



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE UK: SOCIAL POLICY, POLITICS AND IMPACT

Conception and management of the Covid-19 crisis in the UK : consequences on the Scottish constitutional preferences

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CONCEPTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN THE UK : CONSEQUENCES ON THE SCOTTISH CONSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCES

- (1) What are the British specificities in the management of the crisis (sharing of expertise, distribution of competences, collaboration,...)?
- (2) How did Scottish political parties use the management of the Covid-19 crisis to bolster their constitutional position?

CONCEPTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN THE UK : CONSEQUENCES ON THE SCOTTISH CONSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCES

How did Scottish political parties use the management of the Covid-19 crisis to bolster their constitutional position?

(1) Methodology and tools

(2) Actors and corpora

(3) Results

(4) Discussion

CONCEPTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN THE UK : CONSEQUENCES ON THE SCOTTISH CONSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCES

(1) Methodology and tools

Interpretive methods → Discourse Analysis

Quantitative : Corpus Linguistics (LancsBox)

Qualitative : Critical Discourse Analysis (by hand)

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

(2) Actors and corpora

- 5 Scottish political parties : SNP, Tories, Labour, Greens, LibDem
- Covid-19 Committee in Holyrood 24/04/20 → 18/03/21 + Manifestos 2021
- Analysis :
 - (A) CL : abduction (collocates, keywords, statistics, comparison)
 - (B) CDA : use in context (meaning-making), discourse prosody, topoi



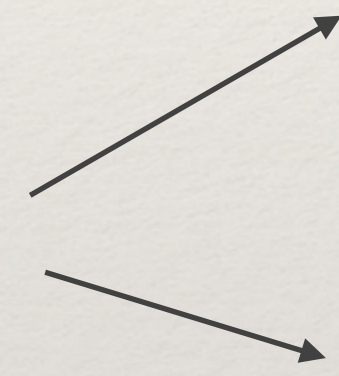
Interpretation of the governments' actions during the crisis? Which use to legitimate their constitutional preference?

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

(3) Results

(A) Position of political parties

(B) Statistics



Evaluation of the handling of the crisis

Constitutional « response »

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

Conservative Party

- Positive evaluation of the UK's actions / Negative evaluation of the SNP's actions
 - « *The tremendous success of the UK vaccination programme* »
 - « *The UK government's furlough and self-employment income support schemes (...) were a lifeline* »
 - « *Under the SNP, Scotland has become the 'sick man of Europe'* »
- Work *with* rather than against the UK / Indyref is a distraction from recovery
 - « *We cannot deliver our recovery if our parliament and our country are paralyzed by the SNP's obsession with another divisive independence referendum* »

Green Party

- Positive evaluation of the Scottish Gov. / Negative evaluation of the Scottish Gov.
 - « *The Scottish Government response to Covid has been hampered by poor planning* »
- Devolution → independence : *not* directly related to Covid

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

LibDem

- Negative evaluation of the Scottish Government's actions
 - « *The Scottish Government missed the opportunity last summer to prepare for the second wave. Testing was neglected and quarantine checks were slack* »
- Work with the UK where relevant *but* reform towards a federal UK / Recovery > divisive and irresponsible referendum
 - « *We won't risk destroying trade with the UK through an independence referendum* »
 - « *No matter what your view on independence, the wake of a terrible pandemic is not the moment for that* »

Labour Party

- Positive evaluation of the Scottish Gov. / Negative evaluation of the Scottish Gov.
 - « *The approach taken by both the Scottish and UK Governments, while welcome, has focused on the immediate risks and stop-gap solutions* »
 - « *We give credit to the Scottish Government for the way it has communicated and taken people with it* » »
- Full use of devolved powers while working with the UK where necessary / Recovery > Indyref
 - « *The last thing we need is more constitutional turmoil; our collective priority must be the national recovery* »

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

SNP

- Positive and negative evaluation of the UK and Scottish governments' actions
 - « *The area on which we have expressed concerns has been the significant absence of COBRA discussions* »
 - « *To be blunt, the Scottish government does not have the borrowing powers and some of the tools that we need* »
- Full powers of independence are needed to drive recovery
 - « *We are seeking your permission at this election for an independence referendum to be held after Covid - when the crisis has passed but in time for us to equip our Parliament with the full powers it needs to drive our long term recovery from Covid* »

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

(B) Summary + statistics

- Except for the Greens, Covid has become another constitutional argument ;
- Opposition to indyref > change in/retention of the current structure ;
- Criticism is rare in terms of volume ;
- Use of keywords for constitutional change : not statistically significant.

HOW DID SCOTTISH POLITICAL PARTIES USE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO BOLSTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION ?

4. Discussion of the results

- Size of corpora
- Time span
- Genre



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Thank you !

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