University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
ScholarWorks@UARK

Theses and Dissertations

8-2012

Objectivity and Balance in Conflict Reporting: Imperatives for the Media Amid the Tensions in the South China Sea Dispute

Huong Thu Thi Vu
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.uark.edu/etd

Part of the International Relations Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, and the Mass Communication Commons

OBJECTIVITY AND BALANCE IN CONFLICT REPORTING: IMPERATIVES FOR THE MEDIA AMID THE TENSIONS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

OBJECTIVITY AND BALANCE IN CONFLICT REPORTING: IMPERATIVES FOR THE MEDIA AMID THE TENSIONS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Journalism

By

Huong T.T. Vu
Universitiet Antwerpen
Master of Arts in Globalization and Development, 2010
Hanoi University of Science and Technology
Bachelor of Arts in English for Science and Technology, 2007

August 2012
University of Arkansas

ABSTRACT

This cross-cultural study explores practice of journalists during June and July of 2011, the most recent peak period of the multi-national conflict in South China Sea. It examines factors that influence journalists and news media outlets when reporting a conflict in which their country is a party, using the theory of news framing process and war journalism.

This thesis is approved for recommendation
to the Graduate Council.

Thesis Director:

_____

Prof. Hoyt Purvis

Thesis Committee:

_____

Dr. Jan L. Wicks

_____

Dr. Myria Allen

THESIS DUPLICATION RELEASE

I hereby authorize the University of Arkansas Libraries to duplicate this thesis when needed for research and/or scholarship.

Agreed   _____
                      Huong T.T. Vu

Refused   _____
                      Huong T.T. Vu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Two years ago, I came to the United States to pursue my passion for journalism. It was not easy for me in the first place. Cultural shock hit me real hard. Yet, the American life has taught me many valuable things and eventually become one of the trips of life time. However, it is impossible for me to overcome this rocky but rewarding road if I had not received so many supports along the way.

First of all, I would like to thank the Fulbright Program, and particularly, the Walter J. Lemke Department of Journalism, whose supports through the Fulbright Scholarship have enabled me to accomplish this paper and my degree in journalism study. Secondly, I would like to give special thanks to my supervisors: Professor Hoyt Purvis, Dr. Jan Wicks, Dr. Myria Allen, Dr. Patsy Watkins, who have been very encouraging from the beginning of my research. Despite the difficulties and prompted problems during the researching process, you have given me insightful comments and suggestions. I am deeply thankful to Professor Hoyt Purvis for his orientation and encouragements during the research, and Dr. Jan Wicks for her advice supported the research. In addition, I would like to thank Professor Dale Carpenter, Professor Larry Foley, Professor Eric Gorder, who equipped me with professional knowledge and necessary skills to become a better-rounded journalist. Also, I would like to thank Carol Rachal, Gloria Flores, and Catherine Cunningham of the Sponsored Student Programs who help make my school life much easier. My appreciation is further extended to all my professors and lecturers at the Journalism and Communication Departments who provided me with helpful knowledge, comments and supports.

Also, my friends in Fayetteville, my friends and family in Vietnam are my most important influence and supporters. Thank you to the following people for your heart-warming

care, for being patient listeners when I pour out my problems, and for always staying by my side through the ups and downs in this journey: Benjamin Lindsey, Mr. Paul, Mr. Boyd Fisher, Radhanath Varadan, Thy Dao, Yen Cam Pham, Khoi Nguyen, Trang Nguyen, Trang Le, and Long Pham.

Finally, a love thank to Benjamin Lindsey, my newly wedded husband. Thank you for turning things around in a totally positive and unexpected way for me. Thank you for always staying by my side in my American adventure and many more of our adventures in future. You are the best gift that life has given me to bring home from the United States.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACRONYMS

- AFP: Agence France Presse

- AP: Associate Press

- ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations

- EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone

- Op-Ed: Opinion Piece(s)

- RQ: Research Question(s)

- SCS: South China Sea

- SEA: South East Asia

- UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement: Theoretical Background and Justification of the Research

Reports of conflicts fill the news media. Conflicts, by their very nature, always attract massive media attention. Past research has pointed out that conflict reporting is often sensationalized for the sake of boosting circulation and ratings (Lee & Maslog, 2005). Since conflicting parties always attempt to use the news media to gain legitimacy and public support, conflict reporting can also involve political and ideological purposes. Yet, Arno (1984) notified that the media content does not merely reflect the level of conflict but has a functional relationship to it: the news media are themselves actors in the conflict situations they report. Put another way, they are participants in the conflict as a third party. In many cases, the media actor is seen as a beneficiary of conflict situations by stimulating interest and readership (Arno 1984; Simmel 1950).

When it comes to international conflicts, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) suggested a more active role for the press, in which it either intensifies or diminishes the conflict. During times of international conflicts, many media professionals strive to maintain journalistic norms and values such as the search for objectivity, fact-based reporting and neutrality, while some others advocate that the media should play a more significant role in defusing tensions and forging peace. At the same time, it is noticeable that the ingredients of war such as nationalism, national interest, anger, censorship and propaganda often conspire to prevent objective reporting (Ting Lee & Maslog, 2002). In other words, many news organizations function as a propaganda tool and an advocate for the perceived national interest of the system of which they are a part. Such third-party functions may present a professional dilemma between the traditional

journalism ethics code and the journalist's patriotic and nationalistic sentiments, and their ethnic and cultural identity (Loyn, 2007; McGoldrick, 2006; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). When journalists are caught between nation and profession like that, the contradictory interests involved might discredit the news media as a credible source of information.

The present study analyzes the role of nationalism and professionalism in the coverage of the conflict over the South China Sea (SCS) in English language papers of the three contending countries of China, Vietnam and the Philippines in June and July, 2011. During this period, the conflict among these countries was at a peak with verbal skirmishes and the region's security situation was deteriorating in a way unseen since the mid-1990s (Lohman, 2011). Schofield and Storey (2011) stressed that risks were growing that the sea dispute could lead to war, potentially drawing in the United States and other major world powers. As such, coverage of the *New York Times*, which is generally considered to be one of the most influential American newspapers, is also analyzed for the sake of comparison and in order to understand the perspective of international observers.

News coverage of the SCS conflict, important and multifaceted in global implications, lends itself particularly well to the analysis of the above-mentioned journalistic clashes. Therefore, this study is intended to function as a cross-cultural case study exploring the practice of journalists during multi-national conflicts. Moreover, as the news media play a significant role in the process of constructing public understanding, through collecting, framing and distributing information, understanding the role of the involved media systems in this particular international conflict is crucial to the prospects of preserving peace and security of both the South East Asian region and the world.

Organization of the Study

Following this introductory first chapter, the second chapter presents brief background information on the current conflict in the South China Sea. The chapter clarifies why the study focuses only on China, Vietnam, and the Philippines among the six states involved (i.e., China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, and Taiwan). The third chapter summarizes what is to be achieved by the study, specifies the research problems, poses research questions and states the research methodology. Then the fourth chapter focuses on journalistic objectivity, discussing such factors as gate-keeping, news values and agenda-setting in detail. It also explores the relationship between nationalism and news objectivity as well as examining the war journalism frame. Characteristics of the news media under study are also discussed in this chapter. The collected data are processed and evaluated in the fifth chapter. Finally, chapter six wraps up the study with some concluding analysis, remarks and suggestions.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA CONFLICT
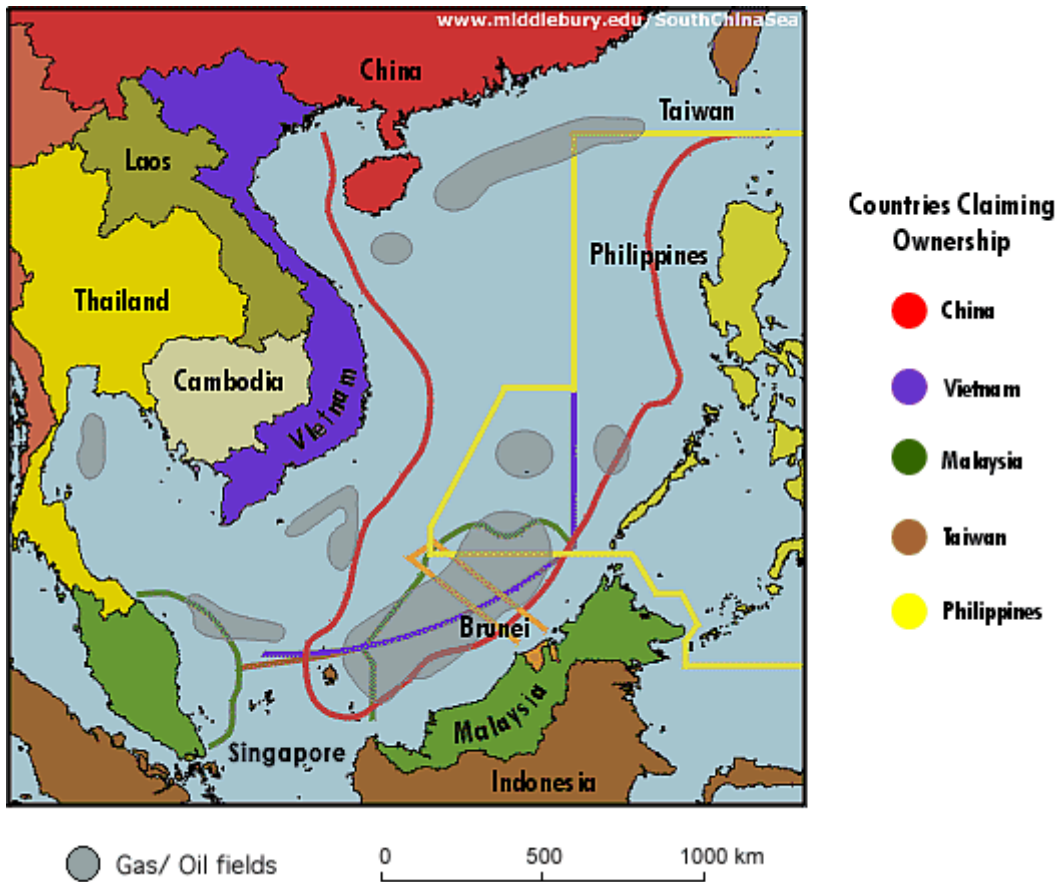
Figure 1. The South China Sea and disputed claimants. Adapted from "South China Sea," by

U.S. Department of Energy, 2008.

The South China Sea (SCS) is part of the Pacific Ocean and an extremely significant

body of water in a geo-political sense. It borders China and Taiwan to the north and is known by

Chinese as the South Sea. It borders Vietnam to the West and thus is called the East Sea by

Vietnamese. Similarly, it borders the Philippines to the east and is officially referred by the

Philippine government as the West Philippines Sea. It also borders Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia

and Singapore to the south and southwest. As its sea-lane is by far the shortest route from the

North Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean, SCS is the second most used sea route in the world. Over half of the world's petroleum-bearing traffic passes through its waters. Over half of the tonnage shipped through the sea is crude oil from the Gulf to East Asia. Japan imports 80 per cent of its oil over these sea routes. Furthermore, these sea lanes in Southeast Asia have a critical economic and naval importance to outside maritime powers such as the United States or Japan. Meanwhile, four of the 16 strategic straits in the world, which are important to the mobility of the U.S. submarine fleet in reaching target areas, are in Southeast Asia. Besides its rich fishery resources, the area holds large deposits of oil and gas.

The SCS conflict has been ranked at the top of the list of the Southeast Asia's hot spots for decades (Cosa, 1998). The lingering territorial dispute involves five countries: China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, and Malaysia. Taiwan, which functions as if it were an independent nation though its status is in dispute, is also a claimant in this dispute.

Basically, the conflict concerns the ownership of the Paracels[1] and Spratlys[2], the two island groups consisting of some 200 mid-ocean islets in the SCS, most of which are coral outcroppings without any permanent human habitation. The two island groups are not of much value in themselves, but all the countries have claimed the two as inviolable parts of the sacred

---

[1] The Paracels are located approximately 200 nautical miles due east of Vietnam' south central coastal city of Danang and about one-third of the way from central Vietnam to the northern Philippines (CIA World Factbook for Paracel Islands).
[2] The Spratlys constitute at least 190 barren islets and partially submerged reefs and rocks covering an approximately 150,000 square mile area. Exact counts vary widely, in part because many are often or almost always under water. The Spratlys are located about 300 miles off the Vietnamese coast and 600 miles southeast of the Chinese island of Hainan. The Philippine island of Palawan is 50-90 miles to the east and the Malaysian state of Sabah and country of Brunei are 160 miles to the south. The Spratlys are geologically separated from the continental shelves of China and Taiwan by a 3,000-meter trench to the north, and from the Philippines, Brunei, and Malaysia by the East Palawan Trough. The area is poorly surveyed and marked as "Dangerous Ground" on navigation charts (Cosa, 1998).

national soil due to the expectation that the owner(s) could benefit from the natural resources from the offshore waters of the islets (Cosa, 1998; Park, 2009; Storey, 1999; Tonnesson, 2000).

Vietnam and China claim the entire islands, reefs and rocks in the main Spratly archipelago that stands or emerges above sea level, while the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei claim some parts. The Philippines also claims the islets within a slightly more limited area called Kalayaan. Malaysia claims seven islets in the Southern Spratlys because they fall within its continental self-boundary. Brunei is the only claimant which does not occupy any islets to support its claims. Its claim takes the form of a corridor extending 200 nautical miles from its coast. Among the six claimants, Vietnam, China and the Philippines are the three most vocal parties in the dispute. Apart from fish and oil resources, Valencia (1997) pointed out that the contested waters also have a strategic function for sea-lane defense, interdiction and surveillance. Therefore, the three countries have tended to see the conflict as a competitive quest for sovereignty, particularly Vietnam and China (Park, 2009; Tonesson, 2000). The disputed sea has long been perceived as "analogous to land, and the delineation of maritime zones has thus been discussed with the same terms as those used for delineating land borders" (Tonesson, 2000, p.200). Both China and Vietnam have incorporated the whole Spratly archipelago into their provincial administrative systems, and the Philippines has done the same for Kalayaan. This led to the use of military force in the past, both to enforce and expand national claims, and could be escalated into a war with far-reaching disastrous consequences. Also, these three claimants have tried to bolster their claims in many other ways: allowing tourists and journalists to visit "their" islands, and granting concessions to oil companies.

Also, free navigation of warships and submarines through and under the straits and sea lanes of Southeast Asia is crucial to the strategy of the United States and a matter of the U.S.

national security interest (Valencia, 1997). Consequently, the SCS conflict raises concern over freedom of navigation issues among members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

As the claims are overlapping, a brief review of claims of China, Vietnam and the Philippines follows:

Vietnam

The Vietnamese present historical and archaeological evidences to bolster their claims, arguing that the Vietnamese have conducted commercial activities on and around the Paracels (Hoang sa) since the 15th century. In 1816, the Vietnamese Emperor Gia Long officially claimed the sovereignty of the Paracel Islands, which would include the present-day Spratly archipelago. These two islands were later delineated distinctly under the reign of his successor. French troops attacked Vietnam (Annam in French) in 1858, and turned the country into a French colony in 1887. In 1930, France claimed the islands on behalf of its protected state (Vietnam), based on the fact that Emperor Gia Long had officially taken possession of the Paracels Islands. In 1932, the French Indochina and the Nguyen Dynasty of Vietnam announced the formal occupation and annexation of nine Spartly islands, and set up a weather station on Pattle Island (Tonnesson, 2006). Vietnam reaffirmed its sovereignty over the Spartlys and Paracels when it gained independence from France in 1945. In 1951, Vietnam asserted its claim to all the Spratlys. In 1956, after the French withdrawal, South Vietnam replaced the French to have control of the islands and reasserted the claim in 1956. From 1961, South Vietnam issued decrees covering the administration of the two groups of islands as part of Vietnamese territory. In 1974, a bloody battle occurred between China and South Vietnam. In 1975, Vietnam was united and the new Socialist Republic of Vietnam reasserted Vietnam's positions in the Spratlys and Paracels area.

7

In 1988, China managed to get a foothold in the Spratlys after another bloody naval forces clash with Vietnam (Burgess, 2003; Cosa, 1998; Nguyen, 2000; Park, 2009; Storrey, 1999; Tonnesson, 2006). Since then, Vietnam has continuously lodged diplomatic protests against China's claim. Currently, Vietnam occupies more of the Spratlys islands than any of the other contesting states.

China

China's claim is based on the grounds of discovery and occupation originating with the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to 220 A.D.) and the use of the SCS by Chinese fishermen since then (Cosa, 1998; Storrey, 1999). The first official claim by China dated from an 1887 treaty with France dividing the Gulf of Tonkin between the French colony of Vietnam (Annam) and China. China interprets this treaty as extending south beyond the Tonkin Gulf to include all the islands of the SCS (Cosa, 1998). In 1948, the Kuomintang government of the Republic of China issued a map of locations of the SCS depicting its claim as a broken, U-shaped line that intersects waters off Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines (Cosa, 1998; Storey, 1999; Tonnesson, 2006). After the Communist Party of China took over power and formed the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the map was adopted and revised by Zhou Enlai. To back up their arguments, both China and Taiwan still cite this U-shaped claim, although no official declarations defining the nature or extent of the claim have been made. Official Chinese maps include the U-shaped line, also without elaboration (Burgess, 2003; Cosa, 1998; Nguyen, 2000; Park, 2009; Storrey, 1999; Tonnesson, 2006).

In 1958, China issued a "Declaration of Territorial Sea" that extended China's territorial waters to 12 nautical miles and claimed the territory of the Spratly (Nansha) Islands, Taiwan, the Paracels, Macclesfield Bank, and the Pescadores. In 1992, China's "Law on the Territorial Waters and their Contiguous Areas" added 24 nautical miles Contiguous Zones, and reiterated

the claims of the 1958 Declaration. It additionally claimed the Senkaku islands east of Taiwan (which are in dispute with Japan). China also authorized the use of military force in defending these claims.

China invaded and seized the Paracels from South Vietnam in 1974. The first PRC occupation of the Spratlys occurred in 1988 in a naval battle in which there Vietnamese vessels were sunk and 72 Vietnamese soldiers were killed. China took possession of several reefs in the Spratlys and established a base at Fiery Cross Reef. Since then, other reefs have also been occupied. Of most recent and greatest immediate contention were the emplacement of markers and the construction of "fisherman's structures" on the Philippine-claimed Mischief Reef in early 1995.

After taking possession of several additional reefs in the Spratlys and establishing a base, China has advanced in occupying other reefs. Currently, China has extended its claim to all the SCS's islands, although it has yet to clearly delineate the claim (Burgess, 2003; Cosa, 1998; Nguyen, 2000; Park, 2009; Storrey, 1999; Tonnesson, 2006).

 The Philippines

Among the three conflicting parties, the Philippines' claim is much more recent. The country bases its claim to the SCS on the grounds of the definition of exclusive economic zone (EEZ) under the provision of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)[3]. The Philippines files its claim over what it calls the Kalayaan Islands on their

---

[3] In 1982, a long-awaited convention on the Law of the Sea (LOS) was adopted at a United Nations conference. This sets down rules for measuring maritime zones and contains guidelines for mediation and settlement of disputes. In brief, the LOS Convention established parameters for defining a territorial sea, a contiguous zone, an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and a continental shelf, and it specified terms for deciding what is and what is not an island, as well as the criteria to be met in order for an island to generate a maritime zone beyond a 12-nautical-mile territorial sea. Four areas covered by the convention are relevant for the SCS context.

proximity to Philippine territory and on the occupation and economic development of these previously "unattached and unused" islands by Filipino civilian settlers. The country argues that the Kalayaan Islands are a separate island chain from the Spratlys and its claim overlaps those of China (Taiwan), Malaysia, and Vietnam.

Philippine forces began to occupy some of the Kalayaan islands in 1968. In 1971 the Philippines officially claimed the islands, stating that any other claims to the area had lapsed by being abandoned. In 1978, the Kalayaans were formally annexed by Presidential decree. The Philippines government has stated that the islands are important for national security and economic survival due to their proximity to the main Philippine islands. The Philippines government alleges that ancient Chinese claims are invalid since these claims also included parts of what today are the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Further, Chinese fishermen in ancient times only used the islands as a temporary base of operations (Cosa, 1998; Nguyen, 2000; Storrey, 2009). Since 1995, China and the Philippines have been involved in a serious conflict over the Mischief Reef, which is in the eastern part of the Spratlys. While Philippine troops arrested people on Chinese fishing boats and Chinese citizens near the conflict area, China demanded their release and warned that it does not have limitless tolerance for encroachments on China's sovereignty and dignity, and that the other side must bear full responsibility for any serious consequences (Valencia, 1997). Like Vietnam and other claimants, the Philippines rejects

---

Article 3 asserts that every state has the right to establish the breadth of its territorial sea up to a limit not exceeding 12 nautical miles'. Articles 55–75 define the concept of an EEZ, an area up to 200 nautical miles beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea. Within its EEZ, a nation possesses sovereign rights 'for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources' of the area. Articles 76–77 define the notion of a continental shelf and accord nations that have a continental shelf 'sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring it and exploiting its natural resources'. Article 121 specifies that 'rocks that cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no EEZ or continental shelf'.

China's nine-dotted line claim, citing that it is baseless and against the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The On-Going Dispute

Since the bloody clash between China and Vietnam in 1988 and after the Philippines's protest against China's creeping constructions on the Philippine-claimed Mischief Reef in 1995, all claimants have expressed a desire to settle the dispute peacefully. Yet, frequent flare-ups, mutual suspicions, distrust and political grandstanding still remain in this maritime region. Since energy insecurity is rising in this developing region, Vietnam, China and Philippines all are pushing to develop oil and gas exploration projects in the SCS waters, which is said to contain enough oil and gas to rival Saudi Arabia's reserves[4].

The most recent and greatest immediate contention spiked up after a Chinese patrol boat cut cables from a Vietnamese ship doing seismic surveys off its southern coast on May 28, 2011. A similar incident occurred on June 9, 2011 when a Chinese patrol boat slashed a submerged cable of a Vietnamese oil exploratory vessel operated by Petro Vietnam, the state energy firm. The second incident happened just four days after the Chinese Minister of Defense Liang Guanglie had attempted to reassure delegates regarding China's intentions at the Shangri-La Dialogue[5] in Singapore. This spate of incidents between the Chinese and Vietnamese vessels in the disputed sea has not only fueled serious tension between the communist neighbors but also put the dispute on center stage of the world's politics. In response to the incidents, Vietnam conducted a live-fire naval drill off its coastal waters in the SCS on June 13, 2011. On the same

---

[4] According to a U.S. Energy Information Administration report, those claims have yet to be proven. Still, there are enough proven wells in the South China Sea to tantalize the players, which explains why oil and gas survey vessels are at the heart of the recent incidents. (http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/06/25/south.china.sea.conflict/index.html)
[5] The annual Shangri-La Dialogue focuses on regional co-operation, peace and harmony, particularly among ASEAN members.

day, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung signed a bill clarifying eligibility for military conscription, which could lead to the call up of five million additional troops (Santolan, 2011).

Vietnam is not the only nation skirmishing with Chinese patrol boats. The Philippines also had reported Chinese boats cutting the cables of a survey ship and threatening to ram its boats in March and May, 2011. In the midst of escalating tensions between the two communist neighbors, the Philippine government reported that Chinese navy boats had erected pillars and set materials near Amy Douglas Bank inside the Philippines' EEZ. In response, the Philippine legislature passed a bill renaming the SCS as the "West Philippine Sea". As such, all Philippine government statements have now referred to the disputed waters by this new name.

The tense atmosphere has sparked nationalist demonstrations in all the three countries and a war of words at the highest levels among the three. This time, the tension further includes the United States, which claimed to have an interest in freedom of navigation in the contested sea at the ASEAN Regional Forum held in Hanoi a year earlier. Towsend-Gault (1999) suggested that ASEAN wants a U.S. presence to counter China and its mercantilist approach. Although the United States is not committed to any of the claimants, the presence of U.S. ships and aircraft in the vicinity is generally believed to have had a stabilizing effect. The United States encourages other claimants to support internationalization of the issue, and calls for the settlement of disputed claims by international laws.

The U.S. standpoint has been embraced by both Vietnam and the Philippines. The Vietnamese foreign ministry declared its strong support for the efforts by the United States and other nations to help resolve this maritime conflict. Similarly, the Philippine government urged military intervention from the United States in the event of armed conflict with China, based on the two countries' 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty. This frustrated Beijing and the Chinese reacted

12

very strongly. The Chinese Foreign Ministry criticized the American intervention as 'an attack on China,' and has recently issued a veiled warning to the United States to keep out of the dispute.

But why invoke the role of the news media in this international conflict? Caught in a dilemma between national desire for solidarity and professional desire for objectivity, the news media are either blamed for assisting in stoking up nationalist sentiment and war propaganda or putting ratings and circulation ahead of national welfare (Ciorciari & Weiss; 2012). Put another way, the media practitioners are charged with either lack of responsible professionalism or of excessive patriotism.

- May 28: A Chinese patrol boat cut cables from a Vietnamese ship doing seismic surveys off its Southern coast.

- June 1: The Philippines reported that Chinese navy boats erected pillars and set unloaded materials near Amy Douglas Bank inside the Philippines' EEZ

- June 8: China steps up its criticism of the Philippines, calling on Manila to stop infringing its sovereignty with claims over the SCS

- June 9: A Chinese patrol boat slashed a submerged cable if a Vietnamese oil exploratory vessel operated by the Vietnam's state energy firm

- June 12: Anti-China rallies in HCM City and Hanoi (Vietnam)

- June 13: Vietnam conducted a live-fire naval drill off its coastal waters in SCS

- June 18: The U.S. and Vietnam jointly call for freedom of navigation in the SCS

- June 23: The Philippines officially claimed that it expected the U.S. military support in the face of rising friction with China

- June 25: The US calls for China to cool tensions over the disputed territory. China rejects this call, telling the US to stay out of its regional dispute

- July 11: American and Chinese military chiefs argue about US exercises in the SCS; Chinese army chief says the US military exercises with the Philippines and Vietnam were "extremely inappropriate".

- July 13: The Philippines states that China's refusal to allow a UN-backed tribunal to rule on the territorial dispute indicates that Beijing's claim stands on illegal ground

- July 14: Armed Chinese soldiers allegedly beat a Vietnamese fisherman and threaten other crew members before driving them out of waters near the contested Paracel Islands

- July 19: The Philippines sent 5 congressmen to the disputed Spratly Islands to support its territorial claims; China says the trip "serves no purpose but to undermine peace and stability in the region and sabotage the China-Philippines relationship

Figure 2. Timeline of the dispute from May 28, 2011 to July 30, 2011

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study functions as a cross-cultural case study analysis to explore the practice of journalists during a multi-national conflict. It examines factors that influence journalists and news organizations as they attempt to report on an international conflict of which their country is a party, seeking answer to the question why war journalism continue to persist.

Research Questions

The present study proceeds using a theoretical framework grounded in the theory of journalistic objectivity, gate-keeping, agenda-setting, nationalism and news framing. Its main research question focuses on whether reporting in the countries under study is characterized by extreme nationalism and bias rather than objectivity. The answer to this question is of critical importance, as misleading information and aggressive reporting will create an "enemy" image among the nations' peoples or could eventually lead to armed conflict.

In order to answer the main research question, other questions or issues to be examined are these:

RQ1: Which country's media gives more coverage to the conflict? (e.g., Vietnam, Philippines, China, or international news organizations)

RQ2: What types of articles or coverage are used more frequently? Hard news reports, features, editorials, or others (e.g., letters to the editors, picture gallery...etc.)?

RQ3: Do the studied mainstream media outlets serve as mouthpieces of the political elite?

RQ4: Has the media discourse on the SCS conflict been predominantly guided towards war journalism?

RQ5: Which newspaper is identified as more titled towards war journalism?

RQ6: In the overall coverage, which country got more unfavorable coverage and was framed as aggressors?

RQ7: Is reporting in the countries under study characterized by extreme nationalism and bias rather than objectivity?

CHAPTER IV

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Journalistic Objectivity

Although the concept of objectivity was only developed at the time of urbanization, industrialization and the advent of consumerism (Foreman, 2010; McGoldrick, 2006), using objectivity to get a version of the truth is one of the most recognized traditional journalistic methods. Journalists have been long aware of the extreme importance of fairness, the ethic of restraining their own biases and the idea that journalism should not be the voice of any particular party or sect (Rosen, 1994). As such, journalistic objectivity has been defined as an effort to report the facts without developing or at least without revealing an opinion about them (Kinsey, 2001). The journalists' view of their profession originates from what Schudson (1978) referred to as "the neutral model" in which the professionals see their job as quasi-scientific. This means journalists should report in an objective and balanced manner, with no obligation to any outside interest. They should be loyal to the truth and public interest (Carrey, 2002; Loyn, 2007; McGoldrick, 2006; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). Objectivity and professionalism have long been intertwined, even mutually defined, although pure objectivity is difficult to attain.

Reality. Yet, although the objective model is still a dominant journalistic value for most journalists world-wide, criteria for an objective news report remain controversial. Schiller pointed out that news exemplifies values and "if a news net is indeed thrown virtually round the world, it is woven in such a way as to harvest only some species of fish" (1981, p.1). Thus, all news is declared to be selective and the result of a myriad of daily decisions, judgments and routine organizational and institutional constraints. Hughes (1940, 1942) suggested that the news depends on the point of view of the reporter who writes it, whereas the reporter's viewpoint

originated from the job itself, the nature of his/her assignment, and the character of his/her newspaper. Also, Hughes argued that the beats the newspaper covers, and the reporters who cover them are all subject to both institutional changes outside and within the newsroom. In other words, there is an invisible frame bracketing news reports as a particular kind of public knowledge and a key category in popular epistemology. Moreover, as Starkey (2007) noted, one person's balance may be another person's bias, particularly if they have extremely different perspectives. Therefore, what seems to be objective to one person may be considered highly subjective by another. In short, researchers argue that despite the importance of objectivity in journalism ethics and standards, neither objectivity nor impartiality exists in practice.

Those arguing the issue point out that the news media routinely present images and descriptions that are partial, as opposed to complete. This is believed to be caused by the news media's inability to recreate any original experiment of the world, but only relatively limited detail (Starkey, 2007). Even with live broadcasts, the news audience still witnesses live events by proxy. Although the audience may choose to view what they are shown, read what is reported and hear what is played to them, they are not at the scene. Since representation is only a partial account of a place, an event or an issue, it necessarily involves choices being made over what is included and what is not. Consequently, it is reporters who are the ones choosing how to present (or represent) the real life experience of being there. Although journalists rarely draw their readers' attention to the incompleteness of their reporting, each news story is a construct formed from elements chosen to offer the readers an insight into a "reality" in which they are supposedly interested. Therefore, the chances of these being wholly accurate representations are very low (Hughes, 1942; Starkey, 2007). Schiller (1981) noted that even if unintentional, representing

reality within the time and resource constraints all media face can introduce distortions that becloud more than they illuminate.

McQuail (1992) suggested four different kinds of bias: partisan, propaganda, unwitting, and ideological. The first is explicit support for a particular position and the second more implicit, which is only apparent to those who are sensitive to the value-laden nature of the comment, descriptions and attitudes in the reporting. Unwitting bias results from the physical constraints of the news profession: there is so much room in a newspaper or time in a bulletin. Finally, since ideological bias is rooted in the reporters' own perceptions and attitudes, values and beliefs, it may not even be apparent to those who produce it.

In fact, a representation that is selective might still be widely considered fair if competing perspectives are balanced in such a way that none of them gain any advantage from the act of mediation taking place (Starkey, 2007). Presenting a balanced account would normally require impartiality, or at least adopting an objective, rather than a subjective position and remaining true to it. In other words, telling it like it is. Being objective now means not placing undue emphasis on one part of a representation, in order to distort it, for whatever motive. This means objectivity implies detachment from an issue, or at least, representing it in as "balanced" a way as could be achieved by someone without a vested interest in it. As such, a high degree of news objectivity is still relatively achievable.

News constructing: gatekeeping and news values. Lyon (2007) defined news as what matters, what gets into the political bloodstream and what counts. As discussed earlier, to imagine that the content of a news report accurately reflects all that has happened during important events to the target audience is to grossly underestimate the role of journalists in constructing the news. Despite its relative objectivity, journalism is still a "subjective art" as its

19

practitioners are the decision-makers (Foreman 2009, p. 63). They are the ones who are often in charge of deciding which issues deserve prominent display and which issues are to be ignored. They make decisions about the news: what facts to use, what facts to highlight in the story and what facts to skip. In other words, news does not spring out of nowhere and each decision is seen as an opportunity for opinions to step in (Foreman, 2009). Also, journalism can be driven by other factors, such as newsroom culture, sensitivities towards advertisers, pressure groups, varied sources, or even seem-to-be mediocre facts like "not putting audiences off their dinner" (Sheridan, 2002, p. 10). For instance, most journalists apply their own particular news values to the prioritization of stories and some newspapers tend to prioritize the compelling nature of bad news over good news. Thus, constructing news is a much more complex process than a simple, linear relationship between an information producer and an information consumer.

In such a complex world of media framing, gate-keeping has been widely used as a term to describe the procedure of news selection, especially decisions regarding whether or not to allow particular news report to pass through the gates of a news medium into the news channel (McQuail, 2005; Shoemaker, 2001;White, 1950). If an event is perceived by the decision makers to be important, it will pass through the gate. Watson (2007) identified that the news-gate might swing shut, open, sometimes wide-open, or sometimes slightly open, but there is usually more than one who gate-keeps. He noted that the selection process not only operates at the gate. In other words, mediation takes place at every possible stage between events and transmission. In effect, anything along the communication chain can affect what does or does not appear in the media as gatekeepers.
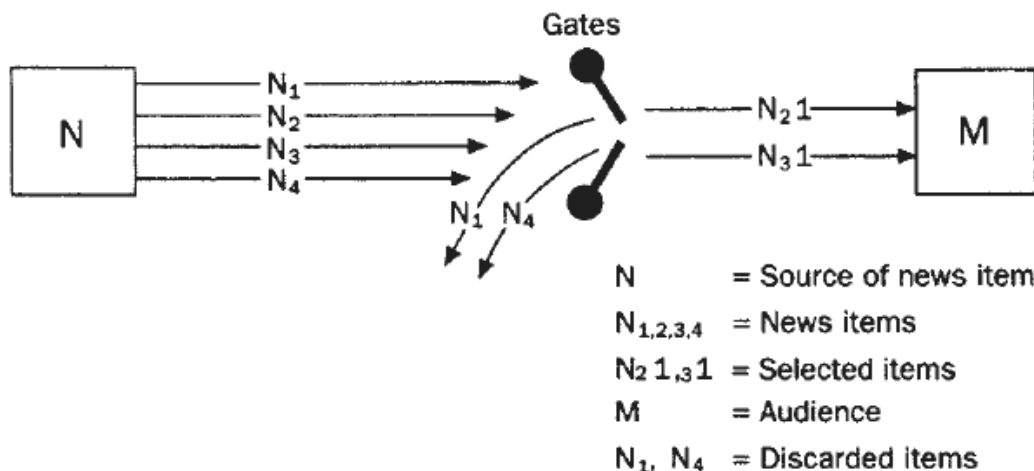
Figure 3. Simple Gate-keeping Model. Adapted from " The Gate-Keeper: A Case Study in the Selection of News", by D.M. White, 1950, *Journalism Quarterly, 27,* p.386.

But what qualifies for admission and who makes the decisions? The regular answer is that "people who gather and transmit the news are doing it every day of their working lives: they are professionals, they know what news is" (Watson, 2007, p. 111). Galtung and Ruge (1995) introduced the model of selective gate-keeping, attempting to rationalize the various levels of selection between the original event and its representation. They suggested that news from around the world is evaluated by using news-values, which are those attributes of a news event transforming it into an interesting story for an audience, to determine its newsworthiness. The researchers categorized news values into three types that influence the selection: including organizational, genre-related, and socio-cultural. The organizational factors are most universal, least escapable and have some ideological consequences.

Undoubtedly, the final news content of the news media arrives by several different routes and in different forms. This means it might have to be sought out or ordered in advance, or even have to be systematically planned. Sometimes, it is also forced to be internally constructed or manufactured. Similar to the procedure of news selection, such a process of news construction is

neither random nor objective. McQuail (2005) explained that it occurs largely due to schemes of interpretation and of relevance which are those of the bureaucratic institutions which either are news sources or processes events, for instance, police departments, government officials, courts, etc. Similarly, Fishman (1982) suggested that what is known and knowable by the press depends on the information-gathering and information-processing resources of these agencies. The main factors that influence the final choice can be considered under the headings of people, place, time, or usually in combination of all. Put another way, the collection of news has to be organized and there is bias towards events and news stories that fit the machinery of selection and retransmission (McQuail, 2005). Genre-related factors include a preference for news events that fit advance audience expectation, and can be easily placed within a familiar interpretative frame; for instance, frames of conflict. Finally, the social-cultural influence on news selection is originated from certain western values that focus on individuals and involve an interest in elite people, negative, violent and dramatic happenings.
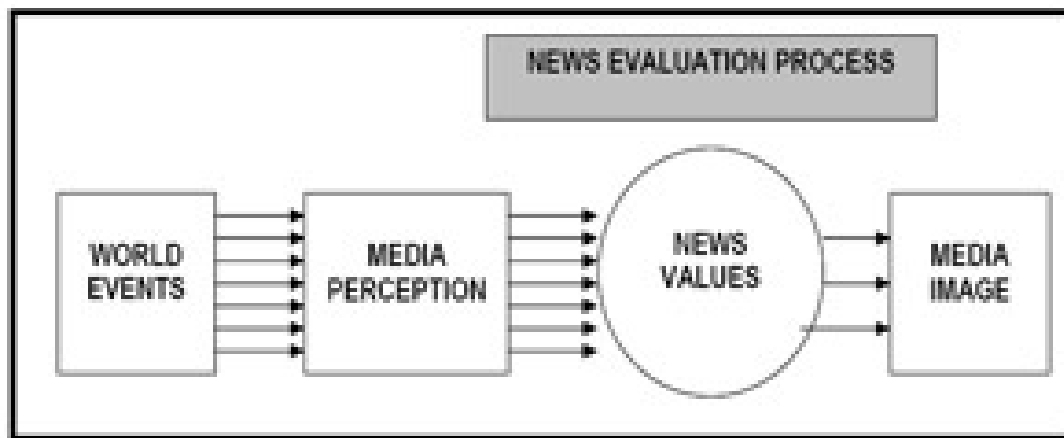
Figure 4. Selective Gate-keeping Theory by Galtung and Ruge (1965). Adapted from *Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communications* (p.166), by D. Mc Quail and S. Windahl, 1993, London: Longman.

Agenda setting: the public and the national agenda. The application of news values not only results in the prioritization of some stories over others, but also determines the extent of coverage, as well as what is included in the stories. Since agenda-setting is a type of social learning, individuals learn how concerned they should be through the amount of coverage the issues receive in the news media. News coverage, therefore, gives salience cues to the members of the public, showing them which issues are important. The public receives these prominent cues and ultimately believes that the issues receiving extensive coverage are more important than those receiving little coverage (Wanta, 1997). Moreover, emphasis by the media, over time on a relatively small numbers of issues, leads the public into perceiving these issues as more important than other issues. The more an issue gets covered, the more it will be perceived as being important by members of the public (see Figure 5).
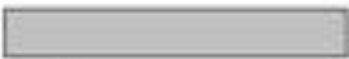
ISSUES	DIFFERENTIAL MEDIA ATTENTION	PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF ISSUES
x_1		X_1
x_2		X_2
x_3		X_3
x_4		X_4

Figure 5. Model of the agenda setting theory, which simply states that, the issues given most attention by the media, will be perceived as the most important. Adapted from *Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communications* (p.166), by D. Mc Quail and S. Windahl, 1993, London: Longman.

Regarding this agenda-setting effect, Vasterman (2004) coined the term "media hype" to refer to a media generated, wall-to-wall news wave, which is triggered by one specific event and expanded by the self-reinforcing processes within the news production of the media. Put another way, since mass media are so pervasive, exposure levels are relative high for all individuals, and such heavy media exposure has the tendency to provoke reactions from social actors that in turn generate more news.

As such, on the surface, the agenda-setting hypothesis seems to be very simple. Yet, when pushing to examine how agendas come about, that is, who decides what goes on to the agenda and who prioritizes items on that agenda, the hypothesis is no longer straightforward. There is evidence of the existence of hidden agendas; in other words, the shadowy frames of authority and power (Watson, 2007), because news selection cannot be made arbitrarily, and journalism does not exist in a vacuum. Resource and institutional pressures will have an impact upon news selection. The determination of an event's news values and significance cannot be value free. Although the news media filter and shape news, and journalists may be able to choose what issues and events they will cover, and how perhaps how they will cover them, those in the media are rarely completely free to always do as they please. In some cases, they are also subject to external regulation, which can be imposed by legislation that constrains expression in a number of respects (Starkey, 2007). Moreover, as Wanta (1997) pointed out, newspapers have often been perceived, by publishers and their audiences alike, as both political tools and a medium for political conflict. Thus, public officials and politicians are identified as among important sources for news stories. Obviously, these same public officials can potentially influence the agenda of issues that the news media cover.

24

As individuals have a wide range of opinions about the news media, media credibility also plays a significant role in agenda setting. Some people perceive the news media as biased and blame journalists for trying to influence public opinion. Others think reporters do a competent job of informing society of daily events. Media credibility has become even more important to agenda setting because members of the public are increasingly doubting the trustworthiness of the media generally and newspapers generally (Foreman, 2010). Thus, attitudes towards the source of a message can determine the message's effectiveness. The higher credibility of a news source, the more likely an individual will think that the information is credible. Credible information will also be processed more efficiently and carefully by individuals, and thus, have a stronger impact on an individual than information from an untrustworthy source. Therefore, Wanta (1997) concluded that if individuals view the news media to be highly credible, there will be stronger agenda-setting effects.

The State and the News Media

Bennett et al. (2006) state that journalists tend to represent political issues from the perspectives of those in power. This means that while there may be various viewpoints reproduced in the news, journalists tend to rely on government officials' perspectives and rarely give the voices of dissent space in mainstream dialogue. In other words, the ones outside the state system, and the ones without power, are unable to make their voices heard, unless they become helpless victims of disaster. In short, governments are the news media's most important social actors, and speak through the media as a matter of course.

Many journalism studies have pointed out that the news media often fail to frame issues and events independently: journalists "simply pass along to the public the frames originated by powerful political actors" (Lawrence, 2010, p. 265). Lawrence extended the argument by stating

that "the media's independence in crafting news frames varies across political context" (2010, p. 266). Past research cited three major contexts: (1) news about foreign policy and national security, particularly in high-stakes contexts of war and international conflict, (2) news about domestic policy, particularly pertaining to social issues, and (3) news about electoral campaigns (Lawrence, 2010, p. 267). Among the three, the foreign policy and national security context is the one in which the mainstream media generally show less independence in framing issues and events. Instead, journalists and media professionals tend to rely heavily on high government officials to frame the news. A reluctance to challenge government officials in times of perceived international crisis is a prominent feature in this context as foreign affairs, particularly issues touching on national security, raise questions of patriotism for journalists and officials that are not usually present in domestic affairs (Althaus, 2003; Etman, 2004; Lawrence, 2010).

Cook goes so far to argue that the news media are, in fact, "governmental institutions" (1991, p. 18). He suggested that state and media exist in a symbiotic relationship within which the state provides information and the news organizations decide whether or not to print or broadcast it. He maintained that the news media need government officials to help them achieve their job, and politicians obviously find the media central to getting done what they want to get done. Thus, the news media is said to operate not only as a way of informing the public, but also as a method of sharing information within the elite group. Since the government relies on the news media as a way of communicating within itself and within the elite establishment, it is a government's strategy to use the media to put its policies into effect. As Cook notes, the government can use the media to criticize another country over its policies and actions, or to place an issue on the agenda. The news media, in turn, depends on the government as a credible source of information.

As discussed earlier, gate-keeping and news values play a significant role in constructing news. Very often, journalists judge the utility of information by the news sources rather than the news content. For instance, an authoritative source is most likely an individual given a leading role in the narrative of that news story. The information provided by someone in an official role within the government hierarchy tends to be treated with the credibility of his/her position within the hierarchy and/or his involvement in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, even if saying the same thing, that same person who is outside the government hierarchy would be more likely to be seen as providing speculation or hearsay (Cook, 1991). Scannel (1989) similarly argued that the news media often act as a kind of "bulletin board" for the state, though this is not always the case. Scannel (1989) concluded that only those in public life have the priority to speak their views and opinions.

As discussed earlier, gate-keeping and news values play a significant role in constructing news. Very often, journalists judge the utility of information by the news sources rather than the news content. For instance, an authoritative source is most likely an individual given a leading role in the narrative of that newsbeat. The information provided by someone in an official role within the government hierarchy tends to be treated with the credibility of his/her position within the hierarchy and/or his involvement in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, even if saying the same thing, that same person who is outside the government hierarchy would be more likely to be seen as providing speculation or hearsay (Cook, 1991). Scannel (1989) similarly argued that the news media often act as a kind of "bulletin board" for the state, though this is not always the case. As such, the ones outside the state system, and the ones without power, are unable to make their voices heard, unless they become helpless victims of disaster. Scannel (1989) concluded that only those in public life have the priority to speak up their views and opinions.

Splichal (1991) argued that, ethically speaking, the news media should be responsible to the public, not to the state. They cannot be seen in simple terms of either government mouthpiece or government adversary. He suggested that the news media should, instead, be seen as an essential service to the public, which ensures the provision of information.

Characteristics of the news media system in the four countries under study. Past research split the world's media system into four categories, including controlled systems, fragmented systems, highly regulated systems and moderately regulated systems (Dissanayke, 1997). The controlled media system is characterized by a high degree of control by the government. This type of system can be found in both communist countries and rightist authoritarian societies. A fragmented media system is characterized by the lack of a central controlling force. The type of media system found in most developing countries is highly regulated, where an appearance of independence masks a high degree of governmental regulation. A media system that promotes open discussion within obvious limits is defined as moderately regulated. Although some commentators seem to see the last as a free system, this contention is not supported by the facts or actual situations. Based on the framework and above analysis, the news media in China, Vietnam, the Philippines and the United States can be categorized as follows (see Table 1):

Since the Chinese news media are totally in the hands of the government and allowed to publish only those items of news, opinions, and viewpoints approved by the government, it is described as centralized. The Vietnamese news media are identified as highly regulated, as some of the news establishments are in private hands, but during times of national crisis, a rigid press censorship is imposed and the newspapers disseminate basically what the government wants. The Philippines's news media is fragmented and they do not necessarily see their role as one of

supporting the government's actions. Also, a measure of chaos goes hand in hand with this system during this conflict. The American press, on the other hand, sought to widen the field of discourse regarding the conflict by seeking to examine the situation as deeply as the information would permit. However, it does not play the role of an observer, but as the fourth party who also has an impact on the other governments, the three countries' people and their news media.

Country	Nature of Media System	Characteristics
China	Centralized	The news media are voice of state. They legitimate and foreshadow government policy
Philippines	Fragmented	Different voices competing for attention. Uncoordinated
Vietnam	Highly regulated	Legitimate action of government in times of crisis
The United States	Moderately regulated	Promote open discussion within obvious limits. Influence of state stable

*Figure 6.*Categories of the News Media under Study

Journalist's Loyalty: to Nation or Profession?

News reporters insist that, ideally at least, they recount events without the intrusion of value judgments or symbols. They repeatedly claim news reports are merely an honest representation, a report on the facts, nothing but reality. Yet, news, akin to any literary or cultural form, must rely on social norms and conventions (Starkey, 2007) because, in many cases, journalists not only have influence on the culture in which they operate, but are also members of a professional interpretative community. Foreman (2010) pointed out that journalism has a socio-cultural function in constructing and shaping the community. As such, the journalists do not explore reality from an external point of view, but rather function as representatives of the society in which they operate and as delegates of the culture they share (Carey, 2000; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). In other words, they are involved in a community whose members share common values and perceptions. Based on this viewpoint, journalistic work is embedded in a broader social, cultural and political context. Yet, the problem is that the dual membership in cultural and professional communities calls upon the journalists' contrasting loyalties. Past research indicated that such tension is exacerbated at times of international conflict, when the journalists may have to give precedence to either their national identity or professional identity (Loyn, 2007; McGoldrick, 2006; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005).

Nationalism. Before analyzing the relation between news objectivity and nationalism, it is important to clarify the meaning and significance of nationalism.

Nationalism has many connotations and it is identified with "a group based on a sense of common heritage including some or all of these factors: language, ethnic or racial origins, religion, geographic location or political base" (Purvis, 1992, p. 408). Purvis (1992) found that nationalism is often associated with the goals of self-determination and independence, and the

30

belief that the nation or nation-state deserves political loyalty. Landon defined nationalism as "the expression of a feeling of cultural, tribal or ethnic oneness" (1943, p. 139). He suggested that every people, even persons of different outlooks, have nationalism or patriotism of some sort and perhaps always have had.

As nationalism has a political connotation, some researchers have focused on a modern political nationalism. Kohn (1968) sees nationalism as a doctrine or set of ideas which is defined as a political creed centering the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the nation-state, either existing or desired. For Anderson et al. (1967) nationalism is political action or movement. It is the assertion of the will to constitute an autonomous political community by a self-conscious group or ideological movement, for the acquisition and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group. Finally, some define nationalism as sentiment, consciousness, or state of mind, emphasizing individuals' awareness and loyalty to the nation and its tradition (e.g., Akzin, 1966; Shafer, 1955; Snyder, 1982).

From this perspective, the homeland is indispensable for economic wellbeing and physical security (Smith, 2010). In this sense, nationalism rising in China, Vietnam, and the Philippines during the South China Sea Conflict exemplifies the ideal of conscious attachment to the nation.

Also, research has identified nationalism as a double-edged sword. "At times, it can represent the outburst of the oppressed. At others, it is the vehicle of the oppressor" (Braisted, 1954, p.356). This means nationalism can be born of resentment. Binder (1964) and Kedourie (1971) both agreed that it is the abstract love of nationalism that has fed the greatest act of terror. As such, nationalism remains the world's most powerful, general, and primordial basis of cultural and political identity.

As nation-building and international conflicts reflect state interests and goals, Townsend (1992) found that the issues tend to be defined in terms of state nationalism. Although the primary nationalist components in the conflict under study here involve state pronouncements and popular demonstrations, and even some military actions, they mostly enter the popular culture as news headlines for large-scale mobilization of popular support against perceived foreign threats.

The relationship between nationalism and news objectivity. Since the concept of nationalism implies commonality, shared values, and loyalty to shared ideals, it always has a boundary that includes "us" and excludes "them" (Anderson, 1983). This boundary is found to prevail in war/conflict reporting as nationalism permeates almost every aspect of the culture of public communication during national conflicts or wartimes. Thus, Anderson (1983) concluded that there is probably no other principle to define mass media output and media reception as clearly as the feeling of loyalty towards one's country, which is generally referred to as "patriotism". Trabber (1995) went even further by claiming that such ideology of patriotism imprisons the news media. Put another way, among the many influences and constraints affecting the news media culture, none is more penetrating and elusive than nationalism.

Regardless of how critically one views the relationship between the news media and the nation, or the media and the state, a universal human need exists for belonging. A family, a community, a people, and a nation are those constituted of the essential social nature of the human being. Trabber (1995) noticed that one of the main dogmas of modernity is not just belonging to a nation, but being co-responsible for the nation's institutional political arrangements and structures referred as "state". Yet, Horsman and Marshall (1994) argued that such principal dogma of modern nationalism is fictional. "If soil and blood express the darker

32

side of nationalism, so does the demand for absolute loyalty towards the state, or the claim that any other social identity has to be submerged into the ultimately defining identity with the nation state" (Horsman & Marshall, 1994, p. 45). These claims have become part of the notion of patriotism and affect public communication as journalists consider it is their patriotic duty to provide legitimization for the state's actions during international conflicts (Hill, 1991). Thus, Trabber (1995) concluded that if this is what patriotism asks from media workers, then patriotism is a major ethical problem for journalists.

In the case of multi-national conflicts, Cuthbert (1985) found that the press in each of the parties in conflict takes an editorial stand which accurately reflects the attitude of their respective governments. In other words, the news media of each nation or region react from the perceived interests of their own national system. The journalists of each news organization have to find words to report the complexity of external reality. Although each region paints the pictures so differently and there are undoubtedly individual exceptions, it seems unlikely that the journalists were deliberately distorting or slanting news. Yet, no matter how committed they are to the truth, the journalists' selection of facts and their choice and organization of words grow out of their different perspectives and ideological differences. The patriotic line of journalism also prevents journalists from covering both sides of the stories as attempts to give the enemy's viewpoint may be met with the charge of reproducing the enemy's propaganda (Trabber, 1995). Moreover, when journalists actively endorse the patriotic line, they sometimes do so in defiance of public feeling. For instance, in some cases the press claims that its patriotism reflects that of the public, fails to acknowledge evidence of a more confused and diverse range of public opinion (Hill, 1991). Stereotyping the "enemy" is another feature connected with the patriotic imperative in international conflict reporting as the less one knows about other cultures, races and faiths, the

easier it is to project the image one wishes or finds chance to use. However, Trabber (1995) argued that the most amazing aspect about nationalism and news objectivity is not the deceptions, lies and stereotypes of the "other" which are associated with them. He found the true surprise is the fact that most people are unaware of how nationalism can result in the manipulation of the news media under the name of patriotism. Therefore, Schiller (1981) pointed out that the media's acclaimed objectivity in multinational conflicts is just a purposeful "myth".

News Framing: War Journalism Frame

War journalism is the term coined by Galtung (1986, 1998), referring to traditional war/conflict coverage and framing that have a value bias toward violence and violent groups, stemming from a victory-defeat paradigm. He suggested that war journalism is when editors and reporters makes choices of what stories to report, and how to report them, which usually leads audiences to overvalue violent responses to conflict and ignore non-violent alternatives. War journalism was said to have four main characteristics: oriented in war/violence, propaganda, elites and victory. War journalism is oriented in war/violence as it focuses on the conflict arena, the two parties and the ultimate goal of winning. In other words, it generally has a zero-sum orientation. It tends to find out who threw the first stone to assign the blame rather than to find a solution. Also, this type of news framing is very propaganda- and elite- oriented because its emphasis is on elite and official sources. Lastly, war journalism often conceals peace-initiatives before victory is at hand. Moreover, Galtung and Vincent (1992) found that war journalism and conflict reporting are characterized by military triumphalist language, an action-oriented focus and a superficial narrative with little context, background or historical perspectives. In other words, the latent meaning of any frame is often translated instantaneously by specific types of framing devices such as catchphrases, metaphors, graphics and allusions to nationalism and war

journalism. Such concrete points of framing war journalism are later summarized and outlined by

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) (see Figure 7).

WAR/VIOLENCE JOURNALISM
I. WAR/VIOLENCE ORIENTATED - Focus on conflict arena, 2 parties, 1 goal (win) war - General zero-sum orientation - Closed space, closed time; causes and exits in arena, who threw the first stone - Making wars opaque/secret - "Us-them" journalism, propaganda, voice for "us" - See "them" as the problem, focus on who prevails in war - Dehumanisation of "them"; more so the worse the weapon - Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting - Focus only on visible effect of violence (killed, wounded and material damage)
II. PROPAGANDA-ORIENTATED - Expose "their" untruths / help "our" cover-ups/lies
III. ELITE ORIENTATED - Focus on "our" suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece - Give name to their evil-doers - Focus on elite peace-makers
IV. VICTORY ORIENTATED - Peace = victory + ceasefire - Conceal peace initiative, before victory is at hand - Focus on treaty, institution, the controlled society - Leaving for another war, return if the old flares up again

Figure 7. War-journalism frame. Adapted from *Peace Journalism*, by J.Lynch and A.

McGoldrick, 2005, Gloucestershire: Hawthorn Press.

Research has long found that framing theory offers a useful way of understanding the news-making process. While agenda-setting deals with factors that may influence the news media's selection of issues to report, framing discusses how the news media select specific frames in presenting the issues (Scheufele, 1999). Watson (2007) utilized the newspaper page as a frame into which journalists can put headlines, captions, the positioning of photographs, the differing styles, and sizes of print such as the longer the story, the smaller the type-size. Gamson and Lasch (1993) suggested that a frame organizes central ideas for understanding events related to the issue in questions. Going into further details, Entman (2007) defined news framing as the process of picking out a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation. He pointed out that fully developed frames generally perform four functions, including problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgment, and remedy promotion. As such, news framing works to introduce or raise the salience and apparent importance of certain topics, activating schemas that can encourage target audiences to think, feel and act in a particular way. Entman (2007) also brought to notice that the character of a frame could be identified by various devices, including metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, moral appeals, visual images and other symbolic devices.

Lewis and Reese (2009) maintained that frames play a central role in political communication as they help define the terms of debate, share public opinion through the persuasive use of symbols, and, when most effective, lead to public policy change. They serve as the main vehicle "through which public officials, the news media and other elites exercise political influence over one another and the public at large" (Lewis & Reese, 2009, p. 85). Apparently, frames don't arise organically. They are constructed and disseminated according to

36

social and institutional interests. As such, framing can be seen as an exercise in power. Yet, such power does not come from out of nowhere. It largely depends on the news media's acceptance and advancement of those frames.

When it comes to covering conflicts, defined as a relationship between two or more parties having incompatible goals, needs and interests (Mitchell, 1981), past studies point out that how news media frame issues becomes essential to how people understand the conflict. Gamson (1992) listed four frames used in framing the Arab-Israeli conflict: strategic interests, feuding neighbors, Arab's die-hardism, and Israeli expansionism. In the Middle East conflict, Wolfsfeld (1997) identified the "drama frame" in which the news media focused on the extremists from both sides rather than on voices calling for peace.

More recently, Carruthers (2000) found that the news media, subjected to state and military censorship, employed the same values and priorities in reporting conflict as in covering other events. Therefore, he suggested that the news media become willing abettors in wartime propaganda and even play a role in provoking conflict. War propaganda is defined as a facet of military power calculated to gain public backing for war, or violent responses to conflict (Lynch, 2007). Lynch argue that "war propaganda works because it fits or articulates with the established conventions of war journalism" (2008, p.136).

Later, Ting Lee and Maslog (2005) developed Galtung (1986, 1998)'s typology of war journalism into 13 indicators of war journalism. These indicators are extracted from the text of stories whose narratives are framed by either war or peace journalism and comprise of two themes: approach and language. The approach-based criteria includes: (1) reactivity, (2) visibility of effects of war, (3) elite orientation, (4) differences, (5) focus on here and now, (6) good and bad dichotomy, (7) two-party orientation, (8) partisanship, (9) winning orientation, and

(10) continuity of reports. The language-based criteria focus on language and consist of: (1) victimizing, (2) demonizing and (3) emotive. (See Appendix A for examples of each of the 13 characteristics of war journalism).

A story is considered to be "reactive" if the reporter waits for war or violence to break out before reporting it. It is mainly focus on the "visible effects of war" such as casualties, death toll, or damage to property when ignoring psychological impacts. A news article has "elite orientation" if its content is mostly sourced from government officials, and/or political leaders. "Differences" means the story is to exploit major differences that lead to dispute(s) among conflicting parties rather than reporting similarities, progress on common issue(s) or previous agreement(s). A story focuses on "here and now" when it is very poor in context and tends to focus on violence as its own causes, failing to report the conflict's possibility of structural and psychological causes and outcomes. "Good and bad dichotomy" refers to the approach of drawing a polarity of "us" and "them" to dichotomize between the good guys and bad guys, the victims and the villains. "Two-party orientation" is defined as the tendency of war journalism to reduce the number of parties to two, and to draw a clear distinction between winners and losers. "Partisanship" indicates that a story framed by war-journalism has its value bias towards one side in the conflict, ignoring or concealing initiatives from the other side or third parties, particularly any option for a non-violent outcome which does not give victory to "our side". The "winning orientation" reflects the evident sport archetype of war-journalism framing, where winning is the only thing and this orientation assumes that one side's needs can only be met by the other side's compromise or defeat. "Continuity of reports" addresses to journalists' practices of quashing coverage of the conflict with peace treaty signing and ceasefire, then heading for another war elsewhere. The three language-based criteria of "victimizing language", "demonizing language",

"emotive words" are to give evidence of war journalism's common focus on the human drama and tragedy of violence. "Victimizing language" is employed to tell what has been done to people and paint them as victims of doomsday scenarios who are irreparably damaged by the conflict and appear to have no future. "Demonizing language" is used to demonize the enemy, while humanizing the participants on our side. Lastly, "emotive words" are to create emotional effects of war journalism by taking advantages of audiences' feelings resulted from the conflict such as hopeless and powerless, anxiety, mood disturbance, sadness and a sense of insecurity with physical and social environment.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS

Research Methodology

The study involves a qualitative comparative analysis, a research technique developed by Ragin (1987) for solving problems caused by making causal inferences on the basis of only a small number of cases. Grounded on the binary logic of Boolean algebra, the technique is to maximize the number of comparisons that can be made across the cases under investigation, in terms of the presence or absence of the characteristics (variables) of analytical interest (Marshall, 1988). For example, 18 cases (e.g., nation-states) that involve seven independent variables (presence or absence of economic recession, of an external threat to state security, etc.,) might be examined in order to identify the causal factors involved in the emergence of revolutions (Marshall, 1988). Ragin suggested that qualitative comparative analysis had clear advantage over content analysis, which only aims at quantitatively analyzing the meaning and characteristics of any context (Krippendorf, 1980), as the former combines the strengths of both case-oriented (qualitative) and variable-orientated approaches.

The study examines 164 stories from one English-language daily newspaper from each of the three countries involved directly in the SCS conflict, including China's *Global Times,* Vietnam's *Thanh Nien News,* and the *Philippines Daily Inquirer.* Coverage of the *New York Times* is also analyzed for the sake of comparison and understanding the perspective of leading international observers.

The data was collected from issues published of the four newspapers during the two-month period of the conflict, lasting from May 28, 2011 to July 30, 2011. This represents the most recent peak period of the conflict that involved military presence. It was a particularly tense

episode between Vietnam and China, fueling a war of words that sent the two communist neighbors to the brink of using armed forces.

The search terms "South China Sea Conflict" or "South China Sea Dispute" and/or "Vietnam", "China", "the Philippines" and "the U.S." were combined to search for relevant articles on the Lexis Nexis Database, Google, or a search tool integrated in the newspapers' website. The unit of analysis was the individual story or article, a definition including hard news stories, feature stories, opinion pieces (Op-Ed), and others such as letters to the editors.

About a third of the stories were obtained from the Lexis Nexis online database. For papers not archived on databases, such as *Thanh Nien News* or *Global Times*, stories were obtained from the newspapers' online archives. Although searches were initiated by keywords, all downloaded stories were assessed for direct relevance. For instance, stories reporting on tourism but with the South China Sea mentioned in passing are rejected. Only stories focusing on the dispute over the sea such as violence, debates, diplomatic activities, political speeches, and related developments are included in the analysis. There are 60 articles from the *Global Times*, 50 articles from the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 36 news stories from the *Thanh Nien News*, and 18 articles from the *New York Times*.

To explore how the coverage of the SCS conflict may differ among the media outlets in the conflicting countries and the dominant framing techniques they used, the present study adapts nine of Ting Lee and Maslog's (2005) criteria in conflict reporting and adds an extra language-based criterion of military vocabulary. The study utilizes only nine out of 13 war-journalism indicators in conflict reporting developed by Ting Lee and Maslog's (2005) because while acts of provocation and high prospects of military confrontation over the SCS conflict do exist, none of the six claimants has officially declared war against one another.

Under this study, a news article has "elite orientation" if its content is sourced from government officials, and/or political leaders, identified by looking at who is being quoted or mentioned as sources in the story. Political elite is defined as government official representing the formal viewpoints of his/her respective government. Meanwhile, official sources might include academic researchers, organizations, etc., who are not necessary support their government's stance on the SCS conflict. "Conflict outcomes focused on war options" is to examine if a story leads its audiences to overvalue violent responses to this conflict and ignore peaceful alternatives. Similar to Ting Lee and Maslog's (2005)'s indicator of "differences", "focus mainly on differences that led to the conflict" is an indicator to explore whether a story delving into major differences that lead to disputes among the conflicting parties or promoting similarities, common interests or peaceful negotiations. "Frequent good/bad tagging" is to identify the good guys and bad guys, the victim and the bully in the SCS conflict. This indicator is accessed by condemning languages and attitudes (e.g., aggressor, big bully, aggressive actions, encroachments, etc.). Partisanship is the indicator obtained by examining if a story has its value bias towards only one country in the SCS conflict, ignoring or concealing initiatives from the other side or third parties, particularly any option for a non-violent outcome which does not give victory to its side. Zero-sum victory-defeat orientation is obtained by studying the above-mentioned winning orientation reflected in a story. Victimizing language, military vocabulary, demonizing language, emotive words are the four language-based criteria of are to access evidence of war journalism in discourse of the SCS conflict. The indicator of military vocabulary is added to enable this study to identify level of potential triggers of armed enforcement in this international dispute.

1. Emphasis on political elite and official sources.

2. Conflict outcomes focused on war options.

3. Focus mainly on differences that led to the conflict.

4. Frequent good/bad tagging.

5. Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict.

6. Zero-sum victory-defeat orientation.

7. Victimizing language.

8. Military vocabulary.

9. Uses demonizing language.

10. Uses emotive words.

These ten criteria are used to code, tabulate, and evaluate the data. Indexes are produced to classify whether a story is oriented toward war journalism, with a score of 1 given to each of these 10 criteria. A score of 1 is recorded when a war-journalism indicator is found in a story. Each single story can have a minimum score of 0 (no war-journalism indicator is found) and a maximum score of 10 (10 war-journalism indicators are all found).

Measures of central tendency of the 10 war journalism indicators were used to identify which newspaper is more tilted towards war journalism compared to other newspapers. The four newspapers were compared based on average of scores of war-journalism indicators found in a newspaper (mean), the middle value of scores of war-journalism indicators found in a newspaper (median), the value of scores of war journalism indicators that appears the most in a newspaper (mode), and the total summary scores of war journalism indicators found in a newspaper (sum).

Apart from examining which media outlet is more oriented toward a war journalism frame, and which war-journalism indicator is more prominent, other variables studied included the story type (news, feature, and opinion pieces), and sources (local, foreign/national news

agencies, wire service) (see Appendix B). Hard news is mostly fast-paced and front-page news, generally up to the minute and takes a factual approach. If news reporting should be informative, fact-based and has a timeliness connected to it, a feature story also presents factual information but without timeliness. Therefore, this news type employs a more leisurely pace than deadline hard-news. However, both are relatively objective because no opinion or conclusions are included. An opinion piece, on the other hand, functions to express the opinions of the writer or the newspaper. In other words, the newspaper tells its reader what happened and then give its opinion on this matter. While focusing on the same topic, feature news covers the SCS conflict in much greater depth and detail compared to hard news and with much less editorial content compared to opinion pieces.

In the context of coverage of the SCS conflict, nationalistic element is defined as any thought, view, or attitude to support a conflicting party by strongly opposing against other parties, based mainly on emotion instead of reason. A story is coded as having nationalistic elements if linguistic elements purport to express such highly emotional thoughts, views or attitudes. The below quote from the *Philippines Inquirer* is an example:

"Although we support a diplomatic solution, let there be no doubt in anybody's mind, in any foreign powers mind, that if they dare to eject us from Pagasa, Filipinos will not take that sitting down. Filipinos are willing to die for their soil," (Flag waving in the Spratlys, July 22).

Due to limited condition of a master thesis, the author of this thesis is the sole coder.

Global Times. The *Global Times* belongs to the *People's Daily* and is China's second-largest English-daily distributed nationally, in terms of circulation number, after the *China Daily*. The English edition of the *Global Times* started publishing in April 2009 as an effort by China's state media to have a greater influence abroad and counteract what Chinese officials see as

biased reporting from the foreign press. "A 24-page newspaper with nationwide distribution, the English edition will be a vital new medium affording international readers the opportunity to discover and understand China, while allowing Chinese to express themselves to the world," reads the paper's website. According to China' Sobao Advertising Agency, *Global Times* is by circulation the third-largest newspaper in China, with a daily print readership of 2.4 million, and reported web readership of 10 million.

The *Global Times* is chosen because it has a different mission from its parent publishing organization of the *People's Daily*, which is often seen as China's state mouthpiece. Although the *Global Times* is also a state-owned paper subject to the same censorship regime, it has evolved a more populist function since its founding 19 years ago. The paper is believed to attract and actually engage readers, rather than to simply telegraph intentions of the China's Foreign Ministry or the Organization Department (Larson, 2011).

Thanh Nien News. *Thanh Nien* is a publication of the Vietnam National Youth Federation, and has been one of the most influential newspapers in Vietnam for 26 years. Its Vietnamese daily publication has a total readership of more than 2 million per week, making it one of the most widely circulated newspapers in the country. *Thanh Nien News* is the English language versions of *Thanh Nien*, which was first launched online in 2004 and became a 16-page daily print in 2007.

Although the move toward a market economy has made rigid censorship more difficult in Vietnam, the country is still a communist state. As such, most state outlets often avoid "sensitive" and controversial topics to reinforce a party-friendly line. *Thanh Nien News* is selected because its journalism is seen as relatively bold compared to other state-owned papers. Although the paper also follows the party line on certain topics, it often presents alternative

viewpoints; even on sensitive topics and even if they are directly and outspokenly critical of the government. *Thanh Nien News* publishes all its top Vietnamese language stories in English.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer. The *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, also known as the *Inquirer*, is the most widely circulated newspaper in the Philippines, with a daily circulation of 260,000 copies. It was founded 26 years ago as one of the first private newspapers in the country. Despite its private ownership, the newspaper is one of the country's newspapers of record since its editorial and news-gathering functions are considered professional and typically authoritative.

The Philippine media landscape is completely different from that of China and Vietnam. The country's media have been touted as the freest, most boisterous in Southeast Asia. Most of the local and national newspapers are published in English as the majority of Filipinos can speak and understand English very well. Yet, the Philippines ranks third on the Committee to Protect Journalists' Global Impunity Index, a quantitative measure of the number of journalists killed world-wide for their work. Its news media is also seen as vulnerable to pressures on their proprietors and protective of the interests of their owners. Therefore, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* is selected for its openness in expressing views on just about anything, including politics.

The New York Times. *The New York Times* is the third largest circulated newspapers in the United States, according to a report compiled by the Audit Bureau of Circulation for the six-month period ending March 31, 2011. Being one of the flagships of the American news media, it helps set the national media agenda. *The New York Times* is selected for this study because, apart from news, it has in-depth analysis and reporting, which is of particular relevant for this study's purposes. Moreover, as a daily newspaper, the *New York Times* offers the most up-to-date news, allowing readers to track the latest developments in the SCS conflict in the fastest way. The

newspaper is also one of few mainstream media organizations in the United States that has been reporting on the SCS conflict consistently for decades. Further, the *New York Time* is widely distributed around the world and has a tradition of excellence in foreign coverage (Zein & Cooper, 1992).

Findings and Discussions

RQ1: Which country's media gives more coverage to the conflict? Vietnam, Philippines, China, or international news organizations? Of the total 164 stories, the Global Times dominates with 37 percent (60 stories), followed by the Philippine Daily Inquirer with 30 percent (50 stories). Vietnam's Thanh Nien News had 22 percent (36 stories) to the coverage of the conflict during this 2-month period, whereas the New York Times constituted 11 percent of the total coverage (18 stories).
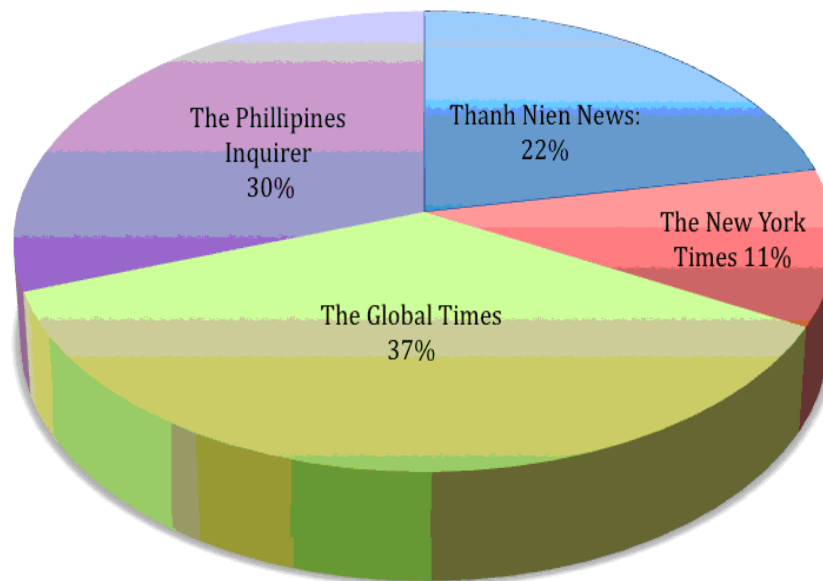
Figure 8. Frequency of Coverage among the Four Newspapers

RQ2: Which types of articles (or coverage) are used more frequently? Hard news reports, features, editorials, or others (e.g., letters to the editors, picture gallery)? Of the total of 164 stories, 73 (43.7%) were hard news stories, 52 (31.1%) were news features, 36 (21.6%) were opinion pieces including editorials, and 6 (3.6%) were listed as others (those include letters to the editor, photo gallery, voices, talk around town and daily quotes). Only a very small number of stories (9 stories or 5.4%) were produced by international wire services, including the *Associated Press*, *Agence France Press*, and *Reuters*. The majority (158 stories or 94.6%) were produced by local sources. Of the 158 stories produced locally, only 14 stories (8.9%) were sourced from national news agencies. *The Global Times* is the newspaper having the highest number of stories sourced from a country's own national news services. It has 16.7 percent of stories sourced from *Xinhua*, the China's national news agency. Foreign wire services, on the other hand, are the major source for *Thanh Nien News*. Freelancers, academics, and members of the public contributed to 9.5% (15 stories) among locally produced articles, while 81.6% (129 stories) were written by the newspapers' own reporters.
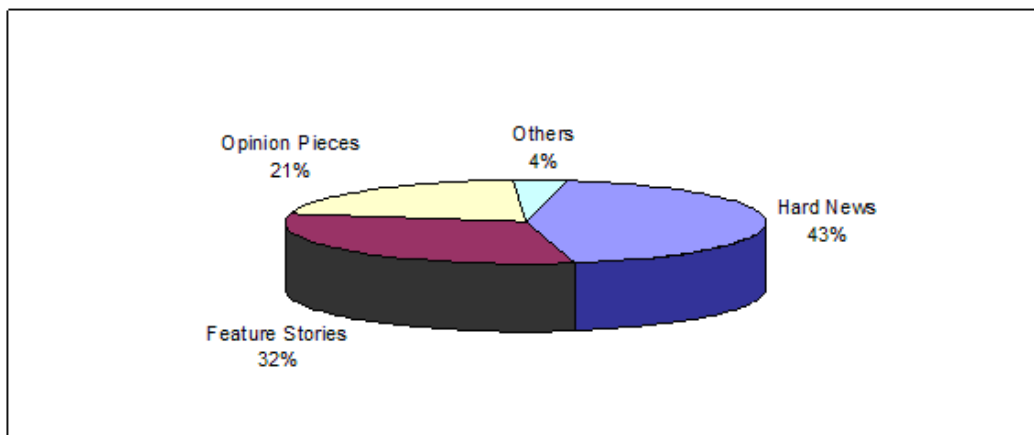
Figure 9. News Categories: All Four Newspapers

The Global Times. On average, 43 percent of the *Global Times'* coverage is hard news, while opinion pieces account for 27 percent (16 stories). Feature stories make up 23 percent of

Global Times stories while other news types such as photo gallery or daily quotes share just about 7 percent of the total.
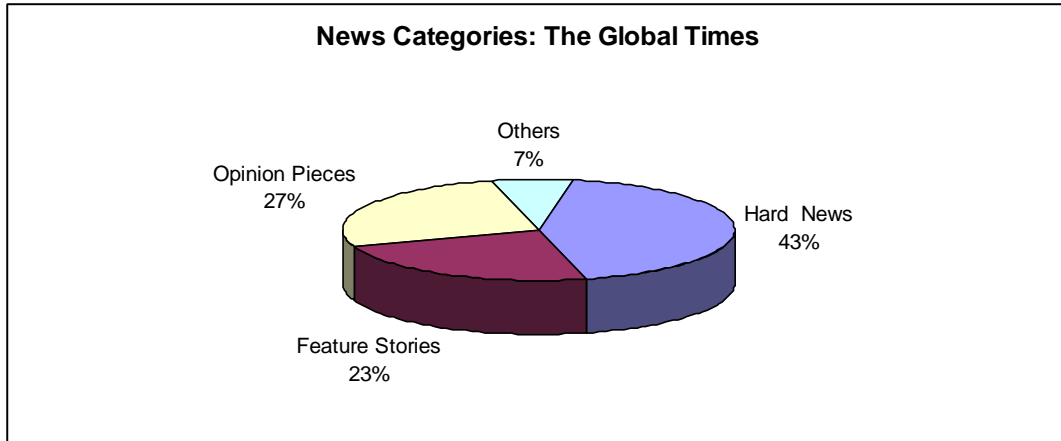
Figure 10. News Categories: The Global Times.

The Philippines Inquirer. Similar to *the Global Times*, hard news prevails in coverage by *the Philippine Inquirer* with 42 percent (21 stories). However, there is a significantly greater percentage of feature stories in the Philippine newspaper compared to the Chinese paper. Feature stories comprise 38 percent, whereas opinion pieces only constitute 18 percent of the total. Other types of news only contributed 2 percent to the whole coverage.
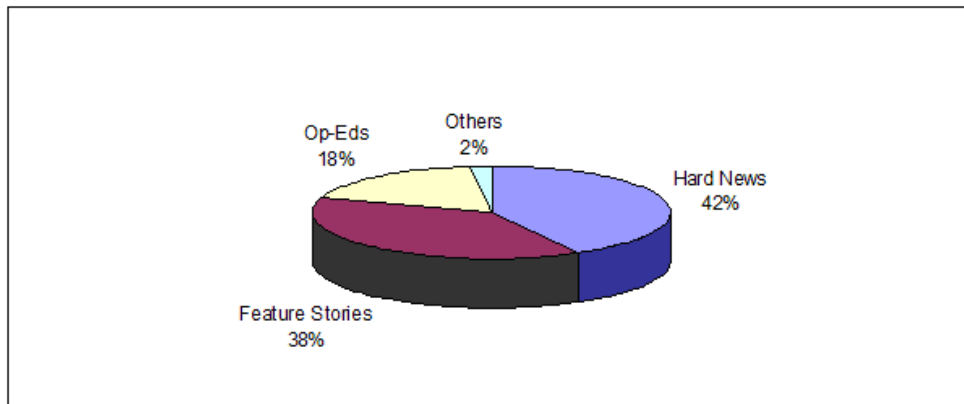
Figure 11. News Categories: The Philippines Inquirer

Thanh Nien News. Coverage in *the Thanh Nien News* has a slightly different structure from both the Philippine and the Chinese newspapers as its coverage only consists of hard news, features

and opinion pieces. Hard news is still the most dominant kind of news with 47 percent, followed by feature stories with 36 percent. *Thanh Nien News*'s opinion pieces accounts for 17 percent.
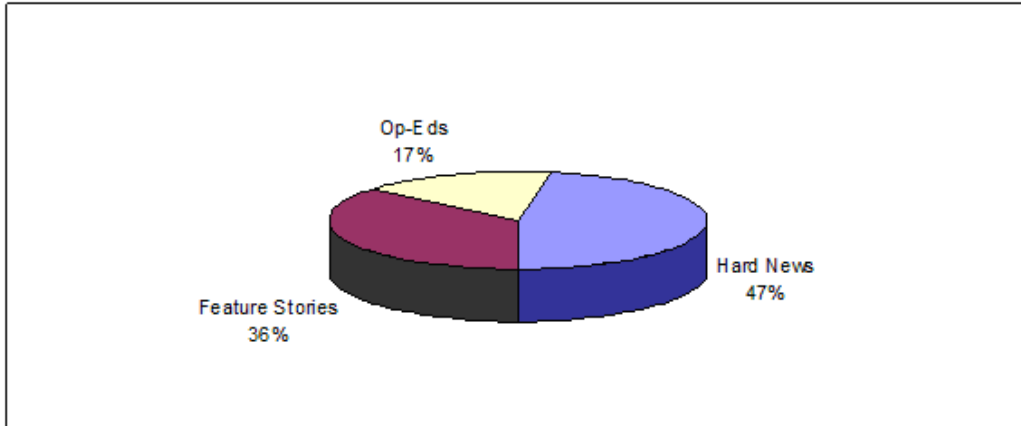
Figure 12. News Categories: Thanh Nien News

The New York Times. Again, the prime story type of *the New York Times*' coverage is hard news with 44 percent. Feature stories make up a considerable amount with 33 percent of the total coverage, whereas opinion pieces only count for 17 percent.
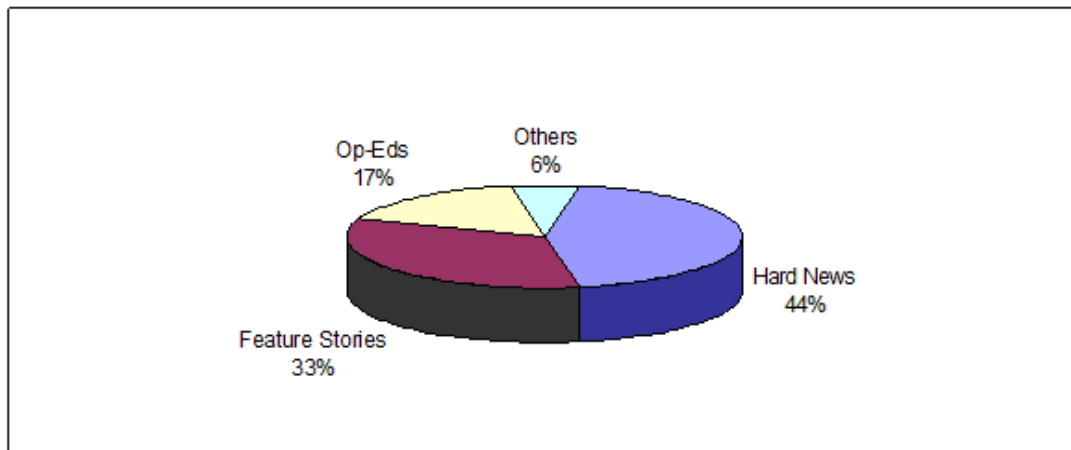
Figure 13. News Categories: The New York Times

Since the development in the SCS conflict during the period under study marks a new round of tensions since the 1980s, it is not surprising that hard news comprises the majority of news coverage on the issue. These stories are mostly front-page news, up to the minute and take

a factual approach: What happened? Who/which country was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why? There is a significance difference between *the Global Times* and *Thanh Nien News, the Philippines Inquirer,* and *the New York Times* in the amount of space dedicated to opinion pieces. Opinion pieces make up the second largest part of the coverage in *the Global Times,* whereas feature stories comprise the second-largest quantity of the other three newspapers' coverage. On a newsworthy issue like the SCS conflict, opinion pieces were informed by facts, but then a particular point of view was found shining through in order to try to persuade readers to agree with the opinion. This means an opinion piece is more to persuade rather than to inform. However, this important point could be lost on readers of these newspapers, especially *the Global Times*, as news and editorials are found mixed together in the paper. In the following example, it is difficult for readers to be clear that *the Global Times* was opining and reporting news because it is factual but highly opinionated and one-sided to make a point.

"*Hundreds of Vietnamese gathered outside the Chinese embassy in Hanoi on Sunday to demand that China stay out of waters claimed by Vietnam, which a Chinese scholar said risked undermining bilateral relations [...] The rare demonstration must have been approved tacitly by the Vietnamese government and is aimed at pressuring China on the South China Sea [...]*" (Vietnam protest damages ties, The Global Times, June 7).

RQ3: Do the mainstream media outlets serve as mouthpieces of the political elite?

"News is not necessarily what happens, but what a news source says has happened," (Sigal, 1973, p.121).

A frequency count shows that political elites are the most likely source for the news coverage on the SCS during the studied period, with 88.4 percent of the four newspapers' stories either coming from or focused on elites or official sources. Among the four newspapers, *the Philippine Inquirer* is the one that depends most heavily on governmental officials or political

51

elites as its news sources (94%), followed by *the New York Times* (88.9%) and *Thanh Nien News* (86%), respectively. *The Global Times* is found to rely the least on elite sources (85%).

The findings reveal that elites and official sources frame the news discourse of the SCS conflict, which is an issue of critical importance for foreign policy and regional and national security. Taking into account their national security and interest, media professionals from all the four countries in this study are shown to stick to the safe side by supporting and reflecting their government's foreign policy decisions. This suggests that the main role of the news media in this conflict is basically to legitimate the actions of their government. In other words, the *Global Times* serves a domestic political function in an authoritarian system which relies on nationalism for its legitimacy while having a formal policy to promote a harmonious world.
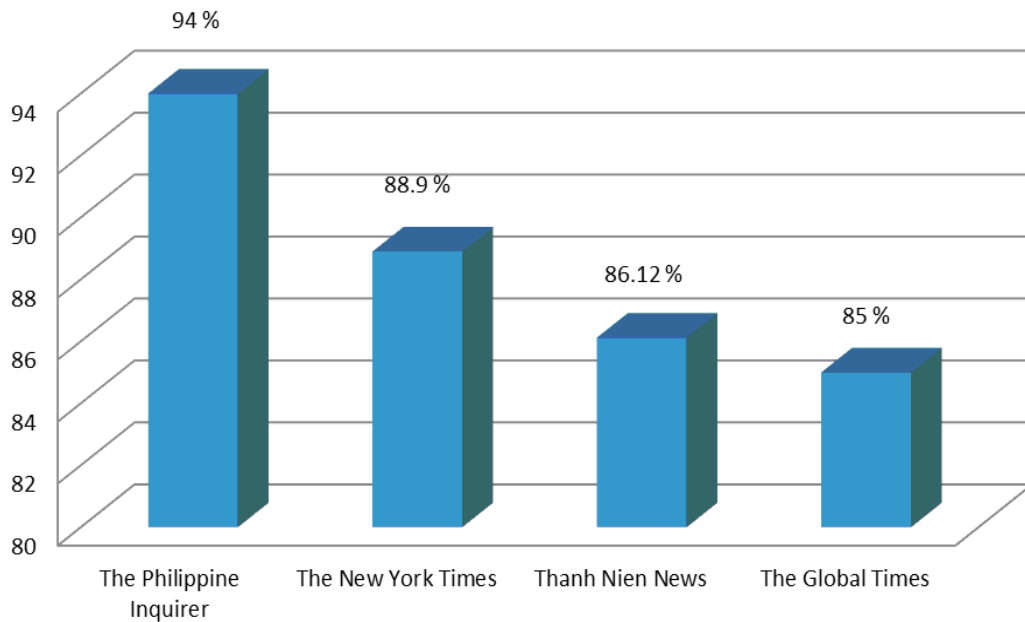
Figure 14. Dependence on Elite Sources.

RQ4: Has the media discourse of the SCS conflict been predominantly guided towards war journalism? Scores are given to each of the ten war-journalism indicators, ranging from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). This mean each story could have from none up to 10 indicators.

The ten war journalism indicators are found in every single studied story. Out of the total 164 stories, 6.7 percent of them have found having eight war journalism indicators; 8.5 percent are found having seven war journalism indicators; 17 percent of stories have six war journalism indicators; 20 percent of stories have five war journalism indicators; 22 percent have four war journalism indicators; 7.3 percent have three war journalism indicators; 10.4 percent have two war journalism indicators, and 8 percent have only one war journalism indicator (see Table 1). Overall, in the sample, the war-journalism frame prevails the media discourse of the SCS conflict.

In greater details, 88.4 percent of the total stories put emphasis on elite and official sources (Indicator 1), followed by partisanship (Indicator 5) found in 87.2% of stories; 77.9 percent of stories focused on the differences leading to the conflict (Indicator 3), while 65.2 percent have the good/bad tagging indicator (Indicator 4). Demonizing language (Indicator 9) is found in 43.9 percent of total stories, whereas 38.4 percent promote war options as the conflict outcome (Indicator 2). Military language (Indicator 8) is used in 37.1 percent of stories, and 30.5 percent have the zero-sum victory-defeat orientation (Indicator 6). Finally, emotive language is an element of only 15.9 percent of stories.

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of War Journalism Indicators in a Single Story (Total Data)

No of War Journalism Indicators	Frequency	%
8	11	6.7
7	14	8.5
6	28	17
5	33	20
4	36	22
3	12	7.3
2	17	10.4
1	13	8
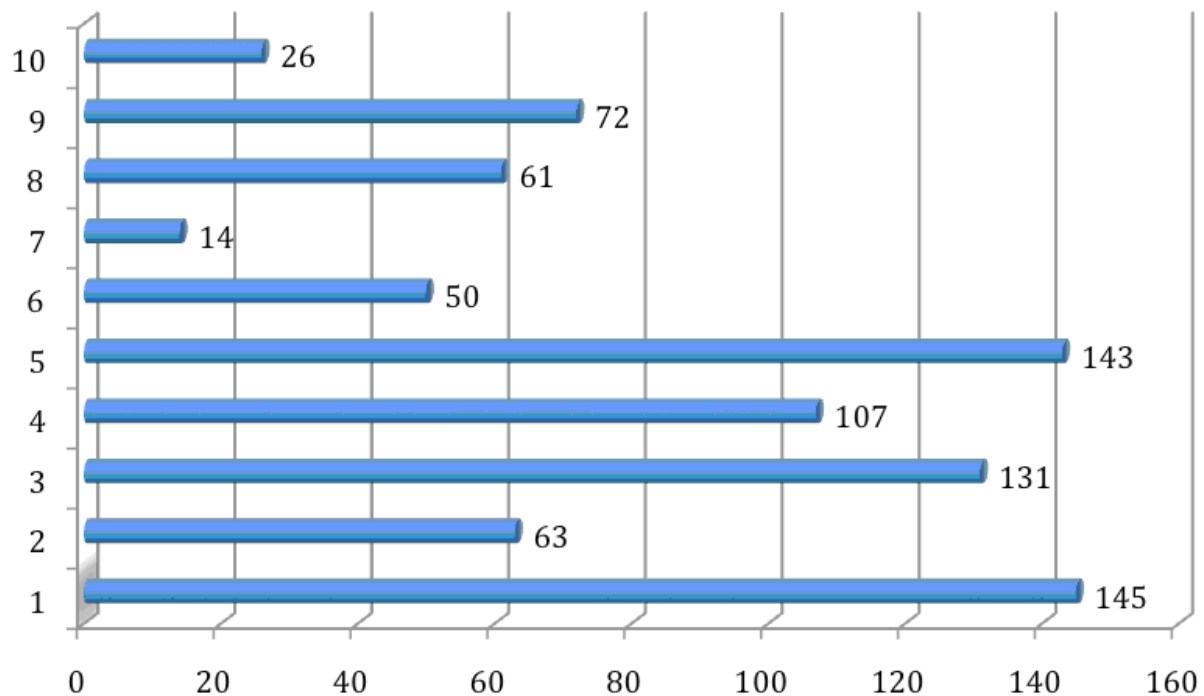
Figure 15. War Journalism Indicators Found in the Four Newspapers.

The Global Times. Based on a frequency count of 60, the four most salient indicators of war journalism found in *the Global Times*' coverage are partisanship (98.3 %), focus on differences leading to the conflict (86.7%), emphasis on elite and official sources (85%), and frequent bad/good tagging (73.3%). In this section quotes illustrating these indicators are provided.

Being partisan, the *Global Times* stories were biased for one side of the conflict (China). The following quote illustrates this indicator.

"Vietnam's unilateral resources exploration in the South China Sea broke the China-ASEAN consensus. Beijing's corresponding moves were not in violation of any international agreements," (Beijing rebuffs Hanoi offshore oil, gas claims, May 30).

It The *Global Times* also confined the conflict to the differences among the conflicting parties, with biased judgment about the United States, Vietnam and the Philippines, and assigned blame to other countries for starting and/or worsening the conflict. The following quotes illustrate the indicator of focusing on differences leading to the conflict.

"The South China Sea is not the only place triggering conflicts over sovereignty. But not all countries are scrambling for their interests and preparing for action, as some countries off the South China Sea are doing today," (Clear red line needed in South China Sea, June 19).

Similar to the main trend, stories of the Chinese newspaper tended to focus on political elites; that is, Chinese political leaders and military officials such as Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi, or China's minister of defence Liang Guanglie. Quoting government and military officials on a frequent basis served this function-to report the conflict from the point of view of the Chinese political elites. The following quote illustrates this indicator.

"'China's stance on the South China Sea is clear and consistent. We oppose the oil and gas operations conducted by Vietnam, which have undermined China's interests and jurisdictional rights in the South China Sea and violated the consensus both countries have reached on the issue,' China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Jiang Yu said late Saturday," (Beijing rebuffs Hanoi offshore oil, gas claims, May 30)

The *Global Times used* frequent good/bad tagging to give name to their evil-doers (i.e., Vietnam, the Philippines and the United States). Condemning language and attitude were adopted in any reference to the respective conflicting parties. This indicator was found following in the following examples.

"The Philippines is obviously piling on the pressure for China by talking about internationalizing the issues, but the involvement of any other parties will not help address the differences," (Experts dismiss Filipino maritime concerns, June 2).

"But unlike the US' ultimate goal of hampering China and driving it further away from the Pacific, China's military strength is aimed at restoring the validity of the Yalta System to what it ought to be and with this China's rightful claim of Taiwan. Such claims are rational and reasonable and have a bright future ahead," (Oceanic strategy not aimed at US interests, June 9).

"The drill is undoubtedly intended as a military show of force toward China. [...] Through the flexing of its muscle, Vietnam wants to demonstrate its resolution to maintain its claims on the Nansha Islands," (Vietnam set for major naval drill, June 13)

"The patience that Vietnam and the Philippines used to possess has been replaced by an impulse to act tough. This might be part of what US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described as "smart power," with which the US appears to be reaching out to countries around the South China Sea, while in fact; it is masterminding discontent and resentment among them. The US looks to be the biggest winner from this discord," (US intervention in South China Sea daft, June 14).
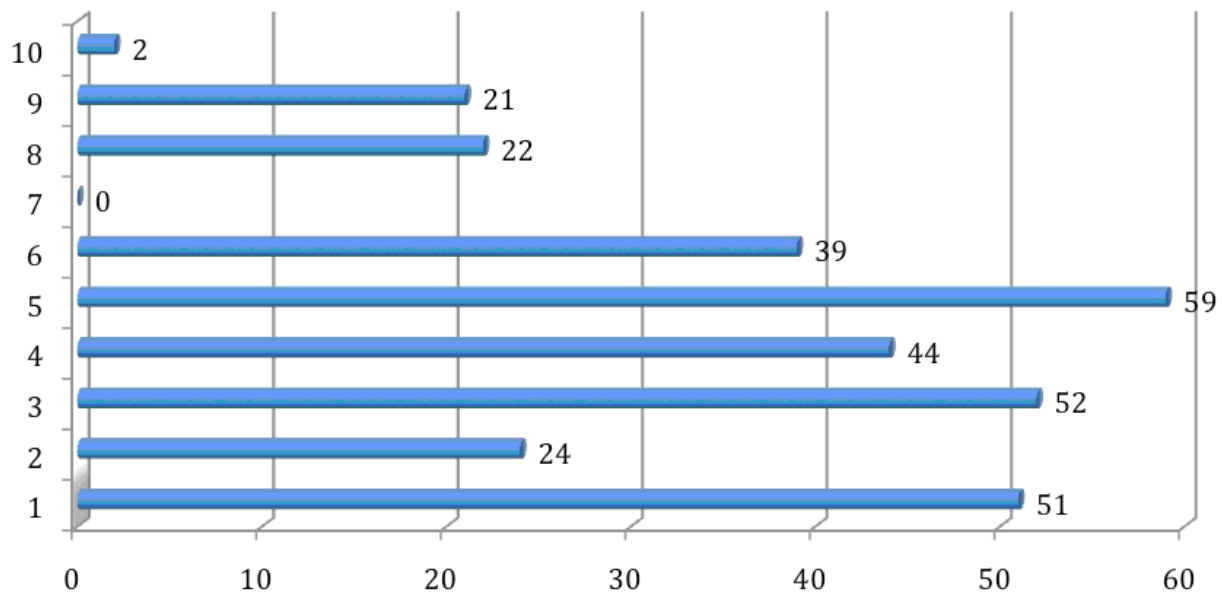
Figure 16. War Journalism Indicators: The Global Times.

The New York Times. The four most salient war journalism indicators in the coverage of the *New York Times,* based on a frequency count of 18, are emphasis on elite and official sources (88.9%), focus mainly on differences leading to the conflict (83.4%), conflict outcomes focused on war options (66.7%), and zero-sum victory defeat orientation (61%). Being an international observer, the *New York Times* pursued a multiparty orientation, giving voice to the many countries involved. Yet, political elites and official sources still comprised the largest proportion of its coverage of the conflict. Also, the *New York Times* mostly emphasized causes of the conflict and tended to report violence and war options.
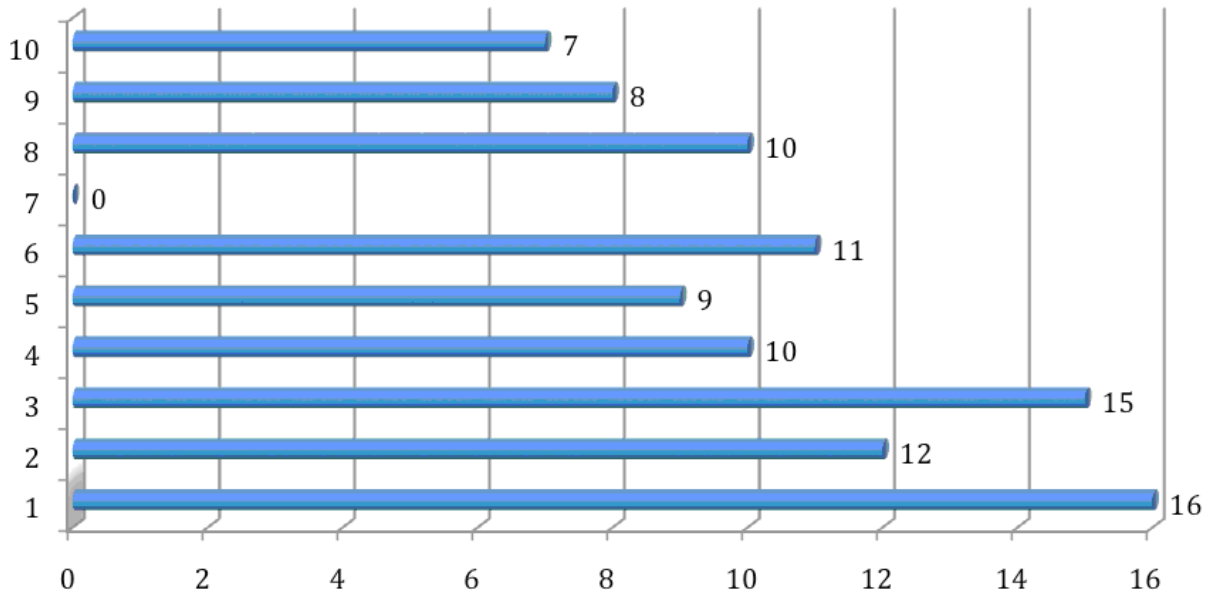
Figure 17. War Journalism Indicators: The New York Times.

The Philippine Inquirer. The *Philippine Inquirer* 's coverage of the SCS conflict was mostly supported by the following four war journalism indicators, based on a frequency of 50: emphasis on elite and official sources (94%), partisanship (84%), focus on differences leading to the conflict (70%), and use of demonizing language (54%). The dominant voice of the Philippine coverage was still from official and political elite sources. It also employed a partisan approach in reporting the conflict as a patriotic and vocal supporter of the Philippine stance. Consequently, it is not surprising to find its coverage dig deep into the involved parties' disagreements, particularly between the Philippines and China. In using demonizing language, the newspaper often portrayed the Chinese activities as wicked, agressive and threatening.

The following quote illustrates the emphasis on elite and official sources indicator:

"Defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin is apparently wearying of the double talk coming from his Chinese counterpart amid reports of fresh incursions into the Philippine-claimed portions of the Spratly Islands in the West Philippine Sea (or South China Sea)," (DND chief accuses China of double talk, July 23).

58

The following quote illustrates the indicator of partisanship:

"At the same time, the Filipino people condemn the arrogance of Chinas sole claim over the disputed islands, its refusal to recognize the claims of other nations, and its refusal to engage in multilateral negotiations, it added," (Pinoy reds rap China, US, PH over Spartlys, July 6).

The following quote illustrates the focus on differences leading to the conflict indicator:

"China speaks with both ends of its mouth on the Spratlys. Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai urges restraint on the part of the United States which has declared its support for allies in the dispute. The US, the minister says, should limit itself to urging more restraint and responsible behavior from those countries that have been frequently taking provocative actions. But how else do we characterize Chinas actuations, including sending navy ships to the disputed waters and arresting Vietnamese and Filipino fishermen who venture too close to the claimed islands? Are these not also provocative? Is this just diplomat before guns and aircraft carriers are brought in to do the talking?" (Common use in the Spartlys, June 28).

The following quote illustrates the indicator of demonizing language:

"China will become the threat it will not only become the giant but it will become the monster," (China will become ruthless monster, says Indon expert, July 15).
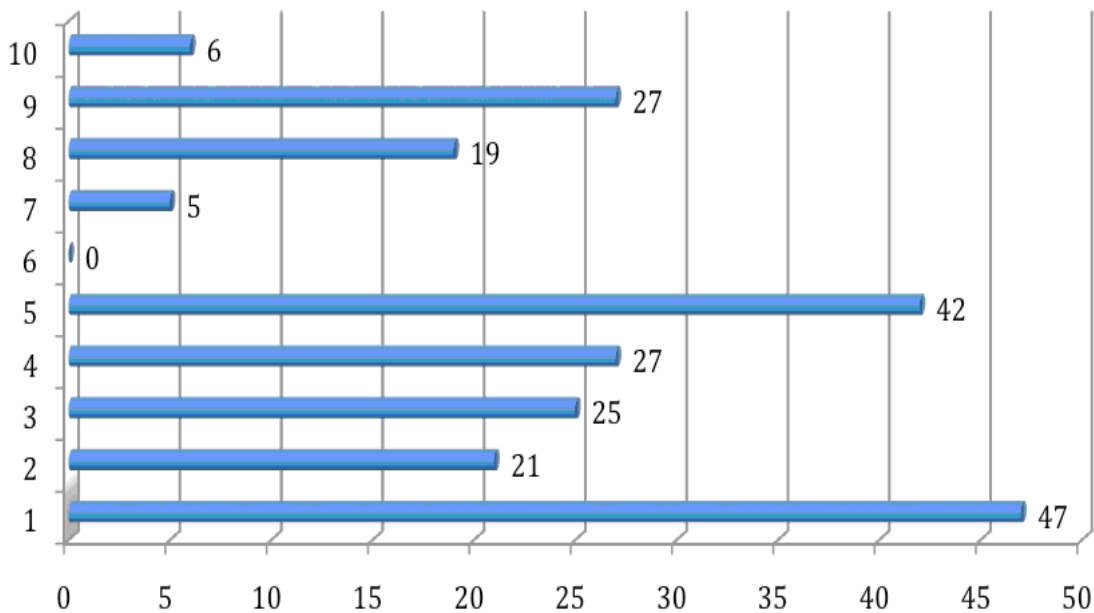
Figure 18. War Journalism Indicators: The Philippines Inquirer.

Thanh Nien News. Based on a frequency count of 36, the four most prominent war journalism indicators found in coverage of the Thanh Nien News are: partisanship (91.6%), emphasis on elite and official sources (86.12%), main focus on differences leading to the conflict (80.6%), and frequent good/bad tagging (72.3%%). As a conflicting party, it is observed that the Vietnamese newspaper's coverage of the conflict also privileged prevailing views of the country's political elites, being strongly supportive for the Vietnamese claims. Also, the majority of its stories denounced Chinese actions in the SCS.

Based on a frequency count of 36, the four most prominent war journalism indicators found in coverage of the *Thanh Nien News* are: partisanship (91.6%), emphasis on political elites and official sources (86.12%), main focus on differences leading to the conflict (80.6%), and frequent good/bad tagging (72.3%). As a conflicting party, it is observed that the Vietnamese newspaper's coverage of the conflict also privilidged prevailing views of the country's political elites, being strongly supportive for the Vietnamese claims. Also, the majority of its stories denounced Chinese actions in the SCS.

In the following quote the focus on differences leading to the conflict indicator is illustrated:

"China's harassment towards Vietnam and its violations of international regulations and normal practices can cause discontent to any people of any country. China is acting aggressively but at the same time accusing another country of being tough," (Chinese press distorting information, threatening Vietnamese people, June 23).

The following quote illustrates the indicator of frequent good/bad tagging:

"Over the years, China has maintained a peaceful and stable environment to develop its economy and has always tried to build up a good image. However, while waiting for a good opportunity, it continued to implement in secret its strategies related to the East Sea. And now it seems to believe that it is strong enough to play the role of a big country," (China has always wanted the whole of East Sea, June 11)

"The behaviors of the Chinese vessels are inconsistent with international law and regional norms," *(Maritime experts cry foul on China, June 3).*
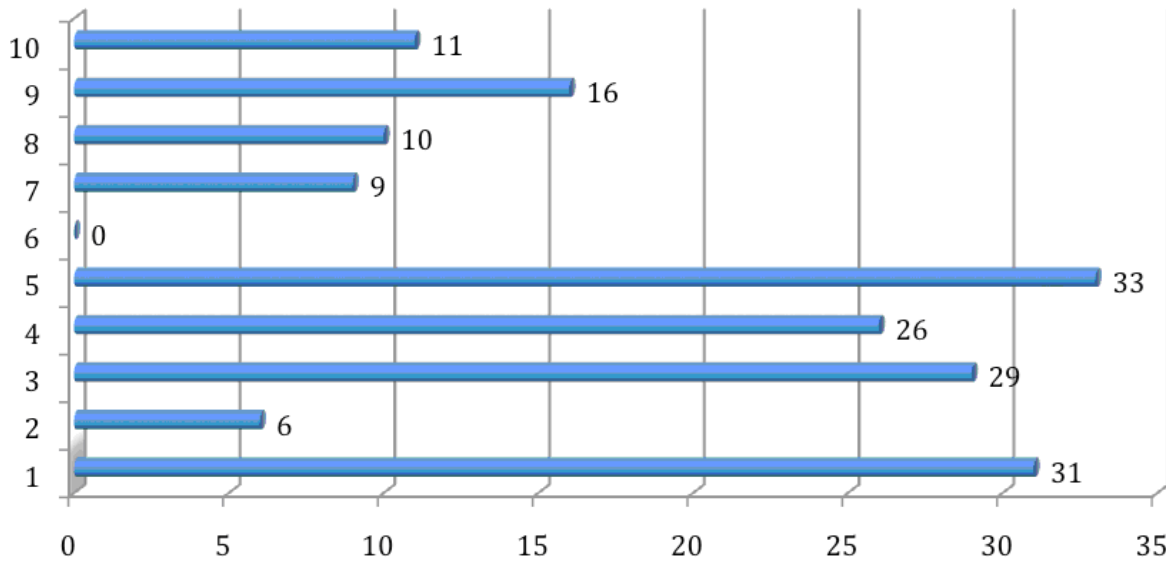
Figure 19. War Journalism Indicators: Thanh Nien News

RQ5: Which newspaper is identified more tilted towards war journalism? In terms of country, the four newspapers differ in their war framing of stories. The strongest war journalism framing is found in the SCS conflict by the Chinese and the American newspapers, followed by the Philipine newspaper and the Vietnamese newspaper, respectively. The following discusses the patterns of framing for each of these newspapers.

The Global Times and the New York Times. Although the war journalism frame is strongest in the coverage of SCS conflict by both *the Global Times* and *the New York Times*, there is a significant higher proportion of war journalism frames observed in the Chinese paper than in the American paper. *The Global Times*'s summary score for the ten war journalism indicators is 295 (per 60 stories), while that number for the *New York Times* is 97 (per 18 stories). The highest number of war journalism indicators found in a single story of both

newspapers is 8. Yet, 25% of the *Global Times'* stories have 6 war indicators, whereas stories with 4 war indicators mostly dominate coverage of *the New York Times*. (see Table 2, 3).

Table 2

Global Times Data Summary Statistics

Mean	4.92
Median	5
Mode	6
Standard Deviation	2.02
Minimum	1
Maximum	8
Sum	295

Table 3

The New York Times Data Summary Statistics

Mean	5.38
Median	5
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	1.71
Minimum	2
Maximum	8
Sum	97

The Philippine Inquirer and Thanh Nien News. The *Philippine Inquirer's* coverage shows a more salient war journalism frame compared to the *Thanh Nien News*. The Philippine newspaper's summary score of total war journalism is 189, which is slightly higher than that of the Vietnamese newspaper (165). The highest number of war journalism indicators that can be found in a single story of both the two newspapers is 7. The frequency of distribution for *the Philippine Inquirer* is 5 and for the *Thanh Nien News* is 4. Similarly, at least one war journalism indicator is found in every story of both newspapers. Also, they are both dominated by stories with 5 war journalism indicators, with 25 percent for coverage of *the Thanh Nien News* and 22 percent for coverage of *the Philippine Inquirer* (see Table 4, 5).

Table 4

The Philippine Inquirer Data Summary Statistics

Mean	3.78
Median	4
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	1.78
Minimum	1
Maximum	7
Sum	189

Table 5

Thanh Nien News Data Summary Statistics

Mean	4.58
Median	5
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	1.6
Minimum	1
Maximum	7
Sum	165

RQ6: In the overall coverage, which country got more unfavorable coverage and was framed as aggressors? Overall, 65.2 percent of the studied stories had some kind of condemnation. China's actions in the SCS conflict was the most common object of the condemnations (59%), while the most vocal critics were from the *Philippine Inquirer* (43%), followed by the *Thanh Nien News* (41%) and the *New York Times* (16%).

As China's claim over virtually the whole SCS contends with all other claimants, the standard editorial stance of *Thanh Nien News, the Philippines Inquirer* and the *New York Times* is to depict China as the bully with words such as "threaten", "rob", "illegal invasion", "warmonger", or even "monster"...etc. The following quote from the *Philippines Inquirer* serves as an example:

"*Andi Widjajanto, a professor at the Department on International Relations Studies at the Universitas Indonesia based in Depok, said China would become **a ruthless monster** by then and trigger conflict in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) region,"(China will become ruthless monster, says Indon expert, July 15)*

The *New York Times*'s coverage mostly discussed the possibility that China could seize the dispute's new developments for a military expansion, becoming a dominant power in both the Pacific region and the world. It commented that " the growing confidence of the Chinese Navy is on open display," (China navy reaches far, unsettling the region, June 15), and from an American standpoint " the Chinese have been ambiguous about their motivations, " (Wary rivals, U.S. and China try to reach truce on military strategy, July 15). Another such quote was:

"We still don't see eye-to-eye with China over military operating rights in the South China Sea. We still don't fully understand China's justification for the rapid growth in its defense spending or its long-term military modernization goals. And we don't believe that China should be allowed to resolve disputes in contested waters by coercing smaller nations," (A step toward trust with China, July 26).

Coverage in both the *Philippine Inquirer* and *Thanh Nien News*, on the other hand, highlighted condemnations of what they characterized as China's sovereignty violation, big power behavior, misleading information, increasing aggression, and its refusal to engage in multilateral negotiations.

The *Philippine Inquirer* voiced that the country's public outcry over "the increasingly aggressive Chinese intrusions" and accused the Chinese of triggering a dramatic rise in tensions between the two countries such as firing on Filipino fishermen, harassing Filipino ships or creeping invasion (Strong Warning to China, July 27). The *Inquirer* also accused China of double talk, espousing policies of peace and friendship on one hand while taking provocative and pressurizing actions that totally belie such claims on the other.

"*China speaks with both ends of its mouth on the Spratlys. Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai urges restraint on the part of the United States which has declared its support for allies in the dispute. The US, the minister says, should limit itself to urging more restraint and responsible behavior from those countries that have been frequently taking provocative actions. But how else do we characterize Chinas actuations, including sending navy ships to the disputed waters and arresting Vietnamese and Filipino fishermen who venture too close to the claimed islands? Are these not also provocative? Is this just diplomatese before guns and aircraft carriers are brought in to do the talking?" (Common Use in the Spratlys, June 28).*

"*But even as China intensifies its show of force, Chinese officials continue to reassure its neighbor that it wants nothing more than peace. In Singapore last Sunday, Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie said his country was committed to peace and stability in the South China Sea. He said China would never threaten any country or seek hegemony.*
Maybe China has a different definition of what constitutes peace, but firing shots over fishing vessels and pushing away research ships are not peaceful acts anywhere. Which is why Filipino officials have lately dropped all diplomatic pretenses and has directly accused China of serious violations of Philippine sovereignty and maritime jurisdiction. Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario has said that while the Philippines is committed to follow international laws, the 2002 Declaration of Conduct in the South China Sea forged by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China, under which all the parties agreed to exercise restraint and refrain from occupying uninhabited areas, was being aggressively violated. And because all its complaints have gone unheeded by Chinese authorities, the Philippines is now bringing the case to the United Nations," (Naked Aggression, June 8).

Apart from accusations of China's arrogance and imperious attitude, China was portrayed as a threat to regional peace and security by the Philippine newspaper.

"China appears more willing now to use its strength and size to promote its interests, driven by new domestic forces and reacting to explicit efforts by other big countries to secure their superior position as maritime powers in the waters surrounding China," (Power Asymmetry in West Philippine Sea, June 26).

Similarly, the *Thanh Nien News* charged China with "violation of international law", "illegal attack", "provocative actions", and " threat of violence":

"China's harassment towards Vietnam and its violations of international regulations and normal practices can cause discontent to any people of any country. China is acting aggressively but at the same time accusing another country of being tough," (Chinese press distorting information, threatening Vietnamese people, June 23).

"From the time of its first leadership, China has always thought about dominating the East Sea (South China Sea). It has targeted that sooner or later it will take it; what matters is when. [...]It is not only racing to develop military bases in the East Sea, but also deeply violating the exclusive economic zones. Of course, China can't conduct its schemes immediately, but has to escalate matters step by step towards the target. What they are doing is aimed at generating publicity, turning an area without disputes into a disputed one, and illogically applying the "U-shaped" line (which has been added by China to its maps to claim to over 80 percent of the East Sea," (China has always wanted the whole of East Sea, June 11)

The Vietnamese newspaper also upbraided China for its inconsistency in talks and actions:

"China also made false claims that Vietnamese armed ships had chased away their fishing boats, posing critical risks to Chinese fishermen's safety. Such actions and claims by China have been considered as "carrying fire in one hand and water in the other," (China has always wanted the whole of East Sea, June 11).

Besides presenting China as the aggressor, the *Thanh Nien News* was found to have used emotive language in its stories to create empathy for poor Vietnamese fishermen who were captured by China in the disputed waters for ransoms.

"Hundreds of people, who are families and relatives of the seized fishermen, standing and sitting on the beach, crying and praying for their loved ones to come back home safe and sound," (Vietnamese scholar discusses East Sea disputes on Chinese television, June 29).

"[...] relatives built empty graves for the missing men – a traditional funeral practice for fishermen who die at sea and whose bodies are not found. "After nearly four months of waiting, I had to accept the truth that my father would never come back. It hurts and feels like my heart has been stabbed and torn into hundreds of pieces. "It feels like I am living in another world – one of sorrow, loneliness and unhappiness. I continue to fold paper cranes and boats, wanting to get out of this world," (Fishermen pick up East Sea gauntlet, July 1)

On the Chinese front, data shows the *Global Times* put 33.3 percent (20 stories) of the blame on the United States for the SCS conflicts' new tensions, followed by condemnations on Vietnam (23.3%) and on the Philippines (12%).

While a sentiment of "who cares what the rivals say" seems to prevail among the Chinese newspaper' stories, how China is seen by the conflicting parties and the international community does really matter. This means discussions in the *Global Times* include ongoing references to international media coverage, and to how China is seen by the world during the conflict. Simply put, the newspaper's assigned task is to defeat "them all" in a war of words.

The Chinese newspaper framed the United States as the largest external power hampering a peaceful settlement of the SCS issue and damaging regional peace and stability, commenting that the Americans were masterminding discontent and resentment among the conflicting parties as the United States seemed "to be the biggest winner from this discord," (US intervention in South China Sea daft, June 14).

"The US also won't stand by idly in the region. Since the start of the 21st century, the US has adjusted its global strategy, transferring its focus from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and gradually gathering strategic resources in the West Pacific. The US aims for nothing but profit, and it will use its balancing role for its own benefits," (Dangerous nationalism risks future of South China Sea, June 26).

The Chinese newspaper not only asserted that the U.S. involvement would complicate the conflict, but also referred to it as "an attack on China" and a pre-planned "war game" (China warns US off naval exercises, July 12). It criticized the United States for clinging to the "Cold

War mentality" and thus always having to find an "enemy state" (China neither world power nor shrinking violet, July 13). Therefore, its coverage sent a strong warning message to the United States that some countries were actually "playing with fire" and the US should not let fire be drawn to itself (China warns US over sea issue, June 23). Also, the newspaper urged China to counter "the U.S. ploys".

"If US continued to take similar moves, keeps on selling weapons to Taiwan and refused to abandon its intentionally established barriers and deeply harbored enmity to China on international issues, fostering and advance Sino-US military relations could only be a wish and fantasy as their insincerity might politically cripple the mutual trust [...] In the South China Sea, the US has spoken of participating in "reconciling" the disputes among China, Vietnam, the Philippines and others. There could be armed clashes if they stepped over China's bottom line. Sovereignty disputes in Northeast Asia are historically unresolved problems. The regional conflicts could be basically brought under control if the US did not meddle in local affairs. Only regional and low-intensive armed conflicts would be possible, even if there were any. Nevertheless, owing to the intervention of the US, some states might misjudge the situation and overstep the line, resulting in war. China's military transparency is growing. Its independence and confidence are more recognized. Developing friendly Sino-US military relations is best for the region and the world. It would be unfortunate if US sticks to their Cold War logistic and persists in establishing a number of realistic or potential rivals to China. In that case, global peace, regional safety and Sino-US strategic interests cannot be guaranteed," (Political impediments could knock Sino-US military relations, July 20).

Vietnam comes second in the blacklist of "aggressors" of the *Global Times'* coverage on the conflict. The Chinese newspaper denied all the neighbor's claims that China was engaging in "bullying actions", calling them "sheer fabrication" (China committed to safeguarding peace, stability of South China Sea: spokesman, June 4), and shifted the allegations the other way around. "Vietnam had endangered Chinese fishermen' lives" and was warned by Beijing to stop "all invasive activities," (South China Sea tensions flare again as Vietnam announces naval drill next week, June 11). It further strongly rebuked Vietnam for attempting to internationalize and complicate the SCS issue.

"Vietnam is the major advocate of inviting the US into the South China Sea as a "balance." Its government is also consenting to a growing nationalistic sentiment among its people. Hanoi has been setting a bad example in Southeast Asia," (China must react to Vietnam's provocation, June 21)

"Vietnam is trying to bring attention to Southeast Asia and portray China as a threatening rising country in the region," (South China Sea tensions flare again as Vietnam announces naval drill next week, June 11).

The Chinese newspaper accused Vietnam of inflaming the recent tensions, threatened that "the biggest challenge of China's insistence on a peaceful solution is laid at Vietnam's door" (China must react to Vietnam's provocation, June 21), and even raised a shrill voice calling for war against its southern neighbor.

"The drill is undoubtedly intended as a military show of force toward China. [...] Through the flexing of its muscle, Vietnam wants to demonstrate its resolution to maintain its claims on the Nansha Islands," (Vietnam set for major naval drill, June 13).

"Depending on how the situation develops, China has to be ready for two plans: negotiate with Vietnam for a peaceful solution, or answer the provocation with political, economic or even military counterstrikes. We have to be clear about the possibility of the second option, so as to let Vietnam remain sober about the South China Sea issue. China has to send a clear message that it will take whatever measures necessary to protect its interests in the South China Sea. If Vietnam continues to provoke China in this region, China will first deal with it with maritime police forces, and if necessary, strike back with naval forces. China should clearly state that if it decides to fight back, it will also take back the islands previously occupied by Vietnam. If Vietnam wants to start a war, China has the confidence to destroy invading Vietnam battleships, despite possible objections from the international community," (China must react to Vietnam's provocation, June 21).

Apart from warning the United States to stay out of the deepening territorial spat in the SCS and accusing Vietnam of provocation, the *Global Times* hit back strongly at the Philippines' reprimands of its sovereignty violations, and "asked Manila to stop harming China's maritime rights and interests" (Beijing rejects Manila accusations, June 8). It even challenged the Philippines with provocative language:

"Clashing with neighboring countries is the last thing China wants. This is not out of timidity but out of a desire to keep a harmonious environment. But if necessary, China will face the

challenges head-on. The risk of an overall confrontation is bigger to neighboring countries. There is little worry for China in breaking off relations with the Philippines. China holds sovereignty over the Zhongye Dao Island, a fact the Philippines cannot change whatever hardline approach it may resort to. If the Philippines think to gain an advantage by rocking the boat, it may go right ahead," (The Philippines will not rock China's boat, July 21)

The *Global Times* also lobbied for military actions against both the Philippines and Vietnam:

"These new possibilities prompted the dispatch of more troops and the development of the modern dispute over the Nansha Islands. If China doesn't act to restrain Vietnam and the Philippines by protecting its rights in the islands, it will have a harder time defending its rights in the future. Vietnam and the Philippines have stirred up the present situation to achieve several goals: As the oil resources in Nansha Islands are very rich, the two countries have real economic interests at stake. They want to grasp the initiative in the South China Sea before the Chinese military becomes more powerful. They also want to play the nationalist card to divert the domestic public away from growing wealth gaps and official corruption in their home countries," (Dangerous nationalism risks future of South China Sea, June 26)

As discussed in the first research question, although Vietnam and the Philippines have overlapping claims, no news story criticizing each other was found in either the *Thanh Nien News* or the *Philippine Inquirer.* On the opposite side of this news battle, *The Thanh Nien News, the Philippines Inquirer and the New York Times* present what might be seen as a common front against China-the "agressor". While *Thanh Nien News* ran stories about Chinese vessels cutting exploration cable on a Vietnamese oil survey ship within Vietnam's exclusive economic zone (Chinese ships violate Vietnam's sovereignty, disrupt oil exploration work, May 25), *the Philippine Inquirer* reported that the country's top military and defense officials discussed the upgrading of military capacity and its president's announcement on sending the country's biggest warship to conduct patrols in the SCS after claiming that Philippine would no longer be bullied by China (Top brass mull upgrades in contested territories, May 31). Similarly, *the New York Times* ran headlines about hundreds of Vietnamese marching down the streets of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to protest against China's behavior (Dispute between Vietnam and China escalates over competing claims in South China Sea, June 11).

RQ7: Have the news media in the conflicting countries framed their reports around extreme nationalism and conflict triggers rather than agreement? Out of the total 164 stories, 151 stories (92 percent) were framed by nationalist sentiments. The *Philippine Inquirer* is found to be the most nationalistic newspaper among the four with 98 percent of its stories having nationalistic elements, followed by the *Global Times* (95%), the *Thanh Nien News* (94%) and the *New York Times* (50%).

Since Vietnam, China and Philippine see the SCS conflict as a rival quest for sovereignty, all the three countries' newspapers quickly frame their stories to defend their "so-called indisputable" sovereign rights, to protect their homeland, sea and islands.

The majority of the *Philippine Inquirer*'s stories were found to echo its government's tough line in defending the Philippines' territorial claims. The newspaper insisted on the Philippines' undoubted possession of the disputed islands and reported that "the Filipino people were prepared to defend their soil," (Spratly 5 go swimming in PAG-ASA, July 21).

"*The President stated the Philippine case with little room for ambiguity: We do not wish to increase tensions with anyone, but we must let the world know we are ready to protect what is ours,"(Strong warning to China, July 27).*

The newspaper also gave its support to the Philippines' attempts to protect its territorial claims by all necessary means, even a military solution:

" *In the strongest warning so far to China, President Aquino declared in his State of the Nation Address on Monday that the Philippines is ready to defend its territorial claims in the South China Sea (renamed West Philippine Sea) with beefed-up military forces," (Strong warning to China, July 27).*

"*Of course, we will also fight, Ensign Conrado Arcellana, the island commander, replied when asked what would happen if foreign invaders attacked," (Spratly 5 go swimming in PAG-ASA, July 21).*

"*In Puerto Princesa City, Lt. Gen. Juancho Sabban told the Palawan provincial board that the Armed Forces of the Philippines would take a defensive position if challenged by China. We will fire only when fired upon. That is our rule of engagement, the Western Command chief said on*

Tuesday, reacting to questions from board members about Chinas reported plan to explore for oil in the region," (PH pulls China markers, June 16).

"The new Philippine ambassador to Washington, Jose Cuisia Jr., has asked the defense department in Manila to prepare an inventory of weapons to beef up the countrys military capability. The weapons list is regarded as the first step in negotiating arms purchases from the United States. I'm told that some of these weapons could at least sink Chinese vessels invading Philippine structures in the area. Diplomatic settlement is still held as a priority over armed action, but diplomacy also needs to be backed by gunsto be credible," (Spratlys row a test of P-Noy mettle, June 13).

The nationalistic flame was also found burning in the coverage of the *Global Times*. It employed an aggressive editorial style to push the Sino-centric view and promote Chinese nationalism.

"It is wrong for countries in the region to try and use Washington's power to counter Beijing as China will not make any concessions on its sovereignty," (Beijing rejects Manila accusations, June 8).

"China didn't take measures to prevent others from playing dirty tricks or to lead to perform good deeds to preserve the solemnity of the declaration. Preserving our sovereignty by economic means is just one possible strategy. It doesn't mean that we exclude other strategies, including military force, to protect our sovereignty," (Clear red line needed in South China Sea, June 19).

"China has to send a clear message that it will take whatever measures necessary to protect its interests in the South China Sea. If Vietnam continues to provoke China in this region, China will first deal with it with maritime police forces, and if necessary, strike back with naval forces. China should clearly state that if it decides to fight back, it will also take back the islands previously occupied by Vietnam. If Vietnam wants to start a war, China has the confidence to destroy invading Vietnam battleships, despite possible objections from the international community," (China must react to Vietnam's provocation, June 21)

The Chinese newspaper was also found to be more willing to adopt the viewpoint of using the country's size and military strength to promote its interests in the dispute. It sent signals that the relevant multinational companies and third parties, who wanted to participate in exploring the area without China's agreement, were asking for trouble of their own making. It even threatened that those attempting to support certain countries with military assistance and

trying to gain profit through building alliances with some countries in the area could drag themselves into a "mud pit".

There was also a surge of nationalism directed at the "Chinese aggressiveness" on the issue's coverage by the *Thanh Nien News.* It should be noted that the theme of patriotism and anti-Chinese invaders has constituted a major part of the Vietnamese tradition and culture. "No country in Southeast Asia is culturally closer to China than Vietnam, and no other country in the region has spent so long fending off Chinese domination, often at a terrible cost in lives, economic development and political compromise" (Forbes, 2007, para. 2). In other words, the Sino-Vietnamese conflict is not news and the relationship between the two countries has been a long history of mutual enmity. However, Vietnam also has an asymmetric relationship with its northern neighbor. China is currently Vietnam's largest overall trade partner, which is the chief source of its machinery, computers, chemicals and textiles. Vietnam's exports are mostly commodities. Therefore, since Vietnam became more deeply embroiled deeper in the territorial spat with China, the Vietnamese official media channels have usually avoided a tough nationalistic line. The *Thanh Nien News,* yet, displayed a feverish anti-China sentiment on its pages.

"*The act of Chinese fishing and surveillance boats were totally intended, calculated, and well-prepared. It has critically violated Vietnam's sovereignty right and national jurisdiction,*" *(Chinese ships cause disturbance in Vietnam's waters again, June 10)*

"*China's bullying acts and such editorials have destroyed good feelings of Vietnamese people towards China. China's harassment towards Vietnam and its violations of international regulations and normal practices can cause discontent to any people of any country. China is acting aggressively but at the same time accusing another country of being tough (Chinese press distorting information, threatening Vietnamese people, June 23)*

"*Vietnamese leaders have met with their Chinese counterparts many times to talk about the arrests, but not all requirements were met. This time, China has demonstrated aggressive actions, which prompted Vietnam to react in a similar way. There is nothing abnormal about that,*" *(Vietnamese scholar discusses East Sea disputes on Chinese television, June 29).*

Also, the newspaper referred to the conflict's new developments as "an occasion for the people and army to once again "affirm our strongest determination to protect the nation's sacred waters and islands, support activities to fight,"(Vietnam PM calls for sovereignty protection at sea week, June 9). It reported that they -the Vietnamese- have love for their nation, the willpower to not make concessions (Glaring at the shark, July 22), and if necessary, Vietnam would face the challenges head-on.

Although the United States is not a claimant in the SCS conflict, the new developments distressed the United States greatly because it related to China's military buildup and its aggressiveness in the Asia-Pacific region, beyond the freedom of navigation issues. At the same time, the Chinese widely believed that the U.S. government had taken a side against it and had formed C-shape envelopment around China, and thus China has made clear its resentment against the American re-engagement in Asia. Therefore, the *New York Times,* which seeks to speak with a national voice, was found to promote the U.S. involvement as a guarantor of the peace and to depict China as "the lone Asian power" that could pose threats to both the American and regional security (U.S. Won't Become Isolationist, Gates Tells Worried Asian Leaders, June 3).

"Just as June 4 in Beijing ended many illusions about the nature of the Communist Party of China, so events of the past year have stripped away many illusions about the country's "peaceful rise. Whether or not this constitutes an "arms race," there is plenty of reaction to China's acquisition of missiles, stealth aircraft and a range of other sophisticated weapons," (China's Troubled Neighbors, June 7)

The New York Times noticed that the "Chinese are building what they call an entirely defensive force, although one that includes weapons that exist primarily to strike American military targets" (U.S. and China Try to Agree on Military Strategy, July 14), alarming about "the prospect that new and disruptive technologies and weapons could be employed to deny U.S.

forces access to key sea routes and lines of communications," (U.S. Won't Become Isolationist,

Gates Tells Worried Asian Leaders, June 3).

"Some American analysts say the two nations' moves and countermoves could doom any chance for a true military and diplomatic accommodation. Others say the United States could be forced into another arms race -- except that this time, unlike during the cold war, it would be China that has billions to spend on new weapons and the United States that might be forced to choose between guns and butter. China may be able to afford the missile, and the United States may be able to build the ship and the defense system. But whether they are necessary might be another matter. Said one American analyst, "We're priming for a fight that I'm not sure either of us needs or wants to have," (U.S. and China Try to Agree on Military Strategy, July 14).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

As half of the world's merchant fleet by tonnage and oil tanker traffic sail through the disputed waters every year, the SCS is a huge artery of global trade. If the simmering tensions explode into full-fledged war, both the countries concerned and the international economy would be dramatically shaken. Moreover, the major petroleum deposits believed to lie below the SCS's seabed have turned the disputed sea into ground for a nascent but potential new cold war with competing interests of the United States and China. Therefore, the SCS conflict is a regional crisis that is becoming a flashpoint with global consequence, causing the upsurge in tensions under study to have triggered both massive international media coverage as well as extensive coverage in domestic media from the involved countries.

A turbulent situation contributed to the dominance of war journalism and nationalistic sentiments in the coverage of the four newspapers under study. The complex web of contentions among the two giants of China and the United States and the two small, vulnerable countries of Vietnam and Philippines forms the background for the conflict. The United States has claimed its national security interest in freedom of navigation in the SCS, and openly supported a settlement of disputed claims by international law. It further announced that the America's leadership was necessary to deal with the current challenges facing the Asia Pacific. Such American assertions irked China, as it maintains that the disputes should be handled bilaterally. For China, apart from obvious benefits from the resource-rich body of water, the SCS conflict is additionally a matter of national pride. As such, China, emboldened by economic growth as well as military advancement, started gearing up to challenge the United States' military presence in the region. Being small claimant states, Vietnam and the Philippines are

uneasy but caught in a dilemma: to challenge the rising Chinese power or to protect what they believe to be their sovereignty rights. The two countries have chosen to embrace an American return to the region as a counter-Chinese approach. Also, China did help invite U.S. ire by threatening these small neighboring countries.

The dominance of war-journalism elements demonstrate that in covering conflict events which are perceived as a threat to the state or to core national security interests-such as was perceived to be the case in the SCS conflict-these newspapers, as an interpretative community, did not maintain a professional approach of objectivity and balance. Put another way, the journalists' belonging to the national community can overshadow their membership in the professional one.

In this study, these newspapers were found functioning in "a sphere of consensus" in which commitment to balanced and objective coverage was sometimes set aside (Schudson, 2002, p. 40). Instead, these media professionals were seen to "invoke a generalized 'we' and take for granted shared values and assumptions" (Zandberg & Neiger, 2005, p. 138).

Theoretically, the *New York Times* should play the role of an international observer and its coverage was expected to be less involved and more detached, as the United States is not a claimant state in this territorial dispute. However, the findings suggested that warlike elements and nationalism were as high in the American coverage as in the other three newspapers. This supports the theoretical basis of the study, specifically the theory of information-gathering and information-processing, which states that news outlets often find a way to tie their story back to their home nation or region.

The comparative analysis also shows that most stories originated from official and elite sources, which supports the aforementioned relationship between the state and the news media. It

sheds light on how the mainstream media promote the nation's official views during multi-national conflicts. The study further lends evidence for Niven (2004)'s argument, which states that when government officials and public opinion increasingly clash on a particular issue, journalists are more likely to deviate from relying just on official sources. However, journalists will be more likely not to seek an alternative viewpoint in international conflicts that evoke strong feelings of patriotism or nationalism.

Within its limitations, this study offers a quantitative contribution to news framing in conflict reporting, a topic that mostly receives qualitative discussions. Based on Galtung's (1986, 1998) classification of war/peace journalism, along with Ting Lee and Maslog's (2005) criteria for conflict reporting, the study investigates the framing of the SCS conflict by four major English-language newspapers of the three most vocal conflicting parties and the major world power involved. The news media in this study appeared to deem military options more newsworthy than peace negotiations or efforts at etablishing legitmate boundaries through multi-national talks or promoting the adoption of a code of conduct in the conflict waters. In fact, the four newspapers tended to use war frames, even though they could report peace negotiations. In other words, these news outlets had a strong tendency to put their focus on military actions and subsequent responses from the involved governments and armies rather than on long-term, peaceful solutions to the dispute.

All four newspapers that were studied were found to be event-oriented or crisis-oriented. During the peak of tension, both story length and variety of story types (news, feature, opinions) involving the SCS conflict increased. Both story length and story type have a significant relationship with distribution of war journalism indicators. The longer the story, the more likely it has more war journalism indicators. Similarly, there is a large difference in distribution of war

journalism indicators in hard-news, feature stories and opinion pieces. Opinion pieces tend to have the most war journalism indicators, followed by features and hard news, respectively. It is conceivable that longer stories allow journalists time to investigate an issue more fully and thoughtfully. Yet, this also permits journalists to move beyond reporting objective facts into personal analysis and opinions.

China, the Philippines, and Vietnam, embroiled in a decades-old territorial dispute over the SCS, have demonstrated through their major newspapers that media continue to adopt an aggressive, war-oriented coverage of conflicts, putting emphasis mainly on the differences leading to the dispute, with little consideration for common benefits. Their coverage largely reflects and supports justifications for their country's foreign policy in the SCS conflict. Moreover, the technique of good/bad tagging was used widely to blame one another. Specific types of war-journalism framing devices such as victimizing, demonizing language, military vocabulary, and emotive, are found to appear on a frequent basis.

Although the strongest war journalism framing by the Chinese newspaper is not unexpected, it is surprising to find the war-oriented frame similarly prevailed in the American newspaper. One explanation is that stories by Western news agencies tend to report violence and conflict more saliently than any other news stories from developing countries (Hachten, 1999; Hess, 1996). The findings lend support to Hess's (1996) argument that the actions of foreign governments, when related to violence and conflict, have the greatest chance of getting reported by the American media.

Context has proved to have strongly influenced the reporting and selection of news framing by the Chinese, Vietnamese and Philippine newspapers. The conflict among the three countries runs deep. Nationalist sentiment also swept through all three countries following the

naval skirmishes. Both Philippine and Vietnamese protesters were seen marching down the streets, gathering in front of the Chinese Embassy and shouting "Down with China" in Hanoi, Manila and other major cities world-wide in June and July, 2011. In China, there was also a surge of nationalism, mostly directed at the United States and Vietnam. It is likely that the news media not only reflected their government's stands, but also shifted from the professional standards of objective journalism to war journalism framing to reflect their country's viewpoint.

On the whole, the study indicates that the news media of the involved countries reduced their own autonomy as an independent third party in times of conflicts or wars. It suggests that media outlets tend to reflect the stances of their respective governments or people, and war-journalism was the defining and dominating frame in news coverage of the recent development of the SCS conflict. War journalism defines the terms of debate, influences public and media discourse within its framework, and thus shapes much foreign and domestic policy. The Chinese newspaper, the *Global Times,* was most likely to carry propaganda-oriented and biased articles, framed around a hard-line nationalistic view. The American, Vietnamese and Philippine newspapers are also found to have promoted a war-journalism frame in their coverage, and sided with their country's perceived national interest. Yet, they still manage to maintain a level of journalistic independence and objectivity amidst a surge of patriotism and national loyalty.

The study demonstrates that journalists face an extremely difficult challenge in reporting on an armed conflict that affects their own people. These newspapers gave priority to the national components during the conflict. The ability to see how "the enemies" picture us in time of international conflict, to present all conflicting parties as accountable for the conflict and call them all to take responsibility, is vital for gaining this critical distance.

The purpose of this study is not to criticize the involved newspapers. Rather, it hopes to promote the view that responsible coverage of the conflict situation could play a decisive role in preventing any further escalation. Since there is no realistic prospect of a settlement in the near future and nationalism has already surged on all sides of the conflict, misleading information and aggressive reports will only worsen the conflict scenario. In summary, the study suggests that the involved media should add 's' for solutions, and 'c" for 'common ground' to the traditional five "Ws" formula.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the study was carefully prepared and conducted, there are still many unavoidable limitations and shortcomings. Since the assessment of the data was conducted by the author herself, it is unavoidable that her own Vietnamese cultural background might result in a certain degree of subjectivity. All the data came from coding done only by the author. Consequently, data is only speculative since unintended bias may have intruded. The present study was also limited by its analysis of English-language Asian daily newspapers. It is recommended that future researchers should do an analysis with additional coders assessing the reliability of the coding scheme being used. Also, future research should consider the vernacular press rather than only English-language media.

BIBIOLOGRAPHY

Allen, T., & Seaton, J. (1999). *The media of conflict: war reporting and representation of ethnic violence*. London: Zed Books

Althaus, S. (2003). *Collective preferences in democratic politics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Anania, F. (1995). Italian public television in the 1970s: a predictable confusion. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*. *August*. Abingdon: Carfax Publishing.

Anderson, B.(1983). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.

Anthony D. S. (2010). *Nationalism*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Arno, A., & Dissanayake, W. (1984). *The news media in national and international conflict*. Hawaii: East-West Center.

Arachard, D.(1995). Myths, lies, and historical truth: a defence of nationalism. *Political Studies*, *43*(3), 472-81.

Bajraktari, Y., & Parajon, C. (2007). The role of the media in conflict. *Journal of the United States Institute for Peace*. Retrieved from: http://www.usip.org/pubs/usipeace_briefings/2007/0705_media_conflict.html.

Bedford, C. (2011). An arms race in the South China Sea. *Candian Naval Review*, *7* (3), 39-40.

Bennett, W., Lawrence, R., & Livingston, S.(2006). None dare call it torture: indexing and the limits of press independence in the abu ghraib scandal. *Journal of Communication*, *56*, 467-485.

Botes, J. (1996). Journalism and conflict resolution. *Media Development*, *43* (4), 6-10.

Braisted, R. W., (1954). Nationalism in eastern Asia. *The Journal of Modern History*, *26* (4), 356-363.

Breed, W. (1995). Newspaper opinion leaders and the process of standardization. *Journalism Quarterly*, *68*, 868-877.

Breed, W. (1995). Newspaper opinion leaders and the process of standardization. *Journalism Quarterly*, *32*, 277-328.

Buszynski, L. (2003). ASEAN, the declaration on conduct, and the South China Sea. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *25* (3), 343-362.

Carey, J. (2000). Some personal notes on journalism education. *Journalism*, *1*, 12-23.

Carruthers, S.L. (2000). *The media at war: communication and conflict in the twentieth century*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Charles W. A., Fred R.M., & Crawford Y. (1967). *Issues of political development* (pp.7). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Ciorciari, D.J & Weiss C.J. (2012). The Sino-Vietnamese standoff in the South China Sea. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, Winter/Spring*, 61-69.

Cosa, A.R. (1998). *Security implications of conflict in the south china sea: exploring potential triggers of conflict*. Honolulu: the Pacific Forum Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Cook, T.(1991). *Are the American news media governmental?: re-examining the 'fourth branch' thesis*. Chicago, IL: Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association.

Crouse, T. (1972). *The boys on the bus*. New York, NY: Random House.

Dissanayke, W. (1984). The roles played by the national and international press in the management of the Sri Lanka insurrection of 1971. In Arno, A., & Dissanayake, W. (1984). *The news media in national and international conflict* (pp.167-88). Boulder, CO: Westview.

Elie, K.(1960). *Nationalism* (pp.9). London: Hutchinson.

Entman, R.M. (2004). *Projections of power: framing news, public opinion, and u.s. foreign policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Eti, C.I. (2009). Objectivity and balance in conflict reporting: imperatives for the Niger delta press. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 3 (3), 91-104.

Forbes, A.(2007). Why Vietnam hates and loves China. *The Asia Times*. Retrieved from http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/ID26Ae02.html

Foreman, G. (2010). *The ethical journalist: making responsible decisions in the pursuit of news*. Chichester, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell.

Galtung, J. (2000). The task of peace journalism. *Ethical Perspectives*, *7*, 162-167.

Galtung, J., & Ruge, H.M. (1965). The structure of foreign news. *Journal of Peace Research*, *2* (1), 64-91.

Galtung, J. & Ruge, M. (1973). Structuring and selecting news. In S. Cohen & J. Young (Ed.), *The manufacture of news*. Beverly Hills, CA.: Sage.

Galtung, J., & Vincent, C.R. (1992). *Global glasnot: toward a new world information and communication order*. Cresskill, NJ.: Hampton Press.

Galtung, J. (1996). Peace by peaceful means: peace and conflict, development and civilization. Retrieved from: http://www.transcendusa.com

Garver, J.W. (1992). China's push through the south china sea: the interaction of bureaucratic and national interests. *The China Quarterly*, *132*, 999-1028.

Gerbner, G. (1964). Ideological perspectives and political tendencies in news reporting, *Journalism Quarterly*, *41* (3), 495-508.

Ginneken, J.V. (1998). *Understanding global news*. London, UK.: Sage Publications.

Gowing, N. (1997). *Media coverage-help or hindrance in conflict prevention*. New York, NY.: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict.

Greenfeld, L., & Chirot, D. (1994). Nationalism and aggression. *Theory and Society*, *23* (1), 79-130.

Hall, S. (1974). Media power: the double bind. *Journal of Communication*, *24* (4), 19-26.

Kohn, H. (1968). Nationalism. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, *11*, 63.

Hatchten, W.A.(1999). *The world news prism: changing media of international communication*. Ames, IA.: University of Iowa Press.

Hess, S.(1996). *International news and foreign correspondents*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.

Hill, D. (1991). Word wars. *Marxism Today*, *April*, 44-45.

Hughes, H. (1940). *News and the human interest story*. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.

Hughes, H. (1942). The social interpretation of news. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *219*, II-17.

Howard, R. (2005). *Conflict sensitive journalism handbook*. Vancouver: Institute for Media.

James T. (1992). Chinese nationalism. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, *27*, 97-130.

Keeble, R. (2005). Is ethical journalism possible? A critical overview of ethical dilemma. In R. Keeble (Ed.). *Print journalism: a critical introduction*. London, UK.: Routledge.

Kinsley, M. (2001). Osama done told me: so how come media objectivity is suddenly a bad thing? *Slate*. Retrieved from: http://www.slate.com/id/2058456.

Koch, T. (1990). *The news as myth: fact and context in journalism*. New York, NY.: Greenwood Press.

Krippendorf, K. (2004). *Content analysis, an introduction to its methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Landon, P. K. (1943). Nationalism in southeastern Asia. *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, *2* (2), 139-152.

Larson, C. (2011). China's Fox news. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/31/global_times_china_fox_news

Lawrence, R.G. (2010). Researching political framing: establishing ground and new horizons. In P. D'Angelo & A.J. Kuypers (Ed.) (2010). *Doing news frame analysis: empirical and theoretical perspectives*. New York, NY.: Routledge.

Lee, S.T. & Maslog, C.C. (2005). War or peace journalism? Asian newspaper coverage of conflicts. *Journal of Communication*, *55* (2), 311-329.

Loyn, D. (2007). Good journalism or peace journalism? *Conflict & Communication Online*, *6* (2). Retrieved from: http://www.cco.regener-online.de/2007_2/pdf/loyn_reply.pdf

Lohman, W. (2011). Sorting American priorities in the South China Sea. Retrieved from: http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/06/sorting-american-priorities-in-the-south-china-sea

Lynch, J., & McGoldrick, A. (2005). Peace journalism in the holy land. *Media Development*, *52* (1), 47-49.

Lynch, J. (2006). What's so great about peace journalism? *Global Media Journal*, Retrieved from: http://www.cco.regener-online.de/2007_2/pdf/lynch.pdf

Lynch, J. (2008). *Debates in peace journalism.* Sydney: Sydney University Press.

Mark J. V. (1997). Asia, the law of the sea and international affairs. *International Affairs*, *73* (2), 263-282.

Marshall, G. (1998). Qualitative comparative analysis. In John Scott & Gordon Marshall (Eds.) *A dictionary of sociology.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

McGoldrick, A. (2006). War journalism and objectivity. *Conflict and Communication Online*, *5* (2), 1-7.

McManus, J. (1994). *Market-driven journalism: let the citizen beware*. California: Sage.

McQuail, D. (1992). *Media performance: mass communication and the public interest*. London: Sage.

McQuail, D., & Windahl, S. (1993). *Communication models for the study of mass communications*. London, UK.: Longman.

McQuail, D. (2005). *Mass communication theory*. London, UK.: Sage Publication Ltd.

Neuendorf. A.K. (2002). *The content of analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Niven, D. (2004). *A consensus theory of political journalism*. Chicago, IL: Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association.

Nguyen, H. T. (2001). Vietnam and the code of conduct for the South China Sea. *Ocean Development & International Law*, *32*, 105-130.

Palmgreen, P., & Clarke, P. (1977). Agenda setting with local and national issues. *Communication Research*, *4*, 435-452.

Park, C. (2009).The South China Sea disputes: who owns the islands and the natural resources? *Ocean Development & International Law*, *5* (1), 27-59.

Purvis, H. (1992). *Interdependence: an introduction to international relations*. Orlando, Fl.: Harcourt Brace Javanovich.

Ragin, C. (1987). *The comparative method: moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rosen, J. (1994). Making things more public: on the political responsibility of the media intellectual. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, *11*, 363-388.

Rubenstein, E.R., Botes, J., Dukes, F., & Stephens, B.J. (1994). *Frameworks for interpreting conflict: a handbook for journalists*. VA: George Manson University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Salwen, M. (1988). Effects of accumulation of coverage on issue salience in agenda setting. *Journalism Quarterly*, *65*, 100-106.

Scheufele, A.D. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*, *49*, 103-122.

Schiller, D. (1981). *Objectivity and the news: the public and the rise of commercial journalism.* Philadelphia, PA.: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Schofield, C. & Storey, I. (2011). *The South China Sea dispute: increasing stakes and rising tensions*. UK: Jamestown Foundation.

Schudson, M. (1978). *Discovering the news*. New York, NY.: Basic Books.

Schudson, M.(2002). What's unusual about covering politics as usual? In B. Zelizer and S.Allan (Ed.), *Journalism after september 11*. New York, NY.: Routledge.

Sheldon, W. Simon., (1991). U.S. interests in the Southeast Asia: the future of military presence. *Asian Survey*, *31* (7), 662-675.

Sheridan, B. L. (2002). *Understanding journalism*. London, UK.: Harper Collins.

Siraj, S. A. (2008). War or peace journalism in elite u.s. newspapers: exploring news framing in Pakistan-India conflict. *Strategic Studies*, *28*, 194-222.

Sigal, Leon V. (1973) *Reporters and officials: the organization and politics of news making*, Lexington: D. C.: Heath.

Simmel, G. (1950). *The sociology of George Simmel*. New York, NY.: The Free Press.

Storey, I. J. (1996). Creeping assertiveness: China, the Philippines and the South China Sea dispute. *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International & Strategic Affairs*, *21*(1), 95-112.

Splichal, S. (1991). Are the state and civil society merging? *Media Development*, *38* (3), 3-5.

Tonnesson, S. (2000). Vietnam's objective in the south china sea: national or regional security? *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International & Strategic Affairs*, *22* (1), 199-215.

Towsend-Gault, I. (1999). *Legal and political perspectives on sovereignty over the Spratly islands.* Paper prepared for the Workshop on the South China Sea Conflict Organized by the Centre for Development and Environment. Oslo, Norway.: University of Oslo

Traber, M. (1995). Beyond patriotism: escaping the ideological prison. *Javnost*, 2. Retrieved from: http://waccglobal.org/en/20063-communication-for-development-and-social-justice/597-Beyond-patriotism-Escaping-the-ideological-prison.html

Vasterman, P.(2004). *Mediahype*. Amsterdam: Aksant.

Waisbord, S. (2002). Journalism, risk and patriotism. In B. Zelizer, & S. Allen (Ed.), *Journalism after september 11*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Wanta, W. (1997). *The public and the national agenda: how people learn about important issues.* New Jersey, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Watson, J. (2007). Representing realities: an overview of news framing. *Keio Communication Review*, *29*.

Wayne, B. (1993). Chinese policies and U.S. interests in Southeast Asia. *Asian Survey*, *33* (3), 317-332.

Wicks, H.R. (2001). *Understanding audiences: learning to use the media constructively.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erbaum Association.

White, D. M. (1950). The "gate-keeper": a case study in the selection of news. *Journalism Quarterly,* 27, 383-390.

Yang, J. (2008). U.S., Chinese newspapers frame Iraq War Differently. *Newspaper Research Journal*, *29* (3), 80-93.

Zandberg, E., & Neiger, M. (2005). Between the nation and the profession: journalists as members of contradicting communities. *Media, Culture & Society*, *27* (1), 131-141.

Zein, H.M., and Cooper, A. (1992). New York Times coverage of Africa, in: B. Hawk (Ed.), *Africa's media image*, Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

13 Indicators of War Journalism by Ting Lee and Maslog (2005)

Approach

1   Reactivity: waits for war to break out, or about to break out, before reporting. Recent interest in the SCS conflict only began when armed clashes and naval skirmishes were imminent. Coverage is dominated by updates of the escalating tensions among the conflicting parties. There are reports on peace negotiations, but that frame is not reinforced as much as the war frame.

2   Visibility of effects of war: Reports mainly on visible effects of war (causalities, dead and wounded, damaged to property). For example, reports on the SCS conflict count the number of fishermen and/or fishing boats captured by conflicting countries (i.e., China, Vietnam, and the Philippines) as they fished in waters around the islands under dispute. In Galtung (1986)'s terms, this focus in on direct violence.

3   Elite-orientation: Focuses on leaders and elites as primary actors and sources of information. The voices that have received the most coverage in the SCS conflict have been political leaders (e.g., foreign ministers, prime ministers, presidents, etc.,) and/or military officials (e.g., defense secretaries, generals, etc.). Other voices such as normal people, sailors or fishermen are not seriously entertained in the mainstream media. For example: "In the strongest warning so far to China, President Aquino declared in his State of the Nation Address on Monday that the Philippines is ready to defend its territorial claims in the South China Sea (renamed West Philippine Sea) with beefed-up military forces" (The Philippine

Inquirer (2011, July 27). Strong warning to China).

4   Differences: Focus mainly on differences among the countries that led to the conflict. In the SCS conflict, the disputed water has long been analogous to land. Therefore, the delineation of maritime zones in this conflict has thus been discussed with the same terms as those used for delineating land borders. For example, "'We continue to affirm strongly and to manifest the strongest determination of all the Party, of all the people and of all the army to protect Vietnamese sovereignty in maritime zones and islands of the country,' Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung said on Thursday," (Thanh Nien News (2011, June 9). Vietnam PM calls for sovereignty protection at sea week).

5   Focus mainly on the here and now: News stories focus mostly on visible effect of violence (e.g., casualties, death, wounded, material damage, etc.). For example, "Back in Vietnam, several fishing families have seen their relatives never return from trips to Hoang Sa, with some blaming the disappearances on Chinese bandits," (Thanh Nien News (2011, July 22). Glaring at the shark) or "Vietnam protested to China on Thursday after three Chinese boats "deliberately" harassed an exploration ship in Vietnam's waters in the East Sea," (Thanh Nien News (2011, June 9). Vietnam demands China to stop harassing ships).

6   Good and bad dichotomy: Dichotomizes between the "good guys" and "bad guys", victims and villains. For example, "Tensions between the Philippines and China have risen recently because of incidents like the Chinese allegedly firing on Filipino fishermen, Chinese vessels harassing a Filipino oil exploration ship, and the building of structures in unoccupied islets claimed by the Philippines," (The Philippines Inquirer (2011, July 21). Spratly 5 go swimming in PAG-ASA).

7   Party involvement: Two-party orientation in which one party wins, one party loses. For

example, "It is wrong for countries in the region to try and use Washington's power to counter Beijing as China will not make any concessions on its sovereignty," (Global Times (2011, June 8). Beijing rejects Manila accusations).

8   Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict. For example, "But unlike the US' ultimate goal of hampering China and driving it further away from the Pacific, China's military strength is aimed at restoring the validity of the Yalta System to what it ought to be and with this China's rightful claim of Taiwan. Such claims are rational and reasonable and have a bright future ahead," (Global Times (2011, June 9). Oceanic strategy not aimed at US interests)

9   Winning orientation: Zero-sum orientation with the ultimate goal of winning. For example, "The new Philippine ambassador to Washington, Jose Cuisia Jr., has asked the defense department in Manila to prepare an inventory of weapons to beef up the countrys military capability. The weapons list is regarded as the first step in negotiating arms purchases from the United States. I'm told that some of these weapons could at least sink Chinese vessels invading Philippine structures in the area. Diplomatic settlement is still held as a priority over armed action, but diplomacy also needs to be backed by guns to be credible," (The Philippines Inquirer (2011, June 13). Spratlys row a test of President Aquino mettle).

10   Continuity of reports: journalists stop reporting when there is a peace treaty signing and/or ceasefire and head for another war elsewhere

Language

11   Uses victimizing language that emphasize casualties, suffering, and displacement (e.g., the pain of loss, impoverished, arrested and bullied by China's policies, being detained and beaten, etc.)

12 Demonizing: Uses demonizing language (e.g., vicious, cruel, brutal, barbaric, inhuman...etc.,) to demonize the enemy, while humanizing the participants on "our side". For example, "China will become the threat it will not only become the giant but it will become the monster, Widjajanto, also one of the members of a team that reviewed the Indonesian National Defense System, said" (Philippines Inquirer (2011, July 15). China will become ruthless monster, says Indon expert).

13 Uses emotive words to create emotional effects of war journalism by taking advantages of audiences' feelings resulting from the conflict such as hopelessness and powerlessness, anxiety, mood disturbance, sadness and a sense of insecurity with physical and social environment. For example, "It feels like I am living in another world – one of sorrow, loneliness and unhappiness. I continue to fold paper cranes and boats, wanting to get out of this world," (Thanh Nien News (2011, July 1). Fishermen pick up East Sea gauntlet).

Appendix B

Coding Variables and Categories

War Journalism Indicators

1. Emphasis on political elite and official sources (e.g., foreign ministers, prime ministers, presidents, defense secretaries, generals, etc.). Story is quoted either directly or indirectly from them. For example, "Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates pledged Saturday that the United States would sustain its military presence and diplomatic involvement in Asia, as he sought to calm regional worries about the potential for a new isolationism brought on by fiscal difficulties at home," (The New York Times. (June 4, 2011). U.S. Won't Become Isolationist, Gates Tells Worried Asian Leaders).

2. Conflict outcomes focused on war options: if a story leads its audiences to overvalue violent responses to this conflict and ignore peaceful alternatives (e.g., word choices, attitudes, etc.). For example, "Depending on how the situation develops, China has to be ready for two plans: negotiate with Vietnam for a peaceful solution, or answer the provocation with political, economic or even military counterstrikes," (The Global Times (2011, June 21). China must react to Vietnam's provocation).

3. Focus mainly on differences that led to the conflict: to find out whether a story delving into major differences that lead to disputes among the conflicting parties or promoting similarities, common interests or peaceful negotiations. For example, "…urges Vietnam to avoid encroaching upon China's territorial sovereignty," (The Global Times (2011, June 21). China must react to Vietnam's provocation).

4. Frequent good/bad tagging: evidenced by condemning languages and attitudes (e.g., aggressor, big bully, aggressive actions, encroachments, etc.)

5. Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict: examining if a story has its value bias towards only one country in the SCS conflict, ignoring or concealing initiatives from the other side or third parties. For example, "Reaffirmed 'the incontestable maritime sovereignty of Vietnam towards the two archipelagos, the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa', which the people and army have "the strongest determination" to protect".

6. Zero-sum victory-defeat orientation: promotes belief that winning is the ultimate goal and this orientation assumes that one side's needs only be met by the other side's compromise or defeat. For example, "Certain countries think that China will continue to tolerate and yield like before, and they stealthily explore and develop on some islands. Such things happened before, but cannot happen today and will not occur in the future," (Global Times (2011, June 16). Joint development only way out of island issues)

7. Victimizing language (e.g., dirty tricks, the pain of loss, impoverished, arrested and bullied by China's policies, being detained and beaten, etc.)

8. Military vocabulary. For example, "The 378-foot Hamilton-class cutter is a decommissioned United States Coast Guard patrol vessel that the Philippines was able to acquire under the United States Excess Defense Act," (The Philippines Inquirer (2011, July 17) PH navy acquires biggest warship)

9. Demonizing language (e.g., clear violations, harassing acts, etc.)

10. Emotive words (e.g., crying rape, unchecked aggressive, naked ambitions, etc.).

Appendix C

News Categories: All Four Newspapers

	Hard news Stories	Feature stories	Opinion pieces (Op-Ed)	Others	Sources	Total
The Global Times	26	14	16	Daily Quote: 02 Picture Gallery: 01 Voices: 01	Xinhua (10)	60
Thanh Nien News	17	13	6		AP AFP Reuters VNA	36
The Philippines Inquirer	21	19	9	Talk Around Town: 01	The Philippines Inquirer	50
New York Times	8	6	3	Letter to the Editor: 01	AP NYT	18

Appendix D

Total Data Analysis

	War-journalism Indicator	Yes		No		Total	
		No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %
1	Emphasis on elite and official sources	145	88.4	19	11.6	164	100
2	Conflict outcomes focused on war options.	63	38.4	101	61.6	164	100
3	Focus mainly differences that led to the conflict	131	79.9	33	20.1	164	100
4	Frequent good/bad tagging.	107	65.2	57	34.8	164	100
5	Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict	143	87.2	21	12.8	164	100

6	Zero-sum victory-defeat orientation.	50	30.5	114	69.5	164	100
7	Victimizing language	14	8.5	150	91.5	164	100
8	Military vocabulary	61	37.1	103	62.9	164	100
9	Uses demonizing language	72	43.9	92	56.1	164	100
10	Uses emotive words	26	15.9	138	84.1	164	100

Appendix E

The Global Times Data Analysis

War-journalism Indicator	Yes		No		Total	
	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %
1 Emphasis on elite and official sources	5 1	85	9	15	60	100
2 Conflict outcomes focused on war options.	24	40	36	60	60	100
3 Focus mainly differences that led to the conflict	52	86.7	8	13.3	60	100
4 Frequent good/bad tagging.	44	73.3	16	26.7	60	100
5 Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict	59	98.3	1	1.7	60	100
6 Zero-sum victory-	39	65	21	35	60	100

defeat orientation.

7	Victimizing language	0	0	60	100	60	100
8	Military vocabulary	22	36.7	38	63.3	60	100
9	Uses demonizing language	21	35	39	65	60	100
10	Uses emotive words	2	3.3	58	96.7	60	100

Non-War Journalism Indicators: The Global Times
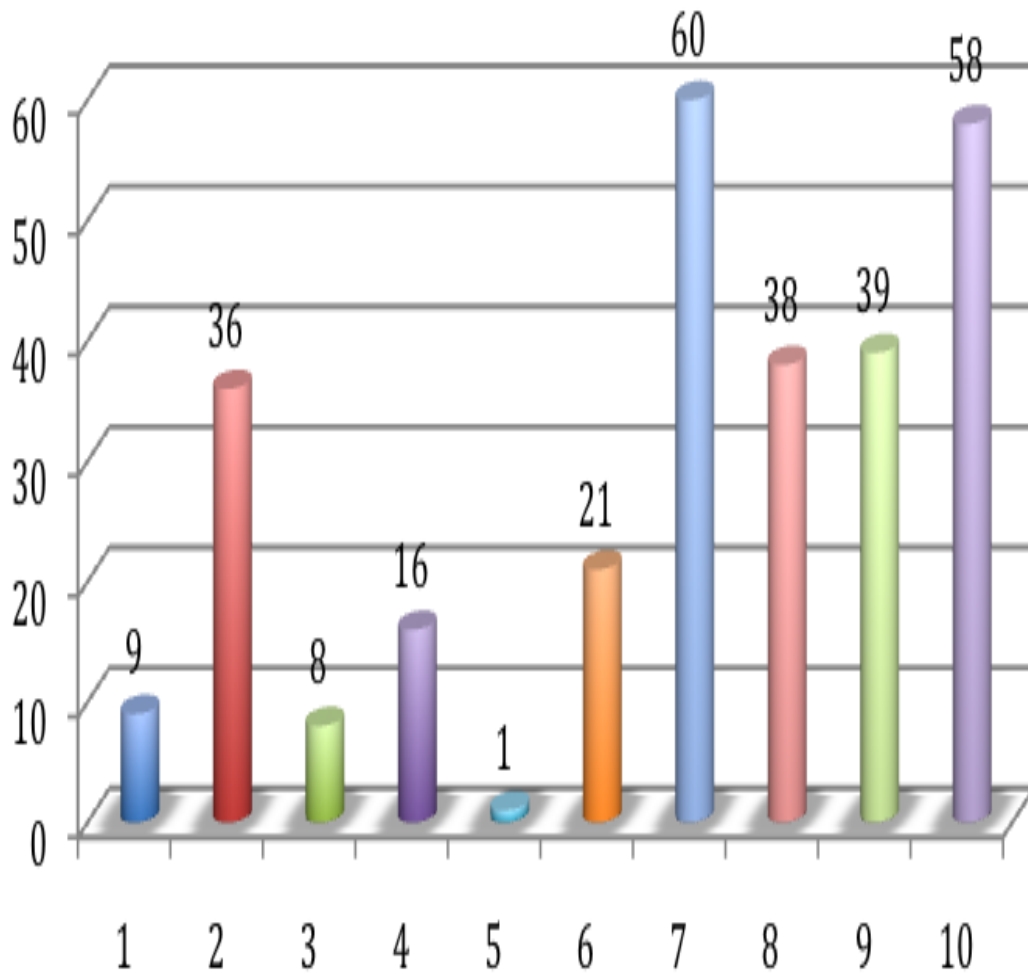
Appendix F

The Philippines Inquirer Data Analysis

War-journalism Indicator	Yes		No		Total	
	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %
1 Emphasis on elite and official sources	47	94	3	6	50	100
2 Conflict outcomes focused on war options.	21	42	29	58	50	100
3 Focus mainly differences that led to the conflict	35	70	15	30	50	100
4 Frequent good/bad tagging.	27	54	23	46	50	100
5 Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict	42	84	8	16	50	100
6 Zero-sum victory-	0	0	50	100	50	100

defeat orientation.

7	Victimizing language	5	10	45	90	50	100
8	Military vocabulary	19	38	31	62	50	100
9	Uses demonizing language	27	54	23	46	50	100
10	Uses emotive words	6	12	44	88	50	100

Non War-Journalism Indicators: The Phillippines Inquirer
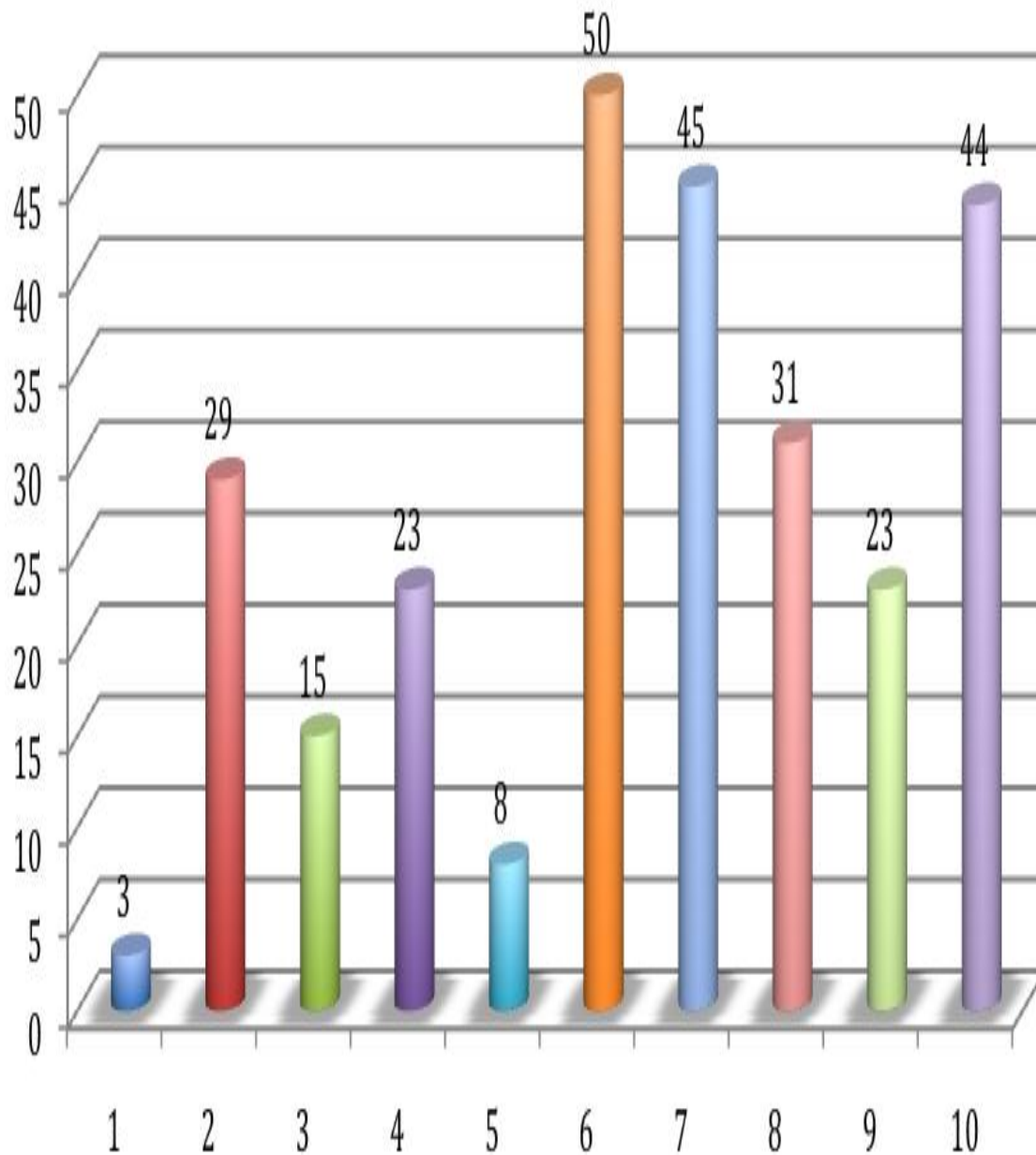
Thanh Nien News Data Analysis

	War-journalism Indicator	Yes		No		Total	
		No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %
1	Emphasis on elite and official sources	31	86.12	5	13.88	36	100
2	Conflict outcomes focused on war options.	6	16.7	30	83.3	36	100
3	Focus mainly differences that led to the conflict	29	80.6	7	19.4	36	100
4	Frequent good/bad tagging.	26	72.3	10	27.7	36	100
5	Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict	33	91.6	3	8.4	36	100
6	Zero-sum victory-defeat orientation.	0	0	36	100	36	100

7	Victimizing language	9	(25	27	75	36	100
8	Military vocabulary	10	27.8	26	72.2	36	100
9	Uses demonizing language	16	44.4	20	55.6	36	100
10	Uses emotive words	11	30.6	25	69.4	36	100

Non-War Journalism Indicators in Thanh Nien News
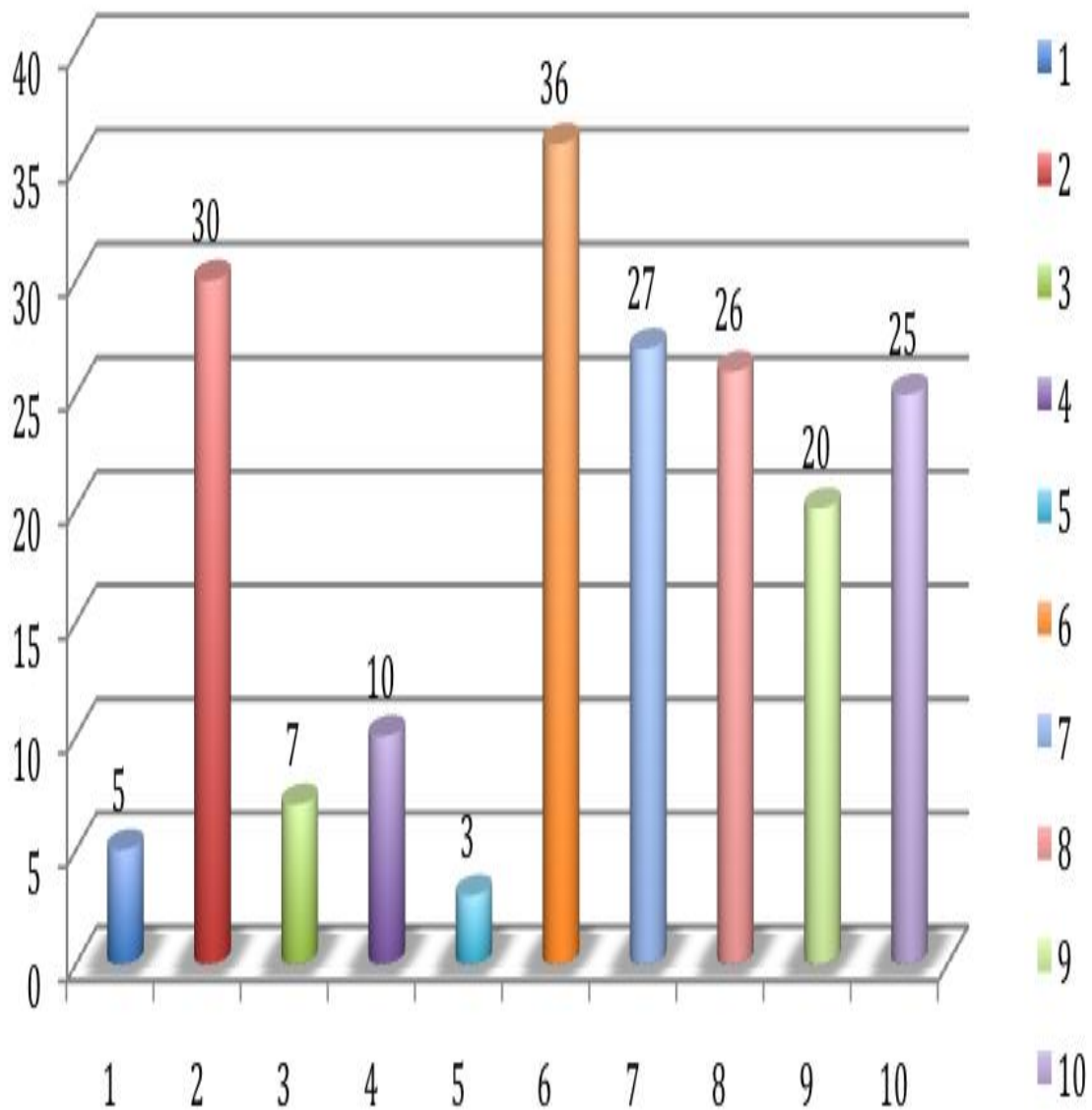
The New York Times Data Analysis

War-journalism Indicator	Yes		No		Total	
	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %	No. of Articles	Percentage %
1 Emphasis on elite and official sources	16	88.9	2	11.1	18	100
2 Conflict outcomes focused on war options.	12	66.7	6	33	18	100
3 Focus mainly differences that led to the conflict	15	83.4	3	16.6	18	100
4 Frequent good/bad tagging.	10	55.6	8	44.4	18	100
5 Partisanship: biased for one side in the conflict	9	50	9	50	18	100
6 Zero-sum victory-defeat orientation.	11	61	7	39	18	100

7	Victimizing language	0	0	18	100	18	100
8	Military vocabulary	10	55.6	8	44.4	18	100
9	Uses demonizing language	8	44.4	10	55.6	18	100
10	Uses emotive words	7	39	11	61	18	100

Non-War Journalism Indicators: The New York Times
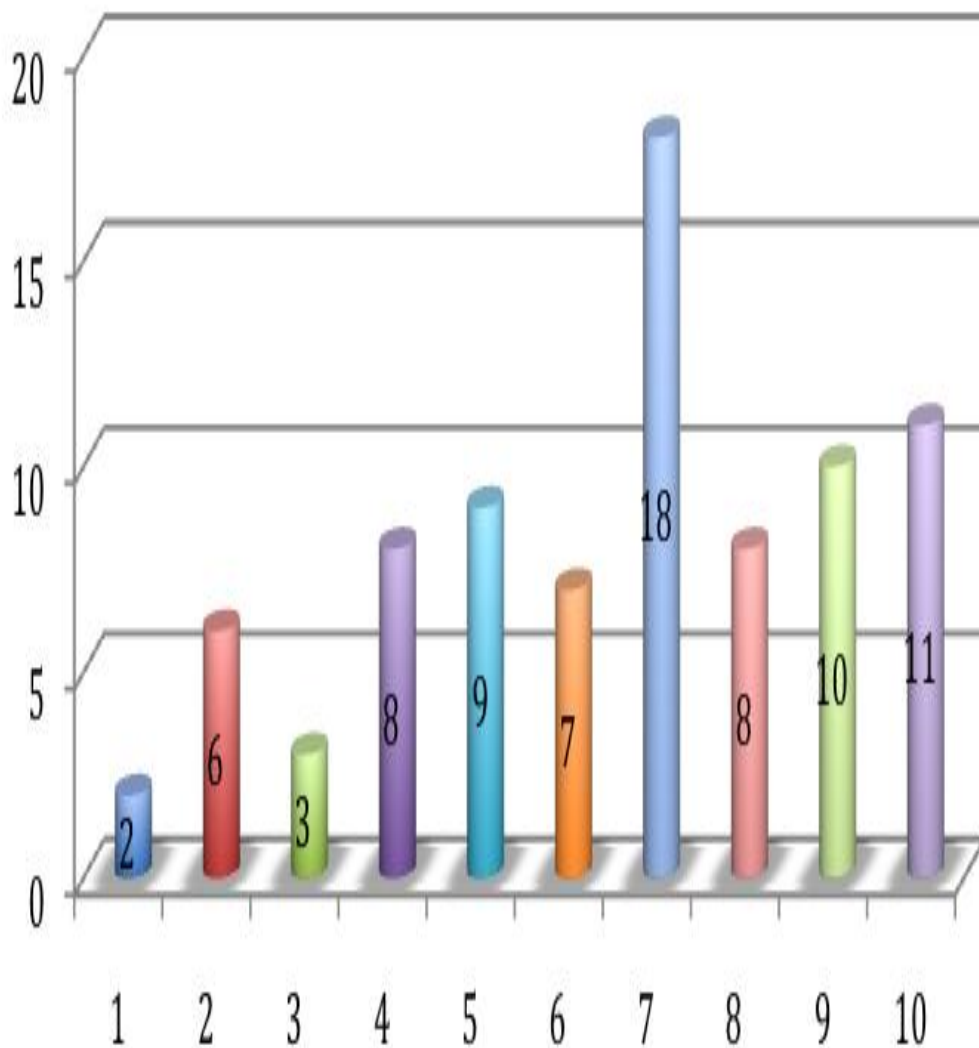
THANH NIEN NEWS (VIETNAM)

1.   Asian navies seek closer ties amid sea spat (7/27/2011).

2.   Glaring at the shark (7/24/2011).

3.   US warns on East Sea, welcomes Korea talks (7/23/2011).

4.   Experts doubt new agreement will ease East Sea tension (7/22/2011).

5.   PetroVietnam ties with Vietnam military firm on ammonia project (7/21/2011)

6.   Vietnam to host ASEAN naval meeting, highlight East Sea issues (7/19/2011)

7.   ASEAN-China agree on East Sea guidelines (7/20/2011)

8.   Petrovietnam Insurance says in stake sale talks (7/13/2011)

9.   Vietnam Petrolimex plans refinery; pipeline for Chinese fuel (7/12/2011)

10.   Vietnam maritime police to recejve new boats, planes (7/8/2011)

11.   East Sea disputes need to be controlled, scholar says (7/3/2011)

12.   Vietnamese scholar discusses East Sea disputes on Chinese television (6/29/2011)

13.   Fishermen pick up East Sea gauntlet (7/1/2011)

14.   ASEAN members call for peaceful resolution of East Sea issues (6/30/2011)

15.   US, China butt heads over East Sea disputes (6/24/2011)

16. Chinese press distorting information, threatening Vietnamese people (6/23/2011) 17. Vietnam, US in joint peace call in South China Sea (6/17/2011)

18. Int'l experts get behind Vietnam in East Sea dispute (6/18/2011)

19. Vietnam demands China to stop harassing ships (6/9/2011)

20 Chinese ships cause disturbance in Vietnam's waters again (6/10/2011)

21. China has always wanted the whole of East Sea (6/11/2011)

22. Vietnam brings up East Sea issues at Asia-Europe's meeting (6/9/2011)

23. Vietnam PM calls for sovereignty protection at sea week (6/9/2011)

24. East Sea undercurrents (6/10/2011)

25. Vietnam insists on peaceful measures for East Sea issues: defense official (6/5/2011)

26. Oil exploration vessel sails again (6/6/2011)

27. Vietnam promotes peaceful policies at Asia-Pacific security forum (6/6/2011)

28. Maritime experts cry foul on China (6/3/2011)

29. Vietnamese expert stresses China's expansion ambition in latest sea clash (6/1/2011)

30. Vietnam condemns China for East Sea aggression (5/31/2011)

31. Vietnam should file lawsuit against China for sea violation: expert (5/30/2011)

32.	Fishermen vow to defend Vietnamese fishing grounds
33	Vietnam condemns China in latest sovereignty violation (30/5/11)
34	Chinese fishing boats violate Vietnam waters; gov't mulls patrol boats (29/5/11) 35 Chinese ships violate Vietnam's sovereignty, disrupt oil exploration work (27/5/11)
36.	Dear to Vietnamese heart

GLOBAL TIMES (CHINA)

1.   Beijing rebuffs Hanoi offshore oil, gas claims (May 30, 2011)

2.   China opposes Vietnam oil, gas exploration in China's jurisdictional sea area (May 29, 2011)

3.   Experts dismiss Filipino maritime concerns (June 02, 2011)

4.   China committed to safeguarding peace, stability of South China Sea: spokesman (June 04, 2011)

5.   Chinese FM says any attempt to complicate South China Sea issue meet interests of none (June 07, 2011)

6.   Vietnam protest damages ties (June 07 2011)

7.   Beijing rejects Manila accusations (June 08 2011)

8.   China can help guard lifeline through Strait of Malacca (June 09 2011)

9.   Keep threats out of the South China Sea - Editorial (Jun 9, 2011)

10.   Oceanic strategy not aimed at US interests (June 09 2011)

11.   China denies Vietnam's accusation on South China Sea (Jun 10, 2011)

12. South China Sea tensions flare again as Vietnam announces naval drill next week (June 11, 2011)

13. Vietnam set for major naval drill (June 13, 2011)

14. Narrow interests limit SCO's influence (June 13 2011)

15. US intervention in South China Sea daft (June 14, 2011)

16. Vietnam urged to act responsibly over tensions (June 14, 2011)

17. Keep Sea issue simple, says Beijing (June 15, 2011)

18. Joint development only way out of island issues (June 15, 2011)

19. Beijing warns against complicating South China Sea issue (June 15, 2011)

20. Picturesque scenery of Xisha Islands in South China Sea (June 17, 2011)

21. Beijing OKs role of Taiwan in spat (June 17, 2011)

22. PLA holds three-day exercise as tensions continue in S. China Sea (June 18, 2011)

23. Clear red line needed in South China Sea (June 19, 2011)

24. Public want tough line in S. China Sea (June 20, 2011)

25. Vietnam 'upsets' Chinese public (June 21, 2011)

26. Turbulent sea disputes not set to calm soon (Jun 21, 2011)

27. China must react to Vietnam's provocation (June 21, 2011)

28. China refutes Philippines' accusation over S China Sea issue (July 23, 2011)

29. China warns US over sea issue (June 23, 2011)

30. China warns off Japan-US alliance (June 24, 2011)

31. US, Vietnam hold military drills in South China Sea (June 25, 2011)

32. Dangerous nationalism risks future of South China Sea (Jun 26, 2011)

33. China, Vietnam agree to resolve maritime dispute through negotiations (June 26, 2011)

34. China, Vietnam to ease sea tension (June 27, 2011)

35. US, Philippines start joint naval exercise (June 29, 2011)

36. China has indisputable sovereignty over South China Sea islands: spokesman (June 29, 2011)

37. Chinese sub to delve 5,000 meters under Pacific Ocean (July 02, 2011)

38. Japan FM visits Beijing (July 04, 2011)

39. War's legacy still tints Vietnam's view of US (July 06, 2011)

40. Manila accuses 'rude' diplomat (July 07, 2011)

41. US walking a tightrope over South China Sea issues (July 07, 2011)

42. China Not to Restrict Navigation in S.China Sea (July 08, 2011)

43. Philippines, China reach consensus (July 09, 2011)

44. China warns US off naval exercises (July 12, 2011)

45. China neither world power nor shrinking violet (July 13, 2011)

46. Voices on the management of the conflict over the South China Sea (July 13, 2011)

47. China rejects Manila's plan to bring spat to UN tribunal (July 14, 2011)

48. South China Sea rows require direct negotiations: Foreign Ministry (July 15, 2011)

49. Deep ambitions (July 15, 2011)

50. Hanoi breaks up anti-China rally (July 18, 2011)

51. ASEAN to finalize South China Sea guidelines (July 19, 2011)

52. Beijing blasts Manila ahead of ASEAN talks (July 20, 2011)

53. Political impediments could knock Sino-US military relations (July 20, 2011)

54. ASEAN and China can't split over South China Sea (July 20, 2011)

55. The Philippines will not rock China's boat (July 21, 2011)

56. Sea row guidelines agreed (July 21, 2011)

57. China, ASEAN talk peace (July 22, 2011)

58.   New guidelines on South China Sea give green light for China-ASEAN cooperation (July 23, 2011)

59.   Chinese FM meets with US Secretary of State Clinton in Bali, Indonesia (July 23, 2011)

60.   US calls for proof in South China Sea claims (July 25, 2011)

THE PHILIPPINES INQUIRER (PHILIPPINES)

1. Strong Warning To China (July 27, 2011)

2. The Spratlys (July 25, 2011)

3. DND Chief Accuses China of Double Talk (July 23, 2011)

4. Flag Waving In The Spratlys

5. Kalayaan Tourists Spot 2 Ships Destroying Coral Reefs (July 22, 2011)

6. Good, Bad News From ASEAN Meeting, Says DFA Chief (July 21, 2011)

7. Spratly 5 Go Swimming In PAG-ASA (July 21, 2011)

8. No Baon For Spratlys 5; Trip Not Official (July 20, 2011)

9. Mischief Reef And Love Me Tender (July 18, 2011)

10. US Lawmakers Back PH In Dispute Over Spratlys (July 18, 2011)

11. PH Navy Acquires Biggest Warship (July 17, 2011)

12. China Will Become Ruthless Monster, Says Indon Expert (July 15, 2011)

13. Despite spat, PH Upbeat On Relations With China (July 15, 2011)

14. PH Fails To Get China Assurance on Intrusions (July 12, 2011)

15. Del Rosario Off To China (July 7, 2011)

16. PINOY Reds Rap China, US, PH over Spratlys (July 6, 2011)

17. US Assures PH Youve Got a Friend (July 4, 2011)

18. PH Correctly Stand Its (Maritime) Ground (June 30, 2011)

19. Dealing With the New China (June 30, 2011)

20. China's Worst-Kept Secret Naval Weapon (June 29, 2011)

21. PH-US Defense Pact Doesnt Apply in Spratlys Dispute, Says Ex-up Law Dean (June 29, 2011)

22. Common Use in the Spartlys (June 28, 2011)

23. China Creates Waves in Naval Show of Force (June 27, 2011)

24. Honasan Not Impressed with US Pledge of Help (June 27, 2011)

25. PAF To Get P14-B Funding To Acquire Aircraft (27, 2011)

26. Power Asymmetry in West Philippine Sea (June 26, 2011)

27. Long Delayed Repair of PAG-ASA Airstrip to Start Anytime Now (June 23, 2011)

28. PH Pulls China Markers (June 16, 2011)

29. Revival of Spratlys Oil Deal Pushed (June 16, 2011)

30. House Backs Rules-Based Approach to West Philippine Sea (June 15, 2011)

31. Pursue Diplomacy over Troubled Waters (June 15, 2011)

32. Name Game PH Now Calls Spratly Isle Recto Bank (June 14, 2011)

33. Spratlys Row a Test of P-NOY Mettle (June 13, 2011)

34. Embassy Official Clarifies Statement (June 13, 2011)

35. PAGASA Follows Palace Lead, Adopts West Philippine Sea (June 13, 2011)

36. Palace Says US Will Side with PH in China Conflict (June 13, 2011)

37. US Not Coming to PH Aid vs China (June 12, 2011)

38. It's West Philippine Sea (June 11, 2011)

39. P-NOY To Raise Spratlys Row in State Visit to Beijing (June 10, 2011)

40. Naked Aggression (June 8, 2011)

41. Gazmin China to Lose Face with Incursions (June 8, 2011)

42. PH Pushes Rules-based Approach (June 7, 2011)

43. Manilas Claim in Spratlys within West Philippine Sea (June 6, 2011)

44. Drilon Says PH Cant Go On Arms Race with China (June 6, 2011)

45. GOVT Shop for US Arms (June 5, 2011)

46. Endangered Wildlife Collateral Damage in Spratlys Row (June 3, 2011)

47. Spratlys Top Agenda of Brunei Visit (June 2, 2011)

48. PH Govt Files Protest vs China Intrusion (June 2, 2011)

49. Top Brass Mull Upgrades in Contested Territories (May 31, 2011)

50. Another Sino Official Assures PH on Spratlys (May 29, 2011)

THE NEW YORK TIMES (THE UNITED STATES)

1. U.S. Won't Become Isolationist, Gates Tells Worried Asian Leaders (June 4, 2011)

2. China's Troubled Neighbors (June 7, 2011)

3. China: Neighbors Warned on Disputed Island Chain (June 10, 2011)

4. Tensions grow in SCS: Vietnam to hold naval exercises (June 11)

5. Dispute Between Vietnam and China Escalates Over Competing Claims in South China Sea (June 11, 2011)

6. China Navy Reaches Far, Unsettling The Region (June 15, 2011)

7. How China Behaves (June 17, 2011)

8. China: Maritime Patrols on the Rise (June 18, 2011)

9. Beijing Warns U.S. About South China Sea Disputes (June 23, 2011)

10. China and Vietnam Agree to Talks on South China Sea Dispute (June 27, 2011)

11. Joint Chiefs Chairman Meets With Chinese Counterpart (July 11, 2011)

12. Military Leaders of U.S. and China Vow Closer Ties, but Bumps Remain (July 12, 2011)

13. Counterpoint: Don't Write Off the U.S. (July 15, 2011)

14. Wary Rivals, U.S. and China Try to Reach Truce on Military Strategy (July 15, 2011)

15. Vietnam: U.S. Ships to Join Exercises, Raising Objections from China (July 16, 2011)

16. US and China Try to agree on military strategy (July 17, 2011)

17. A Step Toward Trust With China (July 26, 2011)

18. Clinton Urges Broad Pact Among Asian Nations (July 26, 2011)