of this text deserve more discussion. First, the identity of these “foreign spouses” and their children are represented as interchangeable. While the study conducted two years ago is referred to as targeting “foreign spouses,” it is in fact their children who were surveyed. It reveals again a reduction of FMIs’ identity to the mothers of “new Taiwan kids.” Second, the “new Taiwan kids’” feeling “different from others” is treated as a problem that needs to be corrected by the intervention of social services, which indicates the Taiwanese-centric view of their difference or “foreignness” as problematic deviance requiring fixing. Therefore,
assimilation is again proposed as the solution to make them less foreign and more Taiwanese:

(20) 台灣新移民愈來愈多，新竹市目前就學的中、小學生就有 888 人，新移民與新台灣之子如何融入社區，相當重要。

There are more and more new immigrants in Taiwan. In Hsinchu City alone, there are 888 elementary and junior high school students [who are new Taiwan kids.] How new immigrants and new Taiwan kids will assimilate into the community is very important. (“新移民說故事 台上台下都掉淚” “New Immigrants Told Stories, Tears among Cast and Crowd,” 2006-10-29/United Daily/C2)

Furthermore, not all FMIs are treated in the same way in mainstream news reports, which is to a large degree contingent on the economic status of their countries/areas of origin. As mentioned earlier, in the emergence and spread of the three labels in question, only those from Mainland China and Southeast Asian countries, which have relatively lower economic power than Taiwan, tend to be classified into the labeled category. Women from economically more advanced countries such as the US, Europe, or Japan are not commonly labeled “foreign brides,” “foreign spouses,” or “new immigrants,” even though they are also immigrants based on transnational marriages. This ethnic-specific tendency is also reflected in the choice to broadcast the FMIs’ nationality of origin made by the news reporters, such as “Huang Mi-lah from Indonesia”, “Ran Bai-xui a Vietnamese mother,” “Indonesian woman Song Qiu-ni,” “Vietnamese Ding zhuang,” “‘Ah-zi’ the Indonesian Spouse,” and “one son of Vietnamese spouse,” just to name a few. In the whole data set, the reported nationalities of these immigrants only include China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Philippines, all of which are economically less developed countries or areas. By doing so, the economic inferiority of these countries of origin is mapped onto the FMIs from these countries. As shown in the case of the “Vietnamese mother” in excerpt (2) and (7), they seem to be doomed for the representation as foreigners/outsiders no matter how many years they have stayed in Taiwan and in the marriage with Taiwanese, and whether they have naturalized their citizenship.

(2) 越南籍媽媽阮氏白雪嫁來台灣十年，兒子就讀小學四年級。現為賽珍珠基金會志工的她說，當孩子讀幼幼班時，她開始讀華語班，三年後畢業，剛好兒子上小一，「ㄅㄆㄇㄈ」、數學加減乘除她還可以應付；現在兒子功課越來越難，不常出現或筆畫多的國字會看不懂，或像「同事」寫成「同式」。

Ran Bai-xui a Vietnamese mother has married into Taiwan for ten years and has a son in the fourth grade at elementary school. She who currently volunteers in the Pearl S. Buck Foundation said, when her child attended the lowest class in kindergarten, she began to attend Chinese courses. When she graduated three years later, her son just attended the first grade and she could barely handle “bo-po-mo-fo” and basic math. Now the schoolwork of her son gets more and more difficult and she can’t understand the less common Chinese characters or those with more
strokes, or she may replace “同事” (tongxu, “co-workers”) with “同式” (mispeelling of tongxu) in writing. (“新台灣之子 自覺“和同學不同”,” “New Taiwan Kids, Feeling ‘Different from Classmates’,” 2006-10-26/United Daily/C5)

(7) 另一金獅獎得主謝秀鴛, 來自北越河內市, 為了協助夫家改善經濟, 她投入洗薑、包裝毛巾、種香菇等粗活, 工作雖辛苦, 家庭生活美滿, 與婆婆如同母女親密。10年前她初到台灣, 心裡不安又惶恐, 夜裡常暗自哭泣, 甚至想逃回越南, 現在慶幸有好老公、好婆婆, 自己扮演好媽媽的角色, 也以成為台灣媳婦為榮。

Another winner of Golden Lion Award, Hsieh Xio-yuan from Hanoi, North Vietnam, devoted herself to laborer jobs such as washing ginger, packing towels, and planting mushrooms, in order to help improve the husband’s family’s finances. Even though the work was hard, she had a happy family life and a close relationship with her mother-in-law just like daughter and mother. 10 years ago she just came to Taiwan. Feeling anxious and worried, she often cried secretly at night and even though of running back to Vietnam. Now she feels lucky that she has a good husband and a good mother-in-law. She plays well the role of a good mother, and feels proud of being a Taiwanese daughter-in-law. (new Taiwan模範家庭金獅獎頒獎 “New Taiwan Model Family Golden Lion Award Bestowed,” 2006-10-23/United Daily/C1)

(4) FMIs as victims of mistreatment

FMIs as victims of mistreatment is another theme found across labels, but with fewer incidences (FB 3, FS 5, NI 2) than the other themes introduced above. The sparseness of such representation in news media seems to contradict the widely held impression of them as victims of domestic abuse in Taiwanese society. One feature of these news texts representing FMIs as victims is that none of them provide details about how they are abused or mistreated. Instead, they are mostly mentioned with only peripheral importance in the texts, such as in excerpt (21), or described as a general fact, as in (9):

(21) 蔷群慈善基金會以4000萬元在永靖鄉福興國小附近購置1公頃多土地, 將規劃失能老人、外籍配偶家暴庇護站、中輟生家園等3棟大樓。基金會已向內政部爭取補助, 另展開愛心募款, 希望打造彰化縣第一座社會福利園區。

The Wei-chun Charity Foundation purchased more than one hectare of land near Fu-xing Elementary School in Yongjin Township for 40,000,000 NT dollars and plan to construct three buildings for disabled elderly, domestic-abused foreign spouses, and dropouts from schools. The foundation has applied for subsidies to the Ministry of the Interior and started collecting donations for charity, hoping to build the first social welfare park in Changhua. (“園遊會為弱勢募款 與弱智同歡” “Carnival, Fund Raising for Unprivileged, Fun with Intellectually Challenged,” 2006-10-16/United Daily/C1)

(9) 社工員陳瑟說, 台東是民風保守的後山, 遠渡重洋來台的外籍配偶需兼負起家中媳婦、太太、新台灣之子母親的角色, 並不是那麼容易, 有很多外籍配偶面臨家暴問題, 卻求助無門, 希望未來能夠主動協助, 讓
外籍配偶們在台灣落地生根、安身立命。

Chen Se the social worker said, Taitung is the back-mountain area with conservative folkways. It is not that easy for foreign spouses from far overseas to assume the roles of daughters-in-law, wives, and mothers of new Taiwan kids. Many foreign spouses are faced with the problem of domestic abuse but find no way for help. It is hoped that in the future [the association] can provide active assistance to help these foreign spouses become rooted and settle down in Taiwan. (“外籍配偶中心 台東揭牌啟用” “Foreign Spouse Center, Curtain Raised in Taitung,” 2006-10-01/United Daily/C2)

This shortage of news stories of domestic abuse victims may be attributed to either that the number of FMIs suffering domestic abuse is not as high as commonly believed, or that it is so prevalent, at least in the perception of the news reporters and editors, that it is not news-worthy anymore. Even though there might not be a certain answer between these two scenarios, given that there is no reliable statistics of FMIs suffering domestic abuse, the following excerpt about the making of an independent film may provide some further insight:

(22) 大倉島有兩個外籍新娘落跑，陳利雲越南籍的弟媳阮秋水飾演飽受家暴之苦的外籍配偶，梁修身說「她一畫瘀青妝就哭」，因為「想到其他越南新娘的遭遇」。
Two foreign brides ran away from the Da-tsang Island. Cheng li-yuan’s Vietnamese sister-in-law played a foreign spouse suffering badly from domestic abuse. Liang Xiu-xeng (the director) said, “she cried every time she wore the bruise make-up” because she “thought of the experiences of other Vietnamese brides.” (“搏海上學 大倉島民 演自己的辛酸” “Fighting the Sea to Attend School, Da-tsang Islanders Acted out Own Hardships,” 2006-10-25/United Daily/A11)

The connection between the two run-away “foreign brides” and those who suffer domestic abuse is not made clear in the text. However, a possible interpretation may be that the former ran away because of mistreatment from their family, given the implication of domestic abuse as prevalent among “foreign brides” through the expression “thinking of other Vietnamese brides’ experiences.” This text among others seems to usualize the occurrence of domestic abuse upon these “foreign brides,” indicating that such experiences are so common that there is no need for the author to clarify what these “experiences” really are in the text.

The other examples that manifest the under-representation of FMIs as victims involve the authors’ choices of framing, as illustrated in excerpt (23) under the title “Polygamy in Rural Village: For Increasing Labor Force?”:

(23) 詹江村說，經濟景氣不佳，失業率高，但勞委會資料顯示，缺工率也高，只是現代人對於勞力密集的工作不感興趣；他的了解，農村勞動力的缺乏並不亞於工廠，但是政府未同意農村引進外勞，所以，有農民
Jeng Jiang-tsuen said, the economy is contracting and the rate of unemployment is high, but according to the data from the Counsel of Labor Affairs, the shortage of labor force is also high, given that nowadays people are not interested in labor-intensive work. As far as he knew, the labor shortage of rural villages was comparable to that of factories, but the government has not approved the import of foreign laborers (for farming). Therefore, some farmers and their wives have performed fake divorces, and married foreign spouses, in order to get one more labor unit for the family. (“農村三人行 為了增加勞動力?” “Polygamy in Rural Village: For Increasing Labor Force?” 2006-10-25/United Daily/C2)

With the detailed quote from the official, the article frames this issue of “polygamy in rural village” as a matter of economics, instead of morality. With the attribution of this problem to “the shortage of labor force” and “the disapproval of government for importing foreign laborers,” the motivation of the farmers’ fake divorce and re-marriage seem to be highly understood and viewed in a sympathetic light. Even though the question mark in the title appears to imply a somewhat reserved attitude of the author, no counter statements or reasoning is provided in the article to balance this economic-oriented account. Therefore, while the “foreign spouses” are as a matter of fact victims of such collusion of the farmers and their (ex)wives, this article does not represent them as such.

Compared to the image of FMIs as victims, which tends to be normalized, naturalized, or under-represented, through the lack of detail, the one example in the current data that portrays one “foreign bride” as a domestic abuser on the contrary provides vivid description with a lot of detail:

(24) 「如果生命可以重來，我還是會選擇『身心障礙』的命運；但結婚？我一定說不！」黃乃輝說，腦麻對他已不再是障礙，但剛娶外籍新娘時適應的痛苦，卻讓他多次出現自殺念頭，「比這數十年都未曾面對的磨難」。

六年前為了撫平感情創傷，黃乃輝在柬埔寨閃電結婚，頂著「十大傑出青年」光環，卻「進口妻子」，備受社會質疑。婚後適應問題讓夫妻倆大吵小吵不斷，另一半從一句中文都不會，吵架要打電話找翻譯，到一年後可罵流利華語，「都是吵架的功勞！」

“If I could re-live my life, I would still choose the fate as ‘handicapped,’ but getting married? I would definitely say no!” Huang Nai-huey said that cerebral palsy is not a handicap to him anymore, but the pain of adjustment from marrying a foreign bride has made him think of suicide many times, which “far surpassed the tribulations I faced in tens of years”

Six years ago after a traumatic relationship, Huang blitz-married in Cambodia. Honored as one of “Ten Outstanding Youths” he was questioned by the society for “importing a wife.” The adjustment problem has caused endless quarrels between the couple after getting married. His wife’s Chinese has improved within one year from not even
knowing a single Chinese sentence and having to call for interpreters for the fight, to the eloquent use of abusive Chinese language. “All credited to the fights.” (“新移民關懷協會 要扮土地公” “New Immigrant Care Association, to Take the Role of Village Deity” 2006-10-16/United Daily/A9)

In this excerpt, even though the use of the broad term “adjustment problem” does not seem to place a blame upon either of the couple, the husband may gain a more righteous status in the readers’ mind through the mention of him as one of “honored” “Ten Outstanding Youths,” who has been tortured by this marriage to the degree of being suicidal. It is also worth pointing out that as “quarrels” and “fights” normally involves reciprocity, the man may as well have used “eloquent abusive Chinese language” against his wife. However, it is the “foreign bride” who gets red-flagged as being abusive. Therefore, the foreign wife, whose own voice again is absent in this news report, is portrayed implicitly as a “domestic abuser” to this adorable, empathizable man, without actually having conducted any behavior that can actually be categorized as domestic abuse.

In addition, through the framing of his personal experience of marrying a “foreign bride” as an irrational decision, “blitz-married after a traumatic relationship,” which caused more pain than his tens-of-years of suffering as a cerebral palsy patient, these quotes from Huang produce a very negative message about transnational marriages with “foreign brides.”

(5) FMIs as model minority

The concept of model minority was first introduced in literature (e.g. Cohen, 1992; Lee, 1999) concerning the representation of Asian Americans in mass media, especially in commercials, which reflect and reproduce the stereotypical image of them as “highly affluent, well educated, professional, and technologically skilled” (Paek & Shah, 2003, p. 228). Despite its positivity on a superficial level, such image risks “simplifying, naturalizing, and fixing ‘difference’ between individuals, groups, and races” (ibid, p. 240) and thus may exacerbate “tensions among minorities” (ibid, p. 239).

FMIs represented as model minority in the current data differ from the media image of Asian Americans in the sense that the differentiation between model and non-model minorities in the case of FMIs is made within, instead of between groups. In other words, some FMIs are represented as better than others in the collected news articles. Questions are then raised: By what token are these FMIs judged as better? And who are the judges?

To answer these questions, two (attributed) traits of FMIs are found to be relevant in the current data, namely their cultural assimilation and cultural performances. The former refers to
their participation and internalization of Taiwanese culture and value system, while the latter involves their cultures of origin.

For the construction of FMIs as culturally assimilated, the signs of their assimilation include their compliance with and advocacy for the traditional patriarchal values, as shown in the earlier discussion of “authentic Taiwanese daughters-in-law,” as well as their engagement in learning Chinese language or other aspects related to Taiwanese culture, mostly by attending Chinese literacy or so-called “life adjustment” programs sponsored by the government or social welfare services, as demonstrated in excerpt (25) and (26).

(25) In the ceremony of National Day celebration of Hsinchu City, many foreign spouses with outstanding performance in City Government Chinese Program dressed themselves beautifully to receive the awards on stage. Their kids brought flowers to them, and the atmosphere was warm and sweet. (“Hsinchu City National Day Celebration, Foreign Spouses as Protagonists,” 2006-10-11/United Daily/C2)

(26) 400 foreign spouses attended the Life Adjustment Program held by County Government, which was completed with the commencement in County Government [Building]. Quite a few mother-in-laws and husbands accompanied them to the exhibition of their study work. [The foreign spouses] also performed the skills and arts they learned in Taiwan to heat up the atmosphere. (“Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

A double-bladed function of this image of model FMIs as culturally assimilated was found in the data. On the one hand, their assimilation tends to be framed as the solution to their problems, as appearing repeatedly in the representation of FMIs as incapable mothers and social problems and prevalently depicted as positive traits of them if they display some success in relevant areas. On the other hand, a very interesting counter-example shows that such success in assimilation, in this case the mastery of Chinese, is not always desired:

(24) Six years ago after a traumatic relationship, Huang blitz-married in Cambodia. Honored as one of “Ten Outstanding Youths,” he was questioned by the society for “importing a wife.” The adjustment problem has caused endless
quarrels between the couple after getting married. His wife’s Chinese has improved within one year from not even knowing a single Chinese sentence and having to call for interpreters for the fight, to the eloquent use of abusive Chinese language. “All credited to the fights.” (“新移民關懷協會 要扮土地公” “New Immigrant Care Association, to Take the Role of Village Deity” 2006-10-16/United Daily/A9)

The “foreign bride’s” proficient use of Chinese, which tends to be highly appreciated in other news, is taken as a negative trait in this text, probably because it is now used to fight against her husband, which conflicts with the traditional female virtue of an obedient wife. This double standard reveals a Taiwanese male-centric logic behind the overt encouragement of FMIs’ assimilation. That is, to be considered a model FMI, one has to assimilate just enough to serve the husband’s family’s needs, but should never assimilate so much that she can fight back from an equal position just like a real Taiwanese woman.

The second set of values that define some FMIs as model minority involves the display of their cultures of origin. Unlike the pro-assimilation view, this is the only discernable theme in the data that reflects to some degree the alternative perspective that respects their cultural diversity. While we may celebrate this more open-minded attitude, it should as well be noticed that this appreciation of their original cultures is still biased and is not immune of the ideologies of Taiwanese superiority.

First of all, the scope of appreciation of FMIs’ cultures in the current data is only limited to very superficial aspects, such as food in Ex. (2), (27) and (28), and clothing in (2):

(2) 來自越南的阮美蓉代表致謝詞，她來台已 3 年，為了這次的結業典禮，她請越南娘家寄來當初結婚時所穿的禮服（也是越南國服），昨天她就穿這件喜氣洋洋的禮服上台致詞。她說，婆婆與老公很疼惜她，育有 1 女，台菜很好吃，她偶爾也煮越南菜給夫家品嘗，生活美滿。

Ran Mei-ron from Vietnam gave a gratitude speech as the representative. She has been in Taiwan for 3 years. For this commencement, she asked her extended family in Vietnam to mail her wedding gown (also the national costume of Vietnam) and she wore this blessed and joyful dress to give her speech yesterday. She said, her mother-in-law and husband “tung-xi” her very much. She has one daughter. (She feels) Taiwanese food is delicious, and she sometimes also cooks Vietnamese dishes for her husband’s family. She has a blissful life. (“結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝” “Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

(27) 台北市長馬英九致詞時表示，台北是個國際化的城市，街頭林立的異國料理餐廳，可看出文化融合力，目前台北市共有 2 萬 8 千多位「新移民」，其中以東南亞國籍最多，這些新移民已在臺灣落地生根，也為台灣美食帶來更豐富的樣貌與深度。

Ma Ying-jiu the Mayer of Taipei City expressed in his speech that Taipei is an international city whose power of
incorporating [different] cultures manifests in the prosperous restaurants of ethnic food. In the present Taipei has over 28,000 “new immigrants,” most of whom from Southeast Asia. These new immigrants have developed their roots in Taiwan, and have enriched the width and depth of Taiwanese culinary arts. (“新移民文化節超大月餅驚豔” “New Immigrant Cultural Festival, Gigantic Moon Cake to One’s Amazement,” 2006-10-02/United Daily/C1)

(28) 新竹市教育局昨天在北門國小舉辦「國際親子日」新移民子女教育輔導園遊會，各地社區、學校，都邀外籍配偶，將家鄉的美味、點心，帶到現場，有泰國蝦餅、印尼小吃、越南青木瓜絲、泰式奶茶等，讓新竹民眾嘗鮮。

The Department of Education of Hsinchu City yesterday held the New Immigrant Children Education and Assistance Fair for “International Parents’ Day.” Communities and schools from its districts all invited foreign spouses to bring to the site their delicious home dishes and snacks, such as Thai shrimp cakes, Indonesian snacks, Vietnamese papaya strips, and Thai milk-tea, to let the citizens of Hsinchu taste the freshness. (“新移民說故事 台上台下都掉淚” “New Immigrants Told Stories, Tears among Cast and Crowd,” 2006-10-29/United Daily/C2)

Furthermore, the purpose of their cultural performance, as indicated in these excerpts, also positions them as the servant of Taiwanese. For instance, in excerpt (27), it is for the “enrichment of Taiwanese culinary arts” and in (28), it is for the Taiwanese citizens of Hsinchu City to “taste the freshness” of the ethnic dishes prepared by these immigrants.

From the discourse of FMIs as model minority, a “double-bind structure” (Hsia, 2002) is constructed and imposed upon these reported figures and other “foreign brides,” “foreign spouses,” or “new immigrants.” That is: if one acts like such model minority, she has to subscribe to the dominant values and worldviews which define her through Taiwanese men’s gaze; if she does not, she risks being judged as a bad FMI.

2.3.3. Label-specific Tendencies

Despite the strong similarities in the representations of the FMIs under different labels, as demonstrated in the five common themes discussed above, there are some differences between labels found in the current data. These differences, however, are not as salient as the similarities between labels and are only tendencies instead of discrete features confined to any given label in specific. These tendencies include:

(1) “Foreign brides” are more likely to be represented as material beings.
(2) “Foreign spouses” are more likely to be represented as social beings.
(3) “New immigrants” are more likely to be represented as cultural beings.
(1) “Foreign brides” as material beings

The view of FMIs as material beings involves the metaphorical representation of them as inhuman commodities, which recurs prevalently in the portrayal of “foreign brides” in the current data. In these texts, the “foreign brides” are either portrayed as goods that can be purchased and utilized for the buyers’ purposes, such as the expression “importing a wife” in excerpt (24) or the emphasis placed on the monetary costs in excerpt (29), or dehumanized as cases or business of marriage agency or governmental management, such as in excerpt (29) and (30):

(24) 六年前為撫平情傷，黃乃輝在柬埔寨閃電結婚，頂著「十大傑出青年」光環，卻「進口妻子」，備受社會質疑。婚後適應問題讓夫妻倆大吵小吵不斷，另一半從一句中文都不會，吵架要打電話找翻譯，到一年後可罵流利華語，「都是吵架的功勞！」

Six years ago after a traumatic relationship, Huang blitz-married in Cambodia. Honored as one of “Ten Outstanding Youths,” he was questioned by the society for “importing a wife.” The adjustment problem has caused endless quarrels between the couple after getting married. His wife’s Chinese has improved within one year from not even knowing a single Chinese sentence and having to call for interpreters for the fight, to the eloquent use of abusive Chinese language. “All credited to the fights.” ("新移民關懷協會 要扮土地公" “New Immigrant Care Association, to Take the Role of Village Deity” 2006-10-16/United Daily/A9)

(29) 娶越妻走捷徑 等一年等無人
「只需3個月」 13人每人花20萬 從此無下文 業者說可再花8萬 擡陸娘 仲介業：正派經營

Marrying Vietnamese Wives through Shortcut, One-Year Waiting Generates No Outcome

“Only need 3 months.” 13 People spent NT$ 200,000 each. Never hearing back from [the broker]. Agency offered Mainland brides for extra 80,000 NT dollars. Agency: [we are] decent/upright business.

("娶越妻走捷徑 等一年等無人” “Marrying Vietnamese Wives through Shortcut, One-Year Waiting Generates No Outcome,” 2006-10-25/United Daily/C4)

(30) 因兩岸交流日漸頻繁，兩岸聯姻、外籍新娘及外勞、外籍看護等業務量大增，行政院核定將境管局提升位階為內政部移民署，今年十二月可望正式成立。

In reaction to the increasing interflow with China, and the amplified business of cross-strait marriages, foreign brides, foreign laborers, and foreign nursing assistants, the Executive Yuan planned to level up the Immigration Office to National Immigration Agency and looked forward to its inauguration in the coming December. ("吳振吉掌移民署生變” “Wu Chen-Chi, Plan for Taking Charge of National Immigration Agency Changed,” 2006-10-30/United Daily/A3)

The over-representation of FMIs as mothers, while found associated with all the labels in question, is especially salient in the case of “foreign brides,” given that other domestic roles (i.e.
wives, and daughters-in-law) are rarely mentioned in the discourse of “foreign brides.” This enormous attention paid to their maternal role may also contribute to the materialization of “foreign brides,” which echoes the view of them as reproductive tools that appears frequently in earlier political discourse as the following example taken from Policy of Taiwan Women’s Health (Executive Yuan, 2003):

此類婚姻係經婚姻仲介管道匆促湊合，主要目的在於娶妻生子，由於該等外籍新娘，年紀輕，教育程度低，且因文化背景之差異，故所引致的生育保健問題不容忽視，幼兒的保健照護亦需給予協助，宜由衛生工作人員予以收案管理，提供必要之協助。

The main purpose of such marriage, which is pooled rashly through agency, is to reproduce the next generation. The problems concerning child bearing, raised from the young age, low education level, and different cultural backgrounds of these foreign brides, allow no ignorance. Assistance is also needed in childcare. Health and hygienic staff should collect and manage these cases and provide necessary assistance. (p. 5)

In general, “foreign brides” shows the most convergence in its representation among the three labels in question, and suffers more marginalization and stigmatization as lesser-humans compared to the other two.

(2) “Foreign spouses” as social beings

The term “social beings” here is used to contrast with “foreign brides” as material beings. Although one may argue that mothers, as which “foreign brides” are predominantly represented, are also social beings, the image of “foreign brides” as mothers is extremely passive and isolated from other social interactions. In comparison, “foreign spouses” are represented as more “social” in two aspects:

Firstly, social beings should be able to assume multiple social roles/identities. As the default label of FMIs proposed by the government and widely adopted by mass media, the image of “foreign spouses” shows more variety and reflects a wider coverage of social roles that may be taken by the FMIs, ranging from various domestic members such as wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law, to more active roles such as career women and service providers, with the latter appearing exclusively with this specific label.

Related to the first feature of social beings as reflected in the image of “foreign spouses,” the second feature of them as social beings involves their participation in social interactions in multiple contexts. Unlike the passive image of “foreign brides” confined to the domain of household, “foreign spouses” are in some cases portrayed as active participants of society: They may be learners of Chinese program, driving test takers, workers, volunteers, small business owners, etc.
We must keep in mind, however, while the participation and contribution of “foreign spouses” are to some degree recognized in these representations of more active social roles, the frequency of such positive representations are relatively low, with limited scope, and portrayed with less deliberation than negative ones such as “foreign spouses” as social burdens, incapable mothers, or foreign invaders, as discussed in the earlier section.

(3) “New immigrants” as cultural beings

“New immigrants,” the latest label proposed to counter the biased and discriminative use of “foreign brides” and “foreign spouses,” does to some degree represent FMIs in a more balanced manner. For instance, the representation of “new immigrants” as incapable individuals is totally comparable to that of them as competent ones (both 17%).

“New immigrants” is also the only label that enjoys equal representations between the culturally assimilated and cultural performers (both 22%), mitigating the prevalent preference for assimilation over diversity in the current data.

Through this acknowledgement of “new immigrants” as individuals with abilities and divergent cultures, discourse of “new immigrants” is less likely to portray FMIs as a null set that has no life as discussed earlier about excerpt (4) or no language as in excerpt (33), which totally neglect the culture they bring in with them.

(4) 嫁來台灣 5 年的印尼女子宋秋妮說, 兒子做功課時常需用到電腦, 修機器的老公也不懂, 派她先來學習再教孩子讀書、上網查資料。來台 2 年的越南籍的丁氏莊才學完烹飪和識字班, 又參加電腦課, 希望在短時間內融入生活, 當個道地的台灣媳婦。

Indonesian woman Song Qiu-ni, married into Taiwan for 5 years, said that her son needed to use the computer for school assignments. Her mechanic husband, who did not know about computer either, sent her to learn [computer skills] in order to teach their son to study and research using the Internet. Vietnamese Ding zhuang, who came to Taiwan two years ago, attends this computer course while she just finished the learning and literacy programs, with the hope that she may assimilate into life and become an authentic Taiwanese daughter-in-law. (“外籍婦學敲鍵盤伊媚兒回鄉” “Foreign Women Learning to Hit the Keys, Emailing Home,” 2006-10-12/United Daily/C2)

(33) 富里鄉竹田村一名外籍配偶, 丈夫失業, 家庭經濟又不佳, 想找兼差工作, 卻因語言無法溝通、無一技之長等問題找不到工作。她說, 非常感謝就業服務站提供了兼差工作, 讓她可以兼顧家中老小。

A foreign spouse from Fu-li, Ju-tian, whose husband was unemployed and familial financial condition was not good, had wanted to find a part-time job but couldn’t because she couldn’t communicate with language and she didn’t have a specialty. She said that she was grateful that Job Service Station offered her a part-time job, allowing her to take care of the family at the same time. (“富里徵才 教你五不、三要” “Fu-li Job Fair, Teaching You Three ’Do’s, Five ‘Don’t’s ,” 2006-10-28/United Daily/C2)
We have to keep in mind, however, the credit these “new immigrants” get for their cultural diversity in the current news data is still highly oriented to superficial elements of their cultures, such as food and clothing, and is not exempted from the ideology of Taiwanese superiority, as discussed earlier. Furthermore, despite this preliminary acknowledgement of the “new immigrants”’ cultures of origin, the most prevalent presentations of them still resemble those of “foreign brides” and “foreign spouses,” namely mothers, users of social services, influx of population, and foreigners, all of which report twice the frequency of “new immigrants” as competent individuals or cultural performers.

2.4. Conclusion

2.4.1. Summary of findings

After accounting for the historical development of the three labels, “foreign brides,” “foreign spouses,” and “new immigrants,” within their sociocultural context and examining the current use of them in mainstream news articles, this chapter reports the following findings:

(1) The mainstream media use of the three labels in question reflects more similarities than differences, manifesting in the five cross-label themes: FMIs as traditional female domiciliary members, social burden/problems, invaders of the outland, victims of mistreatment, and model minority.

(2) Most of the themes portray FMIs negatively, reflecting and reproducing the ideologies of Taiwanese superiority and male-centric values. Positive representations of them tend to be sparse and limited to certain areas (e.g. traditional female virtues; success in assimilation; performers of ethnic cultures), which as well define them through Taiwanese men’s gaze.

(3) There was a shift of the use of labels in mainstream media discourse, from the earliest label “foreign brides” to “foreign spouses,” parallel to the government’s legitimization of the latter as the official label for FMIs in 2003, which could be seen as another evidence of the common alignment between the nation-state agency and media. The incidence of the former has dropped largely since then and now is the least used among the three labels in question. “New immigrants” on the other hand has drawn increasing attention since its media launch in 2003. However, the meaning of this newest label has not seemed to reach its full fledge, given its highly frequent collocation with “foreign spouses” used explanatory.

(4) All of the labels are used in a gendered manner, even though it is not prescribed in the literal meaning of “foreign spouses” and “new immigrants,” given the strong connection between
all of the three labels with female roles and images in the texts analyzed. This result negates the claim made by the Taiwanese government that the official label “foreign spouses” is “inclusive of both sexes” (Ministry of the Interior, 2006).

(5) The use of the three labels also tends to be ethnic-specific. Throughout the dataset, the FMIs’ nationalities are frequently broadcasted, but only limited to China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, and the Philippines. Theoretically, all the FMIs could be categorized as “foreign brides,” “foreign spouses,” or “new immigrants,” but the current data shows that only those from economically less developed Southeast Asian countries get to be labeled as such. Given that the images of these women, whose nationalities are called out in the texts, tend to be negative ones, this finding supports Wang’s (2005) argument that the term “foreign brides” reveals the disparagement against their countries of origin while “in general, women from [developed] countries such as Europe, US, and Japan...are not labeled as ‘foreign brides’” (p. 199). This chapter also suggests that this discrimination is taken up by its descendants “foreign spouses” and “new immigrants.”

(6) As for the differences, which are less salient than the commonalities among the three labels, this chapter did not find clearly cut boundaries between them but some tendencies, with “foreign brides” more likely to be represented as the most negative material beings, “foreign spouses” as social beings with a wider range, and “new immigrants” as cultural beings who are moderately credited for their cultures of origin.

2.4.2. Implications on the label change campaign in Taiwan and feminists’ pursuit of social change through linguistic reform

The debate in literature concerning labeling, especially the labeling of socially unprivileged groups or minorities, regards the question of the social impact of intentionally proposing and promoting label changes. In other words, can we change the world by changing the word?

Some insight might be borrowed from the feminists’ reflection on their campaign for non-sexist language. Ehrlich & King (1992), for instance, pointed out that while the feminists aimed to promote social reform through linguistic reform, introducing non-sexist terms itself would not necessarily lead to non-sexist usage of these terms. Similarly, Cameron (1998) also referred to simple substitution of words without critical thinking as superficial or even counterproductive. On the other hand, these authors also recognized the potential of linguistic changes as being part of a larger quest for social changes, as long as the adoption of the new forms were well thought through, and practiced with political awareness.

With the differences found in this chapter among the current use of the three labels for FMIs, especially given that the oldest one “foreign brides” as the most negative and the newest one
“new immigrants” as the most positive one in a relative sense, it evidences at least some awareness of the users concerning the political bearings carried by the labeling choices they make. In other words, the campaign for the use of “new immigrants” may potentially contribute to the subversion of the unequal power relation shared by the earlier labels and the representations clustering with them. Given the salient similarities in the representations of FMIs collocated with the three labels, however, we should not overlook the likelihood that the promoted “new immigrants” be re-appropriated and ascribe to the current dominant ideologies as exemplified in the development of the label “foreign spouses” described above. The key factor, as Ehrlich & King (1992) and Cameron (1998) pointed out, would be whether the political awareness gets to spread while the use of the label spreads. There has not been a concrete answer as to which scenario will occur to “new immigrants” given that it is still going through the definitional phase as mentioned earlier. The documentation of the further progression of this currently on-going campaign and shift of labeling for FMIs should be continued.

In this chapter I have discussed labeling of FMIs in mainstream news media as one way to represent them. In the next chapter I will examine another way to represent social actors, in the current study the FMIs and related individuals/organizations, namely the use of reported speech in mainstream news discourse.

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1 Hsia analyzed 33 news pieces in her earlier work (2002) and identified these associations between these three themes and “foreign brides.” Unfortunately, the same level of evidence was not provided in this work (2005) where she argued for the appropriation of “foreign spouses.” However, this argument that the meaning of “foreign brides” has to a large degree been mapped onto “foreign spouses” corresponds with my insider observation as a consumer of Taiwanese media, even though the detailed analysis has not yet been conducted.

2 The phrase 吃得開 (“eat well”) is a common lexical metaphor for “being successful.” Here it is used as a pun.

3 Chinese phonetic alphabet used in Taiwan.

4 A Japanese cartoon character

5 The phrase “New Taiwan” is commonly used to refer to things related to foreign spouses, such as “New Taiwan Family,” (the family they form with Taiwanese) “New Taiwan

6 Xiang-fu-jiao-zi (“assisting her husband and educating the children”) is an old Chinese idiom used to describe the very traditional role of women, which is not generally taken as a praise or something to be proud of by Taiwanese women.

7 FMIs in Taiwan are not generally perceived as contributors to the tax system because 1) it takes them at least 4 years to obtain the citizenship and become legitimate tax payers, and 2) most of them are housewives and do not bring in taxable income even after they become citizens.

8 The administrator of the Social Affairs Bureau of Taoyuan County.

9 Guo-lai-ren (“過來人”), “the one(s) that have come through” metaphorically refers to the
people who have experienced and overcome a certain adversity or difficulty in life. It is used in the context where they are expected to share their experience with people who are currently experiencing a similar life situation.

10 In this news article, the labels “foreign brides,” “foreign spouses,” and “new immigrants” were used interchangeably.

11 *Tu-di-gong* (土地公), the “Village Deity” conveys the image of a caring, supportive and protective figure.

12 Name of an elementary school.

13 This status is shared in the text by the children of FMIs and Taiwanese aboriginals, another ethnic minority in Taiwan.

14 Because of the special political relationship between Taiwan and China, FMIs from China are sometimes excluded from the label “foreign brides” or “foreign spouses” and textually presented with the juxtaposition of “Mainland and Foreign Brides” or “Foreign and Mainland Spouses.”

15 Chinese phonetic alphabet used in Taiwan.

16 The leading actress of the independent film.

17 A representative of the Counsel of Taoyuan County.

18 “Ten Outstanding Youths” is an annual prize in Taiwan, awarded to 10 youths who have outstanding contribution to the society of Taiwan or the world.

19 Women from Mainland China, defined and treated differently from FMIs from “foreign” countries by the Taiwanese government given the historical connection and political stalemate between Taiwan and China.

20 A candidate for the Director-general of the National Immigration Agency.
“Reports are rarely even-handed with all the various voices represented. Some are given prominence, and some marginalized. Some are used to frame others. Some are legitimized by being taken up in the newspaper’s or reporter’s voice, others are not.”

--Fairclough, 1995, p. 81

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have discussed one major way for representing social actors, in the current study the FMIs, which is the labeling of them. In this chapter, I will examine another common device for representing human characters, that is, the representation of their speech. The main difference of these two strategies, labeling and representation of speech, lies in that the former tends to be other-initiated, as suggested in Chapter 2, while the latter is taken from the represented characters’ own words and thus may be considered self-initiated. A common assumption is that since reported speech represents one’s own words, his/her perspective is also represented while being quoted. However, while the words are first produced by the original author, they are also interpreted, mediated, and appropriated by the second author who quotes them.

The beginning quote of Fairclough (which is also interpreted, mediated, and appropriated) points to the nature of the issue tackled in this chapter: the interrelationship between reported discourse, voice, representation, and power. In particular, this chapter examines the representation of voices of FMIs and related parties (e.g. the government, non-governmental organizations, husbands, educational personnel, etc.) and the relationships among these voices as well as the relationship between the voices of the reported sources and those of the reporting journalists in mainstream Taiwanese news discourse. I shall begin here with a discussion of the multiple meanings of voice.

3.1.1. Multiple Voicing of Voice

After decades of dominance of the structuralist view of languages as abstract systems since the Cours de linguistique générale was published in 1916, the recent reintroduction of voice as a
research topic for linguistic works, as Johnstone (2000) stressed, marks a large shift from the concern about *languages* to the interest in *discourse* and *speakers*. With this renewed attention towards the issue of voice, related concepts such as self, subjectivity, identity and agency have been revisited by linguists among other humanists and social scientists. As we try to find a definition of voice, however, we may find ourselves faced with the problem of polysemy.

Indeed, as Yancey pointed out in her edited book *Voices on Voice* (1994), voice is “a concept signifying different things to different people, a floating signifier changing from one text to the next” (p. viii). Before examining the voice(s) of FMI:s and others in the news data, it would be helpful to first look into what this term has been taken to mean, and to define it for the purpose of the current study. I shall begin this discussion with an overview of five main stances towards voice.

(1) **Voice is self-expressive.**

Voice as expressive of one’s inner self has been a classical definition of voice, deriving from the reference of physical voice: the (production of) sounds which enables speech. Analogical to the idiosyncratic physical voice, expressionists (e.g. Donald Graves; Peter Elbow; Donald Murray; Walker Gibson; Ken Macrorie) view voice as a tool to express one’s unique thoughts and identity. Some of them take this “self” as united and static while others stress its ever-changing feature and thus an emerging and developmental voice. Shared among these scholars is the assumption that there is a voice *within* the person, inherited and authentic, which is waiting to be uttered. Such an individualistic view of voice is also frequently found in our daily expressions, such as “speak your voice” or “make your voice be heard.”

(2) **Voice is negotiated.**

Unlike the expressionists mentioned above, the interactionists have turned their attention to the social aspect of voice. However, this divergence of emphases does not mean that the latter completely rejects the concept of individualized voice. For instance, Hymes (1995) has related voice to freedom, the freedom to “have one’s voice heard” and to “develop a voice worth hearing” (p. 64). On one hand Hymes admits the existence of “one’s voice,” but on the other hand the function of voice has to depend on whether and how it is “heard” and how it is evaluated (i.e. whether it is deemed “worth hearing”) by others.

(3) **Voice is appropriated.**

Another approach to voice pays particular attention to the trajectory of the construction of voice. Voice is in this approach viewed as not simply a here-and-now phenomenon where self-expression or interaction emerges but a product appropriated from other voices previously
experienced by the current voicing individual. As Bakhtin (1986) explained, “the word enters [one’s] context from another context, permeated with the interpretations of others. His own thought finds the word already inhabited” (p. 202). This notion of appropriation is also prevalent in CDA scholars’ (e.g. Fairclough, 1995a, 2003; Blommaert, 2005) discussion of intertextuality and feminist linguists’ (e.g. Spender, 1980; Ehrlich & King, 1992; McConell-Ginet, 2003) accounts for the development of sexist languages and their proposal for linguistic reforms against sexism.

(4) Voice is assigned.

Unlike the perspectives discussed above, which focus on the real-world relationship between the author and her/his “self,” or the author and others (i.e. listeners and other authors), this particular view of voice as assigned addresses the relationship between the author and the created heroes or characters. This view of voice as assigned by an author has been widely adopted in the field of literary criticism and writing pedagogy, particularly in relation to the genres that call for the linguistic representation of idiosyncratic characters, such as novels. Even while these characters may be (ideally) constructed as “verbally and semantically autonomous” (Bakhtin, 1981, p.315) from the author’s own consciousness (cf. “polyphony” in Bakhtin’s works), they rely on the author to “prepare the way for [such] autonomous voice by manipulating words ostensibly belonging to ‘neutral’ authorial speech” (ibid, p. 434, emphasis added). In other words, the characters’ autonomy within the text has to be legitimized by the author’s purposeful manipulation of language. Their voices are thus assigned through the words the author put into their mouth.

(5) Voice is ideological.

Viewing voice as relational and interactional between the voicing self and others as introduced in (2) and (3), linguists assuming a critical approach to language and discourse (e.g. Smitherman, 1986; van Dijk, 1991; Wong, 2005) have taken us one step further in the connection between voice and ideology. In this perspective, voice, while expressing oneself, embeds the ideological stance of that “self” in a given society, and is heard with evaluation and judgment by others who also take ideological stances. Therefore, “certain voices are acceptable, even valued, in certain roles, but not others” (Hymes, 1995, p. 70). When voicing individuals fail to align their voice with the norms valued in the context, or when the resources within their access do not allow them to put through their meanings and fulfill their intended functions, “the speakers lose voice” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 77). It is not that the voice has never existed, but it may be lost in the discursive practice, which is by its nature ideological.
As shown in these five approaches to voice mentioned above, the epistemology of voice varies depending on the researcher’s orientation towards self, language, discourse, and communication. For the purpose of this chapter, I will adopt an operational definition of voice from the Bakhtinian perspective of *dialogics*, which provides a multi-layered model of dialogues in the making of text. Dialogues involved in this process may include those between the author and the audience (i.e. voice is negotiated), between the authors and others whose voices they previously encountered and recontextualized for their own intentions (i.e. voice is simultaneously appropriated and self-expressive), or between the authors and the heroes or characters in the text they create (i.e. voice is assigned with consideration of the characters’ autonomy). More importantly in this study, I will approach these dialogues in light of the divergent ideological stances as embedded in the textual representation of multiple voices.

**3.1.2. Voice and Reported Speech**

As Voloshinov (1971) has suggested, reported speech should be understood as the intersection of multiple voices. In his word, reported speech is “speech within speech, message within message, and at the same time also speech about speech, message about message” (p. 149). On one hand reported speech *reproduces* the reported individual’s words and thoughts; on the other hand it *recontextualizes* these words and thoughts in alignment with the reporter’s intension. The relations between the reported and the reporting voice may vary, manifesting in different styles of quoting, which Voloshinov roughly classified into *linear* and *pictorial* styles. The linear style reports the speech verbatim and maintains “a clear and obvious boundary between the voice of the reporter, and the voice being reported” (Maybin, 2001, p.68) while with the pictorial style, the reported speech is “infiltrated with the reporter’s speech, and the boundaries become much more fuzzy” (ibid, p. 69). He has also pointed out that the choice of style is associated with the “prevailing ideological practice within a society” (ibid, p. 69). For instance, authorities tend to be reported in linear style more often than non-authorities.

Scholars in the school of CDA have further advanced the issue of reported speech, voice, and ideology, with particular attention paid to their use in news discourse. For instance, Fairclough (1995a), in agreement with Hall et al. (1978), pointed out that by quoting “preferred sources… [occupying] some ‘official’ or semi-official position” (p. 62-63, citing Halloran et al., 1970, p. 137) and presenting them as *transparent reality*, news reporters/editors “legitimize and reproduce existing asymmetrical power relations by putting across the voices of the powerful as if they were the voices of ‘common sense’” (p. 63).

Beyond the general observation of the use and function of reported speech in news media, van Dijk (1991) analyzed the distribution of reported speech in news reports related to ethnic
minorities and found that they were not only quoted with less frequency and importance, but tended to be reported with distance markers (e.g. quotation marks; certain reporting verbs such as “accuse” or “allege”), followed by white sources that “soften or deny” their accusations or accounts of events (p. 154). The white authorities (e.g. police officers; politicians) were preferred sources while representatives of minority organizations or Black leaders were “conspicuously absent” (p.174) even when the topics directly concern them. When minority individuals were quoted, the speech tended to be limited to personal experiences and was “seldom allowed to voice fundamental criticism of the authorities” (p. 175).

From the works mentioned above, we may summarize that under the ostensible objectivity of reported speech, journalists do not simply reproduce the speech of sources “as is” in the original context. They interpret, select, prioritize, and recontextualize the speech via their ideological stances, which predominantly align with elite or mainstream values and biases. How true is this observation for the news of FMIs in Taiwan? In the following sections of this chapter, I will examine the use of reported speech in the 82 news articles which I analyzed in the previous chapter in regards to the issue of labeling. For the purpose of this chapter, I will ask questions concerning not only whose voices are put across through this filter of the press, but also what content are voiced and how they are voiced through the use of the device of reported speech.

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1. Data

In this chapter I use the same dataset that was analyzed in chapter 2 for the labeling of FMIs. This dataset contains 82 articles about FMIs published in October, 2006 in the United Daily, which was selected to represent the mainstream news discourse given its high subscription.

3.2.2. Coding Scheme

In this study I divide reported speech broadly into three categories: Direct Quotation (DQ), Indirect Quotation (IQ), and a mixture of these two (MQ). This categorization has been used by analysts studying reported speech and voice (e.g. Fairclough, 1995a; Waugh, 1995; Obiedat, 2006; Kuo, 2007) with minimal variation. Although the distinction between these categories seems to be drawn upon the form of representation, the meaning, particularly the social, indexical meaning, has been found in these studies to change along with the author’s selection of form.

The orthographic and prototypical features and variations of each category in Chinese
journalism are summarized as follows (For detailed comparison between Chinese and English quotations, see Yung, 1996; Scollon & Scollon, 1997):

(1) Direct quotation (DQ)

A prototypical direct quotation in Chinese is featured by the use of leading reporting verbs (e.g. “say”) or phrases (e.g. “according to”), followed by a colon and quotation marks that confine the reported speech. The quote presented between the beginning and end quotation marks (「」) tends to be taken as verbatim from the original text or speech, which is manifested by the use of pronouns and deictics correspondent to the reported individuals’ (vis-à-vis the reporters’ or readers’) perspective. Despite this prototype, however, the actual form of direct quotation in Chinese journalism is quite flexible. Common variations include:

1. The insertion and position of reporting verbs/phrases are optional. Direct quotes may appear without leading verbs/phrases, or these verbs/phrases may be introduced after the quote.
2. The colon may be omitted or replaced by a comma.
3. The quotation marks may occasionally be omitted after the colon, but if the colon is dropped, quotation marks are required.

Table 3.1 lists the examples of direct quotation in variant formats found in the current data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prototype (RV:「」)</th>
<th>領事局答覆：「沒有特殊」。</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colon omitted (RV「」)</td>
<td>小朋友眉開眼笑，一一湊上前去摸，還直說「是真的耶！是真的耶！」</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comma in place of colon (RV,「」)</td>
<td>徐惠琴昨天說，「一名大陸女子取得證照，第一次領到薪水，抱著我痛哭時，過去種種辛苦，都值得了」。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV omitted (「」)</td>
<td>婚後適應問題讓夫妻倆大吵小吵不斷，另一半從一句中文都不會、吵架要打電話找翻譯，到一年後可罵流利華語，「都是吵架的功勞！」</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV after quote (「」RV)</td>
<td>「如果生命可以重來，我還是會選擇『身心障礙』的命運；但結婚？我一定說不！」黃乃輝說</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotation mark omitted (RV:)</td>
<td>Not found in the current data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV and Quotation mark omitted (: )</td>
<td>龜山鄉龍壽村長簡瑞金：「感謝鄉親支持我當選，最近我積極爭取到一筆300 萬元經費，要建405 高地登山步道指示牌及路口示意圖，美化景點，方便村民運動休閒。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1. Examples of DQ Variations
(2) *Indirect quotation (IQ)*

There are two major distinctions between indirect and direct quotation. First, since neither colons nor quotation marks are used in indirect quotation, introductory reporting verbs or phrases are required to maintain the boundary between the quote and the text produced by the reporter. However, this use of reporting verbs/phrases may only indicate the beginning but not the end of the quote, which is thus left open to readers’ interpretation. This has placed a challenge to the coding of the length of independent quotes, which will be discussed in a later section.

The second feature of indirect quotation that makes it differ from direct quotation is the agreement of pronouns and deictics. As mentioned earlier, the pronoun use in direct quotation is oriented to the reported character (i.e. first and second person). In indirect quotation, on the other hand, the use of pronouns tends to agree with the perspective of the reporter and the readers (i.e. third person). Similar shifts occur in the case of deictics (e.g. conversion from *here* to *there*).

Variation in the format of indirect quotation in Chinese is relatively limited compared to that of direct quotation. In fact, only one format of quoting is present in the current data, in which the quote is led by a comma following a reporting verb/phrase (e.g. “肯愛協會表示，國內外籍配偶約 37 萬人。”)

(3) *Mixture of DQ and IQ (MQ)*

The mixture of direct and indirect quotations, which Fairclough (1995a) called “slipping” between modes (p. 55), is quite common in journalism. The typical format of such mixture is to insert directly quoted key words/phrases/sentences into larger texts of indirect quotation. For instance:

(1) 劍民服務人員答覆，(RV, beginning of IQ) 93 年即規定，大陸配偶來台後，要辦身分證，就得在大陸註銷戶籍，要大陸的退休金或台灣的各項福利，「兩邊只能選一邊」 (insertion of DQ). (“拿身分證「要選邊」陸妻吐苦水” “Taking the Citizen ID ‘Side Choosing Required,’ Mainland Wives Spit Out the Bitterness”)

2006-10-21/United Daily/C2)

A unique type of mixture of first and secondary discourse (i.e. reporter-produced text and quotation), which may be confused with MQ, occurs when the author intervenes simply to shorten or make smooth the reported speech. Take the following extract for example:

(2) 「從印尼嫁到台灣，什麼都不會」，「還好老公疼愛」，現在，「婆婆想吃什麼，我都能夠做出來」…

“Married to Taiwan from Indonesia, and not able to do anything,” “I was lucky that I had my husband’s care and love” *Now,* “whatever my mother-in-law wants to eat, I am able to make it”...
The texts in the three consecutive sets of quotation marks were apparently taken from one speech and the “now” between the second and third sets of quotation marks, which may or may not exist in the original reported text, was inserted by the author mainly to make a smooth transition from the second to the third chunk of this quote. Such mixture in the current study is not coded as MQ while the inserted words carry little propositional meaning by themselves and thus may not be seen as indirect quotation by itself although it might actually come from the reported source. Two instances of this type of minimally tailored quotes were found in the data and they were coded as DQ instead of MQ.

In addition to the quotation type, the source and length of each quote, as well as the reporting verbs used to introduce the quotes, were also identified and coded for analysis. After all quotes were identified and appropriately coded, the collocations of and relations between quotes were analyzed, and the content of FMIs’ quotes was analyzed qualitatively, as will be presented below.

3.2.3. Challenges in coding process

The coding of reported speech is not as straightforward as it appears, particularly given that in Chinese texts it is not obligatory to make clear distinction between quotation and paraphrase (Yung, 1996), or even the reporter’s own elaboration. It is most obvious in the case of indirect quotation that this lack of distinction between first and secondary discourse creates extra challenges for the task of coding. Take the following extract for example:

(3) 縣政府社會局長吳有進 說，政府統計全台外籍配偶人數已經接近 40 萬人，近年來每 100 名新生兒就有 8 名的父母之一具有外籍身分，可見外籍配偶已經是台灣的新移民，及早適應台灣的語言、文化非常重要，不容忽視。

Wu You-jin the Commissioner of Social Affairs Bureau said, according to the statistics of the government, the number of foreign spouses in Taiwan has approached 400,000. In recent years, 8 out of 100 newborns have one parent with foreign identity. It reveals that foreign spouses have become new immigrants in Taiwan. It is very important and essential for them to adapt to the language and culture of Taiwan.

(“外籍配偶三千多人社會局將主動輔導” “Over 3000 Foreign Spouses, Social Affairs Bureau Will Assist Actively,” 2006-10-17/United Daily/C1)
It is apparent that this quote begins at the reporting verb 說 (“said”), but where does this quote end?

The Chinese period (。), which functions differently from the period in English, may imply the end of a quote. In Chinese, the period is used when a “theme,” which may be realized by multiple sentences, is completed. In the case of reported speech, it is highly likely the undisrupted flow of propositions contributing to this theme is taken as a whole from the original text.

While this function of the Chinese period makes a valuable reference for the identification of the boundary between IQ and its surrounding text, it cannot be seen as an unbreakable “rule” for coding. Let’s look at the following example:

(4) 校長林碧雲說，大多數學童下課後到安親班或才藝班上課，但貧困、單親和外籍配偶家庭的學童，無法參加這些課後活動他們的學習條件比別人差，如今下課後有替代役男協助，到學校替他們作課後輔導。Lin Bi-yun the principal said, the majority of school kids would attend after-school or talent programs after class, but kids from poor, single-parent, or foreign-spouse families may not be able to afford these extra-curricular activities. (first Chinese period) Their learning conditions are inferior to those of others, but now they can enjoy assistance from the substitute civilian servicemen who come to school to tutor them after class. (second Chinese period)

The first Chinese period marks the end of the first theme: the comparison of the learning conditions of the majority and the unprivileged school kids, while the second period marks the end of the second theme: the substitute civilian service as the new solution to the inferior learning conditions suffered by the unprivileged children. To an experienced reader of Chinese, it is very likely that these two themes were constituents of the same quote taken from the principal’s account.

As shown in this example, the identification of the boundary between an indirect quote and its surrounding text has to depend on the analyst’s “member resources” (Fairclough, 1989), that is, the background linguistic and cultural knowledge assumed by native users of that discourse. Therefore, I as the analyst have relied on these member resources which I have acquired as a native speaker of Chinese and a regular reader of newspapers published in Taiwan, including the one under discussion. I also consulted two other native speakers of Chinese in regards to my interpretation.

Compared to indirect quotation, it is relatively easier to identify the beginning and ending of direct quotation due to the use of demarcating punctuations such as colons and quotation marks. However, the coding of direct quotation is faced with a different challenge: the multiple functions of quotation marks in Chinese. In this dataset, at least three functions of quotation
marks could be identified: 1) to mark direct quotes, 2) to highlight key words, fixed phrases, or shift of register, and 3) to mark proper nouns. The former two are similar to the use of quotation marks in English (Scollon & Scollon, 1997) while the later is specific to Chinese. In some cases, the potential ambiguity among these functions could be resolved with devices such as the use of reporting verbs, but in others the boundary between these functions is vague or even blended. For instance:

(5) 身為外籍新娘家屬，一路「摸著石頭過河」，黃乃輝感受外籍配偶權益，還不如身心障礙者。
Being family of a foreign bride, who “crossed the river by touching rocks,” Huang Nai-hui felt that the rights foreign spouses were granted were not even comparable to the handicapped. (“新移民關懷協會 要扮土地公” “New Immigrant Care Association, to Take the Role of Village Deity” 2006-10-16/ United Daily/A9)

“Crossing the river by touching rocks” is a known metaphor to describe the difficulty of groping out for a solution or establishment. In this extract, it has two possible interpretations of the use of the quotation marks:

(1) They demarcate a quote from Huang, and the metaphor was taken directly from his statement.
(2) They mark the insertion of a set phrase intended by the reporter to describe the difficulty faced by the “foreign bride’s” family.

In dealing with alternate interpretations like this, I would again apply my insider’s knowledge as a Chinese native speaker and a regular reader of Chinese newspapers, with the assistance of two consultants who share the same member resources.

The third challenge concerns the coding of reported sources, which appears when the primary quoted source cites someone else. For instance:

(6) 王姓男子表示，他們回台後，在泰國的結婚證書被扣在仲介公司，業者聲稱越南新娘3個月內就可來台，但過了半年，仍不見新娘，對方都不接電話，或只答「很快就來了」。
Mr. Wang expressed, after they returned to Taiwan, the wedding certificates issued in Thailand were detained by the agency who claimed that the Vietnamese brides would come to Taiwan in three months. They nevertheless have not seen the brides coming after half a year, and the agency either avoided answering the phone or just responded “they will be here soon.” (“娶越妻走捷徑 等一年等無人 “Marrying Vietnamese Wives through Shortcut, One-Year Waiting Generates No Outcome” 2006-10-25/ United Daily/C4)

In this extract, two quotes from the marriage-broker agency were embedded in Mr. Wang’s
accounts for his experience communicating with the agency. The problem with the coding of reported source is whether we should attribute these two quotes to Mr. Wang (the animator) or the agency (the author), particularly as the animator did not simply recite the author’s word but instead recontextualized it for his own intention to accuse the practices of the agency.

For the purpose of the current analysis, this whole quote was coded as shared by Mr. Wang and the agency because both their voices were made visible to the readers though with different degree of mediation.

3.3. Analysis

3.3.1. Sources of quotation—Who are quoted in the news of FMIs?

The following discussion will focus on five sources of quotation, namely the government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), educational institutes/personnel, FMIs, and their husbands. I chose to focus on these five sources for two reasons: Firstly, they are the most frequently quoted sources in the analyzed news articles (see Table 3.2 for their frequency). Secondly, they are quoted by different authors in at least three news articles in the dataset. Therefore, although the marriage-broker agency (#=8) and the victim husband-to-be¹ (#=6) appear to be quoted with a frequency similar to that of FMIs’ husbands (#=9), they are not included in the following discussion because their distribution is limited to one news article only, which may simply reflect a sole author’s preference for sources regarding one specific topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>% in all quotes (#=183)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMI</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>154</strong></td>
<td><strong>84.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2. Frequency of Five Most Frequently Quoted Sources

As seen in Table 3.2, the five most frequently quoted sources together account for as much as 84.6% of the total number of quotes (#=183) found in the 82 news articles. It is worth noticing, however, that among these most frequently cited groups, there is a huge discrepancy in terms of their frequency. The government by itself accounts for more than 1/3 (38.5%) of the total
quotation, which is 5 times the quotation of FMIs (7.7%) even though all of these articles are about FMIs.

Furthermore, the top three sources (the government, NGO, and educational institutes/personnel) may be categorized as public sources, which tend to be associated with authority and credibility (Fairclough, 1995a). Each group in this category accounts for more than 10% of the total quotation, and altogether they dominate the news discourse about FMIs with the quotation frequency of 72%. On the other hand, the private sources, namely the FMIs and their husbands, only account for 12.6% of the total quotation.

A closer look at the group of FMIs’ husbands further suggest that the actual utilization of private sources may be even less than that. Among the three husbands quoted on three different articles, only one of them appears with “husband” as his sole identity in the text, as shown in Extract (7).

(7) 娶越南配偶的陳皇岐昨天表示，其實領3000元的差別並不多，他認為外籍配偶的健康檢查及嬰兒疾病篩檢才是最重要的。
Chen Huang-qi who married a Vietnamese spouse expressed yesterday, the difference made by the NT$ 3,000 subsidy was not so big. He believed that what’s more important is the health exam of the foreign spouses and the disease screening of the babies. ("外籍媽媽未入籍 沒生育補助" "Foreign Mothers with No Citizenship, No Birth Subsidy," 2006-10-25/United Daily/C2)

In the other two articles, the quoted husbands have dual identities as both a husband and a governmental official or an organizational representative, as demonstrated below:

(8) 游麗娟是印尼籍配偶…丈夫彭偉政擔任國姓鄉南港村長…彭偉政說，南港村有五分之一是外籍配偶家庭，其他地方情況也差不多，希望政府深入基層，多關懷外籍配偶家庭。
You Li-juan is an Indonesian spouse… her husband Peng Zheng-wei is the Chief of Nankang Village, Guohsing District… Peng said, 1/5 of the families in Nankang Village were foreign-spouse families and the situations of other villages were not too different. He hoped that the government could involve and care more about the foreign-spouse families. (新台灣模範家庭金獅獎 頒獎 “New Taiwan Model Family Golden Lion Award Bestowed,” 2006-10-23/United Daily/C1)

(9) 「每個外配家庭都是個案，但政府政策形同大拜拜」，他舉例，兩年前國庫提撥卅億元成立「外籍配偶照顧輔導基金」，大量編印各種宣導手冊，印刷精美，但翻譯文法不通，「很多外籍配偶告訴我，她們根本看不懂。」
“Every foreign-spouse family is a special case, but the governmental policy is like a grand ritual,” he gave an example: two years ago the Treasury established the Fund of Foreign Spouses Care and Assistance with NT$
300,000,000 and published a large variety of guides. Those manuals were printed beautifully but the translation was off. “Many foreign spouses told me, they couldn’t understand it at all.” (“新移民關懷協會 要扮土地公” “New Immigrant Care Association, to Take the Role of Village Deity” 2006-10-16/United Daily/A9)

In Ex. (8), although Peng was first introduced as an Indonesian spouse’s husband, his identity as the Village Chief was stressed more as he was quoted by the author to provide demographic information about the village and to comment on the governmental practice in regards to foreign-spouse families. While this comment could be interpreted as either given from the stance of FMIs’ husband/family or from the stance of a local government leader pleading for more attention from the higher-level government, the demographic information about the percentage of “foreign-spouse families” in Nankang Village was unambiguously stated and authorized by Peng’s status as the Village Chief. Similarly, in Ex. (9), the quoted husband Huang seemed to speak more as the president of New Immigrant Care Association than as the husband of an FMI.

Therefore, from the frequency of citation, we may infer that the official or semi-official sources, especially the government, are more favored by mainstream news discourse than private sources. Both FMIs and their family are marginalized in terms of quotation, even when they are the subjects around which the news stories were built. This result also supports the findings of Chapter 2, where FMIs and their family are viewed as inferior and lesser social participants.

3.3.2. Quotation types—In what format are they quoted?

As far as the quotation type is concerned, among the total of 183 quotes identified in the current dataset, 33 of them are direct quotes (18.0%), 123 are indirect quotes (67.2%), and 27 are mixtures of the two types (14.8%). This result duplicates the finding of earlier studies on Chinese journalism: the use of indirect quotation is preferred or normative while reporting others in the news (Yung, 1996; Kuo, 2007).

This preference for indirect quotation is also consistent across the five sources of discussion (see Table 3.3). Therefore, the reporters’ choice of quotation type seems to be influenced more by the preferred style in Chinese journalism than by the reported sources.
Despite this consistent preference for indirect quotation among sources, the government reports tremendously less rate of direct quotation than the other sources, which may be attributed to the different function of direct and indirect quotations in journalist conventions. Indirect quotation in journalism, as pointed out by many researchers (e.g. Fairclough, 1995a; Waugh, 1995; Obiedat, 2006; Kuo, 2007), shows an agreement between the reporter and the reported source while direct quotation is used by the reporter to distance themselves from the utterances and perspectives of the reported. Therefore in the current case, the reporters’ strong preference for indirect quotation over direct quotation while citing the government may indicate a strong agreement or alignment between the news media and the government.

As this extraordinarily low occurrence of direct quotation, accompanied by a frequency of indirect quotation higher than the other sources, may suggest a strong connection between the newspaper and the government, the relatively high frequency of indirect quotation of FMIs may also be interpreted as a sign that the newspaper does not particularly distance itself from the FMIs. Therefore, in terms of quotation types, FMIs do not appear to be marginalized as in the case of overall quotation frequency discussed in the previous section.

### 3.3.3. Quotation length—How much are they quoted?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th># of Quotes</th>
<th>Mean Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4520</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>64.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>2323</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1189</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMI</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9162</strong></td>
<td><strong>154</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4. Mean Length of Quotation by the Source

As shown in Table 3.4, the mean length of the 154 quotes by the most frequently cited five sources...
sources is 59.5 Chinese characters. While NGOs, education, and husbands of FMIs report a mean length around this average (58.1, 56.6, and 57.6 respectively), quotation of the government (64.6) and FMIs (43.7) show deviations towards opposite directions with a difference of more than 20 characters between them. In other words, the government is not only quoted in mainstream news media more often but also with more content when it is quoted, while FMIs are not only quoted less often but also quoted with considerably less content. This discriminated quantity of quotation also confirms van Dijk’s (1991) earlier observation that the minority sources tend to be marginalized with quotes of less frequency, shorter length, and thus less importance.

3.3.4. Reporting verbs—How are the quotes introduced into the text?

In addition to less frequency and shorter length, van Dijk (1991) also found that the minorities tend to be reported with certain leading verbs (e.g. “accuse” or “allege”) which the reporters use to distance their own stances from those of the minorities. Here of question is whether this discrepant usage of reporting verbs is also reflected in the media news about FMIs.

It is not surprising that the more often the source is quoted, the more variety of reporting verbs it enjoys. In the current dataset, 16 different reporting verbs were used while quoting the government, 7 for NGOs, 6 for educational institutes/personnel, 4 for FMIs and 3 for the husbands. Among all these verbs, the unmarked, neutral reporting verb 說 (shuo, “to say”) was used with the highest frequency in every source category.

A more surprising finding is that the use of 表示 (biao-shi, “to express”) is also consistent across categories as the second frequent reporting verb. As Scollon & Scollon (1997) found, throughout a political news text in Chinese, 說 and 表示 were the only two reporting verbs that were used, and the latter carried the connotation that the quote it led was said by someone of authority. In the current analysis, it is interesting to find that FMIs were also considered as sources of authority by the reporters’ choice of 表示 as the reporting verb. In the latter section about the content of quotes, I shall revisit this issue of authority and discuss what speech content of FMIs tends to be granted authority by the journalists.

Except for 表示, however, other reporting verbs that designate an authoritative status were not seen associated with FMIs. Such authoritative reporting verbs include:

1) 指出 (zhi-chu, “to find out”), which was found across all three categories of public or official figures (i.e. the government, NGOs, education).
2) 強調 (qiang-diao, “to stress”), which was seen leading quotes of the government and educational personnel. Both 指出 and 強調 indicate that the quoted individuals are trust-worthy sources of information.
(3) 呼籲 (hu-yu, “to appeal”). Though translated as “to appeal,” 呼籲 in Chinese has a connotation different from “to appeal” in English. That is, it tends to describe a certain kind of appeal made by the government or social groups, whose purpose is to ask for public attention or behavioral change. Therefore, it functions as a status marker of the quoted sources as socially significant, in this case the government and NGOs.

(4) 要求 (yao-qiu, “to demand”), a verb that usually indicates power difference. In the current data, it was only used while quoting the government.

(5) 統計 (tong-ji, “to calculate”), which was also reserved to the quotes of the government, probably because the government tends to be considered the most reliable source of demographic statistics (e.g. the number of FMIs, their birth rate, their geographic distribution, etc.)

On the other hand, two reporting verbs were found to collocate only with FMIs’ quotes, namely 抱怨 (bao-yuan, “to complain”) and 反映 (fan-ying, “to reflect”). Both verbs mark a status lower than the addressee of the quotes, who happened to be the government officials in both incidences, while the former may also imply distance and disapproval from the reporter.

Therefore, we may say that FMIs do not seem to be marginalized in terms of the two most frequently used reporting verbs 說 and 表示, but in the case of source-specific verbs, they tend to be reported with less variety of verbs indicating authority or high social status, but instead with more low-status and distancing verbs.

3.3.5. Collocation—Who are quoted together and in what relation?

Another way to find out the attributed significance of one source is to examine its frequency of being quoted as the sole source in the news. Not surprisingly, the government is again favored by the mainstream news discourse as 16 out of the 82 articles in the current data cited the government exclusively as the sole source of news. NGOs are also quoted in 9 news articles as the sole source, but as shown in Table 3.5, other sources, including FMIs who are the subjects/protagonists of the news stories, are rarely quoted as the sole source in the news.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th># of articles</th>
<th>As sole source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMI</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5. Frequency of Being Quoted as the Sole Source
Since the focus of the current study is on the representation of FMIs, of interest is what other sources FMIs tend to be quoted with and in what relationship, given that FMIs are rarely the sole source in the mainstream news.

As mentioned earlier, FMIs are cited as the sole source only in 2 out of 82 news articles (i.e. 2 out of 10 articles that cited FMIs). As FMIs are frequently cited together with other sources, they are cited most often in collocation with the government (5 out of 10 news articles) and sometimes with other authorities (2 with NGOs, and 2 with educational institutes/personnel). As FMIs are frequently cited in collocation with these other sources, the relationship between their quotes and others’ is worth examining.

Three types of relationships between FMIs’ and others’ quotes were identified in my analysis, namely the supportive, contrastive, and collaborative relations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation type</th>
<th># of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrastive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6. Relations between FMIs’ Quotes and Others’

Supportive relation refers to the situation where FMIs’ quotes are used to support the theme of other sources’ quotes while contrastive relation on the other hand designates that the theme of FMIs’ quotes conflicts with that of others. Collaborative relation indicates that the quotes do not have a dialogical relation as in the case of supportive and contrastive relations. Instead, both FMIs’ and others’ quotes function in a parallel manner to support a theme developed by the reporter in the text. The distribution of these relationships between quotes is listed in Table 3.6. The following are the examples and analyses of the three relation types:

(1) Supportive relation

**NGO’s Quote:** 主辦的台中縣親子閱讀協會理事長謝涼說，外籍配偶如范寶珍、阮氏八與何少林、徐雪燕等人在開店，還有許多人籌備營經東南亞小吃店，開職訓班協助外籍配偶站起來，融入台灣家庭有了初步成果。

Hsie-liang the president of the hosting Taichung Parent-children Reading Association, which hosted (the cooking program), said that some foreign spouses such as Fan, Ran, Ho, and Hsu had been opening businesses, and many were preparing for opening small Southeast Asian restaurants. Professional training program has helped foreign spouses to stand up and achieve the preliminary assimilation into Taiwanese family.
FMI's Quote: 越南配偶裴氏金梅表示，學 3 個月的烹飪，從炒米粉至蒸米糕等都學會了，生活更多彩。
Vietnamese spouse Pei Jin-mei expressed, attending the cooking program for three months, she has learned a variety of dishes from fried rice noodles to steamed rice cake, and her life has become more colorful. (“外籍婦秀廚藝 南洋料裡飄香” “Foreign Women Display Cooking Skills, Releasing Fragrance of Southeast Asian Cuisines” 2006-10-21/United Daily/C2)

In this text, the “Vietnamese spouse’s” remark of her “colorful life” after attending the cooking program provided by Taichung Parent-children Reading Association functions to verify the immediately preceding statement of achievement given by the president of that association. FMI’s quotes have been found in the data in support of the perspectives of the government (2 articles) and NGOs (2 articles).

(2) Contrastive Relation

FMI’s Quote: 有大陸配偶反映，她們在大陸，退休後有退休金，嫁來台灣後，如果大陸那邊不「下戶口」，就不能在台灣要身分證，沒身分證就不能外出工賺錢，這樣要吃什麼呢，抱怨「又不是兩個國家」。
Some Mainland spouses reflected, if they stayed in China, they could enjoy the pension after retiring, but since they married and moved to Taiwan, they could not get citizen ID if they didn’t “give up the household registration” in Mainland China. Without the citizen ID, they could not work and make money. What then could they live on? They complained, “it’s not like we’re two countries.”

Government’s Quote: 榮民服務人員答覆，93 年即規定，大陸配偶來台後，要辦身分證，就得在大陸註銷戶籍，要大陸的退休金或台灣的各項福利，「兩邊只能選一邊」。
The Veteran Service replied, since 2004 the policy has stated that after arriving in Taiwan, Mainland spouses had to give up their citizenship of China in order to apply for [Taiwanese] citizen ID. Between the pensions in China and the welfares in Taiwan, “choose one side between the two.”

FMI’s Quote: 另有大陸配偶表示，台灣的「榮民老公」，想認養她們在大陸與前夫的婚生子女卻遭禁絕，不合情理。
Other Mainland spouses expressed, their “veteran husbands” in Taiwan wanted to adopt their children from their previous marriage in China but were rejected [by the government], which was unreasonable.

Government’s Quote: 退輔會表示，這是防範大陸人民以依親名義，大量人口輸入台灣，因此必需有所限制。
The Veterans Affairs Commission expressed, this was to prevent people from Mainland China from migrating in the name of dependants and causing huge population influx. Thus the condition was necessary. (“拿身分證「要選邊」陸妻吐苦水” “Taking the Citizen ID ‘Side Choosing Required,’ Mainland Wives Spit Out the Bitterness” 2006-10-21/United Daily/C2)

This last text is very unique in the current data, which is the only text where FMI’s expressed a strong opinion against the implemented policy. Such expression of counter-hegemonic agency
was nevertheless mitigated through the quoting of government officials’ counter-statements which reinforced the necessity of this policy. Particularly interesting is the parallel of two direct quotes while the “Mainland spouses…complained, ‘it’s not like we’re two countries’” and the Veteran Service replied, “choose one side between the two.” This set of quotes reframe the issue of Mainland FMIs’ acquisition of citizenship into a more sensitive political debate between the governments of Taiwan and Mainland China, particularly given that phrases such as “two countries” and “two sides” have long been used in the news discourse addressing the complex relationship between Taiwan and China. The statement of the “Mainland spouses” that Taiwan and China are not two countries may sound very provocative to Taiwanese readers and remind them of the military threat from China per union.

This framing of Mainland FMIs’ plea for acquisition of Taiwanese citizenship as threatening to Taiwanese patriotism may help to justify the latter quote of the Veterans Affairs Commission arguing that the extra-strict constraints governing Mainland FMIs’ acquisition of Taiwanese citizenship are a “necessary” practice to “prevent” the “huge population influx” from the immigration of Mainland FMIs “in the name of dependants.” The newspaper’s readers, who are predominantly Taiwanese, would thus easily “choose a side” against the FMIs’ plea “in the name of national security.”

The sequence of the quotes taken from this controversy between the “Mainland spouses” and Taiwanese officials also contributes to this cognitive effect of “side-choosing” among Taiwanese readers, despite the ostensible equal representation of the voices of both sides. As van Dijk (1991) observed, the minorities’ accounts for or comments on events tend to be softened or denied by the citation of white sources that immediately follow the minorities’ quotes. This observation is also true in the current analysis, as the officials’ perspectives are presented after the FMIs’ and function to negate their accusations.

(3) Collaborative Relation

FMI’s Quote: 來自越南的阮美蓉代表致謝詞... 她說，婆婆與老公很疼惜她，育有一女，台菜很好吃，她偶爾也煮越南菜給夫家品嘗，生活美滿。

Ran Mei-ron from Vietnam gave a gratitude speech as the representative... She said, her mother-in-law and husband cared for her very much. She has one daughter. (She feels) Taiwanese food is delicious, and she sometimes also cooks Vietnamese dishes for her husband’s family. She has a blissful life.

Education Personnel’s Quote: 三田國小輔導主任陳滿玉說，上課增加才藝，很多學員都想學，學校透過戶政所提供名冊下鄉逐一找人來學，但有些公婆不喜歡外籍媳婦拋頭露面。

Chen Mun-yu the chief counselor of Santian Elementary School said, these courses improved the knowledge and ability and many wanted to attend. The school invited attendance door to door according to the census data provided by Household Registration Office, but some parents-in-law do not like their foreign daughters-in-law to
“pao-tou-lou-mian.”

**Government’s Quote:** 民政局統計，縣內有外籍配偶 4655 人，因文化差異、語言隔閡及價值觀等不同而產生不適應問題，為協助這些新移民順利融入台灣社會，建立幸福美滿的家庭，89 年起開辦外籍配偶生活適應輔導班，報名人數年年增加。

The Citizen Bureau calculated, there are 4655 foreign spouses in the County, who have the problem of maladjustment because of cultural difference, language barrier, and different values. In order to help these new immigrants to assimilate into Taiwanese society more smoothly and develop happy and sound families, Foreign Spouse Life Adjustment Program has been opened since 2000, and the number of enrollment is increasing yearly. (“結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝” “Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

In this text, the quotes from the FMI, the chief counselor of the elementary school, and the Citizen Bureau, are not directly connected with or addressed to one another, yet they contribute to the grand theme set by the reporter, that is, the success of the government-funded life adjustment program. The FMI’s quote displays a picture of harmonious family enjoyed by the representative attendant of the program; the counselor’s quote describes the attraction of such programs to FMIs, the effort of the school staff to fulfill their needs, with a mention of the difficulty they encounter; the Citizen Bureau’s report emphasizes the perceived problem of “maladjustment” among FMIs and expresses the government’s “good will” to assist the FMIs’ assimilation through these life adjustment programs that are gaining more and more popularity among FMIs.

Such collaborative relation between quotes appears in three out of eight articles in which FMIs were quoted together with other sources. In two of them the FMIs were quoted to endorse or appreciate the service provided or funded by the government. The other text portrayed a model FMI who supported her husband’s family including his three children from the previous marriage by selling vegetables and took care of her parents-in-law years after her husband’s death. A customer and her father-in-law were quoted to recognize and praise her devotion to the family while a quote of the FMI herself expressed her determination to take care of her late husband’s family despite the financial and emotional hardship.

To sum up, in all eight articles that cite both FMIs and other sources, FMIs’ quotes tend to be included to support a theme that is set up by either other quotes of authorities (the government or NGOs, in the case of supportive relation) or the reporter (in the case of collaborative relation). They were never cited in this dataset for an agenda-setting purpose, except for the one in which they “complained” about the government policy concerning their acquisition of Taiwanese citizenship, as discussed above. Even in this only article where their perspective set the agenda, however, it was the government officials that were assigned the final say by the reporter and thus
negated the legitimacy of the FMIs’ accusation.

5.3.6. Content of FMIs’ Quotes—What is quoted when they are quoted?

Nairn & Coverdale (2005) found in their study of print media discourse that when individuals with mental disorders were quoted, though with much less frequency (i.e. 5 out of 600 news items), their accounts of their lived experiences tend to counter the stereotypical representation of them as deviant from “everyday people” (p. 286). While FMIs are quoted, also with relatively low frequency, in Taiwanese mainstream news media, do the content of these quotes counter the stereotypes as in the case of the mentally ill in Nairn & Coverdale’s study?

After examining the 14 quotes of FMIs distributed in 10 articles in the current data, two themes were identified as recurring in these quotes:

(1) Household roles and responsibilities

More than half of FMIs’ quotes (8/14), distributed in 6 news articles, center around their household responsibilities. While most of these quotes express the difficulties, worries and efforts of these FMIs in fulfilling these responsibilities, as shown in Ex. (10), (11) and (12), a few of them also celebrate their success in taking these responsibilities traditionally reserved for women, as in (13) and (14).

(10) Liu Luo-na said, after her husband passed away, she did not have other choices but could only continue to sell vegetables to support the family of eight, composed of the elderly and children. The three children from her husband’s last marriage were college students. Although she had applied for the student loan, but their living expenses were still a heavy burden for her. (“菲偶沿街賣菜 養活一家老小” “Filipina Spouse Selling Vegetables along the Street, Supporting the Family of Old and Under-aged,” 2006-10-30/United Daily/C2)

(11) Cambodian mother Shu-mei has one son and one daughter, both are attending the kindergarten. She said, she could only read Chinese in the Mandarin Daily News® and could not read at all without the alphabetic symbols. She worried that she could not teach her children herself once their schoolwork got more advanced. (“新台灣之子 自覺「和同學不同」” “New Taiwan Kids, Feeling ‘Different from Classmates’,” 2006-10-26/United Daily/C5)

(12) 嫁來台灣 5 年的印尼女子宋秋妮說，兒子做功課時常需用到電腦，修機器的老公也不懂，派她先來學習
再教孩子讀書、上網查資料。

Indonesian woman Song Qiu-ni, married into Taiwan for 5 years, said that her son needed to use the computer for school assignments. Her mechanic husband, who did not know about computers either, sent her to learn [computer skills] in order to teach their son to study and research using the Internet. (“外籍婦學敲鍵盤 伊媚兒回鄉” “Foreign Women Learning to Hit the Keys, Emailing Home,” 2006-10-12/United Daily/C2)

今年從竹東國小補校畢業的外籍配偶阮氏金容與葉珊珊, 以過來人身分表示, 4 年來從完全聽不懂中文，到可以閱讀中文報紙，唱流行歌曲，也可以督促孩子的課業，現在孩子在校表現優異。他們相信，只要肯學習，子女也能有光明前途。

Foreign spouses Ren Jin-rong and Ye Shan-shan, graduates from the Complementary Education Program of Chutong Elementary School this year expressed as “ones having come through,” in these four years they went from not understanding any Chinese to being able to read Chinese newspapers, sing popular songs, and assist their children’s schoolwork. Now their children had outstanding performance in school. They believed as long as they studied hard, their children could also have a bright future. (“竹縣小一生 一成媽媽是外籍” “First-graders in Hsinchu County, 10% Mothers are Foreigners,” 2006-10-12/United Daily/C2)

富里鄉竹田村一名外籍配偶，丈夫失業，家庭經濟又不佳，想找兼差工作，卻因語言無法溝通、無一技之長等問題找不到工作。她說，很感謝就業服務站提供了兼差工作，讓她可以兼顧家中老小。

A foreign spouse from Fu-li, Ju-tian, whose husband was unemployed and whose familial financial condition was not good, had wanted to find a part-time job but couldn’t because she couldn’t communicate with language and she didn’t have a specialty. She said that she was grateful that the Job Service Station offered her a part-time job, allowing her to take care of the family at the same time. (“富里徵才 教你五不、三要” “Fu-li Job Fair, Teaching You Three ‘Do’s, Five ‘Don’t’s,” 2006-10-28/United Daily/C2)

While the success of the FMIs as the housewives or caretakers of the family is reported, however, it is also fore-grounded that this success is “thanks to” the services provided by the organizations, such as the Complementary Education Program in (13), which transformed the two “foreign spouses” from knowing nothing about Chinese to making themselves model mothers (i.e. being proficient with Chinese and assisting their children to succeed in schoolwork) for other FMIs. In Ex. (14), as the “foreign spouse” successfully found a job for familial financial needs, the credit was completely given to the government-run organization (vis-à-vis the FMI’s own effort) by both emphasizing her incapacities and quoting her statement of gratitude towards the service, with the latter may be (mis)taken by the readers as if the FMI self-confessed her lack of qualification. In these incidences, FMIs’ quotes contribute to, instead of countering, the stereotype of them as household-bound, needy, inferior, and dependent on assistance and services provided by the governmental, educational or social organizations, which
blends into the next feature of the utilization of FMIs’ quotation found in the current analysis.

(2) Appreciation of organizational services

The second theme that is reflected in multiple quotes of FMIs is the expression of their appreciation of the services provided by the organizations such as the central or local governments, NGOs, and different levels of educational institutes. In the current data, 5 out of 14 quotes of FMIs mentioned the assistance they had received from these organizations, some in association with their household responsibilities as discussed above. In addition, as displayed in Ex. (15) below, 1 quote about the FMI’s current life was taken from her “gratitude speech” given in the closing ceremony of a life adjustment program, which could been seen as appreciation addressed to that program even though the service was not directly mentioned in the quote. Therefore, nearly half (6/14) of the quotes of FMIs positioned themselves as grateful recipients of governmental and social services, which also affirmed the stereotype of them as dependants, and in the meanwhile positioned the organizations as more knowlegeable caretakers with good intentions.

(15) 來自越南的阮美蓉代表致謝詞... 她說，婆婆與老公很疼惜她，育有1女，台菜很好吃，她偶爾也煮越南菜給夫家品嘗，生活美滿。
    Ran Mei-ron from Vietnam gave a gratitude speech as the representative… She said, her mother-in-law and husband cared for her very much. She has one daughter. (She feels) Taiwanese food is delicious, and she sometimes also cooks Vietnamese dishes for her husband’s family. She has a blissful life. (“結業式穿禮服 外籍婦喜秀才藝” “Wearing Costumes for Closing Ceremony, Foreign Wives Proud to Present Talents,” 2006-10-06/United Daily/C2)

3.4. Conclusion

3.4.1. Summary of findings

In this chapter I have analyzed the sources, formats, lengths, reporting verbs, collocations, and content themes of quotation in mainstream news. The findings of these analyses suggest that FMIs tend to be quoted less often than official or semi-official sources, and are rarely quoted as the sole source, even when the news is about them. When they are quoted, they are quoted with less content and their accounts may be downgraded by the reporters’ choice of low-status reporting verbs. FMIs’ husbands may suffer a similar level of marginalization, unless they are positioned with an official identity. In addition, FMIs’ quotes tend to function in support of the official/organizational perspectives instead of contrasting them.

On the other hand, the findings also suggest that FMIs do not seem to be marginalized in
every aspect analyzed. Their speech is often reported in the format of indirect quotation, which indicates the reporters do not distance their own perspective from the FMIs. The consistent use of authority-marking verb 表示 (biao-shi, “to express”) across sources also suggests that FMIs’ views may also be granted authority. However, we must consider these two tendencies together with the content of the FMIs’ quotes. As discussed earlier in this chapter, FMIs’ quotes predominantly concentrate on two themes (i.e. their household roles/responsibilities and their appreciation of organizational services) that comply with the mainstream patriarchal and Taiwanese-centric values. As these quoted chunks perfectly comply with, instead of challenging, the dominant ideologies, there may be no need for the reporters to distance themselves from or to de-authorize the quoted discourse from FMIs.

3.4.2. So whose voices are present?

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the realization of voice involves multiple levels of dialogues. Therefore, every text is a co-construct, including the reported speech which seems to have clear attribution to certain speakers on the surface level. In fact, this dialogical co-construction may be further complicated in the case of reported speech because of the re-contextualization of others’ voices into the author’s own.

One ideology of journalism is that the reporters report “truth and truth only” (Christians, 2004; Herrscher, 2002), which assumes the existence of independent, absolute and objective “truth.” An ethical implication of this ideology in journalism is that the reporters should not have their own voices in the news texts they produce. It has been argued by many scholars (e.g. Fairclough, 1995b; Kuo, 2007; Obiedat, 2006; Satoh, 2001; van Dijk, 1991), however, that the journalists’ voices are always present, just in a masked or embedded manner. In the case of reported speech in journalism, which has been used in part for developing (ostensible) objectivity, the quoted source “spoke for himself, but he also spoke for the reporter writing the story” (Morgan, 1994, p. 106).

On the one hand, the reported discourse to a certain degree presents the reported sources’ voices because those are (paraphrases of) their words anyways, but on the other hand, these voices risk being partial, misinterpreted, or distorted while the discourse is recontextualized to realize a different author’s intention. After all, the realization of voice has to depend on whether it “generates an uptake of one’s words as close as possible to one’s desired contextualization” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 68, emphasis added). Through the recontextualization of the journalists, some voices of the sources may be made prominent, while others marginalized or even silenced. As discussed in this chapter, the reporters may selectively represent the reported discourse by selecting who to quote in what format and how much content they quote from each source, or
more subtly, they may manipulate or at least prompt the readers’ interpretation of the quotes by choosing different reporting verbs and sequencing them in favor of certain voices.

However, it should not be mistakenly assumed that the press possesses all to itself this deterministic power in deciding whose voice to be heard. Here I am referring to two embedded grand voices that have great ideological impact on the news-making process, namely the voice of elites and the voice of audience, both functioning in the current case of FMI-related news.

The voice of elites is influential not only because the press tends to be an elite-possessed industry with most associates sharing the elitist or dominant ideologies, but also because of its dependence on the government and the business, two parties of which elite class is primarily composed, as the major news providers. As Schudson (1997) pointed out, “the intermediary between government and business on the one hand, and journalism on the other, trades on its expertise in knowing how to construct items that ‘pass’ [as news]” (p. 9). It helps to explain the strong alignment between the reporters and the government’s perspectives, in contrast with the weak connection between the reporters and FMI, found in the current study. The news media, while “covertly transmitting the voices of social power-holders… as if they were the voices of ‘common sense’” (Fairclough, 1995b, p. 63), contributes to the reproduction of the existing asymmetrical elite-dominant power structure.

Another grand voice I shall discuss here is the voice of audience. According to Fairclough’s (1995b) observation of news media, there is this tension between two models of reporter/audience relationship: the knowledgeable reporter informing the interested citizen versus the media artist entertaining the consumer. Similar to most western societies, newspapers in Taiwan have experienced a comprehensive marketization since the lifting of the ban on free press in 1987. The furious competition of newspapers has promoted a lean towards the commercial model of newspapers as entertainment providers, with the newspaper enterprises catering to the interests, preferences, and values of their assumed readership to increase business profits (Wei, 1997).

This tendency of ideological alignment between the press and the (assumed) audience has been pointed out as prevalent by Shih’s study (1999) on the Taiwanese media’s portrayal of women from Mainland China, in which the producers appeal to the Taiwanese consumers’ nationalist ideology and represent these women as “threat and contamination” (p. 279).

The same tendency was also reflected in the reporters’ “side-choosing” representation of FMI and Taiwanese officials in the current study, as well as the very limited scope of the represented discourse of FMI: Only the accounts compliant with Taiwanese sexist and nationalist ideologies obtain visibility in the mainstream news.

However, we have to be cautious while arguing that certain voices, in this case the FMI’s, are silenced or marginalized in the reporting and recontextualization of their discourse. In order
to validate that some of the FMIs’ voices are neglected in the process of news-making, we have to examine whether these voices do exist among FMIs. In other words, the questions we should ask are: Would the FMIs represent themselves differently, given a different context, compared to the predominant themes in the reported discourse of them in the news? Would they confirm or contest against the framing of their voices as to support or endorse the Taiwanese-centric ideologies? Would they then actively seek other venues to make their voices heard? I will revisit these questions in Chapter 5 while examining a collection of FMIs’ own narratives.

In Chapter 2 and 3 I have conducted synchronic analyses of mainstream news articles published in a concentrated one-month period. In next chapter I will expand my scope of inquiry to include a perspective of history. The trajectory and appropriation of the discourse of “false marriage” as related to the representation of FMIs will be analyzed in the framework of diachronic intertextuality.

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1 Tu-ku-shui (吐苦水), “to spit out the bitter water,” means to complain about one’s suffering.
2 Ti-dai-yi-nan (替代役男), the substitute civilian servicemen who practice civil services to substitute the mandatory military service required for Taiwanese men.
3 Da-bai-bai (大拜拜), a grand ritual at Taoist temples, which in this text metaphorically refers to over-generalized, non-customized services.
4 See Note 11 of Chapter 2.
5 See the discussion of “pao-tou-lou-mian” (拋頭露面) and the patriarchal values behind it in Chapter 2.
6 A Taiwanese newspaper published for children, which has alphabetic symbols to accompany each Chinese character.
7 See Note 9 of Chapter 3.
4.1. Introduction

Moving forward from the synchronic analysis of 82 news articles on/about FMIs published in 2006, in this chapter I expand my analytical scope to include a historical perspective on the trajectory of discourse. Inspired by two articles concerning the legitimacy of FMIs’ marriages, found in the synchronic news data analyzed in Chapter 2 and 3, I shall in this chapter focus on the construction of one specific concept, namely 假結婚 (“false marriage”), which has been strongly associated with the mainstream media representations of FMIs.

179 news articles published within a 21-year period from 1986 to 2006 make the dataset for the current analysis. I will in this chapter focus on the (re)appropriation of this lexical item and the cognitive/discursive framing used to construct its meaning over time.

4.1.1. Diachronic intertextuality

CDA scholars have emphasized the importance of intertextuality in their studies. The basic concept of intertextuality is neither new nor complex in theory. That is, no text could exist without reference, however implicit it is, to other texts. The analysis of intertextuality, on the other hand, could be more complicated because intertextuality is present in all levels of discourse, from the choice of topics, inclusion of content, representations of events, genre conventions, to overt dialogues between texts. In most CDA studies, however, only the last of these, which is also the most obvious, is granted attention (e.g. several studies by Fairclough on “reported speech” in news media). While recognizing the value of investigating intertextuality of this level (e.g. “reported speech” in news as related to the issue of voice), an analysis of intertextuality may cover much wider ground.

For me the most important “missing link” in traditional CDA analysis of intertextuality is the lack of a sense of history, which Foucault has emphasized in his analysis of discourse of medicine and sexuality. Although Fairclough (1995b) has proposed a chain model in which media texts “transform and embed other texts” (p. 75), this chain relation has not been understood in terms of a continuum of transformation beyond texts immediately adjacent in time of production.

Ruth Wodak and colleagues’ discourse-historical approach (Wodak, 1995; van Leeuwen &
Wodak, 1999) seems to provide a potential remedy to this problem, given its “intent on tracing the (inter textual) history of phrases and arguments” (Blommaert, 2005). Most of their historical analyses, however, are still limited to the analysis of contemporary texts at historically significant moments (e.g. the concluding session of the Intergovernmental Conference, Oberhuber et al., 2005) or, while the historical evolving of discourse is documented, the coverage of time tends to be relatively short (e.g. 1998-2000, Wodak & van Leeuwen, 2002).

Addressing this lack of a longue durée perspective in most CDA analysis, I would argue for the incorporation of Foucault’s historical view of the evolvement of discourse in CDA analyses of intertextuality. I shall demonstrate such diachronic analysis in this chapter with the 21-year news data of “false marriage” discourse.

4.1.2. Methodology

As mentioned above, this study on the discourse of “false marriage” was inspired by two articles in my first dataset of news published in October, 2006. In the analysis of this chapter, I first examined these two articles in terms of their framing of “false marriage” as a starting point of further analysis.

The second section of the analysis focuses on the diachronic dataset, which includes news articles on the topic of “false marriage” dated from 1986 to 2006, retrieved from United Daily through a keyword search of the Chinese term 假結婚 (“false marriage”). In order to make a systematic comparison, again I chose to use news articles published in a one-month period (i.e. October) across 21 years from 1986 to 2006. This key word search retrieved 179 news articles for analysis.

These 179 news articles were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively the number of articles of “false marriage” in October of each year was compared in order to identify the spreading trend of such discourse. Qualitatively the texts were analyzed and compared across time, focusing on the construction and appropriation of the meaning of “false marriage,” as well as the mutually cumulative effect between the discourse and social schemata or assumptions of “false marriage.” Diachronic intertextuality as manifested in the relationship between texts over time was also identified for discussion.

4.2. Analysis of “false marriage” discourse

4.2.1. Two News Articles (October, 2006)

When I was analyzing FMIs’ labeling in mainstream news, two news articles about their
“false marriage” caught my attention, given the very different framing they adopted to represent and evaluate such marriage. Let’s begin with the news story of the Indonesian FMI “Ah-zi.”

(1) 嫁給台東曾姓男子的印尼配偶「阿姿」，因發現她與丈夫雙雙感染愛滋病，在丈夫死亡後失蹤。台東縣警方昨天查出她已經出境返回印尼，防疫單位都鬆一口氣，警方建議環管局限制她再次入境。

不過，因阿姿嫁來台灣期間曾多次出境，且曾改過姓氏，因此無法查明她在何處染病，加上愛滋病有相當長的潛伏期，且阿姿涉嫌在台賣淫，衛生局擔心會造成防疫缺口，已經著手調查她在台期間活動範圍及接觸對象。

... 據家屬說法，阿姿是以假結婚方式來台，但疑似有賣淫情況，也曾從印尼取得不明藥物和丈夫服用，目前僅能確定她知道自己和丈夫有病，但無法了解如何得病。(typo as original)

“Ah-zi” the Indonesian Spouse who married to a man named Zheng in Taitung, was missing after her husband’s death because she found both she and her husband were AIDS infected. The Police of Taitung found yesterday that she had returned to Indonesia, which made the disease prevention unit “sigh with relief.” The police have suggested that the Immigration Office ban her re-entrance.

However, because Ah-zi had left the country many times during her stay in Taiwan and had changed her last name, where she received the disease cannot be traced. In addition, since AIDS has quite long latent period and Ah-zi had been involved in prostitution in Taiwan, the Department of Health is worried that it might make a breach to disease protection and has begun investigating her sphere of activity and subjects of contact during her stay in Taiwan.

... According to the family, Ah-zi came to Taiwan through false marriage, but was suspected of prostitution and had brought unidentified drugs to use with her husband. What is certain right now is that she knew that both she and her husband had the disease, but it is not clear how they got it. (2006-10-14/United Daily/C1)

The “Indonesian spouse” in this extract was portrayed as an uncontrollable virus-carrier, whose threat to the society was reinforced by her immorality, which was realized discursively through the mention of her coming into Taiwan through “false marriage,” prostitution, and bringing in unidentified drugs to share with her “husband.” Even though “it is not clear how [she and her husband] got it,” the mention of false marriage, prostitution and drugs right before this statement may suggest an association between immoral behaviors of her and their infection, thus leading the readers to infer that it is likely that the “wife” had passed the virus, which she got from prostitution or drug usage, to the “husband.” Ironically, with the shared endeavors between her and her husband, such as knowledge exchange (she knew that both of them were infected), sharing drugs, and possibly sex (insinuated through the shared disease), their marriage was still mentioned as “false marriage.” Even though this “false” status of their marriage was not treated as a definite one in the text since the author also used terms such as “married to a man,” “husband,” and “wife” which are commonly used to describe a normal marriage, the remark
“false marriage” was brought up through a quote from “the family,” who were very likely to be believed as an insider-source possessing first-hand knowledge of the story.

It is also worth noticing that even though “false marriage” is illegal and considered immoral, particularly in the case of transnational marriages with the entailment of immigration, and was condemned in this text, the blame went exclusively to the “Indonesian spouse” as if the Taiwanese husband took no part in this illegal/immoral matter. His family even assumed the role of accusing her for the false marriage, her prostitution and for bringing drugs to the man. This portrait of the Taiwanese husband as a passive participant of the “false marriage,” and thus as less guilty, may be compared to the next extract in which the Taiwanese husband actively pursued “false marriage.”

Both addressing “false marriage,” Extract (1) framed it as a legal and moral issue while (2) made it a discourse of economics. While in the first extract the Taiwanese husband was victimized through the emphasis of the moral disintegration of the wife and construction of a passive image of the husband, the “foreign spouse” in this extract seems to have more reasons to be portrayed as a victim of the husband and his “ex-wife’s” conspiracy but it did not happen this way. Instead, it is the Taiwanese husband (again!) who was rendered sympathy through the layered argumentation in this text:

Top layer: The shortage of labor force is high because people are not interested in labor-intensive work.

Second layer: The shortage of labor force in rural villages is particularly high (comparable to the factories) because the government has not approved the import of foreign laborers for farming (but it is approved for factory jobs)

Third layer: Farmers and their wives performed fake divorces to bring in a “foreign spouse” for labor work.
With such a progression of the rationale, the Taiwanese husbands seemed to have no choice but to (unwillingly) engage in the “false marriage.” By prioritizing the framing of the “false marriage” as an economic and governmental issue, the husbands were exempted from legal or moral judgment through the legitimacy of their motivation, and the foreign spouses seemed to be justifiably objectified as “additional labor force,” whose feelings and human rights were totally out of the question.

Inspired by this totally different framing of “false marriage” in favor of Taiwanese husbands presented in this synchronic dataset, in the next section I will advance the inquiry to how such discourse of “false marriage” came into being through an intertextual analysis of news articles containing “false marriage” from 1986 to 2006.

4.2.2. Diachronic Analysis of News Articles (October, 1986- October, 2006)

The key word search of “false marriage” in the news articles published in United Daily in the October of each year from 1986 to 2006 generated 179 results, whose distribution is presented in Figure 4.1.

![Figure 4.1. Distribution of News Articles of “False Marriage” (1986-2006)](image)

As shown in Figure 4.1, there is a clear divide between the first 13 years (1986-1998) and the later 8 (1999-2006). In the first stage, the term “false marriage” appeared only sparsely,
which made it difficult to assert the existence of a discourse of “false marriage.” Starting 1999, the considerably and consistently larger number of news articles containing “false marriage” seems to suggest the emergence and maintenance of a “false marriage” discourse that repeats and reproduces. This is nevertheless simply a hypothesis based solely on numbers. A more careful analysis is needed for figuring out whether these texts really reproduce and evolve upon some shared meanings and assumptions. After examining the content of the 179 news articles, I further divide them into three stages: 1) the pre-formative stage before 1997, 2) the formative-transitive stage, 1997-1998, and 3) the reproductive and re-formative stage, 1999-2006. The terms “pre-formative” and “formative” simply refer to the formation of the current discourse of “false marriage” as related to FMIs and transnational marriages and as having certain structure and repeated patterns which will be discussed in the following analyses. There might have been other types of “false marriage” discourses before 1986, but they are not the focus of the current study.

(1) Pre-formative Stage (before 1997)

In this dataset, only 7 articles contained the term “false marriage” from October, 1986 to October, 1996. None of these articles report on “false marriage” as events that actually happened. 6 out of these 7 news articles are news about movies that depict “false marriage” instead of news stories of “false marriage” in reality. For instance:

(3) 「白」片故事背景在二次大戰末期，納粹占領下的南國一處偏僻鄉下。以「俘虜」崛起影壇的男星湯姆康提飾演河的救生員，他曾以「假結婚」的方式救過一對被納粹追緝的母女...

The background of That Summer of White Roses is a secluded rural area of Yugoslavia under Nazi occupation. Tom Conti who rose from Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence plays a river lifeguard who once saved a mother and daughter from the seizure of Nazi through “false marriage...” (1989-10-09/United Daily/p. 30)

(4) 另一部作品則是澳洲奇才導演彼得維爾的新作「綠卡」,男主角是法國影帝傑哈德巴狄厄，安蒂飾演一位園藝學家，為了幫忙法國音樂家傑哈落實移民夢，不惜假結婚。

Another film is Green Card, a new work by Peter Weir the talented Australian director. The leading actor is French award-winner Gérard Depardieu; Andie MacDowell plays a horticulturist who committed “false marriage” to help the French musician (Gérard) to realize his dream of immigrating. (1990-10-01/United Daily/p. 32)

(5) 已經來紐約一個多月的度宗華,正在為新片「少女小漁」的男主角色做準備。他飾演的江偉是一個從中國大陸來美國念書的學生，在魚市場非法打工，女朋友小漁(劉若英飾)為了居留身分和一個義大利裔美國人(丹尼爾楚維提飾)假結婚。

Tou Chunghua, having come to NY for one month, is preparing for his new leading role in Shao nu Xiao yu. He plays Jiang wei, a student who came to the US from Mainland China and now works illegally in the fish market. His
girlfriend Xiaoyu (Rene Liu) false-married with an Italian American (Daniel Travanti) for her residency.  
(1994-10-01/United Daily/p. 22)

Even though these texts do not report on “false marriage” as news events, we may still see a strong connection between “false marriage” and immigration for various motivations as revealed in the extracts above. Although this connection is not localized, given that the background settings of these movies were all outside of Taiwan, such discourse may be easily transited to the local case of transnational marriage and immigration of FMIs and contribute to the formation of a new “false marriage” discourse, as we will see in the next stage.

The only text found in this period that is not related to “false marriage” movies is this one about Taiwanese residency policy:

(6) 台灣人民與大陸人民結婚在台定居問題，行政院陸委會昨天召開協調會報獲致共識...

... 各部會代表獲致共識認為，為避免”假結婚真定居”的情形發生，所以應該有所設限。原則開放結婚[兩](兩)年以上者可來台定居，不過，一旦發現有假結婚的事實，則立即予以遣返。  (typo as original)

Addressing the issue of residency concerning the marriage between Taiwanese and Mainlanders, the Mainland Affairs Council of Executive Yuan held a conference and achieved consensus...

... The representatives of departments achieved the consensus that in order to avoid the situation of “false marriage, true residency,” there should be certain restrictions. In principle, residency in Taiwan is open to [the mainlanders] who have been married [to Taiwanese] for two years. However, they would be repatriated if a factual false marriage is confirmed. (1991-10-18/United Daily/p. 06)

Dated 1991, this text was a reaction to the increasing incidences of transnational marriage between people from Taiwan and China. Although whether Taiwan and China are two “nations” is a long, unsettling debate, which I do not intend to discuss here, the marriages between Taiwanese and Mainlanders are considered “transnational” in terms of policy making and enactment, as well as in day-to-day social interaction. An example of the former would be that the entry and residence of Mainlanders into Taiwan is supervised by the National Immigration Agency, which was developed in 2007 to take charge of travel “across national borders” (NIA, 2007).

Extract (6) is the only occurrence of “false marriage” at this stage that could be viewed as remotely related to FMIs since it is about the policy concerning their residency. However, this text should not be linked to the discourse of FMIs directly. In fact, this text was produced in 1991, which was before FMIs obtained attention from mass media and came into the domain of public discourse. It is evidenced by the result of my search for news articles about FMIs published in the same newspaper through the whole year of 1991, using related key words such as 外籍新娘
(“foreign bride”) and 婚姻移民(“marriage immigration”): Only one entry was returned, which was an article of “foreign brides” published in December. Instead of directly addressing the issue of women migrating to Taiwan to get married, it is more likely that the policy mentioned in (6) was produced in reaction to the trend of Taiwanese businessmen founding factories in Mainland China starting in the late 1980s. With the management spending more and more time in China, the marriage between them and local Mainland women also increased. It caused a problem of residency when these Taiwanese businessmen planned to return to Taiwan because back then the migration between Taiwan and China was allowed only uni-directionally: Taiwanese were allowed to travel and reside in China with appropriate documentation, but the reverse was not permitted. These Chinese wives were different from the phenomenalized “foreign brides” in later discourse who came to Taiwan through marriage broker agencies and who barely knew their husbands before the wedding. Therefore, the government’s statement of “false marriage” was more likely a preventative concern based on a common-sense assumption: False marriage was a possible way of obtaining residency, which also appeared in the text of “false marriage” movies in Ex. (3)-(5), rather than interacting with the discourse of FMIs, which had not yet emerged at this stage.

(2) Formative-transitive Stage (1997-1998)

In this short two-year stage, even though the number of news articles (1 in October, 1997 and 2 in October, 1998) containing “false marriage” was not significantly larger than in the pre-formative stage, a qualitative difference in the content may nevertheless be observed:

A married Taiwanese businessman Chang cohabited with Ni a Mainland woman when he did business in Nanjing, Mainland in 1992. After Ni was pregnant, since Chang had a wife, he asked his brother You to marry her in Nanjing for her reputation. Ni then came to depend on their family in October 1996, but had complicated friendship⁴. You was deeply bothered and filed a claim of invalid marriage to Shiling Court...

...You stated to the judge that Ni did not take care of her mother-in-law after coming to Taiwan. She left home early and came back late, had complicated friendship, and even lived outside with others. The husband’s family⁵ suspected Ni might be doing sexual trade outside and felt very troubled by this, so [You] filed this claim of invalid marriage. (1997-10-11/United Daily/p. 07)
Zhongshan Police Force also tracked down Miou, a woman from Fujian, Mainland, who was suspected of “false marriage, true prostitution.” She confessed that she came to look for her husband Hu in the name of visiting family... (1998-10-09/United Daily/p. 09)

The Mainland Affairs Council expressed, many opening measures have enabled the aims of family reunion and childcare, but control over case numbers was still necessary for the prevention of prostitution, illegal employment through false marriage, true entrance.

From these texts we may sense that a discourse that associates “false marriage” with FMIs is emerging. Unlike the previous stage where “false marriage” was to a large degree a distant and abstract construct that existed in arts (movies) and preventative policies, news reports of local “false marriage” events with detail became visible in this stage.

A formulaic phrasal structure “False marriage, true XXX,” which appeared in one text in the previous stage (“false marriage, true residency” in Ex. (6)), was used repeatedly in this stage (“false marriage, true prostitution” in Ex. (9) and “false marriage, true entrance” in (10)). The application of this structure continued through this and the next stage and threaded texts of “false marriage.” Its intertextual, reproductive effect will be discussed more in the discussion of the next stage when more instances occur, but it is worth bearing in mind that it is in this formative-transitive stage that it was transformed from an innovative use of language to a formulaic structure.

Another pattern of “false marriage” discourse found in the texts of this stage is the association of “false marriage” and other socially disapproved endeavors, prostitution in particular. In fact, prostitution, or “sexual trade,” was mentioned in all of the three texts in this stage. With this link, the discourse of “false marriage” was re-framed and re-oriented, from the question of social relation and intimacy to the question of legality and morality. In the next stage, it is the latter frame that was continuously reproduced and emphasized in the news articles, whose influence I will elaborate more in the following section.

In sum, the news discourse of “false marriage” in this formative-transitive stage is characterized by: 1) the association between “false marriage” and FMIs, 2) the formularization of the phrasal structure “false marriage, true XXX,” 3) the link between “false marriage” and
socially disapproved endeavors, and thus 4) the re-focusing of “false marriage” from its social validity to the issue of legality and morality. All these features were then carried into the next stage in reproduced or revised forms.

(3) Reproductive/Re-formative Stage (after 1998)

While reproducing the patterns emergent in the formative-transitive stage, the news articles found in this reproductive/re-formative stage obviously differ from the former in the number of news articles found addressing “false marriage,” as shown in Figure 4.1. Not only that the total number of such texts is considerably higher than the previous stage, but it is worth noticing that it stays considerably high through the years 1999-2006, with the frequency particularly high in 2001 (# = 41, as related to a widely-attended scandal involving “false marriage” prostitution and police extortion, followed by an intensive search of illegal prostitution) and 2003 (# = 45, as related to a nation-wide census of “foreign spouses”). This consistency shows that “false marriage” discourse has gained more reproductive power than it ever had before, and thus may now have more influence upon the mainstream schemata of “false marriage” and its associated concepts, shared by the producers and consumers of this discourse, which may in return contribute to further production of texts accumulative to “false marriage” discourse.

Such reciprocally accumulative effect between social schemata and mainstream discourse may help explain the more and more self-evident use of the formulaic phrase “false marriage, true prostitution.”

Earlier texts in this stage, while using this phrase, tend to provide a detailed story of how these foreign women got married, how they were involved in prostitution, and how they were found by the police, as in Ex. (11) and (12):

(11)高雄地檢署檢察官賴慶祥昨天晚上指揮高雄市調查處、海巡部高雄縣情報組、高雄縣刑警隊及鳳山警分局，破獲「假結婚、真賣淫」的人蛇集團，逮捕人蛇股東、會計及來台賣淫的八名大陸女子。
警方調查，人蛇集團是以假結婚的方式引進大陸女子賣淫，而被充作人頭結婚的男子每個月可收三萬元，大陸女子接客每次交易三千五百元，飯店的服務生每次只交給大陸女子二千元，這些女子每天接客最多高達廿四人，但要被層層剝削。大陸女子若未依規定時間到指定地點，人蛇集團輕以扣錢處罰、重則拳打腳踢，手段相當殘忍。
Prosecutor Lai Qingxiang from Kaohsiung District Prosecutors Office yesterday led Kaohsiung City Investigation Department, Kaohsiung County Intelligence Section of Coastal Patrol Department, the Police Force of Kaohsiung County and Fengshan Police Precinct to uncover a “false marriage, true prostitution” human smuggling syndicate and arrested their shareowner, accountant, and eight prostitutes from Mainland.

According to the investigation by the police, this human smuggling syndicate imported Mainland women through false marriage. The men who were used as puppet [husbands] received NTS30,000 every month. The [sexual] deal
with the Mainland women was priced NT$3,500, but the concierge of the hotel only gives them NT$2,000. These Mainland women receive at most 24 guests each day, but they are exploited by multiple layers of agents. If these Mainland women cannot make it to the assigned location as scheduled, the human smuggling syndicate would penalize them with anything from fines to corporal punishment. The measures are very cruel. (1999-10-09/United Daily/p. 19)

(12) 大陸陳姓女子來台涉嫌「假結婚，真賣淫」，被查獲後目前留置在拘留所內。...
...
大陸陳姓女子今年七月底來台依親，一出機場就被接到彰化縣和美鎮某茶藝店接客，她受不了皮肉生涯，九天後趁機逃出宿舍，到南投縣向她的在台親人尋求保護，八月下旬她向和美警分局報案，警方埋伏查獲仲介「假結婚，真賣淫」集團。

Chen a Mainland woman involved in “false marriage, true prostitution” in Taiwan. She was placed in temporary holding cells...
...
Chen came to Taiwan to depend on the family and was brought to a teahouse in Hemei, Changhua to receive guests. She couldn’t tolerate the life of prostitution and took the chance to run away from the dorm, looking for help from her relatives in Taiwan. She reported the case to the Police of Hemei in late August and the police ambushed and tracked down the “false marriage, true prostitution” agency group. (2000-10-08/United Daily/p. 18)

Later, the amount of detail decreased and “false marriage, true prostitution” began to be used in a self-evident way, naturalizing the connection between “false marriage” and prostitution. Use of numbers and percentages further reinforces the pervasiveness of its occurrence. Take for example extract (13) from a news article titled “新竹中心女收容人中 至少六成 假結婚真賣淫 情況嚴重” (“Female Residents in Hsinchu Center/ At Least 60%/ False Marriage True Prostitution/ Situation Serious”):

(13) 大陸女子假結婚來台真賣淫情形有多嚴重？大陸地區人民新竹處理中心的女收容人中，警方保守估計，至少有六成是被查獲假結婚真賣淫...

How serious is problem of “false marriage, true prostitution” among Mainland women in Taiwan? Of the female residents in Hsinchu Custody Center of Mainlanders, according to a conservative estimate by the police, at least more than 60% were detained for false marriage, true prostitution... (2000-10-05/United Daily/p. 20)

The first sentence in this extract, which is also the first sentence in this news article, framed this report as examining how serious this “false marriage, true prostitution” problem is “among Mainland women in Taiwan.” This made the 60% detainment rate seem to be scarily high. However, if we read the text closely, we may find that this percentage did not show the percentage of prostitutes among “Mainland women in Taiwan” as the first sentence claimed. Rather, it was in fact the percentage of prostitutes among those “female residents in Hsinchu
Custody Center of Mainlanders,” in other words, among Mainland women who were convicted for violating laws and regulations.

Extract (13) could be misleading for its (purposeful?) confusion between the framing of the issue and the actual information provided, but there is still chance that the reader might be cautious enough to figure out the discrepancy. In (14), which was published one year later addressing the same phenomenon, however, this reader-initiated inference was made almost impossible with less detail provided. Titled “大陸女子假結婚真賣淫比率逾七成 新竹中心女偷渡客又飽和” (“Rate of ‘False Marriage True Prostitution’ among Mainland Women Over 70%/ Hsinchu Center Female Stowaways Over-Saturated”), the first paragraph goes:

(14) 大陸地區人民新竹處理中心本月初日前運一百名女偷渡客到馬祖中心，才短短三天，女收容人數又達到飽和；中心估計，以「假結婚」方式來台「真賣淫」的大陸女子比率超過七成...

Hsinchu Custody Center of Mainlanders transported 100 female stowaways to Matzu Center before the 20th of this month. Only three days passed and the number of its female residents has achieved saturation again. The Center estimated, the percentage of Mainland women who conducted “true prostitution” in Taiwan through “false marriage” exceeded 70%... (2001-10-23/United Daily/p. 18)

Through the whole text, how the Center developed this percentage was not reported. The rate of “exceeding 70%” might well have come from the same calculation method as Ex. (13), but it is very unlikely that a regular newspaper reader would conduct an intertextual analysis like this to find out. They may simply accept this high rate as true and applicable to all Mainland women in Taiwan, especially given that the source of information (the Center) was granted authority by its status as a governmental institution, as well as by the textual placement of the quote as signified (i.e. presented in the very beginning) and unchallenged by the journalist.

Coined with the naturalization of the phenomenon of “false marriage, true prostitution,” events that object to this newly-developed norm were considered exceptional and thus worth reporting. This formulaic phrase in such reports was presented as shared knowledge or assumption in Fairclough’s term, which the readers were assumed to possess, without any explanation. Take Ex. (15)-(17) for example:

(15) 民庭在調查時,曾懷疑是「假結婚真賣淫」,深入追查後,發現農民確實娶少妻,卻被少妻「玩弄」...
The Civil Court once suspected [this case] to be “false marriage, true prostitution” during investigation, but after an in-depth scrutiny, they found that the farmer really intended to marry the young wife but was “schemed” by the young wife... (2001-10-17/United Daily/p. 20)

(16) 新店警分局警備隊一年多前查獲王秀花涉嫌非法來台打工,並追查出陳秀維、許小雲兩名女子是偷渡來
The Police of Hsindian District discovered that Wang Xiuhua was involved in illegal employment in Taiwan and found two [other] women Chen Xiuwei and Xu Xiaoyun came to Taiwan through illegal immigration. None of the three was involved in “false marriage, true prostitution.” They have been held in custody in the temporary holding cell by the district police. (2001-10-13/United Daily/p. 18)

A couple named Fang and Zhou, who were arranged by a sexual agency for “false marriage, true prostitution,” intended for “true marriage, no prostitution” after spending time together. The Taiwanese man Fang even paid to buy the Mainland woman Zhou’s freedom... (2001-10-20/United Daily/p. 20)

From the instances of “false marriage, true prostitution” reported in detail to the more normative, back-grounding use of it, the requirement of explanation and elaboration for this phrase seems to have been reduced over time, since it has been gradually internalized into the social cognitive schemata with textual reproduction. In return this broadened social schemata of “false marriage” allows new discourse to be built upon the shared cognitive base, such as the discourse of exceptional cases illustrated in Ex. (15)-(17), which forms a cycle of mutual reinforcement between social cognition and discourse (also see van Dijk, 1990, 1993 for the relationship between social cognition and discourse).

Another aspect of “false marriage” discourse that requires examination is the construction of the “falseness” of such marriage. The current Taiwanese law does not have specific restrictions on “transnational marriage” itself, but conditions for “residency.” These conditions include “incapacity for maintaining life or having the likelihood for illegal employment,” “evidenced intension of entrance by circumventing the laws and rules,” “having the likelihood of damaging our nation, public security, public order, or good social customs,” “evidenced conspiracy to engage in false marriage,” etc. (Liao, 2005). While legally “false marriage” may only be confirmed by “evidenced conspiracy,” the “falseness” of “false marriage” in my media discourse data seems to be constructed with several different or even contradicting myths, which I will discuss in the following sections.

Myth of flawed morality

Discourse of “false marriage” that reflects this myth of flawed morality in this dataset is characterized by its mapping of other wrong-doings, particularly prostitution, onto the validity of
these foreign women’s marriage. For instance:

(18) 縣警局板橋分局長達一個月追蹤，昨天破獲一越南籍女子以假結婚方式來台賣淫，譯音「畢雲」女子告訴警方，與台籍丈夫去年結婚，但先生忙於事業，兩人感情不睦，她於四月間再度來台，是打算辦離婚...

The Banchiao District of [Taipei] County Police Bureau, after a one-month-long following, yesterday tracked down one Vietnamese woman who came to Taiwan for prostitution through false marriage. This woman “Biyun” (sound translation) told the police that she got married last year with her Taiwanese husband, but he was busy with his business and they did not get along well. She came [to Taiwan] again in April, attempting for filing divorce...

(1999-10-02/United Daily/p. 18)

(19) 台北縣警察局少年隊昨晨在板橋市執行春風專案，在一家撞球店意外查獲大陸女子孫瑜（十九歲）涉嫌以假結婚來台賣淫...

The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Brigade of Taipei County Police Force, while practicing Chunfeng Project yesterday morning, accidentally discovered a Mainland woman Sun Yu (aged 19) involved in prostitution in Taiwan through false marriage...

... Sun Yu confessed that she applied to entrance into Taiwan through legal marriage and currently lived in Kaohsiung. She came to the north with her husband who worked in Taichung... (2000-10-26/United Daily/p. 20)

(20) 二名大陸女子供稱她們是分別和高雄縣、市的男子結婚來台，但二女都找不到丈夫出面，警方認為她們是假結婚來台賣春，偵查後將二女遣送回去，並深入追查假結婚男子的下落。

The two Mainland women confessed that they came to Taiwan through marriages with the men in Kaohsiung County and Kaohsiung City, but neither of them could make their husbands show up. The police believe they came for prostitution in Taiwan through false marriage. After investigation they will repatriate these two women and further trace the two men conducting false marriage. (2000-10-11/United Daily/p. 18)

In these texts, these foreign women seem to be easily accused of “false marriage” as long as they were found doing sexual trade. Doing this one thing wrong was taken as an evidence of flawed morality and thus places their claims of “true marriage” under suspicion. In the case of Ex. (20), one may argue that such suspicion is reasonable because they could not “make their husbands show up.” However, this simple fact could not rule out other possible reasons of their husbands’ inaccessibility. This myth of flawed morality is manifested in a more obvious manner in (18) and (19). In Ex. (18), the woman provided detailed information of her marriage condition; in (19), the woman showed knowledge of her husband, but their marriage was still labeled “false” as if it was simply self-evident—no explanation of why their marriage was considered “false” was provided in these texts.
Furthermore, this myth of flawed morality was applied even when the Taiwanese husband actually showed up for the wife:

Huanlian Police Force have been mopping up the Mainland bar-table girls and tracked down 17 women of “false marriage, true prostitution”...

... [The police] discovered 4 young Mainland women bar-tabling on site. After investigating their background, the police found all four of them came in Taiwan in the name of marriage and had age differences with their Taiwanese husbands over 20 years...

...A Taiwanese husband was very upset when learning his Mainland wife had been earning pocket money without informing him, but considering their bond as husband and wife, he came to Hualian District Police Station yesterday to ask the police to pardon his wife... (2003-10-08/United Daily/ B1)

The foreign women were prone to the suspicion of “false marriage” even when the “crime” they committed was much less mischievous than prostitution. In the following extract, the woman was repatriated simply because her residency permission was two days over due, but nevertheless this minor misbehavior triggered the police’s suspicion of her marriage status:

The woman Yu confessed to the police’s questioning that he came to Taiwan to visit family after marrying a 67-year-old veteran from Kaohsiung, half an year ago in her hometown Fujian, through a marriage broker. Month(s) ago she was introduced by Chen to Haixia Karaoke for work. She had half-year permission of stay and was not an illegal stowaway. However, the police carefully examined Yu’s document of residency and found she had over-stayed in Taiwan for two days. They suspected that Yu might have come to Taiwan for illegal employment and prostitution through false marriage... (2000-10-10/United Daily/ p. 18)

Qualification for True Marriage

Since hard evidence of a conspired “false marriage” is very difficult to obtain, several alternative methods have been taken in the screening of “false marriage” suspects. In addition to
the myth of flawed morality, certain norms of marriage have been applied in judging the trueness of transnational marriages.

The most widely applied norm is the myth of age, which may be seen in the frequent mentions of age difference between the Taiwanese husbands and their foreign wives, particularly when there is a huge gap. For instance, in Ex. (15), the youniness of the wife was mentioned twice in one sentence, while it does not seem to directly related to the event that was reported; in (19), the age of the Mainland wife (nineteen) was specified, implying that she was too young to be seriously married; in (22), it was the husband's old age (seventy-nine) that was broadcasted for the same function; in (21), the age difference between the wives and their Taiwanese husbands (over twenty years), was also mentioned to establish the falseness of their marriages:

(15) 民庭在調查時，曾懷疑是「假結婚真賣淫」，深入追查後，發現農民確實要娶少妻，卻被少妻「玩弄」...
The Civil Court once suspected [this case] to be “false marriage, true prostitution” during investigation, but after an in-depth scrutiny, they found that the farmer really intended to marry the young wife but was “schemed” by the young wife... (2001-10-17/United Daily/p. 20)

(19) 台北縣警察局少年隊昨晨在板橋市執行春風專案，在一家撞球店意外查獲大陸女子孫瑜（十九歲）涉嫌以假結婚來台賣淫...
Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Brigade of Taipei County Police Force, while practicing Chunfeng Project yesterday morning, accidentally discovered a Mainland woman Sun Yu (aged 19) involved in prostitution in Taiwan through false marriage...

...Sun Yu confessed that she applied to entrance into Taiwan through legal marriage and currently lived in Kaohsiung...
(2000-10-26/United Daily/p. 20)

(22) 余女警訊時供稱，半年前在福建省家鄉經介紹嫁給住高雄的六十七歲榮民後，來台灣探親。月前，經陳姓人士介紹來台東海霞卡拉 OK 店上班。她有居留台灣半年核准證件，不是非法偷渡客。
The woman Yu confessed to the police’s questioning that she came to Taiwan to visit family after marrying a 67-year-old veteran from Kaohsiung, half an year ago in her hometown Fujian, through a marriage broker. Month(s) ago she was introduced by Chen to Haixia Karaoke for work. She had half-year permission of stay and was not an illegal stowaway. However, the police carefully examined Yu’s document of residency and found she had over-stayed in Taiwan for two days. They suspected that Yu might have come to Taiwan for illegal employment and prostitution through false marriage...
(2000-10-10/United Daily/ p. 18)

(21) 花蓮警方連日來大力掃蕩大陸女子坐檯陪酒，三天內共查獲十七名「假結婚、真賣淫」女子...
Huanlian Police Force have been mopping up the Mainland bar-table girls and tracked down 17 women of “false marriage, true prostitution” ...

... [The police] discovered 4 young Mainland women bar-tabling on site. After investigating their background, the police found all four of them came in Taiwan in the name of marriage and had age differences with their Taiwanese husbands over 20 years...

...A Taiwanese husband was very upset when learning his Mainland wife had been earning pocket money without informing him, but considering their bond as husband and wife, he came to Hualian District Police Station yesterday to ask the police to pardon his wife... (2003-10-08/United Daily/ B1)

These texts reveal a myth of age as related to marriage. That is, true marriage may only be practiced between a man not too old and a woman not too young, and the age difference between them has to fall within a certain acceptable range. The repetition of such stereotype-driven discourse makes the following reminder, which is more like a warning, seem plausible:

(23) 桃園榮家為避免單身榮民成為人蛇集團的利用目標,或成為大陸女子來台工作的捷徑,輔導室人員近期在訪談住家榮民時,再三向榮民們宣導,應找一些與年齡相近或可靠婦人結婚,千萬不可娶廿、卅歲大陸妻子,避免發生「假結婚」的現象。

In order to prevent single veterans from becoming the target of human smuggling syndicates or the shortcut of Mainland women to come to work in Taiwan, the counselors of Taoyuan Veteran Home¹³ have repeatedly reminded the resident veterans during their recent visits that they should look for reliable women of comparable age and most emphatically, shouldn’t marry Mainland wives aged 20 or 30ish in order to avoid “false marriage.”

(2000-10-05/United Daily/ p. 20)

Besides age, the financial condition of the Taiwanese husband has also been used in evaluation of the validity of marriage.

(24) 嘉義地區色情業者看上水上鄉部分眷村失業男子,以假結婚迎娶外籍及大陸新娘,媒介進入台灣從事色情行業...

...警方昨天證實確有其事,並過濾發現一對慣竊兄弟連自己都養不活,還想娶外籍新娘,已予以退件。

Sex agents in Jiayi target unemployed men in military dependants' villages¹⁴ in Shuishang County for mediating foreign and Mainland brides into Taiwan for prostitution through false marriage...

...The police verified this situation yesterday. They screened and found a pair of habitual thief brothers who wanted
to marry foreign brides when they could not even support themselves. [The police] have denied their application...

(2002-10-23/United Daily/ p. 20)

(25) Unemployed Huang, a resident of Xiaogang, Kaohsiung, false-married a Mainland woman in order to survive. In late May he was hurt seriously in a car accident and died days ago. The Mainland wife dared to call and asked to inherit his property including the remittance from the car accident. His family/relatives asked the Chief of Village and the police for help not to let her achieve her purpose.

The Chief of Fengming Village Huang Junfu said, the resident Huang (aged 55)... did not have a regular job, lived in deep poverty, and had rare contact with relatives or friends...

The family/relatives of resident Huang questioned, given that the resident Huang had not had a job or income for a long time and couldn’t even support himself, how could he afford to marry a Mainland bride? (2003-10-19/United Daily/ B2)

Since the image of “puppet husbands” who “false-marry” for money had been well-established in earlier texts, such as “the men who were used as puppet [husbands] received NT$30,000 every month” in Ex. (25), the claim that the poor Taiwanese man “false-married a Mainland woman in order to survive” was treated as self-evident. No further evidence was provided in the text except for the family/relatives’ reasoning: “how could he afford to marry a Mainland bride” when he “couldn’t afford himself?” Even though the husband “had rare contact with relatives and friends,” their “reasoning” was presented as a valid source of information in place of “evidence” of the “false marriage,” which put the Mainland wife’s claim of heritage under the suspicion of imposture.

Even though the authors of these two texts did not give overt comments, the rhetorical structure and linguistic devices they chose for presenting the events nevertheless revealed their stances. In both texts, a seemingly factual report concerning the “false marriage” was provided in the very beginning of the text and then used quotes from authorities (i.e. the police, the Chief of Village, and the family/relatives) who supported the “falseness” of the marriage. Throughout the whole texts, balancing perspectives (e.g. narratives from the “husbands” in (24) or the “Mainland wife” in (25)) were not provided.

The use of 竟 (jing) in Ex. (25) is an interesting linguistic choice. 竟 in Chinese is an adverb whose function is close to “even” in English, which expresses a sense of surprise. More than just surprise, however, 竟 can be used to indicate something beyond the user’s range of
acceptance. Let’s consider the following two sentences:

A. 大陸太太來電要求繼承車禍賠償金等財產
   The Mainland wife called and asked to inherite his property including the remittance from
   the car accident.

B. 大陸太太竟來電要求繼承車禍賠償金等財產
   The Mainland wife “jing” called and asked to inherit his property including the remittance
   from the car accident.

While the first one could be seen as a simple description of what happened, the second one,
which the author chose to use, indicated that the wife’s claim was unexpected and not accepted
by the author as legitimate.

I couldn’t find an exact equivalent of 竟 in English and ended up translating it as “dare to”
in order to convey this judgmental feature of 竟. Unlike “dare to” in English, however, 竟 does
not involve the sense of disapproval as strong as “dare” suggests. The judgmental sense of 竟 is
not realized in the same literal/lexical level as “dare” but rather structural and connotative.
Therefore, the leading effect of 竟 upon the reader’s interpretation is more likely to be
unconscious, and thus more difficult for the reader to confront spontaneously.

The analysis above has shown that age and financial condition has been used in media
discourse, as well as in practice of the police, to construe the “falseness” of marriage. However,
it is exactly these “old” and “poor” men who are more likely to “truly” marry a foreign wife
because of their disadvantage in the “marriage market” in Taiwan (Wang & Chang, 2002; Zheng
et al., 2003; Lu, 2005). This binary structure (i.e. They are more likely to marry falsely with
foreign women because they are old and poor; at the same time, they are more likely to marry
truthfully with foreign women for the same reasons) makes it impossible in reality to tell whether
an FMI and her husband are truly married or not simply based on the age and financial condition.
As a result, it may undistinguishedly place all FMIs under the stigma: They are all suspects of
false marriage. Or even worse, given the strong connection between false marriage and
prostitution as analyzed above, they are all potential prostitutes.

One example of this stigma is a group of news articles published in October, 2003, in which
a door-to-door survey allegedly aiming at the census of the “living situation” of FMIs was
depicted as a hunt to uncover “false marriage, true prostitution:”

(26) 外籍與大陸新娘越來越多,「假結婚、真賣淫」的案件也層出不窮, 花蓮縣戶政單位昨天起全面調查外籍
與大陸配偶生活狀況, 除了關心也盼能提供警方查緝不法的線索。
Foreign and Mainland brides are increasing in number, as well as the cases of “false marriage, true prostitution.”
Household Registration Office of Hualian County started a full-scale investigation of the living situation of foreign and Mainland spouses in the hope of, besides showing concern, providing the police clues for tracing illegal activities. (2003-10-18/United Daily/ B4)

(27) 警方調查重點，在清查這些大陸人士在台居住地點是否與戶籍地相同，對行方不明的對象要追蹤去向；除考慮到「假結婚，真賣淫」來台的模式猖獗外，因訪查內容包括是否已領有身分證，在總統大選將屆前，一般認為取得國人身分的大陸人士投票傾向藍營，清查動作顯得敏感。

The focus of this investigation by the police is to check whether these Mainlanders live at the same address as registered. [The police] will track those who are missing. Besides the concern of rampant “false marriage, true prostitution,” because whether the interviewees receive citizen ID is included in the survey questions, before the presidential election, this investigation is also sensitive for it is generally believed that the Mainlanders who obtain our citizenship tend to vote for the Blue Camp15. (2003-10-09/United Daily/ A11)

The following extract is from a news report on the preliminary result of this investigation in Hualian County, starting with a seemingly convincing display of numbers and percentage:

(28) 根據戶政單位統計, 花蓮縣包括大陸新娘在內的外籍配偶共有五千四百九十三位, 其中大陸新娘約有三千人, 不過警方、戶政人員及村幹事最近清查戶籍人口, 卻發現有近八成大陸新娘下落不明...

According the calculation of the Household Registration Office, in Hualian County, there are 5,493 foreign spouses, including Mainland brides, who count for about 3,000. But recently when the police, household registration officers, and village secretaries conducted the census, they found nearly 80% of the Mainland brides’ whereabouts were unidentifiable... (2003-10-21/United Daily/ B4)

Where does this percentage come from? It is revealed in the following paragraph that it might be based on one officer’s visits of one village within one day:

(29) ...游慶暉說，他一天清查三十名大陸新娘的行蹤，只找到六名人還在村裡帶小孩的大陸新娘。

... You Qinghui said, he checked the whereabouts of 30 Mainland brides but only found 6 of them who remained in the village taking care of their children. (ibid)

This over-generalized representation echoes the earlier discussed news claiming 60% or 70% of Mainland women commit prostitution. In this article, the author even went so far to suggest:

(30) ...這三千多名「嫁」來花蓮而行方不明的大陸女子，很可能就暗藏在台灣各個角落裡從事賣淫...

... These 3,000-some “married” into Hualian but untraceable Mainlanders may well be hiding in every corner in
Taiwan doing prostitution... (ibid)

While such shocking stigmatization was portrayed and publicized in mass media, the resistant action of the stigmatized were not taken with sympathy or understanding. Instead, it was presented as a “hinderance to governmental procedure:”

(31) 新竹縣政府民政局戶政課課長林光榮表示，昨天訪查員發現最大的阻礙來自於「不受信任」。其次是，被調查者質疑政府調查工作是想了解是否有「假結婚，真賣淫」的問題，認為不受尊重，有人家裡由狗把關，訪查員進入鄉間農宅，冷不防常被闖出的狗追著跑。

Lin Guangrong, the Chief of Household Registration Section of Hsinchu County Civil Affairs Bureau, expressed, the biggest hinder the interviewers encountered yesterday was “lack of trust.” The second [biggest hinder] was that the interviewees questioned the goal of this survey from the government as wanting to investigate issues about “false marriage, true prostitution,” and thought they were not treated with respect. Some households were guarded by dogs. When the interviewers entered the farming houses in the village, they were often unexpectedly chased by dogs.

(2003-10-18/United Daily/ B4)

Ideally the press should represent multiple voices and perspectives of different interests. While most mainstream news fails to achieve such ideal in their representations of FMIs as shown in this and previous chapters, the following extract is a good example where reflexivity does occur against the stigmatization of FMIs within the discursive context of mainstream news:

(30) 王君儀還說，這群來自南洋和中國大陸的姊妹們，在台舉目無親，還得默默承受著扭曲與不公，常被汙名化為假結婚真賣淫、會生出不良的小孩，有苦難言。

Wang Junyi also said, these sisters from Southeast Asia and Mainland China not only had no familial support in Taiwan, but also had to tolerate quietly the unfairness and injustice. They were often stigmatized as false marriage true institution or reproducing inferior children. Their suffering is a speechless one. (2005-10-28/United Daily/ C2)

While it is gratifying to see such counter-discourse in mainstream news, it is sad at the same time, given that this is the only one, out of the 179 news articles in this dataset, that speaks for the FMIs against discriminative stereotypes. Despite such occasional sparkle of resistance and retaliation, the mainstream media news still overwhelmingly reproduce the old domonant ideologies initiated one decade ago, with the discursive construction of the link between FMIs, false marriages, and prostitution.

4.3. Conclusion
In this chapter I have focused on the trajectory of the particular lexical item “false marriage” in mainstream news discourse. Passing from text to text, this term has gone through continuous (re)appropriation of meaning.

In the pre-formative stage “false marriage” was an innovative usage of language, simply combining two independent lexical items “false” and “marriage.” The association between “false marriage” and the discourse of FMIs was not yet developed in this stage.

In the formative/transitive stage, the compound “false marriage” has gradually gained its status as a set phrase, qualified for a lexical item itself, through its reiteration in news texts. Several important semantic and pragmatic features of this term also emerged in this stage, including its connection to the discourse of FMIs and socially disapproved endeavors, the formularization of the phrase “false marriage, true XXX” with negative connotations, and the transition from the representational and interpretative framing, from the frame of social relation and intimacy to that of legality and morality.

In the most recent, reproductive/re-formative stage, these features have been widely reproduced with high and consistent frequency and more naturalized and normative representation. The decrease of collocating details and explanations while using “false marriage, true prostitution” in this stage indicates an increased internalization of this concept in social cognition.

The mainstream news media construct the “falseness” of FMIs’ marriage with the reproduction of several myths, including the myths of flawed morality of the foreign women, financial condition of the husband, and the age difference between them, none of which may be said to sufficiently support the “evidenced intension” or “conspiracy” required for the conviction of a “false marriage” by court.

As seen in the analyses of the previous chapters of FMIs’ labeling and quotation in mainstream news, FMIs also tend to be highly stigmatized in the discourse of “false marriage,” in which they were associated with moral deficits, greed for money, and the socially condemned sexual business.

In the next chapter I shall compare the stigmatized and marginalized representations of FMIs (re)produced in mainstream mass media, as discussed in this and previous chapters, to the self-representations in their own narratives, which may introduce another level of intertextual analysis, namely the examination of the relationship between discourse and counter-discourse.

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1 Many of Foucault’s concepts have been adopted in Faircloughian CDA, such as the relation between knowledge and discourse, and the concept of order of discourse. But his historical
documentation of discourse over time is nevertheless not so well incorporated.

2 A representative of the Counsel of Taoyuan County.

3 In Chinese, 假結婚 is both a noun (“false marriage”) and a verb (“false-marry”). In addition, tense and voice (active/passive) tend not to be marked but inferred from the context. Therefore, multiple English translations (e.g. “false marriage,” “false-married”) are used here for 假結婚.

交友複雜 literally means “make friends complicatedly,” which is euphemistic of “befriending people of suspicious background.”

婆家 literally means “mother-in-law’s family,” which is commonly used to refer to the husband’s family. This term reflects the high status of mothers-in-law in traditional Chinese culture.

依親 (“depending on family”) and 探親 (“visiting family”) were the two legitimate marriage-related reasons for residency, with different limitations on the length of stay.

開放 (“Opening”) was used against the long history of restricted contact between Taiwan and China.

9 接客 (“receive guests”) is a Chinese euphemism for “doing sexual business.

10 A temporary detainment facility for Mainlanders waiting for repatriation.

11 坐檯 (“sit at the bar-table”) and 陪酒 (“accompany the wine”) refer to the seductive business done by women dressed revealingly. It might and might not entail actual sexual trade, but is usually considered a business “against good social customs” and thus may cause cancellation of residency in the case of foreign women.

12 See Note 11.

13 A government-run nursing home for veterans.

14 眷村 (“military dependants' village”) is a special type of public housing provided by the government for the current, retired, or deceased military personnel’s dependants.

15 A cluster of political parties.

16 An officer of the Social Affairs Bureau.

17 姊妹 (“sisters”) is frequently used by sympathetic groups (e.g. migrant right advocates; feminist groups) to refer to FMIs.
5
Self-representations in Published Narratives of FMIs

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines FMIs’ narratives, focusing on their self-representations in comparison to the other-produced or mediated representations of them in mainstream news discourse as discussed in the earlier chapters.

5.1.1. “Please Don’t Call Me ‘Foreign Bride.’”

The narratives of FMIs analyzed in this chapter were collected from a book published in 2005, which has been the first and so far the only publication in Taiwan with FMIs as the primary authors. The title of the book is “Please Don’t Call Me Foreign Bride,” taken from the title of an article written by an FMI in this book. This title is very indicative of the purposes of this publication, that is, to initiate a conversation with the (assumed) Taiwanese public, to present accounts of their lived experiences in Taiwan, and to contest against the prevalent stereotypes as symbolized by the label “foreign bride.”

This book is composed of four sections: (1) A reflection by the editor Hsia, a Taiwanese feminist sociologist and the initiator of TransAsia Sister Association, on her ten-year action study with the FMIs. Here I use the preposition with as in the distinction Cameron et al. (1992) made between research on, for, and with the participants. (2) Sixteen narratives written by FMIs, accounting for their experiences as marriage-based immigrants in Taiwan. (3) Nine articles by social workers, educators and volunteers who have first-hand experience “accompanying and growing with them” (subtitle of this section). (4) Four critiques on political, legal and social inequality faced by FMIs, written by scholars in law, feminism, social work and education. I will in this chapter only focus on the second section of this book, the 16 narratives written by FMIs.

The authors of these articles show a substantial diversity in terms of their original nationality. 5 of these FMIs were from Mainland China, 4 from Vietnam, 2 from Indonesia, 2 from Cambodia, 1 from Myanmar, 1 from Thailand, and 1 from the Philippines. Despite this diversity of nationality, most of their narratives were originally written in Chinese except for two. The inclusion of these two narratives, one written in Filipino and translated into Chinese, and the other narrated in oral Chinese and dictated, shows the editor’s effort to avoid making Chinese proficiency or literacy an obstacle for the FMIs’ voices to be heard.
Compared to the other datasets used in the current study, the number of texts in this data pool is very small (total article # = 16). However, this is what has been available and accessible thus far, particularly given the general absence of their narratives in the domain of public discourse.

5.1.2. Methodology

The analytical framework is similar to that used in Chapter 2 for identification of prevalent representational themes. Given the dialogical nature of most narratives as well as the contesting relationship between this alternative and the mainstream discourse, this chapter will analyze these narratives as counter-discourse.

According to Foucault, counter-discourse is produced when those who are usually spoken for and about by others begin to speak for themselves (Deleuze and Foucault, 1977). In this chapter, I shall focus on the FMIs’ spontaneous effort in resisting and subverting the mainstream stereotypes and stigma as found in the previous chapters.

This focus on FMIs’ discourses as resistant to mainstream reproduction of stereotypes and power structures also aims to compensate for the flaw of traditional critical discourse analysis, the over-emphasis on the discourse regarded as objectionable by the analysts, with the incorporation of positive discourse analysis (PDA) proposed by James Martin and colleagues (e.g. Martin, 1999, 2004; Martin & Rose, 2003; Macgilchrist, 2007). The primary difference between PDA and traditional CDA is that the former analyzes “discourse that inspires, encourages, heartens; discourse we like, that cheers us along” (Martin, 1999, p. 52) in pursuit of the promotion of such discourses that “do well” and “get right” in the analysts’ eyes (Macgilchrist, 2007, p. 74).

Both the title and the content of the narratives will be discussed in the following analysis. However, frequency count is not conducted given that only 16 articles are included in this dataset. Numbers and percentages may not provide as much insight as in the previous chapters. Therefore, the analysis of this chapter will be primarily qualitative and exploratory.

5.2. Theme Analysis

5.2.1. Grand themes in article titles

We may first obtain some sense of the overarching themes of these FMIs’ narratives by simply looking at the titles of the articles:
Three grand themes appear predominant among these titles: rebound to dominant discriminative discourse, autobiographic story telling, and sisterhood (mutually supportive womanhood) among FMIs and sometimes including the Taiwanese feminist activists or female volunteers who work closely with them.

(1) Rebound to dominant discriminative discourse

Five articles may be categorized under this theme, including (1) Please don’t call me “foreign bride,” (3) Please don’t call me “Mainland bride,” (8) My children are not stupid, (14) Media please show respect to us, and the less direct (15) South Pacific sisters’ opinions of Nationality Act. The main purpose of these articles is to resist, challenge, and invert the common assumptions reproduced in mainstream discourse. In (1) and (3), the objection to the labels is not oriented to the labels themselves, but the symbolic, pejorative meaning of these labels granted by the discourse surrounding them (see the discussion of labels in Chapter 2); in (8), the author challenges the stereotype prevalently assumed in mass media, that is the inferiority or developmental deficits of the children of FMIs, who are portrayed as incapable and disqualified mothers; in (14), the objection goes beyond the product (i.e. news reports on FMIs in media) and reaches the dimension of production (i.e. the news-making process). All of the titles of these four articles have an assumed listener “you” by using either imperative sentences (“Please don’t call us…;” “please show respect…”) or negation devices (My children are “not” stupid).
Title (14) is somewhat different from these four articles in that its wording does not convey a strong dialogical feeling as the others. However, it may still qualify for this category because this text was produced in reaction to the discourse surrounding the Nationality Act. Similar to (1) and (3) concerning the labels, it is not just the act itself but the embedded dominant ideologies and social inequality that the author criticized and aimed to invert in this article.

(2) Autobiographic story telling

This grand theme of FMIs telling their life stories may be found in seven articles: (2) The story of a wanderer girl, (4) An untold story until now, (6) My life in Taiwan, (7) Holding hands, (9) My journey to Taiwan, (11) A dream come true, and (16) Power of life. In these autobiographic stories the FMI authors not only describe their lived experiences as marriage-based immigrants in Taiwan, but also their life before immigration, as well as accounts for the transition between these two seemingly discrete life stages. Unlike the mass media representation of them as solely immigrants or wives as if they had no life before the marriage or migration, their self-accounts represent their lives as coherent and seamless, with the marriage as one, though significant, decision among others.

Although these autobiographic narratives do not prescribe a recipient “you” as those articles rebounding to mainstream discourses, they are still dialogical in nature because of the adoption of the genre of story-telling, which is meant to represent one’s life to interested others in order to develop understanding or emotional connection.

(3) Sisterhood among FMIs

The third grand theme of the FMIs’ narratives under analysis is the stressed sisterhood among themselves, sometimes including the supportive feminist activists and female volunteers who have worked closely with them. 姊妹 (jie-mei, “sisters”) is the term they use to address one another, which derives from the metaphor of family and joint womanhood, emphasizing shared experience and mutual support. Four articles in this collection share this theme. They are (5) Dream of the sisters, (10) A tree, (12) Sisters don’t be afraid, and (13) Mother’s home for us.

Two more metaphors are used in these titles beyond the “sisters” metaphor mentioned above. One of them is the metaphor of a “tree,” which the author used to describe her fellow FMI students (the “fruits,” sweet and friendly), their volunteer teachers (the “leaves,” devoted and caring), and their joint creation (the “tree,” symbolizing the passing of knowledge and the bond of affection). The other metaphor is 娘家 (“niang-jia,” “mother’s home”), which is a unique concept in Chinese culture. While the ideational meaning of this term simply refers to the original family of a married woman, the emotional connotation, which is more important to this metaphor, is the special bond between the mother and the married daughter that involves
closeness, unconditioned support, and the passing of womanhood between generations (See Halliday, 1985 for distinction between ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language). In (13) Mother’s home for us, the “mother’s home” refers to TransAsia Sister Association where these “sisters” may share experiences and feelings and provide support to one another.

Again we may sense the dialogical feature from the titles such as (12) Sisters don’t be afraid, although the addressee now is more their fellow FMI “sisters” than objectionable Taiwanese public/media, as discussed in theme (a), or interested Taiwanese “story listeners” as in theme (b).

5.2.2. Representational themes in texts

As mentioned in the previous section, these FMIs’ narratives under analysis reveal their purposes as to counter the mainstream stigmatic stereotypes, to promote understanding among interested readers, and to unite and encourage FMIs as “sisters,” all of which involve the positioning of FMIs in the existent power structure of the society. This discursive effort, in order to move from their current unprivileged position to a more equal and ideal one, has also formed a dialogue between FMIs’ self-representations and those dominant ones prevalent in Taiwanese society, to a large degree mediated and reproduced by the main stream media. In the following analysis, I will address this dialogical nature of this data and identify the representational themes within the texts in terms of their relationship to common media representations of FMIs as discussed in the previous chapters.

Three types of relations between FMIs’ self-accounts and the mainstream representations of them were found in this comparison, with the FMIs’ narratives found to contain themes countering, alternative to, or sharing/incorporating mainstream representational themes.

1) Themes countering mainstream representations

Themes countering mainstream representations of FMIs here refer to the themes realized by the FMIs’ narratives with awareness of and objection to the dominant ideologies. Such contestation by FMIs was found in the current data concerning their role as mothers, the common labels and the concept of segregationist grouping behind them, as well as Taiwanese-centrism/nationalism.

FMIs’ motherhood

As suggested in Chapter 2, the mainstream media tends to represent FMIs as disqualified or incapable mothers who need to be “adjusted” by attending assimilation programs and become
more “Taiwanese.” Lin questioned this deficit view by arguing:

“也許因為我是新移民女性,所以管教孩子的方法,讓台灣人不認同,如果我是台灣人的話,就不會被認為不正常。”

“Maybe because I am a new immigrant female, my way of educating children is not accepted by Taiwanese. But it wouldn’t be considered wrong if I were a Taiwanese.”

(我的小孩並不笨 “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

As she pointed out, their lack of qualification, which has been predominantly represented as “deficit,” may simply be “difference” in the cultural models of motherhood.

Instead of incapable, helpless mothers, FMI s in the current data tended to represent themselves as devoted and resolute/strong mothers. Take the following extracts for example:

“不管多少風雨,為了孩子們我還是要多努力,不能躲避,我要有信心,要有樂觀,讓我的生活更有意義。”

“…no matter how bad the circumstance is, I must work harder for my children. I cannot dodge. I must keep faith, be optimistic, so as to make my life more meaningful.”

(一個現在才說的故事, “An untold story until now” by Chen Cui-wei)

“當時我真的想一走了之,正當此時肚中的胎兒微微顫動,此刻寶寶好像給我一股很大的啟示,好像在告訴我：「媽媽你要堅強,要忍耐,這些問題難不倒你,你一定可以克服的,你一定要活下去。」突然間覺醒好像被敲了一記腦袋,頓時讓我忘記心底所有傷心的念頭,為了這個沒出世的孩子,我要加油,更要堅強勇敢的,而忍耐的活下去。”

“At that time I really wanted to give up and leave, but at that moment the baby in me shivered slightly, as if he’s sending me a sign, telling me, ‘be strong and firm mommy. I know these problems can’t stop you. You can conquer them. You have to hold on and live well.’ It was like a sudden awakening hit on my head that made me forget all the sad thoughts in my heart. I must hang on. I must live more strongly, bravely, and patiently for this baby who hasn’t seen this world.”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

“九十一年二月二十號晚上九點三十二分,我的寶貝女兒在我們一起努力下,呼吸人世間第一口空氣,我熱量全用光了,全身冷的發抖,看著先生抱著女兒,心中卻無比溫暖,這是我最幸福的時候,這一刻在我心中成了一個永恆。”

“9:32 p.m., 2/20, 2000, with our (i.e. the author and her husband) hard effort, my baby girl took her first breath in this world. I had used up all my energy and was shaking for the cold, but seeing her in my husband’s arm, I felt so warm inside. That was the happiest moment in my life, which made eternity in my heart.”

(牽手, “Holding hands” by Little Swallow)
In the meanwhile, some FMIs did express their worries and difficulties about assuming the role of mothers. However, such worries were framed as universal to all mothers, not simply FMIs. For instance:

“如今女兒已經三歲了，期間帶小孩的種種辛苦不言而喻，哪個媽媽不是這樣過呢?”
“Now my daughter is three years old. There’s no word to describe the strains of raising the kid during all this time, but isn’t that true for every mother?”

(牽手, “Holding hands” by Little Swallow)

“I該怎麼辦，白天還可陪他玩，到了晚上怕自己睡著，沒辦法照顧他，不敢睡，求老天爺讓孩子快好起來，所有一切疼痛，由自己來承擔，相信天下的媽媽都會有這樣的想法吧！也許這就是母愛。”
“What could I do? During the day I could play with him but at night, I dared not to fall asleep because I was afraid of my not taking good care of him if I slept. I prayed to God for replacing him for the pain and for him to recover sooner. I believe all mothers in the world would think alike. Maybe this is just what’s called motherhood.”

(我的小孩並不笨 “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

They also mentioned the attendance of Chinese or other cultural programs in order to help them better fulfill the educational responsibility of a mother, but it does not mean that they would completely embrace the idea of assimilation and give up their national identity. Instead of neglecting who they are and fitting themselves into the Taiwanese model, the following extract shows that the opposite may work better for them. They may feel more ready to “raise [their] children healthy and bright” if the programs help them to develop confidence in themselves instead of attempting a thorough conversion to Taiwanese.

“為了孩子在社會上有良好的教育，也為了自己能成為好母親，自己也去到板橋社區大學上課，課程不只認識字而已，那裡的志工老師也教我們認識台灣，教我們日常生活上的習俗，最重要的是「心理輔導」，從此我也改變自己，提高自已的自信心，以前因為我是越南人常被人看不起，現在我很有自信，相信自己可以教出健康、活潑的孩子。”

“In order for my children to have good education in this society and for myself to be a good mother, I go to Panchiao Community University myself. The courses there are not limited to literacy. The volunteer teachers also teach us to know more about Taiwan and the customs of daily life here. What’s more important is the ‘counseling course.’ I have changed myself and raised my self-confidence. I was often looked down upon before because I am a Vietnamese, but now I’m very confident of myself. I believe I can raise my children to be healthy and bright.”

(我的小孩並不笨 “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)
Labeling and segregationist grouping

The narratives of FMIs in this dataset show a strong antagonism towards the label “foreign brides,” including the variation of it that specifies their countries of origin, such as “Mainland brides” or “Indonesian brides.” Two articles used almost identical titles, (1) *Please Don’t Call Me “Foreign Bride”* and (3) *Please Don’t Call Me “Mainland Bride,”* which indicates how strong their objection is against such labeling of them. As suggested in Chapter 2, “foreign brides” is also associated with more negative and pejorative image of FMIs as material beings (e.g. commodities; reproduction tools) than the other two labels “foreign spouses” and “new immigrants,” which may explain why the FMIs are particularly enraged about this specific label but not others.

As discussed in Chapter 2, labeling has been used in categorizing social actors and has functioned to maintain distinction between the labeling and the labeled classes or groups. Ironically, on the one hand the dominant discourse in Taiwan seems to encourage assimilation, but on the other hand the widespread use of derogatory labels seems to indicate “they” will never really become “us.” This places the FMIs in never-ending struggles of identity, as Xiao pointed out:

“「大陸新娘」是公認的一種稱謂, 沒有永遠的「新娘」, 當我年滿四十領到了台灣身份證, 變成台灣歐巴桑的時候, 我是不是還要在我的自尊和台灣人異樣的眼光中間掙扎, 漸漸老去呢?”

“Mainland Brides” is a commonly recognized label for us, but no one can be a “bride” forever. When I reach the age of 40, receive Taiwanese citizen ID, and become a Taiwanese *Ou-ba-san*, will I still have to age in the struggle between my self-esteem and the alienating eyes of Taiwanese?

(請不要叫我「大陸新娘」, “Please don’t call me “Mainland bride” by Xiao Dong-mei)

Will this struggle ever end? The naturalization of their Taiwanese nationality does not seem to provide an answer, since their “foreign” identity is incarnated in their appearance, their accent, and other ethnic or cultural heritages they carry along, as Xu and Li commented:

“「大陸新娘」這樣的稱呼, 已無所謂, 他們的悲哀是走到那裡都是很孤單。在台灣人心中, 早已被貼上標籤, 好比是一種濃濃的味道, 無論你到任何一個角落, 只要一開口, 說的第一句話, 他們就能辨別出你是外籍新娘或是外籍人士。”

“Being called something like ‘Mainland brides’ does not matter anymore. What’s really sorrowful is that they are so alone wherever they go. *The label has always been there in Taiwanese’s mind. It’s just like a thick smell. No matter which corner you visit, once you open your mouth and say the first sentence, they can immediately identify you as a foreign bride, or a foreigner.***”
Xu’s personal experience confirms this observation:

“有一次我肚子好餓，想吃個點心，問老闆娘給我一碗麵，話一停她就問：「小姐，聽你的口音不是本省人吧！你是外籍新娘嗎？」當時天氣非常熱，又挺個大肚子，已不太舒服了，加上聽到這樣的一問，我難過的心又湧上心頭，為什麼要用這樣的疑問！難道外籍新娘不是人嗎？看到那種瞧不起人的眼框中閃爍著異樣的眼神，我的內心就像受到重重的壓力與打擊般的感到，真不該嫁到台灣，台灣人歧視「大陸新娘」的態度，常令我難堪地就好像世界末日就要降臨一樣，讓我們這些外籍新娘有快窒息而無呼吸的感受。”

“There was once I was very hungry and wanted to have some snack. I asked the vendor for a bowl of noodles. Upon the finish of my question she asked ‘Miss, with your accent, you’re not local right? Are you a foreign bride?’ That was a hot day and I was uncomfortable enough with my pregnancy. Hearing such a question, my heart was soon flooded by sadness. Why ask a question like this! Are foreign brides not human? Seeing their despising eyes as if I were something peculiar, I felt like I had been struck and overwhelmed. I felt I really shouldn’t marry to Taiwan¹. The discriminative attitudes of the Taiwanese so often make me feel like the end of the world, making us foreign brides choked breathless.”

So it is not the word, it is the accompanying “eyes” and “attitudes” that make these labels burn. Taking the word out of the context, the question by the vendor could be otherwise interpreted as a friendly initiator of small talk, or as a sign of sheer curiosity. But with the attitudes, the non-verbal co-text, such possible interpretations seem to be implausible, at least in the FMI listener’s ear that may have received similar messages over and over again in her daily encounters.

Echoing the question proposed by Xu, “Are foreign brides not human?” FMIs’ self-accounts seem to favor the frame of sameness (“we’re all human/women”) over the frame of difference (“we’re from different countries/areas”) between themselves and others, in this case Taiwanese, or Taiwanese women. For instance:
In this extract, Huang expressed both the preference of the self-affiliated label “new immigrant females” (“us ‘new immigrant females’”) over the other-ascribed label “foreign brides” (“you call us ‘foreign brides’”) and the similarity between “foreign” and “Taiwanese” women in the sense that they both “have characters and self-esteem” and need to be treated with respect, which seems a basic human right.

Li further argued for the legitimacy of FMIs’ being seen as members of Taiwanese by stating:

“台灣的文化我不是很懂，事實證明有很多的人生活在這塊土地，卻不認同這個國家。每逢到了選舉期間，種族歧視、不實言論壁壘分明。我覺得大家要團結，不分彼此，一同為這塊土地生存來打拼。”

“I am not a master of Taiwanese culture, but the truth is that many people live on this land but do not identify with this country. Whenever there is an election, words of racism and ethnicism4 come from opposing groups regardless of the reality. I think we should all unite instead of segregating ourselves and work together for the future of this land.”

Here Li criticized many so-called “Taiwanese” who do not identify with the country but fight among themselves during political campaigns by manipulating the issue of identity and ethnicity. Compared to them, FMIs like Li herself are more “Taiwanese” in terms of their identification with the country and their willingness to “unite instead of segregating… for the future of this land.”

**Taiwanese-centrism/nationalism**

Related to FMIs’ protest against the use of derogatory labels, the third theme that aims to counter the dominant discourses of FMIs is their contestation against Taiwanese-centrism and discriminative nationalism.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Taiwanese-centric values are mostly realized in the
representation of the superior Taiwanese *us*, and the inferior foreign *them*. Such division is well
aware of by FMIs, as manifested in their remarks of the “alienating/despising eyes” of the
Taiwanese, which we have seen in the extracts concerning the use of segregationist labels.
Beyond the labels and the “eyes,” Taiwanese superiority may also be expressed verbally even in
the FMIs’ presence. For instance:

“因為上班的關係，老闆的臉色也看了多，有一些當面叫名字教的挺親熱的，遇到好奇的客人，問一句「她
不是台灣人吧？」老闆娘就會細了聲音一撇嘴，「那邊的！」這一句「那邊的」含著濃濃的不屑。”
“I’ve seen many faces of bosses at work. Some would call my name warmly to my face, but when curious customers
ask, ‘she’s not Taiwanese, is she?’ the boss would *curl her lips and lower her voice ‘from that side’!* Her tone of
‘from that side’ has a deep distain in it.”

(請不要叫我「大陸新娘」, “Please don’t call me “Mainland bride”” by Xiao Dong-mei)

It is worth noticing that the boss’s “lowering her voice” does not prevent the FMI from
hearing the remark or the “distaining tone” of it. Therefore, this action should not be interpreted
as to show concern and save the FMI’s face. Instead, together with the facial expression of
“curling her lips,” the lowered voice may well be a trick of dramatization of the information to
be revealed, which is not uncommon while gossiping about scandals.

The expression of national superiority may take an even more overt and direct form. Take
the following extract for example:

“很多人知道我是大陸人以後，就會說：「真好命啊，嫁到我們台灣來」，或是說：「在台灣肯定吃的比你們大陸
好」，他們知道我會用電腦，竟然覺得奇怪，說：「大陸也會用電腦嗎？」”
“Learning that I am a Mainlander, many people would say *you’re so lucky to marry to our country Taiwan,* or
‘For sure you now eat better in Taiwan than in your country China.’ When they found that I could use the
computer, they were so surprised and said *they use computers in China too?*”

(牽手, “Holding hands,” by Little Swallow)

The expressions of 我們台灣 (*wo-men-tai-wan*, literally “our Taiwan”) and 你們大陸
(*ni-men-da-lu*, literally “your Mainland/China”) are particularly of interest here. The use of “our”
and “your” before names of countries or places is quite common in Chinese, which is similar to
“our place” and “your place” in English. This use of possessives reveals a clear demarcation of
boundaries. *This is our country, and that is yours. Our country is better than yours because of
our economic and technological advances (“eating better” and “using computers”).*

Even when their imagined superiority was challenged by the first-hand information from the
FMI, such as the author’s being able to use the computer, Taiwanese may be reluctant to take in
the new information and adjust their stereotypical understanding of FMIs from a nationalist perspective. In a later paragraph, the author also mentioned that many Taiwanese “cannot imagine that I could read traditional Chinese” and “cannot believe that I had gone to school.”

In contrast with the predominant media portrayal of FMIs, who self-ascribe the inferior positioning and express willingness to be assimilated without hesitance, FMIs in the current dataset tend to reject the concept that they are inferior to Taiwanese or Taiwanese women. As mentioned in the previous theme of FMIs’ motherhood, it may be simply the “difference” between them and Taiwanese that makes them seem “wrong” in Taiwanese’s eyes:

“也許因為我是新移民女性，所以管教孩子的方法，讓台灣人不認同，如果我是台灣人的話，就不會被認為不正常。”

Maybe because I am a new immigrant female, my way of educating children is not accepted by Taiwanese. But it wouldn’t be considered wrong if I were a Taiwanese.”

(我的小孩並不笨, “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

The author Little Swallow, after being questioned about her competence in using the computer, her knowledge of traditional Chinese, her education level, and eventually the motivation of her husband for marrying her, made sense of all this with what she called “Islanders’ Complex.”

“有些人的小島意識，我倒很能理解，他們都說台灣甚麼都好。這一點我理解，他們生在斯長在斯，當然自己的家鄉好。…有些從來沒有去過大陸的老人家，一輩子都沒出過台灣的人，你解釋也沒用。”

“I could understand the Islanders’ Complex of some people. They say everything is great with Taiwan. I understand that. They were born and grew up here. Of course they consider their home the best. For the senior people who have never been to China and for those who have never stepped out of Taiwan for their whole life, there’s no use even if you explain.”

(牽手, “Holding hands,” by Little Swallow)

In her reasoning, she expressed her understanding of this “Islanders’ Complex” by stressing “I could understand,” “I understand,” and “of course” while reasoning why Taiwanese have this (illusion of) superiority. However, understanding does not mean agreement. By highlighting “the senior people who have never been to China” and “those who have never stepped out of Taiwan,” she framed their sense of superiority as the consequence of lacking knowledge. In doing so, she positioned these “some Taiwanese” as isolated from and ignorant of the rest of the world, and thus inferior, while positioning herself and other FMIs as being more experienced and knowledgeable, and thus actually superior.
As mentioned in Chapter 2, such inferiority could be mapped onto not only the FMIs but their family as well. FMIs seem to be well aware of and resistant to such stigma:

“更好笑的是，有人會懷疑我先生是不是有甚麼毛病，所以才會去娶大陸人，更有人當著我的面說：「人家好的怎麼會去娶大陸人，早就在台灣娶了，哪輪得到你呀。」”

“What’s funnier is, some people would be suspicious that my husband might have some problem so that he married a Mainlander. Some even said to my face, ‘How would those who live well want to marry a Mainlander? They must have married someone in Taiwan way before your turn.'”

(牵手, “Holding hands,” by Little Swallow)

“我們的孩子不像電視報導的那樣，他們不遲緩，很聰明、乖巧，請不要再用異樣的眼光看我們，這就是我要對台灣社會說的心聲。”

“Our children are not like what they report on TV. They don’t have developmental delays. They are smart and clever. Please do not look at us with alienating eyes. This is the voice of my heart that I want to express to the Taiwanese society.”

(我的小孩並不笨, “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

Here Little Swallow and Lin tried to counter the stigma of their family by framing the derogatory view as “funny” and directly inverting it by stressing that they are “not” the way they are believed to be.

(2) Themes alternative to mainstream representations

This second set of themes differ from the first in the sense that these themes do not overtly challenge or address established stereotypes or representations well-spread in mainstream discourses. However, these themes may still function as counter-discourse without overtly “countering” mainstream representations of FMIs and related topics. For instance, many FMIs’ narratives in the current data provide detailed accounts of their decision-making process for their cross-border marriages and their lived experience after getting married and immigrating to Taiwan. Although such accounts do not purposefully address the common mainstream discourse of “false marriage” of FMIs, they may provide the readers with alternative representations of cross-border marriages and marriage-based immigration, and thus may create a competing knowledge frame of “genuine marriage” in their mind, which contests against that of “false marriage.” (For more discussion of the relationship between discourse and social/individual cognition, see van Dijk, 1990, 1993.)

These themes in FMIs’ narratives are alternative to the mainstream representations of FMIs in two ways: Firstly, they may share similar or related topics with mainstream discourses yet
from a different perspective, thus providing alternative framing, as in the instance of “marriage” mentioned above. Secondly, they may address subject matters that tend to be neglected or marginalized in mainstream discourses, thus providing alternative topics of concern, such as their relationship with their original family, which was not found at all in my analyses of mainstream news.

(2a) Themes of alternative framing

Themes of shared topics but with different framing from mainstream media discourses include genuine marriage, FMIs’ practice of agency, and their perspectives of assimilation.

Genuine marriage

This theme of “genuine marriage” of FMIs was established in the current data mainly through the detailed accounts of their sophisticated decision-making process before the marriage (vis-à-vis “rushed marriage for money” in mainstream discourse). However, some FMIs did mention that their marriages were settled in a rushed manner, for instance:

“…與先生認識是經過親戚介紹，並在雙方不太了彼此個性時，便匆匆的結了婚…”
“… it was through a relative that I knew my husband, and we got married hastily when we hadn’t really known each other’s personality…”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

“記得十幾年前，友人和我商議要介紹對象給我，讓我嫁人。當時我也不過是二十幾歲的姑娘，一切都很陌生只好點頭答應，於是我嫁了一位山東老兵，雖然年紀上和我有一段差距，不過他是一位慈祥的老人，我把我的這一生托付給他。”
“I remember 10-some years ago, my friend talked to me about introducing someone to me for marriage. I was only a girl in her twenties and was not familiar with the whole process. I could only agree to the arrangement. This way I married a veteran from Shandong. There was a gap of age between us but he was a gentle person, so I entrusted him with my life.”

(流浪女的故事, “The story of a wanderer girl,” by Wang Xiao-ying)

It is worth noticing that both the original countries of these two authors (i.e. China and Myanmar) have a tradition of arranged marriage, which is still highly accepted or even preferred in their current social circumstances, particularly in rural areas. Despite the haste, their marriages were arranged in a normative way, with a trustworthy relative or friend as the medium between the couple. Although concerns were expressed about the hasty process and the gap of age or
personality, they framed themselves as neither “commodities” nor “profit-seekers.” Instead, they show sincere aspiration for a prolonged marriage by mentioning their concerns about personality fit between themselves and the husband, and the willingness to “entrust” the husband with their life.

Only one article in the current data mentioned the economic benefits of marriage:

“The reason was that the financial condition of my family was not good, and I had a mother to support. My older siblings all had their own families, and my mother and I did not have a place to live. My only thought then was to marry to Taiwan and to ask my husband to buy a house for my mom to live in, because my mom had suffered more hardship but enjoyed less comfort and relish than anyone. All the good things of her life were given to her children.”

*(生命的力量, “Power of life,” by Xie Ting)*

As Hsia (2002) pointed out after years of field work with FMIs, the women tend to struggle a lot before making the decision to leave their country and marry a foreign man. The desire to save their original family from poverty plays a crucial role in finalizing such decisions. However, such selfless motivation tends to be left out in media representations of FMIs’ marriages, which instead predominantly position them as simply “greedy benefit seekers,” as shown in the discussion of “false marriage” in Chapter 3.

In addition, not every marriage of FMIs was represented as hasty in nature or through the matchmaker in the current data. For instance:

“I met him because of work. He was very curious about our town and we were interested in the environment of Taiwan, so we had a lot to chat about. On our days off, my colleagues and I would give him a tour of our ancient town, and every day after work, he would share things about Taiwan with us. Several months later, he started asking me out. Work was still our primary topic in the beginning, and then we began to talk about ourselves. He seemed to intentionally reveal to me his [marital] condition, so we developed a closer relationship. When the act of cross-strait marriage was passed, we got married. He became my husband and my other half.”

*(我的台灣路, “My journey to Taiwan,” by Xie Hong-mei)*
Here Xie described a progression of relationship through the stages of companionship of work, friendship, dating, and ultimately the marriage. This progression conforms to the normative model of marriage in modern Taiwanese society. That is, an ideal marriage should be contracted upon a conjugal relationship, which emphasizes romantic love and mutual commitment between the couple, as discussed in Chapter 3. The following extract presents a different progression of relationship building into marriage, which fits in a more recently developed prototype of romantic love and marriage:

“愛情對我來說，是一個有密碼的鎖，我以為自己已經把密碼忘記了，但是那把鎖就這麼在網路上找到了，而我的第一個網友，就這麼輕易的把密碼找回了…民國八十八年的一個晚上，他就這樣出現了，JESS，一個台灣男生，一個大我十歲的大哥哥，一個同樣在寂寞裏長大的男生，就這樣聊起了天南海北，從古至今，談心情，談風景，談工作，無所不談，談起了家人，談起了愛情。”

“Love was for me a padlock. I thought I had lost the code, but the lock was revealed in the internet, and my first keypal recovered the code, just this simple… One evening of 1999, he showed up unexpectedly. Jess, a Taiwanese guy, a brother 10 years older than me, one who also grew up in loneliness. Just like this, we talked about everything, our emotions, the sceneries, our work, just anything, like our families, and our love.”

(牽手, “Holding hands” by Little Swallow)

On-line dating has been socially recognized and legitimized as an emerging form of dating and constructing intimacy in Taiwan, which is manifested in the spread of a new Chinese term 網戀 (wang-lian, “Net-love”) referring to this specific type of cyber romance. Therefore, the development of the author’s relationship with her husband is in essence similar to those Taiwanese who seek and find romantic relationship through the internet. Furthermore, the rhetoric of this narrative is reminiscent of that of a romance novel by using the typical metaphor of the lock and the person who has the code to open it.

In both Xie and Little Swallow’s accounts, their marriages were represented as based upon true love. Except for that this love relationship was constructed between participants from two different countries, their stories do not differ from those among Taiwanese, and thus are as “genuine” as the latter. Such representation of love-based marriage of FMIIs was nevertheless not found in my analysis of the mainstream news discourse.

**Marital decisions as practice of agency**

Chapter 2 suggested that binary structures have been commonly found in the representations of FMIIs in mainstream discourses. Such binary structures prescribe a “zero-win” situation for the
FMIs. For instance, they may be portrayed as either “bad” FMIs or as model minorities who ascribe to patriarchal or cultural stereotypes. Such binary structure is also reflected in the media representation of FMIs’ roles concerning their marriage. Mainstream media, as discussed in the previous chapters, on the one hand represent them as ill-willed advantage seekers as in the case of “false marriage” but on the other hand position them as helpless women who have no control over the decision of their marriage as in the case of “commodified foreign brides.”

But must FMIs’ role in the construction of marriage fall into one of these two poles? Are they necessarily either ill-willed or helpless in terms of marriage decision? In the previous section, we have seen that FMIs tend not to consider themselves advantage seekers. In this section, I shall focus on their practice of agency in their marriage decisions, which is alternate to the image of them as helpless dependants.

Many FMIs in the current data expressed their active involvement in the decision-making process of their marriage. For instance, Xie accounted in detail for her mentality when she was rushed by the match-maker to decide whether to accept the men introduced to her:

“我當時心理想，我等這一個機會已好幾年了，如果今天把這個機會放走，那我又還要等上幾年呢？真不知
道該如何選擇。因為當時家裡環境不是很好，還有一個媽媽，兄姊而今成家，我跟媽媽都沒有房子住。我此時
的念頭只想來台灣，請先生買棟房子留給媽媽住…”

“At the moment I thought to myself, I have waited many years for this opportunity. If I let it pass today, how many
more years will I have to wait? I really don’t know how I should make the choice. The reason was that the financial
condition of my family was not good, and I had a mother to support. My older siblings all had their own families,
and my mother and I did not have a place to live. My only thought then was to marry to Taiwan and ask my husband
to buy a house for my mom to live…”

(生命的力量, “Power of life,” by Xie Ting)

Although she made clear her struggle by indicating that she “don’t know how I should make
the choice,” she made the decision primarily based on her own contemplation. She later referred
to this process as “gambling,” but no matter how rushed the decision was, she instead of the
Taiwanese man or her family, made the final choice, at least in her perception. No matter how
risky that decision might be, such “gambling” is still a practice of agency.

Li, a Chinese-Indonesian, described an even more sophisticated rationale behind her marital
choice:

“那時考慮台灣婚姻一夫一妻制與印尼婚姻一夫多妻制不一樣，對我們女性比較有保障，而且我們同様是華
人，生活、語言、風俗也比較接近，這是我想嫁來台灣的原因。爸爸、媽媽、長輩皆很贊同，畢竟印尼長期
排斥華人，能變成一個中國人何嘗不是件光榮的事？另外有些原因也讓我考慮嫁來台灣，交通往來很方便，
本國人與外國人通婚頻繁，農村教育程度亦提升...

“那時我考慮到，雖然印尼的多妻制度，台灣的單妻制度，為我們女性提供了更多的保障。再加上我們兩人都為中國血統，生活習俗相似，這是我想嫁給台灣的另一原因。父母及家族成員都同意我的決定。印尼族裔曾長期對華人具有敵意，這會不會成為一種榮耀，成為華人[在台灣]？其他一些因素也影響我作嫁給台灣的考慮，比如交通便利，跨國婚姻常見，農村教育水準提高…”

(請不要叫我「外籍新娘」，“Please don’t call me ‘foreign bride’” by Li Xue-ling)

李說，她的婚姻是一個深思熟慮的決定，涉及多個因素包括文化（例如結婚制度；習俗），政治（印尼族對華人的敵意），家族（家族成員的同意）和實用考慮（交通；農村教育）。更重要的是，這個過程顯示了意見的自我實現，她的權力在決策的最終決定上得到了實現。

有些FMI也公開表達了他們的自主權，強調了對自己生活的掌握。例如：

“我是未來的主人，我已經忘記我是外籍新娘了，偏偏別人卻記憶猶新。”

“I am the master of my own future，I have forgotten that I was a foreign bride, but it remained true and fresh to others.”

(請不要叫我「外籍新娘」，“Please don’t call me ‘foreign bride’” by Li Xue-ling)

“既然嫁來台灣，我選擇這一條路，幾年來，不管多少風雨，為了孩子們我還是要多努力，不能躲避，我要有信心，要有樂觀，讓我的生活更有意義。”

“Now that I married to Taiwan, and this is the path of my own choice, for all these years, no matter how bad the circumstance is, I must work harder for my children. I cannot dodge. I must keep faith, be optimistic, so as to make my life more meaningful.”

(一個現在才說的故事，“An untold story until now” by Chen Cui-wei)

Furthermore, the agency of Taiwanese women and that of FMI may come as both sides of the same coin in terms of such cross-border marriage. Li was well aware of it:

“台灣雖是個小島，但是國家非常繁榮進步，因此國家經濟發展過於快速，女性的思想跟著改變，很多女性並不認為選擇終身伴侶為最後依靠，生活上經濟能力許可，大部分過著單身生活，而不想結婚。其實台灣的女性結婚的還很多，同時大環境的改變讓台灣的很多男士找不到老婆，所以有很多台灣男士去東南亞娶...”

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Although Taiwan is a small island, it is very prosperous and progressive. Therefore the [Taiwanese] women’s thoughts have changed with the over-rapid development of its economy. Many women would not rely on the selection of a life-companion as their final destiny. If their finances allow, most of them choose to stay single and do not want to get married. In fact, there are still many unmarried Taiwanese women. At the same time, the change of the grand [social] climate causes many Taiwanese men unable to find wives. That’s why many Taiwanese men marry foreign brides from Southeast Asia.”

(請不要叫我「外籍新娘」，“Please don’t call me ‘foreign bride’” by Li Xue-ling)

As Constable (2005) observed in the rising of cross-border marriage and the consequent immigration of women, such marriage and migration may involve the desire for independence, empowerment, and opportunities from the women of both the immigrated and immigrating countries/areas. Therefore, such migration may indicate women’s agency in the “gendered geography of power” (Mahler & Pessar, 2001) instead of positioning the women’s mobility as receptive and controlled by men.

Assimilation

The FMIs in the current dataset also reveal a different uptake of the concept of assimilation compared to the mainstream perspectives as suggested in the previous chapters. In chapter 2, I have pointed out that assimilation tends to be presented as the “remedy” to FMIs’ “problems,” such as their “maladjustment to Taiwanese life style” or “incapability to be mothers of Taiwanese children.” Assimilated FMIs tend to be portrayed as model minorities who enjoy harmonious familial and social life, as well as receiving praises from Taiwanese (government/media). In Chapter 4, the analysis of FMIs’ reported speech in news also show that one of the two primary themes of their quotes is their appreciation/gratitude of organizational services, most of which are government-funded assimilation programs. In other words, the mainstream news tends to portray FMIs as embracing the concept of assimilation and endorsing the Taiwanese-centric ideology behind the pro-assimilation view.

Does it truly represent FMIs’ perspectives of assimilation, or does it more reflect the journalists’ choice in alignment with the elite-/audience-preferred view? Let’s now look at what FMIs said in their own narratives.

In the current data, some FMIs did express their willingness and effort for assimilation. For instance:

“…面對這塊曾經陌生而不知所措的土地，我變的成熟了，最後告訴自己做一個快樂而堅強的台灣人。”
“… I have become mature while facing this once foreign and unfamiliar land. Lastly, I would tell myself to be a happy and strong Taiwanese.”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

“I have been married for six years. When I left my mother, she reminded me, ‘You’re becoming a Taiwanese daughter-in-law. You should learn more about Taiwanese life and be tolerant when facing difficulties.’”

(一個現在才說的故事, “An untold story until now” by Chen Cui-wei)

“… Actually I thank god for giving me two lovely children. I am also grateful for the help and teaching of the volunteer teachers of Panchiao Community University. I will work hard in being a good Taiwanese daughter-in-law and Taiwanese mother.”

(我的小孩並不笨, “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

However, adopting a Taiwanese identity does not necessarily entail a loss of their original identity or incorporation of the superior position of Taiwanese culture. For instance, while telling herself to “be a happy and strong Taiwanese,” Xu also expressed the importance of her network with people from her home area:

“Not long after arriving in Taiwan, I finally found friends and lao-xiang. Talking with them about those sad days and mishaps really made me feel so relieved. Being among these friends and lao-xiang has poured incomparable joy into my life. Such power of life encouraged me to move forward step by step. Because of it I also found my direction of life and ceased complaining about the past.”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)
that this social network with people who shared the same culture/ethnicity with her actually helped instead of impeding her adjustment to the life in Taiwan.

Similarly, another FMI author Li celebrated her duel-identity by claiming:

“我是印尼新娘也是美濃新娘。”
“I am both Indonesian Bride and Meinong8 Bride.”

(請不要叫我「外籍新娘」， “Please don’t call me ‘foreign bride’” by Li Xue-ling)

Furthermore, while recognizing the importance of learning Taiwanese culture, none of these FMIs ascribe to the concept of Taiwanese superiority. Instead, they account for their motivation for assimilation with more equalitarian frameworks:

“我來到這塊土地，我就要愛這片土地，這是我的家呀。”
“I came to this land and I have to love this land, because this is my home.”

(牽手, “Holding hands” by Little Swallow)

For the author, her embrace of Taiwanese identity has nothing to do with the superiority of Taiwanese culture but simply a consequence of residency. Another author, Xiao, overtly criticized Taiwanese superiority while explaining her motivation for assimilation:

“這種作為是台灣本地人的優越感嗎？即使在與我同齡的朋友間，也會有意無意的表露出來。也就是這種被排斥的生存環境，激起我作為一個最普通的人的尊嚴。也曾經排斥台語的我，開始學台語、唱台語歌，去了解台灣的文化、歷史，努力讓自己融入台灣的生活中，只為了在台灣的日子少受一些難堪和歧視。”

“Is it the superiority of being local Taiwanese? Even among friends of my age, it is revealed consciously or subconsciously. It is such a hostile environment that has aroused my esteem of being an ordinary human being. I who once rejected Taiwanese language now begin to learn Taiwanese and sing Taiwanese songs, and to understand Taiwanese culture and history. I work hard in assimilating into Taiwanese life, simply because I want less humiliation and discrimination.”

(請不要叫我「大陸新娘」， “Please don’t call me “Mainland bride” by Xiao Dong-mei)

Therefore, FMIs’ assimilation or their welcoming attitude towards assimilation, as commonly represented in news media, may in fact simply be a hegemonic practice/appearance (vis-à-vis internalized hegemony), which is “not based on an internalization of the beliefs and ideas that are sensed to guide these practices” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 169). The supposedly hegemonized individuals perform “orthopraxy,” “doing as if one shares the beliefs and ideas” (ibid, emphasis as original) in order to cope with coercive instruments of dominant ideology, in
this case the hostility faced by the author.

Furthermore, FMI authors in the current data tend not to view their learning of Chinese/Taiwanese culture as unidirectional assimilation. Instead, they tend to position themselves as mediators between Taiwanese and their own cultures. For instance:

“後來參加了南洋台灣姊妹會，我覺得我很高興，我可以學習很多東西，我現在中文進步很多，有時候出去演講，介紹我們的文化。”

“Later I attended TransAsia Sister Association. I felt very happy that I could learn a lot. My Chinese has improved a lot now. Sometimes I go out to give presentations, introducing our culture.”

(姊妹們不要怕, “Sisters don’t be afraid” by Juan Shu-jie)

“沒想到有這樣的機會來上課，可以把我們的能力和文化傳授給台灣人，讓台灣人了解我們和認識我們的文化，這樣使我們覺得生活上很有意義和快樂。
我希望政府能夠多給我們一些機會，讓我們貢獻出我們自己的能力和文化...”

“I’d never thought I would have such an opportunity to teach a course introducing our abilities and cultures to Taiwanese, making them understand us and get to know our cultures. This makes us feel our life is meaningful and happy.
I hope the government could give us more opportunities to contribute our abilities and cultures...”

(夢想成真, “A dream come true” by Ran Mei-fang)

“現在姊妹會希望台灣可以變成「多元文化的社會」，姊妹們要到各個國小跟老師分享我們的文化，讓他們認識和了解東南亞文化。那就是姊妹會提出和完成的未來目標，我們相信姊妹會一定會做更多有意義的事情。”

“Now the TransAsia Sister Association hopes for Taiwan to become a ‘multicultural society.’ The sisters will visit elementary schools to share our cultures with the teachers, letting them know and understand Southeast Asian cultures. That is the goal that the association aims to achieve. We believe our Sister Association will have more meaningful deeds.”

(我們的娘家, “Mother’s home for us” by Wang Mei-chun)

In sum, unlike news media’s prioritization of Taiwanese culture over FMI authors in the current data hold a more equalitarian and reciprocal, instead of hierarchical, view of cultures, and prefer mutual understanding to unidirectional assimilation.

**(2b) Themes of alternative topics**

While the first set of alternative themes identified in the current data involves the same topics yet different *perspectives* compared to mainstream representations of FMI, this second set of alternative themes address alternative *topics* that are rarely covered by mass media. These
topics include: FMIs’ personal history before marriage, their relationship with their original family, and sisterhood among FMIs. Since we have discussed the theme of sisterhood among FMIs in the analysis of article titles, here I will primarily focus on FMIs’ personal history before marriage and their relationship with their original family.

Personal history before marriage

As shown in the previous chapters, mainstream news media in Taiwan tend to emphasize the marriage-related roles of FMIs and their identity as immigrants, both of which are initiated by their marriage with Taiwanese men. On the other hand, their life experience before their marriage is often marginalized, if not completely neglected, in mainstream representations of them. Contrary to this preference for post-marriage representations, FMIs in the current data have covered a considerable amount of their life stories before their marriage:

“As far as I can recall, my childhood was not a happy one, because my parents had many children in my home country (Myanmar) and their financial condition was not good at that time. Around the age of ten, I left home to work in a foreign area. Survival was not an easy thing for me, and naturally it has shaped my character as independent, aggressive, and tolerant. My life experience was really unique. I have been to many places in China when I was very young, and then I went to work in Thailand for a while. I’ve been through a lot before I made it to my current country—Taiwan.”

(流浪女的故事, “The story of a wanderer girl,” by Wang Xiao-ying)

“I have been a believer of Jesus since I was in my home (town). After coming to Taiwan, I spent quite some time to find a place that allows me to quiet down and to hand all the sorrow to Jesus when I am sad.”

(一個現在才說的故事, “An untold story until now” by Chen Cui-wei)

“I was born in a family of a rural village in Meixian, Guangdong. I have two older brothers and an older sister. I am
the fourth child. When I was little, my family was very poor. During my upbringing, which happened to be the time of the Great Cultural Revolution, our household income was very slender. After those years of hardship, people in our rural village have changed because of the reforms and opening-up (of China). It is likely the reason why I married so far away to Taiwan today.”

(生命的力量, “Power of life,” by Xie Ting)

In all of the extracts above the FMIs related their early experience to their decision of marriage or their post-marriage life in Taiwan: Wang viewed her current being in Taiwan as one (final?) stop of her journey between different countries; Chen’s life in Taiwan was helped by her belief developed back home; Xie’s decision for a cross-border marriage was impacted by the reforms in China that changed her village. Reflected in these narratives is that these FMIs conceptualize their life as a seamless continuum rather than disrupted chunks, which is very different from the media representation of their “Taiwanese life” as the only life and marginalization of their previous life as “non-life” (see Chapter 2).

The inclusion of personal history before marriage in FMIs’ narratives and the exclusion of it in mainstream news may have to do with multiple ideological factors: Firstly, the difference of genre may allow different degrees of biographic representations. While narratives are primarily autobiographical as composed of personal life stories, news tends to focus more on the momentary events than on the buildup of the characters. Although we may also see detailed report on famous news characters (e.g. how one grows to be a serial murderer or an Olympic medal winner), it does not apply to the FMIs who are not known figures arousing public interest.

Secondly, the lack of biographical detail of FMIs in mainstream news may also function in distancing the reporter/audience from them. For instance, in the news discourse of “false marriage” or “FMIs as threat to public health,” which we have discussed in the previous chapters, the FMIs tend not to be represented as individuals who have personal histories that may have motivated their behaviors reported in the news. As a consequence, it is quite unlikely for the readers to sympathize with these news characters.

In addition, the lack of individualized representations of FMIs from their pre-marriage lives may contribute to the construction of the image of them as lesser social members in favor of the assimilation model. Without accounts for FMIs’ personal history, it is easier to (re)produce an illusion that these women are simply vessel-like. Their assimilation into Taiwanese model may thus be rationalized as a liberation of them from “non-life” to “life” rather than a transition between two equal cultures.

Relationship with original family
Related to the autobiographic accounts of their personal life, the mention of FMIs’ relationship with their original family could also be seen as a theme of individualized representation of them. Quite similar to the continuum of their pre- and post-marriage life, FMIs’ bond with their original family is continued after their marriage and migration but is nevertheless rarely, if ever, covered by mainstream news discourse.

As mentioned earlier, one main momentum towards FMIs’ decision for such cross-border marriage is their intention to save their original family from poverty and unwanted life conditions. Other than that, the original family may influence FMIs’ marriage life by providing consultation or emotional support. For instance:

“我嫁來台灣已經有六年多了，在離開母親的時候，她都有吩咐我「你要做台灣媳婦了，該多學一學台灣的生活，碰到困難一定要忍耐。」”

“It has been six years I’ve married to Taiwan. When I left my mother, she reminded me, ‘You’re becoming a Taiwanese daughter-in-law. You should learn more about Taiwanese life and be tolerant when facing difficulties.’”

(一個現在才說的故事, “An untold story until now” by Chen Cui-wei)

“…平日在空蕩寂寥的屋子裡,就像關在籠中的小鳥,受不了精神上的空虛,生活沒有滋味,思來想去就想著回家,時常情不自禁的拿起電話向家人訴苦,聽到爸媽的叮嚀,總忍不住滴下傷心的眼淚。”

“… On an ordinary day, in the empty and lonely house, I was like a bird encaged. I could not take such spiritual vanity and colorless life and the thought of going home recurred in my mind. Oftentimes, I could not but pick up the phone to air my grievances. Always when hearing my parents’ concerned words, I could not help the tears falling down.”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

Sometimes this close bond between the FMIs and their family may place extra pressure on them. For example, Xie, who married mainly to save her family, particularly her mother, from poverty, was shocked to find that the family she married into also suffered financial hardship:

“剛嫁來台灣，來到夫家，從第一眼開始，我發覺自己選擇錯誤，在家裡想的跟眼前看的，完全是兩碼事，甚至比我在大陸的環境還差，這叫我如何接受呢？但是而今嫁來了又如何呢？難道回去嗎？但是這回去又如何向老母親和家人交代呢？如果真的是這樣，親戚朋友又會用甚麼樣的眼光看我？”

“Newly married to Taiwan and arriving at my husband’s family, I found my decision to be a wrong one at the first glance. What I had thought back home and what I saw there were totally different. It was even worse than my environment in China. How could I accept it? But what could I do since I had married here? Go back home? Then how could explain it to my old mother and other family? If I really did it, how would my relatives and friends look at me?”
As Oxfeld (2005) pointed out, the cross-border hypergamy of women might be over-generalized. In fact, migrating from a less-developed country to a more developed one does not necessarily indicate an upgrade of the individual immigrant woman’s socioeconomic conditions. Contradicting the dominant assumption of Taiwanese mainstream discourse, it is not uncommon that these FMIs found themselves married into a less luxurious household than their original one.

Similar is the issue of Taiwanese’s (mis)positioning of FMIs in traditional female domiciliary roles. As shown in the discourse of “Taiwanese daughters-in-law” discussed in Chapter 2, Taiwanese husband’s family tends to expect that these women be well-trained household servants. Their original family, particularly the mother, may thus be responsible for such training. In the following extract, Xu had to face her husband’s anger while these expectations were not fulfilled:

“例如，剛結婚第二個月我就懷了老大，那時我還不會煮飯，先生就會罵「怎麼那麼笨，你媽媽是怎麼教你的，煮的菜該鹹不鹹，該淡的又太鹹，還說你以前是教書的老師，這麼簡單的常識都不懂。」”

“For instance, I conceived my first baby the second month after marriage. At that time I hadn’t learned how to cook. My husband would scold me, ‘how could you be so stupid? What has your mom taught you? The dishes are not salty when they’re supposed to be salty, and too salty when they’re supposed to be light. You are said to be a teacher before. How could you not even know such simple common sense.’”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

Here the husband placed his blame on both Xu’s family education and her former career as a teacher, neither of which had taught her the “common sense” of cooking, a pre-requisite for a wife in the husband’s eye.

Although coming from less modernized countries/areas, many FMIs may not be as “old-fashioned” and “family-oriented” as the husbands imagined. In fact, they may decide to marry outside their original country/area to escape such patriarchal gender expectations (Constable, 2003).

Many FMIs in the current data were from middle-class families in their original country/area and were well cared-for and spoiled by their parents. For instance:

“時光匆匆，一轉眼我已經是兩個小孩的媽媽了，想起從前的我，甚麼事都由父母來做不用我擔心，那時的我不懂得珍惜，這種感覺真好，想到以前的生活真讓人懷念。”

“Time passes by so rapidly. With one blink I have become a mother of two children. I recall that my parents used
to do everything for me and I didn’t need to worry about anything before. I didn’t know that I should cherish that back then but that did feel good. I miss my old life so much.”

(我的小孩並不笨, “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

“…從小爸爸就是那樣寵我，從小到大都是爸爸把水果切好端到我面前，連甘蔗都切成一小塊一小塊，桔子都剝成一小塊，全家人都在等我回家吃飯，而今先生上班去，只有我一個人吃午飯，第一次自己吃午飯，心裡很難過，眼淚和著飯粒吞下去…”

“…My dad spoiled me quite a lot. While growing up, it was always him who cut the fruit and served it to me. He would even chop sugarcanes and tangerines into small bites. The whole family would wait for me for meals. Now when my husband goes to work, I have to eat lunch alone. The first time I ate lunch myself, I was so sad that I had to swallow the rice with tears…”

(牽手, “Holding hands” by Little Swallow)

These FMIs were definitely not “trained wives/daughters-in-law” catering to the husbands and their family’s desire and imagination. However, this side of them has seldom, if ever, been represented in mainstream news discourse, which on the contrary tends to reproduce and legitimize the illusive stereotypes of them as gendered household servants.

(3) Themes sharing/incorporating mainstream representations

PDA scholars’ primary critique of CDA is that CDA tends to limit its analytical scope to the objectionable features of discourse. However, while the pursuit of PDA shows promise in this aspect by expanding their subject to counter-discourse, both schools fail in recognizing that the relationship between objectionable discourse and its counter-discourse is not simply dichotomous or oppositional. Instead, they should be seen as located in a continuum where even the discourses supposedly from the opposed ends may share some ideological ground. For instance, feminist and sexist discourse may share an assumption that sex/gender is a socially significant index; Marxist and capitalist discourses may both take material production as essential in human society.

In the current analysis of FMIs’ counter-discourse, in addition to the countering and alternatives themes as discussed above, I also identified two themes shared by mainstream news and FMIs’ narratives, which may compensate for the absent recognition of shared ideologies between discourse and counter-discourse. The two themes in common are the theme of luck/fate and that of gratitude.

Luck/fate
As shown in Chapter 2, mainstream news discourse of FMIs tends to construct a dichotomy between the “lucky” FMIs who are allowed to go out and use the service and “unlucky” FMIs whose actions are restricted by the husband’s family. In doing so, FMIs’ (lack of) agency is framed as a matter of luck or fate. Those who have it are seen as exceptional, “gifted with good luck” while those who do not have it are rationalized as simply lacking luck by accident.

The exceptionalization of the practice of agency that could otherwise be seen as given comes hand in hand with the normalization of the family’s control over the FMIs, and such normalization may to a large degree be attributed to the widespread mainstream news. Hsia (2002) has observed a similar case where FMIs’ husbands evaluate their own marriage conditions based on the media-portrayed stereotypes of “deceptive and unreliable foreign women” (also see Chapter 4 about “false marriage”). In her interviews with FMIs’ husbands and their family, most of them “to some degree internalize the negative news reports into their cognition of ‘foreign brides’” (p. 191). If the FMI’s performance happens to confirm the image, it may reinforce the legitimacy of that stereotype; if not, the husband and his family tend to exceptionalize their own positive experience instead of challenging the dominant ideology. One of the husbands she interviewed described his cross-border marriage, “My wife is very good. She gets along with my family. But other [husbands] might not be so lucky” (p. 192, emphasis added).

Similarly, FMIs in the current data also consider themselves “lucky” when they have an agreeable marriage:

“剛來的時候我很怕，以前未嫁來的時候，常有聽到說台灣人會把外籍配偶帶去賣掉，但是我很想嫁來台灣。不過，可能我的好運，讓我嫁到很不錯的老公。”

“I was very scared when I just came. Although I often heard before marrying here that Taiwanese would sell the foreign spouse to others, I still wanted to marry to Taiwan. But maybe it is because of my good luck that I married a pretty good husband.”

(姊妹們不要怕, “Sisters don’t be afraid” by Juan Shu-jie)

When they are able to enjoy the level of agency granted to average Taiwanese women, they tend to consider it a grace from the husband or his family:

“老公他很好，會讓我出來上課…”

“My husband is very nice. He would let me come out to attend classes…”

(姊妹們不要怕, “Sisters don’t be afraid” by Juan Shu-jie)

When the marriage condition is not so desirable, they might simply attribute it to fate and therefore nothing could be changed for them:
“剛嫁來台灣，來到夫家，從第一眼開始，我發覺自己選擇錯誤…唉！這就是命，無法強求。”

“Newly married to Taiwan and arriving at my husband’s family, I found my decision to be a wrong one from the first look… **Alas, this is just fate and we can’t force it to change.**”

* (生命的力量, “Power of life,” by Xie Ting)

“古人言：「嫁雞隨雞，嫁狗隨狗」命数是如此的安排，而讓自己無法改變，只好將自己努力地融入生活，而不被擊倒，方為上上之策。”

“An old saying goes, ‘A woman follows her husband no matter what his lot is.’ **Fate arranged it this way and I could not change it.** The best strategy would be work hard to fit in this life without being knocked down.”

* (我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

Interestingly, this lack of control seems to contradict with their practice of agency in the decision-making process of their marriage as discussed earlier. One explanation may be that in Chinese and many Southeast Asian cultures, women are allowed to have choices before marriage but after that, they have to stick with what they chose. Any form of abandonment of the marriage tends to be discouraged in such cultures. Another possible reason is that they had more agency as independent women before their immigration, but once entering the family and culture that are foreign to them, they are prone to the control from the husband and his family because of the disruption of social network and lack of resources due to the immigration.

**Gratitude of assistances and services**

The other theme that I identified from both the mainstream news and FMIs’ narratives is FMIs’ expression of gratitude. As suggested in Chapter 4, FMIs’ appreciation of organizational services, particularly those funded by Taiwanese government, makes one of the two predominant themes of their quotes in mainstream news. In the current data, some FMIs also expressed their gratitude for the assistance and good intention they received in Taiwan. For instance:

“時間過的真快，一轉眼來台灣已經二十年了，在這不算短的日子裡，經過了多少的酸、甜、苦、辣，但這一切都隨著時間流逝，過往雲煙。在這同時也要感謝台灣政府的協助，讓我有了身分可以在台灣過著安定的日子。”

“Time flies. With a blink I have been in Taiwan for twenty years. During this period that can’t be called short, I have tasted all flavors of life, but all these have passed with time like clouds floating by. In the meanwhile I’d like to thank for the help from Taiwanese government that granted me the citizenship so that I can live a peaceful life in Taiwan.”

* (流浪女的故事, “The story of a wanderer girl,” by Wang Xiao-ying)
It is worth noticing, however, that although it is not uncommon for the FMI authors in the current data to express their gratitude, this extract above is in fact the only one in which the appraisal was given to the government. More frequently, their gratitude was granted towards the help from their immediate context, such as their family, neighbors, or friends in Taiwan.

“現在已過三年多了,一切不愉快都已煙消雲散,如今我已生了兩個女兒,先生也能體諒包容我以前的不習慣,周圍的人都伸出友善的手來幫助我、關心我,讓我習慣這裡的生活,真的是萬分慶幸…”

“Now three years have passed. All unpleasant feelings have cleared up. Now I have two daughters and my husband is able to understand my late adjustment. People surrounding me all stick out their friendly hands to help me and show concerns. They have helped me to get used to life here, and I feel really lucky.”

(我的台灣生活, “My life in Taiwan” by Xu Mao-zhen)

“與鄰居、朋友、工友,不論親舊朋友,大家對我都很好,都是很主動的幫我介紹工作,教我不懂的事情…”

“Neighbors, friends, coworkers, all of the acquaintances treated me very well. They all introduced jobs for me and taught me things I didn’t know…”

(生命的力量, “Power of life,” by Xie Ting)

Some NGOs received appreciation from these FMIs as well. For instance:

“其實我很感謝老天爺,賜給我兩個可愛的孩子,謝謝板橋社區大學的志工老師們,給我的幫助與教導,我會努力做好一個台灣媳婦、台灣母親。”

… Actually I thank god for giving me two lovely children. I am also grateful for the help and teaching of the volunteer teachers of Panchiao Community University. I will work hard in being a good Taiwanese daughter-in-law and Taiwanese mother.”

(我的小孩並不笨 “My children are not stupid” by Lin Jin-hui)

However, the NGOs that received FMIs’ gratitude in the current data are very different from those broadcasted in mainstream news. In FMIs’ narratives, three NGOs were thanked, namely the Panchiao Community University, the TransAsia Sister Association, and the Meinong10 People’s Association. The most outstanding feature these organizations have in common is that the educational programs they provide aim at the empowerment instead of assimilation of the FMIs. An evidence is that many FMIs who began as receivers of their services later become active volunteers in these organizations and engage in their social works, as shown in the following extracts:
“我們姊妹會跟大學生分享我們的跨國婚姻，跟國小老師討論教育子女的方法。我們還去探訪柬埔寨的姊妹，他們被騙來台灣賣淫，現在在等警察處理。六月份的時候，美濃淹水，我們的教室都泡水，我們打掃，清潔後，再附近鄰居家幫忙他們。”

“We sisters (FMI participants of the TransAsia Sister Association) would share our cross-border marriage experience with college students and discuss methods to teach children with teachers of elementary schools. We also visited those sisters from Cambodia who were tricked into coming to Taiwan for prostitution and are now waiting for the police to process their case. This June when Meinong was flooded, all of our classrooms were soaked in water. After cleaning them, we went to the neighbors to help them.”

(我們的娘家 “Mother’s home for us” by Wang Mei-chun)

“I参加了「外籍新娘識字班」是美濃愛鄉協進會辦的，是全國第一個班，從民國八十四年起成立，我去上到現在已經五年了，會看很多中文字，也會寫字了。我認識了很多台灣義工老師和來自各國的南洋姊妹，大家都想說我們學會中國字也差不多了，還有很多事情要做。從九十一年十一月底我們上「通譯人才培訓的課程」。就是說當我們外籍姊妹遇到家庭暴力時，打電話到一一三社會福利中心求救，我們可以幫忙翻譯和解決問題…”

“The ‘Foreign Bride Literacy Program’ I attended was held by the Meinong People’s Association, which was the first one in the whole country. It was initiated in 1995 and I have attended it for five years. I have learned to read a lot of words and write. I have met many Taiwanese volunteer teachers and Southeast Asian sisters from different countries. We all thought that since we have pretty much mastered Chinese literacy, we had a lot more to do. Since November 2002, we attended ‘Interpreter Training Program,’ which means we could help translating and solving foreign sisters’ problems when they call 113 Social Welfare Center for assistance for domestic abuse…”

(姊妹們的夢想 “Dream of the sisters by Su, Ke-ya)

In general, although these narratives express a theme of gratitude similar to their quotes cited by the mainstream journalists, they differ from the latter in two senses: Firstly, except for the one instance mentioned above, they rarely consider the government or assimilation-oriented organizations as the receiver of their gratitude. Instead, they are more grateful for those who provide immediate assistance in their daily contexts and the organizations whose goal is to empower them. Secondly, they do not position themselves as just users and appreciators of assistances or services, but simultaneously or sequentially both receivers and contributors who reciprocate the favors, which has rarely, if ever, been stressed in mainstream news discourse.
5.3. Conclusion

I have discussed the dominant themes of FMIs’ narratives as counter-discourse in this chapter. In general, their narratives reflect a strong dialogical feature as conversing to dominant discourses, manifested in the frequent use of imperative sentence structures (e.g. “Don’t call me foreign bride.”), negation of mainstream assumptions (e.g. “My children are not stupid.”), and the utilization of inclusive and exclusive devices (e.g. “you Taiwanese;” “sisters”).

Several countering and alternative themes were found in their narratives, which contest against mainstream representations of them. The countering themes point out the fallacy of mainstream stereotypes and challenge them overtly while the alternative themes provide perspectives or topics different from mainstream discourse without overtly challenging them.

Countering themes include the legitimacy of FMIs’ motherhood, the protest against derogatory labeling as well as the segregationist ideology behind it, and the antagonism towards Taiwanese-centrism and exclusive nationalism. Alternative themes include alternative framing of their genuine marriage, practice of agency, and assimilation, and alternative topics, namely their pre-marriage life, relationship with their original family, and the sisterhood among FMIs.

These countering and alternative themes reflect a huge gap between FMIs’ self-representations and the other-initiated or mediated mainstream representations of them, which further confirms the finding of Chapter 3 that FMIs’ perspectives are largely neglected or marginalized in mainstream news.

Although not as salient as these countering and alternative themes contesting against mainstream assumptions and stereotypes, the shared ideological ground of both FMIs’ narratives and the mainstream discourse they aim to subvert or transform should not be overlooked. In this chapter, two themes sharing/incorporating mainstream representations were identified, namely the discourse of luck/fate, and that of gratitude. The former rationalizes the unequal or less-than-desired marriage conditions and exceptionalizes those considered basic rights among Taiwanese women (e.g. the freedom to go out of the household in pursuit of further education), while the latter positions them as receivers of good intensions and assistances from Taiwanese.

Such sharing themes suggest that although these FMI authors are outspoken about their resistance and are aggressive in attempting changes, they may not be able to realize and address all dominant ideologies, particularly those covert and seemingly harmless ones, such as the discourse of luck and gratitude. However, the fact that these better disguised ideologies are not contested against now does not prevent them from being challenged in the future. As I pointed out in Chapter 4, discourse is ever-evolving and constantly appropriating. A good example is the progression of concerns among feminists, evolving from more apparent issues (e.g. civil rights; right to one’s own body) to more deeply-embedded and complex ones (e.g. conceptualization of
womanhood; interaction between gender and other social indexical systems). In the current study we could see a potential of FMIs augmenting an alternative frame of the discourse of gratitude, in that they consider themselves as not only receivers but also contributors to Taiwanese society.

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1 A pen name.
2 *Ou-ba-san* (歐巴桑) came originally from Japanese おばあさん, which is used to address aged women. This term has been appropriated in the local context of Taiwan to refer to middle-aged, uneducated, improperly-behaved Taiwanese women. However, has mostly been used in self-mocking and functioned as a closeness marker.
3 *嫁到* (*jia-dao*, “marry to”) in Chinese may have the person, the family, or the place one marries and moves to as the object.
4 Here the targets of the racist/ethnicist attacks in political campaigns are not the FMIs but the self-claimed Taiwanese whose ancestors immigrated and settled down hundreds of years ago, the aboriginal/native Taiwanese tribes (the Mountain Tribes), Haka, and the later immigrants from China around the takeover of Mainland by Chinese Communists in 1949.
5 That side of the strait, meaning Mainland China.
6 “Cross-strait” (兩岸, liang-an) refers to the relative geographical positions of Taiwan and China.
7 A term referring to people from the same home area (e.g. province; town).
8 A town in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
9 A province in China.
10 A county in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Meinong People’s Association was the first organization to hold a community-based literacy program for FMIs.
6
Conclusion: Reflections on Research Findings and Process

6.1. Introduction

As established in the introduction, the current study aims to achieve two goals, to examine the discourses of FMIs in the public sphere and to develop a refined methodology of CDA. Echoing CDA’s emphasis on both the product and the process, while the former involves the findings of my research on this specific topic, the latter on the other hand pursues the establishment of an analytical procedure that could be adopted and adapted by researchers who take a critical approach to discourse. Therefore, in this conclusive chapter, I shall reflect on both the findings and the analytical process of the current study.

6.2. Reflection on Product: Research Findings Concerning Discourses of FMIs

6.2.1. Summary of findings

Duplicating the results of previous studies on media representations on “mail-order brides” or “foreign brides” in different contexts (e.g. Australia by Robinson, 1996; Japan, by Nakamatsu, 2003; Taiwan, by Hsia, 2002), the current study found that the FMIs in Taiwan tend to be highly stigmatized (e.g. the discourse of “false marriage, true prostitution”) and marginalized (e.g. the under-representation of their voice in reported speech) in mainstream news discourse. While multiple images of them are present in such news, they tend to be framed negatively (e.g. social burden or threat) or stereotypically (e.g. traditional female domiciliary roles), reflecting both ethnocentric and patriarchal ideologies of the very traditional and conservative side of Taiwanese society.

While Taiwanese husbands and their families could make an easy target of the blame for such ideological stance, they themselves nevertheless are also marginalized in mainstream news discourse (e.g. the very sparse representation of the husbands’ perspectives in reported speech; the assumption of these husbands as old and poor in discourse of “false marriage”). Rather than the Taiwanese husbands and their families’ perspectives, the grand forces behind the news-making process are more likely to be those of elitism and commercialism. The former is reflected in the journalists’ preference
for the government and well-known organizations as quoted sources while the latter may be manifested in their catering to the assumed readership, which excludes FMIs and their families, by polarizing the difference between superior “us” (i.e. the alignment between the press and the audience) and inferior “them” (i.e. FMIs and families under “our” gaze).

Such ideological “side-taking” could be realized in multiple discursive strategies, such as the selections of labels, sources and formats of quotation, and the framing of news events. Furthermore, such ideological stance may appropriate the meanings of pre-existing linguistic items/devices and extend their ideological connotations (e.g. the transformation of “false marriage” from a neutral description to a moral judgment of FMIs). Even the innovative language use that was created to subvert the dominant ideologies may be incorporated into the system and lose its original purpose (e.g. the negativization of the label “foreign spouse”). As many feminist scholars (Ehrlich & King, 1992; Cameron, 1995; Butler, 1997) have pointed out, the new language forms created to transform the old context may be transformed and ascribe to the old meanings, despite their original intentions.

However, it is also an overgeneralization to assume that all language reforms would fail to bring about social reforms. As Foucault (1980) pointed out, there is always resistance within the power structure. The negotiation and contestation between dominant and resistant discourses/ideologies are ever-lasting, upon which the transformation of the power structure is made possible. In the current study, such dialogical relation between the dominant and the resistant was made clear through the comparison between the mainstream news and FMIs’ narratives. Functioning as counter-discourse against the mainstream representations, FMIs’ narratives were found in the current study to be highly aware of the dominant ideologies behind the mainstream discourses on/about them and thus initiate countering or alternative self-representations in reaction.

While the publication of the FMIs’ narratives indicates their effort and success to press their voice into the public sphere, the channel of its publication (i.e. in a book instead through news media) is worth our attention. Generally speaking, the readership of mainstream newspapers is larger than that of a book, which makes the former more influential in the (trans)formation of social cognition. Given that many articles in this book have direct appeal to the public or “Taiwanese society,” it might make more sense for them to seek publication in the news as a better circulated media. The fact that those narratives were not made public in the news media may have two possible explanations: First, they chose not to for some material or ideological concerns; second, their arguments did not interest the journalists enough for news publication.

I believe the latter to be a more likely scenario based on two observations: Firstly,
their narratives to a large extent disagree with the news representations of them and some even criticize the news media overtly, which may challenge the cohesiveness of the press’ ideological stances in their reports of FMI-related events. As FMIs’ perspectives tend to be marginalized in terms of quotation in news, it could be even more difficult for the press to fully represent their narratives in the format of complete articles. Secondly, social movements in Taiwan have had a long history of cold shoulders from mainstream news media. For instance, the feminist movements in Taiwan were initiated in 1920s but it was not until 1987 that they achieved a “breakthrough in [mainstream] media coverage” (Lee, 1999, p. 101). Before then, their actions had been either completely ignored or reported with apathetic attitudes. During this period in which feminist movements “received no media interest” (ibid, p. 99), independent publications by women’s groups were the primary channel and method for the feminists to make their voice heard. The publication of Don’t Call Me Foreign Brides seems to share a similar social context as faced by these early feminists, except that now it is the foreign women who are speaking up for their intended social space.

The last but not least point I would like to reiterate here is that dominant and resistant discourses should not be understood as occupying mutually exclusive discursive spaces with clearly cut boundaries. In FMIs’ counter-discourse we may see the hegemonic impact of the mainstream construct of “luck,” while in the news discourse we may occasionally find alternative perspectives sympathetic with the FMIs. Such crossing contributes to the constant reshaping of discourses, ideologies, and power relations in a given society and leaves a possibility for social transformations.

6.3. Reflection on Process: Critical Approaches to Studies of Language and Discourse

As mentioned earlier, one of the goals of this dissertation was to establish a refined approach to CDA in particular. In the analyses, I have demonstrated: 1) the use of data of larger size and scope in terms of discourse types and time, 2) the incorporation of a perspective of history, and 3) the sensitivity towards the differences between the language of data and the language of analysis. While these refinements address primarily the potential weaknesses of traditional CDA, I shall now reflect on my analytical process in light of the larger research domain, namely the study of language and discourse. Particularly I will discuss three issues: the tension between numbers and interpretations, epic versus emic perspectives of the researcher, and the praxis of research.
Numbers vs. interpretations

The tension between numbers and interpretations has been a largely debated one in the study of language and discourse. Should we as researchers pursue the development of the representativeness and generalizability of our analysis, or should we subscribe to the uniqueness of every instance of language use and reject the idea of repeated patterns? As CDA is well-known and sometimes criticized for its highly interpretative analysis, most works of CDA scholars, with some exceptions (e.g. van Dijk, 1991; Santa Ana, 1999), seem to adopt the latter and tend to draw their insights upon a few instances of texts.

I would argue that the most valuable contribution of such interpretative analysis to the research of language and ideology is that it provides detailed accounts for what ideological stances could be taken and what discursive strategies could be utilized to realize these stances given the resources within the specific sociopolitical context. However, for a study that seeks the identification and examination of dominant ideologies and social power relations, an interpretative approach may fail to establish the case of the ideological dominance in the given society due to the very limited instances. In other words, interpretations and their explanations may tell us what is dominant within the selected few texts, but fail to answer whether it is really dominant in the studied sociopolitical context, which could only be answered by comparison across a reasonable number of texts, probably with the assistance of numbers.

In the current study I have used both interpretative and numeric tools for different purposes. For instance, in Chapter 2, I identified the dominant representations of FMI's in relation to different labels using frequency counts among 82 news articles, followed by the provision of abundant interpreted instances that explain how these images were constructed. In Chapter 3, I mostly used numbers and percentages to compare the reported speech between different sources, which supported the case that FMI's were marginalized systematically (vis-à-vis incidentally) in mainstream news discourse. In Chapter 5, on the other hand, I used primarily interpretations, as the focus was how instead of how much the counter-discourse has been initiated by the FMI's.

Therefore, whether to use numbers or interpretations should be the researcher’s choice based on the purposes of the study. As both patterns and innovations exist in our language use, I would propose that the belief in only numbers or interpretations is self-constraining, and that they could function in supplementing one another as in the current study.

Epic v.s. emic perspectives

Another tension that has long existed among language research concerns epic and
emic perspectives. Should we researchers describe language phenomena from a distance to ensure objectivity, or should we take the insiders’ perspectives because it is the actual language users’ orientations towards the language that decide the creation, retention, and transformation of meaning? Relying on the member resource for the interpretation of texts, CDA has traditionally favored the emic perspectives for analysis and has been criticized for its subjectivity as the analysts may read their ideological position into the data (Widdowson, 1995).

Does the distance between the researchers and their data really guarantee ideology-free objectivity? Should such objectivity be prioritized over other purposes of research? For me the answer is no to both questions. Firstly, there could not be an ideology-free study. The over-emphasis on positivism or objectivism, the forceful distancing of the researchers from their data and the prohibition of personal involvement are in and of themselves ideological stances. In order to be less biased and prejudiced, the researchers should reflect on and make clear their own positions rather than falsely assuming that their research is neutral and apolitical. In the current study, for instance, I took the position that FMIs have been misrepresented in mainstream discourse which reflects and reproduces social inequity and that the status quo should and could be changed through linguistic reforms (e.g. new labels; counter discourse) as initiators of social transformation. What really counts in this study is not whether I kept it ideology-free, which is essentially not achievable, but rather whether I could make a valid case by presenting meaningful argumentation.

Furthermore, taking political stances does not mean that we are reality-blind. In fact, such positions or assumptions are not any less objective or sophisticated than hypotheses of scientists in the sense that both should come from the researchers’ observations of the real world. In the current study, my assumptions that FMIs have been misrepresented and that they are now initiating a conversation with the mainstream discourse are based on my long-term readership of the public discourses on, about, and by FMIs, as well as my knowledge of the social contexts as an insider Taiwanese.

It is not to say that a valid study could be conducted solely upon insiders’ knowledge and perspectives. I would instead argue that successful language/discourse research must have member resources on the one hand, and the linguist’s professional lens on the other. Without member resources, the analysts could not make informed interpretation of texts; without the professional reflection, they could not identify the embedded assumptions in the texts nor could they explain about the interpretation. Both Foucault (1972) and Bourdieu (1991) have pointed out that one could not describe their own archives/habitus, which CDA scholars have referred to as member resources. While this remains true in
most contexts, I would suggest that one may actually describe it if and only if they have access beyond the habitus/archive they aim to describe. Take Chapter 4 for example. The analysis of the discursive construction of “false marriage” describes the assumptions related to it, to which I have access as an insider/reader of the news, but I could only identify and describe them by applying another set of habitus/archives as a linguist who is sensitive to the transformation of meaning. In other words, emic interpretation and epic description do not necessarily conflict with each other. They can be mediated and incorporated and achieve in combination neither could when applied alone.

**Praxis of research**

Pennycook (2001) has proposed praxis as an important aim of critical applied linguistics, which should be understood as “a constant reciprocal relationship between theory and practice” (p. 3). Focusing on “social problems and political issues” as realized in discourse as “a form of social action” (van Dijk, 2001, p. 353), CDA has to some degree established this link between theory and practice. The remaining question, however, is whether this relationship is by any means reciprocal.

Among works of CDA, we quite often see the description and explanation of social inequity that takes the form of discursive dominance, but we rarely see suggested solutions or actual impacts of these studies upon the social interactions or the power structures they criticize. In this sense, CDA may have “fallen short of evolving into a form of social action” while the researchers are content with an “observer as opposed to an intruder role” (Martin, 1992, p. 587).

The current study was more inspired by the feminist scholarship than CDA in terms of researchers’ involvement in social intervention. In the context of Taiwan with which I am most familiar, feminist movements have long been led by well-published scholars. They wrote in newspapers to raise public attention, gave public speeches and led actions such as demonstrations and strikes. While conducting sociological studies with the FMI’s, Hsia has originated the first empowerment-oriented Chinese program for FMI’s and co-founded the TransAsia Sister Association, which she described as participatory research (2002, also see Park, 1989 for introduction of participatory research).

In attempt to bring my study to such level of social intervention, I have during the analysis kept close contact with the TransAsia Sister Association and have shared my findings with their volunteers with regards to how FMI’s counter-discourse could gain more visibility and attention in the public sphere. Upon the completion of my dissertation, I also plan to publish my findings in Chinese, preferably as comments in newspapers in Taiwan, to raise critical linguistic awareness among journalists and their readers.
6.4. Limitations and Prospects

6.4.1. Limitations

One limitation of the current study is that it did not collect ethnographic information about the authors. For instance, in the case of news texts, the demographic distribution of gender, age, ethnic backgrounds among the reporters remains unknown. Such information could be useful if the association of these social traits with the texts could be developed. However, in the current study I have been more interested in the ideological positions assumed in the discourse rather than the authors’ actual position in the society. In other words, if one produces sexist discourse, it should be analyzed as such regardless of the author’s actual sex or gender.

Similar to this lack of demographic information, another limitation of the current study is that it did not interview the related parties, particularly the FMIs, about their perspectives on the analyzed discourse. While recognizing the value of ethnographic methods in language analysis (Hymes, 1971), however, I approached the triangulation of data differently in the current study. That is, instead of the reaction solicited by the researcher through interview procedures, I have included the published narratives of FMIs as counter-discourse, which for the purposes of this dissertation is more valuable because it was the direct and spontaneous reaction of the FMIs towards the mainstream discourses and dominant ideologies. In this sense, the FMIs in the current study took more active roles than simply passive interviewees.

The real limitation of the current study may be the lack of responses from the readers of the analyzed texts. Although I did apply my member resources as a long-term reader of these texts, it would be interesting to see how other readers react to them and how these texts influence their beliefs about and attitudes towards the FMIs. In the current study I focused more on the relationship between the author and the assumed readers, but the interpretation and reaction of the actual readers may be a topic for future studies.

6.4.2. Suggestions for future studies

Language or discourse may be analyzed in multiple ways and one study could never exhaust them. As I have analyzed the labeling, reported speech, (re)appropriation of lexical items, and narratives of the FMIs as counter-discourse, there remain other topics and research tools for further research on the discourses of FMIs. For instance, actual
readers’ reactions may be worth investigating, as mentioned earlier. A comparison between media discourses in Taiwan and the FMIs’ countries of origin may also expand the scope of our inquiry. As language and discourse are constantly reshaping and reshaped in their instantiations in the social context, the continuing documentation of the trajectory of discourses of FMIs is definitely worth pursuing. Topics newly emerging in public discourses such as bilingualism among “New Taiwan Kids” and the debate concerning the rights of FMIs and Taiwanese women¹ also deserve researchers’ close attention.

¹ The debate between two groups of feminists: one takes a competitive perspective, viewing FMIs as appropriating the social resources of local Taiwanese women, while the other favors the egalitarian model, bonding with the FMIs via the broadcast of universal womanhood


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My overall research interest is language use in society, particularly among immigrants who learn and use a second language in their adulthood. My MA thesis focused on health literacy practice of female marriage-based immigrants who spoke Chinese as their second language, and my current dissertation topic is the representation of the same population in news reports published in Taiwan.

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