リサーチ最前線：博士論文紹介

Hierarchical Evaluations in Japanese ODA:
A Discourse Analysis of Development Aid Evaluations

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Abstract

日本の国際開発における不偏性を調べるために事業評価の談話分析を行った。日本の国際開発の評価に関するディスコースをステークホルダー別で集め（JICA 職員、開発コンサルティング会社員、各組織の評価政策等）認知言語学理論の概念を用いた結果、英語の "evaluation" と日本語の「評価」は根本的に異なった認知構造があることが明らかになった。

The objective of this research is to provide an in-depth analysis exploring the concept of impartiality through institutional procedures within Japan's international development community. An exploration of project evaluations as a professional genre in the current situational context reveals a model of interdependence clashes with existing conceptualizations of impartiality that are linked to independence. This model of interdependence can be used to explain the situated language-use of institutional actors that has been observed. The current analysis has found that the structure of "evaluations" as a cognitive linguistic category is conceptualized utilizing vertical schemas to place "evaluators" above "evaluates" within a spatial hierarchy, suggesting that an evaluator's impartiality can be closely linked to her perceived authority within a spatial hierarchy, as opposed to her independence. Evidence of the noticeable hierarchical structures and the importance of interdependence within the development discourse are presented from user-level language amongst Japanese subjects, as well as higher-level policy documents within Japan and from the international community. This dissertation has used an analytical discussion grounded in the observations of the Japanese development community to argue that a markedly distinct social construct of impartiality has been observed within the institutional context of project evaluations in the Japanese development community.

Analytical approaches

This paper presents one of the main findings presented in a doctoral dissertation. The dissertation itself took an interdisciplinary approach and has borrowed analytical frameworks from several fields to produce a Discourse Analytic study. In order to produce a systematic discussion of the concept of impartiality as a social construct, this research at first employed a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), an influential method of social research that was developed in response to Grand Theory

and extreme positivism in the academic community. In addition, multiple methods of data collection and analysis have been synthesized in order to explore the case of development aid evaluations in Japan. Although each of the approaches that were used possess comprehensive frameworks for defining and guiding academic research, this dissertation utilizes a flexible approach that feeds off of several discourse analytic methods.

These fields include: Genre analysis (Bhatia, 2002; Swales, 1990, 2004), which is used examine the evaluation practices and policies of development institutions as a form of professional discourse. Pragmatic analyses (Austin, 1962; Grice, 1975; Brown and Levinson, 1987) are used to of interviewee testimony and conversational interaction will allow us to build a deeper understanding of *genre knowledge* and the institutional practices they form. Language that reflects knowledge and practices within the socio-cognitive domain (Bhatia, 2002) are examined with cognitive-linguistic concepts (Langacker, 1986; Croft, 1993; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Cognitive linguistics allows the analysis to systematically reveal how specific utterances identified through this study constitute a markedly different situational context that is observed amongst Japanese development professionals. The main findings presented here in this paper fall under the category of this last field of cognitive linguistics.

The main purpose of the research is to argue that a distinct form of impartiality can be observed (via the evaluation process) within the Japanese development community through a cognitive linguistic analysis of language-use by members of this discourse community. In other words, language use by Japanese development aid professionals reveals a distinct social construct of "evaluations (*hyouka*)" in contrast to English-speaking contexts. The discourse of development professionals in Japan's international aid community has been analyzed to reveal the components (i.e., categories, domains, and schemas) of a cultural model within the development communities. A "cultural model" has been defined in discourse analytic literature as:

> …every day "theories" (i.e., storylines, images, schemas, metaphors, and models) about the world that tell people what is "typical" or "normal", not universally, but from the perspective of a particular Discourse (Gee, 2004, p.40: emphasis added).

As this definition states, details about the cognitive linguistic elements of development discourse, such as schemas and metaphors, constitute a discussion of the cultural model (or models) that are used by development professionals to interpret and function within an institutional setting. The evaluation documents and relevant development policies that have been incorporated directly in this analysis include. Schemas of this nature have been identified in Japanese development discourse, and will be presented here.

Findings: Vertical Schemas within Development Aid Evaluation Discourse

Evidence within the genre (Bhatia, 1993) of evaluations and language use of development professionals reveals the use of hierarchical and vertical schemas when conceptualizing evaluations and development work. This hierarchical language represents the observable evidence and remnants of a cultural model manifesting itself in the knowledge structure (Rosch, 1999; Langacker 2001) of institutional actors (i.e., development professionals as the discourse community (Swales, 1988)).

Relational goals within an interdependent system that are threatened through the critical nature of evaluation procedures are moderated using values and practices of a vertically organized social hierarchy. Consequently, this is reflected directly in the cognitive-semantic construction of evaluations (examples of these constructions will be presented in the following paragraphs). Hierarchy can be used to frame independent and impartial actors as part of the interdependent group. As "independent" evaluators can in some extreme cases be viewed as an "enemy", interview subjects explained how "completely" or "purely" independent entities will experience difficulty being incorporated or accepted as part of the collaborative goals of an interdependent group. However, this paper suggests that exploiting a social hierarchy allows external evaluators to be perceived as part of an interdependent network of stakeholders from a position of authority and privilege. The presence of an independent evaluator can (and in some cases, will need to) be legitimized through her authority

This exploitation of social hierarchy is most exemplified by an alternate phrasing of "to evaluate" that can be observed in the Japanese language, and is prevalent among the language of Japanese development professionals. Similar to English, the Japanese word for "evaluations" (*hyouka*) can take the form of "to evaluate" (*hyouka suru*), creating a verbal noun, or the "to" form. In its basic form, *-suru* is post-fixed to the noun to create the verb form of the activity:

(1) 評価 (*hyouka)* 'evaluation' (N)
(2) 評価する(*hyouka-suru*) 'to evaluate' (V)

However, an analysis of the interviewee testimony and conversational interaction between development professionals displays the following phraseology of "performing evaluations": "評価を下す" (*hyouka-wo-kudasu*). This phrase, which roughly translates to "passing down and evaluation", or "handing down and evaluation" is a verbal noun that is constructed using the verb *-kudasu*:

(3) 下す(*kudasu*)
    a.   pass judgment, conclude, rule.
    b.   issue an order.

The plain irregular verb form of *-suru* ('to do') in (11) is replaced with the subject marker *-wo* and *-kudasu*, which is a verb that incorporates the semantic component[1] of path, and can be used to refer to the passing of judgments, conclusions, rules, or orders. English verbs use particles such as "over" or "under" to specify the path of the verb in phrases such as "run over" and "hide under". Japanese, on the other hand, is a verb framing language "in which the semantic component of path is incorporated in a single verb, such as *hairu* 'enter', *deru* 'exit', and *agaru* "ascend" (Tsujimura, 2002). It may be useful to clarify that the *kanji* character for *-kudasu* is a directional term in itself, and takes many forms including the following:

(4) 下(*shita*) "bottom" (N)

(5) 下がる(*sagaru*) "descend, lower" (V)

Kudasu, however, is a unique form of the deictic verb[2] used only in certain contexts, phrases, and actions – one of which includes evaluations. Thus the following verb phrase is constructed:

(6) 評価を下す

    hyouka-wo-kudasu

    evaluation-to-pass(V)

    [an evaluation that is passed/handed downwards]

    "(To) hand down an evaluation"

We will now provide arguments that illustrate the significance of this phrase by utilizing concepts developed in cognitive-linguistics and semantics. The significance of focusing specifically on *-kudasu* can be justified with the help of Talmy's gestaltic work, which indicates the significance of such "closed-classed" subsystems of language for determining conceptual structure, and the systematic spatial structuring in language (2000, 2005). "Closed-class" forms (to which *-kudasu* belongs) refer to language elements that are relatively difficult to augment, (e.g., case inflections, conjunctions, prepositions) and pertains to paths, sites, shapes, or dispositions (Talmy, 2005). An examination of the use of *-kudasu*

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[1] Semantics refers to the study of meaning. In linguistics, a semantic property or component is an aspect that contributes to the meaning of a unit (e.g., a word or how the word is used in a phrase to signify meaning). The verb form *-suru* has no component of path, meaning direction is not a factor when one uses the verb *-suru*. For example, if one were to say "テストをする (*tesuto-wo-suru*)", meaning, 'to take a test', we envision a person sitting and taking a test. If we say "テストへ行く (*tesuto-[h]e-iku*)", meaning, 'go to a test', the person is now moving towards the location of a test. The semantic information within the verb *iku* ('to go') therefore contains the component of path/movement, in contrast to *suru* ('to do').

[2] Deictic verbs are verbs that require contextual information to be interpreted properly. Its meaning interpretation requires relative information of time, space, or social aspects of the situation.

reveals how Japanese development professionals possess a markedly contrasting knowledge structure of evaluations as a cognitive-semantic construct. The notion of "evaluations" being something to be "passed" or "handed down(wards)" is a product of the perceived structure of an "evaluation" as a category.

One of the primary principles of cognitive linguistics research is to contribute to an understanding of perceived world structure by elucidating the process in which language users moderate the categorization of terms and concepts (Rosch, 1999). The current analysis reveals an observable world structure as reflected in the language of Japanese speakers, who perceive a correlational structure that does not exist when interpreted from a (native) English-speaking context. By looking specifically at the phrase *hyouka-wo-kudasu*, within the domain of international development, the analysis enables us to index "semantic or cognitive categories which are themselves recognized as participating in larger conceptual structures of some sort" (Fillmore, 2006).

Again using Talmy's (2000, 2005) theoretical work to interpret these results, we can segment the spatial schema of "evaluations" into individual components of the Figure and Grounds. The Figure "is a moving or conceptually movable entity whose path, site, or orientation is conceived as a variable, the particular value of which is the relevant issue"; the Ground "is a reference entity, one that has a stationary setting relative to a reference frame, with respect to which the Figure's path, site, or orientation is characterized" (Talmy, 2005). The combination of the figure and grounds creates a planar image of the spatial relations between the evaluator and the evaluatee, rather than a linear or parallel image formation. These spatial heuristics, known as image schemas, were developed and proposed to represent a psychological reality with supporting evidence from experimental research in psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and developmental psychology (Gibbs and Colston, in Clausner and Croft, 1999).

The cognitive linguistic perspective assumes that individuals build knowledge and order information to make sense of the world around them. From this perspective, it is proposed that multiple levels of abstraction of categories are formed in a culture, and that the internal structures of categories are segmented across two dimensions: the (a) horizontal and (b) vertical dimensions (Roach and Lloyd, 1978). The (a) horizontal dimension denotes the segmentation of categories at the same level of inclusiveness (i.e., exclusive concepts), while the (b) vertical dimension denotes the level of inclusiveness of the category (i.e., type-specificity). Thus, for example, the vertical dimension organizes concepts in increasingly abstract terms; for example: [Barack Obama] is the [President of the US] is a [Politician] is a [Person]. The horizontal dimension of similar terms would distinguish prototypical categories that would be included as part of the same group: for example, how [Barack Obama] and [George HW Bush], [pen] and [pencil], or [tea] and [coffee] relate to one another ([US Presidents], [writing utensils], and [beverages], respectively). The current example being examined is elucidating a unique feature about the category of Japanese "evaluations" through a consideration of this horizontal dimension: What other

actions, including evaluations, can be appropriately completed with the phrase *-kudasu*?

Principles of categorization propose that the logic of natural language use is a significant representation of the categorization of terms. Thus, logical categories allow similar terms defined by a prototype to be substitutable in sentences. A prototype is a representative example of a category, in other words, "they appear to be just those members of a category that most reflect the redundancy structure of the category as a whole" (Roach and Lloyd, 1978, p. 12). An exercise in substitutability clearly demonstrates a prototype of evaluative actions that is different from that of the English category. Other actions to which *-kudasu* is attached include:

(7) 判決を下す

   Hanketsu-wo-kudasu

   Ruling/verdict-sub-make

   "Hand down a verdict"

(8) 判断を下す

   Handan-wo-kudasu

   Judgment-sub-make

   "Pass a judgment"

English equivalents to the phrases of (16) and (17) are represented by to "hand down a verdict", or to "pass a judgment". If we substitute the "verdict", or "judgment" with "evaluation", the difference in prototypical categories becomes evident:

(9) *Hand down an evaluation

(10) Pass an evaluation   ("Pass": successfully complete)

Sentence (18) proves to be an unnatural phrase, while sentence (19) shows that a different frame will be applied to interpret the sentence: "pass" is interpreted as a goal-oriented action, (i.e., "to successfully complete an evaluation"), rather than as a subject-oriented action performed from a position of authority, which is the interpretation of "to pass a judgment". The notions of "passing" or "handing down" judgments and verdicts place the concepts within a category that recognize the inherent authority within the actions. The Japanese phrase of *hyouka-wo-kudasu* places evaluations in this same category. Where substitutability can be applied naturally in Japanese, we find it is not the case in English.

Several other examples of the vertical path-infused phrases were found in the language of development

professionals describing the evaluation process. The spatial positioning of individuals and groups within the development network are referred to directly, in a manner that resembles someone referring to one's own "standing" in an organization.

Development Consultant :	JICA とコンサルの<u>立ち位置</u>の大きな違いがあるから、なんだかんだ言って…しゅんとなって丸めるでしょう。 There's a large difference in where JICA and the consultants **stand**, so in the end…[consultants] will give in and end it [the disagreement].

This example discusses how there exists a difference in the "立ち位置" (*tachi-ichi*: standing position) of JICA and Consultants. However, within this context this phrase also assumes a vertical orientation relative to other organizations in defining the dimensions of the "standing position". The relative differences in a "standing position" are defined with vertical dimensions, as opposed to a horizontal, scalar, or centrality (distance to a center) dimensions. This also helps frame the common usage of the phrase "上目線" (*ue-mesen*: arrogant) that is used to describe the arrogant behaviour of others in a professional context. The term *ue-mesen* is shortened from:

(11) "上から（の）目線"

　　Ue-kara-mesen

　　Above-(from)-viewpoint (view from above)

　　"condescending; arrogant; looking down on"

The shortened phrase forms an adjective that is a vertical-spatial description of the relationship between entities. Literal translations of the *kanji* characters are "上" (*ue*: up, above), "目線" (*mesen*: perspective; viewpoint). The inherent vertical hierarchies within social relationships, however, can also be seen reflected in subtler and less explicit language mechanisms. For example, the following phrases use a hierarchical schema to frame the flow of information taking place between JICA, consultants, and district offices:

JICA official:	ある程度情報[を]現場から<u>上げてもらって</u>評価をする。 To a certain extent, we evaluate using information that is **brought up** from the [teams in the] field.

JICA official:	基本[的に]在外事務所から、日本に要望が<u>上がってきて</u>、それを本部と外務省で出来るか出来ないかを判断する。 In principle a request **comes up** from the district offices to [the] Japan [office], and then headquarters and MOFA will decide on whether or not it [the request] can or cannot be done.

These utterances describe the flow of information within the development process with a hierarchical spatial schema. Information is depicted as *"flowing upwards"* towards JICA or MOFA offices and staff, who will then use the information to conduct project evaluations (from the elevated position). In addition to explanations for the flow and direction of information, metaphorical descriptions of the act of gathering information are also framed using a vertical schema:

Development Consultant：	[考える必要があることは]コンサルが言ってることを<u>くみ取る</u>のか、後はもしくは CP（カウンターパート）が言ってることを汲み取るのか、で汲み取った結果どれくらいそれを[レポートに]反映させるのか。 [What you need to think about is] whether you **pick up** what the consultants are saying, or you **pick up** what the CP (counterparts) are saying, and after **picking up** [that information] how well can you reflect that [in the reports].
JICA Official:	情報を<u>くみ取った</u>上で評価をしている Evaluations are done after **picking up** the information [from the field and through research]

This is an example of a "dead metaphor" (although some may argue it not to be dead entirely), in which the original metaphorical imagery is no longer the defining character of its use. "くみ取る" or "汲み取る" (both read as *kumi-toru*) are polysemantic[3] idioms. The two definitions of *kumi-toru* are:

(12) 汲み取る （くみとる） [*kumi-toru*] :

    a. To scoop or transport liquids; to transfer liquids from one container to another.

    b. To understand or become aware of another's feelings or situation; to empathize or sympathize. (*Daijisen*, 2010, author translation)

The phrase originates from the act of collecting or gathering water from their sources (wells, lakes, rivers, etc.), as represented by sentences (13) and (14). It can also be used to describe the action of distributing liquids, e.g., pouring tea for others from the pot (お茶をくむ *ocha-wo-kumu* "to pour tea") and is metaphorically applied to the collection and interpretation of information, in sentence (15).

(13) 水を汲む

    Mizu-wo-kumu

    water-sub-collect

    "[To] gather/collect water"

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[3] A single term or phrase that has multiple meanings.

(14)　水を汲み取る

　　　Mizu-wo-kumi-toru

　　　Water-sub-kumi-take

　　　"To gather/collect water"

(15)　報を汲み取る

　　　Jouhou-wo-kumi-toru

　　　Information-sub-kumi-take

　　　"[To] gather/understand information"

This metaphor characterizes the form and structure of the information as a liquid. The phrasing suggests that in order to generate an appropriate understanding of information, useful or relevant information is to be selectively chosen or skimmed from the top, as if from a body of water. This also places the information gatherers and evaluators at an elevated position from the underground sources of information.

These findings illustrate the cognitive-linguistic features that are associated with evaluations, and are able to add another dimension to discursive psychology's discussion of "object side" and "subject side" constructions of such action verbs (Edwards, 2007). These findings place "evaluations" within the category of a "verb of judging" (Fillmore 1969; Fillenbaum and Rapoport, 1974), in the Japanese context – one that also contains within it the characteristics of an appropriate evaluator. The interpersonal characteristics of an appropriate evaluator are implied (Au, 1986) within the cognitive-linguistic category of *hyouka* – one that is vertically or spatially above the evaluatee – which has constructed an accepted definition that links social cognition with reality (Semin and Fiedler, 1988).

Discussion: The privileged evaluator and vertical evaluations within institutional structure and practice

A study by Richardson et al. (2003) discusses how vertical image schemas were ascribed to the verb "respect", and so it must be clarified that these findings do not mean to suggest that the hierarchical schema are unique and observable only in the Japanese context and culture. The analysis means to argue that a distinctly marked cognitive-linguistic category of "evaluations" has been identified, in which Japanese subjects use hierarchical linguistic categories to construct an understanding of evaluations that are fundamentally different to that of the English term. Evaluations are perceived as an assessment or judgment to be made by authority figures within a social hierarchy, or ordered down upon subjects from a position of privilege. Some further digging into the evaluation procedures of Japan's development community confirmed how this specific knowledge structure is ritualized and reinforced through institutional discourse and practice.

As briefly mentioned before, the hierarchical schema also applies naturally to the structure of the organizations, which in turn shapes the implementation of evaluation procedures. Vertical schemas are not only evident in the language of the institutional actors (the Speakers and subjects). They can also be found in observations of those other than Japanese development professionals (i.e., the international community). The following excerpt is taken from a comprehensive report of Japanese ODA practices written and published by peer-evaluators from the OECD, with examiners representing the European Commission and the United States.

> MOFA focuses on **policy** and **programme** evaluation, and JICA and JBIC place their primary emphasis on **project**-level evaluation. <u>While this information tends **to rise vertically** within the framework of each of the ODA organisations</u>, a growing effort is being made to share feedback among agencies so as to encourage a process of common learning. MOFA formed joint committees on ODA evaluation feedback (Internal ODA Evaluation Feedback Liaison Committee) and to share perspectives among ministries. (Peer Review of Japan, OECD DAC report 2004)

This is a clear example of how reviewers from the OECD also describe Japanese ODA evaluations as one in which information "rise[s] vertically". Interviewee testimony of evaluation practices also displayed the use of vertical schema in conceptualizing the organizational structure of Japanese ODA institutions, for example:

Development Consultant ：	…JICA の評価が来て、色んな人にインタビューをしにきて、上から下まで…
	…the JICA evaluations come in, and they interview all the people, **<u>top to bottom</u>**…

Evaluation procedures are perceived to work their way through a vertical structure of organizations, by interviews and meetings with "lower-level" workers and staff as well as "higher-level" decision-makers and managers. Thus we can observe how the privilege that is associated with evaluations is inherently linked to the vertical spatial schema that is also applied to the act of collecting information, the nature of the information, and the structure of the organizations that hold the information. All of these semantic schemas frame the perception of a legitimate evaluator as an entity that merits a privileged position of elevated status. The source-path-goal of evaluations are defined as an asymmetric relationship between entities within a hierarchy. The exploration of semantic categories of *hyouka* and "evaluations" across Japanese and English prototypes reveal distinct constructs, which are also evidence of the relationship between a specific cultural context and the structure of knowledge.

As impartial evaluators are understood to be partaking in an action with inherent authority and privilege, Japanese institutional practices are consistent with values and a belief-system that emphasize the hierarchical social order. As a result, evaluators are often legitimized and validated for their authority, expertise, or privilege – characteristics that will place them higher in a social hierarchy. In this manner, completely "independent" evaluators, who would otherwise be perceived as extraneous or irrelevant, are conceptually included into the interdependent system. Although evaluators are independent of the development process or project management cycle, their expertise in certain fields or their prestigious status as respected experts in larger circles will justify their duty to evaluate (down upon) the project members.

These findings suggest that some evaluations in the development community are not perceived as an independent act to be conducted amongst peers, or a vessel for critical thought to hold higher institutions accountable; they are a privileged act of assessment to be exercised from a position of authority or power. From a critical discourse analytic perspective (Fairclough, 1989), these findings can be interpreted as an explicit reflection of reinforced power (inequalities) within the institutional structure of Japan's development industry. Hierarchical language that is reflected in evaluation discourse reinforces the relative power differences between development organizations (i.e., MOFA and/or JICA having more power than the consultants and counterpart institutions), and how JICA has a need to "*kudasu*" evaluations (downward) unto the less powerful and "lower" dependent development consultants. The resulting power structure can help JICA (and MOFA) ensure that development projects and agendas reflect national interests (through the government bureaucracy), without displacing too much procedural power over to independent (private sector or civil) organizations through the evaluation process.

Conclusion: Hierarchical vs. Independent Evaluations.
Revealing the vertical schemas and metaphors that have been found within conceptualizations of Japan's development community does not mean to contribute to a scathing critique of these public institutions (such as those in the spirit of Orwell or Barthes, cf. Apthorpe 1986). This discussion intends only to demonstrate how a model of interdependence, in combination with a vertically organized social order, can give birth to language that applies vertical schemas and metaphors directly to the construct of evaluations – an institutional mechanism that is in place precisely to hold those institutions accountable. If we are to critically examine this situation, the logic of hierarchical evaluations does not form an ideal situation for ensuring a balance of power. If accountability mechanisms are meant to retain a balance of power between institutions and the people that support them (i.e., government bodies and the tax payers), it does not seem necessary (or appropriate) to have as a prerequisite, an authoritarian or hierarchical schema attached to it. In fact, if we are to deconstruct the logic of the privileged evaluator, we find that only those with *more* power, or *more* authority, have the privilege or right to evaluate and assess the actions of those with power. If this is the case, a social mechanism (meant to support a cultural model)

of this sort over time will only result in the consolidation of power amongst powerful institutions.

To prevent such consolidations in power, and to ensure that people do not fall victim to the "tyranny of the majority" (Tocqueville, in Horwitz, 1966; Susskind and Cruikshank, 2006), powerful concepts such as deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1996) and impartiality have been conceived as a means for allowing people to generate and choose fair decisions. These aspirations for social justice can be seen reflected in existing definitions of impartial evaluations, which hold independence and externality as defining principles used to legitimize such procedures. Again, examples from the OECD illustrate this construct:

> The evaluation process should be impartial and <u>independent</u> from the process concerned with policy-making, and the delivery and management of development assistance.
> (OECD, 1991, p. 6)

The World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (WB-IEG) also supports this view of impartiality as applied to evaluations in a Sourcebook for Evaluations published in 2007. Dimensions of independence as related to components of the development process are defined within a section entitled "Independence and Impartiality as a Prerequisite for Credibility of Evaluation", which states:

> To ensure its credibility, the evaluation process <u>should be independent</u> from any process involving program policy making, management, or activity implementation, as well as impartial. Impartiality is the absence of bias in due process, in the scope and methodology, and in considering and presenting achievements and challenges. The principle of impartiality applies to all members of the governing body, other donors and partners, management, beneficiaries, and the evaluation team. And the <u>requirements for</u> <u>independence</u> and impartiality are present at all stages of the evaluation process… (WB-IEG, 2007, p. 15)

These clear definitions of the need for independence to perform impartial and credible evaluations frame the critical dimension of this entire dissertation. Current practices by JICA reveal that a large number of evaluations are conducted internally with evaluation teams, which forms a mechanism of closed impartiality (Sen, 2002) that are made credible through dimensions of hierarchical authority, rather than independence. Clearly, independence and impartiality are not "present at <u>all</u> stages of the evaluation process", as defined by the World Bank above. There are clearly different institutional understandings of what it means to conduct impartial and credible evaluations.

However, this discussion has attempted to illustrate how certain characteristics of Japanese development

discourse can be explained as the product of salient concerns for legitimizing evaluators within a hierarchical social order, in order to better fit a cultural model of interdependence. The aim is not to dismiss the entire efforts of Japan's ODA community and claim that there is no accountability being exercised at all. As hierarchy can be used to alleviate the relational tension that is inherent in the face-threatening act of evaluations, it has been proposed that evaluations are schematically conceptualized as a vertical process, with a spatial understanding that the "position" of an evaluator is located above the subject that she is evaluating. Naturally, an authoritative or hierarchical figure is perceived as the appropriate entity to enact this role. The lack of independence observed in current evaluation practices in Japan's development community can be explained not simply as a lack of impartiality, but also as the manifestation of contrasting social mechanisms that legitimize the impartiality of evaluators within an interdependent system.

This summary will conclude here after what has been an attempt to provide a brief discussion of how a substantial amount of development discourse from a range of sources – i.e., stakeholder perceptions, policy discourse, institutional practices, and social interaction – all fit within a cultural model of interdependence, which consequently results in a unique hierarchical construct of evaluations and impartiality.

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