

Australian Chinese Daily not for Australian Chinese?

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Abstract: Australian Chinese newspapers are a significant but under-researched topic in global media arena. This paper investigates what role Australian Chinese newspapers play for Australian Chinese people by an example – *Australian Chinese Daily (ACD)*. The content analysis on *ACD*'s main news pages (2006-2008) shows that the daily published plentiful news especially Australian news, which demonstrates the information and integration roles. But China news, especially the news reporting Australian Chinese people, occupies very limited proportions. Furthermore, the news on Australian Chinese people contains a large number of negative news. Subsequently, a case study was conducted on three significant negative events occurring on the Australian Chinese. The results show that *ACD* covered these negative events, but there was no editorial, in-depth or exclusive report. Together with content analysis and case study, a salient disadvantage of *ACD* is a lack of “local surveillance role”, which is would be the most important role for Australian Chinese people. [China Media Research. 2012; 8(3): 102-115]

Key words: Australian Chinese newspapers, diasporic media, media role, surveillance

I. Introduction

1.1. Australian Chinese newspapers

Australian Chinese newspapers can claim a few “number ones”. The earliest bilingual (English and Chinese) newspaper worldwide, *Chinese Advertiser*, appeared in Ballarat (a town near Melbourne) in 1856 (Wang & Ryder, 1999). The Chinese newspapers have occupied the first position in Australian diasporic press arena since the 1940s.¹ Since the 1980s, the Chinese newspapers in Australia have entered a prosperous period. Currently, there are 27 Chinese papers in Australia, continuously occupying the first position. In addition, there are only three mainstream English language dailies in Sydney, but five Chinese dailies are published in here.² In the global media arena, Australian Chinese take up the second position in the overseas Chinese newspapers market.³

In terms of these Australian Chinese newspapers, *ACD* is very special on its history and present. This daily was the second oldest contemporary Chinese newspaper in Australia, published since 1987. Since the 1990s, this daily has occupied the largest proportion in the circulation and advertisement market of Australian Chinese press. In its first page, *ACD* claims “the most widely-read Chinese newspapers in Australia” under its title. Therefore, it can become a research example to explore Australian Chinese newspapers.

ACD was a branch of *Hong Kong Daily News* (香港新報). But in recent years, it has been separated from its Hong Kong headquarters. *ACD* office is located in the downtown of Sydney. There are more than 70 staff members in the daily, including approximately 30 editing/reporting staff. There are only a few professional journalists, and they rarely publish in-depth and comprehensive coverage. Their major duties of these “journalists” are composed of translation and participation in press conferences. These staff members are basically

from Hong Kong or mainland China. Some have had more than one decade experience, while the others have only entered the media industry in recent years.

ACD maintains good relationships with Hong Kong and mainland China. For example, the daily can obtain the invitations when mainland Chinese high-profile figures visit Australia. Some large mainland Chinese companies advertise in this paper. Since 2006, this daily has published 36 pages in a weekday edition. These pages are composed of three sections- news, entertainment and advertisements. The news sections occupy 14 pages in general (2008), including four categories: “main news” (front page), China news, Australian news, and world news. The latter three categories are basically transferred from the other media. In this case, this paper focuses on the most important category – the main news pages.

1.2 Research question and methods

Although Australian Chinese newspapers are a significant research topic, there is a paucity of research on these newspapers. A reference search into 32 databases shows four academic papers, addressing these newspapers before 1957. Only recently, a paper theoretically discusses the relations between Chinese newspapers and communities in the history and present in Australia, but it did not provide details on the contemporary Australian Chinese newspapers (Sun, et al., 2011).

Based on the limited research, a fundamental question would be generally posed: what role do these newspapers play in Australian Chinese? In other words, how do these newspapers work for Australian Chinese people? The paper will explore this question by an example – *Australian Chinese Daily (ACD)*.

This paper attempts to investigate this question by the content and role in *ACD*. In specific, the

methodology is from broad to specific by two methods: content analysis and case study. The first step, content analysis, is to probe an overall image of content and role of *ACD*. But there may be some questions can not be solved by content analysis. Subsequently, this paper further explores the content and role of *ACD* by case study. Here is a brief introduction on the scope and categories of the content analysis.

The news in *ACD*'s first pages (main news pages) of the weekday editions in January, April, July and October between 2006 and 2008 were chosen as the research samples. Four categories with their units are as follows.

Category 1: Australian news. Units: political news, economic news, society news, and the other news.

Category 2: Chinese (homeland) news. Units: positive news, negative news, neutral news.⁴

Category 3: The news reporting Australian Chinese people. Units: positive news, negative news, and neutral news.⁵

Category 4: The other news.

Based on the content analysis results, the paper will select three significant events as case study samples. After reviewed all news in *ACD* (2006-2008) and comparing with *The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)* and *The Daily Telegraph, Sydney (DT)*, this paper chose three cases for further study: Case 1: The Wei Liao killing (2008); Case 2: The exploitation of two skilled workers (2007); Case 3: "De Yuan" fishing boats case (2006). These cases all have significant impacts on the Australian Chinese communities. Cases 1 and 2 are related to the security and employment issues, and case study 3 is related to the conflict between the Chinese and the mainstream society. The next section will discuss the theoretical background for this research, and analyze and discuss research results in sections 3 and 4.

II. Theoretical arena

2.1 Media content and role

Media content and role are two of the most fundamental aspects for media, and media and role can not be separated. Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 27) contend: "Media content is the basis of media impact...It is, for the most part, open and accessible for study - the most obvious part of the mass communication process - unlike the behind-the-scenes decisions made by producers, writers, and editors and the behaviors of media consumers." These two scholars further explain the effect of media content: "Communications content is of interest not only in its own right, but also as an indicator of many other underlying forces" (ibid. 27). Based on Shoemaker and Reese's viewpoints, media content is a "mirror" to reflect media roles ("underlying forces"), and is one of the most suitable and essential indicators for media role.

Australian Chinese newspapers can be categorized

into community, diasporic or ethnic media, so this paper obtains the research of these three categories. A number of scholars have discussed the role of these media by different angles. In terms of these scholars, Stamm's opinion is systematical. Stamm (1985) defines three roles for community [diasporic] media: information, integration, and bridging roles. Additionally, media surveillance function is a vital role (details in 2.5). Therefore, these four media roles can basically describe a diasporic community newspaper: information, integration, bridging and surveillance roles. Therefore, this paper will explore these four roles in *ACD* by reviewing the news in the first pages (content analysis) and the three significant event reports (case study).

2.2 Information role

The information role is one of the most fundamental roles for mass media, including community/diasporic newspapers. After examining the US community newspapers, Stamm (1985) regards the information role as crucial in community media. "If you are considering a move to a different locale, your initial tie to the place might be through reading issues of the local newspapers" (Stamm, 1985, 21). Similarly, Husbands (1998) holds the same attitude: "minority media are both 'for' and 'by' minorities, perform a crucial function for ethno-cultural minorities, who experience a great need of information about their native country and their country of settlement" (Husbands, 1998, 29).

Likewise, Kim (1985) points out that the role of the Korean diasporic community press is to provide information to the Korean community in Australia. Because Korean migrants have different information needs in a host country that the mainstream media can not provide, their local community newspapers fill in the information gap and provide the specific information for these migrants. Likewise, the researchers found the Russian and Arabic diasporic community press in Israel: "cater to the immediate needs for information and surveillance of the specific group of migrants, especially in the early transition period of settling down" (Adoni, Caspi & Cohen, 2006, 21). Similarly, Ogan describes the Turkish diasporic community media in Holland as "a companion", offering specific information for Turkish migrants (Ogan, 2001).

In addition, Zhou, Chen and Cai (2006) hold a positive attitude on how the US Chinese newspapers achieve the information function. An example is that a 60-year-old Chinese man who is very familiar with current issues, and he acknowledged that it is the contribution of the Chinese language newspapers. Liu summarized that the first function of the Philadelphia Chinese newspapers is "distributing information" (Liu, 2010, 256). Consequently, information role is a fundamental role for diasporic community media.

2.3 Bridging role

Since they appeared in the early 19th century, diasporic community media have been given a function linking diasporic people and communities with their homelands. For example, after reviewing the US diasporic community newspapers in the 1970s, Martin writes: The ethnic press, in a way, is a bridge between the past [hometown] and the future [host country]" (Martin, 1980, 240).

Some diasporic community newspaper editors also take the same attitude. Four of six editors of Australian Chinese community newspapers considered that the second goal of their newspapers is "to inform/educate readers about homeland events" (Pe-Pua, Morrissey & Mitchell, 1994, 97). The researchers also found that "the sample of newspapers analyzed has served more to fill the gap in homeland topics not covered by the English press" (ibid., 97). Likewise, the other scholars observe the bridging role in the Australian diasporic press such as Bell, McKenzie and Vipond (1991).

Zhou and Cai (2002) perceive this role in the US Chinese diasporic community press:

"It [US Chinese diasporic community newspapers] also does the usual thing - keeping immigrants in close contact with the homeland, thus easing the psychological and emotional problems of being a foreigner. New migrants are concerned with what goes on in the original homeland as well as in the US society, how homeland politics and economy affect their families and friends who are left behind, and how events or policies developed in the homeland"(Zhou & Cai, 2002, 437).

The above discussions show that the bridging role is an identical role for diasporic community newspapers. As Stamm (1985) states community [diasporic] newspapers can become a transport, linking the "geographic boundaries" between community members and their homelands.

2.4 Integration role

More than a century ago, Park (1922) has observed the integration role in the diasporic community press. Afterwards, "the thinking of Park was later formulated in what we will call the 'community integration' hypothesis of Morris Janowitz" (Stamm, 1985, 4). Janowitz views the community/diasporic newspapers as a tool that helps the individuals to integrate into their residential community. He concludes four contributions of the newspaper integration role. "(1) adjustment to institution and facilities; (2) democratizing prestige; (3) defining rights and privileges of local community (versus) the metropolitan community; (4) extension of personal and social contacts" (Janowitz, 1952, 73).

Afterwards, a number of researchers point out the integration role of community/diasporic newspapers. After studying German newspapers in the US, Wittke (1957) concludes that these media played a role in integrating the German migrants into US society. In Australia, Gilson and Zubrzycki examine more than 70 newspapers in different diasporic communities in 28 languages from the early 19th century to the 1960s. One of the findings is that: "[This diasporic community press] provides a most valuable instrument of cultural, social, political, and economic integration" (Gilson & Zubrzycki, 1965, 164).

Currently, the integration function of the diasporic community media is still overt in Australia and the US. Pe-Pua, Morrissey and Mitchell (1994) interviewed six editors of the Chinese community/diasporic newspapers in Australia, four considered: the most important goal of the newspapers is the integration role - "to inform/educate readers about Australia". In the US, Xu (2002) examines the front pages in *The China Press* west coast edition by content analysis, and summarizes that "there were more assimilation-fostering content [integration] than culture-preserving content on the first page of the regional section (Xu, 2002, 5)." Similarly, Yang (1992) observes the integration process of the US Chinese students after reading the Chinese community press.

In summary, the integration role is one of the most noticeable roles of the diasporic community media since a century ago, and a number of scholars have found and discussed this role by theoretical and practical aspects. As Cormack (2007, 55) writes: "minority media can meld people into a sense of a large community".

2.5 Local surveillance role

Surveillance role would be a central role for media including diasporic community newspapers. After examining the theoretical discussions of this role, this section will raise a concept "local surveillance role", and will present some practical examples – how some community newspapers play (or neglect) this role.

Surveillance role has different means between social science and media studies. Since the 19th century, "surveillance" has been embedded a "forced" denotation in social science. A typical example is Foucault. In Foucault's system, surveillance is related to "prisoner", "jail", "torture" or "punishment" (Foucault, 1979). However, the meaning in "surveillance" in social science is rather different from that in media studies.

An early media researcher, Harold Lasswell regarded the surveillance function as vital for all mass media. He clearly states the first function of mass media: "Surveillance of the environment, disclosing threats and opportunities affecting the value position of the community and of the component parts within it" (Lasswell, 1969, 118).

Lasswell's opinion on media surveillance has had extensive impacts. Even after the 1980s, some scholars still agree with him. Wilson and Gutierrez consider that "the role of news transmission is to reflect the realities of societal well-being by alerting it to dangers within and without and by providing an agenda of issues for consideration" (Wilson & Gutierrez, 1985, 146). Similarly, Wright states: "[Mass media provide] warning about imminent threats and dangers in the world" (Wright, 1986, 38).

After studying the Chinese diasporic community newspapers in Philadelphia, Liu (2010) summarize five roles for these newspapers. Three roles are relevant to the surveillance of local community and people: "warning the community", "empowering the people", and "functioning as a forum for individual opinions [of Chinese people]" (Liu, 2010, 256).

Consequently, this paper coins a term "local surveillance role", which refers that Australian Chinese newspapers should disclose the dangers threatening the communities, and should disclose the real and in-depth living of Australian Chinese people, especially their unfavorable situations, rather than only transmit simple information to the diasporic community members.

The above section presented the theoretical discussions on the local surveillance role. In media practice, the Maori community media in New Zealand played this function. However, this function showed weak in the other diasporic media, including some Chinese overseas newspapers.

Researchers found that some community media perform the local surveillance role such as *Alia* (2005). After migrating to New Zealand's major cities, Maoris were misrepresented by the mainstream media, so they established their community media. Their own media played a significant local surveillance role: revealed their hardships, reported their political viewpoints, and promoted their campaigns. These media "form a 'sustaining voice' in times of troubles, such as conflict with agents of the majority government" (ibid. 115).

Nevertheless, the other researchers found that some diasporic/ethnic newspapers play a limited local

surveillance role. For example, Tenezakis (1983) looks at Arabic and Greek newspapers in Australia, and concludes that the coverage given to migrants' community welfare in Australia is extremely poor. This means that these newspapers did not perform a sufficient local surveillance role. Another case is some US Californian Chinese newspapers. Lin (2004) found that they rarely focused on the local community members. In specific, there is a paucity of US Chinese news on regional, county, and neighborhood levels.

In terms of Australian Chinese newspapers, some of them have not achieved the local surveillance role since the early 20th century. For example, none of Australian Chinese press spoke for the Chinese community when the White Australia policy was being formulated in 1901 (Poon, 1995; Fitzgerald, 1996). Pe-Pua, Morrissey and Mitchell (1994) made a survey on six editors from *Australian Chinese Daily*, *Brisbane Community News*, *Daily Chinese Herald*, *Sing Tao Daily*, *Tide*, and *United Chinese Times*. Only one editor from the *Daily Chinese Herald* selected the item: "to express the community's concerns and views". Therefore, it seems that the local surveillance role did not obtain widely notice by the Australian Chinese press. This paper will explore the local surveillance role by content analysis and case study in *ACD*.

III. Research results 1: content analysis

3.1 Research results of the content analysis

The content analysis reviewed 2,138 (N=2,138) news items in total 253 weekday issues⁶ in *ACD*'s main news pages in January, April, July and October (2006 – 2008). The results are shown in three charts. Table 1 demonstrates the results of four categories and 11 units in these three years. Table 2 shows the total situations of these categories and units, and the Column 1 is the graphic demonstration of Table 2. These charts suggest that the main news pages published ample and various content for Australian Chinese people and communities, and played the information and integration roles. But the daily achieved a limited bridging role, especially the local surveillance role.

Table 1 News in the selected months in the main news pages, *ACD* (2006, 2007 and 2008)

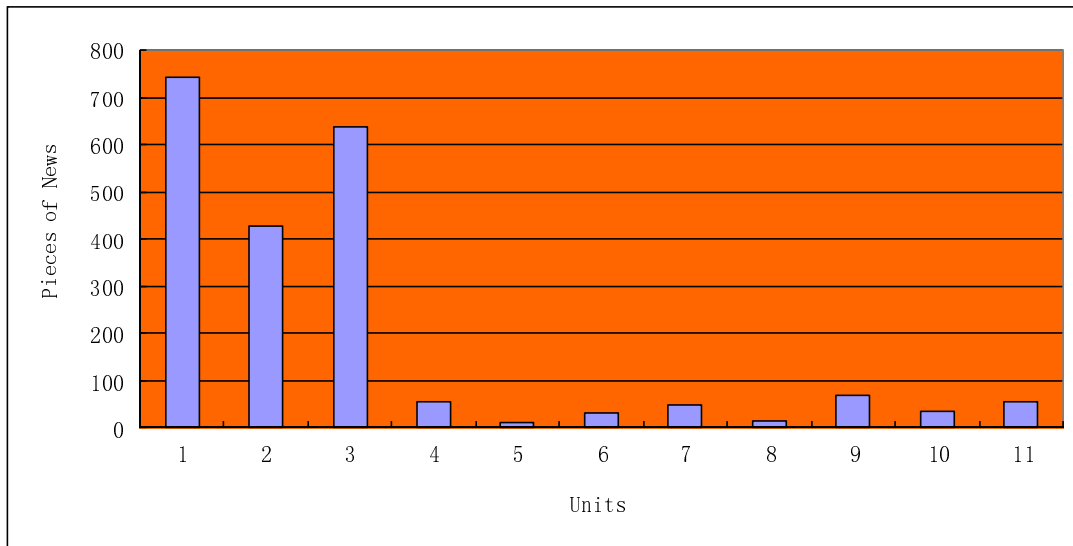
Categories	Australian news				Chinese news			ACP'			OT	
	Ap	Ae	As	Ao	Cp	Cn	Co	Pp	Pn	Po	OT	Total
2006, Total, units	234	141	211	16	1	10	20	7	31	16	18	705
Total, categories	602				31			54			18	705
%, units	33%	20%	31%	2%	0% ⁸	1%	3%	1%	4%	2%	3%	100%
%, categories	86%				4%			7%			3%	100%

2007,Total,units	286	147	224	23	3	7	17	8	26	10	22	773
Total,categories	680				27			44			22	773
%,units	37%	19%	29%	3%	0%	1%	2%	1%	3.5%	1.5%	3%	100%
%,categories	88%				3%			6%			3%	100%
2008,Total,units	223	138	204	15	8	16	21	0	13	8	14	660
Total,categories	580				45			21			14	660
%,units	34%	21%	31%	2%	1%	2.5%	3%	0%	2%	1%	2.5%	100%
%,categories	88%				6.5%			3%			2.5%	100%

Table 2 News in the selected months in the main news pages, *ACD* (Overall situations)

Categories	Australian news				Chinese news			ACP			OT	
Time/Units	Ap	Ae	As	Ao	Cp	Cn	Co	Pp	Pn	Po	OT	Total
Code ⁹	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Total, units	743	426	639	54	12	33	48	15	70	34	54	2138
%,units	35%	20%	30%	2.5%	1%	1.5%	2%	1%	3%	1.5%	2.5%	100%
Total, categories	1862				103			119			54	2138
%,categories	87.5%				4.5%			5.5%			2.5%	100%

Column 1: News in the selected months in the main news pages, *ACD* (Overall situations)



Note: 1,2, and 3... represents the units Ap, Ae, and As...shown in Table 2 (code)

3.2 The content and information role

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate that the main news pages offered ample and diverse content to Australian Chinese communities. There were respectively 705, 773, and 660 pieces of news published in the twelve selected months in 2006, 2007, and 2008. All 11 units appeared in the main news pages, including Australian news, Chinese news, and the news reporting the Chinese in Australia. There were also various contents in

Australian news categories: politics, economy, society news. As Shoemaker and Reese (1996) contend, media content reflects their roles, and the diverse and ample content in *ACD* suggest that it achieved the information role.

3.3 The content and bridging role

The Chinese news takes up a small proportion in the main news pages. This kind of news only presented

4% in 2006 and 3% in 2007, but increased to 6.5% in 2008. The positive, negative and neutral news occupies similar proportions in these three years. Although the quantity of the Chinese news was not large, the daily informed Australian Chinese community members what occurred in their homeland. In other words, it played the bridging role on a certain level. As Stamm (1985) writes, community newspapers can become a “transport” tool connecting the diasporic people with their homeland.

A scrutiny on the Chinese news found that the negative news is more than the positive, and that the neutral news occupies the major position. Then, a further question should be explored: what Chinese news did the daily report, especially negative news? A review on this kind of news found that this Chinese news encompasses two types: Chinese policies, especially political, economic and international policies; and negative social news in China. To illustrate, a total of 14 pieces of Chinese news published in October 2007 and October 2008 are presented as follows.

October 2007

October 4, Beijing’s “friendship and open” policy received recognition (Positive)

October 16, Liberal and Labor Parties all comment on China’s environmental policy (Neutral)

October 30, John Howard claims 60% of global waste air from China (Negative).

October 2008

October 2, Chinese chocolate was found poisonous (negative)

October 3, Chinese White Rabbit candy was suspended poisonous (negative)

October 6, Chinese milk tea was recalled (negative)

October 7,

(1) The stability of Chinese economy is important to the world (positive);

(2) China is looking for business talents (neutral)

October 9, Chinese vegetables were suspected poisonous (negative); the development of China’s economy becomes slow (neutral)

October 13, The development of Chinese economy is important to Australia (positive)

October 14, Da Lian court assessed the Zhang Hong Jia case (negative)

October 24, A parliamentarian inquired into Chinese food (negative)

October 31, Chinese furniture may contain poisonous ingredients (negative)

The Chinese news in these two months provides a suitable example for studying the editorial stand of *ACD* towards China. The negative news is more than the positive news in Tables 1 and 2. However, all negative

news in these months is the objective reports on the problems that China is facing, including environment and food safety. On the other hand, the positive news clearly outlines the development and importance of China to Australia and the world, as two examples show: October 4 2007; and October 7 2008. In addition, the neutral news occupies the largest proportion. These figures suggest that the daily did not hold a hostile attitude towards China.

To further explore this daily’s attitude on the Chinese Communist Party, a special attention was paid to Falun Gong (one of the most sensitive political issues in China) when the content analysis was conducted. In the selected months between 2006 and 2008, no report on Falun Gong was found, as well as the other sensitive issues such as The June 4 Tianan Men incident. This shows that the daily held a “pro” attitude to the Party.

In summary, the daily published some China news for the Chinese community in Australia, but the quantity is the smallest in all categories. In addition, the daily held a “pro” attitude to the Chinese Community Party, so some sensitive issues in China did not appear in the daily. Consequently, the daily only fulfilled a limited bridging role.

3.4 The content and integration role

Australian news occupies the largest proportion in all categories. Taking 2006 as an example, there were 602 pieces of news regarding Australia, occupying 86% in total of 705 pieces of news. These percentages were 88% in 2007 and 2008. In this Australian news, two units, Australian political and society news, constitute the two highest units. Apart from Australian society news which occupied 29% in 2007, these two units were all higher than 30% in both 2006 and 2008.

A comparison indicates the significant position of Australian news. Taking 2008 as an example, there were 580 pieces of Australian news. However, the news reporting China and Australian Chinese people were only 45 and 21 pieces. Even the news quantity of a unit in Australian news category is much more than these two categories. Choosing 2007 as a case, there were 223 and 204 pieces of Australian political and society news, but only 27 and 44 pieces of China and Australian Chinese news. In addition, Column 1 clearly indicates that columns 1, 2, and 3 (Australian political, economic and society news) represent the primary proportions in all content.

At this point, a further question can be posed: what Australian news did the daily report? All news on July 1 2008 is presented as follows. In total of ten pieces of news, nine are composed of Australian news (political, economic and society news).

Australian federal government will protect 457 visa skilled workers by legislation (political news)

An environmental organization urges Australian government to stop shark fin export (political news)

Australian inflation increases to 4.8% (economic news)

NSW government forbids the use of laser torch from today (political news)

NSW government reveals bus ticket plan (political news)

A Dick Jack's mother suffers from cancer (society news)

An illegal cannabis workshop was found on Sydney north shore (society news)

Child crime increased in Sydney (society news)

A 69-year-old Sydney man killed his wife and two grandsons (society news)

Additionally, Column 1 shows the primary position of Australian news, as the three Australian news units occupy remarkable positions in the whole news content. The above figures and examples clearly demonstrate that *ACD* offered a large amount of Australian news by diverse themes. As Park (1922) observes, the new migrants in the US gradually changed their habits and adopted the US political system after a period of reading their community newspapers. Kim (1985) also reveals the integration role in the Korean language newspapers in Australia. In this case, the plentiful news in *ACD* can sustain the above scholars' opinions, which means that the daily fulfilled the integration role.

3.5 The content and local surveillance role

The news reporting Australian Chinese people and community occupies very little space. Overall, this news presented 7%, 6%, and 3% respectively in 2006, 2007, and 2008. A comparison found the significant minimal amount of this kind of news. In 2008, there were 580 pieces of Australian news, but only 21 pieces of Australian Chinese news. In addition, there was a declining tendency in this unit, as the percentages decreased from 7% to 3% in the three years.

In terms of these pieces of news, the negative news is much more than the positive. The percentages of the positive, negative and neutral news are as follows: 1%, 4%, 2% (2006); 1%, 3.5%, 1.5% (2007); 0, 2%, 1% (2008). In this case, what Australian Chinese news did the daily report, especially negative news? The Australian Chinese news in a whole month, October 2007, is illustrated in the next paragraph. It can be seen that all Australian Chinese news is composed of crime, court or accident news.

October 3, A Chinese man in western Sydney killed his former wife (crime)

October 5, The injured actor asked for compensation in NSW court, a Hong Kong director involved (court)

October 9, A "master" of prostitutions was killed in Melbourne (crime)

October 11, A Chinese female student Jiao Dan was killed at night while off-duty in Perth (accident)

October 12, Chinese students compassionated Jiao Dan's death (accident)

October 17, (1) Jiao Dan's parents arrived in Perth, and the murderer in court (court);

(2) The body of a "master" of prostitutions found (crime)

October 18, Jiao Dan's mother extremely grieved at her daughter's death (accident)

October 31, A Sydney Chinese chef killed his former employer, because whom had a relation with his girlfriend (crime)

Admittedly, this negative news was the facts that occurring on the Chinese in Australia. In this case, this negative news revealed something about Australian Chinese people. However, a further review on the issues between November 2008 and May 2009 found no in-depth, analytical or conclusive report following these events. This suggests two disadvantages of the daily.

The first is that the daily should have further explored the causes and affects of this negative news. Taking the Jiao Dan killing case (October 17) as an example, why did this negative news occur? How should the other female students prevent this tragedy? What the Chinese community can learn from this event? These reports can not be found. The second is that the daily should have concentrated on the majority of Australian Chinese people. It is unlikely all Chinese in Australia encounter court or become criminals. Then what are the situations of the majority of Chinese in Australia except for court, accident or crime? Unfortunately, the daily did not publish the news with regard to the life and work of the major Chinese people in Australia. These two disadvantages clearly suggest a weak local surveillance role in the daily.

Overall, the content analysis showed that *ACD* published various and abundant news, especially Australian news, and played the information and integration roles. However, the daily achieved a limited bridging role. Especially, limited news reported Australian Chinese people, and much of this news is composed of negative news, which suggests a minimal local surveillance role. In this case, a question should be further explored: how does this daily report the events occurring on Australian Chinese people, especially the negative news on these people? This paper chose three representative events in the content analysis, and analyzed how *ACD* reported this type of news. A detailed analysis is as follows.

IV. Research result 2: case study

4.1 Case study 1 (2008): The Wei Liao killing

A review on the daily found 13 pieces of news reporting this case between October 2008 and December 2009, as Table 3 shows. An analysis on these reports suggests that *ACD* published detailed information on the

event, and primarily achieved the information role in this case. However, it did not publish in-depth or exclusive report, which suggests an insufficient local surveillance role.

Table 3 The reports on the Wei Liao killing case

Time	Articles	Words ¹⁰	Locations	Other
Oct 28	A naked Chinese female student fell down from the balcony and died	1,030	Headline page 1	2 photos: the balcony
Oct 29 (1)	The student came from Si Chuan	1,000	Middle page 1	2 photos: Wei and her boyfriend
Oct 29 (2)	Wei's classmates mourned her on the spot	420	Middle page 1	2 photos: a student mourns Wei, a flower on the spot
Oct 30	Police published the CCTV video to catch the murderer	910	Headline page 1	3 photos: police, the murderer, and the Chinese consulate officers
Oct 31	The murderer was detained, and the court requests the murderer's DNA	650	Headline page 1	2 photos: the parents, and the murderer
Oct 31	The parents mourned Wei on the spot	750	Middle page 1	No photo
Nov 1/2	The grieving mother preparing for daughter's funeral	1,300	Headline page 1	No photo
Nov 3	The mother intended to ask for compensation	1,100	Headline page 1	1 photo: the parents
Nov 3	The Department of Foreign Affairs (China) discussed the event with the Australian ambassador	820	Up right page 1	No photo
Nov 7	Wei was enthusiastic about living	810	Headline page 1	Two photos: media interview
Nov 8	The victims called police in the accident	630	Middle page 1	No photo
Nov 10	Wei's funeral will be held.	650	Middle page 1	No photo
Nov 12	The smiling angel flew away	750	Middle right page 1	1 photo: funeral ceremony

ACD published abundant information on the Wei Liao killing case, covering the whole process of this tragedy. The first news on October 28 depicted that the four people encountered the attacks in detail by 1,030 words. Then, the following news (October 29) reported that the victim was from Si Chuan province, and that her classmates mourned her near her apartment. The news on October 30 revealed that the murderer was photographed by the CCTV. Two pieces of news appeared on October 31. One reported that the murderer will appear in court, and the other was that Wei's mother mourned her. Subsequently, two pieces of news on 1/2 and 3 November covered that her parents prepared for the funeral and asked for compensation, and that the Department of Foreign Affairs (China) noticed this event. After briefing introducing Wei's personal living (November 7), the news (November 8) disclosed that Wei and her classmates called 000, but the police could

not identify the exact location. After announcing the time and location of Wei's funeral (November 10), the final news (November 12) was a grieving feature depicting the funeral on the spot. Additionally, a comparative study was conducted between *ACD* and *SMH* and *DT* in this period. All news appeared in *ACD* was found in *SMH* and *DT*.

An analysis on these reports shows a limited local surveillance role in the daily. Actually, a few tragedies similar to Wei Liao had taken place. In 2007 November, Jiao Dan, a female Chinese student, was raped and strangled to death in Perth at night, as reported by *ACD* (in content analysis). A six-year old Australian Chinese girl was also killed in the similar way in Perth in 2007. Broadly speaking, the Chinese in Australia frequently experience assaults. Of 11 Chinese in Australia were murdered between October 2008 and September 2009. In 2007, four young people bashed Dr Cao without any

reason at a Melbourne train station. After he fell down on the street, two murderers trampled on Cao's head and caused his death. 2006 saw Jing, a PhD candidate, encountering a robbery at night in Sydney in December. After four years of diligent studies, Jing was going to graduate. However, he died in this attack, leaving his research, wife and son.¹¹

Because a number of these events happened, *ACD* should not simply report the Wei Liao case, and should pay more attention to the Australian Chinese people and reveal their insightful stories on this issue. In other words, *ACD* should fulfill a strong local surveillance role. For example, the daily can summarize the reasons and characteristics of these cases, and provide some recommendations to the Australian Chinese people. This is to prevent the similar tragedy happens again. These recommendations can comprise different aspects for female students and night workers. As a Chinese community newspaper, *ACD* can also organize a reader discussion in the newspaper, summarizing readers' opinions to improve the security awareness of Australian Chinese people. Nevertheless, these kinds of reports were not found in the daily until December 2009.

In relation to the theoretical discussions in Section

2, Lasswell (1969) proposes that the media should surveil the society and inform "dangers" to their passengers (community members). Alia (2005) also comments that diasporic/ethnic media should reveal the hardships of their community and provide practicable message for their community members. Contradictive to these scholars, *ACD* did not publish in-depth, exclusive and analytical articles on this tragedy for the Australian Chinese, which suggests that the daily did not play the local surveillance role. The daily only fulfilled the information role by publishing 13 articles on this event.

4.2 Case Study 2 (2007): The exploitation of two Chinese skilled workers

This case study examines the content and role of the reports in a work conflict between two Chinese workers and their employer. A review on the daily between September 2007 and December 2008 found four pieces of news reporting this case, as a table below shows. Similar to the case of Wei Liao killing, *ACD* provided the information of this event, but did not publish any in-depth articles. Consequently, the daily played the information role but did not achieve the local surveillance role.

Table 4 The reports on the exploitation of two Chinese skilled workers

Time	Articles	Words	Locations	Other
Sep 14	Two Chinese skilled workers penniless and homeless	830	Headline, page 2	1 photo
Sep 15	Two workers facing deport	850	Headline, page 2	1 photo
Sep 18	Two workers' visa cancelled	530	Headline, page 1	1 photo
Sep 27	Two workers obtained the Bridge visa	530	Headline, page 2	No photo

First, the content of these reports is briefly examined as follows. The first news reported that two Chinese skilled workers were deceived by their employer. They claimed that they should have obtained A\$ 45,000 annual salaries, but finally only got several hundred dollars. These two workers were penniless and homeless, and faced the visa problem. The second news (September 15/16) repeated that their visas would be cancelled by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the news on September 18 confirmed the decision from the department. But the headline on September 27 reported that these two workers obtained assistance from the Workers' Union, waiting for the investigation and final decision of the department. After that, there was no report on this event until December 2008. A comparison with *SMH* and *DT* found all news in *ACD* appeared in the former two dailies.

An analysis on these articles reveals that the daily played a weak local surveillance, because *ACD* did not reveal in-depth stories on the hardships of the skilled workers. Resulting from limited English capacity,

usually Chinese skilled workers in Australia encounter cultural shocks and language barrier. They do not know how to protect their legal rights in Australia. For example, on October 31 2006, *Sing Tao Daily* reported that a Melbourne publishing company did not pay for four Chinese skilled workers' outstanding payment A\$ 94,000. Provided that *ACD* could pay more attention to these workers, and publish some relevant legal articles and recommendations for them, they might know how to protect themselves. Then this kind of event could be reduced. However, none of these articles was seen until December 2008.

To some degree, the Chinese skilled workers in Australia may be similar to the Chinese migrant workers in Chinese cities. In China, most migrant workers also encounter a number of difficulties in cities. Some mainland Chinese newspapers have established a column for "migrant workers". The columns in the newspapers disclose their hardships and unfair treatments. If *ACD* could have established a column for these skilled workers, their unfavorable situations could

have been unveiled in public, and they might know and avoid this issue. When the difficulties of these workers are reported by these newspapers, these papers also obtain more audience. *ACD* may take into account in this way.

Finally, *ACD* published four articles on this case and disclosed that the Chinese encounter illegal treatment in Australia. This is the information role in the daily. However, all news simply covered the processes in this event. Wilson and Gutierrez (1985) consider that “the role of news transmission is to reflect the realities of societal well-being by alerting it to dangers within and without and by providing an agenda of issues for consideration” (Wilson & Gutierrez, 1985, 146).

Table 5 The reports on the “De Yuan fishing boats case”

Time	Articles	Words	Locations	Other
Apr 8/9	Two Chinese fishing boats detained.	520	Headline (page2)	1 photo(an Indonesian illegal ship was burnt)
Apr 25	The investigation finished.	440	Up left (page 1)	no photo
May 2	Two Chinese captains accused illegal fishing.	550	Down left (page 1)	1 photo (Australian officers in two boats)
Aug 30	The first Chinese citizen prosecuted for illegal fishing in Australia	350	Down left (page 1)	no photo

A review on these four reports found that although these reports cover the basic information of the event, they provide some misleading content. The first news had shown a deliberate bias. The first paragraph mentions: “Tens of fishing boats detained, but two Chinese fishing boats different”. Then, the second paragraph is a quotation of the Minister of Fishing, addressing that the illegal fishing was increasing rampantly in Australia and organized criminals were involved into the illegal fishing. The following paragraphs are composed of illegal fishing details (e.g. the oyster “black market” and the illegal weapons trade). These paragraphs might have provided a misleading background - these two boats could be the illegal fishing boats.

The news on April 21 covered the investigation of the two boats, and that the 23 crew¹² members were detained in a detention camp. The news on May 2 confirmed that the two Chinese captains were accused for illegal fishing, and 25 crew members would be deported. The final news (August 30) was titled: The first¹³ Chinese citizen to be prosecuted for illegal fishing. The news only mentions the reason why these two boats entered Australia in two sentences: for ship supplies and their mis-identification of Australian navy as Indonesian navy. But the news allocates two paragraphs for the Minister of Fishing. The Minister supported the trial, and emphasizes that Australia should punish illegal

Opposite to these two scholars, the daily paid insufficient attention to the skilled-workers’ difficulties, which suggests a limited local surveillance role.

4.3 Case Study 3 (2006): “De Yuan” fishing boats case

This case study will review how *ACD* reported a conflict between two Chinese boats and the Australian government. An examination on the daily between April 2006 and December 2007 found four pieces of news, as a table below shows. Similar to the above cases, *ACD* provided some information about this event, but did not reveal any insightful story, so the daily played a minimal local surveillance role.

fishing. The final paragraph repeats his ideas. Compared with *SMH* and *DT*, all news in *ACD* all appeared in these two dailies.

A further analysis suggests that *ACD* did not fulfill the local surveillance role by two reasons: the biased reports and the lack of important details. The first and last news provide a biased “stereotype” for the communities. The first news outlines the illegal fishing by the Minister’s address and examples. The last news only spends two short sentences on these two boats, but allocates two long paragraphs for the Minister’s comments. These one-sided reports may deliberately show that these two boats could be illegal fishing boats. But actually, these fishers had a different story. On September 7 2006, *Sing Tao Daily* reported that the fishes in these two boats were not fished in Australia but in Indonesia, and that there was no direct evidence which can prove they fished in Australia.

Furthermore, there is a lack of important details in *ACD*. These two boats were accidentally burnt before the trial (see the reports on September 7 2006 *Sing Tao Daily*). This caused a significant loss for the boats’ owner, and the loss of evidence. Therefore, a trial without evidence would be unfair to these Chinese people. But *ACD* did not publish this crucial news. Additionally, no further report was found regarding the final result. Did these two captains really go to jail and pay for the fine? The daily did not inform the community until December 2007.

Experiencing hardships and unfair treatment in Australia, these two captains and crew members are the Chinese countryman waiting for help from the Chinese media. When the Maoris experienced unfavorable situations in New Zealand, their media spoke out about their difficulties and supported their opinions (Alia, 2005). Unfortunately, *ACD* did not reveal the hardships and the true stories of these Chinese. On the other hand, it published some misleading information (illegal fishing). Consequently, the daily paid insufficient attention to the Chinese in Australia, and played a limited local surveillance function.

Overall, it can be seen that a similarity of these three case studies – *ACD* provided plentiful information regarding these three events for the community, playing an information role. However, none of these articles is in-depth, analytical, exclusive or conclusive. In other words, the daily only “simply raise the alarm about a problem, without asking the community to be part of the solution” (Castillo & Hirst, 2001, 5), and did not reveal the reason and provide some recommendations for the community, in this case, the daily made little contribution to the local surveillance role.

V. Discussion and conclusion

5.1 Summary of research results

Together with content analysis and case study results, it is intended to conclude the roles of *ACD* on news aspect. First, in the content analysis, *ACD* provided abundant information, especially Australian news, to Australian Chinese communities. This shows the information and integration role. However, rare news reported China and Australian Chinese people. In particular, most of the news on the Australian Chinese people is negative news without insightful and following reports, which indicates a limited local surveillance role. Second, in the case study, the daily reported the three negative cases occurring on Australian Chinese people in detail, which demonstrates the information role. But there was no in-depth analysis or exclusive reports, which also indicates an inadequate local surveillance role.

Answering the research question (what role *ACD* plays), *ACD* played the information and integration roles, but achieved a limited bridging role, especially, it did not achieve the surveillance role. Responding to the paper title (*Australian Chinese Daily* not for Australian Chinese), it is not completely sustainable by the research results, because the content in *ACD* did show the information and integration roles to the Australian Chinese people. Nevertheless, the daily only transferred simple information to the Chinese, while publishing little in-depth or exclusive articles to reveal their real situations and hardships. As this point, *ACD* neglected the vital role “local surveillance role”, which would be the most important role of Australian Chinese people.

5.2 Match/mismatch of the media role theories

In relation to the theoretical discussions in section 2, the research results sustain some scholars’ discussions on information and integration roles, but mismatch their opinions on bridging and local surveillance roles.

The abundant and diverse news in *ACD* shows the information role, which matches some scholars’ discussions. For example, Adoni et al. (2006), Husbands (1998) and Stamm (1985) all reveal the information role in community/diasporic media. The content analysis demonstrates that *ACD* provided 2,138 pieces of news for Australian Chinese in the three years including ten units. The daily also reported the three significant events on Australian Chinese in details. Therefore, information role was the strongest role that *ACD* played.

ACD also played a significant integration role by publishing a large proportion of Australian news. The integration function was revealed by many scholars such as Carl (1957), Gilson and Zubrzycki (1965), Janowitz (1952), and Park (1922). As Table 2 shows, 87.5% of the news is Australian news, including Australian politics, economy and society news. Between 2006 and 2008, Australian news also took up the most primary position. Therefore, the daily matched the above scholars’ opinions on this role.

However, there is limited China news in the content analysis, and the daily did not report some sensitive events such as Falun Gong in the three years. This suggests a weak bridging role, because it is contradicted to some scholars’ discussion in section 2. For example, Martin (1980), Bell et al. (1991), Pe-Pua, Morrissey, Mitchell (1994) all consider that providing sufficient information and connecting host country with homeland is a basic function for diasporic media.

Especially, *ACD* did not match the discussions on local surveillance role. Lasswell ranks surveillance role as the first role for mass media, as well as some later researchers such as Wilson and Gutierrez (1985) and Wright (1986). Alia (2003) also advocates that minority media should speak out for their minority groups. However, this role shows very weak in *ACD*. On the one hand, there were limited reports on Australian Chinese people in the content analysis. On the other hand, when the three negative cases occurred, and the Chinese legal rights were trespassed, the daily only simply reported these events without editorial, in-depth or conclusive article.

5.3 Vitality of local surveillance role

Although *ACD* played the information and integration roles, the local surveillance role is most important to Australian Chinese people and communities, and the daily itself. A further analysis shows that only reporting negative news does not mean fulfilling local surveillance role. In addition, achieving this role would be the best “weapon” for Australian Chinese newspapers to “fight for” the other media.

In both content analysis and case study, *ACD* published a number of negative reports on Australian Chinese people. Can this negative news substitute the local surveillance role? A few scholars express the opposite attitude, arguing the distance between information and local surveillance functions.

Kitch and Hume (2008) reviewed the media reports on ten traumas in the US history, including the "September 11" attack. They conclude that simply reporting deaths (negative news) would not benefit the media and community. It is vital that media content link "both the past and the present", revealing how to reduce the possibilities of next trauma. The media should invite audiences to speculate: "how will I, or my neighbors or my countrymen, react in a crisis?" (ibid. 193). Obviously, *ACD* did not provide the recommendations for their readers how to avoid these negative events (security, employment deceiving, and discrimination) in future.

Frost (2006) criticizes negative news in local community newspapers as "death knocks". He questions: "whether the death is newsworthy because of its circumstance or because of who died?" The key to negative news should be "sensitivity and compassion", reminding society to avoid deaths. He recommends that local press should respect victims and provide compassion to their families and alerts to the community, rather than only chase a low level newsworthiness. It seems *ACD* only took the "death news" (Wei Liao killing) as normal news, while failing to reveal insightful stories of these events.

In addition, achieving the local surveillance role would be the best "weapon" for Australian Chinese newspapers to "fight for" the other media. First, the information and bridging functions can be substituted by the Internet in some situations, because Australian Chinese people can easily obtain the homeland news online. The integration role can also be substituted by the English media in some situations. The 2006 figures of ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistic) show that a large proportion of Australian Chinese people have mastered the basic English, so they can use the English language media. However, the Australian Chinese people do hope that their newspapers can perform the local surveillance role. First, many audiences hope that they can be respected and reported (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Mcquail, 1997). Especially, many Australian Chinese encounter the hardships such as employment and security. They do anticipate that their own media can publish their in-depth stories and offer assistance.

On the other hand, the English language media is unlikely to frequently report the stories of Australian Chinese people and communities, because they focus on the mainstream community. Although some Australian Chinese people can express their hardships online, the Internet may have the credibility problems. However,

the newspaper journalists can investigate and summary these events and publish in-depth reports. Therefore, Australian Chinese newspapers are the most suitable media channel to perform the local surveillance role, which is also the advantage that newspapers compete with the other media.

Overall, the above research results and discussions suggest that: although it achieved the information and integration roles, *ACD* did not achieve the local surveillance role for Australian Chinese people. This role would be vital for these people, and the other media are unsuitable to play this role. The case of *ACD* could also become the reference for the other Australian Chinese newspapers. Provided that they can concentrate on Australian Chinese people and reveal in-depth stories of the local Chinese, they can attract readers and obtain their support, and survive in a very competitive media environment.

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¹ Combined the research of Gilson and Zubrzycki (1967) and Fitzgerald (1996).

² The three English language dailies in Sydney: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Daily Telegraphy*, *The Australian*. The five Chinese dailies in Sydney: *Australian Chinese Daily*, *Daily Chinese Herald*, *Epoch Times*, *Sing Tao Daily*, and *Australian Chinese New Express Daily*.

³ In the 5th Global Chinese Media Forum (2007, Shanghai), the US Chinese newspapers ranked first position, followed by the Australian and Canadian Chinese newspapers.

⁴ In this category, positive news means the news in favor of China, such as rapid economic development. "Negative news" means the news that is not in favorable to China, e.g. traffic accident, corruption, poisonous food. "Neutral news" refers that the news depicts the objective events not in favor of or negative to China.

⁵ In this category, positive news means that the news describes the Chinese in Australia in the favorable situations, e.g. an Australian Chinese, Terry Tao, won the Field Award. "Negative news" describes the Chinese in Australia in unfavorable situations, e.g. some Australian Chinese people were murdered, or were charged in courts. "Neutral news" refers that the news depicts the objective events not in favor of or negative to the Chinese in Australia.

⁶ The original weekday issues were more than 253. But four issues did not collected by the New South Wales library, where the content analysis was mainly conducted in. In addition, some issues were not applicable because of full of advertisements in the main news pages.

⁷ ACP: The news reporting Australian Chinese people. OT: the other news. Ap: Australian political news. Ae: Australian economic news. Ac: Australian society news. Ao: Australian news (the others). Cp: Chinese news (positive). Cn: Chinese news (negative). Co: Chinese news (neutral). Pp, Pn, Po: the news reporting Australian Chinese people (positive, negative, neutral).

⁸ The calculation process in Excel ignores the figures smaller than 0.5% in here.

⁹ The codes are for Column 1.

¹⁰ The amount of words is approximate in the case study articles.

¹¹ All these cases are widely reported in the Australian mainstream media including *SMH* and *DT*.

¹² The number for the crew could be 25, because the next news mentioned that the number of crew is 25. In addition, the crew figure in the other newspapers was also 25.

¹³ The news in the issue May 2 *ACD* and in the other Chinese dailies all stated two captains (two boats). So, there would be a mistake in the title: two Chinese citizens were prosecuted for illegal fishing.

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