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REPRESENTING MEANING IN THE HEADLINES OF NEWS REPORTS: A Critical Linguistic Analysis

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Abstract: This study identifies the linguistic structures used for propagating specific ideologies by examining the headlines of a select political issue in South Korea in two English newspapers, one published in South Korea, and the other in the U.S. Critical linguistic analysis is used to examine the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald* coverage of 'the North Korean nuclear threat'. The analysis contributes to the understanding of the ideological role of language within news discourse in constructing representations of a society. Such research has important implications for teaching awareness of the constructive and functional nature of language in general, and news discourse in particular, in and out of school setting.

Introduction

Critical linguistic analysis aims at uncovering the role of language in constructing social identities, relationships, issues, and events. Its central concern has been to examine socio-politically interested nature of the texts and discourses through which social reality is constituted and investigate how these discourses maintain power through their ideological properties (Fairclough, 1989; Fowler 1987).

An increasing volume of studies from various disciplines (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard 1996; Chilton 1982; Curran 1977; van Dijk 1988a, 1988b, 1991, 1993; Fairclough 1989; Fowler 1991; Hall 1985; Hartley 1982; Hartmann et al., 1974; Tuchman 1978) has demonstrated that, due to the nature of news itself, news cannot be a totally value-free reflection of facts. News producing processes comprise selection, interpretation, and presentation of events to audiences, thereby constructing reality in a manner corresponding with the underlying ideologies of the presenters and their intended audience. A news report imposes a structure of values on whatever it represents, and so inevitably news reports produce meanings which construct ideological representations of a society.

Recent studies on media discourse with the critical linguistic analysis perspective (Brookes, 1995; Clayman 1990; Dunmire 1997; van Leeuwen 1995; Wodak, 1991; Wodak and Matouschek, 1993) have demonstrated how the Western news media linguistically construct ideological representations of different groups of people and different countries, and how these representations exercise a great deal of power in shaping our interpretation of the suggested facts. But little attention has been paid to U.S. mainstream newspapers reports about South Korea. Considering growing interest in the situation in the Korean peninsula where the South and the North stand face to face, such an analysis is important for further understanding of the way discourses of U.S. news reports express a subjective and ideologically biased picture of socio-political events in a foreign country like South Korea to the readers. The U.S. news media's political and ideological stance on the affairs in South Korea is clearly manifested through a comparison with the South Korean news reports on the same issues.

In this study, therefore, I will examine the headlines of the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald* news reports of on a select political issue, 'the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea', to show the differences and similarities of ideologies between two countries. Headlines show the most prominent and relevant information of the news discourse. Headline forms the summary of the report, which 'strategically serves as the expression of its macrostructure' (van Dijk 1988b: 226). Since readers often read and recall only headlines, they construct not only preferred meanings for the news texts for the readers but also the most prominent ideological view of the texts (see Bell 1991; van Dijk 1988; van Dijk and Kintsch 1983). In order to investigate the most prominent and specific ideological frameworks in news discourse on 'the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea', therefore, the headlines are examined. I will argue that the headlines of news reports of the issue in the mainstream newspapers manifest an overt ideological power relation in representing three countries, the two Koreas and the U.S. These representations are achieved through linguistic structures and processes at various levels such as wording, syntax, and theme. It is hoped that studies like this one will create an awareness of the constructive and functional nature of language within news discourse in the course of everyday lives to reveal 'ideological and political investments' (Fairclough 1992: 315).

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study comes from the perspectives of critical linguistics (van Dijk 1988a, 1988b, 1993, 1994; Fairclough 1989, 1992; Fowler, 1991; Halliday, 1985; Halliday and Hasan 1989; Hodge and Kress, 1988; Kress 1989, 1991; Thompson 1984). The aims of critical linguistics are to explore the social function of language and to describe linguistic processes in social terms. Language study is a means of understanding the manner in which society works

(Thompson 1984). Uncovering the social function of language entails interpreting language and meaning within a social context: Language can be explained only as the realization of meanings that are inherent in the social system (Halliday 1985). One aspect of meaning worth studying is what is called 'ideology' or 'the ways in which meaning serves to sustain asymmetrical relations of power' (Thompson 1984: 4). 'The workings of ideology' thus can be discerned through linguistic analysis. This concept of ideology is adopted in this paper, because it provides a more explicit link to the position of language in society.

Consistent with the above conceptualization, the method of systematic textual analysis adopted in this study to uncover the way in which discourses operate in society comes from unified discursive framework proposed in Fairclough (1989, 1992). As Fairclough suggests, an ideology of the powerful class is turned into a universal belief through the process of 'naturalization' (1989: 129), and the media plays an important role in naturalizing these dominant ideologies. He argues that critical language study is a proper approach in language studies to uncover underlying power relationships in the use of language that are normally hidden from people.

Fairclough (1989) identifies the processes of critical linguistic analysis: discursive analysis, contextual analysis, and interpretive analysis. Even though Fairclough presents the processes of analysis separately, the analyses are often simultaneous processes. Therefore, the analysis to be presented in this paper will integrate all three processes to show how the ideological and political interests underlying the headlines of the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea are linguistically constructed in the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald*.

Simultaneously with the above approach, the socio-cognitive framework is necessary to examine the ideological construction within news discourse. From the socio-cognitive angle, ideologies are conceived as 'basic frameworks that organize social representations in the minds of social group members' (van Dijk 1994: 1). Ideology is, therefore, conceptualized as a mental schema consisting of various categories such as identity/membership, goal, norms, positions, all of which define and shape the ideology of a group. In these cognitive structures of ideology and its social manifestation the role of attitudes play a central part. Attitudes are manifested in discourse via values accorded and contained in linguistic choices such as wording, syntax, and theme, and the identity membership which underlies the well known 'us vs. them' categorization is found in many attitudes (van Dijk 1994). Following this approach, it is argued in this paper that the ideology embedded in the headlines of news coverage of the North Korean nuclear threat ascribes positive and negative values by the 'us vs. them' dichotomy via linguistic choices which create and sustain positive attitudes toward the 'us' category while creating consequent negative attitudes towards the 'them' category. Therefore,

the approach of socio-cognitive analysis (van Dijk 1994) is also adopted in this study because it establishes the link between ideology and attitudes.

The model adopted in this study, in short, synthesizes the external manifestation of ideology in discourse with the internal cognitive effects on the reader of the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald* news reports about the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea.

Data

This study is based on the analysis of data from the headlines of news coverage of 'the North Korean nuclear threat' in the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald*. The *New York Times* was chosen because of its status as one major national newspaper in the U.S. The *Korea Herald* was selected because it is the most widely read English newspaper in Korea. The headlines of the first four months (September to December 1994) coverage of the relevant events were surveyed. The period of coverage which was selected covers roughly the highlight of the duration of the issue. The data comprise the headlines of every news item (a total of 92 articles). In collecting data, coverage by the outside sources – AP, UP, Reuters News Agency -- was excluded. The whole data analyzed in this study are written by the correspondents of the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald*. The headlines of all articles on the North Korean nuclear threat in the *New York Times* and a subset of the headlines in the *Korea Herald* of September to December 1994 are given in the Appendix A and B, and are analyzed below.

The New York Times

Macroproposition A general ideological picture of 'the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea' is shown by the topics analysis of news items (Hartmann et al. 1974; van Dijk 1988a). Unlike the subject which is denoted by a single concept (e.g., the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea), topics are propositions contained in a subject. Topics are 'routinely expressed in the ideal headline of a single news report' (van Dijk 1988a: 170), therefore, the most important information expressed by a text. For instance, under the subject of the North Korean nuclear threat, both headlines *U.S.-North Korea hold talks in Pyongyang* and *U.S. reassures Seoul on Nuclear Arms talks with North Korea* are topics.

The topics, however, should be accounted for at overall, more global level than the microlevel of words, sentences, and sentence connections; they should be identified at the level of 'semantic macrostructure' which makes explicit the overall topics. Thus, macropropositions are derived by generalization, selection, and construction which semantically map proposition sequences to a macroproposition at a higher level. Because semantic macropropositions describe the gist of the news

reports, the analysis of macropropositions is crucial for understanding the properties of headlines. Therefore, in order to show the most prominent meanings of the news texts, the macropropositions of all 37 headlines are analyzed. Table 1 shows the macropropositions of the headlines of the *New York Times* of 'the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea'.

Macropropositions	No. of total headlines	Examples
U.S. helicopter crash landed in North Korea/ It may affect the nuclear deal with North Korea	12	25,26,27,28,29,30,31, 32,33,34,35,36
U.S. deals with North Korea over nuclear talks	11	3,4,6,8,9,11,12,13,16, 17,22
South Korea wants reconciliation with North Korea	2	15,20
U.S. is a leader on nuclear talks with North Korea	5	7,14,19,23,24
Pressure on left is caused by Fears of North Korea	1	5
South Korea feels anxiety over nuclear talks	1	37
South Korea depends on U.S./South Korea needs U.S. support	1	10
North Korea will receive aid from other countries	1	18
U.S. shows a consistent attitude on foreign policy	1	21
North Korea needs U.S. as a mediator	1	1
U.S. supports South Korea on nuclear issue	1	2

Table 1. Macropropositions of headlines in the *New York Times* coverage of North Korea nuclear threat September through December 1994

The analysis of macropropositions of the headlines reveals the following scripts associated with the reports of the North Korea nuclear issue.

U.S. plays a leading role in North Korean nuclear talks as a mediator. U.S. is capable of solving North Korean nuclear issue and helping two Koreas. Neither the South nor the North can solve the situation by themselves; they need help from U.S. U.S. foreign policy always shows consistency including the deals with North Korea. U.S. is doing its best to soften the anxiety of South Korea and aid North Korea, and South Korea wants improved relationship with North Korea. However, fears of North Korea bring crackdown on leftist in South Korea. Despite all efforts of U.S., the U.S. Army helicopter landing in North Korea can jeopardize the U.S.-North Korea relations.

Lexicalization The choice of words is important in providing readers with cues for interpreting events. Lexical items construct particular ideological representations of events. Apart from this experiential function, vocabulary has expressive value implying the producer's negative or positive evaluation of actions, participants, and events. Vocabulary also has expressive value implying the producer's negative

or positive evaluation of actions, participants, and events. Therefore, the selection of vocabulary can be regarded as ideologically based.

Where an unusually high degree of wording, often involving clusters of related terms which are near synonyms occurs, this overwording often indicates a key concept or particular preoccupation which gives certain meanings the producers of texts intend to convey (Fairclough 1989; Fowler 1991). Overwording around the concept of crisis and violence through the interrelated words such as 'crackdown', 'breakthrough', 'curbs', and 'crisis' indicates an unstable situation and social unrest in South Korea. Interesting comparison with this is the repeated occurrence of word 'deal': *Republicans oppose deal with Koreans* (Nov. 27), *U.S. warning North Koreans on atoms deal* (Dec. 28), and *In South Korea, uneasiness over U.S. dealing with North* (Dec. 31). The result of this overuse of 'deal' has a trivializing effect in that even though the North Korean nuclear threat has caused instability in South Korean society, the two parties involved in 'deal-making' are the U.S. and North Korea.

Second, The reformulation of events through the re-lexicalization of terms has interesting ideological effects. Re-lexicalization is 'the promotion of a new term where it is claimed that a new concept is at issue' (Fowler 1991: 84). Re-lexicalization enables words or terms to be substituted for each other, reconstructing meaning given to an event. Reformulation of events through re-lexicalization is found in a word 'aid'. This word is substituted for 'financial support': *North Korea invites Carter to mediate: new chief seeks aid in dispute with U.S.* (Sept. 2), *President approves a plan to aid the North Koreans* (Oct. 19). It is not obvious who is going to pay for the nuclear reactors for North Korea, U.S. or South Korea? Does 'aid' mean just 'loans' or 'real aid for free'? The use of 'aid' blurs the boundary of real agent/giver and the substance of the act, thereby reformulating the event.

Participants and Processes The analysis of participants and processes has to do with the ways in which choices between different grammatical process and participant types are made to be ideologically significant. The particular selections are from the system of transitivity. Transitivity refers to how meaning is represented in the clause by how text producers encode in language their mental picture of reality (Halliday 1985). Selection between process types has an effect of highlighting or backgrounding agency and such choices are ideological because motivated obfuscation of agency results in leaving attributions of causality and responsibility unclear.

U.S. participants are consistently constructed as agents/doers in the *New York Times*. This is achieved by placing them as participants taking the leading role in the negotiation with two Koreas, that is, as actors or those who make statements:

U.S. reassures Seoul on Nuclear Arms talks with North Korea (Sept 8), *U.S. cuts Nuclear Arsenal...* (Sept 23), *President Approves a plan to aid the North Korea* (Oct 19), *U.S. presses North Korea to free pilot*. This grammatical structure facilitates in the minds of readers the socio-cognitive representation of U.S. as a participant who is a major agent and actor, and Korea as an affected participant.

Korean participants are put both as agents, i.e. as actors, statement makers and as affected participants, as receivers of verbal processes and as beneficiaries of giving processes. Korean participants are structured as agents of transactive verbs which are not typical action verbs: *North Korea invites Carter to mediate*; *new chief seeks aid in dispute with U.S.* (Sept. 2), *South Korea president lashes out at U. S.* (Oct. 8), *North Koreans free U. S. pilot held 13 days* (Dec. 30), or as agents in passive sentences: *Freed pilot tells how he was downed by North Korean* (Dec. 31).

When describing processes of negotiation and talks, the agency of Korean participants is generally backgrounded by attenuation or omission. Attenuation is achieved by 'placing participants as carriers in relational processes which suggest states of being rather than action on the part of the carrier' (Brooks 1995: 476). The effect is prominent where the verb is omitted and the circumstances associated with the process is included: *Korea Talks: hints of thaw* (Sept 8). Attenuation is also achieved through placing participants in the circumstantial element which is normally grammatically subordinate in status to the process: *Unites States assures Seoul on Nuclear arms talk with North Korea* (Sept 8), *Clinton administration reports a breakthrough in North Korea nuclear arms talks* (Oct. 15), *Republican oppose deal with Koreans: senators aim to block atom pack with North* (Nov. 27). Agent is missing even in nominalization: *Talks leave North Korea and US split* (Sept 15). These structures have the effect of backgrounding the process and participants.

It is generally recognized that the choice of whether to include or omit agency from a process constitutes an important part of message construction. The above analysis suggests that the role of U.S. in North Korean nuclear issue is primarily that of positive agency. U.S. participants are consistently the leading actors and sources involving important actions, decisions and pronouncements regarding the negotiations with the two Koreas and the behavior of two Korean governments. The role of the two Koreas, on the other hand, suggests the passive actors and participants seeking aid, their dependency on U.S., and lack of initiative. Consequently, U.S. takes on the role of leadership. U.S. is the senior partner and potential mediator who can solve the critical situation in the Korean peninsula.

Thematization The theme is what a text is about and appears in the first part of the clause in English. The theme gives the most important information in the clause.

Therefore, the writers foreground what they consider the most important information by placing it in the thematic position. The analysis of the thematic patterns of the headlines not only reveals what the writer considers the information that would catch eye, but also gives insight into commonsensical assumptions taken for granted about the social reality.

The thematic patterns in the headlines are either participants: *U.S. reassures Seoul on nuclear arms talks with North Korea* (Sept. 8), or processes in the reduced form of nominalization: *Korea talks: hints of thaw* (Sept 18). The Nominalizations which occur in thematic position are the talks between U.S. and two Koreas (2 occurrences) and tension and impasse related to North Korea and U.S. (2 occurrences). The nominalizations in thematic position are not prominent in the headlines of the *New York Times*.

The highest proportion of thematic positions are occupied by U.S. participants or U.S and North Korea together (56%, 22 among 39). South Korea and North Korea occupied the relatively small proportion of thematic positions, 13 % and 15% respectively. Korean participants are foregrounded in thematic position in relation to processes of the unstable situation, seeking aid, and cause of impasse.

The consistent foregrounding of U.S. participants in thematic position evokes in the mind of readers the commonsensical assumption about the leading role of U.S. in the nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula caused by North Korea, and its ability to solve the problem as a mediator. The themes therein contribute to this ideological common sense and its naturalization through linguistic transformations of the roles of U.S. and two Koreas, and South Korea facing the North Korea nuclear threat, because it is simply the way of depicting the picture of reality in the mind of readers.

The Korea Herald

Macropropositions Table 2 shows the macropropositions of the headlines of the *Korea Herald* of 'the North Korean nuclear threat in South Korea'.

Macroproposition	No. of total headlines	Examples
U.S. helicopter crash-lands inside North Korea	9	35,36,37
Inter-Korean talks should be done first	5	2,4,5
South Korea needs U.S. as a mediator over the North Korea nuclear issue	4	3,6
South Korea calls for North Korean nuclear-transparency	4	15,19,27
Negotiation between U.S. and North Korea	4	12,13,18

is not successful		
U.S. and North Korea came to an agreement	4	25,34
South Korea accepts U.S.-N.K. accord	4	26,29
There is difference between U.S. and		
South Korea over the North Korean nuclear issue	3	23,24
South Korea wants S-N reconciliation through	3	10,28,30
the U.S-North Korean nuclear accord		
South Korea will pay the costs for	3	31,32
North Korean reactor		
South Korea should strengthen the national defense	2	21, 22
South Korea gets support from other countries	2	1,33
South Korea and U.S. should be on the same side	2	7,14
North Korea does not want help directly	2	9, 20
from South Korea		
North Korea is not willing to negotiate seriously	2	16,17
North Korea wants talks with U.S.	1	8
U.S. is an active mediator	1	11

Table2. Macropropositions of headlines in the *Korea Herald* coverage of the North Korean nuclear threat September through December 1994

The analysis of macropropositions of the headlines reveals the following scripts associated with the reports of the North Korea nuclear issue.

South Korea wants North Korea nuclear transparency for the security of the Korean peninsula, asking North Korea to freeze nuclear activities. For this goal, the talks and reconciliation between the South and the North should come first. North Korea, however, insists on U.S. not South Korea as its negotiation partner. As an active mediator, U.S. enters negotiation over the North Korean nuclear issue. Other powerful countries back South Korea. Since there is some difference between U.S. and South Korea, South Korea complains about U.S.' soft stance toward North Korea. The U.S. and South Korea agree that North Korea should give up the nuclear facilities and accept special nuclear inspection, and that South Korean model nuclear reactor will be provided to North Korea. North Korea, however, not only refuses the South Korean model reactor but also does not negotiate with a serious attitude, blaming the South Korea-U.S. joint military service which it considers a military threat. Although North Korea insists on U.S. mediation, it is South Korea who is to pay the cost of nuclear reactors and therefore be the major sources of financial assistance to North Korea. There is an agreement in the ongoing U.S.-North Korea talks despite the North's resistance to the U.S. demand that North Korea should promise to open an inter-Korean dialogue. South Korea accepts U.S. and North Korean accord and hopes that the accord will improve inter-Korean relations. However, the crash landing of U.S.

Army helicopter in North Korea has the potential to jeopardize the U.S.-North Korea relations, and therefore the potential for inter-Korean dialogue.

Lexicalization Compared to the headlines of the *New York Times*, overwording around the concept of 'crisis' and 'violence' through interrelated words does not show up in the headlines of the *Korea Herald*. Unlike the *New York Times* which emphasizes the unstable situation in South Korea caused by the North Korean nuclear threat, the *Korea Herald* does not reveal any political unrest, or resultant suppression of the anti-government students and intellectuals.

Neither does the reformulation of events through the re-lexicalization of word 'aid' which occurs in the *New York Times* occur in the *Korea Herald*. On the contrary, the source and substance of financial support is clarified. It is South Korea who will pay the costs of nuclear reactors for North Korea as in, *Seoul may have to pay additional costs for oil besides N. Korean nuclear reactors* (Oct. 20); *Seoul will have to pay more than 50% in cost of N. K. reactor: Gallucci* (Nov. 11). There are also other countries who support the South or the North, or both, over the nuclear issue, as in *Han draws U.S. support for S-N talks* (Sept. 9); *U.S., Japan back Seoul on N.K. issue: China also supports South Korea's economic cooperation with North* (Nov. 15).

Participants and Processes South Korean participants are consistently constructed as agents/doers in *Korea Herald*. This is achieved grammatically by placing them as participants functioning in a leading role over the U.S.-North Korea nuclear talks. They are shown as actors or spokespersons in material and verbal processes: *Seoul confirms U.S. should improve ties with N.K....* (Sept. 4); *Seoul, Washington agree on importance of inter-Korean relations* (Sept.9); *Korea, U.S. firm on N.K. N-transparency* (Oct. 2); *Seoul embraces agreement, saying S-N contacts possible this year* (Oct. 19); or as classifiers within the nominalized processes where a process has been nominalized: *Seoul to use U.S.-N.K. talks to better inter-Korean ties* (Sept. 6); *Seoul ready to resume S-N dialogue including summit* (Sept.14); *Seoul to monitor U.S.-N.K talks in Geneva* (Sept. 22); or as the determinative deictic possessive in a nominal group: *China also support South Korea's economic cooperation with North* (Nov. 15), which suggests both agency and responsibility. These grammatical structures facilitate in the minds of readers the representation of South Korean participants as major agents and actors, playing a leading role over the North Korean nuclear talks.

U.S. participants are also constructed as agents/doers. They are grammatically put as actors and spokespersons in material and verbal processes in negotiation with North Korea: *Gallucci rejects N.K. proposal on nuclear reactors* (Sept. 17), *U.S. moves to accept delay in special N-inspection* (Oct. 14), *U.S., Japan back Seoul on N.K. issue* (Nov. 15); or as classifiers within the nominalized processes.

U.S.-N.K. nuke accord hoped to open S-N reconciliation: Gallucci, Kang putting final touches on agreement (Oct. 16), *Gallucci here to discuss P'yang nuclear issue* (Sept. 15), where U.S. participants are represented as major agents and doers. The last example foregrounds the agency of U.S. participant as a doer, implying that U.S. is the only agent involved in the North Korea nuclear issue.

A further construction of U.S. agency occurs in *U.S. pilot returns from N.K. over DMZ* (Dec. 31), where the North Korean agency in releasing the pilot is hidden through the use of middle clause where causality and agency is hidden, U.S. participant appears to be an agent of his own actions rather than an affected participant.

North Korean participants are grammatically put both as agents, i.e. as actors, spokespersons and as affected participants, as receivers of verbal processes and beneficiaries of giving processes. North Korean participants are structured as agents in verbal or material processes: *N.K. demands to upgrade expert talks with U.S.* (Sept. 8), *N. Korea offers Russian model as new reactor* (Sept. 14). North Korean participants are also constructed as agents of verbal or material processes such as threat and calling attention by placing them as actors: *P'yang warns resume N-activities if Washington poses military threat* (Sept. 27); or as the determinative deictic possessive in a nominal group: *N.K.'s vice president's visit to China draws attention of P'yang watchers* (Sept. 29).

When describing processes of negotiation and talks, the agency of North Korean participants is generally backgrounded by attenuation: *Seoul to monitor U.S.-N.K. talks in Geneva* (Sept. 22), *Seoul confirms U.S. should improve ties with N.K. after S-N talks progress* (Sept. 4), *Seoul could resume team spirit drill if no progress in U.S.-N.K. talks: Kim* (Oct. 9), *Seoul officials see little possibility of U.S. overturning N-pact with N.K.* (Nov. 29). Agency is missing through nominalization, too: *Hubbard from U.S. to cross DMZ today for pilot talks* (Dec. 28). Contrary to the South Korean and U.S. participants, therefore, North Korean participants are grammatically constructed as affected participants in the sense of being something done to.

The role of the participants constructed by the grammatical representations results in specific ideological meaning and a particular world view. The above analysis suggests that South Korea plays a primary role in North Korean nuclear issue. South Korea is playing a leading role in North Korea nuclear talks because the direct nuclear threat is toward South Korea and the security of the Korean peninsula. Therefore, it is the duty of South Korea to deter North Korea from producing nuclear weapons. However, this is possible only with the help of U.S. as a mediator. U.S. is capable of solving the North Korean nuclear issue. Consequently, U.S. takes the role of leadership in talks with North Korea. The

roles of North Korean participants, on the other hand, suggest the aid-seeker, their dependency on the powerful, their lack of moral ground as a result of causing unrest in the Korean peninsula. Therefore, they lose the leadership in nuclear talks despite their status as a major concerned party.

Thematization Because the theme gives the most important information (besides the forces) in the clause and the writers place what they consider the most presupposed important information in the thematic position, an analysis of the thematic pattern of the headlines reveals what naturalized and commonsensical assumptions about social reality are taken for granted.

The thematic patterns in the headlines are either participants: *Seoul confirms U.S. should improve ties with N.K...* (Sept. 4), *Gallucci rejects N.K. proposal on nuclear reactors* (Sept. 17); or processes in the reduced form of nominalization: *Plan to support N.K. reactors possible when...* (Aug. 31). Nominalizations turns processes into states, and concrete into abstract which creates a new category of abstract entities. The creation of new entities is of considerable cultural and ideological importance because nominalizations themselves take on the role of goal which are treated as a presupposed entity, and even agents of processes. *Plan to support N.K. reactors possible...* (Aug. 31), *Seoul ready to resume S-N dialogue including summit* (Sept. 14), *Gallucci here to discuss P'yang nuclear issue* (Sept. 15), where the nominal group in the thematic position is the information which is presupposed and taken for granted: South Korean actors /givers, U.S. actors/mediators, and North Korean recipients. Thus the nominalizations in thematic position foreground the roles of participants.

The nominalizations which occur in thematic position are predominantly nuclear talks between U.S. and North Korea, and South Korea's attitude toward that (6 occurrences) and other events related to two Koreas and U.S. (2 occurrence). The nominalizations in thematic positions are more prominent in the headlines of the *Korea Herald* than in the *New York Times*.

South Korean participants occupy the highest proportion of thematic positions (56%, that is, 31 among 55). U.S. participants are the next most thematized participants (29%). North Korea occupies the relatively small proportion of thematic positions (11%). North Korean participants are foregrounded in thematic position in relation to processes of asking help, and threat of nuclear activities, consequently the cause of impasse.

The consistent foregrounding of South Korean participants in thematic position evokes in the mind of readers the commonsensical assumption about South Korea's position and role facing the North Korean nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula, and its effort to settle a difficult situation. The appearance of U.S.

participants in thematic position foregrounds U.S.' leading role in solving the problem as a mediator. The themes, therefore, contribute to the ideological common sense and its naturalization through linguistic transformations of the roles of South Korea and U.S. facing the North Korean nuclear threat because it is simply the way of conducting the picture of reality in the mind of readers.

Conclusion

Certain generalizations emerge from the above analysis of the headlines of news reports on the North Korea nuclear threat in South Korea in the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald*.

The systemic analysis of linguistic structures and processes in the headlines of news reports in the *New York Times* and the *Korea Herald* demonstrates that the newspapers are the means of representation of the world and that the newspapers are not simple reflection of the social facts but the manifestation of the specific ideologies. It reveals the generalizable features of an ideological news framework, i.e. the 'in-group ideologies' (van Dijk, 1987: 195) of superiority and uniqueness which are congruent with their national interests.

As Herman (1985) argues, the government is a major factor in a system of news production and dissemination as 'director of foreign policy and primary media source' (137). In reporting international events such as the North Korea nuclear issue, the collective power of the U.S. government and a normally cooperative mass media is very great. The *New York Times* ignored the fact that the direct threat of North Korean nuclear weapon in the Korean peninsula is toward the South Korea. It highlights the role of U.S. as international superintendent over the nuclear issue. The headlines of the *New York Times* reports represent the 'us vs. them' dichotomy. The U.S. belongs to 'us', whereas both the South and the North Korea are in the 'them' category. In this way, the headlines of the *New York Times* news coverage of the North Korean nuclear threat was ideologically motivated.

Contrary to the *New York Times*, The *Korea Herald* paid much more attention to the issues between two Korea instead of focusing on the major role of U.S as a supervisor of nuclear proliferation. For South Korea, the North Korean nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula is directly related to the national security; the direct threat of North Korean nuclear weapons is toward South Korea. Thus, the issue must be treated as an inter-Korean issue. Due to the North's refusal to negotiate with South Korea, U.S. is leading the talks with North Korea as a mediator to solve the North Korean nuclear issue. North Korea is a communist state threatening the security in the Korean peninsula, thus it is an enemy of all the democratic states. In this way, the *Korea Herald* represented the North Korean

nuclear issue within the 'us vs. them' dichotomy. South Korea and the U.S. are 'our' democratic states who fight for peace and get credence for that, whereas North Korea is a communist state who causes the nuclear issue and threatens the security in the Korean peninsula. Like the *New York Times*, the *Korea Herald* uses similar ways of representing events, thus forming the ideological news frameworks.

The selective attention in both newspapers forms a part of the ideological news framework, serves to signify the political reality and makes important ideological statements to the general public. The systemic analysis of the linguistic structures and processes in the headlines of news reports reveal political and ideological interests of each country underlying the news accounts.

This finding provides an evidence to support the claim that dominant discourse, i.e. the news media, are not quite independent and impartial as they would appear to be and that they do not simply reflect the social reality but articulate dominant ideologies in representing political events. As an analytical tool of this study, critical linguistics provided the essential framework to demonstrate how the detailed structures of language continuously shape the ideas presented, moulding them in the direction of the taken-for-granted beliefs.

Implications

This study is a contribution to the area of critical linguistic research in that the theoretical and methodological framework I have adopted has revealed the role of language in the news reports in sustaining relations of power.

This study links theory of ideology and social practice. In her recent book, Hasan (1996) argues that 'ideologies live through the common everyday actions - both verbal and non-verbal - of a host of social actors who are far from thinking consciously about it' (113). Considering that consuming newspapers is a fixed automatic part of our daily routine, the pervasive role of ideology is most evident in the newspapers which this study deals with.

Another implication of this study is that as Fairclough points out (1989: 235) that 'critique of the media has hardly ever been attempted due to the lack of a general access to modes of analysis.' This study attempts to make it possible for the marginalized parties to assume the right to reply to those represented in the newspapers.

This study has implications for teaching language awareness to adults as well as students in and out of school setting, and opens new directions of research that would devise strategies and methods of achieving critical language awareness.

Newspaper readers cannot easily read through a newspaper disinterestedly, and be aware of what is biased. What we really need is an educational program in critical reading within which critical linguistics would be a new methodological input.

APPENDIX A

The *New York Times* Headlines of 'the North Korea nuclear issue' September through December 1994.

1. North Korean Invites Carter to mediate; new chief seeks aid in dispute with U.S. (Sept. 2)
2. U.S. reassures Seoul on Nuclear Arms Talks With North Korea (Sept. 8)
3. U.S.-North Korea Hold Talks in Pyongyang. (Sept. 11)
4. Talks Leave North Korea And U.S. Split (Sept. 15)
5. In Korea, Fears of North Bring Crackdown on Left (Sept. 17)
6. Korea Talks: Hints of Thaw (Sept. 18)
7. U.S. Cuts Nuclear Arsenal, Hoping Russia Will Follow (Sept. 23)
8. U.S. and North Korea Announce Pause in Talks, but No Progress (Sept. 30)
9. North Korea And the U.S. At an Impasse (Oct. 6)
10. South Korea President Lashes Out at U.S. (Oct. 8)
11. Clinton Administration Reports a Breakthrough in North Korea Nuclear Arms Talks (Oct. 15)
12. U.S. and North Korea Agree To Build on Nuclear Accord (Oct. 18)
13. U.S. and North Korea Announce Accord to Build on Nuclear Pact. (Oct. 18)
14. President Approves a Plan to Aid the North Koreans (Oct. 19)
15. South Korea Says It Will Soon Allow Business Travel to North (Oct. 20)
16. U.S.-North Korea Accord Has a 10-Year Timetable. (Oct. 21)
17. U.S. and North Korea Sign Pact to End Nuclear Dispute (Oct. 22)
18. Japan Hints at Conditions on Aid for North Korea Atom Plants (Oct. 26)
19. Clinton, in Letter, Assures North Koreans on Nuclear Reactors. (Oct. 27)
20. South Korea to Lift Curbs On Business Ties to North: Easing of Nuclear Crisis Helps to Clear the Way (Nov. 8)
21. U. S. Promises To Maintain Foreign Policy: Says G.O.P. Gains Won't Bring Change (Nov. 10)
22. North Korea Reports Fulfilling a Nuclear Promise (Nov. 21)
23. Republicans Oppose Deal With Koreans: Senators Aim to Block Atom Pack With North (Nov. 27)
24. G.O.P. Critic Of Korea Pack Eases Stance: After Visit to North Optimism on Accord (Dec. 13)
25. U.S. Copter Said to Crash In North Korea: North Says Aircraft Was Shot as Intruder (Dec. 17)
26. U.S. Says Pilots Thought They Were Over South Korea (Dec. 20)

27. U.S. Issues New Warning to North Korea Over American Fliers (Dec. 21)
28. North Korea Returns the Body Of Downed U.S. Copter Pilot (Dec. 22)
29. U.S. Asks North Korea to Free Pilot (Dec. 23)
30. U.S. Presses North Korea To Free Pilot (Dec. 24)
31. Efforts to Free American Pilot Held in North Korea Continue (Dec. 25)
32. U.S. Warning North Koreans On Atom Deal: Failure to Release Pilot Threatens Relations (Dec. 28)
33. North Korea Says U.S. Pilot Admits a 'Flagrant Violation' (Dec. 29)
34. North Koreans Free U.S. Pilot Held 13 Days (Dec. 30)
35. Both Sides Can Claim A Victory In Release (Dec. 30)
36. Freed Pilot Tells How He Was Downed by North Koreans (Dec. 31)
37. In South Korea, Uneasiness Over U.S. Dealings with North (Dec. 31)

APPENDIX B

The *Korea Herald* Headlines of 'the North Korea nuclear issue' September through December 1994

1. Hanoi backs N-free Korean Peninsula: Seoul Pledges economic help including additional EDCF loans (Aug. 31)
2. Plan to support N.K. reactors possible when inter-Korean relations improve: Han (Aug. 31)
3. Kim D.J. to ask Carter to visit N. Korea again (Sept. 4)
4. Seoul confirms U.S. should improve ties with N.K. after S-N talks progress (Sept. 4)
5. Seoul to use U.S.-N.K talks to better inter-Korean ties (Sept 6)
6. Min. Han leaves for U.S. for talks on N.K. N-issue: To ask Wash. Not to make concession to P'yang (Sept. 6)
7. DPM Lee warns of difference between Wash. And Seoul over N.K nuke (Sept. 8)
8. N.K. demands to upgrade expert talks with U.S. (Sept. 8)
9. N. Korea offers Russian model as new reactor (Sept. 14)
10. Seoul ready to resume S-N dialogue including summit (Sept. 14)
11. Gallucci here to discuss P'yang nuclear issue: Also to explain results of U.S.-N.K experts talks (Sept. 15)
12. Contrasting differences on N-reactors stand in the way of U.S.-N.K. talks (Sept. 17)
13. Gallucci rejects N.K. proposal on nuclear reactors (Sept. 17)
14. Seoul to monitor U.S.-N.K. talks in Geneva: To hold consultations with Wash. To coordinate joint position (Sept. 22)
15. U.S. N-arms cut plan won't affect security here: Min. Han repeats call for N.K.N-transparency (Sept. 24)

16. P'yang warns to resume N-activities if Washington poses military threat (Sept. 27)
17. N.K. vice president's visit to China draws attention of P'yang watchers (Sept. 29)
18. Han takes pessimistic view of N.K.-U.S. talks in Geneva (Sept. 30)
19. Korea, U.S. firm on N.K. N-transparency (Oct. 2)
20. Kim says Yeltsin asks Clinton to provide N.K. with Russian N-reactors. (Oct. 6)
21. Korea, U.S. to beef up defense posture: Minister Rhee meets with Christopher, Perry, Sam Nunn (Oct. 8)
22. South could resume Team Spirit drill if no progress in U.S.-N.K talks: Kim (Oct. 9)
23. DLP criticizes Wash. soft stance on P'yang in nuke talks (Oct. 12)
24. Seoul-Washington feud on N. Korea N-issue not likely to calm down soon (Oct. 12)
25. U.S. moves to accept delay in special N-inspection: For 5 years until work on reactors is 75% complete (Oct. 14)
26. DP reacts positively to news about U.S.-N.K. nuclear accord (Oct. 16)
27. Kim seen to be haunted by U.S.-N.K. deal: Seoul's goal is to establish N.K. N-transparency prior to reactor (Oct. 16)
28. N.K.-U.S. nuke accord hoped to open S-N reconciliation: Gallucci, Kang putting final touches on agreement (Oct. 16)
29. Kim says U.S.-N.K. accord will promote stability in Korea (Oct. 19)
30. Seoul embraces agreement, saying S-N contacts possible this year (Oct. 19)
31. Seoul many have to pay additional costs for oil besides N. Korean nuclear reactors (Oct. 20)
32. Seoul will have to pay more than 50% in cost of N.K reactor: Gallucci (Nov. 11)
33. U.S., Japan back Seoul on N.K. issue: China also support South Korea's economic cooperation with North (Nov. 15)
34. U.S., N.K. agree on N.Y. meeting (Dec. 11)
35. U.S. chopper crash-lands 5 km inside N. Korea (Dec. 18)
36. U.S. command asks N.K. to return pilots of downed U.S. Army helicopter (Dec. 20)
37. Hubbard to limit talks in N.K. to pilot: Assures Seoul he won't respond to offers of political discussions (Dec. 29)

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