
The Framing of Queen Elizabeth II's Death Notices

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ABSTRACT

Engagement is one of the essential aspects of having effective communication in English. In reality, English speakers, specifically language learners, often struggle and are unresponsive in communication, including in the classroom. This contradicts the purpose of learning that requires students and teachers to communicate effectively. In response to this issue, it is necessary to understand how teachers handle the problem through teaching strategies. This paper investigates teachers' strategies for engaging unresponsive students to teachers' questions. It is a qualitative study, with data collected through observations and interviews. The subject is an English teacher at SMKN 1 Tapin who taught tenth-grade students. The results show that the teacher used several strategies in engaging with unresponsive students, including humor, effective pacing, demonstrating intensity and enthusiasm, and pair work. Additionally, she also did code-mix with students' native language, constantly asking other students, and giving rewards. This proves the teacher's ability in exploring creative strategies to be engaging with her students.

Keywords : *students' engagement, teacher strategies, unresponsive students*

1. INTRODUCTION

Death is a difficult subject to discuss in society. It is considered something that is being diminished from cultural consciousness and remains being spoken quietly (Sexton in Cebrat, 2016). This makes the topic becomes a delicate subject to be discussed, including in the academic setting. The issue also leads to a lower number of research on death and other aspects that surround it (Cebrat, 2016)

Though the subject is rarely brought up, previous research has discussed how death has been announced in the form of obituary and death notice. Previous research note that obituary and death notice held importance; not only to celebrate the life and death of an individual but also to contribute to the social understanding of an individual's life (Moses & Marelli, 2004; Salahshour, 2017). However, what has not been discussed a lot is the framing of obituaries and death notices. This is rather interesting, considering death notices not only can be used to discuss linguistic aspects, but also socio-political and economic aspects of the deceased or the death notice viewers/listeners/readers (Salahshour, 2017). This also suggests that framing of death notices is also not only considers the contents of it, but also the target audiences of the news.

One of the potential subjects regarding this issue is the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Queen Elizabeth II, who is the reigning monarch of the United Kingdom from 1952 to 2022, died in September 2022. Her death had brought huge attention from the international media, especially in the procedure of breaking out her death to the media. Before her passing, a scheme titled "Operation London Bridge", surfaced among the public. The scheme covers the stages of her death announcement and funeral. These stages also affect how news outlets respectfully deliver the news regarding the death of Queen Elizabeth II (Taylor, 2022).

In reality, the ways of each news outlet in breaking the news are differentiated from each other. It brought public interest in how the coverage can be considered as respectful, abrupt, or somewhat "a bit too much" (Allday, 2022; Bryan, 2022; Parker, 2022). This also does not go far from the contextual background underlying the death of British monarchs themselves. Since Elizabeth II is the longest reigning monarch in the United Kingdom's history, the reporting of her death has been massive, similar to other British monarchs as well, including Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh (Bryan, 2022). Moreover, the way of her death is delivered also shows how each news outlet frames her death, and simultaneously, reflects the company's stance on UK's royal families.

This paper aims to analyze the framing in death notices and obituaries of Queen Elizabeth II's death. It will also compare each news outlet's framing, with the consideration of the target audiences.

1.1. Death Notice and Obituary

A death notice is a public announcement that someone has died (Collins, 2022). In some countries, it is considered a formal death announcement that is delivered by local radio stations or bulletin boards (Cassell et al., 2005). Meanwhile, Cassell (2005) defines an obituary (short as "obits") as a brief biography and notice of a person's death. It contains the person's life, their surviving family members, and funeral service details.

Although death notices and obituaries are similar to each other, there is a stark difference between the two of them in discussing the deceased. In most British and American newspapers, an obituary describes the life, characteristics, and memories of the deceased from the closest family members and friends (Cassell et al., 2005). However, an obituary is often treated as a "paid advertisement," since it only provides short information about the deceased, often written by the families of the deceased (Starck, 2004). However, another researcher also stated that the difference between death notice and obituary has blurred, as most news outlets and publishers try to combine both of them to reduce production costs (Bates, 2009).

In society, death notice and obituary hold an influence, as it brings the public's attention to the deceased. However, the length and amount of death notice may vary depending on the deceased's gender, status, and popularity; leading to a lack of attention from the public. Bytheway and Johnson in Cebzat (2016) state that in the UK, most obituaries are written by men about men. However, exceptions may apply to royal families, politicians, military figures, and entertainers, regardless of their gender.

1.2. News Framing

D'Angelo (2018) states that framing is a process that involves communication that presents and defines an issue. News framing decides which information that is influential enough for the audiences to interpret and evaluate a situation, process, or issue (Goffman in Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2019). In the other words, news framing let the audience which part of the information is essential to the news— leading them to perceive

the news in a different emotion. News framing is also closely linked with news discourse. News discourse is a process in which an event is considered newsworthy by the journalist. Pan and Kosicki (1993) argue that news sources, journalists, and audiences have a defining role in designing, constructing, transmitting, and perceiving news.

Two processes tie into framing: frame-building and frame-setting. Frame-building considers the factors that influence the quality of news framing. This may include the journalists' interactions with the respondents, elites, or social movements (D'Angelo, 2018). Meanwhile, frame-setting refers to the connection between the media framing and the audiences who perceive it. This means that the framing of news will affect the viewers' prior knowledge, disposition, and judgment regarding certain issues in the presented news.

In discussing framing, the frames can be seen as both or either as independent variables (IV) or dependent variables (DV) (D'Angelo, 2018). When news is studied as DV, this means that the study will focus on the external factors of news production; this aspect includes the journalists, pressures from the elites and organizations, and routines in a news outlet. Meanwhile, IV focus on what aspects of that antecedent audience's interpretations. Considering that this study will focus on aspects that might affect viewers' perception of death notices, this study will focus on the IV aspect.

1.3. Previous Research

There is a small number of recent research that focus on the discourse and framing surrounding death notice or obituary. However, many highlights that despite the limited study regarding the subject, death notice and obituary is a "thick and full" genre, with layers of discussion that can be unfolded by researchers (Cebrat, 2016; Muhammad, 2020; Salahshour, 2017). The focus of each recent research regarding the subject varies; from the genre of death notice (Cebrat, 2016) to the cultural value of death notice (Muhammad, 2020).

Several main ideas are raised by researchers regarding death notices, the approach to the subject, and how it is being delivered or framed by news providers. To begin with, a death notice is considered to be an attempt in justifying the value of the deceased in the community or society. It indicated the huge loss that is experienced by family, friends, colleagues, and the entire society (Cebrat, 2016). This is proven by other researches as well, in which death notices remain culturally rooted in the Farsi and Kurdish communities

(Muhammad, 2020; Salahshour, 2017). However, the treatment of death notices may differ in each country's community. In contrast to most death notices that are similar to obituaries, British death notice is often only used as a way to inform the general public and pay tribute to the deceased.

Another idea that becomes the focus of most research is the deliverance of death notices. Most researchers use Swales's (1990) theory to identify how a death notice is delivered (Cebrat, 2016; Muhammad, 2020). To see this aspect, a death notice is divided into several units called "moves". The moves based on communicative purposes are: establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche. By analyzing the move, a collection of moves and linguistics aspects can be identified (Swales, 1990). The usage of Swales's theory in the previous theory is fruitful in understanding the conservative approach to the pattern of death notice (Cebrat, 2016). It is also proved to be effective to seek the registers and traces of bias in death notices.

Trace of bias and framing in death notices may be spotted through several factors. One of the main factors is the gender aspect, in which women may go through several funeral processes and venues compared to men (Muhammad, 2020). Moreover, women are also less announced in death notices compared to their men counterparts (Salahshour, 2017). Another factor is the socio-economic status of the deceased. Not only the factor may affect the existence of the deceased's death notice, but it will also affect the influence of the deceased's notice on the public (Salahshour, 2017). An example is delivered in other research, in which politicians, military figures, royal families, or celebrities may have more spotlights on their death notices rather than people with lower socio-economic status (Cebrat, 2016). Regardless of the existing biases or framing, journalists and news outlets need to keep their sensitivity and impartiality in delivering the news. It is also important for them to be aware of the major consequences after the death notice's deliverance (Oxford, 2013).

2. METHODS

This research is a qualitative study, in which the presentation of the analysis will be in the form of reasoning and description (Given, 2008; Nassaji, 2015). An additional approach to the study, which is discourse analysis, is also used to analyze the data. By integrating discourse analysis, the utterances and statements are not only being analyzed on the utterance level, but also the situated meanings and social practices (Rogers, 2013).

The data of this research was taken from the death notices of Queen Elizabeth II on UK major news outlets, including BBC One, BBC Two, Channel 4, Channel 5, ITV, Sky News, and CBBC (Newsround). Each of the news outlet announcements lasted 2-3 minutes. These sources were chosen since television programs announce death notices travel faster compared to other media, such as newspapers or magazines (Thiel, 2018). The coverages data were transcribed for analysis.

The data were gathered and analyzed using Swales' (1990) Moves and Steps analysis framework or CARS (Create a Research Space Model). The "moves" are considered to be the discoursal unit that has a communicative function in a discourse (Swales, 1990). According to Swales, the three moves to be analyzed are establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche. However, for this research, the unit of analysis will be adapted from move functions in death notice according to Muhammad (2020), including signaling the event, identifying the deceased, reference to next of kin, date of death, cause of death, funeral arrangements, and death as truth. After breaking down the moves in each death notice, the death notices will be compared according to the deliverance aspect.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

After examining the death notices samples, three moves exist in all of them: *Signaling the Event*, *Identifying the Deceased*, and *Date of Death*. However, other move functions also existed in the different samples. The frequency of the moves structures is listed below. The analysis of each move function and its framing of it will be discussed after the table.

Table 1. Moves in UK Television's Death Notices of Queen Elizabeth II

Move	Move Function	BBC 1	BBC 2	ITV	C4	C5	Sky	CBBC	Move Frequency
1	Signaling the Event	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
2	Identifying the Deceased	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
3	Reference to Next of Kin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	6
4	Date of Death	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
5	Cause of Death	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0

6	Funeral Arrangements	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	4
7	Death as Truth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0

3.1. Move 1: Signaling the Event

A signaling event is considered an "establishing a territory" move. This move declares the death of a member of society (Muhammad, 2020). With Queen Elizabeth II's death notices, all death notice contains this move and are delivered in an almost similar way. Since the format of the death notice is officially prepared by The Royal Family, it closed the chance for news outlets to prepare different structures to announce the news. In the Royal Family statement, the notice starts with "*Buckingham Palace has announced the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.*" This line aired in death notices spoken by BBC One and Two (Hew Edwards), Channel 4 (Cathy Newman), and Sky News (Dermot Murnaghan).

An interesting exception applies to ITV (Mary Nightingale), in which the announcer is fumbling while delivering this move. In the death notice coverage, Nightingale looks for the issued statement as she continuously said "I will find that statement for you." Fillers ("uh") and pauses were also used while delivering the news. This move is framed by the audiences as uncomposed and seemingly unprepared to deliver the news, leading it to be perceived as unprofessional by the viewers. Another exception also applied to CBBC (Lizo Mziba), in which the death notice is started with the statement "*We have some sad news to bring to you.*" Stating emotional values to signal someone's death is not something that often appears in death notices, as shown in previous studies (Muhammad, 2020; Salahshour, 2017). However, this news is intended to be crafted for younger audiences, due to CBBC as a BBC's children television channel. Therefore, the announcer and news provider was trying to frame the news in a language that is easy to understand by children. Despite using easy phrases to signal the death ("*important news,*" "*sad news*"), it still holds the value of a death notice that tries to underline the huge loss for society over the deceased (Cebrat, 2016).

3.2. Move 2: Identifying the Deceased

The identification of the deceased may be seen from social and professional titles, profiles, and social images (Muhammad, 2020). In the case of Queen Elizabeth's death notices, news outlets use different titles to address Elizabeth II. Several channels including

BBC One and Two, Channel 5, and ITV, addressed her as “*Her Majesty*,” “*Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II*,” and “*The Queen*.” This is different compared to Channel 4 and CBBC, who preferred to address her as “*Queen Elizabeth II*.” The notion of the two channels’ way of framing to address Elizabeth II is to underline Elizabeth II as the UK’s most important historical and political figure.

The issue above is added with the descriptions that Channel 4 and CBBC gave to her in the notices, describing that she was “the longest serving/reigning monarch in British history,” helping to “preserve the monarchy” with “a combination of skill and sense of duty” (Mziba, 2022; Newman, 2022). The descriptions gave the sense of historical importance of the deceased, rather than giving much to her personality to the closest people. This practice often happened with deceased people that have higher socio-economic or political status (Cebrat, 2016). Another prominent description was given by Channel 5 (Dan Walker), who decided to give informal assurance to the viewers. After giving a short identification of Elizabeth II's death, the announcer gives an assurance that the news might be upsetting for the viewers since she is “a huge part of so many lives” and it is okay to feel sad about it. The way Channel 5 took a slightly personal framing of the news gives a glimpse of how the audience would react to the death notice.

Other channels, including BBC channels as parts of the royal charter, did not give descriptions similar to what Channel 4, CBBC, and Channel 5 delivered. All of them only mentioned Elizabeth II as the longest-serving monarch, framing it to the audience that her death is a huge loss to society.

3.3. Move 3: Reference to Next of Kin

Reference to Next of Kin is a move that lists the extended families of the deceased, with an expectation that people would come to pay respect and grief during the mourning period. Muhammad (2020) notes that the more relatives put on the notice, the more people will pay respect to the deceased. However, this is not the case for most death notices for Queen Elizabeth II. Almost all news outlets only mention Prince Charles and Princess Camilla (effectively changed as The King and The Queen Consort) as the next of kin. The framing underlines the couples’ importance as the current monarchs of the UK to the viewers.

However, an exception applies to Channel 4 and Channel 5. The channels mention other relatives as the next of kin in their news, including Elizabeth II’s children (Prince Charles,

Princess Anne, Prince Andrew, and Prince Edward) and grandchildren (Prince William and Harry). The mentions of other relatives are framed by the news outlets with the intention that the royal families are supposed to be presented as a whole unity during the mourning time.

3.4. *Move 4: Date of Death*

In the majority of death notices, a death notice usually include the day, month, and year of an individual's passing. However, this is not the case for all death notices provided by UK news outlets. Since all of the death notices are taken from television breaking news, all of them did not refer to the exact date. Instead, the date of death is marked with words *today, just now, this afternoon, and a few moments ago*. This frames an urgency for the viewers, with the hope that they would get the news immediately. This practice proved to be normal in death notice practices in different countries, such as in Iran, where the funeral is still considered to be "fresh" and includes words like *tomorrow or today* (Muhammad, 2020).

3.5. *Move 6: Funeral Arrangements*

Funeral Arrangements is a move that mentioned the official funeral procedure for the deceased. In the majority of death notices, funeral arrangements are disclosed by the family and news providers with details. However, this does not apply to Queen Elizabeth II's death notices. Several news outlets (Channel 5, Sky News, CBBC) seemingly believe that the information might be irrelevant to the viewers and decides to not include it in the death notices. However, other channels (BBC One and Two, ITV, and Channel 4) decided to put it with as little information as possible, mentioning that King Charles and Queen Consort Camilla would return to London the day after Queen Elizabeth II's passing. The intention behind this framing is to make the procedures as private as possible for the next of kin; thus, keeping this information from the public. This framing also happened in other death notices, as some people want to keep the funeral arrangement to the deceased's closest people (Cebrat, 2016).

3.6. *Other Moves: Cause of Death and Death as Truth*

In the "Cause of Death" move, the reason behind the deceased's passing is disclosed. Meanwhile, "Death as Truth" focus on the inevitability of death and its religious implications

of it. These two moves are not disclosed and framed in any death notice by UK television. This is because the two aspects are considered to be delicate subjects that need to be disclosed only to the closest people. It is also considered to be not relevant to the urgency of the news to the viewers. This is confirmed by previous research, in which the discussion of the cause of death, life after death, and religious matters in death notices are considered to be taboo in several regions (Cebrat, 2016; Muhammad, 2020).

4. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing death notices from the UK's news outlets, several death notices fulfill the moves of death notices. The three main move functions that appeared on these death notices are Signaling the Event, Identifying the Deceased, and Date of Death. Other move functions such as Cause of Death and Death as Truth did not appear in these death notices due to the possible framing of keeping Queen Elizabeth II's family privacy and taboos surrounding the subject.

What needs to be underlined for this research is that despite the existence of move functions, the delivery of these moves may differ depending on the target audience and news outlets' bias toward the Royal Family. To illustrate the first point, the target audience for the channel, CBBC, is younger audiences. This led the news outlet to frame their death notice as simple as possible, so children would understand the grief and importance of the news. This rarely happened in other death notices since it mainly targeted adult public viewers. Meanwhile, for the second point, the bias might be shown in how the news outlet addressed the news. Royal Family-based channels such as BBC or ITV would use specific addresses and identifications of Queen Elizabeth II to honor her impact on the monarchy and the UK. However, other channels, such as Channel 4, would use a general address to Queen Elizabeth II and frame her death as a historical event of a passing of a prominent political figure.

Although this study gained several interesting points on how news outlets frame death notices, there is still a limitation of this study. This study cannot cover death notices of Queen Elizabeth II from the Commonwealth countries, the United States, and other countries due to time limitations. However, further research on death notices, whether in the form of written or audiovisual, is a need to understand possible framing existing in death-based news coverages.

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