Newspaper and Television Advertising in
2004 Taiwan Presidential Election
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Please note: This is a draft only

At the end of the 20th century, political marketing appeared to have become a global phenomenon with more and more election campaigns resembling those of the US. Comparative research by Bowler (1992), Farrell (1996), Butler (1992) and others has shown the existence of a so-called ‘Americanization’ of election campaign practices in other democracies. This globalization of campaigning that can be best described as media and money driven has not only affected traditional democracies but also democracies of the Third Wave. The reason behind this worldwide proliferation of US campaigning is partly seen as the result of a modernization process and partly considered as a consequence of a transnational diffusion and implementation of US concepts and strategies of electoral campaigning. Modernization theorists claim that structural changes at the macro-level (changing media, political and social structure) has caused adaptive behavior at the micro level (parties, candidates, and journalists). Supporters of the transnational diffusion theory, however, focus “on the micro-level of entrepreneurial actors, exporting their strategic know-how to foreign contexts by supply- or demand-driven consultancy activities, thus changing and modifying the campaign practice in the respective countries.” (Plasser 2002, p.17). Observations on developments in East Asia suggest that any change in electoral campaigning has had its roots in both the macro and micro level, and its boundaries are set by institutional, legal, and social factors (Schafferer, forthcoming). As to Taiwan, the lifting of martial law in 1987 paved the way for a new era of election campaigning. Liberalization and democratization intensified political competition and with it the way election campaigns were conducted. Traditional forms of campaigning were either replaced or had to share the overall campaign strategy with modern campaign techniques such as the utilization of mass media and mass communication. Liberal election laws—Asia’s most liberal—and an affluent society has led to media and money driven electoral campaigns.
Political advertisements in newspapers and on television

Taiwan’s first experience with political advertising dates back to 1989, when the election law was revised. Revisions allowed candidates to place political ads in newspapers and magazines, but still prohibited the utilization of radio and television for campaign purposes. Newspaper advertising was first used in political campaigns in the 1989 local and national elections. The first research on political advertising in Taiwan’s elections was conducted by Chen Yi-yan and Chen Shih-min (1992). The two local scholars analyzed the newspaper reports and advertisements of the 1989 elections. Political ads on television were not legal until the 1991 national election, when the election commission released regulations dealing with government funded ads on terrestrial television. Chen Chi-long published extensively on the utilization of television in Taiwan’s election campaigns (1992, 1995). Party-funded ads on terrestrial television are still illegal in parliamentary elections, whereas the presidential election law does not at all restrict political advertising on Taiwan’s mass media.

In this paper, advertisements placed in Taiwan’s leading newspapers and aired on Taiwan’s most popular terrestrial and cable television stations are analyzed. It should be noted that only those ads found during the official campaign period of 28 days were included in the study.

According to a survey conducted by AC Nielsen, there are four leading newspapers in Taiwan: The China Post (45 percent of the respondents said that they had read this newspaper the day before the interview), United Daily News (33.5 percent), Liberty Times (31.5 percent), and Apple Daily (6.3 percent). The China Post and the United Daily News also have an evening edition, namely the Chinatimes Express and the United Evening News, respectively. These two newspapers were also included in the analysis. Among these newspapers, only the Liberty Times supports the green camp. The ethnic composition of the top management is often quoted as an explanation for this phenomenon: Liberty Times (75 percent Taiwanese), China Post (66 percent mainland Chinese), and United Daily News (80 percent mainland Chinese).

A report on Taiwan’s top 50 television stations released by the Government Information Office was used to determine which stations should be included in the analysis. Nine
stations were selected according to their viewing rates. They are FTV (min shi), TVBS-N, CTI (zhong tian xinwen tai), SETTV (san li xinwen tai), CTV (zhong shi), FTV-N (min shi xinwen tai), CTS (hua shi), TTV (taishi), and TVBS.

Newspapers ads

In total, there were 124 different newspaper advertisements. About 30 percent were full-page ads, 65 percent half-page, and less than 5 percent were smaller in size (see Table 1). Supporters of the blue camp placed 56 percent of the ads, the green camp 29 percent, and those neither supporting any of the camps 15 percent. It should be noted here, however, that the overwhelming majority of those individuals and organizations not endorsing a candidate strongly attacked Chen Shui-bian in their ads. There were, thus, only about three out ten ads in support of the DPP candidate.

One hundred and twenty-four different ads were found in Taiwan’s leading newspapers during the election campaign period, but the total number of ads accounted for 205, that is to say that some ads were placed more than once in one of the six observed newspapers. Table 3 shows the distribution of these 205 observations by political affiliation and newspaper. Most ads were placed in the Liberty Times (26 percent) and the fewest in the United Evening News (8 percent). Ads in the China Post accounted for 22 percent, those in the United Daily News for 18 percent, and in the Apply Daily for 13 percent.

Six out of ten ads were funded by the blue camp (KMT/PFP: 42 percent; other: 18 percent), and almost three out of ten by those supporting Chen Shui-bian (DPP: 21 percent; other: 7 percent). The remaining ads (12 percent) were funded by individuals and organizations supporting neither of the two candidates. Given the fact that the latter predominately attacked Chen Shui-bian, it may be correct to say that 70 percent of the ads did not favor the DPP candidate.

As shown in Table 2, the green camp did not advertise in the two newspapers belonging to the United Daily news group except for one half-page ad in the United Evening News. More than half of the pro-Chen advertisements were placed in the Liberty Times, 21 percent in the Apple Daily.
The blue camp preferably advertised in the United Daily News (26 percent) and the China Times (26 percent), followed by the Chinatimes Express (14 percent), Liberty Times (13 percent), Apple Daily (11 percent), and the United Evening News (10 percent). The remaining twenty-four ads were quite evenly distributed with the exception of Apple Daily (4 percent). Most of the ads could, however, be found in the Liberty Times (25 percent), and the Chinatimes Express (25 percent).

**Newspaper advertisements by the KMT and PFP**

The election campaign committee of the blue camp designed eighteen different ads to polish up the image of Lien Chan, seventeen to make an appeal to the electorate, and eight to attack incumbent President Chen Shui-bian (Table 3). At the beginning of the campaign period, most ads placed in newspapers were of the latter type. One full-page ad in the United Daily News describes Chen as someone who opposes everything that would benefit the country, such as canceling the “illegal” referenda, increasing the number of reserved parliamentary seats for females to 30 percent, and introducing a professional army. The ad concludes that the electorate should therefore “oppose” Chen. Chen’s Hakka policy was criticized in one full-page ad, in which the blue camp accuses Chen Shui-bian of cheating Taiwan’s Hakka of their rights and creating a racial division in Taiwan. The ad says that Chen Shui-bian’s government only has one ranking official who is Hakka, whereas during Lien Chan’s term as premier there were nine. Three full-page ads mock Chen Shui-bian and his government officials, and describe them as incompetent. One ad reads “the Republic of Wulumuqi,” and shows the faces of several leading DPP government officials and Chen Shui-bian sitting on a throne. Other ads contain abstracts of newspaper articles about rising unemployment, an increase in the number of suicides, and seventy thousand pupils not being able to afford lunch. Lien Chan’s economic expertise was the theme of one ad where he and Nobel laureate Lawrence Klein can be seen. The ad says that Klein has agreed to assist Lien Chan in improving Taiwan’s economy situation.

At the end of February, the alliance was surprised when their own opinion polls suggested that more people would turn out in support of Chen Shui-bian’s hand-in-hand rally than originally assumed. Marketing strategies had to be adjusted accordingly and the
KMT/PFP put emphasis on the necessity of ethnic harmony among the people of Taiwan in their campaign messages. The alliance asked the people to donate blood on 28 February rather than to take part in the hand-in-hand rally organized by the DPP. Donating blood would symbolize “ethnic harmony,” says one full-page ad entitled “in my blood there is your blood and in your blood there is mine.” After the success of DPP’s rally, the KMT/PFP came up with the idea of staging their own rally. Subsequent newspaper ads exclusively focused on promoting this rally. The aim was to mobilize more people than the DPP on 28 February. The tone and language used in the ads got rougher. The ethnic harmony that should have come with Lien Chan’s appeal to the people to donate blood was quick forgotten. Over ten different ads were placed in all major newspapers. They were entitled “Change the president, save Taiwan,” and contained short sentences saying that nobody believes Chen Shui-bian, Chen Shui-bian is a liar, or to put it differently, incumbent President Chen Shui-bian is the scum of the nation. One full-page ad went further and urged the people to “end A-bian’s dictatorship.” The ad “quotes” Freedom House as saying that during Chen Shui-bian’s term as president, political rights have deteriorated because of widespread corruption within government circles. Moreover, the ad concludes that A-bian more and more resembles Adolf Hitler, and that the people have to “rescue” Taiwan by making proper use of their ballots. A photo of Hitler was added to make the message better understood. After the 3-13 rally, the KMT/PFP used photos of the event to illustrate the scope of support they had received at the rally and to inform the electorate of further campaign activities. Photographic material included scenes of Lien Chan prostrating himself and kissing the ground in front of the presidential office. All of these ads are entitled “dormant volcano erupted.” Several short slogans saying that there is no brutality, no lies, and no hatred in “real” Taiwan cover parts of the ads.

During the final days of the electoral campaign period, the blue camp placed ads in all major newspapers urging the electorate to cast their votes. One of these ads, for instance, claims that the gap between the two candidates would only be one percent and that the voter turnout of the green camp would be 20 percentage points higher.
Newspaper ads by groups and individuals supporting Lien Chan

There were twenty-six different ads by groups and individuals supporting Lien Chan. Except for one, they were all attacking Chen Shui-bian’s government policies. Organizations representing the aviation industry, businesses, academics, medics, and ultra-conservative members of society blamed Chen for the “worsening relations with China,” high unemployment, increasing number of suicides, and the loss of economic opportunities. The electorate learnt from the ads that Lien Chan and his running mate Song Chu-yu are the solution to these problems. Moreover, the two referenda were labeled illegal in the ads. A group of university professors, lawyers, and members of local election committees made the referenda the major issue in their ad and urged the people to boycott them since they were illegal.

Ads by DPP election campaign committee
The DPP election campaign committee placed eight full-page and fifteen half-page advertisements in Taiwan’s most popular newspapers except for those belonging to the United Daily group. More than half of the ads were appeals to the electorate, in two of which the DPP urged voters to call their friends and relatives in Taipei and convince them to vote Chen Shui-bian. The ads said that Taipei remained the only stronghold of the blue camp and that DPP supporters should therefore “launch an attack” on the greater Taipei area. One full-page ad asked DPP supporters to take part in the election rally held in Taipei on election eve. The ad called for one million participants. Another four ads urged citizens to take part in 2-28 hand-in-hand rally, and seven to support the referenda. In total, there were eight different referenda ads, five of which were an appeal only, whereas the other three were designed to create the image that the referenda are necessary. In one ad, a group of pregnant women line up in a row and one can read that in order not to have the next generations exposed to Chinese missiles the electorate should take part in the referenda. In another ad with the slogan “Taiwan needs you,” a young woman points her finger at the reader and left to her there is an explanation why the electorate should cast their ballots. It says that a failure of the referenda would mean a victory for China and would send a clear message to the US that Taiwan does not care
about its defense capabilities. As to convince the electorate of the importance of the two referenda, the DPP also placed photographs of three former US presidents (Kennedy, Roosevelt, and Wilson) and one former prime minister (Churchill) next to Chen Shui-bian. Kennedy, for instance, is of the opinion that keeping silent while facing a missile attack would only benefit the opponent, and Roosevelt adds that under permanent military threat true peace seems impossible. The ad was entitled “only true leaders know what peace is.” Here the reader should not only get the impression that the four politicians seem to support the referenda but also that Chen Shui-bian is a true leader and thus be put on equal footing with statesmen like Churchill. In another half-page ad, the DPP let Kennedy elaborate on his principles. A large photo of Kennedy sitting in his chair and explaining the Cuban crisis of 1962 can be seen in the advertisement. In medium-sized characters one can read that the current military threat posed by China is similar to the one Kennedy had to cope with in 1962 when the Soviet Union planned to install nuclear weapons on the island of Cuba. The last commercial in this series makes reference to Neil Armstrong’s walk on the moon. Instead of him, however, a lady can be seen holding a ballot in her hands and walking to the ballot box. The ad says that the voter’s small step to the ballot box is a giant leap for Taiwan.

The image that the DPP’s presidential candidate is the president of Taiwan and his rival Lien Chan a representative of Beijing was conveyed in one ad. The ad shows a map with China on the left and Taiwan on the right. Next to the map was a copy of a ballot with the DPP candidate on the right. The ad reads “Taiwan is on the right, so stamp on the right.” The DPP used four newspaper ads to attack or rebut allegations made by its rival candidate Lien Chan. Chen Shui-bian’s campaign team doubted the correctness of many of the statements Lien Chan had made during the two televised presidential debates. The party, thus, placed two full-page ads in the Apple Daily at the end of February “correcting’ Lien’s statements regarding various issues, such as women rights, Taiwan’s future relations with China, foreign investment, and government debts accumulated during Chen’s term as president. Other ads showed the candidates of the blue camp together with their close friends who happen to be among Taiwan’s most wanted fugitives.
Ads by organizations and individuals supporting Chen Shui-bian

Religious organizations, lawyers, public accountants, US-based organizations placed ten different types of ads in Taiwan’s dailies. Except for one small ad placed in the China Times and one full-page ad published by the China Times and the Liberty Times, all advertisements found were for image creation.

Attacks: Two organizations based in Houston and supporting Chen Shui-bian strongly criticized Lien Chan’s policies. The asked several questions addressed to the supporters of the blue camp and unaffiliated voters. One dealt with the two referenda, one with the social welfare programs promised by Lien Chan, and two with Taiwan’s relations with the PRC. The ad conveyed the message that the referenda were necessary as Taiwan faces a serious military threat, and that Lien Chan’s welfare programs would not be financially feasible. As to relations with the PRC, the two organizations predicted an influx of illegal Chinese immigrants, if Lien Chan went ahead with his plan of annually letting one to three million Chinese tourists entering the country.

The Formosan Association for Public Affairs was another US-based organization utilizing Taiwan’s print media as to support Chen Shui-bian’s two referenda. Each of the two half-page ads was an endorsement of the referenda by several dozens of members of US Congress. The first ad appeared on 16 March in the China Times and the second a day prior to the election in the Liberty Times. Two other half-page ads were sponsored by a group of forty-six businesspeople and forty-five companies, respectively. Both of these ads stressed the importance of continuing the DPP’s reforms, wiping out corruption, and the necessity of holding the two referenda. A nationwide A-Bian support committee formed by public accountants placed a similar ad in the Apple Daily at the beginning of March, and Chen Shui-bian’s reelection committee placed a full-page ad in the China Times with the names of over five hundred lawyers supporting Chen’s reelection bid. In another ad, over six hundred judges and lawyers tried to do away with the myth that the referenda are illegal as had been suggested by Lien Chan and his supporters.

A group of religious organizations voiced their support for Chen Shui-bian’s reforms and his proposing a new law regulating religious organizations in Taiwan. The half-page ad found in the Liberty Times one day before the election carried the names of over twenty renowned organizations and a lengthy explanation why they supported Chen Shui-bian.
public opinion leader, Ku Kuang-min, expressed his support for Chen’s policies, especially for the referenda and a new constitution, in a half-page ad that could be found in all three leading newspapers. Ku is the chairman of a leading fishing and shipping company and a national policy advisor to the president.

**Ads by NGOs and individuals not supporting either side**

Apart from the 105 advertisements supporting either Lien Chan or Chen Shui-bian, there were eighteen commercials funded by individuals and organizations not explicitly mentioning whom the electorate should support. The majority of these ads attacked incumbent president Chen Shui-bian, and only one in the Chinatimes Express attacked both candidates: A group of disillusioned citizens formed an organization urging the electorate to express their dissatisfaction about Taiwan’s politicians by casting invalid votes. The group aimed at one million invalid votes. Ballots not only show the name but also have photographs of each of the candidates. Supporters were asked to stamp on each of the candidate’s mouth as to show their discontent. There were four other ads that made an appeal to the electorate. The Clean Election Committee placed a half-page ad in all three major newspapers urging the people to report cases of vote buying to the authorities. The ad said that whenever evidence was sufficient to bring a prosecution against the suspect, the informant would receive between NT$ 200,000 to NT$ 15 million depending on how serious the reported case turned out to be. The remaining three ads that made an appeal to electorate were sponsored by Nobel laureate and head of the Academia Sinica, Lee Yuan-tse, and democracy activist Lin Yi-hsiung. The aim of the ads was to ask the public to sign a petition calling for parliamentary reforms, such as cutting the number of legislators by half. One of the ads carried the signatures of about one thousands intellectuals from all walks of life. The other thirteen ads attacked Chen Shuibian. Chen You-hao, one of Taiwan’s most wanted fugitive, made great efforts to discredit Chen by placing three full-page and two half-page ads in Taiwan’s leading newspapers. All of these ads were lengthy explanations why Chen rather he himself is a criminal. Other critics spent less money on trying to shed a different light on Chen Shuibian’s personality and leadership. The Labor Party and several other left-wing organizations claimed in one half-page ad in the United Daily News that Chen Shui-bian
and his supporters distorted the truth about the 2-28 Incident. According to the ad, mainland Chinese suffered equally under the rule of the KMT. The director of Taiwan National University Hospital shared the view of the left groups and added that many mainlanders were killed by Chiang Kai-shek’s troops because of having voiced their concern about what had happened in the province of Taiwan. Apart from that, Chen was accused of having caused numerous social problems during his term, such as rising unemployment and ethnic tensions. The referenda were viewed as another step to cheat the people of Taiwan of their bright future. Li Hsun-ching, a well-known author used his half-page ad in the United Evening News to publish his essay on how the Taiwan independence movement cheated the electorate.

Several former supporters of the green camp distanced themselves from the green camp and made their discontent known to the public through newspaper ads. The group included Chen Cheng-fu, a former democracy activist, Leng Ren-zong, a leading member of the Kaoshiung county branch of the Taiwan Independence Party, and Wu Chang-sheng, who—according to his ad—had spent most of his life actively supporting Hsieh Chang-ting and other DPP politicians. Chen Cheng-fu blamed Chen Shui-bian for the death of his son who had committed suicide because he could not find a job. Wu Chang-sheng accused Chen Shui-bian of destroying the DPP because of his totalitarian leadership. He said, for example, that Chen has blocked the promotion of many talented party members, such as Hsieh Chang-ting, Chang Chun-hong and Hsiao Mei-chin. His two half-page ads were full of hatred of President Chen. Although his ads did not mention that he supported the blue camp in this election, he became the leader of one of Lien-Songs support committees. Whereas, copies of Leng Ren-zong’s advertisement questioning Chen Shui-bian’s national identity policy could be found at the KMT/PFP campaign headquarters in the county of Kaoshiung.

**Television advertisements**

During the election campaign period, a total of forty-four different political ads were aired. Almost half of the commercials were ads of the KMT/PFP election campaign committee. Blue camp affiliated interest groups refrained from utilizing television as to
promote Lien Chan and Song Chu-yu. The DPP produced eleven ads, the government ten, and a pro-DPP organization two. The green camp, thus, put slightly more ads on Taiwan’s TV channels than the KMT/PFP. Almost four out of ten ads were image-building, three out of ten attacked the opponent, and the others were appeals to the electorate or rebutted criticism (see Table 4). Unemployment, crime, suicide, Chen Shui-bian, the two referenda, and other government policies were the issues raised by the blue camp. The DPP concentrated on issues dealing with its past achievements, women, the future of Song-Lien, and the relationship between the blue camp and Taiwan’s most wanted fugitives. Spots funded by government agencies focused on vote buying, education, agriculture, and the two referenda. Two other commercials were sponsored by a Taiwanese organization based in the US and appealed to the voters to support Chen and his referenda.

The total length of the forty-four commercials was 24 minutes, and the average length half a minute. The shortest clip was five seconds and the longest ninety. As to the language used in the ads, 36 percent were in Taiwanese and 27 percent in Mandarin. In three out of ten cases music or sound affects were used only, and in the remaining two spots, English with Chinese subtitles, or both English and Mandarin. It is interesting to note that the blue camp refrained from using Mandarin in their TV ads, except for one with Ma Ying-jeou asking the people to support Lien Chan. The DPP and various government agencies, on the other hand, predominantly used Mandarin to inform the public about their ideas.

**KMT ads**

More than half of the KMT/PFP ads attacked Chen Shui-bian’s economic and social policies. One ad claimed that during Chen Shui-bian’s term the number of crimes has increased dramatically. The commercial features an ordinary citizen who constantly receives phone calls from his relatives informing him about all the different types of crimes that happened to his relatives. At the end of the commercial, the man is exhausted and has had it with the government and suggests we should change the president. The same conclusion is made in an ad where a chain reaction of “accidents” causes an office
full of chaos. The disaster starts when a cigarette thrown into a trash bin ignites a piece of paper. An employee—by accident—hits the secretary with a fire extinguisher on her head and soon the whole office turns into a battle field.

In another ad Chen Shui-bian’s educational reform was targeted. Young people can be seen dancing around and mocking Chen’s reform saying that since Chen always talks about reforms it seems unclear to them why nothing has happened so far. The only observable change is that more and more students cannot afford to study. The ministry of education responded to the commercial by having its own ad aired. The minister himself talks for 55 seconds about the quality of the current education system and its reforms. Education and what Lien Chan would have to offer if elected president was mentioned in one of the six image-building ads of the blue camp. Two mothers have a chat while doing their housework. One of them says that Lien Chan promised that families earning less than one million NT$ per year would only have to pay half of the tuition if their children decided to continue to study after high-school.

Chen’s two referenda were the issue mentioned in of the blue camp’s televised ads. In the kitchen of a small restaurant, a man is reading a newspaper and tells his wife and other people present about the government’s plan to hold a referendum on the sale of more weapons. Half a billion NT$ would this referendum cost. A woman preparing some dishes seems to be very unhappy. While looking at her child she asks the others how the government can hold such a referendum when there are so many pupils in Taiwan who do not even have enough to eat. The man replies that we do not need such a government.

The blue camp produced a series of three ads entitled “Divination” to make the electorate sympathetic to ordinary citizens facing economic hardship because of Chen’s incompetence. The mother of an unemployed son, a bankrupt factory owner, and a farmer unhappy about WTO regulations go to a nearby temple, pray to god and throw two pieces of bamboo root on the ground to determine whether things would be better if they voted for Chen Shui-bian again. Unfortunately, the two pieces land on the reverse side. The god has thus rejected the request. They all suffered because they trusted A-bian and voted for him in the last election. Mr. Tang made the same mistake. When Chen won the 2000 presidential race, he and his wife were very happy. But soon his company went bankrupt because of Chen Shui-bian. In this ad, the electorate can see episodes of great depression
when unemployed Mr. Tang listens to President Chen speaking on television about his fortune to be the president. Nevertheless, Mr. Tang and his wife still have a chance to escape their miserable life: Vote for Lien.

The good character of chairmen Song and his glorious achievements during his term as provincial governor were highlighted in one commercial. Lien Chan’s historic mission to rescue the nation and his manifold abilities as a true leader were the theme of a thirty-second televised ad.

Among the six commercials that aimed at polishing up the blue camp’s image there were three others that should be mentioned here. The KMT used on commercial to let history speak for fifty-five seconds, showing footages from various documentaries illustrating the success of the KMT’s economic, social, and political policies. At the end of the ad an hour glass makes the people understand that time has run out for the DPP and that it is high time the KMT continued its sound reforms. During the final days of the election campaign period, there were two ads frequently shown on TV. The first shows footage from the 3-13 rally, in which more than three million people were reported to have taken part. The ad was designed to make the electorate understand that Lien Chan was more popular than A-bian with his two million people joining the green camp’s 2-28 rally. The second spot frequently seen on television was the V-ad. At public places, such as bus stops, markets, and restaurants, people from all walks of life are greeting each other by raising two fingers indicating their support for number two, Lien Chan.

Apart from the image-building TV commercials, the KMT/PFP utilized television to urge people to vote for the KMT. KMT vice-chair Wang Chin-Ping says that the people should vote for Lien Chan and as to the referenda everybody has to make their own decision. Former DPP chair Hsu Hsin-liang claims that A-bian wasted a lot of money and asked the people to support Lien. At the end of this thirty-six second spot, Taipei mayor Ma Ying-jeou says that we should vote for Lien because of our next generation.

Somewhat more dramatic was the blue camp’s last video clip. For a total of eight seconds one is inclined to think that he or she is watching a horror movie. Amid a black screen a ballot appears and the voter is reminded that because of his or her not voting for Lien Chan Taiwan will suffer for another four years. In large characters the question whether
the voter could accept such a situation is posed. The ad could be seen after almost every other spot on all major TV stations during the last 24 hours leading to the election.

DPP ads

The campaign team of the DPP produced eleven TV commercials, four were attacks, four for image-building, and three to appeal to the electorate to take part in large-scale rallies, such as the one held in Kaoshiung on 13 March. Similar to the newspaper ad entitled “attack Taipei” the DPP had one short spot frequently aired on TV during the final days of the election campaign. The ad said that Taipei is the last stronghold of the blue camp. The party, thus, urged its supporters to call their relatives and friends in Taipei and convince them to support Chen Shui-bian.

The image ads put emphasis on the ability of the DPP to reform the country. In one spot the referendum law is mentioned as one of the results of the party’s ongoing struggle for democracy. The ad recalls that in the past the blue camp always rejected the ideas of the DPP saying that such reforms would be dangerous.

In four commercials the DPP attacked the blue camp. In a 35-second spot, the party questioned the stability of the current KMT-PFP alliance. The ad shows footage from campaign speeches given four years earlier, when Song and Lien competed against each other in the 2000 presidential election. At that time, Lien Chan described Song Chu-yu as deceitful, cruel, and unscrupulous. Song Chu-yu, on the other hand, claimed that Vice-President Lien Chan was incompetent and posed the question how such a failure could become president. Newspaper articles about crumbling governments in Indonesia and the Philippines are shown. The ad refers to these two countries as examples where failed cooperation between the ruling coalition led to a crisis. Taiwan would, thus, be unstable with a Song-Lien coalition and the people should support the DPP as to guarantee political stability.

Two ads tried to confirm the public feeling that the KMT maintains good connections with the underworld. The first shows a man, presumably Lien Chan, who is looking at his remaining wealth and remembering the times when he and his friends did business together. An introduction of his friends follows, and nobody should be surprised that the
five old friends of Lien Chan are among Taiwan’s most wanted fugitives. The man blames A-bian for his misery. At the end of the 58-second commercial, Lien Chan can be seen receiving a phone call on his cellular phone and the caller expresses his hope that Lien Chan wins the election. The second ad is similar in style and poses the question why those involved in economic criminal activities vote blue.

**Government agency ads**

Government agencies had ten different ads aired on TV. Sixty percent of the commercials dealt with the issues of vote-buying and the two referenda. Although vote-buying has become less visible in recent years, the problem still exists. The government, thus, used commercials to urge the public to report cases of vote-buying to the authorities. The length of the ads ranged between 5 to 38 seconds. The referenda spots were all 25 seconds in length and tried to convince the public of the importance of the two referenda. The Department of Agriculture under the Executive Yuan, Taipower, and the Ministry of Education produced ads explaining their policies. Moreover, the Council of Labor Affairs put on ad on TV rebutting the blue camps claim that Taiwan’s unemployment is the highest in the world. The council simply listed the current unemployment rates of several leading economies, such as Hong Kong, Singapore, USA and Germany. Among the listed countries, Taiwan has the second lowest unemployment rate.
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Source: Author’s own research
Table 3: Newspaper advertisements by party and content

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Main Issues</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Main Issues</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Main Issues</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Main Issues</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Rebut criticism</td>
<td>Create image</td>
<td>Make an appeal</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>124</td>
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Source: Author’s own research
### Table 4: Television advertisements by party and type

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<th>Language</th>
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<th>Rebut criticism</th>
<th>Create image</th>
<th>Type</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| KMT/PFP      | 21     | total: 11' 14"  
average: 32"  
shortest: 8"  
longest: 60" | Taiwanese: 12  
Mandarin: 1  
Sound effects: 8 | unemployment, referendum,  
economy, government  
policies, crime, Chen Shui-bian | 11               | -               | 6            | 4               |
| DPP          | 11     | total: 6' 47"  
average: 37"  
shortest: 14"  
longest: 90" | Taiwanese: 1  
Mandarin: 5  
mixed: 1  
Sound effects: 4 | corruption, past achievements,  
women, Lien-Song | 4               | -               | 4            | 3               |
| Government   | 10     | total: 4' 41"  
average: 28"  
shortest: 5"  
longest: 55" | Taiwanese: 3  
Mandarin: 6  
Sound effects: 1 | Education, agriculture,  
referendum, vote buying | -               | 2               | 4            | 4               |
| Other        | 2      | total: 1' 10"  
average: 35"  
shortest: 35"  
longest: 35" | English with Chinese subtitles: 1  
Mandarin and English: 1 | Support of overseas  
Taiwanese, Referendum | -               | -               | 2            | -               |
| Total        | 44     | total: 23' 52"  
average: 33"  
shortest: 5"  
longest: 90" | Taiwanese: 16  
Mandarin: 12  
Sound effects: 13  
Mixed: 3 | unemployment, Chen,  
Lien-Song, crime, corruption,  
government policies, referendum, vote buying | 15              | 2               | 16           | 11              |

Source: Author’s own research