

A Comparative Study of the Accuracy of Quotation-Embedded Headlines in *Chosun Ilbo* and *The New York Times* from 1989 to 2009*

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Abstract

Journalism scholars have argued that South Korean newspapers take advantage of quotation-embedded headlines to perpetuate their bias. However, the frequent use of direct quotations alone is not sufficient evidence for opinionated news. This study claims that it is more important to scrutinize the accuracy of direct quotations in headlines rather than their frequency. This study further argues that the accuracy of direct quotations should be analyzed with three foci: the exactness of the quotation, the validity of the attribution, and the legitimacy of the emphasis. Using these, this study attempts to compare headlines in South Korean and American newspapers (i.e., Chosun Ilbo and The New York Times). A content analysis revealed that Chosun Ilbo prevalently placed direct quotations in headlines, extensively revised them, frequently left out the verb of attribution, and put more direct quotations in the very beginning of headlines. These trends are becoming more pronounced over time. This study seeks to challenge the methodological limitations of current headline studies and expanding newspaper accuracy literature with a particular emphasis on headlines.

Keywords: headline, accuracy, direct quotation, attribution, media bias

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Introduction

During the hearing held for the appointment of a new prime minister, Chung Un-chan, several national South Korean newspapers printed a story entitled, “Chung Un-chan is Not a Decent Scholar,”¹ According to the articles, Park Ji-won, a leading figure in the Democratic Party, claimed that Chung produced no publications for the last twenty years while he served as a professor of Economics at the Seoul National University. These reports were found to be false and Chung demanded a retraction from the newspapers the next day. However, most newspapers refused to correct their stories; instead, they justified themselves by explaining they had accurately printed Park’s actual statement.

A series of similar events turns the spotlight onto the use of direct quotations in headlines. South Korean journalism scholars argue that the quotation-embedded headline presents mere opinion as verified facts, sponsored by news organizations, and amounts to the violation of journalism ethics. While newspapers explain that they only repeat what was said, scholars dub this phenomenon as “parrot journalism” and condemn the irresponsibility of South Korean newspapers (Y. Choi 2004, 2007, 2008; D. Kim 2004; S. Kim 2007; H. Lee 2003).

Criticism of the prevalent use of direct quotations in headlines has intensified, as subsequent empirical studies reported that the quotation-embedded headline is a unique feature of South Korean newspapers (e.g., S. Park 2004; Park and Lee 2007). Specifically, Park and Lee (2007) found no direct quotations in the headlines of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* from 1990 to 2007, whereas on average 44% of headlines in three South Korean newspapers (i.e., *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, and *Hankyoreh*) included direct quotations during the same time period. J. Park (2006) labels this prevalent use

1. This story was reported on September 8, 2009, in a variety of newspapers (e.g., *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, *Hankyoreh*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, and *Kookmin Ilbo*); the headlines of the story were identical across all of the newspapers.

of quotation-embedded headlines in South Korea as advocacy journalism under the guise of objectivity, which raises questions regarding fairness. Indeed, highlighting a particular comment within headlines already indicates media bias. Rhee et al. (2007) also note that newspapers take advantage of direct quotations in their headlines to perpetuate their biases.

However, these arguments have room for further development. First, the arguments stand on erroneous data. In direct contradiction to the results of the comparative headline studies between South Korea and the United States, American newspapers have placed direct quotations in their headlines. In actuality, quotation marks are the most frequently used form of punctuation in American newspaper headlines, with the exception of the comma and the semicolon (Garst and Bernstein 1982). However, American newspapers use single quotation marks in headlines and subheadlines, rather than double quotation marks (Ellis 2001; Garst and Bernstein 1982; Gibson 1984; Jordan 1962; Radder and Stempel 1942; Saxena 2006). Due to overlooking this punctuation difference between the two countries, previous South Korean headline research cannot help but fail to detect single quotation-embedded headlines in American newspapers.

Secondly, selection of words or phrases is a significant part of the process in all headline writing. Just as reporters focus on a specific part of events when they write articles, editors focus on a part of the articles for the headlines. If a statement best represents the essence of the article, it is a legitimate choice for editors to place it in the headline. Moreover, a direct quotation is a tool that directly illustrates factual statements. That is, it is a vehicle of *fact* used as a reliable information in news articles (Nam 1984; KPI 1990; KCEA 2001; NIKL 1997). According to Tuchman, reporters believe that by interjecting someone else's opinion, they are removing themselves from participation in the story and letting the facts speak; she calls the direct quotation a "strategic ritual" of objectivity (Tuchman 1972, 668). Accordingly, as long as a statement is accurately quoted in the headline, the use of direct quotations, no matter how common, is not sufficient evidence for opinionated news. Thus, in order to measure good journalis-

tic practice, how accurately direct quotations are utilized in headlines is a more important question to examine, rather than how frequently they are used in headlines.

The Importance of Accurate Headlines

Headlines are one of the major components in newspapers. Visually, headlines dominate newspapers (J. Lee 2003; S. Park 2004). Further, headlines summarize the news in one sentence (Baskette and Sissors 1971; Brooks and Sissors 2001; Brown 1952; Copperud and Nelson 1983; Gilmore 1990; Smith and Fowler 1982; Taylor and Scher 1951). Accordingly, people tend to read newspapers in a headline-centered manner. English (1944, 217) names this type of newspaper reader “a shopper of headlines”; headline shoppers are a near-universal phenomenon. Brown (1952, 132) describes America as “a nation of headline scanners.” Similarly, more than 50% of South Korean newspaper readers choose what article to read solely based on the headlines (KBAC 2006). In addition, more people read headlines as a substitute for the actual articles (Joe 2005; Jung 1995; KPF 2004).

Nevertheless, the headline does not always correspond to the news article. From time to time, the headline describes something different from the article’s content. Smith and Fowler (1982) found that only 42% of headlines were efficient in telling the story and approximately 60% were misunderstood. Marquez (1980) reports that 25% of hard news headlines from four Philadelphian newspapers were either misleading or ambiguous, and suggests that imminent deadlines, sensationalism, and technical mistakes explain the errors. Regardless of the reason, even seemingly minor details, such as misspellings, significantly damage the newspaper’s credibility (Maier 2005).

More importantly, the perception of news is influenced by the headline. Tannenbaum (1953) found that people draw different conclusions based on different headlines, even when the articles are exactly the same. In his experiment, participants’ opinions on a criminal trial were positively correlated with three versions of the headline

that respectively described the defendant as guilty or innocent, or described the case neutrally. In addition, news headlines were found to be connected to people's morale during wartime. According to Allport and Lepkin (1943), bad news headlines, such as "U.S. Losing," stimulated subjects to take a more active part in the war effort, compared to good news headlines such as "U.S. Winning." These studies show that the headline alone can play an integral role in the formation of public opinion.

Taking the importance of the headline into account, the accuracy of the headline deserves more attention than it has ever received. Historically, headline research has never been popular. While some studies focused on the effects of headlines (Emig 1928; Steigleman 1949; Winship and Allport 1943), very little research has investigated the headline itself. A series of newspaper accuracy studies have reported that headlines are misleading, and inaccurate headlines have been one of the most frequent newspaper errors, along with misquotations and omissions (Berry 1967; Brown 1952; Blankenburg 1970; Charnley 1936; Marshall 1977). Nonetheless, the study of headline errors is still understudied.

Three Elements of Evaluating the Accuracy of Quotation-Embedded Headlines

Reporters use direct quotations for two key reasons (Missouri Group et al. 2004; Cappon 1980; Einsohn 2006; Itule and Anderson 1994; Siegal and Connolly 1999). First, a direct quotation lends more color to stories, makes them more realistic, and helps readers remember the main points. Second, it is an easy way to establish an authority and authenticity over the news through primary sources. This explains why direct quotations in news normally come from authoritative figures such as presidents, well-known figures in business, and prominent scholars. Therefore, when it comes to the accuracy of direct quotations, the word should correspond exactly to *what* the person said (Brooks and Sissors 2001; French, Powell, and Angione 1980; Jordan

1962)² and *who* is behind the statement (Brown 1952; Copperud and Nelson 1983; Gibson 1984; Saxena 2006).

In this light, the verbatim criterion for the accuracy of direct quotations is unidimensional. Scholars should also carefully examine quotations' attributions. For instance, there is a fine line between "Obama Took Bribes" and "G.O.P. Claims, 'Obama Took Bribes.'" While the latter clearly shows that the statement is a claim from President Obama's opponents, the former is more likely to appear as if President Obama actually took bribes.³ As quotation marks do not themselves indicate who made the statement, Garst and Bernstein (1982) note that readers may think that quoted words constitute an editorial slogan of the newspaper when they are presented in headlines without attributions. To avoid this "unconscious editorialization" (Brown 1952, 156), the quotation-embedded headline must definitely spell out "someone" that is responsible for the statement and "some verb" that will clarify who that someone is (Garst and Bernstein 1982, 129).

"Errors of meaning" is another significant issue in the accuracy of quotation-embedded headlines. In one of the very first newspaper accuracy studies, Charnley (1936) coined this term to examine overemphasis and omission errors in news reporting. As these errors involved the personal decisions of reporters, subsequent studies called them "subjective errors," as opposed to "objective errors" such as typos, wrong names, misquotations, and misspellings (Berry 1967; Lawrence and Grey 1969; Maier 2005; Marshall 1977). Errors in meaning (or subjective errors) are relevant criteria for evaluating the accuracy of direct quotations in headlines. Furthermore, for examinations of emphasis, the headline is very susceptible to the order of presentation (Garst and Bernstein 1982).

For instance, a headline such as "'Obama Took Bribes,' G.O.P. Claims" is different from "G.O.P. Claims, 'Obama Took Bribes.'" The

2. Cappon (1980, 68) notes that any attempt to make a quote sound better by changing the words and sentence structure is no better than "high crimes and misdemeanors."

3. For more examples, see Copperud and Nelson (1983).

latter blocks immediately the possibility that the quote will be interpreted as more than a suspicion raised by President Obama's opponents, while the former delays that acknowledgment until the end. A psychological analysis would suggest a *primacy effect*, in which the side of an issue presented first has greater impact than the side presented subsequently (Lund 1925, as cited in Hovland 1957). Similarly, this principle also applies to a split headline such as "Obama Took Bribes," followed by "G.O.P. Claims at Hearing" in a subheadline (or a separate line) with a smaller font size. Therefore, when a quote is highlighted in the very first line of the headline with the biggest and boldest letters, readers interpret the headline as having more impact.

Taken together, the accuracy of quotations presented in headlines should be examined differently in three aspects from other facts that are also presented in headlines: the accuracy, or exactness, of the quotation (verbatim quotation), the accuracy, or validity, of the attribution (clear articulation of attribution), and the accuracy, or legitimacy, of emphasis (appropriate position of quoted information based on the order of presentation between a quote and its attribution). Previous quotation-embedded headline studies in South Korea have only focused on the first aspect (e.g., S. Park 2004; J. Park 2006; Park and Lee 2007; Rhee et al. 2007). In addition, the comparison of the use of direct quotations between South Korean and American newspapers has not yet been adequately conducted due to a misunderstanding of the operational definition of quotation-embedded headlines (e.g., S. Park 2004; Park and Lee 2007).

To overcome these limitations, this study redefined the quotation-embedded headline through a literature review, and reexamined the frequency of quotation-embedded headlines in a South Korean newspaper compared to an American newspaper and the accuracy of the headlines through the three foci mentioned above. Longitudinal analyses were added to each research question. In previous headline typology studies in South Korea, quotation-embedded headlines were classified as objective headlines (e.g., J. Kim 2008; Lee et al. 2003; KCEA 2001) and used as a sign of objective journalism (e.g., Choi and Chae

2008; Nam 1984). Yet since the late 1990s, this scholarly view has changed dramatically, and the use of direct quotations in headlines has been criticized as advocacy journalism disguised as objectivity (J. Park 2006). Thus, this study postulates that a longitudinal perspective would detect some changes in the frequency or the accuracy of quotation-embedded headlines over time, in relation to relatively recent criticism. The study examines the following research questions:

1. How frequently are direct quotations used in South Korean and American newspaper headlines?
2. How accurately are quotation-embedded headlines presented in South Korean and American newspapers?
 - 2-1. How accurate is the quotation?
 - 2-2. How accurate is the attribution?
 - 2-3. How accurate is the emphasis?
3. How have the frequency and accuracy of quotation-embedded headlines changed over time in South Korean and American newspapers?

Methods

The study conducted content analysis to answer these questions. Newspaper accuracy studies normally survey sources who are cited in the news, considering whether their words were accurately quoted (e.g., Berry 1967; Blankenburg 1970; Charnley 1936; Maier 2005; Marshall 1977). However, headline writing is an entirely different procedure from news writing. Editors, not reporters, compose headlines; the quoted statements are extracted from articles. Therefore, the study examines the accuracy of the headline in relation to its article.

Sampling

This study chose *Chosun Ilbo* and *The New York Times* as the primary objects of analysis. *Chosun Ilbo* is the one of the oldest newspapers in

South Korea, and carries the largest readership in the country.⁴ In addition, this study expected that investigating *Chosun Ilbo* could provide an understanding about the common use of quotation-embedded headlines in South Korea because Rhee et al. (2007) conclude that South Korean newspapers show a similar pattern in the use of direct quotations in their headlines after examining four nation-wide newspapers (i.e., *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, *Hankyoreh*, and *JoongAng Ilbo*). *The New York Times* has been recognized as the most prestigious newspaper in the United States (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001). Furthermore, as an exemplar of good journalism, most comparative journalism studies in South Korea have examined *The New York Times* as a reference (e.g., J. Lee 2006, 2008; Lee and Jung 2008; S. Park 2004; Park and Lee 2007).

The time period of this analysis was from 1989 to 2009. Separated by ten-year intervals, sampling procedures were repeated (1989, 1999, and 2009). Based on the historical circumstances in both countries, the study infers 1989 as the time that the current layout of the headline was established. Specifically, in South Korea, the freedom of press expanded tremendously after the June Democracy Movement in 1987 (Lee et al. 2003). The number of daily newspapers skyrocketed from 30 to 65 within one year after the movement; the increased competition in the market propelled rearrangements of newspaper layouts with more pictures and bigger headlines (Cha et al. 2001; Lee et al. 2003). In the United States, on the other hand, newspapers started to establish their own layouts around the late 1980s. Utt and Pasternack (1989) named this moment the Refinement Period that followed the Homogenization Period (1981-1986), when every newspaper adopted modern newspaper editing patterns, such as the six-column layout and the use of margins. Most importantly, this time period allows comparisons before and after the late 1990s, when criticism of quotation-embedded headlines became widespread in South Korea.

4. According to the South Korean ABC Association (www.kabc.or.kr), in 2010 the circulation of *Chosun Ilbo* is 1,884,783; *JoongAng Ilbo* (1,309,568) and *Dong-A Ilbo* (1,289,973) followed.

Samples were collected through the constructed week sampling method. Simple random sampling fails to reflect variations in newspaper content, and consequently, news-holes such as Sunday editions that carry larger sports sections and ad spaces could by chance be overrepresented or underrepresented in a sample. By contrast, constructed week sampling assumes the cyclic variation of content for different days of the week. All weekdays (i.e., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc.) are identified and one is then randomly selected until all days of the week are represented (Riffe, Aust, and Lacy 1993). Thus, the constructed week sampling method is known for being more representative than random sampling in newspaper content analysis (Riffe, Aust, and Lacy 1993). According to Riffe, Lacy, and Fico (1998), two constructed weeks provide a reliable sample size for one year of newspaper editions. However, this study constructed four weeks for the sake of a robust sample size.⁵ The scope of analysis was limited to the headlines on the front page. The study included headlines and subheadlines that were located before the beginning of the story, while blurbs, headlines floating in the article, were excluded. The front pages on the designated days were collected by an online PDF service for *Chosun Ilbo* and by microfilms for *The New York Times*, resulting in seventy-two front pages for each newspaper.

5. The four constructed weeks of 1989, 1999, and 2009 as follows:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1989	May 8	August 29	November 22	December 7	October 13	January 7
	December 11	April 11	June 21	October 5	February 3	February 11
	September 18	February 7	March 29	July 13	May 19	December 23
	March 13	October 31	July 26	August 3	January 6	June 10
1999	May 10	August 31	November 24	December 9	October 15	January 2
	December 13	April 13	June 23	October 7	January 29	February 6
	September 20	February 9	March 31	July 15	May 14	December 18
	March 13	November 2	July 28	August 5	January 1	June 5
2009	May 11	September 1	November 25	December 10	October 16	January 3
	December 14	April 7	June 24	October 8	January 30	February 7
	September 21	February 10	April 1	July 9	May 15	December 19
	March 16	November 3	July 29	July 30	January 2	June 6

The data collection procedure produced a total number of 950 news articles (432 from *Chosun Ilbo*; 518 from *The New York Times*). For the given period of time, on average 6 stories per day were printed on the front page of *Chosun Ilbo* and 7.19 stories on that of *The New York Times*. The unit of analysis was a headline.

Coding Procedure

Each headline was analyzed in terms of the presence of quotation marks and the accuracy of direct quotations within the headlines. To this end, the quotation-embedded headline was operationally defined as a headline with either double or single quotation marks. Direct quotation is not the only function of quotation marks. The usages of quotation marks differ between South Korea and the United States. Specifically, in South Korea, double quotation marks are used for direct quotations or emphasis, while single quotation marks are used for emphasis, to designate titles, or to indicate irony (KCEA 2001). By contrast, specifically in news writings, there are no functional differences found between double and single quotation marks in the United States except for the fact that single quotation marks carry all the indications of double quotation marks, but punctuationally they are only used within double quotation marks. American newspapers employ quotation marks for such purposes as indicating slang, nicknames, foreign languages, and unfamiliar words. Yet these additional forms of usage were left out of the study, due to the lack of agreement on the nature of the usage (see French, Powell, and Angione 1980; Garst and Bernstein 1982; Jordan 1962). Therefore, quotation marks found in headlines were screened by their specific usage, including indicating emphasis, titles, and irony, in addition to direct quotations (French, Powell, and Angione 1980; Garst and Bernstein 1982; Jordan 1962; KCEA 2001). When these quotation marks identify direct quotations, further analyses followed.⁶

6. Quotation marks used only for direct quotation were analyzed. Specific usages of

The accuracy of the quotation-embedded headline was analyzed in three dimensions. First, the accuracy of the quotation was coded into three categories (i.e., verbatim quotation, edited quotation, and fabrication). The verbatim quotation refers to a quote cited word for word from the article. When a quote was contaminated with omissions or minor changes, it was categorized as an edited quotation. If a quotation was entirely revised or significantly changed from the original meaning, it was categorized as a fabrication.

Secondly, the accuracy of the attribution was examined by two criteria: the presence of the source and the verb of attribution. In the case of “Park Ji-won Claims, ‘Chung Un-chan Is Not a Decent Scholar,’” the headline includes the source (i.e., Park Ji-won) of the statement but no verb suggesting attribution. The importance of the verb indicating attribution lies in the verb’s capacity to denote that a statement is quoted from other sources, and therefore arguable rather than conclusive (Missouri Group et al. 2004; Garst and Bernstein 1982). News writing textbooks recommend using “says” instead of “emphasizes,” “exclaims,” or “retorts” as the verb of attribution since the verb itself can carry the emotional weight or judgment of reporters (Missouri Group et al. 2004; Ellis 2001). Taking into consideration these roles of the verb of attribution and the difference of South Korean newspapers in revealing the context in which the statement occurred, a phrase like “in the hearing,” “at the press conference,” or “in His New Year Address” that also indicates that the quoted words are said by someone in a certain situation was counted as the verb of attribution in the case of *Chosun Ilbo*. Both criteria were coded either for present (1) or absent (0).

quotation marks in the given sample were as following:

	Double quotation marks			Single quotation marks				
	Quotation	Emphasis	Total	Quotation	Emphasis	Title	Irony	Total
<i>Chosun</i>	179 (95.7)	8 (4.3)	187 (100%)	4 (4.3)	62 (66.0)	28 (29.8)	-	94 (100%)
<i>NYT</i>	-	-	-	17 (70.8)	-	3 (12.5)	4 (16.7)	24 (100%)

Lastly, the study analyzes the accuracy of the emphasis by examining the relative order of presentation between the quote and its attribution. In *Chosun Ilbo*, it was not uncommon for a headline to start with a direct quotation, with its attribution following in a separate line or a subheadline. In headlines, each line functions as a thought group (Garst and Bernstein 1982). As a result, the location of the attribution was specified below, above, and along with the quotation. For example, a headline from the February 3, 2009 edition of *Chosun Ilbo*, “‘Economy Is the Top Priority of This Administration,’ President Lee in His New Year Address” discloses the source (i.e., “President Lee”) and the verb of attribution (i.e., “in His New Year Address”) *below* the quotation. If the source came first and the quote followed in a separate line or subheadline, it would be an example of an attribution *above* the quotation. When the quote and its attribution are presented in the same line, either in a headline or subheadline, the attribution appears *along with* the quotation.

For the research, categories were established through pilot studies to find and correct possible disagreement between the two coders, who were graduate students studying English and Journalism. The coders analyzed about 20% of the samples, which were randomly selected. In an intercoder reliability check, Cohen’s *kappa*, which corrects for possible agreements between coders by chance, was 1.00 for the function of double quotation marks, .841 for the function of single quotation marks, .759 for the accuracy of the quotation, .947 for the presence of the source, .883 for the presence of the verb of attribution, and 1.00 for the accuracy of the emphasis.

Results

Research Question 1: The Frequency of Quotation-Embedded Headlines

For the last 20 years, *Chosun Ilbo* placed more direct quotations in its headlines than *The New York Times*. Specifically, 183 of 432, or

42.4%, of *Chosun Ilbo* front-page headlines embedded direct quotations.⁷ By contrast, the rate was 3.3% (17 of 518) in *The New York Times*. This difference was statistically significant ($t = 8.414$, $df = 79$, $p < .001$) (see Table 1). Considering that the difference in the number of news stories between the two papers also carries statistical significance ($t = -5.092$, $df = 124$, $p < .001$), the authors suggest that while *Chosun Ilbo* published a fewer number of stories, it used more quotation-embedded headlines than *The New York Times*, which indicates the Korean newspaper's prevalent usage of quotation-embedded headlines.

Table 1. Comparison of Number of News and Quotation-Embedded Headlines between *Chosun Ilbo* and *The New York Times*

	Mean difference	SD	df	t
News ^a	-1.19	1.53	124	-5.092*
Quotation-embedded headlines	2.30	1.23	79	8.414*

* $p < .001$

^aThe "news" refers to the number of headlines in total, because one news story contains one headline.

Research Question 2: The Accuracy of Quotation-Embedded Headlines

1) Research Question 2-1: The Accuracy of the Quotation

The direct quotations in *Chosun Ilbo* headlines were extensively edited (see Table 2). Only 24% of them met the verbatim criterion. One third

7. This result corresponds to Park and Lee's (2007) finding that approximately 44% of newspaper headlines in *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, and *Hankyoreh* include direct quotations from 1990 to 2007. However, this result is somewhat different from what Rhee et al. (2007) found. They reported that, on average, 31.9% of headlines contained direct quotations in the four nation-wide South Korean newspapers. However, it is important to note that the authors limited their analysis to the coverage of the local election in May 2006 in Seoul, Korea, while Park and Lee (2007) and the present study examined the front page.

of them (about 36%) were rewritten to some extent, and the rest (about 40%) were fabricated. *The New York Times*, on the other hand, only used verbatim quotations. However, they were all fragmentary quotations such as “Small Number” (June 10, 1989), “New Isolationism” (October 15, 1999), and “A Perverse Incentive” (July 30, 2009). This presents a contrast to the sentence length quotations used in *Chosun Ilbo*, such as “No Diplomatic Ties with South Korea” (February 3, 1989) and “We Know N. Korea Did Nuclear Experiment” (February 7, 2009).

Table 2. The Accuracy of the Quotation in Chosun Ilbo and The New York Times Headlines

	Verbatim quotation	Quotation edited	Fabrication	Total
<i>Chosun</i>	44 (24.0%)	66 (36.1%)	73 (39.9%)	183 (100%)
<i>NYT</i>	17 (100%)	-	-	17 (100%)

Unfortunately, the authors of the present study could not conduct inferential statistics, but focused instead on the descriptive analysis for research questions 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3, due to the nature of the research questions. Since the number of cases in some cells of the newspapers is less than 5, we avoided the risk of overestimated results which may occur with the use of inferential statistics.

2) Research Question 2-2: The Accuracy of the Attribution

Chosun Ilbo revealed the source of the statement in 85.2% of quotation-embedded headlines, but the verb of attribution was mentioned in 35% of the cases (see Table 3). This number is less than half of the source disclosure rate. By contrast, this disparity was not found in *The New York Times*. Both sources and the verbs of attribution were equally well articulated (70.6%). Nevertheless, *The New York Times* tended to quote sources by their titles such as “Judge,” “Aide,” and “Authorities,” whereas *Chosun Ilbo* was more likely to spell out the

names of the sources with their positions such as “The Former President Kim Young Sam” (June 5, 1999), and “CIA Chief Director Nominee Panetta” (February 7, 2009).

Regarding the verb of attribution, *Chosun Ilbo* used “declares” the most (13 out of 64), followed by “directs”, particularly when the statement came from the President (5 out of 64). *The New York Times* used “urges,” “seeks,” “demands,” “asks for,” “backs,” “condemns,” “blames,” “says,” “tells,” and “finds,” each word once, as the verb of attribution. Only “declares” was used twice: “Banker Bonuses Are ‘Shameful,’ Obama Declares” (January 30, 2009) and “A ‘Break-through’ Is Declared by Obama” (December 19, 2009).

Table 3. *The Accuracy of the Attribution in Chosun Ilbo and The New York Times Headlines*

	Present	Absent	Total
<i>Chosun Ilbo</i>			
Source	156 (85.2%)	27 (14.8%)	183 (100%)
The verb of attribution	64 (35.0%)	119 (65.0%)	183 (100%)
<i>The New York Times</i>			
Source	12 (70.6%)	5 (29.4%)	17 (100%)
The verb of attribution	12 (70.6%)	5 (29.4%)	17 (100%)

3) Research Question 2-3: The Accuracy of the Emphasis

Chosun Ilbo tended to use direct quotations in a more prominent way than *The New York Times*. Almost 70% of the direct quotations in *Chosun Ilbo* headlines (123 out of 183) were placed in the very first line, the space for the main headline, while most of their sources either followed in the subheadline (56.9%) or failed to be articulated (13%). In addition, the verbs of attribution were either not disclosed (57.7%) or followed in the subheadlines (35%). On the contrary, *The New York Times* placed more quotations in its subheadlines (70.6%, 12 out of 17) rather than main headlines (29.4%, 5 out of 17); attribu-

tion (including the verb of attribution) was frequently elucidated prior to the quotations. *The New York Times* never put direct quotations ahead of their attributions (see Table 4).

Table 4. The Accuracy of the Emphasis in Chosun Ilbo and The New York Times Headlines

		Where the source and the verb of attributes reside								
		Above		Along with		Below		Absent		
		Source	Verb	Source	Verb	Source	Verb	Source	Verb	
<i>Chosun Ilbo</i>										
MH		0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	37 (30.1)	9 (7.3)	70 (56.9)	43 (35.0)	16 (13.0)	71 (57.7)	123 (100%)
S1		4 (8.4)	0 (0.0)	37 (77.1)	7 (14.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	7 (14.6)	40 (83.3)	48 (100%)
S2		2 (18.2)	1 (9.1)	6 (54.5)	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (9.1)	3 (27.3)	7 (63.6)	11 (100%)
S3		0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (100)	1 (100)	1 (100%)
<i>The New York Times</i>										
MH		0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (80.0)	4 (80.0)	-	-	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	5 (100%)
S1		1 (14.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (28.6)	3 (42.9)	-	-	4 (57.1)	4 (57.1)	7 (100%)
S2		1 (5.9)	1 (20.0)	4 (80.0)	4 (80.0)	-	-	0 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (100%)

Note: MH stands for the main headline, S1 for subheadline 1, S2 for subheadline 2, and S3 for subheadline 3.

4) Research Question 3: Changes in the Frequency and the Accuracy of Quotation-Embedded Headlines

In comparison to *The New York Times*, *Chosun Ilbo* (1) prevalently used direct quotations in the headlines (42.36% versus 3.28%), (2) extensively revised direct quotations (76.0% versus 0.0%), (3) frequently left out the verb of attribution (65.0% versus 29.4%), and (4)

placed more direct quotations in the very beginning of the headlines (67.2% versus 29.4%). In short, *Chosun Ilbo* not only used more direct quotations in the headlines but also presented them more provocatively.

These headline patterns of *Chosun Ilbo* are becoming more pronounced over time (see Figure 1). The frequency of quotation-embedded headlines noticeably increased from 25.6% in 1989, to 50.6% in 1999, and to 53.7% in 2009 ($\chi^2 = 10.632$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$). The rate of fabrication rose from 27.5% in 1989, to 37.6% in 1999, and to 51.7% in 2009 ($\chi^2 = 10.791$, $df = 4$, $p < .05$). The disclosure rate of the verb of attribution drastically fell from 60% in 1989, to 31.8% in 1999, and to 22.4% in 2009 ($\chi^2 = 15.424$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$). Lastly, more quotations were placed upfront from 25.6% in 1989, to 50.6% in 1999, and to 53.7% in 2009 ($\chi^2 = 14.716$, $df = 4$, $p < .01$). By contrast, none of these trends were statistically significant in *The New York Times*. Thus, Figure 1 only displays *Chosun Ilbo*'s case, which shows statistically significant results.

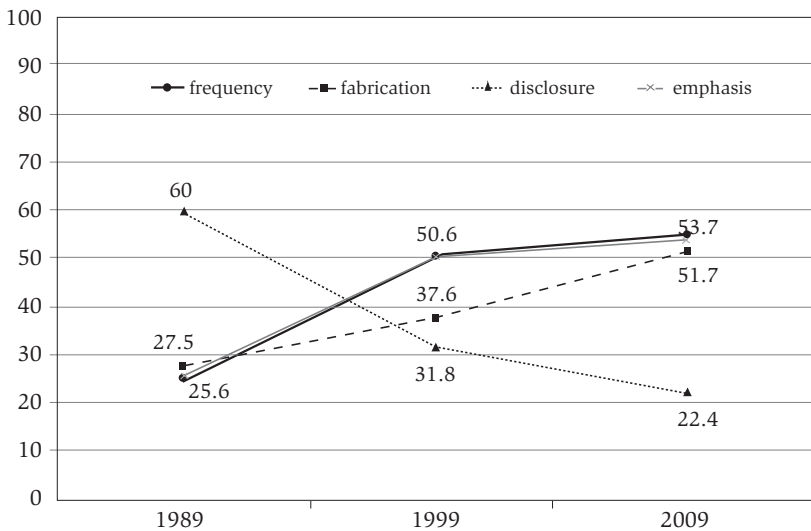


Figure 1. Changes in the Frequency and Accuracy of Quotation-Embedded Headlines in *Chosun Ilbo*

Discussion

This study was motivated by criticisms of the quotation-embedded headline in South Korea. Many journalism scholars have claimed that South Korean newspapers utilize quotation-embedded headlines to perpetuate their biases. However, previous studies focusing on the frequency of direct quotations in the headlines failed to provide a firm ground for this argument because a direct quotation is one form of statement illustrating what was said. Thus, this study presumes that the manner in which direct quotations are presented in headlines is a more important question than the frequency. This study further argues that a direct quotation, unlike any other form of statement that is also selectively presented in the headlines, has two unique features regarding its accuracy: attribution and emphasis. Even a verbatim quotation can be misleading with the absence of its attribution and an improper emphasis in presentation.

To this end, this study compared the use of quotation-embedded headlines in *Chosun Ilbo* and *The New York Times*. Distinctive features of quotation-embedded headlines were found in *Chosun Ilbo* (i.e., fabrication of direct quotations, omission of the verb of attribution, and emphasis on direct quotations) as well as in *The New York Times* (i.e., fragmentary quotations and abridged source disclosures). The inaccurate uses of direct quotations in *Chosun Ilbo* headlines provide more compelling support for the argument that the quotation-embedded headline is a violation of journalistic principles. However, it is still inconclusive whether or not the use of quotation-embedded headline is evidence for opinionated news. In addition, the results of this study should not be generalized as features of all South Korean newspapers. Particularly with respect to the accuracy of the attribution and the accuracy of the emphasis, no literature suggests that overall trends can be inferred from solely examining *Chosun Ilbo*.

Nevertheless, the aim of this study is to contribute to the progress of scholarly arguments on the use of quotation-embedded headlines in South Korean newspapers. First, based on the literature review, this study revised the operational definition of the quotation-embedded

headline. This methodological advancement allowed the present study to make a substantial level of comparison between quotation-embedded headlines in *Chosun Ilbo* and *The New York Times* for the very first time, and to demonstrate the inaccuracies of quotation-embedded headlines in *Chosun Ilbo*. As a result, this study successfully redirected the criticism of the use of direct quotations in South Korean newspaper headlines from its frequency to its accuracy. Along the extended lines of newspaper accuracy literature, this study suggested an approach to assessing the accuracy of quotation-embedded headlines with three foci: the accuracy of quotation, the accuracy of the attribution, and the accuracy of emphasis.

Despite its contribution to a better understanding of the use of quotation-embedded headlines in South Korea, many questions remain for future studies. First, researchers may investigate the accuracy of quotation-embedded headlines of South Korean newspapers and see whether there are commonly shared patterns. Without further studies of this kind, the implications of this study are limited. For example, the longitudinal analyses of this study demonstrated that the frequency and inaccuracy of quotation-embedded headlines sharply increased from 1989 to 2009. *Chosun Ilbo* drew maximum attention to direct quotations by putting them in the very first line of main headlines with the boldest and biggest letters, but lacking attribution. By their nature, direct quotations are more vivid and colorful than paraphrasing (Missouri Group et al. 2004; Cappon 1980; Einsohn 2006; Itule and Anderson 1994; Siegal and Connolly 1999). Weaver et al. (1974) note that readers perceived that direct quotation is more dramatic and emotional than paraphrasing, while readers perceive no difference in terms of accuracy, objectivity, credibility, and informative-ness. Taken together, we speculate sensationalism (Rhee et al. 2007; KCEA 2001) as the cause of this malpractice, instead of press-party parallelism (Y. Choi 2004, 2007; J. Park 2006; Park and Lee 2007; Yoon 2000) or the event-centered reporting tradition (J. Lee 2006; Rhee et al. 2007) of South Korean newspapers. With the limited scope of analysis of this study, however, this speculation cannot be applied to South Korean newspapers in general.

Secondly, most journalism studies in South Korea refer to *The New York Times* as an exemplar of good journalism and, therefore, highly value the work of *The New York Times* (e.g., J. Lee 2006, 2008; Lee and Jung 2008; S. Park 2004; Park and Lee 2007). The current study also follows suit. However, it is undeniable that the South Korean and American press systems have been built on substantially different traditions. Accordingly, the analysis of this study should be understood very carefully. For example, the frequent disclosure of the verb of attribution in *The New York Times* owes to the American journalism conventions that rely heavily on the use of verbs in headlines. American news editing underscores the importance of action verbs. Some even stated that the appearance of verbs in the news titles functioned as a transition from libeling, which only shows the general topic of the news (i.e., foreign news or the national crisis), to headlines, which actually definitively state the news (Garst and Berstein 1982; Sutton 1948). Thus, we would like to clarify that this study does not attempt to argue that *The New York Times* is better than *Chosun Ilbo*. Nonetheless, this limitation does not change the fact that *Chosun Ilbo* has inaccurately used direct quotations in its headlines.

Lastly, future study may further investigate how the patterns of quotation-embedded headlines (i.e., the fabrication of direct quotations, the omission of the verb of attribution, and the emphasis on direct quotations) are associated with the level of readers' perception of news. The headline is important because it modifies the perception of the news (Allport and Lepkin 1943; Tannenbaum 1953). Accordingly, the accuracy of the headline matters. Accuracy is the most fundamental and the most critical principle of journalism (Maier 2005). As Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001, 43) note, accuracy in news reporting is "the foundation upon which everything else builds: context, interpretation, debate, and all of public communication. If the foundation is faulty, everything else is flawed." Nevertheless, only 25% of the general public agrees that reporters get the facts straight, and 66% of them report that news stories are often inaccurate (PRCPP 2011). In addition, more people access news through the Internet and social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter (PRCPP 2011). These

types of media, by design, provide headlines first and show the whole story after people click on the headlines. Given such significant and fluctuating circumstances, future studies should continue to focus on the accuracy of the headline.

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