

Acknowledgement

It was stressful and toilsome when writing the thesis during the past one year. Eventually, at this moment, I could heartily enjoy the delights of the harvest of the research. I would like to express my appreciation to several people who offered me support during the research period.

The most important person I would like to express my sincere gratitude is my advisor, Dr. Shari S. C. Shang. Without her inspiring guidance, I could not accomplish this hard work. Every time when I felt bewildered, she always guided me through the difficulties and confusion of the research. Her encouragement gave me great strength to carry on the thesis. Besides of providing great help on the research, Professor Shang's great enthusiasm for research and life has influenced me much. I have learned much from her and I am really glad that I could have the chance to get along with her in my graduate life.

I would also like to thank Dr. Minder Chen and Dr. Ping-Der Huang. They provided valuable comments and suggestions on the thesis. Their advices from different perspectives made the research become more complete and substantial in content.

In addition, I am greatly appreciative of the interviewees' help. Their enthusiastic sharing gave me sufficient materials to do the analysis. It is difficult to find interviewees of the cases. Their nice and warm attitude encouraged me not to give up when I was frustrated in finding interviewees.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my family and friends. I am deeply indebted to my friends for their encouragement and support when I am disappointed and depressed. I wish to give my warmest thanks to my mother especially. Although she was uncomfortable because of her illness, she still took care of me attentively when I was busy with the thesis. Her love gave me the courage to confront all difficulties. I would like to share this accomplishment and gratification with her and all my family.

Ya-Fen Ko

June, 2006

Taipei, Taiwan