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Field: Reading, Discourse Analysis

新聞の見出し記事を使用した話者の視点を考えるリーデイング

Awareness-raising for Evaluative Expressions by Using the Lead of Newspaper Articles

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The term 'evaluation' in this presentation will be used following the example of Hunston and Thompson (2000: 5), which covers 'the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about.' The use of evaluative expressions in the text does not only reflect the speaker/writer's attitude and viewpoint but also a value-system of the community which the speaker/writer belongs to. Thus, awareness of an evaluative function of language can help mature learners to interpret the speaker/writer's intention and attitude behind the text. It can also promote the learner's recognition of varied ways of expressing a proposition according to the speaker/writer's viewpoint.

Newspaper articles can be an inspiring, authentic language teaching material when carefully chosen and appropriately exploited. They can bridge the classroom with outside worlds and stimulate students' critical thinking. Presenting a whole article on current issues, however, often discourages students from reading on partly because students are not always familiar with the textual organisation of newspaper articles and partly because students' vocabulary is insufficient for understanding the text of an article.

One way to use newspaper articles for awareness-raising of evaluative language is presenting the headline and the lead of articles in different newspapers on the same topic as an introductory phase of reading. The lead, which normally consists of no more than a few sentences, can show the reporter's or publisher's evaluation and interpretation of incidents on which the reporter is reporting. Evaluation can be represented by the use of lexis, grammar and textual organisation. The following examples are the headlines and the leads from two different newspapers on the arrest of Livedoor's CEO, which occurred in January 2006. The underlined expressions are heavily loaded with the reporter's evaluations.

Japanese internet <u>guru</u> arrested

Japanese prosecutors today arrested Takafumi Horie, the <u>celebrity</u> chief executive of Livedoor, the internet services provider, for <u>suspected</u> securities laws <u>violations</u>.

(The Times, January 23, 2006)

Japanese <u>web mogul</u> arrested for alleged securities violations

TOKYO – Japanese prosecutors arrested <u>iconoclastic</u> <u>Internet mogul</u> Takafumi Horie and three business partners today, <u>whisking</u> them <u>off</u> to a Tokyo detention center in a <u>nationally</u> televised police <u>cavalcade</u> to <u>face</u> <u>allegations</u> they <u>broke</u> securities laws

(Los Angeles Times, January 23, 2006)

In both articles, Horie appears as an object of the action in the passive sentences in the headlines, and the prosecutors are the agent of the action in the active sentences in the lead. While the article in the *Times* reports the incident with relatively neutral expressions, the article in *Los Angeles Times* describes the incident with more value-laden expressions.

Comparing the leads of different newspapers on the same topic has several pedagogical advantages. The topic which is discussed by multiple newspapers is likely to be familiar to students, and the fact that they have background knowledge on the issue helps students to understand the broader context of the issue. Leads have common elements such as "who", "where", "when", "what", "why" and "how" of the incident discussed. This makes it easier even for students who have very little or no experience of linguistic analysis to identify value-laden expressions. Reading more than one short passage about the same issue enables students to predict the meaning of unknown words and expressions, and this can boost students' confidence in their current reading activity.   The comparing process can lead to students' choosing one article over others and promote further reading of the text.

Reference

Hunston, S. & Thompson, G. (2000). Evaluation: An introduction. In S. Hunston and G. Thompson (Eds.), *Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse.*   Oxford: Oxford University Press.