

# Representation of Foreign Countries in Two US Newspapers: Analysing Grammatical Collocates of China, Japan, North Korea and South Korea

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## Introduction

This paper presents findings of an investigation of grammatical collocation, in particular prepositions occurring as collocates of four country names: *China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea*. The study is part of an ongoing thesis project, which looks at the representation of foreign countries in a 40 million-word corpus of foreign news reports taken from the two major US newspapers, the New York Times and the Washington Post between the year 1999 and 2003. The concordancing package used in the study is Mike Scott's WordSmith Tools. The four countries chosen here for analysis, China, Japan, North Korea, and South Korea are chosen partly because of my own personal interest in these four neighbouring countries since I come from South Korea, and more crucially because these countries represent different types of relations the US has with foreign countries. North Korea is undoubtedly a sworn enemy of the US, sometimes supposed to pose a grave danger to not only the US but also the rest of the civilized world, famously branded as the axis of evil along with Iran, Iraq and Syria by the US president, George Bush during the period covered by the corpus. On the other hand, Japan and South Korea are regarded as traditional allies of the US even though their status as ally cannot be said to be the same. Clearly Japan has more economic and (therefore) more political leverage with the US than South Korea does. US-South Korea ally relations are not exactly on equal terms. For example, Bang analyses the coverage of speeches of the leaders of foreign countries visiting South Korea in the South Korean newspapers. Uniquely, the US presidents are reported as giving policy advice on what can be considered as the domestic affairs of South Korea as illustrated in the example below (2003:72):

**U.S. President Bill Clinton said** Tuesday (early Wednesday morning, Korean Standard Time) **that Korea may reduce its defense budget in**

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order to devote more funds to combatting social problems including unemployment. In a joint press

As for China, she is not an ally of the US, but is no longer an outright enemy of the US. As one of the military super powers and recently as a rapidly growing economic power, she can be positioned as a competing power of the US. This particular segment of analysis is part of larger analysis to see how these countries and their relations with the US or each other are construed in the corpus.

## **Analysis and Discussion**

Grammatical collocates are usually not the most obvious candidate in discourse analysis. It is well-known that grammatical words in general occur extremely frequently: the top 50 most frequent words in the BNC are all grammatical words and only 8 content words are found among the first 100 words. Their overall frequency is so high that they are likely to turn up as a high frequency collocate of any word. Moreover, grammatical words do not carry any kind of attitudinal or ideological meaning, and therefore are often considered of little interest as far as discourse analysis is concerned. For example, on ruling out grammatical words from analysis, Baker remarks that:

...the most common collocates are grammatical or function words: articles, prepositions, conjunctions and pronouns. One of the problems with using a frequency-based technique to calculate collocates is that these high frequency words generally tend to be function words – which does not always reveal much of interest, particularly in terms of discourse (2006: 100).

Grammatical collocates by themselves may not be very revealing. However, there is a phraseological approach which emphasises grammatical words as part of larger meaning units. Sinclair (1991) demonstrates how *of* in nominal groups has its own phraseology associated with different meanings and uses, and Gledhill (1996, 2000) shows how grammatical collocates are used in phraseological patterns which carry out specific semantic functions characteristic of each section of articles of cancer research. What can be illuminating is to look at what lexical collocates these grammatical words occur with as part of a larger unit. Broadly adapting from Gledhill's approach, the paper examines what lexical words co-occur with the prepositional collocates of *China, Japan, North Korea and South Korea*. Table 1 shows the top 20 collocates of

each name:

<b>China</b>	<i>the, in, to, and, of, a, that, with, is, has, for, on, from, by, as, said, its, have, was, united</i>
<b>Japan</b>	<i>the, in, and, to, of, a, that, is, for, has, korea, united, from, with, states, south, by, as, on, its</i>
<b>North Korea</b>	<i>to, the, and, in, of, a, that, with, has, its, on, is, for, nuclear, by, from, said, it, as, states</i>
<b>South Korea</b>	<i>and, the, in, to, of, japan, north, a, with, seoul, that, united, from, states, for, china, has, by, is, on</i>

**Table 1:** Top 20 collocates of *China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea*

There are few content words found in the list, and the majority are grammatical words, including prepositions or particles such as *in, to, of, with, for, on, from, by*. There is only the finite number of grammatical words and the collocates in the lists are very similar. What will be of interest is, however, any potential difference in the use of these grammatical words as a collocate of each country. There are some noticeable differences in frequency of some of the grammatical collocates. Table 1 shows that the most frequent grammatical collocate for *North Korea* is *to* ahead of *the* and *and* is the most frequent collocate for *South Korea* and *in* is the second most frequent collocate followed by *the* for *China* and *Japan*. The presence of *and* as the most frequent collocate of *South Korea* can be explained in the light of the observation that the most frequent group of lexical collocates for *South Korea* are the names of countries (e.g. *japan, north (korea), untied states, china* from the list given in Table 1 above). It is found that *South Korea* is used in coordination with the names of other countries in about one quarter (1252) of its total occurrences of 4027 (e.g. *South Korea and Japan*).

### 1. Frequency of the preposition *in*

Another notable observation is that the frequency of the collocate, *in* significantly differs across the names. Table 2 below shows the total number of *in* occurring in the first and second slot to the left of the node word and its percentage against the total number of occurrences of each name. Regarding the inclusion of the instances

of *in* occurring in the second position, in the case of *North Korea* and *South Korea*, most of the examples are not valid (e.g. *in return*, *North Korea*, *in which North Korea froze*), however *China* and *Japan* include many examples such as those in the screen shot below:



The L2 position has been considered in order for the examination to be as inclusive as possible. At the same time it should also be borne in mind that the figures given in Table 2 include invalid examples as mentioned earlier, so the actual percentage will be lower, specially for *North Korea* and *South Korea*, however the difference does not seem significant enough to affect the overall trend.

	L1	L2	Total	Percentage (%)
<b>China</b> (28,082)	3987	970	4957	17.6
<b>Japan</b> (10,494)	2051	316	2367	22.5
<b>North Korea</b> (10,628)	700	194	894	8.4
<b>South Korea</b> (4,027)	640	73	713	17.7

**Table 2:** Total number of *in* occurring in the first and second slot to the left of each name

As can be seen from Table 2, *in* collocates most frequently with *Japan* while the frequency of *in* as a collocate of *North Korea* is notably lower than the rest. Assuming that *in* is most likely to be used to signal location, specially since the names collocating with the preposition refer to a place, it may be suggested that *North Korea* is used less as a locative. It has to be further investigated whether this is indeed the

case and how it is related at all to the construal of North Korea. It has been shown above that *to* is the most frequent grammatical collocate of *North Korea*. Among other things, *to* as a preposition can be used to signal location (e.g. *visit to North Korea*) or construe a noun phrase as a beneficiary or a recipient (e.g. *food aid to North Korea*). It will require manual inspection of concordance lines to decide which function *to* performs in the context of *North Korea*. Similarly, there are other prepositions which can be used to construe a noun phrase as a beneficiary or a recipient of an action such as *with* (e.g. *dealing with North Korea*), *for* (e.g. *humanitarian aid for North Korea*), *on* (e.g. *policy on North Korea*), *against* (e.g. *international sanctions against North Korea*), *toward* (e.g. *tough stance toward North Korea*). On the other hand, there are also prepositions, *by* (e.g. *by demands by North Korea*) and *from* (e.g. *threat from North Korea*), which construe a noun phrase as an agent of an action.

The observation of *to* being the most frequent collocate of *North Korea* and the relatively low frequency of *in* has prompted at a closer examination of how different prepositions are used with each name. The first inquiry carried out is to compare the frequency of *in* with that of the other prepositions, *with*, *on*, *against*, *toward*, *for*, *by*. *To* is not included here and will be discussed separately later in the section and, it should be noted that *for* can also be used as a locative, however is treated as if non-locative for now since the locative function is quite minor as will be shown later in a detailed discussion of *for* with the exception of *South Korea*.

Table 3 below presents the frequency of each preposition co-occurring with each country name, which is taken directly from the collocate lists:

	<i>China</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>North Korea</i>	<i>South Korea</i>
<i>In</i>	4957	2367	894	713
<i>With</i>	1274	219	1042	170
<i>On</i>	277	60	284	16
<i>Against</i>	76	29	150	10
<i>Toward</i>	104	20	160	5
<i>For</i>	435	210	156	57
<i>By</i>	254	132	250	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>2420</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>305</b>
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>2:1</b>	<b>3.5:1</b>	<b>1:2.2</b>	<b>2.3:1</b>

**Table 3:** Frequency of the preposition, *in*, and other prepositions

The ratio difference between the frequency of *in* and other prepositions given in Table 3 shows that the frequency of *in* outnumbers that of the other prepositions put together for *China*, *Japan*, and *South Korea*, but *North Korea* occurs with the other prepositions twice as frequently as with *in*. The hypothesis, which might be drawn from the comparison is that *North Korea* is used more to signify a political entity which is construed as either an agent or a beneficiary, whereas the other three names are used more as geographical locations than as political entities with *Japan* being used almost three times more frequently as a locative. However, there is no one to one correspondence between a preposition and a function as already mentioned. For example, *in* not only signals location but also is used to form lexical phrases, which may have no connection to a locative function.

A selection of 100 random concordance lines has been manually inspected to see how much of the observation made from the collocate list holds valid against actual concordance examples, and whether the potential discrepancy is large enough to affect the hypothesis derived from the collocate list. The concordance lines below illustrate *in* used in the locative function:

Her obsession now is to find her older sister [in North Korea](#), although she concedes that she assembly work to low-wage free-trade zones [in North Korea](#). On Friday, North and South Korean said they had not received U.N. rations while [in North Korea](#). "Why does American and South brutal realities of survival for 22 million people [in North Korea](#). For many years, the stories of the Park Soon Duck worked at an iron mine [in North Korea](#) before she defected to South Korea.

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Regarding the non-locative use of *in*, only 2 instances for *China*, 0 for *Japan*, 6 for *North Korea*, and 0 for *South Korea* have been identified out of the sample of 100 concordance lines. The non-locative examples of *China* and *North Korea* are as follows:

mark the beginning of a new era of investing in China.  
Part of Jiang's motivation was to spark pride in China among a people  
companies interested in investing in North Korea has dwindled.  
region. The group's investment in North Korea is viewed as one reason a  
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South Korea's largest investment in North Korea since the largest foreign investment in North Korea: "The administration has acquiesced in North Korea becoming a nuclear power," s South Korea's largest investment in North Korea, the Hyundai Asan Corporation

This means that 2 % and 6 % of the instances of *in* occurring with *China* and *North Korea* respectively are non-locative. Table 4 below shows the results of the recalculation incorporating this information:

	<i>CHINA (4957)</i>	<i>NORTH KOREA (894)</i>
<b><i>In as non-locative</i></b>	99 (2% out of 4957)	53 (6% out of 894)
<b><i>In as locative (recalculated)</i></b>	4858	841
<b>The other prepositions</b>	2420	2042
<b>Ratio (locative <i>In</i> vs the others)</b>	<b>2:1</b>	<b>1:2.4</b>

**Table 4:** Revised frequency of *in* and other prepositions

As for *China*, the ratio remains the same as 2:1 while the proportion of the combined frequency of the other prepositions against the frequency of *in* as a locative even slightly increases from 2.2: 1 to 2.4:1 in the case of *North Korea*. It can be safely said that the results validate the interpretation put forward based on the information gained from the collocate list. The observation made here illustrates that something as basic as frequency of grammatical words can yield useful information about the way these countries are perceived.

## 2. Semantic patterns of the collocates of the preposition *to*

*To* has been identified as the most frequent collocate of *North Korea*. There are two uses of *to*: firstly, there is the use of *to* as a preposition preceding nouns. Secondly, there is the use of *to* as a particle forming 'to-infinitive'. This section is concerned only with *to* as a preposition. For this reason, the examination has been limited to the instances of *to* occurring immediately to the left of each name (e.g. *to China*), and the respective frequency is as follows:

	<i>CHINA</i>	<i>JAPAN</i>	<i>NORTH KOREA</i>	<i>SOUTH KOREA</i>
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	(28,082)	(10,494)	(10,628)	(4,027)
L1	1597	526	928	235

**Table 5:** Frequency of *to* in L1

Given the fact that the overall frequency of *Japan* and *North Korea* is , the relative high frequency of *to* as a collocate of *North Korea* becomes apparent when compared with the frequency of *to* as a collocate of *Japan*. This frequency difference is worthy of note but does not reveal much by itself. The next step of analysis is to examine the lexical items which co-occur with *to* in the left position of the preposition (e.g. *returned to China*, *warning to North Korea*). The analysis has considered the first 50 of these lexical collocates for *China* and *North Korea*, and the those with the minimum frequency of 2 in the case of *Japan* and *South Korea*. The observation indicates that the collocates fall into two main semantic groups. There is a group of words to do with travel and movements, which I have termed ‘locative’ as illustrated by the following concordance examples:

Randt, Bush's nominee for ambassador to China. Randt said that Gao's release was at canceled trips that included visits to China, and a fifth delegation reported that it spying, Lt. Gen. Pan Xixian, traveled to China just days after he retired, breaking a year ago, Mr. Salisbury returned to China to fill a temporary position, teaching Chinese television during an official visit to China, General Musharraf raised the

The inclusion of the first example, ‘ambassador to China’ in the category will be elaborated later. Another group of collocates is to do with giving and receiving, which is termed ‘beneficiary’. The second group can be further categorised into three main subcategories. They are as follows: i) verbal process; ii) material process of giving gifts; iii) material process of moving commodities. In the verbal process, a country is construed as a recipient of a verbal process as can be seen from the examples below:

the latest in a string of pointed rebukes to North Korea. "We seek a peaceful region United States must offer concessions to North Korea, concessions that Bush has official said China has also appealed to North Korea to avoid taking any provocative as Japan strengthened its warnings to North Korea not to fire another rocket over In Policy Shift, U.S. Will Talk To North Korea BYLINE: By DAVID E.

In the material process of giving gifts, a country is construed as a recipient of

financial or material aid such as *food, fuel oil*:

today lifted its embargo on food aid to North Korea, another step toward thawing agencies are urging donors to send food to North Korea to avert famine, but such aid the use of aid it had already provided to North Korea. Two days after Dr. Rosenthal are being too generous in providing aid to North Korea under President Kim 's the United States to help provide fuel oil to North Korea to help alleviate its severe

In the material process of transferring commodities, a country is construed as a recipient of a variety of commodities including technology either through commercial transaction or sometimes through allegedly illegal means as illustrated in the concordance examples below:

year from the glacier-fed Blue Lake and export it to China. There, local handlers will put the water into tighter inspections of advanced computers sold to China was "not feasible" because projected that it failed to guard against technology leaks to China, calling security concerns a priority for the stop sales and transfers of military technology to China. He said Washington had pressured Israel to investigating improper technology transfers to China has called for new restrictions. The steep

The results of the examination of the collocates are given in Table 6 given below. In some cases, concordance lines have been consulted for clarification:

	LOCATIVE	BENEFICIARY		
		Verbal process	Material process	
			Gift	Commodity
<b>To China</b>	<i>visit, ambassador, trip, returned, back, travel, return, came, traveled, come, go, over; (hong) kong, returning, fled, visits, trips, envoy, traveling, directly, way, feel, going, went</i>	<i>apologized, (ties, opening approach)</i>	<i>aid</i>	<i>technology, sales, sale, sold, secrets, transfers, (radar) system, equipment, jobs, information, production,</i>
<b>To Japan</b>	<i>ambassador, visit, fled, returned, trip, come, came, brought, return, go, back, flight, went, coming, traveled, travel, over, korea, traveling, taken, visits, sent, flown, directly, move, route, Europe, home, got, going,</i>	<i>(ties, overtures)</i>		<i>shipped, exports, exported, drugs, export, on</i>

	<i>immigrated</i> , <i>parents</i> , <i>Okinawa families</i> , <i>fly</i>			
<b>To North Korea</b>	<i>visit</i> , <i>trip</i> , <i>back</i> , <i>returned</i> , <i>return</i> , <i>traveled</i> , <i>went</i> , <i>taken</i> , <i>travel</i> , <i>envoy</i> , <i>go</i> , <i>sent</i> , <i>mission</i> , <i>flew</i> , <i>refugees</i> , <i>boats</i> , <i>traveling</i> , <i>abducted</i>	<i>talk</i> , <i>message</i> , <i>warning</i> , <i>warnings</i> , <i>concessions</i> , ( <i>MAKE it</i> ) <i>clear</i> , <i>signal</i> , <i>response</i> , ( <i>approach</i> <i>ties</i> , <i>opening</i> ( <i>REACH</i> ) <i>out</i> )	<i>aid</i> , <i>oil</i> , <i>shipments</i> , <i>food</i> , <i>assistance</i> , <i>money</i> , <i>million</i> , <i>cash</i> , <i>payments</i> , <i>technology</i> , <i>fertilizer</i> , <i>goods</i> , <i>donor</i> , <i>provided</i> , <i>pipeline</i> , <i>inducements</i> , <i>rice</i>	
<b>To South Korea</b>	<i>ambassador</i> , <i>visit</i> , <i>passage</i> , <i>travel</i> , <i>defected</i> , <i>come</i> , <i>trip</i> , <i>return</i> , <i>way</i> , <i>returned</i> , <i>go</i> , <i>korea</i> , <i>defect</i> , <i>going</i> , <i>ambassadors</i> , <i>route</i> , <i>fled</i> , <i>forces</i> , <i>link</i> , <i>made</i> , <i>get</i> , <i>north</i> , <i>on</i> , <i>travels</i> , <i>troops</i> , <i>vance</i> , <i>defector</i> , <i>trips</i> , <i>traveled</i> , <i>access</i> , <i>went</i>	( <i>ties</i> )		

**Table 6:** Semantic functions of the collocates of *to* + *country name*

Firstly, the locative use of *to* seems to be fairly evenly shared among all the names. The inclusion of the collocates such as *ambassador*, *envoy*, *families*, *refugees*, *troops* warrants some clarification. The words like *refugees*, *troops*, *families*, are included because they are usually represented as being sent or dispatched to countries:

that China was forcibly repatriating 100 refugees to North Korea a week. As of has forcibly returned a group of 60 refugees to North Korea after they contrasting its speed in deporting refugees to North Korea to its reluctance pressured China in the past to return its refugees to North Korea, where they are eluding authorities who routinely return refugees to North Korea where they face China has an agreement to return refugees to North Korea. It also

As for the nouns referring to a government official like *ambassador*, *envoy*, they are

included since their job title necessarily implies travel to other countries.

Moving on to the beneficiary categories, Table 6 shows that the subcategories of this function of *to* are distributed quite evenly across the names. The collocates of *North Korea* dominantly belong to the verbal process and material process of giving gifts, while the material process of moving commodities only include the collocates of *China* and *Japan*. Meanwhile, apart from one collocate, ‘*ties*’, no collocate of *South Korea* occurs in the beneficiary categories, and no collocate of *Japan* is associated with the material process of giving gifts. The verbal process category includes another seemingly incongruous set of collocates such as *approach, ties, opening, overtures, REACH out to* which are exactly an act of saying. They are more to do with a process of building relations and much of the relationship-building between the countries is through a verbal process such as *talk*. For this reason, these collocates are included in the verbal process category, however they could be designated as a separate category. Table 7 shows the rest of the collocates which do not belong to the categories proposed above:

<b>To China</b>	<i>(hong)kong, threat, ties, opening up, closer, reverted, it, important, according, close</i>
<b>To Japan</b>	<i>threat, reverted, it, country, is, Okinawa, loss</i>
<b>To North Korea</b>	<i>them, referring, iraq,</i>
<b>To South Korea</b>	<i>them, it, then, according</i>

**Table 7:** Rest of the collocates of *to* + *country name*

One point to be made from the table is the presence of *according* and *referring*. They clearly are part of a prepositional phrase, *according to* and a phrasal verb, *referring to*. It is another function of *to* as a preposition to be used in prepositional or phrasal verbs. Incidentally, it is interesting to notice that *according to* collocates with *China, Japan,* and *South Korea* while *referring to* with *North Korea*. *According to* indicates a source of information, that is, a noun phrase coming after *to* is a sayer, whereas a noun phrase preceded by *referring to* is part of what is said.

Lastly, a random selection of 100 concordance lines has been manually examined in order to work out the overall proportion of the categories observed from the collocate list across each name. The results are given in Table 8 given below:

	<b>CHINA</b>	<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>NORTH KOREA</b>	<b>SOUTH KOREA</b>
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	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Beneficiary	42	29	<b>65</b>	12
Locative	53	69	43	<b>87</b>
Phrases	5	2	2	1

**Table 8:** Frequency of different semantic functions of *to*

*To* as a collocate of *China*, *Japan*, and *South Korea* are more frequently used in the locative category and *South Korea*, in particular, is overwhelmingly locative. In contrast, *North Korea* is the only name used as the beneficiary category more frequently than as the locative category.

### 3. Frequency of the preposition *with* and semantic patterns of its collocates

The first thing to notice regarding the collocate *with* occurring in the first position to the left of each name is its differences in frequency:

	<i>CHINA</i> (28,082)	<i>JAPAN</i> (10,494)	<i>NORTH KOREA</i> (10,628)	<i>SOUTH KOREA</i> (4,027)
<i>With</i>	1274	219	1042	170
Percent (%)	4.5	2.1	9.8	4.2

**Table 9:** Frequency of *with* in L1

The relative high frequency of *with* as a collocate of *North Korea* is apparent from the percentage figures, which are the highest among the four names, accounting for almost 10 percent of the total occurrences of *North Korea*. *With* is, in fact, the most frequent collocate of *North Korea* in the L1 position. In comparison, *Japan*, whose overall frequency is similar to *North Korea*, collocates least frequently with the preposition, *with*. The examination of the 100 randomly selected concordance lines has found instances where *with* does not semantically position the countries as a beneficiary: *China* 9, *Japan* 14, *North Korea* 9, *South Korea* 11. The overall frequency difference among the names remains. Regarding the rest of the instances, one recurring semantic theme is shared by all four names. Below are 20 examples

from *China* and *Japan*:

goldfish trade is any indicator, negotiators of pacts *with Japan* will have to agree to disagree about farm products. fans at least, it is a sour one. "Our relationship *with Japan* has always been like this," complained Oh Hyun in Tokyo. "So Kim is meeting with Putin, dealing *with Japan* and South Korea, just to get the United States more month. And it has resumed a whirl of discussions *with Japan* and South Korea. Today those talks bore fruit. obstacle" to Pyongyang's ability to cooperate *with Japan*. North Korea unexpectedly admitted to the aging population. "Countries with a war relationship *with Japan* are not ideal because they look at our elderly people in the past as a product of the abnormal relationship *with Japan*. We will prevent such things from happening in the

Meanwhile, North Korea's brief fall honeymoon *with Japan* now seems long over. Today, Pyongyang revised last year to bring it to the level of those pacts *with Japan* and Germany, "but with this incident as a lesson, its missile development first and make concessions *with Japan* on other issues before there can be normalization,"

here. But if Congress rejects normal trade ties *with China*, the backlash in China against engagement with came the closest to a military confrontation *with China* since the Eisenhower era after the Chinese United States and a serious setback to relations *with China*. In an analysis immediately after the Communist." But while Macao kept the peace *with China*, it could do little about the thrusting British has resolved its first diplomatic test *with China*, an important question remains about what the said the United States wants good relations *with China*, but his other statements about human rights about Japan's perennially difficult relations *with China*, worsened this week by a visit by a former say they will actively oppose any trade deal *with China*. They are particularly incensed about China's suggestion that America's broad engagement *with China* as at risk. "This accident has the potential of faces a major diplomatic and military quandary *with China*. The sensitivities are so acute that the Clinton a potentially divisive diplomatic confrontation *with China*. In 1995, after the administration granted a visa

A relationship or conflict requires two parties and the preposition *with* may denote either two or more participants doing things together (e.g. *work with each other*) or one party involving another in doing things (e.g. *resume talks with*). When the contexts in which the collocates of *with* occur, are considered, the case appears to be one country persuading the other(s) to work with them rather than two countries working together on equal terms in order to build a relationship, therefore positioning the country at the receiving end of the other country's relationship-building actions. A sense of imposition underlying the act of one country getting another to engage or participate in relationship-building can be detected from collocations which mark efforts (e.g. *resolved, make concessions, wants good relations*), and difficulties in trying to get others involved (e.g. *obstacle, difficult, worsened, serious, setback, test, abnormal, at risk, face...(major) quandary*) or an unwillingness to do so (e.g. *rejects, actively oppose*), or an interruption of the process (e.g. *honeymoon...seems long over, resumed*). Several examples of extended contexts have been given below. In the first example, the noun, the adverbial phrase, '*for seven years now*' heightens a sense of difficulty in the US effort to build a relationship with China:

May 21 BODY: For seven years now, very little has gone as planned in Bill Clinton's effort to shape a new relationship with China. Now, amid increasing confidence among White House officials this weekend that they

In the next example, North Korea's taking an initiative to propose talks with Japan is positively evaluated as '*one note of optimism*', however the evaluation is counter-balanced in the next clause by the introduction of the US demand to disengage with North Korea:

plants for the energy-starved country. **One note of optimism was Pyongyang's request to schedule more talks with Japan next week.** Tokyo, under pressure from the United States to halt any diplomacy with North Korea until the uranium enrichment program is scrapped, said it would consider the request.

In the following example, the reluctant attitude of the US towards its relationship with North Korea is encapsulated in the word, '*suspicion*' and is negatively evaluated as '*skepticism*', which prevented North Korea from reconciling with South Korea:

missile and missile proliferation activities remain a serious concern." **The Bush administration has regarded negotiations with North Korea with suspicion, and American skepticism is widely seen as having slowed North Korea's reconciliation with the South.** Marking an unmistakable difference in

The collocational and contextual behaviour of *with* as a collocate of *China*, *Japan*, *North Korea*, and *South Korea* illustrate how the relationship between the countries is construed as a goal to be achieved, but often perceived as a task fraught with difficulties and complications. It is also shown that the overall frequency of *with* for *North Korea* far outnumbers that of *China*, *Japan*, and *South Korea*.

#### **4. Semantic patterns of the collocates of the preposition *for***

The next collocate to be discussed is *for*. The total occurrences of *for* occurring with each name of the countries given earlier are as follows: *China*: 435; *Japan*: 210; *North Korea*: 156; *South Korea*: 57. For analysis, 100 concordance lines have been

randomly chosen in the case of *China*, *Japan*, and *North Korea* while *for* occurs only 57 times as a collocate of *South Korea* as shown above, and 50 occurrences have been analysed for comparison. The analysis shows that *for* is used in semantic patterns which construe the countries as a beneficiary of various types, and each country tends to be construed more frequently as one type of a beneficiary than as the other types. Discussion will be focused on this beneficiary function of *for*. Before that, I will summarise observations regarding the other functions. The other categories includes some unrelated examples (e.g. ...*waiting for*: “*China is...*”), prepositional phrases (e.g. *except for Japan*), and a few instances denoting ‘possessive’ (e.g. *export figures for Japan*, *the cost of defense for South Korea*). The other categories also include occurrences indicating location, in particular, destination (e.g. *set sail for South Korea*, *fled the country for Japan*). This function is found to be most frequently associated with *South Korea* occurring 20 times out of the total occurrences of 50, so making it a major function of *for* as far as *South Korea* is concerned while relatively infrequent among the instances of *China* (7), *Japan* (7), and *North Korea* (7).

Turning to the main semantic function of *for* construing the countries as beneficiaries, as mentioned above, examining the concordance lines reveals that the beneficiary role assigned by *for* to the countries are semantically multi-faceted, and each name of the countries is associated with different beneficiary types. The first type of beneficiary is what can be called a social beneficiary in which a country is represented as a recipient of gifts as illustrated in the examples below:

donors are less inclined to provide food for North Korea, he said. "We are experiencing and how specific to be about incentives for North Korea to give up its nuclear program. it is widely believed to contain incentives for North Korea to drop its missile program and move quickly to offer tangible incentives for North Korea to give up its nuclear ambitions potential source of trade and investment for North Korea. The statement came as the make 10 years' worth of cold medication for North Korea, were seized in 1997 while passed counterfeit bills to raise money for North Korea. For the most part, they were cars, computers and mechanical parts for North Korea. On one trip in November, the nuclear power plants for North Korea and to provide the country with pay \$25 million to buy sleepers and rails for North Korea for linking what is to be called of several nuclear energy reactors for North Korea to show its displeasure over building two light-water nuclear reactors for North Korea as part of an agreement with the

This type of beneficiary occurs most frequently with *North Korea* with 36 instances. This category occurs only 4 times with *China*, once with *South Korea*, and no occurrence is found in the examples of *Japan*. The three underlined examples are different from the rest in that *North Korea* is followed by a *to+ V* phrase. Even though *North Korea* is the agent of the action described in a *to + V* phrase, the action

is a precondition for the gift, therefore, imposed on the actor, *North Korea*.

The second type of beneficiary is for the country to be construed as a recipient of support. The countries are given (or not given) acceptance to an organization, or support for the membership. This is the main type of beneficiary for *China* occurring 22 times, while found only twice in the examples of *South Korea*, and no instance has been identified from the examples of *Japan* and *North Korea*. The sample concordance lines illustrating the type are given below:

United States agrees to press jointly with **the Chinese for China** to enter the W.T.O. DECEMBER 199: arrangements in hopes of helping to work out **a deal for China** to enter the trade organization. That w hat it would rekindle momentum for a deal to **gain entry for China** into the World Trade Organization this Hong Kong, which he charged would provide **a foothold for China** to threaten the canal's security. Most well as ordinary citizens. "It's a New **Year's gift for China** as it enters 2000," said Li, who found on resuming negotiations on **obtaining membership for China** in the World Trade Organization, a go linked." She emphasized the possibility **of membership for China** in the World Trade Organization, aide Gephardt's intention to oppose normal **trading privileges for China** misstated his title in some copies. He Clinton's push to gain permanent normal **trade relations for China**. Sending official Chinese press report passage by the Senate of normal **trade status for China** and are fueling the push for a Senate out international norms. Foes of permanent **trade status for China** say that Mr. Gephardt's strategic silen and 110 Democrats backed normal **trade status for China**. By comparison, the House passed N

The third type of beneficiary is for the country to be at the receiving end of a verbal process. This is most frequently found occurring with *North Korea* with 16 occurrences and *Japan* with 7 occurrences. It occurs once with *South Korea* and with *China*. As can be seen from the examples below, the verbal actions often entail asking the country to do something specified in a *to + V* phrase:

continued. The proposal calls **for North Korea** to abandon any nuclear-weapons Beneath the official commendations **for North Korea** is a swirl of conflicting interests early today. The agreement also calls **for North Korea** to begin construction as soon as interim government of Afghanistan, and **for North Korea**, which he said continued "to THREAT ON NUCLEAR ARMS **FOR NORTH KOREA** BYLINE: By DAVID E.

okyo, North Korea repeated its call **for Japan** to apologize and pay reparations month. The defense guidelines call **for Japan** to provide logistical support to the ill of the once unimaginable: advice **for Japan**. "Japanese people wait for their party with an unusually strong call **for Japan** to field an army, then met with growth. "Mr. O'Neill pleaded **for Japan** and Europe to play their role in

Similar to the first beneficiary type in which the country is construed both as a recipient and an agent, the country is assigned agency followed by a '*to + V*' phrase, but the action is imposed upon the country by a verbal process.

The third beneficiary type is to have an action, mainly a material process

including a nominalisation performed for the benefit of the country. The examples are as follows:

men and women to work and fight for Japan. At war's end, the Koreans say of the excitement of the World Cup for Japan, which has struggled through we were taught that people who died for Japan would become gods and would be like as 'student volunteers' and fought for Japan," testified Chung Ki Young, now nothing less than devising a strategy for Japan to win 30 more Nobel prizes in the

A scientist suspected of spying for China improperly transferred huge the case of a suspected spy for China at the Los Alamos nuclear "We miners have been working here for China, for the Communist Party since we're doing is not just an experiment for China," he said in a recent interview in Russian service and customized for China. Western military experts said the

This type of beneficiary occurs equally frequently with *Japan* (15) and *China* (13), and *South Korea* (6) while occurring twice in the examples of *North Korea*. Incidentally, as in the example, '...*devising a strategy for Japan to win...*', there are three examples in total (2 for *Japan* and 1 for *China*) followed by a 'to + V' phrase, which conveys what action is desired by the process preceding *for*.

The next four types of beneficiary are all concerned with the construal of the countries as a recipient of appraisal. The term, appraisal is borrowed from Martin (2001), but it should be noted that what is described in this segment does not follow his 'Appraisal Systems'. The target of appraisal is a situation in which the countries are experiencing or a recommendation of what the countries should or should not do. It is realised in a number of different semantic sequences. Firstly, there are examples of appraisal conveyed by nouns denoting difficulty and significance of a situation or an event as can be seen from the examples given below:

a moment of considerable challenge for Japan, which is struggling to overcome a system creates complications for Japan. Tokyo had hoped for some at incalculable economic costs for Japan, underscores the difficulties that a banking crisis. "The danger for Japan is not cataclysm," Mr. Katz said a venture would cause difficulties for Japan. Top officials of the three ruling touched on an explosive issue for Japan and its Asian neighbors, one that Raises Sensitive Defense Issues for Japan, S. Korea BYLINE: Doug Struck, But after a decade of hard knocks for Japan, the lure of trappings of success pursue the most troublesome option for Japan. U.S. officials now talk of a wide progress today came at the price for Japan of a large but still unspecified

at the conviction that the only path [for China](#) was one of cautious, progressive also came at a sensitive time [for China](#) internally. Ten years ago, on June 20 BODY: Calling it a milestone [for China](#), the top human-rights official of the officials associated with him and [for China](#), the analysts said. "Jiang really that carry the surname Zhang. [For China](#) the rise in asylum seekers at was the topic, the underlying issue [for China](#) seemed to be an obsession with impasse is an enormous headache [for China](#), which hopes for regional stability most serious intelligence setbacks [for China](#) in years. It follows the August

This appraisal by a noun occurs most frequently in the examples of *Japan* with the total occurrences of 37 followed by *China* (18), *South Korea* (9), and *North Korea* (7). There is also an appraisal by an adjectival pattern, which similarly evaluates an event or a situation as to how difficult or significant it is to the countries:

point had been especially important [for China](#) -- and a fairly easy one to concede nearly all its influence. "It is good [for China](#) that Li Peng is retiring," said a nterviews. The stakes are enormous [for China](#). Along with banking reform, essays argued, would be disastrous [for China](#), sparking a mass exodus of Taiwan alone would remain difficult [for China](#) throughout the remainder of the

makes the road forward so perilous [for Japan](#), many experts say, is that the 3 percent. For corn, almost zero. [For Japan](#) it's almost embarrassing and we "I think the fishing era is over [for Japan](#)," he said. The one part of the of \$250 million -- that is so huge [for Japan](#) when you think about the number alliance is important not only [for Japan](#) but also Asia." Unlike some of

The frequency of this pattern is as follows: *China* 14, *Japan* 8, *North Korea* 3, *South Korea* 0. There is one example of *North Korea* which falls into the category of 'appraisal of noun', but does not share the evaluation of difficulty and criticalness of the situation faced by the countries:

from the United States, "the next war may break out on the Korean peninsula."  
Bombast is standard fare [for North Korea](#), but all sides have shown increasing concern recently as North Korea apparently has continued preparations to test a new long-range missile, the Taepodong II. Japan and the

In this one-off example, North Korea's verbal behaviour, described as overtly negative '*bombast*', is appraised as typical of North Korea.

The next two patterns construe the countries as an agent while performing appraisal of the countries like the previous two types of beneficiary. Appraisal is expressed through either nouns or adjectives and the name of the countries are the

agent of an activity signified in a 'to + V' phrase. Look at the examples given below:

strong rumblings in Tokyo about the need for Japan to move out of the United States' article last week with the headline "Time for Japan to shed its 'passive partner' role," the then ran on charcoal. But it was a mistake for Japan to try to colonize other peoples, in China missile test last year also cleared the way for Japan to announce that it was joining an talks -- represents a rare opportunity for Japan to take the pivotal position on an issue of

that it is unacceptable under any circumstances for North Korea to develop nuclear weapons." Over the United States had emphasized that it was "critical for North Korea to begin cooperation with the International, even if talks resumed, it would not be enough for North Korea to simply stop its efforts to enrich uranium to the Communist leadership? It would be hard for North Korea to have less contact with the outside world to expand its nuclear arsenal. "It's important for North Korea to understand this is unacceptable

The appraisal is imposed on the countries regarding an action which they should (not) be engaged in. This appraisal-agency pattern occurs most frequently with *North Korea* (16) followed by *Japan* (14), *China* (8), *South Korea* (6). There is one example of *Japan* which does not belong to the type given above. Despite sharing the 'appraisal + agency' pattern, the example shown below is different in that the noun of appraisal, 'a tremendous destabilizing effect' is not experienced by Japan, but by other countries:

up diplomatic leverage on nuclear nonproliferation. Others worry about long-term effects of some of these changes. "For Japan to send troops that would do more than peacekeeping will have a tremendous destabilizing effect in northeast Asian relations," said Chang Dal Joong, a professor at Seoul National University. "This

So far, all major categories of beneficiary associated with semantic sequences of *for* have been outlined. Before discussion moves on to the implication of these results, one minor beneficiary type shall be introduced. It occurs with *North Korea* (5), *China* (2) and *South Korea* (0) as seen from the examples below, a person of an official title precedes *for*:

for him late last year by his special envoy for North Korea, former Secretary of Defense for Iraq. Why not food inspectors for North Korea?" North Korean defectors say food the Bush administration's special envoy for North Korea, met with the ambassador, Pak Morton, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for North Korea, said international corn donations Rick Corsino, the program's director for North Korea. The Japanese government, which

The official is charged with negotiating with or overseeing an aid programme in North

Korea on behalf of an aid organization or a government, that is, North Korea is construed as the beneficiary of activities represented by the official. Table 10 below gives the frequency of different beneficiary types for each name:

		<i>CHINA</i> (100)	<i>JAPAN</i> (100)	<i>NORTH KOREA</i> (100)	<i>SOUTH KOREA</i> (100)
<b>Beneficiary</b>	Recipient of gifts	4	0	<b>36</b>	2
	Recipient of support	<b>22</b>	0	0	4
	Recipient of verbal process	1	7	<b>16</b>	2
	Recipient of other process types	13	<b>15</b>	2	12
	Appraisal by noun	18	<b>37</b>	7	18
	Appraisal by adjective	<b>14</b>	8	3	0
	Appraisal + agency	8	14	<b>16</b>	12
	Official title	2	0	5	0
<b>Locative</b>		7	7	7	<b>40</b>
<b>Others</b>		11	12	8	5

**Table 10:** Frequency of the different semantic functions of *for*: the frequency for *South Korea* has been doubled because the total number of the samples of *South Korea* is only 50

It can be seen from Table 10 that each country tends to occur more frequently with one type of beneficiary than the others. North Korea is most frequently represented as a recipient of gifts while China as a recipient of support. However, these two types do not occur with *Japan*. *Japan* is most frequently used in the ‘appraisal of noun’ pattern, whereas the semantic function of *for* most frequently linked with *South Korea* is locative, which is a non-beneficiary type. One way of interpreting these observations is to consider the degree of subordination or imposition implied in different beneficiary types. Clearly, being represented as financially or materialistically needy indicates a greater degree of subordination than does a representation of being in need of political or diplomatic support for entry to an organization. In turn, a greater degree of subordination is attached to the latter type of beneficiary than to being a target of appraisal. In this sense, North Korea is semantically signalled as most subordinate of all four countries. This portrayal of

North Korea is further seen from the finding that North Korea is the most frequent recipient of a verbal process and of the ‘appraisal agency’ pattern. As mentioned earlier, appraisal can be interpreted as a kind of imposition, an act of imposing judgment on the country as an experiencer of a situation or an event. Furthermore, another layer of imposition is added in the case of the two types of beneficiary which are complemented by a ‘to + V’ phrase. That is, an action conveyed in the ‘to + V’ phrase, is semantically signalled as something the countries should (not) do, therefore, imposed upon the countries:

two days mainly in private, unannounced sessions, concluded their talks early today. The agreement also calls **for North Korea** to begin construction as soon as possible of its portion of a railroad that would link the two Koreas by rail. South Korean Army engineers have almost completed building the portion of the

... sudden he moves." Masao Okonogi, a North Korea specialist at Keio University here, said: "It is necessary **for North Korea** to proceed with normalization of relations with Japan before the U.S. attacks Iraq. That way, North Korea can avoid becoming a target. " Normalization of relations with Japan

On the other hand, *Japan* is most frequently associated with the ‘appraisal by noun’ patterns as shown in the table, while ‘appraisal by adjective’ occurs most frequently with *China*. The two types perform a similar semantic function even though they have been differentiated in terms of the formal patterns. When the frequency of the two types are combined, the total for *Japan* is 45 and 32 for *China*, which make them the most frequent beneficiary type for *Japan* and *China* as a single semantic category. This indicates that the both countries are construed as less subordinate compared with North Korea, while China may be seen as more subordinate than Japan given that the most frequently occurring single beneficiary type for *China* is a recipient of support, which does not occur with *Japan* as shown above. As for *South Korea*, the frequency of the category of location (40) slightly outnumbers the combined frequency of all three types of recipient of appraisal (38). *South Korea* attracts less appraisal while the relatively high frequency of *South Korea* used as a locative is in line with the earlier findings of the analysis of the preposition, *to* as a collocate which show that *South Korea* is predominantly used as a locative (87 instances out of 100).

## Conclusion

To sum up, this paper has tried to show how grammatical words, in particular, prepositions can be methodologically exploited in the study of discourse analysis.

The analysis has focused on the four prepositions, *in, to, with, for* as a collocate of *China, Japan, North Korea* and *South Korea*. It has been shown that each name tends to be associated with different semantic functions performed by each preposition and that the different semantic patterns emerging from the lexical collocates of the prepositions can be interpreted to shed light on the ways in which these countries are represented in the newspapers.

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