言語的致命力量：對新冠肺炎時期新聞中之種族主義及學生情緒的詞彙庫用語分析

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摘要

致命的冠狀病毒又名 COVID-19，已使世界屈服，著實使全球經濟崩潰並摧毀了人們的生活和生計。在這疫情期間，COVID-19 毀滅性的後果帶來了另一種病毒連鎖效應，這與病毒本身一樣致命：種族主義，更具體地說是反華種族主義言論。 COVID-19 最初在中國武漢被發現這一事實，在很大程度上促使了反華情緒的建立。隨著病毒從東方傳播到西方，不盡相同地將大流行病歸咎於中國以及與中國人有關的任何事物的可能性也在增加。由於台灣學生傾向於出於教育或休閒目的出國旅行，當前的反華敵視使他們處於非常弱勢的地位，因為他們當中的許多人與大陸人很像。新聞中提高學生對種族主義意識的需求比以往任何時候都更加重要。本文報告基於詞彙庫的用語分析，該用語分析基於兩個自建的詞彙庫，該詞彙庫是從 110 篇國際新聞報導（文章）和學生的書面回應（45 篇文章）中得出。進行了基於詞彙庫語言學的批判性用語分析（Baker 等，2008），使用了基於網路上的數位文本閱讀和分析程序 Voyant Tools（Sinclair＆Rockwell，2016），研究了詞語搭配和協調產生的單詞模式數據，以及基於這些模式的搭配趨勢，單詞頻率及其在 Cirrus（單詞云）中直觀呈現的與單詞選擇的關係，以及這些語言修辭手法的相關影響，得出的模式強度。然後，使用 Van Dijk（1984，2015），Fairclough（1995，2001）和 Wodak（2001）的批評性話語分析（CDA）理論框架來解釋這些結果，以評估種族主義話語，學生的態度以及他們的心理和社會表徵，這些表現所引起的恐懼，擔憂和解決方案。研究結果表明，他們的態度並非根深蒂固，而是根據公眾話語在社會上培養出來的。調查結果還暗示，國際新聞報導具有傳播反華情緒的意識形態觀點的能力，即將流行病定為"中國病毒"或"功夫"，從而在總體上加劇了對"亞洲人"的"歧視"。學生的詞彙庫顯示出頻繁出現的"台灣/台灣人"和"幫助"的引理，這表明強烈的自豪感，因為絕大多數人認為台灣已經成功領導了與 COVID-19 的鬥爭，從而明確劃定了界限使自己與"中國人"區隔。

關鍵詞：COVID-19、詞彙庫語言學、批判性用語分析、種族主義用語、跨文化溝通

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The Deadly Power of Words: A Corpus Discourse Analysis of Racism in the News during COVID Times and Students' Sentiments

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Abstract

The deadly Coronavirus aka COVID-19 has brought the world to its knees, literally crashing down the global economy and destroying people's lives and their livelihood. Amid this pandemic, another viral chain of discourse has been brought about by the devastating consequences of COVID-19— one that is as deadly as the virus itself: racism, more specifically, anti-Chinese racist remarks. The construction of anti-Chinese sentiments was predominantly instigated by the fact that COVID-19 was first identified in Wuhan, China. As the virus spreads from the east to the west, the propensity to blame the nuances of the pandemic to China and to anything or anyone related to being Chinese has also increased. As Taiwanese students tend to travel abroad either for education or leisure purposes, the current anti-Chinese hostility puts them in a very vulnerable position as many of them bear physical resemblance to the mainlanders. The need to raise students' awareness about racism in the news has become more important than ever. This paper reports a corpus-based discourse analysis based on two self-created corpora drawn from 110 international news reports (articles) and the students' written responses (45 articles). Critical discourse analysis based on corpus linguistics (Baker, et al, 2008) using Voyant Tools (Sinclair & Rockwell, 2016), a web-based reading and analysis program for digital texts, was conducted to investigate word patterns that rose from collocations and concordance data, and the intensity of the patterns based on collocation trends, word frequency and word choice as visually presented in Cirrus (word cloud), and the correlational impact of these linguistic devices. These results were then interpreted using critical discourse analysis (CDA) theoretical framework of Van Dijk (1984, 2015), Fairclough (1995, 2001) and Wodak (2001) to evaluate the racist discourse, students' attitudes and their mental and social representations that they share, which evoke fear, concerns, and resolutions. The findings suggest that their attitudes are not ingrained but are socially cultivated based on public discourse. The findings also imply that international news reports have the capability of spreading ideological views of anti-Chinese sentiments, i.e., framing the pandemic as "Chinese virus" or "Kung Flu" thus instigating further "discrimination" against "Asians" in general. The students' corpus shows a high frequency of the lemma "Taiwan/Taiwanese" and "help" signifying a strong sense of pride as an overwhelming majority felt that Taiwan is successfully leading the fight against COVID-19, thus explicitly drawing a clear demarcation line disassociating themselves from the "Chinese".

Keywords: COVID-19, corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis, racist discourse, cross-cultural communication

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Introduction

Previously referred to as 2019-nCoV, Coronavirus, otherwise known as COVID-19, is a highly contagious, medically fatal illness brought about by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (World Health Organization, 2020). The outbreak of this new strain of SARS-related virus was first reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019, which has rapidly spread across the globe. By March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) finally declared COVID-19 a global pandemic (Medscape, 2020). Since the chances of getting infected is high, people who have existing medical conditions, older people, and those who frequently congregate in crowded places are most likely to be vulnerable of infection. Thus, the Center for Disease Control (CDC, 2020) advised people to stay at home and refrain from going to crowded places. Wearing a mask, constant washing of hands, physical distancing, and disinfecting and other preventive measures have been put in place by the authorities in mostly all of the countries where infection rate was high. The virus is easily transmitted through direct contact with the respiratory droplet of an infected person which can happen when sneezing or coughing (CDC, 2020). These droplets can stay on surfaces for hours but repeated use of disinfectants through constant cleaning can kill the virus. Having a fever, coughing, and shortness of breath are the frequent symptoms, but could be fatal if the vulnerable person suffers from other medical complications. According to the Taiwan Center for Disease Control (TCDC, 2020), to date (August 2020), there are now 23,639,727 infected cases worldwide (187 countries being affected), with 813,714 reported deaths. Yet, despite this number, Taiwan only had 86,419 reported cases with only 487 being confirmed (457 recovered), and only 7 recorded deaths. As Farr and Gao (2020) of CNBC reported Taiwan is highly praised for effectively handling the pandemic and sets a good example for others, for instance, the United States with about 330 million people, there has been "more than 3.4 million cases and more than 136,000 deaths" (par. 3). The overall impact of COVID-19 has been truly severe. The economic repercussions of COVID-19 can never be underestimated as the brutal impact has been hard and felt by ordinary working people. Jones, Palumbo, and Brown (2020) of The BBC reports that as central banks in many countries massively reduced interest rates to encourage consumers to borrow and spend to somehow boost the economy, yet many people still have lost their jobs due to closures of businesses as a direct result of the government policies to control the pandemic. As unemployment continued to rise, people's livelihoods were destroyed as well.

Amid this pandemic, another viral chain of discourse has been brought about by the devastating consequences of COVID-19 – one that is as deadly as the virus itself: racism, more specifically, anti-Chinese racist remarks. The construction of anti-Chinese sentiments that were reported by the media was predominantly instigated by the fact that COVID-19 was first identified in Wuhan, China. As the virus spreads from the east to the west, the propensity to blame the nuances of the pandemic to China and to anything or anyone related to being Chinese has also increased. As Taiwanese students tend to travel abroad either for education or leisure purposes, the current anti-Chinese hostility puts them in a very vulnerable position as many of them bear physical resemblance to the mainlanders. The need to raise students' awareness about racism in the news has become more important than ever.

This study is grounded on a corpus-assisted discourse analysis that was undertaken to investigate racist discourse in the news coverage surrounding COVID-19. The analysis was predicated on two self-created corpora drawn from 110 international news reports (articles) and the students' written responses (45 articles). Critical discourse analysis based on corpus linguistics (Baker, et al, 2008; Biber et al, 1998) using Voyant Tools (Sinclair & Rockwell, 2016), a web-based reading and analysis program for digital texts, was conducted to investigate word patterns that rose from collocations and concordance data, and the intensity of the patterns based on their concordance lines using Termberry, word frequency and word choice as visually presented in Cirrus (word cloud), and the correlational impact of these linguistic devices. These results were then interpreted following Fairclough's (1995, 2001) discourse analysis model, Van Dijk's (1984, 2015) discourse analysis of discrimination, and Wodak (2001) negative presentations to evaluate the racist discourse, students' attitudes and their mental and social representations that they share, which evoke fear, concerns, and resolutions.

Literature Review

The main aim of CDA with the corpus linguistic approach used in this study was to analyze the lexical choices made by foreign news outlets in their coverage of COVID-19 and the racial discrimination issues surrounding them. Thus, the interplay of language, power, and ideology is inevitable when looking at racist discourse in the news. Lexical items, collocations, and how they are constructed in a phrase defines the contexts that expose a certain social ideology encapsulated in the discourse that has potential influence in shifting people's attitudes and behavior (Fairclough, 1995). Studies on CDA emerged in the 1970s, which concentrated mostly in the UK and Australia; topics of discourse revolved around racism, sexism, and politics (Van Dijk, 1984, 1993, 2015) however, the variety of issues expanded to other cultural contexts, traditions, and genre (Machin & Van Leeuwen, 2007; Schmutz, 2009; Spielmann, 1998; Wood & Kroger, 1995). Therefore, it is imminent that the spread of topics run across multiple disciplines, hence overlapping and intertextual referencing may occur as they are connected with each other; this notion of interlinking discourses often times fall under these labels: textual chains, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, and hybridity (Fairclough, 1992, 2013; Wodak & Reisigl, 2003). Across genres and multimodality of semiotic types and themes, there is a certain concentration on a specific social reality presented and will most likely emerge as the frame of discourse (Wodak, 2001).

Fairclough (1995) proposed a three-dimensional model (see Figure 1) as a theoretical framework for examining discourse in the news, which begins with a "linguistic description of the language text, interpretation of the relationship between the (productive and interpretative) discursive processes and the text, and explanation of the relationship between the discursive process and the social processes" (p. 97).
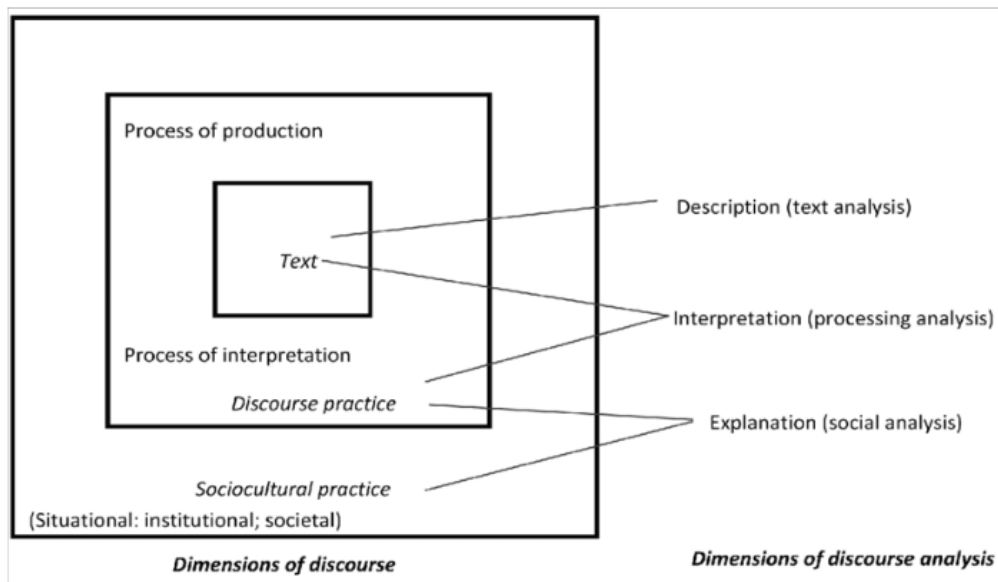
Three-dimensional Method of Discourse Analysis (adapted from Fairclough 1995: 98)

Figure 1. Fairclough's three-dimensional method

Text analysis begins with a description of text (written or spoken) and generation of text genres, types, and categories. As the analysis moves from the literal and obvious, a deeper analysis entails an interpretation of the meaning derived from the description of the text and its discursive production, i.e., how it is (re)produced and utilized, accepted, and manipulated. Further explanation requires examining the social context in which the (re)production and interpretation of the text are socio-culturally situated, the conditions of that environment, and what hidden ideology they may carry. For CDA experts, criticality in discourse analysis goes beyond sketching the social processes and structures, but they also argue that discourse itself is not merely an outcome as it also reinforces the (re)production of these social processes (Fairclough, 1992; Fowler, 1991; Kress & Hodge, 1979; Van Dijk, 1993).

Similar critical approach to analyzing racism in the media was purported by Hartmann and Husband (1974) based on their study of black racism in the UK, suggesting that racial prejudice views are not only a result of misleading information but they also serve as a "function...of maintaining whites in an advantageous positions relative to blacks…" and that "prejudice attitudes cannot be changed significantly, independently of the structural relationships to which they relate" (p. 41). Therefore, racism is not an individual pursuit but rather a discursive social practice, and as Van Dijk (1998) strongly argues that the social factor plays an intentional course of action to shelter the interests of the in-group or those who belong to a self-perceived social cluster that differentiates them from the others. He posits that racism and racist discourse are deemed crucial in the preservation of power dynamics and social structural relationships that have been imposed or even deliberately emplaced in society, as there is the need for "rationalization and justification of discriminatory acts against minority groups" (Van Dijk 1984, p. 13). He categorized them as

"the 7 Ds of Discrimination: dominance, differentiation, distance, diffusion, diversion, depersonalization or destruction, and daily discrimination" (Van Dijk 1984, p. 40). These are strategies that lay out the demarcation line between *the other*, for instance, concepts that portray "positive self-presentation" and "negative other-presentation", exclusion from events or social activities, ruining or destruction of image or properties, assassination or manslaughter (p. 40). Such display of power and power relations are discursive, and they may be interspersed and enacted in laws, rules rather than guidelines, norms and habits, and widely accepted dogma– all these are forms of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Other examples are class domination, sexism, and racism. They do not necessarily manifest through abusive acts of those in power or the in-/dominant group, but they can also be exercised through subliminal forms of sexism or racism (Essed, 1991). Wodak (2001) noted five discursive strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-representation in relation to discourse of identity and difference (Table 1). These strategies are a "systematic way of using language" which can be identified as "intentional... discursive practices adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim" (Wodak, 2001, p. 73).

Table 1

Strategies of Positive Self-presentation and Negative Other-presentation adapted from Wodak, 2001

Strategies	Objective	Devices	Examples from the news corpus
Referential/Nomination	Construction of in-groups and out-groups	Membership categorization Biological, naturalizing and Depersonalizing metaphors and metonymies	'...the **pitiful convoy**' '...an **army** of 110,000 Iraqi refugees'
Predication	Labeling social actors more or less positively or negatively, deprecatorily or appreciatively	Stereotypical, evaluative attribution of negative or positive traits Implicit and explicit predicates	'Calais is still **crawling** with asylum seekers **trying to break into Britain.**'
Argumentation	Justification of positive or negative attributions	Topoi used to justify political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment	'... if too many arrive in an uncontrolled manner, the structures of society in an already overcrowded island cannot cope'
Perspectivation, framing or discourse representation	Expressing involvement positioning speakers 'point of view	Reporting, description, narration or quotation of events and utterances	'BRITAIN **was warned last night** it faces a massive benefits bill to pay for the looming influx of immigrants...'
Intensification, mitigation	Modifying the epistemic status of a proposition	Intensifying or mitigating the illocutionary force or (discriminatory) utterances	'... the politically correct dictators of liberal fashion... will **never** concede that **most** asylum-seekers are economic migrants, rather than people fleeing persecution.'

The media play a crucial role as gatekeepers and agenda-setters of hegemony and how *the other* is represented or framed, thus perpetuating unequal social relationships between social groups or communities, as Cottle (2000, p. 2) postulates "to construct a sense of who 'we' are in relation to who 'we' are not, whether as 'us' and 'them', [...] 'citizen' and 'foreigner', [...] 'friend' and 'foe', 'the west' and 'the rest'". The manner in which these groups are (re)presented is only a snippet of the context, and this what Entman (1993) refers to as framing which he defines as "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52). Tewksbury (2015) describes framing in the news or by the media/press as "the verbal and visual information in an article that directly or implicitly suggests what the problem is about, how it can be addressed, and who is responsible for creating and solving it" (para. Introduction).

The breadth of the media is widely extensive, if not, pervasive. Its reach is beyond the confines of a country; it can be seen historically leading up to what it is today that the media is globally situated and powerful enough to exert a strong influence on people and world leaders. Due to its dynamic ability to persuade and influence, it has been a subject of concern and scrutiny in various academic fields, i.e., media and cultural studies, semiotics, film studies, linguistics, etc. by continuously critiquing and deconstructing anything that (re)creates a social impact and cultural (re)productions (Cotter, 2003). There are two factors that circumscribe the discourse of news media: the actual news story (either spoken or written text) and the process or the systematic series of actions in the production of the story. Bell (1991) explains that the text (story) is what media researchers are interested in decoding as there are embedded meanings and ideologies that can be extrapolated; the process, on the other hand looks into the backstory which involves the influence of news reporters, writers, editors, etc. in and when crafting or delivering the story.

For linguists, text analysis in media discourse encapsulates the analysis of discourse structure, linguistic features and their functions in delivering and/or maintaining certain ideology. As what was pointed out earlier, the overall media discourse is vigorously dynamic and constantly evolving. Thus, seeing the evolution of the discourse, from the time a news story comes out to the time it is consumed and (re)produced by the people, can be an eye-opener that can trigger further debates and discussions. Some of the earlier groundwork for media discourse analysis are framing (as popularized by Goffman, 1975, 1981), voicing (Bakhtin, 1981) in uncovering situations or instances of media bias based on a speaker's version of events, Bell's (1991) narrative structure and stylistics, and Tannen's (1998) views on media positioning as provocateurs of public debate and controversies have all been instrumental in the development of analytical frameworks for media discourse.

Studies Employing Corpus Linguistics and Discourse Analysis

Blending corpus linguistics (CL) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been adopted by other renowned experts in the field (Cheng & Lam, 2013; Fairclough, 2009; Krishnamurthy, 1996; Partington, 2006; Stubbs, 2001). As corpus-driven CDA is being used as an analytical approach, Baker et al. (2008) suggest that achieving a balance between these

two approaches is essential. Because of the quantitative nature of collecting and analyzing the texts used in corpus linguistics (Sinclair, 1991), it is deemed as highly objective compared to the subjective interpretation applied to semantic and pragmatic content analysis when performing CDA (Fowler, 1991). CL demonstrates from the corpora as the primary data and starting point in searching for trends, patterns, and repetitive occurrences of lexical terms within a sentence structure or through the entire corpora (Teubert & Krishnamurthy, 2007). By integrating CL into CDA, it strengthens the analysis using sampling and a large collection of text where textual features can be analyzed in order to construct reliable generalizations about the lexical terms that are being studied (Stubbs, 1997). The arduous task is to explore the lexical choices made and probe into how they were used to express social experiences or processes (Cheng, 2012) and their overall influence on the people or vice versa.

Aside from the studies of the experts mentioned above, there are a few recent studies on news media discourse using a corpus-driven approach to CDA. Baker, Gabrielatos and McEnery (2013) published in 2013 a paper on the corpus-driven analysis of representations of Muslims by the British press from 1998-2009. They investigated the linguistic patterns surrounding the word Muslim using Sketch Engine that analyzed the noun collocates, frequency or the number of times *Muslim* was referenced in the corpora, and lexical categories, i.e., ethnic identity, conflict, culture, religion, etc. They found that *Muslim* and *conflict* were correlated and the implicit connotations that they were often in conflict with non-Muslims. The suggested legitimation strategies to include other representations.

Cheng and Lam's (2013) study looked at western perceptions of Hong Kong ten years after it was handed back to China 1997. Their observations using Concgram and Wmatrix analytical tools suggest that the West have changed their views toward Hong Kong, which was a stark difference from the negative perceptions that other researchers have claimed. Their paper provided a re-examination of the struggle to gain balance in relations and power dynamics between the West and China.

Efe's (2019) paper on the corpus-driven analysis of representations of Syrian asylum seekers in the Turkish press. With a total of 2,321 texts as corpora from five Turkish daily newspapers, they were interested in the lexical tokens *Syrian, refugee,* and *asylum seekers*. They found that asylum seekers were referred to as *our brothers*, *victims, needy people, criminals*, etc. while creating a narrative that constructs a version of their own reality concerning the refugee crisis in Turkey, which according to them was ambiguous and indicates political views as well.

Taylor's (2014) research was a cross-linguistic corpus-assisted discourse analysis of how migrants are textually represented in the UK and Italian press. She looked at the newspapers' supposition of the terms *racism* and *xenophobia* and how they were exploited using attribution and letters sections "in order to express alignment with or understanding of prejudiced viewpoints" (p. 369). She found that there was "a greater sympathy in UK tabloids, compared to the broadsheets, shown towards those accused of racism" (p. 369). Her research also found various nationalities that occurred frequently with the lexical items *refugee, asylum seeker, immigrant, migrant* considering the distinctive historical accounts of both countries concerning immigration and emigration. Since she was analyzing two

languages at the same time, she posits that it is paramount for a researcher to consider the nuisances of translation and understanding language in context when performing cross-linguistic studies. Taylor's study was an attempt to present the different geographical origins of migrant identities and the manner in which they were characterized in and by the media.

Most Recent Studies on CDA and COVID-19

In view of the specific context (COVID times) in which racism is being put under scrutiny, there were a few studies that have been recently published. For instance, AlAfnan's (2020) study examined media bias, ideology, and dominance that existed in Chinese and American newspapers (American Washington Post newspaper and the Chinese People's Daily) surrounding COVID-19 as the foreign virus. The biases he found were mostly in the context of gatekeeping, coverage, and statement bias, which reflected ideological influences particularly in the selection of topics and the tone of reporting. He also found that news items published by Washington Post where they showed dominance and foregrounding of information or ideas were filtered by Chinese People's Daily. Those the Washington Post downplayed were highlighted and given emphasis by the Chinese press. He concludes by saying that foregrounding can be both explicit and implicit and suggests that the interpretation depends on the readers' adeptness with the current events between these economic powers.

Another recently published study was Fatima's (2020) paper on the construction of journalistic frames and interpretation of editorial coverage of COVID-19 in New York Times. Recognizing the importance of well-informed reporting and its social repercussions, she investigated the construction of positive and negative frames and their intertextual relations through three different periods from January to March 2020 using qualitative content analysis. She found that the New York Times' editorial reporting of COVID-19 was generally constructive with occasional negative framing in a few published coverages. The constructive frames that were mostly used were focused on providing solutions, hence logical and mathematical. Negative frames were mainly attributional to finding faults, blaming the repercussions of the conflict on others; the latter was more dominant in comparison to raising solidarity. She also observed that the construction of frames also changed depending on the different time periods or the time scope of her study.

The article published by Cotik et al. (2020) was based on a research in progress with a very short timeline, which was similar to the other papers mentioned above. Their work looked at hate speech in Spanish tweets (Twitter short messages) related to the newspaper articles concerning COVID-19. The hate speech (as classifier) in these tweets comprised the corpus which they annotated, collected, and analyzed using computational software tools. Their findings suggest a strong feeling of hate against the Chinese people. Although, they posit that the tweets were not targeted hate speech, nonetheless they were aimed towards poor Chinese people who were viewed as culprits in spreading the disease. They recommended a further study and continuous survey of the tweets, however, they also suggested that researchers have a clear understanding of the contexts to justify the classification or categorization of the tweets by running a toxicity detection test or assessment of the data. Similar to Taylor's (2014) proposition, they also recommend using

translations and it is inevitable when dealing with textual data in foreign languages.

There are limited studies on racist discourse by the media using corpus-assisted discourse analysis. This paper fills in the gap in research as it also covers racist discourse about COVID-19 and how it affects the Taiwanese, more specifically, the Taiwanese students in higher education whose safety is potentially at risk due to the physical and ethnic similarities with the Chinese from mainland China.

- Which traits, characteristics, qualities, and features are attributed to Chinese/Asians during COVID-19?
- What are the linguistic evidences of exclusion, discrimination, and racist discourse by specific social groups as reported by the media?
- What are the Taiwanese students' attitudes and concerns about the discourse circulated by the media, and how are they affected by it?

Methodology

For this study, the corpus-assisted CDA approach was used in analyzing the content of the international media (or the press) which in this case is only limited to written articles, news reports, and editorial coverage. Lexical choices, positioning of information, content analysis, and quotations and labels used in relation to racist discourse against the Chinese during COVID-19 were applied. Data were collected using a blend of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which according to Baker et al. (2008) is a "useful methodological synergy" (p. 273) and it also reduces researcher bias. Corpus linguistics and CDA allow both approaches to take place. Two self-created corpora drawn from 110 documents (from January to July 2020) and the students' written responses (45 articles, June 2020). Critical discourse analysis based on corpus linguistics (Baker, et al., 2008; Biber et al., 1998) using Voyant Tools (Sinclair & Rockwell, 2016), a web-based reading and analysis program for digital texts, was conducted to investigate word patterns that rose from collocations and concordance data, and the intensity of the patterns based on collocation trends, word frequency and word choice as visually presented in Cirrus (word cloud), and the overall correlational impact of these linguistic devices.

The first step was to do an online navigation and mapping of news reports related to the pandemic. The search items "COVID-19" and "Chinese" were used together to retrieve related reports and news articles from media sources. These texts were then gathered to compile the COVID-19 Newspaper Discourse Corpus (CNDC). The CNDC contains editorials, feature stories, and news articles retrieved from the Internet; many of the sources come from prominent news agencies such as Aljazeera, BBC News, CNN, Associated Press, Business Insider, Boston Globe, Fox News, New York Times, PBS NewsHour, Philadelphia Inquirer, Taiwan News, The Guardian, Time, etc. The students' feedback reports were also collected which made up the Student Feedback Corpus (SFC, see section 3.1). Their responses made up the second set of corpora which was categorized into two issues: Conflict and Resolutions (see section 4.9).

Following Fairclough's (1995, 2001) discourse analysis model, I looked at the text and

how they are linguistically presented and described in the selected report or articles. Part of interpreting the texts is to critically scrutinize the relationship between how the texts are produced (written) and dig beneath the literal meaning to uncover the hidden messages, the discursive pragmatic message(s) and social ideologies that are being set forward. The results were then interpreted using critical discourse analysis (CDA) theoretical framework of Van Dijk (1984) on discourse and discrimination and Wodak's negative (re)presentations (2001) to evaluate the racist discourse in the news, students' attitudes and their mental and social representations that they share, which evoke fear, concerns, and resolutions. In the analysis, there were a few contextual factors such as place or areas of publications, cities or countries badly hit by COVID-19, the ethnic Chinese Asians, (im)migrant status, etc. were taken into consideration to explain why such perceptions of the spread of the pandemic and ramifications toward the Chinese.

Student Feedback Corpus (SFC)

In countering racism and bigotry in the media, students need to increase their awareness and be more informed. In-class discussions about racist news reports can only superficially bring the issue to the forefront. To ensure that students comprehend the gravity of the matter and for them to realize the power of words, a collaborative task-based activity was conducted which involved pooling news reports and analyzing them using textual representations and discursive construction (Bhatia, 1993) of anti-Chinese sentiments i.e., scathing pejorative and derogatory labels. The activity was part of a series of lectures and hands-on workshop on cross-cultural communications and media discourse given to students (n=45) in higher education at a private university in Taiwan. In the feedback report, students were asked to construe the characterization of anti-Chinese views as conflicts, how they think they might be affected by them, and what resolutions can they offer to alleviate the problem and avoid being victims of racial slurs and verbal attacks. They made their own inferences concerning these conflicts in relation to cross-cultural communication scenarios that they might experience in the future. This paper presents the outcome of the report which provides an insight to the students' deep concerns about this issue; the feedback report as mentioned in the previous section was collected to create the second corpus: Student Feedback Corpus (SFC).

Results and Analysis

Voyant Tools' Summary gives a general textual overview of the corpus, which includes a detailed summary of the number of words, unique words, longest and shortest documents in the corpus, most frequently used words and notable peaks in frequency across the corpus. The corpus has 110 documents with 119,375 total words and 9,825 unique word forms. To filter out the most commonly used words, also known as stop words which is also referred to as *useless words* (Wilbur and Sirotkin, 1992), such as *the, a, an, in,* etc. Voyant Tools automatically process the data and removes them from the list prior to doing the frequency count, thus prompting the program to ignore stop words in the list. This list can be edited if the researcher wishes to add more words to be excluded.

The longest document is from Anti-defamation League (ADL) News which has 4,140 words followed by The New Yorker (3,976) and BBC (3,239), while the shortest document from the corpus is The Economist (172) followed by People (182).

Document Length:

- Longest: ADL (4140); TheNewYorker (3976); BBCNews (3239); TheNewYorker2 (3210); NYTimes (2964)
- Shortest: The Economist (172); People (182); FoxNews (269); KRQE (270); ABC7NY (298)

Vocabulary Density or the ratio of the number of words in the corpus to the number of unique words in the corpus, the highest from The Economist (0.669) and the lowest from Pew Research Center News page (0.205). A lower vocabulary density shows the complexity of the text alongside unique words, and a higher ratio implies simpler text with words being reused in the document. As expected, The Economist, an international weekly digital newspaper printed in magazine-format shows the highest density of complex words in the corpus. The topics they cover range from current affairs, international business, technology, and politics, hence the style of writing can be technical and professional which may not be easily comprehensible for the lay people.

Vocabulary Density:

- Highest: TheEconomist (0.669); People (0.659); TaiwanNews (0.609); KRQE (0.607); FoxNews (0.595)
- Lowest: PewResearchCenter_SocialT… (0.205); TheNewYorker2 (0.238); ADL (0.257); PBSNewshour(0.266); BBCNews (0.316)

The most frequent words in the corpus are: Asian (1322); chinese (894); said (778); people (765); americans (516); coronavirus (499); virus (472); racism (471); american (407); anti (351); china (337); COVID (326); hate (321); racist (287); pandemic (238).

Unlike other digital text analytical software programs, Voyant Tools can do more than simply publish a table of summary of results. If one looks at the list of frequent words, the words appear to stand alone as individual words. However, Voyant Tools provides a visualization of the frequency count of each word in the corpus called Cirrus. Cirrus is similar to what is commonly referred to as Word Clouds where the size of each word indicates its number count (frequency) and importance in the corpus (Heimerl, Lohmann, Lange, & Ertl, 2014). This is one of the advantages of using Voyant Tools; Cirrus provides a quick, simple yet effective way of visually communicating the most frequent words in the corpus. By looking at the Word Cloud below, it is easy to draw conclusions on the kind of phrases based on how they were situated or placed together. For instance, looking at the order of words from the Cirrus output below (Figure 2), we can easily make a summation of the following phrases:

- COVID + virus= coronavirus,
- Asian + people = Asian people

- Hate + Asian people = hate Asian people
- Asian + pandemic = Asian pandemic
- Anti + Chinese = Anti-Chinese
- Chinese + racism = Chinese racism
- Chinese + American = Chinese American
- Racist + American = Racist American
- People + said = people said

Figure 2. *25-word scale Cirrus output for CNDC*

Geographical Identities

Although the key words used in the search were Chinese and COVID-19, it was not surprising to see that *Chinese* occurred 894 times, however, what is interesting is that the word *Asian* appeared more times than Chinese. This suggests the relation of these words, not in terms of lexical relativity but more of racial context as being Chinese would right away denote that one is Asian in terms of ethnic background. It becomes an even more compounding issue when one may have a physical resemblance from the Chinese of Mainland China yet may have a different nationality if one was born or is carrying and legally identified as a national of a different country i.e., Malaysian Chinese, Taiwanese, Singaporean Chinese, Filipino Chinese, etc. Such an association can be problematic as misidentification by foreigners who are not well informed may easily make assumptions that all Chinese are the same, and all those who look Chinese fall under one ethnic umbrella—Chinese.

Looking at the geographical identities for those with Chinese ethnic background in the corpus (n= 71), the following semantic phrases found using Voyant Tools' Phrases Tool show the repeating sequences of words that are organized in order of their frequency of repetition or the number of times the words were repeated in each phrase.

- Chinese nationals
- Chinese people
- Chinese and Asian origin
- Chinese or Asian descent
- Chinese Canadian National
- Chinese Italian
- Chinese American(s)
- Chinese Australian(s)
- Chinese Canadian(s)
- Chinese Italian
- Chinese communist(s)
- Chinese communities
- Chinese immigrants

Another point of interest is that out of the many other nationalities mentioned in the corpus, Americans appeared in the top ten of the most frequent words in the corpus, which also correlates to the lexical terms *Chinese, virus,* and *racism*. Further analysis of the origins of the news reports suggests that Americans were more prone to show racism against the Chinese during COVID times.

Collocates

Collocates Graph or what Voyant Tools calls us Links shows keywords and terms (tokens) that appear in close proximity and are presented in a network of graphs. The network graph shows keywords in blue and are linked to collocates in orange. The user can hover a word to see its frequency in the corpus. The words can also be dragged around the canvas to see possible collocation patterns. In Figure 3 below, three keywords are shown: Asian, Chinese, and said, and the light grey lines indicate the network connection of these terms. As it appears, the keywords have strong collocations with the terms: virus, people, racism, American, and Americans.
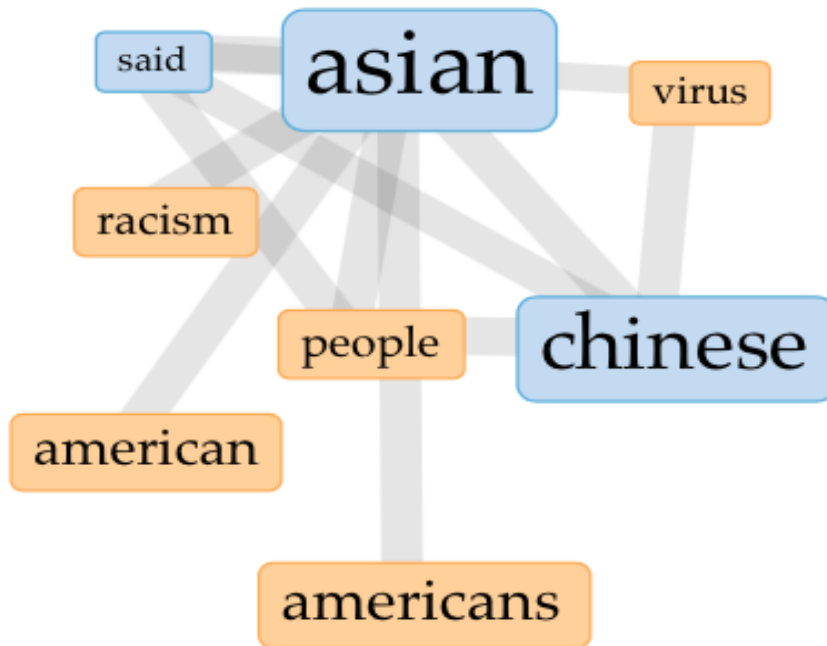
Figure 3. *Collocates graph for top keywords*

The strength of each collocation can also be visually marked by the darkening of shade. For example, hovering on the term Chinese, it brings up strong collocations with Chinese people, Chinese virus, and Chinese Americans. This is an example of an occurrence of a phrase pattern, Chinese virus, which suggests that this label has been used in contextual references from the documents across the corpus. The strength of this collocational pattern can be tested by shifting focus to the term Virus; hovering the mouse to the term Virus reveals that it is only linked to the word Chinese, Figure 4. Whereas from the same Collocates Graph, the term Racism only strongly collocates with Asian people. And shifting focal terms to people, it shows Chinese and said, which seems to suggest that Chinese people said- and in the context of racism, it implies that the Chinese are the ones making all the claims about racism against them during the pandemic.
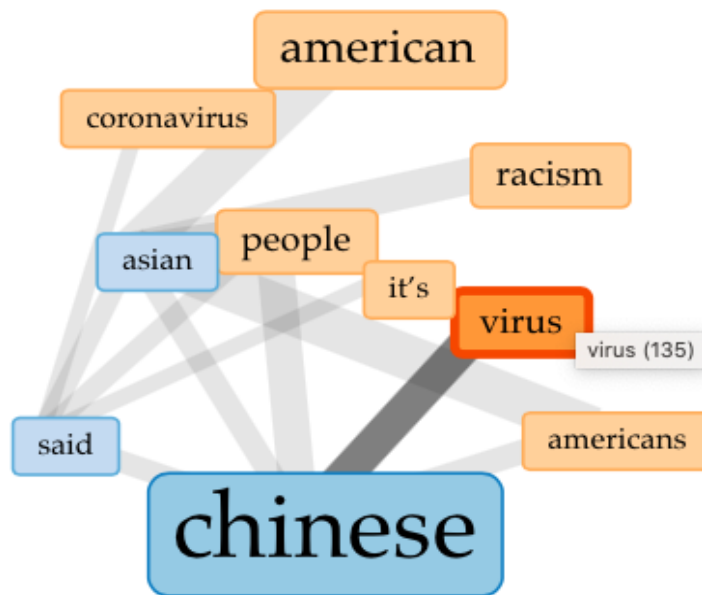
Figure 4. *Collocates graph for Chinese*

However, looking at the occurrence of the words Chinese + Virus as separate lexical tokens, the Trends Graph of Voyant Tools shows line graphs of the distribution of each word's occurrence across the corpus (110 documents, Figure 5). Chinese + Virus are lexically associated, and the patterns also show the relative frequency of the terms appearing in the same document across the corpus. According to this Trends Graph, the term Chinese occurred frequently in The Economist with a relative frequency of 0.04%, whereas Virus appeared in the Quartz with 0.02 relative frequency.

Figure 5. *Trends pattern for the lexical token "Chinese"*

Breaking down the contextual relations of the terms would reveal the sentences in the document in which they appeared. For instance, the top trend of the term Chinese appeared in document 89, The Economist, and the line which tops the list of contextual sentences gives a clearer background in which the term was used in the sentence structure (Figure 6). In this report from The Economist, it describes a situation experienced by different Chinese people from different geographical locations. Expressions such as "Virus Boy! Don't infect us" used against a Chinese-Canadian in Vancouver, while a Chinese student in the Netherlands complained of racist attack towards him when the phrase "Die Chinese" was spray-painted on the lift in his dormitory, and in Japan #ChineseDon'tCometoJapan was the trending hashtag on Twitter.

Figure 6. *Contexts of lexical token "Chinese"*

The term Virus has the highest frequency of occurrence in Quartz (Document 77 of the corpus). Although, Virus was used as a separate term in the document, it also appeared as part of a phrase. For instance, Chinese virus, foreign virus, coronavirus, etc. The example excerpt below shows an informative report of the time The US President used in a tweet the phrase Chinese virus where he emphasized the place of origin of the virus. The report also included a statement from the World Health Organization that advised people to avoid further stigmatization of people.

> A new low point came late Monday (March 16) when US president (sic)Donald Trump tweeted that US will help industries that are particularly affected by "the Chinese virus." Although the US president(sic) has previously called the coronavirus a "foreign virus," this is the first time he used phrasing that pointedly draws attention to the outbreak's geographic origins, something the World Health Organization (WHO) advises against doing to avoid stigmatizing a place or people.
> (Li, 2020, para. 2)

However, different patterns are revealed when the search is changed to Chinese Virus as a phrase rather than two separate terms (see Figure 7). As a phrase, instead of having two line graphs in different colors in the Trends Graph, there is now only one, which suggests that Voyant Tools reads the lexical phrase "Chinese virus" as one term.

Patterns of Representations

Using the keywords *Chinese, coronavirus, virus, racism* in searching for collocations (words in context), there were 2,336 counts of occurrences. In addition to geographical identities found in the corpus, the following patterns of representations used to identify the Chinese (and/or Chinese Asians) during the pandemic. By identifying these patterns of representations and geographical identification in the corpus, they will show that the Chinese are being used as scapegoats or someone to blame for the pandemic. This supports Wodak's (2001) claims of negative representation. The following labels used to describe the Chinese characterizes negative representation of the other, i.e., this is us: Chinese virus.
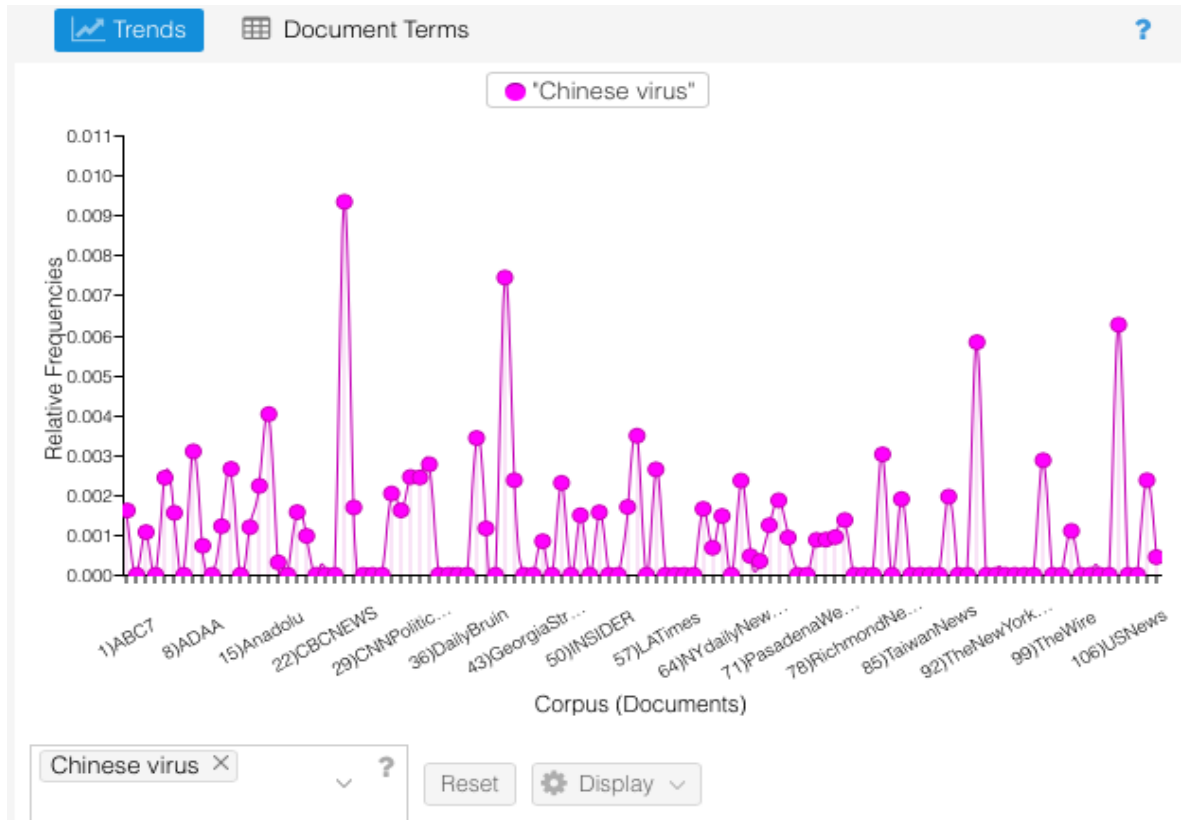
Figure 7. *Trends pattern for "Chinese virus"*

Chinese virus

Chinese Virus has a total count of 107, while the highest relative frequency of occurrence appeared from CBS News. By looking at the sentence pattern in context, the excerpt below shows an example of how the term was used. In this report, it once again reports President Trump as the instigator of the use of the term pejoratively but also warns the "backlash" that could happen if and when stigmatization of Asian-Americans continues.

> President Trump again used the term "Chinese Virus" to refer to the novel coronavirus on Wednesday, despite calls from global health officials to avoid labels associating the disease with a particular nation or ethnic group. Mr. Trump's Comments have drawn backlash and raised concerns about stigmatizing Asian-Americans. (Brito, 2020, para. 1)

The excerpt report above is an example of media framing (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 2001) where the media frames President Trump by reporting and quoting him of his repetitive use of *Chinese Virus*. Their use of "again used" in "President Trump again used the term 'Chinese Virus'" is an example of prediction (cf. Wodak, 2001) where they emphasize President Trump's habitual behavior and actions as using the term again and again

despite being told not to is a typical Trump's manner of conducting himself during media briefings. Table 2 shows how the example above can be linguistically dissected using Wodak's (2001) representation strategy.

Table 2

Example of Representation in the News

Strategies	Objective	Example from the News excerpt
Referential/ Nomination	Construction of in-/out-groups	"from **global health officials**" "**Particular nation or ethnic group**" "**Asian-Americans**" "**President** Trump"
Predication	Stereotypical and evaluative positive/negative attribution	"**calls from** global health officials"
Argumentation	Justification of negative attributions	"Mr. Trump's Comments **have drawn backlash** and **raised concerns** about"
Framing/discourse representation	Expressing, reporting, quoting utterances/events	"President Trump **again used** the term 'Chinese Virus'"
Mitigation	Mitigate/intensify discriminatory utterances	"raised concerns about **stigmatizing** Asian-Americans"

The second highest on the Trends Graph for Chinese Virus was from Fox News, which rehashes the CBS News report but also highlights the danger of *fueling anti-Asian American sentiment*:

> President Trump used the phrase "Chinese virus" in a tweet on March 16 and received swift and immediate backlash, with many saying he was fueling anti-Asian American sentiment. He has continued to use the phrase in public briefings from the White House. (Aitken, 2020, para. 3)

The results suggest that their attitudes are not ingrained but are socially cultivated based on public discourse similar to what Van Dijk (1984) suggests. The findings also imply that international news reports have the capability of manipulating ideological views of anti-Chinese sentiments i.e., framing the pandemic as *Chinese virus* or *Kung Flu*. Both corpora, however, reveal that the racist discourse may bring on discrimination against Asians in general. Nonetheless, the students' corpora show a high frequency of the lemma *Taiwan/Taiwanese* and *help* signifying a strong sense of pride as an overwhelming majority

felt that Taiwan is successfully leading the fight against COVID-19, thus explicitly drawing a clear demarcation line disassociating themselves from the *Chinese*.

The third highest peak in the Trends Graph is from The Guardian, which reports racist incidents following President Trump's tweets calling the COVID-19 as Chinese virus. The report also airs the fears of Asians as the pandemic becomes widespread and so do racial prejudice, a strong insinuation that China is to blame for COVID-19. This resonates with Fairclough's (1992) views about the powerful tool that public discourse creates and reproduces a certain social ideology– the very same ideology that Chou fears, as he states in the same interview, *My fear is coughing in public, coughing while Asian, and the reaction other people will have*. Below is a longer excerpt from Chou's interview:

> When Rosalind Chou was on a flight at the end of February, she saw a woman in front of her raise her phone up high, as if taking a selfie. The woman snapped a picture and sent it to a friend, whose reply showed up in big font on the woman's phone: "Oh no, is he Chinese?" Across the aisle from Chou was a man she later learned is Korean American and a woman sitting next to him, also of Asian descent. The woman quickly replied to her friend: "There's a lot of them. Pray for me." (Aratani, 2020, para. 1)

Chinese flu/ kung flu

Similar to Chinese Virus, the phrases Chinese Flu and Kung Flu share the same racist rhetoric that perpetuates the fear, if not anger towards the Chinese or to anyone who looks Asian Chinese as seen from the examples above. Although the frequency count for Chinese Flu (n=3) and Kung Flu (n= 17) is far less compared to Chinese Virus (n= 107), the Trends Graph visually displays which documents (news reports) the terms appeared (Figure 8).
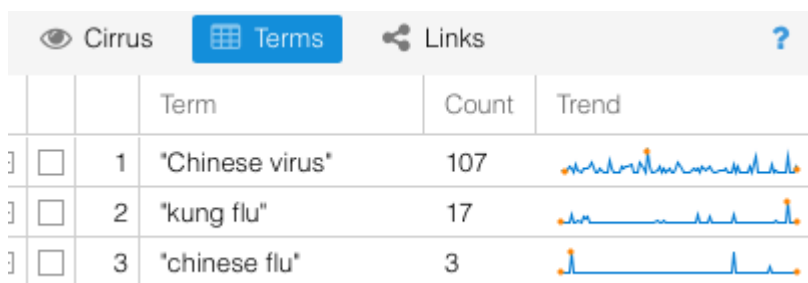

Figure 8. *Key terms and trend graphs*

Chinese Flu's highest peak in its Trend Graph appeared in ABC News Australia. However, the use of the term is also a repetition of the report on Trump's Chinese Virus, as one of the interviewees was quoted on saying, "We've got Trump calling it the Chinese flu and kung flu."

The report recasts the pandemic as adding tensions at a political level; the Chinese Australians are feeling the blunt since they are blamed for COVID-19 and some have

expressed that the psychological pressure is being laid down on them, while instances of verbal assaults such as *go back to China* is occasionally heard in public places. As Qian, one of the interviewees from the report also states:

> Australian society at large doesn't really distinguish between the Chinese state and the people of Chinese Ancestry, so I imagine that we'll continue to be blamed and harassed for things that are happening in China... I think it's only going to get worse. (Om, 2020, para 18)

The highest peak in the Trends Graph for Kung Flu appeared in US News, where similar to other reports they were piggybacking on Trump's statements which "puts Asian Americans at risk of retaliation despite growing reports they are facing virus-related discrimination". However, Trump insists that calling COVID-19 *Chinese virus* — or the *kung-flu*, is not a racist remark.

The second highest peak for Kung Flu was a report from Al Jazeera that reported they found *more than 10,000 posts on Twitter that included the term* "kung-flu" *during March alone*. They also noted that there are other variations of the phrase being used on Twitter, such as *chop fluey* and *rice rabies* which are both as racist and offensive.

The above examples meet Van Dijk's (1984) Ds of Discrimination, where the quoted texts clearly show efforts of the other social group to differentiate, distance, divert, destroy, and discriminate Chinese Asians. With Trump denying that such remarks i.e., Chinese virus or Kung-flu are anything but derogatory, then what would we call them? The fact that race i.e., *Chinese* and cultural attributes i.e., *kung-flu* derived from kung-fu (which is a kind of Chinese martial arts) used in these terms make them carry a racist overtone.

Yellow Peril

A total of 40 media sources used the label "yellow peril" as a derogatory representation of the Chinese; yellow is a reference to the color of their skin, and peril frames the Chinese as a danger to society, the culprit to spreading the pandemic. Hence, "yellow disease" and Wuhan disease were used, too.

> In a pandemic, where we have no cure and no vaccine, people are afraid. They want to place blame, says Hyde. "It's easier to place blame on someone different from you." The so-called "yellow peril" has been entrenched in health scares ever since the Chinese started immigrating to Canada.
> Excerpt from Global News, (Gill, 2020, para 12)

A few excerpts below show the extent of usage which also suggests that this label is an expression of anti-Chinese sentiment. The report from Colorado Arts Magazine also reveals that these negative sentiments have trickled down to affecting other immigrant groups of Asian descent. It also exposed a historical pattern of subliminal exclusion of Asian Americans as they are always considered to be foreign rather than American (Kawai, 2005).

> Yellow Peril refers to a general fear, mistrust, and hatred of, first, Chinese in the U.S., and then these negative sentiments were transferred to other Asian-ethnic immigrant groups: Japanese, Korean and Indian...The most important thing to note is that Yellow Peril sentiment reduces Asians to always being foreign, never considered American.
> Excerpt from the Colorado Arts Magazine, (Ho, 2020, para. 4)

Citing the origins of the first use of Yellow Peril in American history, Al Jazeera also pointed out that this blatant exclusion of the Chinese was enforced as a law in 1882; Asian Americans were only given the right to naturalization in 1943 (Hing, 1993). This resonates with Hartmann and Husband's (1974) claim that prejudicial attitudes tend to stick around and changing them would be futile.

> Sadly, blaming Asians for public health crises has a long history in the US. The undercurrent of anti-Asian racism has always lingered in the backdrop of US national security practices.
>
> Referred to as the "yellow peril", Chinese and other Asians were lawfully excluded from entering the United States starting with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Asians living in the US could not naturalise as US citizens until1943.
> Excerpt from Al Jazeera, (Aziz, 2020, para. 11)

KQED echoed the same story with an inclusion of quoted excerpts saying that Yellow Peril is a repeated discriminatory act against the Chinese living in America.

> "This is a very typical American response to the 'yellow peril threat,'" said Russell Jeung, department chair of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State. "Health policies have historically been used to discriminate against people of color. And this is just another case of it."
> Excerpt from KQED, (Guevarra, Medina-Cadena, Montecillo, 2020, para. 7)

BBC News reported that there have been cases of anti-Asian racism happening across the UK and other countries citing France's news headlines about the "Yellow Peril" sentiments using catchy but derogatory titles, "Yellow alert" and "Yellow Peril". Forbes' report also parroted the same news. "Yellow alert" hinges on setting of an alarm warning the public about the potential danger, but the use of the term "yellow" clearly suggests racial profiling of the Chinese with a direct reference to the stereotype color of their skin. The phrase "Yellow alert" not only steers people's fears towards the Chinese, insinuating that they have to be avoided at all costs, and being near them can be perilous. The quoted French headline "Le péril jaune?" (Yellow peril?) in BBC and "Yellow Peril" from Forbes is also an interesting semantic issue where the choice of punctuation can shift the meaning of the phrase and pragmatically alter the stance or standpoint (see excerpts below). The use of a quotation mark in "Yellow peril?" does more than simply putting it as an interrogative

phrase. Since the structure is not a complete sentence but a phrase, one that is used more in colloquial conversations where a suggestion is being made or an idea is being raised. The photo that goes along with it as suggested by BBC is also a strong semiotic approach used by the French media suggesting the Chinese (represented by the photo of a Chinese woman wearing a mask) is a peril to the society, and that the society at large is therefore in danger. The use of the question mark softens the statement; it gives people (the readers) the chance to consider the suggestion being made. However, the none use of a punctuation mark in the phrase would be read like a factual statement; it tells people that it is what it is. What they are really saying is that there is no doubt that the Chinese pose a health threat to others.

> Anti-Asian racism has been reported in the UK and elsewhere, and now French Asians have complained of abuse on public transport and social media. They have been using the hashtag JeNeSuisPasUnVirus (I'm not a virus).
> There was an outcry when local newspaper Le Courier Picard used the inflammatory headlines "Alerte jaune" (Yellow alert) and "Le péril jaune?" (Yellow peril?), complete with an image of a Chinese woman wearing a protective mask.
> Excerpt from BBC, ("Coronavirus: French Asian hit back", 2020, para. 1)

> In France, a local newspaper has come under fire for its "Yellow Alert" headline, echoing a historic Western racist and derogatory term, "Yellow Peril." The paper later apologized in a tweet. On social media, sensationalized videos of East Asian people eating live rats, bats and frogs populate users' feeds.
> Excerpt from Forbes, (Kim, 2020, para. 6)

Expletives and Verbal Abuse

The use of expletives and verbal abuse has also been reported by the international media. It is important to note that vulgar and expletive words convey emotions and they become abusive when there is an intention to harm the people to whom the message is meant for (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990). The following excerpts retrieved from the corpus show two groups of people in the discourse: the victim- the one being shouted at, and the oppressor- the one causing the harm and victimizing others. The victims here are obviously the Chinese or the Asian community as they are the receiving end of the verbal assault. The oppressors are the non-Chinese and those who also feel threatened by the pandemic. Their aggressive attitude towards the Chinese could have emerged out of fear of getting the disease and all the nuances that come from getting sick. The following is a list of expletives and verbal abuse that were quoted from the media reports included in the corpus:

- The man allegedly told the restaurant owner, "Fuck you and your chinky ass policy" and told him to "Go back to China, you COVID ass." (Source: NextShark)
- "smell like shit" and "You guys are all disgusting! You all!" (Source: Reported to ADL)

- "Chinese disease…they bring it here!" Later, the man allegedly yelled anti-Asian remarks inside an Asian restaurant. (Source: King5)
- May 17 – Contra Costa, CA: A farm stand displayed a racist sign that read "Fresh bat soup" and "Thank you China." (Source: Reported to ADL)
- April 26 – Queens, NY: An Asian woman in Rego Park was harassed by a man who yelled expletives and told her, "You're the one who brought the virus here." After the woman attempted to record him on her cellphone, he slapped her phone away. (Source: Patch)
- April 19 – San Francisco, CA: An Asian American woman was harassed while walking her dogs. She was told to "Go back to whatever fucking country you came from" and that "nasty people should stay in fucking Asia." (Source: Facebook- quoted from ADL)
- April 16 – Brooklyn, NY: An Asian woman was walking on the street in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood when two men harassed her with remarks about Chinese people and called her a "Fucking freak." (Source: Reported to ADL)
- April 2 – Cherry Hill, NJ: A Vietnamese American man was walking his dog when he was verbally harassed by a stranger who yelled that he "caused the coronavirus and needed to get the fuck out of here." Source: WHYY
- March 24 – Brooklyn, NY: In a subway station, someone spat on an Asian man and yelled, "You fucking Chinese, spreading the coronavirus. You people got the virus." Source: NY Daily News)
- March 29 – Bronx, NY: Three teenage girls harassed and used an umbrella to attach an Asian woman, saying, "You caused coronavirus, bitch." (Source: New York Post)
- March 27 – Cerritos, CA: A Korean American woman was verbally harassed in the parking lot of a Walmart by a man who called her a "bitch asshole" and threatened to hit her. (Source: Reported to ADL)

Threat

The use of threats against someone is even more alarming than a verbal slur. Threats are also verbal but the message behind the threats suggests endangering others (victims of verbal assaults) and the potential risk of physically harming them is imminent (Nockleby, 1994). A threat such as "Kill China virus" does not only express exterminating the disease but the people who were believed to be the carriers of COVID-19. Some threats in the excerpts below suggest a command or telling them what to do; they also imply that there is a possible ugly consequence if they do not heed.

- From ADL, June 14 – Newark, DE: Fliers targeting Asian and Asian American students were found at off-campus housing at the University of Delaware, Newark. The Flyers included the message "Kill China Virus." (Source: WDEL)

- April 17 – Albuquerque, NM: A Chinese American man reported that while at a supermarket another customer singled him out and *told him to* "stay away." (Source: Reported to ADL)
- April 1 – Pittsburgh, PA: (Date approximate) An Asian American woman was at a grocery store when she was told by another shopper to shop with her own kind and that she "should be rounded up with the virus and shipped back to China." (Source: Pittsburgh's Action News 4)
- March 31 – Webster Groves, MO: American Identity Movement, an alt right group, distributed propaganda that promoted their group and featured a Corona beer bottle with the coronavirus germ and read: "Immigration kills," and "Made in China." (Source: ADL identified)
- March 30 – Yakima, WA: An Asian buffet restaurant was vandalized with graffiti that included an ethnic slur and a message that read, "Take the corona back." (Source: YakTriNews)
- March 25 – Woodbury, MN: A woman returned home to find this flier posted on her door: "We're watching you fucking chinks take the [C]hinese virus back to [C]hina. We don't want you hear [sic] infecting us with your diseases!!!!!!!" (Source: Facebook- reported to ADL)
- March 12 – New York, NY: An Asian man was in a restroom at Penn Station when he was verbally harassed by a man who called him a "Chinese fuck" and said, "I hope you die by the coronavirus." The perpetrator also spat on the victim. (Source: Patch)

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the actual manifestation of a threat (Shepard & Campbell, 1992), and hurting someone physically is a kind of abuse that should not be condoned. And yet, there have been cases being reported of incidents where Asians are physically attacked and put in harm's way. ADL referred to the perpetrators as *coronavirus-inspired bigots* who attacked, spat on, punched, and screamed at Chinese Asians.

- Over the past week, Asian-Americans across the U.S. have reported nearly 700 incidents of discrimination by coronavirus-inspired bigots who have attacked them online, spat on them, screamed at them in the streets and on public buses and even physically assaulted them.
- One of the victims whose stories were shared this week described a disgusting incident in which a man yelled, "f---ing Chinese disease" and "spat at me hitting my coat, scarf and face."
- April 4 – Edison, NJ: A group of juveniles "surrounded an Asian woman and attacked her" with racial slurs before "punching her in the back of the head". (Source: NJ Advance Media)
- March 9 - San Francisco, CA: A woman told reporters that while walking to the gym she was harassed by a man who shouted expletives about China at her and encouraged a passing bus to "run them over." The man then "spat at her". (Source: New York Times)

- February 2 - New York, NY: An Asian woman was "attacked in the subway station" for wearing a mask. One witness said she heard a man call the woman, who appeared Asian, a "diseased bitch." (Source: CNN)

Students' Written Responses

The following results and analysis were based on the Taiwanese students' written feedback where they were asked to construe the characterization of anti-Chinese views. They were asked what kind of self-perceived conflicts that could arise from the racist issues that flood the media during COVID times. They were also encouraged to share what they think and how they might be affected by these issues, and to suggest resolutions that can mitigate the problem.

The SFC-Conflict corpus has a total of 3,846 total words and 898 unique word forms. Most frequent words in the corpus: people (67); Asian (55); virus (36); countries (35); asians (32). The issue of racism (21) and discrimination (23) made them think of their safety when travelling abroad, hence, it is a problem that causes them to worry and fear (Figure 9).

Figure 9. *Cirrus for SFC-Conflict*

The students' concerns were born out of the rising tensions between the Chinese community and non-Chinese amid the pandemic, where one student even predicted "Asianophobia will rise". The media reports that they have read about the verbal and physical abuses that Chinese Asians experienced made them contemplate the possibility of encountering the same kind of attack simply because they look Chinese, and the fact that ethnically, they are Asian Chinese:

- *People might look down on me.*
- *People will avoid me and avoid having eye contact as I "look Chinese".*
- *People will joke around and label "virus-spreader in 2020" to me.*
- *People will exclude me in a community for "looking Chinese".*
- *If I go abroad I should worry about my situation because I am an (sic) Asian.*
- *These conflicts may occur in my life as well if I were to start traveling in the next few months because even if I speak fluent English, I have an Asian face. So no matter what, people will assume that I'm from China, or I carry the Coronavirus because this idea that "Asians" are the cause of this virus...it is not being communicated well with the world.*
- *My deepest concern about this issue is that Asians will be marked a label like black people. We will face more racism when we travel around the world, and being treated unequally because of our physical appearance.*

Other reflections are concerned about the economy and how the tourism industry will be greatly impacted. Others have noted the implications toward the already battered cross-strait relationship between Mainland China and Taiwan.

- *Asian businesses will be targets of violence.*
- *Anti-Asian riots could happen again.*
- *Asian people might not get jobs easily in the racist countries.*
- *Economic war between America and China.*
- *Tourism fading (sic)*
- *China and The US will once again have an economic war.*

While other students have thought about how Asian students may lose their interest to study/travel to countries where recent racism attacks took place for safety reasons.

- *Asian-American will face bullies in their school.*
- *Asian-international students who study in countries that have anti-Asian racism will have fear* (sic) *of being treated differently.*
- *Less Asian students want to study abroad (to racist countries).*

The excerpt below nicely summarizes the overall reflections toward the devastating ramifications of COVID-19 on students' lives and life in general, but this student mentioned a very important issue which is somehow being buried under the economic slug – mental stress that everyone (in)directly affected by the pandemic must be suffering:

I am mainly concerned about the world economy and the mental condition of people in serious crisis countries. It appears that many SMEs or restaurants have already got bankrupt and unemployed people are increasing with coronavirus. I think the world economy could break down at any time. In addition, there are no medicines that can stop Coronavirus now and no one knows when we get back to normal life, just wait

to increase patients who contract the coronavirus every day. People easily feel stress and mental conditions will get worse.

Students' Suggested Resolutions

The students' reflections on the kinds of resolutions they could offer regarding the issues (cf. Hoey, 1986) brought upon by COVID-19 provide an interesting view of how they perceive not only their role as students but their cultural identity as Taiwanese and what Taiwan as a nation could do to help alleviate the worldwide suffering. The self-created corpus for Resolutions have a total of 2,306 total words and 688 unique word forms, with the following most frequent words in the corpus: people (31); taiwan (16); help (15); think (15); racism (13); The frequency of their occurrence in the corpus are visible in the Cirrus output below i.e., the larger the size of the word, the higher the frequency (Figure 10). What is interesting is how the words are placed side by side thus helping readers to create phrases which make sense. For example, the phrase *people minimize racism* is a message that is strongly being echoed by the students who believe that racism should be minimized if not totally eradicated. A few more interesting phrases that can be seen from the cirrus are *students try tell + Taiwan mask + help + example + countries*. Putting them all together suggests that students think Taiwan could help other countries either by giving Taiwan-made masks and by setting a good example in combating the pandemic. With the slogan "Taiwan can help, and Taiwan is helping," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) announced the "offer of a total of 10 million masks to Taiwan's 15 diplomatic allies, 11 European countries, and the United States, which is currently being carried out." (Focus Taiwan, 2020, par. 2). Kyle Vass of The World, a public radio program, reports that "Taiwan leads the world as the most-prepared and best-equipped nation to fight the pandemic" (2020, par. 2) and therefore can set a good example for other countries to follow. However, The World also states in the same report that the country's efforts are being "overshadowed by global politics" (par. 1).

Figure 10. *Cirrus for SFC-Resolution*

Looking at the collocations of keywords in context, the Context Tool shows the phrase or sentence in which a keyword occurred, thus giving the readers a better understanding of how the word was used in its appropriate context. For example, in Figure 11, the word Taiwan is the keyword that is being observed, and the output shows where in the sentence structure it appeared in, thus giving an expanded background of the text. The first sentence in the example below states that the need to "also tell the world that Taiwan can help." The second example also suggests telling the world that "Taiwan which comes from Asia can help." However, other than what has already been pointed out about Taiwan's ability to offer medical assistance, the collocations output also highlights the students perceived self-identification in reference to being a citizen of Taiwan and Taiwan as a sovereign democratic country:

- *I'm from Taiwan*
- *Citizens of Taiwan*
- *I am from Taiwan, not China*
- *Different country from China and Taiwan is definitely not a part*
- *Not a part of China. Taiwan is doing well…*
- *Other countries recognize Taiwan and realize Taiwan is also…*

Left	Term	Right
also tell the world that	taiwan	can help. I think the
at least tell the worldwide "	taiwan	" which comes from Asia can
There is an example of	taiwan	. Taiwanese YouTube personality Ray Du
print. The ad elaborates that	taiwan	knows how to fight pandemics
as they think. I'm from	taiwan	. I think it is a
way to reduce racism since	taiwan	now is well known as
stereotypes about Asian. For instance,	taiwan	donates masks to expand our
the world by citizens of	taiwan	. Shorten the distance between Asian
hatred. Next, the government in	taiwan	should provide some advanced medical
tell them I am from	taiwan	, not China. Taiwan is totally
am from Taiwan, not China.	taiwan	is totally a different country
different country from China and	taiwan	is definitely not a part
not a part of China.	taiwan	is doing well during the
in the other countries recognize	taiwan	and realize Taiwan is also
countries recognize Taiwan and realize	taiwan	is also striving for COVID
what the current situation in	taiwan	is Give the supplies they

Figure 11. *Collocation and context for Taiwan in SFC corpus*

Identifying themselves as Taiwanese seems to signify a sense of national pride and reinforces their cultural identity; the examples from the collocation output below suggests the importance of being identified as Taiwanese with a Taiwan passport:

- Maybe we can show them our passports to prove that we are Taiwanese when we travel in a foreign country,
- a backpack which has the sign "I am Taiwanese."

Conclusion

In this paper I have raised some of the issues surrounding racism in the news about COVID-19 and Taiwanese students' sentiments using corpus-assisted discourse analysis. In particular, I have emphasized the reciprocal relationship between language, power, and

ideology behind the racist discourse in the news. Applying Fairclough's discourse analysis model, I was able to examine the racist discourse which begins by scouring the texts and focus on the lexical descriptions used by the media i.e., were they reporting news? Do they include interviews? were they quoting or narrating news events that took place? etc. It was interesting to note that the majority of the news about COVID-19 was a regurgitation of what other media outlets have reported–a case in point was the news on Trump's repetitive use of the term "Chinese virus". The news articles included in this study described the kind of racist discourse that the non-Chinese used. The verbal and physical abuses that some Asian Chinese have experienced during COVID-19 were very alarming. The threat to harm was real and that was what the Taiwanese students have seen on the news which certainly has caused alarm, if not, fear– fear to travel, fear of their own safety. Blending corpus analysis with discourse analysis adopted in this study provided a visually stimulating approach to studying the texts in the news. Trying to achieve a balance between the data from the corpus and CDA was an arduous task, however, it is essential as suggested by Baker et al (2008). Although the CDA performed in study was a subjective interpretation of the text, the data from the corpus provided not only the objective quantitative results but also offered thought-provoking insights about the contextual clues seen from the collocation patterns and trends. In addition, this paper was also able to present the pragmatic message behind the actual construction of the texts. The size of the self-created corpus based on the news reports and students' written feedback may be considered small, hence a limitation of the study. Nonetheless, it did provide an insight to how racist discourse in the news can seem like an interminable act of constant repetitions. In time, these reiterated, repeated utterances from the media can penetrate into people's minds; the students' written accounts of fear as a result of their understanding of the racist discourse they have read/seen from the news is an example of how they, as a social group, are impacted. Nonetheless, it has also catapulted their passion to express their cultural and ethnic identity as Taiwanese. Politically sensitive as it is, these students are aware of the ramifications of racism and the deadly power of words– seizing the opportunity that the international news have also brought Taiwan into the limelight with the slogan "Taiwan can help" which the students are also loudly echoing. The results of this study also suggest that the students have a clear notion of what it means to be Taiwanese, and with the current upheaval of being mistaken as Chinese from mainland China, they know that a clear demarcation line between these two nations and a stronger cultural identification for Taiwan is crucial. For further research into this field, a bigger corpus data and longitudinal approach would be helpful for a wider coverage of racism during COVID times.

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