

The Power and Pedagogy of Quotations : Using a Political News Story in an EFL Classroom

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力関係が表れた引用を用いての教授法 : EFL 教室で政治ニュースを使用して

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要 旨

小論では外国語として英語を学ぶ学生が、政治的なニュース記事におけるメディア・アクセス ‘media access’ を評価する方法について調査した。まず始めに、メディアの重点やメディア・アクセスのポイントとして、引用箇所がどのような役割を果たしているのかについて論じた。その後、学生に実際のニュース記事を読ませる活動についての考察を行った。授業では、学生はニュース記事を取り上げるプランを作成し、それをもとに、同じテーマを扱った実際のニュース記事の評価する。日本人大学生の標準レベルクラスで書かせたコメントから、学生達は実際のニュース記事におけるメディア・アクセスを評価できるという結果が得られた。そして、外国語としての英語教育における新聞記事利用の多様な可能性について示唆した。

キーワード

外国語としての英語、ニュース、メディア、クリティカルペダゴジー

Abstract

This paper investigates one way of critically evaluating media access in a political news story with students studying English as a foreign language. The paper begins by examining how quotations act as the locus of media values and media access in the story. This is followed by a discussion of activities designed to help students engage with the authentic news story. The process in class involved students planning their own news stories then using these as a basis from which to critique the authentic news story of the same subject. Results drawn from the writing samples of a high-beginner Japanese university class indicate that students were able to evaluate media access from the authentic news source. Furthermore, implications for the use of political news stories in the foreign language classroom will be discussed.

Key words

English as a foreign language, news, media, critical pedagogy

1. Introduction

In foreign language education, theories of discourse analysis have stated the importance of going beyond the surface features of

language to include the social and interpersonal contexts contained within texts (McCarthy [1991 : 85]). In line with these principles, Fairclough (2001 : 197) makes the case

for critical language study in the classroom whereby the underlying power dynamics of a given text are not accepted as fact but, rather, able to be challenged. To do this, Fairclough suggests that classroom activities provide opportunities for raising students' critical awareness and producing meaningful discourse thus allowing them to reshape their relationship to the text and their own society.

This paper will discuss how an examination of quotations in a political news story was used to raise awareness of media access and provided an opportunity for meaningful discourse in the form of a critique of the story's allotment of quotations with a class studying English as a foreign language at a Japanese university. The paper begins with a discussion of the role that quotations play in political news stories in general and in one story in particular. Following this, the author will present the activities used for engaging students with the story and discuss the implications for the use of political news stories in the foreign language classroom.

2. Information and quotation in the news : explicit and implicit quotations

In examining the use of quotations in a political news story, it is important first to mention that information can be based ei-

ther explicitly or implicitly on quotation. Information based explicitly on quotation can be considered information that has been attributed to the source of that information, usually by way of a reporting verb or phrase such as 'say' or 'according to' (Bell [1991 : 206]). The category of explicit quotations consists of two sub-categories : direct and indirect quotations (Table 1). Direct quotations use quotation marks to denote the exact wording of a piece of information while indirect quotations do not. Information based implicitly on quotation can be considered information that has not been attributed to a particular source. Nevertheless, such information may in fact originate from one or even multiple sources (Fairclough [1992 : 79]) which the journalist or editor has decided not to include.

2.1 Explicit quotations

Information based on explicit quotation plays an important role in political news stories and journalists have several reasons for presenting information in this way. According to Tuchman (1972 : 660–5), attributing information to a source allows journalists to appeal to objectivity, protect themselves from claims of liable, present verification of facts, or, when verification is not possible, present competing unverifiable truth claims. Indirect quotations, on the

Table 1. Explicit and implicit quotations

Explicit quotations	Direct quotations	* Attributed to source * Uses quotation marks
	Indirect quotations	* Attributed to source * No quotation marks
Implicit quotations	Implicit quotations	* Not attributed to source * No quotation marks

other hand, allow journalists to take information from different parts of a speech event (such as an interview) and present that information together in one place thus focusing the story (Bell [1991 : 209]). In terms of the presentation of newsworthy information, explicit quotations (direct and indirect) are used to convey much of the information related to the main events of news stories (Bell [1991 : 57]). Despite any claims to objectivity that can be made through the use of attribution by journalists, Van Dijk (1995 : 8) states that the inclusion of certain voices to the exclusion of others is a conscious process of selection and therefore can be seen as the locus of media values. In other words, not everyone is granted equal access to the media and, generally speaking, those who are granted greater access can be seen to be valued more highly by the media.

2.2 Implicit quotations

It was mentioned earlier that, although not attributed directly to a source, implicit quotations may be based on one or more sources. Tuchman (1972 : 674) lists the degree to which journalists accept a given piece of information as common sense as one criterion for presenting information unattributed. This, however, raises questions about the ideological underpinnings of what is considered common sense, and the implications of framing certain information as such.

For Fairclough (2001 : 127), claims to common sense represent an ideological position which may serve to influence the reader to interpret events according to the values of those in power :

While unequal influence of social

groupings may be relatively clear in terms of who gets to be interviewed, for example, it is less clear but nevertheless highly significant in terms of whose perspective is adopted in reports. If, for instance, industrial disputes are systematically referred to as *trouble* or *disruption*, that is systematically building the employer's perspective into industrial news coverage (Fairclough [2001 : 42]).

It is thus apparent how journalists' selection of whose voices to include in a story, whether explicitly or implicitly, can result in events being framed from a certain perspective and according to certain values. This goes hand in hand with the ability to access the media in the first place, "In modern societies, discourse access is a primary condition for the manufacture of consent, and therefore the most effective way to exercise power and dominance" (Van Dijk [1996 : 102]). Hence, power is often a prerequisite for media access which, in turn, serves as a support structure for the interests of power.

3. Examining a political news story

The article (Appendix 1) to be examined comes from the BBC News website (BBC [2010]) and concerns Japan's Prime Minister at that time, Yukio Hatoyama, and his decisions to break a key election promise to remove the U.S. Futenma Airforce Base from the island of Okinawa.

3.1 Explicit and implicit quotation in the text

When comparing how much of the story

is explicitly and implicitly based on quotation, there is a clear divide between the top and the bottom half of the text. The top half is composed almost entirely of explicit quotations, counting for 10 out of 12 sentences, of which Prime Minister Hatoyama receives six, Okinawan Governor Nakaima receives three, and the people of Okinawa receive one. In contrast, the bottom half of the text is composed mostly of implicit quotations, which account for 9 out of 12 sentences.

The top half of the story focuses on new information related to the decision to keep the Futenma base operational. The bottom half of the story presents information related to the historical context of Japanese-American security agreements, background concerning the Futenma agreement and local opposition to it, and the consequences for Hatoyama's approval ratings. No new information is presented in the bottom half.

3.2 Voice and media access in the text

The story focuses on three stakeholders in particular: Prime Minister Hatoyama, Okinawan governor Nakaima, and a group of people from Okinawa who are opposed to the presence of the base. Their importance is signaled by their inclusion in the top half of the story. Other stakeholders mentioned in the bottom half of the story are the United States government, political analysts, people who attended an earlier protest on Okinawa, and Japanese voters. As Hatoyama and Nakaima are two high ranking officials, the only two people mentioned by name and the only people granted direct quotations, they could be considered the two most important people in the story. None-

theless, Hatoyama is the main topic of the story and the governor and people of Okinawa are placed in referent positions relative to him.

One can find that the general tone of the story is favourable toward Hatoyama. A majority of the story revolves around the prime minister's announcement to "scrap" his earlier plan to remove the troops stationed at Futenma. The word "scrap" implies the discarding of something useless and therefore could be seen to cast a positive light on Hatoyama's decision. It is also a colloquial term, which could serve a softening function. Only later is it mentioned that 'scraps plan' is equivalent to 'breaks election promise' but by that time the article has already signaled to the reader how events should be interpreted. In addition to the favourable tone he receives, the amount of voice attributed to Hatoyama amounts to more than double that of governor Nakaima and the people of Okinawa combined, including three out of four direct quotations in the story.

By most standards, the governor of Okinawa could also be considered a powerful position. In this situation, his role appears to be the voice of the local opposition. He attempts to put pressure on Hatoyama but accomplishes little, as his only direct quote is an appeal to Hatoyama to reconsider.

Despite having been spoken for by their governor, the people of Okinawa are also present in this story. Discredited by Hatoyama and described by the BBC as "banner-waving protesters," an unspecified number of people demonstrated at Hatoyama's arrival to Okinawa. No representative individuals are provided a chance to speak articulate-

ly their views via direct quotations. Instead, their voices are parceled together with the governor's appeal for reconsideration. Later in the story, concerns about sexual assault, noise, and a helicopter crash are mentioned (un-attributed) as some of the grievances held toward the presence of the base. Throughout the story, one finds the people being homogenized and spoken for – in other words, de-voiced.

While not especially active in this story, the United States government is provided with a significant amount of voice through Hatoyama's speech and the background and historical context sections. The concerns of the US are presented as dominant to those of Japanese public opinion, which the story mentions is strongly opposed to the presence of US bases. By citing national security reasons for keeping Futenma operational, Hatoyama leverages US military power against the very voters to whom he is breaking his promise.

4. Use in the classroom

Using news articles in the foreign language classroom can be beneficial to students. Even though some textbooks may try to focus on current events, the volume of up-to-the-minute news available online represents a distinct advantage over textbooks concerning the selection and timeliness of material. In this way, using current news allows teachers to appeal to the interests of a specific group of students at a specific time in a way that textbooks cannot. Newspapers also provide students with exposure to a common type of authentic text that students would be likely to encounter outside the classroom. Because the language

within the text is not filtered for students of English, the use of authentic texts has been said to help students prepare for communicating in the real world (McGrath [2002 : 105]). Teachers must be careful, however, to balance the benefit of exposing students to natural English with the danger of overloading students to the point that learning does not take place (McGrath [2002 : 117]). Some of these challenges will be discussed below.

A political story was chosen because, as demonstrated above, the use of quotations plays an important role in the genre of political news. Unlike other genres of news reporting that may adopt a more narrative style such as editorials or entertainment, political news stories rely on quotations to convey much of the important information. It could be argued that politics is the realm of speech acts, which is to say that one takes action and potentially effects change in the world by speaking. This can be said about the participants of the story examined here – the story *Japan PM scraps plan to move US base* centers on a speech act: the announcement of Hatoyama's decision plus the subsequent reaction to and potential fallout from that decision. There is no story, it seems, without people speaking. Through examining quotations in a political news story, one can see who is doing what and to what degree they are valued. This, in turn, provides an opportunity for students to play an active role in examining critically how the positioning and inclusion of quotations serves to present one version of events and to imagine alternate possibilities.

The BBC was chosen as the news source for two main reasons. First, the BBC

can be seen as representing neither a directly American nor Japanese perspective. Though there are many quality news outlets in the USA and Japan, news from a country not directly involved in the story was chosen to minimize the potential that the story would be presented from the perspective of one country at the expense of the other. Granted, accounting for such factors could also lead to a fruitful investigation. Second, the BBC is considered here to represent a balanced, mainstream perspective within the media landscape. While one could argue that there is no such thing as neutrality in the media, the BBC is regarded here to be a news outlet of high journalistic standards.

The sections below discuss several activities that were used to engage students' critical interpretive abilities regarding the BBC news article with regard to the values expressed by the amount of media access granted. The class consisted of 29 high-beginner first-year Japanese university students majoring in pharmacy. Students participated in two sets of activities. The first activity was for students to create a plan for a newspaper article about the Futenma Base decision, focusing specifically on defining what constitutes the important events and how much access to grant the various stakeholders. In the second activity, students compared their plans with the original BBC article in terms of the amount of media access granted via quotations and wrote their impressions. Since the class was at the beginner level an effort to grade the text was made whereby students were presented with only the first half of the article. Tasks were also graded so that students' specific goals for reading were to iden-

tify quotations for each person and to write comments specifically about this.

4.1 Method

To refresh students' memories and also to allow them to frame the issue in their own words, students were guided through two questions relating to their knowledge and understanding of the Futenma base issue. Students brainstormed in pairs about the following questions :

Q1) What words come to mind when you think of "Futenma" ?

Q2) Futenma was in the news back in May, do you remember why ?

The next step was for the students to start planning a news story about the Futenma base remaining on Okinawa by considering who will be granted a voice in the story and to what degree. The class was to imagine that the date was May 3, 2010, the day before the announcement that Futenma would remain. The following questions focused more on individual work, though consultation with other students was also encouraged to stimulate ideas.

Q3) Whose voices are important in this story ?

The teacher then introduced the class to three media events that were scheduled to occur the next day : 1) a protest by an unknown number of Okinawan people against the decision to keep the base ; 2) Prime Minister Hatoyama's press conference to announce that the base would remain ; 3) governor Nakaima's press conference to ex-

press his opposition to the continued presence of the base. To avoid any perceived bias about the importance of the events, they were presented to students by random selection resulting in the order above. Those three events were chosen to allow for a clean comparison with the BBC story and to acknowledge real events that occurred on May 4, 2010. Students were also given the opportunity to imagine alternative events worth media coverage.

- Q4) Which of these events is the most important event ?*
- Q5) Which of the remaining events will also be covered in the story ?*
- Q6) If there were space for 10 sentences, how many sentences should each event receive ?*

Having created a plan for covering the main events of the story and allotting quotations, students were presented with the BBC article. Students read the first half of the article with the purpose of identifying the amount of information attributed to each news actor then wrote their responses.

- Q7) Compare your plan with the BBC news story. What is your reaction to the number of quotations given to each person ?*

4.2 Results

This section presents a selection of student responses to the questions posed in class. Grammatical errors have been left unchanged and corrections in brackets have been added when deemed necessary.

In the first part of the Futenma brainstorm (Table 2), students' responses revolved around the USA, Japan, and conflict. For Q2 (Table 3), students described the situation in their own terms with popular responses presenting Hatoyama as someone who broke his promise or simple the air force base as the topic. In terms of whose voice was deemed to be important in the story (Table 4), the Okinawan people were the most common choice. Hatoyama was not mentioned by name though his party was.

For Q4 (Table 5), Hatoyama's press conference was selected as the top event (16 votes) followed by the protest (9) and Nakaima's press conference (4). Coupled with the results of Q5, each of the top three events were selected to have some place in the story. Event number 4, interviewing pro-base business leaders, received support from four students. For Q6, students awarded Hatoyama the most access.

Students then read the story to complete Q7 (Table 6). This proved to be chal-

Table 2. Selected student responses to Q1) What words come to mind when you think of "Futenma" ?

USA	demonstration	noise pollution	Ginowan city
marine base	USA air force	constitution (article 9)	real estate
argument	move	prime minister	difficult problem
Okinawa	secret agreement	PM Kan / Hatoyama	lie

Table 3. Selected student responses to Q2) Futenma was in the news back in May, do you remember why ?

At last, a military base in Futenma didn't move.
Hatoyama couldn't solve this problem by May.
Where [will the] marine base move from Futenma ?
Mr Hatoyama broke his manifestation [promise] to Okinawa people.
Constitution of Japan change.
A secret agreement got caught. Hatoyama prime minister was attacked by Mr. Tanigaki. So he said, "I have a plan". But his idea can't persuade Okinawa people.
When DPJ [Democratic Party of Japan] come into power they had manifesto [a plan] to move marine base to outside the prefecture. But that was not realized. So people around base holded a demonstration.
Decision of a base's new address.

Table 4. Student responses to Q3) Whose voices are important in this story ?

Okinawan people	Barack Obama
Specialists (ex, professor)	American people in USA
Officials from the Democratic Party of Japan	

lenging for many students, as the level of the text was difficult for them. Initially, some students identified only direct quotations – those with quotation marks. Many students also missed the reference to the Okinawan people as banner-waving protesters. This provided a chance for peer checking and a class feedback session about the distribution of quotations in the story. Following this, students wrote their comments.

Of the nine comments presented in Table 6, the first six (S1-S6) represent the range of opinion found in the class. A majority of students expressed the opinion that the people of Okinawa did not have enough and/or Hatoyama had too much voice in the story (S1-S5). Even when students themselves would have provided Hatoyama with the greatest access, there were still comments that the story was unbalanced (S5). Moreover, several students made a point to men-

tion that they thought media access was tied to power, as evidenced by S1-S4 and S9.

A minority of students felt that the balance of the story was correct (S6). S7 focused critical attention of the use of language in the story for labeling the people of Okinawa. S8 pinpointed the role of selection of content as it relates to media access. S9 commented that political news can exist within the genre of international or local news and that such a genre may impact media access.

5. Discussion

It is worth mentioning that though Hatoyama dominates the BBC story and the comments about media access, his importance was not signaled until the middle of the lesson. He was not identified much by name in Q1 and in Q2 he was cast as a villain. However, in Q3 (Whose voices are impor-

**Table 5. Student responses to Q4) Which of these events is the most important event ?
And Q6) If there were space for 10 sentences, how many sentences should each event receive ?**

	Hatoyama	Okinawan people	Nakaima	Other
Question 4	16	9	4	0
Question 6 (averaged)	4.25	3	2.5	0.25
Media access in BBC article	6	1	3	0

Table 6. Selected student responses to Q7) Compare your plan with the BBC news story. What is your reaction to the number of quotations given to each person ? (Individual responses to Q6 are provided for context)

Student	Student comments	Media access			
		H	Ok	N	O
S1	Okinawan people idea should be much more. I understand that Hatoyama speech is important. But I think I want to know local people idea.	4	4	2	0
S2	I think that unbalance. Okinawa's people opinion is little. Okinawa's people opinion is important. Hatoyama is Japanese top so media think Hatoyama's opinion is important.	5	3	2	0
S3	Bad balance. I hope to listen to Okinawan people because Okinawan people know about Okinawa's US base very much. Hatoyama is six !! It's many. Because he is Japan's Prime Minister	5	3	2	0
S4	I thought that Okinawan people should be more than Nakaima because I think this topic is central to people in Okinawa. But, I agree this story because Mr. Nakaima is a leader of Okinawa.	6	3	1	0
S5	I was surprised to the amount of Mr. Hatoyama's article. I think that Mr. Hatoyama's article is too much. Okinawan people's article is too little because I think Okinawan people's opinion is more important than Mr Hatoyama's.	3	4	3	0
S6	I think good. Hatoyama is important and Okinawa people is not important.	5	2	3	0
S7	"Okinawan people" is different words in this story so I missed counting. This story's balance is not good because other's and Okinawan people's opinion is very small	/	/	/	/
S8	This distance [discrepancy] are BBC's favor [bias]. In addition, BBC examined almost [exclusively] Hatoyama. BBC had to examine about Okinawa people, Nakaima's voice, and others.	3	3	1	3
S9	BBC international media should get the word of Hatoyama as important subject. But if I make my paper, I want to make local paper, so I think the word of Okinawa people is very important.	1	5	4	0

tant?) students identified officials from his party as having an important role but not specifically Hatoyama. It was only once he was put up against the people and governor of Okinawa that his dominant position in the story was established among students. Many of those same students then rebuked the BBC for placing him in, what they believed to be, too dominant a position relative to the other stakeholders. Thus, many students did agree with the BBC that Hatoyama's voice was important and, in many cases, the most important. Their objections appear to centre on the BBC's exclusion of the people of Okinawa whom students also placed in a position of importance in this story.

The Futenma story received much media coverage over the previous year. Judging by the comments and reaction of the class, few, if any, of the students were unaware of the issue. The activities that took place before reading the BBC story were designed to raise awareness among students insofar as they examined their own knowledge on the issue and had to make choices about newsworthiness. By selecting how much space to provide each stakeholder, students could be said to have established their own media values from which to examine the topic of media access in the authentic news story. After reading the story, students were in a position to produce a piece of meaningful discourse – to speak back to the BBC concerning its portrayal of the events that day. As the sample comments demonstrate, they were not shy about criticizing or agreeing with the BBC's position on the story.

The news story was not introduced until the end but still played an important role in

the lesson. It was mentioned earlier that both the text and tasks were graded to the level of the students. Even still, many students had difficulty with the text despite the focus on identifying quotations rather than more content or comprehension-based tasks. S7's inability to connect banner-waiving protesters to Okinawan people demonstrates how language can make even a simple task challenging. S7's problem was common among students and from speaking with them, the problem was partly comprehension (not understanding the words) and partly strategic (not connecting subjects to speech verbs ; not identifying alternate wording). The amount of unknown words throughout the story would have made an in-depth textual treatment difficult and possibly demotivating. Since the subject was familiar, it was not essential to exploit the text for its informational content. In a different class with more advanced learners, more options to go in that direction would exist. In the case of this class, the text functioned as a source of information that provided social and interpersonal context through the way that the BBC framed the events via media access and presented them as a packaged news story to its audience.

6. Conclusion

This paper has examined the use of quotations within the context of a political news story in an EFL class. The analysis has sought to demonstrate how explicit and implicit quotations, and media access are clear indicators of how elite perspectives are valued and propagated in the story. It was demonstrated that a dominant position can be established through having more voice, as

evidenced by being granted more quotations, or by having one's concerns presumed to be significant.

In the context of foreign language pedagogy, one specific series of activities was used to raise students' critical awareness of language and power through establishing students' own 'media values' in relation to media access and provide an opportunity for meaningful discourse relating to the media access in the selected political news story. The discussion of such activities presented some of the possibilities and challenges of approaching news articles through the lens of critical interpretation. Teachers are encouraged to consider the contexts of their unique teaching environments when designing their activities. Quotations in the media offer a rich source of textual, interpersonal, and social contexts for teachers and learners to explore through critical pedagogy that would only benefit from further description and classroom research in this field.

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Appendix 1. BBC News Story Used in Class

Japan PM scraps plan to move US base from Okinawa

Japan's Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has said it will not be feasible to entirely remove a controversial US base from the island of Okinawa.

The US Marines' Futenma base is deeply unpopular with many residents and removing it had been a key election pledge of the prime minister.

But on a visit to the island, Mr Hatoyama said "realistically speaking, it is impossible" to fully relocate it.

The island is home to over half the 47,000 American troops based in Japan.

Mr Hatoyama, speaking on his first visit to Okinawa since becoming prime minister, said maintaining the base in some form was needed for national security, under Japan's post-war military alliance with the US.

"I really feel sorry as I visit here today that I must ask for the Okinawan people's understanding that part of the base operations would have to stay," he said.

He called on the Japanese people to be "willing to share the burden, because the bases are necessary for national security".

Mr Hatoyama, who had promised to resolve the issue by the end of this month, was greeted by banner-waving protesters demanding the closure of the base as he arrived for his one-day visit.

He said that regardless of where the troops were moved there would be "critical voices from local people".

But the governor of Okinawa prefecture, Hirokazu Nakaima, told reporters Mr. Hatoyama's plans went against the wishes of local people, and that he still had time to change his mind.

"There is still some time until the end of May. I want him to continue to consider this in line with his election pledges," he said.

Protests

Japan and the US agreed a deal in 2006 to reduce the US troop presence in Okinawa, under which Japan would contribute \$6.1bn (£4bn) towards the cost of moving some 8,000 troops to the Pacific island of Guam.

The airfield at Futenma would be closed and replaced by a new base in Nago in Okinawa's less populated north.

The US has been staunchly opposed to any renegotiation of the deal, and the row has damaged bilateral ties.

It has also undermined support for Japan's centre-left government.

Mr Hatoyama took office in September, promising to steer Japan into a more independent relationship with the US - reassessing Okinawa was a central part of this pledge.

But his approval rating have plummeted in recent month to around 20%, partly over what has been seen as his indecision over Okinawa.

Last month, nearly 100,000 people staged a protest on the southern island, demanding that the base be removed.

Islanders have been angered by incidents involving US troops based there, including the 1995 rape of a 12-year-old Japanese girl by three US servicemen and a helicopter crash on a university campus in 2004.

Other complaints have focused on noise levels and objections to the US military use of Japanese land.

Analysts say Mr Hatoyama's handling of the bases issue could be critical ahead of elections for Japan's upper house of parliament in July.

Okinawa is the focal point of the security treaty between the US and Japan which has balanced military power in the north-east Asian region since the end of World War II.

Under the pact, Japan - which is prevented from maintaining a war-ready army by its pacifist constitution - subsidises the US military presence while the US guarantees Japan's security.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asiapacific/8658901.s> (last visited June 5, 2010)