Constructing Allies versus Non-Allies in News Discourse

A Discursive News Values Analysis of US Media Reporting on Two Territorial Disputes

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Abstract

News values are used by journalists to construct events and news actors as newsworthy. The present study investigates the use of news values in the reporting on two territorial disputes, one between China and Japan (Diaoyu/Senkaku) and one between Japan and South Korea (Dokdo/Takeshima), in the US news outlets CNN, FOX News and the Washington Post. In addition, it also examines what news values tend to be associated with the involved parties, US-allies Japan and South Korea, and US non-allies China, as well as to what extent the news values associated with Japan differ between the reporting on the two disputes. This is done through a Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) which examines how news values are construed using linguistic resources. The aim is to produce new insights into how international conflicts are reported on, and how certain nations are made newsworthy in US media. The results suggest that the news values of Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness were foregrounded in the reporting on both disputes, while Proximity was far more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles. Eliteness and Personalisation were commonly associated with US allies while a combination of Superlativeness and Negativity was more common with US non-allies, which resulted in Negativity being further emphasised. Finally, Proximity was far more commonly associated with Japan in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles compared to the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles. Thus, the analysis shows that US allies tend to be constructed as newsworthy in a more positive light than non-allies, and it also indicates that nations defending a contested area in a territorial dispute appear to be framed more positively than their counterparts.

Keywords

News values, discourse analysis, news discourse, political conflicts, framing.
Contents

1 Introduction ................................................................. 1
  1.1 The Dokdo/Takeshima and Diaoyu/Senkaku Disputes .................. 1
  1.2 Aim and Research Questions ..................................... 2
2 Literature Review .................................................................. 3
  2.1 Theoretical Framework: Discursive News Values Analysis ............ 3
  2.2 Representation of Nations in the News ............................... 5
  2.3 Discursive News Values Analysis Oriented Research ................. 5
3 Method ................................................................................ 7
  3.1 Data Collection .......................................................... 7
  3.2 Data Analysis .................................................................. 8
    3.2.1 Analytical Framework - News Values .............................. 8
4 Results .................................................................................. 12
  4.1 The Overall Usage of News Values .................................... 12
    4.1.1 Eliteness ................................................................. 13
    4.1.2 Negativity ................................................................. 13
    4.1.3 Proximity ................................................................. 14
    4.1.4 Superlativeness ......................................................... 14
    4.1.5 Timeliness ............................................................... 15
    4.1.6 Unexpectedness ......................................................... 15
    4.1.7 Summing up results for research question 1 ..................... 16
  4.2 US Allies and non-Allies .................................................... 16
    4.2.1 Eliteness ................................................................. 18
    4.2.2 Impact ................................................................. 18
    4.2.3 Personalisation ......................................................... 18
    4.2.4 Positivity ................................................................. 19
    4.2.5 Proximity ............................................................... 19
    4.2.6 Superlativeness ......................................................... 20
    4.2.7 Summing up results for research question 2 ..................... 21
  4.3 News Values and Japan ..................................................... 21
    4.3.1 Negativity ................................................................. 22
    4.3.2 Personalisation ......................................................... 22
    4.3.3 Positivity ................................................................. 23
    4.3.4 Proximity ............................................................... 23
    4.3.5 Summing up results for research question 3 ..................... 23
List of Tables

Table 1 The number of articles and words collected and analysed from each news source ........ 8
Table 2 List of news values with descriptions and examples from the data of the present study . 9
Table 3 The total number of instances and relative frequency (n) of each news value per 10,000 words in the two different territorial disputes ................................................................. 12
Table 4 The number of instances and relative frequency (n) of each news value per 10,000 words associated with China, South Korea and Japan ................................................................. 16
Table 5 The number of instances and relative frequency (n) of each news value per 10,000 words associated with US allies and US non-allies ................................................................................. 17
Table 6 The number of instances and relative frequency (n) of each news value per 10,000 words associated with Japan in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute and the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute ................................................................. 21
1 Introduction

News outlets report on events not only to inform their readers about happenings, but also to make money, which means they need to find news to write about, as well as make sure it is newsworthy enough to sell well. The concept of ‘news values’ refers to the discursive strategies employed by journalists to construct an event or news actor as newsworthy (Bednarek & Caple, 2014). Newsworthiness can be constructed through several news values such as Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness to name a few. When journalists report on an event, they use news values according to what they believe their audience would prefer (Richardson, 2007). Thus, news values reproduce ideologies in the sense that journalists must frame news events in ways that reflect the shared values of the readership at the time of reporting. News values possess the ability to affect readers’ perception of events and news actors since they can be used to frame these in many ways (Bednarek & Caple, 2017). For example, if one nation is commonly associated with Eliteness and another Unexpectedness, this could possibly create an Us versus Them ideology, which - if used repeatedly enough - may affect readers (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137).

The present study investigates the use of news values in the reporting on two territorial disputes in three US news outlets, CNN, FOX News and the Washington Post. The territorial disputes concern two groups of islands, the Dokdo/Takeshima islands, and the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, as detailed in Section 1.1. Since both US allies (Japan and South Korea) and a US non-ally (China) are central to these territorial disputes, the role of news values in the framing of the events and news actors could give insight into both the stance of the US readership on the issue, and whether journalists make conscious decisions to discursively construct certain nations differently.

Previous research has shown how journalists construct climate change as newsworthy (Dahl & Fløttum, 2017), what news values tend to be shared on social media (Bednarek, 2016), and to what extent news values in the Chinese press have been affected by the marketisation of the media in China (Huan, 2016). Furthermore, the representation and framing of nations in US media has also received some attention (Kim, 2014). However, previous studies that focus on news values tend to look at the use of news values when reporting on specific events or how the use of news values differs between different news sources or countries. There is little research that treats the role of news values in the process of framing nations in the news. Therefore, this study focuses not only on what news values are used and emphasised when reporting on the two territorial disputes examined, but also what news values tend to be associated with US allies and US non-allies.

1.1 The Dokdo/Takeshima and Diaoyu/Senkaku Disputes

The dispute between Japan and South Korea is about a group of islands known as the Liancourt rocks, or Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan. Japan incorporated the islands 1905 to accommodate fishermen who wanted to hunt seals around the islands (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2013). However, South Korea claims the islands have been Korean territory since the 6th century, and that the Japanese incorporation of the islands was illegal (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of South Korea, 2013). Following the end of World War II, South Korea declared the islands its territory in 1952 and occupied them in 1954, after which Japan has disputed South Korea’s claim to the territory while South Korea denies that any territorial dispute exists (“Profile: Dokdo/Takeshima islands,” 2012).
The other dispute is between Japan and China regarding a group of islands known as Diaoyu in China and Senkaku in Japan. Both countries claim the islands, but they are currently under Japanese administration. The islands had been occupied by the US since World War II, when the US left the area, administrative control over the islands was given to Japan. Similar to South Korea’s view of the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, the Japanese government claims the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands belong to Japan according to international law, and that “[t]here exists no issue of territorial sovereignty to be resolved concerning the Senkaku Islands” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016). The Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute recently intensified when China announced a new air defence zone that included the disputed islands, which are also covered by a US-Japan defence treaty.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

News values play an important role in framing events and news actors in certain ways (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137). The present study aims to determine how two different territorial disputes are construed as newsworthy and whether there is a difference in what news values tend to be associated with the involved parties. Furthermore, as Japan is involved in both territorial disputes, its associated news values in the reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute will be compared to those in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. This will be done by answering the following research questions:

1. What news values are foregrounded in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute versus the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute?
2. What are the most common news values associated with US allies versus US non-allies?
3. To what extent do the news values most commonly associated with Japan differ in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute versus the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute?
2 Literature Review

As the Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) theoretical framework is relatively new, to my knowledge, there are still not many studies in which it has been applied, and no studies in which it is used to compare the reporting on two different events or focused on news values and nations in the way the present study does. For example, previous research by Kim (2014) focused on a similar topic, the representation of North Korea in the US press, but used a different analytical framework. Studies examining the use of news values includes Bednarek (2016) who investigated commonly shared news values on social media, Huan (2016) who looked at news values in the Chinese press and Dahl & Flottum (2017) who focused on news values in climate change news stories. The following sub-section will give a brief theoretical background of news values, followed by an account of the studies mentioned above.

2.1 Theoretical Framework: Discursive News Values Analysis

Earlier research on news values by Galtung & Ruge (1965) dealt with similar topics using different terminology, and Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) Discursive News Values Analysis framework is based on their research. Instead of news values, Galtung & Ruge (1965) use the term news factors. They identified 12 different ones, listed with definitions below:

1. Frequency – “the more similar the frequency of the event is to the frequency of the news medium, the more probable that it will be recorded as news by that news medium” (p. 66).
2. Threshold – “the bigger … [the event] the bigger the headlines it will make” (p. 66).
3. Unambiguity – “the less ambiguity the more the event will be noticed” (p. 66).
4. Meaningfulness – “[The event is] interpretable within the cultural framework of the listener or reader” and “there has to be cultural proximity” (pp. 66-67).
5. Consonance – “The more consonant the signal is with the mental image of what one expects to find, the more probable that it will be recorded as worth listening to” (p. 65).
6. Unexpectedness – “It is the unexpected within the meaningful and the consonant that is brought to one’s attention, and by “unexpected” we simply mean essentially two things: unexpected or rare” (p. 67).
7. Continuity – “once something has hit the headlines and been defined as ‘news’, then it will continue to be defined as news for some time” (p. 67).
8. Composition – “the desire to present a ‘balanced’ whole” (p. 67), meaning that news outlets aim to offer news on a range of topics (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 29)
9. Reference to elite nations – “The more the event concerns elite nations, the more probable that it will become a news item” (p. 68)
10. Reference to elite people – “The more the event concerns elite people, the more probable that it will become a news item” (p. 68)
11. Reference to persons – “The more the event can be seen in personal terms, as due to the action of specific individuals, the more probable that it will become a news item” (p. 68)
12. Reference to something negative – “The more negative the event in its consequences, the more probable that it will become a news item” (p. 68)
News factors 1, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are altered or not present in Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) framework of DNVA. This is because 1, 7 and 8 are not linguistic in nature, 9 and 10 are included in Eliteness, and in the case of 3, Bednarek & Caple (2017) suggest that many news values, such as Unexpectedness and Eliteness, are used to reduce ambiguity, but it is not classified as a news value of its own. The rest are defined as news values, with the addition of the news values Impact (assessments of significance), Positivity (reference to something positive) and Timeliness (time references to construct recency). A major difference between Galtung & Ruge’s (1965) news factors and Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) news values is that rather than seeing news factors/values as something that can be used to construct news actors and events as newsworthy, Galtung & Ruge (1965, p. 71) see it as something that a news actor or event either possesses or does not possess. Bednarek & Caple (2014, p. 137) define news values as “the ‘newsworthiness’ aspects of actors, happenings and issues as existing in and constructed through discourse.” News values can be construed through different strategies such as Consonance ((stereo)typical aspects), Proximity (geographical or cultural ‘nearness’), Eliteness (elite status) and Negativity (negative aspects such as negative words and negative evaluative language) to name a few. To separate the terms news values and newsworthiness, Bednarek & Caple (2014, pp. 136-137) argue that news values are “constructed in and through discourse” and that “newsworthiness becomes a quality of texts.”

News values are considered inherently ideological, hence they are not considered ‘natural,’ but rather socially and culturally constructed (Fowler, 1991, cited in Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137). Thus, foregrounding (emphasising) or backgrounding (playing down) certain news values when reporting on certain news actors or events can affect how these are viewed by the audience. For example, if news stories about one country foreground the news value of Eliteness, and news stories about another country foreground the news value of Unexpectedness, this could be seen as the ideology of (the elite) Us versus (the exotic) Them being reproduced through the use of news values (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137).

Although news values are used by journalists to construct events, issues and news actors as newsworthy, they do not necessarily reflect the readers’ preferences. Richardson (2007, p. 94) points out that “news values are the (imagined) preferences of the expected audience,” and Bednarek & Caple (2017, p. 37) suggest that news values affect how journalists gather, structure and present events, which results in said events being framed in a certain way. According to Bell (1991, cited in Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 37), news values are not only the criteria that journalists use, but also a quality of news actors and events.

Linguistic approaches to news values have received some attention in recent years (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, 2014, 2017; Bell, 1991; Richardson, 2007), but they are not without criticism. Firstly, there is yet no consensus among researchers on how many news values are necessary or how these are to be conceptualised (Caple & Bednarek, 2013, pp. 4-5). Secondly, many new news values have been created as Galtung & Ruge’s (1965) framework is seen as outdated, but Caple & Bednarek (2013, pp. 4-5) point out that these news values are problematic as they often tend to overlap with other, already existing, news values, further increasing the disparity in the field. For example, Harcup & O’Neill (2001, p. 279) use The Power Elite (references to powerful individuals) and Celebrity (references to famous people) as two separate news values, while in Bednarek & Caple’s framework both are included in Eliteness. Other news values they use include Surprise (stories that have an element of surprise), Bad News (stories with negative overtones) and Good News (stories with positive overtones), which are very similar to Unexpectedness,
Negativity and Positivity respectively. Thus, the present study will rely solely on the framework provided by Bednarek & Caple (2017) to avoid these issues, as detailed in Section 3.2.1.

2.2 Representation of Nations in the News

Previous studies have focused on how different nations are presented in the news. Kim (2014) investigated how North Korea is constructed in US news media between 1998-2010. She did this through a corpus-based critical discourse analysis, analysing articles by major US news outlets. She found that the examined news outlets tended to group countries together, and that their stance toward the US affected their association with North Korea. For example, not unexpectedly, China, a North Korean ally, was found to be strongly associated with North Korea. However, countries such as Iran, Iraq, Libya, Cuba and Pakistan, which do not have much in common with North Korea, were common collocates of North Korea. Kim (2014) claims that this is because these countries have an anti-US political stance.

The concept of news values is not central to Kim’s (2014) study, but as it focuses on how a nation is represented in US media, it is relevant to the present study. News values can also be used to frame a nation in a certain light (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137). Especially in the case of China, the findings of Kim’s (2014) study are of relevance to the present study. China’s stance toward the US is complicated by their alliance with North Korea (Kim, 2014, p. 222) and their activity in the South China Sea, which could affect what news values are associated with them. Japan and South Korea, on the other hand, are US allies and have agreed on a united front against the North Korean threat, which in turn might affect how they are framed in the news.

2.3 Discursive News Values Analysis Oriented Research

As mentioned earlier, to the best of my knowledge, there is no research that utilises DNVA and compares the representation of nations in two separate news events, thus the studies presented in this section relate to the present study mainly due to their use of similar methods.

Bednarek (2016) looked at what news values tend to be foregrounded in news items shared on social media. This approach, examining news items that are shared by readers, reveals not only what the journalists believe their readership finds newsworthy, but also what the readers themselves find newsworthy (or rather, newsworthy enough to share the news on social media). The study is corpus assisted and combines corpus techniques such as frequency analysis, semantic tagging and concordancing with DNVA, which is used to determine how news values are established through semiotic resources (Bednarek, 2016, p. 228).

Bednarek (2016) found that traditional news values such as Eliteness, Superlativeness, Unexpectedness, Negativity and Timeliness were important news values in news shared on social media. She also noted that unexpected and affective news items tend to be shared more frequently, and that Negativity is more important than Positivity.

In a study by Huan (2016) the use of news values in the Chinese press is examined as its government subsidies have been withdrawn and have become increasingly influenced by the effects of marketization. As news values reproduce ideologies, they can also reflect political and societal changes (O’Neill & Harcup, 2008, cited in Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 33). Since the newspapers must please both their readers and the government, they have to be careful when determining how to establish newsworthiness. Similarly to Bednarek (2016), Huan (2016) used a corpus of news articles, but he also interviewed and observed journalists. Thus, his study also
accounts for the process of constructing newsworthiness, not only the final product. However, as Bednarek & Caple’s (2014) analytical framework of DNVA is adapted for English, Huan (2016) did not consider it applicable to his study as the newspaper articles were written in Chinese. Instead, he looks at how news values are construed through journalistic stance in the articles (Huan, 2016, p. 117).

Huan (2016) found that journalists are indeed affected by the new situation they find themselves in. The government must remain pleased for the newspaper to remain in business, and the ordinary people must find the news interesting in order to be fed the government ideology. In addition, the news must sell well enough to gain commercial profit (Huan, 2016, p. 120). He found that Eliteness and Positivity were foregrounded together to please the leaders of the country, and Negativity and Personalisation were foregrounded together to please ordinary citizens.

In a multimodal analysis, Dahl & Fløttum (2017) investigated the interplay between verbal and visual representation of climate change news. This was done by examining headlines and images of news articles on climate change in two British newspapers, the broadsheet The Guardian and the tabloid Daily Mail, according to Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) analytical framework of DNVA. Their aim was to both determine how climate news is mediated to the readers through verbal and visual representations, as well as how these two modes operate together to create newsworthiness (Dahl & Fløttum, 2017, p. 125). Dahl & Fløttum (2017) found that both newspapers use similar news values when representing climate change, Eliteness, Impact and Negativity, and that the verbal and visual messages for the most part project the same news values. However, in the case of the Daily Mail, the headline would sometimes construe Negativity while the image would construe Positivity.

Bednarek & Caple (2017) mention corpus methods and multimodal analysis as suitable additions to DNVA, which might explain why all the studies presented here utilise one of these methods. However, neither of these additions were deemed suitable for the present study as there were not enough data to make a corpus analysis practical, and a multimodal analysis would have been outside the scope of this study as it already involves manual analysis of large amounts of text. The following section provides details concerning the data collection and analysis of the present study.
3 Method

This section will present the data collection procedure and method used in the data analysis, including examples of how the news values were identified.

3.1 Data Collection

Two data sets, consisting of news articles about the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute and the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute from three major US news outlets, CNN, FOX News, and The Washington Post, were collected. These news sources were chosen as they are some of the biggest in the US and are therefore highly influential since they reach many readers. The articles were collected using LexisNexis through the Stockholm University Library, except for the FOX News articles, which were collected directly from the FOX News website (this was because FOX News articles were not available through LexisNexis).

Although the news outlets chosen differ in political leaning, this was not considered in the analysis of the present study. The news outlets were chosen based mainly on their size, however, since they differ in political leaning (CNN – left, Washington Post – liberal, and FOX News – right), a small comparison of two articles from each news outlet on each territorial dispute was carried out, where only minor differences in the use of news values between the different news outlets were observable. This was likely due to the territorial disputes being international issues rather than domestic ones. Thus, it was determined that the difference in political leaning was not going to skew the results according to a particular political angle. It should be pointed out, however, that the present study never intended to examine how different news outlets use news values when reporting based on their political leanings.

When collecting articles about the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, the search term Senkaku was used, and Takeshima was used when collecting articles about the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Only articles classified as news were collected, as these are supposed to report on facts, while opinion/editorials were not included. As for the timeframe, the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles were published between 2010-2019, and the Dokdo/Takeshima articles 2005-2019. Although both disputes stem from the end of World War II, they did not receive much media attention until recently, which is why the data consists of articles published within the past 15 years. Furthermore, in the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, China’s new air defence territory caused the dispute to resurface once more, giving it much media coverage. In the case of both disputes, articles in which they were only mentioned briefly were ignored as the focus of this study is on news discourse regarding these specific events. Thus, for example, an article about the US president visiting China that focused on the diplomatic relations between the two nations, with the Senkaku dispute only being brought up briefly at the end of the article, was not included. Furthermore, in the case of some articles, especially those reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, there were parts that reported on the other dispute. These parts were removed before analysing the data since the aim was to find potential differences in the reporting on the two events, which required the articles to be focused solely (or at least mainly) on these.

Table 1 shows the number of articles collected from each news source as well as the total word count on the Diaoyu/Senkaku and Dokdo/Takeshima disputes. Note that the number of articles and words were recorded after removing and editing the articles as mentioned above.
Table 1 The number of articles and words collected and analysed from each news source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Source</th>
<th>Diaoyu/Senkaku Dispute</th>
<th>Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOX News</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15773</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Data Analysis

As the dataset was relatively small, a qualitative analysis of the data, based on Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) framework of DNVA was chosen. The analysis was carried out in three steps. First, the number of instances of each news value in the reporting on each territorial dispute was recorded. This was done manually by colour-coding the articles to highlight the various news values (see Appendix A for a colour-coded sample article). Then the total number of instances of each news value was counted and assembled into tables. Second, to determine which news values were most commonly associated with US allies and non-allies, news values in connection with China, Japan and South Korea were examined. Finally, the news values typically associated with Japan in the Dokdo/Takeshima articles were compared to those of the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles. Although the analysis itself was qualitative, Bednarek & Caple (2017) mention frequency as a determiner when measuring how foregrounded or backgrounded a news value is. Thus, the process of identifying and determining news values was qualitative, but the quantitative data, that is, the total number of instances of each news value, was an important factor when answering all three research questions.

Since the size of the two data-sets differed, with the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute consisting of 15773 words and the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute 14049 words, the foregrounding/backgrounding was determined based on a news value’s relative frequency, that is, the number of occurrences per 10000 words. This way, the results were comparable despite the difference in corpus size. However, it should be mentioned that the present study does not aim to make any generalisations as the data set is too small.

3.2.1 Analytical Framework - News Values

Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) DNVA framework was used to determine which news values were most commonly used in the reporting on the two territorial disputes. Table 2 below contains the different news values followed by a brief description and an example from the data:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News value</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consonance</strong></td>
<td>Reference to something as (stereo)typical</td>
<td>China has a habit of bullying its neighbors with intimidating military drills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eliteness</strong></td>
<td>Markers used to symbolise high status</td>
<td>Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said it was the closest that Chinese jets had come to Japanese aircraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
<td>Assessments of significance, references to real or possible consequences</td>
<td>South Korea's choice of dessert for Friday's historic inter-Korean summit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negativity</strong></td>
<td>Reference to negative/positive emotion and attitude, negative/positive lexis or evaluative language, and descriptions of negative/positive behaviour</td>
<td>The plan sparked massive anti-Japanese protests across China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positivity</strong></td>
<td>References to ordinary people and their emotions/experiences</td>
<td>His statement seems aimed at reassuring Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personalisation</strong></td>
<td>References to ordinary people and their emotions/experiences</td>
<td>&quot;Japan has accomplished a lot,&quot; said Jeong Eun-jae, 31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proximity</strong></td>
<td>References to place or nationality near the target audience, using first person plural pronouns and cultural references</td>
<td>America's mutual security treaty with Japan applies to the islands at the center of a territorial dispute between China and Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Superlativeness</strong></td>
<td>Lexis, metaphors and other devices that are used to show that the news is of high intensity/large scope</td>
<td>China 'escalating' tensions over disputed islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeliness</strong></td>
<td>Explicit and implicit time references that present the story as recent, ongoing, about to happen etc.</td>
<td>South Korean shop owners are launching a nationwide boycott of Japanese products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unexpectedness</strong></td>
<td>Evaluations of unexpectedness, or references to surprise/expectations</td>
<td>but Beijing shocked Tokyo by demanding an apology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It should be noted that some linguistic devices can be assigned several news values. For example, in the headline *China accused of invading disputed islands, invading* was assigned both Negativity and Superlativeness as it counts as both negative and intensified lexis.

Which news values tended to be foregrounded and backgrounded in the different news stories was determined through their frequency. However, in the case of determining the foregrounding/backgrounding of some news values, especially Timeliness, it was less straightforward as repetition of this news value is uncommon and does not necessarily mean it is being foregrounded (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 145). Instead, Bednarek & Caple (2014, pp. 145-146) suggest that explicit time references such as *last week, last Friday, yesterday*, rather than only relying on verb tense, should be considered as foregrounding in the case of Timeliness, but at the same time, phrases that mark events as being somewhat old such as *last month or last year* do not tend to be used to foreground recency. Personalisation is another news value where foregrounding and backgrounding cannot be determined solely by looking at its frequency. Bednarek & Caple (2017) point out that mentions of names, age and occupation of news actors as in *In 1991, Kim Sin-yeol [moved] to a lonely outcrop of islands* are considered strong cases of personalisation while references to groups as in *A group of settlers manufactured dried fish and collected feathers* are considered as weak and backgrounded cases.

It is also possible for a news value to be both foregrounded and backgrounded through the same word. *Recent*, for example, falls into the news value category of Timeliness, which is used to construct an event as current. In *Japan [...] [said] it would not tolerate recent unauthorized landings by Chinese activists*, it is used to foreground Timeliness, but it sometimes backgrounds this aspect when used as in *in recent months or in recent years* since months and years ago are not usually considered as recent. Thus, in addition to its frequency, the context of the news value is also an important factor when determining whether it is foregrounded or backgrounded.

The news values typically associated with US-allies and US non-allies were determined by examining the context and co-text of collocates of China, Japan and South Korea. First it was necessary to determine whether the collocates were indeed news values. Depending on the context, the same linguistic device could be classified as different news values, or no news value at all. For example, while *something that some have speculated would start World War III* is a case of Impact, *it’s as if World War III has begun* is a case of Superlativeness. In the case of Impact, *World War III is* a possible consequence, but in the case of Superlativeness it is used as a comparison to something big. Similarly, *collision* as in *Japan won’t indict Chinese captain over collision* was not classified as a news value as it is simply describing two objects hit each other. However, when used figuratively, as in *Trump and China on collision course*, it was considered a case of Superlativeness since it emphasises the high intensity of the disagreement between the US President and China. Therefore, the context plays an important role in determining what news values are to be assigned to each linguistic device.

Additionally, the news values associated with the actions of China, Japan and South Korea were also examined. Not only actions by the countries were included in this part, but also references to their governments or agencies and news actors where the nationality was specified. Thus, in *South Korean politicians said they would insist on linking resolution of the islet dispute to what they condemned as a pattern of resurgent militarism by Japan, condemned* was considered a case of Negativity and was counted as associated with South Korea since the action was carried out by South Korean politicians. Similarly, in *The Chinese government cut off high-level talks with Japan both cut off (Negativity) and high level (Superlativeness)* were considered associated with China as it is the action of the Chinese government.
As some news values could be difficult to distinguish, especially Superlativeness and Impact, a second evaluator (E2) was given 20 sentences with elements classified as Impact and 20 sentences with elements classified as Superlativeness in the data analysis, randomly selected from the two data sets (see Appendix B). E2 was instructed to analyse the sentences using Bednarek & Caple’s (2017) framework of DNVA and identify potential news values. E2’s analysis agreed with the original analysis in 18 out of 20 cases of Impact and 19 out of 20 cases of Superlativeness. Since there was an agreement in over 90% of the cases, it was not considered necessary to reevaluate the original analysis.
4 Results

In this section the results will be presented, starting with the overall usage of news values in the reporting on the different territorial disputes, followed by news values associated with US allies and non-allies, and finally the news values associated with Japan in the two territorial disputes.

4.1 The Overall Usage of News Values

This section presents the data to determine which news values are foregrounded in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute versus the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. The total number of occurrences of each news value found in the reporting on each territorial dispute were counted and assembled in Table 3. As mentioned in the previous section, the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles were somewhat longer than those of the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Therefore, the relative frequency (occurrences per 10000 words) were used when comparing the articles rather than their total frequency. For the sake of transparency, however, both numbers will be presented, first the total frequency, followed by the relative frequency in brackets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Value</th>
<th>Dokdo/Takeshima</th>
<th>Diaoyu/Senkaku</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonance</td>
<td>2 (1.4)</td>
<td>7 (4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliteness</td>
<td>337 (239.9)</td>
<td>339 (214.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>34 (24.2)</td>
<td>38 (24.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negativity</td>
<td>349 (248.4)</td>
<td>331 (209.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity</td>
<td>27 (19.2)</td>
<td>35 (22.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalisation</td>
<td>69 (49.1)</td>
<td>69 (43.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>39 (27.8)</td>
<td>153 (97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlativeness</td>
<td>229 (163)</td>
<td>256 (162.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>164 (116.7)</td>
<td>208 (131.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpectedness</td>
<td>18 (12.8)</td>
<td>5 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total news values</td>
<td>1268 (902.6)</td>
<td>1441 (913.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3 shows, the reporting on the two territorial disputes use news values similarly for the most part in the Dokdo/Takeshima versus the Diaoyu/Senkaku disputes. Both disputes are made newsworthy using Negativity (248.4 versus 209.9), which was the most frequent news value overall, Eliteness (239.9 versus 214.9), Superlativeness (163 versus 162.3) and Timeliness (116.7 versus 131.9). However, Proximity was far more prevalent in the reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, with a relative frequency of 97 compared to 27.8 in the...
Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles. There were also some differences in how the news values of Eliteness, Negativity and Unexpectedness were construed. The differences in the use of the aforementioned news values will be accounted for below in the same order they appear in Table 3.

4.1.1 Eliteness

Eliteness was used frequently in both news stories. The most common use in both cases were titles of politicians, celebrities, and experts.

(1) [...] after new US Defense Secretary James Mattis reaffirmed US commitment to defending Japan and its disputed islands.
(2) [...] the International Olympic Committee withheld the bronze medal from South Korean player Park Jongwoo [...] 
(3) [...] said Carl Schuster, a professor at Hawaii Pacific University and former director of operations at the US Pacific Command's Joint Intelligence Center.
(4) Despite the frequency of the Chinese sailings, experts said having one so soon after Mattis' visit to Japan sent a subtle message to both Tokyo and Washington.

Examples 1-3 exemplify how Eliteness was used in both news stories, a title followed by a name. Example (4), however, is also a case of Eliteness and simply refers to experts without mentioning a name. This use of Eliteness was more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute news stories. Another way of constructing Eliteness that was used more in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute was the use of well-known names as in example (5).

(5) During his time on the stump, Trump railed against Chinese economic and political policies

As Donald Trump is the president of the United States, his name is widely known, especially among American readers. Thus, his name helps create newsworthiness and is a case of Eliteness. Although there were some references to famous people in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, such as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, his title would always have been mentioned somewhere in the article before starting to refer to him by name only.

4.1.2 Negativity

Negativity was foregrounded in the reporting of both territorial disputes, and negative lexis, such as protest, conflict, tension and enrage, was by far the most common type of Negativity used in both news stories. Some cases of negative evaluative language also occurred, but mainly in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, as in the examples below:

(6) When it comes to China's relations with Japan, history runs deep and often venomous.
(7) Talks between the two sides in Tokyo this month on the island row made no progress.

Example (6) shows how evaluative language was used in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute to construct Negativity. This type of Negativity is more closely related to the opinion of the journalist (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 86) than negative lexis. Example (7) uses row to construct the event as negative but does not explicitly show the disapproval of the author.
4.1.3 Proximity

Proximity was notably more common in the reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. There were many references to the US, as can be seen in examples (8) and (9) below.

(8) U.S. officials said China's air defense identification zone needlessly raised tensions between Asia's two largest economies.

(9) President Trump’s defense secretary visited Japan and vowed to defend the islands.

In example (8), U.S. is added to the title officials in order to construct the event as near the target audience (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 91). Example (9) works the same way, but rather than using U.S., President Trump’s is used instead, which also creates Proximity for an American readership since it is a reference to their president.

Other cases of Proximity included references to World War II, which constructs the event as culturally near. The United States was a part of World War II, which means the readers are likely to be familiar with it.

(10) Regional tempers flared in Asia on Wednesday - the anniversary of the end of World War II combat.

There were few cases of Proximity in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, and most of them were references to the US and US allies as in example (11). Thus, cultural proximity was nearly entirely absent in the Dokdo/Takeshima articles, apart from a few references to World War II.

(11) Trump's announcement appeared to catch the US military and US allies in South Korea and Japan off guard […]

4.1.4 Superlativeness

Common in both news stories, Superlativeness was used in a wide variety of contexts. The most common use of this news value was to create newsworthiness through quantifiers (12), intensified lexis (13) and lexical intensifiers (14).

(12) Both videos have received more than half a million page views since they were published.

(13) Man crashes Japanese embassy gate over disputed islands

(14) […] new fears of China's rising economic and military clout.

Superlativeness was also construed by using comparison (15), which was slightly more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, but not as common as the aforementioned examples in any of the news stories.

(15) Once downplayed by the neighbors, this territorial dispute and others are adding to the frictions between Asia's most economically linked countries

Bednarek (2005) argues that Superlativeness is also construed by using metaphor and simile, and that these are particularly important for creating newsworthiness. However, no such cases were found in the data examined for this study.
4.1.5 Timeliness
Timeliness was commonly used and there was little difference in how it was construed in both data-sets. It was constructed, for the most part, through references to weekdays as in example (16).

(16) The Japanese government opened a small museum Thursday displaying maps and documents to defend its territorial claims against neighbors South Korea and China.

There were also many cases where words such as latest and first were used to frame the event as recent.

(17) The conflict is the latest in a string of blow-ups […]
(18) President Lee Myung-bak’s trip Friday to the tiny, rocky outcroppings between the countries was the first by a South Korean president […]

Repetition of Timeliness was uncommon in the reporting on both territorial disputes, and there were also few cases of Timeliness being played down as in (19).

(19) The Japanese national soccer team was brutally attacked several months ago in China

Thus, since it is used frequently and its purpose in the vast majority of occurrences was to create recency, Timeliness is to be considered as foregrounded in the reporting on both territorial disputes.

4.1.6 Unexpectedness
Although Unexpectedness was uncommon in the reporting on both disputes, it was far more common in the Dokdo/Takeshima one. In the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles, Unexpectedness was constructed in two ways, as exemplified below:

(20) a government spokesman in Tokyo, in an unusually strong condemnation, called the Friday intrusion an "unprecedented scale of invasion into Japanese contiguous waters.
(21) Abe's government has increased defense spending for the first time in a decade

In example (20) unusually assesses the event as unusual while in (21) for the first time in a decade constructs the event as rare. In both cases the events are made newsworthy because they happen rarely (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 100).

In the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute there were also cases where unusual happenings were reported on as in examples (22) and (23).

(22) Politics keeps South Korean soccer player off medal podium
(23) Japan objects to the dessert South Korea is serving Kim Jong Un

Example (22) counts as a case of Unexpectedness because it would be considered unusual by most that politics would be what keeps a soccer player from receiving a medal (rather than not winning). In example (23) the Unexpectedness can be found in that the objection is about a dessert when the meeting between the two Korean leaders is of such high importance. This use of Unexpectedness was used several times in the Dokdo/Takeshima articles, and was commonly found in the headlines, which means it is both more common and less backgrounded than in the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles. However, it should be noted that Unexpectedness was rare in both news
stories and should therefore not be considered as foregrounded in the reporting on either territorial dispute.

4.1.7 Summing up results for research question 1

The most frequent news values in the reporting on the two disputes were Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness and Proximity, Negativity being the overall most common news value. Unexpectedness, although not a foregrounded news value in either dispute, was used more often in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles. Proximity was used frequently in the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute articles, but only occasionally in those of the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Although there were some differences in how the news values were construed, this did not strengthen or weaken the foregrounding of any of the news values, which means the frequencies are sufficient to determine what news values were emphasised. Thus, the most foregrounded news values were Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness in the reporting on both disputes, with the addition of Proximity in the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute.

4.2 US Allies and non-Allies

This section presents the data aimed at answering what news values are most commonly associated with US allies versus US non-allies. Table 4 shows the number of instances of each news value associated with the three countries involved in the two disputes, China, Japan and South Korea. The data from both disputes were combined in the case of Japan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Value</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonance</td>
<td>5 (3.2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>4 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliteness</td>
<td>39 (24.7)</td>
<td>99 (70.5)</td>
<td>167 (56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>20 (12.7)</td>
<td>14 (10)</td>
<td>15 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negativity</td>
<td>107 (67.8)</td>
<td>69 (49.1)</td>
<td>210 (70.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity</td>
<td>12 (7.6)</td>
<td>3 (2.1)</td>
<td>12 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalisation</td>
<td>12 (7.6)</td>
<td>25 (17.8)</td>
<td>19 (6.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>6 (3.8)</td>
<td>4 (2.8)</td>
<td>42 (14.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlativeness</td>
<td>106 (67.2)</td>
<td>65 (46.3)</td>
<td>87 (29.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>14 (8.9)</td>
<td>20 (14.2)</td>
<td>17 (5.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpectedness</td>
<td>2 (1.3)</td>
<td>7 (5)</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total news values</td>
<td>323 (204.8)</td>
<td>306 (217.8)</td>
<td>576 (193.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Negativity (67.8) and Superlativeness (67.2) were the news values most commonly associated with China. Especially Superlativeness was significantly more commonly used with China than
with South Korea and Japan (67.2 versus 46.3 and 29.2 listed in the same order as in Table 4, China, South Korea, Japan.). Although Proximity was not commonly associated with any of the three nations (3.8 versus 2.8 versus 14.1), it was more commonly used with Japan than with China or South Korea. In the case of Personalisation, it was most commonly associated with South Korea (7.6 versus 17.8 versus 6.4). Eliteness was foregrounded both in the case of Japan and South Korea, but not to the same extent in that of China (24.7 versus 70.5 and 56).

Although both Japan and South Korea are US allies, there were still some differences between them. The aim is to find out what news values tend to be associated with US allies and non-allies; not necessarily what news values are associated with each country involved in the territorial disputes. Therefore, Table 5 shows the Japan and South Korea data combined as “US Allies” compared to China as “US non-allies”. Since there was more data on Japan, to ensure it would not make the data skewed, only half the data from the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute and Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles were combined and compared to the data on South Korea. This way, while keeping the mixed results of news values associated with Japan from the reporting on both territorial disputes, the size of the data on Japan (14911 words) and South Korea (14049 words) was similar, with 306 instances of news values associated with South Korea versus 288 in the case of Japan (note, however, that due to odd numbers being rounded up after being halved, the total number of news values for US allies is 597 rather than 594).

**Table 5** The number of instances and relative frequency (n) of each news value per 10,000 words associated with US allies and US non-allies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Value</th>
<th>US allies</th>
<th>US non-allies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonance</td>
<td>2 (0.7)</td>
<td>5 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliteness</td>
<td>183 (63.2)</td>
<td>39 (24.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>22 (7.6)</td>
<td>20 (12.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negativity</td>
<td>174 (60.1)</td>
<td>107 (67.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity</td>
<td>9 (3.1)</td>
<td>12 (7.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalisation</td>
<td>35 (12.1)</td>
<td>12 (7.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>25 (8.6)</td>
<td>6 (3.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlativeness</td>
<td>109 (37.6)</td>
<td>106 (67.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>29 (10)</td>
<td>14 (8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpectedness</td>
<td>9 (3.1)</td>
<td>2 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total news values</strong></td>
<td><strong>597 (206.1)</strong></td>
<td><strong>323 (204.8)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The news values of Eliteness and Superlativeness were commonly associated with both US allies and US non-allies, but Eliteness was notably more common with US allies (63.2 versus 24.7), and Superlativeness more common with non-allies (37.6 versus 67.2). Some less evident differences could also be found in the use of Impact (7.6 versus 12.7), Personalisation (12.1 versus 7.6), Positivity (3.1 versus 7.6) and Proximity (8.6 versus 3.8). How the news values mentioned above were construed will be accounted for below in the same order they appear in Table 5.
4.2.1 Eliteness

Eliteness was not only less frequently associated with China, but it was also constructed differently. In the case of Japan and South Korea, Eliteness was created by using titles as in example (24).

(24) Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda told reporters the islets are "our sovereign territory."

However, in the case of China, references to the Chinese government or government institutions were common while titles for people were less common. Furthermore, the news actors that did receive elite status through titles were rarely named.

(25) China's government describes its right to the islands as an "undeniable fact backed up by historical records."
(26) A spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry issued a statement urging Japan to refrain from doing anything that would endanger Chinese citizens or their property.

There were few cases of Eliteness as in examples (25) and (26) associated with Japan and South Korea. Thus, the data indicates that Eliteness is used more frequently with U.S. allies than non-allies, and that there are also some differences in how its use as references to people of elite status was rare in the case of China, while very frequent in the case of Japan and South Korea, making Eliteness a particularly foregrounded news value in connection to US allies.

4.2.2 Impact

For the most part, Impact was construed through references to potential military confrontations between the involved parties in the disputes (27), and thus more than one country was involved in many cases.

(27) While experts agree that neither Japan nor China want an armed conflict over the disputed territory – something that some have speculated would start World War III – it may be up to the U.S. to help resolve this issue.

There were also cases of Impact associated with China or South Korea only as in (28) and (29) respectively, but very rarely in the case of Japan.

(28) China had warned that any noncommercial aircraft entering it without notice could face "defensive emergency measures."
(29) South Korea's choice of dessert for Friday's historic inter-Korean summit has left a bitter taste in Japan.

Thus, Impact appears to be more foregrounded in the case of US non-allies as it is used more frequently, but it is construed similarly for both allies and non-allies.

4.2.3 Personalisation

Personalisation was more commonly used with US allies than non-allies. Furthermore, attributes such as name and age, which according to Bednarek & Caple (2017, p. 89) are considered the
strongest cases of Personalisation, were almost absent when associated with China, but more common with South Korea and Japan.

(30) **Kim Sung-do is 71 years old. He and his wife** are the only permanent residents here.

(31) **Yoko Sakamoto, 55**, said Japan has been too easy on China.

(32) **Diplomatic tensions peaked in September after Japanese authorities arrested a Chinese fishing captain [...]**

(33) Last month, a group of activists from Hong Kong were arrested and quickly deported after landing on one of the islands [...] 

Identifying by name is more personalising than using role labels (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 89). Examples (30) and (31) show how Personalisation was largely construed in the case of Japan and South Korea. In (32) no name is given, but instead the job title of fishing captain is used. **Fishing captain** is considered a case of Personalisation rather than Eliteness as it is not a high-status occupation. Example (33) refers to a group of people, which according to Bednarek & Caple (2017, p. 89) only constructs weak Personalisation. Thus, Personalisation appears to be somewhat more backgrounded in the case of US non-allies versus US allies.

### 4.2.4 Positivity

Positivity was less commonly associated with US allies than non-allies. It was mostly used to refer to improvements in US-China (34) or Japan-China (35) relations, or China’s unwillingness to let the situation escalate into an armed conflict (36). The last one was commonly used with US-allies too, especially Japan.

(34) Obama said the United States is **deepening its ties with China** […]

(35) In 2009, relations between China and Japan were **improving** […]

(36) […] **neither Japan nor China want an armed conflict over the disputed territory** […]

In many cases of Positivity associated with China, there were more than one country involved as in (35) and (36). In cases such as these, the news value would be considered associated with both US allies and non-allies. Unique for US allies was the use of positive statements as in (37) and positive emotions (38), which were not dependent on a second party.

(37) Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda **apologized to victims of Japanese atrocities, mourned the dead** and **renewed Japan’s pledge to renounce war**.

(38) […] **more than 100 visitors swarm onto the island**, some carrying Korean flags, others **shouting with joy** as their feet touch the ground.

Thus, the use of Positivity differs between US allies and non-allies, but it is still relatively rarely associated with either, while Negativity is far more common.

### 4.2.5 Proximity

Proximity was more commonly associated with US allies than with non-allies. However, since Proximity was more common in the overall reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, it was notably more frequently associated with Japan than South Korea. Proximity was construed
differently for the most part, referring to US-China relations (39) and US-Japan treaties (40) and joint actions (41).

(39) While the Senkakus remain a source of friction in the **US-China relationship** [...] 
(40) Obama says **US-Japan treaty** applies to disputed Senkaku Islands ahead of visit 
(41) [...] a **joint U.S.-Japanese statement** issued Thursday does not address the issue

Proximity was also construed by referring to Japan and South Korea as US allies as in Example (42).

(42) [...] even though Japan and South Korea are strong **U.S. allies** [...] 

Thus, in the case of US-allies, Proximity was construed by referring to alliances, treaties and joint action, while in the case of non-allies it was construed through references to their relationship with the US.

4.2.6 Superlativeness

Superlativeness was used mainly to describe the size of China’s territorial intrusions (43) and constructing disputes and conflicts as having been active for long spans of time. When construed using numbers, there is no threshold for how large numbers are required, but larger numbers tend to be more foregrounding. Intensified lexis such as *crash, clash* and *ram* were also used to construe this news value.

(43) Japan has protested to China after **six** Chinese coast guard vessels approached disputed East China Sea islands accompanying a fleet of **hundreds** of Chinese fishing boats. 
(44) The two incidents mark the first times during the **six-month** maritime standoff that China has supposedly used such radar on Japanese ships or aircraft. 
(45) After a Chinese trawler captain in 2010 **rammed** two Japanese coast guard vessels, Japan charged the captain criminally [...] 

Other common phrases that construe Superlativeness as in (44) include *a decade-long, long-simmering, longstanding*. Note that *rammed* in (45) is a case of intensified lexis, while *rammed two Japanese coast guard vessels* is a case of Negativity, thus this is an example of when one linguistic device was assigned two news values. Other intensified lexis as in (45) include *smashed, crashed, clashed* and *bashed*. Intensified lexis was not common together with US allies. Instead, Superlativeness was construed mainly through numbers as in (46) and referring to something increasing as in (47).

(46) Oh says they handed out **50,000** flyers about the boycott [...] 
(47) A long-simmering dispute over a group of islets **escalated sharply** Wednesday [...] 

Finally, Superlativeness was also used in combination with Negativity when associated with China (48, Negativity underlined). This was not unique to China, but it was far less common with Japan or South Korea.

(48) Chinese ship sailing close to disputed islands *'heightens tensions'*
4.2.7 Summing up results for research question 2

Eliteness, Personalisation and Proximity were more commonly associated with US allies, and Superlativeness, Negativity and Positivity were more common with China. In the case of Eliteness and Personalisation, major differences in how the news values were construed in the case of US allies versus non-allies were observed. In the case of Eliteness, there were few references to people of elite status in the case of China, while these were very commonly found with Japan and South Korea. Personalisation was also downplayed when associated with China by referring to job titles or groups of people rather than name, age and occupation, which was the norm in the case of Japan and South Korea. Superlativeness was far more commonly associated with China, and it often occurred in combination with Negativity, thus amplifying the negative aspects, making it a prominent news value.

4.3 News Values and Japan

This section presents the data on what news values were most commonly associated with Japan in the reporting on the two territorial disputes. What news values tended to be associated with Japan is of interest as it is directly involved in both territorial disputes but is against a US-ally in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, and a US non-ally in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. Table 6 shows the number of instances of each news value associated with Japan in the reporting on the two disputes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Value</th>
<th>Dokdo/Takeshima</th>
<th>Diaoyu/Senkaku</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonance</td>
<td>2 (1.4)</td>
<td>2 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliteness</td>
<td>81 (57.7)</td>
<td>86 (54.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>7 (5)</td>
<td>8 (5.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negativity</td>
<td>129 (91.8)</td>
<td>81 (51.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity</td>
<td>1 (0.7)</td>
<td>11 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalisation</td>
<td>4 (2.8)</td>
<td>15 (9.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>1 (0.7)</td>
<td>41 (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlativeness</td>
<td>42 (29.9)</td>
<td>45 (28.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>10 (7.1)</td>
<td>7 (4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpectedness</td>
<td>2 (1.4)</td>
<td>1 (0.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total news values</td>
<td>279 (198.6)</td>
<td>297 (188.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the most part, there is little difference in what news value is foregrounded in which news story. However, Proximity is almost entirely absent in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles.
(0.7), while being used frequently in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles (26). Negativity, on the other hand, is notably more emphasised in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute (91.8 versus 51.4). Positivity (0.7 versus 7) and Personalisation (2.8 versus 9.5) were not foregrounded in either dispute, but they are still of interest as they were both more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. The following sub-sections will present how these news values were construed in the reporting on the two different territorial disputes.

4.3.1 Negativity

Apart from Negativity being more common in the case of the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, there were no major differences in how it was constructed in the different articles. Bednarek & Caple (2017) do not specify any type of Negativity being more foregrounded than the rest, but the repetition of the same negative lexis, negative evaluative language or negative statement is a strong indicator of foregrounding. Negative lexis such as protest, dispute, threaten, tension and conflict were the most common in both news stories. The use of anti- (49) was more common in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, but there was little evaluative language in the reporting on either event.

(49) South Korean leaders have played on anti-Japanese sentiment before to appeal to Korean nationalism as a way to boost their standing.

There were also more cases of Negativity related to Japan’s actions prior to (50) and during (51) World War II in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles, which were rare in those of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute.

(50) It has stalled military cooperation between Washington's two closest Asian allies and reignited historical animosities that date to Japan's brutal land grab in the region before World War II.

(51) Seoul frequently presses Japan to apologize for its occupation and use of Korean women as front-line sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during World War II.

Thus, relatively few differences are observable, and Negativity is clearly foregrounded in the reporting on both territorial disputes.

4.3.2 Personalisation

Personalisation was more commonly associated with Japan in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. This was done mainly by referring to protesters by nationality, name, age or occupation (52). The sellers of the disputed islands were also referred to as a Japanese family (53).

(52) China should apologize and pay for the repair of the vessel because the captain was in Japan’s territory when the accident happened, according to Fukumoto.

(53) Ishihara said Monday that he had been negotiating with the islands' private owner -- a Japanese family -- and would like to buy the land.

However, in many cases Personalisation was less emphasised, as in example (54) where people were referred to as groups of people, which according to Bednarek & Caple (2017) should be considered as backgrounding.
Protesters held up Japanese flags and chanted, "We will not allow Communist China to invade our territory."

In the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, nearly all cases of Personalisation were associated with South Korea or not associated with any specific nation. Thus, this news value was backgrounded in the case of Japan in the reporting on this dispute. In the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute on the other hand, Personalisation was used for both China and Japan. In other words, the use of Personalisation in association with Japan differs greatly between the two territorial disputes, and the general usage of this news value appears to be more one-sided in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute.

4.3.3 Positivity

Although a relatively backgrounded news value in the reporting on both the Dokdo/Takeshima and the Diaoyu/Senkaku disputes, Positivity was associated with Japan more in the latter. As with Negativity, evaluative language was rare also in the case of Positivity, but descriptions of positive behaviour were used frequently. Positive lexis was only used rarely.

Still, signs have emerged lately that the two sides may be moving to calm matters.

His statement seems aimed at reassuring Japan that the U.S. would come to its defense if China were to seize the islands [

It is worth noting that Positivity was used in the reporting on both disputes at almost the same frequency (see Table 3), yet it was very rarely associated with Japan in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Thus, the usage of Positivity in association with Japan appears to be similar to that of Personalisation.

4.3.4 Proximity

Proximity was the only news value where major differences in usage between the reporting on the two disputes was observed. In the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, there were almost no cases of Proximity associated with Japan, and as mentioned in 4.2.5, it was used to refer to Japan as a U.S.-ally. In the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, it was used more often and in a wider range of contexts (see examples (40) and (41)), emphasising it as an important news value. However, almost all cases of Proximity associated with Japan in both stories were used to construe the event as geographically near rather than culturally near. Thus, it is evident that Proximity is far more commonly associated with Japan in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, but it should also be considered that Proximity was used more frequently in the overall reporting on that particular dispute.

4.3.5 Summing up results for research question 3

Most news values were used almost identically in the reporting on both disputes, but Negativity was more common in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, while Proximity was more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. Some less prominent differences were found in the use of Personalisation and Positivity, both of which were more frequent in the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles. What stood out the most was Proximity, as it was not only more frequent in the reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, but differences in how it was construed were also observed, making it
notably more foregrounded in this dispute. To conclude, Eliteness, Negativity and Superlativeness were the news values most commonly associated with Japan in the reporting on both disputes, but in the case of the Diaoyu/Senkau dispute, Proximity was also notably foregrounded, and to some extent Personalisation as well.
5 Discussion

The findings produced by this study have shown that there are indeed differences in the overall reporting on the two territorial disputes examined, that the involved parties, grouped as US allies and non-allies, are made newsworthy using different news values, and finally, that the news values most commonly associated with Japan differ notably between the two disputes. The most foregrounded news values in both disputes were Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness, with the addition of Proximity in the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. As for US allies versus non-allies, Negativity and Superlativeness were frequent news values in the reporting on both disputes, but Eliteness and Personalisation were both more common and construed to be more foregrounded in the case of US allies. Moreover, Superlativeness was more frequent and foregrounded in association with China. The news values most commonly associated with Japan differed somewhat between the disputes, mainly in the use of Negativity and Proximity. Negativity was common in the articles on both disputes, but notably more so in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Proximity was more frequently associated with Japan in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute.

Both News Stories foregrounded similar news values such as Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness. Bednarek (2016) also found that these news values were common in her data. Eliteness is to be expected as all the involved parties count as elite nations, hence, it is effective for creating newsworthiness (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 68). Negativity is a prominent news value since the events often are negative in nature, and the journalists then amplify this through various linguistic devices such as negative lexis and negative evaluative language to some extent. Furthermore, Negativity was found to be foregrounded in many previous studies (Bednarek, 2016; Dahl & Fłottum, 2017; Huan, 2016), usually more so than Positivity, which indicates that people want negative news. Superlativeness was used similarly to Negativity in that it was used to construct happenings as more intense, for instance by using intensified lexis such as crash or clash instead of hit or disagree. Finally, Timeliness was used almost solely to frame events as recent. Thus, there was little difference between the two news stories how the most foregrounded news values were construed. This is likely because the nature of the two disputes are similar, they are geographically close to each other, Japan is a part of both disputes, and both are international news.

The news value where the biggest difference in frequency was recorded between the two news stories was Proximity, which was used more frequently in the reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. This is likely due to the US being directly involved in this territorial dispute, while keeping a neutral stance in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Furthermore, references to Japan as a US-ally were common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles, while almost completely absent in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. According to Galtung & Ruge (1965, p. 66) “there has to be cultural proximity,” which, in the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles, is construed through various kinds of references to the US, mostly as a geographical location, but also some cultural references. This is due to US being a common modifier as in US president Donald Trump. In the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute there were cases of Geographical Proximity, and also some references to World War II, which is a case of Cultural Proximity. Therefore, the US involvement in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute could explain why Proximity is more foregrounded in those articles, and it could also explain why Geographical Proximity is used more frequently than Cultural Proximity.
Personalisation was backgrounded for the most part, but very foregrounded in some of the articles. In the articles where Personalisation was used, it tended to be repeated frequently, even referring to the same person several times. It was rare to see Personalisation mentioned only once or twice in the same article in the reporting on either territorial dispute. According to Bell (1991, p. 158), Personalisation “indicates that something which can be pictured in personal terms is more newsworthy than a concept, a process, the generalized or the mass.” Thus, perhaps the reason for personalisation being markedly foregrounded in some articles, while completely absent in nearly all the other, might be due to some news items being more suitable for Personalisation than others.

Unexpectedness was backgrounded in both news stories, but it was less so in the Dokdo/Takeshima articles. Bednarek & Caple (2014) suggest that Unexpectedness can be used to frame news actors as exotic in an Us vs Them narrative, which is interesting as it was less backgrounded in the dispute between two US allies (which would normally fall into the Us category). Despite this, it was more commonly used in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. According to Bednarek & Caple’s (2014) theory, Unexpectedness can be used to create otherness, hence, journalists likely associate it more frequently with foreign nations. Since the US is directly involved in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, and Japan is a US ally, the only ‘other’ is China. In the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, however, there are two foreign nations, and the US is not directly involved, which gives the journalists more opportunities to use Unexpectedness.

As for which news values were foregrounded in association with US allies versus non-allies, Eliteness was far more commonly associated with Japan and South Korea, and Superlativeness with China. Another difference observed was that Superlativeness often occurred together with Negativity in connection to China, which was uncommon in the case of Japan or South Korea. Although not as large, notable differences were also found in the use of Impact, Positivity, Personalisation and Proximity.

Eliteness frames news actors as being of high status, and US and US-allies were given elite markers frequently while non-allies were not framed this way as often (Bednarek, 2016). Eliteness was frequently associated with Japan in both news stories, and South Korea in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles. However, in the case of China, although still a somewhat foregrounded news value, it was only used occasionally in comparison, and it was seldom used to give elite status to individuals. In other words, this could be seen as journalists using Eliteness to group together US and its allies as strong and of high status. This is similar to Kim’s (2014) findings that countries with an anti-US stance and countries with a pro-US stance were divided into separate groups by US media. Thus, the data indicate that the foregrounded use of Eliteness for US-allies and its under usage for non-allies are potentially used to reproduce an Us versus Them Narrative (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137).

Superlativeness was often used to refer to the size of Chinese armed forces, and often occurred together with Negativity. Superlativeness was thereby often used to amplify cases of Negativity. Huan (2016) also found that the combination of news values was used differently depending on which readership the articles were aimed at. In this case, however, the combination of Superlativeness and Negativity could be an attempt at further framing China’s actions as dangerous by intensifying their negative elements as this was not observed in the case of Japan or South Korea. Therefore, not only Superlativeness, but also Negativity should be considered a strongly foregrounded news value associated with China.

There was little difference in how Impact and Positivity were construed, but Personalisation and Proximity were utilised differently depending on whether they were associated with US allies or non-allies. When associated with US allies, Personalisation was construed through references to
the name, age and occupation of news actors, but this only occurred once in association with China. Bednarek & Caple (2017) list name, age and occupation as strong cases of Personalisation. Thus, Personalisation is not only associated with US allies more frequently than non-allies, but it is also construed to be more emphasised. When Proximity was associated with US-allies, it was construed by referring to alliances, treaties and joint action, while in the case of non-allies it was construed through references to their relationship with the US. It should be noted, however, that there were very few cases of Proximity associated with South Korea and the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles in general, which makes it difficult to determine whether these differences are due to Japan being a US ally while China is not or if it is simply because the US is not directly involved in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute.

There were notable differences in the frequency of some of the news values associated with Japan when comparing the reporting on the two territorial disputes. Negativity, although foregrounded in both news stories, was used more frequently in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles, and Proximity was more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles. Some differences were also found in the use of Positivity and Personalisation, as elaborated below.

Although Negativity in association with Japan was more foregrounded in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles, this does not necessarily mean Japan is being framed in a negative light in the reporting on these events. Most cases of Negativity were not evaluative language, but negative lexis. Bednarek & Caple (2017, p. 86) point out that negative evaluative language is the most effective when framing a news actor in a negative way. The many references to protests by Japan (protest being an instance of negative lexis) constituted many cases of Negativity, and this also occurred in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles. Thus, Negativity is foregrounded in both news stories, but seems aimed at framing Japan as being offended rather than an offender.

Proximity was nearly completely absent in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles. As already mentioned, this is likely due to the US not being directly involved in the dispute. The only case of Proximity associated with Japan was a reference to the Japan-US alliance, in which South Korea was also mentioned. In the articles on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute on the other hand, Proximity was construed in a variety of contexts, and foregrounded as an important news value. This could be an attempt at framing Japan as an ally under attack by China, a non-ally, in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, while this is considered less important when in a disagreement with South Korea, as they are both US allies. Again, this is possibly an attempt at further emphasising the Us versus Them narrative in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137).

Both Positivity and Personalisation were more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles. However, in both stories positive evaluative language was largely avoided, which serves to hide the opinion of the journalist (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 86). Thus, apart from frequency, Positivity was used similarly in both news stories. Personalisation was nearly absent in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles but was used frequently in select articles on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. Thus, Personalisation is backgrounded in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles but an emphasised news value in some of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles, while completely absent in almost all the other articles. As there were also several cases of Personalisation associated with South Korea, perhaps Personalisation is more likely to be associated with the nation defending a territory in disputes such as these since there may be residents from the defending nation living in the contested territory. Thus, some articles are made newsworthy by focusing on how the people in the disputed areas are affected by the conflicts, which explains both why Personalisation is over-represented in some articles and also why it is rarely associated with the other party in the dispute.
As a final observation, some similarities can be found when comparing the news values associated with Japan in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute and China in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. Both nations find themselves in similar situations. China is claiming islands controlled by Japan, and Japan is claiming islands controlled by South Korea. The news values of Negativity and Superlativeness are foregrounded in the case of both nations. Similarly, when comparing the news values associated with Japan in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles with those of South Korea in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute articles, Personalisation is notably prominent. Furthermore, although Negativity is foregrounded in both cases, it is emphasised less than their counterparts in the disputes. This indicates that when reporting on disputes between nations, the US media consider not only the diplomatic status of a nation in relation to the US an important factor, but also whether the nation is defending or claiming a disputed area.
6 Conclusion

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What news values are foregrounded in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute versus the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute?
2. What are the most common news values associated with US allies versus US non-allies?
3. To what extent do the news values most commonly associated with Japan differ in the reporting on the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute versus the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute?

As for the foregrounding of news values, Eliteness, Negativity, Superlativeness and Timeliness were emphasised in both news stories. However, Proximity was far more foregrounded in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles. This is likely due to the US being directly involved in the conflict as they have a defense treaty with Japan that includes the islands.

The news values most commonly associated with both US allies and non-allies were Negativity and Superlativeness. However, both news values, especially Superlativeness, were more commonly associated with US non-allies. Furthermore, Eliteness was strongly foregrounded in the case of US allies, while only somewhat foregrounded in the case of non-allies. Personalisation and Proximity were also notably more common in connection to US allies.

Although the differences in news values associated with Japan in the reporting on the two disputes were small for the most part, Negativity, Personalisation, Positivity and Proximity differed somewhat. Negativity was foregrounded in both news stories, but it was far more common in the Diaoyu/Senkaku articles. Proximity was very rare in the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute while foregrounded in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute articles. Personalisation and Proximity, on the other hand, were backgrounded in the reporting on both disputes, but both news values were rare in the Dokdo/Takeshima articles while used occasionally in the reporting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. The US being directly involved in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute could explain the usage of Proximity, and in the case of Personalisation, it appears it is used more frequently in association with the party that is being attacked than the one attacking in territorial disputes.

To conclude, the present study has applied the DNVA framework to a new dataset and provides insight into how US allies versus non-allies are constructed in the US media. It has shown that US news outlets tend to associate US allies with Eliteness while non-allies were more commonly associated with Superlativeness and Negativity, often in combination, amplifying the Negative aspects. By using news values this way, the US media effectively group US allies together as being of high status and importance, while non-allies are constructed as dangerous.

As the present study is limited to some extent by the scope and time frame of the project, a suggestion for future research is to combine Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis with DNVA, which could allow for a more in-depth analysis. For example, it would be possible to determine what role news values play in the framing of nations in news discourse on territorial disputes. Furthermore, a larger study would be able to produce more generalisable results. Kim (2014) found that the US media tend to group countries together depending on whether they had a pro- or anti-US stance, and with a larger data-set, including articles on several other territorial disputes (not only the ones examined in the present study), it would be possible to determine whether the use of news values follows a similar pattern. Additionally, looking at the news values most commonly associated with the US might also clarify whether the US is placed in a category of its own or together with its allies.
References


Appendix A

An example of how the articles were colour-coded is presented below. The colour-scheme is as follows:

Consonance
Eliteness
Impact
Negativity
Positiviry
Personalisation
Proximity
Superlativeness
Timeline
Unexpectedness

Japan says warship was targeted by China

SEOUL - A Chinese military vessel last week locked its weapons-targeting radar on a Japanese warship, Japan's Ministry of Defense said Tuesday, marking a brief but dangerous escalation in the showdown over maritime territory between Asia's two largest economies.

The Chinese ship eventually unlocked its radar without firing a shot, the ministry said, but the alleged incident underscores how the neighbors - wrangling over uninhabited islands in the East China Sea - are just one mistake away from potential armed conflict.

On Tuesday, Japan lodged a protest with the Chinese government over the incident, which it said took place near the contested islands that Japan calls Senkaku and China calls Diaoyu.

"Beaming of radar for firing is very abnormal, and it could have put us in a very grave situation if things went wrong," Japan's defense minister, Itsunori Onodera, told reporters, according to the Kyodo news agency. He added that in January, a Chinese ship targeted a Japanese helicopter in the same manner.

The two incidents mark the first time during the six-month maritime standoff that China has supposedly used such radar on Japanese ships or aircraft. According to Japan's Asahi Shimbun newspaper, which cited Japanese Defense Ministry officials, the Chinese vessel and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ship were less than two miles apart when the radar was used.

Although Tokyo and Beijing have long been at odds over the rocky chain of remote islands - the countries have competing narratives about decades- and centuries-old claims - tensions spiked in September when Japan bought three of the islands from a private landowner. Previously, Japan rented and controlled the islands, although China and Taiwan also staked claims.
Since the purchase, relations between China and Japan have hit their lowest point in decades. China has steadily increased its surveillance of the waters around the islands; incursions into Japanese territory, once rare, now occur almost daily.

More recently, China has been sending aircraft to the area, and on one occasion, China and Japan scrambled fighter jets in a game of cat-and-mouse. Both governments, hemmed in by nationalism, are limited in their ability to calm the situation, security analysts in Asia say.

China’s government describes its right to the islands as an "undeniable fact backed up by historical records," and analysts say Beijing is pressing Tokyo to acknowledge that the territory is up for grabs. Japanese officials refuse to admit that a territorial dispute even exists; they say the islands are an "inherent" part of Japan, based on "historical facts," according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Japan’s new prime minister, Shinzo Abe, said several days ago that there is "no room for negotiations" over the islands, but he did raise the prospect of a meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping.
Appendix B

E2 was asked to look for news values in the 40 cases below. In this appendix, the answers from the original analysis are highlighted, and E2’s answers follow each case in brackets (in bold when it differed from the original answer). The colour scheme is as follows:

Impact

Superlativeness

1. Dokdo/Takeshima is one of several of disputed island chains in the region and fears are emerging that competing territorial claims in the South China Sea could create a new Cold War in Asia. (E2 – Impact)
2. No one knows how large the reserves might be, but they're potentially big enough to merit a diplomatic spat. (E2 – Superlativeness)
3. But reports suggested the President's plan applied only to large-scale exercises involving thousands of troops. (E2 – Superlativeness)
4. If Park does not receive his medal, he may not be exempted from compulsory military service -- a benefit accorded to Olympic medal winners in South Korea. (E2 – Impact)
5. The incident has also heightened a tense diplomatic standoff between Japan and South Korea. (E2 – Superlativeness)
6. Friday's historic inter-Korean summit (E2 – Impact)
7. South Korean shop owners are launching a nationwide boycott of Japanese products (E2 – Superlativeness)
8. The Japanese politicians announced they would visit Ulleung Island -- adjacent to the disputed Dokdo islets -- after the two countries clashed over a civilian aircraft running a test flight over the area. (E2 – Superlativeness)
9. Asian giants in years, amid persistent animosities over Japan's imperialist past and new fears of China's rising economic and military clout. (E2 – Superlativeness)
10. Japan scuttled the survey in the face of South Korean protests, which included the dispatch of patrol boats to the islets and veiled warnings the survey could lead to a clash. (E2 – Impact)
11. It has stalled military cooperation between Washington's two closest Asian allies (E2 – Superlativeness)
12. Although the police spoke about their job seriously, saying they'd defend the islands to the death, some also acknowledged their neighbor as a friend more than an enemy. (E2 – Impact)
13. Enraged officials in Seoul put their maritime forces on high alert and strongly suggested they would use force if necessary to prevent two Japanese ships from entering waters claimed by South Korea (E2 – Impact)
14. The latest events dramatically widened a growing diplomatic breach between Washington's two biggest allies in the region (E2 – Superlativeness)
15. The Japanese public has yet to pay much attention to the dispute. But in South Korea, it has taken on huge nationalistic proportions. (E2 – Superlativeness)
16. the North Korean government has **missiles aimed at Japanese territory**. (E2 – Impact)
17. hundreds of nationalists **sporting paramilitary gear** urged the council on. (E2 – Superlativeness)
18. Analysts say the chances of a **military clash between Japan and South Korea** -- the two closest U.S. allies in Asia -- remain remote. (E2 – Impact)
19. the show of Korean control is **pushed to extremes**. (E2 – Superlativeness)
20. Some 20 South Korean gunboats have been dispatched to the area in anticipation of the arrival of Japanese survey ships (E2 – Superlativeness)
21. [...] including face-offs between Japanese and Chinese warplanes and ships. (E2 – Impact)
22. The China-Japan dispute parallels U.S. efforts to curb Chinese claims for territory in the South China Sea, out of fear the increasingly powerful Chinese military could seek to dominate Asian waters. (E2 – Impact)
23. Japan scrambled warplanes on Thursday after four Chinese coastguard ships and a drone aircraft entered territory it claims around disputed islands in the East China Sea (E2 – Superlativeness)
24. [...] use of the drone aggravated tensions inflamed by what Japan says are a **record number** of scrambles by [Japan’s] Self-Defense Force aircraft in response to Chinese incursions in the last fiscal year. (E2 – Impact)
25. Japan responded with two F-15 fighter jets along with two early warning aircraft (E2 – Superlativeness)
26. Tensions have flared numerous times in recent years over the disputed islands, including face-offs between Japanese and Chinese air and naval forces that have been termed dangerous by both sides. (E2 – Impact)
27. ship movements in disputed waters could result in a shooting incident. (E2 – Impact)
28. a China-Japan military confrontation could bring US forces into play] (E2 – Impact)
29. Thousands of people across China took to the streets outside Japanese consulates. (E2 – Superlativeness)
30. For now [the US-Japan war games] is just an exercise, but with tensions running high, **there are fears it could become reality**. (E2 – Impact)
31. Last November, China flew a pair of **nuclear-capable bombers** around Taiwan for the first time (E2 – Impact)
32. While experts agree that neither Japan nor China want an armed conflict over the disputed territory – something that some have speculated would start World War III – it may be up to the U.S. to help resolve this issue. (E2 – Impact)
33. It’s alleged that in the past year, China has **increased** its military activity (E2 – Superlativeness)
34. The decline in high-level contact, the most pronounced since Japan and China normalized relations 41 years ago, points to fundamental shifts in both countries (E2 – Superlativeness)
35. After a Chinese trawler captain in 2010 **rammed** two Japanese coast guard vessels, Japan charged the captain criminally and held him for two weeks (E2 – Superlativeness)
36. The group's representative said the activists evaded several Japanese coast guard boats, which tried to **pummel** them with water cannons. (E2 – Superlativeness)
37. the spat between the two Asian economic giants might jeopardize global growth and destabilize the security of the entire region. (E2 – Impact)

38. China is also engaged in a bitter territorial dispute with Japan over the Senkaku Islands, an uninhabited group of outcroppings in the East China Sea that Japan nationalized last year, sparking confrontations between the two countries' ships deployed in the area. (E2 – Impact)

39. Japan’s nationalization of the Senkaku Islands provoked protests across China (E2 – Superlativeness)

40. the Chinese vessel and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ship were less than two miles apart when the radar was used. (E2 – Superlativeness)