A study on "inductions" hidden in the headlines of newspaper articles

Isao Iori

In the present Internet society, "headlines" are becoming more important. This paper presents a quantitative investigation of headlines and unveils some of their characteristics. This investigation focuses on the most impressive headlines, which correspond to the titles of E–mails, and which can be termed "alerts".

I collated all of the headlines in the articles of the Asahi Shinbun Digital edition delivered by email every morning in 2015. I then analyzed the frequency of topics by sorting them into the three categories: "alert", "today's topics" and "noticeable news". I discovered that the topic "(Japanese) politics" was intentionally avoided in the "alerts".

In 2015, politics were a special concern of Japanese people, as the so-called national security bills were deliberated in the Diet. Therefore, the fact that the leading "liberal" paper did not include politics in its "alerts" was very unnatural. Although this topic was often included in the front pages of other digital newspapers, the Asahi Shinbun Digital only included politics in its "noticeable news" of the day.

The results strongly suggest that this omission was intentional, which further implies this newspaper's lack of confidence in reporting politics.