# Analysis of Media's Attitude in Criminal Cases from the Perspective of Attitude System

Yeqing Xu

Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Chongqing, 401120, China

E-mail: xuyeqing1108@gmail.com

## Abstract

Culture and ideas are transmitted through news reporting. Despite its assertions of fairness, neutrality, and objectivity, the media consistently portrays one point of view. Taking a news article about the case of a Chinese pregnant woman who fell off a cliff in Thailand as the data, this paper analyzed the media's attitude toward the involved persons in the criminal case. The paper aims to explore the media's attitude towards the involved persons in the criminal case of a Chinese pregnant woman who fell off a cliff in Thailand. The result shows that appreciation and judgement are mainly concerned, with which propriety in judgement ranks at the top while the reaction in appreciation ranks second. When describing the wife Wang Nan, propriety is more often used and appreciation ranks second. By judging the injuries of the wife and the hard recovery from injuries of the wife through reaction and judgement and using some evaluative words to describe the injury and state of Mr.Sheppard, the author tries to praise Wang Nan as a very strong person. Although she is badly injured, she is still full of hope for life. When describing the husband, less description is made about him. The evaluated entity is mainly about the habit of gambling with the husband. All the evaluations are negative.

**Keywords:** *Attitude System; Criminal Case; Media*

## Introduction

Culture and ideas are transmitted through news reporting. In spite of its assertions of fairness, neutrality, and objectivity, the media consistently portrays one point of view (Zheng, 2010). The media regularly fabricates characters in news accounts, either directly or indirectly, to change the reader's view of the events. Scholars have studied the characterization of news reporting in great detail. Li (2016) illustrated that news organizations should follow these recommendations when creating characters for disaster reports: use common people to generate group images; use distinctive language to create characters; and use relatable stories to illustrate reality. Sabao (2016) conducted a linguistic analysis of the creation of journalistic reality is sufficient when looking at how journalists' vocabulary choices reflect

their ideological stance regarding the context and substance of the news report. by comparing and contrasting two news stories that were published in two Zimbabwean newspapers about the demise of retired General Solomon Mujuru. Du & Hui (2023) advocated a more human-centered perspective on the perception of scientists. Yang (2006) contended that media organizations had to explore the character constructs in news reports. However, few scholars analyzed the media's attitude in the criminal case from the perspective of the attitude system.

The case of the Chinese pregnant woman who fell off a cliff in Thailand is a high-profile criminal case. On the morning of 9 June 2019, local time in Thailand, a pregnant woman from China and her husband were visiting Ubon Patten National Park in Thailand, when the pregnant woman fell from a 34-meter-high cliff, and was found in serious condition by a Thai tourist on a trail in the park. After the case, the injured woman was taken to the hospital for treatment. The woman initially told the police that she fell off the cliff because she fainted. However, she later told the truth that her husband had tried to murder her. This is because the husband accompanied her during her hospital treatment and threatened to kill her if she revealed the fact of his attempted murder. On 17 June 2019, the man was arrested by the police while visiting his wife in the hospital. Under Thai law, the suspect faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. Taking a news article about the case of a Chinese pregnant woman who fell off a cliff in Thailand as the data, this paper analyzed the media's attitude towards the involved person in the criminal case. The paper aims to explore the media's attitude towards the involved persons in the criminal case of a Chinese pregnant woman who fell off a cliff in Thailand.

## Material and Methodology

### Material

I got the most viewed article from the Thailand website. First, I searched with the "Chinese women" and "cliff" as the keywords. I found the article from the Thaiger according to the page view. I got the article entitled "A Chinese woman is finally on her feet and on the road to recovery after the trauma of being pushed off a cliff in Thailand in 2019 by a sinister ex-con husband".

I chose the articles from the Thaiger because the Thaiger is a news website that covers a wide range of topics from across Thailand, such as politics, business, crime, and lifestyle, covering a wide range of topics, including politics, business, crime, lifestyle and exclusive stories from Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pattaya, and beyond.

### Method

Initially, I marked the attitude words in the essay using attitude system in UAM. To manually annotate the attitude terms, I first imported the article into the UAM. I then counted the number of each group using Statistics in UAM. Second, I clarified the main themes of the news articles.

## Analytical Framework

The three semantic areas that make up the attitude system encompass **affect**, **appreciation**, and **judgement** (Martin & White, 2005). **Affect** is concerned with positive and negative emotions, containing un/happiness, in/security,dis/satisfaction and dis/inclination. **Appreciation** involves the evaluation of natural phenomena or things or performances we make, including **reaction**, **composition** and **valuation**. **Judgement** deals with attitudes towards people or their towards people or their behavior, behavior, including social esteem and social sanction. Judgment of esteem has to do with **normality**, **capacity** and **tenacity**; judgment of sanction has to do with **veracity** and **propriety**.

In the following example, the "sinister" is used to judge the husband, showing that the media shows a negative attitude towards him.

Example: A Chinese woman is finally on her feet and on the road to recovery after the trauma of being pushed off a cliff in Thailand in 2019 by a sinister ex-con husband [**judgement**:**propriety**].

### *Results and Discussion*

In the news article, attitude resource in this journalism is shown, including 5 **judgement**, 16 **appreciation**. In the **judgement**, all are **propriety**. All **appreciation** is **reaction**. According to Table 1.1, the highest frequency of occurrence is the **appreciation**, accounting for 76%.

Table 1.1 Number and Proportion of Attitude Resources

| Feature | N | Percent | Feature1 | N | Percent | Feature2 | N | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| attitude | 21 | 66.00% | **judgement** | 5 | 24.00% | **propriety** | 5 | 24.00% |
| | | | **appreciation** | 16 | 76.00% | **reaction** | 16 | 76.00% |

The major themes are displayed in Table 1.2. the news article mainly focuses on three major themes, respectively Wang Nan（the wife）, Yu Xiaodong (the husband), and the cliff. Attention is paid mainly to describing Ms. Wang. When describing Ms. Wang, 3 **reaction** and 11 **propriety** are used. When describing the husband Yu Xiaodong, 2 **reaction** and 12 **propriety** are utilized. Only 1 **propriety** is about a Thai tourist. Fewer attitude resources are shown when describing the husband Yu Xiaodong. 2 **reaction** and 3 **propriety** are used to describe the habit of gambling of the husband. Only 1 **propriety** is used to describe the place of the cliff.

Table 1.2 the evaluated themes and the evaluated entity

| 2. ATTITUDE TYPE | Evaluated themes | | Evaluated entity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | person | N | entity |
| [**Appreciation**: **reaction**] | 3 | Wang Nan(the wife) | 3 | The injuries of the wife |
| | 2 | Yu Xiaodong(the huaband) | 2 | The habit of gambling |
| [**Judgement**: **propriety**] | 12 | Wang Nan(the wife) | 11 | The recovery from injuries of the wife |
| | | | 1 | The courage of the wife |
| | 3 | Yu Xiaodong(the huaband) | 3 | The habit of gambling |
| | 1 | The cliff | 1 | The place of the cliff |

**The Description of the Wife**

In the description of the wife, the media expresses positive attitudes. When describing Ms. Wang, the attitude is positive by using **appreciation** and **reaction**. The description focuses on the injuries of the wife and the hard recovery from injuries of the wife and the courage of the wife. 3 **reaction** is to describe the injuries of the wife. 11 **propriety** for the hard recovery from injuries of the wife is about the hard recovery from injuries of the wife and 2 **propriety** is about praising the courage of the wife.

Example 1 and example 2 are typical examples in the description of the injuries of the wife, According to example 1, the adverb" severely" is used to judge the injuries, showing that the wife was badly injured after she was pushed from the cliff. What's more, as shown in example 2, the adjective "traumatic" is used to modify the ordeal that the wife suffers.

Example 1: A Thai tourist found Wang lying severely injured [**judgement**: **propriety**] on a Pha Team National Park trail.

Example 2: Her fall was broken by trees, and she survived the traumatic ordeal [**appreciation**: **reaction**], but unfortunately, her baby did not.

When describing the hard recovery from the injuries of the wife, journalists mostly use **appreciation**. Example 3 is indicative in various ways. Firstly, The word "long and arduous", "multiple" and "extensive" was used to show that the recovery from the injury is very hard.

Example 3: The journey to recovery has been long and arduous [**appreciation**: **reaction**], involving multiple surgeries [**appreciation**: **reaction**] and extensive rehabilitation treatment [**appreciation**: **reaction**].

To praise the courage of the wife, the word "remarkable" is used to praise the courage of the wife, showing the strong will of Wang Nan just as in example 4.

Example 4: The courage and strength shown by Wang Nan in the face of such adversity is truly remarkable [**appreciation**: **reaction**].

In conclusion, we can see that the media expressed positive attitudes towards the wife by using **appreciation** and **reaction**. The description focuses on the injuries of the wife and the recovery from injuries of the wife and the courage of the wife.

**The Description of the Husband**

In the description of the wife, most of the evaluation is negative. When describing Ms. Wang, the **appreciation** and **reaction** are often used. The description focuses on the habit of gambling of the husband.

For example, the adjective" one last" is used to modify the dice, showing that the husband is gambling-addicting, as shown in example 5.

Example 5: Wang Nan spent the past four years of her life trying to survive her life-threatening ordeal [**appreciation**: **reaction**] and rebuilding and rehabilitating her life after her gambling addict husband [**judgement**: **propriety**] threw one last dice [**appreciation**: **reaction**] and tried to murder her in Thailand.

Use the adjective "sinister" to judge the personality of the husband and use gambling to show he is gambling-addicting. And the negative evaluation shows that the husband wants to kill her wife with a comprehensive motive.

**The Description of the Cliff**

In the description of the cliff where the wife fell off, the **reaction** is used. As shown in example 3, the adjective "popular" is to modify the place, providing a backdrop for the rescue of the wife.  So the possibility of finding the wife falling off the cliff is very high.

Example 3: The 35-year-old Chinese woman was three months pregnant at the time when her husband Yu Xiaodong ruthlessly [**judgement**: **propriety**] pushed her off a cliff at the popular Thai tourist spot Pha Team [**appreciation**: **reaction**], in Kong Chiam district on June 9, 2019.

## *Conclusion*

Taking a news article about the case of a Chinese pregnant woman who fell off a cliff in Thailand as the data, this paper analyzed the media's attitude in the criminal case. The questions proposed are addressed.

In the attitude system, only **appreciation** and judgment are mainly concerned, with which **propriety** in **judgement** ranks at the top while the **reaction** in **appreciation** ranks second. When describing the wife Wang Nan, **propriety** is more often used and **appreciation** ranks second. By judging the injuries of the wife and the hard recovery from injuries of the wife through **reaction** and **judgement** and using some evaluative words to describe the injury and state of Mr. Sheppard, the author tries to praise Wang Nan as a very strong person. Although she is badly injured, she is still full of hope for life. When describing the husband, less description is made about him. The evaluated entity is mainly about the habit of gambling with the husband. All the evaluation is negative.

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