A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TIME MAGAZINE'S COVERAGE

OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR

JULY 1967 - JANUARY 1970

By

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PREFACE

This study sought to determine if the _Time_ magazine's coverage of the Nigerian Civil War was balanced and fair to both parties - the Federal government of Nigeria and the Biafra government. The writer is from Nigeria, was concerned with the coverage received by the Federal government during the Civil War. He was concerned that the case of the Federal government was not adequately presented by the Western press, the chief among which is the _Time_ magazine.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the guidance and support given to me by my graduate work adviser and the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Journalism and Broadcasting at Oklahoma State University, Dr. Walter J. Ward. It was his assistance, more than anything else, that provided my continuing course of study.

In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Harry E. Heath, Jr., Director of the School of Journalism and Broadcasting at Oklahoma State University, whose kindness and consideration sustained me throughout the program.

My appreciation to the members of my thesis committee and, in particular, the chairman of the committee, Professor Lemuel Groom, whose patience and persistence saw me through this study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This is not a study of the Nigerian Civil War itself, but of how

the civil war was portrayed by the _Time_ magazine. The writer believes

a brief chronological description of events that led to the civil war

would provide an adequate background for those unfamiliar with Nigeria.

This background was best summarized by Lloyd when he wrote:

> The Nigerian Civil War was between the Regions and over the
> right of one of them to secede from the Federation. But the
> impetus for the war and its prolongation derived from the
> hostility which had developed between the major ethnic
> groups of the country.[1]

The dominant ethnic groups are Hausa (approximately 15 million),

Ibo (approximately 10 million) and Yoruba (approximately 10 million).

The river Niger forms the natural boundaries between these major groups

– Hausa to the north, Yoruba to the south, and Ibo to the east (see

Figure 1). These three major groups have other minor tribes within

their boundaries.

If the beginning of the civil war was the climax of the events

that happended between January, 1966 and May, 1967 (a brief description

of these events will follow later), the situation before 1966 was the

gathering of the storm for what happened on the night of January 14-15,

1966. Panter-Brick put it thus:

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[1]P. I. Lloyd, "The Ethnic Background to the Nigerian Crisis, " In
Nigerian Politics and Military Rule: Prelude to the Civil War (London,
1970), p. 11.
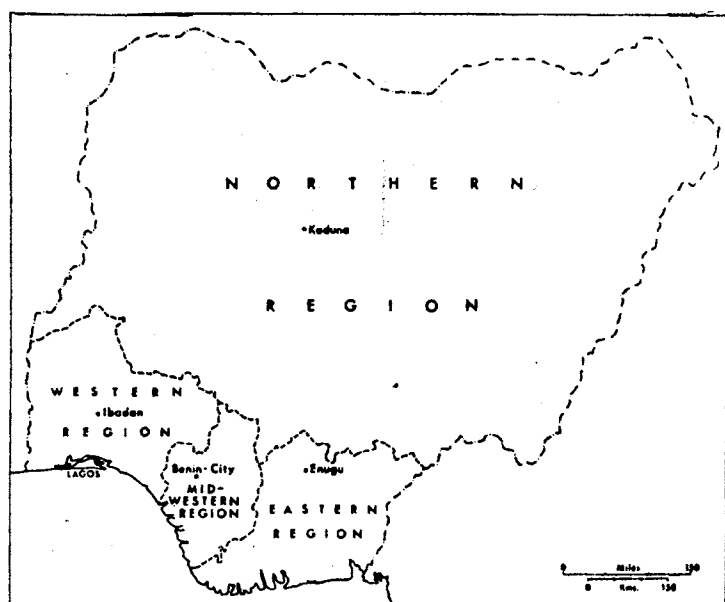
Figure 1. Map of Nigeria Showing the
Four Regions

The muted confrontation between the President and the Federal
Prime Minister, arising out of the 1964 Federal election, was
a portent of the gathering storm. The rigged elections in the
Western Region in October 1965, and the resulting breakdown of
law and order in that Region, were clearly the prelude to fur-
ther, more desperate, measures involving in all probability
the use of the army. Rumors to this effect were rife when,
in the night of 14-15 January 1966, a small group of army
officers staged a coup, murdering in the process several lead-
ing politicians and senior military officers.[2]

After the military coup on the night of January 14-15, 1966, one

event led to another at very close paces. This culminated in the civil

war. These are the major events that had direct effects on the nature

of the civil war.

On January 16, 1966, General Ironsi, an Ibo, assumed power as Head

of the Federal Military Government. He appointed military governors to

administer the Regions. In May, he formally abolished the Regions and

the Federation (see Figure 2).

The reaction was swift in the North. There were riots and massacre

of Ibo civilians presumably by the Hausa populace. And in the West,

Northern troops mutinied. General Ironsi, Colonel Fajuyi, and some one-

hundred Ibo officers and men were killed.

On August 1, Lt. Col. Gowon, a northerner, took over as Supreme

Commander of the Armed Forces and Head of the National Military Govern-

ment. Lt. Col. Ojukwu, who later became the leader of Biafra, refused

to recognize him.

Between August and April, several futile attempts were made to re-

solve the crisis peacefully. On April 1, 1967, Lt. Col. Ojukwu confis-

cated federal government revenues. This was followed by similar

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[2]S. K. Panter-Brick, "Military Coup To Civil War January 1966 To
May 1967," In Nigerian Politics and Military Rule: Prelude to the Civil
War (London, 1970), p. 16.
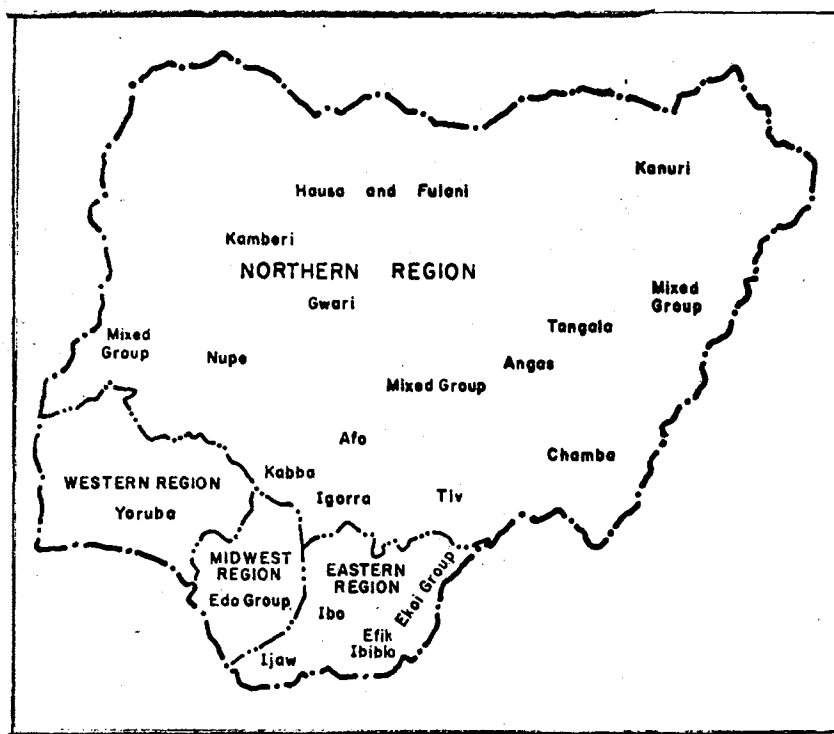
Figure 2. Map of Nigeria Showing the Old
Structure of Four Regions and
Major Tribal Groups

measures and retaliatory action by the Federal Military Government.

A meeting of the Eastern Region's Consultative Assembly was held May 26, 27. Lt. Col. Ojukwu was authorized to secede. On that same day, Lt. Col. Gowan declared a state of emergency, assumed full powers, and divided Nigeria into twelve states (see Figure 3). Finally, on May 30, the Eastern Region seceded from the Federation and declared the area covered by the Eastern Region the "Republic of Biafra" (see Figure 4). This final act led the Federal authority to launch war, at this stage was called "police action," against Biafra to bring it back into the fold.

The purpose of this study, as previously stated, is to examine the performance of _Time_ magazine during the events that took place in Nigeria in the 18 months that followed. And that event, as it is now known, is the Nigerian Civil War.

Many questions about communications are asked non-quantitatively, as in this case:

Did the _Time_ magazine deal fairly with the Federal government in its coverage of the Nigerian Civil War?[3]

The need to carry out this study arose from the generally expressed opinion among many Nigerians both at home and abroad in their attempts to answer the question raised above. Most Nigerians, who the writer spoke with, hold a very strong view that the _Time_'s coverage of the war was slanted in favor of the rebels.

This is a question of fact which is amenable to content analysis: What is the actual distribution of favorable, unfavorable, and neutral

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[3]Harold D. Laswell, "The Comparative Study of Symbols," _Hoover Institute Studies_, Series C, No. 1 (1952), p. 10.
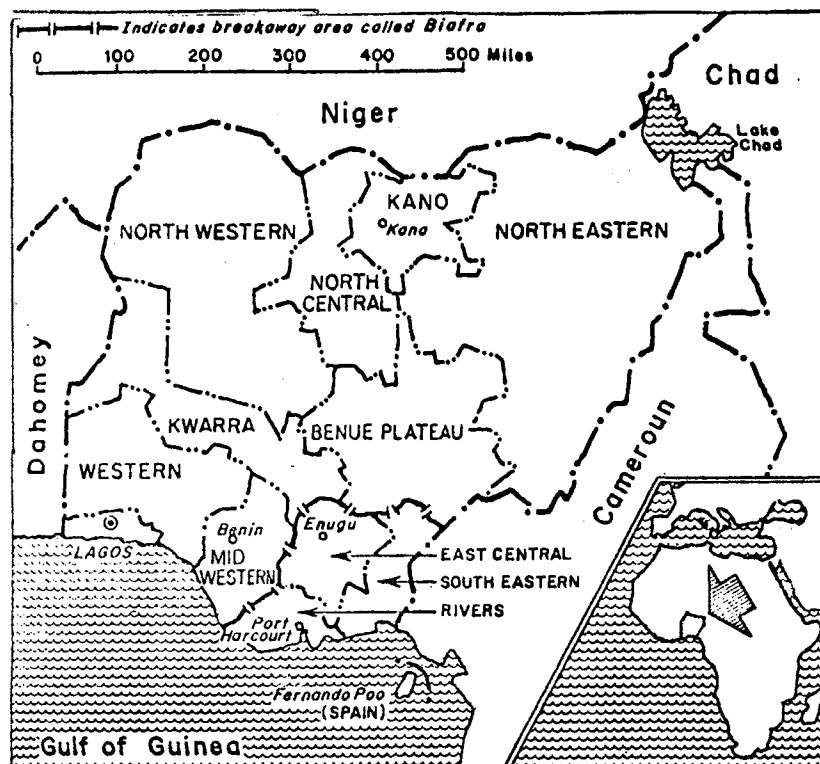
Figure 3. Map of Nigeria Showing the Twelve States
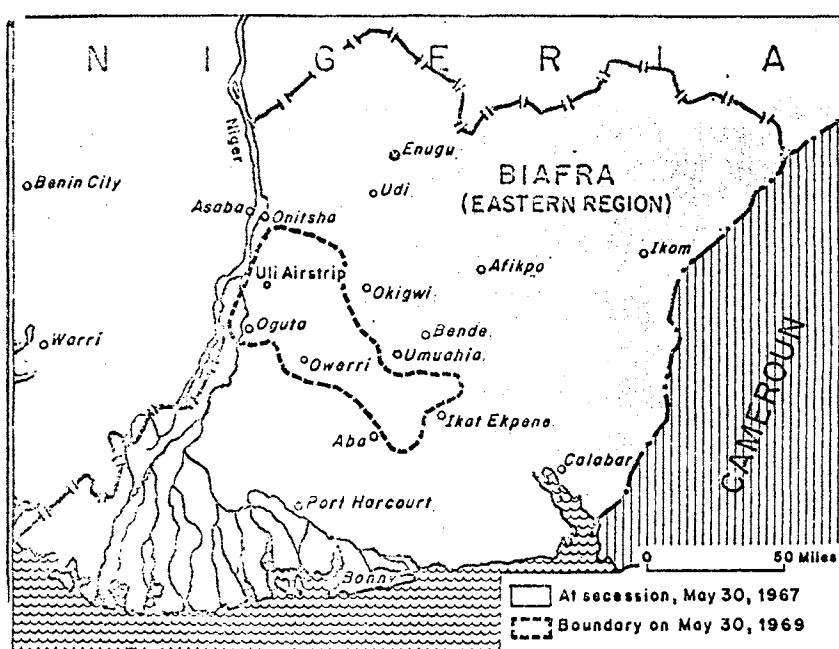
On May 30, 1969 the second anniversary of the declaration of
independence of Biafra, her territory represented roughly one
tenth of her original size, an area barely 2,000 square miles.

Figure 4. Map of Biafra

items in the body of stories on the war published by <u>Time</u>?

There is a statistic, the knowledge of which would help in answering the question raised above. As Lasswell once conjectured, "Is there any statistic on the content of this communication which, if obtainable, will help solve my research problem?"[4]

It is the opinion of the writer that this question can be answered in the affirmative in the present study.

Why did the nigerians feel this way about the coverage of the war by one of America's internationally circulated news magazine? The answer to this can be found in an incident that happened early in the war.

Bruce Oudes, who covered Nigerian developments for several American publications, was expelled from Nigeria by the Federal Military Government in Lagos.[5] From this point on, the only news of the conflict that reached the American public came solely from the rebel side. And the major part of it originated from <u>Time</u> correspondents.

Before his departure, he managed to write the following in one of his dispatches:

> From the military standpoint, it was clear that newsmen were, and are, viewed as a special burden to be dealt with in an efficient, military fashion - only periodically and all in one group. Some officers had a special reason for wanting newsmen out of their hair and preventing them from turning up at unexpected moments! They were deeply involved in black-market operation.[6]

Added to this was the generally pro-Biafra sentiments held in the

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[4]Ibid., p. 12.

[5]Genenka Zdenek, <u>The Nigerian War</u> (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1972), p. 52.

[6]Ibid., p. 52.

country. In January, 1969, President Nixon ordered a study of U.S.

relief operations and asked Donald E. Lukens, who had just returned from

his visit to both Biafra and Nigeria, to report his findings. Needless

to say, this was also pro-Biafra.

When asked by the press whether the new administration was con-

templating radical changes in the U.S. policy of supporting "one

Nigeria," he said:

> . . . I do think Biafra has the usual right to be heard
> before appropriate international bodies, including the United
> Nations. And I think it is wrong to base a policy on colonial
> boundaries drawn decades ago by colonial powers to serve
> European interests.[7]

Apart from this official stance, which was very pro-rebel, the

prolongation of the war and the reports of starvation and suffering

among the civilian population in the besieged Biafra received wide

publicity in the United States.[8]

This follows the simple fact that newspapers and newspapermen

inevitably play an important role in every international dispute; and

more important the conflict of interest, the more vital the influences

of journalism.[9]

Obviously, the influence of the press on any great international

question is quite as uneven as individual temperaments, prejudice and

ideals. Sometimes the press does a good job and sometimes it does

nothing but throw oil on the flames.[10]

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[7]Ibid., p. 125.

[8]Ibid., p. 124.

[9]Leland Stowe, "The Press and International Friction," _Journalism Quarterly_, Vol. 13 (March, 1936), p. 1.

[10]Ibid., p. 2.

All these are impressionistic "more or less" judgments of "either or." Hence, the writer's attempt to subject what was written on the war by one of the American internationally recognized news magazines to content analysis - the characteristic of which Lasswell explained thus:

> It is a quantitative aspect. Content analysis aims at a classification of content in more precise, numerical terms than is provided by the impressionistic. It provides a precise meaning of describing the contents of any sort of communications -- newspapers, radio programs, films, everyday conversations, verbalized free association, etc. The operations of content analysis consist of classifying the signs occurring in a communication into a set of appropriate categories. The results state the frequency of occurrence of signs for each category in the classification scheme.[11]

There are special considerations of feasibility favoring use of the national news magazines, rather than other media. The flow of symbols in film and radio have less regularity in sequence. News magazines appear regularly and frequently in uniform formats. They are mainly an information medium rather than entertainment. Also, they have a more or less explicit point of view.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to make a symbol analysis of TIME coverage.

In a sense, content analysis occurs whenever someone summarizes and/or interprets what he reads or hears. As Berelson contended:

> Content analysis denotes an objective, systematic, and quantitative method for the analysis of communication content, intended to provide precise and concise description of what the communication says, in terms appropriate to the purpose at hand.[12]

Hence, this study is an attempt:

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[11] Harold D. Lasswell, "Studies in Quantitative Semantics," Language of Politics (New York, 1949), p. 55.

[12] Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research (Glencoe, Illinois, 1951), p. 50.

1. To state a symbol list which would index the hypothesis.

2. To analyze the flow of symbols throughout the period of
    the war in all the issues of the magazines published
    throughout the period of the Civil War.

3. To count for distribution of favorable and unfavorable
    symbols in relation to the Federal Government.

4. To find out the relationship of the distribution of both
    favorable and unfavorable symbols in the light of the
    performance of the participants during various phases of
    war.

5. To look at the words that are there, instead of guessing
    at their meanings.[13]

Thus, this study examines through ex-post facto study, the bias of

a communication medium through content analysis of the message, and

thereby, using the flow of words as an expression of attitude.

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[13]Ibid., p. 29

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Since the 1930's through the post-war years, a large body of

literature on, and as a result of, content analysis has been published.

Some of these studies pertain to studying the flow of foreign news into

the United States or to other countries.[1]

For example, while James W. Markham made a comparative study of

foreign news in the dailies of the United States and South America,[2]

Abu Lughold made a similar study of International news in Arabic press.[3]

Many of these studies employed the traditional methods of content

analysis such as:

> Space occupied, length of column, column width of text and
> headlines; page location; size of headline type; type face,
> style, roman, boldface, italics, capitals; number of lines
> in headlines - blanks, cross lines; use of accompanying maps,
> pictures, and cartoons; use of colons; use of lead to space
> texts - lines; use of boxes around stories on leads.[4]

All of the above methods were useful to the researchers in

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[1]Sharif Mujahid, "Coverage of Pakistan in Three U. S. Newsmaga-
zines," Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Spring, 1970), p. 50.

[2]James W. Markham, A Comparative Analysis of Foreign Newspapers of
United States and South America (University Park, Pa., 1959).

[3]Abu-Lughod Ibrhim, "International News in Arabic Press; A
Comparative Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 26
(Winter, 1962), p. 6000-6012.

[4]D. Milton Stewart, "Importance in Content Analysis," Journalism
Quarterly, Vol. 20, No. 3 (December, 1943), pp. 286-287.

providing them with qualitative data about the content of communication.

Janis expressed a view on the subject which demonstrated the lack of quantification in the prevailing techniques. He wrote:

> 'Content analysis' may be defined as referring to any
> technique a) For classification of the sign - vehicles; b)
> Which relies solely upon the judgments (which theoretically,
> may range from percentile discrimination to sheer guess) of
> an analysis or group of analysts as to which sign - vehicles
> fall into which categories; c) On the bases of explicitly
> formulated rules; d) Provided that the analyst's judgments
> are regarded as the reports of a scientific observation.[5]

The science of content analysis underwent a traumatic change immediately after World War II. The reason for this is closely related to the adroit usage of propaganda disguised as communication by Nazi Germany during the War.

In the early post-World War II years, Hoover Institute and Library on War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford University sponsored its first study of - The RADIR Studies, "The Study of International Symbols." This study suggests the wide possibilities of content analysis for solving problems. Such important factors in international relations in the rate of social change in the general tension level is opinion about key symbols and policies and in identification with groups and with national and international symbols may be closely paralleled by measurement indices.[6]

The subsequent report suggests that measurement of the intensity of opinion about key symbols may provide an index of general tension

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[5]I. L. Janis, "Meaning and Study of Symbolics Behaviors,"
Psychiatry, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1943), pp. 425-436.

[6]Quincy Wright, "Introduction to Symbols of Internationalism,"
Hoover Institute Studies,Series C, No. 3 (Stanford, California, 1951),
p. 3.

level. Changes in attention to key symbols may provide an adequate

index of social change.[7]

According to Lasswell, one of the experts involved in the Hoover

Institute Studies:

> What most students who speak of 'Symbols' (a technical
> term for words) have in common is an interest in a flow of
> words as an expression of attitude. Words are 'symbols'
> because they stand for (symbolize) the attitudes of those who
> use them, as distinguished, for example, from 'signs,' which
> are words that point to (signalize) objects external to their
> users. The symbol analyst works with words by selecting
> those which best stand for the attitudes - whose presence or
> absence he wishes to detect and describe. Symbols thus con-
> ceived serve as his 'operational indices' of attitude.[8]

It may be true that "actions speak louder than words" and it is

certainly true that people who use symbols of communication often

neither mean what they say nor say what they mean.

Pool wrote:

> Symbol usage is basically the link between means and ends,
> promise and fulfillment. They also very often serve a rit-
> ualistic end. Familiar symbols heard or read in a familiar
> context often induce a sense of security (or insecurity) even
> in those who 'haven't the foggiest idea' of what the symbols
> mean.[9]

Concerning the meaning and the study of symbolic behaviors through

the use of content analysis, Janis, on "semantic content analysis,"

agrees. This, according to him, deals with the relations between signs

and their significations. The procedure sets up classification rules in

terms of common significations.

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[7] Ibid., p. 4.

[8] H. D. Lasswell, "The Analysis of Symbolic Content," The Compara-
tive Study of Symbols (Stanford, California, 1952), p. 29.

[9] Peter H. Odegard, in "Introduction to Symbols of Democracy,"
Hoover Institute Studies, Series C, No. 1 (Stanford, California,
1952).

Two major types of 'semantic content analysis' may be
distinguished: designation analysis and assertion analysis.
Designation analysis consists in counting terms which signify
a given designation, that is, roughly speaking, signs which
refer to the same thing. Thus, for example, the sign-vehicles
'Hitler,' 'Nazi,' 'Reichs,' and 'Berlin' might be classified,
when they occur in certain contexts, as falling into the
designation category 'reference to Germany.'

Assertion analysis: This goes one step beyond designation
analysis. It describes what is designated but it also de-
scribes how the designated object is characterized. The unit
of analysis is assertion; any phrases which contain an iden-
tifior and a characterizor, and which connects the two in
accordance with syntactical rules of language.[10]

Janis contended that, irrespective of the counting unit which is

used in these assertion analyses, the meaning unit remains a phrase

which connects a characterizor with a identifior. Thus, even though

the analyst reports frequencies in terms of numbers of paragraphs or

number of articles, the determinants of the classification of these

counting units are assertions which occur in the paragraph or in the

article.[11]

Lasswell listed the conditions that should be fulfilled by content

analysis of communication:

It should enable the investigator to determine relationship
between a given (content) characteristic of communications
and a) characteristic of communication, b) characteristic of
the audience, or c) some other (content and non-content)
characteristic of the communication.[12]

He then suggested the types of hypotheses that can be tested with

content analysis. These are:

1. Propositions which state a relationship between (a) a

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[10]Janis, pp. 430-431.

[11]Ibid., p, 431.

[12]Lasswell, Language of Politics, p. 40.

communicator's environment, his opposition in the social

structure, his personality traits, or his intentions, and

(b) the kinds of signs which occur in his communications.

2. Propositions which state a relationship between (a) the

kinds of signs which occur in communication, and (b) the

reactions of audience (such as changes in attitudes) which

result from perceiving those signs.

3. Propositions which state a relationship between one kind

of sign in communications and another kind of sign which

occurs in the same communication, such as typography.[13]

This study is concerned only with the relationships between

the kind of signs or symbols used by _Time_ magazine in its coverage of

the Nigerian Civil War, but not with the reactions of audience (such as

changes in attitudes) which result from perceiving those signs.

The writer would also like to point out that the typography of

such signs or symbols are of no importance to the present study because

of the format of _Time_ magazine - it does not use banner headlines or

special type faces for emphasis.

<div align="center">Recent Attempts at Quantification</div>

<div align="center">of Content Analysis</div>

It is the writer's opinion that the review of quantitative content

analysis of communication media would be incomplete without a word on

Edith Efron's analysis of television bias.

Whittaker Chambers before her, who produced his Pumkin Papers,

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[13]Ibid.

which in a sense quantified his argument on the nature of the Soviet

threat that sent Hiss to jail, demonstrates the importance of

quantification.[14]

The lack of quantification of Vice President Spiro Agnew's case

against the TV networks did not make him credible outside his so called

"silent majority."

Hence, Efron turned quality into quantity by assertion count and

breaking everything into simple "fors" and "againsts" of network news

in relation to the Nixon Administration.[15]

The technique of Efron has been criticized for three basic

shortcomings:

    (1)   The categories are not all inclusive.

    (2)   The categories are not usually exclusive.

    (3)   No rules are used for identifying materials to be
           coded, or how to code.[16]

These criticisms would act as guidelines for the investigator in

this study.

Other Approaches to Content Analysis

Another way of looking at content analysis is the mode of the

communication. George distinguished two models: the representational

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[14]John Chamberlain, "Edith Efron's Murderous Adding Machine,"
National Review, Vol. XXIII, No. 43 (November 5, 1971, p. 1225.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Robert L. Stevenson, "Untwisting the News Twisters - A Republican
of Efron's Study," Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 2 (1973), p. 212.

model and the instrumental model.[17] The serious questions raised by this approach is that of inferences that can be made about the relationship between a message and its antecedent motives or causes.

He argued that the purposes for which messages are designed determine the meaning that can be assigned to specific words. According to him, rather than represent an author's true feelings (the representational model), many messages are purposely biased so as to manipulate an audience in a predesignated way (instrumental model).[18]

Mitchell, as reported by Stempel, supports this view:

> Messages filter through a number of gates, and some of these gates neutralize or exaggerate the effects produced at other phases in the communication process. According to these models, one must view messages as only indirect indicators of the underlying variables being studied.[19]

The Question of Reliability of Content Analysis

The diverse approaches to content analysis are not the only area of disagreement. What about the reliability?

Very little has been written on this. Stempel views reliability in content analysis as a problem that individual researchers must solve to his own satisfaction within the limits of his study, design and resources.[20]

He defined reliability as consistency of measurement. These errors

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[17]George L. Alexander, _Propaganda Analysis_ (Evanston, Illinois, 1959), p. 200.

[18]Robert Mitchell, "The Use of Content Analysis for Exploratory Studies," _Public Opinion Quarterly_, No. 3 (Fall, 1967), p. 237.

[19]H. Guido Stempel III, "Increasing Reliability in Content Analysis," _Journalism Quarterly_, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Fall, 1955), p. 10.

[20]Ibid.

of reliability he said are random errors rather than content.[21]

Lasswell is very much in agreement with Stempel on this.

> In the case of sign-vehicle with respect to validation,
> because such techniques provide a direct measure of physical
> occurrences, the analyst's operations involve simply percep-
> tional discriminations: determining the presence or absence
> of a given physical configuration and counting the number
> which are present. Hence, no special validation procedures
> are necessary.[22]

Janis holds a very strong view as to how important the problem

of reliability is in content analysis.

> Content analysis, like those obtained from any quantita-
> tive technique, must be evaluated in terms of the reliability
> of the method of analysis. It is obvious that the frequences
> obtained by a content analysis would be without significance
> if different analysts did not agree in their classification of
> symbol data. The degree to which there is disagreement among
> analysts determines the amount of 'error of measurement.'[23]

If this error of measurement is a random error, as stated by

Stempel, one need not be unduly concerned about it.

Furthermore, Janis gave guidance as to how these errors could be

avoided. He indicated that reliability is a function of (a) the pre-

cision with which the rules of content analysis (i.e., definition of the

categories) are set up and (b) the ease with which discrimination can

be made between the types of content specified by the rules.

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[21]Ibid.

[22]Laswell, Language of Politics.

[23]Irving L. Janis, "The Reliability of a Content Analysis Tech-
nique," The Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1943), p. 243.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

The investigator attempted to determine, through content analysis,

the relation between several characteristics of symbols used by _Time_

magazine in its coverage of the Nigerian Civil War.

The symbols employed were chosen from Lasswell:

There is no cut-and-dried list of political symbols (and
objects) that will serve the needs of every research on
politically significant contents of the press. We can,
however, be sure that comprehensive studies will include
certain classes of symbols:
  1. of persons
  2. of groups
  3. of agencies
  4. of policies
  5. of participants
  6. of ideas (statements of crimes, future
     expectations).[1]

The questions posed were: Did _Time_ magazine use some symbols

concerning the rebel in favorable light while the same group of symbols

were used concerning the Federal government in unfavorable light? What

kind of attention was given to the participants in the Civil War? How

often did the news magazine refer to the participants or the issues?

And in what direction - favorable or unfavorable? And what dimension -

moral or immoral, strength or weakness?

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[1]Harold D. Lasswell, "The Politically Significant Content of the
Press, Coding Procedures," _Journalism_ _Quarterly_ (March 19, 1942), p. 12.

Operational Definition of Variables

(1) The Rebel government and its leadership: Any reference to the
Republic of Biafra, Biafrans and Lt. Col. Ojukwu, and other representa-
tives of his government.

(2) The Federal government and its leadership: Any reference
to the Federal government of Nigeria, Nigerians and Lt. Col. Gowan and
other representatives of his government.

(3) Favorable: Any reference to the parties in the conflict in
positive light as defined earlier in the potential value of the symbol.
This is in relation to our two classes: strength and morality - cause
(or effect) and conformity or non-conformity of a symbol to a norm
(the norm being the usual usage to that symbol).

(4) Unfavorable: Any reference to the parties in the conflict
in negative light, also as defined in the potential value of the symbol
usage. This again is in relation to our two classes: strength and
morality - cause (or effect) and conformity of a symbol to a norm (the
being the usual usage of that symbol.

(5) The issues at stake in the civil war: This is a deduction
made by the writer from the opinion expressed by the parties in the
conflict, United Nigeria and secession. As Major General Yakubu Gowon
put it in one of his interviews, "I am fighting a war to keep the coun-
try one and united." It should be noted that the conflict ended when
Biafra leaders formally renounced secession in these words: "We are
loyal Nigerian citizens, and we accept the authority of the Federal
Military government."

Statement of the Problem

The writer is concerned with the objectivity of <u>Time</u> magazine's coverage of the Nigerian Civil War.

The following questions were asked during the study of the stories of the conflict published by <u>Time</u>.

Which aspect of rebel's story did <u>Time</u> emphasize? Was it their successes or failures?

In what light did <u>Time</u> portray the two sides?

In what dimension was the Federal government portrayed in <u>Time</u> coverage of the civil war?

To which did <u>Time</u> direct more attention, was it the issues or the major participants in the conflict?

Key Symbols Studied

As Berelson pointed out: A value judgment must be made in connection with standard. One of the ways in which standard for measuring performance may be set is a master list constructed by the analyst of major facts of the events.[2] This is what the investigator did. The following key symbols tell the story of the war.

The treatment of subjects was measured on the following variables or key symbols:

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[2]B. Berelson, <u>Content Analysis in Communication Research</u> (Illinois, 1952).

1. Genocide	18. Onitsha	35. Petrol - oil
2. Starvation	19. Republic of Benin	36. Ammunition
3. Hunger	20. Ore	37. U. K.
4. Biafra	21. Owerri	38. France
5. Gowan	22. Uli	39. U. S. A.
6. Ojukwu	23. Umuahia	40. Hospital
7. Red Cross	24. United Nigeria	41. Church
8. Christian	25. Minority	42. Market
9. Muslim	26. Coup	43. Secession
10. One Nigeria	27. Rebel	44. Mercenaries
11. IBO	28. Soviet	45. Blockades
12. Women	29. Rolf Stener	46. Relief
13. Children	30. Col. Adekunle	47. Massacre
14. Hausa	31. Lagos	48. Survival
15. Yoruba	32. O.A.U.	49. Sovereignty
16. Catholic	33. Kwashiokor	50. Radio Lagos.
17. Enugun	34. Police Action	

The adequacy of such symbols is as stated by Lasswell in his comparative study of symbols as:

> As means of surveying the significant features of a vast body of symbol material, it is convenient to focus upon key symbols occurring in the flow of political statements. The role of key symbols in political life is deeply woven into the texture of the body politic, since symbols enter into the experience of everyone, irrespective of status. Key symbols are focal points for crystallization of sentiment, uniting child with adult, layman with expert, philosopher with lawyer, the speculative man with the man of action.[3]

The number of potential value standards if infinitely great. But

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[3]Lasswell, "The Comparative Study of Symbols," _Hoover Institute Studies_, p. 10.

for practical purposes, it is useful to concentrate on two broad

classes: strength and morality. The former standard refers to the

position of the symbol as a cause (or effect) of value changes. It

includes military, diplomatic, economical, and ideological assets and

effectiveness. The morality standard relates to conformity or non-

conformity of a symbol to a norm. Strictly, the word "morality" is too

narrow, by definition. However, it includes the presentation of symbols

in terms of beauty, goodness, consistency and the like.[4]

The content analyst does not know what to expect. There is almost

no theory of language which predicts the specific words one will emit

in the course of expressing the content of his thoughts. Theories in

philosophy or in sociology of knowledge sometimes enable us to predict

ideas or social characteristics. But little thought has been given to

predicting the specific words in which these ideas will be cloaked.

As such, it is impossible for us to operate on specific hypothesis.

However, one can offer the following research questions:

(1) What proportion of Time's coverage was negative and

.positive to the Federal government? The rebels?

(2) Which of the two participants did Time magazine por-

tray in more unfavorable light than favorable?

(3) How accurate was the Time's coverage of the war with

regard to the aspect emphasized in its coverage?

This study is based on historical records. This is because of the

time lag between the event and the study of it. The investigator

recognizes the difficulty that this "historical standard" will not be

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[4]Ibid.

so acceptable to all. Two historians working independently with the

same sources might not construct a list that is "objective" in the sense

that it can be duplicated by every historian working independently.

In his searching study of historian accounts of the cause of the

American Civil War, Beal commented that:

> Two authors of equal honesty, sincerity, and scholarly train-
> ing, each believing he has been completely 'objectional,' may
> use the same historical material to arrive at diametrically
> opposed statements of what each believes is historic 'fact.'[5]

But, repeatability is not the only test of objectivity. In this

historical standard, the following are among the claims that have been

made by historians and others: "First there are many clearly-established

'facts' of history that are stable and stand as constants: date, name,

and certain sets of official and unofficial persons and bodies."[6] .

For example, historians would not quarrel over the date of crossing

the river Niger into Biafra, although they may be in severe disagreement

as to the cause or causes of the civil war.

Hence, it is the opinion of the investigator that the list of key

symbols would suffice for our purpose.

Time Phases of Analysis

The author attempted to analyze the content of _Time_ magazine

coverage of a specific event that took place during the period from July,

1967 to January, 1970. As such, the data available are of limited

nature. Unlike customary content analysis, the material investigated,

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[5]Howard K. Beale, "What Historians Have Said About the Causes
of Civil War," _Theory and Practice in Historical Study, A Report of
Committee on Historiography_, ed. Merle Curtis (New York, 1946), p. 56.

[6]Ibid.

such as newspaper headlines or items on radio news programs, a count
was made of their number during certain time intervals. If the mater-
ials investigated involve a large number of items, the procedure takes
much time and labor. This suggests sampling of material as a labor-
saving device.

Hence, the investigator decided not to employ a sampling technique
but to read carefully through all the issues of the publication from
July, 1967 to January, 1970. Occurrences were recorded as favorable,
unfavorable, or neutral to two key symbols.

As Pool put it, attitudes are ordinarily thought of as being
directional - for or against.[7]

To identify the trend of events during the war, the period covered
by this investigation has been grouped into five phases. Each phase
represented favorable or unfavorable situations for one or both par-
ticipants in the conflict.

1st Phase (July, 1967 - August, 1967)

"Police action" against Biafra and invasion of Mid-West
Region by Biafra forces.

2nd Phase (August, 1967 - October, 1967)

Full-scale military operations against Biafra. Fall of
Enugun, Onitsha, Calarbar and Portharcourt.

3rd Phase (October, 1968 - April, 1969)

Biafran counter-offensive in October, 1968. Escalation
of raid by the Nigerian Air Force.

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[7]Ithiel de Sola Pool, "Symbol of Internationalism," Hoover
Institute Studies, No. 3 (1951), p. 12.

4th Phase (April, 1969 - November, 1969)

The fall of Umuahia the surprising recovery of the

Biafran forces in recapturing Owerri. The private war of

Count Von Rosen.

5th Phase: The Collapse of Biafra (November, 1969 - January, 1970)

The "final-push" by the Federal forces and the capitulation

of Biafra on January 12, 1970.[8]

Analysis of Symbols

Ex post facto research may be defined as that in which independent

variables have already occurred and in which the researcher starts with

observation of a dependent variable or variables. He then studies the

independent variables in retrospect for their possible reactions to, and

effects upon, the dependent variable or variables.[9]

As noted, what the investigator had to work with is purely the

report of the war in _Time_ magazine. Analyses involved the flow of

symbols in a series of situations. Since a class of more than one

member is involved, the method must count for distribution as well as

reference of the symbols selected for study. To describe distribution,

the analytic categories must be used according to certain statistical

conventions. This is what is meant by quantification.[10]

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[8] Genenka Zdenek, _The Nigerian War_ (Frankfurt-am-Main), 1971, p. 55.

[9] Fred N. Kerlinger, _Foundation of Behavioral Research_ (New York, 1964), p. 55.

[10] Lasswell, "The Comparative Study of Symbols," pp. 31-32.

The methodology of this study draws heavily on the work of Lasswell et al.[11] First, the content was read for descriptive purposes. The next step was to set up a stable base of comparison.[12] One method of constituting a stable base is to take that total number of frequencies per period of a selected symbols list. Lasswell explained it thus:

> We do count meanings when we count frequencies of a given symbol, and obtain a meaningful base when we pool frequencies of all the symbols of our list. The assumption involved if we choose words, is that there is a constant relation between number of words and the universe of meaning conveyed by these words.[13]

First, one must select the _recording unit_. This, according to Lasswell et al., is the range of text for which occurrence of a symbol is tabulated with the unit weight of 1.[14] This could either be a symbol, a paragraph, three sentences or article. In this study, a symbol sufficed.

Then the writer decided on the _specified context_. This is the range of text which is to be considered in characterizing the presentation of a listed symbol in any given recording unit.[15] Hence, it is the portion of text to be read in order to determine whether a given symbol is favorable or unfavorable. It could be a sentence, a paragraph, three sentences or an article. For this study, the author

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[11]Harold D. Lasswell, "The Politically Significant Content of the Press Coding Procedures," _Journalism Quarterly_ (March, 1942), p. 12.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

employed the sentence.

The point should be made here that the choice of unit depends upon the problem under investigation. With only 34 stories published by *Time* on the war, the investigator had to make the arbitrary decision to enable the detailed study of the flow of symbols. "A small-unit recording procedure," noted Lasswell, "would catch qualifying ideas that would elude a larger content method and diminish the strength of the reported bias."[16]

The next step is what frequency unit to employ. Lasswell suggested an unweighted unit of reference which counts every occurrence.[17]

This study treated the symbol as favorable or unfavorable (+ or -). The underlying proposition, of course, was that responses are affected by the manner in which the symbol was presented. This, in turn, was affected by direction, intensity, and elaboration.

Therefore, the need arose for special precaution to spell out criteria.

> We must adopt simple and reliable procedures if we are to advance the study of press content beyond simple impressionism. If we use a word, we must clarify our meaning. In explaining how the terms favorable - unfavorable are to be understood.[18]

The work of Lasswell on attention to some democratic symbols provided a generally acceptable means of doing this.

' The following instructions were used in connection with the work

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[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

of the World Attention.[19] But it has been altered where necessary to suit the present study.

(a) Any city is coded as its country. Example, OWERRI, code BIAFRA: LAGOS, code NIGERIA.

(b) Any public figure (or synonym for him) is coded as his country unless he is in the symbol code. Example, AZIKWE code BIAFRA; HASSAN code NIGERIA.

(c) Any synonym for a country is coded as that country. Similarly, any synonym for a man is coded as the man.

(d) Do not use pronouns as synonyms. However, there are certain instances where coding would be impossible unless this were done. Further, often the reference is abundantly clear. For example, OJUKWU: "WE FIGHT TO THE LAST MAN," Here, the WE obviously refers to BIAFRA. Without this substitution, it would be impossible to cide. OJUKWU, therefore, in the above example, codes BIAFRA for WE.

(e) Intertwined Symbols - In cases like "OJUKWU'S BIAFRA", "NIGERIAN Military Leader Gowan," where two symbols occur together, code for plus and minus only the symbols which are the subject or object of the verb. Symbols used adjectivetly should be counted as neutral. Examples, "OJUKWU'S BIAFRA is strong." Neutral for OJUKWU, and plus for BIAFRA.

(f) Pronominal Reference - Although in general a pronoun gives an implicit reference to an explicit symbol in some

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[19]Ibid.

sentence, note that two conditions must be fulfilled:

(1) The reference must be abundantly clear;

(2) The pronoun must not be merely incidental to the

statement as a possessive pronoun frequently is in

a prepositional phrase used in a merely adjectival

way.

The test is whether a definite or indefinite article could

be substituted for the pronoun without obvious loss of

meaning. Example, "In his review of the war situation,

OJUKWU praised the heroism of the BIAFRA Army." Neutral

for OJUKWU; plus for BIAFRA.

(1) To strike the balance in comparison: Example, "The

BIAFRA lost 10 planes, the NIGERIANS lost 5 planes."

Minus for BIAFRA; minus for NIGERIANS.

(2) In coordinate clauses where the second clause has

the same subject as the first, even with no pronoun

standing for it, the symbol may be understood in the

second clause. Example, "The NIGERIANS captured the

city - and lost it again." Plus for the Nigerians

and also a minus for the Nigerians.

Rules for Small Contingencies in Coding

(1) _Tense_: ·All statements are coded in terms of the effective

present tense. All tenses in the data are first reduced to the effec-

tive presence if such relevancy can be established. In simple and

(non-conditional) declarative sentences, each part thereof is to be

coded in terms of present tense. Example: "Nigeria won the first civil

war, but she might lose the next." Code: Nigeria +, -.

(2) Mood: In sentences containing verb structure in the subjunctive mood, first try to reduce the conditional element to the effective present. Example: "If only BIAFRA had not lost, she would be a strong nation." Recasting: BIAFRA lost, did lose (an effective status quo in past time). Code: BIAFRA (will be) BIAFRA would be strong. Code: BIAFRA +. If future conditionals in the conditional element is pursely so, disregard the conditional and code in terms of the consequence. Example: "If BIAFRA has enough ammunition, she will win the war." Recasting: Conditional element cannot be expressed as an effective present, so code the consequences (in terms of an effective present). Code: BIAFRA neutral, +.

(3) Special Guides

(a) Interrogatory sentences: In sentences wherein poor questioning is done, the sentence is codeable only in terms of neutral references. In compound interrogations, code that part of the item which can be reduced to effective present as in "2" and all else neutral. Example: "Can BIAFRA win?" Code: BIAFRA neutral.

(b) Either-or sentences: Where both parts of an either-or sentence represent pure condition, or pure contingency, code neutral. Example: "Either BIAFRA produces more ammunitions or loses the war." Code: BIAFRA neutral. Where a consequence in terms of an effective present is explicit, code the consequences. Example: "Either we get more ammunitions or our territorial loss increases." Code: our territorial loss (BIAFRA), BIAFRA -.

(c) Advice, suggestion: Outright sentences of advice are coded as neutral. Where a consequence is given which can be re-cast as an effective present, code the consequence. Example: "BIAFRA should buy arms." Code: Neutral.

(d) Comparison: When both items in comparison predication are present, code each part in terms of effective present; also code the obvious conclusion for which the comparison was drawn. Example: "BIAFRA lost men, Nigeria lost 5." Code: BIAFRA -, NIGERIA -, NIGERIA'S net +.

(e) Verbs of contingency, condition, possibility: Must, should ought, may, believe, can, might, etc. Example: "Under present conditions, NIGERIA must (has to) send her troops to IBO heartland." Where definite compulsive element is present, code the consequence then. NIGERIA is neutral, BIAFRA +.

(f) Irony, sarcasm, ridicule: Example, "NIGERIA is engaged in a slum clearance project in BIAFRA." Where the literal phrasing of such sentence manifestly indicates opposite meaning, negate the literal structure in coding. Thus, code minus morality for NIGERIA.

(g) Sacrifice: Definition of sacrifice indicates an exchange of values. Where the one who makes the sacrifice does so far a manifest purpose or cause (term of the exchange), code according to such manifest ends. Example: "NIGERIA sacrificed her youth to keep her honors. Sacrifice was for moral end." Therefore code +2 for NIGERIA and -1 for loss of her youth.

(h) Belief, evaluation, opinion, hopes, wishes: Example: "OJUKWU believes (thinks, hopes, wishes) BIAFRA will win."

(1) Claims, reports, rumors, indication: Example, GOWAN says BIAFRA is smashed. GOWAN claims victory.

(2) Opinions which are not broached as editorial opinion: Example, GOWAN said NIGERIA used the wrong tactics. General rule: code the object of opinion, belief, report. Such belief is expressed by a codeable source - and not by unidentity and/or strictly news source. Code the source as neutral, thus: GOWAN says BIAFRA is smashed - Gowan; BIAFRA -.

(i) Dangers, fears, menaces, threats, all fears: All fears, menaces, or threats are coded as deprivations.

(j) Attacks and retreats (successful or not): General rule: Code attacks only where there is an indication of success or failure; never mention of +S column under symbol: of the classification of the predication is -S according to strength, code number of the symbol is written in the -S column under symbol; etc.

In the further interest of clarity, supplementary instructions may be issued regrading standards, and are as follows:[21]

I. STRENGTH: Plus

Gain of, act, indication, promise, hope, expectation, demands of: economic, military, diplomatic, social strength and/or gain. Military strength: attack, raids on, bombing of, harassing of the enemy; avoidance of losses, availability of fighting power, personnel, and material; military operations "successfully"

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[21]Lasswell, "The Politically Significance Content of the Press," p. 13.

carried out - such as reconnaissance, improved position, scouting parties, etc. Economic strength: aid received or promised, trade pacts, negotiations, production gains, finance available, availability of materials, resources, transportation, communication facilities. Diplomatic strength: envoy recall, demands for reparations, verbal attacks and offensives, belligerent stands, pro-war and anti-peace stands, threats. Ideological strength: social services available, child care, health standards, medical facilities, education despite adverse conditions, housing and shelter facilities.

II. WEAKNESS: Minus

Loss of, act, indication, expectancy of weakness or defeat in the military, economic, diplomatic, or social spheres. Military loss: attacks suffered, casualties, loss of position, material; failures of attacks, raids, sorties, reconnaissance, insufficiencies of fighting power, retreat; military gains as described above when the symbol on which gains have been made is indicated. Economic weakness: lack of items constituting economic strengths described above; need for aid, shortages. Diplomatic weakness: yielding to pressure, conciliatory attitudes, pro-peace anti-war in face of threats. Ideological weakness: lack of items listed under ideological strength.

III. MORALITY: Plus

Emotional evaluations of the symbol, endowing it with the following qualities: truth, mercy, glory, heroism, virtue, propriety, religiosity, honor, generosity, kindness, affection,

sympathy, duty, justice, honesty, patriotism, loyalty,
legality (courage, bravery).

IV.   IMMORTALITY: Minus

Emotional evaluation of the symbol, endowing it with the
following: falsity, viciousness, ferocity, uncharitableness,
cowardice, impropriety, paganism, dishonor, selfishness, cruelty,
hatred, vanity, treachery, treason, subversiveness, unjust,
dishonesty, unpatriotism, disloyalty, illegality, aggressions,
insanities, abnormalities.

Classification Procedures

This was adapted also from the work of Lasswell et al., with
some changes.

(1) The medium studied here was <u>Time</u> magazine.   The dates -
July, 1967 to January, 1970. The pages - The World section where
there were stories on the Nigerian Civil War.

(2) A form schedule for analysis of every period of phase of
the war, see Appendix A.

      (a)   Date of article being studied and the period of
          war in the spaces at the top of the schedule.

      (b)   All the symbols were memorized.

      (c)   Magazines were read for symbols in the code.   When
          a symbol was found, it was then coded, its predica-
          tion was determined and classified according to
          "indulgence-deprivation" and standard.

      (d)   If the classification of the predication was +
          according to strength, the symbol was coded in the

+S column under symbol; if the predication was -S

according to the strength, code number of the symbol

was written in the -S column under the symbol; etc.

(3) The coded sheets were then tabulated and the frequencies of

each symbol in the code sheet was tabulated by a simple counting

operation.

The research question guiding this study is based in the main on

the frequency counts of favorable and unfavorable presentations of

symbols in relationship to the main participants in the civil war.

Also, we are interested in the plus and minus character of presen-

tation. While the former enabled us to predict direction of symbol

predication the latter gave us the dimension of symbol predication.

The following statistics were applied to propositions 1-3.

Proposition 1. A percentile table showing the following:

(a) Negative presentation of the Federal government and

the Rebel government.

(b) Positive presentation of the Rebel government and

the Federal government.

Proposition 2. Complex chi square and contingency coefficient

were computed to determine the significance of relationship and the

degree of relationship between:

(a) Unfavorable symbol presentation of the Federal

government and the Rebel government.

(b) Favorable symbol presentation of Rebel government

and the Federal government.

Proposition 3. Percentile table would be computed for certain

variables depicting the issue at stake during the conflict and the individuals on both sides to determine relationship of emphasis on the two groups of variables.

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TABLE I

DIRECTION AND DIMENSION OF CODED CONTENT ANALYSIS OF <u>TIME</u> ON THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR

Phase	Federal Government +S	+	+M	0	-S	-	-M	Rebel Government +S	+	+M	0	-S	-	-M	Total
1	5.2		1.5		16.3		13.3	20.0		11.9		3.0		0.0	
Total		6.7		11.1		29.6			31.9		17.8		3.0		100
2	6.6		2.5		0.8		17.9	10.3		32.9		5.1		1.6	
Total		9.1		6.4		18.7			43.2		16.0		6.7		100
3	6.0		3.9		6.0		13.3	10.2		27.4		6.3		0.7	
Total		9.9		9.1		19.3			37.6		17.2		7.0		100
4	4.0		6.7		16.1		11.4	16.1		23.5		0.7		0.0	
Total		10.7		7.4		27.5			37.6		14.1		.7		100
5	7.1		13.0		4.6		6.4	8.4		21.8		10.5		2.5	
Total		20.1		8.8		10.9			30.2		16.8		13.0		100

+S = Positive Strength   +M = Positive Morality

O = Neutral   -M = Negative Morality

-S = Negative Strength   N = 924 Symbol Frequencies

disproportionately negative to the rebels. This was in complete con-
trast to the situation on the battle field as shown on page 40 (see
Table I).

Take the first phase of the civil war, for example (July 1967-
August 1967). The Federal government embarked on a "police action"
against Biafra. And in retaliation, the Briafran forces invaded the
Mid-West region of Nigeria. This fact, at least, should have shown
either side as even in terms of strength (military strength: attack,
raids on, harassing enemy, etc.).

Also, the emotional evaluation of the symbols should have endowed
them with the following qualities equally: propriety, duty, justice,
patriotism, legality (courage and bravery, Morality-plus) in the same
proportion or near to it. Instead, _Time_, in its coverage, portrayed the
Federal government 5.2 percent in terms of Positive strength and the
rebels 20.0 percent. As for Morality-plus (propriety, duty, justice,
patriotism, legality), this writer found the rebels with 11.9 percent,
while the Federal government was given only 1.5 percent. One conclusion
is that _Time_ magazine passed a clearcut judgment from the beginning of
the conflict as to which side was right and which was wrong. For
instance one of its correspondents wrote on July 14, 1967:

> Colonel Ojukwu called on the Biafrans to kill ten Federal
> soldiers for every one of their Ibo tribesmen slaughtered
> last year in riots in the predominantly Moslem North. It
> was the massacres of thousands of Ibos that convinced
> Ojukwu that his state cannot hope to live safely within a
> strong Federal union led by Gowon and Northern Officers.
>
> Ojukwu's troops had taken up positions at the oil
> installations, and the companies apparently felt that they
> had no choice but to pay the de facto government. This
> gave the Eastern regime a degree of recognition, and may

have convinced Gowan that the time had come to demonstrate
that he could enforce his writ throughout Nigeria.[1]

The first paragraph endowed the symbol Ojukwu (Biafra), with emo-
tional evaluations (Morality-plus): heroism, virtue, propriety, honor,
duty, justice, patriotism and legality (courage, bravery). The second
paragraph portrayed it in term of strength-plus-gain of hope, expecta-
tion, demands of: economic, military, diplomatic, social strength
and/or gain.

<div align="center">

Phase II and III (August, 1967 -

April, 1969)

</div>

By now the civil war was in full scale. The rebels had lost their

capital Enugun and some of their big cities - Onitsha, Calbar and Port

Hacourt. One would expect the percentage of the Strength-plus dimension

to be disproportionately high in favor of the Federal government.

Instead, the figures are Federal government, 6.6 percent, and the

rebels, 10.3 percent. And the Morality-plus dimension shows the Fed-

eral government as 2.5 percent (an increase of 1 percent for the Federal

government, and 21.0 percent for the rebels) as shown in Table I. Thus,

Time implied it saw the position of the rebels as proper, just, pat-

riotic and legal. The Time's correspondent wrote:

> There were thus ample signs that the war may prove to be a
> long one, though the 'battles' so far have been rather
> modest skirmishes. The Federals, their lines overextended
> in places, were tending to stick to the roads, while the
> Ibos, on the home ground, were more fighting a guerrilla-
> like war.[2]

---

[1]Time (July 14, 1967), p. 19.

[2]Time (July 28, 1967), p. 29.

By this report, _Time_ endowed the Federal government with more

Morality-minus. It gave it the emotional evaluation of cowardice and

aggression. While at the same time, coverage portrayed the rebels more

in the Strength-plus dimension by showing them to have military

strength: attack, raids on, harrassing of the "enemy," avoidance of

losses, availability of fighting power, and improved position.

Although, the third phase of the war could be said to be indecisive.

This is because the two sides were taking what could be regarded as a

show-of-strength position. Biafrans mounted their counter offensive,

and the Nigerian Air Force escalated their air raid on the enemy terri-

tory. But the data show the Federal government with a decrease of .6

percent and the rebels .1 percent (6.0 percent to 6.3 percent).

Quantitatively, the difference in the portrayal of the two sides

was negligible. Yet during these particular phases (II and III), one of

the _Time_ correspondence still wrote the following:

> Ojukwu . . . having fought his attackers to a standstill,
> he was ready to take the offensive. In a swift twelve-hour
> drive, he captured the federal government's oil-rich Mid-
> western State . . . with impresssive ease . . . . With nice
> timing, Biafra sympathizers in Benin were already staging a
> military coup. So far, Gowan's 15,000 troops double those of
> Ojukwu - have barely won a foothold in Biafra . . . . It is
> still anybody's war.[3]

Again, another _Time_ correspondent wrote this about the rebels:

"The 8,500,000 Ibo tribesmen in the secessionist state of Biafra are

proving adept at the business of defending their homeland as they have

always been at trade and commerce."[4]

These are just a few of such statements that portrayed the rebels

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[3]_Time_ (August 18, 1967), p. 29.

[4]_Time_ (February 9, 1968), p. 38.

in good light and the Federal government as the culprit.

As these statements show, it was _Time's_ tendency to give entirely false information about the war in an attempt to present the rebels in more Strength-plus than the Federal government. These provide answers to the question raised in Proposition 1 as to what proportion of _Time's_ coverage was positive to the Federal government, and disproportionately positive to the rebels.

Phase IV (April, 1969 - November, 1969)

During this phase, the rebels had lost their big cities and all their major airports and were restricted to an area of some 4,000 square miles of the 29,000 square miles they held when hostilities began (see Figure 5).

In contrast, Table I, page 40, shows that the rebels were presented more favorable in terms of Strength dimension than the Federal government. The rebels actually gained 5.9 percent while the Federal government lost 2.0 percent (4.0 percent to 6.1 percent). As for the Morality dimension, the Federal government gained 2.8 percent while the rebels lost 3.9 percent (6.7 percent to 23.5 percent). One conclusion that could be reached is that as the civil war dragged on, _Time's_ coverage began to see it as proper, just, patriotic and legal, as far as the Federal government was concerned. And _Time_ portrayed the rebels still higher in the Morality dimension.

An example of presentation of the rebels in terms of Strength by _Time_ was when one of its correspondents, James Wilde, wrote the following:
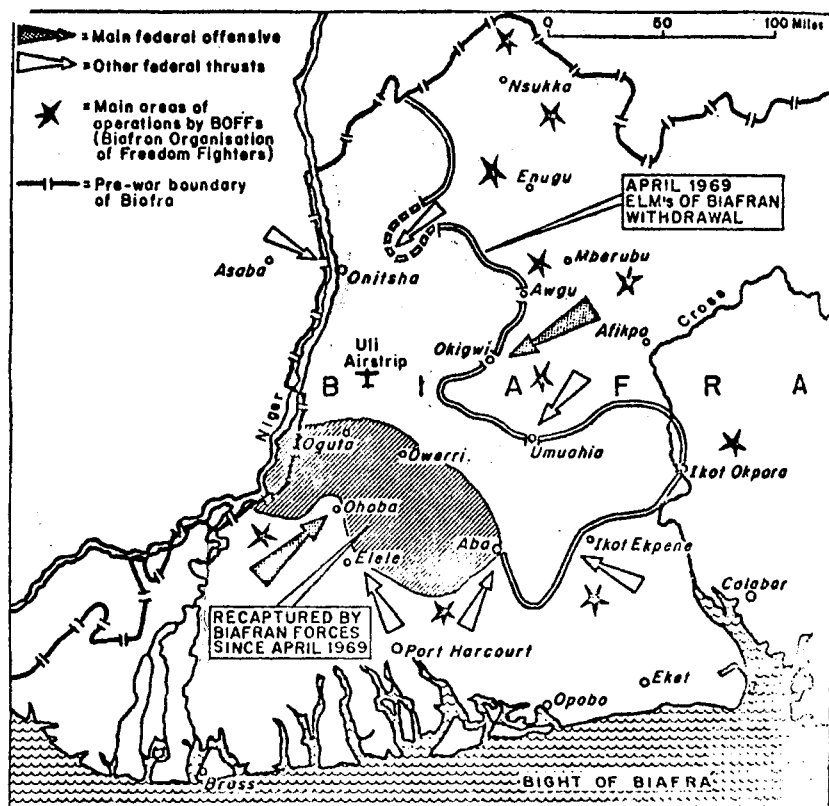
The fourth phase of the war. A map showing the Federal offensive in April, 1969 and Biafran counter-offensive in May, 1969.

SOURCE: Genenka Zedenek, The Nigerian War, 1972, p. 72.

Figure 5.   A Map of Biafra Showing the Area Under the Rebels' Control During Phase IV

There was the unmistakable whistle of a 105-gun howitzer . .
. . The gun fired six rounds, and the Nigerian lines began
to crumble.

        . . . The Biafran troops fighting on despite the loss
of capitals. Soon after Umuahia fell in April, Biafra re-
taliated by capturing the junction town of Owerri following
a lengthy siege. Last week Biafran units were moving slowly
southward from Owerri toward the oil field around Port
Harcourt.[5]

According to the Strength-plus dimension, the above paragraph

showed the rebels as gain-of, hope, expectation. In terms of military

strength, it showed them on the attack: raids on, harassing the enemy,

availability of fighting power; military operations "successfully"

carried out, "improved position."

With a solid presentation of the rebels in Morality-plus (23.5 per-

cent to 6.7 percent for the Federal) in the Phase IV of the war, little

would one wonder when _Time_ wrote the following about the rebels:

To the east, where they are now trapped, the ambitious and
clever Ibo people thrived . . . . Most hated of all and
most envied by other Nigerians-were the Ibos, quite possibly
Africa's most capable people and by force of energy and
intellect, the dominant tribe of newly independent Nigeria.[6]

Not only did the _Time_ write in glowing terms about the rebels,

reporting the illegal arrest of some foreign oilmen by the rebel

soldiers its correspondent wrote:

Biafran tribunal that sits for security cases condemned the
18 prisoners to death by firing squad for helping Nigeria
wage war . . . . Ojukwu treated the men correctly however.
Three lawyers defended them at their trial, they received
food forwarded by the Vatican . . . . He got his way when
Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs Mario Pedini flew into
Owerri to negotiate, thus giving Biafra at least temporary
defacto recognition that irritated opposing Nigeria.[7]

---

[5]_Time_ (June 13, 1968), p. 44.

[6]_Time_ (August 23, 1968), p. 21.

[7]_Time_ (June 13, 1969), p. 49.

Again, this is how one _Time_ correspondent, Alan Grossman, reported

a Federal air raid from Umuahia:

> Nigerian jets returning to their bases have even doubled
> back to strafe civilian crowds gathered at railway crossings,
> in village marketplaces and in a churchyard after morning
> services. Nigeria's Egyptian pilots have so often bombed
> and strafed Biafran hospitals whose roofs are often clearly
> marked with large crosses.[8]

One needs no further explanation apart from the afore-mentioned

paragraphs that _Time_'s coverage of the Nigerian Civil War portrayed the

rebels more in the dimension of Morality-plus. The above paragraphs

are an emotional evaluation of the symbol-Biafra - endowing it with

the following qualities: truth, glory, virtue, propriety, honor,

sympathy, duty, justice, honesty, patriotism.

Contrary to the situation on the battle field as demonstrated by

the present phase of the war (the fall of the rebels' new capital -

Umuahia), _Time_ portrayed the rebels higher in terms of Strength-plus

(military strength) than the Federal government (4.0 percent to 16.1

percent). This is far from what may be called an "objective" reporting.

<div align="center">Phase V (November, 1969 - January, 1970)</div>

The final phase of the civil war, won by the Federal government,

did not alter the perception of the Federal role by _Time_. At least now

one would expect _Time_ to portray the winner overwhelmingly positive in

the dimension Strength. Instead, the Federal government was given 7.1

percent portrayal in positive Strength, and the rebels 8.4 percent in

the same dimension.

Also, the positive-Morality portrayal of the Federal government was

---

[8] _Time_ (May 10, 1968), p. 45.

The Trends   The Trends   The Trends

The Over-all Direction   Over-all Direction   all Direction

TABLE II

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF KEY SYMBOLS DURING EACH
OF THE FIVE PHASES OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR*

Phase	Federal		Biafra		x^2	df	C	Level of Significance
	Fav.	Unfav.	Fav.	Unfav.				
1	9.0	40.0	43.0	4.4	43.7627	1	.9804	p < .01
2	44.0	91.0	210.0	33.0	111.6432	1	.9852	p < .001
3	28.0	55.0	107.0	20.0	53.6146	1	.9654	p < .01
4	16.0	41.0	59.0	1.0	59.6966	1	.9840	p < .01
5	48.0	26.0	72.0	31.0	.2965	1	.0223	> NS

*Favorable and Unfavorable presentation of Federal and Biafran governments by _Time_ magazine during each of five phases of Nigerian Civil War, May, 1967 to January, 1970.

Unfavorable directions.

In Table II, page 49, the figures for Favorable were compiled from the presentations of the parties in Positive light (+); and those for Unfavorable from their presentations in Negative light (-). A quick look at the table suggests there is a clear-cut direction in _Time_'s coverage of the parties during the Civil War.

This proposition is supported significantly in four of the five phases. This is supported by expected frequency test showing strong conteingency coefficients (C) of magnitude of relations.

In Phase I of the war, figures for the rebels are 43 to 4.4 for the Federal government in Favorable direction as shown in Table II. With 48.7620, one can conclude that the difference is significant. The observed differences could occur less than 1 time in 100. The coefficient of contingency of .9804 shows a strong relationship. Therefore, in the first phase of the war, the _Time_'s coverage of the war supports the proposition.

The difference in the second phase also supports the proposition. The observed difference ratio of 111.6432 could occur by chance less than 1 time in 100. And the coefficient of contingency (.9852) shows a strong relationship. It is also noteworthy that despite the reverses occurring on the battlefield by the rebels during this phase (full-scale military operation against Biafra. Fall of Enugun, Onitsha, Calarbar and Port Harcourt), _Time_ magazine still portrays them in more favorable light than it did the Federal government.

The same trend continues in Phase III and Phase IV with difference ratios of 53.6146, 59.6966, all significant at .01 level, and correlations of .9654 and .9840.

Only in Phase V of the war was there a non-significant difference between the portrayal of the Federal government in unfavorable light and the portrayal of the rebels in favorable light. Even then, the Federal government was given 48 favorable rating and the rebels' 72. These figures also answer the question as to which of the two participants Time portrayed in more unfavorable light than favorable.

Individual phases of the war apart, what about the over-all direction? This question is answered by the interaction of the cells in Table III. Of the total 210 assertions, 135 were favorable; 75 unfavorable. Biafra received more favorable, while the Federal government received more unfavorable. Were the differences among the cells, as shown in Table II, greater than would be expected by chance? The observed difference ratio was significant at the .01 level. The difference ratio of 53.6146 could occur by chance less than 1 time in 100. Therefore, Time magazine's coverage of the Nigerian Civil War did probably portray the Biafra government in more favorable light while it portrayed the Federal government in unfavorable light.

Then what about the relationship between the portrayal of the Federal government in unfavorable light and the Biafra government in more favorable light? The coefficient of contingency was 0.9654 which gave a rough estimate of correlation between each government and the direction in which it was presented. It is overwhelmingly significant.

Presentation of Individuals and Issues

Table IV reports on the third proposition: How accurate was the Time's coverage of the war with regard to the aspect of the war emphasized in its coverage?

TABLE III

NUMBERS OF TIMES ALL THE 50 KEY VARIABLES WERE USED
IN FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE LIGHTS TOWARD
THE TWO GOVERNMENTS

	Governments		
	Federal	Biafra	Total
Favorable	28	107	135
Unfavorable	55	20	75
	83	127	210

Chi Square = 53.6146 (p < .01)

Contingency Coefficient = 0.9654

TABLE IV

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SYMBOLS ATTRIBUTED
BY TIME TO INDIVIDUALS AND ISSUES OF THE NIGERIAN
CIVIL WAR (MAY 1967 TO JANUARY 1970)

	Individuals and Issues									
	Gowan		Ojukwu		United Nigeria		Biafra		Secession	
Phase	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-
1	1.3%	37.7%	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.2%	3.5%	1.5%	0.0%
2	9.9	11.2	15.3	20.7	0.6	0.0	37.9	22.5	0.0	0.6
3	2.8	0.6	4.3	1.4	0.0	0.0	17.4	12.11	2.2	0.0
4	1.5	4.3	6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.0	1.4	0.0	0.0
5	24.6	10.4	5.8	33.2	0.0	0.0	13.6	13.7	0.0	0.0

In order to clarify the answer to this proposition, the presentation of each symbol was restricted to the two directions: positive and negative, divided into the five phases of the war. The decision has been taken arbitrarily to compare all the symbols according to their over-all presentation throughout the war and not during the individual phase of the war.

A quick look at the data presented in Table IV shows that _Time_ made more references to the symbols representing the names of individuals (the names of the leaders of both parties involved in the conflict: Gowan, the Federal leader, and Ojukwu, the rebel leader), as well as the symbol Biafra than the issues-United Nigeria and Secession.

While the symbols Gowan, Ojukwu, and Biafra had references ranging between 1.3 percent and 37.9 percent, the two issues involved in the conflict constitute as low as 0.6 percent (United Nigeria) in Phase II and the highest of 2.2 percent (Secession) in Phase III. And the only other presentation of either issues was to Secession 1.5 percent in Phase I, see Table IV.

Therefore, the conclusion could be reached that _Time_ paid more attention to the symbols representing the individual leader of the conflict than it did to the issues. The heavy reference to Biafra could be construed as an implication of associating the name Ojukwu with Biafra. As to the issue United Nigeria, _Time_ did not think it was the cause or even an indirect cause of the war.

If _Time_'s treatment of the symbol United Nigeria has any significance, it is that not only did _Time_ not consider it as an issue during the conflict, but there is nothing by that name. This conclusion is

supported by what one of its correspondents wrote during the conflict:
"Unfortunately, Nigeria is only partly a nation; it is, in fact, an
arbitrary conglomeration of hostile tribes."[9]

---

[9]Time (May 18, 1968), p. 31.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study's findings indicate bias in Time's coverage of the

Nigerian Civil War in favor of Biafra. This contention, the writer

would like to caution, is based on what information the coverage pro-

vided by Time. And as determined by the stated rules of interpretation

of press content.

Time's coverage was very pro-Biafra in terms of direction and dimen-

sion during most of the war. It was not until when the war was moving

toward its end, and the final outcome was clear (that the rebellion was

doomed), did Time shift its position and increase the positive portrayal

of the Federal government (from 6.7 percent to 20.1 percent). This

should be expected, in that no one likes to be associated with a fail-

course. Another evidence of the shift in the position of Time is the non-

significant differences reported during Phase V of the civil war, Table II.

The same support for the rebellion was demonstrated in Time's

treatment of the specific symbols. The symbols related to the Federal

government received more negative presentations than those associated

with the rebels. Take the symbol Gowan (Table IV). It was portrayed

in more negative light than positive. Not until the last phase of the

civil war was this symbol referred to in more positive light than

negative (+1.3 percent to -13.7 percent in the first phase, and +24.6

percen to -10.4 percent in the fifth phase). Maybe identification with the winning side is also the reason for this change.

It is noteworthy that the symbol Ojukwu (the name of the rebels' leader), was treated in the opposite direction from that of the symbol Gowan. That is, it received more positive mention at the beginning of the conflict and more negative mention at the end. The same reason would suffice here.

From the way the symbol United Nigeria was treated (see Table IV), the highest mention of .6 percent implies that _Time_'s coverage did not reflect this symbol as an important cause of the war. This was a distortion of the actual situation. Everyone who had followed the trend of events in Nigeria pertaining to the war knows there was a breakaway of some of its (Nigeria) constituency, part which was later named Biafra.

As a matter of fact, this was the main cause of the conflict. But _Time_, for reasons unknown to the writer, apparently did not think so. Why? The writer has no answer and would not attempt to provide one.

Noting the number of mentions _Time_ gave the symbol Secession, it would be very difficult for a reader to discern this as an issue in the conflict. Whereas, anyone familiar with the situation knew there was a secession. And this led to the civil war.

From the data in Table IV, it is clear that _Time_ treated the symbol "Secession" more positively than negatively (+2.2 percent the highest and -.6 percent the highest negative). It should be pointed out that in Phases IV and V, there was no reference to this symbol.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study has demonsrated the value of using the content
of communication to determine the direction and dimension of communica-
tion quantitatively. Whatever may be the shortcomings of this study,
and they are many, it has definitely opened up an old field of communi-
cation research - content analysis.

The **exploratory and limited** scope of this study could not have
covered every aspect of the Time's coverage of the Nigerian Civil War.
Thus, the reported results are merely speculative.

The writer would like to point out some shortcomings of the study.
The first of which is the writer's prejudice in the civil war, being a
Nigerian from the Western region of the federation. His people were at
the forefront of the civil war. They fought on the side of the Federal
government. As such, his sentiment was for the Federal government
during the conflict. How much this must have influenced some of his
interpretations of the content of the Time's coverage would be hard, if
not impossible, to determine.

There were some sets of ground rules for interpretation which were
aimed at achieving objectivity. How far this was achieved could be
easily judged by the readers of this study.

Next is the methodology of the study: The shortcoming here is in
the coding of symbols. This was done by the writer solely. There was
no built-in technique for checking the coding consistency. By the
nature of the materials involved in the study, some value judgments had
to be made.

Due to the lack of finance and time, it was not possible to recruit
outside coders to recode the symbols, so that intercoder reliability

could be determined. This, the writer believes, would add to the

credibility of the findings.

However, it would be interesting to see how much difference there

would be in the findings of future researchers from that of the

writer's, using exactly the same methodology and the same data. One can

take solace in the level of the significant findings and hope there

would be little difference in their findings and that of the writer's.

In conclusion, the writer has observed a tendency to treat the

rebles more fairly than the Federal government in the _Time_'s coverage of

the civil war. The three propositions have been supported. There were

significant differences in the portrayal of the Federal government in

more negative light and the rebels in more positive lights.

There were significant differences in the portrayal of the Federal

government in unfavorable light and the rebels in favorable lights.

The percentages of positive mention of personality (the leader and the

symbol Biafra) on the rebels' side were higher than that of the Federal

government and more attention was paid to these personalities than the

symbols representing the issues (United Nigeria and Secession).

The writer had given some reasons for the performance of the _Time_

magazine, but these are not supported by any evidence. One is then

tempted to conclude that _Time_ may be playing an old game of rooting for

the underdog. It was obvious in the conflict examined, the rebels

were the underdog.

From the way the correspondents of _Time_ magazine had covered the

Nigerian Civil War, they demonstrated a great lack of knowledge of the

local issues involved. As such, the writer would recommend that in

reporting on any future international conflict, _Time_ management should

make use of local journalists who would be able to give adequate background of the event in question. The age of the instant expert is gone, and it is time this fact is recognized for the good of all.

Finally, the writer would like to suggest that _Time_ magazine and any other media that has interest in foreign countries should practice their "objective" reporting in those countries as they do at home. This is another lesson the press of those countries would learn from them.

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APPENDIX

A FORM SCHEDULE OF ANALYSIS OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES

ON THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR

Date of Article _____   Phase of the War _____

	Federal Government							Rebel Government						
Key	+		0		−				+		0		−		Key
Symbols	S	M	N	S	M				S	M		S	M		Symbols
1.															1.
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