CHARLES UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social Sciences
Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism

MA THESIS REVIEW

NOTE: Only the grey fields should be filled out!

Review type (choose one):

Review by thesis supervisor ☐   Review by opponent ☒

Thesis author:

Surname and given name: CHEN Chih Yun

Thesis title: Words of War on Triangular Relations: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Cross-Strait Relations in Official Statements of Taiwan, China and the U.S. during Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in August 2022

Reviewer:

Surname and given name: MIESSLER Jan

Affiliation: KMS IKSZ FSV UK

1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND THESIS (mark one box for each row)

		Conforms to approved research proposal	Changes are well explained and appropriate	Changes are explained but are inappropriate	Changes are not explained and are inappropriate	Does not conform to approved research proposal
1.1	Research objective(s)	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.2	Methodology	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.3	Thesis structure	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

COMMENTARY (description of the relationship between the research proposal and the thesis. If there are problems, please be specific): The thesis is generally consistent with the research proposal, the changes made are well explained and appropriate.

2. EVALUATION OF THE THESIS CONTENT

Use letters A – B – C – D – E – F (A=best, F= failed)

		Grade
2.1	Quality and appropriateness of the theoretical framework	A
2.2	Ability to critically evaluate and apply the literature	A
2.3	Quality and soundness of the empirical research	C
2.4	Ability to select the appropriate methods and to use them correctly	B
2.5	Quality of the conclusion	B
2.6	Thesis originality and its contribution to academic knowledge production	B

COMMENTARY (description of thesis content and the main problems):

Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in 2022 had been seen as a rather important diplomatic move at that time, with possible implication on cross-strait relations and stability in the region. The thesis revisits the event with a benefit of hindsight and performs a critical analysis of discourse present in a small number of Pelosi's, Taiwan's and China's press releases, three from each. This allows for a comparison of three different ways of political power working through texts.

Generally, the thesis focuses on interesting, relevant, but also fairly well-researched topic of US-Sino-Taiwanese relations, zooming closely on a single event. Official documents from the realm of diplomacy, foreign relations and politics in general with its possible hypocrisy, duplicity, carefully worded language etc. are a very suitable material for CDA. The author also makes wise strategic choices when limiting the analysis on a manageable number of texts that she can explore in depth. The logic of the research is clear, the research questions well chosen and appropriate, the literature review provides a thorough discussion of a reasonable scope of relevant literature, and the choice of inductive textual analysis to uncover themes, frameworks and underlying meanings optimal given the nature of the research problem.

On the other hand, the execution of the analysis seems to struggle with the scope of the task: even a limited amount of material seems to have too many things to discover inductively, so this part of the thesis looks both descriptive and interpretative but somewhat unsystematic and not very analytical. The use of WordCloud feature is interesting but its analytical power may not be the deepest, although its use, complementing an in-depth analysis of the discourse, makes sense and is very reader friendly. The author also discusses limitations of her research (p. 35), displaying her meticulousness and self-reflection. The discussion is useful, the conclusion could highlight the main results of the research more clearly.

3. EVALUATION OF THE THESIS FORM
Use letters A – B – C – D – E – F (A=best, F= failed)

		Grade
3.1	Quality of the structure	A
3.2	Quality of the argumentation	A
3.3	Appropriate use of academic terminology	A
3.4	Quality, quantity and appropriateness of the citations (both in the theory part and in the empirical part)	A
3.5	Conformity to quotation standards (*)	A
3.6	Use of an academic writing style, and correct use of language (both grammar and spelling)	A
3.6	Quality of the textual lay-outing and appendices	A

(*) in case the text contains quotations without references, the grade is F; in case the text contains plagiarised parts, do not recommend the thesis for defence and suggest disciplinary action against the author instead.

COMMENTARY (description of thesis form and the main problems):
There are no formal problems. The thesis is concise, and its parts are well balanced.

4. OVERAL EVALUATION (provide a summarizing list of the thesis's strengths and weaknesses):
The thesis is a well-designed and well executed piece of relevant research on a relevant topic. The only minor flaw is a somewhat descriptive and not very deep analytical part, which is probably caused by the still considerable volume of the analysed material.

5. QUESTIONS OR TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE THESIS DEFENSE:

5.1	Was the Taiwanese and US discourse essentially compatible or essentially contradictory?
5.2	
5.3	
5.4	

6. ANTIPLAGIARISM CHECK

☒ The reviewer is familiar with the thesis' score in plagiarism analysis in SIS.

If the score is above 5%, please evaluate and indicate problems:

6.1	The system shows either properly quoted text or short snippets of common phrases, in fact there is no problem with the thesis.

7. SUGGESTED GRADE OF THE THESIS AS A WHOLE (choose one or two)
A ☐ Excellent (excellent performance)
B ☒ Excellent (excellent performance)
C ☐ Very Good (above the average standard but with some errors)
D ☐ Very Good (above the average standard but with some errors)
E ☐ Good (generally sound work with a number of notable errors)
F ☐ Fail (unsatisfactory performance)

If the mark is an "F", please provide your reasons for not recommending the thesis for defence:

Date: Signature: ……………………………..