



COLECCIÓN CONOCIMIENTO CONTEMPORÁNEO

Educación 360: Emociones, tecnología, evaluación e inclusión en la era digital

Coords.

Carmen Romero García

Olga Buzón García

Dykinson, S.L.

EDUCACIÓN 360:
EMOCIONES, TECNOLOGÍA, EVALUACIÓN
E INCLUSIÓN EN LA ERA DIGITAL



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Dykinson, S.L.

2024



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EDUCACIÓN: EMOCIONES, TECNOLOGÍA, EVALUACIÓN E INCLUSIÓN EN LA ERA DIGITAL

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SECCIÓN III.

DENOMINADA “EXPLORANDO
LA RELACIÓN ENTRE EMOCIONES
Y TECNOLOGÍAS EN LA ERA DIGITAL

POSTING ROYAL NEWS: SENTIMENT AND IDENTITY IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA ERA

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving digital communication landscape, social media have become a powerful medium, revolutionizing the way people engage with information, construct identities, and contribute to larger societal discourses (Marwick & Boyd, 2014). Amidst the vast array of online platforms available, [X] –previously known as Twitter– stands out as an influential tool that provides a real-time environment for widespread user participation, facilitating the rapid dissemination of news and products on a global scale (Arceneaux & Dinu, 2018; Briones et al., 2011; Lerman & Ghosh, 2010).

On 8th September 2022, Queen Elizabeth II, the monarch of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth realms, passed away at the age of 96 at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. The news was shared by Buckingham Palace and other media on different platforms, including TV news, Instagram, Facebook and [X], among others. Public and private figures also posted official statements on their social networks' accounts, reflecting emotional nuances, such as sadness, respect, or nostalgia, or even promoting their products. Understanding the sentiment in these statements from a multimodal approach contributes to a broader analysis of how the digital narrative is shaped in such historical events.

As a result of its pervasive influence, the adoption of a number of discursive strategies on [X] has raised interest among scholars (Bouvier, 2015; Zappettini & Rezazadah, 2023). This research builds on this evolving landscape by focusing on the nuanced analysis of interactional

metadiscoursal markers in [X]. Metadiscoursal devices, as linguistic features that reflect how discourse is organized and interpreted, play a pivotal role in propagating viral news and influencing public discourse. The need for more comprehensive research on the utilization of these devices on digital platforms becomes apparent in light of their potential impact on identity construction and the broader social narrative.

Bearing all these aspects in mind, this paper seeks to contribute to ongoing research on sentiment analysis in [X] discourse. Specifically, the objective is to explore how official statements around the passing of Queen Elizabeth II on [X], shared by influential figures, support identity construction dynamics in a multimodal environment. The subsequent sections of this article will present the theoretical background, methodology, results and discussion, shedding light on the patterns identified in the use of metadiscoursal devices. Through this exploration, the study aims to contribute valuable insights with implications for scholars, linguists, and educators interested in the intersection of language, sentiment, and identity construction within the dynamic landscape of social media, particularly on [X].

2. SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE

The multifaceted nature of social media communication has been explored from different perspectives. The concept of social media as the new public sphere, posited by Marwick and Boyd (2014), lays the foundation for understanding its profound impact on information flow dynamics. As a digital meeting point, social media platforms offer a space where individuals engage in dialogue, prompting the construction of collective knowledge. [X], in particular, emerges as a valuable tool within this framework, exemplifying its role as a new town square, particularly during the 2020 lockdown in Spain (Mesa-Pedrazas et al., 2023). The platform's real-time nature and widespread user engagement facilitate the rapid dissemination of news and products, amplifying their reach (Briones et al., 2011; Lerman & Ghosh, 2010).

Research has explored how scientific and educational communities utilize X to disseminate information on topics ranging from agriculture to

health and sports (Aguilar-Gallegos et al., 2022; Whang & Zhou, 2015; Wunderlich & Memmert, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2014; Rosenberg et al., 2020).

Nonetheless, the advent of social media has not only facilitated information dissemination but has also become a focal point for understanding collective attitudes and sentiments. In fact, scholars have investigated the creation of individual and collective identities through the analysis of hashtags and political speech on digital platforms (Kroon, 2017; McGlashan, 2020). A study by Kroon (2017) investigated the “bonding” strategies used by a TV sports production on [X], revealing that hashtags, as metadiscoursal devices, served not only as content organizers but also as identity construction tools tied to commercial interests. Other studies, for example, encompass a nuanced negotiation of social roles. By focusing on the exploration of key indicators of social identity in the #MeToo era, users can negotiate their participation in response to socio-cultural movements.

As regards sentiment analysis, affection may be treated as a form of capital within the attention economy (Marwick, 2015; Tufekci, 2013; Turow, 2012), rendering sentiment a vital instrument for marketers (Rambocas & Gama, 2013). In this vein, Puschmann and Powell (2018) look at how words are transformed into consumer preferences, with an emphasis on the intricate relationship between language and consumer behaviour in the digital landscape.

Drawing attention to the intricate nature of identity construction, Maryufani (2022) acknowledges the prevalence of attitudinal markers in private companies’ posts, incorporating elements of respect, humour, and irony. These markers play a pivotal role in shaping readers’ comprehension and attitudes toward content. Private companies strategically leverage attitudinal markers to influence perceptions and establish a distinct identity within the digital agora.

Yus (2016) addresses the effects of social networking sites and virtual worlds pragmatically, as these portals may favour interaction as well as the development of users’ personal and social identities. This exploration lays a foundation for understanding how sentiments are

woven into narratives about environmental issues, as seen in the empirical mapping of environmental protection and conservation nonprofit discourse on social media by Ter-Mkrtchyan and Taylor (2023). This contributes to a comprehensive grasp of the socio-emotional underpinnings of online communication.

In the face of these advancements, linguistic choices have garnered significant attention, particularly concerning hate speech strategies (Chakraborty et al., 2020). Understanding the sentiment behind hate speech is essential for identifying and addressing harmful content effectively on different social media platforms (Chakraborty et al., 2020). Wanniarachchi et al. (2023) provide a methodological framework for investigating hate speech patterns on social media. This framework incorporates sentiment analysis, topic modelling, and discourse analysis, offering a comprehensive approach to studying the multifaceted nature of hate speech. The study focuses on how hate speech manifests, identifying patterns and linguistic markers that contribute to the characterization and detection of such content.

In essence, this collective body of research has proven the multifaceted nature of social media. A higher number of studies may provide valuable insights on the dynamics of information flow and identity construction.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In light of the theoretical background abovementioned about social media discourse, this paper examines the multimodal elements present in posts made by influential figures, either private or public. To achieve this goal, the focus is on the occurrence of interactional metadiscourse devices and the use of visuals. Thus, the current study departs from the following research questions:

- RQ(1): What types and frequency of interactional markers use private and public figures?
- RQ(2): How do multimodal elements contribute to information flow dynamics and identity construction?

The following section will outline the context and corpus gathered for the study. It will also present an account of the data analysis and the methodology employed in the research.

4. METHODOLOGY

The context and the corpus collected for the purpose of this study will be described below. Additionally, an accurate overview of the data analysis and the employed methodological procedure considered in this study will be given.

4.1. CONTEXT

Queen Elizabeth II, head of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth realms, passed away on 8 September 2022 at the age of 96 at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. Her death was announced by Buckingham Palace and other media, encompassing TV, Instagram, Facebook, and X. Well-known figures from public and private spheres shared official statements through these platforms, conveying a spectrum of emotional nuances (i.e., sadness, respect, nostalgia, historical events) or even promoting their products. A comprehensive analysis of the sentiment in these statements, employing a multimodal approach, contributes to a more expansive understanding of how the digital narrative unfolds during significant historical events.

The death of Queen Elizabeth II is not only a significant news event but also a moment of national mourning. [X] discourse analysis helps uncover how this event is culturally and historically significant, reflecting the collective identity and values of the nation, and its international relevance. In addition to written content, the visual elements accompanying posts, such as images or emojis, contribute to the overall sentiment. A multimodal analysis captures the holistic emotional expression within the digital discourse and can be used as a basis for future professionals in a wide range of fields, either in social and digital media, marketing and advertising or public relations.

4.2. CORPUS COLLECTION

To collect data for subsequent linguistic analysis, a set of 50 posts was systematically chosen using the Twitter API. Specific keywords associated with the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, namely “Queen”, “Elizabeth”, and “death” were introduced. The [X] advanced search tool served to define a specific timeframe, focusing on posts in the English language. The selected posts were those published between September 8, 2022, and September 9, 2022, originating from verified accounts of public figures and private companies.

Table 1 presents the typology and the number of posts under examination. A total of 2,639 tokens were analysed, revealing 1,618 tokens in posts from public figures and 1,020 tokens in posts from private companies.

TABLE 1. *Classification of posts*

Figure	Number of posts	Number of tokens
Public figures	25	1,619
Companies	25	1,020
Total	50	2,639

Source: own elaboration

4.3. PROCEDURE AND DATA ANALYSIS

This study adopts a mixed-method approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative analyses, to delve into posts discussing the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. Initially, a comprehensive examination of the written content of the posts, originating from both companies and public figures, was undertaken to discern any markers expressing sentiments or opinions. Subsequently, attention was directed towards the visual content, focusing on accompanying images, if present, to identify visual cues or symbols conveying attitudes or emotions related to Queen Elizabeth II's demise.

Users' interactions on [X] were also scrutinized, encompassing written text or emojis. Following Bellés-Calvera and Bellés-Fortuño's

(forthcoming) multimodal classification, various interaction categories were explored, including:

- Plain image (no text) + users' interaction. This category has to do with posts containing images without any accompanying text overlaid on the image itself. Apart from this visual element, interaction from users is present through the inclusion of text and/or emojis in the post.
- In-text image + users' interaction. In this category, text is embedded within the image, and users' interaction is evident in the post through the use of emojis and/or written texts.
- In-text image + no users' interaction: This category denotes posts where an image includes embedded text, but there is a lack of interaction from users. The absence of text and/or emojis entails a lack of engagement, with only the image serving as an interactive element.
- Plain text. Unlike the previous categories, only text is utilized to convey the message.

Additionally, posts were analyzed and classified based on the presence of metadiscoursal markers. Drawing from Hyland's interactional model of metadiscourse (2018), particular emphasis was placed on discerning attitudinal markers – also referred to as operators facilitating speaker-speech relations (Bellés-Fortuño, 2018) – and engagement markers. In so doing, the subcategories of engagement and attitudinal markers outlined by Martín del Pozo (2014) and Azar and Hashim (2019) were contemplated. Leveraging their models, this approach facilitates a nuanced examination of how users convey emotions and attitudes in discourse surrounding this significant event.

Table 2 below provides a comprehensive overview of the categories and subcategories considered in interactional metadiscourse.

TABLE 2. *Adapted taxonomy of Hyland’s interactional metadiscourse (2018)*

Metadiscourse category	Subcategory
Engagement markers (Martín del Pozo, 2014)	Questions (referential, rhetorical, display, indirect).
	Imperatives
	Inclusive comments
Attitudinal markers (Azar & Hashim, 2019)	Significance
	Limitations and gaps
	Emotion
	Assessment

Source: own elaboration

To ascertain the occurrence of both linguistic devices, Sketch Engine, a specialized software tool and online platform tailored for corpus linguistics research and text analysis, was employed. Thanks to its functionalities, not only frequency lists and statistical data from corpora were generated, but its sentiment analysis tools enabled the automatic classification of posts based on their emotional tone or sentiment polarity.

The subsequent section will delve into the key findings regarding the presence of multimodal elements.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the corpus has been pivotal to detect the occurrence of interactional makers in the posts under study (i.e. engagement and attitudinal markers) and point out the discourse differences between public and private figures.

As noted earlier, the examination of the corpus adhered to the four categories delineated in the multimodal framework introduced by Bellés-Calvera and Bellés-Fortuño (forthcoming). The findings suggest that users’ interaction is widely appraised in messages from both public figures and private companies.

Table 3 reveals noteworthy distinctions in post typology between public figures and private companies in their digital communication strategies. Public figures predominantly opt for plain text as it constitutes 48% of their posts. These results suggest that public figures rely heavily

on textual content to engage with their audience and shape their public persona. Following plain text, public figures also make use of the category referred to as plain image (no text) + users’ interaction (36%) to encourage direct communication and feedback from their audience.

On the other hand, private companies adopt a different approach, with 52% of their posts featuring plain images (no text) + users’ interaction. This highlights that private companies prioritize visual content as a means of communication, leveraging images to capture attention and prompt engagement from their audience. In-text image + users’ interaction (24%) emerges the second most common digital communication strategy for private companies. In contrast to public figures, users’ interaction is still relevant for private companies as perceived with the presence of plain text in private companies’ posts (20%). Last but not least, in-text images without user interaction (4%) represent a smaller portion of their posts, showing a lesser emphasis on this format compared to other types of posts.

TABLE 3. *Results of the multimodal categories identified.*

Post typology	Public figures		Companies	
	No.	%	No.	%
Plain image (no text) + users’ interaction	9	36%	13	52%
In-text image + users’ interaction	1	4%	6	24%
In-text image + no users’ interaction	2	8%	1	4%
Plain text	12	48%	5	20%
Total	25	100%	25	100%

Source: own elaboration

These findings point out the shifting dynamics of digital communication strategies adopted by both public figures and private companies. Public figures prioritize textual content to engage with their audience and shape their public image, as opposed to private companies who lean towards visual elements to captivate attention and encourage interaction.

As regards the occurrence of interactional metadiscourse markers, significant differences have been identified, as illustrated in Table 4. Public figures exhibit a higher prevalence of engagement markers, with a

frequency of 3.2‰. These markers play a crucial role in fostering a collective identity and facilitating interaction with their audience, contributing to the broader discourse surrounding national identity and shared values. Attitudinal markers do not seem to be widely employed since their frequency decreases to 2.7‰. Hence, public figures appear to adopt a more restrained approach in expressing personal attitudes and opinions within their digital communication strategies.

In contrast, private companies tend to share more emotionally charged posts (12.5‰), where humour and irony are employed to resonate with the audience and shape their attitude towards the content presented. Similarly, engagement markers are prevalent with 7.5‰ of these linguistic devices. Such use of these metadiscoursal devices stresses their commitment with their audience, a crucial aspect of effective digital communication strategies in the competitive landscape of social media platforms like Twitter.

TABLE 4. *Number of engagement markers and attitudinal markers identified.*

Post typology	Public figures		Companies	
	No.	‰	No.	‰
Engagement markers	33	3.2‰	122	7.5‰
Attitudinal markers	45	2.7‰	128	12.5‰
Total	78	100‰	250	100‰

Source: own elaboration

5.1. MULTIMODAL FUNCTIONS

From this analysis, four functions served as the basis to understand the polarization of the multimodal elements within the corpus. It becomes evident that the combination of textual and visual elements contributes to conveying conative force. Thus, an initial exploration into the message's significance has unveiled four predetermined multimodal patterns, namely:

- Showing respect
- Promoting commercial interests
- Making use of irony
- Condemning historical events.

Table 5 provides an insightful overview of the multimodal functions observed within the corpus. The primary function across both public figures and companies is showing respect, particularly in light of the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. Evidence may be found in 76% of public figures’ posts and 74% of private companies’ posts. However, disparities arise regarding the secondary functions. While public figures allocate 24% of their posts to condemning historical events related to the British empire’s actions in previously colonized territories, this thematic element is notably absent in the discourse of private companies. Instead, private companies allocate 12% of their posts to promoting commercial interests, with an additional 12% employing irony. These differences highlight distinct communicative strategies employed by public figures and private companies in addressing the event, reflecting varied perspectives and objectives in their digital communication efforts.

TABLE 5. *Results of the multimodal categories identified.*

Functions	Public figures		Companies	
	No.	%	No.	%
Showing respect	19	76%	19	74%
Promoting brands and/or services	-	-	3	12%
Making use of irony	-	-	3	12%
Condemning historical events	6	24%	-	.
Total	25	100%	25	100%

Source: own elaboration

Evidence of these functions will be provided below.

5.1.1. Showing respect

Figure 1 displays a post shared by Harrods in the form of an image with accompanying text. The sentiment conveyed in the post is overwhelmingly negative due to the passing of Her Majesty the Queen. However, it should be noted that despite the negative nature of the event, the tone maintained throughout the post is one of deep respect and reverence for the Queen’s legacy. Additionally, the expression of condolences to the Royal Family emphasizes the respect and honor embedded in the message. By extending condolences on behalf of the company and its

employees, Harrods demonstrates its commitment to being an integral part of the national community, participating in collective moments of grief and reflection.

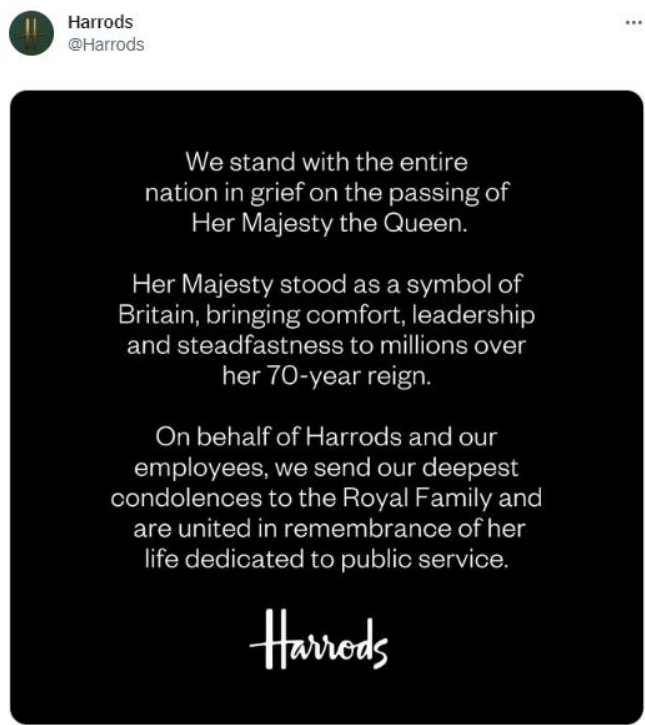
In relation to Azar and Hashim's framework (2019), the attitudinal markers within the post reflect a positive stance towards the Queen and her enduring legacy. This positivity is evident in phrases such as "symbol of Britain" and "bringing comfort, leadership, and steadfastness," which not only shape the overall tone of the post but also convey Harrods' deep admiration for the Queen's dedication to public service.

With the use of engagement markers, Harrods aims at establishing a connection with its audience, fostering a sense of community and shared experience during a difficult time. For instance, the statement "Harrods stands with the entire nation in grief" aligns the company with the collective emotions of the nation, acknowledging the widespread sense of loss. This open acknowledgment demonstrates a high level of respect and empathy, essential components of positive engagement.

Overall, by recognizing and honoring significant national events, organizations contribute to shaping a collective identity rooted in shared values and experiences. In this case, the combination of engagement and attitudinal markers in Harrods' post helps to create a profound sense of unity, respect, and admiration within the audience, while also paying homage to the Queen's memory and legacy.

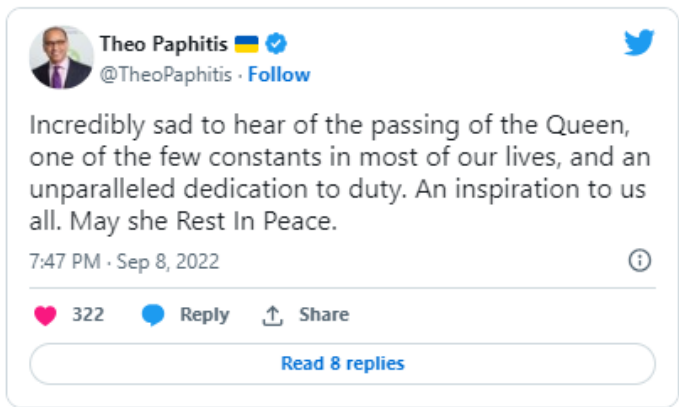
Users' interaction can also be examined from a public figure perspective, as illustrated in Figure 2. Evidence may be found in the post shared by Theo Paphitis, a well-known British entrepreneur and television personality. Through his post, Theo Paphitis reinforces his identity as a member of the broader community mourning the loss of the Queen. By sharing his emotions and acknowledging the Queen's impact on individuals and society as a whole, he strengthens his connection with his audience and reaffirms his shared values and experiences with them.

FIGURE 1. Harrods' post



Source: [X]

FIGURE 2. Theo Paphitis's [X] post.



Source: [X]

Regarding attitudinal markers, the Queen is positively portrayed as a source of inspiration and admiration (e.g. An inspiration to us all). Sentiment is also present by means of the closing remark “May she Rest In Peace”, which serves to demonstrate his respect for the Queen’s memory and legacy, conveying a tone of solemnity and dignity that reflects the seriousness of the occasion.

Turning to engagement markers, the use of the phrase “Incredibly sad to hear of the passing of the Queen” by Theo Paphitis serves as a robust engagement marker. This expression of sadness and empathy seeks to effectively foster a sense of connection and solidarity with his followers. By recognizing her constant presence and dedication to duty, Paphitis reinforces the sense of community among his followers and invites his audience to appreciate her commitment to service. Thus, through these engagement markers, Paphitis effectively connects with his audience, fosters a sense of solidarity, and encourages reflection on the Queen’s legacy.

By and large, Theo Paphitis’s communicative strategies on this post serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it fosters a sense of unity, respect, and positivity among his followers. Secondly, it acknowledges the solemnity of the occasion, recognizing the gravity of the Queen’s passing. Through the strategic use of engagement and attitude markers, Paphitis effectively communicates his emotions, values, and perspective, thereby contributing to a meaningful interaction with his audience.

5.1.2. Promoting commercial interests

As seen above, private companies demonstrate their human side and show that they care about more than just their products or profits during times of tragedy or loss. Some of them may also try to benefit by promoting their brands and/or services.

This is the case of Sainsbury’s post. In Figure 3 it can be seen that the textual interaction effectively contributes to the company’s digital communicative strategies by aligning its brand identity with values such as empathy, respect, and appreciation for national figures. The use of attitudinal and engagement markers, such as expressions of condolences (e.g. our thoughts and condolences are with Her Majesty’s family) and gratitude (e.g. we thank her for her decades of service), helps Sainsbury create a positive perception of the brand and strengthen a sense of community during a solemn occasion.

Featuring Queen Elizabeth II in the image provides a powerful endorsement for Sainsbury's, enhancing the brand's credibility and prestige. Her association with the brand suggests approval and recognition of Sainsbury's commitment to quality and excellence. Hence, the phrase "high class provisions" together with Queen Elizabeth II's visit implies that Sainsbury's offers products of exceptional quality and distinction, reinforcing consumer perceptions of the brand as a trusted provider of premium goods. The image evokes a sense of tradition, elegance, and refinement, while the accompanying phrase has the potential to generate positive publicity for Sainsbury's. This increased visibility can result in heightened consumer interest and loyalty towards the brand.

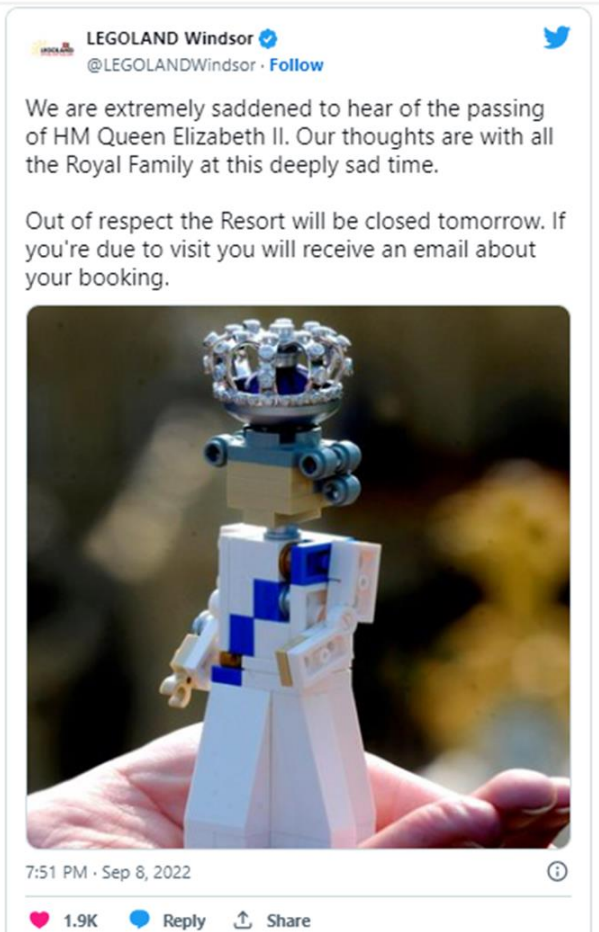
FIGURE 3. Sainsbury's [X] post.



LEGOLAND Windsor adopts a similar approach in paying tribute to the Queen, as depicted by a picture of Her Majesty made of Lego pieces

(see Figure 4). The incorporation of personal pronouns (e.g. we, our) can be perceived as a means to build a sense of community with potential consumers. Aspects such as solidarity are also worth mentioning, as evidenced by the closure of the resort and the proactive management of customers' bookings. This demonstrates the company's dedication to supporting those affected by the Queen's passing. In essence, through genuine expressions of sadness and empathy, LEGOLAND Windsor enhances its reputation as a company that prioritizes the well-being of its customers, employees, and the wider community.

FIGURE 4. Legoland's [X] post.



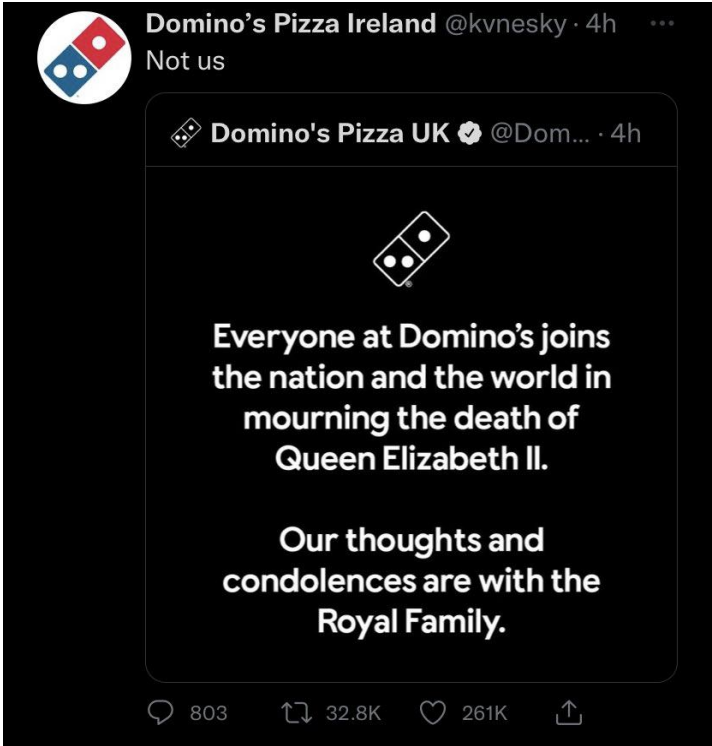
Source: [X]

This function is clearly absent in the messages posted by public figures. Those holding political or public positions may be mindful of the public’s perception and may want to avoid being seen as opportunistic. Making reference to their careers or services in the context of offering condolences could be interpreted as using a somber occasion for personal promotion, which could lead to backlash and criticism.

5.1.3. Making use of irony

Another function that can only be found in the discourse strategies employed by private companies is irony. The response “Not us” from Domino’s Pizza Ireland to the post by Domino’s Pizza UK expressing condolences for the death of Queen Elizabeth II is a clear example (see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5. Domino’s Pizza Ireland’s [X] post



Source: [X]

With this phrase, Domino’s Pizza Ireland is explicitly distancing itself from the sentiment expressed its UK counterpart. The reasons for holding this position could be reflective of the preferences and expectations of Domino’s Pizza Ireland’s customer base. The brand may have determined that its Irish customers would not appreciate or resonate with a public expression of mourning for Queen Elizabeth II due to cultural differences or historical sensitivities. Therefore, Domino’s Pizza Ireland’s post demonstrates engagement and attitude markers indicative of independence, assertiveness, and potentially differing cultural or strategic considerations compared to the UK branch.

5.1.4. Condemning historical events

Unlike private companies, who may promote their commercial interests and even make use of irony, public figures may take advantage of their relevance to condemn historical events. Jemele Hill, an American sports journalist and contributing writer to *The Atlantic*, showcased her communication strategy as a public figure on social media, as displayed in Figure 6.

FIGURE 6. Jemele Hill's [X] post.



Source: [X]

Hill’s post immediately grabs attention with a provocative statement suggesting that it is appropriate to examine Queen Elizabeth II’s role in the

devastating impact of continued colonialism. This post reinforces her identity as a journalist committed to critical analysis and challenging conventional narratives involving members of royalty. By expressing her perspective on a controversial topic, she reaffirms her role as a thought leader and influencer in the media landscape. In so doing, she encourages critical thinking and invites followers to reconsider established norms and beliefs.

Similarly, Attiah reinforces her identity as a writer, journalist, and editor who is unafraid to confront difficult topics and advocate for marginalized communities (see Figure 7). Engaging with the historical context of British colonialism, she acknowledges the “horrendous cruelties and economic deprivation” experienced by black and brown people worldwide under British rule.

By asserting that black and brown people are "allowed to have feelings" about Queen Elizabeth II, Attiah validates and acknowledges the emotions of marginalized communities. These linguistic cues foster empathy and solidarity among followers who may have personal or ancestral connections to colonial history.

FIGURE 7. Karen Attiah’s [X] post



Source: [X]

All in all, through her vocal stance on issues of colonialism and historical injustice, she reaffirms her role as a thought leader and advocate for social justice. While these posts may appear as critical of Queen Elizabeth II and the British monarchy, they also reflect a deep respect for the significance of the contextualization of historical figures and their influence, especially on marginalized communities affected by colonialism.

6. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Pedagogically speaking, enhancing the learning skills of students using [X], with a focus on attitudinal and engagement markers, demand a deliberate and strategic approach. One effective strategy is the integration of corpus analysis into the curriculum. By incorporating authentic examples extracted from various sources such as articles, videos, or interviews that illustrate engagement markers, students can gain valuable insights into language use and expressions indicative of enthusiasm or interaction. These examples can serve as discussion prompts in class, fostering critical thinking and analytical skills among students.

In line with this, students can be assigned individual or group tasks that prompt autonomous learning. For instance, research projects, reflective essays, or presentations can provide opportunities for students to express their attitudes and engagement with the subject matter. Through such activities, students not only deepen their understanding of the content but also develop their communication and presentation skills.

Moreover, peer learning can play a significant role in enhancing students' engagement with [X]. By sharing their insights and experiences with each other, students can learn from one another's engagement markers and foster a positive peer influence within the learning environment.

As for the role of teachers, they can monitor and provide feedback on students' use of engagement markers in both written and spoken communication. By offering constructive feedback, teachers can help students refine their language skills and develop effective communication

strategies, thereby facilitating their overall foreign language learning experience.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Building upon the theoretical background abovementioned, this paper has delved into the analysis of multimodal elements within posts shared by influential figures, whether they belong to the private or public sphere. To this end, this study stemmed from the following research questions:

- RQ(1): What types and frequency of interactional markers use private and public figures?
- RQ(2): How do multimodal elements contribute to information flow dynamics and identity construction?

Addressing RQ(1), the findings indicate a notable contrast between the usage of engagement and attitudinal markers by private companies and public figures. tend to use a higher number of engagement and attitudinal markers, compared to public figures, where the occurrence of these interactional devices decreases to a great extent. This suggests distinct communication goals between the two entities. Public figures, aiming to establish a personal rapport with their audience, predominantly employ engagement markers to foster interaction and dialogue, thus nurturing a sense of shared identity and values. On the contrary, private companies, while also seeking consumer engagement, may prioritize maintaining a controlled brand image, hence favoring the use of attitudinal markers in their discursive strategies.

Regarding RQ(2), the selection of specific images and the manner in which they are paired with text can influence the audience's perception of the message and the identity of the sender. For instance, public figures predominantly utilize plain text to communicate, emphasizing personal connections, while private companies favor *plain images (no text) + users' interaction* to convey their brand image. Consequently, the influence on consumer identity is multifaceted, with both public figures and private companies playing distinct roles. While public figures inspire

personal connections, private companies influence consumer identity through the products and values they represent. Thus, even though public figures may have a more direct impact, both public figures and private companies significantly contribute to shaping consumer identity, each through unique mechanisms and levels of personal connection.

Limitations of the study should be addressed to interpret its findings accurately. Firstly, the restricted sample size of 50 posts may constrain the comprehensiveness of the analysis, potentially overlooking nuances and variations in digital discourse surrounding the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. Another limitation may be related to the selection of posts in the English language and within a specific timeframe (September 8-9, 2022), since these criteria may prevent the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or time periods. Lastly, the fact only posts from verified accounts of public figures and private companies have been examined may lead to potentially excluding posts from other relevant sources.

Further research would thus be needed to explore a larger and more diverse sample of posts to capture a broader range of perspectives and voices surrounding this significant event. Comparative studies across different socio-political contexts and cultural backgrounds would also shed light on how digital communication practices vary across regions and demographics in response to similar events. In so doing, scholars can deepen their understanding of digital discourse and its implications for teaching public communication and social dynamics to future professionals in the media industry.

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