
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Analysis of the Civil Power of the News by Civil and Anti-Civil Reporting of the ICC: In Case of Brexit as News Story

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| ABSTRACT

In the civil sphere, news excises its civil power by making civil and anti-civil judgments. These judgments need media organizations to use specific lexis to emphasize the public sentiment with ICC of identity, legitimacy, and risk. Thus, Brexit as a news story is selected from 12th November to 18th November 2018 from The Mirror, The Guardian, and The Washington Post in this paper. In terms of ICC of identity determination, journalists prefer to use a combination of pros and cons to reflect the impact of the Brexit event on the public. Concerning ICC of legitimacy, journalists mostly focus on the border problem of Northern Ireland by using anti-civil judgments. For the part of the ICC risk, the government gives some specific measures to overcome potential risks which belong to civil judgment. The rest reports just list what risks would happen and what influence people and the state will face but do not give positive and effective measures, so these reports belong to anti-civil judgment. In short, the analysis reveals that the news media prefer using anti-civil judgement over civil judgement by using compound language with multiple positive and negative perspectives to achieve this purpose of reporting.

| KEYWORDS

Civil power, News, ICC, Identity, Legitimacy, Risk, Brexit

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Brexit has become a worldwide topic after a slim (52:48) majority in the United Kingdom voted "leave" in the referendum on EU membership on 23 June 2016 (Bachmann and Sidaway, 2016). The United Kingdom's authority made a Brexit deal in order to out of the European Union step by step since 2016. Once it happened, a majority of media outlets, including The Mirror, The Guardian and The Washington Post, focused on this political event. According to the civil power of the news of invariant civil concerns (ICCs) theory from Harrison (2019), the author only pays attention to the Brexit news story to present the civil power of the news and analyse the relationship to ICCs for identity, legitimacy and risk. Therefore, The chosen news reports about Brexit in this paper are selected from 12th November to 18th November 2018 from The Mirror, The Guardian and The Washington Post. And through analysis, it is founded that the media pay more attention to the content of the Brexit deal and what influence people will face if the UK leaving from EU with no deal at the beginning of this case. In this stage, the civil judgment of identity, legitimacy and risk all were emphasized. Along with the deeper investigation, journalists started to analyze what troubles the world leadership over, the problem of the country's border as well as Brexit how to influence the UK's business. Thus, the civil judgment and anti-civil judgment of legitimacy and risk both were included in these news reports.

2. Literature Review

In the book of 'The Civil Power of News', author Harrison (2018) sets the civil power of news in the civil sphere theory and puts the mass media as a civil institution. Harrison (2018) thinks that whether in civil society or anti-civil society, the news ought to know its responsibility and point out what the audience should value and preserve. Thus, in the mass media atmosphere, analysis of

public sentiment with invariant civil concerns (ICC) of the identity, legitimacy and risk in a certain news story to get a relationship among each others, which is meaningful and importantly.

The focus point of ICC's identity in Harrison(2018) theory is with who and what "I" am, who and what "we" are, as well as who and what "they" are. In other words, ICC of identity is to use specific words or expression methods to clarify who or what is civil status and who or what is anti-civil status. Meanwhile, the implications of civil and anti-civil judgments are usually presented in a news story from the angles of age, gender, religion, class and so on. And civil emotion can be influenced by these judgments from the news story. Sometimes, media organizations engage with different viewpoints from, both positive and negative, to achieve a seeming balance. Sometimes, they directly use audience ideas in the news reporting. Whatever the media use approaches, the result is that the audience will recognize or comprehend the perspectives from news media.

The ICC of legitimacy is concerning with the concept of authority, which can be understood with two different meanings, one is the strength of moral principles, another is formal laws, power, justice, rights and responsibility. With regard to the non-civil society, the basic legitimation demand (BLD) gives a method to distinguish legitimate states from illegitimate states, and it also helps the audience know what is acceptable for civil life. Concerning the civil sphere, there are two civil institutions, the law and the factual media can improve the demands for legitimacy. In this process, news media play a significant role in helping people to evaluate and judge the civil and anti-civil by using the news lexis. Specifically, the attitude of agreement and disagreement, or trust and distrust, reflected in the news media through reports about the actions of civil and non-civil institutions is a judgment about events related to the ICC of legitimacy. Generally, news languages prefer using an expression like "what is right or wrong", "what is just or unjust", "what is fair or unfair", and so on.

The ICC of risk is about how "we" worry about things and people who may threaten "our" own world. The risks that the public need to face and confront can stimulate their sense of belonging and solidarity. When the news covering the ICC of risk, people would increase connections with events which threaten their civil life. This will influence the public's attitude toward risks. These risks include two main types. One can be scientifically measured, which is more objective, like financial, health and environmental risks; another one is the emotional relationship to risk, which pays more attention to individuals' and groups' subjective perceptions.

3. Methodology

In this research, in order to better analyze the outstanding ICC of identity, legitimacy, and risk in the news story, the author selected Brexit as a news story case. And considering the diversity of news samples covering the same news story, two British different newspapers and one American newspaper were selected, namely The Mirror, The Guardian and The Washington Post. The time period of news reporting is from 12th November to 18th November 2018.

During the time period, the author selected 15 pieces of news about Brexit and use Lexis analysis of content analysis method to research:

Which ICCs are emphasized in the reporting of Brexit news stories?
How the ICCs have been portrayed in Brexit news stories?

4. Results and Discussion

Over one week, all three ICCs are described in the chosen news articles. The ICC of identity in the context of Brexit is focused on three different ways. First, the civil values that government insists democracy and honest to make the Brexit deal. Second, people's attitude towards Brexit and the leadership. Third, immigration measure brings to effects, show the civil and anti-civil identities. The ICC of legitimacy is portrayed in the news articles in two different ways. First, the legitimacy's censorship of Brexit is a bidirectional judgment. Second, the problem of the Northern Ireland border stimulates the legitimacy of state sovereignty. The ICC of risk is also explained in three ways. First, the army would assist polices in maintaining social unrest caused by Brexit, which is a positive civil measure. Second, Brexit would influence the business that prices rising and inflation. Third, No deal Brexit would bring the exchanges of peoples' lifestyles. The above using anti-civil language to express but not give useful measures to confront the risks.

The news reports were chosen from two different UK national newspapers---the Mirror, the Guardian, and one USA national newspaper---the Washington Post; furthermore, in order to guarantee the event reported comprehensively and variously for ICC analysis, the extent of reporting is from different five days during one week.

Alexander (2006) claimed that the civil sphere or civil society is considered an ideal module; in spite of this, there are some differences to some extent. And in this process, the media, as one of the civil institutions, has the ability to maintain the civil sphere's boundaries, which means journalists are able to do this judgment (Lamont and Molnar, 2002).

Brexit, described by coverage as a political decision or measure, has been reported from different perspectives, which is beneficial to analyze by using the ICC method, including identity, legitimacy, and risk. However, in this news story, there are two diverse starting views, the UK and the EU. From different subjects, the analyzing result of ICC is the opposite. Therefore, in this paper, I took the UK as the theoretical subject to research ICC in the whole process of the Brexit story.

4.1 Identity

For the civil judgment, the Mirror focused on emphasizes civil values, status and citizenship in the 15th November report. In this report¹, Jacob Rees-Mogg, a member of the Conservative, said: "We are a democracy. And that's why these splendid people can shout away. Because we believe in the right of free protest." In his words, he still emphasized that the UK is a democratic country when facing the stop Brexit protesters. The using languages are "we" and "our" in this news in order to identify the civil value of respecting different voices to articulate particular viewpoints as government officers. Meanwhile, in the Washington Post on 18th November², Dominic Raab, the Brexit secretary, said: "we need to be very honest with the country that we will not be bribed...." The above two reports emphasized "democracy" and "honest" words in order to give the audience a piece of important information that the government represents the people, which belongs to civil citizenship. Furthermore, the Guardian reported³ that Theresa May insisted that as prime minister, her job is to make up a deal and emphasized leadership is about making the right decision, not the easy ones. This piece of news shows that the officer protects the citizens' rights and claims to be representative of civil society. Moreover, on 17th November, the Mirror report⁴ claimed that half of Britain's voters supported Theresa May as PM to finish the Brexit Deal, which means that people trust May showed civil attitudes as an active citizenry. As Krosnick (1988) believes that the voters' significant attitudes are likely to be more powerful guides of candidates. So, on the one hand, it shows people trust leadership; on the other hand, it also can promote governing party to be a better deal with Brexit.

For the anti-civil judgment, there are some news cases also showing anti-civil attitudes, non-compatibility, and civil intolerance. On 14th November, the Washington Post reported⁵ that people were extremely tired of talking about Brexit. Furthermore, the leaders of the "Leave" movement said: "Theresa May's Brexit agreement is the worst deal in history." So in this report, we can see that people avoided this problem with a negative attitude, and relevant leaders defended the leadership. Because some people think that their society was deeply divided by Brexit (Ashcroft and Bevir, 2016). In another newspaper, on 12th November, "Britain had all but given up on a special Brexit deal summit at the end of November as there remain too many sticking points to complete the talks in the time originally", said the Guardian⁶. In this report, "too many sticking", "give up" these worlds send a negative attitude towards the government, which judgment can influence public sentiment. Thus these belong to the anti-civil judgment of ICC identity.

However, it is founded that a piece of reporting is not just judged as civil reporting or anti-civil reporting. The most of situation is that civil and anti-civil reporting appearing in the same news. There are two cases of news reporting demonstrate this phenomenon. The Washington Post tended to use some sharp language to reveal the UK authority facing the problems with the Brexit deal from an anti-civil angle to analyze. On 13th November, the report⁷ showed that: "Hard-line Brexiteers have pushed for a decisive split from E.U. rules and regulations." Whatever the regulations of the EU are profit or hard for the UK, Hard-line Brexiteers blindly make split out of the EU as soon as possible, which reflects unacceptable other norms. In this news, the journalists also mentioned that May, using the opposite method, sought a softer Brexit, a bundle of compromises, which can be better to protect the British economy. The word "softer" can show the protection of the values by emphasising compatibility with the anti-civil society. In this piece of news reporting, journalists use anti-civil language at first and then use civil language to describe the same event from an opposing angle, which is better to give the audience a trend of this media outlet aiming to the specific news. Media has the

¹ Smith, M. and Bloom, D. ' Stop Brexit protester drowns out Jacob Rees-Mogg's big moment in bid to topple May', *The Mirror*, 15 November 2018, [online] <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/stop-brexit-protester-drowns-out-13594568>

² Hui, S. 'UK leader warns ousting her won't make Brexit talks easier' the Washington Post, 18 November 2018, [online] https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/uk-leader-warns-ousting-her-wont-make-brexit-talks-easier/2018/11/18/650b493e-eb3c-11e8-8b47-bd0975fd6199_story.html?utm_term=.5b404d0f21c0

³ Stewart, H. and Crerar, P. 'Theresa May vows to see Brexit plan through on day of turmoil', *The Guardian*, 15 November 2018, [online] <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/nov/15/theresa-may-vows-to-see-brexit-plan-through-on-day-of-turmoil>

⁴ Nelson, N. 'Theresa May should STAY as PM to finish off Brexit deal, say half of Brit voters', *The Mirror*, 17 November 2018, [online] <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-theresa-may-prime-minister-13605171>

⁵ Drezner, D.W. ' Will Brexit end nor in tragedy but in farce?' *The Washington Post*, 14 November 2018, [online]

https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2018/11/14/will-brexit-end-not-tragedy-farce/?utm_term=.69a2819d5097

⁶ Sabbagh, D. and Boffey, D. 'UK all but gives up on November Brexit summit' *The Guardian*, 12 November 2018, [online] <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/nov/12/may-has-little-room-for-manoeuvre-brexit-german-minister-warns>

⁷ Booth, W. ' Britain and the E.U. reach a draft agreement on Brexit', *The Washington Post*, 13 November 2018, [online] https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/britain-and-the-eu-reach-a-draft-agreement-on-brexit/2018/11/13/a2f00e9c-e768-11e8-8449-1ff263609a31_story.html?utm_term=.71d8bee58d7c

potential ability to contribute to a globalized civil society by promoting democracies (Taylor, 2009). Another case⁸ is the 16th November reporting. If the UK succeed out of the E.U., immigration will be a serious problem. Thus, May promised the British people that she would control the immigration levels. May has vowed to reduce overall immigration from 100,000s annually to 10,000s and to give preference to the high-skilled and high-earning. In this measure, if the footing is British, May's measure is a benefit for the locals, and this is a civil measure. By contrast, if the start point is the whole world people, it can be seen as an anti-civil measure because this measure shows the different classics have a different corresponding policy, which breaks the basic civil value (i.e. All men are created equal).

4.2 Legitimacy

For the civil judgment, in terms of British how to deal with the relationship with the E.U., the reported⁵ said: "EU capitals want to examine any agreement made between the European Commission and the UK before it is published." From the angle of the EU, it emphasizes the importance of the need for censorship which belongs to civil legitimacy. But the subject of this essay is the UK, so it is anti-civil legitimacy for the British because the UK is an independent country, and it does not have an obligation towards the EU.

For the anti-civil judgment, "the UK signs up to 'dynamic' alignment with the state, which would in effect force parliament to cut and paste EU diktats into British law", said the Guardian⁵. This means that British law would be affected by the EU regulation, so it is an anti-civil authority of ICC legitimacy. Moreover, Brexit must deal with the serious problem that the 'Irish' border owes. Doyle and Connolly (2017) state that Brexit has a potential impact on the "peace process" in Northern Ireland, and this may destroy the peace process. Concerning this topic, the Guardian and the Washington Post both reported it from the legitimacy. On 13th November, in the report of the Washington Post⁶, the Europeans insisted Northern Ireland should remain in the European customs union about the future free-trade deal. This is a sign of anti-civil legitimacy, which challenges national sovereignty since Northern Ireland belongs to the UK. Meanwhile, the Guardian, on 16th November reporting⁹, said: "a reluctant UK offered a compromise, the Irish Free State, which was ruefully accepted by a slim majority in Ireland." Ireland spent nearly 50 years as a vassal state and struggled to assert itself as an independent nation. However, the UK believed it had made a reluctant compromise in order to reach a relative peace situation. Furthermore, Boris Johnson, who was the arch-Brexitteer, believed⁶ that the Parliament would not have a say over the laws. Mr Johnson, as the officer, expressed an antagonistic view of the legitimate because he denied parliament its legal status as a state institution.

4.3 Risk

The civil judgment of risk, its focus on how to overcome threaten, and a sense of solidarity to confront risks from Brexit. Welfens (2018) argues that Brexit is not just a historical problem, but also it will bring challenges to final marks for the 28 member states of the EU. In the news of the Guardian¹⁰, on 18th November, if the UK wanted to get more extra time to get a smooth Brexit, the EU warned the British would have to pay near £10bn more to Brussels. Theresa May wanted to pass the Brexit deal to respond to Brussels's warning. Moreover, Andrea Leadsom, who is the Pro-Brexit cabinet minister, claimed that there was still a lot of work to be done. On the same day, the Mirror¹¹ reported that the army would help the police in case of No Deal Brexit chaos; the government had made plans that the team were ordered to assist with traffic troubles. The army boss Sir Nick Carter said: "what we always do is make sensible contingency plans for all sorts of eventualities." The above news shows that the office can make informed decisions for the state and knowingly to set their trust in particular organizations. Therefore, these belong to the civil judgment of risk.

For the anti-civil judgment, there is a coverage reported by the Guardian¹² on 13th November. It described that UK food security and quality would be in danger without trade deals, and this would influence prices. In this report, journalists described some specific data to illustrate the seriousness of the situation and further strengthened the credibility of the risks through interviews

⁸ Adam, K. and Booth, W. 'Immigration worries drove the Brexit vote. Then attitudes changed.' *The Washington Post*, 16 November 2018, [online] https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/immigration-worries-drove-the-brexit-vote-then-attitudes-changed/2018/11/16/c216b6a2-bcdb-11e8-8243-f3ae9c99658a_story.html?utm_term=.15015edde71a

⁹ Neville, R. 'Brexit and 'Irish' border woes', *the Guardian*, 16 November 2018, [online] <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/nov/16/brexit-and-irish-border-woes>

¹⁰ Boffey, D. 'Brussels tells Theresa May - delaying Brexit will cost UK £10bn' *the Guardian*, 18 November 2018, [online] <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/nov/17/smooth-brexit-could-cost-10bn-extra>

¹¹ Forsyth, L. 'Army is 'on standby to help police' in case of No Deal Brexit chaos', *The Mirror*, 18 November 2018, [online] <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/army-on-standby-help-police-13609201>

¹² O'Carroll, L. 'Food prices would soar after no-deal Brexit, warns major dairy boss' *The Guardian*, 13 November 2018, [online] <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/nov/13/food-prices-would-soar-after-no-deal-brexit-warns-major-dairy-boss>

with local people and responsible government officials in Northern Ireland. Thus, it belongs to the anti-civil judgment about emphasizing vulnerability and the risk arising from Brexit. If both sides fail to finalize the withdrawal and the UK leaves the EU in a disorderly manner in March 2019, that would result in a significant slowdown in the UK economy, with GDP projected to be 2% below forecast by the end of 2020 (Goodwin, 2018). Once the UK ended up with this political measure by No Deal Brexit, what would happen in the British? The Mirror on November 14th and the Washington Post on November 17th, respectively, reported the effects in different ways. The Mirror¹³ explained what the changes would happen before and after Brexit in terms of trade and in terms of citizens' lifestyles. In the same newspaper, on 14th November, it deeply¹⁴ explained how would Brexit affect the Northern Ireland border. The news emphasized if goods and people could move freely between Northern Ireland and Ireland, it would break up the union of the UK. Furthermore, the Washington Post¹⁵ said: "No deal, according to some forecasters, would cause grave economic harm." These pieces of news just post the problem that the UK will face but not apply efficient solutions from the government, so the media has played a pressure role, and this can stimulate civil risks. Thus these are anti-civil judgments.

5. Conclusion

Through analyzing the above 15 news reports, anti-civil judgment is larger than civil judgment in this Brexit news story. In terms of the ICC identity, on the one hand, journalists simply express to the officers how to positively confront Brexit and emphasis their responsibility to represent people. This is civil judgment. On the other hand, journalists also reveal some doubts about the Brexit Deal of Mrs. May's leadership from party officers and local masses. This is anti-civil judgment. Therefore, through analyzing civil identity, I find that in some news, journalists do not just use one expression method to write a report; rather, they prefer to use combine methods to reflect the whole event from a civil and anti-civil perspective. In terms of ICC legitimacy, journalists mostly focus on the border problem of Northern Ireland. There are historical reasons and interest reasons among the countries, so all news are anti-civil judgment. For the part of the ICC risk, in these two reports, the government gives some specific measures to overcome potential risks which belong to civil judgment. The rest reports just list what risks would happen and what influence people and the state will face, but do not give positive and effective measures, so this belongs to anti-civil judgment. In the whole Brexit news story, I get another two founds. One is media tends to prefer using anti-civil language to reveal the serious situation that the UK is facing, whatever ICC identity, legitimacy and risk. Another is sometimes ICC identity, legitimacy and risk; all three are reflected in a report. Journalists want to use combined and mixed ICC language to reflect the event from several angles.

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¹³ Bloom, D. ' what is a No Deal Brexit? 21 ways you'll be affected if UK leaves EU with no deal' *The Mirror*, 12 November 2018, [online] <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/what-no-deal-brexit-what-13419829>

¹⁴ Bloom, D. ' what is the Brexit deal? Why UK negotiations with EU got so stuck for so long' *The Mirror*, 14 November 2018, [online] <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/what-is-brexit-plan-chequers-13418779>

¹⁵ Letts, Q. 'The political inertness of Brexit, the deal no one seems to like' *The Washington Post*, 17 November 2018, [online] https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-political-inertness-of-brexit-the-deal-no-one-seems-to-like/2018/11/16/37f2e9c6-e9ec-11e8-bbdb-72fdbf9d4fed_story.html?utm_term=.1c553725552b