

POLITICAL NEWS AS A CULTURAL REPOSITORY:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICAL REPORTING IN SOUTH KOREA AND THE
UNITED STATES

by
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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation explores how the journalistic, political, and organizational cultures of the United States and South Korea have moderated press/politics relationship in these two countries with regard to the practice of journalism. While the majority of previous comparative journalism studies approach culture by measuring either journalists' ethical standards or their idealized normative ideas of their work, this study investigates how cultural dimensions affect each country's actual journalistic practice, specifically in relation to the writing of presidential news, political reporting routines, and the journalistic use of social media. By conducting a content analysis of presidential speeches and quoted statements in news stories, as well as in-depth interviews with 27 journalists, my findings show that in Korean media, a president is portrayed as a person who exercises a great deal of influence, following the tradition of "imperial presidency." Meanwhile, in U.S. media, comparatively president-centered patterns and an emphasis on presidents' negative remarks through quotations are found. In South Korea, an informal connection is unconsciously established through direct or indirect contact between reporters and their sources, as well as between reporters from rival media outlets through the practice of *kkumi* and *mawari*. The sense of collectivism manifested in the newly routinized mechanisms of press activities, forms the basis for the "insiderization" of political reporters. On the other hand, the culture of self-determination and unencumbered individualism in the United States fits with the model of an open-beat system, as well as open-market competition, as seen in the adversarial relations between journalists, their sources, and their competitors. With the establishment of rules differentiating one from the many, customized and personalized strategies have been used to reach a greater audience. Furthermore, this research also reveals the divergent ways of interpreting social media by journalists in these two countries. In a collectivist society, which depends on journalists interpreting social media, it can be used as a homogenizing tool that reifies the hegemonic system through conformity thinking. By comparison, the U.S. media's market-oriented model tends to produce news that pursues commercial goals and intensifies journalists' social media use, resulting in a commodification of journalists' branding and self-marketing.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For a democracy to function well, it needs the complementary underlying condition that all members of the society consent to a set of fundamental norms (Almond and Verba, 1963; Pye, 1965; Dahl, 1971; Diamond et al., 1990). Such norms do not mature overnight. Depending on the conditions, the press in democracies—whether in their juvenile or mature periods—have specific concerns about their responsibilities, professional routines, and obligations.

An abundance of evidence shows that the convergence of media systems (due to globalization and commercialization) has created shared journalistic norms such as objectivity and accuracy. In addition, a common perspective on the journalistic role leads to homogenization of the international news product, specifically a product that is “Americanized” in its marketing structure, role perception, and organizational workflow. Comparative studies have played a significant role as “engine[s] of knowledge” (Dogan and Pelassy, 1990, p. 8), allowing researchers to identify “what types of political communication culture are conceivable under what structural condition in different national arenas, and what profiles of political discourse are to be expected in each case” (Pfetsch, 2004, p. 347). As a society’s social structure mirrors its political culture in the form of representation (Hallin, 1984, p. 829), journalists’ practices similarly reflect the cultural expectations of the democratic ideals that individual members of the society pursue (Gans, 1998).

Although significant evidence for ethical and occupational universality has been presented, specifically in terms of norms, practices, and judgment (Weaver & Willnat, 2020), comparative studies, conducted on national levels, have focused on differing assumptions about the nature of

journalism in various countries, “opening our eyes to communication patterns and problems unnoticeable in our own spatial and temporal milieu” (Blumler et al., 1992, p. 3). Specifically, this research has been widely used when “system-sensitivity” (Blumler et al., p. 7) is needed. With these powerful benefits, comparative journalism research has flourished over the past four decades (Hanusch, 2020). However, while abundant research has compared completely different systems, such as those of a democratic country and a totalitarian country, little attention has been paid to journalistic practices in countries functioning as democracies, but with dramatically different cultures—specifically where the socio-cultural norms contain the remnants of authoritarianism, hierarchical in its original form, even after the trend toward de-Westernization. However, “a distinction between merely Western and non-Western contexts would be too simplistic.” The degree of democratic performance and the presence of emancipative values in a society should be discussed when examining journalism in the “rest” of the world (Hanitzsch et al., 2020, p. 289).

Historically, given that the media system and the institutions of the nation state have been inextricably linked, media norms and practices govern the actual operation of the social institution called journalism. Abundant scholarship has explored how journalism has achieved its status through professionalism and practice, while distinguishing itself from other institutions. For this reason, the schema used by Hallin & Mancini (2001) and other researchers to compare media systems (a schema focused on media institutions) has been dominant. This approach eschews focusing on journalistic norms and instead focuses on assessing how well a media institution adapts to the democratic system in which it operates. Researchers have noted that it is “risky to generalize across many nations, whose media systems, histories, and political cultures we cannot know with equal depth” (Hallin &

Mancini, 2001, p. 5), when trying to produce “a cogent theoretical framework.” In other words, one cannot understand a country’s relationship with its media without understanding its political culture.

Political journalism is the intersection of cultural factors and practices between politicians and professional journalists (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995; Cook, 1998; Kuhn & Neveu, 2002), where journalism is unique to the cultural context and cultural protocols, and it utilizes culturally specific meanings and language. Exploring the patterns of political communication has yielded insights into the power dynamics between institutions, further enhancing our current understanding of the role that cultural values play in political journalism. Each country’s cultural contexts mediate the communication and political cultures that are embedded in reporters’ daily approach to contacting officials and their aides, their organizational arrangement, their working logic in the newsroom, and the assumptions made in their writing and reporting.

In this sense, the normative expectations among professional journalism groups are used as the litmus test for quality. Previous studies have measured how journalistic norms, such as investigation, fairness, and objectivity, differ—even among democratic countries. Van Dalen et al. (2012) examined the characteristics and reportorial processes of political news in various countries, based on their understanding of the journalistic role and the relationship between a journalist and his or her sources—especially in political coverage. However, such perceptions of journalists tend to represent normative presumptions rather than actual behaviors or activities (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2007, p. 118). In other words, studies that considered journalistic perceptions did not investigate actual practices but rather explored the journalistic ideals of each society.

Given this context, my dissertation borrows from Hanitzsch's (2007) framework for a cultural approach to journalism and investigates the cultural influence of political reporting in two countries, South Korea and the United States, focusing on journalistic (i.e., professional, political, and organizational culture). To address the consequences of cultural influence, this study examines the political/journalistic conventions in these two countries, which have similar democratic political systems but different cultural values and trajectories toward democracy. Particularly, it aims to determine how divergent cultural assumptions are embedded in 1) journalistic writing that covers presidents and other politicians, 2) newsroom-staff structure and political reporters' daily routines, and 3) how journalists incorporate social media into their news production processes.

Why Compare South Korea and the United States?

Selecting these two liberal democracies has many advantages in determining the cultural influence in journalism practice. Despite its success of having been rapidly incorporated into the Western-centered democratic order during the Cold War (Huntington, 1991), scholars have discussed South Korea, a late-comer country to democracy, as having a combination of a remnant authoritarian culture and extending efforts to mimic the Western world (Kang, 2000). At the same time, compared with other Asian countries, South Korea embraces democracy the most and tries to implement it in the most Americanized way possible (Tudor, 2012).

Both countries enjoy a functioning free press, according to the World Press Freedom Index 2022, compiled by the Paris-based Reporters Without Borders (RSF). The United States ranks 42nd

(with a score of 72.74), and South Korea is 43rd (with a score of 72.11)¹. Back in 2003, the *World Press Encyclopedia* depicted South Korea as a media-rich country with 47 million people who enjoy more than 116 daily papers and 74 satellite broadcasting channels. South Korea is home to technology-savvy citizens and the world's most industrialized free-market economy, guaranteed by democracy (Quick, 2003). In particular, the country's democratization (in 1987) marked a dramatic transformation in which the Korean press gained complete journalistic autonomy from the government (Heuvel & Dennis, 1993). As Lipset (1994) notes, South Korea occupies a distinct position. Most countries that evolve from an authoritarian regime to a democracy struggle to align democratic norms with long-held traditions and beliefs. According to Lipset, "South Korea appears unique in having done so in a relatively short period" (p. 3).

Regarding the media in this transitional period, Youm (1996) specifically noted that the press has evolved from acting as a "voluntary servant" to an "equal contender" in its relationship with political authorities (p. xiii). After the democratic turn in 1987, South Korea experienced a horizontal regime change as a result of elections, the public's active participation in social movements, and growing party politics. These elements served to develop and mature South Korean democracy in a unique fashion. The Korean press experienced a golden age after the 1987 reformation: "The media have been freer than ever to criticize the government, address formerly taboo issues, and expand with virtually no restraint" (Heuvel & Dennis, 1993, p. 13). However, Youm stressed that 'journalistic freedom' needs to be distinguished from 'press freedom'. He addressed that publishers' freedom from government interference

¹ Norway ranked at the top of the 2022 Index with a score of 92.65, followed by Denmark and Sweden with scores of 90.27 and 88.84, respectively. North Korea is the lowest-ranked country in the world, with a score of 13.92. The press polarization that intensified internal social divisions resulted in the United States surprisingly low rank of 42.

may not directly translate to individual reporters' freedom in Korea as the continuous attempt of company executives to influence on journalists' reporting process persists (Youm, 1994).

To emulate such global changes and to catch up with Western developed countries, whether through democratization or industrialization, South Korea has progressed precariously in its quest for change, largely because its driving force derives from external pressure (such as the desire to catch up with Western countries) rather than internal motivation (i.e., spontaneous pressure from the Koreans themselves). In this sense, if Western democratization has a primitive nature, then Korean democratization has a derivative one. For this reason, Koreans are more interested in how quickly they can achieve democratization, rather than being obsessed with why they need democracy. This leads Korean democracy has been framed as possessing "borrowed or unearned legitimacy" (Kang, 2000, p.73), mimicking the ideals and systems of the United States as the liberator.

In fact, the sense of "borrowed legitimacy" appears evident in fundamental norms, such as a free press. Countering the belief that the principle of press freedom is universally applicable in democratic countries, Lee (1997) argues: "While the notion of freedom of the press and institutions of democracy have literally evolved hand in hand in the West, the South Korean media have lacked such institutional foundations. Simply put, the idea of free press in South Korea was nothing more than a superficial imposition of foreign ideas which completely lack indigenous institutional support" (p. 87). This perspective leads to the term "Asian democracy," meaning a semi-democracy, a mixture of democracy and authoritarianism (Neher, 1994; Hachten, 1989; Lee, 1991). The Korean government thus considers press freedom as "grants of political favor rather than acceptance of political or civil rights" (Gastil, 1983, p. 5).

In a similar vein, Korea has been described in terms of its “experiencing growing pains in how much and in what ways it will continue to change—and it will remain to be seen how the country will adapt itself to its new persona” (Park & Youm, 2017, p. 205). Media practices in South Korea are in a state of flux:

Yet such a rosy picture of South Korea’s media also has an undertone of anomaly in an odd mix of today’s modernity and yesterday’s traditional society. The anomaly surfaces in the form of instability, contradictions, irregularity, and cohabitation of old and new values and practices, especially in the present transitional phase of Korea’s rapid industrialization. The press enjoys a constitutionally guaranteed freedom, but often it behaves as if it doesn’t have much freedom in its coverage of certain sensitive subjects, such as the powerful military or the incumbent president (Quick, 2003, p. 83)

Against this backdrop, this study focuses on how democratic ideals (such as press freedom) are exercised and executed at both the individual journalist and newsroom levels—rather than studying the influence of constitutionally guaranteed freedom. Institutional performance depends not only on structure but also on the way journalists interpret professional norms in their everyday actions. After all, terms like “freedom of the press” mean different things in different cultural contexts.

In established democracies, democratic norms like press freedom are considered “clearcut concepts” (Voltmer & Wasserman, 2014, p. 179). Nonetheless, press freedom remains fluid, influenced by cultural tradition, historical experiences, and political values that emerge as members of a society negotiate its meaning, especially in an emerging democracy (Searle, 1995; Weaver & Willnat, 2012). Instead of comparing institutional factors, such as the regulatory protection of the media, this dissertation focuses on the struggle over the interpretation or appropriation of press freedom as a professional practice. In this sense, it calls for the need to examine a country’s structuring of press freedom—via local cultural values and customs (Owusu, 1997). To respond to the adoption of basic norms executed in

newsrooms, this dissertation aims to fill the gap by employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. To address how press freedom and its implications for journalistic practice are understood by journalists in different contexts, I compared the epistemologically divergent forms and social constructions of journalistic norms.

With the emergence of digital technologies and the formation of a system where journalist use digital tools actively, university scholars have discussed the possibility for a mixture of liberal ideals and existing trajectories of inherent authoritarian values—based on the internet’s unlimited capacity and digital media’s interactive features (Cottle, 2011; Howard & Hussain, 2011; Tufekci and Wilson, 2012). Specifically, with newly arising sociological and technological issues (including channel proliferation, and unbundled media outlets with fragmented audiences), Hallin et al. (2021) note that “individual news outlets may become, in important ways, more homogeneous in the kinds of journalism they practice.” Benson and Hallin (2007) interpret this development as the convergence tendency toward the U.S. media system model. With regard to this point, this study also examines journalists’ social media use and its effects on newsrooms in the two countries. How does the widespread and universal use of social media affect the journalistic conventions in both countries? More specifically, this study evaluates the divergent practices of political journalists’ methods of using social media when they cover their respective president (the most important political figure in both countries), as well as their legislatures, which are the most important policy-making bodies in a democracy. By doing so, this study challenges assumptions about a democracy, which are often limited empirical observations based on single-country studies. Selecting South Korea as one of the countries for this study allows for an exploration of the peculiar mixture of the country’s active digital culture, high-tech character, and pervasive Neo-Confucianism, accompanied by a feudalistic conception of a presidency that was

established through its colonial period and a military-dominated form of authoritarianism—all within the context of a representative democracy.

Outline of the Dissertation and Findings

While previous comparative studies have studied culture by measuring journalists' ethical standards through cross-national surveys, those approaches tended to represent idealized normative ideals rather than actual professional practices. Such attempts make causality rely on individuals' journalistic ideals without considering how cultural dimensions—such as interventionist journalism, newsroom organization, and national politics—impact journalistic norms. This lack of contextualization results in studies that may not accurately represent the widely divergent journalistic practices seen around the world. Thus, this study selects journalistic writing, routines, and social media practices as the window for inferring journalists' actual writing and reporting. To pursue this inquiry, I examined three interrelated questions. First, this dissertation explores how direct quotations are leveraged in presidential news, showing how presidents and other politicians around the president are positioned in varying ways through different conventions in reporting and writing (e.g., how is the position of the president defined in each country? What type of presidential remarks appear in quotation marks and which are summarized?). In South Korea, where the Imperial Presidency is still conventionally embedded in the practice of journalism, the president's message is conveyed through an order, a command, or a resolution (or plan determination). The president is represented as a commander or monarch who forces his ideas and will on the people. Reporters in South Korea internalize these authoritarian values. In the United States, the rhetorical transition from

a presidency that was directed toward Congress to being directed toward the public (Tulis, 2017), gave the U.S. president a significant and dominant media presence.

The second question centers on an examination of the reporting arrangements and daily routines of political reporters in the two countries. Which venues do journalists visit in their reporting and how do editorial teams and individual journalists define their functioning with regard to Congress (in the United States) and the National Assembly of South Korea. The structure of a news staff and its institutional reporting systems critically shape journalists' daily routines and the characteristics of their work. For example, U.S. journalists "are not beholden to members of Congress and are free to exercise their own judgment in the coverage" (Gershon, 2012). This means that the mind-set and attitudes of an editorial staff or an individual journalist can directly influence the content of the news. On the other hand, a South Korean newsroom's rules lead reporters to function as spin doctors for political parties, with various conventions that reduce the legislative process to political factions.

Third, how journalists incorporate social media into their news production processes is examined. Despite the commonalities related to the high level of social media use, journalists in the two countries show key differences in how they perceive social media and employ it in their work. In the U.S. media's market-oriented and entertainment-centered model (which tends to produce news that pursues commercial goals through striving to satisfy consumer demand), journalists' social media use is intensified. This results in a commodification of journalists' branding and self-marketing and the perception of social media as an avenue for reaching potential audiences. In South Korea, a collectivistic culture that has prioritized cooperation and social unity under the long

tradition of Neo-Confucianism, social media serves a unique professional function as a collectivist digital workspace, primarily in the way journalists rely on group chat functions. This leads to a degree of homogenization across news outlets, as journalists bring their thinking into conformity with one another. The result is broadly uniform news coverage, on social media and beyond.

CHAPTER 2

SITUATING THE CASE ON THE COMPARATIVE MEDIA STUDIES MAP

To address the rationale behind selecting cultural influences on media systems with three dimensions, the development of the comparative media studies field and the way cultural factors have been used in the existing literature need to be discussed first. This chapter provides an overview of the areas in which comparative media studies are currently developing. It also situates the present study within the long tradition of comparative media studies. Based on the assumption that a cultural approach can contribute to a more nuanced yet holistic understanding of non-Western journalism, I will introduce the three dominant approaches: journalistic, political, and organizational, while drawing on Hanitzsch's suggestion of "interventionism, power dynamics, and market orientation" to determine the institutional roles of culture in journalism. By adopting Hanitzsch's systematic angles, this chapter discusses how interventionism (the first dimension) was used in the previous literature, and its potential applicability to U.S. and Korean journalism cultures.

Mapping Theories of Comparative Journalism Studies

The development of comparative communication research can be chronologically divided into three phases, each with milestone works: 1) the first phase centered on normative theories that attempted to model global media systems under which "the press that takes the form of the social and political structures within which it operates" centered on Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm's (1956) four theories of press (pp.1-2). Phase 2 marked the period in which studies flourished on the structure of media markets, political parallelism, journalistic professionalism, and state intervention—as led by Hallin and Mancini (2004). This phase also included an increasing focus on

political leaders and journalists, as studied in Blumler and Gurevitch (1995). In Phase 3, studies such as Curran and Park (2000), Hallin and Mancini (2011), and Hanitzsch et al. (2020) attempted to point out the inadequacy of existing media models to overcome West-centric comparisons. These phases of comparative research encompass the macro level to the micro (individual) level, embracing state ownership of the press, the structure of media markets, professional ideology of journalists, and a variety of forms of media production, content, and consumption across the world (Esser et al., 2011; Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Shoemaker & Cohen, 2006).

To briefly introduce the history of comparative journalism research's development, the origin of comparison at the macro cross-national level can be traced back to the aforementioned "four theories of the press," exploring the question of "what the press should be and do" (Siebert et al., 1956). Rather than focusing on a clear distinction between single nations, Siebert and his team discussed normative dimensions of a free press operating amid the tension between government authority and the public's need for information. It classified four models of the world's press, based on the function of each: (a) the authoritarian theory, which traces back to the Renaissance and regards truth as the product of a small elite; (b) the libertarian theory, which aligns with Milton, Locke, and Mill and asserts that truth is humanity's natural right; (c) the social responsibility theory, which states that the free press should not be censored but also holds that the press should be subject to public intervention and professional self-regulations; and (d) the Soviet Communist theory, an expanded version of the authoritarian theory, which holds that the state should control all media for the benefit of the people—in order to develop a strong and uniformly socialized society.

The four-theories approach has received sharply contrasting evaluations. Some consider it “the bible of comparative media studies” (Curran, 2011, p. 28), while others claim that it has “stalked the landscape of media studies like a horror-movie zombie for decades beyond its natural lifetime” (Hallin and Mancini, 2004, p. 10). The major criticisms of this foundational work have focused on its negligence of economic influence (Akhavan-Majid & Wolf, 1991), lack of applicability in modern press systems (Merill & Lowenstein, 1979), and ethnocentric assumptions (Hachten, 1981; Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Moreover, it does not offer any social or scientific explanations or predictions. It merely describes an ideal model for all media systems. It provides only causal inference from a universalizing approach, rather than a detailed analysis of specific media systems.

In their landmark work, Hallin and Mancini (2004) compared 18 liberal democracies (in Western Europe and North America) that featured a dominant, well-developed capitalist Western journalism paradigm in their market system. Focusing only on liberal democratic countries within the narrower scope of Western Europe and North America, they expanded their analysis to consider the structure of media markets, the professionalization of journalism, and the role of the state in media systems. The key dimensions of their findings are (a) the role of the state and its involvement in media; (b) political parallelism, the degree to which the media is linked with political parties and institutions; (c) journalistic professionalism, as measured by the autonomy of journalists and their adherence to standards of practice, including public service; and (d) the development of media markets and their methods of disseminating news. By adding variables such as economic conditions

and the development of the market, this work provided analysis of press systems based on their structural differences and similarities.

On the basis of the four dimensions, Hallin and Mancini devised a liberal model (including North Atlantic countries such as the United States, Canada, the UK, and Ireland) based on strong free markets but minimal state intervention; a democratic corporatist model (North/Central Europe, including Germany, Belgium, and Denmark) based on strong journalistic professionalization; and a polarized pluralist model (France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain) with central elite-class commercial media and high political parallelism—that is, “the degree to which the structure of the media system parallels that of the party system” (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 27). However, Norris (2009) pointed out that there was a lack of empirical testing or verification with standardized measures across the different cases. Moreover, since the nations the authors chose all had strong protection for press freedom (despite state intervention in some of the countries), microlevel efforts and cultural and political foundations and beliefs are ignored.

The third turn in comparative journalism study is its effort to expand across the globe. While there have been voices arguing for de-Westernization of media studies from early on, actual attempts to accomplish this aim are relatively recent. In the 2010s, there were two milestone works that attempted to address the West-centric bent of comparative studies. This turn has been led by works such as *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World* and the *Worlds of Journalism* project, and is still ongoing. These pieces adopt the premise that media systems have to be understood in the broader context of political institutions, while avoiding a universal schema.

In this sense, de-Westernizing efforts focused on understanding the nature and variety of media systems (beyond the advanced Western democracies) in an effort to expand and refine the analytical categories and broaden the theoretical framework. Up to this point, comparative journalism research has focused on clustering countries based on criteria like political orientation or economic perspective, in an attempt to form theories about the media environment. Particularly when conducting comparative research beyond the Western world, the critical theme of the core/periphery approach has been actively adopted, contributing to a deeper understanding of the discernible features of media systems in developed and developing countries. Even though culture serves as a fundamental basis for the “consensus sphere” in certain societies (Hallin, 1989) and despite culture’s potential to serve as a strong determinant of a journalism product, the cultural approach to the news-making process (or news content in general) has been relatively sidelined in comparative journalism research. In this sense, scholars have noted that, while comparative media research has flourished quantitatively, “celebration of the maturity of this field might have been somewhat premature, as there are still numerous caveats to be addressed” (Canei & Voltmer, 2014, p. 3). Scholars like Canei and Voltmer have noted that it is presumptuous to assume that the Western ideals of individuality and liberalism can be applied universally to areas beyond the West. Such presumption results in ignorance of the cultural value system of a specific society and of the way that the meaning-making process operates in a given state. Indeed, cultural components are important variables that affect the way journalists think and report (Hanitzsch, 2019; Hanitzsch & Mellado, 2011). These components are often unseen because they are seemingly “natural.” This is

one reason that cultural approaches in conducting comparative research would allow research to progress beyond the beyond exploratory stage.

The Worlds of Journalism Study, which can be called the “cultural turn of the comparative journalism studies,” was based on a survey of more than 27,500 journalists from 67 countries—including a variety of democratic and totalitarian (such as Chinese or Russian) political systems. It included a comparison of discursively constituted journalistic cultures by examining journalistic identity and changing norms in different nations. The study noted that, in a polarized pluralist model, a lack of journalistic professionalism, clientelism, a strong state role, and contested transition to liberal institutions can be clues (or at least a starting point) for understanding non-Western countries.

Rather than discussing political systems or governmental structures, it focused on individual journalists, including their journalistic roles and perceptions of journalistic ethics. The reason the Worlds of Journalism project emphasizes the understanding of transnational journalistic culture is that it shapes the ethical constructs, role perception, and the autonomy of journalists. Developing a four-dimensional journalistic culture (monitorial, advocative, developmental, and collaborative), the study argued that Southeast Asian nations (such as China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand) have collaborative journalistic cultures within authoritarian governments, and journalists experience very low levels of press freedom. However, in this model South Korea is bound with Eastern Europe and Latin America as an advocative journalistic culture (Hanitzsch et al, 2020, p. 207).

When explaining collaborative journalistic cultures (such as China, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand), academics acknowledge that these countries’ journalistic practices are driven by Asian values that “promote the larger good of social harmony and stability together with economic growth

and development” (Wong, 2004, p. 37). However, Japan and Hong Kong are described as having distinct, hybrid journalistic cultures. A British cultural legacy still remains in Hong Kong and Japan, even though they have adopted a Western approach due to the control and influence of the United States after the Second World War. For this reason, Japan and, by extension, its former colony Korea, were excluded from the clusters of Asian value influence, despite their geographical location. However, such an understanding of journalism in transitional democracies is an oversimplification. Further, this kind of unilinear explanation can result in a misinterpretation of journalistic culture. The map also reveals that U.S. journalists considered their role as being accommodative, whereas Korean journalists saw it as being interventionist. Japan’s journalists occupy a middle ground on the spectrum. It’s important to note, though, that scholars from Japan and Korea contend that “the specific [reporting] mechanisms are the same,” as modern journalism practices were introduced during Japanese colonization, and that a similar system still operates in the two societies, with many of the same consequences (Freeman, 2000, p. 201).

The reason for these discrepancies may be due to a lack of understanding of how journalism developed in each nation. Furthermore, when surveyed, journalists may have answered the question “whether [they] think there has been an increase or a decrease in the importance of the credibility of journalism, or the relevance of journalism for society” in an idealized manner. This point aligns with previous literature that identified a gap between the ideals that journalists claim to have and what they execute in their actual work (Mellado & Van Dalen, 2014; Tandoc et al., 2013).

In relation to this, Hanitzsch and Vos (2017, p. 118) have developed four distinct analytical categories: (1) normative ideals (what journalists should do), (2) cognitive orientations (what they

want to do), (3) narrated performance (what they say they do), and (4) professional practice (what journalists actually do). Within these categories, comparative-studies scholars tend to focus on society's expectations of journalists (Donsbach 2012), or reporters' ideals, and professional goals (Löffelholz et al., 2003; Schudson, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 2013). Such authors have stated that a "practiced role" refers to institutional roles as they are executed in practice. This practiced role includes "behavioral expression," or a practical form by which journalists articulate their position in the discourse of journalism's identity and locus in society" (Shoemaker & Reese, p.115). Using a qualitative approach, including in-depth ethnographic interviews or observations, this topic could be explored even further. Researchers also note the fact that news content can offer solid material to investigate the practiced role, as it is a "proxy" of journalistic practice. Thus, instead of comparing journalists' ethical standards and their professional commitment through surveys in several countries (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Patterson & Donsbach, 1996; Weaver & Willnat, 2012), the objective of this dissertation is to analyze how journalists executed their work in the newsroom and how cultural values affect the news-making process. Although ethnographic interviews with journalists might also represent a norm rather than actual practices, my interview questions were designed to focus on journalists' work routine, the places they routinely visit, and how their social-media use differs from their professional standards. This focus helped to explore in detail how political news coverage is done in South Korea and the United States. All three schemes scrutinized are bound to journalists' everyday practices.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Journalistic Culture

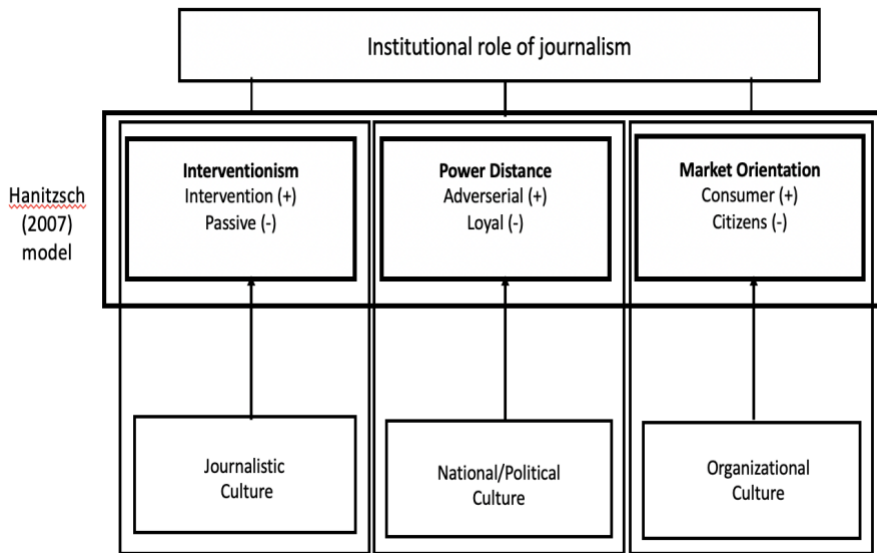
Since democracy is all about broad and deep legitimization that needs “all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels” (Diamond, 1999, p. 65), journalism, like other fields of cultural production, legitimizes political systems on the basis of different sets of beliefs and professional definitions of value at individual, organizational, and societal levels. When studying journalistic culture, significantly different approaches to and definitions of journalistic culture become apparent—due to a wide variety of political, economic, cultural, technological, and historical factors. This has led to a conceptual slipperiness with regard to culture when comparing media systems. Some scholars have also noted that culture is a “tricky concept” and that it is “easily used to cover everything and consequently nothing” (Alvesson, 2002, p. 3). In fact, when conceptualizing journalists’ norms and orientations, researchers have used a variety of terms that are interchangeable, including “journalism culture,” “journalistic culture,” “news culture,” and “news production culture.”

It is important to note that comparative media studies include various layers of culture. For example, the differing dimensions of political, organizational, and professional culture intersect within the domain of journalism. This calls for a more nuanced and detailed understanding of the culture that surrounds a newsroom. Hanitzsch (2007) asserted that any comparative research into journalism cultures should be conducted in more systematic ways, with “a clear conceptualization of journalism culture that works properly in diverse cultural contexts” (p. 368). Attempting to deconstruct journalism culture, he proposed that it consists of three essential constituents (with seven principal dimensions.) One particularly useful analytical tool he puts forward is the first constituent of journalism culture: the institutional roles of journalism in society. The institutional roles of

journalism are distinguished from the other two dimensions (epistemologies and ethical ideologies). An institutional role includes both normative responsibilities and journalism's contribution within a culture—unlike the other dimensions of journalism, because these constituents “rarely become manifest in the ‘real’ world of journalistic practice” (p. 371).

Specifically, the institutional role of journalism is composed of three dimensions: interventionism, power distance, and market orientation. This model provides a useful conceptual framework that systemically divides how to investigate the cultural influence of journalism. However, because the journalistic role concept is based on and influenced by the Western epistemology of news making, and mostly “borrowed items from the ‘American journalist’” (Hanitzsch, 2007), not echoing cultural variation across the globe, its dimensions do not include Asian values. For example, the market orientation and interventionism dimensions have been established through the substantial research comparing American and European settings. In order to more thoroughly incorporate Asian cultures, this study located the prior relevant literature, both within and beyond journalism studies, in a more comprehensive way, and it attempts to re-label the framework. By doing so, I aim to make room to insert Asian culture so that both American and Korean journalism can fit into the model. The three dimensions are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they interact, condition, and co-evolve with each other. Adopting the three senses of culture (political, journalistic, and organizational) will provide a clear picture of the cultural influence present in journalism practice in South Korea and the United States. Within this context, Hanitzsch suggests that the three dimensions of journalism's institutional role should be investigated further, and their global variances identified. In the following three chapters, I will explain how each cultural

dimension was studied in detail, in South Korea and the United States, and I will illustrate why, in its current iteration, the Hanitzsch model is unsuitable for an investigation that utilizes an Asian country as a comparator.



<Figure 1> The expanded model of Hanitzsch’s (2007) principal dimensions of journalism culture

In addition, the cultural conditions restraining journalistic activities, such as the way in which journalists are organized for a particular purpose (e.g., newsroom routines, staff arrangements), were not included. Thus, the focus of this study is to identify the inherently different nature of media culture in routinized mechanisms by drawing on in-depth interviews with political reporters in the two countries. For example, the residual Kisha club culture (for a detailed introduction see chapter 4) describes associations of media companies and is a unique characteristic of a journalistic practice that holds powerful control in some East Asian cultures; however, it is not explained by the existing

dimensions of Hanitzsh's model. When culturally dictated formats are entangled with the newsroom practices, they may serve as the criteria for measuring whether the press-politics relationship is subordinate or independent.

Interventionism as Journalistic Culture

Among Hanitzsch's three categories, the first, interventionism, has been long discussed in comparative journalism scholarship. A high degree of interventionism is found in pragmatic journalistic cultures, as opposed to sacerdotal cultures. In a pragmatic journalistic culture, where an individual politician's statements are deemed less newsworthy, they are used as raw material in the construction of an entire news story. The sacerdotal approach, in contrast, tends to value the political statement as intrinsically important, one that deserves to be reported verbatim to be authentic. In a sacerdotal journalistic culture, politics are considered "as if imbued with a degree of sacredness" (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995, p. 50). In addition, news stories tend to allow politicians enough room for their own agendas. In a pragmatic journalistic culture, conversely, journalists do not give political news any special status, and politicians' remarks are not necessarily considered sincere or true. Rather, "The treatment of politicians' activities and of political events will be based on journalists' assessment of the intrinsic 'newsworthiness' of these activities" (Semetko et al., 1991, p. 6). This approach leads to journalists having a skeptical perspective of politics, and it contributes to the negativity of the news. Given the differences in work roles and editorial control mechanisms between German and U.S. newsrooms, Donsbach (1995) refers to these cultures as "two very different professional worlds."

When it comes to presidential news, however, American journalism's distinctive character should be given more attention than the U.S. presidency's characteristics, because U.S. journalists have historically increased their interpretive influence and authority, expanding their control over the news, which in conceptual terms amounts to journalistic intervention. Therefore, the U.S. journalistic culture is categorized as highly interventionist when compared to the cultures in other Western countries, such as the moderately interventionist Anglo-German culture and France's non-interventionist culture. U.S. journalists increase their own voice, and their influence over the news, through the coverage they provide. This tendency was revealed in the study on the shrinking lengths of sound bites in election news coverage over time, with Patterson noting that "a candidate's words are now usually buried in a narrative, devoted primarily to expounding the journalist's view" (1993, p.75).

While studying the changing structure of mass communication, Farrell (1971) observed that "in almost all political systems, executive dominance and the personification of this domination in a single leader is a central fact of political life" (p. x). However, the meaning of centralization appears to differ across cultures. In the United States, the president has a significant and dominant quantifiable media presence (Graber, 2002; Grossman & Kumar, 1981; Lichter & Amundson, 1994), albeit without insight into the media's fundamental power structures. In addition, this tendency is exacerbated by the emphasis placed on candidates' personalities rather than on substantive party issues (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997), as well as the media's focusing on negativity and conflict in their coverage of political actors (Negrin, 1995). Such human-interest reporting, which includes stories on U.S. politicians' private lives and scandals, is a hallmark of U.S. political news. These

features are highly related to the findings that the tone of the American political news is becoming more negative. Specifically, Schudson (1999) saw this trend as prevalent in American political news stories—originating from cynicism in the press corps, as well as their tendency to blur lines between news and entertainment. He noted that “out of a journalistic convention that there are two sides to any story, news heightens the appearance of conflict even in instances of relative consensus” (Schudson, 1995, p. 9). Conflict-seeking and negative reporting have been found as a general tendency in the U.S. context (Bennett, 2009; Farnsworth & Lichter, 2011; Patterson, 1994; Zaller, 1999), however, it should be noted that a negative slant to news coverage has been a global tendency rather than a singularly American phenomenon. In all cases, the tone of the coverage is often dependent on how the power balance in a political system is moderated by a certain journalistic culture.

As reviewed, the traditional notion of journalistic interventionism sets the scene concerning the extent to which the media intervenes in political news within the dichotomy of political actors and the journalist’s voice. Though interventionism relates to the dynamics of journalists’ professional attitudes toward political institutions and political actors, either loyal or cynical/distrustful, it is not clear from whom the interpretation (the media’s logic) in the news comes – whether individual journalists, the editorial desk, or journalists as a professional group. This ambiguousness concerning the interpretive voice’s holder matters when it comes to the Asian context, as collective decisions of the tones, directions, or important soundbites of the stories have been routinely discussed among the journalists’ group even among the rivalry news outlets.

Although no research is available that directly deals with the journalistic interventions of the Korean media, there are comparative studies which allow one to infer that Korean journalism has a low level of interventionism. This strategy is, however, distinct from European journalism, which also has a low level of interventionism, as it implies that low interventionism means legislative-centered coverage rather than a focus on conflict or political gamesmanship. Lee (2006) compared presidential reporting in South Korea and the United States and found that the two newspapers he studied were fundamentally different in their approach and perceptions. Korean newspapers publish many brief articles from a range of perspectives (e.g., one news story focuses on politicians' remarks or actions, with the behavior of each politician being described in different stories), yielding several texts that reveal the complex aspects of political news. The American model integrates diverse sources into a single article, presenting a wide range of related elements into one comprehensive piece. This difference in approach implies that Korean journalists tend to focus on politicians' remarks and decisions. They do not serve as moderators or interpreters of the stories they write. This strategy is also distinct from the European approach of low interventionism, as the Korean approach tends to be centered primarily on events or politicians' actions, rather than evaluating their agendas or critiquing the bills they support. As reviewed, the unique Korean way of political reporting could not be evaluated solely through the lens of interventionism, especially given that Korean newsrooms are culture-led.

The next chapter discusses how the second dimension, power distance (which mediates through political culture) plays a role in constructing the media's institutional role in the two countries. First, the significance of political culture in journalism is discussed, as the press system is the result of

democratic legitimization and making sense of the power distance. Then, the chapter moves on to describe the distinct national political cultures in South Korea and the United States. For example, the process of media institutionalization has been fundamentally different in Korea, because its history includes thorough colonialism and military authoritarian rule.

CHAPTER 3

NATIONAL POLITICAL CULTURAL REPERTOIRES IN TWO COUNTRIES

The second dimension explored by Hanitzsch (2007) is power distance. It implies how institutions or individuals can be independent from those in power, radically criticize their society, and maintain a healthy skepticism. In a society with low level of power distance, a journalist might position him- or herself as a loyalist, taking on a ‘‘propagandist role’’ (Pasti, 2005, p. 99), especially in a transitional or authoritarian culture. On the other hand, in liberal democracies, ‘‘adversarial’’ climates between the two entities (journalists and the government) are formed. The press acts as watchdog of the fourth estate, and as agents of social control (Gans, 1979) Thus, this power distance dimension relates to political status, and to the political climate of the society. Aligning power distance with political culture, this chapter explores how the press could be discussed in influence of the political culture in the U.S and Korean settings.

A Political Cultural Approach to Democratic Norms

Since the publication of Almond and Verba’s (1963) *The Civic Culture*, myriad studies have suggested that cultural software is essential for the stable operation of institutional hardware (Dalton & Welzel, 2014; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Putnam, 1993). In particular, research has explored non-Western emerging democracies, including the extent to which citizens support the democratic system and how they internalize democratic norms. The degree of support for or rejection of authoritarianism is an important variable in the dynamic trajectory of transitional emerging democracies—where authoritarian and democratic forces compete in the political process as authoritarian legacies are rapidly transformed (Rose et al., 1998). When emerging democracies

experience democratization without core sub-systems, such as the press, citizens' evaluations and democratic political systems are important variables when measuring the success or failure of democratization.

In this sense, a political cultural approach is essential to explain the “fast and smooth implementation” or the “slow or stagnant solidification” of democracy (Cho & Kim, 2017). When evaluating cultural elements that align with democracy in Korea, Park and Shin (2006) diagnosed that cultural capital for the consolidation and quality of democracy in Korean society had already reached a state of depletion in the early 2000s, given that the implementation of democracy had been successful. At the same time, they noted that the momentum to solidify and deepen democracy had been lost (Rose and Shin 2001). As a result, democratic institutions were rapidly transplanted through a series of political reforms designed to implement democratic ideals and institutions. However, due to the lack of cultural foundations to support these ideals and institutions in the political sphere, Korean society is struggling to incorporate democratic norms.

Thus, while democracy has developed as a political system to guarantee political freedom and provide equal rights, it is likely to be considered an optional mechanism to escape poverty and overcome social instability. Existing studies have applied the cultural approach when exploring why and how the consolidation of democratic norms has influenced citizens' perceptions. However, the question of how core democratic norms align or do not align with cultural values and how such norms are put into practice—especially in the world of journalism—remains understudied. Assessing how journalists establish their relationship with power and how they perceive politics and manage

political information for their audience can reveal how a particular society makes sense of its own path to democracy.

Democratization and Journalism in Confucian Culture

The term “Third Wave of Democracy” was coined by Huntington (1991) to describe the global trend of democratic systems spreading quickly across Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia from the 1970s to 1990s. Democracy replaced authoritarianism and took root, and it was adapted to suit those regions’ culture and lifestyles (Atkins, 2002; Mellor, 2005). Thus, democratic norms and ideals may appear divergent between countries and across the globe (Rose, Mishler, & Haerpfer, 1998; Shin & Wells, 2005).

Since the third wave of democratization coincided with the decrease of authoritarian regimes and the increase of economic modernization, democratic systems spread quickly across Eastern Europe in the mid-1970s, Latin America in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and East and South Asia by the mid- to late 1980s (Huntington, 1991). Although these third-wave democracies vary in their geographic locations, economic status, and political traditions, they share commonalities in that they stemmed from long autocratic histories—histories that include including military rule, one-party regimes, and communist oligarchies marked by rigorous media censorship. With little knowledge of Asian democracy in particular, these “new democracies” have been regarded as partial and defective (Potter et al., 1997; Voltmer, 2008). However, there has been insufficient discussion of why foundational democratic aspects like popular sovereignty and freedom of speech have been absent in these countries.

Early research on the third-wave democratic countries has revealed why their democratic rule is struggling. This research includes the notable comparative framework developed by Voltmer (2008, 2014). Presenting their democratic transitions theory, Hollifield and Jillson (2000) contended that a new regime's characteristics could be predicted by the former regime's institutional structure. Meanwhile, Voltmer (2014) categorized the third-waves democracies into three clusters: transitions from (a) communist oligarchies (Eastern Europe), (b) military dictatorships (Latin America), and (c) one-party dictatorships (Asia and Africa).

Given the prevalence of Confucian rules in the political sphere, South Korea (like any other East Asian country) achieved compressed economic development in a short period during the 1960s and 1970s, after it prioritized industrialization over democratization. For this reason, South Korea emerged as a strong, centralized country that values statism and strong hierarchies, while sacrificing diversity to achieve effective economic growth (Henderson, 1969). In this political environment, diverse and competing thoughts are considered bothersome, an unnecessary conflict, because development requires centralized and efficient decision making (Clark, 2000). As a result, the Korean people were paradoxically forced to sacrifice their individual freedoms to protect themselves from communist threats.

A U.S. ambassador to Korea in 1960s once described Korean political culture as a "vortex": extraordinarily homogeneous and surmounted by a highly centralized political system with a culturally uniform environment (Henderson, 1969). He noted that this vortex resulted in a lack of intermediary organizations. For this reason, power politics in South Korea tend to be the culture's one great magnet, exerting an inevitable upward pull toward the capital (resembling a vortex). In this

context, the country is a paradox, striving for democracy and self-governance, via laws and institutions, but being ruled by one man. This, of course, contradicts the values of democracy, and it has hindered the country's democratic transformation (Kim, 1988). For example, a 1999 survey illustrated how firm authoritarian influences and Confucian traditions permeated the public sector, as well as public perceptions of society's ruling system even after the country's democratization in 1987. In their survey responses, Koreans expressed some degree of understanding that the democratic system is ideal, but they also indicated a residual preference for authoritarian principles, which are akin to traditional Confucian or Asian values. Only half of the Korean respondents considered democracy to be the best form of government. An equal number believed that economic security is more important than maintaining democracy. Moreover, 45 percent preferred to be ruled by a dictator, such as Park Chung-hee, when it came to solve economic problems (Chu et al., 2001).

This might explain why South Korea was ruled by a military regime at the same time it formed an alliance with the United States during the Cold War, an alliance that included efforts against communist expansion in Asia. North and South had similar starting points economically, but, by the end of the Korean War, South Korea's GDP was more than 50 times larger than that of North Korea. The drastic economic change in South Korea's prosperity and its elevated geopolitical status during the Cold War created a moment in which South Koreans were eager to adopt Western values throughout the society in general (Park & Kim, 1987).

Kang (2000) explained that this combination of authoritarian culture and effort to mimic the Western world derives from South Korea's status as a third-wave democratic country. Like many other non-Western societies, South Korea was incorporated into the Western-centered world order

during the Cold War. Since this time, change has been slow and precarious, particularly because the driving force behind the change comes from external pressure rather than internal motivation. Thus, the democratization of Korean society is not based on intrinsic dynamism. Instead, it has a strong objectivistic (teleological) nature that targets an external, foreign-imposed goal and is modeled on more advanced countries. For latecomer countries, the changes that occurred in the West have been presented as universal and standardized trends—trends that should be imposed on countries like South Korea.

In regards to the compatibility between Confucian culture and democracy, some scholars have questioned whether the elements of freedom are compatible with non-Western cultures, particularly in Asia. Patterson (1991) argued that such freedom is a peculiar Western value that cannot be found elsewhere. He regards the concept of freedom as the fight against foreign domination in the non-Western traditions of freedom, not as an autonomous person realizing his or her own personal freedom. Thus, one may conclude that press freedom is foreign to non-Western cultures, as it is dependent on the unrestricted expression of individual thoughts—an expression that is based on libertarian sensibilities and values. In contrast, scholars like Bell (1995) have noted that democracy cannot be realized through autonomy and self-governance alone. Asian values like wholearchy and family communitarianism are vital in achieving democracy. This debate was also sparked by Lee Kwan Yew and Kim Dae Jung in 1994. While Lee Kwan Yew argued that the Western-style democratic system does not conform to Asian democratic traditions, Kim Dae Jung, on the other hand, believed that democracy is a force that applied universally, regardless of the culture involved. He noted that “Asia has its own venerable traditions of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for

the people”, elaborating that it simply needed to transplant the democratic institutions that would reflect to this culture.

In a similar vein, journalism has been discussed as having its own Asian cultural values in the newsroom, such as respect for authority, collectivism, harmonious group dynamics (Xiaoge, 2005), and supportive relationships between reporters, especially in countries like Malaysia and Singapore (Massey & Chang, 2002). Journalism in these countries places an emphasis on communalism (collectivism) rather than a focus on individualist values. Subsequent studies have found evidence that key values, such as harmony and supportiveness, were present in news reporting in Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore (1999).

Among the third-wave democracy clusters, Voltmer (2008) contended that the East Asian political culture was largely influenced by the Confucian traditions that form an East Asian set of values. Indeed, Confucianism pervades as a ruling norm in East Asian society (Wei-Ming, 1989; Tu et al., 1992). Basically, Confucianism stresses respect for authority and hierarchy, thus emphasizing social harmony as individuals performing their job duties in various settings. For example, in the Confucian system juniors are required to show respect and reverence to their seniors, while seniors are expected, in turn, to show benevolence to their juniors (Berthrong & Berthrong, 2014; Yao & Yao, 2000). However, this cultural legacy has been described as a barrier to democratization, because it reflects authoritarian ideologies. For example, government leaders are regarded as “good,” and citizens are expected to respect hierarchy, status, and power (Neher, 1996). It should also be noted that in East Asian countries, an authoritarian political culture has taken root easily, because it resonates with those countries’ strong Confucian traditions (Park & Kim, 1987). Discussing the odd

mixture of obedient cultural norms and a democratic political system in East Asian democratic countries, Voltmer (2008) argued that these values also permeate the professional norms in journalism:

An important issue for the professionalization of journalism is the discussion evolving around so-called Asian values. This set of values has its roots in Confucian tradition that emphasizes social harmony, deference to authorities and discipline. Because of the uniqueness of Asian values it is argued that Western models of democracy and journalism cannot be transplanted to the Asian context. Objectivity and neutrality are understood as specifically Western values that emerged from the European enlightenment and therefore cannot claim universal validity. According to the concept of Asian journalism, the role of the media is to maintain social and political stability and assist in the economic development of the country. It is obvious that this view of journalism sits uneasy with news values such as conflict and negativism. (Voltmer, 2008)

It is hard for the press in Asian countries to serve as watchdogs who hold political leaders accountable to the general public (Massey & Chang, 2002) because of the Confucian prioritization of collectivism (i.e., loyalty to a central power). Halvorsen (1992) succinctly identified the reason for the incompatibility, noting that:

The outward traits of moral righteousness, deference to superiors, and politeness to avoid embarrassment are in vivid contrast to American values of independence, self-reliance, and creativity, generally summed up in individualism. The ghost of Confucius is an editor-in-residence in every newsroom in Korea. (p. 233)

Simply speaking, American journalists competitively and vigorously pursue exclusive stories by contacting sources and searching for documents and records with skeptical viewpoints. All these traditions lead to journalism acting as the watchdog of the government and institutions through check and balance. In contrast, the Confucian tradition brings “quite another person to the

newsroom.” This individual “considers himself as part of the ruling class, not the voice of the people” and as “an adviser to the royal court” (Halvorsen, 1992). Within this culture, orders from superiors must be accepted without question, and reporters are less likely to seek exclusive stories, so as not to embarrass their fellow reporters. In addition, anonymization of the sources are considered a virtue. Moreover, analyzing Korean politics from traditional dynasties to modern times, Henderson determined that the centralized oligarchic system of maintaining a uniform national culture and language is rare in world history. This innate character of Korean political history and culture, which marks the centralization of political power and the rule by one man (such as president) has clashed with the concept of polyarchy, which means “rule by the people”—and is democracy’s foundation (Dahl, 1989, p. 221) Therefore, it has obstructed the stabilization of democratic transformation (Kim, 1988). This tendency of the Korean presidency toward the centralization of power to one person—the power of the imperial presidency—has been accelerated through the military authoritarian regime.

Thus, South Korean political news is marked by executive domination because the president has ruling power over most institutions (Kang, 1994; Jeon, 1997). For example, various experts and officials attend cabinet meetings and voice their opinions. However, the South Korean news media has historically portrayed these individuals as being sidelined, relegated to the periphery of the political process, where they passively accept and obey the president’s commands. The president, in contrast, is always highlighted as the main subject of reporters’ focus. Verbs like *order*, *command*, and *instruct* are used often, giving the impression that the president alone drafts and directs most of the government’s policies (Kang, 1994). Therefore, the trend toward “presidentialization”

(Poguntke & Webb, 2007), which refers to the increasingly dominant role of presidents (regardless of a nation's formal constitutional makeup), appears to be different, depending on intervening cultural factors. Lee (2013) has explained this by focusing on the dual structure of Korean journalism. In his analysis of commemoration articles from South Korea's earliest major newspapers (editions that typically include a newspaper's declaration of its purpose and goals), Lee found that the Korean press self-identifies as part of a state-centered industrialization project. In other words, the Korean media perceives itself as a tool for legitimizing and promoting government policies and contributing to the regime's development goals. He also noted that the notion of Mill's "marketplace of ideas" or Habermasian thoughts on the public sphere were absent in the commemoration articles. In South Korea, the state has incorporated the media as a component of its national development strategy. Political leaders have regarded the media as a subordinate agency that thoroughly supports government policies through legal systems and the deployment of human resources. Even after the removal of the constraints of colonialism, liberation from an authoritarian military regime and the subsequent democratization, this dual structure still remains (Lee, 1996).

Individualism in the United States

According to Hanitzsch (2007), the power distance dimension is typically discussed in tandem with the individualism that corresponds to it. Hofstede (1980) defines power distance as a measure of society's tolerance for unequal hierarchical power, such as the power dynamics between a superior and his subordinate. In Hofstede's categorization of culture, the United States, Australia, the UK, and the Netherlands are the most individualistic in the world. Individualism emphasizes the

value of individuals rather than that of a group identity. The ideal citizen is a “self-determining, unencumbered individual, a being connected to others only by choice” (Glendon, 1991, p. 48). This concept is part of the first “language” of American life (Bellah et al., 1996). These authors described individualism this way:

Individualism lies at the very core of American culture. . . . We believe in the dignity, indeed the sacredness, of the individual. Anything that would violate our right to think for ourselves, to judge for ourselves, make our own decisions, live our lives as we see fit, is not only morally wrong, it is sacrilegious. Our highest and noblest aspirations, not only for ourselves, but for those we care about, for our society and for the world, are closely linked to our individualism (Bellah, et al., 1985, p. 142).

In fact, the individualism depicted in American political culture can be traced back to Tocquevillian thoughts (1945, pp. 3-4). The book *Democracy in America* presents Alexis de Tocqueville’s argument that the primary characteristic of American political culture is that “in most of the operations of the mind, each American appeals only to the individual effort of his own understanding.” Wildavsky explored this idea in a more systemic way, based on a scheme proposed by Douglas (1982). Defining culture as the ways of life, and as worldviews, these two scholars used the dimensions of group and grid. Wildavsky noted that those who adhere to a “low group” or an individualistic way of life value “self-regulation” and “favor bidding and bargaining” over collectively dictated allocations of resources (1987, p. 6). The group dimension relates to the way that “the individual’s life is absorbed in and sustained by group membership” (Douglas 1982, p. 202). Meanwhile, the grid dimension is associated with social differentiation within a way of life (Wildavsky, 1987, p 7).

Under this broad theme of individualism, contemporary thinkers provide various concepts that are compatible with individualism, such as cultivated interdependence (Lakoff, 1996), self-transformation, transcendental progress in a free-market society (Fitzgerald, 1997), interconnectedness, self-determination, self-discipline, personal responsibility, and limited government (Bellah et al., 1996), to create a “schizoid combination of operational liberalism with ideological conservatism” (Free & Cantril, 1967, p. 37). As these concepts all stress self-reliance, imposing moral obligation has also been noted in American culture.

Quotation and Attribution as Cultural Work Tools

As reviewed in the previous literature, words like order and command appear frequently, suggesting that remnants of authoritarian culture could still exist in democratic countries. Along with this assumption, this study seeks to discover how such words are emphasized in journalistic work tools. To examine how journalists in each country position authority, their journalistic devices must be reviewed. Quotation and attribution efficiently locate and arrange sources and highlight words that the journalist thinks are important (Sigal, 1973). Journalistic methods like this serve as tools to provide a direct connection between reporter and source—thereby preserving the readers’ trust and ensuring journalistic credibility, accuracy, and professionalism (Fedler et al., 2005; Martin-Kratzer & Thorson, 2007; Blankenburg, 1992). In this process, cultural assumptions are revealed in the way journalists attribute their sources and select a few sentences from a long speech, interview, or press conference. The way journalists employ such tools helps to construct social meaning (Tuchman, 1972) on the basis of their own cultural assumptions. Therefore, the journalist’s selection of quotes

and attributions conveys a “local interactional context” (Clayman, 1990, p. 79). No matter how precise and accurate each quote is, in a broader sense, the selection, positioning in the text, and attribution are all rhetorical choices (Killenberg & Anderson, 1993).

Another implication of the use of quotes is that journalists confer authority to the sources they quote (Althaus et al., 1996; Entman & Page, 1994; Sigal, 1973). This is why journalists typically quote authority figures, such as government officials and prominent scholars. Depending on the nation’s shared cultural values, the contextual issues of quotation and attribution—who is quoted and how sources are attributed—helps to determine who is regarded as an authority. Thus, quotation and attribution can be a window for determining power dynamics and cultural assumptions.

If a source asks for anonymity (with bad intentions) and the reporter agrees, the reporter could be eventually manipulated by spin doctors and leakers. In addition, readers tend to believe that a properly attributed quote is verbatim when someone’s remarks are in quotation marks (Killenburg & Anderson, 1993; Shapiro et al., 2013) Accordingly, misquoting has been regarded as a cardinal sin in U.S. journalism (Anderson, 1984). For this reason, journalism scholars have studied quotations from the perspective of accuracy (Culbertson & Somerick, 1976; Fedler et al., 2005). Moreover, the careful use of quotations can specifically serve as a practical means to reach the goal of objectivity, because the use of quotations forces journalists to detach themselves from the events covered, and to make the news they report less subjective (Itule et al., 2006; Sigal, 1973).

Regarding the frequency and type of anonymous-source use, Culbertson (1975) reported that a third of U.S. newspapers included anonymous sources in 1974, shortly after the Watergate

incident. More recently, however, Martin-Kratzer and Torson (2007) reported a sharp drop in anonymous coverage since 2004, when U.S. newspapers tightened their rules on anonymous-source use after Janet Cooke's invented story of a child drug addict and the Jayson Blair and Jack Kelley fabrications. But contrasting perspectives still exist. Some scholars argue that the use of anonymous sources may greatly contribute to journalists' ability to collect information and increase the diversity of perspectives in writing a news story (Blankenburg, 1992).

In the case of Korea, Hong (1986) has explained that the number of anonymous sources in news stories increased sharply during the Third Republic, which was closely related to the political control of the media. In the context of Korea's political history, the media developed the use of anonymous sources to avoid censorship and oppression. This related to Hallin's (1993) argument that a high number of anonymous sources can indicate deferential journalism if it results from journalists acceding to an official's request to speak off the record. This convention continues to be prevalent even after democratization in Korea, with 38.6 percent of news stories containing direct quotes in their headlines and 37.5 percent of the speakers in news stories being quoted anonymously (Lee et al., 2007). The political news section most frequently contains anonymous sources (Hong, 2016). Also, Korean reporters are more eager than necessary to suck up to their sources if they want to speak off the record, even when there doesn't seem to be a compelling reason to do so.

Drawing from literature about journalistic writing conventions in presidential reporting, this study posits the hypothesis that there are fundamental differences in the way Korean and U.S. newspapers portray the presidents of their nations. This will be achieved by using quotations and attributions from newspapers and by comparing them with original presidential speeches.

- H1a: There will be difference in the number of quotations used in presidential reporting between Korean and U.S. newspapers.
- H1b: There will be difference in the anonymous-source use in presidential reporting between Korean and U.S. newspapers.
- H1c: There will be difference in the affiliation of individuals quoted in presidential reporting between Korean and U.S. newspapers.
- H1d: When reviewing an original presidential speech, there will be a difference in the characteristics of presidential remarks featured in presidential news in Korean newspapers.
- H1e: When reviewing an original presidential speech, there will be difference in the characteristics of presidential remarks featured in presidential news in U.S. newspapers.

CHAPTER 4

DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES IN TWO MEDIA SYSTEMS

The third dimension proposed by Hanitzsch (2007) is market orientation. It refers to whether the primary goal or focus of groups follows the market logic or pursues public interest. In the high market orientation culture, the media prioritizes what audiences want to know over what they ought to know. Instead of speaking to readers in their capacity as citizens concerned with the social and political issues of the day, content targets them in their capacity as consumers who become the focus of the conversation due to their own aspirations and emotional experiences (Campbell, 2004). Studies have found that this market-oriented journalism trend is found in commercial media and in the environment where individualism is valued (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

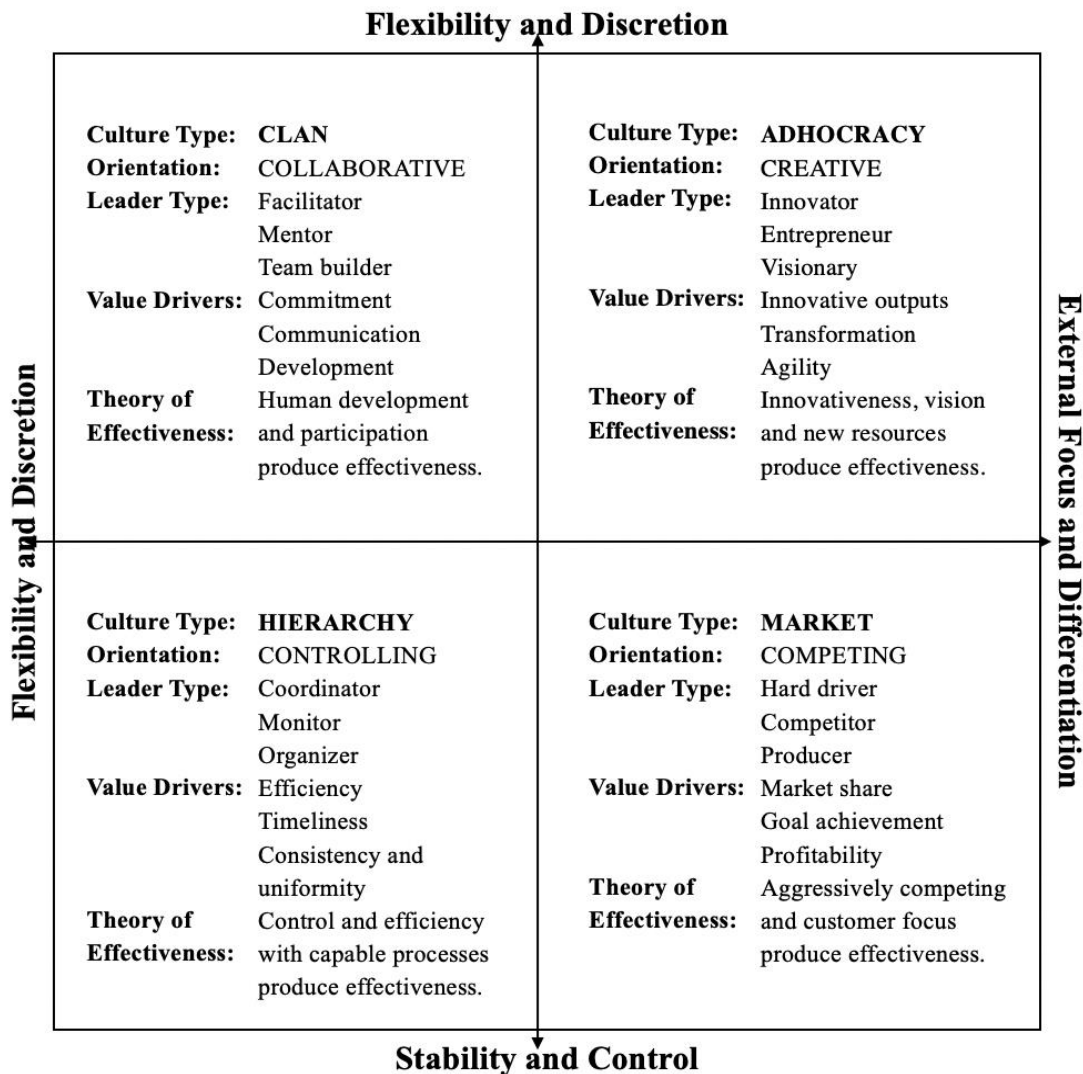
In contrast, where journalism culture prioritizes public interest, journalists work to disseminate information for citizens' self-governing. However, the public-versus-market logic is understood differently in the east versus the west. There is no dispute that, within the comparative media studies landscape, the U.S. system is classified as being market driven and highly commercialized (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; McManus, 1994) where public service is limited. In relation to the American media system's market-driven culture, the feature of the U.S. market being driven with minimal interference by the states is also associated with the professionalization of journalism (Schudson, 2001), where journalistic autonomy developed with the commercialization of news and the divorce from party pressure.

However, in reflecting Hanitzsch's model on Korean case, the market versus public logic cannot capture the case in detail. As Gurante (2006) notes, in the East Asian setting, the media's public responsibility is related to uphold social harmony and respect for authority, and media is urged to refrain from reporting on issues that can jeopardize the social order (Masterton, 1996; Xiaoge, 2005). In addition to this, a legacy from past authoritarian regimes, the meaning of the public pursuit tend to be aligned with the regime's interest, rather than citizen's interest, as the government have influence over the public media with the substantial financial support from the government in the form of public advertising, subsidies, and a monopoly on the distribution of broadcasting advertising. Contrarily, in the United States, the notion of journalism functioning in the public's interest indicates that the media works to reacquaint Americans with public life and encourages them to engage in civic engagement and political discourse (Rosen, 2000). Due to these considerations, the degree of market orientation could not be utilized in this context to describe the culture of the emerging democracies like Korea. For this reason, in order to compare cases in South Korea and the U.S., it would be useful to borrow the literature that reflects more comprehensively on cultural values that drive the news organization. In fact, even in the field of journalism, market orientation has been discussed at the level of the organization rather than in relation to political culture (Ferrucci, 2018; Ferrucci et al., 2017).

As the present research illustrates the expectations for standard political reporting for journalists and how such expectations vary based on newsroom's organizational cultures, the division of labor among reporters, as well as the employed methods of normalizing social hierarchies (Blofield, 2011; Huges & Prado, 2011). It includes both formal structures as well as informal

procedures of conventions, the consensus with regard to “how we do journalism” and the “assumptions and expectations about legitimate modes of practice” (Ryfe, 2006, p. 205). Especially in the newsroom, “essential shared values” (Elliott, 1988, p. 30)—that is, the specific organizational culture commonly adopted by everyone working there — are indexed into journalists’ standards of what kind of news reporting is supposed to be done (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986; Hanitzsch et al., 2020; Boczkowski, 2004). Such routines of newsroom culture have been “sticky”, become internalized and even be ultimately reinforced through the ongoing socialization of reporters, thus are difficult to alter (Ryfe, 2009)

With this background, Cameron and Quinn’s (2011) study on organizational theory suggests that market orientation is a relevant domain for classifying organizational culture. Authors categorized organizational culture as four types with two dimensions: (1) flexibility and discretion versus stability and control (2) internal focus/integration versus external focus/differentiation—using the term “competing values framework” See figure 2 from Cameron and Quinn (2011). Within the two dimensions that evaluate organizational culture, they addressed four types of culture (clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and market culture) and the effects of each. For example, if an organization is dominated by a hierarchy culture (which emphasizes formal rules and policies) the emphasis will be on stability. Stability and predictability will be valued, because they allow for smooth processes and a trouble-free outcome. The market culture, however, represents the competitive air that exists among its members, members who value achieving measurable goals. Market culture also emphasizes stability, but the major driving force is competitiveness. Moreover, transaction with external bodies is valued.



<Figure 2> The competing values of organizational theory from Cameron & Quinn (2011)

In the specific newsroom context, market-orientated cultures are defined as those that focus on consumer needs and everyday life issues, such as “news-you-can-use” items (Underwood, 2001,

p. 102). In addition, this approach considers the audience as customers instead of citizens. Beam (1998) described this market-orientation feature as one that:

identifies a potential market opportunity, selects a group of customers that it wants to serve and develops a strategy for efficiently meeting the wants and needs of those customers. The central business assumption is that long-run success depends on a strong, organization-wide focus on customer wants and needs. (p. 2)

If an organization is dominated by the hierarchy culture, which emphasizes formal rules and policies, the stability is the most emphasized. In this cultures, stability and predictability are valued for smooth procedures for a trouble-free outcome.

Kisha Clubs as the Backbone of Korean-Japanese Journalism

The issues that the organizational culture of the Korean newsroom faces, however, are more delicate, due to modern journalism's prototype originating during Japanese colonial rule. Thus, in order to better understand the Korean newsroom's organizational culture, a review of several traditions of Japanese journalistic practices will provide clues, since the Korean press was institutionalized under Japanese colonization. In this sense, exploring the Japanese tradition of *Kisha clubs*² helps one identify difference between East Asian and American journalism. It describes the exclusive press corps that report on the prime minister's office, as well as government ministries, city councils, local

² *Kisha clubs* originated in 1890 with the aim of gaining access to the Japanese Emperor Diet. Reporters from numerous newspapers, including Jiji Shinpō (時事新報), organized correspondence with the Diet and formed a “[g]roup of journalists visiting the Diet” to protect their interests. To access the Diet, reporters needed so-called “red tickets” that distinguished them from government officials and foreign diplomats, who were identified by green and white tickets, respectively. Since only 20 gallery tickets were permitted for journalists, the tickets were usually granted to major newspapers, while smaller ones were relegated to the role of secondary sources. The press members who held gallery tickets on a regular basis were called Gikai Deiri Kishadan.

authorities, and the police headquarters. They are similar to the U.S. press corps or press pool. While the U.S. pool system provides a practical, cost-effective way for journalists from various organizations to divide responsibilities when covering large events, the Japanese *Kisha* system focuses on arranging daily contact between sources and reporters, as well as sharing workspaces. *Kisha* clubs reflect the distinctive characteristics of Japanese journalism, including 1) favoring the established and major media outlets, which establishes a monopoly on political news by press club members (Park & Youm, 2017); 2) the perilously close relationship between news sources and journalists; 3) the domination of dictation-like, straightforward coverage of event-centered news; and 4) uniformity among various news media outlets (Fidelman, 1993; Nomura, 2002; Freeman, 2000). Because of these factors, the South Korean press room can degenerate into a “spin room,” as reporters who spend a lot of time with sources and build long-term friendships with government officials can easily lose their critical spirit (Kim & Song, 2004). The press often provide positive news coverage as a personal favor to officials with whom they spend a lot of time.

To understand how such “positive spin” stories are created, one needs to look closely at the working logic and practices of the *Kisha club* structure. First, the weekly schedules of individual *Kisha* clubs closely resemble one another. For example, political journalists’ reporting revolves around the press conferences that are given by the prime minister following cabinet meetings. Through these conferences, political journalists have continuous exposure to officials, via the formal press conferences and the many “background briefings” provided by various government executives. There are also frequent “backroom deals” made between the journalists and the government officials they cover. This cartel establishes a “mood of compromise” and a “club-like” atmosphere in press

rooms. This hampers the critical watchdog spirit that is essential to robust and honest journalism. As a result, *Kisha* clubs have been criticized for hindering independent lines of inquiry and institutionalizing self-censorship. The main driving force behind the *Kisha* club is peer pressure; members are required to share information with each other. Based on the Confucian element that friendship should be rooted in faithfulness, according to Halverson (p. 235), the relationship between members – mostly “male-bonding” – is more crucial than the individual enterprise for developing news stories. The bonding is strengthened by school connections and the focus of loyalties and group coherence “more powerfully than almost anywhere else” (Henderson, 1965).

Since Japanese journalists belong to a specific *Kisha club*, they typically spend the entire day with their fellow *Kisha* members and generally have little contact beyond that environment. The club makes collective decisions about the issues on which members may or may not report and can occasionally even determine the tone of the reporting (van Woferen, 1989). Because of the *Kisha* club culture, “The articles that were carried by the affiliated newspapers became increasingly characterized by a high degree of uniformity . . . through the club’s internal pressure for consensus, even confidential news would be meted out equally to all the reporters who enjoyed the privilege of membership” (de Lange, 1998, p. 132), forming “impenetrable fraternal structures” (p.188)

The influence of newsroom-driven professional conditions and constraints tends to override individual journalists’ perceptions (Hellmueller, 2014). In this sense, the differing institutionalized reporting systems of South Korea and the United States can determine the way journalists write, report, and communicate with their sources. A closer look at the two countries’ reporting systems follows:

	Korean–Japanese model	US model
Basic source–journalist relationship	Cozy relationship: Journalists are subservient and deferential to power	Symbiotic but ritualized adversarialism (“adopt an adversarial position when dealing with a disagreeable administration, but the posture vanishes when the administration is agreeable” (Glen et al., 1997, p. 121)
Tactical elements of news management	Private and informal networks	Distribution of press credentials and preferential access
Newsroom culture	Preserving harmony and being dutiful to the in-group through organizational allegiance; peer-pressure from in-group journalists	Market oriented, pragmatic
News content	Uniformity among news outlets	Ensures distinctive processes based on reporters’ high autonomy, high interventionism
Relationship between journalists	Cooperative	Competitive

<Table 1> *Official source reliance in two media systems*

As stated, in Korea and Japan reporters tend to depend on government officials. This dependence, coupled with the *Kisha* culture, creates a form of journalism quite divergent from that of the United States. East Asian cultures broadly represent collectivism. As a result, an individual’s decision-making process depends on others’ thoughts, and he or she is unlikely to betray or disagree with members of the central in-groups (Le Febvre & Franke, 2013).

Meanwhile, in the United States, the press’s reliance on official sources is based on back-channel public relations. For example, journalism in Washington, D.C. is based on a compliance rooted in a

ritualized adversarianism between journalists and government officials. Journalists can be “managed” through the distribution (or revocation) of press credentials, which gives preferential access to certain journalists (Bennet et al., 2007). The close relationship between reporters and sources can be also made in the U.S. context, as David Broader, the D.C. reporter for the Washington Post, confessed in a speech that “Certainly in Washington, D.C., in the time we have lived there, there has been a melding and a coalescing of the world of journalism and the world of politics that has been fairly dramatic and, to me, fairly disturbing. Some of it is good, but there is also increasing social intimacy between reporters and journalists in Washington and the people we write about and cover.” However, Halvorsen saw the nature of the relationship as distinct in that “This kind of soul-searching does not take place in Korean press circles. It would be inconsistent with their standing in the hierarchy, the closer they can get to the seat of power, the more likely they are to achieve wealth, fame, and a political career.”(p. 235) In the Korean/Japanese model, however, reliance tends to appear as a form of clientelism, which depends on interpersonal networking based on shared routines and the activities of everyday press room life. Within this context, the *Kisha club* pressures journalists to be dutiful to the “in-group” through organizational allegiance. As for the official-and-source relationship in Japan and South Korea, “the system has a Western appearance, but its operation has been more dependent on informal and pre-modern methods than official and reasonable procedures” (Park & Curran, 2000, p.102)—by suggestions of monetary benefit or governmental positions. Table 1 presents what the official source-reliance practices look like in two media systems, and which structural components create that reliance.

As noted earlier, a Japan-influenced reporting system has prevailed for years in South Korea. Examining the Supreme Court’s communication system, Park & Youm (2017) noted that only the “first-tier group”—senior reporters from major news outlets—are allowed to communicate (officially and unofficially) with higher-court officials. Because the cohesive ties among press club journalists are so strong, unanimous decisions are often made about how to cover a particular story. Some journalists do defy the official sources who provide press releases and hold press conferences, but they do so at their own peril. For example, a reporter who defies the press club’s decision to embargo a story might be denied access to sources or to a particular reporting venue in the future. In addition, reporting beats are organized differently in South Korea and the United States. In South Korea, reporters who cover the National Assembly are assigned to specific political parties. These reporters attend all daily meetings of their political party and spend their working days in the press room for that party.

The United States Congress has a somewhat similar system, as the Senate and the House of Representatives have designated places for the press (the press corps and the press gallery). However, while the structure is similar, the actual practices are quite different. According to the Congressional News Media and the House and Senate Press Galleries Reports (2017), 6,016 U.S. journalists are registered with the congressional press corps. Once those journalists submit their credentials, they can be provided information from and about the U.S. Congress. Journalists are also free to independently contact any congressperson they choose. Jeremy Peters, a Capitol Hill reporter for *The New York Times*, has commented that the best part of covering Capitol Hill is accessibility, as a person is “far more likely to run into a lawmaker or a staff member you needed in the hall than

you were to get a phone call returned,” adding that, “in the Capitol we are given ID badges that let us go almost anywhere” (Peters, 2015). In addition, Capitol Hill news rapidly trends toward specialization over time. The composition of Capitol Hill reporters has drastically changed over the past several years. According to the Pew Research Center (2009), the number of newspaper reporters accredited to cover Congress declined by 30 percent from the mid-1980s to 2008. This decline was accompanied by “a sharp growth among more narrowly focused special interest or niche media,” such as specialized magazines and newsletters (Pew, 2009, p. 3). Such “micro target” publications grew by 50 percent over the same time frame.

RQ2: How do journalistic conventions and routines, including reporting venues, the beat system, and the organization of news staff, constrain or shape reporting politics in South Korea and the United States?

Digital Transformation of the Newsroom Around the World

The digital transformation involves relationships between audiences and news workers (or sources and reporters), as well as the working logic in the newsroom. This transformation represents a threat to the structure of a quality-focused press, because it affects journalists’ work, journalistic methods, and even their very identities. To adapt to these shifts, journalists are required to acquire new technical skills, and the team dynamics of the newsroom are also changing (Anderson, Bell, & Shirky, 2014). As “old media” and “new media” logistics clash (Chadwick, 2013), digital tools have become vital in journalists’ everyday routines. As Pfetsch argued, “[O]nline communication has the potential to challenge media–political elite linkages” (Pfetsch et al., 2013, p. 18), transforming

power relations between the actors, with the need for sophisticated methods for shaping personalized messages in communicating with sources. The power relationship shifts among key message providers means that the culture of political journalism is transforming. Conventional journalistic routines are being questioned and rethought. Drok (2013) argued that the traditional routines of a professional journalist are no longer the status quo. Such changes raise questions about the fundamentals of comparative political journalism, considering that it implies “an account of the existing, real world as appropriated by the journalist and processed under the particular requirements of the journalistic medium” (McNair, 1999, p. 9).

The same technological forces are at work across the nations—creating a media environment characterized by audience fragmentation (Prior, 2007; Stround, 2011), partisan polarization (Bennet & Iyengar, 2008), and an increasing reliance on social media (Williams & Delle Carpini, 2011; Wojcieszak & Mutz, 2009) over traditional news media. However, technology’s impact on the two countries will likely differ, given their divergent political and cultural contexts, as well as their vastly different histories.

Thus, it is necessary to view the cultural impacts of these new communication systems at the national level through a comparative lens. This will provide for a nuanced understanding of the current digital landscape of the global media system. Such a comparison must include examining the role of digital technologies’ impact on reshaping the newsroom at the national level (Curran, 2011; Nielsen & Levy, 2010; Norris, 2009). Correspondingly, the research questions of this work include asking journalists in two cultures how they accept, respond to, and use such technologies.

The tendency of different value systems to operate in the newsroom is revealed in journalists' social media use. In the United States, journalists see Twitter as a reliable source of news (McGregor & Molyneux, 2018), and the platform has played an essential role in the news production process (Lawrence, 2015; Usher et al., 2018). Checking social media has permeated journalists' daily routines; often, it is the first task of each working day (Hamby, 2013). Journalists continuously monitor social media to assess the climate of public opinion (McGregor, 2018). It is important to note, however, that while D.C.-based journalists routinely check social media, they don't consider politicians' social media posts to be as credible as their personal interfaces with these individuals (Hellmueller, 2014).

The combination of social media posts by political leaders, posts from “non-elite” sources of news (Hermida et al., 2014), and personal contact enables journalists to expand and diversify their perspective. Journalists' routine use of social media in the news production process also influences their news judgment and their evaluations of newsworthiness, such as those of tweets (McGregor & Molyneux, 2018). Meanwhile, journalists also use social media to build their own personal brands and to build their relationships with their audience (Molyneux, 2014). They also use social media to keep tabs on the competition by engaging with their colleagues (Molyneux, 2015; Molyneux & Mourão, 2017). In short, U.S. journalists use social media as part of their everyday work process, including information gathering, reporting, event coverage, and disseminating commentary and opinion.

Despite the abundant research on U.S. journalists' practices, this type of different working culture—individual or collectivistic—has rarely been discussed from a comparative perspective to

other countries. In my interviews and analyses, I will draw distinctions to determine the meaning of the different uses of social media in the reporting process and the influence of those practices in the two countries.

While the systems of the United States and South Korea may appear similar, reporters' functions and actual activities on their beat differ. These conventions might stem from the different cultural organization of newsrooms. This leads to the third research question:

RQ3 : How do political reporters in South Korea and the United States incorporate social media as a professional tool in their reporting?

CHAPTER 5

METHOD

The method involves two parts: 1) a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of presidential news, and 2) in-depth, semi-structured interviews. To trace how news stories about presidents, politicians, and their activities in both countries are constructed, a content analysis of political coverage will be conducted. The content analysis will serve as a diagnostic tool for examining presidential coverage, revealing the distinct ways and settings in which reporters in each country use quotations. This examination will include how direct quotations are leveraged in presidential news, including how quotations illuminate the relationships between the president and other politicians.

In order to compensate for the limitation of quantification, which limits the nuances of written representations of the president and other politicians, qualitative analysis has been conducted concurrently. Qualitative analysis enhances validity and accuracy, as it helps interpret news data to highlight the patterns of words used, their relationships, and their structures of communication directly (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). By adopting both an inductive-qualitative and a deductive-quantitative strategy, my research aims to identify the political and cultural assumptions behind the reportage. Then, to examine the division of labor among the political reporters in newsrooms in two countries and the specific expectations for political news stories at the organizational level, in-depth interviews will be conducted with political reporters from the United States and South Korea. This interview process also helps to evaluate how journalists legitimize their professional roles within an ever-changing environment.

Content Analysis of Presidential Speeches and News Media Data

This analysis aimed to answer two main research questions (RQ1) with two data sets: two presidents' speeches on specific events, as well as cabinet meeting transcripts and the media coverage of those speeches. Since this process is designed to examine journalists' conventions for selecting presidential remarks, the sampling method will allow for a comparison of two data sets: 1) original speeches and 2) the news stories that feature those speeches.

Data Collection and Sample

The first data set was obtained from presidential speeches and transcripts of meetings. The speeches considered were made by the U.S. and South Korean presidents in the two periods: January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014; and January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. Since President Donald Trump's case is unconventional and norm-breaking in his leadership and communication style (Douglas, 2018), it has been suggested that he represents a specific type of American identity (Heidt, 2019). Because of this factor, two presidents from each country—South Korea and the United States—have been selected. Moreover, the time periods were chosen to avoid the inauguration year for each president. The exclusion of the first year of incumbency was determined to increase the validity of the study, given that the purpose of the study is to examine everyday reporting rather than specific coverage of election results, the period leading up to the inauguration, or the early honeymoon phase of a presidential term.

In South Korea's Blue House online speech and remarks collection, three speech booklets are openly displayed on the website. Official statements, speeches, and meeting transcripts were

collected from White House (US) archives and Blue House (South Korea) websites below. Examples of the speeches are provided in Appendix A.

- <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks>
- <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/remarks/>
- <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/>
- <https://www1.president.go.kr/c/president-speeches>

In order to obtain data on my specific inquiry, I examined three specific factors: time period, speech characteristics, and speeches by conservative and liberal administration in order to increase the validity of the study. From the start date of the data collection, three time periods were selected (2014 to 2018, 2018 to 2022, and 2022 to the present). These time spans coincide with presidential terms of Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden. In North Korea, these time spans coincide with the presidencies of Park Geun-hye and Moon Jae-in. In the case of President Geun-hye, the Korean government has published transcripts solely from his speeches spanning from January 1 of 2013 to January 31 of 2014. Therefore, 2013 was chosen as the corresponding representative year from the Obama presidency. Presidential remarks from the Blue House are already divided into five subgroups: 1) presidential speeches, 2) cabinet council meetings (including personnel announcements), 3) meetings with senior advisors, 4) specific events, such as the March 1st Independence Movement Day speech, and 5) state of union addresses. Most of the transcripts from the cabinet council meetings and meetings with senior advisors are limited to opening remarks. As such, one sample from each of the other three groups was selected from each four-month period using the rotating method developed by Jeff Clark. The full list of speeches used is included in the appendix. If there was more than one cabinet meeting transcript for a given month, the earliest

meeting was chosen for analysis. This sampling method was repeated for the 2018 sample from both countries. As the 2022 data collection had to begin early in the year, only one cabinet meeting and the State of the Union address were selected. In total, 22 speeches were selected. Sentences with no political meaning, such as “Good morning, everyone,” or “Thank you,” were excluded from the actual coding. Ultimately, 1,246 sentences from the United States and 688 sentences from Korea were coded.

Once the speeches were selected, the second data set for RQ1 was constructed to determine what kinds of presidential remarks are quoted in news stories, as compared to the original texts of the speeches. The 156 collected news stories collected excluded editorials and advance-notice news (e.g., the announcement of a State of the Union address to be given later in the week). In total, 452 quotes from the United States and 574 quotes from Korea (1,026 quotes in total) were coded.

Using the combination of the president’s name and the term “speech,” “cabinet meeting” or the specific event name as a keyword and setting within a particular date, the Factiva database was used to locate stories. As for news outlets, three of the highest-circulation daily papers in the United States (*The New York Times (NYT)*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*) were used. For Korean newspapers, the same method was used, and samples were collected from *Chosun Ilbo*, *Choong Ang Ilbo*, and *Hankyoreh*³, via Eyesurfer, a Korean newspaper search and scrapping service. *Chosun Ilbo* is one of the oldest newspapers in South Korea and has the largest readership in the

³ In terms of the papers’ political alignment, *Chosun Ilbo* and *Dong-A Ilbo* are categorized as right-wing conservative papers, while *Hankyoreh* serves as the voice of the central left, with a strong national sensibility. Thus, choosing these three papers to represent Korean newspapers will increase the validity of the study; since this study examines the patterns of straight news coverage on the president, regardless of the paper’s editorial tone, the rationale for choosing both a conservative and a progressive paper from each country is to avoid specific characteristics due to the political leanings of a particular paper.

country. *Hankyoreh* was selected because its political inclination is center-left, which is in opposition to *Choshun Ilbo* and *Choong Ang Ilbo*. All told, these six newspapers constitute the leading print media outlets in each country and have been the most frequently used in comparative studies of media coverage in South Korea and the United States (Park & Lee, 2007).

Coding Procedures and Variables

Several types of coding schemes have been established, based on the previous literature: order/command, assertion/argument, resolution/prospective, and impressions/emotions. In Kang (1994) and Jeon (1995), the Korean president is depicted as the ruling power over most institutions. The verbs order and command appear frequently, and presidential remarks are coded as orders or commands. Jeon (1995) categorizes the expressions in Korean presidents' remarks as 1) sentences directly implying a president's power or 2) normative expressions that imply coercion. Another type of presidential rhetoric is the resolution/prospective category. Scacco (2014) found that when talking about the future, the president's expectations are a prominent aspect of presidential communication. Lim (2002) also identified several dimensions of presidential rhetoric. Using a computer-assisted content analysis of inaugural addresses delivered from 1789 to 2000, Lim found that presidential rhetoric became more assertive during this period. This is attributed to the institutional strengthening of the presidency and increased confidence around certain issues. More recently, presidential rhetoric delivered through social media uses "more emotionally charged" rhetoric (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013, p. 241), including the expression of positive and negative emotions (see also Thelwall, Buckley, & Paltoglou, 2011; Ott, 2017).

A presidential remark or quote that includes blaming, attacking, or expressing an unfavorable opinion about other individuals (or institutions) has been coded as negative. Following Riffe (1980), anonymous sources have been defined as those whose identity—either name or position—is not explicitly stated in a news report. When the name and position of the quoted source is explicitly stated in the news article, this is considered an attributed source (rather than an anonymous source). The code book includes ten mutually exclusive types of speakers (the source of a quote). These types are listed in Appendix B. The total number of quotations in each news story was also counted. Trained coders, including the author, coded the anonymity of each speaker (named or anonymous), the type of speaker, the tone of remarks (negative or not), and the characteristics of presidential remarks.

Journalists' Specific Expectations in Two Countries: Semi-structured Interviews

The second and third questions are answered by conducting interviews with reporters who have covered political beats in the United States and South Korea. The initial questions determined what journalists in each country routinely do when covering politics, what are the practices or journalistic conventions they typically employ, the operating logistics of the Kisha system and the U.S. press corps, and the use of social media as a tool for reporting stories. Additional questions were asked, based on the nature and flow of the interview.

Recruitment

In conducting a comparative qualitative analysis, Nechustai (2020) found that American journalists tend to be highly cautious about sharing their personal thoughts (compared to European

journalists) in cases where the interviewee has no previous acquaintance with the interviewer. This project approached recruitment via three tracks: identifying the author’s professional networks (in South Korea), reaching out directly to individual journalists in organizations (“cold emailing”), and posting about the recruitment in journalistic Facebook groups (in the United States). In selecting the news outlets, the top 30 newspapers, ranked by the Pew Research Center in accordance with average Sunday circulation data from 2019 and 2020 (as provided by Alliance for Audited Media) were used for selecting the organizations. Political reporters with experience covering Congress or the White House (in the United States) or the Blue House (in South Korea) were contacted. These “cold emails” included an assurance that all of a reporter’s identifying details would be anonymized.

Toward this end, I interviewed 27 journalists (15 in Korea and 12 in the United States), all with at least one year of political reporting experience. Every effort was made to recruit journalists who were working on the political beat at the time they were interviewed. With the exception of two (Interviewee 18 and Interviewee 21—who stopped working as a journalist and became an educator), all interviewees were actively working in politics-related journalism at the time of the interview.

Other qualitative, interview-based studies on this subject have utilized a much larger sample size. For example, Nechushtai (2020) interviewed 87 U.S. and German journalists, and Powers and Vera-Zambrano (2018, 2022) conducted 60 in-depth interviews with French and U.S. journalists. However, these studies focused on reporters in general, regardless of their specialization. Since the present study sought to interview reporters *specializing* in national politics (covering, for example Congress or the White House), the number of relevant and available interview subjects was somewhat smaller (27). In previous research, the specific scope of a study has similarly limited the

number of interview subjects. For example, Kim (2020) conducted a comparative study of journalists' reporting on global infectious disease outbreaks, and the sample size was 18. All interviews were recorded and documented after securing participants' consent. See Appendix C for the interview protocol. Two exploratory pilot interviews were conducted as part of this research. On January 18, 2021, I interviewed Jihoon Lee, a reporter at *Choongang Ilbo*, in Seoul, who covered a political beat for three years. In general, the interviews lasted approximately one hour each. For my U.S.-based pilot interview, I contacted David Herezhorn, a current political reporter for *Politico* (and a former *NYT* reporter), via email.

The Korean reporters were recruited through a "snowballing sampling," using my personal connections. For the U.S. sample, I began by contacting all the reporters whose bylines appeared in my data set. In total, I contacted 125 U.S. reporters; 12 responded, yielding a response rate of 9.6 percent. Detailed information about the interviewees is shown in Table 2. Seven women and eight men made up the Korean sample, while two women and 10 men represented the United States. All the interviewees have done extensive reporting on politics and policy. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and over Zoom/phone. Each interview lasted between 35 minutes and 1.5 hours. I interviewed the U.S. journalists in English and the Korean journalists in Korean. The responses from the Korean journalists were first transcribed and then translated into English by a professional translator.

Though surveys are most commonly used for journalistic social media uses, Powers and Vera-Zhambrano (2016) argue that qualitative interviews have advantages when it comes to exploring cross-national differences because they allow the researcher to compare structural and

systemic issues (see also Lamont and Swidler, 2014). By comparing two countries' journalism fields in terms of their divergent economic, political, and professional orientations, the potential influence of national contexts on social media use can be examined. Interviews were designed to follow a semi-structured protocol, which included asking journalists about their daily work routines, their perspectives on journalistic ideals, and their social media use. To compensate for the small number of interviewees, when discussing U.S. journalism culture, I have incorporated and leveraged previous literature.

< Table 2> Interviewee information *Interviewees requested them, and their places of employment not identified. Participants were recruited via email and contacted on the phone after IRB approval.

Number	Title	Years of experience	Employer	Country
1	Chief reporter (of party team)	12	National daily newspaper	Korea
2	Chief reporter (of party team)	10	Online news outlet	
3	Reporter	9	National daily newspaper	
4	Reporter	3	National daily newspaper	
5	Reporter	5	Business-focused, daily newspaper	
6	Chief reporter (Election team)	20+	Broadcast network	
7	Reporter	5	National daily newspaper	
8	Reporter	6	National daily newspaper	
9	Reporter	8	National daily newspaper	

<Table 2>, Continued

Number	Title	Years of experience	Employer	Country
10	Reporter	4	Regional newspaper	
11	Reporter	8	Korean news agency	
12	Former chief reporter (Current regional center director of broadcasting system)	27	National broadcaster	
13	Reporter	3	National daily newspaper	
14	Reporter	3	National daily newspaper	
15	Reporter	5	National daily newspaper	
16	Managing editor	10 +	Online news outlet	US
17	Reporter	4	National daily newspaper	
18	(Former) senior political reporter	30+	Regional newspaper	
19	Reporter	40 +	American regional newspaper	
20	Reporter	10 +	Regional newspaper	
21	(Former) Washington, D.C. correspondent	30 +	Regional newspaper	
22	Senior Reporter	30+	Business-focused, daily newspaper	

<Table 2>, Continued

Number	Title	Years of experience	Employer	Country
23	Reporter	8	National daily newspaper	
24	DC bureau chief	30 +	National daily newspaper	
25	Chief correspondent	40 +	National daily newspaper	
26	Reporter	5	A policy journalism company	
27	Reporter	7	A political journalism company	

CHAPTER 6

RESULT: POLITICS OF QUOTATION

	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Per News Story	10.397	8.541

<Table 3> Comparison of the average number of quotations for each news story and individual

The average number of direct quotations in a given news story was 8.541 in the Korean newspapers, as compared to 10.397 in the U.S. papers (Table 3). This indicates that there are almost three times as many quotations featured in news stories as compared to that reported in previous studies (Moon, 2016; Park, 2008). Further, the U.S. news stories contain 20 percent more quotations than those of South Korea. One can also infer that the length of the stories in the United States is double that in Korean papers (Lee, 2006; Kim et al., 2017). Moreover, the American newspaper employs diverse sources and features a higher number of quotations. Another key difference is that Korean papers tend to employ full quotations, while U.S. papers feature more sound bites, or short phrases. The U.S. stories examined featured 7.793 quotations from the president, as opposed to South Korea's average of 5.857 presidential quotations.

	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Per News Story	7.793	5.857

<Table 4> Comparison of the average number of presidential quotes

Table 4 shows how frequently the president's remarks are quoted per news story. With regard to the speaker types, Table 2 shows a slight difference in their affiliations. Since the samples were all sourced from presidential news coverage (State of the Union addresses, cabinet meetings,

etc.), quotations from the president, members of the executive branch, and the legislature were used by journalists in both countries. American news relies heavily on remarks made by the president (75 percent) in contrast to the Korean papers (68.6 percent). The *Chosun Ilbo* primarily quoted officials from the executive branch, such as the Presidential Secretariat (11.7 percent). The corresponding figure for quoting White House officials was markedly lower, at 2.2 percent.

<Table 5> Affiliation of individuals quoted

Source Type	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
President	452 75.0%	574 68.6%
Executive Office of the President	9 1.5%	98 11.7%
Cabinet	13 2.2%	30 3.6%
Legislative branch	75 12.4%	88 10.5%
Judiciary Branch	7 1.2%	1 0.1%
Experts, pundits	26 4.3%	18 2.2%
Citizen	3 0.5%	7 0.8%
Other nation	1 0.2%	3 0.4%
Previous administration	12 2.0%	14 1.7%
Others	5 0.8%	4 0.5%

<Table 5>, Continued

Source Type	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Total	603 100.0%	837 100.0%
χ^2 test : $\chi^2=64.437$, $df=9$, $p<.001$ Fisher exact test : $p<.001$		

Table 5 gives

an overview of the quotation use of Korean and American newspapers used. It is statistically significant in source-type proportions between the two countries ($\chi^2 = 64.437$, $df = 9$, $p < .001$).

Korean reporters often quote members of the Korean executive office, while U.S. journalists prefer direct quotes from the president. In other words, U.S. coverage is president-centered when compared to South Korea. The results also indicate that the voices of citizens, non-governmental organizations, and business groups are clearly limited when it comes to presidential reporting in both countries.

<Table 6> Anonymous source use comparison

Anonymous	US	Korea
Anonymous	21 3.5%	124 14.8%
Named	582 96.5%	713 85.2%
Total	603 100.0%	837 100.0%
χ^2 test : $\chi^2=48.461$, $df=1$, $p<.001$		

Table 6 presents the individuals quoted anonymously in the two country's newspapers. There is statistical difference in the frequency of the anonymous source use between the two countries ($\chi^2=48.461$, $df=1$, $p<.001$). In terms of anonymous sources versus attributed sources, the Korean

papers featured anonymous quotations more often (by 14.8 percent) than those in the United States.

(The U.S. percentage of anonymous quotations was only 3.5.

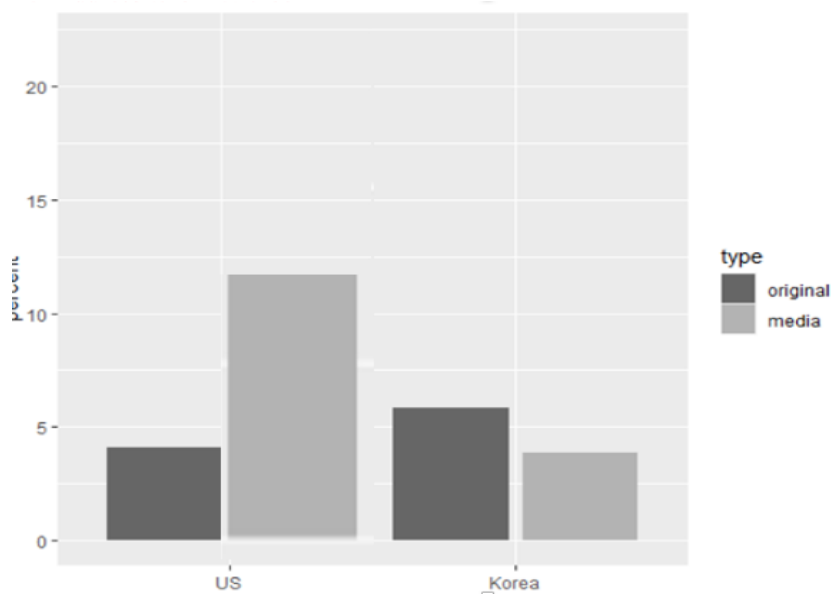
<Table 7> Affiliation of anonymous source quoted

Source type	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Executive Office of the President	7	44
	33.3%	46.7%
Cabinet	5	9
	23.8%	3.3%
Legislative branch	5	54
	23.8%	36.7%
Judiciary branch	0	1
	0.0%	0.0%
Experts, pundits	2	6
	9.52%	6.7%
Citizen	0	3
	0.0%	0.0%
Other nation	0	2
	0.0%	0.0%
Previous administration	1	0
	0.0%	0.0%
Others	1	4
	4.7%	6.7%
Total	21	124
	(100%)	100%

Table 7 presents a more detailed analysis of individuals quoted anonymously across the two countries. About 47 percent of the officials from the executive branch were quoted anonymously,

followed by 36.7 percent from the legislative branch. Those anonymous sources have been identified as “government officials,” “a senior administration official,” or “Key aides for Hankuk Party.”

Transcription data from the two countries showed no statistically significant differences between them ($\chi^2 = 2.5562$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.1099$). In other words, the presidents in both countries uttered negative remarks in an equal proportion. As for the use of negative elements in presidential speeches (such as accusatory, attacking, or blaming comments), the predicted statistical difference was observed between the U.S. administrations studied (χ^2 test : $\chi^2 = 29.975$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$). As for negative remarks ($n=51$), Trump’s speeches contained more negative remarks (76.5 percent), than Obama’s (5.9 percent) or Biden’s (17.6 percent). The proportion of negative remarks for Biden’s speeches is higher than Obama’s, perhaps because the analysis began at start of the Russia-Ukraine War, and Biden often criticized and blamed Vladimir Putin in his State of the Union address. Likewise, when it comes to comparing negative statements in presidential quotes in news stories, there also has been statistical difference between the various regimes ($\chi^2=52.168$, $df=2$, $p<.001$). In this context, Trump’s negative-remark percentage rose to 80.2 percent. By contrast, Obama’s negative remarks were rarely quoted in news stories. It is interesting to note (see Figure 3) that news stories featuring presidential speeches yield different results. Though negative remarks in original speeches were limited to less than 5 percent of the total content, those negative remarks constitute 13 percent of the news stories’ quotations ($\chi^2 = 130.88$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$). This means that when journalists construct presidential news stories, the inclusion of other sources, such as past announcements from the president, campaign promises, or remarks at various events, resulted in U.S. news stories that tend to feature more negative remarks.



<Figure 3> Comparison of proportion of negative remarks in presidential speeches and news stories

Conversely, while the Korean presidential speeches contained a similar proportion (5.8 percent) of negative remarks, Korean news stories tended not to feature those negative presidential quotes (4.2 percent). Instead, the Korean stories featured primarily neutral or positive remarks. The negative remarks in these news stories came from congressmen or party members (48.6 percent), rather than the president. This finding clearly indicates how the newspapers in the two countries position their respective presidents. Korean news coverage positions the president as an authoritative figure who rarely makes negative comments. In the United States, however, the president is more strongly associated with an active attacking, accusatory, and defensive stance.

Remark type	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Command, Order	39(3.1%)	51(7.4%)
Idea, Assertion, Argument	427(34.3%)	240(34.8%)
Resolution	73(5.9%)	102(14.8%)
Explanation	474(38.0%)	215(31.3%)
Impressions, Emotions	30(2.4%)	28(4.1%)
Boast	80(6.4%)	2(0.3%)
Reprimand	0(0.0%)	19(2.7%)
Prospective	100(8.0%)	28(4.1%)
Others	23(1.9%)	3(0.4%)
Total	1246 100.0%	688 100.0%

<Table 8> Characteristics of the President's Remarks in a Presidential Speech

When it comes to coding each sentence type, expressions of a president's ideas, assertions, and arguments (as well as explanations of the situation in question) constitute a large portion of the presidential speeches in both countries. In total, 72.3 percent of U.S. speeches and 66.1 percent of Korean speeches are made up of these components. It is interesting to note that U.S. presidential speeches involve boasts of American exceptionalism at a rate of approximately 6.4 percent, while Korean presidential speeches rarely involve anything similar (0.3 percent).

<Table 9> Characteristics of the president's quoted remarks in news stories

Remark type	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Command, Order	11 (2.4%)	138 (24.0%)
Idea, Assertion, Argument	222 (49.1%)	133 (23.1%)

<Table 9>, Continued

Remark type	<i>US</i>	<i>Korea</i>
Resolution	44 (9.7%)	157 (27.3%)
Explanation	72 (15.9%)	36 (6.2%)
Impressions, Emotions	10 (2.2%)	15 (1.5%)
Boast	56 (12.3%)	12 (1.2%)
Reprimand	1 (0.02%)	56 (9.7%)
Prospective	33 (7.3%)	21 (3.6%)
Others	3 (0.06%)	5 (0.8%)
Total	452 (100.0%)	574 (100.0%)

χ^2 test: $\chi^2=348.81$, $df=8$, $p<.001$
fisher exact test: $p<.001$

In terms of the type of quoted remarks from the president, the most interesting result was that 24 percent of the quotes in the Korean newspapers involved an order or command, while such remarks were rare in the United States. In contrast, U.S. news stories tend to characterize the president as an individual who makes arguments (49.1 percent), gives explanations (15.9 percent), and boasts of American exceptionalism (12.3 percent). This data shows that the media in each country depict the president differently.

<Table 10> The comparison of the remark type in Korean presidential speech and news stories

Remark type	Original	Media
Command, Order	31 (4.5%)	138 (24.0%)
Idea, Assertion, Argument	260 (37.8%)	133 (23.1%)
Resolution	112 (16.3%)	157 (27.3%)
Explanation	215 (31.2%)	36 (6.2%)
Impressions, Emotions	28 (4.1%)	15 (1.5%)

<Table 10>, Continued

Remark type	Original	Media
Boast	2 (0.3%)	12 (1.2%)
Reprimand	9 (1.3%)	56 (9.7%)
Prospective	28 (4.1%)	21 (3.6%)
Others	3 (0.4%)	5 (0.8%)
Total	688 (100.0%)	574 (100.0%)

2 tests : $\chi^2=400.51$, $df=8$, $p<.001$
Fisher test: $p<.001$

When comparing original presidential speeches with the selected quotes in Korean news stories, a statistical difference in type of remark was observed between the actual speech and the remarks highlighted in the news ($\chi^2 = 400.51$, $df = 8$, $p < .001$). Presidential commands and emphases on order occurred more frequently in news stories ($\chi^2 = 249.23$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$), as did reprimands ($\chi^2 = 142.89$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$). This tendency also appeared in U.S. cases, with the U.S. media tending to feature arguments more often ($\chi^2 = 30.331$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$).

<Table 11> the remark type in U.S. presidential speech and news stories

Remark type	Original	Media
Command, Order	39 (3.1%)	11(2.4%)
Idea, Assertion, Argument	427 (34.3%)	222(49.1%)
Resolution	73 (5.9%)	44(9.7%)
Explanation	474 (38.0%)	72(15.9%)
Impressions, Emotions	30 (2.4%)	10(2.2%)
Boast	80 (6.4%)	56(12.4%)
Reprimand	100 (8.0%)	33(7.3%)
Prospective	23 (1.8%)	3(0.7%)
Others	0 (0.0%)	1(0.2%)
Total	1246(100.0%)	452(100.0%)

< Table 11>, Continued

2 tests : $\chi^2=98.151$, $df=8$, $p<.001$
fisher test: $p<.001$

Since the samples from the news stories were collected based on presidential speeches at a particular event or meeting, such stories usually did not include the president's social media. However, while Korean news stories did not feature mentions of the president's social media, the U.S. media was slightly more inclined to do so (by 1.5 percent) during the Trump presidency. In other words, during the Trump presidency, reporters tended to include presidential tweets in addition to quotations from his speeches.

Discussion: The Media Portrayal of the President

A Fighter at the Forefront Versus a Commander in the Background

Drawing on the theoretical framework of comparative journalism, the overall picture conveyed by U.S. and Korean newspapers highlights the starkly different descriptions of the president in the two countries. A country's political structure affects the way its journalists write about politics. Through varying conventions in reporting and writing, presidents in the two countries are positioned as different political actors. Every day, Korean and American news consumers are presented with contrasting pictures of their respective political scenes.

As the data reveals, the Korean president is rarely portrayed as uttering negative comments in quotations featured in Korean newspapers. Instead, the president's quoted remarks evince the characteristics of order, command, and resolve, indicating that reporters perceive the president as an

individual of authority, a commander. The analysis further reveals that the Korean president rules over institutions like the press with absolute authority. The implied message conveyed by this presidential order, command, and resolve is that the president has forced his ideas and will upon the people. This presidential coverage causes readers to regard the presidential concentration of power as something to be taken for granted. Policy making and decision making at the institutional level have become personified through the president. This tendency is consistent with Nelson's (1994) point that press defines the government's administrative branch as its center, and the institutions are personified through one person: the president. The president of Korea is depicted as a commander in the background, while the U.S. president appears as a fighter at the forefront—someone who argues, opposes, and justifies his action via the U.S. papers.

It is worth noting here that Korea bars reporters from active questioning of the president. According to a former Blue House correspondent (Moon, 2017), this conventional reporting system makes covering the president quite difficult, even though there was a peaceful turnover of political power in 2017. In Korea, questions for the president are strictly limited, and a Blue House correspondent stated that Q&A sessions are either not allowed or fully rehearsed beforehand. He reported that, rather than directly communicating with the president or Blue House officials, specific officials (such as the Senior Secretary of Communication and approximately 300 Blue House correspondents), communicate via KaKao Talk, which is a popular messenger service in South Korea. Thus, the information and/or remarks that are relayed through this service must be quoted anonymously, such as a from "a Blue House official" or "a key advisor." In the history of the Korean presidency, there have been several attempts to revolutionize the Blue House's reporting

system, such as through open press briefings or regular press conferences. However, there has always been limited and veiled access to Korean presidents (Moon, 2017). Thus, from the perspective of readers, Korean newspapers continue to highlight presidential authority in both the public and political spheres, despite South Korea's democratization 40 years ago.

One can also infer that many people are anonymized in Korean presidential coverage. As Hallin (1993) argued, "The government officials are so often cited anonymously that it reflects both their power—they still get covered—and the constraints under which they operate" (p. 760). He added that a large number of anonymous sources can indicate deferential journalism if it results from journalists acceding to an official's request to speak off the record. Previous studies have indicated that political news tends to feature anonymous sources more often, as compared to news in other spheres (Hong, 2016; Kim, 2008). This is also seen in Hong's (2016) assertion that much of the political news that features anonymous sources centers on Blue House. This problem, as noted by Park and Kim (1987), may be attributed to the prevalence of Neo-Confucian tradition in Korea. The authors asserted that Neo-Confucian principles, including the centralization of political power, the rule of man instead of governance by law—ideas that contradict the value of democracy—have served as obstacles to the stabilization of democratic transformation from political culture to civic consciousness. Heo and Ham (2014) addressed this:

Confucianism-based political culture impedes institutionalization and the emergence of democratic culture and attitudes. South Korean political culture is not based on the principles of the rule of law. Instead, hierarchy, harmony, and stability are emphasized as remnants of Confucian influence. Since these values were promoted with a long tradition of family, academic, and regional ties, factionalism prevailed, creating a major hurdle to democratic consolidation. (p. 939)

Meanwhile, as U. S. news stories tended to feature negative presidential remarks, often emphasized with quotations, conflicts between different branches of government also appeared often. It is important to note, however, that negativity in news stories is a general trend across all mass media coverage of modern politics. It's not an American phenomenon (Schudson, 1999). Regardless, the findings align with the literature indicating that American skeptical and assertive patterns of reporting assume an adversarial relationship between sources and journalists. These patterns are used to secure journalistic authority, protect professional integrity, and set journalists up as an independent, professional fourth estate. Opposing worldviews between the media and political actors may also contribute to negative biases in the media (Kleinnijenhuis, 2008).

In addition, the negative reporting and the aggressive description of political actors can be seen as a strategy for achieving professional legitimacy and maximizing readership (Benson and Hallin, 2007; Dunaway, 2009). In other words, the appearance of negative content has been an, “economic and instrumental value in the struggle for people’s attention,” as well as more “marketable than positive news as it is more eye-catching, adds drama, stimulates interest, and is easy to understand, even by uninformed audiences,” (Lengauer et al., 2011, p.182) Thus, this tendency to amplify negativity in U.S. news media has been induced by cultural, professional, and commercial factors, confirming that U.S. journalists search for conflict, as their audiences do not see news about politics as inherently relevant. Thus, U.S. journalists try to make political news more attractive to their audiences by framing politics as combat.

CHAPTER 7

RESULT: COOPERATIVE OR COMPETITIVE?

Unlike the presidency, which is represented by a single individual, Congress is more about process than person. For this reason, reporters face difficulties concerning “who and what to report” (Paletz & Entman, 1981), not having a deep understanding of legislature (Hess, 1991). In addition, because legislatures “are part of a complex and often glacial process, [they are] often hard to track and difficult to assess” (Dennis & Snyder, 1998, p. xi). More specifically, because it is a covering institution, “while each piece of legislation has a beginning and an endpoint, the distance between the two often bores those who are driven by immediacy and by defining moments or great decisions” (p. 11). Due to these traits of reporting on the legislative branch, reporting on Congress varies, rather than following specific patterns of journalistic convention (Tidmarch & Pitney, 1985).

Moreover, the digital media environment has rapidly altered the way that government institutions operate, the way journalists gather information, and the way they communicate with political sources. The relationship between press and legislative branch today is deeply entrenched in the widespread use of communication technologies (Mattoni and Ceccobelli, 2018) The digital disruption of the traditional news business model has led to fundamental changes in journalistic practice, as well as the values guiding journalists’ work. The increased significance of digital technologies is evident in both countries.

As Sigal (1973) described “What newsmen know depends to a considerable extent on whom they know, which, in turn, depends on where they are”(p.46). The places reporters routinely visit and the people they meet are the historically accumulated decisions determined by “what was and

was not considered newsworthy” (Tuchmann, 1977, p. 676). Through developed institutional and professional processes, political information is legitimized and accepted by the public. In this process, various arrangements have been developed, depending on different cultural contexts.

Yet how these processes operate varies cross-nationally. Because of this variation widely across regions, the same technological challenges are interpreted in different cultural contexts, depending on a culture’s technological trajectory (Boczkowski, 2005). Assuming that journalistic routine provides central evidence for determining journalistic, political, and organizational culture in a given country, it is important to consider reporters’ internalized consciousness and their understanding of the structural conditions (or orientations) of a given society (Pfetsch, 2004; Verba and Almond, 1963). Against this backdrop, this chapter examines differences in legislative-reporting practices, based on in-depth interview with 27 journalists in the United States and South Korea.

Reporters interviewed in both countries described how the digitalized newsroom transformed their routines and staff arrangements—changes which ultimately have an impact on journalistic culture. In both countries (in addition to the severe economic and existential threat to journalism in general), all interviewees expressed concern over the pressure of shifting from print to digital media. This shift is fundamentally changing the characteristics of their audiences, as well as increasing their workload and the scope of what they have to cover. This change is also reflected in scholastic findings that “journalism as an institution is still struggling to define clear professional norms for the use of audience clicks and at present sticks—at least in words--to traditional norms” (Welbers et al., 2016, p. 14). In South Korea and the United States, newspapers are seeing rapid losses in circulation and advertising revenues (Smyrniotis & Bousquet, 2011). In addition the growth of the internet and

social media means that publications like *The New York Times* have to compete with other traditional news outlets, digital start-ups, and even the many Twitterians.

The political newsrooms in both countries have responded to the competitive market pressure by focusing on breaking news and the 24-hour news cycle. This has increased workloads as reporters have to identify, write, and fact-check more stories than ever before, on increasingly tight deadlines. Other responses to this existential threat include reporting more negative news and satire, or adopting a particular ideological slant to attract a larger and more loyal audience (Kernell et al. 2018, Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2010; Patterson, 2000). This chapter will focus on how the two countries are embracing the digitalization of political news, in accordance with their specific cultures, rather than the shifting content of the news itself.

The Korean Approach: Insiderization through a Collective Working

Background

For at least a century, journalists in South Korea have been committed to a professional ethos under the Kisha club system, which was explained in Chapter 4. (This system is also known as the “informational cartel” (Freeman, 2000). Under this system, a limited numbers of reporters from nine major papers, three broadcast companies, and a couple of business-oriented news outlets have monopolized the press room. Senior reporters who worked in politics before the 1990s recall that “in the past, the party spokesperson visited the press room himself and presented about the insider politics to the reporters while reporters were smoking and playing Go. We didn’t need to chase the scene. If formal reporting was done through attending the actual meetings between politicians,

informal reporting was done by visiting a key politicians' house and having a dinner together” (Interviewee 11).

However, the reporters interviewed for the present study attested that there are no longer Kisha clubs dedicated to the National Assembly. When Roh Moo Hyun, who has been called a political outsider, was inaugurated as the 16th president, he targeted the Korean press (specifically the Kisha club and press room system) as the subject of reform, announcing plans to abolish press clubs and the press room system, as a way to “improve the exclusivist and hierarchical journalistic culture” (Jouhki & Baek, 2007, p. 1). This “led to a collusive system between bureaucrats and journalists, and among journalists themselves” (Kim, 2007) and ““monopolization of the information.” He attempted to shift the system to be “more open, and to give ‘equal opportunity to all media’” (Onishi, 2004). To compensate for these press room closures, the president recommended centralizing the official open briefings system, an approach with the “doors flung open to all” (Onishi, 2004). From that point, Blue House reporters increased from 90 to more than 300, and more than 1,000 reporters now cover the National Assembly (Interviewee 2). Instead of operating according to the Kisha club system, every reporter in the National Assembly receives credentials if they have registered as press. Though the Roh administration was confident that “the changes will lead to the emergence of something rare in East Asia: a fiercely independent press” (Interviewee 2), reporters perceive this new system as an environment in which “no one backs you up” (Interviewee 6). As any outlet, including internet-based small companies, can register as part of the National Assembly press, there is no control tower for these reporters. As their information hub has thus been rapidly dismantled, as a survival strategy reporters have voluntarily organized a small

group, which is called *kkumi*. Reporters marked this point as the rise of the new *kkumi* culture, which interlinks closely with the arising and widespread use of mobile messenger apps, such as Kakao Talk (Kim, 2017).

In order to comprehend Korea's journalistic culture and news production system, which are distinct from those of the United States, a brief overview of how Koreans consume news is needed. Unlike the United States, South Korean news, according to a 2021 Korean Press Foundation survey, has been primarily consumed through the major portal platforms. In fact, 79.2 percent of Korean people get their news through major portal platforms.

According to the Korean Press Foundation, Naver has the biggest market share (43.8 percent), followed by Daum (29.9 percent) (KPF, 2021). The people who consume news through traditional news organizations' websites, such as *Chosun Ilbo* or *Hankyoreh*, are limited to 1.1 percent and 0.4 percent, respectively. The major portal platforms' overall impact on the online news market is therefore far more consequential than the addition of more news venues in general. The portal system is central to creating the format and type of the news available, how the news is sourced and produced, as well as the degree of the market orientation of news organizations (Dwyer & Hutchinson, 2019). Media outlets have thus continued to invest more resources in articles that deliver provocative and "clickbait" news stories. Indeed, platforms like Naver run on click-oriented policies. Unlike *The New York Times*, which has nearly 10 million paid subscribers, there is no Korean media outlet that has secured paid digital subscribers. This media ecosystem variation cannot be explained only by differences in the audiences' news consumption habits (such as the fact that Korean audiences prefer short articles).

To upload news stories consistently and maintain steady page views, the amount of news stories each Korean reporter produces every day is considerably larger than the quota of U.S. reporters (Kim et al., 2018). Korean junior reporters write an average three to four articles per day, and some of them write five or more articles daily, including online-only news stories. In fact, only a few of their stories are for print editions. Thus, they are written in a very short form. Some are based on a politician's social media posting. Others cover minor political events that happened in the National Assembly. Senior reporters, including the party team chief or the associate captain who directs the team, write only one or two stories every three days. And they focus on longer, feature-type stories.

This number of news stories produced per reporter influences the form that the news takes. Korean news stories thus tend to appear in a short, fragmented, and event-centered form (Lee, 2006; Moon, 2016). Though this “he said, she said” coverage is often criticized in United States, Korean reporting reflects the intense bearing that most political news has on the daily actions of politicians, press releases which are spoon-fed by officials with “whom they met and what they talked about”—delivered in a simple and descriptive manner (Fedelman, 1996; Nomura, 2003), being referred to announcement journalism. Empirical evidence has revealed that the typical straight-news story in *Chosun Ilbo* averages 9.87 sentences. The average for similar stories in the *New York Times* is 41 sentences. In addition, there are differences in the diversity of news sources. The average number of news sources for a *Chosun Ilbo* story was 2.1, compared to 7.5 for *The New York Times* (Lee, 2006). These results show that the two newspapers have fundamentally different approaches to producing political news. The result is that Korean stories are inevitably more fragmentary and superficial. My

interviews reveal the process through which these news stories were created, particularly how they mobilize the vestiges of the *Kisha* clubs, and how cultural orientations operate within them.

News Team Arrangement and Journalistic Routine

To enter the world of reporting full-time, Korean reporters are trained in the Japanese way from the moment they begin their jobs. They begin their tenure by working with the police, introducing themselves to police officers—also known as *satsu-mawari*, or *mawari* for short (Kim, 2008). After spending a few months or years at the police station, these young reporters are assigned to a beat, such as politics, the prosecutor’s office, sports, or the economy. The best reporters are ultimately assigned to the political beat, and the interviewees in this study reported that the congressional beat tends to attract younger reporters. In fact, the junior reporters interviewed had only two or three years of political beat experience.

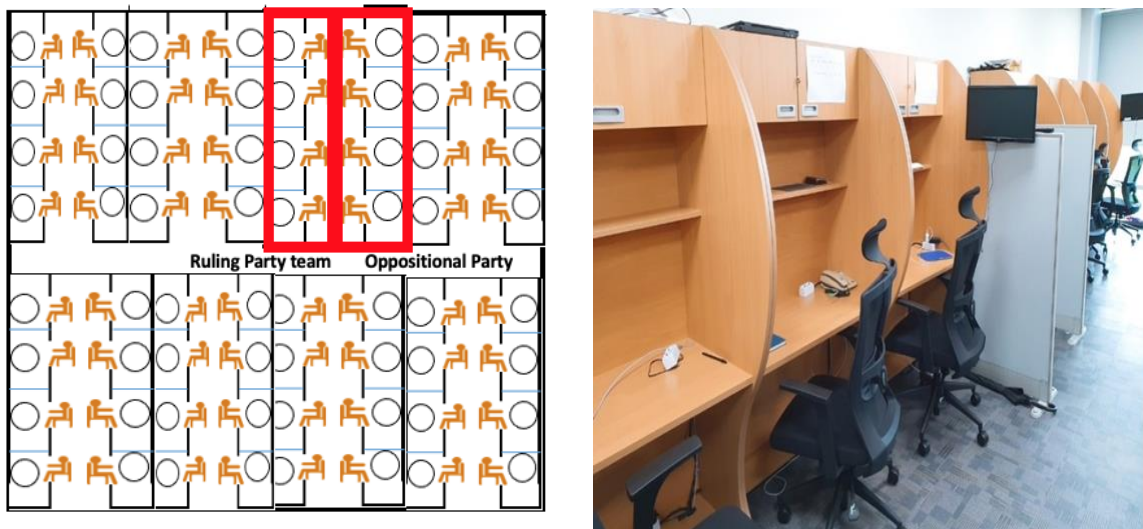
In the Korean newsroom, including the congressional beat, reporters work within a hierarchical culture that includes a cap(tain) system. On the major news outlets’ congressional teams, the reporters are divided into two teams: the opposition party and the ruling party. Excluding the local news outlet in Pusan (which has only three resident congressional reporters), all the national outlets have 10 to 12 reporters. Unlike a U.S. newsroom, where one reporter fulfills the role of “Congress captain,” a South Korean newsroom will contain two “caps,” one for the ruling party and one for the opposition party. These positions are based on a reporter’s experience level. Supporting each cap are “associate caps” and two or three junior reporters. Each party team works closely with one another, under a rigid hierarchical apprenticeship system. The experienced reporters direct the junior reporters’ tasks. The major news outlets, such as *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-a Ilbo*,

Hankyoreh Press, and *Korea Broadcasting System*, have adopted 5–5 or 6–6 systems, where five or six reporters are assigned to the ruling party team and the remaining five or six are assigned to opposition party team. Depending on election seasons or pending issues, they adjust the number to 6–6, or 6–4. One reporter noted, “After the impeachment of President Park, when the conservative party was almost dead, the company reduced the party team to only three” (Interviewee 8).

Each team has a shared press room in the communication building of the National Assembly. Though the press rooms were previously located in the main building, called Jungtronkwan, the National Assembly removed and relocated them to the second floor of the communication building, called Sotongkwan⁴. In this communication building, the third and fourth floors are dedicated to each party’s public relations office and the local government’s public officials. For this reason, reporters move to the main building to cover standing committee meetings or the morning supreme council meetings. As Figure 4 shows, the press room has cubicle dividers situated between the news outlets. Even within the same news outlets, “reporters for each party sit in a row with their backs turned to the oppositional party team” (Interviewee 7). The reporters also noted that although it is an open space, it is more like a “study room” than a meeting facility. Due to the ambience of the press

⁴ Those reporters from major news outlets that are regularly assigned to the National Assembly are assigned seats in the press room; however, small-scale news outlets and freelancers do not receive fixed seats. They instead write articles at a wide table in a public lounge space at the end of the hallway on the second floor. The National Assembly’s media relations officer explained that the legislature had secured journalist privacy and arranged additional seats by increasing space efficiency. They also said that the space allocated to reporters has been expanded by about 30 more seats, while still maintaining the photojournalists’ office, and more than 90 percent (553 out of 590) of regular reporters have been accommodated. This physical separation between the reporters in communication buildings and the legislators’ office in the main building also closely relates to the rapid changes in the media environment. As the number of reporters and independent internet media has increased, contact between lawmakers and reporters has become rare. To make media relations efficient, the National Assembly needed to manage and accommodate the sharply increasing numbers of reporters.

room, journalists report to their senior reporters and their colleagues elsewhere, communicating only in an online chatroom.



<Figure 4> The press room office arrangement in the Korean National Assembly Communication Building. Source image from <http://www.mediatoday.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=207416>

In terms of task arrangement among reporters from the same party team, a junior reporter with the least reporting experience—called a *maljin*—is sent to the main building to transcribe the politicians’ remarks about political events. Based on these remarks, the junior reporters write straightforward news stories, many of them online-only. A more experienced reporter, called a *japjin*, directs the junior reporters and writes stories with them. These reporters’ stories are limited to the party under consideration. For this reason, the captain of each party team usually directs reporters on what to cover, distributing tasks among the reporters. If they have to cover stories that

deal with consensus or debates between the two parties, the more experienced reporters or the captain will step in. Feature stories that require contextualization also fall within the purview of the captain or experienced reporters. In addition, most of the reporters (excluding the captain) must assign a “mark man”⁵ (Interviewee 7), or a person who will “mark” a certain politician’s every action inside and outside the National Assembly. These assignments are made according to the power the politician has and the hierarchical order of the reporters. Therefore, the party caps are assigned to the party representative or majority leader, while the next most experienced reporters mark the majority whip.

Reporters’ morning routines start with summarizing rival news outlets’ stories and delivering them to senior reporters. Each political team member is responsible for at least one outlet, checking up on them and discussing why their team missed information that the other outlet covered—if there are discrepancies (Interviewee 8). This task is focused on the rivalry among news outlets, rather than on covering political issues for the sake of journalism. After reviewing the other news outlets, reporters present the topic of their news stories for the day from 8:50 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. The “most important task of the day for junior reporters is attending the morning supreme council of political parties” (Interviewee 7). Three times every week, the supreme council of each party holds a meeting,

⁵ This marksman system is derived from the practice of the bankisha (番記者), which refers to a political journalist that follows a particular, high-ranking politician and essentially covers their movements and routine 24 hours a day. The bankisha's most important role is to collect information behind stories or elicit comments from the politicians he/she covers closely. By continuously and closely following a single influential politician, the smaller a bankisha’s physical and psychological distance to the politician becomes, the more opportunities will there be to obtain important information. In some cases, the bankisha can even land a big scoop. Arranging a bankisha's role is thus crucial for media companies. Accordingly, each media company deploys their bankisha to leading politicians and faction leaders of the ruling and opposition parties. In the Korean context, these marksmen organize groups, share the information they have obtained, and arrange informal meetings with politicians

which is open to the media. According to the participants, this meeting is “completely for media, not an authentic meeting where they decide something” (Interviewee 5). In other words, this supreme council meeting is a “media event,” providing regular and consistent content for news coverage in an official way. Given the increasing number of the news outlets with open briefing systems (and the closure of the Kisha club system in 2003), this supreme council meeting aims to formalize and standardize media briefings in an uncontrollable media landscape.

In the afternoon, reporters have free time to contact sources, develop news stories, or conduct interviews. However, these activities are mostly carried out cooperatively with their colleagues. For print papers, based on the items that reporters present in the morning, the editorial desk plans the paper’s layout by 2 or 3 p.m. If there is an order sent out from editorial desk, reporters will go to the main building to visit the legislator’s office or contact sources with phone calls, at 3 or 4 p.m. The final task is determining what will be reported the next day—once the party has released its schedule and information about events.

The Logics of Kkumi as a Fractioned Information Cartel

Kkumi (< ㄱ ㅁ 이) is a word that refers to a group, pair, company, team, or set of people. In the Korean journalism industry, a *kkumi* denotes a group of close journalists from different outlets. Each *kkumi* has 5 to 10 journalists, and only one journalist from each outlet can join the group. A typical reporter belongs to three or four *kkumis*. In most cases, the *kkumi* is structured like a “bibimbap (or a mixture of various things)” (Interviewee 2). For example, one member is from a news agency, one from a major daily newspaper outlet, one from a business-focused newspaper, and the other from a

broadcaster. Smaller *kkumis* have four or five reporters, and bigger ones have up to 10. Each *kkumi* focuses on two central jobs: 1) sharing the transcripts of various political meetings, hearings, and press conferences; and 2) scheduling lunch meetings with politicians together (Interviewee 3). The cooperation and symbiosis among *kkumi* reporters may be one of the defining characteristics of the system. *Kkumi* members share every single piece of information with each other, and such closeness is the driving force behind the group. The most important thing for Korean reporters to avoid is a situation in which they “miss some information that other rival news covered, or get scooped [*mulmukda*]” (Interviewee 15). The easiest way to avoid this outcome is to make such cartels, diversifying incoming content channels so that they can catch every single piece of information about their assigned member of the National Assembly. *Kkumi* are formed according to reporters’ years of experience. *Kkumi* colleagues’ approach to politics and information gathering influences the perspective on or interpretation of certain political events, providing a window into politics. Typically, each reporter is allocated a portion of the remarks issued by each politician to transcribe, and they share these transcriptions with the other reporters in their *kkumi*, in the Kakao Talk chatroom, before the meeting ends. When all the reporters in the chat upload their transcripts and cross-reference them with each other, the combined transcript becomes an important source for the day’s news stories. This process may seem similar to the cooperative “pool system” among American journalists. However, American reporters utilize the pool system only under extreme circumstances, such as the Persian Gulf War or other disasters. In South Korea, such cooperation is a daily routine. All *kkumi* members release their information at the same time. This familial relationship, which emphasizes everyone’s specific role and prioritizes the entire group’s success,

imposes enormous moral pressure on individuals to conform. For the reporters, sharing the transcript is a communal sharing of labor that will benefit them in the future:

One junior reporter said to me one day that she was concerned about sharing the transcript, since it could be an exclusive news, asking why we have to share. I advised her “Don’t be frugal” with the transcript. It’s better to be wise; you give it to them now and you receive their help someday in the future. (Interviewee 2)

The second purpose of the *kkumi* is to schedule a lunch meeting. This is a convenient system for politicians, because it allows them to meet reporters from various outlets at the same time. Therefore, when organizing the *kkumi*, reporters carefully consider the composition of the group. One reporter described it as “the portfolio of the *kkumi*” (Interviewee 11). For example, one of the *kkumi* member may be from a significant and powerful news outlet, while another member may have a strong connection with a legislator’s office aides. Further, each team wants at least one news agency reporter for transcription. Of course, the *kkumi* goes beyond the two aforementioned functions. The *kkumi* group members who are junior members will read each other’s draft stories and edit them before they deliver them to the senior reporters. Junior reporters also collaborate on what topics to cover and what to convey to senior reporters (Interviewee 2). The creation of a friendly environment and interpersonal rapport is vital to the operation of a *kkumi*.

Captain *kkumis*, composed of reporters who are at the manager level and other people in authority (such as the captains of diverse news outlets), function in their rightful place by “asking about and sharing the layout, arrangement, and direction of the news, or to what extent they should make salient a certain event” (Interviewee 1). They visit local or district constituencies to have lunch meetings with various politicians:

I even went on a trip with my *kkumi* members . . . to visit politicians' district office in the suburbs. That was possible because we are all close friends. Lawmakers are so busy promoting themselves that they don't come to Seoul often. At that time, we went to Daegu, Gangwon, and other places, like a weekend trip. But not all reporters do this. We just got close enough to each other. (Interviewee 8)

Though the *kkumi* may seem like a group of close friends who encourage each other, the journalists also said this group does not work solely through "love and peace." All the reporters acknowledged that the *kkumi* system is based on one's conscience. Whether it is sharing a transcript or scheduling lunch meetings, each reporter strives to contribute in some way. The power dynamics among the reporters is always in flux, because Korean reporters closely identify themselves with their own news outlet. One reporter from a small news outlet confessed:

Since I'm not a reporter from major news outlets, I was extra careful with how to contribute this group. I mean, if the reporter is from *Chosun Ilbo*, then his being there itself in our *kkumi* is super helpful. Every politician asks when we schedule a lunch meeting, "Who is in your *kkumi*?" If we have a reporter that has some power from major news outlets, they definitely are happy to schedule a lunch (Interviewee 2)

Having someone from a major news outlet, such as *Chosun Ilbo*, in a *kkumi* means that the group can more easily secure their position as a journalistic team. In order to avoid seeming like a free rider, each reporter must exhibit their commitment, whether by transcribing or sharing the information that they overheard from officials or scheduling the lunch appointments. To make their efforts visible, they ping the performance sheet in their Kakao Talk group, which lists who made each meal appointment with a politician and brought it to their group. Each reporter can thus check

how much other reporters contribute to their *kkumi*. The reporters who belong to three or four *kkumis* have lunch appointments with politicians at least two or three times per week (Interviewee 11). The relationship between reporters in a *kkumi* is the primary reason for its success, and that success is also determined by the number of lunch appointments scheduled with high-ranking politicians.

So, the reporters in certain *kkumi* are close to each other; we feel somewhat good energy and vibes. A politician feels that, and he would have fun having a meal with us, and then we keep making appointments, which make it easier for us to make an appointment with the so-called big fish. There is also a notable *kkumi* among reporters. They often make appointments with party representatives. (Interviewee 8)

If someone brings a so-called heavyweight politician, all the members love it. It keeps up our solidarity and emotional bonding. If you make an appointment with such a powerful figure, members would have more affection for this *kkumi*. Yes, I had that experience when we had a meal with the speaker of the National Assembly. (Interviewee 11)

Rewards and sanctions are issued within *kkumi* as well. Those within the *kkumi* care about the performance of each member. Since the *kkumi* member reporters tend to avoid conflict, if the *kkumi* is not active, they simply participate less until the *kkumi* dies out, freeing them to participate in different *kkumi*. The collective mentality remains all-important for news-gathering, and it requires that each member must follow the methods of journalistic work. If someone breaks the “sharing information” rule—which is central to the success of the *kkumi* collectives—over their own personal goals, and if they work for their own individual achievement, such as delivering exclusive news, sanctions follow. In the worst cases, the reporter is expelled from the political beat:

One reporter from a major news outlet was a member of a markman *kkumi* that covers presidential candidate Hong JoonPyo. Hong was visiting and campaigning in Kyungju, Kyungsan, and Daegu, in this order. The *kkumi* reporters decided to cover the Kyungju and Daegu campaigns. This reporter broke the rule and followed the candidate to Kyungsan and did not join the Daegu campaign, because the reporter might have thought that s/he could receive the transcripts from the other *kkumi* members about the event at Daegu. At Kyungsan, Hong made some provocative announcement, so the reporter who broke the rule chased him to Kyungsan pulled a big scoop there. However, this reporter was kicked out of the *kkumi*, and the *kkumi* members problematized this case, and reported it to rival news outlets, so that reporter could not even come back to the political beat. (Interviewee 2)

If reporters have a lunch with each politician and in doing so make an acquaintance, senior reporters will ask these reporters to obtain some information from that politician's office. This performance, gained through the *kkumi*, leads to their ability to prove their achievement to their news outlets. Thus, a *kkumi* group's success directly leads the individual's success. To make the maximal effect on group success, the members always try (through diverse strategies) to make their *kkumi* stand out. To increase reporters' sense of belonging, they name their *kkumi*. One reporter shared a great memory about the achievements of their *kkumi*:

Every time we have a meal with politicians, we give small gifts under our *kkumi*'s name. The National Assembly speaker Moon-Hee Sang was so pleased to receive it and said, "It's my first time I received a gift from reporters in my more than 30 years of political life." Our *kkumi* name was *Uhmangku*, which means almost-dead *kkumi*, a somewhat sarcastic name, and he gave a new meaning to the name, fishing net *kkumi*, to encourage us to move forward in attracting more interviewees. We *kkumi* members were all impressed and proud of it. (Interviewee 11)

The Paradox of Mawari on the Political Beat: The Process of Insiderization

On the political beat, doing *mawari* refers to the act of young, Johnny-come-lately reporters visiting every legislator's office one by one. Though the legislators are not in their offices, as they often stay in their constituency or have other business, these reporters engage in *mawari* to make acquaintances with a legislator's aides and secretaries. In doing so, they forge connections that grant them special access to information during audits, hearing seasons, or standing committee meetings. Whenever they have free time, so-called "diligent" reporters do *mawari*. If they visit many legislators' offices, they are considered good and hard-working reporters. One reporter shared the following:

Every reporter has a different strategy for making connections. In my case, I buy ice cream and candies and move around the building and say hello. To make them feel friendly, I used to say, "Oh we go to the same school." Mostly, the junior aides or staffs there are my age. So if we feel like-minded, we get close and become friends. (Interviewee 7)

There are various advantages to making strong connections. For example, a well-connected reporter can often obtain information or reports first, before any other reporter. When reporters do *mawari*, they also pair up with other news outlets' reporters, and a group of two or three reporters do *mawari* together. After introducing themselves, exchanging name cards, and making an appointment, they move on to another round of visits. This process becomes their afternoon routine. The harder a reporter works, the more *mawari* he or she does:

I'm trying to go *mawari* at least once a week. Once I do it, I spare two hours. I spend 30 minutes per office, then I can complete four legislators' offices, if I go around for two hours. If lucky, I can make an lunch appointment, and then I'll able to better prepare for parliamentary inspection. (Interviewee 11)

When we ask aides to “please give us a cup of joe,” it’s a sort of sign. They know what we mean. When we reporters are in the room, the aide will bring coffee, give business cards, and provide small talk about their legislators’ recent interest and some factions within the party as well. Some politicians who like drinking, if they like the vibes of the *kkumi* members, then sometimes they make a drink appointment at the moment. He gets us upscale restaurants and treats us to something delicious. (Interviewee 8)

Since the reporters do *mawari* for the party they cover, lawmakers naturally gather for these political lunch appointments with reporters covering their own party, not those covering their opposition. As a result, the informal and close relationships formed between the media and political practitioners is developed through gift giving and informal gatherings and is more frequent in Asian countries than in the United States (Wu, 2011). This “reporting through informal relationships” has been the *modus operandi* of Korean journalism, with a close connection to a “kind of spiritual tie that is unconsciously established through direct or indirect contact and common experience” (Berkowitz & Lee, 2004, p. 431). And it is reinforced through “continuous contact and common experience” (Berkowitz & Lee, p. 433) and defined by feelings like attachment, affection, and sympathy, causing serious ethical concerns.

All the reporters agreed that they are assigned to a political party team for a specific reason. Indeed, they are incentivized by their school connections or regionalism (Interviewee 5).

School connections and intense regionalism have characterized Korea’s contemporary politics (Kwon, 2004). Although hometown advantage is a factor that exists in other countries, in South Korea politicians tend to use regionalism as a criterion to measure loyalty to them, and as a sign of a person who can be trusted (Kwon, 2004). When a team needs a specific piece of information, the senior reporters do not just send any junior reporter; they carefully consider the

region or school the reporter has belonged to, in an effort to leverage a common bond or common history. Furthermore, when they arrange the team by political party, they consider “the possibility or inclination to build a rapport or friendship” (Interviewee 11). Some of the participants shared that if a reporter from a different party beat visits a political party, they are treated as a guest. However, if the reporter covers the same political party, they are considered somewhat like a family member: “We are treated as family and welcomed like a new family member. The new baby arrived!” (Interviewee 2).

Therefore, reporters understand that forging strong relations with their sources—“to some extent that this source receives my call whenever I call”—is an important factor for their success. Naturally, this goal is more advantageous to the company than to the individual’s career. One reporter described his goal as “expanding my influence to the political sources.” Throughout this insiderization process, reporters become part of the larger power structure:

Reporters believe that, in the end, the reporter’s role is to expand his influence on the political beat in order to bring the influence yielded to the news outlet he is working with. For example, on the founding anniversary of our company, we may need to bring a high-profile politician guest. I invited Chung Jin-seok, vice chairman of the National Assembly, and Kim Ki-hyun, the floor leader. When we ask politicians, we should be able to make it happen, make them attend to our outlet’s anniversary. That’s the responsibility of a reporter. (Interviewee 2)

This process of establishing source–reporter relationships in Korea tends toward “informal, indirect, implicit, closed, private, and personal interactions” (Shin & Cameron, 2003, p. 266). This affects social relations between the press and politicians as a whole. As this close connection enables

reporters to feel comfortable with accessing a source, it results in “blurring the line and mixing business with pleasure because we are all humans at some moment” (Interviewee 7). Reporters are thus left unintentionally playing the role of a spin doctor, losing their sense of independence, not only with sources but also with rival journalists. Power is therefore placed in the hands of the politicians, who can deny certain reporters the opportunity to engage in these lunches, compelling them to acquiesce to political requests. The essential “behind-the-scenes” information—which is considered privileged—is provided during *kkumi* lunches, without which the media could not effectively carry out their task of informing the public about the internal mechanisms of the political process. Moreover, as this privileged information is received by all *kkumi* members in the same way, the gathering of news material can no longer operate as a free enterprise, as *kkumi* members form agreements about how and when information should be released as news:

After having a lunch, a lot of stories came out, but there’s a rule that we don’t write a story with real names during the lunch. The stories should come out from anonymous sources. To be honest, politicians exploit this opportunity to leak their agenda. For example, if there’s one who’s dissatisfied with the leadership of the party and he said that during the lunch with *kkumi*, it becomes a story next day that leadership is in crisis according to one supreme member of the party. Hilarious, but it’s true, and sometimes it becomes a real crisis.
(Interviewee 1)

Furthermore, experienced reporters sometimes become directly involved in delicate political situations. Indeed, sometimes they have to give advice to junior politicians and even teach them or direct their communication strategies as if they were spins (Interviewee 8). This desire to be close to the sources thus places their role as a reporter in a perilous position. Depending on the closeness of

the connection, specific reporters may even be evaluated as sharing a specific culture—for example, “that reporter is a person of Yoo Seung Min of the Bareun party” (Interviewee 2)—once they became experienced senior reporters. As the experience of a reporter accumulates, this tendency becomes evident. In this tight circle, when the reporter faces a situation wherein they should write about a mistake or issue criticism, they may fall into anguish. This makes it very difficult for a journalist to act as a watchdog:

I know that I should write about Hong’s mistake during the television debate, but his aides called me and said he acknowledges his mistake, and it isn’t what he meant to do. Yes, it’s a very difficult situation for me to report it. I know it’s media’s role to hold powers accountable. But I can’t write articles sprinkling salt on wounds. I gave the item to another reporter and said it was written by the other team. I feel really sorry about it. (Interviewee 2)

A main component of collectivism is conflict avoidance, coupled with high value on group harmony and solidarity, as well as a value of cooperation that operates between reporters and sources through their informal relationship and continuous contact. When conflict arises, collectivists tend to conform to existing norms of the source/reporter relationship, rather than being guided by personal pursuits and goals.

The U.S. Approach: Showcasing Journalism Excellence Through Differentiation Strategies

Backgrounds

According to the Congressional News Media and the House and Senate Press Galleries (in a 2017 report by the Congressional Research Service CRS), more than 200 media outlets and 6,000 reporters are registered in Congress (Eckman, 2017). If one register proves you are a reporter, you

can register without separate permission, and you can receive meeting and event schedules.

However, this figure is only the number of registered journalists, and there is a significant difference between the number of registered and unregistered journalists who continue to write political articles regularly. In addition, the United States also has press corps and press galleries, which have been around since the 1800s. “Access and How to Get It: Congressional Reporter's Notebook,” an article written by *New York Times* reporter Jeremy W. Peters, explains that it is common to encounter lawmakers in the lobby of the Capitol. It is “far more likely to run into a lawmaker or a staff member you need in the hall than you were to get a phone call back,” he noted, adding that the open atmosphere and accessibility were the advantages of congressional reporting (Peters, January 12, 2015). My interviews with U.S. journalists support Peters’s viewpoint. Interviewee 23, who is working as a D.C. bureau chief at a mainstream news outlet, confirmed that the congressional beat is an accessible and open space. Chief editors or desk-level reporters perceive “the Hill” as the place where junior reporters can gain valuable experience and access. Conversely, White House reporters are literally quarantined to a corner of the West Wing. Unlike the “high prestige beat like the White House or State Department, which requires the time-consuming process of developing reliable sources, Peters notes, “If you’re willing to go up there [to the Hill] and spend time, you can reach anybody and catch them when they’re going on and off the floor for a vote,” and they are much more eager to talk to reporters. Once reporters are given ID badges, legislators “usually see us not as a problem that needs to be controlled but as just another constituency they need to do business with” (Peters, 2015)

In the case of *The Times*, there are residential reporters who routinely cover the White House, the Ministry of National Defense, the Supreme Court, and Congress. David Herezhorn, who once served as congressional reporter for *The Times* and now works for *Politico*, said in an email interview that “there are two full-time reporters and one junior reporter working in Congress three days a week.” However, in addition to these three journalists, many other reporters cover issues and events that connect with Congress in some fashion. For example, the Washington-based environmental reporter will write about energy legislation as it moves through Congress. As such, U.S. reporters cover Congress and bills in detail based on their specialized fields, such as medicine, defense, and finance. In this environment, rather than relying on daily briefings or press releases, U.S. journalists write articles that reflect the issues that they think are important, and tap into their areas of expertise. Two journalists I interviewed, David Herrezhorn and Jennifer Steiner Steinhauer, regularly cover Congress, but do not classify their work by party or by “Senate” or “House of Representatives.” The division of duties between such journalists is based on issues, such as budget, taxes, domestic policy, foreign policy, and so on. Other than during the campaign period, it is very rare for a reporter to focus coverage on political party, or a faction within a party.

Staff arrangements vary according to the institution. For example, *The Washington Post’s* model encourages connections between each unit’s reporters. It has a half-dozen reporters assigned to the White House, and each week one person is designated as the lead, the one responsible for going to the White House daily briefings. The other members of the team do enterprise stories, which are not tied to daily reporting. There are House reporters and Senate reporters, as well as one or two people who float between the two chambers. There is also someone who is technically a

White House reporter, who functions as the nexus between the White House and Congress. Similar to the *New York Times*, the *Post* reporters from various beats also cover Congress. For example, there is an economic reporting team, which often focuses on congressional coverage, particularly in relation to budgetary spending, such as the “Build Back Better” agenda. The *Wall Street Journal* divides reporters into three groups: White House, Congress, and national politics. The D.C. bureau chief typically operates according to one of two models. In one model, the bureau chief is the top editor. He or she edits copy, directs reporters, deals with headlines, and generally handles everything editors do. In the other model, the bureau chief focuses more on high-level decisions, such as hiring writers and editors and the general direction of the coverage. This person also writes analyses and high-level reports, leveraging his or her many years of experience (Interviewee 23). This fluidity of the staff arrangement and duties is seen as a strength of congressional reporting teams.

As the financial deterioration of local media in the United States has accelerated, more than 2,000 local newspapers were closed over the past 15 years. (Hendrickson, 2019); Even the political teams from legacy media outlets are directly facing these crises (Darr et al., 2018, Martin and McCrain, 2018, Hopkins, 2018, Shaker, 2014). In fact, staff cutbacks and dwindling reporting resources result in less political news (Peterson, 2019; Hayes and Lawless, 2018, Abernathy, 2018).) Such newsroom reductions have resulted in fewer D.C. correspondents. According to the Pew Research Center (2016), the face of congressional-based journalism has changed drastically. According to Pew, 21 of 50 states do not have a local daily newspaper with a Washington D.C.-based correspondent who covers the U.S. Congress. According to the report, 30 percent fewer journalists cover Congress than they did in the 1980s. Specialized political media outlets, such as

Politico and Roll Call have tried to fill the gap. And because covering politics requires a deep understanding, there is a trend for consumers to turn to magazines or newsletters operated by journalists who specialize in politics (Pew Research Center, July 16, 2009). As a result of these cutbacks and staff layoffs, the workload of individual journalists has increased, but there is still a reduced volume of political news coverage (Starkman, 2010). In an interview, one reporter stated that this workload consisted of “approximately three stories in one week; it was a pretty busy week” (Interviewee 22). But this quota is far below the typical quota of a Korean journalist.

Another factor that distinguishes the U.S. newsroom culture from that of South Korea is the lack of job stability and consistency. The 12 reporters interviewed for this study had changed jobs at least two to three times, and some had been covering the political beat for only three years. Such flux is atypical in South Korea. The most frequent movement reported by my interviewees was from a small local newspaper to a larger/major news outlet. American journalists prize their independence over belonging to a particular organization, and the chance for a promotion or a move to a bigger, more influential media outlet is a prime motivator for U.S. journalists. Such a career move rewards individual accomplishment and separates the “one from the many”:

We augmented the team. When President Trump came into office, we had a kind of pre-digital White House team of two people. But the demands of the digital age are such that we have to be ready to write around the clock. And so it simply takes more people. You can’t ask two people to be on duty twenty hours a day. So we now have half a dozen people” (Interviewee 25)

As politicians can now reach their constituents directly (for example, through social media), they can say what they want without it necessarily being factual or placed in context—without being challenged. So, to verify their stories, reporters are required to do a lot more fact-checking than ever before (Interviewee 17). In addition, as technological change has undermined established media funding models (Seamans & Zhu, 2014), U.S. journalists find themselves as rivals in the information market. Indeed, some journalists now see themselves as adversaries with their fellow journalists. In general, the nature of competition in the newsgathering process has intensified significantly.

The U.S. political reporters' motivations are competition and a desire to report stories better than other journalists, or "because your goal is to do something that no one else has done or something no one else has noticed, or to do an analysis that has an insight that no one else has, or to find a scoop that no one else has" (Interviewee 23). The catchphrase "getting something no one else has" aligns with Daniels and Hollifield's (2002) finding that journalism is an industry "where product quality is largely dependent on individual journalists' talents and motivations" (2002, p. 661). The competitive nature of American journalism has been discussed in the existing literature (Singer, 2004; Lacy and Martin, 2004; Martin, 1998). Abbott (1988) described this occupational competition with external entities as the core criterion for journalistic professionalism, which "shaped it decisively" (1988, p. 225). Because reporters have been socialized to see other news outlets as competition, they keep tabs on each other's performance. Interviewees say they are "friends with a lot of the other reporters; we've seen each other and laugh and talk and have dinner

on the weekend”(Interviewee 17). However, when it comes to the work of reporting, they are all competitors.

This is a totally different approach from those seen in collectivist cultures. One reporter, a White House correspondent, recalled her embarrassment when she saw the way Japanese reporters worked: “It would strike me at big White House events when, for instance, a Japanese leader was visiting, that the Japanese reporters would kind of stick together. After an event, they seemed to talk to each other about what the event meant. They were trying to agree on what happened and represent a kind of consensus view on that” (Interviewee 23).

Such differences can also be seen in the fact that journalistic job promotions in the United States are based on individual achievement, as noted earlier, the distinguishing of the one from the many. The interviewees said that competition can take a variety of forms, including rival news organizations covering the same beat, reporters within the same outlet, or the competition between traditional reporters and alternative online journalists, bloggers, and citizen journalists (Carpenter, 2008). Some scholars argue that this competition can lead to the sensationalization of stories (Bird, 1940; Lacy et al., 1999). Others see it as something that makes journalists pursue different angles on the same topic or forces them to be more accountable to the public (DuBick, 1978).

Very competitive here. It’s pretty competitive, especially in [covering] Congress. I think because so much is happening, you’re really trying to break news. It’s a new news-breaking beat. So you don’t want to work together too much. (Interviewee 26)

Sense of competition is a very much a part of the American system of covering stories. Because you’re competing, certainly, with reporters from other organizations, but to a degree you’re also competing within your own organization. Reporters are encouraged to show as much initiative as they can and as much energy as they can. We are completely independent.

We are competitors by any means. We kind of unite as an association [only] when we need to fight for space. (Interviewee 20)

We're competing against a lot of other organizations. In the in the pre-internet days we worried mostly about the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* and the *LA Times*. Although the networks didn't often break stories in the way they sometimes do now. Now today we're competing against all kinds of people. We're competing against all of them. (Interviewee 24)

In short, journalists face market competition and professional competition simultaneously. Since U.S. reporters value internal factors (such as the interplay between individual interpretations and judgments based on professional values) in their perceptions of ethical behavior, they tend to believe that personal goals and interests are more important than external constructs, such as group pressures and interests. This mindset is an intuitive fit with individualist-oriented U.S. reporters, who consistently rank autonomy as highly important to their work (Powers, 1991; Weaver et al., 2007) and tend to connect job rewards to job satisfaction (e.g., Weaver et al., 2007). This individualistic and independent reporting system is closely related to the United States' pragmatic culture. In pragmatic cultures, political reporting is considered the same as any other beat and does not hold a special status. For this reason, the treatment of "politicians' activities and political events will be based on journalists' assessment of the intrinsic 'newsworthiness' of these activities" (Semetko et al., 1991, p. 6). This, in turn, relates to the American system of covering politics based on various beats of reporters' specializations, allowing for the possibility of journalists' intervention in the story.

I cover an energy environment from the congressional perspective. But we have a lot of teamwork here. So there's sometimes some overlap where you'll have a reporter who's maybe very focused on, let's say, the oil industry in a piece. But if I have some good sources that I can contribute, I will. But I'm usually the only reporter covering the energy industry for us. (Interviewee 26)

This approach to journalism is an intuitive fit with the individualistic American culture. To write a story based on a reporter's expertise in connecting a politician's decision or event to a bill and its effects on people's lives requires competence and "expertise to make the story better" (Interviewee 17). This can lead to high interventionism. In the existing work culture, showcasing an individual's reporting specialty is encouraged. This involves adopting a broader definition of politics, which allows beat reporters to connect to political issues and bills in unique ways. The framing of political news stories totally depends on journalists' capability to selectively adapt existing journalistic norms and practices to changing times.

It just beyond politics, into business, sometimes even in the sports when you have moneyed interests. And if they (politicians) want to build a new football stadium somewhere, it becomes a political issue. I mean it really gets very expansive, but I pick and choose, really, what I want to do. (Interviewee 20)

So I might think mayor is making this bus line free in this part of the city where she really wants to win votes to get reelected. And the transportation reporter might just think, like, this is good policy and it's good for climate or whatever. And so it's often helpful to, like, work together on something, that you kind of bring the broader context. (Interviewee 17)

This broad definition of politics guarantees the high autonomy of journalists in developing story ideas and sources, as well as in constructing new storylines. This also relates to reporters' efforts to seek diverse sources. Under these circumstances, reporters play a more central role in

constructing the narrative of an entire story. Thus, U.S. journalists in pragmatic, high interventionist journalistic cultures are more open to diverse sources, including opposition or nonofficial sources (Althaus, 2003; Arnold, 2004; Shehata, 2010). Thus, the reporters themselves become the moderators of the news. Seeking views representing conflict and disagreement around bills, the news media open an oppositional space for less-powerful actors and various experts (Benson & Hallin, 2007).

Going Personal as a Differentiation Strategy

The perceived competition can take many forms. It can lead to different angles and better quality, as well as to sensationalized stories (Bird, 1940; Lacy et al., 1999). My interviews show that in the U.S. context, such a differentiation strategy tends to go inside people's lives to satisfy individual readers. It is customized to meet their direct needs, to respond to the audience's desire to hear how politics actually affects their life. For example, a particular bill might change their life. Reporters adopt this practice of customized and personalized news as a differentiation strategy. By going deeply into people's lives to better meet readers' needs (e.g., differentiation) reporters use various tools to increase customer loyalty. Rather than merely adapting existing routines that rely on official sources inside politics, reporters acknowledge that venturing into public life and writing stories that are rooted in people's lives are key for differentiating themselves in a competitive marketplace.

[We consider] the nature of our readership. We think, what are our readers are interested in? They are not interested in inside politics. They do not care about the mechanism for who's going to be the next Speaker of the House. And it's a story that Politico and the *Post* cover very closely. It's not a story our reader care about. Our readers care a lot more about the issues that are going to affect them in their own lives. We spent a lot of time

focusing on what some decision means to you. The infrastructure bill that got passed? Where is it going to go? Or on Covid, we try to write about the things that affect people in their daily lives in a way that they understand and in a way that talks not about what it means to Washington politics but what it means to them. How education has gone during Covid? That's been an issue in which we did a poll. We would call back to see what's happened with your family and what's happening with your kids. If you're a teacher, what happened in your classroom? We are less Washington-centric than some of our major competitors (Interviewee 24)

Interestingly, reporters with such Washington-centric news outlets as Politico and *The Washington Post* also attempt to differentiate themselves by reaching into people's lives into a different form, not only through polls but also through newsletters (Interviewee 27) that explore their lives deeply and customize the news, providing “news-you-can-use” items (Underwood, 2001, p. 102). In the American newsroom, reporters perceive readership as linked to generating revenue, and thus tend to view readers as customers rather than as members of the public. Therefore, acquiring more subscriptions means that journalists are doing trustworthy work that is directly connected to their reputation and credibility (Neustai, 2020). The United States' customer-centered atmosphere overlaps in the journalism field as newsrooms go personal and rely on customization strategies to attract and retain their news audiences.

Discussion

The interview data analyzed in this chapter show how the profession has been practiced and structured in two respective cultures. This chapter adds to the current literature on the variance in journalistic norms and routines by showing the influence of the journalistic culture on cross-national

variation. As described, the news values are shaped differently in each journalistic, political, and organizational culture, and this can lead to differing definitions and portrayals of politics. The data also support the core thesis of the dissertation, which is that journalistic, political, and organizational culture moderates the press–politics relationship, both in the political system and in the news. The United States, where news media operate in a high interventionist, individualistic, and market-oriented culture, has adopted the model of an open-beat system in politics. This structure allows reporters from non-political beats to cover political stories when they intersect with their specific areas of coverage. This open-beat structure does not mean that any reporter can join the political beat at will. The political beat is prominent in the United States, so a reporter must have seniority, experience, specialized talent, and a well-established professional network if he or she wants to cover politics. This is not a beat for beginners (Deuze, 2005; Weaver and Wilnat, 2012; van Dalen, 2015). And while U.S. newsrooms try to model collaboration between political reporters and those from other beats, the collaboration tends to operate by “insider logistics.” For example, if a visit from a politician has specific business implications, a political-beat reporter might use a reporter from the business beat to help him, leveraging that reporter’s business expertise and relationships with key sources. This is the type of collaboration prevalent in U.S. journalism (Reich, 2012; Marchetti, 2005).

This approach relates to the pragmatic journalistic culture of the United States, where a high degree of autonomy is guaranteed (Neschtaï, 2020) and journalists are encouraged to build the basic outline of a political story themselves rather than describe a certain event in detail. As previous studies confirmed, this culture allows journalists a high degree of intervention in their stories, which

often results in individual politicians' remarks being considered insignificant material with low news value. Therefore, politicians' comments often constitute only a small part of a larger news story. Instead, they try to make this news more enticing by customizing the information to make it relevant to their readers' everyday lives.

The U.S. political culture values individualism and autonomy. These values correspond strongly with U.S. journalism culture. Indeed, American journalists base their authority and legitimacy on their "commitment to independence, autonomy, and capacity in their professional judgment" (Neschutai, 2020, p. 134). Althaus has argued that "oppositional voices appeared to enter news discourse through the 'narrative imperative' of American journalism, either from routine applications of the fairness norm by individual journalists or because the need for conflict and drama created an oppositional space in the news that required filling even when government officials closed ranks" (Althaus, 2003, p. 382).

When reporters seek to add conflict to a story, their reporting tends to feature diverse sources and differing perspectives. This approach is equated with high-quality journalism in the United States. However, from a global perspective, the use of diverse sources and perspectives is seen as more of a peculiar feature of the American journalistic culture than a true sign of journalistic excellence. Indeed, the American media's amplification of politicians' entertainment-oriented Twitter messages and tendency to use social-media virality as a cue for news (especially during the Trump administration) were seen as attempts to attract audience attention, rather than coverage of objectively important news.

A contrasting view of the media can be seen in South Korea, which has a relatively low interventionist culture and uses a “divided by party” beat system. My interviews show that, in response to the expansion of website and news portal-based services, journalists’ workloads have increased significantly. The short Facebook stories mostly came from digital mawari (Park et al., 2020). Because reporters’ beats are limited to the political party they cover, the workload increase is based primarily on the shift to more online stories, as opposed to those created for traditional media. In order to quickly upload content on news portals, copying and pasting a politician’s or a pundit’s social media posting often passes as a news story in itself. Reporters perceive this practice as efficient “bang for the bucks,” as it allows them to post multiple stories in a short time.

Another contrast between the two countries is that the South Korean audience considers consistent, uniform news as more credible (Interviewee 2). As all news outlets’ reporters participate in this digital mawari, it is becoming increasingly common for multiple media outlets to cover homogenized news stories simultaneously.

CHAPTER 8

RESULT: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A HOMOGENIZEER OR COMMODIFIER?

During the past decade, journalistic work has become inextricably linked with social media work—that is, media and communication professionals, such as journalists and public relations practitioners have made social media a central piece of their everyday workflows. The nature of this shift, including its consequence for the digitalized communication, has been a central piece of many lines of communication research, perhaps nowhere more so than in journalism studies (see Lewis & Molyneux, 2018). However, most of this research has focused on Western cases and practices, such as frequent comparisons between U.S. journalists and their counterparts in European countries (Engesser & Humprecht, 2015; Christine, 2020; Power & Vera-Zambrano, 2018; Neschtai, 2017). The studies conducted only within Western democracies favor liberal democracy and individuality (De Beer et al., 2016), and they approach media coverage “from within the Western experience and a Western analytical framework” (Hanitzsch et al., 2020, p. 8). Although the crucial nature of contextual factors (e.g., cultural patterns) has been continuously emphasized as a necessary condition for more inclusive and comprehensive research (Esser & Pfetsch., 2017; Hanitzsch et al., 2019; Humprecht & Büchel, 2013), specifically accounting for different social orientations across Western and Eastern cultures has rarely been done in social media research. Recognizing that “a distinction between merely Western and non-Western contexts would be too simplistic” (Hanitzsch et al., 2019, p. 289), the presence of pervasive cultural dimensions in particular social and cultural contexts should be more fully considered when examining media work in the rest of the world. Against this backdrop, this chapter explores how different socially shared cultural assumptions—

individualistic or collectivist—can influence the professional norms and practices of media professionals in their use and prioritization of social media.

The Korean Approach: Social Media as a Homogenizer

The interviews show that across the news outlets, social media is found to serve a unique professional function as a collectivist digital workspace, primarily in the way journalists rely on group chat functions, such as Kakaotalk or telegram. Twitter is not mandatory for U.S. journalists (though most of them use Twitter for professional purposes). However, in South Korea one cannot function as a reporter without platforms like Twitter. In South Korea, reporters are not encouraged to identify themselves as reporters on social media (e.g., Twitter and Facebook). These platforms are used professionally only when reporters visit politicians' pages for online-only stories, which is called 'Facebook *mawari*,' or 'Digital *mawari*' (Interviewee 12).

Group Chat as a New Spin Room with Collectivist Work

Group chat constitutes an exclusive space for political communications, through which reporters prepare and review the news agenda among themselves. The *kkumi* group chat expands the interactions between reporters by offering a virtual space for continuous contact between reporters. Each reporter belongs to at least 7 to 10 group chats (Some junior reporters who cover presidential campaigns said they belong to almost 20 groups). In case of Interviewee 4, she has three *kkumi* group chats: a group chat of political party team reporters from her company, the group chat run by the political party, and the mark-man group chat run by the presidential candidate's press office during the campaign. Each group chat has different rules and functions. For example, Interviewee

l's group chat, run by the People Power Party, comprises 555 reporters. This group's major function is to receive officials' announcements via group chats. In the Kakao Talk group chat (which is focused on the Democratic Party and similar to a Facebook group chat run by a political party) reporters from various media outlets gather to exchange ideas and information. In each party reporters' Kakao Talk (also known as KaTalk) group chat, there are 10 officials, the press secretary and other Office of Communications officials, along with hundreds of reporters (Korean and international correspondents). All major announcements, including press releases, are shared in this group chat. Since this is the first channel through which journalists receive information about the political party schedule and events, it has become even more important than official press conferences (Moon, 2017). All the workflows of newsroom members are managed in the group chat as well. A reporter's morning routine starts with uploading other outlets' news stories on their party team group chat. As one reporter explained, "I'll summarize the CBS radio interview with Lee Joon Seok" (Interviewee 4); then the other reporter on the team does the different media outlets. All workflows, including the presentation of ideas and the sharing of the schedules of high-ranking politicians, are done in the group chat rooms.

My interviews show that, in response to the expansion of website and news portal services, online-based news reporting is essential for these journalists. The short Facebook stories mostly came from *digital mawari* (Park et al., 2020). Their "tours of duty," of course, are limited to the party they are covering, so the backdrop of their reporting has simply been moved from offline to online. In order to quickly upload stories on the news portals, copying and pasting the politicians' or

pundits' social media postings often passes as news stories in itself. Reporters perceive this as an efficient “bang for the buck” when it comes to homogenized news. After all, their news audience perceives consistent, uniform news to be more credible. (Interviewee 2). As all the news outlets' reporters take part in this *digital mawari*, it is becoming more common for multiple media outlets to cover homogenized news stories at the same time.

For those online-only stories, I just tend to write stories quickly and complete them. As they have assignment for online-only news, digital mawari of politicians' Facebook pages is the cheapest way to produce a news article. In addition, party officials notify reporters once again through group chat when their party member politicians have posted something (Interviewee 7)

Most of news wire reporters upload these politicians' posting right away in the kkumi group chat. A politician posts on Facebook. It's shared as soon as possible. Someone uploaded it 1-2 minutes ago, and it became a news story in many outlets in 10 minutes (Interviewee 8)

In addition, organizational social media policies influence individual reporters' social media behavior (Ihlebaek & Larsson, 2018). For example, most U.S. news organizations require their journalists to post their news stories, or retweet those of their colleagues, in order to boost the organization's social media presence. However, such individual and organizational branding-by-posting is not encouraged in Korea. The Korean reporters stated that they diligently refrain from posting something professional on Twitter, and they are skeptical of branding themselves using social media. Not only are reporters reluctant to reveal themselves as individuals, but also they are wary of being involved in any wrongdoing. In such case, reporters tend to worry that they might harm the company's reputation. Furthermore, reporters consider themselves as a part of their media

organization and identify themselves with it. Therefore, they are careful to align and harmonize their opinions with their organization and endeavor to avoid being “conspicuous and obtrusive.” They strive “not to damage the company’s reputation” with their private activities on social media. One journalist explained it this way:

For example, if someone posted incorrect information on that Facebook page or posted some political claims, it could actually be a problem, and would harm the company. (Interviewee 3)

News companies think that branding through social media is somewhat a waste of labor. Every reporter has their role, and that is for the whole company, not for his own brand power. For increasing the company’s brand power, in fact, it's cheaper to outsource it. As far as I know, big news outlets such as *ChosunIlbo*, *Joonang Ilbo* don’t like their reporters, and keep regulating things like that.(Interviewee 11)

The majority of the reporter are not allowed to ask questions in the party group chat room or to draw attention to contentious issues, and party officials almost exclusively set and control the agenda on the digital platform. As a result, journalists become even more disconnected from playing a watchdog role. The speed of the social media revolution creates significant challenges and opportunities for reporters. The one-way model of traditional media (“We write; you read”) is being replaced by a two-way model (Lasorsa et al., 2012). However, the one-way model still reigns in party-group chatrooms.

Of course, there are strict rules in the party running group chat rooms. Because if they all open up to questions, even the minority media raise a question. Then maybe there should be some complaints, why let them ask such useless things and make my phone alarm [go off]? So, they set the rule of “don't ask questions here; just use a private chat or call.” There are a lot of group chat rooms with such rules. (Interviewee 8)

In this arrangement, group chat rooms effectively function as an echo chamber used by a clique of journalists. They are an exclusive space for political communications, through which journalists prepare and review the various agendas among themselves. These networks have solidified, through the group chat function, as closed groups of reporters covering a certain political party. In this way, they represent a new type of Korean spin room. This finding aligns with Laor (2020), who observed that Israeli journalists use social media as “a clique of journalists and politicians in a manner than reifies the hegemonic system” (Laor, 2020, p. 41). Laor also pointed out that discourse on social media typically constitutes an internal conversation involving only politicians and journalists, who talk “over the heads.”

Typically, each reporter is allocated a portion of the remarks by each politician to transcribe and share with his or her colleagues in the Kakao Talk chat room. When all the reporters in the chat room upload their transcripts and cross-check them against each other, the combined transcript becomes an important source of the news stories of the day (KBS, 2018). In this way, Korean journalists use social media as unique professional tool, allowing them to function in a collectivist digital workspace (Park et al., 2020).

All these hundreds of reporters receive the same announcement via Kakaotalk. During the campaign period, we have a group chat for each of the candidates. And we all share it. Sometimes, I see the same information or transcript several times, one from my Kkumi and some from other group chats. All reporters have this experience. (Interviewee 8)

As in the offline world, online reporters interact with other reporters who resemble them and cover the same party, which generates a significant degree of “homophily.” This homogeneous

network reduces uncertainty and provides a stable orientation for work practices. However, this “groupthink” leads to homogeneous media coverage (Hanusch & Nöcker, 2019).. Social media, which ostensibly offers a greater pluralism of opinions and exposes news consumers to a diversity of opinions, significantly affects society and news consumption. However, studies have shown that social media users tend to consume content that echoes their own worldviews and resonates and aligns with their existing ideological positions, while disregarding content that represents opposing opinions (Gainous et al., 2019; Porumbescu, 2017).

In short, in South Korea, a collectivistic culture that has prioritized cooperation and social unity, under the long tradition of Neo-Confucianism (Hofstede, 1980; Nisbett, 2019). Social media is found to serve a unique professional function as a collectivist digital workspace, primarily in the way journalists rely on group chat functions. This leads to a degree of homogenization across news outlets, as journalists bring their thinking into conformity with one another, which in turn appears to lead to broadly uniform news coverage.

The U.S. Approach: Social Media as a Commodifier

For exploring the U.S. journalists’ use of social media, this chapter used both interview data and incorporated previous literature on the topic. Compared to the Korean journalists’ use of social media, there has been considerable amount of literature on this subject. To present such literature, this chapter divided the journalists’ function with regard to social media into three parts: the role of information gatherer, chief editor and marketing tools.

Production Level: Social Media as an Information Gatherer

Previous research on journalists' social media use focuses on its function as raw material. (Hamby, 2013; Broersma and Graham, 2013; Lasorsa et al., 2013). Checking Twitter feeds has become the first task of journalists in the morning. Then they monitor activity on the platform all day, using tools such as DataMinr, so that they are alerted to what might become news (Usher et al., 2018). Generally speaking, social media provide limitless space for resourcing, the journalistic routine of monitoring prominent public figures, live broadcasting of political events, and identifying breaking political news (McGregor, 2018). It has also been discussed as a tool for diversifying the voices within a single news story. However, the social-media practices noted above can also lead to “pack mentality” journalism, because of the tendency to follow similar “processes of monitoring, imitation, and co-orientation between [journalists from] different media outlets” (Harder et al. 2017, p.14). In political beat, building close ties with politicians via Twitter is also an important reason for journalists use this platform (Freelon and Karpf, 2014; Mourão et al., 2015) to explore new political information. Social media's raw material mining function however, sometimes creates “a negative bias against the platform among journalists who don't use it as often, as well as among journalists with more years of experience” (Usher, 2018). In addition, journalists' perception of social media as a news beat has been criticized, as it leads to “sit-down journalism” instead of shoe-leather efforts (Baisnée and Marchetti, 2006).

I have three screens on and normally. One is for my email and my writing. And then I have another one where I just have various browser tabs open. But then I have another one over here and it is pretty much full time on Twitter. And so I just keep a casual eye on it. For example, other competitors that I follow very closely and people on my own team so that I can see when

they published a story. I monitor it. Now, it's not like I'm looking at it full time, all day.
(Interviewee 23)

In the social media beat, Twitter, for individual journalists, can serve as a cue for newsworthiness, thus affecting their editorial judgment. (Mcgregor & Molyneux, 2019; Usher, 2018). In this sense, it can usurp a chief editor's role of determining what is newsworthy and what is not.

Among U.S. reporters, Twitter has become one of the existing norms of their work life, even though they acknowledge that the "average person in the middle of the country isn't on Twitter" (Interviewee 27), and that Twitter represents politically polarized and "obviously very sensitive territory" (Interviewee 26). For these reasons, journalists said they are extra careful about overestimating the importance of what's happening on Twitter.

Interviewee 18 said that on the profile page of his Twitter account, he notes that "Retweet does not mean endorsement." This is one way journalists can protect themselves professionally. Journalists like Interviewee 18 understand that Twitter "retweets" are performative engagement markers that meld direct alignment with ironic promotion or personal brand management. As such, retweets can reveal all or nothing about one's true beliefs, depending on the observer.

Indeed, managing editors have recently begun expressing their concerns about their journalists' Twitter use. Dean Baquet, the executive editor of the *New York Times* staff said, "Tweet less, tweet more thoughtfully, and devote more time to reporting," According to his memo, running a Twitter account is "purely optional" for reporters, and he added, "If you do choose to stay on, we encourage you to meaningfully reduce how much time you're spending on the platform, tweeting or scrolling,

in relation to other parts of your job.” In general, the interviewees said they are to avoid the following: expressing opinions, engaging with non-professionals, and bringing Twitter conversation to the newswriting process. In other words, the existing norms of objectivity and gatekeeping authority still matter, and that can make Twitter a perilous place for reporters.

When there's a hot Twitter conversation going on that the whole country is talking about, it can often be an echo chamber. We know that it's a platform that has been and continues to be used to spread disinformation, so we have to be very careful about that. And it's a platform in which people are often rewarded for being outrageous. And that's not a good place for a reporter to be. (Interviewee 24)

Conventional norms indicate that when social media is used in journalistic practice, it should be used gather information or measure public opinion. Previous literature showed that there are contrasting views on whether journalistic norms operate in the same way on Twitter. The first strand of research views social media as a norm-breaker. Within this view, the journalistic standards of objectivity and balance do not apply in the Twittersphere because journalists' use of Twitter challenges certain established rules, such as objectivity and independence (Molyneux 2015; Mourão, 2015). It serves more to express an individual's critical views (Schumacher et al., 2021). However, my interview data revealed a finding that is supported by the majority of the previous literature, namely that the platform has largely incorporated traditional journalistic norms, such as objectivity (Lawrence et al. 2014), and that journalists are still “guided more by the norms, expectations, and regulations of their employers and their profession” (Lough et al., 2018, p. 1288). In regard to this observation, returning to the Hanitzsch's (2007) dimension of power distance, traditional journalistic

norms (e.g., objectivity, detachment, independence) are all associated with the adversarial culture that facilitates individualism.

Marketing News Stories and Commodifying Journalists Themselves

Due to the obligation not to avoid engaging with an audience on social media, Twitter has been primarily used as an information source for U.S. journalists. Meanwhile, news organizations are struggling to distribute their content to the public, which is becoming less and less inclined to visit their websites (Nielsen and Ganter, 2018). As a result, these organizations now consider social media as an economical avenue to reach their audience (Baisnée and Marchetti, 2006). As a result, they are encouraging their journalists to promote their news pieces over these platforms. Regular layoffs in newsroom staffs have further increased the reliance on social media. My interviews support these findings. More and more journalists consider Twitter use as “a promotional project”(Interviewee 18). Most journalists responded that they use Twitter to disseminate their news, and that their newsrooms encourage them to post their reporting product to this audience.

Moreover, the reporters who want to attract a larger audience to their platforms have developed specific strategies. As it has been more difficult to disseminate news due to pay-walls for premium news services, one reporter noted that he posts screenshot with enticing quotes from his articles, in an effort to share his news stories with people who do not subscribe to his publication. Efforts like this can serve as a way for journalists to brand themselves, a topic mentioned quite often. Branding is seen as key ways to promote and advance one’s career (Molyneux and Holton, 2015), as well as to promote an organization or news outlet (Molyneux et al., 2017; Molyneux et al., 2019).

Journalists feel strongest about individual-level branding, followed by the branding of their organization. Branding for the institution of journalism came in a distant third (Molyneux et al., 2019). Institutional branding also appears to be triggered by the desire of journalists themselves to engage in networking (which, at its core, is an individual factor) (Mcgregor & Molyneux, 2018), as they seek to position themselves alongside prominent peers.

This branding activity also relates to the practice of building journalistic authority by distinguishing oneself with the public, which can lead to competition with other journalists. Journalists tend to engage mainly with other journalists, and this helps them keep tabs on the competition (Molyneux, 2015; Molyneux and Mourão, 2017; Mourão et al., 2016; Lawrence, 2015)

Most of the journalists responded that they used Twitter for the promotion or dissemination of their news. They noted that their newsrooms now encourage reporters to post their news stories or to retweet the work of their colleagues. However, when they disseminate their work, journalists tend not to post every news story they wrote. Rather, many journalists share only their best work, the stories they are truly proud of. This is another part of branding themselves. They use Twitter as their own portfolio. With the rise of journalist-influencers, the line between a journalist's portfolio and "brand" has become increasingly blurred. Their social media brand has been pivotal to their career and to differentiate from the competition. An editor might believe, "If I hire this person, our web traffic will go up, because you know this person is going to bring these 2.3 million people along with them."(Interviewee 23)

In addition, Twitter-savvy reporters actively link the handles of politicians mentioned in a story, "Like tweeting that, hey, I spoke with senator Tina Smith. I just did a tweet this morning about

Tina Smith to make sure that the congressperson will retweet it. And they have large audience." (Interviewee 27) Such basic strategies serve as a good opportunity for reporters to shape how attention is being paid.



<Figure 5 >Screenshots of journalists bios on a news organization website. Journalists are represented by the Twitter logo, along with the numbers of followers they have.

The more followers the journalist has, the greater his or her visibility on social media, the stronger are his or her perceived abilities and editorial influence. Thus, having many followers becomes an asset for journalists. Some U.S. newsrooms feature the Twitter logo and the number of followers to indicate the journalist's fame. Moreover, there has been abundant research on the use of Twitter for journalistic self-promotion and branding (Hanusch and Bruns 2016; Molyneux 2015; Molyneux and Holton, 2015; Molyneux, Holton, & Lewis, 2017; Olausson 2017). Studies demonstrate that journalistic branding is becoming pervasive, with branding activities being intertwined with traditional news reporting activity. In addition, studies note that such branding is

closely linked with the competitive nature of the U.S. newsroom. When newsrooms experience budget cuts or layoffs, journalists are placed in precarious job situations. Thus, efforts to become a celebrity Twitterian could be a survival strategy, a way to distinguish oneself from competitors. With the “skills and persona, and presenting them on a well-arranged platter to others” (Brems et al., 2017, 445), it all leads to journalists’ self-commodification. Olausson (2018) explored what type of discourse constructs celebrity status. She suggested that journalists typically use “fame by association,” which refers to the journalist depicting him- or herself with the political leaders of a group. She contested that journalism tweeters’ “celebrification” through self-promotion should be understood as a wider general individualization trend in society, something generally embedded in wider trends, where self-promoting discourse itself becomes a commodity as a form of “searchable talk” (Page, 2012).

Discussion

This chapter examined the journalistic conventions of social media use in South Korea and the United States. Using a comparative approach of choosing two countries that have similar democratic and organizational systems, but different cultural assumptions, I showed how digital media technologies can have divergent ramifications for communication systems worldwide. This provides a direct contrast to the popular belief that the social media based newsroom environment is a globally homogenizing force or universality of hybridity across the culture. In a collectivist society, media professionals’ social media can be used as a collectivistic workspace. In fact, the digital media environment may actually strengthen existing hierarchical cultural values within the

group. Meanwhile, the U.S. media's market-oriented model, with its individualistic values, intensifies the tendency toward commodification, as news workers are required to actively engage in branding and self-marketing and use social media as an avenue for reaching potential audiences.

The U.S. media is highly market-oriented, and its future appears to be rooted in commercialism. These trends that are intensified by journalists' social media use, given the consequent commodification of these practitioners themselves. Compared with the collectivistic purpose of journalists' social media use in East Asian contexts reinforced through uniform conformity thinking, social media in the United States tends to be utilized for individual reasons, reasons based in commercialism and a market orientation. By highlighting a significant difference between the situation in two countries, this study showed how social media are used to preserve the existing social order in different national arenas.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As modern forms of political journalism have developed in parallel with the growth of democracy, different forms of democracy have bloomed as a result of indigenous cultures. With the expansion and globalization of public spheres gradually replacing authoritarianism, journalism around the world is currently undergoing a particularly tumultuous but fascinating change. The abundant research comparing journalistic cultures in the past reached dichotomous conclusions about “whether they are moving toward convergence or they remain essentially different” (Waisbord, 2013, p. 229), showing that that there has been divergence in their journalistic practice (Christine, 2020; Neustai, 2020; Powers & Vera-Zhamrano, 2018).

This study reviewed how culture determines journalistic writing, news staff arrangement, and social media use by conducting content analysis of presidential speech transcripts and presidential news that featured those speeches, as well as in-depth interviews with political journalists in South Korea and the United States. The preconceptions journalists have regarding their work, as well as the cultural conditions and settings of the newsroom, are rooted in their everyday accumulated experiences and the cultural contexts in which they were formed. In other words, the professional practices of the norms are “domesticated” in many ways through specific cultural and historical worldviews. After all, the findings support that “global culture and practices are not simply imported unchanged into distinct local contexts; instead, they are adapted to specific conditions and conceptions of the media’s role within existing news systems” (Hallin et al., 2021, p. 6). It also proves that cultural value system divergence, along with postcolonial dependencies, is identified as

the significant determinant, more important than political systemic, institutional or economic status factors. Cultural values moderate the practice of journalism, and they affect the relationship between source and reporter, which is either subordinate or adversarial.

Although the U.S. and Korean economic and technological challenges may be identical, the two countries respond to them differently, and local sensibilities come to the fore. Therefore, journalistic norms cannot be transferred from one culture to another. Conceptually relabeling the three dimensions of Hanitzsch's (2007) typology of journalism culture (which comprises interventionism, power distance, and market orientation) as journalistic, political, and organizational, I made room for East Asian journalistic culture—mostly from Japan and Korean—to be inserted into the comparative maps so that they could be more comprehensive. By emphasizing culturally contextualized forms of political communication practice through a comparative lens, this study also contributes to providing the empirical evidence regarding how localized and reinterpreted norms are practiced. While the role culture plays in shaping journalistic work is often acknowledged implicitly, the existing literature tends to focus on journalists' ethical perception through surveys of individual journalists (e.g., Donsbach & Patterson, 2004; Hanitzsch et al., 2020). An examination of journalism using the specific frames of East Asian and Western cultural influences within the same element of a democratic system still requires more nuanced consideration of the temporal processes of modernization and colonization.

Comparison of South Korea and the United States offered useful insights in identifying culture's role in political communication practice. South Korea occupies a distinctive position on the world democratic map, boasts that its democracy "is consolidated in the maximalist sense" (Hahm,

2008) and that this process has been conducted in an Americanized manner, actively adopting the American political model. Such a transition from authoritarianism to a democratic socio-political system starts with the autonomization of the press, which implies that the transition of the Korean press from a power-hierarchical interaction into an element of the public sphere—creating a distance between power and the press—was also completed in a direct way. However, the findings show that the feudalistic conception of the president, and the highly hierarchical and collective Korean convention of newsroom management, and the cultural patterns’ repetition in digital space emerge as a new structural restraint of journalistic freedom in Korea.

Chapter 6 highlighted the finding that the U.S. president is portrayed as occupying a dominant position with a high media presence, while the South Korean president is portrayed as a commander with a veil. This implies that, in new democracies in East Asian cultures, the Confucian cultural norm, as well as its authoritarian political culture, remains a living myth that informs journalists’ unconscious assumptions. As this study shows, the exercise of press freedom in a given power structure is complex. In this context, power means more than state censorship of the press. It also involves the press’s right to cover the power authorities in a critical sense, as well as the degree to which journalists have embodied and internalize norms throughout history. One could infer that journalists’ perceptions when establishing a relationship with the authorities may not have changed fundamentally after democratization. Even though Western ideas have been used as bases for modernizing the institutions of media systems, “the mass media, in spite of theoretical independence, have never been able to successfully resist routine domination by the state” (Lee, 1996, p. 89). One should ask why this tradition continues even after Korea’s dramatic transformation of 1987.

Hanitzsch et al. (2020, p. 4) provide the insight that “for countries newly emergent from colonialism, developmental journalism—based on a collectivist precept—was one way to overcome the destitution left behind by colonialists.” In other words, those transitional democracies had an instrumental notion of the press that could be useful for a certain purpose, such as decolonialization or political and social change. Rather than interpreting this as an immaturity or stifling of the press, such unique historical background should be considered with a view of the full context.

The results from Chapter 7 show how cultural aspects shape the source/reporter relationship by depicting how reporters in political teams arrange their tasks, set their routines work, and respond to digital transformation. The longstanding dances of source/reporter relationships in South Korea and the United States are rooted in their different journalistic, national/political, and organizational dimensions. Journalists in these two countries exhibit different methods of 1) managing their relationships with sources (mostly politicians or political party staffs), and 2) managing their relationships with journalists from rival media outlets. Though Korean media practitioners believe that they have improved significantly in terms of professionalism (with the development of open access digital technologies), South Korean newsrooms are still heavily influenced by the Japanese reporting system, which was institutionalized during the colonial period. This influence is evident in the approach to politics through the *kkumi*. The exclusivity and closed features of the *kkumi* have led to its being called an “information cartel” (Freeman, 2000). When Korean journalists work collectively in these groups, autonomy is exchanged for the certainty that one will not be easily scooped by a rival media outlet and that all member news agencies will be given the same information in an equitable manner. In responding to the digital transformations of the newsroom,

Korean journalists work collectively, through the *kkumi*, to fill the limitless digital space. Whatever their own cultural values might be, they apply the collectivism's working logistics to their reporting. This leads to a dense, web-like system that creates unconsciously established spiritual ties—leading to the “insiderization” of political reporters. Interestingly, my findings are supported by some evidence that early journalists in both Korea and Japan identified themselves as “insiders whose ultimate goal was to push for the modernization through the enlightenment of the masses” (Freeman, 2000, p.171)

In contrast, the U.S. approach centers on customization, which makes news more lucrative, as it becomes “news you can use.” This finding aligns with the impact of digital technologies, which mutually shape the reporter and the news. A new set of norms, emphasizing individualism and risk taking (Agarwal & Barthel, 2015) has emerged, along with a personal sense of “responsibility” or situational ethics in the U.S. newsroom. Under the American cultural value of self-determination, the attitude of remaining unencumbered (and being connected to others only by choice) is dominant. In U.S. newsrooms, this attitude is compatible with journalists' freedom to move across beats. However, this characterization is an idealization. It describes expectations that do not apply to every political-beat journalist. In terms of U.S. political beats, previous literature has warned of the dangers created by the closeness between politicians and journalists. Coverage can be affected as source and reporter “strongly intertwine” (Skovsgaard & van Dalen, 2013, p. 372), even establishing offices inside political institutions (e.g., Ciboh, 2017; Revers, 2014). The symbiotic and mutually dependent relationship between political reporters and politicians has often been described as destiny in the United States, as both sides have a natural drive to collaborate to advance their respective

goals. This heightens the risk of journalists being subject to manipulation because they work as “vehicles of official viewpoints” (Revers, 2014, p. 38) or as “unofficial spokespersons” of their sources (Marchetti, 2005), forming a journalist–politician connection as an in-group and alienating their audience. In other words, this risk can be understood as natural to the political beat, rather than coming from cross-national differences. However, my interview data showed that cultural values intervene in such circumstances. The individualistic culture of the United States has been apparent in the rivalry in the open market system, which allows for aggressive competition between individual journalists. This further enables audience choice to dominate the news industry. Meanwhile, governments’ and political parties’ limitations in their involvement in the media sector have helped to create independent professional ideologies. As they cover politics, journalists feel the tension between relying on their individual interpretations versus relying on the ethical values of their profession.

Journalists’ social media practices also vary in the two countries, and this variance stems from their different cultures. Depending on how journalists make sense of social media as a work tool, it may be utilized in collectivist societies as a homogenizing instrument that solidifies a hegemonic system through conformity thinking. Two features of the media system in Japan are key to understanding its present form in Korea: The first is blurred state–society boundaries. The second is a cohesive but insular industry structure. The collectivist outlook of journalists’ social media use in East Asian contexts means that they heavily rely on group chat functions. This results in a high degree of predictability in their reporting. Social media can be used as a tool to reify the hegemonic system through conformist thinking. Thus, the digital media environment may actually strengthen

existing authoritarian cultural values. In addition, digital media controls the structure of the communicative environments in politics and shapes the nature of the journalists' relationships and their positions in a company.

Meanwhile, the independent work style and fierce open competition environment of the United States defines journalists as autonomous, self-reliant actors. It pushes them to engage in self-branding and self-promotion on social media platforms, which in turn escalates the commercial trends of the industry. In other words, as the media is rooted in commercialism and is highly market oriented, trends are intensified by journalists' use of social media. This leads to the consequent commodification of the practitioners themselves. They use their "brand" and their portfolios to demonstrate their excellence. This scenario prohibits journalists from being free from marketization. In short, the basic rules of conduct in news practice vary widely between these two countries, and cultural factors act as powerful intermediaries that shape journalistic products.

Landmark research on comparative journalism studies (using media's position of power distance, market orientation, and journalistic intervention) has provided useful frameworks for comparing media systems. The theoretical tools of 1) high-interventionist, pragmatic-market logic, distance to power holders versus 2) low interventionist, sacerdotal, public-service logic, proximity to power holders, are still applicable to U.S. journalism. This study confirms that the U.S. case corresponds to the former model. However, the scheme does not fit perfectly in the Korean journalism case. Although it is true that Korean journalists are loyal and defend their sources in close proximity to authorities, they are more receptive to politicians' statements and thus less interventionist. This is the result of Confucianism culture and the remnants of Kisha club system, not

an outcome of the public-service logic that European scholars have found (Hanitzsch, 2007; Pfetsch, 2004).

The unidirectional information system, which delivers vertically to other media organizations, enables a formal structure that makes it easier for authorities to control the news outlets and define their own agendas. In this sense, differences in the role of the media in state–society relations may provide important evidence in explaining the institutional sources of power. The notion of the separation of powers “accomplished through a system of checks and balance, [with] media as the fourth estate” is possible only in the liberal pluralist view (Hanitzsch et al, 2020, p.4). Freeman’s (2000) observation on the Kisha system (which was the prototype of the *kkumi*) that “reporting of the news results in the creation of an informationally inferior product where people do not get all the news that’s fit to print” may be correct. However, this dissertation’s hypothesis is not that one approach to journalism is better than another. Rather, it is that the different values of different cultures influence the way that journalism operates.

Since “patterns of political content reflect journalistic assumptions about power in the political system” (Alexseev & Bennett, 1995, p. 395), the basic assumptions of a culture should be carefully considered. Comparatively speaking, the American system of open access to sources, flexible routines, less restrictive rules and no group-based reporting activities (along with the orientation toward minimal regulation) ensures distinctive journalistic outcomes. As Hanitzsch et al. (2020) reported, the American case does not represent a dominant model of journalism or media, not even of Western media. Considering that journalism scholarship’s “centrality primarily in Western scholarship has negatively impacted existing understandings of journalism in their broadest possible

parameters” (Zelizer, 2012, p. 459), this dissertation contributes to the understanding of democracy within an authoritarian culture and how the practice of democracy changes when technologies like social media unsettle traditional political reporting, depicting how democratic norms adapt to Confucian values, values that hold society in higher regard than the individual.

As Inglehart (1997) argued, cultures and cultural values change over time. However, even in the digital media era, Western models of media cannot be easily applied to new democracies. They might even strengthen existing authoritarian cultural values, as journalists appropriate social media in a collective way. By exploring certain paradoxes and overlooked truths, this study seeks to support a more nuanced understanding of journalism in collectivist cultures, and it calls for the consideration of various modalities in evaluating news stories, especially in comparative works.

Limitations

Similar to most research, the present study is encumbered with certain limitations. The first, which was explained in the methods section, is the fact that the recruitment of journalists who have experience in covering the White House of the United States and the Blue House of Korea (or Congress) brings inherent challenges. This difficulty was most evident in recruitment in the United States. I, as the researcher, had no personal connections in the field of American journalism. This challenge required me to work with a small sample size. Despite this shortcoming, however, interview data were collected until data saturation was reached, enabling me to find reliable patterns and clearly predict the interviewees’ answers. Second, the interviews were conducted under full anonymity, which restricted me from disclosing the identities of the interviewees and the companies

to which they belonged. In some cases, the respondents included information that could identify them, but I anonymized such information to prevent inferences about who the interviewees were. With all aspects considered, the strategies described here were necessary for the study to achieve successful recruitment and for me to listen to the perspectives of the respondents on some sensitive issues.

Most of the interviewees (except two individuals) were affiliated with established traditional news organizations. I believe that some cable news outlets or digital startups may have different perspectives about addressing their routines, team arrangements, and the challenges that they face. However, in identifying the cultural influence of journalistic practices, directing attention to legacy media outlets, which have already accumulated experience, should be more than appropriate for the research purposes. Because newer outlets, including cable news networks and digital-born startup news companies, may exhibit more innovation in terms of systems and rules in their newsrooms, those entities were excluded from this study.

Other factors, such as job titles and age/gender group differences between the two countries, may also influence journalistic practices, but an analysis of these determinants was beyond the scope of this research. Furthermore, as with any interview-based study, the way the journalists *described* their work practices might not correspond to the daily realities of their jobs. However, much of the evidence provided by the journalists interviewed aligned with the existing literature on the U.S. and Korean journalism industries.

As underlined in Chapter 4, the cultural contexts of the United States and Korea remain characterized by their own distinct reporting styles—a tendency that may have stemmed from the

histories of the U.S. and Korean press systems being built on significantly different traditions. Correspondingly, this study analyzed whether vestiges of these traditions remain, regardless of the political inclinations of media outlets or presidential leadership styles. Nevertheless, the results are not generalizable, because only the congressional reporting styles of the media in the United States and Korea were investigated. Moreover, as other researchers have pointed out, one of the periods included in the sample (congressional news coverage under President Trump's regime) was exceptional in terms of his rhetoric, leadership style, and communication style. In this regard, the former president can be described as marking the boundary that constitutes a specific type of American identity (Heidt, 2019).

Despite the limitations discussed above, this study was carried out in the hope that the structural or perceptive differences in reportage explored in this work will provide opportunities for people to rethink the party–press relationship in connection with freedom of the press and the conventions that underly congressional reporting in both countries. In future studies, the expansion of the time frame to include more than one administration should be considered to accurately capture patterns and increase the possibility of generalization. Furthermore, a comparison with other democratic countries should be expected to depict the landscape more vividly. Finally, conducting similar research on other national press corps in the United States—and directly comparing them to the Korean system—would help us better understand the factors that shape journalistic practices, as well as the association between news professionals and authorities in times of political change.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH SCRIPT EXAMPLE

US	South Korea
Remarks by President Trump After Meeting with Congressional Leadership on Border Security	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Summit
Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure	Cabinet meeting
Remarks by President Trump After Marine One Arrival	Speech at groundbreaking ceremony for Busan Eco Delta Smart City
President Donald J. Trump’s Address to the Nation on the Crisis at the Border	Remarks by the President at Firefighters Memorial Service
Remarks by President Trump in Signing Ceremony for S. 1862, the “Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act”	Celebration message on South Korea- US alliance
Remarks by President Trump Before Senate Republican Policy Lunch at the U.S. Capitol	Speech at Anti-Corruption Policy Council Towards a Fair Society
Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure	Meeting with Security council
Remarks by President Trump in Roundtable on Border Security McAllen, TX	Meeting with Blue house Chief of Staff
Remarks by President Trump During Briefing at the Rio Grande Valley U.S.-Mexico Border	Speech at appointment ceremony for new prime minister

APPENDIX B. OPERATIONALIZATIONS/CODEBOOK

Unless otherwise indicated, codes are 0 = absent, 1 = present

GENERAL INFO

1. Coder ID
2. Date (DDMMYY / 010120)
3. Country: US (0) South Korea (1)
4. News Outlet: NYT (0), WP (1), USA Today (2), ChosunIlbo(3), ChoongAng Ilbo(4), Hankyoreh Press(5)

DIRECTIONS: Once a source has been coded, and find another source, repeat the coding scheme 8-9, and move on to code each sentence individually using the questions and prompts below.

Headline

5. Quotation in Headline : 0 = absent, 1 = present

6. If present, Speaker in headline: : 0 = absent, 1 = present

7. Number of quotations in entire news story(use count provided by Word readability statistics)

8. Speaker Type : Each source was categorized according to his or her organizational affiliation. The sources were divided into the ten broad organizational affiliations. The categorized sources were as followings:

Category	Definiton	Example
1= President	the head of state and head of government of	President Trump, President Jae in Moon
2= Executive Office of President,	staffs that works and directly reports to him	spokesperson, senior presidential secretary.
3= Cabinet	Advisory body made up of the heads of the executive departments.	Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Interior
4= Legislative branch, Political Party	A source who(or which) was identified as representing, owning, or working for a party, congress including congressmen, officials	The Senate, Mr. Specter, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee
		Representative Charlie Dent, Republican of Pennsylvania
5= Judicial branch	A source either Supreme Court or other federal courts.	Justice Stephen Breyer
6=Pundits, Experts	A source representing either a university or policy institute, it also includes expert, analyst, pundits	A health care economist at Princeton University
7= Citizen	A Source without any more specific organizational citation.	Supporters for President Trump

		Twitter account of one citizen
8= Other Nation	A source representing another countries	Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu In the Japanese press and on radio in Tokyo
9= Business sector, Interest group	A source representing certain Interest group	Staff of Turing Pharmaceuticals
0 =Unspecified	A Source without any more specific organizational citation.	

9. Anonymity of the Speaker Following Riffe (1980), anonymous sources were defined as those whose identity—including name or position—is not explicitly stated when a reporter covers a given topic. When the name and position of the quoted source is explicitly stated in the news article, it is considered attributed source (absent of anonymous source). Examples includes cases of quotes attributed to “a key figure” or a “Pro-Moon alliance assembly member.” When the source is not clearly indicated, such as with the use of the phrase “It has been brought to our knowledge that” the article was considered to have no source.

0 = absent, 1 = present

10. Negative Remarks Quotes featuring negative remarks contain a blaming, attacking, or unfavorable stance with respect to other individuals (or institutions), it was considered a negative remark.

0 = absent, 1 = present

11. Characteristics of Quotations / Speech by the President From the quotations, remarks from the president were grouped into six categories.

Code	Examples
1= Order, Command: (Kang, 1994; Jeon, 1995)	This category includes orders and commands from the president, including instructions or reprimands. Examples of these are as follows: “Don’t let the sound of fighting between parties be heard,” “Prepare the budget by the end of the year,” and “Relevant institutions have to figure out what they’re doing and what to do.” These quotes may also include interrogative statements with a reprimanding tone, such as “Why is there a difference in the number of people who were saved?”

2= Assertion/ Argument (Support or Opposition):	This category includes opinionated expressions and opinions in support of or against an idea or bill. In other words, quotes featuring the pros and cons pertaining to presidential matters were assigned to this category. Consider the following examples: “The Blue House is not to function as a control tower” and “With no change, it’s better not to engage in a dialogue with North Korea.”
3= Resolution, Prospective (Sccaco, 2014)	This category includes phrases and sentences such as “We will try to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue peacefully so that peace on the Korean Peninsula can be achieved.” Another example is as follows: “Let’s work together so that the two can ensure that this meeting goes well.” The sentences that include types of expectations “will,” “shall,” and “can, could” are coded to this category.
4= Explanation on fact	Explanation” category includes quotes that describe a phenomenon or report facts, such as “funds amounting to 3 billion.”
5= Impressions, Emotions Thelwall et al., 2011; Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013 ; Ott, 2017)	The sentences which include president’s state of mind deriving from circumstances, mood
6= Boast	The quotes that contain nation’s achievement, and excellence. (e. g. American exceptionalism, Miracle of Han river (in Korean context))
6= Others	The quotes that do not belong to any categories above

12. Quotes from Social Media

When the president's or other important figures' social media is quoted or embedded in stories, this is coded as “present.” In case the tweet has been embedded, it is considered to be one quote.

APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Routine-related

1. Did you cover one (or more) particular beat(s) (eg.congress, party, Bluehouse/White House) or do you cover politics more generally?

2. What's your daily routine as a reporter whose beat is politics? Where are the places you usually visit for this?
3. In the process of your reporting, what do you rely on to understand and assess the political issues?
4. Who are the sources that you contact most frequently/ or most important person when you cover the congress?
5. Do you have a specific area that you cover in the political domain ? (Tax, international, military...)
6. How long is it before your beat could be changing?

News stories-related

7. How many stories do you usually produce weekly?
8. What is your expectation in terms of the number of sources/parties quoted for writing one news story?
9. What's the criteria that you (or anyone in your news organization) have for good political news stories?

Newsroom- Organization level

10. Do your colleagues influence your decisions regarding the direction the news story will go?
11. How does your news organization divide the work among political reporters? (division of labor) ?
12. In your capacity as a reporter, what role do you play in communicating with politicians or communicating your understanding of political issues to other people or groups in the news organization?
13. Do you (or anyone in your news organization) have specific expectations about a political news story? If so, what pressures/expectations were those?

Social media

14. What's your main reason of using social media during the reporting process? which do you use more: group chat, or your individual account?
15. What is your routine with respect to social media – communicating your work or informing your coverage?

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