

How Do Japan and China Report on Each Other?

A Content Analysis Study to Encourage Mutual Understanding

Ge WANG, Akira SAKAMOTO

Global COE Program
“Science of Human Development for Restructuring the ‘Gap-Widening Society’”
Ochanomizu University

How Do Japan and China Report on Each Other? A Content Analysis Study to Encourage Mutual Understanding

Ge WANG
Ochanomizu University

Akira SAKAMOTO
Ochanomizu University

Abstract

Since 2001, in Japan and China, public sentiment toward each other has been negative. Many people have suggested that the worsening public opinion is partially attributable to the manner in which each country reports on the other. However, comprehensive research on how Japan and China report on each other has not been conducted. The current study addresses this by performing a content analysis of Japanese and Chinese newspaper reports on the other country.

The first purpose of the current study was to investigate general tendencies in how Japan and China report on each other across the three areas of Basic Information, Reported Contents, and Reporting Manner, focusing on newspapers published between 2001 and 2004. The second purpose was to compare the findings from each country, and to discuss tendencies in reporting that block mutual understanding, in accordance with six criteria: (1) credibility, (2) diversity in reporting, (3) attitude to conflicts, (4) reporting with comparison, (5) neutrality in reporting manner, and (6) differences in mutual reporting. We analyzed 3466 Japanese newspaper reports on China and 1657 Chinese newspaper reports on Japan.

Significant differences in reporting tendencies between Japan and China were found for the three areas investigated. For example, Japanese newspapers tended to report Chinese government related events, but Chinese newspapers tended to report events which were not related to the Japanese government. In addition, Japanese newspapers tended to report on China mainly in a neutral manner, but at the same time consistently delivered negative messages more than positive messages. However, while Chinese newspapers also tended to report on Japan in a neutral manner, they consistently delivered positive messages more than negative messages. We follow a discussion of how these tendencies in reporting block mutual understanding between Japan and China by outlining the limitations of our study.

Key words: Content analysis, Chinese newspaper's reporting on Japan, Japanese newspaper's reporting on China, Mutual understanding

1. Introduction

Our impression of foreign countries is greatly determined by the available information about them. International news is one of the most influential elements of the information environment (Hagendoorn, 1992). In the field of mass media research, understanding reporting tendencies is regarded as an important issue. Content analysis is a method for assessing reporting tendencies that is based on quantitative data, and is the method most commonly used to clarify reporting tendencies (Maletzke, 1965).

A country tends to report negatively about another country with which it has had historical conflicts or conflicting interests (Ito, 2000). This seems to typify how Japan and China have reported on one another since 2002. Since 2001, public sentiments in these countries have been negative towards one another, and this

has affected public opinion in both Japan and China (Liu, 2003). In 2002, criticism of the press in the other country became more prominent, and many people have suggested that the worsening public opinion is partially attributable to how Japan and China report on one another (People, 2002; Golble Times, 2003; International Herald Leader, 2004; Takai, 2003; Yamada, 2004; Sakaeda, 2004; Kawakami, 2006). At the same time, it has also been suggested that the reporting in both countries should be reviewed in order to promote mutual understanding (Takai, 2007).

However, these discussions are mostly based on the experience of experts, and a comprehensive investigation into how Japan and China report on each other has not been conducted. Until now, it has been difficult to examine the reporting tendencies that are blocking mutual understanding in these countries, as based on objective and verified data. It would be useful if we could understand how and why countries report on each other

in a certain way, and the current study attempts to clarify this issue through a content analysis of Japanese and Chinese newspaper reports on the other country.

How Japan and China report on one another has not been researched systematically as yet. In China, the media is regarded as no more than a mouthpiece of the government. For this reason, there has long been a strong sense of distrust about how China reports on Japan (Ishida, 2003). Therefore, attention has tended to be focused on Chinese reporting about Japan, and only a small experimental study about Japanese reporting on China has been conducted (Zhang, 2003). In addition, in Japan there is a tendency to believe that Japanese reporting about China is monitored by the Chinese government and that this reporting often favors China. Thus, some of the previous researches were designed to prove this "favor-China bias" and to disclose Chinese government's problem (Miyoshi & Eto, 1972; Sugino, 2004). Furthermore, most of the research has targeted reports on specific events, and no research has been done to examine the tendencies of more general reports (Zhang, 2003).

On the other hand, some research on Chinese reports about Japan has been conducted, but not to any great extent. Design limitations of this research mean there is little information by which to thoroughly evaluate how China reports on Japan. In general, existing studies report the following items: (1) the number of articles, (2) the theme of an article, and (3) the general image projected in an article (whether it is positive, neutral or negative). This information is not sufficient to comprehensively understand Chinese reports on Japan, as it omits information sources, and does not indicate if the report primarily concerns Japan or China, or if any stereotyped images have been delivered. In addition, assessments of the general image projected in articles are simply classified into positive, neutral and negative. There has also been no mention of controlling for the subjectivity of ratings (Takai, 2005).

Thus, existing content analyses do not have enough information or neutrality for an understanding of how the Japanese and Chinese media report on the other country. The current study takes this into consideration, and aims to determine the tendencies in how Japan and China report on one another by using more comprehensive and verifiable data.

The current study attempts to make improvements in both the contents that are analyzed and the research method. Regarding contents, we examined the following three aspects of articles: "Basic Information," "Contents," and "Manner." Basic Information includes the position of the "Reported Country" in an article, and the type and source of the article. For Contents, we examined the theme and images of articles in terms of

the Reported Country, the people of the Reported Country, and both countries. The tone of reports and comments are included under Manner.

Our improvements in research methodology included defining all of the concepts that were used to classify items. We also provided specific examples of each concept, and had raters judge whether the contents of articles corresponded to specific concepts. For example, one item evaluated the general image of people in the Reported Country as positive, neutral, or negative. We defined a positive image as one which would enhance the target's impression (e.g., helpful to other people, nice and polite, etc.). In addition, we provided the raters with a nine-hour training course, and examined the extent to which the assessments made by different raters were in agreement. Thus, we tried to eliminate subjectivity as far as possible.

The second purpose of the current study was to discuss how the reporting of one another by Japan and China could be improved to encourage mutual understanding. Earlier studies have indicated that international reporting significantly influences the creation of an environment in which international understanding is promoted (UNESCO, 1982), in terms of increasing knowledge (Perry, 1990) and reducing prejudice (Graves, 1999). Akuto et al. (2000) described reporting tendencies that can promote international understanding: (1) Credibility (reporting the news accurately), (2) Variety of information (reporting news in a variety of fields, e.g., politics and sports, rather than only reporting problems in the Reported Country), (3) Avoiding negative attitudes in reporting on friction between the countries (e.g., not blaming the other country for the friction), (4) Avoiding comparisons between countries (e.g., avoiding reporting that one country is either superior or inferior), and (5) Neutrality in reporting (maintaining a rational tone in reports and focusing contents on actual events). Moreover, the observed differences in reporting in the media in both countries represent differences in the awareness of problem and interest between the media in the two countries. We consider that this is also important information to examine reporting tendencies to encourage mutual understanding in both countries. Therefore, this research has regarded differences in reporting the related fields in both countries as the sixth discussion point.

Thus, the current study compares how Japan and China report on one another in terms of Basic Information, Contents and Manner (the way news is reported). Based on the results, and from the standpoint of the six topics outlined above, reporting tendencies that discourage mutual understanding in both countries are discussed. Table 1 shows the research questions we asked, and the measures corresponding to each of these. Research questions 1, 2, and 3 relate to credibility; 4, 5,

Table 1 Research Questions and Measures

	Research Question	Measure
Basic Information	1. Credibility of sources	Reports sent from Reported Country
	2. Topicality	Reporting level in "Straight News Articles"
	3. Level of reports focusing on own country	Reporting level on own country and the other country as "The Main Issue"
Content	4. Field of reports	Reporting level of 6 fields/51 subfields
	5. Its people	Reporting level of their occupation and attitude towards the Reporting Country
	6. Stereotyped images	Reporting levels of all 46 images
	7. General images	Images of reported county and its people
	8. Gap between topics	Reporting level of 12 topics
	9. Gap between type of mutual relations	Tense/Distrustful, Competitive, Equal, Friendly/-Cooperative, Other
	10. Responsibility Attribution	Reporting level of mutual conflicts, who is responsible
	11. Equal reporting view	e.g. Superiority/inferiority, Provocation, Model, and Lesson
Manner	12. Tone of report	Tone of title and text
	13. Level of Fact-Centered reporting	Reporting level without comment
	14. level of Comment	Type of comment on the country and its people

6, and 7 consider diversity; 10 deals with confrontation with friction; 11 deals with comparison; 12, 13, and 14 handle neutrality in reporting; and 8 and 9 cover the reporting differences between the two countries.

2. Method

2.1 Form of media

Newspapers are the most widely used form of media by which both Chinese and Japanese people get information about each other's country (NRC, 2005). Moreover, compared with other forms of media, newspapers have more control over Agenda-Setting process and more influence on the formation of public opinion (Takai, 2005). In the current study, we chose the newspaper as the most representative form of media for studying the reporting tendencies in both Japan and China.

For a newspaper to be influential it must be read by many people. Thus, in the current study circulation size was the main factor in deciding which newspapers to include. To facilitate our research we required that electronic versions of the newspapers were available. In China, there are no national newspapers as such, so, ultimately, we chose the official national organ, "The Renmin Ribao," and a popular local paper, "The Beijing Evening News." For Japan we chose two national papers, "The Yomiuri" and "The Asahi."

2.2 Period of reporting studied

Before 2001, surveys showed that a majority of Chinese and Japanese people either liked or had no strong feelings about the other country. However, after 2001

there were more Chinese and Japanese who had negative sentiments about the other country than who had either positive or no feelings (Liu, 2003). Since 2002, criticism of each other's reporting has increased. We thus consider 2001 to 2004 as the most suitable period of reporting for the current study.

2.3 Sample of reports

Reports were randomly chosen from all articles referring to the other country for three days each month. The keywords for Chinese Papers were "Japan/Japanese." The keywords for Japanese newspapers were "China/Chinese." In total, 671 articles from "The Renmin Ribao," 986 articles from "The Beijing Evening News," 1725 articles from "The Yomiuri," and 1741 articles from "The Asahi" were analyzed.

2.4 Measures

The measures are shown in Table 1.

2.4.1 Basic information

"Basic Information" included "The Information Source," "The Type of Report," and "How Often China/Japan was Reported as a Main Issue."

To check how many reports were sent from the "Reported Country," we divided "Information Sources" into "From China," "From Japan," "From Another Country," and "Not Described."

There were five types of reports. A "Straight News Article" tells us when, where, and what happened; it is a typical news item. A "Feature" reports events from any time, past or present (i.e., does not necessarily report events on the day they happened, as may be the case with a chronicle of a trip). A "Review From Inside"

can be a leader article, a “Review From Outside” is comments from a reader or specialist, and “Miscellaneous” includes advertisements, public notices, etc.

Reports were also divided into “The Main Issue,” “The Accompanying Issue,” and “Simply Mentioned.” The Main Issue classification applied to Straight News Articles or Features in which the Reported Country (China or Chinese/Japan or Japanese) was mentioned in the first paragraph and was a central part of the report. For Reviews to be classified as The Main Issue, the Reported Country had to appear in the first three paragraphs and be a central part of the report. Reports that did not meet the above requirements were classified as Accompanying Issue or Simply Mentioned.

2.4.2 Reported Contents

“Reported Contents” included the “Reported Fields,” “People of the Reported Country,” “Image of Report,” and “Mutual Reporting.”

The definition of “Field of Report” is different from the “Subjects of Reports.” In the current study, we included all articles mentioning a Reported Country, regardless of whether or not it was a Main Issue. In our research, sometimes the subject of the report was about the economy of the Reporting Country, but the report mentioned the Reported Country’s diplomatic relations with another country. Hence, in the current study we used Reported Fields instead of the Subject of Reports. There were six fields: “Politics,” “Military,” “Diplomacy,” “Economy,” “Culture,” and “Society and Life.” Among these fields, Politics, Military, and Diplomacy are “Government Activities.” Furthermore, we subdivided each field into between 8 and 13 subfields. In total, 51 subfields were used. For example, the field of Diplomacy had eight subfields: Mutual Relations, Foreign Policy, Conflict, International Aid, International Issue, Threat/Invasion, and other Diplomatic Issues.

We studied “People of the Reported Country” by rating their “Occupation” and “Attitude towards the Reporting Country.” We classified “Occupation into 19 types, including Politician, Students, etc. Attitudes towards the Reporting Country included “Positive,” “Negative,” “Both Positive and Negative,” “Neutral,” and “Not Mentioned.”

“Reported Images” were classified as either “Stereotyped Images” or “General Images.” Based on past studies and pilot testing, we prepared 23 “Stereotype Scales.” For example, for each report we asked if it described the Reported Country as “Democratic,” “Undemocratic,” or “Not Mentioned Here.” In addition, we rated the general image of the reported country and its people in each article as “Positive” “Negative,” or “Neutral.” In the current study, we defined everything except people as “Country” (e.g., Food, Military, etc.).

“Mutual Reporting” included “Reporting View,” “Topics Related to Both Countries,” “Type of Reported

Mutual Relationship between Them,” and “Responsibility Attribution.” Reporting View included Superiority: “Japan is better than China,” “China is better than Japan,” “both are the same level,” and “Not Mentioned”; Provocation: “Japan Provokes China,” “China Provokes Japan,” “They Provoke Each Other,” and “Not Mentioned”; Model (referring to the use of the other country as a model for the future): “Japan is the Model for China,” “China is the Model for Japan,” and “Not Mentioned”; Lesson (referring to how one country learns from the other country’s mistakes): “Japan can Teach China,” “China can Teach Japan,” and “Not Mentioned.” We checked the extent to which these featured across all of the reports included for analysis.

Articles that reported both China and Japan as a main issue were studied here. In terms of the topics related to both countries, there were 12 topics, such as “Official Visit” and “Trade Friction”. A maximum of three topics in any one report could be counted.

Types of Reported International Relationship included “Tense/Distrustful,” “Competitive,” “Equal,” “Friendly/Cooperative,” “Other,” and “Not mentioned.” For relationships reported as Tense/Distrustful, we checked the percentage of reports that attributed responsibility, and to whom this was directed: “Japan,” “China,” or “Both.”

2.4.3 The Manner of Reporting

“The Manner of Reporting” covered the “Tone of the Report” and “Comments in the Report.” For “Tone of the Report,” we first identified the tone of the title as “Rational” or “Emotional,” and then classified the “Type of Emotion” as one of nine types, including “Threat and Satire.” We also checked if the tone of the text was “Rational” or “Emotional.”

“Comments of the Report” concerned opinions made by a third person who was not directly involved in the reported event. We checked whether there were any such comments, and whether the comment was about the Reported Country or its People. We looked at what kind of comments there were: “Positive,” “Negative,” and “Neutral.”

2.5 Procedure

To guarantee the consistency of coding in our analysis of Japanese and Chinese newspapers, we used the procedure of back-translation. Japanese newspapers were rated by 20 Japanese undergraduates. Chinese

Table 2 Agreement between raters (%)

	Information	Content	Manner
Japanese Newspapers (J. N)	83.26	94.95	88.89
Chinese Newspapers (C. N)	72.73	90.91	89.50

newspapers were rated by six Chinese international students. To calculate the rate of agreement, 10% of the Japanese newspaper articles were rated by an independent coder. The same procedure was followed for the Chinese newspapers. Rates of agreement are shown in Table 2.

3. Results

3.1 Results for “Basic Information”

We show the results of reports from the Reported Country and Reporting Country in Table 3. In Japanese newspapers, 45.3% of reports mentioned their “Information Source,” with this being “From China” (48.3%), “From Another Country” (32.8%), and “From Japan” (18.9%). Taking articles which reported China as a “Main Issue” only, 57% mentioned their “Information Source”, with this being “From China” in 70.3% of cases, and “From Japan” in 11.1% of cases. In contrast, in Chinese newspapers, 33.4% of reports mentioned their “Information Source,” with this being “From China” (56.1%), “From Japan” (22.2%), and “From Another Country” (21.7%). Taking articles that reported Japan as a “Main Issue” only, 43.7% mentioned their “Information Source”; this was “From Japan” in 40.49% of cases, and “From China” in 48.8% of cases. In comparing this data across the two countries, we can say that the credibility of the “Information Source” is higher in Japanese newspapers than in Chinese newspapers.

Table 4 shows the results for Type of Reports. In Japanese newspapers, Straight News articles were the most common type, and Miscellaneous the least com-

Table 3 Frequency of Information Source (%)

	From Reported Country		From Reporting Country	
	All reports	Main issue	All reports	Main issue
J. N	48.3	70.3	18.9	11.1
C. N	22.2	40.4	56.1	48.8

Table 4 Frequency of Report Types (%)

	Straight	Feature	Review in	Review	Miscella-
				Out	nies
J. N	58.6	24.4	7.0	6.9	3.1
C. N	42.4	45.7	2.3	3.9	5.7

Table 5 Frequency of Mainly Reported Articles (%)

	Reports about the other Country			Reports about Own Country			
	Main	Accompanying	Simply	Main	Accompanying	Simply	No Report
J. N	45.4	32.4	22.1	54.5	12.5	4.2	28.7
C. N	33.7	49.8	16.5	67.9	7.3	1.7	23.1

mon. For Chinese Newspapers, the most common types of report were (in descending order) Feature, Straight News, Miscellaneous, Review from Outside, and Review from Inside. This reveals Chinese newspapers as tending to convey old facts about Japan more frequently than current events.

Table 5 shows the results for Mainly Reported Articles. Japanese newspapers reported on Japan as a “Main Issue” 54.5% of the time, and on China as a “Main Issue” 45.4% of the time. Chinese newspapers reported on China as a “Main Issue” 67.9% of the time, and on Japan as a “Main Issue” 33.7% of the time. In comparing this data, we found the level at which Chinese newspapers reported on China as a “Main Issue” to be 13.4% higher than the level at which Japanese newspapers reported on Japan as a “Main Issue.” Also, the level at which Chinese newspapers reported on Japan without mentioning China was 5.6% lower than the level at which Japanese newspapers reported on China without mentioning Japan. This shows that the newspapers of both countries tended to focus on their own country, but that this tendency was stronger in Chinese newspapers.

From our results, it seems that the credibility of Chinese newspapers was lower than that of Japanese newspapers.

3.2 Results for “Reported Contents”

The results for Reported Fields are summarized in Table 6. We define “Police,” “Military,” and “Diplomacy” as “Government Activity Fields,” and which we found to be reported on by 43.2% and 25.4% of Japanese and Chinese newspaper articles, respectively.

The level of reporting about Chinese Government Activity in Japanese newspapers was thus 17.8 percentage points higher than the level of reporting about Japanese Government Activity in Chinese newspapers. Both countries’ newspapers reported on “Economy” at the same level. A similar tendency was confirmed in the results of the subfields.

In Table 7 we show the top 10 subfields reported on in each country. The subfields shown account for 55.1% and 60.6% of the subfields reported on by Japanese and Chinese newspapers, respectively. We further investigated these subfields in relation to their overarching Field. In Japan, the Government Activity Field was reported on by 22.4% of articles, with the relevant subfields from the top 10 being: No. 1 (Mutual Rela-

Table 6 Frequency (%) and Ranking of Report Fields

		J. N		C. N	
		Name	Level	Name	Level
No.1	Economy		24.0	Society/Life	29.4
No.2	Society/Life		22.1	Economy	27.7
No.3	Diplomacy		19.6	Culture	17.4
No.4	Politics		17.8	Diplomacy	10.1
No.5	Culture		10.7	Politics	8.2
No.6	Military		5.8	Military	7.1

Table 7 Frequency (%) and Ranking of the top 10 Report Subfields

		J. N		C. N	
		Name	Level	Name	Level
No. 1	Mutual relations		10.4	Sports	14.5
No. 2	Government/politicians		8.3	Products	7.8
No. 3	General economy issues		6.9	Enterprise activity	7.2
No. 4	Enterprise activity		5.6	Mutual relations	5.0
No. 5	Trade		4.9	Government/Politicians	5.0
No. 6	Crime		4.3	General economy issues	4.9
No. 7	Traditional culture		3.9	Traditional culture	4.8
No. 8	Administration/Policy		3.7	Popular culture	4.3
No. 9	Products		3.6	Threat/Invasion	4.3
No.10	Sports		3.5	Ordinary life	3.8

Table 8 Frequency (%) and Ranking of Occupation

		J. N		C. N	
		Name	Level	Name	Level
No.1	Politicians		44.8	Politicians	24.1
No.2	Ordinary people		13.4	Celebrities	21.4
No.3	Criminals		11.3	Ordinary people	13.1

tions, 10.4%), No. 2 (Government/Politicians, 8.3%), and No. 8 (Administration/Policy, 3.7%). For the Economy Field (19.3%) these were No. 3 (General Economy Issues, 6.9%), No. 4 (Enterprise activity, 5.6%), No. 5 (Trade, 4.9%), and No. 9 (Products, 3.6%). For the Society/Life Field (7.8%) the relevant subfields were No. 6 (Crime, 4.3%) and No. 10 (Sports, 3.5%). The only subfield from the top 10 relevant to the Culture Field (3.9%) was No. 7 (Traditional Culture). The situation was different in Chinese newspapers. The top Field was Economy (19.9%), with the relevant top 10 subfields being No. 2 (Products, 7.8%), No. 3 (Enterprise Activity, 7.2%), and No. 6 (General Economy Issues, 4.9%). For the Society/Life Field (18.3%) the relevant subfields were No. 1 (Sports, 14.5%) and No. 10 (Ordinary Life 3.8%). The amount of sports coverage was relatively high. The subfields relating to the Government Activity Field (14.3%) were No. 4 (Mutual Relations, 5.0%) and No. 5 (Government/Politicians, 5.0%), and for the Culture Field (8.1%) they were No. 7 (Traditional Culture, 4.8%) and No. 8 (Popular Culture, 4.3%). Our data show that newspapers in both Japan and China reported

extensively on the economy. They also show that more attention was paid by Japanese newspapers to the Chinese government than was paid by Chinese newspapers to the Japanese government. Conversely, there was greater coverage of Japanese entertainment, such as sports and popular culture, in China than there was of Chinese entertainment in Japan.

Table 8 shows the Social Roles that were reported in more than 10% of stories. A top three "Occupations" account for 69.2% of the occupations reported for Chinese people in Japanese newspapers, and for 56.8% of the occupations reported for Japanese people in Chinese newspapers. In relation to "Politicians," the reporting in Chinese newspapers was 20.7% lower than that in Japanese newspapers. Both countries' newspapers reported on Ordinary People to a similar extent. In addition, Japanese newspapers reported on Chinese "Criminals" much more but Chinese newspapers reported on Japanese "Celebrities" much more.

Table 9 shows the results for "Attitude towards the Reporting Country." Japanese newspapers reported on Chinese who had a "Negative Attitude" towards Japan

Table 9 Frequency of Peoples' Attitudes to the Reporting Country (%)

	Positive	Negative	Both	Neutral	No report
J. N	4.7	6.9	1.3	3.4	83.7
C. N	17.4	5.2	0.3	0.7	76.4

Table 10 Frequency (%) and rank of stereotyped images reported (minimum frequency = 5%)

	J. N		C. N	
	Name	Level	Name	Level
No.1	Economy is growing.	13.7	Advanced	16.3
No.2	Influence is increasing.	13.6	—	—
No.3	Intimidate other country.	10.9	—	—
No.4	Have many domestic problems.	10.4	—	—
No.5	Threatening other countries.	10.1	—	—
No.6	Detrimental to other countries.	9.5	—	—
No.7	Carrying on reform.	6.8	—	—
No.8	Beneficial to other country.	6.7	—	—

Table 11 Frequency of General Images of country/People (%)

	J. N		C. N	
	China	Chinese	Japan	Japanese
Positive	10.3	7.1	12.1	12.4
Negative	12.6	6.9	6.5	4.4
Neutral	77.1	86.0	81.4	83.2

Table 12 Frequency of Reports with Comparison (%)

	Superiority	Provocation	Model	Lesson
J. N	2.9	6.0	1.0	0.4
C. N	20.3	5.7	7.2	2.6

more often than those having a "Positive Attitude" ($z = 2.39$, $n = 1373$, $p < .001$). Conversely, Chinese newspapers reported on Japanese who had a "Positive Attitude" towards China more often than those who had a "Negative Attitude" towards China ($z = 6.48$, $n = 620$, $p < .001$). These results can be seen in terms of Japanese newspapers having reported on Chinese people more negatively than positively, and Chinese newspapers having reported on Japanese people more positively than negatively.

The "Stereotyped Images" that were present in at least 5% of reports are shown in Table 10. China's image in Japanese newspapers was mixed. "Development in China" accounted for 34.1% of the articles with stereotyped images, which from Table 10 included No. 1, No. 2, and No. 7. Articles showing distrust (30.5%) contained images No. 3, No. 5, and No. 6. Another major image by which China was depicted was "a country with many domestic problems" (10.4%). The only clear positive image was No. 8, which was present in 6.7% of reports. Except for "Japan is Advanced," no

particular image of Japan featured more often than 5% in Chinese newspaper reports. These results show the image of China in Japanese newspapers as primarily one of two types: "China is developing" and "China is a threat." In contrast, images of Japan were presented relatively infrequently in Chinese newspapers, with "Japan is advanced" being the most prominent.

The results for "General Image" are shown in Table 11. Japanese newspapers contained more negative images than positive images of China ($z = 2.8$, $n = 3393$, $p < .001$), but a similar level of positive and negative images with regard to Chinese people ($z = 0.35$, $n = 3393$, ns). By contrast, Chinese newspapers reported more positive images than negative images of both Japan ($z = 5.63$, $n = 1627$, $p < .001$) and Japanese people ($z = 5.47$, $n = 1627$, $p < .001$).

The results for "Reporting with Comparison" are shown in Table 12. Except in stories about "Provocation," Japanese newspapers seldom compared Japan and China. Where "Provocation" featured in Japanese newspapers, 41% of reports identified China

Table 13 Frequency (%) and Ranking of Common Topics

		J. N		C. N	
		Name	Level	Name	Level
No.1	Others		39.4	Others	35.1
No.2	Problems left by War		22.6	Official Visit	29.0
No.3	Official Visit		10.4	Problems left by War	20.1
No.4	Territory conflicts		9.4	Trade conflicts	5.6

Table 14 Frequency (%) and Ranking of Mutual Relations

		J. N		C. N	
		Name	Level	Name	Level
No.1	Tense/Distrustful		46.1	Friendly/Cooperative	63.9
No.2	Friendly/Cooperative		29.9	Tense/Distrustful	11.8
No.3	Equal		12.8	Competitive	11.8
No.4	Others		7.6	Equal	6.25
No.5	Competitive		3.6	Others	6.25

as provoking Japan, and 42.9% identified each of the countries as provoking the other. Except for stories mentioning a lesson, Chinese newspapers tended to compare Japan and China, especially in terms of "Superiority." Of the articles in which superiority was addressed, 68.9% reported Japan as better than China. In 91.5% of the articles concerning "Model," it was Japan being reported as a model for China. Of the Chinese newspaper reports mentioning Provocation, 68.1% identified Japan as provoking China.

Table 13 shows the four topics most frequently reported on by the newspapers of Japan and China. These topics were covered by 81.8% of reports in Japanese newspapers, and 89.8% of reports in Chinese newspapers. Except the same events reported by both Japanese and Chinese newspapers, Japanese newspapers contained more reports of "Territorial Disputes," though fewer reports of "Trade Conflicts," than Chinese newspapers. Chinese newspapers also reported on "Official Visits" to a far greater extent than Japanese newspapers. Japanese newspapers reported on topics addressing "Problems left by World War II" more often than they reported on "Official Visits." While the newspapers of both countries reported on "Problems left by World War II" to a similar extent, the reporting of Official Visits in Chinese newspapers was 18.6 percentage points higher than in Japanese newspapers.

Table 14 shows the frequency with which various descriptions of the mutual relations between Japan and China were reported. Japanese newspapers mostly reported relations between Japan and China as "Tense/Distrustful," doing so at a level 3.9 times higher than that of Chinese newspapers. Indeed, Chinese newspapers reported the relationship most frequently as "Friendly/Cooperative," at a level 2.1 times higher than that of Japanese newspapers. In addition, Japanese

newspapers reported on the relationship in terms of "Equal Relation" more often than Chinese newspapers, whereas Chinese newspaper reports contained greater reference to "Competitive Relations." There were thus large differences between Japan and China in how their newspapers reported on "Mutual Relation." Furthermore, when mutual relations were reported as "Tense/Distrustful," 63.3% of the reports in Japanese newspapers contained "Responsibility Attribution." These reports attributed responsibility for the "Tense/Distrustful" relationship to China in 46.4% of cases, Japan in 43.8%, and both countries in 9.8%. Every Chinese newspaper report in which mutual relations were described as "Tense/Distrustful" contained "Responsibility Attribution," with this always directed at Japan.

Our "Reported Contents" data shows that Chinese and Japanese newspapers reported to a similar extent on some topics, including "Economy," "Ordinary People of the Reported Country," negative "Attitude toward the Reporting Country," and "Problems Left Over From World War II". However, compared with Chinese newspapers, Japanese newspapers reported more frequently on "Government Activity," "Crime," "Politician," "Criminal," negative "images" of China, the negative issues between Japan and China, and "Tense/Distrustful" and "Equal" mutual relations. Conversely, Chinese newspapers reported more frequently than Japanese newspapers on topics that include "Sports," "Entertainment," "Celebrities," Japanese people who had a "Positive Attitude toward China," "Official Visits" between the two countries, and "Friendly/Cooperative" and "Competitive" mutual relations. In addition, Chinese newspapers tended to attribute responsibility to Japan, and to highlight Japan's Superiority.

3.3 Results for “The Manner of Reporting”

The percentage of reports in Japanese newspapers with emotional titles was 11%, which was significantly less than in Chinese newspapers (16%) ($z = 3.02$, $n = 1576$, 551 , $p < .001$). The frequency of reports in Japanese newspapers with emotional text was 2.9%, which was also less than in Chinese newspapers (6%) ($z = 3.24$, $n = 1576$, 551 , $p < .001$). There was thus a tendency for the tone of reports in Chinese newspapers to be more emotional.

Table 15 shows the frequencies with which reports exhibited various tones. The most common tones of Japanese newspaper reports were “Others” (35.3%), “Negative Tones” like “Satire/Criticism/Incendiary/Threat” (24.9%), “Ambiguous Tones” like “Misgivings/Skepticism” (21.4%), and “Positive Tones” like “Optimism/Supportiveness” (18.5%). This contrasts with the frequency with which these tones featured in Chinese newspaper reports: “Positive Tone” (39.7%), “Others” (34.1%), “Negative Tones” (21.6%), and “Ambiguous Tone” (4.5%). Compared to Japanese newspapers, Chinese newspaper reports exhibited more “Positive Tones” ($z = 3.71$, $n = 173$, 88 , $p < .001$), and less “Ambiguous Tones” ($z = 3.55$, $n = 1576$, 551 , $p < .001$). There was no difference between Japan and China in the frequency with which “Negative Tones” were present in newspaper reports.

The percentage of Japanese or Chinese newspapers reporting events without citing any Comment were both near 75%. In Japanese newspapers, the most frequent sort of comment made about China or Chinese people was “Neutral Comment.” The extent of “Negative Comment about China” was less than half that of “Positive Comment about China.” However, “Positive Comment about Chinese” featured more frequently than “Negative Comment about Chinese” ($z = 4.83$, $n = 404$, $p < .001$). In Chinese newspapers, “Neutral Comment about Japan or Japanese” was the least frequent sort of comment made. “Comments about Japan” were equally divided into “Positive” and “Negative,” whereas “Positive Comment about Japanese” featured more frequently than “Negative Comment about Japanese” ($z = 5.43$, $n = 123$, $p < .001$). Compared to Chinese newspapers, Japanese newspapers tended to report more “Neutral Comment,” with the comment in reports from Chinese newspapers being more polarized. We also found the level of “Positive Comment” about Japan and Japanese people in Chinese newspapers to be higher than the level of “Positive Comment” about China ($z = 1.76$, $n = 75$, 121 , $p < .001$) and Chinese people ($z = 3.12$, $n = 123$, 404 , $p < .001$) in Japanese newspapers. There was no difference in the frequency with which “Negative Comments” featured in the newspaper reports of Japan and China (see Table 16).

In summarizing our “Manner of Reporting” results,

Table 15 Frequency (%) and Ranking of Tones in Title

	J. N		C. N	
	Name	Level	Name	Level
No.1	Others	35.3	Others	34.1
No.2	Satire	14.5	Support	26.1
No.3	Misgivings	13.3	Criticism	14.8
No.4	Optimism	9.8	Optimism	13.6
No.5	Support	8.7	Misgiving	4.5
No.6	Skepticism	8.1	Incendiary	4.5
No.7	Criticism	5.2	Satire	2.3
No.8	Incendiary	3.5	Skepticism	0.0
No.9	Threat	1.7	Threat	0.0

Table 16 Frequency of Comment on Reported Country/People (%)

	J. N		C. N	
	China	Chinese	Japan	Japanese
Positive	16.3	32.2	40.7	54.7
Neutral	50.5	43.0	19.5	14.6
Negative	33.2	24.8	39.8	30.7

we found that the newspapers of both Japan and China reported on the other country in a mainly neutral manner. However, the reports from Chinese newspapers tended to have a more emotional tone than the reports from Japanese newspapers. Concerning reports not exhibiting neutrality, Chinese newspapers were more likely than Japanese newspapers to be positive in manner. There was no difference between Japan and China in the extent to which their newspapers reported in a negative manner.

4. Discussions

One purpose of the current study was to investigate general tendencies in how Japan and China report on each other from the standpoints of Basic Information, Reported Contents, and Reporting Manner, focusing on newspapers published between from 2001 and 2004. The other purpose was to compare the findings from each country, and to discuss tendencies in reporting that block mutual understanding, in accordance with six criteria: (1) credibility, (2) diversity in reporting, (3) attitude to conflicts, (4) reporting with comparison, (5) neutrality in reporting manner, and (6) differences in mutual reporting.

4.1 Summary of General Tendencies in Reporting in Japan and China

Significant differences in reporting tendencies between Japan and China were found in the areas of Basic Information, Reported contents, and Reporting Manner.

The two Japanese newspapers we studied frequently

reported on the current events in China, with an average of approximately 24 articles per day. (1) Economic matters of interest to Japan featured prominently, though the most frequently reported topics were the Chinese government's diplomatic, political and military activities, and Chinese politicians. There was a particular focus on diplomacy or diplomatic conflict between Japan and China. From 2001 to 2004, the relationship between Japan and China was called "Cold Politically and Hot Economically"¹. Political conflict was reported frequently during this period, with the attention paid by the Japanese newspapers reflecting the situation between Japan and China. (2) In Japanese newspaper reports about China there was an assumed superiority of Japan over China. China was often described in terms of provocation or as being a threat, though was rarely depicted as a competitor. The reporting of China as a threat is consistent with the results of public surveys conducted in recent years (Asahi & Chinese Academy of Social Science, 2002; The Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, 2005). (3) Japanese newspapers were consistent in delivering messages in a manner that was mainly neutral. However, when this was not the case it was negative messages that featured more prominently than positive messages. It seems that this tendency is consistent with national sentiments in Japan and China since 2001 (Liu, 2003). In this regard, there were no specific differences between the two Japanese newspapers that we studied, and it can thus be concluded that our results represent general tendencies of Japanese reports on China.

The two Chinese newspapers we studied mainly reported information about Japan that originated in China and did not concern current events. The average number of articles was 11.3 per day. (1) Chinese newspapers rarely reported on political issues. As past studies suggest (Liu, 2001 & 2002), Chinese newspapers show more interest in aspects of Japan that are related to economy, sports, arts, athletes, and artists. These newspapers also tend to report about economic friction, rather than territorial issues, with Japan. (2) In relation to this, Chinese newspapers had a tendency to avoid mentioning problems either specific to Japan or in the relationship between Japan and China, and to show unilateral friendship. Despite the strained relations between Japan and China from 2001 to 2004, Chinese newspapers often discussed the relationship as one of friendly cooperation. (3) It appears that when Chinese newspapers did report about problems either specific to Japan or in the relationship between Japan and China, they did so in order to criticize Japan rather than to discuss the issues. Though always describing the relationship as friendly, when conflict between Japan and China was reported, Chinese newspapers attributed full responsibility to Japan. (4) Chinese newspaper

reports depicted Japan as being superior to China, and expressed the idea that China should emulate Japan. This is evident in reports that emphasised Japan's development and superiority in the competitive relationship between Japan and China. (5) Generally, Chinese newspapers delivered messages about Japan that were neutral in manner. There were cases in which the manner was either positive or negative, though it was positive messages or a positive impression of Japan that featured most frequently.

In summary, despite a generally neutral tone, Japanese newspapers consistently delivered more articles containing negative messages or impressions of China or its people than articles that were positive in these regards. Indeed, Japanese newspapers appear to have emphasized negative messages, such as the threat of China, and the tension and distrust between Japan and China. The reason for this may be because Japanese international reporting primarily focuses on news. It is easy for newspapers to react to events that have an immediate impact, and for reporting to focus on friction or conflict (Takai, 2007). In addition, when a foreign country is perceived as a threat, it is in the economic field that negative sentiments are most keenly felt (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick and Xu, 2002; Hagendoorn, 1992).

Our results also show that, in contrast to the actual strained relations between Japan and China and the nature of national sentiments, Chinese newspapers tended to report favorably about Japan. Mentioned in these favorable reports were nice Japanese people who like China, a favorable relationship between Japan and China, and a cooperative Japan. This might be related to the media's role as a mouthpiece of the government in China, and to the international policy of the Chinese government. The necessity for international reporting in China to be consistent with government policy can limit the extent to which news is reported. It also seems that it is Chinese international policy to avoid reporting negative views held by other countries, and to concentrate on more positive aspects. This tendency can be observed in the "Agreement of Reporters Exchange between China and Japan", and it is might be for this reason that the Chinese media reported on a unilateral friendship between Japan and China, rather than on the conflict between these countries.

4.2 Discussion of Reporting Tendencies that Block the Promotion of Mutual Understanding

We now look at issues related to tendencies in reporting in Japan and China that encourage mutual understanding between these countries.

Our results suggest that the credibility of reporting on China by Japanese newspapers is high, and that a neutral manner was mostly maintained. However, there wasn't much diversity in the contents of the

reports. Research on Japan and Korea conducted by Akuto, et al. (2000) identified more than 5% of the images projected in reports as stereotypes. By comparison, the Japanese newspapers studied by us presented a relatively high incidence of negative stereotypes related to China. Such as, 46.1% of the articles reporting on the relationship between Japan and China did so with reference to tense and distrustful aspects, and 11.3% of Chinese people as being criminals. This indicates that Japanese reports on China tended to be largely negative. It might also be said that the Japanese media did not avoid reporting conflicts, but that it exaggerated them.

Chinese newspapers reported less current events in Japan, and because of this we assessed their credibility as low. However, the messages in Chinese newspapers were delivered in a mainly neutral manner. With regards to the contents of articles relating to Japan, local news was not reported. Rather, the information tended to be about sports, Japanese products, and popular culture. There was thus little information by which Chinese people could learn about either current Japanese politics, or the relationship between Japan and China. The image of Japan primarily presented was that of a developed country, and the nature of reporting by Chinese newspapers may have made it almost impossible for Chinese people to form one that was any different. It was a tendency of Chinese newspapers to emphasize friendship and friendly relationships between Japan and China, and to avoid mentioning friction. Indeed, it seems that the Chinese media considered that to report conflict was to criticize Japan. It might be for this reason that reports on conflict between Japan and China were avoided. However, when conflict was reported an attribution of responsibility to Japan was always made. There was also a strong tendency of Chinese newspapers to deliver articles in which Japan and China were compared.

We found large differences in how the newspapers of Japan and China reported on the other country. During the period of reporting we studied, issues relating to the war were still an important source of argument between Japan and China. However, while the newspapers of Japan emphasised political conflict, such as territorial issues, those of China emphasized trade conflicts. Furthermore, while Chinese newspapers emphasized a friendly and cooperative relationship with Japan, Japanese newspapers reported the relationship between countries as more tense and distrustful.

4.3 Broader Implications of Reporting Style

With respect to the two Japanese newspapers analyzed in the current study, it was considered in Japan that the 'Asahi' favored China and that the 'Yomiuri' was more neutral (Okada, 2002). However, our results

show the attitude of both to be mainly negative when reporting on China. It is likely that these newspapers represent a general tendency in Japanese reports on China. As discussed in the issues in reporting, in Japan, Japanese reports on China were regarded as favouring China. Thus, without being aware of it, the Japanese mass media repeatedly provided (and in large volume) negative messages related to China that were likely to be readily believed by the general public. It is necessary to improve the awareness of this negative reporting attitude.

In addition, Japanese newspapers tended to report relatively infrequently about Chinese people who expressed positive feelings for Japan. Research into meta-perception suggests that if we believe someone to have a negative attitude towards, or a negative image of, us, we are more likely to have a negative attitudes towards, or a negative image of, them (Frey and Tropp, 2006). Although data relating to meta-perception was not collected in the current study, it is common for Japanese people to believe that Chinese people has an anti-Japan sentiment. Although we don't have any supporting evidence, it is possible that the negative reporting of Chinese people by the Japanese media may be one reason for this belief.

Improvements are also needed in how China reports on Japan, including enhancements in the credibility of news organisations and an increased depth of reporting. We also consider it appropriate that the Chinese media review their attitude towards conflict between Japan and China. The findings of the current study show that China does not solely report negative information about Japan. However, articles in Chinese newspapers expressing positive attitudes about Japan did not accurately represent the relationship between the countries. The adoption of a friendly attitude that avoids mention of current conflict is in keeping with the way Chinese people deal with conflict, and understanding this will contribute to the promotion of mutual understanding between Japan and China.

4.4 Limitations of the Current Study

The results of the current study suggest that while confident of maintaining neutrality, the Japanese media reports on China in a negative manner. The results also suggest that the Chinese media regards reporting conflict with a country as criticism of this country, and that it reports an international relationship as friendly despite it being otherwise. Our research has thus contributed to an understanding of reporting in Japan and China.

We have also discussed reporting tendencies that encourage mutual understanding. However, these can only be viewed in a relative sense, as absolute conclusions could not be drawn. We believe research into

international reporting to be important for promoting mutual understanding. However, beyond a conceptual stage, a standard methodology for this research has not been developed. Important issues that remain to be resolved in future studies include what it is that should be reported, what ratio of content is sufficiently diverse, and whether diversity in content can encourage mutual understanding.

There is some support for the validity of our findings concerning Chinese newspapers in them being partially consistent with prior research. However, there were significant differences between the "Beijing Evening" and the "Renmin" on many issues, and which were not reported in detail here. Similarly, of the two Japanese newspapers we studied, one is regarded as "left wing," and the other as "right wing." It is important that differences between newspapers be considered in future research that investigates how newspapers influence readers. More research is also needed to determine the factors blocking mutual understanding. While most Japanese newspapers reported and commented on Chinese people's negative behavior, the Chinese media reported many positive sentiments about Japan. We consider it necessary to examine such differences between newspapers and that this be done with qualitative analytical techniques.

Notes

- 1 Cold Politics and Hot Economy: A situation of limited exchange in the political field and active mutual exchange in the economic field.

References

- Akuto, H., Li, Shioda, Y., and Hatori, H. (2000) 'How did Japan and South Korea Report on each other: A Change from Conflict to Understanding', *The NHK Annual Bulletin of Broadcasting Culture Research* 45: 99-164. (Original in Japanese)
- Asahi & Chinese Academy of Social Science. (2002) 'A Public Opinion Survey', URL: <http://contest2.thinkquest.jp/tqj2003/60130/Asahi.htm>. (Original in Japanese)
- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002) 'A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content: Competence and Warmth Respectively Follow From Perceived Status and Competition', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 82 (6): 878-902.
- Frey, F. E., and Tropp, L. (2006) 'Being seen as individuals versus as group members: Extending research on metaperception to intergroup context', *Personality and Social Review* 10 (3): 265-280.
- Graves, S. B. (1999) 'Television and Prejudice Reduction: When does Television as a various. Experience Make a Difference?', *Journal of Social Issues* 55: 707-727.
- Hagendoorn, L. (1992) 'Determinants and Dynamics of National Stereotypes', in: Meyenberg, R. and Dekker H. (eds.) *Perceptions of Europe, East and West*, pp. 105-122. Oldenburg: BIS.
- International Herald Leader (2004) 'Japanese Media Highlight Competition between Japan and China and Provoke an Energy War', URL: (<http://www.yahoo.com.cn>) (Original in Chinese)
- Ishida, O. (2003) 'Whether there is any Truth in a Socialist State's Media: A Study on China's Media', *Issues & studies* 32 (12): 1-19. (Original in Japanese)
- Ito, Y. (2000) 'A Review of Theories and Empirical Findings on the International Flow of News Reporting', *Institute for Media and Communication Research* 50: 45-63. (Original in Japanese)
- Golble Times. (2003) 'Analysis of Japanese reporting on China', URL: <http://www.peopledaily.com.cn>. (Original in Chinese)
- Kawakami, K. (2006) 'The Nanjing Massacre, Poison Gas, Forced Labor, Textbook Bias ... All the False Anti-Japanese Allegations made by China to the World', *Bunshun opinion magazine* 38 (5): 78-87. (Original in Japanese)
- Liu, Z. M. (2001) 'A Review of Mutual Perception Surveys between China and Japan, in the *Media and Public Opinion*', URL: <http://www.jccnet.cn/yth/2001/index.htm>. (Original in Chinese)
- Liu, Z. M. (2002) 'A Review of Mutual Perception Surveys between China and Japan, in *Inter-perception between Japan and China and the Role of the Media*', URL: <http://www.jccnet.cn/yth/2002/index.htm>. (Original in Chinese)
- Liu, Z., M. (2003) 'A Review of the change in Mutual Perception between Japan and China: the Influence of the Media on Changes in Mutual Perception between Japan and China', URL: <http://www.jccnet.cn/yth/2002/index.htm>. (Original in Chinese)
- Maletzke, G. (1963) 'Psychology of Mass Media: Theory and System', Hujino, S. (translation) (1965), Tokyo: Japan Broadcast Publishing. (Original in Japanese)
- Miyoshi, O. and Eto, S. (1972) 'Facing the Bias in Reporting on China: Based on a Survey. "Freedom of Reporting in a Crisis"', Tokyo: Nisshin Publication. (Original in Japanese)
- NRC. (2005) 'The Results of Public Opinion Research on Japanese and Chinese Relations', Japan Research Center URL: <http://www.nrc.co.jp/ep/rep20050715.html>. (Original in Japanese)
- Okada, T. (2002) 'Japanese University Students' Opinions on "Japan-China Relations"', *NUCB Journal of Economics and Information Science* 47(1): 199-206. (Original in Japanese)
- Perry, D. K. (1990) 'News readings knowledge about, and attitude toward foreign countries', *Journalism Quarterly* 67 (2): 353-358.
- People. (2002) 'Excessive reporting on the "Shenyang Consulate Incident": Why is Japan doing this?', URL: <http://www.peopledaily.com.cn>. (Original in Chinese)
- Sakaeda, K. (2004) 'Media Foment Nationalism and Anti-Japan, Feeling the Arrogance and the Ignorance of Chinese News Staff', *Sapio* 16(1): 22-24. (Original in Japanese)
- Sugino, S. (2004) 'Study of SARS Coverage in Japanese Newspapers: Numerical Analysis of the Propaganda Aspects of Chinese News Reports', *Journal of Mass Communication*

- Studies* 65: 95-115. (Original in Japanese)
- Takai, K. (2003) 'How do the Chinese Media report on China?' *Issues & studies* 32 (12): 20-32. (Original in Japanese)
- Takai, K. (2005) 'Japan's Image in the Chinese Media', *China* 21 22: 57-89. (Original in Japanese)
- Takai, K (2007) 'Progress in the Relation between Japan and China- Looking back on Japan's reporting on China in 2006', URL: <http://www.geocities.jp/ktakai22/>. (Original in Japanese)
- The Cabinet Office, The Government of Japan (2005) 'A Public Opinion Survey on Japanese Diplomacy', URL: <http://www.8.cao.go.jp/survey/h15/h15-gaikou/2-1.html>. (Original in Japanese)
- The Japanese National Commission for UNESCO (1982) 'The Handbook of International Education', Tokyo Horei Publishing.
- Yamada, K. (2004) 'The Internet and Anti-Japanese Feeling in China: From a Chinese Internet Researcher's View', *The NHK Monthly Report on Broadcast Research* 54(11): 54-57. (Original in Japanese)
- Zhang, N. (2003) 'A Study on Three Newspapers' Reporting on "Textbook Issue": Based on a Frame Theory', *Fuji Xerox Kobayashi Fund.* (Original in Japanese)

Author Note

Ge WANG

Graduate Student, Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu University

E-mail: wanggeakesu63@yahoo.co.jp

Akira SAKAMOTO

Professor, Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu University

E-mail: sakamoto.akira@ocha.ac.jp