

**Framing the Other:  
Representations of Africa in  
*The Japan Times /Online* between January and December 2000  
A Case Study**

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to find out, against the news genre norms, how representations of particular regions are produced in the structure of newspaper reporting in the foreign news sub-genre. The study focuses on news reports concerning Africa, or African countries, in one Tokyo-based newspaper: *The Japan Times/Online*. The study is theoretically informed by Cultural Studies – a field of study concerned with the study of ideology and power in discourse – and investigates how Africa and African countries are represented as “other” than developed countries.

This is a textual study that focuses on the production moment using Critical Discourse Analysis methods. Critical discourse analysis is interested in the study of ideological forms that have become naturalised over time, so that ideology has become common sense. The first part of the study analyses headlines and reveals evidence of ideological positions adopted by *The Japan Times/Online* in the representation of, firstly, home or Japanese actors, which is very different to the representation of African actors. The second part of the analysis examines the structures of the texts and the language used therein. The evidence from this analysis shows how Africa is represented as a Third World entity through various crises, including a health epidemic, perceptions of political instability and economic instability, an inadequate business image, as well as market and managerial skills, and wars and conflict.

The study concludes with a discussion of the representation of Africa and African countries as a part of the Third World entity. This representation reflects and naturalises social inequality between developed countries and those of the Third World, of which Africa is a part. The representation of Africa as a Third World entity also naturalises the social, health, economic and political conditions said to be characteristic of African countries. It is this process of representation that reveals the power relations between Japan as a First World country and Africa as part of the Third World.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1. Introduction

This thesis reports on a study of media representations of Africa in Japan's English press using *The Japan Times/Online* as a case study. The rationale behind the study is that little research on Japan's coverage of Africa has been done. The lack of empirical research on the media constructions of Africa's identities in Japan is surprising. Japan has pursued a diplomacy policy based on procurement of natural resources with African countries since the 1950s, and as such has a trading history of more than 50 years with the continent. The need for further research on media representations of Africa exists now more than at any time in the past. This is due to the growing discursive marginalisation of the continent in international affairs, particularly since the end of the Cold War. Inadequate understanding of representations of Africa in First World publications can be a serious drawback to efforts aimed at increasing Africa's visibility in international relations. An introduction to a UNESCO study of foreign news noted, "distorted images of the international scene could be a major obstacle for those trying to solve the problems at issue between the North and the South" (UNESCO, 1985:7).

Even though the documented history of Japan's trade with Africa spans a little over fifty years (Morikawa, 1997), she has only recently become officially associated with Africa. The aim of the study is to discover what this publication "makes Africa mean" to its readers, by investigating how it constructs the "other".

The central question of the research hinges on the ideological role of the media in the construction and representation of Africa as an "other". The specific questions I intend to address in this thesis are as follows:

- What factors guide the representation of Africa as an “other” in foreign news, as produced by a prestigious Japanese publication?
- How are these factors encoded or framed in the linguistic structure of texts?

## 1.1 Significance

The study reported in this thesis is important, as little previous research on Japan’s representations of Africa has been done. A study like this brings to the fore new information on the factors that determine representations of Africa in an elite publication located in the world’s second largest economy.

The selection of *The Japan Times/Online* stemmed from the fact that, when its hard copy version was founded in 1897, the underlying need for Japan was to “provide foreign residents and visitors from abroad with a “true” picture of Japan” (*Japan Times*, 1998). This statement can be considered ideological, for it gives the impression that media representations can construct such a "true" picture. In fact, research has shown that media representations are constructions of social reality. Further, the mass media, including the news media, are not simply institutions of the public sphere, but are also private businesses, and are therefore guided by both an economic and a political logic (Jensen, 1986).

With this in mind, it should be noted that some researchers have linked the publication’s views and opinions to official Japanese government thought on foreign policy issues. The publication’s standpoint on foreign and domestic policy may, therefore, be said to be largely similar to that of the government (Chang, 1981:181).

As a Zimbabwean journalist who has worked in Zimbabwe, South Africa and now in Japan, the representation of Africa in a leading online Japanese publication is of concern to me. In many ways, this is a study of foreign or international news reporting as a genre. To be more precise, it is a study of coverage of events that occur abroad as well as within Japan and relate to Africa.

### **1.1.2 Japan's English Press**

*The Japan Times/Online* is one of four major English language newspapers that inform a bilingual Japanese readership as well as English speakers. The others, all of which are “general news” newspapers, are the *Asahi Evening News*, *Daily Yomiuri* and the online *Mainichi Daily News*. A fifth is an economic and business news publication called *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*. This press structure may, however, hide the reality of the *Daily Yomiuri*, the *Asahi Evening News* and the online *Mainichi Daily News*. The stories of these three are mostly direct translations from their Japanese language versions, and written with a Japanese readership in mind. The companies that publish them also own the Japanese versions, with the exception of *The Japan Times/Online*. It has been established that the Japanese language newspapers have a total circulation of 47,559,052 (<http://www.pressnet.or.jp/data/files/0101/xls>). These newspapers are considered to be independent, mass-circulation papers of a high standard, which operate objectively without government interference and, therefore, are comparable to the better newspapers of the world (Chang, 1981:182). It is, however, important to point out the Japanese language newspaper companies have a greater commitment to Africa than *The Japan Times/Online*. The number of own correspondents based in Africa measures this. The *Asahi Shimbun*, the *Mainichi Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun* all have at least one correspondent in either Johannesburg or Nairobi. The Japanese national news agency, Kyodo, has correspondents in both cities. Donck (1996) argues that those newspapers with low priority for a region will use national and international press agencies.

## **1.2 Government/Media Influence**

Newspapers in Japan enjoy political and legal freedom. There is no regulation of the functions of newspapers by means of vulgar control as found in authoritarian countries. However, there are subtle controls, which are exercised through restrictions on newsgathering. This control works through the in-built dependence of media

professionals on the friendships and favour of government officials for gathering news. The Japanese government makes newsgathering facilities available to the media. Each government agency provides a reporters' clubroom and the equipment that facilitates newsgathering activities. It is within this system of newsgathering that dependence of journalists on officials is transparent. This dependence activity will be described more fully in Chapter Two. The political leaders of Japan maintain personal ties; they dine frequently with newspaper presidents, managing editors and editorial writers, and ask for the media's understanding and co-operation on major policy issues.

The government also exerts influence on the news media through business management, when perks such as corporate tax exemptions are provided for newspaper companies (Feldman, 1993:14). For example, big name newspapers such as the *Mainichi* and *Yomiuri* were offered land at considerably reduced prices for them to build their offices. Most individuals would interpret such a move as an attempt to influence the future operations of the press. Institutionalised contact between the government and the media takes place through the placement of news executives such as editorial writers, company presidents and vice presidents on government commissions and deliberative councils. Akhavan-Majid (1990:1006) states that influence does not work in only one direction, government on the media, but that the media also exercise influence on the government.

Akhavan-Majid (1990) argues that national media policy is one area where these Japanese media conglomerates wield visible influence. He describes the Japanese media as an "elite power group" model, characterised by concentration of ownership (as opposed to diversity and plurality of media units); integration with other elite power groups (as opposed to independence from the power elite); and a two-way flow of influence and control between government and the press (as opposed to freedom of the press from government control) (Akhavan-Majid, 1990). The reverse influence is rooted in the extent to which the Japanese bureaucratic and political elite relies on the press to explain their actions and policies through *kisha* or reporters' clubs. In this way the press is able to develop its own power and have control over government elites. The power is put to use when the press selectively conceals or reveals damaging political facts.

### 1.3 The Newspapers

Each of the following Japanese newspapers – the *Asahi Shimbun*, *Mainichi Shimbun*, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, *Sankei Shimbun* and *Yomiuri Shimbun* -- has affiliation with a national television network, apart from other holdings such as radio networks and stations (Chang, 1981:182). *The Japan Times/Online* runs a radio station that mainly caters to the interests of listeners who share characteristics similar to those of *The Japan Times/Online* readers, in other words, English speaking foreigners and bilingual Japanese. According to Chang, the Japanese language newspapers control what the Japanese public sees and hears, or does not see or hear, in the privacy of their homes. *The Japan Times/Online*, on the other hand, can be said to be aspiring to provide a large portion of the cultural nourishment of foreigners and an alternative for bilingual Japanese. All these Japanese language and English language newspapers, including *The Japan Times/Online*, reach millions of people on a national scale, and collectively this represents the power of the Japanese media.

#### 1.3.1 History: *Japan Times* and *Japan Times/ Online*

The selection of the *Japan Times Online* was made for a number of reasons. Firstly, it has the highest circulation amongst the English language publications in Japan. *The Japan Times/Online* was launched in 1996. Its history as an online publication is, therefore, very recent indeed, compared to that of the hard copy version on which it is based. The hard copy version celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1997. This aspect of *The Japan Times* gave *The Japan Times/Online* a much-needed boost in terms of attracting online readers. It is the oldest English language newspaper to be published and managed by the Japanese people and has the highest circulation. The *Japan Times* print run is 72,345 copies daily, including 6,420 copies for overseas subscription. It is a city newspaper whose concentration is in centres of international business. Half of its overall distribution is in Tokyo. Together, Tokyo and Osaka account for 82% of the newspaper's total readership. All online stories are the same as those appearing in the hard copy version. The writers for the online newspaper also write for the hard copy publication. In fact, stories are first

written for the hard copy version and then transferred online. Since *The Japan Times* was founded over 100 years ago, the paper has developed by absorbing and merging with other English-language papers.

Today *The Japan Times/Online* is owned by a growing industrial conglomerate, Nihon Industrial Fastener Corporation (NIFCO), which was established in 1967 at a time when Japan was undergoing a period of rapid industrialisation led by the automotive and home electronics industries (<http://www.nifco.com>). Though its main business is the production of industrial fasteners and manufacture of plastic components, NIFCO is a diversified group. In addition to its fastener-producing affiliates overseas, NIFCO owns Simmons, a manufacturer of deluxe beds, LEC, a producer of plastic household goods, and OHTO, a maker of writing instruments and stationery products. Nifsan, a housing development and sales company based in Australia, is also part of the NIFCO Group. NIFCO is currently advancing into IT-related sectors. Information Technology (IT) is causing major restructuring of the Japanese economy and is seen as the key industry of the future. NIFCO also owns InterFM, a greater Tokyo-area, foreign-language radio station that is very popular among young Japanese.

NIFCO has an industrial globalisation strategy focused on Japan, Asia, Australia, North America and Europe. Significantly, it has no business ventures anywhere in Africa. *The Japan Times/Online* is considered mostly outward looking in contrast to its competitors, which, being influenced by the reporting of their Japanese language editions, are usually inward-looking, according to Kitazume (Interview 2001/04/24). Kitazume says that the *Japan Times/Online* usually focuses on issues that have to do with foreign affairs and government positions on those issues. This is perhaps what has caused *The Japan Times/Online* to be associated with the official Japanese government positions on foreign policy issues. Chang (1981:181) argues that the publication's standpoint on foreign and domestic policy may be largely reflective of, or similar to, that of the government of Japan. Japan's main foreign policy issue, around which all other foreign policy issues revolve, is its relations with the United States. In a recent *The Japan Times/Online* article it was stated that a new foreign minister, Makiko Tanaka, would, on her impending visit

to the United States, tell that country's secretary of state, Colin Powell, that "the Japan-US alliance is the centre of Japanese foreign policy" (*The Japan Times/Online*, 28 May 2001).

The publisher of *The Japan Times/Online*, Mr. Toshiaki Ogasawara, recognising this central issue, duly informed the editors that Japan's relations with the United States were to be editorially treated with special care (Ishikawa Interview, 10/05/2001). It is clear that in this case the newspaper's editorial line on relations with the United States will follow that of the government. The ownership structure of *The Japan Times/Online* is woven around a complex financial arrangement, although the publication seems financially independent of the direct influence of the owner of the newspaper. Around 1985, the owner of Nifco, Mr. Toshiaki Ogasawara, made a substantial enough investment in *The Japan Times/Online* to make him the majority shareholder (Ishikawa, Interview, 10/05/2001). Some time around 1995, NIFCO bought a majority of Mr. Ogasawara's personal shares. Now NIFCO and Mr. Ogasawara are the major shareholders of *The Japan Times/Online*. The chairman and publisher of *The Japan Times/Online* does not involve himself in the day to day running of the newspaper, but the publication and the headquarters of NIFCO are located in the same building (Ishikawa, Interview, 10/05/2001).

While operational control of *The Japan Times/Online* is left to two senior managers, namely the managing editor and editor-in-chief, the allocation control is retained in the hands of the publisher (Ishikawa, Interview, 10/05/2001). This is shown by a standing, unwritten arrangement that two auditors who report to the publisher attend the *Japan Times/Online* policy meetings (Ishikawa Interview, 10/05/2001). Their brief is to monitor financial details of *The Japan Times/Online* on behalf of the chairman and publisher and to report to him. *The Japan Times/Online* does not, however, transfer profits to NIFCO (Ishikawa, Interview, 10/05/2001).

### **1.3.2 Readership Profile**

Non-Japanese readers of the *Japan Times* number slightly more than the Japanese readers, which is acceptable considering that the newspaper itself came into being to serve an English-reading public. The following information is from an internal 1998 September to November survey, which is the latest information provided by the advertising department to potential advertisers. The general readership profile is as follows: bilingual Japanese - 48%; non-Japanese - 52%, with most of the readers found in the business districts of Tokyo and Osaka. The general age spectrum for both Japanese and non-Japanese readers is between thirty and forty, although all age groups are represented in *The Japan Times* readership profile.

The readership, as one would expect in such a technologically advanced society and business capital as Tokyo, comprises 60% of people who are engaged in business, while 40% are company executives or managers. More than 80% have completed four years of college and 20% have completed graduate study. About three quarters of *The Japan Times* foreign readership is, according to the survey results, from English-speaking countries, particularly North America, which accounts for over half the readership (*The Japan Times* Media Data no. 11: 1998). The Japanese readership of the publication is composed of internationally minded, bilingual Japanese citizens, most of whom have travelled to North America and to Europe.

### **1.4 The Internet**

According to Jackson (2000: personal communication), the readership profile of the hard copy largely applies to those who access the *Japan Times/Online*. Jackson stated that when the *Japan Times/Online* was started in January 1996 the rationale was to secure “our piece of cyberspace”.

In 1996, existing economic conditions affected the extent to which the online version could be set up. Japan was in the midst of its worst post-war recession. Newspaper advertising revenues were down and online costs were still high. “Most importantly the

Internet had still not come of age here then” (Jackson, 2000:personal communication). *The Japan Times* decided to put its entire local, political and business news stories online once a day. Each news item was edited down to about two-thirds the length of the print edition and at that time all of the news items were thrown together in one file. There was no search engine. Things changed in 2000. The site has since been redesigned; all features are now on the site and in full length, including op-ed pieces, which are articles placed on the page opposite the editorial. A search engine has also been included. An indication of how widely accessed the site is can be gained from an analysis of the hits registered.

#### **1.4.1 Hits**

According to an offline survey done by the company (Ibid.), the *Japan Times/Online* registers seven million hits every month. More than 70 percent of readers of the print version also access the Website. The average *Japan Times* reader can access the *Japan Times/ Online* at home, as most of these readers are connected to the Internet at home as well as at work. One is able to conclude, therefore, that the average non-Japanese reader of the *Japan Times* and the *Japan Times/Online* has what could be considered an affluent background, and is on the good side of the digital divide, benefiting from the digital age.

#### **1.4.2 Deadlines**

The online edition does not have its own deadlines, but follows those of the print version. Each time a story for the print edition is updated, the online version is also updated. In total, the *Japan Times* has five editions every day. This means that stories selected for the online version are also updated that many times a day.

### **1.5 News Processing and Reporters' Clubs**

At *The Japan Times/Online* about five deputy chiefs or news editors run the news desk. They are all Japanese. Apart from directing the reporters in newsgathering, they make judgements about the news value of particular events and decide if they are worthy of coverage. Importantly, they revise and polish incoming news copy from journalists to

ensure that accuracy and balance are maintained in the story. The five deputy news editors each have responsibility in different areas such as business, politics, society and foreign events. They therefore receive news in terms of their specialisation. After the deputy news editor has finished with the story he/she either recommends changes or makes those changes him/herself before passing the story to the sub-desk or make-up department. Native English speakers then check the texts for language use and grammatical expression. These are sub-editors who also construct headlines and tighten linguistic expression by, for example, replacing expressions with others more appropriate to native speakers of English.

It is reasonable to suggest that, given the way the news gathering structures of Japan are organised, the country's major English newspapers, *The Japan Times/Online*, *The Asahi Evening News* and the *Daily Yomiuri*, are centrally positioned as national newspapers to report events which are promoted by mostly powerful sources. In fact, one study conducted by Akhavan-Majid (1990), found that an alternative model of the Libertarian press operated in Japan. Akhavan-Majid's argument is that the model in Japan indicates that the structure of the Japanese press reflects integration with other power groups, as opposed to independence from the powerful elite (Akhavan-Majid, 1990:1006).

The news gathering structures of Japan are evidence of this model of integration. Newsgathering is systematised through structures called reporter clubs (*kisha kurabu*), which have significance in the ideological role of the press and the news practices of journalists. A press club is, in fact, a beat that is formalised into an association. Japanese press clubs are organised in the main by the news media associations *Nihon Shimbun Kyokai* (Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association) and the *Nihon Minkan Hosho Renmei* (The National Association of Commercial Broadcasters). Contact between information sources and the press takes place within the framework of the reporters' clubs. News dissemination works through club agreements. These agreements, which are enforced on a day-to-day basis and stipulate the time, place and way in which news is to be released, are considered necessary for setting professional standards and are said to guarantee the proper functioning of the press, though others argue that the agreements

dictate the terms on which authorities are prepared to give out information (De Lange, 1998). These clubs number about a thousand and are placed near, or in, the premises of government ministries and agencies, law courts, police headquarters, political party centres, and major economic and social organisations. These include the Diet *kisha* or parliament club, the Nagata club covering the cabinet, the reporters' clubs at the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, called the LDP *kisha*, a club representing opposition party sources, a club that operates at the prime minister's office, one at each of the government agencies/ministries, clubs at local government level, clubs at business organisations such as an organisation representing motor car manufacturers, or agricultural producers such as rice farmers. Reporters' clubs are placed within all areas of official national and local government authorities.

A large room is made officially available to the reporters. Here they carry out their operations. They gather, confirm, organise and write all the news relating to their club, which constitutes a beat. They receive briefings, handouts and press releases, attend press conferences and communicate by telephone in those rooms (Feldman, 1993; Kim 1981). One or two reporters usually serve as secretary for a month or two, thus facilitating the smooth functioning of the press clubs. The press clubs are the ultimate factor to be considered in any attempt to understand how news people gather daily information in Japan, the sort of information they obtain, the identity of the information sources and how this information is provided to reporters (Feldman, 1993:69). In addition to providing space for reporting activities, the sources also provide paraphernalia needed in an office used by journalists such as telephones and furniture. A reporter is usually assigned to a club for up to three years. According to the foreign editor at *The Japan Times/Online*, reporters spend up to six months or more without ever setting foot in *The Japan Times/Online* offices (Kawabata 2001:Interview).

Once a person becomes a member of a club, the information he or she obtains is most likely to be published. This is because the sources are all "legitimated" or "primary" and so what they say is news. Seeing that the press clubs cover all sections of society, politics and economics, one can safely say that the Japanese press, while producing dominant

definitions of the Japanese society, also reflects and constructs the society's consensus on a variety of issues. This is the media's ideological role.

The system of the *kisha kurabu* causes problems on the subject of the plurality of voices in the media. Firstly sources are all government officials and ruling political party spokespersons. Reporters whose organisations are not members of a club are not allowed to cover press conferences on the grounds that press conferences are organised by the clubs and not by a public body. Kim argues that it is difficult to classify conferences as either government or club sponsored (1981:47). This is because of the integrated nature of this relationship, as discussed by Akhavan-Majid (1990). A highly authoritative source, the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan (FCCJ), in its compilation of more than fifty years of its history, says the *kisha* clubs "sometimes limit news coverage of Japanese ministries, agencies and even some private industries and were in effect "cartels, fixing the distribution – and often the value – of the information they glean" (FCCJ, 1998). Though foreign correspondents now have partial access to events organised by *kisha kurabu*, in the beginning they were almost universally barred from attending press conferences and briefings including those at the Kasumi Club of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FCCJ, 1998).

## **1.6 Background: Africa/Japan Relations**

Of late, Japanese aid to and trade with Africa has increased somewhat, particularly after 1993 when the Japanese government organised the first Tokyo International Conference on African development (TICAD). This followed a three-pronged economic recommendation for development by the Japanese Economic Mission to Southern Africa, which called for a co-ordinated approach by the Japanese federation of business organisations, the Keidanren, individual private companies and the Japanese government (Morikawa, 1997: 69).

Each of these three sectors was to extend its efforts in the upliftment of the African continent. TICAD noted the economic and social crises Africa faced in the 1980s and the

development challenges it faced. This first conference also noted that the end of the Cold War brought an opportunity for African countries and the international community to share a broader common understanding of the need for development co-operation. This first TICAD in 1993 marked a significant turnaround in the nature of Japan's diplomatic, political and economic relations with Africa, namely the end of a tendency to engage with conditions. These included improvement in Africa's political systems, where good governance and transparency were to be the order of the day. The TICAD conferences have become the way through which Japan engages with Africa. They show that now Japan is not only interested in giving aid to Africa, but that involvement in peacekeeping activities, conflict resolution and helping to combat infectious diseases have become part of Japan's diplomacy towards Africa. Significantly, trade protectionist barriers against African products and goods remain in place.

### **1.6.1 Dual Policies**

Morikawa (1997:52) argues that Japan's foreign economic policy towards Africa was governed by the dominant racial and political ideologies of the West at one time. This was evinced in its dual policies – one for a White and one for a Black Africa – for conducting business on the continent (1997:52-81). A policy shift is observed as from 1993.

From 1952 onwards, South Africa received Japan's explicit and implicit support, especially during the Korean War (1950-3) in the context of the pro-American, anti-Communist climate of the early 1950s. Nagasu (1976) critically examines Japan in relation to developing or Third World countries in Asia during the period from 1950. In his analysis he finds that Japan perpetuated Cold War patterns through aid and trade, and argues, "Japan favours only the side supported by the West" (Nagasu, 1976: 221).

In 1948, the same year in which the National Party in South Africa took power, Japan, still under US occupation, resumed trade with South Africa. It also formally concluded a trade agreement with the White settler controlled Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in February 1960 (Morikawa, 1997:79). By 1993, Japan's role and status worldwide

made it a major player in international relations. It looked forward to playing an even greater role as a world financier.

## **1.7 Africa Policy**

### **1.7.1 White Africa Policy**

Morikawa (1997) argues that Japan's first objective in its White Africa Policy, which ran from 1951 to 1989 and a little after, was political. It was geared towards a partnership with the white minority regimes and was against African states, the Angolan and Mozambican forces, the South West People's Organisation (SWAPO) and the African National Congress (ANC) that were considered to be pro-Eastern and pro-Communist.

The second goal that the White Africa Policy sought to achieve was economic. The Japanese government intended to use Africa as a stable source of metals such as chrome, manganese, platinum, and vanadium necessary for Japan's accelerated transformation. Japan was at the time changing its industrial structure from heavy chemical industries to a knowledge-based industry, focusing on intensive high-tech industries including integrated circuits, computers and industrial robots. South Africa and the Soviet Union were the leading producers of the necessary rare metals. Since Japan considered the Soviet Union as its principal enemy, it chose to buy from South Africa.

Thirdly, the White Africa Policy was intended to maintain and expand export markets. However, in spite of increasing international pressure to isolate South Africa because of its apartheid policies, Japan remained adamant in its support of the regime as an export market. In 1985-6 a number of ministers from the apartheid regime visited Japan. This was at a time when the white minority regime was facing serious economic and political difficulties at home and abroad. This visit invited criticism of Japan from Black Africa (Morikawa, 1997: 76).

### **1.7.2 Black Africa Policy**

Morikawa (1997) argues that Japan's Black Africa Policy presented a stark contrast to the White policy. He argues that it did not seek engagement with the African states and was dictated by Cold War politics. It sought to promote friendly and co-operative relations with pro-Western African countries (Morikawa, 1997:81). Its goal, as with its White Africa Policy, was economic in that it sought to secure natural resources such as copper, iron ore and uranium. Natural resources became Japan's main focus towards Black Africa from the 1960s onwards. In 1970 the Japanese government dispatched the Kono Economic Mission to nine countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Senegal.

Both the Black and White Africa policies have long been discarded in response to changes in international boundaries that have resulted in a redrawn economic, political and ideological map. The world now has a multi-polar system and an increased role for Japan to play, particularly in Africa.

### **1.8. Thesis Structure**

This thesis is divided into six chapters, which show the step-by-step processes entailed in the case study.

- Chapter One, as already seen, introduces the study, outlines its importance and provides an historical background to both the existing political and economic relationship between Africa and Japan, and the context of the media environment within which *The Japan Times/Online* operates.
- Chapter Two examines the theories of language and ideology that provide the theoretical background to the study. It explores how these theories may apply to the study of *The Japan Times/Online* representations of Africa and African countries. Other sections of the chapter examine what the news genre is, followed by an examination of news production at *The Japan Times/Online*. The chapter then

provides a review of foreign news studies that acts as a context for this current study's focus on Africa related news.

- Chapter Three discusses the methodology of the study and details the techniques used to analyse the texts of *The Japan Times/Online*.
- Chapter Four provides an analysis of the factual category of *The Japan Times/ Online* foreign news texts on Africa.
- Chapter Five provides an analysis of the opinion category of *The Japan Times/ Online* texts on Africa.
- Finally, Chapter Six, the conclusion, shows what steps have been undertaken in the study to answer the research question.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **2.1. Introduction**

In this chapter I discuss the question of representation from a constructionist point of view. Representation is one of the central practices through which culture is produced and is considered a key moment in the “circuit of culture” and in the field of study called Cultural Studies. I discuss how the process of representation takes place and what the role of culture is in the construction of meaning. I also discuss what ideology is in terms of systems of representation and discourse. Later on I focus on the news genre, process of news production and how the product, news, is a “social construction of reality” rather than a “window on the world” or a reflection of reality. My discussion also deals with the role of news values in this process. I then turn my attention to the foreign news sub-genres, and briefly discuss the similarities between the sub-genres with the main news genre as a socially constructed product. Finally, I review past research into foreign news of both news flow and news coverage issues between First World and Third World countries.

### **2.2. Circuit of culture**

This section attempts to locate the study of textual representations as cultural forms within a “circuit of culture” consisting of different moments, such as production, circulation and consumption of cultural products (Johnson, 1996; Hall, 1997; du Gay, 1997). However du Gay (1997:1) mentions five moments. These are representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation. Each of these moments depends on the other and is necessary to complete the circuit, though each of the moments is distinct

from the other and is characterized by changes of form. The focus here is on representations, in other words, on texts, or the second moment in the circuit of culture, after production. It is important to study the production context because it is not possible to infer the conditions of production from studying the text (Johnson 1996:108).

### **2.3. Representation**

The social constructionist view of representation conceives it as entering into the very constitution of things, where culture is conceptualized as a primary or “constitutive” process in the same way as the economic or material base shapes social subjects and historical events (Hall 1997:2). This view differs from the view that representation is a reflection of the world after the event, which used to be the conventional view.

Constructionists consider the media not to represent (re-present) a piece of reality, but rather to produce or construct it. Fiske argues that in theories of representation, “reality does not exist in the objectivity of empiricism, but is a product of discourse” (Fiske 1991:56): the media does not record reality but encode it: the encoding produces a sense of reality that is ideological (Fiske 1991:56).

However, there is a different view based on mimetic theories. This view rests on the assumption that “an image is, or at least ought to be, a reflection of its referent. It is based on a transparency metaphor that constructs the media as a window through which to view the world” (Fiske 1991:56). The mimetic theories approach “reality” in terms of positivism. On the other hand, theories of representation define “reality” in terms of historical materialism. Representational theories locate the epistemological problems of the media in ideologically determined discursiveness; mimetic theories locate them in its

relationship to an empiricist reality. Media professionals are generally held to have mimetic assumptions in their operations.

The social constructionist position is adopted in this discussion and is used to demonstrate the production of news and representation of Africa and African countries by *The Japan Times/Online*. This thesis is specifically concerned with representation, but production though the moments of identity and consumption are also considered. Du Gay (1997) argues that in the circuit of culture, it is not relevant which moment is analysed first given that for a study to be considered complete all five moments have to be studied. In this case I start with what Hall (1997:1) describes as a “key moment” in the “circuit of culture”, namely representation. This makes representations of how identities of Africa are constructed an element in the next part of this thesis, and production of representations in news texts an important part of this study. I would like to show that the definition of culture encompasses the definitions of representation and the other moments in the circuit of culture. The term “culture” describes the way of life of particular groups, peoples, nations, or periods: a meaning which led to the word being more commonly used, in the plural – “cultures” (du Gay 1997). In other words, culture is a “way of life” of a specific social group or period. According to Hall, “culture is involved in all those practices...which carry meaning and value for us, which need to be meaningfully interpreted by others, or which depend on meaning for their effective operation. Culture, in this sense, permeates all of society” (Hall 1997:3). A contemporary definition of culture is that it is the “production and circulation of meaning” (Giles and Middleton 1999). According to Giles and Middleton (1999) one can choose to see culture as “the

production and circulation of meaning”, or as “ a particular way of life”, but whichever way is chosen, the place of culture in constructing, sustaining and reproducing structures and relations of power needs to be given careful consideration. I would like to consider culture as “the production and circulation of meaning”. Such a consideration argues Giles and Middleton, makes culture a significant site for the formation of discourses by which one group or community legitimates its power over another group or community (Giles and Middleton 1997). Culture also becomes an important place where power, and the meanings that uphold power, can be resisted.

In cultural studies, it is not so much things like novels, paintings, or even news programmes or news columns, that are important, the emphasis is more on culture as a process, a set of practices (Hall 1997:2). Culture, argues Hall (1997:2), is primarily concerned with the production and exchange of meanings – “the giving and taking of meaning” in a society or a group. In the “circuit of culture” meaning is produced at several sites, which I have mentioned above, and circulated through different processes or practices. Meaning, according to Hall (1997:3), gives people a sense of their own identity; who they are and with whom they belong. Meaning is used to mark out and maintain identity within, and difference between, groups. Meaning is produced by the mass media and also when people consume or appropriate cultural things in everyday rituals and practices of daily life. Meanings also regulate and organize by setting rules, norms and conventions by which social life is ordered and governed (Hall 1997:4). The production and circulation of meaning takes place through culture and language. Meanings are produced through systems of representation. Meanings are given by the way they are represented. The principal means of representation in culture is language.

Language in cultural studies means not necessarily the written or spoken words, but any system of representation such as photography, painting, speech, writing, where signs and symbols are used to re-present ( Hall 1997:4).

The social constructionist view of language and representation owes much to Swiss linguist Saussure who was born in Geneva in 1857. For Saussure, the production of meaning depends on language: “Language is a system of signs” (qtd. in Hall 1997:31). A sign is the union of a form that signifies (signifier) and an idea signified (signified) (Hall 1997:31). Saussure insisted on what he called the arbitrary nature of the sign: “There is no natural or inevitable link between the signifier and the signified” (qtd. In Hall 1997:31).

The word “represent” may be used in a number of senses. In one sense to “represent” means to stand in for, as a country’s flag does at the United Nations; secondly “represent” may mean to speak or act on behalf of, in the same way an elected official represents the interests of those who elected him. Thirdly “represent” may be used to mean “re-present”, such as when a photograph re-presents a moment or an event or a piece of writing such as historical writing may re-present past events. In this case, I am concerned only with the role of language in representation. Language is considered a system of signs, in the sense that a system of signs/ letters/ sounds such as d o g will represent “stand in for” an animal that is classified as different from cats or cows. There are, however, two systems of representation in operation. The first is a system for all sorts of objects, people and events

that correlate with a set of concepts or mental representations people carry around in their heads (Hall 1997:17).

Representation is the production of meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language, which enables us to refer to either the real world of objects, people or indeed to an imaginary world of fictional objects, people and events (Hall 1997:17).

Meaning therefore depends on the system of concepts and images in our thoughts, which can stand for or “represent” the world (Hall 1997). The other system of representation concerns signs. For example, words construct meaning and transmit it. However, they do not have any clear meaning in themselves. They are the vehicles of media that carry meaning because they operate as symbols, which stand for or represent (i.e. symbolize) one’s meaning. Words function as signs. Signs stand for, or represent, concepts, ideas and feelings, which enable members of the same society to read, decode or interpret meanings in the same way (Hall 1997:18).

The constructionist approach to meaning in language emphasises that neither things in themselves, nor the individual users of language, can fix meaning in language. In other words, “things don’t mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems – concepts and signs” (Hall 1997:25). For constructionists the material world, where people and things exist, is different from the symbolic practices and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate (Hall 1997). For constructionists it

is not the material world which conveys meaning, but the language and other systems used to represent concepts. Meaning therefore depends not on the material quality of the sign but on its symbolic function (Hall 1997). “It is because a particular sound or word stands for, symbolizes or represents a concept that it can function, in a language, as a sign and convey meaning – or, as the constructionists say, signify (sign-i-fy)” (Hall 1997:26).

For Saussure, language consists of signifiers which must be organized in a “system of differences” in order to produce meaning. The differences between signifiers are what signifies (Hall, 1997). According to Saussure,

...language sets up an arbitrary relation between signifiers of its own choosing on the one hand, and signifieds of its choosing on the other. Not only does language produce a different set of signifiers, articulating and dividing the continuum of sound (or writing or drawing or photography) in a distinctive way; each language produces a different set of signifieds; it has a distinctive and thus arbitrary way of organizing the world into concepts and categories  
(Culler qtd. in Hall 1997:32.)

Hall finds that the argument by Saussure has implications for the theory of representation and the understanding of culture. For Hall if a signified and a signifier result from a system of social conventions specific to each society and to specific historical moments, then all meanings are produced within history and culture (Hall 1997). There is therefore no single, unchanging, universal “true meaning”. Culler argues, “Because it is arbitrary,

the sign is totally subject to history and the combination at the particular moment of a given signifier and signified is a contingent result of the historical process” (qtd. in Hall 1997:32). Hall argues that if meaning changes historically and is never fixed, then “taking the meaning” involves an active process of interpretation. Meaning has to be actively “read” or “interpreted”. According to Hall (1997), Saussure showed that representation was a practice and not a mere transparent medium between things and meaning.

Hall places the link between society and meaning in the process of signification – giving social meaning to events. It both assumes and helps to construct meaning as a “consensus” in which society is represented, as if there are “no major cultural or economic breaks, no major conflicts of interests between classes and groups” (Hall 1978). However, media representations can be decoded from three possible positions: dominant, negotiated and oppositional.

#### **2.4. Ideology**

Ideology is conceived from a realist and critical point of view as negative, distorting and concealing of dominant (class) interests while, on the other hand, a relativist, more positive conception is of ideology as discourse. When conceived as ideology, discourse facilitates different (pluralist) identities and “ways of knowing” (Cottle 1995). This is a realist and positive conception of ideology as discourse, but when informed by a critical conception, ideology is negative, “distorting and concealing of dominant (class) interests” (Cottle 1995:276). The question of ideology is central to representation. This is because ideologies function as “systems of representation composed of concepts, ideas, myths or

images in which men and women live their imaginary relations to the real conditions of existence” (Althusser qtd. in Hall 1985:103). Hall (1985) argues that it is in and through the systems of representation of culture that we experience the world. However, because images are constructions they can also be dismantled into their constituent elements, and each of these elements can offer insights into a culture’s ideology and the connection between the control of representation and political power.

Hall argues that ideological practices entail a double articulation of the signifier, first to a web of connotation (signification) and second, to real social practices and subject-positions (representation). According to Hall, ideological practices are those through which particular relations, or particular chains of equivalences, are “fixed,” “yoked together” (qtd. in Grossberg 1985). Cultural practices, such as news gathering and editing, construct the necessity, the naturalness, the “reality” of particular identifications and interpretations. Ideology, argues Hall, is the naturalization of a particular historical cultural articulation. An example may be how Africa and African countries have been represented since the colonial days by Western media as “primitive” or “conflict-full”.

Hall argues that ideology “yokes together” particular structures of meaning, thus anchoring them in a structure in which their relations to social identity, political interests etc., have already been defined and seem inevitable. Thus a representation of Africa as “primitive” or “poor” is an identity Africa as a homogenous mass may have been given through constant production and the meaning has now become naturalized to the point of “common sense” in Western societies.

Hall argues that ideology functions in the arena of signification, representation and discursive practices through signs and codes (Hall 1982). Dominant codes apart from the denotative ones used in language are called connotative. These enable a sign to “reference” a wide domain of social meanings, relations and associations. They are also the means through which “widely distributed forms of social knowledge, social practices, the common knowledge which society’s members possess of institutions, beliefs, ideas are ‘brought within the horizon’ of language and culture” (Hall 1997). The way these things function in the language of news is central to the production of meaning. This is the process of signification. When viewed as practice, signification is a “process of transformation of a determinate raw material into a determinate product, using determinate means (of production)” (Hall 1982).

The specificity of media institutions therefore lay precisely in the way a social practice was organized so as to produce a symbolic product. To construct this rather than that account required the specific choice of certain means (selection) and their articulation together through the practice of meaning production (combination).

Hall 1982:68

Signification therefore involves a determinate form of labour, a specific “work”: the work of meaning production” (Hall 1982). Meaning is not, therefore, determined by the structure of reality, but is conditional on the work of signification being successfully

conducted through a practice. The inflexion that a term such as “Africa” can be given becomes the centre of the struggle and its connotative field of reference that is studied, in other words, the system of representation. The struggle takes place as a result of differently oriented accents, which intersect in every ideological sign (Volosinov qtd. in Hall 1982).

In terms of the relationship between language and ideology, Volosinov argues:

A sign does not simply exist as part of reality – it reflects and refracts another reality. Therefore it may distort that reality or be true to it, or may perceive it from a special point of view. Every sign is subject to the criteria of ideological evaluation.... The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. They equate with one another. Wherever a sign is present, ideology is present too.

(Volosinov in Hall 1977:329)

This argument has importance in the study of the production of meaning in texts from a constructivist point of view. The cultural “work” of signification is accomplished because of the nature of signs and the arrangement of signs into their various codes and sub-codes, ensembles and sub-ensembles. Hall stresses that an event by itself does not mean but is *made intelligible* through the process of encoding. The term ‘encoding’ refers to the selection of codes that assigns meanings to events by placing them in the referential context that attributes meaning to them (Hall 1977). He thus emphasises not just the structuring effects of signifying systems and the codes through which they were

organised, but also the disjunction between “en-coding” and “de-coding” (Hall qtd. in Connell and Mills 1985).

## **2.5. Discourse and Social Power**

Semiotics brings together the concepts signifier and signified and langue/parole, and the idea of underlying codes and structures, and the arbitrary nature of the sign. Langue and parole are the distinctions made by Saussure in the study of language. Langue is the language-system and parole is the individual act of communication produced by the system and its conditions (Robey 1986:49). For Saussure it is langue and not parole which must be the primary object of a science aimed at showing how language functions (Robey 1986:49). In the semiotic approach, representation is understood on the basis of the way words function as signs within language. According to Hall (1997) the weakness of semiotics is in its tendency to confine the process of representation to language and to treat it as a closed system as is reflected in the proposal that it is language that is the object of study.

For new theoretical developments representation was a source for the production of social knowledge and connected closely with social practices and questions of power. Hall (1997) states that theorists such as Foucault were concerned with the production of knowledge (rather than just meaning) through what he called “discourse” (rather than just language) (Hall 1997). Foucault’s project was therefore more about the “relations of power, and not relations of meaning” (qtd. in Hall 1997). Foucault therefore shifted from “language” to “discourse, studying not “language” but “discourse”.

According to Hall, by “discourse” Foucault meant

a group of statements which provide a language for talking – a way of representing the knowledge – about a particular topic at a particular historical moment...Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But ...since all practices entail meaning and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect

(Hall 1997:44).

According to Foucault, discourse constructs the topic, defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. The same discourse which characterises a way of thinking or state of knowledge at any one time (called an episteme by Foucault) can appear across a range of texts, and as forms of conduct at a number of different institutional sites within society. According to Cousins and Hussain, (qtd. in Hall 1997) whenever these discursive events “refer to the same object, share the same style and ...support a strategy ...a common institutional, administrative or political drift and pattern” then they are said by Foucault to belong to the same discursive formation (qtd. in Hall 1997:44).

The texts on Africa studied in this thesis can be said to fit this pattern of description. They belong to a discursive formation associated with Africa by a certain group of First World countries, mostly former colonial powers, but this knowledge has now spread and is shared by all First World countries including Japan. It is how they come to know Africa. These discourses, though appearing in Japan, are being produced in a publication most of

whose readers are from the countries which were former colonial masters in Africa, and whose language of communication is English. The discourses on Africa in the *Japan Times/Online* can be said to have as their historical context colonial and neo-colonialist relations with Africa.

Discourse, according to Giles and Middleton (1999), moves the focus from an examination of the relation of signs within a signifying system to asking questions about how certain ways of thinking about an area of knowledge acquire authority, how certain meanings attach themselves to certain signs in specific historical periods and how meaning and knowledge produce and sustain power relations. Discourse is a social act, in that it links systems of representation with the real world in which people experience social relations (Giles and Middleton 1999).

Deacon *et al* (1999) consider the term discourse important for showing the relationship between language use and social structure. They argue that the term “discourse” enables focus to be directed not only on the actual uses of language as a form of social interaction, in particular situations and contexts, but also on forms of representation constructed from and in the interests of a particular point of view, a particular conception of social reality. Discourses, according to Deacon *et al* (1999), deeply permeate what is allowed as legitimate knowledge in particular domains of social life, and rigidly exclude other possibilities and other perspectives on those domains.

Discourses are conceptualized as both the products and preservers of existing social structures, the status quo (Shepherd 1994); but they are not only the product of social structures they are also producers of those social structures.

Clearly then dominant discourses about others are produced by those with social power in the world, the dominant classes or countries. It is in this sense that the discourses which are (re)produced to represent Third World countries of Africa invoke the notion of media imperialism. The discourse of media imperialism explains how Third World countries in Africa are kept in certain positions of dependency through the way they are represented. The theoretical framework for cultural media imperialism, dependency theory, asserts that “core” (developed) nations keep “periphery” (developing) nations perpetually dependent upon “core” media for their cultural existence (Salwen 1991). Past research has shown that foreign news media reporting foreign news of Africa and African countries focused on the negative happenings thereby constructing in the mind of the readers the ideological basis of the marginalizing of the continent through the representation of “reality” there as a negation of the “reality” in the West. This thesis therefore notes that the discourses of “core” countries’ media products give “distorted, negative treatment of the Third World in the Western media” which is “... transferred to the Third World itself because of the latter’s dependence on the Western news agencies” (Stevenson and Cole 1984).

Sreberny-Mohammadi, however, argues that the conceptual challenge to the “cultural imperialism” model arises from new modes of analyzing media effects that question the “international hypodermic needle” assumption.

Arguments about the “active audience” and “polysemy” inserted into international communications debate suggest that diverse audiences bring their own interpretive frameworks and sets of meaning to media texts, thus resisting, reinterpreting and reinventing any foreign “hegemonic” cultural products.

Sreberny-Mohammadi 1991:122

## **2.6. Difference/ Othering**

Some arguments about “difference” matter here. Hall presents arguments about why “difference” matters to representation from three different perspectives. First the argument from linguistics is that “difference” matters because it is essential to meaning; without it meaning could not exist. For example, to be “African” is not because of certain continental characteristics, but because of its “difference” to its “others”. “African-ness” is not-European, is not-American, and not-Asian. Meaning is therefore relational. For Saussure whose argument it is, “black” means not because there is some essence of “blackness”, but because it can be contrasted with its opposite –“white”. Meaning therefore depends on such binary oppositions as white/black, day/night, masculine/feminine, British/alien (Hall 1997).

The second explanation is that “meaning arises through the “difference” between the participants in any dialogue; “Other is therefore essential to meaning” (Hall 1997:236).

The third argument is anthropological, and says that culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system. The marking of “difference” is therefore important to culture. This argument states that social groups impose meaning on their world by ordering and organizing things into classificatory systems (Hall 1997). Binary oppositions are crucial for all classification because one must establish a clear difference between things in order to classify them. As a result what unsettles culture is “matter out of place”; the breaking of unwritten rules and codes (Hall 1997). Babcock (1978) argues; “...symbolic boundaries are central to all culture. Marking difference leads us symbolically to close ranks, shore up culture and to stigmatize and expel anything which is defined as impure, abnormal” (Babcock, qtd. in Hall 1997:237).

Hall argues that “difference” is ambivalent in that it can be both positive and negative. It is both necessary for the production of meaning, the formation of language and culture, for social identities, yet it is threatening, a site of danger, of negative feelings, of splitting, hostility and aggression towards the “Other” (Hall 1997). According to Said, a discourse produces, through different practices of representation, a form of racialized knowledge of the “Other”, deeply implicated in the operations of power (imperialism) (qtd. in Hall 1997:238).

In most cases, the themes about Africa in *The Japan Times/Online* show a high degree of acceptance of Western themes, frameworks and subject positions about Africa, thereby indicating an ideological or cultural dependency on the West for ways of interpreting

Africa and African countries. This also implies an acceptance of the power relations between African countries and the West the discourses produce, which in turn become (re)produced as power relations between Japan as a First World country, and African countries.

Power, according to Foucault, should not be thought of as always radiating in a single direction – from top to bottom – and coming from a specific source, such as the sovereign, the state, the ruling class. It does not function in the form of a chain; it circulates (qtd. in Hall 1997). It is never monopolized in one centre; rather, it “is deployed and exercised through a net-like organization” (Hall 1997:261).

The circularity of power is, however, especially important in the context of representation. The most obvious place to look for the circularity power of discourse is in the “stereotyping” of Africa and African countries. Hall argues that stereotyping has its own ways of working and its own politics – the ways in which it is invested with power. The power in “stereotyping” is described by Hall as “a hegemonic and discursive form of power, which operates as much through culture, the production of knowledge, imagery and representation, as through other means” (Hall 1997:261).

Construction, sustaining and reproducing “truths” through discourses about the Third World countries in Africa, is essential to the maintenance of power of First World countries over those Third World countries in general and those in Africa in particular. Foreign news does this in many ways, exploiting the question of “difference” and

“otherness”. The important point to keep in mind, however, is that because, as Hall (1997:270) argues, meaning can never be finally fixed, representations in foreign news can be contested in various ways as I suggest in Chapter Six.

## **2.7. Context of Study**

This is a textual study, which approaches the study of the representations of Africa in *The Japan Times/Online* within a production framework. Such a framework places the professional ideologies and work practices of journalists at the centre of the enquiry.

Textual representations in *The Japan Times/Online* on Africa, an African country, and events relating to both, were analysed, identified and traced to how they were produced.

The aim of this activity is to analyse the effects of institutional practices on media texts.

In order to do this, I assumed a particular stance in relation to the production of the data.

This stance enabled me to consider the contents and meanings carried by *The Japan Times/Online* not to be primarily determined by the economic base of the organization that produces them, as argued by Curran et al (1982:25). Rather, I take the Althusserian view that the texts and their producers (the journalists) are “relatively autonomous” of the controlling power of ownership.

Meanings of representations, or the decoding process, are considered to be independent of the wishes of the encoder. Meanings can be decoded according to a preferred reading, which is the dominant code, or according to a negotiated or oppositional code. This all depends on the social situation of readers/audiences: those whose social situation favours the preferred reading produce dominant readings; those who inflect the preferred readings to take account of their social position, produce negotiated readings. On the other hand,

those whose social position puts them into direct conflict with the preferred reading produce oppositional readings (Hall 1980).

To facilitate the review of the literature, the studies and theoretical assumptions about mass media and their ideological role are grouped into three broad categories: i) representation, language and ideology and discourse, ii) news, journalistic ideologies and newsroom practices, and iii) foreign news. Postulations of these three groups of studies overlap in some places. However, I make no claim to thoroughly cover the questions raised by these three categories.

*The Japan Times/Online*, as part of the superstructures that are “structured in dominance”, has to locate itself in the dominant discourses it produces about Africa and African countries, in order to represent the continent. How it does this through its language of the news is what is interesting for analysis. The kind of subject it constructs is one who is Western, whom it interpolates using particular discourses of Africa. The way in which the publication locates itself in the discourses it produces about Africa is equally important as the kind of representations it produces about Africa. I will now proceed to examine the subject of the news genre and how it applies to this study.

## **2.8. News Genre**

### *News, journalistic ideologies and newsroom practices*

In this section I emphasize the constructionist tradition in news production. This view assumes an active role for both the audience and the press. For example, Tuchman,

describes the news process by emphasizing how reporters and editors frame stories both in text and pictures and how those frames organize the “reality” presented in a story (Tuchman 1978). Tuchman’s views are based on an intimate observational study of American journalism. Gans who also engages in a penetrating observational study, presents a not so different view. For, Gans news is:

... information which is transmitted from sources to audiences, with journalists – who are both employees of bureaucratic commercial organizations and members of a profession – summarizing, refining and altering what becomes available to them through sources in order to make the information which is transmitted from sources in order to make the information suitable for their audiences.

(Gans 1979:80)

Gans’s circular model emphasizes that all key players in the process are engaged in the construction of reality. Sources (government spokesmen, public affairs people, candidates for political office, company executives and union officials) interpret news for reporters. This view equates with Hall’s, for whom news is a “product, a human construction: a staple of that system of “cultural production” we call mass media” (Hall 1973:148). The view of journalists is that news is: “...newsworthy people and events, happening “out there” in the real world at home and abroad” (Hall 1973:148).

News is a socially constructed product rather than a neutral and reflective one (Cohen and Young (eds.) 1981); Fishman (1980); Gans (1979); Golding and Elliot (1979); Roshco (1975); and Tuchman (1978), van Dijk, (1983)). These studies show that news is not simply an incomplete description of facts, but that it is also a specific reconstruction of

reality according to the norms and values of a society. The studies also show that news production is also a part of a complex of professional routines for the management of possible sources, the interaction among journalists, and the possible “formulations” of reality.

Through these processes, news systematically constructs one picture of the world preferred over others, although no social event has a singular or given meaning. The media, which constantly refers to a system of assumptions and social values generally accepted as “common sense”, thus manufactures social consent in a liberal democracy (Hall 1982; Schlesinger 1978; Tuchman 1978).

A number of forms of presentation constitute the news genre. Kosir (1988) describes these forms as report (factual), commentary (opinion), interview and text forms of the journalistic message. According to Jensen (1986), genre is a cultural form that renders social reality in a characteristic perspective, and implies similar characteristic forms of awareness, as well as social uses for the content. In this study, genre is considered a way of understanding news as argued by Jensen. For Jensen, the stance of the reporter in relation to his readers is important in the consideration of what a genre is. In the news genre that stance stresses the role of the journalist as an independent observer, gathering social facts as well as contrasting viewpoints (Jensen 1986). This is the positivist position, which is the view the journalist profession holds. However, the view that postulates that news is a social construction challenges this position and insists that journalists actually construct news of events and are not separate or independent

observers of events they report. Van Dijk (1983) conceptualises the organisation of news discourse as both a result of and a condition for the cognitive operations of journalists and readers, respectively in the production, reproduction, or understanding of the news “data”.

The constructivist view of news critically examines the identity of the journalists and whose reality they report on, and in what way, as well as to whom. Journalists sincerely believe that they produce an objective news product, but the constructivist point of view shows that what the journalists produce is based on social values and cultural assumptions, and is generally presented according to the dominant view in a society.

### **2.8.1 News Values**

Roscho (1975) studies some characteristics of news. He finds that the concept of *timeliness* is central to the definition of news. *Timeliness* is accounted for by three elements: the source of the information for the journalist, the channel in which it is transmitted and the stance of the audience to the information. Where the prerequisite for news is that the event must be *recent*, emphasis is also placed on disclosure even if the event may have occurred in the past. News therefore focuses on recent and isolated events. News is considered as focusing on what is immediate, such that as soon as information becomes available it must be published, because news has to be urgent and if that is so then the public ought to be told immediately. In addition, because news is a commodity, news media want to beat the competition.

The criterion that news is *current* applies to the relevance of the information to the audience. Measures of relevance are considered relative. It is up to the journalist to administer the criteria of relevance according to his understanding of the audience as defined in the market surveys. In addition, Itule and Anderson (2000:14) have identified the following criteria for newsworthiness:

- Proximity or ‘closeness to home’ of events,
- Unexpectedness.

Criteria such as these make it possible for one event and not another to become news.

In general, journalists operate under newsroom norms, professional standards and deadlines to make crucial decisions about selection of events to cover and print. In other words, an event must meet various criteria of newsworthiness. This study also examines news values and the role they play in the definition and construction of events related to Africa, as *The Japan Times/Online* reports them. It is these news values that make news a socially constructed product:

The media do not simply and transparently report events, which are “naturally” newsworthy *in themselves*. “News” is the end product of a complex process, which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories.

(Hall 1978:53)

In general, news values structure events according to how far out of the ordinary they are or in what way they breach our normal expectations of social life (Hall, 1978). News values provide the criteria in the routine practices of journalism through which professionals decide which stories are newsworthy and which are not, which stories are major lead stories and which stories should be killed. It is news values that lead news to be a socially constructed product. However, Hall argues:

News values are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All “true journalists” are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it. Journalists speak of “the news” as if events select themselves. Further, they speak as though which is the “most significant” news story and which “news angles” are most salient are divinely inspired. Yet, of the millions of events which occur every day in the world, only a tiny proportion ever become visible as “potential news stories”: and of this proportion, only a small fraction are actually produced as the day’s news in the news media. We appear to be dealing then with a “deep structure” whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally most know how operate it.

(Hall 1973:181)

In terms of foreign events some factors which predispose them to become news have been identified by many studies. Galtung and Ruge (1970), for example, identify these factors as elite nations, negative events, unexpectedness-within-predictability and cultural proximity. Lee and Yang (1995:2), however, point out that the national interests of nations may be the most important factor in defining media accounts of the political

world.

Other elements identified by Galtung and Ruge (1970) include *frequency* or timing as a predisposing factor. This means that events taking place over a short time such as a flood, an earthquake, a volcanic eruption or a train accident where many lives are lost are more likely to be reported than those taking place over a long time. *Threshold*, or the size of an event, is also identified as an important criterion. If an event is too small it will escape notice. *Unexpectedness* and *consonance* are also criteria. News has a characteristic mode of formal composition. Accounts of genre may tend to focus on this aspect, as it is directly accessible for analysis. News reports tend to have a characteristic and regular composition.

### **2.8.2. News categories**

The news genre consists of the sub-genres “fact” and “opinion”. In the following accounts I try to show the distinction between the two. This is important in understanding how the composition of news is a preliminary indication of how and for what purpose news communicates social information.

Factual news, presented as “hard news”, can be said to represent the standard of the news genre. It is against this standard that we can talk about sub-genres. Every hard news story is constructed according to the inverted pyramid style of writing. This style stacks paragraphs in order of descending importance. The lead summarizes the principal items of the news event. Thereafter, the second and each succeeding paragraph hold secondary

or supporting details in order of decreasing significance. The inverted pyramid encapsulates the news quickly (Itule and Anderson, 2001:29). This style is also meant to facilitate editing, where staff can cut a story from the bottom, where the least important facts are supposed to reside, to fit a specific space. The sub-genre of opinion does not follow this form, although the 5Ws and the H (Who, What, Where, When, Why and How) will be tucked away somewhere in the story. The separation of opinion from fact is the hallmark of the news paradigm.

In the opinion genre, we find similarities of style, which can often be confusing. According to Newsom and Wollert (1985:322), it is not very easy to distinguish between a feature, a column and an editorial, because the qualities of each cross over and intermingle. Having said that, one can distinguish types of features. Editorials are about topics of news significance; features often focus on events and people in the news, whilst columns, on the other hand, can range from the philosophical to the whimsical (Newsom and Wollert 1985).

Columnists are not intended to be news writers in the traditional sense of the 5Ws and the H. Although political columnists write about timely events, they are generally read for their personal presentation as much as for factual content (Newsom and Wollert 1985). Columnists and feature writers can therefore be specialists, reviewing food at restaurants, books, music, theatre, or writing about political issues, life style and travel issues. Reviews are informed judgements about the content and quality of something presented to the public. Most reviews are a form of interpretative reporting.

What identifies “features” as features is their form of presentation, which I discuss below. Mentioning form suggests the concept of "genre" and therefore may lead one to wonder why three genres, ranging from travel through art to sport, were analysed in one chapter (Chapter Five). The term "feature" is reserved for a number of news stories that profile, harmonise, add colour, entertain or illuminate. A feature is not meant to deliver first hand news, although it may recap news that was reported before. According to Itule and Anderson (2000), there is no firm line between a news story and a feature story, because many events are “featurised.” According to Hutchison, Sr. features are,

here, there and everywhere. They fall somewhere between the news story and fiction and consequently incorporate the writing of both. With features, you write for impact. You pull away from strict formats of organization and use your creativity to show the shades of grey behind something that, in a news story, may have appeared to be black or white

(Hutchison Sr.1986:283)

Features are also structured differently from hard news. According to Alexander (1979:142), unlike news writing the body of a feature may be written first, then a lead – a paragraph or several paragraphs. Leads for feature stories are often simple statements to catch reader interest, and they do not answer the 5Ws. They contain a narrative “hook”. These leads, however, answer the “why” or “how” of the story as openers (Alexander, 1979:142). The body of the feature is written in chronological form, or in a sequence of

events in the time pattern in which they took place. Unlike news writing, features use many adjectives (Alexander, 1979:142).

As has become clear, features cut across all genres. Assignment for features may therefore be dictated by one's beat and the news events that occur in it. An example of how the beat may influence the assignment of features is the sport feature in this analysis. I elaborate on this point below. Feature headlines usually touch the focal point of the text, unlike those of hard news (Hutchison, 1986). In my analysis of the features, finding the focal point of each of the texts in the category was important for the process of understanding the structure of the text. It is now clear how the opinion genre categories of travel, art and sport can be analysed together, because stylistically they all belong to the same family of texts called "features".

The study of features involves an examination of their structure and construction and whether this conforms to the conventions applicable to feature writing (see Alexander, 1979; Hutchison, Sr. 1986 and Itule and Anderson, 2000). The headline, lead and body of the feature were examined for the particular features peculiar to feature writing and different from hard news stories.

The separation of opinion from fact, then, is the defining characteristic of the news paradigm. The terms "objectivity" and "balance" play a central role in the practices of news construction. Objectivity is in general the one professional norm that influences the

way journalism is practised. It is from this ideological position that specific aspects of news professionalism arise, such as news judgement, the selection of sources and the structure of news beats. Generally, objectivity implies balance in news reporting. This means that “facts” from all “primary definers” must be sorted out and reported in an impartial and balanced way (Soloski 1997; Reese 1997). In other words “objectivity” refers not so much to the news product itself, but to the practices of newsgathering, although for the readers the degree of objectivity is manifested in the news text. Jensen (1986) argues that in order to sell itself, news must somehow signal its objectivity where the facts of news are in fact not aspects of the world but “consensually validated statements” which must be validated for readers within the form of the news report.

“The ideal of objectivity holds that facts can be separated from values or opinions and that journalists act as neutral transmitters who pass along events to an audience” (Hackett qtd. in Reese 1991:423).

Hackett observed that traditional studies of objectivity and bias in news accounts assume that “news can and ought to be objective, balanced and a reflection of social reality” (qtd. in Reese 1991:423). Hackett argues that the practical objectivity criteria of balance and non-distortion are epistemologically incompatible (qtd. in Reese, 1997). Both criteria require that journalists’ values be kept out of reporting. Hackett goes on to argue that the goal of non-distortion in objectivity rests on an assumption that “the facts” are ultimately knowable; the journalist is a detached observer, separate from the reality being reported, and capable of transmitting a truthful account of “what’s out there”. Both science and

journalism are guided by a positivist faith in empiricism, the belief that the external world can be successfully perceived and understood” (Reese 1997:424).

However, in this thesis, I uphold the social constructionist view of news, that it is a social construction, shaped by the journalist’s social background and the media organization’s positioning in the social structure.

### **2.8.3. Foreign News**

Theoretically, this study is located in the micro-level construction perspective of international news research, as will be more fully discussed in Chapter Three. According to Hjarvard (2002) there are three other perspectives of international news research besides this one. The micro-level and selection perspective encompasses a more traditional, gatekeeper approach. The macro-level and selection perspective encompasses the news flow analyses, such as UNESCO (1953), Nnaemeka and Richstad (1980), Stevenson and Shaw (1984). Finally, the macro-level and construction perspective encompasses theoretical contributions about international news in the context of media or cultural imperialism, and the political economy of the media (Galtung 1971; Mosco, 1996; Tunstall 1977; Hjarvard 2002).

The micro-level construction perspective of this study focuses on empirical studies of news content (see Adams 1982), or detailed studies on news agency organisations (see for example, Boyd-Barret 1980; Boyd-Barret and Thussu 1992; Hjarvard 2002).

As discussed earlier, the news genre has a number of sub-variants of which foreign news is one. As with other genres, the sub-variants depend on the central code of the news genre for their identity. What sets this variant apart from others discussed here is that it focuses on what happens across its borders, whether immediate borders or overseas. It touches on all aspects of life and events earn coverage upon satisfying the news values described above. News about visiting foreign delegations such as those led by presidents and cabinet ministers, or of conferences attended by foreign leaders in a publication's home country, is considered as foreign news in this research work.

This study takes into consideration long-standing criticism that the media fail to cover international news in a comprehensive and balanced way (McQuail 1994:137). In other words, some form of bias has been detected in media representations of the Third World made by the Western media. This study does not set out to prove that this bias exists. Instead, it explores this understanding of the media through an investigation of representations of Africa and how they are framed in the *Japan Times Online*.

Indeed, McQuail points out that under the UNESCO Media Declaration of 1978, the responsibilities of the press to resist warlike, nationalist and racist propaganda were underlined (1994); but it is also true that these United Nations' efforts to influence governments to "agree on certain standards in news reporting concerning other countries ... failed ... largely because of the conflict with journalistic freedom which could be entailed" (McQuail 1994:181). Van Dijk (1988) considers that UNESCO's rejection of a proposal to adopt certain standards for reporting on other countries on the grounds that it

would interfere with freedom of the press to be an indication of the Western media's ideology of self-interest and irresponsibility. Van Dijk (1988) questions why UNESCO considered only the merits of the freedom of the press argument, yet ignored or trivialised the "reasons and facts underlying the critique levelled against the Western media" by Third World countries. For example, while the relationship between the First World and the Third World was once represented as "enlightened transfer of development and democracy to 'backward' lands", it is now represented, argues McQuail, as what it has always been in real life -- "economic and cultural domination" (1994:47).

However, much research has focused on the analysis of how international news flows between Western nations and Third World countries. Other research has focused on the analysis of international news coverage and is concerned with the amount, nature, and type of foreign news disseminated across national boundaries (Kim and Barnett 1996:325). This review looks at both perspectives. I will start with research about factors influencing international news flow before turning to international news coverage.

Early communication research (Kim and Barnett 1996) found that the structure and flow of news was dependent on factors external to news such as political and economic factors including government censorship and media ownership. Other research focused on factors inherent in the news that enhance an event's newsworthiness. Galtung and Ruge, basing their own research on Ostgaard, suggest the twelve factors affecting newsworthiness of international events mentioned in the above discussion of news values (Galtung and Ruge 1970:270).

Chang et al's summary of research on international news coverage focuses on the structure of foreign news coverage. The research summary divides international news coverage into context-oriented and event-oriented approaches. The context-oriented approach examines the relationship between foreign news coverage and contextual or external factors such as geographical proximity, political affiliation, economic relations or cultural similarity. The event-oriented approach suggests that characteristics inherent to foreign news, such as the degree of deviance and the negative nature of the events, enhance the newsworthiness of events (Chang et al., qtd in Kim and Barnett 1996:328). This view holds that internal factors determine foreign news value regardless of external factors.

Focusing on factors external to news, Hester (1973:239) suggests four determinants of information flow based on international relations. These are: hierarchy of nations, cultural affinities, economic associations between nations, and news and information conflicts. Hierarchy of nations includes geographic size, population, economic development, and length of existence as a sovereign nation. Cultural affinity includes shared language, the amount of migration, intermarriage, travel between countries and historical relationships such as mother-country/ colony status. Economic relationships include international trade, the amount of foreign aid, and business investment between countries.

Kim and Barnett, in their summary of research on external factors as determinants in the

structure of international news flow, found that a number of variables have significant effect. These are political freedom, Gross National Product per capita, language or culture, physical location and population (Kim and Barnett 1996:328). Other studies introduce factors such as technical-economic, political-historical, editorial weighting and market pressure or audience as the external factors determining newsworthiness. Editorial weighting and market or audience factors depend on editorial processes (Robinson and Sparkes 1976; Gerbner and Marvanyi 1977).

In other studies, however, when Africa is visible the most outstanding internal factor is the negative criterion. In their view, the Western media devote greater attention to the Third World at times of disasters, crises and confrontation, and subjects such as floods, famines, natural disasters, and political and military intrigues. A number of studies have concluded that newsworthy events unfolding in Africa and the Third World in general are newsworthy because they are negative (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al 1985; Pratt 1980; Charles et al 1979; Boyd-Barrett 2000; Van Dijk 1988; Riffe & Shaw 1982). Stevenson and Cole conclude that Western news representation of the Third World consists of war, political disruption and social instability. They argue, however, that disruption is greater in the Third World than elsewhere and, because of this, reporting reflects the political situation there (Stevenson and Cole 1984:59; Larson 1979).

The anti-Communist or Cold War news framework has been highly influential in the construction of news about the Third World. It was a means of selecting information that emphasised the superpower rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Today developing countries are not represented according to their support or opposition to Western policies and values (Huang and McAdams 2000; Stein 1970; Liebovich 1988; Davison 1975; Giffard 2000:406). Current foreign news tends to legitimise the existing international order, while alternative systems are marginalised and delegitimised (Hamelink 1985:145). Foreign news is conceptualised as functional. One of its functions is to be an instrument of foreign policy where diplomats and politicians execute foreign policy through the international media providing “political power holders with a convenient conduit for the transmission of their selected views on the world” (Hamelink 1985:145).

These studies lead me to expect that coverage of Africa and African issues in *The Japan Times/Online* would not just emphasise the crisis or atypical event, but also that such coverage would stress a non-Third World point of view. These earlier studies on international news flow and international coverage provide a context within which to understand the African coverage in *The Japan Times/Online*. In the next chapter I show this process through the analysis of *The Japan Times/Online* text.

#### **2.8.4. The Foreign News Sub-Genre**

The historical development of the production of the foreign news-sub genre can be traced through what happened after Julius Reuter established the first news agency in 1849 in Aachen, France. Reuter originally supplied commercial news to bankers, investors and merchants and competing news agency, Havas and Wolff, carried other news as well. In order to increase his clientele Reuter added noncommercial news. In order to attract small

newspapers he created a Special Service in 1890 to carry sensational journalism (Meyer 1988).

To attract a wider readership, “they departed from patterns of substantial news and information and from considerations of accuracy and truth to present stories of crimes and scandals, disasters and accidents of special violence, riots and disturbances...the more sensational the better” (Desmond 1980: 333).

Following Reuter’s example, news agencies supplied two broad types of foreign news to two types of customers. Trading communities were supplied with “instant, exact and copious commercial and political information “which had direct importance for their overseas holdings. The other market consisted of “a large number of smaller newspapers whose readers wanted romantic headlines, big stories and not too much substance” (Smith 1980:77).

The perception of news as a social construction of reality is, in this section, extended to the foreign news sub-genre. It can be seen that the use of personal values and the national slant in reporting foreign news had been popular from the beginning when reporting foreign news was formally practiced. Foreign news as a news sub-genre is not too different in terms of form. It uses the same format of the 5Ws and the H. The main qualities that make foreign events become more or less valuable as news are factors that also apply to domestic or local news. In fact, Righter (1978) argues that foreign assignments “were treated like local assignments. The diversity (being) so great...making

order of it for the reader almost require(d) that it be explained in the relatively “local” framework of a set of cultural and intellectual perceptions” (Righter 1978: 120). Righter also argues that national slant is still exhibited in Western reporting today (1978).

Those events with high news value (a high score on one or more of the news factors) will be preferred by the news media. This thesis is interested not only in the media-centric factors that determine what foreign news is, but also in political, economic, social, cultural and cognitive factors. However, Hess (1996) contends that there is a distinctive culture, an amalgam of attitudes, practices and ideas that inform the behaviour of all involved in the production of foreign news. It is these, much more than the excitement of reporting foreign news, which gives this genre its distinction. The culture of foreign correspondence has a tendency to categorise journalists in terms of specialization: there are Asia hands, Africanists and generalists. Hess (1966) argues that there is not much difference between a good police reporter and a big time foreign correspondent. The same qualities – namely tenacity, integrity, intellectual honesty, precise and graceful writing – which are important in domestic reporting are equally important in foreign news reporting. In general, however, news from abroad, apart from concentrating on violence, is about the doings of heads of state, politicians, diplomats and the military. Seventy-five percent of foreign news is considered to be largely government oriented (Hess 1966).

## **2.9. Conclusion**

**This chapter has tried to present a theoretical framework in the areas of ideology, language, news and foreign news that underpin the areas this study is concerned**

with in the analysis of *The Japan Times/Online* news texts. The question of representation is important for the analysis given that the thesis examines how this publication leads its readers to think about Africa in particular ways. The importance of the discussion on ideology for this thesis lies in the fact that *The Japan Times/Online* is one of the structures through which dominant views about Africa and African countries are produced, reproduced and circulated. Who controls – or how the system of representation of Africa is controlled – at the publication, and how this relates to the political power of Japan are questions that interest this thesis. The next chapter presents the methodological approach to the analysis of news texts. Other questions raised by this chapter include finding out how *The Japan Times/Online*'s systems of representation are used to hail or interpolate the readers. The other theories of news are self-explanatory in that they show a working theory or definition of news that will be applied to *The Japan Times/Online* texts.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the steps that led to the analysis of *The Japan Times/Online* news texts. First of all, the investigation into the study of representations of Africa in both “factual” and such “opinion” news categories as travel news, music and sport is explained. Both are considered equally ideological. Secondly, I describe how this study’s sample mixture of “hard” and “soft” news was arrived at, detailing the sampling procedure in the process. Thirdly, I locate this research within the study of foreign news by showing how its topics relate theoretically to previous studies of foreign news. Fourthly, I present an explicit, detailed description and explanation of the method of analysis according to van Dijk (1988a).

Broadly speaking, this thesis can be described as a piece of social research using a case study methodology, which in turn employs qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. It is focused on *The Japan Times/Online* news texts from the factual and opinion news categories. The texts cover the period between January and December 2000 and their subject is Africa. In this chapter, I discuss my understanding of my approach to the research and detail the way data was collected and analysed.

#### **3.2 Qualitative Study of Texts**

This study seeks to investigate the kind of representations of Africa found in news texts. “Text” as a theoretical term is used in the context of cultural studies. In cultural studies, texts refer to cultural objects where meaning is completed by the audience’s reading. In the first place the term text refers in a general way to the message, such as a news story. However, the dominant understanding of texts in cultural studies is that the term refers to the meaningful outcome of the encounter between content and reader (Fiske cited in McQuail, 1994). In this sense, the production context is applied to the activities of both the reporters and the readers. This way of understanding text has a bearing on the method selected for analysis of news discourses in this thesis.

In order to find out the kind of representations encoded by *The Japan Times/Online*, the most suitable methods for the study of texts were deemed to be qualitative analysis through a case study of texts: “Qualitative researchers tend to conceive of their studies, most generally as an iterative or repeated process, which allows for the flexible application of theoretical concepts and analytical procedures to a wide variety of empirical domains” (Jensen, 2002).

A case study is a type of qualitative design that explores delimited entities such as media organisations, communities, singular individuals and events (Jensen, 2000). Though there is inherent interest associated with case studies, one of their identified purposes is to arrive at descriptions and typologies that have implications for other, or larger, social systems. Like other qualitative research, case studies give detailed attention to both phenomena in their everyday contexts, and to the structural or thematic interrelations with other phenomena and contexts (Jensen, 2000).

In qualitative research the context is critical, according to Bryman (1988), who explains that qualitative research exhibits a preference for contexture in its commitment to understanding events in their context. Cultural products must be considered in the context within which they are produced, the context of the values, practices and underlying structures of the social and cultural fabric of that society and its multiple perceptions. In general, qualitative research facilitates the understanding of events and phenomena only when they are situated in the wider social and historical context (Bryman, 1988). Following from this, the analysis of texts about Africa in this research took into consideration the context of location of *The Japan Times/Online*, the context of the audience and the production context. The Japanese context within which texts were produced, and the linguistic and cultural context of the Western readership were part of the context taken into account when exploring how the publication represents Africa to its readers.

The construction of an event about Africa by *The Japan Times/Online* to an English reading public, in the world’s second largest economy, is influenced largely by its context

and the socialisation context of the encoders and the decoders of the newspaper messages and their meanings. “Generally speaking, a case study is not a specific research technique, but a way of organising social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied” (Goode and Hatt in Punch, 1998:150). A case study ensures that one case will be studied in detail. Case studies do not produce results that will later be used for generalisation. Rather they are used to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular case, as argued by Punch (1998: 155) and Yin (1984:21). Accordingly, this particular case of the coverage of Africa by *The Japan Times/Online* does not seek to generalise its findings about representations of Africa in publications in Japan. Rather it seeks to understand in greater depth how Africa is represented in this particular case.

Punch argues that a proper case study will make a valuable contribution where knowledge is “shallow, fragmentary, incomplete or non-existent” (1998:55). The fact that *The Japan Times/Online* is little known in South Africa in terms of what it is, its product and the context within which this product is produced, makes this case study important. I will now turn to this study’s chosen method of analysis, but before I do that I will briefly recapitulate my discussion on discourse and ideology.

I have shown in Chapter Two that discourse constructs, defines and produces its object of knowledge in a way that excludes other ways of knowing that object. In other words, discourse provides a common language for representing knowledge about a given theme. The word “discourse” is described by Fiske (1987: 14) as “a language or system of representation that has developed socially in order to make and circulate a coherent set of meanings about a topic area”. I have already pointed out that foreign news journalists are divided into areas of specialization where one finds “Africa” hands and other such specialists. These reporters called “Africa” hands acquire discourses, or a way of framing discourses about Africa, which make the continent mean something specific to readers of First World publications. As I have already discussed in Chapter Two, the meanings of these discourses serve the interests of the section of society within which the discourse originates and work ideologically to naturalize those meanings into common sense.

Common sense is held to sustain unequal relations of power, and to do this smoothly because it works within what is assumed, and tacitly accepted, to be the case in any particular instance. If Africa as a homogenous mass is held to be “conflictful” in a natural way by a certain society in the developed countries, this is how its members will think about Africa. This way, discourse is clearly related to the concept of ideology and power, which for Fairclough is “most effective when its workings are least visible” (1989:85). The analysis of discourse is, therefore, an attempt to deconstruct the ways in which the particular discourses have been constructed. A very effective method of doing this is critical discourse analysis.

### **3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical discourse analysis has its roots in critical linguistics, “a branch of discourse analysis that goes beyond the description of discourse to an explanation of how and why particular discourses are produced (Fowler *et al.* qtd. in Teo, 2000: 11). Critical linguistics is a term first employed by Fowler *et al.* (1979), who believe that “discourse doesn’t merely reflect social processes and structures, but affirms, consolidates and, in this way, reproduces existing social structures” (Teo, 2000:11).

Critical discourse analysis has several strands including Fowler *et al.* (1979), Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (1983; 1985), amongst others. According to Fairclough, (1995) “Discourse analysis can be understood as an attempt to show systematic links between texts, discourse practices, and socio-cultural practices”. I chose not to use Fowler *et al.*’s critical linguistics method as “it is doubtful how far the predominantly syntactical form of analysis can adequately explain the social relations of power which language incorporates and generates” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999). The criticism against this method includes the claim that it reduces ideology to syntactical structures. On the other hand, both Fairclough and van Dijk’s works have made the transition from text analysis to discourse analysis unlike critical linguistics. Fairclough’s (1995) analysis focuses on how socially available genres and discourses are drawn from socio-cultural practices, while van Dijk’s analysis of practices of news production and news comprehension has a social-psychological emphasis on processes of social cognition – on how cognitive “models” and “schemata”

shape production and comprehension (Fairclough, 1995). The analysis of practices of news production and news comprehension, and an examination of how “cognitive models” and “schemata” shape production and comprehension, made me prefer van Dijk’s method to the method by either Fairclough (1995) or Fowler *et al* (1979).

The word “critical” in critical linguistics or critical discourse analysis is associated with Marxist analysis, and in this case it signals the need for analysis to unpack the ideological underpinnings of discourse in foreign news. In the area of foreign news – news about “others” – ideological underpinnings have become naturalised to the extent that the Western systems of representing Africa link to foreign news discourses in many ways, and become acceptable and natural features of how to talk about Africa. Batista (2000) argues that in all questions of representation, researchers must be determined to ask whose interests and needs are being represented. This thesis seeks to explore this question in relation to representations about Africa in *The Japan Times/Online*.

### **3.4 Data and Sampling**

For the purposes of this study, a period of twelve months from January to December 2000 inclusive was selected. The archives of *The Japan Times/Online* were then searched using the term “Africa”. This search term was used in order to access articles that focused in the main on “Africa”, or an African country, without regard to the subject of the article. The articles sought were not of a specific genre. The stories had to be produced by or for *The Japan Times/Online*. No stories by global news agencies were selected. The stories selected thus covered both the factual and opinion categories. The search term “Africa” yielded a population of 56 stories, which appeared in the publication and were produced by the publication, or available through syndication from the domestic news agency, *Kyodo*. A “population” in this case is defined as an aggregate of texts (Deacon *et al*, 1999:41). Some of these articles did not meet the criterion that the text had to be about Africa or an African country in a comprehensive way. For example, if the text was about European countries, the U.S.A., or the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank or the United Nations, and only mentioned Africa as part of a global system, such article/s were excluded.

The stories remaining were each inspected online to examine the extent to which aspects of Africa or an African country were either the primary or secondary focus. These texts not only had to be about official discourses from the public sphere of politics. They also had to include discourses from the everyday: discourses of cultural exchange, tourist travel and the arts, associated with Africa or about Africa, by writers of *The Japan Times/Online*, or by the domestic news agency, *Kyodo*. It is usual for domestic news agencies to supply national newspapers with copy through various agreements. The emphasis was that the copy selected and appearing in *The Japan Times/Online* be produced by Japanese reporters and reporters in the employ of the publication.

Op-ed and editorials were excluded as they dealt with the very same public sphere issues of a political nature associated with texts in the factual category. Opinion texts on travel, culture and music are not always on issues of public importance. The texts in the opinion category can be said to represent part of global cultural flows.

One could call the method of sampling of texts undertaken in this study as “purposive” or non-random sampling. According to Punch (1998:193) ideas specific to sampling strategies vary and “reflect the purposes and questions guiding the study”. My criteria for articles to be comprehensive and to have Africa or an African country as its primary focus facilitated the analysis of how one aspect – such as Africa or an African country – is treated by the publication. The purposive or non-random sampling approach used in this project resulted in the eventual sample containing 32 stories.

Analysis of the sample according to news genre is detailed in the table below.

The following are quantitative results of the sampling procedure according to the news genre and sub-variants. I also show the full range of the articles that were in the original sample.

News sample					
FACTUAL=7    OPINION=25 articles					
Total	Hard news	Editorials	op/ed	Sport	Tourism/Arts
32	7	8	9	2	6
Percentage of total	22%	25%	28%	6%	19%

**Factual news texts:**

Politics; economics

Topics: Conflict; political instability; aid; tourism; ivory trade; war/peace-keeping; disease/epidemic.

**Opinion texts:**

Politics; economics; sport

Topics: Racial conflict; democracy; epidemic/disease; poverty war/famine; war; diamonds/conflict; natural disaster/floods; Aids/aid; democracy; art; small arms trade; poverty; disease/epidemic; peace-keeping/conflict; sport/politics; music; tourism; travel and wildlife

**3.5 Genre Categories**

**Factual news texts:**

Politics; economics; aid

**Opinion texts:**

Tourism; art; sport

**Factual Genre content categories**

War; peacekeeping; epidemic; diplomacy; tourism

**Opinion Genre content categories**

Travel; art; music; tourism

There was a need to reconsider whether all of the 32 articles would be examined, or only hard news or factual news texts would qualify for analysis. The main problem over which texts and how many were to be analysed was centred on the amount of space available to do justice to all 32 texts. A decision was made to leave out the editorials and op-ed articles. The main justification for the exclusion of the editorials and op-ed articles from the study is quite easy to understand. Foreign events that become the subjects of editorials and op-ed articles are mostly expressed in the current dominant view of the home country's news organisations, and thus would already have been the subject of texts in the factual category. They express views on events and issues written about in hard news texts. Editorials are the institutional voices representing the views of the home country news organisation. Therefore, it was considered more interesting to find out how other news categories, such as the so-called “non-political” ones, dealt with issues. For example, asking how *The Japan Times/Online* covered sport or culture events related to Africa, helped give direction to the selection of texts in the sample. Focus was, therefore, shifted to, on the one hand, hard news texts and, on the other, to “non-political” texts. In this way 17 texts were dropped, leaving 15 in the sample. Of these, seven are factual or hard news and eight consist of sport (2), travel news (4) and art (2). These 15 texts constitute the sample. I decided to come up with a sample that brought together hard news and “soft” news category texts on the grounds that both categories contain ideological significance.

For Curran *et al* (1980), the press is a broader form of cultural production, where the construction of messages takes place, and the ideological significance is not limited to the narrowly and overtly political. Curran *et al* regard it as misleading that one section of a newspaper dealing with public affairs is considered political, while the rest is considered apolitical. They argue that it is when content offers itself as apolitical that ideological significance is most successfully concealed (Curran *et al*, 1980:304). There is, therefore, ideological significance that, in the soft news category, parts of Africa are represented as being only about wildlife and disconnected from the social, political and economic life in Africa or an African country. This explains why both hard news, which is the domain of the political, and soft news as represented by travel, sport, and art stories, are included in

the same sample.

### **3.6 Themes and Foreign News Theory**

Hjarvard (2000) has identified four strands of research in the study of international news.

These are:

1. The micro-level and selection perspective, in which the gatekeeper analysis is located. This includes the seminal study by White (1950), which was further developed by McNelly (1959). Gate-keeping corresponds to empirical observations at the micro-level that foreign news is brought into the newsroom, some of it is selected, rewritten, edited, allocated a space on a particular page and given a headline.
2. Hjarvard's (2000) second approach is the macro-level and selection perspective, which is about news flow analyses. Examples of news flow studies are UNESCO (1953), Nnaemeka and Richstad (1980), Stevenson and Shaw (1984), UNESCO (1985) and Varis and Jokelin (1976). News flow studies are about counting individual news items, though these studies have to be conducted at the macro-level. They postulate that the more data one collects and summarises, the more general propositions one can make as to the structure of international news.
3. The third perspective is called the micro-level and construction perspective. This covers empirical studies of news content. Detailed studies include those about news agency organisations such as Boyd-Barrett (1980); Boyd-Barrett and Thussu, (1992); Femby (1986) and studies of foreign correspondents (Batscha, 1975). The underlying assumption in these studies is that social institutions heavily influence the form, content, and volume of foreign news. Analysis concerns micro-level phenomena such as the content of individual stories or the particulars of an individual news agency.
4. The fourth perspective is the macro-level and construction, which is in general theoretical and is concerned with international news in the context of broader

questions of media or cultural imperialism or the political economy of the media (Galtung, 1970; Mosco, 1996; Mowlana, 1997).

In this thesis I focus on the content of texts and their contexts. It is therefore located in the third perspective: the micro-level and construction perspective. However, as van Dijk (1985:71) notes, it is not enough to be concerned with a “pure” structural analysis without relating textual structures to those of cognitive and socio-cultural contexts of news production and reception. Van Dijk also contends that one cannot really account for the specific constraints on news structures, without specifying their social (institutional, professional) conditions or their socio-cognitive functions in mass mediated communication (van Dijk, 1985). Some studies are restricted to the institutional and professional dimensions of news production by journalists at news agencies or newspapers (Tunstall, 1971; Boyd-Barrett, 1980), or with the economic and ideological controls of news production (see Curran, ed. 1978; Gurevitch, *et al* (eds.) 1982) and are important for the study of social and ideological constraints on journalists during news production. However, these studies do not usually show exactly how social and ideological, institutional and professional constraints work in the actual production process and in the final text. Exceptions to this include work by Hall *et al.* (eds. 1981) and Cohen & Young (eds. 1981). Not much work has been done on the details of news texts themselves, and still less about the exact relationships between text and context of the news (van Dijk, 1985:74).

What this study shows is how, theoretically, a cognitive framework is at work in the production of news at *The Japan Times/Online*. The cognitive framework favours foreign news about situations both familiar and different from peaceful everyday events (van Dijk, 1988). The topics in this study (mainly in the factual category, but also in the comment category of travel) display this tendency. The topics include: war, which is a far cry from the peaceful and everyday events of Western readers living and working in Japan; a health epidemic which is also far from the ordinary peaceful everyday events of Japan; and bungee-jumping which is not part of the everyday lives of *The Japan Times/Online* readers in Tokyo or Osaka. It is an elite sport associated with particular

environments far from the bustling city streets. One can see panic and death in epidemics, huge amounts of adrenaline in bungee-jumping, and intrigue in sport. These themes/topics are in agreement with observations by van Dijk in his study of foreign news (1988). Van Dijk shows that events must fit into models of production well known to particular audiences, and instances of general knowledge of foreign events and scripts such as civil wars are to be preferred.

What this study's themes/topics show are factors similar to those that were raised in Ahern's comparative study (1984). This study's topics indicate that hard news events were selected more for their intrinsic factors and not extrinsic ones. This may be ground for generalising about news from particular regions in particular publications at specific periods of time. According to Ahern, intrinsic factors of newsworthiness are unique to each event and pertain directly to what happened, and how and when. On the other hand extrinsic factors include journalists' socialisation, media constraints and event context (Ahern, 1984). Event context actors include location of the event and who was involved. The identity of participants is important in that newsworthiness is determined by such factors as economic and military power, and geographical and cultural proximity. Though such extrinsic factors as geographic proximity, cultural proximity, cultural affinity or colonial heritage could have militated against the selection of some events, these made it mostly on the criterion of negativity. Hester's study quoted in Ahern (1984), found that foreign relations factual news was overshadowed by conflict and/or epidemic news in the same way as the factual news topics in this study suggest.

Although there may appear to be a difference between factual news and opinion in general, foreign and travel news reporting places media practitioners in a special journalistic role "outside" their usual system of reference (Fursich 2002). Having said that, I must point out that it is also important to note that journalists do not constantly create new accounts (discourses), but fall back on established and recurring "frames" as noted by Entman (qtd. in Fursich 2002). This technique of representation is practised in both factual and opinion news texts. The non-current affairs content, as Curran *et al* (1980) refer to the opinion category topics in this study, exhibits certain characteristics

common to this kind of news. These characteristics are of a world divided into a diverse collection of individual interactions, separate from broader social determination, whereby social structure is concealed and hence naturalised. Secondly, these topics describe a fragmented world that is given an imaginary unity based on the universality of individual experience of consumption (Curran *et al*, 1980). This study has, therefore, taken a departure from traditional studies on foreign news and political communication, and breaks new ground by bringing together topics from both current affairs and non-current affairs in order to understand the nature of representations about Africa constructed by *The Japan Times/Online*.

### **3.7 Analysis of Data**

#### **3.7.1 Method**

This study uses the van Dijk (1983) model of discourse analysis. Van Dijk's approach, as with other approaches such as Fairclough's, draws on Halliday's functional framework. According to Lyons (1970), Halliday distinguished three grammatically relevant "language functions": the "ideational", the "interpersonal" and the "textual". The "ideational" function refers to the "cognitive meaning" or "propositional content" of sentences. The "interpersonal" function refers to distinctions such as "mood" or "modality" (e.g. differences between statements, questions and commands). The third, "textual" function, refers to the way in which the grammatical and intonational structure of sentences relates them to one another in continuous texts and to the situations in which they are used (Lyons, 1970). Garrett and Bell (1998) stress that Van Dijk's approach draws from this functional framework and has three components: first, text or discourse analysis, which includes micro levels (e.g. vocabulary, syntax) and macro levels of text structure, as well as interpersonal elements in a text. The second is analysis of discourse practices, which is about how texts are constructed and interpreted, and also how they are distributed, such as by the media. The third component is analysis of social practices, focusing in particular on the relation of discourse to power and ideology (see Chapter Two).

In concrete terms, the Van Dijk framework is "interested in the analysis of the various

contexts of discourse, that is, the cognitive processes of production and reception and in the socio-cultural dimensions of language use and communication” (1983:2). Secondly, according to van Dijk’s framework, the analysis seeks to answer the question of the processes involved in the production, what the complex relationships between text and context are, and how cognitive and social constraints determine the structures of news. Lastly, the question of how the understanding and use of news is influenced by its textual structures is also attended to.

In fact the major aim of discourse analysis, argues van Dijk (1988a), is:

to produce explicit and systematic descriptions of units of language use that we have called discourse. Such descriptions have two main dimensions, which we may simply call textual and contextual. Textual, accounts for the structures of discourse at various levels of description. Contextual dimensions relate these structural descriptions to various properties of the context, such as cognitive processes and representations or socio-cultural factors. (1988:15)

This process of discourse analysis was followed in the analysis of *The Japan Times/Online* news texts. At all times the descriptions of the units of language in each structure of the news texts were accounted for through terms signalling the hierarchical arrangement of facts (see van Dijk 1983). These structures were examined for implications of the representation of Africa as an “other” which, in some instances, led to an analysis of the context of the structure of international relations within which Africa has a seemingly fixed discursive position in First World systems of representation.

The texts consist of two genres, namely “factual” and “opinion”. In both genres, "situation models" will be assumed as being deployed in the production of meaning. The situation model is a representation of the text situation and features such schematic categories as Time, Location, Circumstances, Participants, Actions and Events (van Dijk 1988a). Van Dijk suggests that when readers read, for example, about Poland, Nicaragua or Lebanon, they already know what is happening there and the text adds new information to their situation model. So, in the analysis of texts about Africa I assumed that journalists and readers of *The Japan Times/Online* already possess different situation models of reported African events. These situation models are both individual and

personal, but they work together with those based on group ideologies about each particular event related to Africa. I also assume, as van Dijk does, that these ideologies are subjective given their personally- and socially-based nature, and that the general attitudes and ideologies of both readers and reporters are brought to bear on the representation of actual events.

In the analysis the presumed assumptions made about the interpretation of each particular text by journalists and readers of *The Japan Times/Online*, were considered to be hypothetical, as this is neither an ethnographic study, nor does it use participant observation as a method. No interviews were conducted with journalists or readers to verify these presumed assumptions.

The assumptions of the journalists and readers are obviously wide and varied considering that the texts under analysis include those on sport, international trade in ivory, peacekeeping, aid, health epidemics, tourism and art. I considered representations of Africa resulting from analysing the construction of these texts as being based on one or other situation model. In most cases the presumed situation models were group based, rather than individual or personal. However, according to Fiske, these attitudes of, say, Western countries towards for example, health in Uganda, “serve the interests of the section of the society within which the discourse originates and works ideologically to naturalise those meanings into common sense” (Fiske qtd. in Giles and Middleton 1999:68). It then becomes natural to think of health conditions in Uganda in terms of epidemics. Such a representation would have the effect of keeping Uganda in a powerless state over its health conditions, thereby maintaining the superiority of the First World countries over the Third World countries through the power of representation. Finding out how this is achieved in the text becomes the purpose of the analysis.

In many respects, certain aspects of the situation models constructed by readers are not found in texts because they are presumed known by the writers, who share membership of the same social, national or racial group as the readers. An example is an analysis of implication and presuppositions, which can be said to originate in what Van Dijk (1988;

1988a; 1991) refers to as “scripts”. According to van Dijk, scripts, which are pre-packaged forms of "general" and "social" knowledge that are culturally shared by members of the same society or social group, represent a stereotypical and consensual knowledge that people have about actions, events and episodes in social life (van Dijk 1988a). Production processes may have their origin in situation models where meanings are specified that correspond to aspects of the model (van Dijk 1988a). Van Dijk argues further that different categorisations are involved in the construction of events. For example, persons or groups are “demonstrators” or “hooligans”. Each category has a different group schema, which must be activated and applied to model building by the reporter. Such reporters will be assumed to have a situation model. This model can be, for example, about conflict in an African country, which they will use to interpret an event, such as the United Nation's request that Japan send peacekeeping forces to Ethiopia.

### **3.7.2 Components of Analysis**

Qualitative analysis of texts was undertaken in this study using a cognitive model of critical discourse analysis developed by van Dijk (1983;1991) The framework does not merely “focus on the structures of texts and their representations in memory, but rather emphasises the strategic nature of discourse production and understanding” (van Dijk 1988a:30). A flexible account of rules and representations is allowed by this approach, which “assumes that text production and understanding is geared towards an effective context-dependent processing of textual and situational information” (van Dijk, 1988a).

I examined the structures of *The Japan Times/Online* news texts within the hierarchy of a news discourse superstructure. All the texts in both the “factual” and the “opinion” genres were subjected to a macro-structural and micro-structural analysis. Van Dijk argues that it is important to assess macrostructures more than microstructures because “macrostructures represent the information that is best recalled, whereas micro-structural or local meaning details are usually forgotten after longer delays” (van Dijk 1988a).

A macro-structural analysis is in other words a thematic analysis. Van Dijk postulates that from a methodological point of view, a macro-structural analysis in mass media research allows for the explicit definition of topics or themes for both “factual” and “opinion” texts (van Dijk, 1983). Swathes or paragraphs of text, and in particular cognitive structures – also called macrostructures (van Dijk 1985), which form part of the whole discourse and are derived from a particular paragraph or discourse structure – were examined for a topic/theme. These topics are linked together hierarchically and are organised through the function of cognitive news discourse categories. A headline, for example, is not labelled "headline", neither is a lead labelled "lead", but readers know what a headline and lead are and what their functions are. Other cognitive categories expected to be present in a story by readers include background information, verbal reactions and comments. These form a news story's abstract schema called a "superstructure" (van Dijk 1985).

The macro-structural analysis led to the analysis of macropropositions. First I analysed the news text's superstructure or news schema, which consists of the Summary category composed of the Headline and Lead, then the body of the text, which exhibits different schematic functions such as Main Events, Backgrounds Context, Verbal Reactions or Comments. Each of these was further analysed into smaller categories such as the Comments category, which comprises Evaluation and Expectations. These categories are called superstructure categories.

I employ a cognitive perspective based on the comprehension of news production developed by van Dijk (1983; 1988 and van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983). The main focus of the analysis of *The Japan Times/Online* texts is their structure. All texts had a selective structural and cognitive analysis applied. However, not all news structures are present in every news text. This means that particular structures of the news texts were analysed. The first stage involves the analysis of the headlines and lead paragraphs of each text. Headlines were analysed first because they are the most prominent features of any news text. The headlines constitute the dominant meaning of a news text and, through acting as

a summary, provide the reader with the preferred way of interpreting the news text through the facts highlighted.

The second part of the analysis is the thematic analysis, which includes the compilation of a list of topics and topic categories derived from the respective news texts. Thematic analysis defines the most important information in a text organised in a hierarchical manner (van Dijk, 1983). The compiled list of topics of each text reflects this organisation. Both the topic categories and the thematic structures of the news texts are central to the production of meaning and what Africa is made to mean by *The Japan Times/Online*.

The third part of the analysis involves the topics in the construction of the schemata, which is the last part of the structural analysis. The topics contain the cognitive information on the events, context and background described in a story. The schema organises the overall content of the news text and is also known by the theoretical term "superstructures".

In production, therefore, the top of the macrostructure is always expressed first i.e. the headline and the lead. The headline expresses the highest macroproposition, followed by the lead as the top of the macrostructure, before lower macropropositions of the text follow.

The following is a macro-structural analysis representation of van Dijk's (1983) proposed conventional news schema or superstructure of news discourse. This schematic superstructure, as van Dijk calls it, is the form that organises the overall meaning or semantic macrostructure of a text as a whole. It is a set of characteristic categories that, through a set of rules or strategies, specifies the ordering of these categories. Some of the categories below are obligatory, such as the "Summary" and "Main Event", whereas others are optional. The Summary category consists of the Headlines and Lead. The following are also categories for global meanings or content (topics). Van Dijk argues that apart from organising the global content (themes, macrostructure) of news reports,

they also have cognitive and social functions in news production and in news understanding and memorisation. It is from some of these categories that I derived topics, as well as built a schema for texts of *The Japan Times/Online*.

1. Summary/Introduction
  - 1.1 Headlines (with super-, main- and sub-headlines and captions)
  - 1.2 Lead
2. Episodes
  - 2.1 Main Events
    - 2.1.1 Previous information / background
    - 2.1.2 Antecedents
    - 2.1.3 Actual Events
    - 2.1.4 Explanation
      - 2.1.4.1. Context
      - 2.1.4.2. Background
    - 2.1.5 Consequences / Reactions
      - 2.1.5.1. Events
      - 2.1.5.2 Speech Acts
3. Comments
  - 3.1. Reactions
  - 3.2. Expectations
  - 3.3. Evaluation

*Table 1: Macro-structural analysis adapted from van Dijk (1983)*

Categories 1 (Summary) and 2 (Episode/s) together form the proper “news story” category. This “news story” category is at the top of the macrostructure of a news report and is always expressed first. The Headline and Lead summarise the news story and express the semantic macrostructure. Headline defines a special news sequence in which variable global content is inserted. The news headline content, when formulated, is realised in bold large type in an actual headline. In the Lead category, typical expression

markers of a news category may yield specific signals that may be used by the reader to infer that a specific category is being used. Readers come to expect that the beginning of a text always contains the most important information and is a reflection of what the news text structures, the strategies of news production and the uses of news reports in mass communication contexts (van Dijk, 1988b). It is in respect to the higher-level news story that the “comments” are given. The “comments” are the typical expression, signalled as such, of the beliefs of the journalist/newspaper. An “episode” can be described in terms of “reminding” the reader of information about the facts that precede the main events.

According to van Dijk (1988a) the analysis of thematic structures or global coherence brings together certain categories. Some of these, such as Background and Evaluation, journalists know explicitly. Backgrounds usually follow the Main Events category, though information in the Main Events category may be embedded in the Context aspect. Van Dijk suggests that Context is signalled by such words as “while”, “during” or words which indicate simultaneity. Context is considered to have been the main event in other or previous news items. Main Events is the kernel of the news story and describes the main “new” events in focus. Some newspapers run a sentence or a paragraph of further explanation of the main, that is, they give some specific “contexts” of the actual events as well as “background”, which provide more detail about the actual events, participants, countries or social problems.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has described the analytical framework within which analysis of texts in this study was carried out. It has also provided a theoretical background for that framework. It has shown step by step how the process of obtaining a sample was carried out. It has described the qualitative framework of the analysis of texts. It has also located this study within the theoretical framework of foreign news. The next chapter is composed of the analysis and findings, and discussion of the factual news category.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FACTUAL NEWS CATEGORY ANALYSIS (Appendix One to Seven)**

### **4. Introduction**

This is the first of two chapters that present analysis of representations of Africa and findings in *The Japan Times/Online*. It is based on the factual news category. It is this category that typifies the news genre as it is the main one through which an audience encounters the news world everyday. The analysis itself goes through various stages. It starts off with the analysis of headlines, and then moves to analysis of topics, themes and schematic categories before examining results and implications for representation. The analysis includes that of lexical terms in both texts.

News audiences have, both in general and through socialisation, an understanding of the form of presentation of factual news, against which they make sense of the news in their particular publications. A particular publication will pursue a different angle to another one in the presentation of facts about a particular event. However, whatever angle it is, readers are aware that factual news is different from editorials or features because of the principle that there is a separation of fact from opinion. Factual news presents facts through the 5Ws and the H (What, When, Who, Where, Why and the How) and these are organised in a hierarchical order determined by the event and the news angle taken by the reporter. In this analysis, I employ the understanding of news as a social construction of reality that theoretically assumes that the social and cognitive backgrounds of the producers of news, as well as the location of the news medium, influence the production of particular meanings. How these characteristics influence the representations in the news texts is part of this investigation.

#### **4.1 Headline analysis**

Having performed the analyses of all seven texts in the factual category, I will show briefly what the headlines mean for the representation of African countries (for full texts see listed appendix in each case). Analysing the headline and lead, as some discourse

analysts concur, is like analysing the whole story. Bell argues that the story is encapsulated in the headline and lead, therefore the headline and “lead is a story in microcosm” (Bell 1991:174). The lead contains a story’s most important information organized in descending order. A lead mostly contains the actors, the main event and place- the: who, what, and where organised in the “inverted pyramid” style. The reader will, therefore, get the gist of the story with a glance at the headline and a quick read of the introduction. The headline and lead provide cognitive macrostructures assigned by the writer and reader. In order to understand news discourse of a different nature, writers need vast amounts of general knowledge, whether political, geographical or scientific. Headlines and leads provide macro-strategies to help readers build themes about the story (van Dijk 1984:77). Headlines and lead sentences contain part of the macrostructure of a story, which is why they can be used to make effective guesses about what is important about a news text (van Dijk 1984:77).

The headlines of the seven hard news texts are as follows:

*Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda* (For full story see appendix One)

*Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech* (see appendix Two)

*Japan pledges 1,5 billion yen for Zambia’s program of reforms* (see appendix Three)

*UN asks Japan to dispatch troops - Ethiopian peacekeeping Mission* (see appendix Four)

*African nations earmark ivory for Japan - But is anybody buying?* (see appendix Five)

*Visiting Tanzanians aim to stock tourism* (see appendix Six)

*Tanzania’s tourism strategy is paying off* (see appendix Seven)

The seven headlines are all in the active voice. This has the effect of keeping the focus on the actors and not on those affected by actions (Hodge, 1979:161). Three of the headlines focus on the actions of Africans or an African country, but in two of the cases the “actions” of the Africans are not real actions (*Visiting Tanzanians...and Tanzania’s tourism...*) but illusions. These are illusions because there appear to be actions suggesting agency when in fact there are none – although Subject + Verb + Object occur, suggesting agency, there is no action. It is instead a mental process.

In the third case the actions of the Africans are real, but are held negatively (*African nations earmark...*). The active voice in the other four headlines focuses attention on the good actions of the Japanese officials, private citizens, and on both the United Nations and the Japanese government (*Japanese doctor joins...; UN asks Japan to dispatch troops...; Mori to call for stability...*).

I will select two texts in the politics and aid categories of factual news to demonstrate fully the methodological processes involved in the analyses. All the results of analyses of the seven texts were brought together before a discussion about them was undertaken. At this point I should mention that the hard news category was chosen for analysis mainly because it constitutes the dominant view of a society in either local or foreign news.

The texts chosen were: *Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda* and *Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech*. The choice of these two texts is not arbitrary, but has been carefully considered, as they constitute the relevant content of the study. The texts chosen are those that are “about” how the *Japan Times/Online* represents Africa. There is a direct relationship in the texts between Japanese experts, and Japanese leaders with African events/situations. These two texts demonstrate, more than the other texts, the way in which Africa and African countries are represented by *The Japan Times/Online*, firstly, through themes or topics or semantic macrostructures in the headlines and, secondly, through the reporting of the pronouncements made by the prime minister of Japan on Africa and African countries. These two texts were also chosen because they demonstrate, in one case, the actions of a private Japanese citizen and, in another, the actions of an elected and prominent official of the Japanese government. Though the Japanese citizen is presented as a private citizen, his pronouncements are similar to those of the prime minister; official and institutional because he belongs to a United Nations body, the World Health Organization. However, both private citizen and public official are portrayed as doing something “good” in connection with Africa or an African country, while at the same time the image of Africa or an African country is presented negatively. Both the private citizen and the prime minister are primary definers of the different African situations they are involved in. The issues of Africa are, in both

cases, therefore, defined by powerful institutions, thereby demonstrating that news “is at heart, an exercise of power over the interpretation of reality” (Turow, 1983). In this case one finds that the multi-lateral body, World Health Organization, and its officials, as well as the Japanese government through its prime minister, interpret the reality of Africa or an African country for *The Japan Times/Online* readers. How they do this is part of the point of this analysis. It is, therefore, justifiable to use these texts for analysis on the grounds that their structure and treatment is the most relevant of all the texts.

The analysis of these texts sought to unveil the representations of Africa or African countries by demonstrating the strategies used by journalists in text processing with a focus on cognitive expectations, local and global coherence and schematic superstructures. In order to analyse coherence, the text was divided into certain cognitive categories. These categories include "headline" and "lead" – which together constitute the "summary" category – “main event”, "background", "comment" and "consequence". Discourse is therefore ordered according to its function as structured by these categories. These discourse categories are those known to Western readers, as they form part of their culturally Westernised story comprehension (van Dijk, 1985). These categories are expected in a news text, as without them discourse would be neither meaningful nor comprehensible. While not all of them are in every news text, some are always present, such as the headline and lead. I discuss these aspects further when examining the schema of the texts.

#### **4.2 Analysis: Text One**

A summary of the first text to be analysed appears below:

##### **Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda**

A Japanese medical doctor, who is a World Health Organisation employee, joins a group of international experts tasked to combat the outbreak of Ebola in Uganda. This was after the Ugandan government had announced the outbreak. Some Western governments assisted the group of experts called the Ebola Task Force with funds. Ebola has no known cure to date. Ebola causes death in 50 to 90 per cent of its victims. (2000/11/07).

A reader will come to the text with general and assumed expectations. These expectations of a reader's experience, postulated by van Dijk (1985), were presupposed in the textual analysis of all the texts in this chapter. The presupposed expectations are considered crucial for the structural or cognitive analysis of a particular article, since they allow for the activation of relevant knowledge and beliefs about the world – in this case, Africa, Uganda and Uganda's health conditions. Van Dijk (1985) argues that in a reader's cognitive control system, the acquisition of knowledge about political events regulates the flow of information between short-term memory and long-term memory (knowledge and beliefs). A reader possibly activates and stores the relevant general knowledge about the newspaper (*The Japan Times/Online*) and its dominant views on political matters (ideology) in his or her control system. Further, the reader possibly has concrete expectations about the type of semantic information (e.g. foreign affairs about Africa on some specific page), and activates general knowledge about the structural format, e.g. the news schema of news articles in *The Japan Times/Online*. In this text the activation of knowledge and beliefs about Africa, Uganda and health conditions in that country occurs in "frames" and "scripts" useful to understand each word, sentence or sentence connection in the Ebola text. Such frames or scripts may start with the general knowledge of Uganda as a Third World country. "Third World" as a frame or script contains all the relevant information such as the health conditions prevalent in such countries.

The first aspect of the news text to examine is which of the five W's and the H had more relevance than the others in the construction of the summary lead. This is important in formulating the initial understanding of the text. Clearly the *Who* had more relevance. In other words *Who* the event happened to, was considered more important than *What* happened, or *Where* the action occurred, and was rated higher than *When* it happened, or *Why* it happened, or even *How* it happened. However, all these elements are in the summary lead. After that, less important details are located in the second or succeeding paragraphs.

#### **4.2.1 Analysis**

My stylistic analysis of surface structures revealed both cognitive and social functions of

language. The analysis focused on the term “outbreak”. It is the syntactic term with the most pervasive meaning. Outbreak is a sudden increase in something, as the occurrence of a disease: epidemic, a plague or “outbreak” can have the meaning of an act of emerging violently from limits or restraints: eruption, explosion outburst (Roget’s II – The New Thesaurus 1995:696). Linguistic terms can indicate the specific beliefs, opinions and ideologies of the journalist/newspaper that is describing the events (cf 3.0.6.1.).

What can *The Japan Times/Online* be signalling by describing the occurrence of Ebola in Uganda as an “outbreak”? If “outbreak” is taken to mean “epidemic”, it signifies particular social conditions, mostly unhealthy, where disease can thrive. If it is taken to mean “explosion”, it signifies a state of the epidemic that is uncontrollable. Either way, the term “outbreak” reflects negatively on the social conditions or health administration standards existing in Gulu, northern Uganda. *The Japan Times/Online* may be saying that in Uganda health conditions are bad or terrible. “Outbreak” carries with it negative connotations, which is the norm in the representation of all foreign news by First World news organisations. “Outbreak” as the overall concept of the health system in Uganda, is the most readily retrieved in memory.

In terms of lexical choice analysis of the text, “outbreak” signals the kind of term preferred by *The Japan Times/Online* to represent conditions in Gulu, northern Uganda. Van Dijk (1985) argues that lexical choice is a typical phenomenon at the local level of sentence, but it is also relevant for discourse analysis because a whole discourse will typically exhibit some kind of stylistic coherence. A text’s lexical choices reflect the register, which denotes the same referents and subjects them to the same evaluative dimensions. The kind of register “outbreak” comes from is found present in other terms denoting this referent. The terms that follow were intended to construct the outbreak discursively. Such terms as “victims and suspected victims”, “international effort to control the fever”, “71 people had been killed” and “205 cases recorded since the outbreak” all help construct the representation of the Ebola occurrence as an outbreak. In general, outbreak is symbolised by the increasing numbers of victims. Statistics are

therefore part of the meanings generated by “outbreak” as a syntactic term.

I then looked at some other aspects of local coherence. Local coherence is defined in terms of the locally coherent propositions that denote “related” facts in some episode, or will themselves be functionally organised by a relation such as “general to particular” (Van Dijk, 1985). News stories have functional or rhetorical relations of local coherence. The most pervasive news discourse type of this kind of local coherence, argues van Dijk (1985), appears to be specification. First, a description of a fact is made and in the next sentence details, or particulars, are given, thus the discourse is organised along a dimension of “general toward particular” (van Dijk, 1985). In news production this arrangement is called the “inverted pyramid” which is suitable for editing purposes, when the story is cut from the bottom upwards to fit into limited space.

However, propositions in the lead paragraph (see Appendix 1) appear to be connected by conditional temporal relations (among the facts denoted): the breakdown of health conditions in a remote African country attracts a Japanese doctor and other international experts. In other words, the condition that is met for international health experts to descend on Gulu, is a breakdown of health conditions. The presupposition that the “outbreak” needed to be contained has important cognitive implications, for it implies that the Ugandan government had no such financial capacity, or had no medical technology expertise. Such information may be stored in the reader’s episodic situation model of Africa, Uganda and health conditions in that country. The next sentence or second lead paragraph is a specification, providing further details about Dr. Taniguchi, the location “360km north of capital, Kampala” as well as further particulars about international experts (five other experts from Centres for Disease Control and Prevention) (*Kyodo* 2000:1).

The third paragraph is a summary of previous events. The use of the noun phrase, “the Ebola outbreak”, presupposes (or by presupposition reminds the reader of) the major initial action of this epidemic, thus reinstating from memory the relevant episodic knowledge. “Previous events” is a conventional category in the overall organisation of

news discourse. As soon as events are described, the relations of the propositions can be assumed to be of both conditional and functional coherence. The functional relations tend to be of a specification nature where lower level details or particulars are described.

Van Dijk (1985) argues that discourse is meaningful when it is both locally and globally coherent, in other words, some kind of “semantic unity” must exist. For semantic unity to be analysed, a theme or topic must be assigned to the discourse or a part of it. In the article I have been analysing at local level, the overall meaning or theme is “international experts fight Ebola outbreak in Uganda.” Van Dijk (1985) argues that such a theme is defined by a macroproposition, which is derived from information represented in respective propositions expressed by the text of the whole discourse. For this news article on the Ebola outbreak in Uganda, the rest of the text provides details of moves to contain the outbreak by international experts. In order to derive the relevant macropropositions, the reader needs to have not only the information expressed in the discourse, but also more general knowledge of the world. The reader must know, for example, that in order to treat any illness tests have to be done first. In order to do tests, samples from the victim or potential victim must be taken into a laboratory situation. The test results can be negative or positive. If the sample tests positive the victim must be hospitalised to receive treatment. This is not the only information the reader must be familiar with. He or she must also know that a country such as Uganda may not have the necessary expertise to fight such an outbreak, and that Ebola breaks out in certain unhygienic conditions attractive to disease.

Next in the analysis I tackled the macrostructures of the text. Macrostructures organise information from discourse at a high level in memory, but also tend to be recalled much more readily than local micropropositions (van Dijk, 1985). The overall organisation of news discourse reflects this importance of macrostructures. This will typically be expressed by titles or headlines, by initial or final summaries, or by leads. Macrostructures are usually signalled by: a) a prominent position in layout, b) a change in typeface, and/or c) bold or capital letters. Thus the headline will typically express the most important macroproposition, where “importance” is defined in terms of general

knowledge and beliefs defining the newsworthiness criteria (van Dijk, 1985).

#### **4.2.2 Thematic Analysis**

By thematic analysis here I refer to the analysis of semantic macrostructures, which realise global coherence in a text. These are meanings from large fragments of text or whole texts. A thematic analysis is, therefore, a production of particular themes from large swathes of text. These themes are also called topics. Headlines and leads, called Summary, together contain the highest macrostructures or themes or topics of a hard news text.

Now follows the analysis of themes of the text, “Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda”:

The themes of news text in general constitute its contents. In a news text, headlines provide the first information about the thematic structure of the news report. Headlines work by activating personal knowledge models as well as socially shared scripts and attitudes. Van Dijk points out that headlines monitor, top down, the very comprehension of the news report, and determine the very relevance of structures of the models the reader builds of events and situations (1985). The main characteristic of information in the headline is to “define the situation.” Below I show the role of the headline in a particular text.

The headline: “Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda” is a typical hard news headline constructed according to the 5W and the H. The theory of news writing allows us to surmise that the most important information is placed in both the headline and the lead, which together form the summary of a news text. This headline expresses only one topic from the thematic structure, viz. a Japanese doctor joining an Ebola task force in Uganda. By implication, it also expresses a second topic; that a bad case of Ebola occurred, necessitating the setting up of a task force. The Ebola outbreak itself is not mentioned in the headline, but is part of the lead sentence, where it provides the reason for the existence of the task force. Van Dijk argues that a news item may cover two events, but a single headline will usually express only one of them, the most recent and/or

the most important (1985). According to the theory we can conclude that the Japanese doctor joining this Ebola task force constitutes the most recent and most relevant information for *The Japan Times/Online*.

The first sentence of the article after the lead then specifies some of the details about the actors (details of Dr. Taniguchi's age, followed by details of where in Japan he comes from, thereby locating him in Japan). Further specifications about the actors together (task force; the international experts) are then given as specification that they work with the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at the Gulu Ebola Task Force.

So far the picture of the realisation of the thematic structure in this news text appears as follows: first, the highest or most important topic was expressed in the headline. Second, the top of the complete macrostructure of the text was formulated in the lead (Japanese doctor joining a group of international experts to fight an Ebola outbreak). Third, the initial sentences or paragraphs of the text express a still lower-level macrostructure, featuring important details about time (last week), location (Gulu, northern Uganda), participants (Japanese doctor; five experts with the CDC) and the causes/reasons or consequences of the main event (Ebola outbreak).

The third paragraph specifies the details about how the international experts came to join the task force: this followed an announcement of the outbreak by the Ugandan government. Already a representation of the conditions existing in Uganda, giving rise to this outbreak, can be associated with those typical in Third World countries. The fact that there is an "outbreak" necessitating the sending in of international experts implies failure to control it by local authorities.

The fourth paragraph of the text comes back to the CDC, but this time a further specification is included, which specifies that the CDC laboratory at Gulu actually falls under the World Health Organisation. Further specification of the work of the laboratory is provided, such as details of the testing and the consequences of these tests. This construction gives the impression that Ugandan authorities are either unable to do this

work or cannot afford the technical expertise involved. Such a situation is also one more generally associated with the Third World. Third World countries are usually represented as having little or no expertise or technological know-how, and as economically unable to improve their people's living conditions.

Most of the rest of the text provides details of particulars of the CDC, its work and the Ebola virus. The story can be said to be about the CDC and the Ebola outbreak much more than about Dr Taniguchi. Dr Taniguchi is absorbed into, or is part of, the CDC theme. The headline, however, suggests that Dr Taniguchi is either the main topic, or is important. Van Dijk refers to this as an instance of "skewed" headlining, where one topic from the text, organising only a small part of the text, is promoted to the main topic. The topic that, structurally speaking, dominates the story is not mentioned in the headline. Van Dijk explains that the reason for such "bias" in signalling topics by headlines need not be ideological or political, but seems to be determined by an implicit journalistic rule of news organisation: last main events are more important (1983).

The Japanese doctor joining the Ebola task force in Uganda, then, is the "latest development", thereby earning more prominence and "overshadowing" earlier events. Earlier events may become mere causes, conditions or reasons for the later events. The constraint on the rule is that the latter event must also be of high news value, as is the news of the outbreak of Ebola. The nationality of Dr. Taniguchi makes this development of high news value for this Japanese-owned newspaper, which reports to a predominantly Western readership. A relevance structure of the news event emerged as a result of the nationality of the Japanese doctor. In other words, it was most relevant for this publication to promote the topic constituted by the participation of a doctor who is Japanese.

Van Dijk argues that the thematic structure represents a formal or subjective collection of topics, each of which organises part of the meanings of the text. The topics are not only organised by thematic importance, but also by relevancy and the principle of how recent they are. Relevancy may supersede the thematic hierarchy, as is demonstrated in this text

where a Japanese doctor joining an Ebola task force is both the most recent and most relevant fact for *The Japan Times/Online*.

Relevancy can be observed in the macrostructures of the text: the third topic, being the main event, is shown to be in third place after the headline and the lead. The themes in that macrostructure are about the actions preceding the involvement of the CDC, and at the top of that macrostructure is the announcement by the Ugandan government of the outbreak. Only then is information about the main event registered: this includes many specimens testing positive, those who have been doing the testing and how long the work has been going on. The first three themes below, after the two lead themes, show that they are about immediate or delayed consequences of the Ebola fever (victims and suspected victims): declarations by officials of the World Health Organisation (Ebola Task force) and those of the Ugandan government, but none by local citizens. After that, information of a background nature about Dr. Taniguchi, about the Task Force, about countries contributing resources and about the fever itself is reported.

#### 4.2.3 Table 1: The Derivation of Topics from the Text:

Topics and topic categories in the thematic structure of “Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda”:

Topic Category	Topic
Actor	Forty-year-old Dr Taniguchi from Mie Prefecture joined a group of international experts in fight against an outbreak of Ebola fever in Uganda.
Actor	The experts are with the UN Centres for Disease Control and Prevention at the Gulu Ebola Task Force.
Circumstances	The Ugandan government announced the Ebola outbreak on October 15
Actor(s)	The CDC-World Health Organisation laboratory in Gulu tested specimens
Consequence	Many of them tested positive for the Ebola virus, said a researcher.
Actor/	Dr Taniguchi, who worked with the National Institute of Infectious

Verbal Reaction	Diseases before he joined WHO, was happy to contribute to the control of the fever.
Actor(s)	Japan, Italy, Ireland and Germany have provided the task force with funds to fight the Ebola outbreak.
Context	Seventy-one deaths and 205 new cases have occurred since the outbreak and every day there are increases.
Circumstance	Fears of Lords of Resistance Army affecting work of volunteers and health workers to control Ebola fever in remote villages.
Context	Villagers need to know and understand preventive measures against Ebola as there is no known cure.
Circumstances/ Consequences	Symptoms for Ebola fever include sudden fever, headache, vomiting, diarrhoea, limited kidney and liver functions and internal and external bleeding.

**Table 1. “Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda”**

Table 1 lists a derived thematic structure indicating the order in which the topics appear in the text. The first topics form the 5Ws and the H, and are therefore high-level topics. Those that follow these are lower-level topics about, for example, context and background. By observing the relevancy criteria one is able to determine, working from top down in a hierarchical structure, which topics are more general and which more detailed.



**Figure 1: Thematic Structure of “Japanese Doctor joins Ebola Task Force in Uganda”.**

#### **4.2.4 News Schemata**

It is assumed that news items have a conventional form, a schema that organises overall content. This global form is what is referred to as "superstructure" or just "schema". Superstructures or schemata of stories can be explicitly described in terms of conventional categories and rules (or strategies). These categories operate on a global rather than a local level. They include the headline and the lead, together known as the Summary category. Other well known categories include: background, quotations, called Verbal Reactions, Main Events, Previous Events, Consequences and Comment, usually at the end of the article. I present below the schematic representation of the text: "Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda".

**Figure 2: Schematic Structures of “Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force”.**

#### **4.2.5 Representation**

This analysis shows implications for the representation of Africa in *The Japan Times/Online*. The representations of Uganda, through the construction of the Ebola happening as an “outbreak”, produces and reinforces the perception of Uganda as a Third World country. The meanings encoded into “outbreak” as representative of health conditions in a part of Uganda, signal the traditional nature of the country, as opposed to modern, which characterises First World countries. The level of development is also a meaning that is encoded into the linguistic term “outbreak”, where the social conditions, which give rise to the “outbreak”, are almost synonymous with the term “Third World”. It is through the discourse of news that this representation of health conditions in Uganda by a First World publication takes the meaning that it does; as an “other”. The Ebola fight, with financial aid given to Uganda by four Western countries including Japan, produces a representation of that country as both struck by an “epidemic” and needing aid, a representation which usually goes hand in hand with that of countries of the Third World.

### 4.3 Analysis: Text Two

The next text in the analysis is: *Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech* (2000/12/13). (See appendix Two for full text.) The following is a summary.

Japanese prime minister, Yoshiro Mori, is going to announce Japan's policy towards Africa from Johannesburg. His visit to Africa will make him the first Japanese prime minister to visit sub-Saharan Africa. His policy speech will include calling for political stability in Africa through efforts towards development and preventing conflict. He will also address issues of heavily indebted poor countries, how to control the spread of infectious diseases and how to prevent conflict and issues around the digital divide. Mori will be accompanied by former U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata. Ogata praised Japan's contribution to the UNHCR and called for aid for refugees to be increased (2000/12/28).

The headline "Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech" expresses two macro-propositions (topics): namely, that Mori will pay an official visit to South Africa and that (at the same time) he will call for political stability on the continent. The implication of paying an official visit exists, because if Mori as the leader of Japan is going to make a speech in Johannesburg, then he must do so on an official visit. The headline is certainly a high-level abstraction of the information in the text. These two propositions summarise the main information of the text and thereby signal that for *The Japan Times/Online* both events are important. The Lead and the subsequent sentences provide further details of these topics in the Main Event category (featuring information about Mori's visit to South Africa and other sub-Saharan countries), as well as other categories such as Brief History (Mori's visit will be the first by a Japanese prime minister to sub-Saharan Africa), and Context (political stability).

Though it is not clearly shown in this headline, the call for stability implies that someone is responsible for the existing instability in countries on the continent and that, by implication, that same person or persons are being called on to (re)establish stability. The agents of the actions, which prompt the Japanese prime minister to call for "stability", are African presidents, prime ministers and monarchs, but mention of these is in general

avoided and their names are notably left out in the rest of the text (see Fowler *et al.* 1979). This position of avoiding identifying the agents of various types of actions in Africa is maintained throughout the text, at various levels of analysis, including local and global semantics and news schemata.

According to Riverburgh (1997:81) “the work of the national media in the representation of others involves not only the selection of events and issues, but also the positioning and evaluation of others relative to the perspective of the home nation”. This can be said to apply to this text, where the headline, the lead and the second and third paragraphs contribute to how *The Japan Times/Online* has chosen to position itself in the discourses about Africa’s political standards. The structure of the text is such that this message is the overriding one, since it is the one emphasised in the headline. It is Japan’s perception, according to this text, that Africa as a homogenous mass is politically unstable. This is the preferred as well as the dominant meaning. It is this perspective of the home nation (Japan), which Mowlana (1997) states may be the one expressed in the foreign policy. Mowlana (1997:35) argues that the selection and dissemination of the most important news of the day is determined by a nation's national culture and its political norms, and that "economic and commercial factors play a decisive role". Japan’s perception of African political systems may be said to be determined by its own political norms much more than by economic and commercial factors, even though these still play a role in providing a context for this view on Africa.

To examine how this view of Japan about Africa is encoded into the text, it was important to look at the local coherence of this text through specification, which van Dijk (1983) argues is the most pervasive type of news discourse. Specification occurs when a fact is described and the next sentence gives further details or particulars. In other words, when given a topic, specification rules elaborate on it. The specification relations for a news theme follow a specific categorical “track” in such a way that each category is cyclically treated in more or less detail: main act, main participants, other participants, properties of main participants, properties of the event (time, place, circumstances), consequences, conditions, context, history, and details of these categories in decreasing order of

relevancy.

The thematic analysis begins with the first four sentences of the text (see Appendix 5), meaning that the Lead paragraph, the second Lead and the sentence after that were examined for specification. What is clear is that conditional/temporal relations connect the propositions of these sentences:

- In the lead paragraph, in order for the Japanese prime minister to make a speech regarding Africa, he will have to fly to South Africa at some time in the future, and this conditions the information reported to *The Japan Times/Online* by government officials. This does not condition Japan's policy based on the understanding that Africa is politically unstable.
- The information in the second Lead paragraph, that the trip will make Mori the first Japanese prime minister to visit, is conditioned by Mori being able to eventually make the visit. It is also a specification of the previous proposition, the intended visit to South Africa.
- The third paragraph is a further specification of the proposition of policy/speech Mori intends to make. At the same time and with important cognitive implications, the sentences presuppose and imply that such a condition (about political instability) is expected to be or is normal, or is a property of previous reports about Africa (as indeed is the case – a bit of information stored in the reader's episodic situation model of conditions in Africa that have been constructed through previous news items).
- This text is able to communicate with its largely Western audience mainly because this representation of Africa as politically unstable has become part of the shared meanings that are tacitly accepted by the encoder and decoder, though the decoder can bring in some alternative or oppositional understanding of this message. The same paragraph contains a sentence that is a specification but is

also a generalisation of information about solutions to Africa's problems.

- The fourth paragraph takes in information which is not directly applicable to Africa, but places Japan within the context of Asia and then looks at Africa from an Asian perspective, or where Japan sees itself as not part of Asia, although its policy will be promotion of ties between the Asian and African countries. In other words, by aligning itself with the rest of Asia, Japan constructs a division based on political stability between Africa and Asia where the reality of Africa comes out as on the side of instability. The paragraph is, therefore, a further specification about how the representation of Africa as politically unstable is affected by Japan's standing with the rest of Asia. Africa then stands as both politically unstable and poor, whereas the rest of Asia appears as poor, but politically stable.
- The fifth paragraph generalises the information in the proposed speech to include issues not just about Africa. It places Africa within a broader representation of countries that are "heavily indebted and poor, suffering from infectious diseases, conflicts and on the other side of the digital divide". These are characteristics of Third World countries.
- The second part of the text after the sub-heading (Ogata to join Mori) focuses on an aspect that is a reflection of the social instability caused by political instability, namely refugees. It is refugees who most of all represent the political instability of countries in Africa. However, refugees are found in specific areas in Africa and not everywhere, as suggested by the implication that Africa is politically unstable.

#### 4.3.1 Derivation of Topics from the Text

Topic Category	Topic
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Actor	Prime minister, Yoshiro Mori, will announce Japan's policy to Africa in a speech to be made in South Africa.
Context	Political instability in Africa (deletion)
Context/Actor	Mori will support bolstering ties between Asia and Africa while introducing Japan's "frontier diplomacy" initiative (deletion)
Background	Mori will voice Japan's intention to help heavily indebted poor countries, stemming the spread of infectious diseases, preventing conflicts and bridging the digital divide.
Main Event/ Actor	Mori to leave for S.A. and other Sub-Saharan countries, becoming Japan's first PM to do so.
Consequence / Actor	Mori will meet with leaders of four countries, and inspect projects supported by Japan's official development assistance.
Context	Mori will arrive in Johannesburg on Jan. 8 and a couple of days later travel to Kenya and Nigeria.
Main Event / Actor	Ogata, UNHCR head, will accompany Mori and show him refugee camps.

**Table 2:** "Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech"

**Figure 3: Thematic Structure of “Mori to call for stability . . .”**

### 4.3.2 News Schemata

**Schematic category of topics in the text:** “Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech”

<b>Category</b>	<b>Report</b>
Main Event Context)	Prime Minister, Yoshiro Mori, will announce Japan’s policy in a speech to be made in South Africa.
Main Event (Circumstances)	Mori will be the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit sub-Saharan Africa in January.
Verbal Reaction	Mori will call for political stability in Africa and declare that for Africa, 21 <sup>st</sup> century prosperity hinges on resolving its various problems (deletion)
Context (Goals/Expectation)	Mori will support bolstering ties between Asia and Africa while introducing Japan’s “frontier diplomacy” initiative (deletion)
Context (Cause/Reason)	Mori will voice Japan’s intention to help heavily indebted poor countries stemming the spread of infectious diseases, preventing conflicts and bridging the digital divide.
Main Event (Actor)	Mori will depart Japan on Jan 7 and stop in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria.
Main Event (Actor)	Mori will meet with leaders of four countries, and inspect projects supported by Japan’s official development assistance.
Main Event (Actor)	Mori will arrive in Johannesburg on Jan 8 and a couple of days later travel to Kenya and Nigeria.

**Table 2:** Schematic Categories of “Mori to call for stability ...”

**Figure 4: Schematic Analysis of “Mori to call for stability ...”**

As is shown in Figure 4 above, this text does not possess background information on Japan’s relations with Africa. Such information would enable the reader to know what was going on, before the intention to announce an official policy for the first time. Such background is important, as it provides a basis for the production of meaning about how the relations between the two entities had thus far been conducted. The text instead provides a Background category for the content produced by the primary definers, where readers get to know that the Main Event – the announcement of a policy for Africa – has

something to do with the constructed condition of “political instability.” The avoidance of providing background to the relations existing between the two entities, prior to the announcement, seems more than an innocent oversight on the part of *The Japan Times/Online*. It may point to news production problems posed by producing this story at the *kisha* clubs, where there is no library to carry out background research. Alternatively, it may point to the attitudes of the journalists working for *The Japan Times/Online* to the production of news on the relations between the Japanese government and Africa. This production of news, where journalists report interpretations by Japanese officials of meetings between local and visiting politicians, may be intended to convey to readers official views of the Japanese government.

Figure 4, however, shows transformations to the basic schema where Main Event and Context come first, followed by History, then Conclusions and Verbal Reactions. Having considered the nature of the event, which constitutes the Main Events category, one finds that the Consequences category is missing. The question of relevance may be high on the agenda of the news writer, according to van Dijk (1988a). The fact that an event that will happen at a certain date in the future is being reported, has much to do with its relevance as a news story. Van Dijk argues that news relevance in the text takes precedence over semantic hierarchies in certain circumstances (1988a). In this case what will be announced is placed in the Lead, when it could have been in the Verbal Reaction category.

### **4.3.3 Representation**

The dominant representation of Africa in the text “Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech” is of the continent as politically unstable. The way the representations of Africa are constructed is very much neutralised, depoliticised and naturalised. They are presented as if it is common knowledge that Africa’s political systems are all unstable. The goal of the Japanese prime minister, that he intends to call for “political stability” – thereby implying the continent is “politically unstable” – is made in such a way that the representation takes on the quality of timelessness. This is the dominant way in which Africa is represented by the Western news media. This

representation of Africa as “politically unstable” conforms to the general representation of the Third World as “conflictful” (Stevenson and Gaddy, 1984).

#### 4.4 Summary of Results

According to Dyer, “...re-presentation, representative-ness, representing have to do with how others see members of a group and their place and rights, others who have the power to affect that place and those rights” (qtd. in Giles and Middleton, 1999:80). The representations by a First World publication, *The Japan Times/Online* on Africa in the texts (Appendix one to seven): “Japanese doctor joins Ebola task force in Uganda; Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech”; “UN asks Japan to dispatch troops - Ethiopian peacekeeping Mission”; “African nations earmark ivory for Japan - But is anybody buying?” have the uniformity of being produced within the broad frame of the First World/Third World dichotomy. Such a dichotomy places the African countries at the end that depicts them as traditional as opposed to modern; under-developed as opposed to developed; static as opposed to dynamic. Japan and the rest of the West are depicted at the other end of the dichotomy. The last two texts, “Tanzania’s tourism strategy is paying off” and “Visiting Tanzanians aim to stock tourism”, are differently represented within the same dimension of the Third World. The difference is that the texts on Tanzanian tourism are not represented within the general negativity norm of representing foreign news.

The Third World representation framework normalises and homogenises certain conditions that are in general said to be the opposite of those in the developed world (Johnston, 1991). This dimension is the same as the one that operates in the rest of the texts. Having done this analysis, *The Japan Times/Online* can be said to represent Africa using this framework to understand the nature of events on the continent. Particular frames, applicable to each of the texts as I show below, confirm the overall Third World dimension.

Uganda is represented through the “crisis” frame manifested in terms of the Ebola “outbreak” that occurs in a particular region of the country. It is also represented through

an ongoing, armed conflict in the same region. Though the representation through crisis or epidemic is the dominant meaning of the text that of the region as an aid recipient is also constructed through the financing of the activities of the Ebola Task Force. These representations manage to present Uganda as an under-developed Third World country.

The construction of a homogenous “Africa” as “politically unstable” in the text “Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech” is an attempt to normalise this condition of “political instability” in a timeless and homogenous way. Such a representation has the consequence of freezing “Africa” in this frame. This is an indication of the power of representation where the position of Africa within the sphere of international relations is governed by such representations. As Dyer (1993) argues, “how social groups are treated in cultural representation is part and parcel of how they are treated in life” (qtd. in Giles and Middleton, 1999:80).

In the text, the UN asks Japan to dispatch troops. African conflicts, other than the one between Ethiopia and Eritrea, are represented as too dangerous for Japanese troops to be deployed. In the same text, Africa in general comes out as “conflictful”. This representation is constructed through the use by “Africa” of almost 50 per cent of the total military and civilian personnel of the United Nations in peacekeeping operations worldwide.

The representations of one other African country, Zambia, shows a country whose economy is deteriorating and needs the support of Japan’s financial power. The same text also represents Africa in a homogenous way, where AIDS and HIV infection must be combated. These representations characterise Zambia as a Third World country.

There are two texts that are removed from the norm, so to speak, where the negative criterion, which is so typical of the way foreign news is represented, is not employed, mainly because of the tourist “gaze” involved. A different model, that of dependent development, is at work. These texts are on Tanzania and are about tourism development.

Tanzania is represented as doing something positive in the area of promoting its tourism industries. It is in fact succeeding at it, drawing more and more Japanese tourists.

In the last text, the Third World frame is maintained as a meaning production presupposition. The actions of four Southern African nations in the text “African nations earmark ivory for Japan” are represented in a way that constructs their identity as different to the rest of the world. This representation is constructed by the persistence of the four African countries in wanting to sell ivory in the face of a world ban. In other words their actions, opposed as they are to the existing ban, demonstrate how these nations as part of the Third World think differently about conservation.

#### **4.5 Discussion**

The primary goal of this study has been to examine both the representations and the ways in which Africa is represented in this online publication. The secondary goal was to account for these representations from a contextual point of view, and in relation to the production moment. The third goal was to look at the implications of these representations in the circulation of meanings about Africa. However, the role of the theories of language, ideology, news, news production, and foreign news was central to the investigation.

This chapter has attempted to discover what representations *The Japan Times/Online* produces in its foreign news texts about Africa and African countries produced between January and December 2000.

The structural analysis of headlines of the seven texts revealed the effect on meaning created by presenting these headlines in the active voice. In general this creates the effect of focusing on the actions of the actors. Representations in such constructions will tend to be either about the “good” actions, such as those of the Japanese government or Japanese citizens, or “bad” actions, such as those of Africans in one case or an appearance of actions, as created in two of the texts concerning African tourism in Tanzania.

The “good” actions of the Japanese were the stance the text preferred the reader take towards the rest of the content. However, the good actions of the Japanese government or Japanese citizens seemed to be subordinated to the negativity criterion around which foreign news events are selected for coverage:

The negative news enters the news channel more easily because it satisfies the frequency criterion better. There is a basic asymmetry in life between the positive, which is difficult and takes time, and the negative, which is much easier and takes less time (Galtung and Ruge, 1970: 267).

In other words death, accidents, disasters, epidemics, crises, coups and earthquakes are more dramatic; they take less time and thus make it easier for journalists to meet their production deadlines. In conformity to the negativity criterion, Africa as a homogenous mass is represented through the discourses of political instability, conflict and epidemic. Particular African countries were represented through the following frames: “crisis” in the case of Uganda; “ailing economy” or “aid recipient” in the case of Zambia; “controversial” in the case of four African nations aiming to sell ivory to Japan. The way *The Japan Times/Online* is producing news about Africa, through the negativity criterion, is the dominant way for the production of foreign news. The exception to this norm in this analysis is the representation of Tanzania in terms of its tourism industry.

The language of the texts showed an inclination towards the negativity frame. In the case of Uganda the lexical item “outbreak” had the most pervasive meaning in the text. It defined what there was to describe about a certain region in Uganda. It is an item that easily gets registered in the episodic memory of readers and is, therefore, the easiest to recall as a situation model about Uganda’s health conditions. It is a “crisis” frame that is used in news about the Third World. Crisis as a representation frame is also pervasive in the news sample. Zambia’s economic condition where it needs the financial aid of Japan is also part of an extended crisis frame. This is the representation whose “maps of meaning” are shared by publications with their readers about African countries. In the text where Mori calls for stability in Africa, the “crisis” frame is easily recognisable, just

as it is in the text about Japan being asked by the United Nations to send troops on an Ethiopian peacekeeping mission.

The prevalence of this frame in the representations of Africa and African countries may be said to tell something about how *The Japan Times/Online* perceives Africa's reality to be. However, in most cases it tells more about how news values structure the representation of African countries at this publication.

Lastly, the reports gathered at the *kisha kurabu* or reporters' clubs, around which Japanese news gathering activities are organised, show how the uncritical reporting of official accounts of events is done to the detriment of balance. The texts "Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech" 2000/10/28; "Japan pledges 1,5 billion yen for Zambia's program of reform" 2000/12/07; "UN asks Japan to dispatch troops – Ethiopian Peacekeeping Mission" 2000/04/08 demonstrate this quality of lack of balance most clearly. In two other texts in the sample, "Visiting Tanzanians aim to stoke tourism" 2000/09/14, and "Tanzania's tourism strategy is paying off" 2000/10/17, only African officials are used to define the Tanzania situation, but in the texts in question, those gathered through *kisha* clubs, no sources other than Japanese officials speak for Africa and African countries. These officials also speak for the actual Japanese political actors. This reflects on the *kisha kurabu* as a news gathering system. The question that arises at this point is why *The Japan Times/Online* -- and perhaps other newspapers that use the *kisha* clubs – report news in this way. To answer this question I probe deeper into the workings of the media industry in Japan.

I can approach this question by understanding the workings of what Akhavan-Majid (1990) has called an alternative Libertarian model characterising the Japanese media. The key characteristics of this model include 1) concentration of ownership (as opposed to diversity and plurality of media units), 2) integration with other power elite power groups (as opposed to independence from the power-elite), and 3) two-way flow of influence and control between government and the press (as opposed to freedom of the press from government control). (Akhavan-Majid, 1990:1006) It is the third point that has direct

relevance for this analysis. None of the sources in the texts cited are the actual primary definers of the news events in the texts: “Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech” 2000/10/28; “Japan pledges 1,5 billion yen for Zambia’s program of reform” 2000/12/07. The analysis showed that Japanese officials cited in the texts from *The Japan Times/Online* were the only news sources. The journalists have no access to foreign officials. This in itself is a restriction on the plurality and diversity of voices on Japan’s relations with African governments. The *kisha*, as noted above (2.0.6.), are the exclusive channels of information regarding government institutions, and that is where reporter/official interaction takes place.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have performed the structural and cognitive analysis of texts starting with headlines, followed by leads and subsequent categories. I have also undertaken a limited lexical analysis. Having done that, I presented the implications of the analysis for the representations of Africa in the texts. These implications for representations were then used in writing out the final results about the representation of Africa in *The Japan Times/Online* texts of between January and December 2000. Following this, a discussion of the results in relationship to the theories of representation and news was undertaken.

## CHAPTER FIVE: OPINION CATEGORY ANALYSIS

### 5. Introduction

In this chapter I set out to analyse opinion texts in the sub-categories of travel, art and sport news. The three texts analysed in this chapter belong to the class of journalistic texts called features. The analyses of the three texts include that of headlines, structures of the news stories, as well as style, which includes analysis of lexical terms. Thematic and schematic analyses are undertaken before implications for representation and results are worked out.

It may be important at this juncture to point out why these features were selected for analysis. The decision was based on a balance of factors between analysis of editorials and op-ed articles together with other non-political features. It was decided to drop the editorial and the op-ed articles, based on the reasoning that foreign events that become the subjects of editorials and op-ed articles are mostly expressed in the current dominant view of home countries' news organisations, and thus would have already been the subject of texts in the factual category. They express views on events and issues written about in hard news texts. Editorials are the institutional voices representing the views of the home country news organisation. It was, therefore, considered more interesting to find out how other news categories, such as the so-called “non-political” ones, dealt with issues. For example, the way *The Japan Times/Online* covered sport or cultural events related to Africa helped give direction to the selection of texts in the sample. Focus was, therefore, shifted to the “non-political” texts.

All in all eight texts in this section were analysed, but only three are featured to show how the analysis proceeded. The following are the eight texts:

“Rolling along through Ngorongoro” (Appendix Eight) (2000/09/06); World Cup: “Africa needs a good PR officer” (Appendix Nine) 2000/08/03; “African artists hold display, classes to boost awareness” (Appendix Ten) (2000/10/01); “South Africa done in by shady vote for 2006” (Appendix 11) (2000/06/13); “Adeagbo seeks animistic roots in

Japan” (Appendix 12) (2000/07/02); “Risking your life at Victoria Falls” (Appendix 13) (2000/06/05). This text has two wildlife pictures of animals that live in water, a hippopotamus and a crocodile. The hippopotamus is constructed with its mouth wide open while the crocodile is constructed as lurking in the Zambezi waters hoping for a bite of a “tasty tourist” The third picture is that of the Victoria Falls represented in the text as “most inspiring” compared to others in other parts of the world. “Festival highlights the myriad sounds of Africa” (Appendix 14) (2000/10/09). This text has three photographs, two of African musicians standing behind microphones and performing to audiences that are out of the picture. The musicians are a South African group called Durban Black Drifters and Senegal’s Cheikh Lo. The third picture is interesting. It is that of a Japanese musician Takashi Hirayasu and South African musician Mfiliseni Magibane, playing music together. This picture illustrates a coming together of Japanese and African musicians. The African musician is in African traditional costume which is striking in that the modern and the traditional stand together in one moment of cultural history. “The coolest dudes of the Kalahari – Suricates in shades” (Appendix 15) (2000/10/29). This text has two pictures of suricates. One is a close up photograph of the “sentinel” suricate while the other is of these animals in their characteristic group, which the sentinel protects with warning of danger. The picture of the “sentinel” is placed right above that of the group in a way which demonstrates this relationship in the real situation.

The following three texts: “Rolling along through Ngorongoro” (Appendix Eight); “World Cup vote: Africa needs a good PR officer” (Appendix Nine) and “African artists hold display classes to boost awareness” (Appendix Ten) were selected because they represent three feature news genres: travel news, sport news and art news, and thus offer a wide appreciation of the content of journalistic texts as well as their construction. However, there were a number of texts in each of the categories making it possible to make a choice based on such factors as: the popularity of the “tourist gaze”, in a particular “object of pleasure”. In this way Ngorongoro was considered to be more widely popular than the Victoria Falls or the Kalahari. These two texts were, therefore, not displayed. In the sport category, the choice between the two columns was based on the structural factors explained in the headline. The headline of the selected text collapses

Africa into one homogenous mass and is, therefore, more ideological than the almost factual headline of the text: “South Africa done in by shady vote for 2006”. It was, therefore, considered more appropriate to analyse the processes through which South Africa and the rest of Africa were represented in the text: “World Cup vote: Africa needs a good PR officer”. The last text, “African artists hold display, classes to boost awareness”, was chosen simply because it is also a representation of the proposed interaction between ordinary Japanese people and African artists. It was the consequences of this interaction which were considered important for the struggle over the meanings of “Africa” and which direction the term was inflected. Based on the above, it was not possible to feature the music text, “Festival highlights the myriad sounds of Africa”, because of space restrictions.

### **5.1 Text One**

The text “Rolling along through Ngorongoro” (2000/09/06) is about an episode at the Ngorongoro crater in Tanzania. The following is a summary and description of the presentation of the article. (For full text please see Appendix Eight).

A small boy who has just arrived at the crater expresses his wonder at how much the crater looked like England. The narrator, however, reminds the reader that one pays a great deal of money to visit the Ngorongoro, which is famed for its safari tourism. It is “a wonder of the world” and “everyone raves about the Ngorongoro crater”. At some stage early in the text Ngorongoro stops looking like England. Hungry lions arrive and the atmosphere becomes charged. From then on the tourists experience other interesting encounters such as marvelling at the size of the crater itself, which is immense. All species of animals including giraffe, black rhinos, buffalo, ostrich, leopard and gnu amongst others, inhabit the area because of its permanent water and rich pasture. Near to the Ngorongoro crater is the Olduvai Gorge where an attraction of a scientific nature is located. The first skull of 1,75-million-year-old hominid, *Zinjanthropus*, was discovered there. The text also has two pictures, one of a lion and the other of zebras. The pictures of wild life contribute to the tautness of the atmosphere the text seeks to create. The lion

is the hunter, the zebras the hunted, and appropriately the picture of the hunter is placed above the picture of the hunted. The lion in the picture has a large mane, sharp eyes and a hungry expression. The lion's picture is a close up, showing its terrible teeth, while the picture of the zebras shows that these are zebras, with their characteristic black and white lines, but the construction of the zebras' picture is of them as prey of the lion predator.

### **5.1.1 Analysis**

This travel news feature deals with an episode at the Ngorongoro in which the writers who have experienced it inform readers and would-be travellers about what to expect if they undertake the tour. It focuses on the low and high points, both in terms of drama and knowledge acquisition about wild life. It is intended to make the reader cultivate an interest in this uniquely Tanzanian tourist experience. The writers simultaneously market the experience for would-be tourists.

The Lead of this text is typical of features. It is constructed through a narrative "hook" (Alexander 1979:142). The hook lies in the first two sentences where temporal relations define the text's non-dramatic moment. Van Dijk explains the effect of this style (1985) in this way:

As soon as news stories imitate a narrative style of starting with details, from causes, conditions, circumstances or setting to the actions or events themselves, as in this case, then the relevance criteria usual in news stories plays a minor role. (van Dijk, 1985).

What plays the major role is an aesthetic, persuasive, or other principle, such as the creation of dramatic tension.

I must point out that the schematic organisation of the texts in this category is not organised as in news discourse; i.e. from general to particular. The structure is expected to be different according to the theory on features I presented above.

The text under analysis is a travel news story. A reader will approach this text differently from how he approaches a news text. His/her goal will be to gain information about a travel experience and to see if reading about the experience will convince him/her to travel to the destination in question. Van Dijk argues that knowledge and beliefs about the world play a role in the processes of understanding and producing discourses (1983).

Van Dijk argues that a goal exists in the reader's cognitive control system where an established system regulates the flow of information between short-term memory and long-term memory (knowledge and beliefs). As such, a goal such as van Dijk refers to may include the acquisition of knowledge about wildlife attractions in Africa in general and of the Ngorongoro park in particular. The reader is presumed to have activated general knowledge about the structural format of travel news; e.g. feature news schema. The reader will also know that *The Japan Times/Online* publishes travel news on a particular page and on Sundays only. Also of importance is the style register. It can indicate a publication's specific degree of formality or familiarity. It can also indicate the specific beliefs, opinions, and ideologies of the journalist/newspaper describing the events. Van Dijk states that the choice of lexical items is interesting in that such items may denote some participant in the events described.

The first macrostructure in Table 1 below is derived from the cognitive processes that led Ngorongoro to be described as looking like England. The reader's knowledge and beliefs about Tanzania's Ngorongoro is that it is a wild place full of wild animals. It should also look wild, and have tall grasses and danger everywhere. None of these attributes, which form part of the reader's episodic memory, were confirmed during the moment described in the lead of the text. This, therefore, makes the macrostructure "Ngorongoro looks just like England" more of an understatement or irony than a statement of fact.

These themes, identified in Table 1 below, represent how the text is hypothetically understood. The themes are found important and may constitute the text's relevancies stored in memory (van Dijk, 1985). Each of the macropropositions or topics in Table 1 was derived from several propositions through the application of macro-rules. The

macro-rules of deletion, construction and generalisation were employed to yield the stated macropropositions. One can see that the topmost topic in Table 1 is in fact derived from outside the text. This is because in a hard news story, the arrival of the tourists at Ngorongoro would have been possible to report through reported speech. In this case the writers reporting their own arrival would have shifted the focus of the story to what is irrelevant for the purpose of the text – which is to market tourism travel. However, it is important to report the macrostructure signifying the arrival of the tourists, in order to establish temporal relations in the text. This helps establish the text’s temporal relations. Ngorongoro is represented as a product of tourist consumption.

### 5.1.2 Derivation of Topics from the Text

Topic Category	Topic
Main Event	Writers tour Ngorongoro crater.
Verbal Reaction	Tanzania’s Ngorongoro is like England.
Event	Arrival of lions: Ngorongoro stopped looking like England.
Background	Writers observe that you can bump into all sorts of animals, birds and insects on the floor of the crater.
Actors	The Leakey family discovered the first 1,75 million year old hominid in the Olduvai Gorge.
Consequence	The Olduvai Gorge is now known as the cradle of man.
Event	Writers visit the Shifting Sands and recommend others to do the same.

**Table 1:** “Rolling along through Ngorongoro”

We see how in the text, *The Japan Times Online* produces the tourist “gaze” associated with the Ngorongoro through the identified semantic macrostructures. The publication does this through the construction of the Ngorongoro from the Verbal Reactions of a child participant, ordinary tourists and the expert opinion of one professor whose experiences

are (re)produced from elsewhere. This reproduction of texts indicates an instance of inter-textual referencing.

This use of expert opinion obviously has something to do with establishing credibility of the “gaze”. This is the same in hard news stories where sources are mainly legitimated though the men and women in the street that are used as sources. The expert opinion of conservationist professor, Bernhard Grzimek, who describes Ngorongoro as “a wonder of the world” shoots down the second macrostructure that “Ngorongoro looks like England”. However, the views of such legitimated sources are crucial in the consensus building function of the press. If the professor pronounces the Ngorongoro to be “a wonder of the world” then it cannot look like England. This is why the text says “all aboard” the vehicle expected to find Ngorongoro as the “wonder of the world” described by professor Bernhard Grzimek.

The Ngorongoro is constructed as a tourist gaze through the “raves” of “everyone” (Paxton, 2000). The writers say “everyone without exception raves about the Ngorongoro”. The writer uses the noun “rave” as part of the construction of the Ngorongoro as a particular tourist gaze. It is a place that causes someone to talk in a wild and incoherent manner about it because of the excitement it causes. *The Japan Times Online* is therefore part of the world’s media machinery, which teaches its audiences how, when and where to “gaze” and produces the “gaze” through constant reproductions that sustain it (Urry, 1990). The media such as *The Japan Times/Online*, therefore, help to produce and sustain the (re)production of the Ngorongoro as a tourist “gaze” and as a product of tourist consumption. The tourist “gaze” is, therefore, an ideology through which a place is represented and makes that place attractive as a product for consumption. This “gaze” constructs a particular representation of that which is looked upon. The “tourist gaze” is about the power relations between who looks and what is looked at. The observer is the subject = desiring, masculinised, controlling: and the observed = object, eroticised, feminised, controlled (Tseelon, 2000).

The entry of the lions, which made Ngorongoro stop looking like England, is an image that contributes to the intense pleasure for the observer, the tourist. It is a highlight of the tourist's gaze because the character of the tourist gaze in this case includes seeing and taking pictures of wildlife, thereby fetishising the pleasure. They can relive the experience through the pictures when they have long left the Ngorongoro.

The fourth macrostructure is the observation that one can bump into all sorts of animals, birds and insects on the floor of the Ngorongoro crater. It is derived from much more information than this. This information covers the size of the crater, its geological history, the animals, both herbivorous and carnivorous, which visit the place because of the nourishment it offers, and the behaviour of these various animals when they are there. It is derived from eleven paragraphs that describe the wildlife attractions.

The fifth macrostructure concerns information about the location where the discovery of the 1,75 million-year-old hominid was made.

The sixth macrostructure is information that Olduvai Gorge is now known as the cradle of man, while the last macrostructure in the production of meaning is the visit to the Shifting Sands and the recommendation that readers do the same. Thus global coherence in this text is achieved through the construction of the Ngorongoro as a product of tourist consumption and through its representation as a "wonder of the world" which "everyone raves about".

**Figure 1.** Simplified thematic structure “Rolling along through Ngorongoro”

### **5.1.3 Analysis**

The lexical items in this text are seemingly divided into different sections that signify the way the discourse has been constructed. It is, however, references to the personal that dominate the text. The text is cast in the mode of an exchange of goods and services.

According to the text, participants “paid” a considerable “sum” to take part. The Tanzanian safari is described in a similar way to that of goods or services, it is of a “high quality”. It is constructed as worthy of the tourist gaze of Westerners who constitute the majority of *The Japan Times/Online* readership. This is the first part of the lexical register that articulates the Ngorongoro in such a way that it becomes a product of commercial exchange and consumption.

#### **5.1.4 Representation**

The Ngorongoro as a part of an African country is constructed first of all as a product of “tourist consumption” and represented as an “object of the tourist gaze”. The consumption of these goods/products is not entirely necessary, argues Urry, but they are consumed because they generate pleasurable experiences (1990:1). The pleasurable experience is attained through the “gaze”. The gaze is associated with the pleasure it brings the spectator. In this text, the tourist gaze that is most powerful is that of a Western male expert. It is a gaze associated with financial power. The representation of Ngorongoro as a “wonder of the world” is a representation of a visible but objectified reality. It is a representation by a dominant Western male, who is therefore powerful. This “gaze” awards the status of “wonder of the world” which produces the representation of the Ngorongoro as an object of pleasure or desire which the reader encounters through the text, but which they can experience if they “consume” the message.

#### **5.2. Text Two**

The text “World Cup vote: Africa needs a good PR officer” is about the World Cup 2006 vote and why, according to the writer, Africa lost the chance to host it. Both Africa and South Africa, argues the writer, do not have the image or market that FIFA’s sponsors want. The perception, says the writer, is that Africa is a bad place full of bad people. Two cases are used to support this perception. One concerns the statement by the South African president that AIDS is not caused by the HIV virus, a statement, which the writer emphasises, was ridiculed all over the world. The second case is that Mbeki supported Robert Mugabe when he targeted white farmers in Zimbabwe. South Africa’s murder rate is also used as contributory to the writer’s and, by implication, the Western perception of

Africa as a bad place full of bad people. Other press reports are used to show that the political instability coming about as a result of Mugabe's policies in Zimbabwe undermines the confidence of the West in Africa. The people and press reports that argue that South Africa is the only place able to host the Cup in Africa because it is still seen as a "white man's country", are wrong for thinking that for this reason it deserves the World Cup. The writer argues that Morocco's bid was better than South Africa's. Its credentials are as good as South Africa's. It is a short distance from Europe and has a very low crime rate. The writer, however, concludes that the World Cup 2006 bidding and voting process alienated the entire continent of Africa.

### **5.2.1 Analysis**

This sport text deals with the post-World Cup 2006 vote event, which saw the widely expected candidate, South Africa, lose to Germany. The article does not go into the actual episode of voting and the events which happened there, but seeks instead to explain why, in the writer's view, South Africa failed to secure the opportunity of hosting the 2006 World Cup using texts not directly related to the event of voting. In reality South Africa lost the opportunity of hosting the 2006 World Cup event when a New Zealand delegate failed to cast his vote as instructed by his association. The text makes no mention of this fact.

As I have already pointed out in the text about tourism, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and ideologies all operate in the cognitive construction and representation of macrostructures. As Van Dijk points, out a goal exists in the reader's cognitive control system where an established system regulates the flow of information between short-term memory and long-term memory (knowledge and beliefs). Such a goal, as in this case, may include the acquisition of knowledge about the relationship between the World Cup vote and Africa as a continent. However, the reader may go into the reading experience of this text to read the views of this columnist mainly because the writer is a soccer/sport beat reporter. It is more likely that the reader will seek to find out the columnist's views rather than acquiring knowledge about the World Cup vote and Africa. The reader will have in his episodic memory knowledge about the World Cup vote and about Africa already. This

knowledge will vary from reader to reader according to the nature of their socialisation. What will be new to their situation model about both the World cup vote and Africa are the views of the sport columnist. The reader will also have activated general knowledge about the structural format of sport features; e.g. feature news schema indicating that it is structurally different from factual sport news.

The following six topics/themes are those that map out the global coherence of this writer's attitudes/ideologies/beliefs and knowledge about his topic, which can be summed up as the loss of a chance for Africa to host the World Cup 2006. The global coherence of the text is achieved through the construction of Africa as standing for that which negates values that the West stands for. The representation is achieved through discourses that discredit both Africa and South Africa. The following themes make the columnist's position clear for the reader. They are those that a reader will remember most about the text. They are how Africa is represented:

1. Africa's image does not represent the kind of image or market FIFA's sponsors want. It is important to note that this image is constituted in the writer's perception of the continent as a "bad place full of bad people". The second macrostructure also shows how this negative image of Africa is exacerbated by the miscalculations of President Mbeki.
2. South African president, Thabo Mbeki's, two positions on AIDS and Mugabe were not shared by the West and were blunders that cost his country the chance to host the World Cup. The following macro-proposition shows how, by incorporating discourses from other media, the writer constructs the unsuitability of Africa as a venue for the World Cup 2006 as a business.
3. Other press reports about Mugabe, his policies and the condition of Johannesburg undermine international confidence in the continent.
4. It is a mistake for some press reports and people to assume that South Africa

deserved the World Cup more than other African countries.

5. Morocco's bid should have won over South Africa's. Finally the writer shows how he believes in the power of the "democratic" system based on the ballot box, when he dismisses concerns with the credibility of the bidding process and insists that the system works through voting.
6. It is FIFA's voters who decide the venue of the World Cup in spite of bidding by cities.

Instead of writing that South Africa should be hosting the World Cup, the writer writes "Africa" should be hosting the Cup. He conflates the discourses about South Africa with those about "Africa", so that "South Africa" and "Africa" become discursively one and the same thing. After this, the writer articulates a North Africa that is discursively more attractive to the West, and argues that in this way the Moroccan bid was better than South Africa's. He argues that the Moroccan bid would have been a better representative for Africa than South Africa (though one doubts whether Africans south of the Sahara would share these sentiments).

After the second paragraph, subsequent discourses of the text quote mainly from the dominant news media of the West, which conform to the foreign news reporting of Africa through the norm of negativity. These give further reasons why Africa is an unsuitable candidate.

The primary definers in this text are the FIFA sponsors, whose perceived audience preference is represented by *The Japan Times/Online* readers. The following quotation may help explain the stance of the writer as a national of a country that embodies the values espoused by FIFA's sponsors writing against the values which he argues are embodied by "Africa":

Within a particular inter-group relationship, it is often the case that one group has more resources, power, status and prestige. More powerful groups generally seek to maintain the *status quo*, promulgating their own system of values and ideology. Membership of subordinate groups may potentially confer negative social identity, especially if the dominant group's values are accepted. (Abrams and Hogg in O'Donnell 1997:108).

An example of an inter-group relationship may be the one constituted by World Cup voters, who are all official delegates from continental and regional football bodies. African delegates are also members of FIFA, as are Western delegates. This means that although members that include Africans, who may all have equal votes, constitute FIFA, the influence of the more powerful members will be stronger. FIFA's sponsors may be constituted by businesses that make the more powerful member countries influential. Using this theory, we can try to understand that the writer may, through socialisation, belong to a nation whose values agree with those espoused by FIFA's Western sponsors. *The Japan Times/Online* is certainly a publication that belongs to a nation with such values.

The process described above, where powerful groups seek to maintain the *status quo* through their own system of values and ideology, depends on the downgrading of other national groups (O'Donnell 1997:108). This discursive downgrading of Africa south of the Sahara in general, and South Africa in particular, is geared towards illustrating the views of FIFA's sponsors. The first macrostructure, "Africa's image does not represent the kind of image or market FIFA's sponsors want", indicates the progressive representation of Africa in a way which serves to construct the way in which Africa does not represent what FIFA's sponsors want.

The social values and ideologies associated with Africa's political elites are discounted, as indicated in the second macrostructure. South African president Thabo Mbeki's positions on AIDS and Mugabe were not shared by the West, and were blunders that cost his country the chance to host the World Cup.

The writer discursively downgrades Africa's soccer audiences as a market for the

products produced by FIFA’s sponsors through discourses that apply to image and marketing. These are reinforced by discourses associated with the negative actions of political elites. “When news producers select codes it is usually only the preferred codes within the repertoire of dominant ideologies, and these embody the “natural” explanations accepted by most members of a society” (Hall, 1977:343). By conflating these discourses the writer and *The Japan Times Online* manage to represent Africa as unattractive for business and as having social values that negate those the West stands for.

Lowes argues that as a commodity it is not the actual content of the sports pages being sold – “rather it is the audience for that content, the sport fan” (Lowes, 1999:14). A newspaper’s readership is construed as a commodity, an audience commodity, which is sold to advertisers. Soccer’s audiences are what FIFA’s sponsors, who have their own products to market, want. The writer, and this publication, discursively, though not conspiratorially, work to win *The Japan Times/Online* readership to the argument that soccer, World Cup 2006, is a business and not simply a sport to be enjoyed. The business is the expected returns through the advertising of the sponsors. What the sponsors advertise is geared for a certain market, which is not located in Africa.

### 5.2.2 Derivation of Topics from the Text

Topic Category	Topic
Comment	Africa should be hosting the World Cup in 2006.
Circumstance/Actors	The problem is Africa does not represent the image or market desired by FIFA’s sponsors.
Cause	Perception is of Africa/South Africa as a bad place full of bad people.
Cause	South African president Mbeki made two blunders concerning the cause of HIV virus and he supported Mugabe’s anti white stance.
Cause	South Africa’s murder rate worst selling point.

Cause	Recent press reports show Africa incapable of hosting World Cup.
Circumstance	Morocco also bid for the 2006 Cup.
Actors	FIFA voters are top men who control soccer.
Consequence	Germany's getting the 2006 World Cup alienated an entire continent.

**Table 3:** “World Cup vote: Africa needs a good PR officer”

How to signify Africa in this text is part of what by *The Japan Times/Online* has to struggle with in order to make FIFA's vote, which awarded the World Cup 2006 to Germany, meaningful to its readers. For the readers of *The Japan Times/Online*, the discourses that the writer turns to in the signification process in order to produce this or that meaning about Africa, have already appeared elsewhere in the news pages. The discourses from other press reports contribute to the writer's stated notion that “Africa is not capable of hosting the World Cup”. However, the original discourses were not constructed to produce this notion. It is the writer who articulates the discourses to produce his notion of Africa's capability to host the World Cup. But why draw from other media news reports?

According to Hall (1977:330), though events will be systematically encoded in a single way, they will tend to systematically draw on a very limited ideological or explanatory repertoire, and that repertoire will create a meaning within the sphere of the dominant ideology. The writer draws from a negative and limited ideological repertoire about Africa, because it is how the West and *The Japan Times/Online* and its Western audiences know or prefer to know about Africa.

As represented in the diagram below, the text has three main events that depend for their signification on the critique by FIFA's sponsors of Africa's image and market possibilities. This is the central theme on which the failure of Africa to get the World Cup 2006 is based, according to the writer. The other three main events in the diagram act as

subsequent propositions and further specifications of why FIFA's sponsors' critique is correct in the view of the writer of the feature.

**Figure 2.** Simplified thematic structure “World Cup vote ...”

### **5.2.3 Representation**

The most dominant representation of soccer as a business affects how “Africa” and “South Africa” – whose discourses are conflated into one and the same thing – are constructed and represented as entities. Firstly, the construction and representation of the World Cup as a business – and, by implication, media audiences as a commodity – is responsible for the type of representations of Africa in the text. Advertising is a major component of the understanding of soccer as a business. The media as a business depends on advertising in as much as the World Cup 2006 as a business depends on advertising by

FIFA's sponsors. In turn FIFA's sponsors expect the World Cup 2006, as a business, to generate investment opportunities. This becomes the basis on which to represent "Africa" and "South Africa" as unattractive for the World Cup 2006. The representation of Africa and South Africa in this text is constructed mostly through notions of identity. The writer locates his idea of "Africa" in relation to the West. The representations of Africa in this text are constructed through processes of differentiation. By this I mean the representations of Africa that are chosen by the writer construct Africa as unlike the West, which the World Cup 2006, by implication, symbolises. The representation of Africa as a negation of what the West stands for is symbolised in the rejection of the continent as host of the World Cup 2006.

### **5.3 Text Three**

The next text for analysis is "African artists hold display classes to boost awareness" (2000/10/01). The text is about how an African engineering graduate seeks to change the perception the Japanese people have of Africa through an art exhibition. The former student, Anthony Mhonda, thinks the Japanese people have either a biased or very stereotyped knowledge about his continent. As far as he is concerned, Japanese people see Africa as one vast land of black people, an assortment of animals and hot weather. An art exhibition is one way to expose the Japanese people to a new way of looking at Africa. Mhonda, therefore, has organised an exhibition where two African artists will display their work and run workshops. In this way the Japanese people will meet and talk with the artists and broaden their views about Africa.

This text deals with the concern of a former African student at a Japanese university, that the Japanese people's views of Africa are biased and stereotypical. He is interested in introducing the Japanese people to other views of his continent. He does so by organising an art exhibition featuring two African artists. In his view the art exhibition may help Japanese people see a different aspect of Africa that is rarely seen in the mass media.

#### **5.3.1 Analysis**

The first issue to address is how a reader might possibly approach this text. The fact that

it is located in the Arts & Culture section should say something about what a reader's expectations of his or her reading experience might be. The importance of this lies in how it may impact on the macrostructures the reader constructs. For example, a reader whose situation model consists of very little information such as that expected by the text may produce different macrostructures to a reader with much more information. The text could be considered to be a report on how an African in Japan perceives the way Japanese people think about Africa, or it could be considered to be about how an African in Japan wishes to change the thinking of Japanese people about Africa through an art exhibition. These are both major themes of the text. The text could also be said to be about informing *The Japan Times Online* readership about an African's perception of Japanese people's thinking about Africa, and how he proposes to help them have new ideas about the continent through art.

As shown in Table 3, which is the thematic representation of the text, there are two main events in the text. The exhibition is also a Main Event category along with the critique on Japanese ideas about Africa. The Main Act of the text is the organising of the art exhibition, rather than the exhibition itself. The exhibition itself is also a macrostructure. The central theme of the text is the broadening and correction of the Japanese people's views about Africa. While the text's main actor, Mhonda, criticises the Japanese for seeing Africa as a certain type of homogenous mass, the artists themselves go on about how they are going to showcase Africa, thus also homogenising Africa. One notices, therefore, a tendency in this text to fail to distinguish between individual African countries and the continent as a whole, both by Mhonda – who criticises the tendency – and by the artists, who seek to rectify this tendency. The differences lie in the inflection of the tendency. Volosinov refers to this as a class struggle in language (qtd. in Hall 1982). Hall explains that meaning is not a result of a functional reproduction of the world in language, but of a social struggle – a struggle for mastery in discourse – over which kind of accenting is to prevail and to win credibility (Ibid.). What is happening in this text is a struggle over not the class belonging-ness of the term “Africa”, but the inflexion it can be given, its connotative field of reference. The way in which Africa is continually constructed in travel news is as a homogenous mass, populated firstly by game or wildlife

and, in fact, mostly by nature. The position of the local people does not seem to enter tourism discourse about Africa. When the local people are mentioned in discourses, it is as victims of natural catastrophe such as floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, and epidemics. Mhonda is suggesting that there are positive, not just negative, connotations to Africa, and these are what he wants the Japanese people to be introduced to through the art exhibition.

The art exhibition, as noted above, is a signification process in itself. It is a main event whose signification has its own consequences on the meanings about Africa. It signifies “Africa” in new ways for the Japanese and for the Western readership of *The Japan Times/Online*.

### 5.3.2 Derivation of Topics from the Text

Topic Category	Topic
Actor	For Anthony Mhonda Japanese people know very little about Africa.
Verbal Reaction	Japanese people’s knowledge of Africa is biased.
Main Event	Mhonda is organising an art exhibition to help Japanese people change their thinking about Africa.
Verbal Reaction	Japanese people can get a better understanding of Africa through art work.
Event	Martin mainly paints African people and their traditions.
Event	Caroline, an art historian and accessory designer, will display 200 accessories and bags.
Verbal Reaction	The exhibition work has a traditional African background.
Event	Visitors will mingle with artists, ask questions and workshop ideas.
Consequence	Essence of the workshop is to interact with Japanese people

**Table 3:** “African artists hold display classes to boost awareness”

**Figure 3:** Thematic structure of the discourses in the text and how they are organised to produce meaning.

As discussed above, there is no necessary correspondence between sign and meaning; every sign is “multi-accentual” and every meaning is a result of the process of signification. The art exhibition’s signification process consists of artworks and explanations in workshops by the artists involved. This is a signification process based on art as both production and interaction.

It is obvious that new meanings about Africa emerge, struggling to be heard because of

the existence of traditional and more established meanings against which the new contest for hegemony. These new meanings come to form a new situation model about Africa for the reader.

### **5.3.3 Representation**

Two types of representation occur in this text. The first consists of representations of Africa as an object, where the subject is composed of the Japanese public, which sees only what it wants to see about Africa. What it sees, according to the text, is Africa as a “vast land of black people, an assortment of wild animals and hot weather”.

This view of “Africa” as an object also underlines the power relations between the Japanese as observers of Africa and the continent as an object. The representation of Africa as an object emphasises the power relations between the two entities. These power relations in the representation stress the powerlessness typical of objects. The counter-veiling representations of Africa as something different to Africa, as understood by the Japanese, are offered through proposed works of art. However, the views constructing “Africa” as different from an object of the tourist gaze prefer a view of Africa constructed through cultural appreciation. This view contests the view of Africa as a homogeneous mass.

## **5.4 Results/Discussion**

Opinion category representations of Africa in *The Japan Times/Online* between January and December 2000 vary according to the type of text in hand. In the category of travel news, representations tend to construct Africa or African countries as objects of pleasure. The observers/spectators in all cases are tourists from Europe and Japan. The tourist “gaze”, as Urry describes the encounter with the spectacle, is primarily aimed at seeking pleasure (1990). The places involved and consequently the countries involved, where these places of pleasure are located, are by implication regarded as objects that exist for the pleasure of the observer. All the texts in the category of travel news, beginning with that in the analysis, “Rolling along through Ngorongoro” through to “The coolest dudes of the Kalahari – suricates in shades”, “Festival highlights the myriad sounds of Africa”,

and “Risking your life at Victoria Falls”, are constructed through representations of these places as objects of pleasure. Such a position is easy to understand, where the relationship between the tourists and these places is concerned. It is a relationship where the observer, through his financial power, brings foreign exchange to these countries, which need it. These countries therefore prize this industry for the foreign currency earnings and employment of local people. The text is silent about this relationship, but it is this relationship that enables the representations of places of interest in African countries to be made from the position of the subject – who has financial power. These places are represented as pleasurable, which is what is construed as being sought by tourists in travel news texts.

In the art news category the main representation is of Africa as a homogenous mass, as well as an object, which is similar to how the continent is represented in the travel news. In “African artists hold display, classes to boost awareness”, the representation of Africa as an object, which is attributed to Japanese people, is obviously borrowed from travel news discourse. The representation of Africa as a mosaic is in turn attributed to the African artists in the text. Both positions regard Africa as a homogenous mass, but each position puts its own inflection on this view. In the text “Adeagbo seek animistic roots in Japan”, African art is represented as dynamic and contemporary, but is observed from the position of a Western male "viewpoint" whose power is to award it status as “contemporary art”. It is therefore an object of pleasure for First World museums, from New York to Tokyo.

In the category of sport news, representations of Africa and African countries are broadly made in a way suggestive of their Third World characteristics. This means that the discursive strategies in the text reproduce the power relations between Africa and the First World. The texts “World Cup vote: Africa needs a good PR officer” and, to an extent, “S. Africa done in by shady vote for 2006” reflect this tendency. In these representations Africa is clearly represented as “other” from the countries that constitute the so-called First World. The representations in this category clearly show how the boundaries between Africa and the Third World and First World countries like Japan are

constructed through particular representations of standards of living, quality of political and civic leadership and level of managerial skills. Representations of Africa as a “bad place full of bad people” qualify the continent as “traditional” which is the opposite of “modern”. As a representation, the World Cup symbolises a “higher quality” and Africa is, by implication, a negation, a disruption or complication. A comparison between the two representations of the World Cup 2006 and Africa/South Africa in this text can be made using Johnston’s (1991:154) dichotomies, where the first in each case stands for the World Cup 2006 and, by implication, the First World, and the second, for Africa: modern/traditional, dynamic/static, rational/irrational, efficient/inefficient, progressive/backward and developed/un(der)developed. This, according to Johnston (Ibid.), is how in general the Third World is represented in terms of lack of capital, skilled labour, technology, management, political stability, health standards and so on. This causes the underdeveloped and traditional to be cast in opposition to what is normal; in this case the developed First World, which possesses all these things. Theorists have criticised the way in which First World media organisations represent Africa, as reflected in the sport category. For example, McQuail (1994:47) argues that the relationship between the First World and the Third World was once represented as “enlightened transfer of development and democracy to 'backward' lands”. It is now represented, states McQuail, as what it has always been in real life, “economic and cultural domination”. Others, such as UNESCO (1985) and van Dijk (1988), have made similar criticisms of how the Third World is represented.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This chapter examines the structures of the news features in the categories of travel, sport and art. The three texts were subjected to topic/theme analysis (or macro-structural) analysis (van Dijk 1985). The macrostructures contain the information more easily remembered by readers. The production context of the texts was analysed concurrently with the analysis of the structures of the texts. Having performed the analysis according to stated criteria the results were noted and a discussion of those results carried out in terms of the theory of the study.

## **CHAPTER SIX:**

### **6. CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This thesis deals with theoretical, methodological and practical questions concerning representations of Africa in *The Japan Times/Online* within their production context.

The purpose of a case study as stated earlier is “normally to arrive at descriptions and typologies which have implications for other or larger social systems” (Jensen 2002:239).

It offers great insight into representations about Africa and the production of foreign news at *The Japan Times/Online* using critical discourse analysis. This study explores the nature of the representations in each of the texts analysed. The representations of Africa and African countries result in the discursive perpetuation of the domination of countries of the First World, such as Japan, over those of the Third World countries. The thesis shows the ways in which *The Japan Times/Online* constructs Africa and African countries through a regime of representation which is dominant within the Western world.

#### **6.2 Chapters and Activity**

In Chapter One I introduced the study, focusing on its significance. I pointed out that little study has been done of how Japan’s media represents Africa. Research on *The Japan Times/Online*, as a case study, helps to understand the way in which Africa is

represented by one of Japan's English language newspapers. I also examined the nature of *The Japan Times/Online*'s ownership and editorial policies.

In Chapter Two I focused on the theoretical framework within which the study is located. The framework is part of the field of study called Cultural Studies. Its perspectives are mainly concerned with the study of power, ideology and signification. In terms of news production, this approach argues that the economic base does not have complete control over the ideological superstructure, but that news producers have relative autonomy in the news production process. Such a framework places the professional ideologies and work practices of journalists at the centre of this enquiry. The same framework also assumes that audiences play an active role in the process of meaning production and that journalists are guided by perceptions of their audiences in news production.

In Chapter Three I explored the methodology of the analysis. I discussed the ways in which the data was to be organised, before examining the sampling procedures and then locating this particular study within foreign news. I discussed the cognitive approach to the production of news and how it works together with the structural analysis of news texts. I then examined the analytical techniques to be followed in the analysis of *The Japan Times/Online* news texts.

Chapter Four is the first analytical chapter of the thesis. I analysed factual news. The first step was to analyse representations through the structures of the news texts and language of the news.

Chapter Five is the second chapter of analysis and it focused on features that all belong to the opinion category. By opinion category I mean all the texts that are not produced according to the separation of fact and opinion. These texts all carry the opinion of the writers in the form of professional opinion on the subject in question. Through an examination of revealed opinions and personality, the analysis examined how each of the features was unlike hard news as part of examining how these features produced meaning through the representations in the language of the texts. Features are structured differently from hard news. The opinions that were expressed in the opinion texts were treated as professional opinions on the subject of the text, though the analysis also recognised some of the opinions as social and collective ones resulting from the background of the news processors as Westerners.

### **6.3 Findings**

It is apparent that the kind of representations of Africa common in both the factual and opinion categories were framed in complex ways. The discursive strategies represent African countries unfavourably in the international arena. These news discourses when considered against the historical context of the representation of Africa, can be said to play the role of perpetuating the domination of Third World countries in Africa by First World countries such as Japan through the active exploitation of “difference” and “otherness”. Examples of such representations include the use of the term “outbreak” to describe an Ebola occurrence, or the implication from the term “political instability” in relation to Africa. These representations are a result of the systems of representation and

the power behind these systems. What I mean by this is that cultural representation such as that of Africa in *The JapanTimes/Online* raise political questions about dominance. “Who represents whom, where and how determines the representations available...representations do refer to realities at the same times as they affect reality” (Giles and Middleton 1990:80).

Many of the meanings about Africa in *The Japan Times/Online* are what one may call “established” in Western meaning systems. They share the same colonial culture about Africa. In many ways these meanings form part of the “episodic memory” of the reader. Giles and Middleton (1999) argue that producing and sustaining “truths” is crucial to the maintenance and reproduction of power relations. The kind of representations in *The Japan Times/Online* are the kind of representations which result from this publication modelling its agenda on that of the Western media about Africa as some newspapers do, for such reasons as ideology, prestige or necessity (Link 1984). This is one place where Africans can contest the representations of the continent by negotiating with such a publication as *The Japan Times/Online* to accept content from independent media organizations in Africa. In this way the African countries can counter Western negative representation by increasing the amount of Afro-centric content circulating in Asian capitals.

What is difficult to counter easily is what is part of the “episodic memory” of the reader as this is constituted by the representations of Africa which have become “naturalized” over time and acquired “commonsense” status. However as has been noted in cultural

studies theories about discourse and power, meanings are not historically fixed, because “knowledge...is historically and culturally specific (Foucault qtd. in Hall 1997:47). Most of the negative representations have attained the status of “truths” which makes publications such as *The Japan Times/Online* participants in the production and sustenance of these “truths” about Africa and African countries. Giles and Middleton argue that once “truths” have become naturalized they are difficult to challenge (1999). However the point that knowledge and practices are historically and culturally specific gives greater possibilities to change the representations of Africa circulating in the world’s media today. As I have already pointed out the media has come to refer to the former communist countries, which were hated in the West as “New Europe”. Clearly the label “communist” with all its negative connotations has therefore ceased to be a meaning system for countries in the Eastern European region. It therefore means it is possible to change the labels attached to Africa at the moment through a change in the political and human rights systems. But as I have said the introduction of Afro-centric representation in Japanese and Asian publications is one strategy of resisting negative representations and misrepresentations of African people and their countries.

However these news discourses affirm what in international aid relations (and institutionalised by the media) has become a natural, neutral and depoliticised way of representing Africa. The “opinion” category had slightly different representations. The representations in the sport genre were largely similar to the ones in the hard news genre indicating a cross-cutting of representations from one sub-genre to the other.

Representations of Africa as a “bad place full of bad people” qualify the continent as

primitive or more generally “traditional”, which is the opposite of “modern”. Africans can also argue at different fora against the media practice which makes the continent the “other” of Westernization. For example as a representation, the World Cup comes to symbolise for *The Japan Times/Online* a “higher quality” and Africa is by implication a negation, a disruption or complication. The two representations of the World Cup 2006 and Africa/South Africa in this text fit into Johnston’s dichotomies, squarely where the first in each case stands for the World Cup 2006 and by implication the First World while the second stands for Africa: modern/traditional, dynamic/static, rational/irrational, efficient/inefficient, progressive/backward and developed/un(der)developed (Johnston, 1991:154). The media are however sites of struggle over meaning and are not transparent cultural prescriptions of Africa and African countries. Even though I have argued against the “reality reflection thesis” applying to the media texts about Africa and African countries where others might question whether the epidemics, the conflicts, the floods, the hunger and famine are not real, I still maintain that the question is how the representation is constructed and for whom? Fiske (1987) argued that media texts are inherently “polysemic”, but in foreign news the preferred meaning, which is the dominant one, about a region such as Africa, is always taken. The polysemous nature of the text may have its limitations, mainly because the message is being directed to readers who share the same Western culture over Africa and African countries. The media texts of *The Japan Times/Online* therefore mainly reinforce through circulation in another region Western stereotypes of Africa and African countries. Within the “cultural imperialism” critique (Sreberny-Mohammed 1991:120) that far from aiding Third World nations to develop, aspects of international flows such as technology transfer and media hardware

coupled with “software” flows cultural products actually strengthened dependency and prevented true development, I argue that Western media news discourses of Africa enhance this situation and have the ideological effect of marginalizing the continent.

Developmental journalism is another way for African journalism to move away from Western news values which are embedded in the negativity criterion and turn around negative representations of the Western media of their societies. African media organizations can market features stories about different aspects of their countries, including human interest stories in a bid to counter the negative representations of their countries in the Asian region. Golding (qtd. in Guneratne 1990:45) regarded developmental journalism as instrumental towards national progress by: its stress on the educational function of news which raises awareness of events and issues; its production of stories about social needs or problems in the hope of stirring government action; its highlighting of self-help projects that can be implemented by other communities and its reporting on obstacles to development. These aspects of developmental journalism cited from Golding are what we in Africa should be concerned about in our quest to move out of agrarian economies. The duty of journalists should be to commit themselves to reshaping the foreign news sent to the Asian region with that reflects and supports the efforts of their countries to make the transition from stagnant agrarian structures to modern industrialized and just societies.

In the category of travel news, representations tended to construct Africa or African countries as objects of pleasure. The observers/spectators in all cases were tourists from

Europe and Japan. The tourist “gaze”, as Urry describes the encounter with the spectacle, is primarily aimed at seeking pleasure (1990). The places involved and consequently the countries involved, where these places of pleasure are located, were by implication regarded as objects that exist for the pleasure of the observer. In the art news genre the main representation is of Africa as a homogenous mass. There is also representation of Africa in similar ways to those in the "travel" news, which is as an object. In the text *African artists hold display, classes to boost awareness* are the representations of Africa as an object which is traced from travel news discourse, also representations of Africa as consisting of a single attraction such as animals. Both positions, however, recognise Africa as a homogenous mass but each position inflects in a different direction. This reflects an ideological struggle in the text over how to represent Africa.

The study also found that foreign news was in some cases used as an instrument of foreign policy. Here, diplomats and politicians execute foreign policy through the international media, which provides “political power holders with a convenient conduit for the transmission of their selected views on the world” (Hamelink 1985:145). This is not to suggest that there is a conspiracy between the media and political elites, but that the media as social institutions are part of the dominant structures of society. Only legitimated sources, such as Hamelink (1985) refers to, have access to the media because of their position in the structure of dominance. The stark example of this is *Mori to call for stability in Johannesburg speech text*. The representations of Africa in this text reproduce the condition of Africa as a homogenous mass as politically unstable and needing help. In the text Japan demonstrates the power to both arrest Africa in this zone

of helplessness as well as the power to rescue it from the condition. This is the power of representation used to produce the superiority of Japan over all of Africa.

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

The foregoing discussion on African countries illustrates a need to counter negative representations of the continent. This can be done by African countries negotiating news exchange deals with media in such countries as Japan. This means that African news organizations can sell their news directly to Asian news organizations. Currently there is no such relationship between Asian and African news organizations. All the news about Africa is news written for Western audiences by Western journalists pursuing Western agendas. If Africans market news to Asia this might have the effect of introducing news with Afro-centric emphasis. Hall argues that it is possible to talk about counter-strategies which can begin to subvert the existing representation process simply because “meaning can never be finally fixed” (Hall 1997:270).

The question is how this regime of representation can be challenged, contested or changed. In the first place the content about Africa and African countries can be subjected to what Hall (1997) refers to as “trans-coding”. This is the process of “taking an existing meaning and re-appropriating it for new meanings” (Hall 1997:270). Hall (1997) uses the example of the word Black, which was said to mean the despised other to when it was given a new meaning by African American activists through the expression “Black is beautiful”. My own example of “trans-coding” is that associated with political change which resulted in Eastern Europe being understood not as the “Iron Curtain” with a repressive and ugly communist system but as “New Europe”, full of hope for the future.

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