A Comparison of the Style and Communicative Functionality of Two Newspaper Articles: A Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) Approach

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This paper aims to compare the general stylistic properties and communicative functionality of two news articles of a political event using a Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) approach. A transitivity analysis has been conducted to investigate the biases, positions and ideologies encoded in the experiential meaning of the articles. The first part of the paper briefly discusses the experiential components of the SFG framework and news article genre and introduces the two articles. The second part of the paper has attempted an analysis and findings of the texts using the SFG framework. The results of this analysis highlight the value of an SFG approach to text analysis and its application as a tool to help readers identify biases and ideological positions in news articles.

Ⅰ. INTRODUCTION

Since the second half of the 20th Century, the traditional approach to the study of language has been based on language form. However, this approach did not take into account the function of language in communication and has led to the growth of an alternative approach to grammar: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), also commonly referred to as Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). SFG, in contrast, is described as a functional-semantic approach to

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language that examines the meanings that are expressed in different contexts and the language structures in which these meanings are expressed (Halliday, 1985; Thompson, 2004). One of the applications of SFG is its use in text analysis to identify language patterns that illustrate differences and similarities between texts according to their experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings. SFG allows an examination of grammatical patterns in an objective way that can uncover underlying ideologies in texts (Eggins, 2004).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section includes a brief overview of the experiential function of SFG with a particular focus on transitivity analysis and a discussion of the features of the news article genre.

1. The experiential function

According to SFG, language has three main functions, or metafunctions, that operate simultaneously to create meanings: experiential or ideational (encodes meanings that represent experience of the world), interpersonal (expresses meanings about the role of relationships and identities of individuals in social interactions between people) and textual (meanings related to how linguistic elements fit together into whole unified texts) (Halliday, 1985). Butt, Spinks, & Yallop (2000) describes the experiential function as the function of language that creates 'pictures of reality' that is concerned with the question, 'Who does what to whom under what circumstances?' This question refers to the three critical components of human experience (events, things, circumstances), which represent the three functional constituents of a clause: Process, Participant, and Circumstance. Experiential meanings are realized through configurations of these constituents where such configurations create grammatical, or transitivity, patterns in language that can encode bias and ideology in a text (Eggins, 2004).

2. Genre

Texts that share the same structural patterns (register) and 'cultural purpose' belong to the same genre in SFG. In this analysis, the two texts studied are from the news article genre. According to Butt et al. (2000), the purpose of news articles is to entertain by showing how events are significant. However, news articles can also influence the way readers perceive current events by their text structure and amplified colorful language that encode ideological meanings. This view is supported by Fowler (1991) who adds that readers are "enrolled in an ideological mass population, holding certain views which will be useful to business and government" (p. 232). Therefore it may be possible for two news articles that share the same Field (subject matter) to have subtle differences in experiential meaning due to the biases and ideological positions encoded within them; and these biases and ideologies can be uncovered through a transitivity analysis.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The two newspaper articles (Appendix A and B) chosen for this analysis are from the online news sites of *The Japan Times* and *The Chosun Ilbo*. *The Japan Times* is an independent Japanese English-language newspaper that was once regarded as a government mouthpiece of the Imperial government of Japan. However, since the end of the Second World War, the newspaper has reverted back to its foundational goal of reporting news from an objective standpoint (Kamiya, 2011). *The Chosun Ilbo*, on the other hand, is an independent Korean multi-language newspaper (Korean, English, Japanese and Chinese) that was established in 1920 during Japanese colonial rule. The newspaper has a long history of opposing Japanese rule over Korea and appears to have developed a nationalistic and conservative reputation over the years. The texts in this analysis report on a political incident concerning South Korea's refusal to permit the entry of three Japanese politicians in August 2011. *The Japan Times* text is longer with 478 words compared to *The Chosun Ilbo* text which has 317 words. Because this is a sensitive issue due to the history of the countries and newspapers,

it is expected that the newspapers' interpretations of the incident will express a different tone, style and approach.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, a transitivity analysis will be attempted on the two articles to investigate their grammatical patterns which in turn will reveal the positions, biases, and ideologies encoded within the texts. The analysis is structured according to the three clause constituents in the experiential metafunction: Process, Participant and Circumstance. The first section of the analysis will investigate patterns of Process in the texts; the second section of the analysis will investigate patterns of Participant; and the final section of the analysis will focus on patterns of Circumstance.

1. Patterns of process

Processes are one of the central components involved in the representation of events in a text. The selection of process types and the lexical choice of processes can influence a text's experiential representation in a particular way (Eggins, 2004). This section will examine the process patterns of the articles to uncover any differences in the representation of events.

1) Process types

An inspection of process types in the two articles (including those in embedded clauses) indicates that both texts have predominantly material Processes, accounting for 50% of processes in *The Japan Times* article and 61.7% in *The Chosun Ilbo* article (see Table 1 and 2). This suggests that the texts are concerned with actions and events and the participants who carry them out (Eggins, 2004). However, *The Chosun Ilbo* text has a higher proportion of material processes, and thus has a greater focus on tangible, physical actions than *The Japan Times* text.

<p style="text-align:center">Table 1. Processes in the Texts (Ranking and Embeded Clause)</p>

	The Japan Times	The Chosun Ilbo
Total Number of Processes	62	47

For both articles, verbal processes accounted for the second largest group of processes. This is expected due to the political nature of the event and the genre of the texts. *The Japan Times* text has a higher proportion of verbal processes which might indicate that it is a more objective and factual report by having more indirect and direct quotes. In addition, *The Japan Times* text has a higher proportion of relational processes. This difference is mainly due to the higher proportion of relational attributive processes, indicating that *The Japan Times* text is slightly more descriptive than *The Chosun Ilbo* text.

When comparing the proportions of mental processes between the two texts, *The Japan Times* article has a higher percentage than that of *The Chosun Ilbo*. This difference is solely due to the higher number of cognitive mental processes, which suggests that *The Japan Times* article is more concerned about cognition. Finally, causative processes were not found in both texts, and according to Eggins (2004), this implies that their focus is related to constructing a field of events and happenings. Although the percentages of each individual process type differ between the texts, overall, they both appear to have similar process type patterns.

Since both texts are predominantly focused on processes of 'doing', it is possible to identify the main actions and events in the text by classifying the material processes into semantic groups. The classification reveals that approximately 45% of material processes in *The Japan Times* article fall into three lexical groups: prevention, refusal, and travel. Similarly, 41% of material processes in *The Chosun Ilbo* are related to either 'refusal' or 'travel' (see Table 3).

Table 2. Proportions of Process Types

Process Type	The Japan Times	The Chosun Ilbo
Material	50.0%	61.7%
Verbal	32.1%	23.3%
Mental	8.1%	6.4%
Relational: Attributive	6.5%	4.3%
Relational: Identifying	3.3%	4.3%

Lexical groups 'prevention' and 'refusal' are both related to the main incident while processes related to 'travel' refer to actions and events concerning the movements of the lawmakers leading up to and after the incident. The three lexical groups indicate that the focus of both texts is primarily on the rejection of entry and the movements of the lawmakers. This suggests that a significant portion of the material processes in both articles are concerned with the same events.

Table 3. Lexical groups of material processes

Newspaper	Processes related to 'prevention'	Processes related to 'refulsal'	Processes related to 'travel'
The Japan Times	bar, thwart, stop	turn away (x2), deny (x2)	visit (x3), return (x2), depart, travel
The Chosun Ilbo		deny (x4), refuse (x2)	leave (x2), return, visit, arrive, board

The following section will analyze the newspapers' lexical choices of processes and the subtle nuances in meaning that they encode.

2) Lexical variation of processes

Although both texts describe the same actions and events, the selection of verbal groups to represent Process differs between the texts and indicates slight nuances in meaning. The first example can be found in the headlines of the texts shown below in Table 4.

Table 4. Headlines of articles

Newspaper	Headline
The Japan Times	South Korea <u>bars</u> three lawmakers
The Chosun Ilbo	Japanese lawmakers (were) <u>refused</u> entry in Korea

The Japan Times headline refers to the event with the process 'bar', a term that appears to have a connotation of imprisonment whereas *The Chosun Ilbo* presents the same event with the process 'refused', a more neutral selection. Another difference can be found in the material process related to the event of the lawmakers returning to Japan in Table 5.

Table 5. Variation in the process 'return'

Newspaper	Example
The Japan Times (Cl. C. 4 cl. 2)	The three conservative politicians <u>were compelled to return</u> to Japan later in the day
The Chosun Ilbo (Cl. C. 2 cl. 1)	Three rightwing Japanese lawmakers <u>returned</u> home nine hours after

The Japan Times clause includes the term 'compel' in the verbal group, which is not found in *The Chosun Ilbo* clause. This addition implies that South Korea 'forced' the lawmakers back to Japan instead of allowing them to leave voluntarily. Differences in meaning resulting from lexical choice were also found in verbal processes. The example shown in Table 6 refers to processes related to communication between the Japanese Embassy and Seoul.

Table 6. Variation in the response of the Japanese Embassy

Newspaper	Example
The Japan Times (Cl. C. 15)	The Japanese Embassy in Seoul <u>had asked</u> the South Korean government to let the three enter the country.
The Chosun Ilbo (Cl. C. 9)	Nobukatsu Kanehara, a minister at the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, called the Foreign Ministry <u>to protest</u> after the three were denied entry.

The Chosun Ilbo's choice of the verbal process 'to protest' could be

construed as an aggressive response from the Japanese Embassy while *The Japan Times* uses 'had asked' to describe the Embassy's action, making its conduct appear neutral and professional. Other examples of lexical variation are related to events that describe communication between the three Japanese lawmakers and Korean officials (see Table 7).

Table 7. Variation in verbal processes involving Japanese lawmakers

Newspaper	Example
The Japan Times (Cl. C. 9)	The lawmakers <u>said</u> they do not intend to renew Japan's territorial claims
(C1. C. 7 cl. 2 & 3)	and the lawmakers <u>called on</u> the officials to provide detailed explanations
The Chosun Ilbo (Cl. C. 6 cl. 1 & 2)	They <u>argued</u> they were here on legitimate business
(Cl. C. 8 cl. 2 & 3)	the three <u>warned</u> failure to admit them could lead to 'diplomatic consequences'

Again, the verbal processes initiated by members of the Japanese government in *The Chosun Ilbo* article have an aggressive tone. In contrast, the verbal processes in *The Japan Times* depict the lawmakers in a neutral light. One final example of biased reporting that relates to verbal Processes is the use of the figure of speech 'to vent their spleen' to describe the Japanese lawmakers' action by *The Chosun Ilbo*. Although the clause's literal meaning could be labelled a material process, its metaphorical meaning, 'to express anger', can be considered a verbal process (see Table 8) and insinuates that the lawmakers are hysterical individuals.

Table 8. Figure of speech involving Japanese lawmakers in *The Chosun Ilbo*

Cl. C. 14 cl. 4	to vent	their spleen
literal meaning	Process: material	Scope
metaphorical meaning	Process: verbal	

From the examples above, it may appear that both newspapers are biased in their lexical choices of processes when reporting the same actions and

events. There seems to be a pattern where the articles tend to encode neutral meanings for events initiated by members of their own government. However, for processes initiated by members of the opposite government, the newspapers' lexical choices have a propensity to encode negative meanings associated with aggressive behavior. It appears that the lexical choices of the newspapers' cast the other government as the aggressors in the incident.

2. Patterns of participant

Texts can decidedly represent experience in a particular manner by selecting which participants to include and what configuration of participants to express (Eggins, 2004). Patterns of Participant such as the selection of prominent participants, the use of exclusion, the configuration of agents and the lexical choice of participants will be explored to reveal the texts' positions, biases and ideologies.

1) Participant types

In both articles, the most common participant types are related to material and verbal processes (see Table 9). This is expected since material and verbal processes account for the largest and second largest groups of process types in the texts, respectively.

Table 9. Most common participant types

Newspaper	Participant type	Proportion of participants
The Japan Times	Goal (m)	24.0%
	Sayer (v)	19.8%
	Actor (m)	17.7%
	Receiver (v)	9.4%
The Chosun Ilbo	Actor (m)	27.4%
	Goal (m)	21.2%
	Sayer (v)	10.9%
	Scope (m)	10.9%

(m = material process, v = verbal process)

The most prominent participants in both texts are those that represent the governments of Japan and South Korea with the three Japanese lawmakers being the most prominent Actor and Goal. This was expected as the issue is between the governments of both countries. In both articles, there are more Japanese government participants than Korean government participants (see Table 10), suggesting that there is a pattern where both texts place a greater focus on the Japanese participants than on the Korean participants.

Table 10. Proportion of government participants in the two texts

	Total participants	Participants representing the Japanese government	Participants representing the South Korean government	Other
The Japan Times	96	38.5%	14.6%	46.9%
The Chosun Ilbo	73	38.4%	6.8%	54.8%

A comparison of the proportions of Japanese participants in both articles reveals that they are nearly identical at approximately 38.5%. However, when comparing the proportions of participants related to the South Korean government, there is a noticeable difference: the percentage of South Korean government participants in *The Japan Times* article is more than double that of *The Chosun Ilbo* article. This might indicate that *The Chosun Ilbo* has placed less emphasis on the Korean participants through the use of exclusion.

2) Exclusion

The subtle representation of a main social actor such as the Korean government in *The Chosun Ilbo* article may be an example of exclusion. According to van Leeuwen (1996), exclusion can be achieved through either suppression, where no reference of social actors are made in a text, or backgrounding, where social actors are not mentioned in relation to given events but are instead mentioned in other parts of a text. It appears that *The Chosun Ilbo* strongly 'suppresses' the role of the Korean government by having it represent only 6.8% of the total number of participants in its report. The newspaper also de-emphasizes the role of the Korean

government by pushing it into the background. Instead of explicitly referring to the Korean government, the article makes implicit references to the government in circumstances and through nominalisation (see Table 11).

Table 11. Implicit references to the Korean government in *The Chosun Ilbo*

Cl. C. 1 cl. 1	Japanese Lawmakers were refused entry <u>in Korea</u>
Cl. C. 2 cl. 2	being denied entry at Gimpo airport <u>in Seoul</u>
Cl. C. 4 cl. 2	They were denied entry <u>into Korea</u>
Cl. C. 14 cl. 1	<u>the government's refusal</u> to admit the Japanese lawmakers backfired

This use of backgrounding forces the reader to infer the identity of the social actor (i.e., Korean government) in the text instead of being explicitly informed. These subtle acts of exclusion employed by *The Chosun Ilbo* reduce the role of the Korean government in the incident, and might suggest the newspaper's position: the government is not responsible for the incident. In contrast, *The Japan Times* article does not attempt to relegate the Japanese government's participation in the incident by exclusion. Japanese social actors such as the lawmakers and officials account for 38.5% of all participants in the text which, as mentioned above, is about the same percentage in *The Chosun Ilbo* article. This may indicate that *The Japan Times*' position on the issue is more impartial.

3) Agency

The social actors of texts can be endowed with either active or passive roles (van Leeuwen, 1996). Variation in participant allocation of these roles can lead to different representations of an event. Table 12 displays a comparison of active and passive roles of Japanese government participants in both articles, and reveals a significant difference. In *The Japan Times*, 71.1% of Japanese participants have an active role in clauses whereas in *The Chosun Ilbo*, 48.4% of the participants are activated. With a greater proportion of active Japanese participants, it may appear that *The Japan Times* foregrounds the Japanese government's role in the incident.

Table 12. Roles of Japanese government participants

	Number of Japanese government participants	Active role (Actor, Sayer, Senser)	Passive role (Goal Receiver, Scope, etc.)	Carrier, Attribute, Token, Value
The Japan Times	38	71.1%	26.3%	2.6%
The Chosun Ilbo	31	48.4%	38.7%	12.9%

In contrast, a comparison of active and passive roles assigned to Korean government participants reveals relatively smaller differences between the two articles. Table 13 shows that the distribution pattern of these roles are not drastically different between the two texts. These figures might suggest that both newspapers believe that the Korean government is responsible for initiating approximately half of the processes in which it is involved.

Table 13. Roles of Korean government participants

	Number of Korean government participants	Active role (Actor, Sayer, Senser)	Passive role (Goal Receiver, Phenomenon, Recipient)	Carrier, Attribute, Token, Value
The Japan Times	14	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
The Chosun Ilbo	5	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%

The results in Table 12 and 13 show that both main social actors account for at least half of the active roles in the clauses in which they are involved. On the surface, this might imply that neither articles display any bias for or against the governments. However, the tables do not illustrate the newspapers' specific allocation choices of Actor and Goal to processes which can encode bias in representation. Consequently, an examination of these choices is needed to reveal the ideological positions presented in the texts. The first example which illustrates a difference in the representation of social actors is from the headlines of the newspapers which are shown again in Table 14.

Table 14. Headlines of the two articles

Newspaper	Headline
The Japan Times	South Korea bars three lawmakers
The Chosun Ilbo	Japanese lawmakers (were) refused entry in Korea

The Japan Times headline presents South Korea as the Actor of the process, and thus implies that South Korea initiated the process and is responsible for preventing the three lawmakers from entering the country. In contrast, The Chosun Ilbo omits the Actor role from its headline and forces the reader to infer the identity of the social actor responsible for the event. By removing the Agent (i.e., South Korea) from the headline, The Chosun Ilbo diminishes South Korea's responsibility in the act of refusal. Within both articles, there are further references made to the refusal where differences in representation can be observed. In The Japan Times article, neither social actor is predominantly foregrounded in the clauses (Table 15). The Actor role is filled by both social actors, and there are instances of passive agent deletion of the Korean government in Cl. C.2 cl. 1 and Cl. C. 4 cl. 1. In addition, the Korean government's refusal is backgrounded in Cl. C. 12 cl. 2 by relegating the act, 'to deny them entry', to an embedded clause in a nominal group. These instances of backgrounding suggest that The Japan Times does not attempt to emphasize the role of the Korean government in the incident and has a balanced approach to the allocation of roles which creates a fairly neutral tone in its reporting of the event.

Table 15. Clauses referring to the incident (refusal) in The Japan Times

Cl. C. 2 cl. 1	Opposition politicians were turned away at Gimpo
C1. C. 3 cl. 1	South Korea turned away three Japanese opposition lawmakers
Cl. C. 4 cl. 1	The three conservative politicians were stopped upon arrival
Cl. C. 4 cl. 2	(Lawmakers) were compelled to return to Japan
Cl. C. 6 cl. 3	(South Korean officials) sought their swift return to Japan
Cl. C. 12 cl. 2	that Seoul's decision to deny them entry would evolve into a "big diplomatic problem."
Cl. C. 13. cl. 1	…the unusual step taken by South Korea

In contrast, many of *The Chosun Ilbo*'s references to the incident absolve the Korean government from responsibility by omitting it from the clauses (see Table 16). Only two clauses make reference to the government, which appears as a passive agent in Cl. C. 4 cl. 2 and within the nominalisation 'the government's refusal' in Cl. C. 14 cl. 2. In addition, there is an absence of the Korean government filling the Actor role in an active clause in Table 16.

Table 16. Clauses referring to the incident (refusal) in *The Chosun Ilbo*

Cl. C. 2	Three rightwing Japanese lawmakers returned home nine hours after being denied entry at Gimpo Airport in Seoul on Monday.
Cl. C. 4 cl. 2	(The lawmakers) were denied entry into Korea by *airport immigration officials*.
Cl. C. 6 cl. 3	denying them entry was an infringement of their rights
Cl. C. 8 cl. 3	failure to admit them could lead to "diplomatic consequences"
Cl. C. 9 cl. 4	after the three were denied entry
Cl. C. 14 cl. 2	*the government's refusal to admit the Japanese lawmakers* backfired

All these discreet references to the Korean government suggest that *The Chosun Ilbo*'s choice of allocation, again, pushes the government's role into the background and diminishes the government's responsibility despite the fact that it performed the action in the incident (denying entry). This provides a further indication that *The Chosun Ilbo* may be biased in its reporting of the incident and holds a position in which it supports the Korean government's actions in this international political affair.

4) Lexical variation of participants

According to Trew (1979), differences in lexical choice can indicate a comprehensive, systematic kind of difference in thinking about specific matters. An inspection of the lexical choices of participants in both articles reveals that there are differences that reflect the tones of the newspapers, and these tones can influence the way readers perceive events. In reference to lawmakers, *The Japan Times* uses a neutral nominal group 'opposition politicians' while *The Chosun Ilbo* selection, 'three rightwing Japanese

lawmakers', is connotational (see Table 17). The term 'rightwing' paints the lawmakers as 'extreme' and implies that the Korean government was justified in denying them entry.

Table 17. Lexical variation of lawmakers

The Japan Times (Cl. C. 2 cl. 1)	*Opposition politicians* were turned away at Gimpo
The Chosun Ilbo (Cl. C. 2 cl. 1)	*Three rightwing Japanese lawmakers* returned home nine hours after

The next example is related to the territorial issue between the countries. The ideological position of *The Japan Times* regarding the issue is that it is unresolved as indicated by the term 'disputed' (see Table 18). *The Chosun Ilbo* on the other hand believes that the ownership of the islets are not disputed but rather resolved by referring to Japan's claim as 'dubious'.

Table 18. Lexical variation of description of islet issue

The Japan Times (Cl. C. 3 cl. 1)	*disputed* islets claimed by Japan
The Chosun Ilbo (Cl. C. 3 cl. 2)	to stress Japan's *dubious* territorial claim to KOREA's Dokdo islets

The third example is related to the translation of a statement made by one of the lawmakers in the articles. The lawmaker made a statement in Japanese which was later translated into English by the newspapers. However, there is a slight difference in the translation of one of the participants from the statement. *The Japan Times* translation of the participant "big diplomatic problems" differs from *The Chosun Ilbo*'s translation "diplomatic consequences". The use of the term 'problem' by *The Japan Times* does not appear to have a connotative meaning whereas *The Chosun Ilbo*'s preference for 'consequences' insinuates that the lawmaker made a threat (see Table 19).

Table 19. Lexical variation of translation

The Japan Times (Cl. C. 12 cl. 2)	that Seoul's decision to deny them entry would evolve into a "big diplomatic *problem*"
The Chosun Ilbo (Cl. C. 8 cl. 3)	failure to admit them could lead to "diplomatic *consequences*"

The final example is the lexical choice of participants by *The Chosun Ilbo* in reference to the Korean government. Table 20 displays all the clauses in the article where the Korean government is a participant. A notable pattern emerges in the labelling of Participant where the term 'Korean' is omitted except in one clause (Cl. C. 12 cl. 2). Instead, the terms 'government' and 'officials' are used to refer to the Korean government. By only having one government participant labeled 'Korean' in the entire article, the role of the Korean government is further relegated to the background and the reader is made to rely on inferences once again. Conversely, *The Japan Times* does not refrain from explicitly identifying Japanese government participants (e.g., 'Japanese lawmakers', 'Japanese government' and 'Japanese Embassy').

Table 20. Clauses that refer to Korean government in *The Chosun Ilbo*

Cl. C. 4 cl. 2	and they were denied entry into Korea by *airport immigration officials*
Cl. C. 5 cl. 1	*The government* tried to put them back on the same plane,
Cl. C. 10 cl. 1	Around 6:30 p.m., *the government* told Japanese Ambassador Masatoshi Muto
Cl. C. 12 cl. 2	Muto "agreed to deliver our demands to the *Korean government*"
Cl. C. 14 cl. 2	*the government's* refusal to admit the Japanese lawmakers backfired

The lexical choices of participants differ between the newspapers, and as a result, likely indicate their bias. *The Japan Times*' lexical choices appear more neutral and do not negatively describe participants related to Japan. On the other hand, *The Chosun Ilbo*'s choices tend to appear more sensational when describing the same participants. This contrasts with its inexplicit

references to Korean participants which de-emphasize the Korean government's role in the incident.

3. Patterns of circumstance

The experiential content of the texts is increased by the use of circumstances by both newspapers. The most frequent type of circumstance in both articles is related to specific locations and points in time (Location), which account for 80% of all circumstances in *The Chosun Ilbo* and 61.6% in *The Japan Times* (see Table 21). The second largest group of circumstances is 'cause' for *The Chosun Ilbo* and 'manner' for *The Japan Times*. Both articles have a slightly similar proportion of circumstance of cause, accounting for 10% of circumstances in *The Chosun Ilbo* article and 7.7% in *The Japan Times* article. Where the two articles differ widely is in the number of circumstance of manner. In *The Japan Times* article, 19.2% of the circumstances are related to manner whereas there are none in *The Chosun Ilbo* article.

According to Eggins (2004), a text dominant in circumstances of location is concerned with situating events in time and space, noting where and when they take place. A text dominant in both circumstance of location and manner such as *The Japan Times* article is "concerned with where, when and how behaviors occurred" (Eggins, 2004, p. 337). With the complete absence of circumstance of manner coupled with a small proportion of circumstances related to cause, *The Chosun Ilbo* article suggests that it is not overly concerned with 'how and why things are the way they are, and what caused them to be that way' (ibid, p. 337).

Table 21. Circumstances in the two articles (Thompson, 2004, pp. 110-111)

Circumstance	*The Japan Times*	*The Chosun Ilbo*
Total number of circumstances	26	20
Proportions of circumstance types		
Location (location, point in time)	61.6%	80.0%
Manner (quality, means, comparison)	19.2%	0.0%

Cause (reason, purpose, behalf)	7.7%	10.0%
Matter	7.7%	5.0%
Angle	3.8%	0.0%
Accompaniment	0.0%	5.0%

In summary, both articles use circumstances to add specificity to processes and to increase the experiential density in their reports. Due to the wider range of circumstance types found in *The Japan Times* article, the text is more capable of providing answers relating to 'when, where, how and why' events happened.

V. FINDINGS

The aim of this paper was to take an SFG approach to compare the general stylistic properties and communicative functionality of two news articles. A transitivity analysis was conducted revealing similarities and differences related to patterns of Process, Participant and Circumstance that reflect biases, positions and ideologies encoded in the articles. Both texts share a similar pattern of process types, and focus on the same events and actions. Nonetheless, differences were found in the lexical choices of processes which highlight a tendency of both articles to 1) select neutral verbal groups to represent processes initiated by participants from their respective countries and 2) select verbal groups with negative connotative meanings for processes initiated by participants representing the other country. Concerning participant patterns, it was revealed that both texts share the same participant type pattern. However, the similarities are overshadowed by the differences in the participant patterns of allocation and lexical choice. The patterns found in *The Japan Times* appear more impartial due to its non-connotative lexical choices and the absence of backgrounding of either country's participants. Conversely, *The Chosun Ilbo* appears to de-emphasize the role of the Korean government through the use of exclusion, passive agent deletion and inconspicuous lexical choices. Patterns of Circumstance reveal that in both texts, the most common type of circumstances are related to Location, but the circumstances in *The Japan*

Times have a more diverse pattern, providing a wider range of information on its processes.

VI. CONCLUSION

To sum up, this analysis likely confirms that it is possible for two articles reporting on the same incident to have subtle differences in experiential meaning due to their stylistic properties and communicative functionality. Both newspapers attempt to represent the actions of their own governments in a more positive manner that can influence the way readers perceive the countries. The results of this analysis highlight the value of an SFG approach to text analysis and its application as a tool to help readers identify biases and ideological positions in news articles.

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APPENDIX A

(The Japan Times article)

The Japan Times NEWS

NATIONAL

South Korea bars three lawmakers

Opposition politicians turned away at Gimpo, thwarting bid to visit base of Japan-claimed isles

KYODO

ARTICLE HISTORY | AUG 2, 2011

SEOUL – South Korea turned away three Japanese opposition lawmakers Monday who were planning to visit a South Korean island near a pair of disputed islets claimed by Japan.

The three conservative politicians were stopped upon arrival at Seoul's Gimpo International Airport and compelled to return to Japan later in the day.

Yoshitaka Shindo, Tomomi Inada and Masahisa Sato of the main opposition Liberal Democratic Party departed from Tokyo's Haneda airport in the morning but finally gave up on entering South Korea in the evening after the Japanese government asked South Korea in vain to reconsider the rejection, Shindo told Japanese reporters accompanying them.

South Korean officials told the three that their visit could "trigger actions that would threaten public safety" and sought their swift return to Japan.

The lawmakers remained unconvinced and called on the officials to provide detailed explanations for denying their entry.

The trio were planning to inspect Ulleungdo, the administrative and military base for the South Korean-controlled islets called Dokdo by South Korea and Takeshima by Japan, on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The lawmakers said they do not intend to renew Japan's territorial claims to the disputed islets, but the South Korean government said the refusal was based on the immigration control law.

"Takeshima is Japanese territory," Shindo told South Korean media at the airport. "Our positions are different and we need to talk to each other on the issue." He also warned that Seoul's decision to deny them entry would evolve into a "big diplomatic problem."

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano had expressed Japan's "deep regret" over the unusual step taken by South Korea and said Tokyo was making a last-ditch effort to urge Seoul to let the lawmakers in.

"The lawmakers intended to inspect the island legally and in light of our friendly relations, we very much regret that South Korea took such a measure," Edano said at a press conference.

The Japanese Embassy in Seoul had asked the South Korean government to let the three enter the country.

In Tokyo, Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto summoned South Korean Ambassador to Japan Shin Kak Soo prior to the three lawmakers' decision to return home and conveyed his regret over the move and urged Seoul to reconsider it.

Matsumoto also expressed regret over a visit Monday to the contested islets by South Korean Special Affairs Minister Lee Jae Oh and called for the cancellation of a planned South Korean parliamentry committee meeting on the islets on Aug. 12.

The LDP members traveled to Seoul despite South Korea's decision last Friday to slap an entry ban on them on the grounds their safety could not be guaranteed and their visit would negatively affect bilateral relations.

Their plan to visit Ulleungdo has ignited a storm of protests in South Korea.

APPENDIX B

(The Chosun Ilbo article)

The Chosun Ilbo
english.chosun.com

🖨 Print

Japanese Lawmakers Refused Entry in Korea

Three Japanese lawmakers arrive in Gimpo Airport in Seoul on Monday.

Three rightwing Japanese lawmakers returned home nine hours after being denied entry at Gimpo Airport in Seoul on Monday. Yoshitaka Shindo, Tomomi Inada, and Masahisa Sato of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party had planned to visit Ulleung Island on a mission to stress Japan's dubious territorial claim to Korea's Dokdo islets.

The three arrived at 11:03 a.m. and were denied entry into Korea by airport immigration officials. The government tried to put them back on the same plane, which was to leave for Tokyo at 12:40 p.m. according to international practice, but they refused and staged a sit-in.

They argued they were here on legitimate business, and denying them entry was an infringement of their rights. The lawmakers enjoyed a lunch of the Korean signature dish bibimbap offered by the airline at around 3 p.m.

While any government can deny entry to anyone it chooses without explanation, the three warned failure to admit them could lead to "diplomatic consequences."

Nobukatsu Kanehara, a minister at the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, called the Foreign Ministry to protest after the three were denied entry.

Around 6:30 p.m., the government told Japanese Ambassador Masatoshi Muto, who had met the Japanese lawmakers earlier, that the day's last flight was leaving at 8:10 p.m. and that the lawmakers would have to share a holding cell with illegal immigrants awaiting deportation overnight if they were not on it.

This apparently changed their mind. They said Muto "agreed to deliver our demands to the Korean government."

Right before boarding the plane, they asked aides to buy dried Korean seaweed for them at the duty-free shop.

But some observers said the government's refusal to admit the Japanese lawmakers backfired by giving them a platform to vent their spleen.

Others complained that the Korean media overplayed the story, pointing out that the lawmakers' stunt attracted little attention in the Japanese press.

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