

COMPLETION REPORT

The title of our paper is “Made in Japan: How the Image of Japanese Product is constructed in Chinese Media, A content analysis of mainland Chinese newspapers, 2001-2010”. **Note 1*

Chinese consumers usually show mixed attitudes towards products made in Japan. On one hand, “Made in Japan” is associated with reliable quality; on the other hand, there is a calling for resisting products made in Japan among Chinese consumers from time to time. Although the importance of consumer attitude has been well established, research on the construction process of product image is relatively limited. For consumers, mass media is a major information source that represents product image. Therefore, this study attempts to understand how Chinese mass media construct the “Made in Japan” image in the recent ten years.

China’s newspaper system has two major components, namely, the party newspaper and metropolitan newspaper. The party newspapers act as the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party and the government. However, the metropolitan newspapers rely more heavily on the market. Such a type of newspapers lay special stress on news that closely related with ordinary people’s daily life. In this study, we sampled newspapers from both types of newspapers according to the newspaper’s circulation and impact. Based on a content analysis on six Chinese newspapers, this study arrives at the following major findings:

First, “Made in Japan” has attracted increasing attention from Chinese newspapers, such a trend is more apparent in the metropolitan newspapers than in the party newspapers. Second, with regard to the source location, both the party newspapers and the metropolitan newspapers mainly rely on sources located in China. Third, in respect to the attitude towards Japanese product, both the party newspapers and the metropolitan newspapers adopt a “neutral” stand to cover “Made in Japan” issues, followed by positive articles. However, it is also found that there were more positive articles in the party newspapers than in the metropolitan newspapers, whereas the negative articles occurred more frequently in metropolitan newspapers than in the party newspapers. Fourth, “Made in Japan” is most frequently constructed as both the “example” for Chinese to learn from and “being declining”. Regarding two types of

newspapers, the party newspaper mostly represents “Made in Japan” as an “example”, whereas the metropolitan newspaper most heavily described “Made in Japan” as “being declining”. Fifth, examining the patterns of “Made in Japan” news coverage over the decade, it is found that: first, Chinese newspapers tend to use longer article length to report “Made in Japan”; second, Chinese newspapers tend to rely on the “example” frame to construct the image of “Made in Japan” more heavily as time goes by. We did not find any relationship between the changing pattern of “Made in Japan” news articles and the political cycle.

**Note1: The tile of our original proposal is “How the Image of Japanese Brands and Products is constructed in Chinese Media: A content analysis of mainland Chinese newspapers, 1998-2008”. After our proposal was approved, we spent a lot of time on further literature review and found that the Japan-China relation has experienced a series of disturbances after 2008; furthermore, 2001 marked a start point for the new era of the trade relation between Japan and China, because China entered the World*

Trade Organization in that year. Therefore, we changed the time span from 1998-2008 to 2001-2010, we think this time period has more theoretical implications than the original time period we proposed.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Date : November 17, 2012.

Venue : Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou, China

Name of Conference : Reconstructing Actors: The fifth Chinese Young Scholars Conference in Communication

Title of Presentation: Made in Japan: How the Image of Japanese Product is constructed in Chinese Media, A content analysis of mainland Chinese newspapers, 2001-2010

Presenter: Lin Gongcheng & Li Ying

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Our paper had been submitted to Chinese journals and now we are waiting for reviewer's comments. Once it could be published, we will inform your foundation ASAP.

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

None