Perceptions of the EU in South Korea: EU Images in News Media

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Abstract

The European Union (EU) had been a distant region for South Korea. Located in North East Asia, this country has traditionally been a strategic ally for the United States (US). Yet, the EU designated Korea as its Strategic Partner in 2010, and the bilateral relations between the EU and Korea have been upgraded since then. The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether or not this ‘upgraded’ status of the relationship is recognized by and reflected in the Korean news media discourse. Our analysis points to the Korean media still prioritizing the coverage of the US. Yet, the EU has been an active interlocutor to Korea over the past years, not lastly due to the bilateral FTA that went into force since July 2011, and this new reality has been recognized and reflected by the local press. The paper focuses on the EU representations in the Korean influential opinion-making news media (analysis of the daily monitoring of the three leading newspapers in 2015). The paper argues that through framing an important Other (the EU), Korean media delivered a message about itself to its nationwide audiences, namely Korea as a unique Strategic Partner for the EU, potentially one of few main partners of the EU.

Keywords: the EU, Korea, Media Perceptions, Media Representations, Strategic Partnership

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I. Introduction

On 8 November 2013, the European Union (the EU) and South Korea celebrated 50 years of bilateral relations. For Korean demographics, the EU has been unfamiliar international counterpart comparing with the US and China. However, the EU and South Korea have been close partners by reviewing half-century of bilateral relations. According to Joint Declaration, the EU and South Korea are natural partners who share common values and principles and the experience of rising from the ruins of war. In 2010, Korea is the first country who signed Framework Agreement and Free Trade Agreement, and EU-Korea relations was upgraded to a strategic partnership. Against this backdrop, co-operation between the two parties will become widening and deepening. In addition, we could find out there is a gap between reality and perceptions of the EU and Korea. For filling this gap, continuous investigations of EU perceptions are significant.

From January to December 2015, PPMI from Lithuania with the supports from NCRE from New Zealand and NFG from Germany conducted a research project called “Analysis of the Perception of the EU and EU’s Policies Abroad.” Selected countries for this project were the EU’s 10 strategic partners including South Korea. As a part of this research project, the Korean research team investigated EU images found out in three Korean representative media. The period for the media analysis of this project was from April to June 2015. Comparing with the empirical research, the period was relatively shorter. However, this period captures Greek financial crisis which presented the shift of Korean media attitude towards the EU.

This paper selected Chosun and Joongang Dailies (comprehensive media) and Maeilkyungje Shinmun (economic media) as mediums of analysis. In Korea, the public believe Chosun and Joongang Dailies are conservative media to the government. Consequently, due to these media’s political affiliation, some arguably concern these media could reach limited number

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2 This research consists of researchers from 10 strategic partners of the EU to explore perceptions of the EU and Europe. Participating nations are Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Mexico, Russia, the United States, South Africa and South Korea.
of people who would prefer. Regrettably, there is an error to apply the concept of political affiliation to the media. Chomsky mentioned traditional political terms like right or left already lost their meanings, and they rather should be discarded. In this context, Kim sought to investigate the political preference of the Korean media. She concluded that the public’s understandings or prejudice could reflect or show such political preference of the media but we still cannot determine the media outlet’s political preference. This is because such media show their conservativeness differently. Thus, this paper did not consider political preference of the media.

This paper selected the media outlets according to the results of Korea Press Foundation Report on influence, trustworthiness and subscription rates. Considering the subscription reach, these three newspapers have far-reaching influence. According to Korea ABC, in 2011, Chosun Daily printed 1,353,000 copies per day, Joongang Daily did 944,000 copies and Maeilkyungje Shinmun did 580,000 copies. Moreover, since mid-90s, such media released internet versions to the public.

Before looking into Korean media representation of the EU, we need to have a look at any restriction upon releasing EU-related news items. There is a legal act named Newspaper Law (Shinnunbop) which is closely related with EU-related news production in Korea. This legal act consists of 6 chapters: Chapter 1 general rules, Chapter 2 Management of Newspaper Industry, Chapter 3 Korea Press Foundation, Chapter 4 Press Progress Fund, Chapter 5 Supplementary Rules, and Chapter 6 Penalties. Looking into Newspaper Law, the legal acts did not restrict news agencies’ rights and publication but supported them. Recently, Freedom

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7 김세은, 조선-중앙-동아 일보의 유사성과 차별성: 1면 구성과 사설의 이념성을 중심으로 In 미디어, 젠더 그리고 문화 (2010) 15: 37-78. Looking into this research, Chosun Daily showed strong criticism towards the Korean government in political editorials, Joongang Daily rather covered diverse issues like economy, international relations, education and entertainment.
8 2010 연론수용자 의식조사, (서울: 한국언론재단, 2010); 2014 연론수용자 의식조사, (서울: 한국언론재단, 2014)
9 이은주, 미디어기업의 소유구조연구: 실태 및 현황 (서울: 한국언론재단, 2008).
11 한국언론재단, 2009 한국의 인터넷 신문 (서울: 한국언론재단, 2009); MK, history, http://etc.mk.co.kr/mk/sub1_2.php (Accessed on 15 July 2015) In this research, Chosun.com—internet edition of Chosun Daily—was established in October 1995. JOINS.com was established in March 1995. Maeil Kyungje Shinmun launched its internet service in December 1999. According to Korean Click, the number of visitor to Chosun.com was 7,727,000 in June 2015, the number of visitors to JOINS.com was 6,429,000, and the number of visitors to Maeil Kyungje Shinmun was 7,025,000. For more information, please visit http://www.koreanclick.com/information/freedata_rankings.php
House report evaluated Korean media environment as “partly free.”\textsuperscript{13} Regarding this report carefully, the Korean government restricts and prohibits the article contains praise of the North Korean government.\textsuperscript{14} If we suppose the EU is losing its connection with North Korea, the Korean press would rather be free from reporting EU-related news items to the Korean public.

This paper aims at exploring how the Korean media delivered a message about the EU to its nation-wide audiences. This paper consists of five research questions:

1) How frequent the Korean representative opinion-making newspapers published EU-related articles?
2) How the Korean newsmakers produce EU-related news items?
3) How did the Korean newspapers cover the EU?
4) How the EU was framed in EU-related news items in Korean newspapers?
5) How the EU was evaluated?

In the subsequent section, this paper seeks to revise empirical studies and related theories. In the third section, this paper will introduce research methodologies employed. In the fourth section, this paper will present the results came out of media contents analysis. In the last section, this paper will summarise the results and draw conclusion.

\textsuperscript{13}Freedom House, Freedom of the Press, South Korea, https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2014/south-korea#.VaXv8jcTqWo
( Accessed on 15 July 2015)
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.
II. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

1. Empirical Research

In 2004, the research team led by National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) initiated the project named “Public, Elite and Media Perceptions of the EU in Asia-Pacific Region: A Comparative Study.” In this project, the research team chose four locations in Asia Pacific Region (Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Thailand) and conducted a research about EU perceptions in local media, public and elites.\(^{15}\) Since then, Korean perceptions of the EU have been continuously investigated through different projects. Restricting the research scope into Korean media perceptions of the EU, the publication consist of four academic papers, two chapters in academic volumes and one doctorate thesis.

The publications of the beginning stage were mainly published as a part of academic volume or journal articles. The first article covers Korea’s EU perception as a part of EU perceptions in four locations of Asia Pacific region. Chaban et al. touched upon formal and substantive characteristics.\(^{16}\) Regardless the diverse approaches, the Korean media’s perceptions of the EU were less relatively visible. Korean media mainly covered the EU as a subject of cosmopolitanism.\(^{17}\) The author concluded this situation by using Lippman’s quote “world out of sight, out of mind and out of touch.”\(^{18}\) The results show that there was no momentum for EU-Korea relations.

In 2006, since the negotiations of EU-Korea FTA have become the momentum of developing EU-Korea relations, the number of Korean media’s perceptions of the EU has been increased. Park and Seo investigated the main issues about the EU in the Korean media, public and elites.\(^{19}\) Their work mainly suggested EU-related economic issues were more evident than other areas and this also resonates with the results of public opinion and elite interviews.\(^{20}\)

\(^{15}\) EU Global Perceptions, [http://www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz/](http://www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz/) (retrieved on 6 January 2016)


\(^{17}\) Ibid.


\(^{20}\) Ibid.
Chaban et al. focused on metaphorical expressions in EU-related news items in the Korean media with internal and external angles. The research at the beginning stage mainly has its own meaning in terms of exploring EU perceptions in Korean media, elites and public. However, these studies restrictively show Korean perceptions of the EU due to their structures so we cannot focus on such perceptions.

Since 2010, the recent research works have put more weight to EU representations in the Korean media. Chaban, Yoon and Chung investigated on EU imageries in Korean TV news focusing on EU-Korea FTA. Comparing with previous studies, this work covered EU external perceptions in a broader angle (formal and substantive characters of EU images). Their research findings are as follow: first, even though FTA was a turning point for the Korean media and public, they consider their domestic issues such as the suicide of former president Roh Moo Hyun are more significant. Second, same as previous studies, this study suggest Korean Television news project EU images as “trade giants” or “economic powerhouse.” Connected with these images, the Korean media commented that the EU is not interested in political issues like territory dispute between Korea and Japan but interested in economic issues. Finally, regarding non-FTA news, KBS and MBC described the EU as a passive spectator in international political issues. More recently, Yoon covered EU perceptions in the Korean public and media. This study suggested that the visibility of the EU has been increased but mainly represented the image of ‘economic powerhouse.’ Thus, future research should explore how mutual understandings and perceptions could be improved. These two studies suggested that EU-Korea FTA was an event which holds timeliness in EU-Korea relations. The time frame for this study seems to be appropriate, but these studies have not covered why the EU was depicted as an economic power.

22 S. Yoon, N. Chaban and S. W. Chung, “’Trading Giant’ and ‘Economic Powerhouse’?: Images of the EU on Korean News Television,” Contemporary European Studies* (This journal is Korean journal not an international one. The Korean name for this journal is『유럽연구』), 28 (3), 2010. In this paper, EU imageries were investigated in two aspects. According to the former one, EU imageries were investigated according to their significance (the weight of the EU in the articles), regionality (regional boundary of EU news), and news division category. According to the latter one, this paper focused on analyzing EU actors, evaluation towards the EU and visual images in news screen.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
In the same year, Chung investigated EU images presented in Korean print media and their internet editions in 2008 and published as his doctoral studies.29 Different from previous studies, Chung investigated EU imageries using the methodologies based on Critical Discourse Analysis.30 The results of this study suggested the difference between paper newspapers and their internet editions. He drew out several differences. 31 First, internet newspaper retains more news items than print newspapers. Second, while newsmakers of print newspapers were more inclined to rely on their own journalists, internet newsmakers were more inclined to rely on Yonhap News Agency. Third, the print newspapers sought the uniqueness of the news contents and internet versions preferred the volume of news items available for the readers. Fourth, internet editions showed more passive-neutral attitude than print versions. Fifth, the news items in internet versions hold more metaphorical expressions than print newspapers. Except for these findings, the Korean news media were more likely to project EU-related economic images than political and other areas.

Most recently, Yoon and Lai published an article about EU perceptions in three major states in Northeast Asia based on their analysis conducted in 2011.32 Focusing on Korean results, this work suggested these findings. Despite the EU seeks for its positions in international politics after the Lisbon Treaty, the EU is still presented as an economic power. Consequently, the EU’s images were defected by its economic crisis. They pointed out the main reason for such decline of the image was that the newsmakers and editors did not employ diverse sources of information.33 At this point, it is necessary to reconsider which issues were significant for news editors. According to Chung, news editors concern mainly about how these news items would be sold well and evoke the readers’ sympathy.34 For instance, the news about welfare system in Europe would lead the readers to compare with the welfare in Korea. Also, the news items about financial crisis of Europe would remind the readers about Korea’s financial crisis at the end of 90s. Thus, such news items would have higher chances to be published in Korean media outlets. This study cannot

29 S. W. Chung, *External Images of the EU: Comparative Analysis of EU Representations in Three Major South Korean Newspapers and Their Internet Editions*, the University of Canterbury, 2013 (PhD thesis)
30 Ibid. Chung employed Chaban and Holland’s media analysis methodology after reviewing available research methodology. However, Chung added several elements exploring interactivity in the internet media and the combination of visual images and texts based on visual social semiotics
31 Ibid.
32 S. Yoon and S. Lai, “Far, Yet Close Enough?: Dynamics of the EU Representations in East Asian Media,” *Contemporary European Studies* (This journal is Korean journal not an international one. The Korean name for this journal is 『유럽연구』), 33 (2), 2015.
33 Ibid.
34 S. W. Chung, op. cit.
suggest the media outlets to cover EU-related issues with other scope such as political or socio-cultural aspects. At least, the current studies can explore EU representations in other areas could be valuable.

2. Theoretical Framework

Over the last ten years, investigating the EU’s global perceptions has been a topic of grand project covering more than 30 countries in Asia Pacific region. However, this area has also always been criticised about insufficient theoretical frameworks. Lucarelli calls for establishing theoretical framework for this area.35 Against this backdrop, Lucarelli suggested Role Theory and Social Identity Theory for conducting EU external perceptions studies.36 Holsti introduced Role Theory in 1970 which states others’ perceptions are significant in setting international actor’s political identity and roles in setting diplomatic relations and related policies.37 In this theory, role means the model of appropriate actions and others’ perceptions and expectations.38 Later, Tajfel proposed Social Identity Theory which states groupings of others’ evaluation can be significant reference points for understanding a certain group’s identity. This theory suggests the groups (such as social class, family or working groups) which people belonged to were a source of sense of belonging to the world.39 In the context of this theory, Tajfel divided the world into in-group (us) and out-group (them).40 When setting the identity or images of in-group, out-group’s identifications and differentiation would be significant factors. Seemingly, these theories suggest the results of EU global perceptions could back up the EU’s standing and political identity in the global society.

Chaban’s recent studies commented that role theory reaches only internal perceptions. For facilitating external perceptions studies, image theories of international relations are more

36 S. Lucarelli, Mirrors of Us: European Political Identity and the Others’ Images of the EU in: Debating political identity and legitimacy in the European Union, LONDON, Routledge, 2011
38 Ibid.
applicable for investigation.\textsuperscript{41} Herrmann and Silverstein introduced this theory based on the research on external images of the US and the Soviet Union and their diplomatic policies.\textsuperscript{42} According to Jervis, it is impossible to make a major decision or to explain policies about a certain nation without perceptions from other nations.\textsuperscript{43} For the case studies of image theory, Movahedi’s UNESCO studies about exploring national images which states these images provide momentum for solving the conflicts in international society.\textsuperscript{44} Abovementioned theories suggested the rationale and impacts of external views of a certain international actor which would support EU global perceptions. However, more theories need to be backed up for illuminating how EU global perceptions would operate in the international society.

Looking into the subordinate elements of global perceptions, Entman’s Cascading Activation Model suggested the chain of information exchange by illustrating the relationship between the media and the society. Based on the previous studies by Hallin, Bennet and Mermin, this model introduced the feedback chain between elite, media and public.\textsuperscript{45} The figure below suggests the feedback movement in the context of this model.


\textsuperscript{42} R. K. Herrmann, 1985, op. cit.; and, B. Silverstein, 1989, op. cit.


\textsuperscript{44} S. Movahedi, 'The Social Psychology of Foreign Policy and the Politics of International Images', Human Affairs, 8, 18–37, 1985.

For finding out the messages within this model, exploring the media discourse seems to be a overriding concern. For analysing the media contents, Chaban and Holland employed the methodology based on Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter CDA). According to van Dijk, CDA covers the discourses about various forms of social inequality and injustice. CDA consists of three interrelated steps of analysis: descriptions (text, responses and social activities), interpretations and explanation. At the first stage (description), the analysts focus on linguistic and visual texts and the combination for describing the linguistic characters. At the second stage (interpretation), they focus on the interconnection between discourse production such as writing and speaking and interpretation processes such as reading and listening. At the last stage (explanation), they focus on the clarifying inter-relation between discourse and societal phenomena.

Fairclough considers the discourse as linguistic phenomena of the media’s power and ideology. According to his research, media discourse consists of diverse genres. Its main

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49 N. Fairclough, Critical Discourse Analysis, (Boston: Addison Wesley, 1995).
genre is news texts in television, radio or magazine. These discourses are the medium of CDA.\textsuperscript{50}

The subordinate concepts of media discourse are news report, texts,\textsuperscript{51} editorial,\textsuperscript{52} interview,\textsuperscript{53} visual illustrations and images.\textsuperscript{54} Since the end of 1970s, the research upon media discourse analysis has been actively pursued. From 1976, Glasgow Media Group conducted the discourse analysis of news articles about conflicts.\textsuperscript{55} In 1979, Fowler et al. implemented comparative analysis of ideologies of media discourse by different news media.\textsuperscript{56} Trew analysed media discourse to show the ideological differences and compare how two different British newspapers see an identical issue with opposite views.\textsuperscript{57} After 1980s, scholars began to pay their attentions to media discourse analysis with a cultural studies view.\textsuperscript{58}

Since 1990s, five representative scholars of CDA focused on discourse and ideology. Van Dijk focused upon the relations between the text about racism in the media and ideology.\textsuperscript{59}

\begin{footnotesize}
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Fairclough and Wodak focused on social inequality and ideological and discursive patterns.\textsuperscript{60} Kress and Van Leeuwen employed social visual semiotics which covers the combination of texts and visual images.\textsuperscript{61} Based on these approaches, when we consider EU perceptions as a kind of ideology, the discourse regarding EU affairs can be a significant object for analysis.

**III. Research Methodology**

According to the EU Global Perceptions homepage, media analysis methodology explores two main aspects of EU images. First, formal characteristics analyse the superficial characters of EU coverage. Second, substantive characteristics analyse substantial, in-depth and collective mechanism of image formation. In addition to these two analytic methodologies, this methodology also aims to attempt two-fold approach—“news as a product” and “news as a process.”\textsuperscript{62} The summary of the research methodology was presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two-fold Aspect of News</th>
<th>Research Objects and Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News as a Product</td>
<td>Formal Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Dynamics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Length</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Placement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-News Source</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substantive</td>
<td>Characteristic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Focus of Domesticity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Degree of Centrality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-EU Actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Thematic Frame of the EU/its actors actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Sub-frame and Sub-sub frame</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For formal characteristics, this paper covered five elements. First element is the volume of news articles. This paper examined how many EU news items were released as newspaper articles during the research period. This paper divided the period by one month. Second element is dynamics of news items to cover how the number of news items has been changed over the research period. Third element is investigating length of a news article which shows


the weight of analysis of EU-related issues. Fourth element explored placement which EU-related news items were located in newspapers. Finally, this paper investigated which news source did the newsmakers employed for covering EU-related issues.

For substantive characteristics, this paper investigated five elements. The first element is focus of domesticity which present context and position of the EU in the news texts. This element suggests how the EU was reported in certain contexts (domestic, regional and international) of a certain country. This element consists of five sub-elements: EU, EUMS, Local, Global and Third. This paper coded an article as EU if the news item covers EU news with using the EU as a background of the news story. This paper coded EUMS when the background of EU-related news is EU Member States. This paper coded local when the EU-related news items featured Korea as a background of news item. This paper coded global when the news items have global issues as their background. This paper coded third when the news-items’ background was neither Korea nor the EU.

Second element is degree of centrality which covers how the EU was covered with certain importance and weights for the readers. For the centrality, this paper covers with three main perspectives: major, secondary and minor. When the EU was mainly dealt in the news story, this paper coded the article as major. When the EU was covered with other international actors with the same weight, this paper coded the article as secondary. Finally, when the EU appeared briefly in the news story, this paper coded the article as minor.

Third element is EU-related or external actors which could illustrate the EU more in detail for overcoming the common criticism about the EU “the EU is a faceless entity.” There are three groups of actors for this study: EU-related, local and others. The first group is EU-related actors which are the EU, EU officials, EU bodies, EU Member States, official bodies, and officials, EU Candidate nations, official bodies and officials. The second group is local actors which are Korea-related actors such as officials and official bodies which are connected with the EU in the news story. The last group is others which are related with third countries connected with the EU in the news story.

Fourth element is thematic Frame of the EU. In here, this paper analysed the framing, sub-framing and sub-sub-framing of EU related issues. This element is based on the methodology based on framing theory of media studies. According to Fiske and Taylor, humans are considered as cognitive miser who wants to think less about certain issues.\(^{64}\) Framing is a cognitive frame which reduces amounts of thinking. Framing consists of media and individual framings.\(^{65}\) Media framing is newsmakers’ cognitive filter which supports the accepting new information. Gitlin suggests media framing is a continuous pattern which helps select, emphasise and delete in forming the discourse.\(^{66}\) Price, Tewksbury and Powers mentioned that media framing influence significantly in how the readers would understand certain issues.\(^{67}\) In order to find out such pattern, the summary of framings utilised in this project was provided below.

**Table 2) Framings of Research Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framing</th>
<th>Sub-frame</th>
<th>Sub-sub frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Internal, external</td>
<td>The sub-sub frames were presented diversely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>trade, business and finance, state of economy, industry, agriculture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society and Culture</td>
<td>migration, welfare, social legislation, diversity, education, crime, health care, entertainment, sports, demography, lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research, Science and Technology</td>
<td>research, science, technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>internal, external</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>security of supply, competitiveness, sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>aid, political, economic, social, energy, environmental, Research, Science and Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Power Europe</td>
<td>political, economic, and social and cultural</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The last element is evaluation which shows whether the EU and EU-related actors was evaluated as positive, neutral or negative. This paper covered this element in order to investigate how the EU was depicted in the Korean society. Furthermore, the results of this element would provide helpful feedbacks to diplomatic practitioners dealing with EU-Korea relations.


\(^{65}\) Ibid.


IV. Results

1. Formal Characteristics
   1) Volume

The first element of formal characteristics covers how many news items were published over the research period of this project. In April and June 2015, *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun* published the largest number of EU-related articles followed by *Chosun* and *Joongang Dailies*. However, in May 2015, *Chosun Daily* posted the larger number of EU articles than *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun* and *Joongang Daily*. In June 2015, except for *Joongang Daily*, two major newspapers increased their coverage of the EU. The main factors of such coverage were Greek financial crisis and state of EU economy. This result shows the Korean newspapers seem to pay their attentions in EU-related economic affairs more than other areas.

![Figure 2) Volume of EU Items in Korean Newspapers (April to June 2015)](image)

2) Dynamics

This element seeks to investigate how the volume of EU news items of three newspapers has been changed over the research period. In order to have a look at such dynamics, the research team divided the period by 7 days average. The results were summarised in Figure 3.
In this figure, the last ten days of June was the peak period. In this period, the newspapers mainly covered Greek Financial crisis. On 22 June, they covered Greece submitted the final negotiation deal with the creditors. On 25 June, Greek government conducted referendum about its default declaration to the creditors which was turned down and the negotiation was broken. On the next day, debt repayment period was extended up to 5 months. The results reflect Korean media focus on the EU’s state of economy with sensitivity. However, this sensitivity probably suggests that EU-Korea economic relations have upgraded significantly. Comparing EU news items between the period before EU-Korea FTA, Korean newspapers and present, we can observe these newspapers cover EU-related economic issues more in depth. Probably, this issue shows Korean newsmakers’ news values would have shifted toward EU-related economic issues. Korean newsmakers consider the topics which cause the sympathy of Korean readers, so EU-related economic issues have gained their news values in Korea. News items covering Greek economic downturn have their news values because they would remind Korea’s economic crisis at the end of 90s. When you look into the results, *Chosun Daily* and *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun* focused on Greece’s responses after the financial crisis from 1 to 8 May.

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68 Chung (2013) op. cit.
3) length

This element investigates the length of EU news items for the Korean readers. Looking into the empirical studies about length of news items of the Korean media, the researchers covered television news items but no newspaper articles. In this project, the analyst was asked to classify whether the item is short, medium or long. Considering the empirical studies, classifying the length of news items was challenging. According to Chung (2013), a letter is the unit of counting the length of Korean language. The analyst counts articles up to 500 words as short articles, articles from 500 to 1,500 words as medium articles and articles more than 1,500 words as long articles.

Figure 4) Length of EU-related Articles

After the analysis, three newspapers had the largest number of medium length articles. Most EU-related news items were published in more than 500 words. There is a concern longer articles would not draw the readers’ attentions. According to Lee, shorter articles are higher to draw the readers’ attentions and they are highly effective in communication.⁶⁹

In other words, such news items would not likely to reach the readers. However, longer news items have their own values. According to Schulz, longer articles contain the newsmakers’

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⁶⁹ 이재현, 디지털 시대와 읽기와 쓰기 (커뮤니케이션북스: 서울, 2013)
thorough investigation and discussion about a specific issue.\textsuperscript{70} Even if EU-related articles would not reach the readers effectively, newsmakers consider EU-related issues are the news items which need delicate and accurate descriptions. This implies that the Korean readers have not sufficient understandings about the EU, so EU-related news items would draw the limited number of readers’ interests.

4) placement

This element investigates where EU-related news articles situated in newspapers. The placement of Korean newspapers usually consists of three groups: A Section (General Affairs), B Section (Business/economic Section) and C/D/E Sections (Others). Most EU news items were placed in A Section in three newspapers.

Figure 5) Placement by each news outlet

\textit{a) Chosun Daily}

The results imply the higher possibility of accessibility to the readers. Leff and Higgins regards the placement refers to the significance. Based on their idea, EU news items might have values. Rogers et al.’s agenda setting theory, prior placement can also mean salient

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issues which would be transferred from media agenda to public agenda. However, at the moment, this paper could not measure whether these articles had a significant effect. Thus, the future studies should consider and measure the impacts of such articles.

5) News Source

Each newspaper’s news source covers who holds the priority in producing EU news items. Summarised results are presented in Figure below.

Figures 6) News Source of Korean news Items

Three newspapers mainly employed their journalists and correspondents to Europe for publishing EU news items. Three newspapers are not likely to trust external sources to cover the international issues. Among three newspapers, Chosun Daily and Maeil Kyungje Shinmun relied heavily upon British media or source organisation such as telegraph, guardian and BBC. Joongang Daily mainly employed EU-related news items from Rossiskaya Gazeta. Same as the results of empirical studies, three newspapers mainly rely on their internal journalists and foreign correspondents. In other words, journalists are the main decision makers for

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73 During the research period, Joongang Daily employed significant number of articles from Rossiskaya Gazeta because Joongang Daily was participating Russia Beyond the Headline Project conducted by Rossiskaya Gazeta. For more information, please visit http://russiafocus.co.kr/about

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publishing EU-related news items. This finding suggests further studies about decision makers’ understandings of the EU.

2. Substantive Characteristics

1) focus of domesticity

This element seeks to explore how the Korean newspapers report EU-related issues with specific focus. The results were summarized in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7) Focus of Domesticity

Among three newspapers, Chosun Daily was most likely to focus on the EU and its member states covering EU-related news items. For instance, when this newspaper covers Greek financial crisis, it focused more upon issues about EU member states. However, Joongang Daily and Maeil Kyungje Shinmun focused on the EU’s influence upon Korea or EU affairs’ correlations with Korea. For instance, when these news outlets cover ECB’s quantitative easing to Greece, they also cover the possible impacts upon Korean economy or EU-Korea relations. This finding implies that the Korean public would feel the EU as a distant partner. Thus, most media were likely to set a domestic angle to explain the European Union.
2) degree of centrality

Degree of centrality focuses on covering how the EU was weighed in the news stories of Korean newspapers. The results are summarised in Figure 8.

![Figure 8] Degree of Centrality

Among three newspapers, *Chosun Daily* reported the EU as a major perspective. In other words, the EU was covered with a significant weigh in its news stories. On the other hand, the EU was reported with a secondary perspective in *Joongang Daily* and *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*. According to Chaban and et al., such centrality shows how the EU was represented with some degree of significance in the news stories and to the readers. The results show that the readers of *Chosun Daily* would more likely to be impacted about the EU or its affairs. However, the impact of the EU was less presented in EU-related news items. At this stage, the EU’s visibility is not impressive enough regardless active diplomatic engagement between the two. This finding implies the significance of exploring why the EU was portrayed as a secondary international actor to the Korean public.

3) Actors

In this project, the EU-related actors in the news articles were categorised into four groupings: the first one is EU institutions, the second one is EU Member States, the third one is EU Officials and the last one is EU MS Officials. The results were summarized in Figure 9.

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The researcher explored the number of mentionings of EU institutions and member states. Among EU institutions, ECB was most mentioned European Council and European Commission, European Court of Justice and European Parliament consecutively. Looking into EU Member States, Greece and Germany were most mentioned countries and then the UK, France, Italia and Spain were mentioned subsequently. This finding was different from previous research: the number of mentioning of EU Big 4 nations namely, France, Germany, the UK and Italy was higher than other EU Member States. This result show the Korean newspapers focused on Greek financial crisis. In here, Germany was frequently mentioned as a frequent opponent to Greece in the negotiation period. This finding also implies that Korean news media concerns most about the EU’s economic performance and state of economy. Especially, they also pay more attentions negative issues rather than positive issues about the EU. This might project defected images of the EU to the Korean readers.

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S. W. Chung (2013), op. cit.
In this table, this paper investigates the number of mentionings of EU officials and Member State officials in the news texts of Korean newspapers. Jean-Claude Juncker (the President of European Commission) was mentioned most in the news, and then Mario Draghi (President of European Central Bank), Federical Mogherini (the head of European External Action Service), and Jeroen Dijselbloem (the representative of Eurogroup) consecutively. Juncker and Dijselbloem mainly appeared in the news of negotiation between the EU and Greece and of the EU’s relief fund to Greece. In case of Draghi, he was mostly mentioned in the news about ECB’s quantitative easing. Different from these three figures, Mogherini was mentioned in the issue about refugees in the EU, the EU’s sanctions against Russia and Iran, and her visit to Korea from 4 to 5 May 2015. The results of the EU Member States officials resembles with the results of EU Member States. Different from empirical studies, Greek officials like Tsipras and Varoufakis were mentioned most frequently during the research period. Except them, Merkel, Cameron and Hollande were mentioned consecutively. The results also reflect the Korean newspapers focused on Greek financial crisis and showed sensitivity towards the EU’s state of economy. After this issue, the Korean newspapers also paid attention towards Brexit by mentioning Cameron in their news stories.
4) **Thematic Framings**

This paper also examines the thematic framings about the EU news in Korean newspapers. The results were presented in the Figure below.

Figure 10 shows that three newspapers published more than half of EU-related news items with economic thematic framings. Subsequently, three newspapers published the articles with political and socio-cultural framings consecutively. Except for these three major framings, the other framings were not that significant in terms of their proportions.

In economic framing, EU-related news items belong to the sub-framings of state of economy, business/finance and trade. The news items with state of economy sub-framings dealt with Greek financial crisis. The news items with business/finance framing mainly dealt with
ECB’s quantitative easing. The news items with trade framing mainly covered EU-Korea trade. These subframings project EU imageries in a negative way which might influence Korean public’s perceptions toward the EU. Also, this paper concerns that the image of economic powerhouse might degenerate in the future.

In political framing, three newspapers were more inclined to cover EU internal issues than EU external issues. The news articles with internal framing mainly covered the UK’s Prime Minister Elections and possibility of Brexit. Most news articles with external framings were more likely to cover the EU affairs with the US. This result also show political imageries of the EU were also challenged by Korean journalists. It is difficult to conclude the newsmakers would rely on the source covering negative aspects of the EU. Echoing the results of the source of information, Korean newsmakers were more likely to rely on American and British news source such as Reuters. However, in order to make sure, this needs further study based on in-depth interview with media practitioners.

In socio-cultural framing, the representative subframings are migration, health care and social legislation. Within migration subframing, refugee was the main subsubframing. Within health care subframing, elders’ falling accidents and tinnitus were the most evident subsubframings. In social legislation subframing, law and legal issues are main subsubframings.

Minor framings for this research were normative, environment, RST, energy and development framings. In normative framing, political subframing was the main one. In this subframing, peace was the main sub-subframing. In environment framing, external framing was more evident than internal framing. While carbon trading was the main sub-framing of external framing, EU’s internal regulations and courses of actions were the main subframing of internal framing. In RST framing, Research and Technology were main subframings. In energy framing, security of supply was the main subframing. In this subframing, generation IV international forum and energy supply from Russia are the main subsubframings. In development framing, this paper could only find the news items from Maeil Kyungje Shinmun. The aid for Nepal earthquake was the main subframing for this framing. Considering the distribution of these minor framings, Korean newspapers cover more diverse
issues about EU-Korea relations. This also implies EU-Korea relations are expanding their areas of cooperations. However, such cooperation was not visible to the readers. Thus, further studies should continuously illustrate media portrait of the EU to the Koreans for disseminating purposes.

5) Evaluation

This paper explored how the EU was evaluated in the news items of the three newspapers. The results were presented in Figure 11.

Figure 11) Evaluation

The results points out three newspapers mainly showed neutral evaluation about EU affairs. However, except for such neutral evaluation, these newspapers were more likely to show negative evaluation rather than positive evaluation. Such negative evaluations were mainly found in main framings (political, economic and socio-cultural). On the contrary, negative evaluations were rarely found in minor framings (environment, energy, development, RST and normative). As mentioned above, there were negative events about the EU’s economy and politics. Especially, Greek financial crisis was the main economic issue and Brexit was the main political issues which project negative images about the EU.
V. Discussion and Conclusion

For the first research question, one or two EU-related news items were published in these newspapers daily. This means the EU would not be visible enough to the Korean public. Among these three newspapers, Chosun Daily and Maeil Kyungje Shinmun published more frequently than Joongang Daily. For the second research question, the Korean newsmakers heavily rely upon local journalists and correspondents for producing EU news items. This finding was as same as the results of empirical studies on Korea’s media perceptions. Possibly, the Korean journalists would have considered international wires as their sources of information but they did not show them as their references in the news text. However, British news agencies like Reuters, Guardian and BBC appeared considerably in the news texts, so we could guess the Korean newspapers were more likely to rely upon British news agencies. In the third research question, the Korean newspapers have recently covered the EU in a more negative way. This is probably because Korean media concern whether the EU’s financial crisis and Greek debt crisis would affect Korean economy. This implies EU-Korea economic relations has become intimate before. Linking with the result of second research question, the Korean journalists would have been impacted from British media as a substantial source of information. In the fourth question, the EU was more inclined to be framed as an economic actor or economic power to the Korean public. However, considering recent negative evaluation, the image of economic power would become a contested concept among Korean newspapers and readers. In the last question, echoing the result of the third question, the EU was evaluated negatively due to its financial crisis, political crisis after British Prime Minister election, and social crisis such as refugee issues. The Korean media has become more sensitive about negative issues about the EU than before. Also, the Korean media showed more interests towards diverse aspects of the EU.

Different from empirical studies upon Korean media representations of the EU, this study found out the changes of media attitude towards the EU. Considering the amount of EU news items, the EU is not yet a prominent international actor to the Korean public except for economic affairs. However, the Korean newsmakers should be careful about their evaluation changes towards the EU. Regardless their impact upon the Korean public, the newsmakers should carefully employ more diverse sources of information. Such effort could contribute to the diplomatic workers making a proper decision upon EU-related affairs and then it would
lead to the improvement and upgrading of EU-Korea relations.

According to joint declaration of 50th Anniversary of EU-Korea relations, the two declared “We will make concerted efforts to further develop the creative economy and innovation through cooperation in research and higher education and collaboration between businesses.” Contrast to such vision, the Korean media still produces EU imageries as an “economic powerhouse” and “a political dwarf”. If the news media would reflect upon such vision, it is necessary to cover the EU with different angles and new perspectives. Also the two want the deepening of EU-Korea relations which was reflected in the joint declaration.

We express our commitment to expand cultural exchanges and networks in the fields of science and technology, tourism, media, academia and civil society for the benefit of the coming generation. We will continue to work side by side to bring Europe and Asia closer.

In order to expand such connection, the future researchers should find more proper agendas for improving status quo of EU-Korea relations. At the end of Joint Declaration, as natural and strategic partners, sharing a vision for a better future, we look forward to working closely to bring a message of hope and happiness for the world. However, the two still have many things to overcome in order to develop bilateral relations, so future research should continuously explore such perceptions for the development of EU-Korea relations for feedbacking to practitioners of public diplomacy. EU-Korea relations are at crossroads. In order to realise such visions, the two should pay more attentions towards each other based upon thorough understandings.

77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
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