



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Yi-Chen Cheng

Title: Recent Changes of Taiwan's Foreign Policy

Programme/year: International Relations, 2020

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/~~external assessor~~): Aleš Karmazin

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	26
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	19
<i>Total</i>		80	53
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	71



Evaluation

Major criteria: The thesis is focused on comparing changes in Taiwan's strategic approach to international affairs (Taiwan's strategic orientation) under two recent presidents. The goal itself might be specified a little bit more clearly. The author uses neo-classical realism which is a relevant theory to deal with the goal/question. And, it should be noted, the author tries to follow it thoroughly. Two key and interconnected weaknesses of the thesis relate to the author's methodological approach and actual empirical analysis. There are too many things going on without being incorporated into a clear and persuasive narrative and framework. I believe variables might be streamlined (at least partially), and some of them might require better explication why and how exactly they are included. The actual empirical analysis is built on the author's careful collection of data. However, the analysis is not always completely persuasive and clearly interconnected and incorporated. The reader may sometimes wonder what the point of a given part is and whether it is really proven.

Minor criteria: Individual parts of the text do not always clearly (elegantly) follow each other or fit into specific chapters or the overall thesis. While it is not a crucial issue, "better flow" would certainly help improve the reader's understanding of the author's main points and arguments.

Overall evaluation: The thesis is certainly a relevant piece of scholarship that thoroughly covers important issues in relations to Taiwan's foreign policy. While the thesis uses neo-classical realism as a theoretical background and is quite well supported empirically, it is difficult to follow main narrative and argument(s) which is, I believe, due to the weaknesses mentioned above.

The student should try to clarify her main arguments and defend her overall approach to prove the thesis can be assessed "C".

Suggested grade: C

Signature: