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# Five National News Programs on the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011

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(Received 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013, Accepted 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014)

## Abstract

This study compares the television reporting of the Great East Japan Earthquake/tsunami in equivalent news programs of five different countries (Japan, the UK, Germany, France, and the U.S.A.) on March 11 and 15, 2011. Use of the KJ method finds the content and its presentation in each news program are closely linked to the cultural styles of each region. The relationships of the visual (static, in movement, animated, etc.) and the oral (announcement, report, interview, off-voice narration, etc.) are partially taken into consideration for the news examined. The comparison's aim is to elucidate the focus of the news content and its linguistic and visual presentation which are biased by cultural norms and assumptions

Keywords: communicative style, cultural style, TV news programs

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In 1985, Galtung described academic styles he had personally encountered and divided them into Gallic, Teutonic, Saxonian and Nipponic styles, each of which he theorized, encompasses a core region and its periphery. The styles he described have been further researched by others and were also found in domains other than academia. Schroll-Machl (2002) and Nees (2006) found the Teutonic communicative and cultural style to be marked by seriousness, directness, analysis and thoroughness. Kainzbauer (2002) found the Saxonian communicative and cultural style to be more focused on empirical data, diplomatic (indirect), communicative, relationship-building, and pragmatic and Muench (1990) added (especially for the U.S.) to be purpose-driven, with quick changes and oriented towards popular taste. Yamashita (2003) found evidence for the Nipponic style to be focused on social relationships, on uniting differences, and on displaying vagueness to avoid confrontation while Barmeyer (2000) found the Gallic (French) style highly esthetic,

theory-oriented, relating polarizing arguments through 'verbal elegance'. In Mijnd Huijser's 'The Cultural Advantage' (2006) and 'Managing Mindsets' (coauthored with Danae Huijser in 2011) a differentiated portrayal of all the styles is given within several international companies.

By comparing prime-time TV news broadcasts from these five countries, this study attempts to shed light on a portion of these different communicative styles which might emerge in the oral and visual presentation of the evening news. As broadcast news is always selective and chosen according to well researched criteria (Maier et al, 2010), the common topic of the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011 was explored, which although it may be sensational, was reported on for more than a week.

No matter how similar news programs from different parts of the world might seem to be, they still have different communicative styles and different priorities in their content. Bolten (2002) has demonstrated that communicative styles are in themselves cultural styles, subtly showing the values held important in a given culture. This study aims to show a) cultural norms are unconsciously perpetuated in the form of communicative styles in the media, which while being part of their respective cultures at the same time link to other cultures

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and b) the same media are influenced by those other cultures.

## 2 METHOD

Various nations' television broadcast news covering the Great East Japan Earthquake and the resulting tsunami and nuclear catastrophe was used as it was the center of interest around the world at that time. A week of reporting about this event has been gathered from five countries (Japan's NHK News7, the U.K.'s BBC News at Six, Germany's ARD Tagesschau, France's TF1 LE20H, and the U.S.'s ABC Evening News) in order to compare and analyze their contents and presentation (linguistic, visual, and cultural).

More than a year of extreme difficulties in obtaining copies of the Japanese NHK and the BBC News about the Great East Japan Earthquake/tsunami caused a delay in analyzing this topic, but it has lost none of its impact. The German and French news programs were downloaded from the internet and the ABC Evening News could be borrowed from the Vanderbilt University News Archive. The news programs chosen for each country are all well-known and have a reputation of credibility and long-standing. Except for ABC they are the most watched news programs in their respective countries.

The entire news broadcasts were transcribed by the author and by collaborators, including captions and sub-titles etc. The author then measured the length of time allotted for each news sequence about the catastrophe in each news program, as well as the length and type of prevalent shots. Building on previous findings concerning NHK, the BBC and the Tagesschau (Krause-Ono, 2012) the cultural styles of news presentation, such as the non-verbal and paraverbal elements of communication, as well as the ways of interacting between newscasters, correspondents, experts etc. will be especially referred to for the French and American news. To find the overall focus or frame of the presentation of each news program the KJ method of Kawakita Jiro (1986) was used, including looking at the repetition of keywords, clusters or related words.

By comparing the above mentioned facets, the different frames and foci of the event become apparent, as well as the different communicative styles of the news programs. In this paper, translations by the author are marked (\*).

On the first day of the catastrophe, the visual material

is mostly provided by Japan and all the news programs chose from it. The news of this first day, March 11, will be contrasted with the news of four days later, March 15.

## 3 THE NEWS OF MARCH 11, 2011

### 3.1 Japanese NHK News7 March 11, 2011

Japan is 8 to 9 hours ahead of Europe and 13 to 17 ahead of the US. The quake happened at 14:46 Japan time. Roughly four hours later the normal evening news would have been aired, however, NHK disregarded regular programing and continually broadcast about the catastrophe. As there was no official start of that day's News7, a total of 60 minutes was analyzed beginning from the usual news time of 7 p.m..

As can be seen from the following keywords, the NHK program gives repetitive information in bits and pieces without apparent priority. Except for Edano's press conference, which seems to call for action, there is no report about any actions being taken. Everywhere things happen to people, much reporting about individuals, schools and certain buildings, quake damage and the tsunami rolling inland. The message is, we have to share this, everywhere is important, and Tokyo is the center. The screen is full of subtitles: below, top left, top right, also on left side. Sometimes the upper part is a moving band of news reporting about individual deaths, new tsunamis or quakes, their degree of strength and location. Bottom right a small map of Japan with alert stages for tsunami is visible, coast lines blinking in colors indicating the varying heights of an expected tsunami. The keywords are: 地震 "earthquake" (82, 45 in subtitles), 津波 "Tsunami" (80, 10 in subtitle), 福島 "Fukushima" (76, 43 in subtitle), 東北 "Northeastern" (66, combined with area, region, electricity), 仙台 "Sendai city" (47), 宮城 "Miyagi Prefecture" (44), 中継 "live" (41), 警報 "alert, warning" (35), 避難 "refuge, evacuation" (32), 東京 "Tokyo" (31 plus 11 in subtitle), バス "bus" (27), 対応 "tackle, deal with" (25), 建物 "building" (24), 伝えします "report/ed" (23), 観測 "measured" (19, 1 in subtitle), 青森 "Aomori Prefecture" (17), 火 "fire" (16), 緊急事態 "state of emergency, crisis" (12), 河口 "river mouth, estuary" (12), 東京電力 "Tepco" (11), 海岸 "coast" (11), 繰り返して "repeat" (11), 停電 "power shutdown" (10).

The news consists mainly of visual reports in voice-over by correspondents and anchor Takeda. The

latter is visible only three times, in medium close-up sitting in a light-blue suit and necktie at a desk. The visual reports move back and forth between places such as Sendai, Fukushima and other smaller locations damaged by the quake/tsunami, and the transportation situation in Tokyo for 58% of the time. The shots' lengths are between ten and seventy seconds or more. The camera is often static or moves slowly, zooming in and out. The voice-over often repeats information about bus transportation in Tokyo and describes what is currently visible on screen. Voiceovers of reports about various separate incidents such as deaths or injuries of individuals are given while showing non-related shots, such as damage caused by the quake. Three times scenes of the tsunami are shown, taking 10% of the news time. In-between, newscaster Takeda appears in medium close-up in the studio and reports for 2 minutes at high speed with forward moving head movements. The reports cover Fukushima Daiichi, the non-working cooling system and Tepco's report to the government of a state of emergency.

Chief Cabinet Officer Edano's press conference is shown mid-way, lasting for nearly seven minutes. He announces nuclear emergency status, stating proper procedures are being undertaken, people should stay calm, things will be taken care of, and no radiation leaks have been detected. Edano repeats this news several times during the press conference. The content is again repeated by Takeda in voice-over, and once again in a mostly voice-over interview with correspondent Yamazaki from the Science and Culture Department of NHK, where the reason for declaring emergency status is downplayed: "dating back to a decision made in 2001 after an incident at Tokai Nuclear Power Plant" (\*) while shots of the Fukushima plants are shown, looking nice and proper. Shots of the Fukushima or Onagawa plants are shown for nearly 22% of the news time.

### 3.2 BBC News at Six of March 11, 2011

The BBC spends 46% of its 30 minute 40 second news program on the catastrophe in Japan. The focus of the program is on the immenseness of the quake/tsunami and the resulting helplessness expressed by the keywords, as well as accompanying phrases, e.g.: ordeal, chaos, could only watch, trapped, claimed the lives of so many, greater horror, terrifying, crushing, tossing, swept up, swept away, absorbed, immense, long history of battling with the forces of nature. Shots and tone of voice are partly emotion-seeking. Although the nuclear emergency is mentioned three times, it is

rather downplayed as it is always mentioned that the reactors shut down automatically. The keywords are: Japan (used 25 times, 8 in writing), quakes (23, 12 in writing), earthquake (17), tsunami (15, 4 in subtitle), fire (9, 1 in subtitle), hit/s (9), dead/deaths (7), thousand/s (7), devastation (6), huge (6), wave/s (5), disaster (5), struck (5), collapse (5).

The introduction is sudden and attention-grabbing showing 8 shots of the tsunami sweeping in, a sea whirlpool, and fires. Newscaster Bruce reports in voice-over: "Several fires have broken out... A nuclear emergency has been declared as reactors have automatically shut down. There have been more than 50 aftershocks. The quake was 8000 times more powerful than the recent one in New Zealand." The comparison to the New Zealand quake is much more strongly emphasized than the report about the nuclear emergency, which is also justified by an automatic shutdown. On this first day of the news distance in km was not correctly changed into miles.

The main report is divided into themes such as 'The Quake', 'The Tsunami', 'Infrastructure' and 'Transport' with female reporter Kendall in voice-over describing the scale of the quake and tsunami pictures shown. An Englishman living in Tokyo also tells in voice-over how he feared he would die. In the 'Tsunami' part, PM Kan is shown in medium close-up and translation: "...I offer my deepest sympathy to the people who have suffered the disaster." Reports about huge fires and another mentioning of: "There were also, worryingly, incidents at two nuclear plants. They shut down automatically when the tremors began, but a small blaze started in the turbine hall of one and the cooling system failed in the other. Local residents were evacuated as a precaution." This is accompanied by shots of Fukushima nuclear plants. It then continues about broken or swept away roads, the Sendai airport, and stranded people in Tokyo. Kendall summarizes in voice-over: "As nighttime fell, fires were still breaking out ... Rescue teams reported they'd found hundreds dead in Sendai...Many people are still missing. Aftershocks have continued. On this day of catastrophe, the scale has been so immense; it is hard to absorb it all." The initial 13% of news time are very intense and crude. Most of the shots are shown for at least 4 seconds, many for longer. Tokyo correspondent Buerk in medium close-up gives tidbits of the disaster: "... It is these little glimpses, pictures of what is happening in very local areas that can give us an idea of what's happening in the wider area. ..." He emphasizes that the death toll is bound to rise.

For 8% of the news time Science Correspondent Shukman in studio uses colloquial words to explain the causes of the catastrophe with graphs and simulations. He illustrates the many quakes Japan experienced since 1900. In-between he is briefly scientifically backed by an expert emphasizing the enormous amount of energy released. Bruce then announces there will be special programming on BBC tonight plus news on a website always available. After news about other events, another nearly 8% covers the Japan quake, showing a Japanese amateur film from YouTube taken with a mobile phone. This is followed by shots from official Japanese sources, again stressing the magnitude of the disaster.

### 3.3 German ARD Tagesschau of March 11, 2011

The Tagesschau of March 11, 2011 totals 20 minutes 12 seconds, 5 minutes longer than usual. The catastrophe in Japan is covered for 54% of the time. Clearly the main focus of the news presentation is already on Fukushima nuclear plants with concerns of a possible meltdown. Of the keywords, 24% are Fukushima-related, and only 12.4% are about the actual quake and tsunami catastrophe. The keywords are: Japan (used 20 times), Beben “quake” (10), Menschen “people” (10), japanisch “Japanese” (9), Tsunami (9 including warnung, welle), Atom (9, eg. Atomkraftwerk “nuclear plant”), Welle/n “wave/s” (7), Erdbeben “earthquake” (7), Reaktor (7), Fukushima (6), Gefahr “danger” (6), kuehl “cool-related words” (6, eg. Kuehlsystem “cooling system”, Kuehlanlage “cooling facility”, gekuehlt “cooled”), Kernschmelze “meltdown” (5), Nachbeben “aftershock” (4), zerstoert “destroyed” (4), Katastrophe (4).

The broadcast gives a very serious, seemingly neutral and reserved kind of presentation. The newscaster’s nearly motionless and calm reporting has been described in Krause-Ono (2012). It is unusual that three shots are shown before the newscaster appears who summarizes in voice-over what has happened and then continues in medium close-up: “...Caused by the catastrophe, troubles occurred in nuclear plants. It is said that no radioactivity has leaked.” (\*). For 10% of the total news program, long and very long shots of the catastrophe, quake, tsunami, fires, destroyed areas and infrastructure are shown without focusing on any living being. The next 10% focus on the cooling problems in Fukushima, the 3-km-evacuation zone, and Edano’s press-conference. Female correspondent in voice-over: “A speaker tries to calm the citizens. The evacuation is only a precaution... However, the problems at the

reactor seem to be serious. According to the Japanese NISA the cooling water level in the reactor is dropping. This can lead to an overheating, in the worst case to a meltdown. It has not happened yet, however agencies report that the cooling system is without power and runs on an emergency device.”(\*)

In an extensive and fact-loaded 10% of news time Japan’s geological situation and the probable mechanism of quake and tsunami are explained, followed anew by nearly 9% of news time about Fukushima. Newscaster in medium close-up: “... However, Roettgen does not want to exclude that a meltdown in the Japanese nuclear plant Fukushima is, in the worst case, possible.” (\*) An expert says: “In case of a real meltdown this would be after Chernobyl the worst case we have had.... Now everything depends how successful the emergency measures will be. Either nothing happens or we will have a meltdown.”(\*) Newscaster in voice-over explains that despite immediate shut-down of reactors, because of the heat; there might be a catastrophe if it is not cooled down. “Federal environment minister Roettgen too deems a meltdown possible.” (\*) Roettgen in direct: “After all what we know we can exclude any radioactive influence on Germany. This is due to the great distance to Japan as well as to what we know about the actual weather.”(\*) At the end of the Japan-related news Chancellor Merkel is shown expressing her sympathy and assuring help. The newscaster concludes all news with a brief reference to the following special program on the catastrophe in Japan.

### 3.4 French TF1 LE20H of March 11, 2011

The broadcast lasts 42 minutes 6 seconds, about 10 minutes longer than usual, with quake and tsunami related news comprising 80% of the time. TF1 has no special program that evening; the catastrophe is reported on only in the news program. In total 15 correspondents and journalists (two are colleagues from other media) report in one to three minute-slots: nine about the actual disaster in Japan and the past quakes in Tokyo and Kobe comprising 57%, and six on the impact on Pacific-bordering countries and past tsunamis in Hawaii and Indonesia, comprising 23%. Eleven of the correspondents/journalists are only heard in voice-over, three are partly visible in split screen, and the science correspondent both in voice-over as well as in the studio. Before each of those fifteen reports, newscaster Clair Chazal (CC) gives an average

20 second overview of the news to come and announces the name of the reporter.

Fukushima is mentioned by CC literally only once in the beginning of the news. The shots portray the immensity of the tsunami and the catastrophe is reported on from different angles. The link to surrounding countries as well as to previous catastrophes in Japan and in the region is done thoroughly in text as well as in shots. To link close and far, immensity and facts, present and past seems to be one of the major underlying principles.

The keywords underline the focus of the program on the catastrophe linked to past ones. Variations of nouns, accompanied by adjectives or participles, contribute to the eloquence of the reports, supported by accented narration. The keywords are: séisme “quake” (39), tsunami (38, 9 in subtitle, 7 directly related to actual catastrophe, others to bordering countries or past tsunamis), Japon (36, 16 in subtitle), vague “wave” (34, 14 about the actual disaster), tremblements de terre “earthquake” (23), alerte “warning” (23), japonais “Japanese” (13), victime (11), secousse/s “aftershock/s” (11), personnes (10), magnitude (9), passage (8), océan (8), eau “water” (8), bateau/x “ship/s” (7), catastrophe (7), provoqué (7), sismique “seismic” (5, 2 anti-seismic), raz de marée “tsunami” (5), gigantesque “giant” (5), frappé “hit” (5), réplique “aftershock” (5).

The newscaster’s non-verbal and para-verbal communication contrasts with the German. In medium close-up CC is sitting dressed décolleté at the immense studio’s desk, which seems to be the middle of an intersection of several roads. Her facial expressions, as well as tone of modulation, are animated. The nodding of the head starts from the shoulders/neck, supported by movements of the upper body, underlining what is verbally expressed. The head is often tilted halfway to the right, showing left side to audience, with eyes directed directly towards the camera. CC addresses the audience with ‘vous’, polite ‘you’. She uses expressions such as: ‘essayons’ (Let’s try to..), ‘Je vous le rappelle’ (I remind you of), ‘vous le savez’ (you know (it)) ‘on a compris’ (we have understood), ‘vous avez compris’ (you have understood), ‘on rappelle’ (one remembers). CC in studio reports combined with audience-orientation. The two online interviews are in ‘vous’, calling one by first name once, thanking in both cases by saying full name. At the end of all reports the correspondents’ names appear in subtitle.

The broadcast begins with fanfare, medium shots of the quake are shown without any voice-over for 16 seconds,

followed by one minute of shots of the tsunami, devastation and big fires while CC gives facts and figures in voice-over, thus relating contrasting the emotional impact and rational reporting.

A strong 9% portrays the intensity of the quake/tsunami. The text in voice-over is spoken by two correspondents in a very dramatically intense way. Voices start out deep and calm, gradually becoming quicker, reaching a climax and again becoming softer and slower. Reports on the devastation, on big fires (one minute of consecutive shots of night fires are shown), on rescues, on survivors in camps, on training for earthquakes, and the probable death toll on the northeast coast follow. The calmness of the Japanese is stressed three times in different reports, which is also underlined by the in total four interviews of Japanese in Tokyo. They appear in medium close-up and three of them seem to smile.

Experts in French institutes give the scientific explanation for quake/tsunami. A two minute discussion between CC and scientific correspondent Fabrice Collaro takes place in the studio. They sit diagonally opposed at the above mentioned desk. The (non)-verbally animated talk is accented by continued switching of camera-angles, going from Collaro in close-up back to CC, again long-shot of both, then zooming towards them, etc. Collaro stresses the actual quake being 900 times stronger than the one in Kobe. In following reports the high standard of Japanese quake-resistant architecture, infrastructure, and tsunami warning system is stressed.

Drastic shots of the immense tsunami of 2004 are shown, again accompanied by numbers and facts given in voice-over. Lastly, President Sarkozy expresses his sympathy and offers help. CC also reports about a cultural event, which will raise money to support victims in Japan.

### 3.5 American ABC Evening News of March 11, 2011

The news program is 28 minutes 36 seconds long, including 6 minutes and 32 seconds of advertisements. Of the actual news time 96% is related to the disaster in Japan.

Newscaster Diane Sawyer stands in studio, in medium close-up with only herself and half of the screen wall visible. She keeps her chin back, half looking up to the camera with shining eyes, bobbing her head often. More than the keywords, the language and presentation are revealing. Short sentences are used to maximize emotion-catching, emotion-building and attention-seeking. Many verbs are used, appealing to

people's emotions and emphasizing empathy with the Japanese. The keywords are: earthquake (25), tsunami (19), nuclear (16, with plant, expert, accident etc.), disaster (9), backup system (7), melt down (3)

The introduction with Sawyer in distinct, slow and much accented voice-over has three parts: quake/tsunami "roaring as fast as a jumbo jet", nuclear fear "with the volcanic heat from the reactor rising", and survivors "people made it through the worst to a reunion within the arms of those they love". The shots are close, often medium close-ups and change quickly (3 seconds or less). Instead of cuts, there is a quick sliding in of new shots. Sawyer, in full body medium shot, dressed in black suit and red high-necked blouse, stands on a map of the Pacific showing Japan, the main points appear on screen wall. On the right rear, an office is visible.

The main news starts off with scenes of the tsunami, vividly and metaphorically described by Sawyer inviting audience to watch: "... the tsunami, racing at the speed of a jumbo jet... You can see it... You can see... Those are cars riding the rapids, apocalyptic scenes... And a nuclear power plant suddenly finding itself without backup pumps to cool the 3400 degree uranium in the reactor core."

In total there are five correspondents, two interviews of Americans living in Japan, and one amateur video by a young Japanese. Two experts are interviewed and one physicist is in the studio with Sawyer.

The first correspondent reports in voice-over about the earthquake/tsunami for 16% of the time, calling on the audience to watch and stressing the reality of shots: "Fresh pictures..., you can see the fear and incomprehension.... This is the real thing. ... You are seeing live footage of the tsunami engulfing the port... This is what is happening right as we speak.... Watch as this... To get a sense of the scale of this thing, check out this lone man... Or look at this boat, ..."

In two interviews Americans living in Japan describe their feelings. Next, the path of the tsunami to Hawaii and the American West Coast is documented by numerous tweets; of which some emotional ones are presented. Hotlines are introduced and references to Google, Facebook and Twitter to search for people who may have been affected. The news up to here comprises 45% of time.

This is followed by a 20% time-slot about the Fukushima nuclear plant with a new correspondent, Cuomo. He explains in voice-over a simulation of the cooling system of a reactor using an alarming tone and mentioning meltdown. Three Mile Island is mentioned,

where a meltdown happened, but tragedy was avoided. Cuomo is shortly sitting in studio reporting about backup power still lacking. A physicist sits with Sawyer at a table, and explains with colored blocks the effect of insufficient cooling water, which could lead to a meltdown within 30 minutes.

A Japanese correspondent in Tokyo being asked by Sawyer "What have you seen in the faces of people?" replies: "...Japanese like to believe they are very prepared for earthquakes." and stresses the constant aftershocks and feeling of dizziness. A report follows about the west coast of America, where a mini-tsunami had arrived. The correspondent praises Japan's advanced warning and protection system, and quake-resistant constructions.

In conclusion Sawyer refers to a special program that evening and says: "Earlier today the President reminded all of us that events like these simply reinforce our certainty that we share one planet, bound by our vulnerabilities. So we leave you tonight with some snapshots of people so much like all of us here at home." For 42 seconds, ten pictures of Japanese are shown with only music heard.

#### 4 SUB-CONCLUSION 1

On March 11 all five programs had little preparation time, reporting on the same content and using many of the same visuals provided by Japanese media. However, even on this first day the focus of each broadcast is quite different. In the Japanese NHK program information is given repetitively in bits and pieces without apparent priority and no ending. Fukushima is covered for 22% of the time without mentioning any meltdown. BBC's focus is on the immensity of the disaster and people's helplessness, downplaying Fukushima although mentioning it. The German Tagesschau, however, already focuses in a serious manner on the Fukushima non-cooled nuclear power plants, several times mentioning a possible meltdown. The French TF1 strives in eloquence to cover the whole disaster, linking it to Pacific-bordering countries as well as to past disasters. Fukushima is not covered. The American ABC reports sensationally and emotion-seeking on the disaster, also mentioning a possible meltdown in Fukushima, stressing that all people are equal.

#### 5 NEWS OF MARCH 15, 2011

##### 5.1 Japanese NHK News 7 March 15, 2011



News7 starts at 7 p.m. and continues for several hours. For this analysis only the first hour is analyzed. As can be seen from the keywords, the main subject is the situation of the Fukushima plant, which is covered in the first half of the news. During this time 200 ‘uhs’ are accumulated, indicating the intention not to say too much. The focus of the second half is on people: evacuated, rescued and reunited ones. The keywords are: あのー “uh” (103), 避難 “take refuge, flee” (as refugee camp, refugee life) (97, 20 in subtitle), えー “uh” (71), Fukushima (as Fukushima Daiichi / prefecture / part of address etc. (90, 20 in subtitle), 原発 “nuclear power/plant” (25, 23), 放射 ... “radioactive” (... something) (46, 13), 住民 “citizens, inhabitants” (36, 6), まー “uh” (29), 退避 “seek shelter” (28, 6), 爆発 “explosion” (23), 影響 “influence” (on .....health, body etc.) (20, 4), 爆発 “explosion” (19, 3), tsunami (15, 1), 救助・救出 “rescued (15), おー “uh” (15), 不安 “worry, scared” (14), Miyagi (prefecture) (12+19), 原子力 “nuclear power” (plant, committee) (13), 被害 “harm, got harmed” (13), 圧力 “pressure” (chamber) (13, 13), 計測 “measured” (9, 2), 火災 “fire” (8, 3), 核燃料 “fuel rods” (9), 寒 “cold” (9), 冷 “cool/ing” (system etc.) (8), 事故 “accident” (7), 情報 “information” (7 + 3).

The news starts with a 45 seconds close-up of a young man rescued after 96 hours, immediately followed by a still picture of Fukushima nuclear power plants, where new troubles occurred. Then follows the usual introduction with fanfare, the emblem News7 slides in and newscaster Takeda appears standing at a desk. The date of March 14, Monday appears in subtitle, which is the date of the day before. Takeda shows a grave face, while behind him a huge still picture of the Fukushima plants looms. His body sways a little and he reports about the new troubles at the plants, now concerning Reactor 2 and 4. The evacuation zone is now 20 km, plus a 10 km stay-indoors zone. This is repeated several times. Next, Prime Minister Kan addresses the people in a press conference, asks them to stay calm but also adds that radiation might rise. His spokesperson Edano stresses that radioactivity, although still high, is now lower. The special headquarters which had been set up close to the plant has had to evacuate to Fukushima city. People/towns are asked to take in evacuees from the 20 km zone. With a map of the area shown behind him, newscaster Takeda interviews the mayor of Minami-Soma, which is located within the 30 km stay-indoor zone. The interview is mostly in voice-over and carries on for four minutes. The mayor explains

and complains about the situation and pleads to relieve the inhabitants of their fear, being triple-hit by quake/tsunami and now the radiation. The interview is followed by a 10 minute in-studio discussion among newscaster Takeda, a professor of Tokyo University and a scientific correspondent standing in front of a simulation of the internal workings of a reactor, reluctantly explaining, with many ‘uhs’ mainly uttered by the professor, what might have happened in the reactor without saying what consequences this might have, except for the advice to shower off radioactive particles in case one gets wet. The Fukushima-related news is covered for 33 minutes or 55% of the time. Then follows medium and close-up shots of devastated areas and of one survivor rescued after 96 hours. The next part is about refugee camps, a voice-over interview by Takeda of a person in charge of a camp about what people need, what would help. After the interview is a voice-over report by Takeda about people looking for relatives, about reunions, directly or by phone, of people who had been separated. This is always accompanied by medium shots, (medium) close-ups, which are all shown for a minute or longer. People are united in grief and also worry, although the news tries to minimize the latter.

## 5.2 BBC News at Six of March 15, 2011

The total broadcast lasts 29 minutes 47 seconds, with 53% on news of Japan. Newscaster and reporters in medium close-up, or on site, are shown for 31% of the time on Japan. Actual scenes make up only 12% of the time. Fukushima is the main subject, with many shots of the damaged plants shown. Although a possible meltdown is mentioned, it is stressed that nothing is known with certainty. The same is said for possible radiation risks, which are played down by comparing them to X-rays or CT scans. In general, the report about the situation in Japan remains opaque (we have no hard info, here is what we think happens) with no special focus on Reactor 4. The camera work of today’s news, however, is very static: no zooming, hardly any close-ups. This stresses the seriousness of what is said and enhances the appearance of rationality and neutrality.

Prevalent keywords and phrases also reflect the emphasis on (uncertain) facts: radiation (used 25 times, 2 of them in subtitle), level (16, often with radiation, 2 in subtitle), nuclear (15, 3 in subtitle), reactor/s (13), plant/s (13, 2 in subtitle), disaster (10), tsunami and earthquake (9, mentioned together), risk/s (9, 2 in subtitle), Fukushima (9), health (9, 2 in subtitle)

‘Health Risk’), concern (8), explosion/s (7), danger (7), dangerous (7), radioactive (6, with material or particle), cool (6), cooling (5), exclusion zone (5, 2 in subtitle), threat (5), fear (5), rain (4).

After an overall introduction of the news, which starts with the news about Japan “Japan from a nuclear disaster....the Prime Minister Kan appeals for calm” the actual news starts with “...the biggest atomic plant is STILL causing concern four days after ...” Newscaster Edwards, standing in medium shot in studio wearing suit and necktie, explains with animated facial expressions the situation in Fukushima for one minute. This is followed by five reports about Japan under various headlines.

The correspondent in Tokyo reports in voice-over and on scene about “...reactors, broken, overheating, at risk of melting down.”, the exclusion zone, testing for radiation and about the Japanese PM who tries to reassure people and appeals for all to act calmly. Impressions of apparent Japanese calm seem to have an undertone of worry and are interspersed with an interview of a British father wanting to send his family to Britain, but unable to leave himself.

The second report is by Science Correspondent Shukman in studio concerning the situation in Fukushima: “Getting hard information about the fate of the power stations is proving really difficult, but here’s what we think is happening.” “....maybe a partial meltdown. We just don’t know.” Mainly pictures of Fukushima and simulations of reactor functions are shown on the screen wall. “There are doubts about the power company’s ability to cope. The Japanese PM has taken charge and American experts are on the way.” This last information is mentioned three times in the overall news. Also US Energy Secretary Chu appears with a short explanation.

The third report is by a correspondent in the northeastern city of Sendai about radiation danger there. Very slow camera work and 25 seconds of close-ups of raindrops which might contain nuclear particles. “Unlike the previous disasters, you can’t see it or hear it coming.” This is repeated again in the same report and stressed by the sentence ‘...if more invisible radiation is released...’ A half minute interview of a Japanese mother is added to illustrate how people try to cope with the situation, seemingly calm, but worried.

The fourth report is given by the Medical Correspondent in studio. He explains on the screen wall different radiation levels caused by the explosions of the reactors, comparing the levels to natural radiation but never commits to stating what a dangerous level

might be: “...we’re lacking precise evidence about the amount and type of radioactive material. But none the less, experts suggest the threat to the Japanese public is low.” The figures are compared to the one of a chest X-ray or of a CT scan, which nobody would refuse, using an interview with an expert for the latter as backup. Further comparison to Chernobyl is made in order to downplay the danger. The “wider psychological stress caused by the nuclear leak should not be underestimated.”

Here the continuous beginning news about Japan ends. A fifth report on Japan is given for 96 seconds or 5% of time just before the concluding British weather report. It focuses again on Fukushima and radiation leaking: “Japanese engineers hope to avoid a meltdown at the Fukushima Plant...” He also adds: “The fact is the government has done pretty well in most people’s estimation, of handling this crisis, but the nuclear issue is causing a lot of concern.” And concern is one of the keywords which extends to all disturbing aspects of this catastrophe.

There is one mention of a survivor, rescued after 96 hours, and about the presence of a British rescue troop (60 people), but no mention at all of British nuclear plants.

### 5.3 Tagesschau of March 15, 2011

The news is 14 minutes 52 seconds long, of which 56% is related in some way to the catastrophe in Japan. The keywords used in this broadcast illustrate that the focus is completely on nuclear subjects: covering the situation in Fukushima, the domestic moratorium on nuclear power, and the discussion about common safety standards for nuclear plants in the EU. The reports appear distant and neutral, which is underlined by the usage of mostly long shots. The wording seems to euphemize domestic nuclear plants by mostly calling them AKW, Meiler or Kernkraftwerk as opposed to Atomkraftwerk for Fukushima and other European plants.

The keywords are: Atom-related words such as: Atomenergiebehörde “IAEA”, Atomkraft “nuclear power”, Atomkraftanlage “nuclear plant”, and atomar “nuclear” are used 12 times. Atomkraftwerk (used 8 times, with 4 related to Fukushima), Reaktor (8), japanisch, Japaner “Japanese” (8), Japan (7), Fukushima (6), Kernkraftwerk(e) “nuclear plants” (5), Meiler (4), Reaktorkatastrophe (4), Strahlung “radiation” (4), Sicherheit “safety” (4), and 5 test-related words in connection with Fukushima.

The news starts with the situation in Fukushima, which is covered by 15% of the time. The report is gloomy and alarming, but there is no mention of a meltdown: “The IAEA calls the situation alarming... Today the government warned for the first time about danger for health. The radiation around the plant is very high... The safety container of Reactor Two might be damaged...” (\*) This part is illustrated by long shots of the Fukushima plants and medium shots of ‘testers’ in protection suits. A 19-second report follows about the German rescue team leaving the area because of danger of nuclear fallout and scarce hope of finding survivors. Next follow reports about the devastation caused by the tsunami along the coast and survivors in camps, which is covered for 13% of the time. The shots are mostly long or very long shots, focusing on destroyed houses, cars, and infrastructure. Soldiers and men around a camp-fire are also shown in long or very long shots. Only an interviewed young man is shown for 15 seconds in medium close-up. He seems very rational, seemingly displaying no strong emotions. People in the half-dark, cold camp-gymnasium are shown in five long and medium shots from the back or half-sided, faces are not visible. Correspondent Reimers reports for 15 seconds in medium close-up. Except for eye-blinking nine times she shows no movements whatsoever: “Devastation as far as one can see. By far not all dead have been recovered... Recovery of the dead, to provide for the survivors, a mammoth task for catastrophe-hit Japan.” (\*) It is mentioned that people around Fukushima and foreign companies are evacuating south.

28% of the broadcast is allotted to discussion about and the provisional stop of seven nuclear plants in Germany, and about common safety standards for nuclear plants in the EU. This discussion is portrayed in a more lively fashion with eleven interviews or comments by politicians and executives of electric companies and ends: “But should the lesson be that nuclear power is too dangerous? To replace it would be very difficult....” (\*) The CEO of RWE: “Europe without nuclear power? Maybe in 80 years. But certainly not now. I don’t think so.” Newscaster: “Indeed, countries such as Poland make it clear, that they want to build reactors. Even now, after Japan.” (\*) The newscaster ends by referring to upcoming programs about the fear of a nuclear cloud in Tokyo and a nuclear moratorium.

#### 5.4 TF1 LE20H of March 15, 2011

The broadcast totals 26 minutes 38 seconds and is shorter than usual because of a soccer match following.

The focus of this broadcast is mainly on the dangerous nuclear/radioactive aspect of the catastrophe, two thirds on what is happening in Japan and one third on what relates to France and the safety of her nuclear plants. The report is critical and voices mistrust of official Japanese statements. It also portrays the worries of seemingly calm Japanese.

The keywords are: nucléaire (used 25 times including 2 crise nucléaire and 3 menace nucléaire), Japon (25 with 7 in subtitle), centrale “nuclear power plant” (17, 1 in subtitle), radioactivité (17, 1 in subtitle), japonais (13 times, 5 as adjective), Fukushima (13, 4 in subtitle), catastrophe (11, 3 catastrophe nucléaire), radioactif/ve (11, 1 in subtitle), séisme (11), réacteur/s (10), France (9, 1 in subtitle and 3 Air France), sécurité “safety” (9), tsunami (8, 1 in subtitle), risque (8), nuage “cloud” (7), crise (7, 1 in subtitle), inquiétude “worry” (6),

This evening the news is presented by Laurence Ferrari (LF), the other main anchor of TF1. She has a more direct style of facing the camera, not as diagonal as CC, however her head and body movements are similar, as is the accentuated intonation of speech.

A full 87% covers Japan-related news, with 58% on Japan itself. Reports on the disaster left by the quake-tsunami, the victims, and rescuers with no one to rescue take 15% of the program, with 44% on Fukushima and radiation-related news such as the situation at the reactors, evacuees being checked for radiation, radiation levels, a radioactive cloud moving towards and arriving in Tokyo, and the reaction of people there. French people leaving Japan, frank comments by a correspondent, other correspondents vainly asking for radiation checks, official secretiveness, and the position of Air France are all shown.

Coverage of the disaster’s effects on France takes 29% of the time. The finely adjusted French radiation alert system is presented and the determination of all politicians to check the safety of each and every reactor in France and to learn from the Japanese lesson. A minute of silence was observed for the victims of the catastrophe in Japan in the National Assembly. In-between there is a report on the danger of radiation and its consequences on the human body, referring to Chernobyl. The last interview is about the economic aspects of the catastrophe. At the end of the news, LF ‘reminds’ the audience of the aggravation of the nuclear crisis in Japan.

There are a total of 9 reports, and all but two are given only in voice-over, plus two interviews in studio. Before each of them, LF gives a 10-25 second

summary/overview of the report/interview to follow and introduces who is going to do the report. LF is visible in medium close-up for 5-6 minutes.

This broadcast contains more emotion than the March 11 program, showing several victims and French people leaving Japan in medium close-up displaying emotions. Nearly 9% of the time covers a close-up report on a young French man leaving Fukushima and Japan, harshly criticizing the Japanese government. Scientific correspondent Fabrice Collaro is in the studio with LF, the setting similar to that of March 11. However, in this program, Collaro in medium shot/medium close-up is standing, gesticulating, sometimes putting hands together, body swaying a little, showing simulations on a screen wall and explaining clearly what happens in the reactors, especially No. 4. He has animated mouth and eye movements and rapidly delivers 280 words in 75 seconds!! He does not use 'meltdown' but comparable expressions and stresses that it is a race against the clock.

Following are translations by the author. Correspondent in voice-over about evacuees: "One after the other undergoes the inspections without panicking. The Geiger counter determines the level of radioactivity. Only the officials wear protection suits, the population seems helpless." (\*) Correspondent in voice-over about the Prime Minister: "One sees that he tries to reassure us, therefore in my opinion, one knows what that means." (\*) Correspondent in medium shot: "The sentence one hears most is: "when we will really know everything, it will be too late". The Japanese, however, cling to their island. They are astonishingly calm while the country is paralyzed. ...because, after having spent 3 days in the Fukushima area one thing is sure: the government is incapable to face/fight a major nuclear accident and to protect its population." (\*) LF: "It is not yet panic in Tokyo but people become more and more nervous." (\*) Interviewed Japanese: "I decided to put on a mask. That is all I found against radiation." "I am worried and I decided to go out as little as possible." "The French and the Americans have left. That means that things are serious, while for us, there are no instructions from the government." (\*) LF: "Air France is going to use bigger planes. The airfare is set at 700 Euro to enable people who desire to leave." (\*)

### 5.5 ABC March 15, 2011

Actual news time is 21 minutes 13 seconds with an additional 7 minutes 18 seconds of commercial advertisements interrupting the news three times. The entire program is devoted to the events in Japan as

Diane Sawyer, the main anchor, is dressed in outdoor clothes, reporting from Tokyo and from parts of devastated areas. She uses emotion-seeking facial expressions, swaying her head, leaning her body forward, using gestures to emphasize her words. Her body-language and the wording is such she appears to speak personally to each and every member of the audience. The news is usually fast-paced, at times quickly changing shots, but then again very attention-catching, in parts moving, calling for empathy, with nearly all in (medium) close-ups or medium shots. There is great interaction between newscaster and correspondents, calling each other by first name and actually talking to each other. The boundaries of the reports are blurred as dialogues between newscaster and correspondent are interspersed within the reports, giving the impression of familiarity, seeming to include the audience.

In total there are five reports, partly in voice-over, partly on scene and/or in interaction with Sawyer, interspersed with comments of experts on the subject. The sentences used are easy to understand, especially Sawyer pronouncing slowly, distinctly and with deep attention.

The keywords are: radiation (used 37 times, 2 in subtitle), disaster (3 + 14 Disaster in the Pacific in big subtitles), reactor workers (14), nuclear (14, as in power, plant, etc., + 2), reactor/s (12), survivor/survive (12 + 1), meltdown (9, partial, total, full, + 1), rescue-related (7), radioactive/ity (6), United States (6), Chernobyl (6 + 1), evacuate/ion/evacuees (6), leak/age (4).

The voiceover of the short introduction with catchy shots and the title 'Disaster in the Pacific' in distorted font already sums up the main focus of this broadcast in an interacting talking style that continues throughout the news: "Now there are four, four troubled nuclear reactors at one site. What happens if they all melt and who are the 50 brave workers who agree to stay inside and try to save everyone else? We go out with rescue crews, calling out for signs of life in the rubble. "Make a noise," they say. "Is anybody there?" "Hello, is anybody there?" And survivors did emerge today. And we'll tell you what is the real danger for the United States. What about that run on potassium iodide pills? And on World News, lessons for all of us from survivors of that Hiroshima radiation 60 years ago." As the keywords show, the main focus is on radiation: radiation from Fukushima, from Chernobyl, natural radiation and radiation from the Hiroshima atomic bomb. The 50 workers staying at the Fukushima plant

are portrayed as heroes. Sawyer accompanies a rescue team and is emotionally overwhelmed: “Can’t imagine how they are going to clean this up. Look at this, Shovels, probes, and their voices. That’s all they have.” Right after this an American rescue team equipped with microphones, necessary tools and sniffing dogs is portrayed. Examples of altruistic help are shown and close-up shots of one survivor as well as of crying people overjoyed to be reunited with family members. Giving examples of natural sources of radiation (bananas, a statue’s granite) and X-rays, the message is that there is no danger for the U.S.: “Even if we had a Chernobyl type accident, the impact on the United States would be minimal.” One report is about the various sites of devastation, which ends with examples of survivors’ creativity coping with the disaster and lucky survivors.

In the conclusion, survivors of the Hiroshima atomic bomb are assembled and interviewed. They rebuilt Japan and have grandchildren now. Pictures of children of that time and of those today are shown: “As this generation of Japanese say, there is a different kind of strength you learn after you survive something terrible.” This illustrates the search for positive news or giving a positive outlook (it’s bad, but not that bad and it will even improve). At the end Sawyer in medium close-up on street stresses that many Americans will come to the rescue and that ABC will be always online (just like assuring a friend/family member to be always there for him/her). The first of two ending shots is a 6 second close-up of the tear-filled eyes of a Japanese again evoking empathy.

## 6 SUB-CONCLUSION 2

As on March 11, all March 15 programs report on the same content, however their focus and stance again are very different. This time the focus is no longer on quake and tsunami, but on the Fukushima nuclear power plants. In the Japanese NHK program information is again given repetitively in bits and pieces without apparent purpose. Fukushima is now covered for 55% of the time, however no mention of any meltdown or clear information about radiation is given. A full 53% of BBC’s news of March 15 is on Japan, focusing on Fukushima. Displaying a marked seriousness, which is supported by tone and camera-work, a possible meltdown as well as radiation risks for Japanese, is played down and reporting kept noncommittal, stressing that Americans will help. No mention of danger for Britain or of British nuclear

plants is voiced. The German Tagesschau uses 56% of its broadcast for Japan-related news. Fukushima is covered by 15% of that, however no meltdown possibility is mentioned this time. The focus is completely on the moratorium on German nuclear plants, which was triggered by the events in Fukushima. The French TF1 of March 15 has a full 87% of its program Japan-related. Several reports criticize Japan’s handling of Fukushima. A meltdown is not mentioned, however the effectiveness of the French radiation alert system, as well as further safety upgrades of its plants, are stressed. The entire American ABC news is on Japan with its main anchor reporting from Japan. The emotional and empathy-seeking reporting portrays the remaining workers at Fukushima as heroes and applauds the survivors. Fukushima is compared to Chernobyl, but the emphasis is there is no radiation danger for the U.S. and little for the rest of Japan.

## 7 CONCLUSION

Although all the news programs report on the same drastic events, their stance and focus is quite different. How these different foci are presented, heavily relies on the prevalent communicative style of the culture in which the news program is broadcast. The five countries’ news programs analyzed show evidence of the communicative styles attributed by various authors to each of the five cultures.

It is an extreme situation for Japan, nevertheless, the NHK News7 of both dates strives to cover everything, from the individual to nationwide scale. Using all that is available (whole screen), everything has to be repeatedly reported, without giving any clear information or instructions or necessary future planning, especially concerning Fukushima. This is not through lack of broadcast time as the news is continually broadcast, without end. Shots are often shown for a long minute or more and people are portrayed in close-ups and medium close-ups. The news program strives to do many interviews, providing an emotional bonding between the people of the disaster area and the audience. The focus is on sharing.

The BBC news first focuses on the immensity of the disaster and the resulting helplessness. However, by day four the focus is on Fukushima, and while stressing that nothing is known for certain, plays down the possible danger of radiation. There is interaction and relationship building between newscaster and correspondent, as well as with the audience, by

displaying animated facial expressions and by verbal choices. However, on March 15, the camera-work is more static, conveying a serious and seemingly fact-based image.

The focus of the German Tagesschau of March 11 is on Fukushima, mentioning melt-down several times. Four days later the focus is on the phase-out of domestic nuclear power. Even when reporting about Japan, maintaining a distance both visually and verbally seems to be a goal. There is very little or no facial expression or body-language by the newscasters and correspondents. No discernible social relationship could be detected between them. Stressing facts and analysis emphasizes distance and seriousness as do the usage of long shots. The shots seldom portray people and seem to avoid emotional or sympathy seeking content.

The French TF1 of March 11 strives in 80% of its time to cover the whole disaster, linking it to Pacific-bordering countries as well as to past disasters using 15 reporters. Fukushima is not covered. On March 15, 87% of the news is Japan-related. This time several reports criticize, both directly and indirectly, Japan's handling of Fukushima, while at the same time stressing further safety upgrades of French plants. The French newscaster's non-verbal and para-verbal communication is animated and the dress is more appealing than formal. The studio layout and its desk emphasize extra-verbally the intention to link different or opposite aspects or themes. The reporting is not focused on emotion-seeking, but rather on eloquently intertwining different aspects and data concerning the disaster. The newscaster's facial expressions, as well as tone of modulation, are animated, supported by a nodding of the head which starts in the upper body. The audience is addressed with 'vous', polite 'you' and reminding or encouraging expressions 'Je vous le rappelle' (I remind you of), 'vous le savez' (you know (it)) 'on a compris' (we have understood), or 'vous avez compris' (you have understood) are used. Reporting is combined with audience-orientation. Correspondents are introduced with full name, when interviewed are addressed with 'vous', and thanked by saying full name. At the end of all reports the correspondents' names appear in subtitle.

The American ABC of March 11 reports extensively on the disaster, also mentioning a possible meltdown in Fukushima. The empathy-appealing conclusion stresses empathy between all people. Four days later the entire news is on Japan with the main anchor reporting from Japan. The remaining workers at Fukushima are

portrayed as heroes and survivors applauded. Fukushima is compared to Chernobyl but it is stressed there is no radiation danger for the U.S. or for the majority of Japanese. The newscaster uses emotion-seeking facial expressions, swaying or bobbing her head, leaning body forward, and uses gestures to emphasize her words. Verbal and body-language are as if she talks to only one person, in a distinct, focused and attentive tone. Newscaster and correspondents call each other by first name and talk to each other during the reports, which gives the impression of familiarity. This is enhanced by short, colloquial and inviting sentences. The news is usually fast-paced, at times quickly changing shots. The shots are nearly all in (medium) close-ups or medium focus, very attention-catching, in parts moving, calling for empathy.

Given the great breadth of the subject, it was impossible to cover all points and facets in detail within this study. Therefore, although part of the findings confirm in various aspects preliminary results of a previous study, further investigations and comparisons are necessary to find stronger evidence for culture-related communicative styles in prime-time television news programs of different countries.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research is funded by a three year grant ending March 2014 from the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)

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2011年の東日本大震災を取り上げた5か国の全国版ニュース番組

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概要

本研究は、2011年3月11日と15日における5か国（日本、イギリス、ドイツ、フランス、アメリカ）の代表的なテレビニュース番組の中で東日本大震災がどのように報道されたかを比較するものである。KJ法によって明らかとなったのは、それぞれのニュース番組における内容と取り上げ方にはその国の文化様式と密接な関係があるということである。ビジュアル（静止画、動画、アニメ映像 etc.）とオーラル（アナウンス、レポート、インタビュー、無音声 etc.）との関係については、ニュースのそれに適した部分を対象とすることで分析が行われている。比較の目的は、文化的な規範と前提によってバイアスのかけられたニュース内容と言語的・視覚的表現の中心にあるものを明らかにすることである。

キーワード：コミュニケーションスタイル、文化様式、テレビニュース番組

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